

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

The Nimitz Education and Research Center

Fredericksburg, Texas

An Interview With
W. Guy Longshore
LaGrange, GA
March 19, 2021
U.S. Army Air Corps
73rd Bomb Group
Tinian

My name is Richard Misenhimer: Today is March 19, 2021. I am interviewing Mr. William Guy Longshore by telephone. His phone number is 706-880-7103. His address is 101 Vernon Woods Drive, LaGrange, GA 30240. This interview is in support of the National Museum of the Pacific War, the Nimitz Education and Research Center for the preservation of historical information related to World War II. His alternate contact is Mark Traylor, 373 Frank Baum Drive, Schertz, TX 78154. Phone number is 210-257-5337.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Guy, I want to thank you for taking time to do this interview today and I want to thank you for your service to our country during World War II.

Mr. Longshore:

I'll tell you, it was the best time of my life, really. Wish I had stayed in longer. In fact, I wanted to stay in longer. Should have. But my dad, when it came time to get out, my dad wanted me to come work for him so I didn't re-enlist, went to work with my father which was good because he didn't live much longer after that. So I was glad I was with him.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now the first thing I need to do is read to you this agreement with the museum to make sure this OK with you. (agreement read) Is that OK with you?

Mr. Longshore:

Yes, sir. That's very good with me.

Mr. Misenhimer:

OK, good. Now, what is your birth date?

Mr. Longshore:

10/31/1923.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where were you born?

Mr. Longshore:

Montgomery, Alabama.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have brothers and sisters?

Mr. Longshore:

No. No brothers and sisters.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You're an only child?

Mr. Longshore:

Right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You grew up during the Depression. How did the Depression affect you and your family?

Mr. Longshore:

I was an only child so it didn't bother me. My mother and father both worked for the railroad. I went to the railroad station about every day so it didn't bother me at all.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was your father's occupation?

Mr. Longshore:

He worked for the railroad station in Montgomery, Alabama.

Mr. Misenhimer:

He kept his job during all the Depression?

Mr. Longshore:

He had to be there, had to keep the trains going.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was your mother's and father's first names?

Mr. Longshore:

His name was Guy, same as mine. Hers was Imogene.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now Guy is your middle name. Is that correct?

Mr. Longshore:

Yes, first name is William.

Mr. Misenhimer:

William Guy, right.

Mr. Longshore:

My father is William Guy, Sr. and I'm William Guy, Jr. Mother's name was Imogene Farris.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You grew up during the Depression. How did the Depression affect you and your family?

Mr. Longshore:

We had three meals a day. Growing up in a railroad town, you know the railroad town Montgomery, Alabama. Anybody that worked for the railroad, we had three meals a day. Everybody survived. We didn't have automobiles or anything wasn't any automobiles in Montgomery at all. Everybody walked to work.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now on December 7, 1941 when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. Do recall hearing about that?

Mr. Longshore:

Yes, I should have known you were going to ask me that but I can't think of where I was. I was in Atlanta, I think. I'm sure. I was living in Atlanta then.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you heard that, how did you think that would affect you?

Mr. Longshore:

I didn't think it would affect me at all at the time.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You were what, 17, near 18 years old?

Mr. Longshore:

17 then, yeah. Actually I was thinking about going into the service right then.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When did you enter the service?

Mr. Longshore:

I volunteered.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What date?

Mr. Longshore:

I have no idea. I was in for five years altogether.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You went in before Pearl Harbor or after?

Mr. Longshore:

I went in before Pearl Harbor, yeah, sure.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So you went in how long before Pearl Harbor?

Mr. Longshore:

I can't go back that far, I really can't. I can't go back that far with my memory.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were you in a year before Pearl Harbor or more or less?

Mr. Longshore:

Yeah, before Pearl Harbor.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What branch did you go into?

Mr. Longshore:

Air Force.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How did you choose the Air Force?

Mr. Longshore:

I wanted to fly. I'd always been around airplanes and loved airplanes and wanted to fly an airplane. So I ended up learning how to fly an airplane. After I'd crashed two of them they said, "You'd make a good gunner."

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you go for your basic training?

Mr. Longshore:

Miami, Florida.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was basic training?

Mr. Longshore:

We were walking around the golf courses down there, parading on the golf courses.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were you drill instructors pretty tough on you?

Mr. Longshore:

No. It was entirely different then. It was almost as a picnic really.

Mr. Misenhimer:

This was before the war, wasn't it?

Mr. Longshore:

The war had already started, yeah. We were all having a picnic, though. It wasn't that rough yet before the war got rough.

Mr. Misenhimer:

About how long was your basic training?

Mr. Longshore:

I don't know. I'm not sure.

Mr. Misenhimer:

About three months?

Mr. Longshore:

Well, finally ended up graduating from the University of Miami after the war.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you stay in after the war?

Mr. Longshore:

Used my G.I. Bill and went down to the University of Miami and finished down there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Had you started to the University before you went into the service?

Mr. Longshore:

No, not that one. I had been to three other schools.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Which ones were those?

Mr. Longshore:

Georgia, North Georgia Military Academy, Kent State College and then Miami University.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you graduate?

Mr. Longshore:

Yeah, sure did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What year did you graduate?

Mr. Longshore:

I cannot remember that. These are all things I should have thought ahead of time you might ask because to tell you the truth, I'm 97 years old. I don't think about when I graduated from high school really. Things you just don't think about every day.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, after basic training, where did you go?

Mr. Longshore:

I went to so many different places. I've been to Maxwell Field in Montgomery, Alabama. Went to Kent State College in South Carolina. Different schools, learn to fly an airplane. When I crashed it up over in South Carolina, they decided I better not fly. I'd make a better gunner than I would a pilot. Then they sent me to...

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you learn to fly a plane?

Mr. Longshore:

Oh, yes, I was flying. I soloed. I could fly, I can still fly today if they'd let me but they won't let me.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What kind of plane was your first training in?

Mr. Longshore:

Piper Cub.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Single engine. How was that plane to fly?

Mr. Longshore:

Easy. If you couldn't fly that, you better give up. Then I cracked up in South Carolina, flying a twin-engine fighter plane. I can't think of the name of it now.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What kind of twin-engine was that?

Mr. Longshore:

I can't think of the name of it but...

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was it a Cessna?

Mr. Longshore:

The same plane that the Army and the Navy used in training. I can't think of the right name of it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Longshore:

After that I went to gunner school out in Denver, Colorado.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Tell me about that school.

Mr. Longshore:

Great school, great school. Too many people and I loved the town of Denver. What little time we had off, we went to town all the time. Of course went to church every Sunday out there in Denver. Got to know some people. Great town with Christian people. Went to church every Sunday and got invited out to somebody's home for donuts. Great people.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now in your gunner's school, what kind of gun were you training on?

Mr. Longshore:

B-29. I'm trying to think of what it was, the gun. It was just a 50 caliber gun. That's all.

Mr. Misenhimer:

A machine gun?

Mr. Longshore:

Yes, right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

50 caliber machine gun.

Mr. Longshore:

Who made it? Browning, I guess. But we did that down in Florida, gunner's school. I was down there for shooting targets.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Longshore:

Then from there they sent me somewhere else. I've forgotten where I went from there. I really can't remember. I ended up back to Albuquerque, New Mexico. I got on a crew and we went out to Albuquerque, New Mexico just before we went overseas. Everybody went home for a few days and came back and then we all went overseas together. We stayed together for about six months.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, was this before the war?

Mr. Longshore:

Oh, no. This was during the war.

Mr. Misenhimer:

During the war, OK. Then on December 7, 1941 when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, where were

you then, when you heard that?

Mr. Longshore:

I guess I was in Atlanta. I wasn't in service then, I don't think.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You went into the service before the war, right?

Mr. Longshore:

I'm trying to think. I guess I was because I volunteered before then, yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You don't have a copy of your discharge there in front of you, do you?

Mr. Longshore:

No, sir. I don't. No idea where it is.

Mr. Misenhimer:

But you went in before the war?

Mr. Longshore:

Right. I'm a writer and right now in this room I'm sitting in I have one, two, three, eight or nine books over there that I'm in the process of writing and I can't remember all the stuff I've got before me. In fact, right now I'm waiting for the editor to bring me the latest book that I wrote. When he does, I'll send you a copy of it if you're interested. But I wrote books about World War II. About especially flying over Japan. Started out in Japan we were dropping bombs and ended up dropping supplies to the prisoners of war camps all over Japan. I was a gunner on a B-29.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you recall where you were when you heard about Japan attacking Pearl Harbor?

Mr. Longshore:

I already told you I guess. I was in Atlanta, Georgia that was before I was in the service.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Before you went in the service?

Mr. Longshore:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I thought you said you went in before the war?

Mr. Longshore:

I'm confusing you then. I was in before I ever saw any action. I never did leave Atlanta until after that. I was inducted in the service in Atlanta, right. Then Pearl Harbor was attacked.

Nobody knew about it until it happened, then. It surprised everybody. Admiral Nimitz was a great sailor. You have pictures of him from the museum out there. We have pictures of the men and then ones of me and all my crew, the crew of the B-29, and me sitting in my hole up there in the top hole of the airplane. So it was very nice. I've given them to just everybody I know, trying to show how important I was. I appreciate it. Some of these places they don't give you the portrait.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Longshore:

This was after the war. Last year. I got the brochures from you. From your museum.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now were you stationed on Tinian or Saipan?

Mr. Longshore:

Oh, Saipan, Tinian, and Guam.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You were on all of them?

Mr. Longshore:

All three.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you do there?

Mr. Longshore:

Same thing we did every day. We got in the airplane with somebody to fly it. Go on a mission and drop bombs. After the war was over then we started dropping supplies. While the war was still going on, we were shooting at the enemy.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I understand you saw the Enola Gay take off. Is that correct?

Mr. Longshore:

Right. Yes, early in the morning. I was down there, walking on the edge of the cliff. We didn't have electricity so we didn't have air-conditioning or anything like that so most of us got up early two or three o'clock in the morning and took a long walk around the edge of the cliffs and I was out there walking about 2:30 in the morning. I looked over there toward Tinian and saw that airplane take off. That was the Enola Gay. We had not flown in three or four days so we knew something was up. Didn't find out that day what was going on. So the next day we did know what happened.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, what outfit were you in, there on Tinian?

Mr. Longshore:

I'm sorry. I should have been prepared for this but was still Air Force but I don't remember the different ones. We switched around so much.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Any of your papers there tell you what it was?

Mr. Longshore:

I've got papers here but like I said, I'm a writer and I've books in every room that I'm writing on now. I cannot remember the numbers, what group and all that. All you need to do is put what you saw and all that so I can't remember the numbers. The guys you see in the picture, 73rd Wing. That's it. It's hard to remember all these little things. I don't think about them every day. I'm a writer and I like to write but what I'm writing about is from my notes that I took. Right now I've got some notes that I'm working on of the book right now.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now I understand that after the war that you flew over Japan and dropped supplies and things like that?

Mr. Longshore:

Right, sure did. The day the surrender was signed there were 200 B-29s flying over Tokyo Bay. How about that, 200 B-29s flying over the bay.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were you in one of those planes?

Mr. Longshore:

Yes, sir. That's the reason I know about it. I was there. I was in one of them. Listened on the radio and you could hear the noise of the air plane engines being picked up by the microphones on the Missouri. We heard our noises going over Tokyo Bay and coming back. We were there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

About how many total missions did you fly?

Mr. Longshore:

I have no idea because we were flying every other day.

Mr. Misenhimer:

More than 30?

Mr. Longshore:

Oh, yeah, sure. Every other day. Some missions we didn't get back. Iwo Jima some other places we would spend the night, stay overnight and come back the next day. You never knew when you left whether you'd have enough fuel to get back in time or not. I'll send you one of my books and bring you up-to-date on that. How about that?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were you stationed on some other islands besides Tinian?

Mr. Longshore:

Guam, Saipan and Tinian.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Guam, Saipan and Tinian. About how long were you there?

Mr. Longshore:

I can't remember.

Mr. Misenhimer:

A year? More or less?

Mr. Longshore:

Oh, yeah. I was overseas at least three or four years.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, did you fly some bombing missions?

Mr. Longshore:

We started out flying bombing missions, right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you bomb? Where were some places you bombed?

Mr. Longshore:

Different places in Japan.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You bombed in Japan, huh?

Mr. Longshore:

In Japan, yeah. It was inland until the surrender was signed and then after that, we started dropping supplies to the POW camps. We found out there were prisoner of war camps in there that had no supplies. They needed medical supplies, they needed food, clothing. We started dropping to them. That was the most worthwhile thing we ever did in the war. Someone said I can ever be proud of it, dropping those supplies to the POW camps. So sometimes you'd fly and see 15 or 20 men standing out in the middle of the POW camp there, waving as we went by. They'd not had any decent food in two or three weeks or something.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was your job on the plane?

Mr. Longshore:

I was command gunner. Up in the top.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever shoot at any Japanese airplanes?

Mr. Longshore:

Sir, I'm sorry. The questions are getting me because every day we shot at airplanes. We shot at Japanese airplanes whenever we could.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever shoot any down?

Mr. Longshore:

Let me put it this way to you: I'm sitting in this turret and I've got six guns, four guns up front and two guns right behind me so I'm firing six guns. The Japanese always came in, matter of fact, they came toward me so they're firing with the same number of guns, coming right at me. I could see the bullets bouncing off the airplane as they came on by the tail. They shot us up pretty bad. I don't know how many I shot down. I have no idea. We just shot at them, me and the other gunners. We shot at them and it was hard to say which ones we actually killed or shot.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Your plane was damaged then, right?

Mr. Longshore:

Yes. I never realized it until one day I got out of the plane and one of the ground crew said, "Come here, let me show you something." So we both got back in the airplane at the tail. There

was an emergency exit at the tail there. We got in there and crawled up on top of the airplane back where my position was. He pointed up there and said, "Look at the holes in the tail." It was still full of bullets. "How you going to get rid of those?" He said, "Well, we can't." He said, "We'd rather get them out before they rust because the holes will rust in there." He said, "We try to put some fluid on there to get rid of them but they will be there for a while." They didn't have time to stop and check them out. I could see at least a hundred bullet holes and more than that in my tail.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were any of the men on your plane ever wounded or killed or anything?

Mr. Longshore:

No, not that I know of.

Mr. Misenhimer:

None of them were ever wounded.

Mr. Longshore:

No, we all got out pretty good, most of the same time. I kept up with a lot of them when we got out because they were my friends and I wanted to keep up with them but it was kind of ironic. I'm the only one left of my crew. The rest of them have died. I kept in touch with them. The last two boys, friends of mine, they were in Wisconsin, they both died. They were buried on the same day up in Milwaukee. I've got from the funeral home. This was their services. I kept up with the families but some of their family, they didn't care about keeping in touch with people like the southern boys. Seriously, right after we got out of the service had all these pictures developed. I was good at taking pictures, taking pictures all the time. So I took pictures I had of every member of my crew, I mailed them copies of everything I took.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What's some other things that happened?

Mr. Longshore:

Well, that's about it. I did my time so I could get out, go home. I should have stayed in really but I got out because my father wanted me to come to work for him. That's the reason I got out. I knew he wasn't going to live forever and he wanted me to work for him. Good thing I did because I worked for him two or three years and he died. But I thought about it so much since then, had I stayed in the service, it would have been rough because my mother would have been home by herself. I would have been stationed in Alaska or something like that. Here we get back and forth, you know. God made me go ahead and get out when I got the chance. It was the right thing to do.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now I have a note here, something about after the war was over, you were returning from the weather mission right about Vladivostok, Russia, and had some problems. What happened on that?

Mr. Longshore:

Vladivostok, Russia. I don't remember that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Something about you saw Japan at a low altitude.

Mr. Longshore:

That's my last book I just put it out last week. This was 50 years ago. The last book I wrote was about what happened 50 years ago. That was flying these weather missions over there, dropping supplies. Twenty planes would take off every morning, we'd drop our supplies and come back.

Sometimes we wouldn't get back all the way back because we'd run out of fuel so we'd stop somewhere overnight and then come back.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you stop?

Mr. Longshore:

I can't tell you right now.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Something about the airfield at Yokohama.

Mr. Longshore:

Well, that was different.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was that where it was?

Mr. Longshore:

Not for emergency, no. I'm not a good memory. If I've got the papers before me, like I'm writing a letter or a book, I can go right to it. If I go back to my memory, what I did yesterday, I can't remember that far back.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now in the notes I have here, it's something here about you spotted the American men in the Japanese prisoner of war camp at a place in Japan.

Mr. Longshore:

Yeah, that was one of the first drops we did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Tell me about that.

Mr. Longshore:

That was one of the first camps we found. We kept flying over until we found it and there were about a dozen men standing in the road out in the middle. So went back and started dropping supplies to them. Some of the supplies hit people, might have killed them. I don't know. I did see a couple of men out in the middle of the road that got hit by maybe a two hundred pound load that we dropped supplies to them. But that was the first time we started on the supplies. That was a lot of our job to do.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now something about when you were flying over Japan you saw the letters P, W, painted on something. What was that?

Mr. Longshore:

Oh, yeah. MacArthur had ordered that the head of the Japanese military to paint the words Prisoner of War on the roof of his camps so we could find them. Otherwise, we never would have found them. I'm sure we went over a lot of places we didn't know the prisoners were there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now you say the men were outside, jumping up and down?

Mr. Longshore:

Oh, yeah, sure. If they could.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did they look like? They were skinny?

Mr. Longshore:

They didn't have for weeks, nothing to eat.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You said something about they were half-naked. Is that right?

Mr. Longshore:

That's right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What's some other things that happened?

Mr. Longshore:

That was just went on and on. Finally the war was over then we moved from Saipan over to Tinian. Saipan was the best for swimming, right off the beach where we saw the Enola Gay, we could go swimming. We had a nice big beach there, nice, deep, clean water. But when we got to Tinian, Tinian we didn't have a big beach. We had a nice building but we couldn't get to the beach so we didn't have any recreation much at all. We went to town a couple of times but it wasn't exactly sound. We went downtown and downtown Tinian there was a beautiful lake.

We'd like to go there and go swimming. We'd hitchhike to town, take off our clothes, put them behind a tree and we'd swim naked in the lake in the middle of downtown Tinian. Didn't matter. Nobody saw us. Finally we moved back over to Tinian and came home from there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now you say here on one mission you were flying up a dead-end canyon? What happened?

Mr. Longshore:

The pilot went up to the left, pulled a Chantelle. He pulled out of it, but if he hadn't pulled out, we'd have been dead. We didn't know it was dead-end until we got there. We didn't have any maps. The only maps we had were some maps from World War I put out by somebody, Red Cross or somebody. We didn't know some of those canyons we never did find. Some of them we

just gave up on. We never did go back to look for them the next day because we couldn't find them. Good feeling though when you hit the target and everything went right straight to the target. That was a good feeling.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, you say here the flight to Shanghai is one I well remember. Tell me about that flight to Shanghai.

Mr. Longshore:

That's sort of a delicate thing. The airplane in front of us was from another group and we got over there to Shanghai they were following us from one target to the next and the last target we dropped, the next time came around, they didn't drop. All of a sudden the next time somebody bailed out. Just a man came out of the bomb bay and we followed him to see what happened and his parachute opened and he landed. Found out after the war it was the co-pilot out of the first airplane. He knew his brother was in that prisoner of war camp and he was going to go down there and find his brother. Really a dumb thing to do because he could have been killed on the way down. He could have hit a telephone pole or anything and be killed. Another thing too, he didn't have assurance that his brother was there in the first place. Then, too, what got me being a crew member, he was the co-pilot. Soon as he bailed out and was on the ground, that plane still had to turn around and get back to where it came from without a co-pilot. Naturally, you have two people on the airplane. Pilot doesn't fly by himself, you know that. Cut the crew short like that. It wasn't a good thing to do. But he made it and we made it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You say something here about over Saipan the co-pilot of the other plane bailed out or something.

Mr. Longshore:

That's what I just said, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

OK, I didn't catch that. He was looking for his brother?

Mr. Longshore:

Right. He was the co-pilot but that wasn't being fair to the rest of the crew because they had to fly back with one pilot. One man can't fly that big B-29. It takes more than two.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, when you were in the service, what would you consider your most scary time?

Mr. Longshore:

I don't know. Really going through some of the storms was the worst time. Once you were up in the airplane I felt pretty secure. I was never really afraid in the airplane.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What are some other things that happened when you were over there?

Mr. Longshore:

Well, I should let you talk to my friend who Mark Traylor. His address is 373 Frank Baum Drive, Schertz, TX 78154. He was on a crew like I was and he and his wife just took a tour over there. Went to Saipan and Tinian. Went back to the places where he used to live. So we compared notes on what we saw and did and it was the same thing. We went to the same places, saw the same things. I didn't want to go back again because I just don't want to go back. It wouldn't be the same. You go over there now you live in a motel. You wouldn't be living in a hut out in the woods.

Mr. Misenhimer:

OK. Now when you were stationed on Saipan, what outfit were you in?

Mr. Longshore:

I cannot remember the numbers. I really can't.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You don't remember.

Mr. Longshore:

We changed around each time going from Saipan to Tinian. Each time we changed groups, you know and we never did pay attention. All we cared about was where you were going the next day, what airplane you were going on and who was flying it. I never noticed things like that. I really didn't. I'm sorry.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now you say on your plane you were command gunner. What is a command gunner?

Mr. Longshore:

That's the guy up on the top. There is a turret on the top. I turned all the guns on every day. They could not fire their guns until I turned them on every day. There are six switches in front of me and I had to turn on all six after we got on the airplane and let them know the guns were armed. You could change a switch from one gun to the next. I thoroughly enjoyed being up there. I got shot at all the time. Like I said every time the Japanese came at us they came from the nose. The minute we saw them they were firing and bullets were coming out and bouncing off the front of my airplane and going up to the tail. Thankfully none of them ever hit me. They came bouncing off the tail.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, were you attacked by Japanese fighter planes?

Mr. Longshore:

That's what these were that were shooting at me.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How bad were they?

Mr. Longshore:

I don't know. They were shooting at me. That's all I cared about. That's all I was interested in. Getting out of the way, shooting back at them.

Mr. Misenhimer:

But you don't know exactly how many missions you flew. You must have flown more than 30 missions, right?

Mr. Longshore:

Sure, right. Flying every other day.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Which one of those would you consider to be your worst mission?

Mr. Longshore:

Well, it would be hard to say. We just did emergency landings when we were completely out of fuel and we could have caught fire. I can't say one was worse than the other really. Because I was young and I enjoyed the excitement. Spent the night at Iwo Jima. We spent quite a few nights at Iwo Jima. If you know the history we lost thousands of men when we captured Iwo Jim. We captured it so the B-29s would have a place to land when we came back. We spent the night there quite often.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What's some other things you recall about your time in the service?

Mr. Longshore:

I just enjoyed it. I enjoy people. I like people and I like to make friends and I have nothing to complain about, really. I was glad I was there instead of home wondering what was going on. I was glad I was there. Like I said, I had some good friends but that's what hurts right now. They're all gone. The last one died just about a month ago. But I kept up with all the families just about. I kept up with the wives and some of the children and in fact I had a letter yesterday, today, from one of the wives. I keep in touch with them. Great people. I miss them so much, wish they were still here so I could talk to him.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now you don't know what outfit you were in on Saipan, is that right?

Mr. Longshore:

73rd Bomb Group. That's all I can think of right now. We changed all the time. We didn't stay with the same thing.

Mr. Misenhimer:

None of your paperwork tells you. Is that right?

Mr. Longshore:

Sure.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Any of that paperwork you have there tell you what outfit you were in?

Mr. Longshore:

They do but I'd have to go way back. They're in a closet around here somewhere. I try to throw,

not throw away last night or this morning, some things to get out of my way because the book I'm going to start on tomorrow, they would be in the way. I'm going more into the details of the people when I write about that, wonderful people. Sort of mental block right now, trying to think of names of people and I can't think of it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you know about what date you came back to the States?

Mr. Longshore:

No I don't.

Mr. Misenhimer:

It would have been after the war though, right?

Mr. Longshore:

Oh, yeah, right. I don't remember the exact date. I'm 97 years old and these things happened a few years back. It's all written down somewhere but I don't think of it every day. I've got books I can look at right now that might have the dates in them but I've had to go pick it up and find it in a book, you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

On May 8, 1945 Germany surrendered. Did you all hear about that?

Mr. Longshore:

I guess we did. I'm sure.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have any kind of celebration or anything?

Mr. Longshore:

You know, these questions, I wasn't prepared for that. I just don't know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now on August 6, 1945 they dropped the first atomic bomb on Japan.. Did you hear about that?

Mr. Longshore:

Oh, yeah, all about that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where were you and how did people react?

Mr. Longshore:

I don't remember because we were still in action over there. That's right. You know you can't say you can find out the reaction of the people because we're all different. Some of people said yes to it and some people said no. You know. We really didn't have time to get excited about anything really.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now a few days later they dropped the second atomic bomb. Did you hear about that?

Mr. Longshore:

I didn't see that airplane. I saw the Enola Gay take off though. Another thing about the Enola Gay, I knew at the time but I couldn't do anything about it. The navigator was a friend of mine from Atlanta. I waved at him when the plane went by that day. It didn't do any good because he wasn't looking out the window. He was looking at his map, trying to figure out where they were going. But anyway, some things you just don't remember about the war. You don't have time, don't have time to stop and think.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now on August 14 when Japan surrendered, did you have any kind of celebration then?

Mr. Longshore:

I guess we did but there was no way to celebrate though.

I was celebrating. I didn't smoke then but a lot of people did but we had a little PX on each place where you could go buy some cigarettes or Coke or something. But I'm trying to remember from over there. I'll tell you I said "This is a lead story." Of all the gunners that I flew with, three or four with me, we didn't have anything to eat. We flew starving to death. Finally some of them learned to do like I did: I carried four apples with me all the time. On my flight suit I had a big pocket on each knee. I carried two apples on each knee. Every time we left home to go somewhere I had four apples. Good thing I did because we didn't have anything else to eat. That's all we had to eat until we got back. Every time we got back and the mess hall was closed. The plane took us back to base. Then we had empty stomachs. Couldn't eat because the mess hall was closed. There's more to war than people think there is.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What would you consider your most frightening time?

Mr. Longshore:

I was never really frightened, really wasn't. I trusted the airplane, trusted the pilots. Give you a short story on that: My pilot was such a great guy. Sometimes, it was a six-hour mission coming back from Japan to where we took off. At six hours a pilot has to get up and stretch every now and then. He can't sit in that chair for six hours. He'd get up and come back to the back where I was. He'd come back there and do his exercises. When he was back there I said, "OK, I'm going to front and take care of things." So I'd go up front and sit in his pilot seat. He left me fly the airplane. He said, "Go ahead and do what you want to do." So I flew it while he was there in the

back, exercising. That's where we were in the crew. Everybody knew everybody and trusted everybody. Really did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then when did you come back to the States?

Mr. Longshore:

I can't remember the date. I cannot.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Would it have been somewhere in the fall, October or November or something?

Mr. Longshore:

I can't remember that because like I said, I can't remember those dates. I really don't. I've got them written down somewhere in my book...

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you know what date you were discharged?

Mr. Longshore:

Don't know that either. I remember calling my dad to come get me. He came out to Fort McPherson in Georgia, Atlanta and got me from there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You don't have any papers showing that there, right?

Mr. Longshore:

I do have the papers but honestly they are not right here. They're in a closet somewhere in Atlanta in a building in Atlanta where we used to live, in the closet.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You don't have your discharge or anything like that in front of you there?

Mr. Longshore:

No, it's all in Atlanta, locked up in a closet.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So you don't have it there.

Mr. Longshore:

No. No reason to have it now.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Would it have been before or after January 1, 1946?

Mr. Longshore:

I don't remember. See there again, I'm sorry to say I'm in such poor service to you but those dates I just don't know now. Some of those stories I see pilots do things they shouldn't do and other things, like drinking when they shouldn't be drinking.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you came back from Japan over there at the end of the war, would this have been in October, November, December? When do you think it would have been?

Mr. Longshore:

Probably in October or November. We came back in by ship into San Diego and I felt strange from there back to Atlanta.

Mr. Misenhimer:

About when?

Mr. Longshore:

It was in the fall. Had to be in the fall.

Mr. Misenhimer:

In the fall, OK.

Mr. Longshore:

Got on a train and went all the way across the United States on the train, coming back to Atlanta to be discharged. I let you down with all these questions you asked. I just don't know the answer that quick. I'm sorry.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you know about what date you were discharged?

Mr. Longshore:

I have no idea. All that is in the box.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Would it have been in 1945 or 1946?

Mr. Longshore:

Can't think. It was throwed in a box in Atlanta somewhere. I really have no use for it to remember, you know. Nothing to compare it to. Once I got out, that was it. Started my life all over. Had different jobs, traveled all over Georgia, Alabama, Florida. Had some wonderful jobs. But I cleared all that and came down here to LaGrange, Georgia.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was your first job when you got out? What was that?

Mr. Longshore:

Worked for my father for about four or five years. Insurance business. He had an insurance company.

Mr. Misenhimer:

About when did you start there? Do you have any idea?

Mr. Longshore:

I can't remember those dates right now? I have them written down and then I lost, they're just written down in my book in Atlanta that is in a closet where I used to live in Atlanta. I can't find those things right now. I should have thought about that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you got out, did you have any trouble adjusting to civilian life?

Mr. Longshore:

No, I went right back. I worked for my father. He worked in his insurance company and every day I'd leave the insurance company and if I didn't go home, I'd go to the YMCA and run track or swim. Get some exercise that way. I used to ride back and forth with my father and then I got to be on the road. Got my own car then. I was traveling in Georgia and over into northern Alabama. I enjoyed that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you got out, did you use your G.I. Bill for anything?

Mr. Longshore:

Yeah. Graduated from University of Miami.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you know when you started there?

Mr. Longshore:

No, sir, I don't. Sorry.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How long did you go there?

Mr. Longshore:

I should know because at the time the date was important but after that everything was filed away. I guarantee you probably wouldn't find anybody else that got through about that same time that would remember the dates because I can't remember them.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, when you were in the service, did you have any experience with the Red Cross?

Mr. Longshore:

One time I was in Ft. Belvoir, Virginia, and I went to town to the Red Cross downtown Washington, D.C. and they gave me a free meal. That was it. I took the bus back to Ft. Belvoir, Virginia.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were in the service, did you ever see any U.S.O. shows?

Mr. Longshore:

I traveled all over the United States quite a bit, Virginia and then I was stationed out in Colorado. Albuquerque, New Mexico was the last place. From Albuquerque we went to San Diego, California and flew from there overseas. Then coming back I came into San Diego by ship and then caught the train and came home. So that was my travels. Went back and forth all over the United States. I've been in just about every big city in the United States with the Air Force when we were training. Especially out in Albuquerque, New Mexico we were learning how to fly then. We'd leave Albuquerque and fly pretend bombing loads and straight to New York. We'd fly over New York and pretend bomb, drop bombs and then come on back. We'd did the same to

Chicago. Then we'd go from Albuquerque to Miami, pretending we were dropping bombs. I'll try. I didn't give much information but I wanted to thank you for this brochure you put out because I had a number of credits, sent it to all my friends and let them see how important I was from your perspective out there in Texas. It must be on another sheet of paper but this one has my picture. I made copies and sent it to everybody I knew that I was in service with.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get home with any souvenirs from World War II?

Mr. Longshore:

No really. I kept my pistol, which I did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have any experience with the Red Cross when you were in?

Mr. Longshore:

No, never did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was the morale in your various outfits?

Mr. Longshore:

I think it was good. I never heard anybody that complained. We were happy. We were doing what we were doing. Supposed to go over there and shoot down Japanese and we did. We thought we were doing our job and there was not anybody that was unhappy. You couldn't get candy. The only thing you could buy at the PX was cigarettes. That was the main thing you could buy and I didn't smoke so I didn't bother. As long as I had my apples in my pack on my knees, four apples so I knew I was going to survive that day. I gave some of my apples to my crew because they didn't have anything to eat. They finally learned to go buy an apple so they could

get through the day. I'm sorry I'm not giving you much information here but the way this is, I didn't think you'd need the dates and I can't remember all those dates. If I had my books before me, I could look in the books somewhere and give you a date. That wouldn't do you any good now because honestly I don't know where all my books are. I'm working on now, what I like to work on and that's...

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, when you were overseas, could you get your mail with any regularity?

Mr. Longshore:

Well, I don't know about regularity. We did get it but I don't know how long it took to get there. We were paid every two weeks but most of us going overseas we elected, we didn't want our full pay. We just wanted the minimum so about ten dollars was all we got every time because there was no need for money unless you smoked. You smoked, you wanted to buy cigarettes but a lot of us never did. I don't think I got fifteen dollars a week a month in pay. The rest of it went into my salary at home so when I got out of the service I got that back pay.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever hear Tokyo Rose on the radio?

Mr. Longshore:

I heard it at times I'm sure. Just one of those things you'd switch off real quick. No use wasting time on something like that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you think of her?

Mr. Longshore:

I don't know. Like I say, I didn't listen to it. I spent time in Tokyo. Spent three days in Tokyo

while my airplane was being prepared. One of our missions as we were dropping supplies and flying over those POW sightings we had engine trouble so we had to make an emergency landing right outside of Tokyo and we were there for three days. You know, what you do, we caught the train into town. Happened to remember to take pictures of the hotel in Tokyo. I can't remember the name of it. My mind just went blank. But anyway, nobody else knew where it was so I said, "Come on. Follow me." All ten of us marched down the road, found the hotel. Eisenhower was staying there then and we went in and signed up for the hotel. There were three of us in a room and we stayed there for three days. We didn't have anything to eat but we found something to eat the whole time. We all had enough money we could find something to eat. Finally got our airplane fixed and we went back to where we were. It was really interesting there in Tokyo. I took some pictures of that, downtown Tokyo and they were selling stuff down the street. It was really interesting. If you've never eaten in Tokyo, eaten a meal over there, fish is the main thing. If you get fish it's for free. The owner of the restaurant would give us a free meal done of fish. What it consisted of, it's a seven or eight piece meal. First piece was the fish's head, next was the neck of the fish, going down the fish. The last piece was the fish's tail. Can you imagine, fourteen men sitting around a table trying to eat that. We were all hungry. We couldn't eat the stuff. You couldn't. You wouldn't. Have you ever eaten a fish head? Or fish tails?

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were overseas, did you ever cross the Equator?

Mr. Longshore:

I'm not sure.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You don't think you crossed the Equator?

Mr. Longshore:

Well, going to South America. I've been to South America before.

Mr. Misenhimer:

No, I mean while you were in the service.

Mr. Longshore:

No. Not in the service. All my travels over there was after the war. Went back over there to see things. Come in to Europe a couple of times. I wanted to see that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did I ask you if you heard about Roosevelt dying in April of 1945?

Mr. Longshore:

That's another thing. We didn't get the news. We didn't know until a few days after something happened. I don't remember. I just don't. My memory is not too good. I did keep up with things.

We got a newspaper so we knew what was going on.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Have you been on the Honor Flight to Washington, D.C.?

Mr. Longshore:

That's a good question. I was going. I had a free trip to Washington. Then I found out that they were running short on people to go so I gave my ticket to somebody else and I paid my own way to Washington.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that out there?

Mr. Longshore:

I gave my free ticket to somebody else. I don't know who it was. There was a friend of mine. He

and I went together. It was perfect. We stayed three days at the Airport Hotel and went to the museum out at the airport. They have every airplane you'd want to see in your life at the museum there at the airport and you could spend all day there. We did that. Went the first day and then the third day we went to town and we toured Washington, D.C. My friend had never flown before. I couldn't imagine that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Have you had any reunions of your outfit?

Mr. Longshore:

No. They're all gone. I told you, all my crew is gone. I'm the only one left. The wives or brothers or sisters of some of them, we're writing all the time. People up in New Jersey, Maine, and California. I had a letter yesterday, this was Washington... We write all the time. It's just that the fellows that were with us, they're gone.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I'd like to get an alternative contact in case you move or something. Someone who could find you. Who would be good for that?

Mr. Longshore:

I'm not planning on moving. I want to stay here until I'm gone, seriously. Because I'm paying \$4,000 a month for this retirement home. I don't have a car any more. I got rid of my car. I'm going to stay right here until I die. I hate to think of that. I don't plan on moving anywhere else.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Who is Mark Traylor?

Mr. Longshore:

His daddy is Grady Traylor. You've got him listed in your place out there in the museum.

You've got pictures of him on the wall. Mark sent me pictures of Grady on the wall in the museum. I think outside on the plaque outside, Grady Traylor. My picture is outside also.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you happen to have Mark's phone number?

Mr. Longshore:

I can't get to it right this second. I'm sorry. No, I don't. He's in the military so you couldn't reach him at home then. So he's gone all the time. I can give you his phone number and address. You know, Mark's the one that opened up the account for his daddy. He's dealt with you people and put his daddy's pictures up there. All that was done by Mark and Mark's got my name and I guess that's the reason that I get these advertisements from you. It's all through Mark because I never visited the museum. I'll probably never get to Texas. Like I said, this is my last home right here. I don't plan on traveling any more. It's pretty sad, isn't it. I'm 97 years old. I really don't plan on taking any trips any more. I'd like to. I'd go to the airport right now to go somewhere but I don't think it's practical.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you have any children?

Mr. Longshore:

No children. That's a personal question about my wife and family. They're gone so I don't talk about them.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Are you in a retirement home?

Mr. Longshore:

Yes, Burning Woods. That's where I am now. It's my retirement home in LaGrange, Georgia.

All you need is

Mr. Misenhimer:

Anything else about your time in the service?

Mr. Longshore:

It was over three years I'm sure. I'm sorry I didn't help you much on this. I was hoping I could give you some information but I'll send a bunch of photographs to the museum down there and some albums that Mark Traylor said you all needed photographs out there to put on a wall around Grady's portrait so I took out about 30 or 40 photographs out of my album. I took them out of the albums, they were already in there, took them out, boxed them up and sent them to put on a wall out there. I don't know if you've ever put them on a wall out there or not but I sent them to you. Mark knows where they are. I sent them to him instead of the museum. I donate all my time. I'd do it now but I can't with young people, 17, 18, 19 year old, earlier, I had them out to my house. I had a boat. I'd take them out in my boat. In fact, I took three 16-year-olds to Florida for a week one time. Can you imagine that, taking three 16-year-old boys to Daytona Beach for a week. That takes a lot of courage, doesn't it?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you have a phone number for Mark Traylor?

Mr. Longshore:

I should have that. I should have known.. Wait a minute. If you can hold on for about two seconds, I can get for you. 1-210-257-5337. He travels a lot. If he's not there. He may not answer the phone. His wife might answer the phone. She is a nurse also. She'd be there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Well, Guy, anything else you've thought of?

Mr. Longshore:

Sometimes I can't hear what you're saying. I'm sorry.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I say, anything else you've thought of?

Mr. Longshore:

Oh, no. That's all I can think of. I'm sorry I didn't have all this information for you but I just keep all those dates. I've got a whole closet full of stuff in Atlanta that show dates that I could probably use but I haven't needed them, so I left them in Atlanta when I sold my house that's was one of the conditions I left the closet locked. It goes with the house. I can get into it anytime I want to. I hope you find those other photographs, too, that I sent to Mark. I sent about 20-25 good-sized photographs.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Guy, thanks again for your time today.

Mr. Longshore:

Thank you.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Thank you for your service to our country.

Mr. Longshore:

Thank you for calling and we got through it OK. Talk to you later.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Bye now.

Mr. Longshore:

Bye, bye.

End of Interview

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