

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

The Nimitz Education and Research Center

Fredericksburg, Texas

**An Interview With
Harold Z. Rodin
Deerfield, IL
May 4, 2021
U.S. Navy
Underwater Demolition Team
Volunteer, Practice Only
Iwo Jima, Kwajalein, Okinawa
Pilot on Landing Craft LCM-2**

My name is Richard Misenhimer: Today is May 4, 2021. I am interviewing Mr. Harold Z Rodin by telephone. His phone number is 561-523-7999. His address is 130 Doral Court, Deerfield, IL 60115. He spends winters in Florida. His address there is 9583 Honeybelle Circle, Boynton Beach, FL 33431. 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.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Harold, 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. Rodin:

You're welcome.

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). What is your birthdate?

Mr. Rodin:

Yes, that's OK. May 9, 1927.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where were you born?

Mr. Rodin:

In Chicago, Illinois.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have brothers and sisters?

Mr. Rodin:

Half-brother and half-sister in Chicago. Half-brother and half-sister in Texas.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were any of your brothers in World War II?

Mr. Rodin:

No.

Mr. Misenhimer:

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

Mr. Rodin:

My father was Robert Zodin and my mother was Doris. They divorced and she re-married a man with the name of Nate Rodin who adopted me. That's how I got the name Rodin.

Mr. Misenhimer:

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

Mr. Rodin:

The Depression affected us like it did everybody else. We were poor.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was your father's occupation?

Mr. Rodin:

My father was a rancher first and then during the war he went into the junk business. Iron and metal.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was he able to keep working during the Depression?

Mr. Rodin:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you all have much problem with having food?

Mr. Rodin:

Not really.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you go to high school?

Mr. Rodin:

In Chicago, Illinois, Hyde Park High School.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When did you graduate?

Mr. Rodin:

I spent three and a half years in high school. Quit to join the Navy and then went back to high school, got my diploma after I was discharged from the Navy.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When did you go into the service?

Mr. Rodin:

I enlisted May 9 on my birthday 1944 and I think I spent six weeks in boot camp at Great Lakes Naval Station and then was shipped to Coronado, California amphibious training base right after boot camp.

Mr. Misenhimer:

After your boot camp, then what happened?

Mr. Rodin:

After boot camp I was shipped to Coronado, California, Naval Training Station there but that was for amphibious training, landing craft, and it was the Marine base, submarine base. It was also a training base for Navy people for landing craft.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Rodin:

We were trained to drive landing craft. We had LVCPs, 2 LCMs that we got training how to pull in, not to broach a boat, because if you broach, you can't get off the beach. That's about it. We were also at Great Lakes, going back to Great Lakes, the thing that you had to learn is that when you have the tear gas drill, you can't eat too much because if it leaks, you get violently sick to your stomach. It's tear gas. Anyhow, at Coronado we were taught basic training in landing craft, LCVPs and LCMs. How to pull into the beach, get off the beach ASAP and that's basically it. Then you get your ship, you're assigned to a ship and I was assigned to the U.S.S. Sibley, APA206.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Go ahead. What happened next?

Mr. Rodin:

I was assigned to the ship. I was assigned to the boat crew and they put me on LCM2, Landing Craft Mechanized 2. They also taught me how to work the boom and winch. As soon as my boat got hoisted aboard, I'd go and operate the boom to hoist the second LCM on board ship. There were two LCMs and the Sibley carried I believe 24 boats total. The LCM was an all metal landing craft mechanized and the LCVP was personnel only. We could carry a truck and a small

howitzer. I was assigned to LCM2. We had a crew with officers of approximately 530 members. Basically what is that you want to know. You want me to just keep going with what I did?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened? What next. What thing was next?

Mr. Rodin:

We had a lot of things. Well, the things that I remember is that we had training. We had, we went to different islands. We went to Hawaii, we went to...let me give you a list. Hold on. The keel of the ship was laid down on the 17th of May, 1944 and it was launched on the 19th of July 1944. Edward I. McCristen was in command of the ship who was a super, super Captain. He had that ship running like a clock. It was absolutely unbelievable. He had a very loyal crew. The guy was unbelievable. It was actually commissioned on October 2, 1944. After the commissioning the Sibley moved from the yard to load supplies and provisions. She actually underwent a shakedown cruise from the 20th of October to November 6, followed by amphibious training at Coronado, California from 310 November sailing from San Diego on the 20th of November the Sibley loaded cargo in San Francisco and sailed on the 25th to Pearl Harbor where she arrived on December 2. On December 6 to January 18 we underwent intensive training and amphibious operation on Maui. Then we sailed from Pearl Harbor on the 27th of January for the assault on Iwo Jima. After we stopped at Eniwetok from the 5th to 7th of February, we arrived on Saipan on the 11th, underwent the final period of amphibious training on the 12th and 13th at nearby Tinian. Sailing on the 16th, we arrived off Iwo Jima early on the 19th which was D-Day. Orders were received in the middle of the afternoon. Two hours later all troops were off the ship which was unbelievable. Sibley remained off Iwo Jima for the next eight days but my boat was in the water, not back on the ship at all for those eight days. We were unloading cargo by the day and retiring

at night but in the water. Also, we unloaded cargo and we received casualties for return to the rear areas. We carried up about 194 to 200 Marine casualties on my ship. We had a great surgeon on the ship. We stopped briefly at Saipan on March 2 went on to Guam two days later, discharged our casualties. When we took casualties off the beach at Iwo Jima, we saw a bulldozer from my boat, my landing craft, LCM2, we were taking body parts...that was the only way they could possibly know whose parts were on to was by finding the dog tag and not knowing who it actually was, looking at the dog tag to see who was in that pile that the Seabee with a bulldozer was pushing all the body parts together. We pulled up alongside the hospital ship with about 20 wounded, there was one in particular that was getting plasma and we needed real blood. The corpsman that was with him was shoving his bowels back into his stomach because it was cut open by a piece of shrapnel and he needed real blood so we pulled alongside the hospital ship and we were hollering for type o blood and they threw a bag of blood down for us and he immediately stopped on the plasma and gave this fella, this Marine, real blood that he needed. We found out afterward we were curious about it, where he was and we found out he was actually brought aboard the Sibley to be operated on and the guy pulled through. It was absolutely unbelievable. He was really hit. To continue on, Sibley briefly stopped at Saipan and arrived at Guam two days later. We discharged our casualties, returned to Saipan on the 7th and loaded Marines and cargo for the assault on Okinawa. But like I said, Iwo Jima was a horrible, horrible mess. Out of the entire crew of our ship we lost two boats, but didn't get one casualty on our ship. That was the whole operation at Iwo Jima. Then we are on our way to Okinawa for the invasion of Okinawa. Like I said, we briefly stopped in Saipan, Guam two days later. Sibley sailed on the 27th for the assault. During the approach early on April 1 we had the smokescreen the April Fool's Day, fake attack on the southern part of the island and the Marines were going

in on the opposite side. So we had two destroyers lay down a smokescreen, dropped out boats in the water and had our boats go to port in the smokescreen, turn around and come back. We did that for two days to draw the Japanese from the opposite of the island to the side where the fake attack was going on. Then we heard Tokyo Rose after the smoke cleared saying on the radio which they piped in on the ship's radio and we could hear it that all the boats were destroyed. Not one boat was destroyed. It was absolutely an April Fool's Day attack. We did that the second day also to draw the Japs away from where the Marines were going in, the Army and Marines were going in on the opposite side of the island. They walked in before the first shot was fired, I think they walked in like two miles. So let's see what else. Sailed on the 7th. Had that fake demonstration of landing on the southern part of the island. On April 11th Sibley was ordered to return to Saipan. We unloaded our troops and cargo. Remained on call for possible use in the Okinawa operation until June 4th. On that day, the Sibley sailed for Tulagi Harbor in the Solomon Islands, arrived there on the 12th, three days later set sail for Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides Islands, arriving on the 17th. We loaded with cargo, cleared Espiritu Santo on June 28 and arrived at Guam on the 5th of July. These are things that I dug up and got all these dates from all the writings that we had that we would keep on our own. On July 14th we received orders to return to the United States and sailed the same day, arriving in San Francisco on July 28. On August 9, 1945 we sailed once again. This time with passengers, cargo for the Philippines. We stopped at Eniwetok, on the way and reached Samar on September 1. We then proceeded to Manila Bay, Subic Bay, finally Lingayen Gulf where we arrived on the 10th to load troops and cargo of the 33rd Infantry Division for the occupation of Japan. The bomb was dropped and we heard that on the radio and we were on our way to Japan originally and all these fleets actually to invade Japan. That was called off after the two bombs were dropped, the one in Hiroshima and

the second bomb at Nagasaki. After a rehearsal landing a week later, we sailed on the 20th and arrived on the 25th at Wakiyama, Japan where we rapidly put troops and cargo ashore. Sailing the next day we returned to the Philippines for more troops which we delivered to Kure Naval Base, Japan on the 22nd of October. On the 25th the Sibley reported for duty with an operation called "Magic Carpet," the transportation of servicemen back to United States. Departing Japan on the 27th and there's a story that I have to tell. When we were at Wakiyama, and we were unloading, and we weren't supposed to fraternize with any of the Japanese, quite a commotion going on in back of a factory. So we had about 15 or 20 of us were on our way to find out what the commotion was. We went back of the factory and we saw, believe it or not, the Japanese were playing baseball. They had a baseball game going on. All that happened what they were thinking we had no idea but the Japanese were also actually helping us unload ammunition but it was an unbelievable thing to witness.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You're doing fine. Keep going.

Mr. Rodin:

We went to Kure Naval Base where one of the largest Japanese battleships was sunk in the bay. It's right across the street of Hiroshima and Hiroshima was where they dropped the bomb. We had to be in the area of the bomb drop because we saw desolation like you can't believe. We saw melted glass, a melted space where there must have been a bank and lots of areas where there was a person and you saw on the ground where you could see the outline where a person had been but no person. The only building that we saw was like a dome-top building and that's all I remember of actually seeing in Hiroshima. The other thing is that we walked into Kure. We were crazy souvenir hunters. Sailors were wild souvenir hunters and I had a story about Saipan that I'd

like to tell also. In Kure we took cigarettes and wrapped them in our clothes area because you were only supposed to take six cigars and one pack of cigarettes ashore. This was at Kure which was where the Japanese Naval Base was. We received two battle stars for World War II service. I had a note there for reference. I'm taking my time, OK?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Keep going, you're doing fine.

Mr. Rodin:

I have a story to tell about Joe Rosenthal. A flag raising on the invasion of Iwo Jima. We had Joe Rosenthal on the Sibley. Little guy with a mustache, an AP photographer. We didn't know who he was until we took him on my landing craft, LCM 2, to the APA190. I had Joe Rosenthal on my boat and I asked him, I saw AP on his shirt and I asked him, "Where you are going? What are you going to do?" So he says, "I'm going up to the top of Suribachi. They don't like that little flag up there so they are going to raise a bigger flag. I said, "You're going up there to take a picture? They're still shooting up there." So he says, "Yeah, I know, but I'm supposed to get guys that are going to escort me." I said, "Buddy, I wish you good luck." That was my experience that I remember distinctly that I told him good luck so we dropped him off at the Pickens APA190 and evidently they took him into the beach and it was the greatest thing that we could possibly see was one flag came down and another flag going up. It looked like it was three times the size of the flag that was taken down, larger. All of a sudden all of the ships that were there, there were hundreds of ships, all were tooting their horns. It was the greatest sight that you could ever witness. That became one of the most iconic photographs of the war. I was invited to go to Washington, D.C. for the inauguration of the World War II Memorial about five, six years ago and we discussed these things that I'm discussing now, There were 92 of us telling stories. It

was a sight to behold at Iwo Jima to see that flag go up. It left a lump in your throat and it became one of the most famous pictures ever taken. I'm proud to say that I had this guy on my boat, taking him to the Picken. Anyhow, that's my story about that. What else is it that you would like to know?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, you said something about you saw one of your buddies attacked by a shark or something?

What was that?

Mr. Rodin:

I volunteered to try out for UD. We were having an underwater demolition practice and we were in the water. Our pickup boat was late to pick us up, but three of the guys that weren't on my ship but who were in this practice, got hit by sharks. I said, "That's it. I don't go in the water any more. No more ocean water." So I went to my Executive Officer, his name was McMinn, and I told him, "I can be discharged, whatever you want to do. I'm not going back in the water again." He said, "You know you can be dishonorably discharged." I said, "I may be dishonorably discharged but I'm not going in the water again" was what I said. I said, "Our boat was late, we were swimming around and one guy said, "hey, something just brushed by me." And that was it. The others, including myself, were lucky picked up, got pulled into the raft that was attached to an LCVP, a rubber raft. This guy pulled us in with a figure-8 line and that's the last time I ever...I don't even wade in the ocean any more. I believe in pools. I don't go near the ocean to go in there for anything. I don't need the ocean because it's for fish. That's my story and I still live with it. I was back on LCM-2 until the end and was honorable discharged.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever hear Tokyo Rose on the radio?

Mr. Rodin:

Yes. When we made the invasion of Okinawa, Tokyo Rose is the one that got on the radio. The ship piped it out to us and we heard it, you could hear that P.A. system for five blocks away and we heard Tokyo Rose. There was a song at first and then Tokyo Rose got on and she says to Americans, "All the boats that were at the southern side of the island were all demolished." Not one boat was demolished. It was in a smokescreen. All we did was ride up the beach, go off the beach, turn around and come back to the ship and get hoisted. We did that for two days. That was April 1st. That's what I mentioned before, April 1st of 1945. So Tokyo Rose was a propaganda expert for the Japanese. She spoke perfect English, perfect English, and told us that all the boats were demolished but not one boat got hurt. That was it for that time. Is there anything else?

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was the morale on your various organizations?

Mr. Rodin:

The morale on my ship was absolutely unbelievable. We had the greatest captain, Captain E. I. McQuiston. This guy was previously a submariner and he got this ship and was the greatest thing for our crew because the morale on our ship was absolutely the highest of any ship that I know of. Just great.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever cross the equator?

Mr. Rodin:

Oh, yes. We crossed the equator. We had an initiation. From a polliwog I went to a shellback and in one day I knew what an initiation was. It was absolutely unbelievable. We had the ship

lawyer, we had the ship's _____, we had the ship's _____. It was a wild affair. We had a slop chute with spoiled food, garbage, that was about 20 feet long and what they did, they wet it with the fire hose and the guys would stand there while we're crawling through this slop chute, pounding us with these straps that they made out of fire hose. The other thing was that we would have grease smeared on the royal babies. They had a royal baby, they had the queen, they had all dressed up. The royal baby was in diapers and they had grease on his belly and you had to go and kiss the grease off the belly, OK. Then while you were doing that, they had an electric prod that they would prod your rear-end and you'd jump forward and your face fell into the grease. After that you were sent up on a pool that they constructed, a small pool filled with sea water and there was like you see it in carnivals where you throw a ball and somebody falls over backward into the water. Well, this one they put you, you have a blindfold on, they tell you open your mouth, they'd throw a handful of flour in your mouth, they'd tip you backward into the water and they'd leave you there for about 10 or 15 seconds. Then you'd get up and you'd try to spit this flour out and you're coughing, you're choking. It was an unbelievable affair. When you become a shellback, you are now in the Navy. You are now a sailor. You are now respected and I have my shellback diploma hanging in my den in my house in Florida with a flag. Now I'll tell you this story.

When we made the invasion of Iwo Jima and Okinawa, we took the ship's flag that was up there on the 14th of February. On the 14th of February we changed flags because the one that was there was frayed and we put up a new flag before the invasion of Iwo Jima. This flag flew on my ship for the invasion of Iwo Jima and the invasion of Okinawa. After that it was all frayed at the end so they were going to take that flag down and put up another new flag. So I saw the flag being lowered and I said to my buddy who was Steve Busalacchi, my real buddy on that

ship. It was Steve Busalacchi. I said, "You know, I want that flag." So he says, "I'll tell you Harold, you know what they're going to do with that flag. They're going to burn it." So you know, burning an American flag is actually how you get rid of an American flag. So in those days we had the ship's incinerator so they were going to burn the flag in the ship's incinerator. I ran down there and lo and behold they're ready to put it in the incinerator and I said, "Stop." So they stopped and they said, "What's going on?" I said, "I want that flag." They said, "We have orders to burn it." I said, "Hold on, I'm going to go see the O.D." The Officer of the Day. I saw the O.D. and that was Ensign Caposel. I'll never forget his name. I said, "Sir, they're going to burn the flag that was up there and I want that flag. I want to keep that flag. I don't want it to burn." So he said, "OK, you go down there and you tell them that Ensign Caposel said that you can have that flag." That flag is now hanging in my foyer in my house in Florida with a note that tells the story of that flag. So I took pictures of that flag and the Sibley was named from a city, a town in Sibley, Minnesota, who was the first governor of Minnesota. I think it was General Sibley and what I did was take that information about the flag (I'm losing myself here). It's hanging in my foyer and I had that note on there and I took pictures of it and sent it to friends of mine in Minnesota who took that picture to be in the museum that they have in Minnesota to put the picture of that flag and the wording on there where it came from, what it was, in the museum in Minnesota. So that's where it is now. The photograph, not the flag. The flag is in my house in Florida. The actual flag that flew in the invasion of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were you in any typhoons?

Mr. Rodin:

Oh, there was a typhoon. Yes, there was a typhoon, a big typhoon and that was when we were coming back. Do you know who the first flag raisers were, the small flag? Would that interest you? Charles W. Lindbergh was on the first flag deal. He was the first flag raiser on Iwo Jima, the small flag. He carried a flame thrower. He took part in the raising of the first flag on Iwo Jima's Mt. Surabachi and earned a silver star medal for bravery also I think. There were six guys that actually raised the first flag. There was a Lieutenant Tryor, Sergeant Thomas, Sergeant Anson, Corporal Lindbergh and Private Charlow and Private First Class Michaels. Those were the original flag raisers on Mt. Suribachi. Maybe a lot of people don't know that but I do. The questions that you're asking me, who told you? How do you know what to ask me? How do you know all this stuff? Got a lot of stories as I remember them.

Mr. Misenhimer:

On April 12, 1945 President Roosevelt died. Did you all hear about that?

Mr. Rodin:

Came over the P.A. system when I was on board ship, sitting on my boat, my landing craft, with three of my other crew. We heard that and the first thing I thought was "Well, here goes the war." Which at that time after Roosevelt...we thought that Roosevelt would win it by himself. Back to the crossing of the equator. There were many people that were in the group that were responsible for the initiation. The bigshots were Neptunis Rex and the royal queen and the royal princess, the royal baby, the royal judge. Then you had Davy Jones, got the attorneys, the navigator, the chaplain, the deacon, the doctor, the dentist, the barber, the sheriff, Pegleg Duffy, chief of the royal bearers, chief of the royal bulls and then the Devil. All these guys were bosun mates and officers and officers were in a stock. You know what a stock is? Where your head and

hands are showing and the rest of you is in back of a board with the holes for your head and hands. You know what I'm talking about?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yeah, go ahead.

Mr. Rodin:

Well, we even had officers in there that were polliwogs and going through the initiation. Seeing that initiation actually in action is a sight to behold because there is nothing like it. When you get to be a shellback, like I said, you are now a sailor. So, let's see. As far as the typhoon is concerned, we found out that the Captain told the Executive Officer if our ship went more than one more degree to the right that the ship would have turned over, just one more degree, we would have been in the water. That's what happened with that typhoon. It was absolutely unbelievable. We saw waves over two stories over the ship. It was unbelievable. You couldn't move, you couldn't do anything. You just had to hang on and you were going from one side to the next side to another side. Then when that ship made that one lurch we all thought that was it. We were below deck. That's what I know about the typhoon. You never want to be in another one. That's why I stay away from the ocean. I look at the ocean as something that belongs to fish. It's their homeland, it's not mine. I hate the ocean. I'll go fishing. I love to fish. I'm a fisherman. I go in rivers, I go on lakes but I don't go to the ocean ever. My experience in the ocean was a disaster.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I've got some more questions for you. On May 8, 1945, Germany surrendered. Did you all hear about that?

Mr. Rodin:

Yeah. I heard about that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Any kind of party or anything?

Mr. Rodin:

Not really. We were doing our thing on our side. We were happy that the war was over in Germany and we were worrying about our side. We were on our way to invade Japan. If we would have invaded Japan, we would have lost at least a million men, at least a million. But when we got to where we were going, we didn't know what to expect. We see Japanese people actually helping to unload ammunition on the beach, working with some of our crew. When we pull up with our landing craft and unload they were helping unload. We couldn't believe our eyes. The war was over for us. They dropped those two bombs. When Hirohito said the war is over, we're now at peace and they declared peace, the Japanese listened. They were fanatics. They were fanatics during the war. They'd run right into your bullets. It didn't make any difference. If they had a banzai attack, they just ran in. It was unbelievable. They would die for the emperor. They listened to the emperor when he said the war is over. They had declared peace and then when they got onto the Missouri and they did the signatures and everything you heard a roar like you couldn't believe go up.

Mr. Misenhimer:

They had the big ceremony in Tokyo Bay. Was your ship in there?

Mr. Rodin:

No. We were in Magic Carpet. We were doing Magic Carpet. We started Magic Carpet. You know what that was? We had troops almost on every single island in the Pacific. We had ships

like mine, APAs, going around and picking them up and bringing them back to the States.

That's what we were doing after the war. They called it the Magic Carpet.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, while you were overseas, what would you consider your worst day?

Mr. Rodin:

Being in the ocean with sharks. That's my worst day. When you got guys screaming in the water, forget it. When a boat is a little late, a little late, and your swimming around there. No, originally we would have a swimming party off the ship. The ship would stop and we would be lowered down, we'd climb down a net, get into the ocean originally, when we were in warm water in the South Pacific and we'd have a swimming party. We'd all go in the ocean and we'd swim around. They'd have an LCVP with a guy with a rifle turning constantly, circling the guys that were in the water, including myself at that time. That's the way we would do it. There wasn't anybody circling with a rifle when we were in the water that day. I consider that my worst day.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever see that sign "Kilroy was here?"

Mr. Rodin:

Yeah, I know about Kilroy. Everybody knew about Kilroy. Kilroy was not with us he was on the other side, the other war.

Mr. Misenhimer:

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

Mr. Rodin:

Yeah, I had souvenirs. I have a samurai sword. I had a couple helmets with bullet holes in them, Jap helmets. I had sunglasses and a picture I took off a dead Japanese guy of his family. It

showed his wife and two babies. That photograph. I also have a Nazi dagger that I bought. I have my Japanese rifle, all in my den. I told you we were crazy souvenir hunters. I'm going to tell you a story that is unbelievable. When we were in Saipan we got off because they had a beach party and there was Melvin Bledsoe and Andrew Mulligan and Barton Bledsoe and myself and we went inland to look for souvenirs. We came across this cave where we saw two skeletons which still had their helmets on and we went up, luckily on the right side of that cave, because as I was on the right side of the cave I noticed stone steps leading up to the cave on the left side. I take a look and I see that between the stone steps and a stone base, walking up the steps where I could see a Jap hand grenade between the stone steps. The Jap grenade is set off by pressure on the top of the grenade. So they used to hit it against their helmet and throw it. Are you with me? You understand how that works? So I take a look and I said, "Hold it. Hold it! Don't anybody move!" I said, "There's a booby-trap right there. There's a booby-trap. Let's get the hell out of here. Leave everything. Let's get out." So what we did get was the two helmets with the bulletholes in them. We did get that and we took off and that was it. That could have been a disaster. We were very lucky there. We also reported the location of the cave.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What else can you recall from your time overseas? Did you have any experience with the medics?

Mr. Rodin:

Yeah. I had to have a medic. We went up to the Aleutian Islands in Alaska and I think we were in Saipan and we were ordered to go up to the Aleutians. The Japanese were up there and we had loaded troops aboard ship and we went up to the Aleutians and the weather was absolutely the worst weather you would have besides the typhoon. It was horrendous, freezing cold. At least

with the typhoon it was warm but here freezing cold and we had outside duty when you had to stand your watch. When we got to Kiska and Attu. We were on the tip of the island of Kiska and Attu. We took our boats and went ashore and saw nothing but cases of Sake and a few other junky things. There were no Japs. I think the weather was so bad there that they'd packed up and left. I don't know if there was any shooting there. I think that there was but there were absolutely no Japs that we saw when we were there but what did happen, I caught pneumonia and they just came out with penicillin then and I had shots, I think I had 80 shots of penicillin. I wound up being allergic to the penicillin. The palms of my hands and the bottoms of my feet broke out in big blisters, like water blisters, and they stopped giving me the shots, cured the pneumonia and then we went back to Maui in the Hawaiian Islands and let's see we were there and we had amphibious training with large waves, practicing not to broach, again there in Maui and there was a guy on Maui at the beach on a hill and he says, "Any of you guys want to buy land here?" I said, "Buy land? I can't afford a toothbrush. How much is your land?" He says, "Well, it'll go for about five dollars a foot. I own it." I said, "Five dollars a foot. Who can afford something like that? Not at five dollars a foot." Now it's worth about five thousand dollars a foot in the same area on Maui. When I got married and we wanted to go to Hawaii. We went to Hawaii, we went to Maui and I went to the same spot that we were practicing with our landing craft when we got on his property all you could see was all the building that was there. If I had the money, I would have maybe bought a hundred feet but I got \$39 a month with overseas pay.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I got some questions for you. What date did you leave the U.S. to go overseas? What month and what year?

Mr. Rodin:

It had to be late 1944, around October.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When did you come back to the States?

Mr. Rodin:

We came a couple of times during the war. Then in 1946.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You stayed over there after the war was over.

Mr. Rodin:

After the war was over, we were doing this Magic Carpet thing. We wanted to get out sooner.

They had a point system and you had to have enough points.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What time of year in 1946, spring, summer or when?

Mr. Rodin:

When did I return to the States?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yes.

Mr. Rodin:

That's a good question. I think January of 1946.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When were you discharged? Do you have a copy of your discharge there?

Mr. Rodin:

May 29, 1946.

Mr. Misenhimer:

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

Mr. Rodin:

No. The first thing I did when I was picked up was go and buy a suit, a civilian suit and I bought it at a store called Hicky Freeman's. Then I was engaged to a girl that I met when I came home on a leave. I got an extra leave from the Red Cross, and they had a party for me, because my stepfather made a u-turn and we got hit by a streetcar. You know what a streetcar was? I got an emergency 30-day leave because my stepfather was driving his car and made a u-turn on the streetcar tracks and a streetcar broadsided him. Originally, I had a seven-day leave to go from California to Chicago to see my family for a day and turn around and go back. When we were going back, my stepfather made a u-turn on streetcar tracks and the street car hit us. I was OK. They went to hospital, called the Red Cross and got me an extra 30-day leave. During the 30-day leave they had a party for me and my mother invited some people over and she said, "You're going to meet your future wife, a pretty girl." Well the pretty girl wound up to be like a 200-pounder. That wasn't for me but at the dinner table there was this beauty by the name of Shirley who I walked over and I said to her immediately, without even knowing her name because she was an invited guest with her mother and father, I said, "You're the girl that before I leave to go back to my ship, we're going to be engaged." We were engaged and we went bowling downtown Chicago and I proposed to her and she said yes and after the war we got married, had two children and those two children have now given me four grandchildren and my four grandchildren have now given me ten great-grandchildren with triplets included in the brood. I have ten great-grandchildren that I'm enjoying. I play 18 holes of golf three days a week and I play 9 holes on Saturday. I'm an excellent golfer and I teach my whole family how to play golf

to this very day. I will be 94 years old in May and happy people live longer. That's my motto and remembering to the best of my ability. My story.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What date did you get married?

Mr. Rodin:

March 23, 1947.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you use your G.I. Bill for anything when you got out?

Mr. Rodin:

Yes, I did. I got a \$4,000 loan on my G.I. Bill and I went and bought a house on the south side of Chicago.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When did you buy that?

Mr. Rodin:

When did I buy that?

Mr. Misenhimer:

What year?

Mr. Rodin:

It had to be when my wife got pregnant—1949.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you go to college?

Mr. Rodin:

No. High school.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have any experience with the U.S.O. when you were in the service?

Mr. Rodin:

Oh, yes. Those people were great. They were absolutely great. U.S.O. in California was wonderful. Treated us like we were God-dropped down from the sky.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How about the Red Cross? Any experience with the Red Cross?

Mr. Rodin:

Yes, in Chicago as explained earlier and in Australia. I'll tell you an experience with the Red Cross and the Salvation Army. Here's the story. We had a landing in Australia and we had a beach party on the beach, I think it was in Sydney. When we had the party on the beach we had a Salvation Army stand that was dishing out coffee and a Red Cross stand right next to the Salvation Army stand. The Red Cross stand they had beer from another stand. We didn't go to the beer, we went to the coffee stand. We went to the Red Cross stand first and they gave us each a cup of coffee with cream and sugar and they said, "That's a nickel." I said, "A nickel? We don't get it free?" "No. No, it's a nickel." So we went right next door to the Salvation Army stand and said, "Got coffee here?" She said, "Yes." I said, "How much is it?" She says, "Oh, it's free." I said, "Yours is free? Why is the Red Cross five cents?" "We don't know, sir, but ours is free." So I said, "OK, we'll have your coffee." So we had coffee free. But the Red Cross was charging a nickel. That's my story. By the way, the beer was free.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Have you had any reunions of your outfit since you've been out?

Mr. Rodin:

Oh, yes. I had a reunion. In 2011 I had the next to the last reunion. There were five of us left, only five. Right now there's myself and one other that I spoke to recently in California. He said he was in a wheelchair, huffing and puffing. Thank God I'm a happy person and God has been good to me. I have a wonderful woman, a second wife that I cherish and I have a wonderful family who all live in the Chicago area and my grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I've had a wonderful life. I'm still living it and like I said, happy people live longer and I'm happy.

Mr. Misenhimer:

That's all the questions I have unless you've thought of something else.

Mr. Rodin:

You keep reminding me of things I've forgot.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Harold, that's all I have unless you've thought of anything else. We'll keep in touch and we'll get you a copy of this when we get it all finalized.

Mr. Rodin:

Where does this actually go?

Mr. Misenhimer:

It goes to the Admiral Nimitz Museum in Fredericksburg, Texas.

Mr. Rodin:

Richard, listen to me closely. You listening? You're a good kid.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Thank you.

End of Interview

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