Carl “Bud” Morck

Tape 1 of 2

Question: Give me your first and last name and the correct spelling so I have it on tape and this lets me set my audio levels. If you want to do that?

Answer: Starting right now?

Question: Yes, please.

Answer: I'm Carl E. Morck, The Carl is C-A-R-L, Morck is M-O-R-C-K. The "E" as I used to tell my children stands for effervescent.

Question: And what did they say it stood for?

Answer: (Laughs)

Question: (Laughs) Or did they say it to your face?

Question: Now you -- where -- were you born in the Harbor?

Answer: Yes. I was bon in Aberdeen.

Question: So was that tail end of the Depression that you grew up then?

Answer: I was born in 1922, so I was ahead of the Depression. And I lived in Aberdeen until the end of my junior year in high school and my dad, who was a Reservist in the Navy, decided that it was time to get me some military training because he thought there was something coming.

Question: Oh, really.

Answer: And I went to school -- my senior year of high school was spent at Puget Sound Naval Academy on Bainbridge Island. And -- I want to go and look it up again. I -- I don't even know if it exists anymore. But that helped me considerably when I finally went into the military. Because having had some military experience, I knew how to march and how to hold a rifle and etcetera, so on and so forth, you know.

Question: Was that a high school then? Military high school?

Answer: Yes, it -- it took -- let's see. From 8th grade, I think it was, through 12th. And I was in the first class. It was a brand new school. And I think there were 18 of us filling all the classes in the school. It was a kick, really. But it was fun, it was interesting.

Question: I assume it was a boarding school, or not?

Answer: Yes, yeah. And I ended up being second in command of the cadet corps. How I got that lofty title I don't know, because my roommate was from Seattle, forget what his name was, but he was a character. And one night while I was sound asleep, he got up, went out the window, we had a tree that grew right up in the corner of the building on the outside, and right up by our window. And he climbed that tree and went down. And he and a couple of other fellows from the school stole the school cruiser which was anchored out in the little bay there, and went to Seattle. They were picked up on the streets in Seattle, sometime during the night, and returned to school. Oh, boy. And of course then I started getting lectures as to why I hadn't done something about it. Heck, I slept through it. I didn't know. (laughs) I didn't know he was gone.

Question: So you were what, you were like 17, 16, 17?

Answer: Sixteen. And I skipped a grade in school, I skipped the fourth grade, yeah, fourth grade. I never want that to happen again.

Question: Do you remember -- so did your dad tell you -- did your dad sit down and say, well, you know, I -- I think there's a war coming and this is why I'm sending you to military academy? Or do you see that in hindsight?

Answer: Well, I probably see it more in hindsight, but he did take me aside once in awhile and kind of talked seriously to me, but you know, didn't mean much to somebody my age at that time. And I went on after that to Washington State and had two years over there. And then had a little work time in a shipyard, in a small shipyard in Olympia

Answer: We were building tugs for the Army. And prior to that I had worked at Todd Shipyard in Seattle building destroyers. And now this seems like quite a period in my life but I'm talking about maybe three months or something at either place. I was waiting or trying to wait, trying to stay from being drafted because my dad had it in mind he wanted to get me into the Naval Academy. And we finally got a letter from someone of note, probably a senator or something addressed to Carl E. Snorch, S-N-O-R-C-H. And my dad said I think you can forget the Naval Academy and I agreed. So then by that time my dad had gone back into the Service, and this was still prior to Pearl Harbor. And he was stationed at the Federal Building in Seattle. And I moved to live with my parents then. They had a house rented out by the Canal, close to the University of Washington. What's the --

Question: The --

Answer: The ship canal deal --

Question: Yeah, it's to -- the Ballard Locks and then into the Canal.

Answer: Yeah, it was from Lake Union into Lake Washington. And, gee, that was a nice place, beautiful place to live. And I went down to the Federal Building with my dad one day to take the physical for the V-5 program, flight training. And I didn't know it at the time but I had a bad case of WCS Disease, which was known as White Coat Syndrome by the medical profession. And every time they would touch me to take blood pressure, something like that, I could just feel my blood pressure going up. Even at that young time. I don't know. I was scared to death of doctors. And I got so that -- well, I would have to go through everything, up to the point where they were going to do this (gestures) and I got so I pretty well knew the eye chart, you know, and I could sit there like this and read the eye chart. (laughs) But one day I had taken it and they tried my pressure and it was too high and they said go out and relax, go out and eat a lunch or something, and come back after lunch and try it. So my dad and I went to a restaurant called the Ratskeller in Seattle, which I don't believe is still there, but at the time, it was a very famous German, German-type restaurant. Their specialty being coleslaw and some kind of pasta, spaghetti-type deal. So we went and I had a great big plate of pasta and a whole bunch of -- well I started to say sauerkraut, no, it wasn't sauerkraut, but it was coleslaw. And they were famous for their coleslaw. It was delicious. And then we went back down to the Federal Building and my dad said well go take the thing again, before you go home. Just see what happens. So I went up and I breezed right through it. Well that kind of presented a problem, I thought, because the next thing they did was the -- they put you in a chair that has a handle on it and the man that's testing you takes ahold of that handle and he spins the chair. They're checking you for vertigo. And when they stopped the chair, you can't

help it, you dive over one side of the chair. I can't remember, right or left or something like that. Well, I knew this was coming, but in the meantime I was thinking, oh boy, you know, they're going to make me sick to my stomach and I'm going to see the coleslaw and the spaghetti around the walls at about this height, you know. (laughs) All the way around. Fortunately I didn't do it, but I sure dove over one side of the chair. Well, I thought that would throw me out. 'Cause I was trying to fight against it and I couldn't help it, I just, boy, I went over the side of the chair. And I straightened up and sat there and everything going around for awhile. Finally the fellow that was testing me, he says, okay, you go on to the next thing. And I don't know what it was after that. But I had passed it because you have to react to the vertigo condition one way or another and if you don't react, then you don't pass. If I had sat stoically still in the chair, they'd washed me out right there. So I went through the rest of that.

Question: Now is this still pre-Pearl Harbor?

Answer: No, no, Pearl Harbor had happened by now. This was -- we were into 1942. And --

Question: So where -- do you remember where you were when you heard about Pearl Harbor?

Answer: Yes, I was home on that Sunday at the place on the Sound, the home there, and I was sitting in front of the radio and we had, at that time, one of the -- what do they call them, no stoop, no squat, no squint, Philco Radios. Console model, it was about this high, but they had a slanting front, and their advertising was that you could see it without having to get down and stare at the dials and so on and so forth. And they told about Pearl Harbor. And just scared the pie out of me. I was home for a weekend, let's see. December 7th. Why would I have been home then? I don't know, but anyway I was. I don't think I was home for Christmas vacation yet. But anyhow -- reading the funny papers. And it was scary, of course. Didn't know what to do or what foot to move next and so on and so forth.

Question: So you had a good understand -- I would assume with having gone through the -- the military school, plus it sounds like with your dad being in the Reserves and being active, you were pretty knowledgeable what this really meant.

Answer: Well, it wasn't too long after that point that my dad called me aside and he said now, I'm going to tell you something that I don't want you to repeat. And he said right after the attack on Pearl Harbor when all the damage was done and so on and so forth, he said there were one, two or three big ships out of Pearl Harbor that had been badly damaged that were on their way to the States. That they were going to put them in Bremerton, probably San Diego, in the big shipyards that could handle the repairs on them. And the shipyards, of course, in Pearl Harbor had been damaged. And the ones that were operable were very, very busy. So they were bringing these ships back. But the ships -- the fastest one could only make six knots. And they were scared to death that the Japanese were going to follow them. But of course they didn't. They were not even aware of it. But he said don't you dare mention this to anybody. And I think now it was probably, maybe the second time I've mentioned it to anyone. Very frightening sobering thought at the time, and of course the whole West Coast was alive with activity, you know, the Japs are coming and so on and so forth. We called them Japs then, I don't since, we have many, very close Japanese friends.

Question: Was your dad in the Reserves at that time or was he --

Answer: (nods head) And he was active in the Federal Building then. And then I don't know how much, well it wasn't too long after that. This was in the spring of 1942 and not long after we had taken Guadalcanal and the South Pacific, my dad was transferred to Guadalcanal on Admiral Turner's staff down there. He was liaison officer. Exactly what that meant, I don't know. But it was kind of rough and tough there.
And -- and then I was accepted into the V-5 program but I wasn't called until the fall, let's see I can't remember the timing on this. Anyway, the first place that I went was to the YMCA Building in Yakima with a group of other fellows that were in the V-5 program. I learned to play handball there. Which we did in our spare time, and we were in the, oh, what did they call it? The Wartime Civilian Training Air Force, or something. It was a college-type program where they taught you to fly. Some of the various schools had it. We were under this jurisdiction there and it's before it became a definite part of the training command in the Navy and had a Navy title. But we were flying small single engine model planes. Piper, Taylorcraft, those type airplanes. And one day while these planes were being flown, we had the dreaded Williwaw show up, which here in the Northwest is a pretty good wind. And it can be warm. Well, in Yakima, when this blew, it was -- it was a warm wind coming from the east and blowing very hard. And there were several very green pilots. Unfortunately, or fortunately, I should say, I wasn't one of them, who were up in the air at the time that this hit. And in bringing these fellows back to the ground, the planes would come in and as they approached the field, they were practically over the field and coming straight down like this. They were going ahead through the wind but they weren't really moving over the ground, just coming down. And there would be instructor pilots out there to catch the wings as they hit the ground, and hold the wings while they taxied back out of the way and keep them on the ground because the airplane, with just a touch of power, would have gone right back up into the air again. Quite a thrill for the fellows that were up. Scared some of them half to death. But I didn't happen to be up that day, I was very fortunate. Anyway, we went through that training there.
Then I think my next stop was Monterey, California, where it was strictly physical training and book work. Navigation, mathematics, everything, so on and so forth.

Question: So when you say physical training, what -- traditional boot camp --

Answer: Oh, they -- yeah, attune to boot camp. We had wrestling, boxing, track, no football. Some basketball. But they -- they pushed the sports that were more individually physically stimulating, I should say. And we were assigned a major sport, which was the one we really concentrated on. And they gave me wrestling, of all things. And I was, oh I guess I'd attained my initial height which was 6'2" at the time and I weighed about 165 pounds. And I was kind of like a match stick. And I thought oh, boy, somebody's going to break me in half, you know, in wrestling. And we had a lot of practice bouts and so on and so forth which I always managed to end up being the guy flat on his back. I was not good at wrestling. And then we finally had our final match which was to be the big one, you know, before they passed us on to another major sport. And my major sport in high school had been swimming, but of course, I couldn't get into that. That was another one they had, but they wouldn't let me in it. Because I'd done it before, you know. But anyway, in wrestling, I -- I don't know who I wrestled finally, but anyway, I thought, well dog-gone it, I'm going to make a good mark, if nothing else, in this, and I beat this guy. How, I will never know. I just -- all of a sudden I had him flat on my -- on his back and I stood on him and he couldn't get up and that was that. I had won. Well then after that they me transferred into track. And track was another thing that, oh, boy, I was really swell at, you know. But one of the fellows. I had a platoon. I was in command of a platoon. And one of the fellows in my platoon had done a lot of track work in high school. And he was in track also. Got into it, I don't know how. He probably never admitted that he had had it before. But he kind of took me under his wing, and I was running the high hurdles. And I was terrible to start with. But I was getting pretty good. And

then they finally pulled me out of that and I don't know where I ended up after that. But at Monterey, Del Monte was what it was called where we were. And Del Monte was a -- before the war, prior to the war, before the Navy took it over, was a -- was a resort, and a beautiful resort. And they had this big hotel. Well, that was our barracks. So to speak. And I was in the second battalion that was moved in there. And they hadn't finished repainting the place in Navy gray. And we had wrestling in what was known as the Balinese Room. And there were naked, half-naked, I should say, Balinese women painted on the walls, all the way around. Well, we looked forward to going in for wrestling, you know, that was fun, as long as you get a chance to look at the walls once in awhile. And I spent most of my time staring at the ceiling and there was nothing up there.
But from there I went to -- there was no flight training at that point, there. There was an airport in Monterey, but we never flew.

Question: Were these all potential pilots that you were with or --

Answer: Yes. These were all members of the V-5 Program, which were ostensibly to become pilots. If they didn't wash out and various --

Question: I was going to say they were trying to wash out whoever.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: What was the attitude? Now, were these wanting to be pilots, were they a little bit older? When I say older, that means, you know, 20 years old and older, or was it still a whole mix of young, real young kids and --

Answer: Ah, they were college kids or -- oh, I didn't mention that shortly before I got into the program, they dropped the requirements to become a Naval aviator, one of which was to be a four-year college graduate. Well I had two years, and they finally dropped that requirement because they needed pilots. So I got in. Otherwise I would not have gotten into that program. I'd have been transferred into something else. Probably Great Lakes Naval Training Center as an enlisted man or something, I don't know. But being an Aviation Cadet, you were about this far below the lowest enlisted man in the Navy. We were just nothing, dirt. But it was interesting, and it was fun and in our -- our training in -- at Monterey, all our physical instructors were ex-coaches from colleges, and so on and so forth. And we had one man who was, we finally found out, he was 40 years old. And we thought, oh, boy, he's not going to teach us much. You know, we're so much younger than him, we'll run him into the dirt. He would take us out in platoon size bunches out on the beach and it was soft sand at Monterey. And he would double time us up and down the beach. Oh, I don't know how many of us he almost killed. And when the thing was all over, he was standing there looking at us and saying what's the matter with you, you know? Get up, let's go again. Oh, boy. I remember as we were double timing down the beach, I'd look out in the surf at Monterey and the waves would stand up pretty steep just before they broke on the beach, and so many times you'd see a seal standing right up in the wave, just silhouetted in there. The water was clear as could be and here's this seal standing up and a lot of times their nose was poked out and they were looking at the activity on the beach. Just before the wave would break, they'd duck out of it, you know. Very smart. Anyhow --

Question: What was the -- the attitude. I mean, 'cause the war's going pretty good at this point.

Answer: Yes.

Question: And so news reels have come through. Is there a reality at this point, or is this a bunch of young kids that still are like, man, we're in --

Answer: Gung-ho.

Question: -- summer camp.

Answer: Gung-ho, Gung-ho as could be. Ready to go, you know, quit all this foolishness, let's go fight. They were ready to go, every one of them. Ah, I mention one of them. A fellow by the name of Chuck Sacora who was our battalion commander. And I got to know him and liked him very much. He was a graduate of the Colorado School of Mines. And I mention him because he'll come into my experiences later on. About the time we left Monterey, let's see. The group I was in was going to Hutchinson, Kansas for flight training in the Stearman airplane, a bi-plane, two cockpits, open. And just before we left Monterey, Del Monte, this Chuck Sacora, in boxing, had gotten his nose broken. And it was a pretty bad break. So they had him in the hospital for a period of time and he was behind the rest of us about two weeks. Anyway, then he followed us all the way through training but he was always about two weeks behind. I kept hearing about him. And we went from Hutchinson, Kansas down into Florida after we graduated flight school in Hutchinson, where I fortunately ended up being battalion commander. But this is where my previous training had paid off, you know. And they were looking for guys who would accept this kind of responsibility. Well, shucks, I had enough worries of my own, I didn't want to worry about those guys, you know, and so on and so forth. And I didn't have an awful lot to do. It was -- it was just a title to help buoy me along in my fabulous career. Anyway, we left Hutchinson, Kansas, we went to -- where did we go from there? Ah, the field in Florida out on the western end. Now, we might have been associated with Pensacola, but we weren't at that time, to my knowledge. Where we flew a basic trainer that was a single-engine low wing airplane known as the Vultee Vibrator. It was a Vultee airplane. And we had very little time in it. Enough to solo in them. And I was, at that point, I was not too trusting of that airplane cause it only had one wing. And I'd come out of bi-planes, you know, and I loved those two wings. And I had fallen out of the sky in a Stearman in about every way, shape or form you could possibly imagine and that lovely airplane would always bring me home, you know. I loved that airplane. Well, I didn't feel that way about the Vultee Vibrator, I just didn't really trust it. And besides, there were all these rumors flying around when we were flying them, about this airplane. About the fact that the tail was only held on that airplane by four very small bolts so be very careful with it. Well, I flew that airplane like it was an angle food cake, you know. I didn't bang it on the runway or anything else. Set it down very gently. But anyhow was glad to get out of that airplane for some strange reason.

And went from there on into PBYs -- the sea planes at Pensacola for final -- what they called final flight training. And the first thing that we saw at Pensacola when we went into PBYs was a beached PBY setting close to the ramp where they pulled us out of the water. In a PBY, the ones we flew did not have wheels on them. They had a later version that was an amphibious version, had wheels that folded up into the hull. But the planes I always flew were always sea planes. Anyway this one was sitting up on the beach and the engines were out of it. And it was just kind of nosed up on the beach. And they told us a story about that airplane. That some students had been flying it and they came back from a flight someplace, and they were going to make a full stall landing. Well, a full stall landing in a PBY is quite a thrill. You'd be close to the water and you just keep pulling the nose up and applying a little more power to keep it flying and so on and and so forth until it finally had just all it wanted, you know. Now all this time you had the tail very close to the water. And when you finally cut the engines, the airplane was stalling and it would shake and rattle and vibrate, it made more noise. And it would go into the water cause it had quit flying, it would just fall into the water, and it sounded like you were landing in a pile of gravel. Quite a thrill, making a full stall landing.

And these fellows, when they full-stalled, unfortunately were about 50 feet in the air. So when they hit the water, the engines kept right on going. And the engines were above the fuselage up in the wing and you could look back at them just slightly from the cockpit. And they were about -- the propellers were going around about this far back from you sitting in the front seats. And they went through the hull on both sides just like saw blades and cut the holes in the hull and when it landed in the water it promptly sunk. But fortunately there was no one sitting in the navigator's seat back behind the pilots so nobody was hurt, these guys got out. And I don't know what happened to them -- whether they were washed out of the program or just said no, don't do that again, you know. Tough waste of airplanes.

Question: So that was your -- they had that set right there so your introduction, as you come in, for the new --

Answer: I guess they just left it there as an example of what not to do. And of course we had to learn not to do that.

Question: Were they -- were they pumping pilots out just as fast as they could? I mean, did they kind of skip some of the training parts or --

Answer: They had ... I was, let's see. After I finished operational flight training, then I was sent, I mean, after I finished final flight training, I was sent from there to Jacksonville Naval Air Station, which was out on the east coast of Florida on the St. John's River, and this was called operational flight training. You would be trained to fly the airplane as you would fly it in combat. Supposedly. And to this point I really can't recall a whole lot of difference from what we were doing in Pensacola, except that that was pretty much basic, learning to take off, learning to land, learning to turn it and so on and so forth. And I finally picked up a few traits of -- of PBY, as most everybody did that flew them for awhile. It was very heavy on the rudders. It did not have power assisted rudders. And all the fellows that were flying PBYs for any period of time seemed to develop large calves in their legs, because it took a lot of pressure on that rudder. Well, what I learned was after I was in operational flight training and flying for quite awhile, you could just tip the airplane, turn the wheel, and use the ailerons, and tip the airplane, the rudder would fall over on that side, the you'd just (gestures) ease back, just slightly on the yoke and you'd make your turn, you know. You could even take your feet off the rudder pedals. Very stable airplane, good airplane, fun to fly. But it was a truck. And it was, let's see. I think I had gone to Jacksonville out of operational flight training and we heard about a crash that had occurred back at Pensacola

Answer: And it was a night time crash. We were taught to not get too close to the water at night unless you were landing. Don't come down and make a turn or anything like that, try to fly away. Because if the water was smooth, if there was no wind, the water would be very glassy. And it didn't even have to be dark, it could be dusk. And you would lose your depth vision, depth perception. And you could get close to the water and crash the airplane, not be aware of it. Well, I don't know what had happened, but my friend, this Chuck Sacora, was in this airplane, as I heard later. And the instructor was flying it evidently, and they had come down close to the water and he banked to go someplace. I don't know whether they'd gotten a report of a crash out at sea or something. I don't know. But anyway, he banked the airplane and caught a wing tip. And the airplane cartwheeled. And it's a big airplane. It had 103 foot of wing span. And it cartwheeled, and when it did, it killed everybody on the plane. Unfortunately, this Chuck Sacora was one of them. Well, not all the deaths in World War II occurred in combat. There were a ton of them in training, various and sundry types of training. But that saddened me very much because he was a real nice guy, very capable, very intelligent. And he would have made a great Naval officer.

Anyway, when we got to Jacksonville, then we were commissioned. We were taken into a big auditorium and -- and given a very fiery speech by Marine Corps colonel, who told us that now that we had completed our flight training and we were ready for commissioning, could choose whether we want to be commissioned as Marine Corps second lieutenants, or ensigns in the Navy. And I choose -- chose the Navy. Naturally, my dad was already in the Navy so I chose the Navy. But a lot of the fellows went into the Marine Corps. And our training, flight wise, was the same. But this was 13 months from the time I had started my flight training. Now when -- when the war first began, there was an immediate surge of people going in, volunteering and so on and so forth. A lot of those fellows that went into flight training that early were commissioned in six months. A lot of them were sent to San Diego in fighters, flying F4F fighters at the time, and were ordered aboard carriers that were out off the beach and they'd fly out of San Diego and go out, land on the carriers. And they had maybe had, at most, a half a dozen carrier landings, two or three of them in a two-place airplane and then solo. And a carrier landing, which I have never made, I was never trained, as a single engine pilot, were very hairy, very hairy. The F4F fighter had a very narrow landing gear, and they would, depending on wind conditions on a carrier deck, they could tip over on one wing tip and cartwheel around, go off the deck into the water, so on and so forth. Hmm. Anyway, they, as they were building up all this tremendous number of people that were coming through the training program -- I guess the Air Force was going through the same thing, they stretched the training out. Well, I went through my final flight training at Jacksonville and, let's see, then I got my first leave from when I'd first started in the Navy. And so I came home to the Northwest, and I don't know whether I had 30 days -- that seems awfully long. Maybe I had two weeks or something like that. And then I was ordered back to Jacksonville as an instructor pilot, a rather junior instructor pilot, I might add. But a lot of the fellows that had been in my class that had graduated there at Jacksonville were sent to PV-type aircraft, which were low wing Lockheed bombers. They used them also for observation work, so on and so forth. They were fairly fast, but they were land planes. And these fellows went through training someplace and were transferred up there into the Alaskan territory. And one of my close friends, a guy I'd gone through training with, a fellow by the name of Ralph Iani, I-A-N-I, Italian boy who was 6'4". And the reason I mention that is because he used to come forward when it was his turn to fly in the PBYs, he'd come forward up into the cockpit and there was a -- one of these egg-shaped, or not, oval-shaped hatches to climb through into the cockpit. And he would climb through there and he would straighten up, and every time he bumped his head on the throttles that were hanging down there, you know. And it accelerated the airplane a little bit. Never learned. I don't know -- he must have had a constant bruise or dent in his forehead. But he went out on a flight in a PV as a navigator and I was worried about that when I heard that he was a navigator on these PVs because he was never good in navigation. And they were going down toward the Kurils -- the islands north of Japan, and bombing. And they would generally get chased home by a Japanese fighter as far as the Japanese could go, ran out of range. But he disappeared on one of those flights, so there was another friend gone, you know.

Question: So there -- while you were in training and a trainer, a lot of people you knew were shipping off to go -- at this time mostly to the South Pacific and Alaska

Answer:

Answer: Well, Alaska, and they went to ComSoPac, Commander, South Pacific, Commandant, South Pacific Forces, so on and so forth. And they went to various and sundry places, all over the South Pacific, depending on what kind of airplanes they were flying. And --

Question: Is it the type of situation where you actually made strong friendships with these people that were --

Answer: In a very brief period of time, yeah, it's amazing. You stop and look back how close some of these friendships were, really. One of the fellows that, oh was also a junior instructor at Jacksonville, fellow by the name of Bill Crawford, came from the LA are

Answer: He'd been an automobile salesman before he'd gotten into the program. Nice guy. And he and I were going out on a target towing flight together, in a PBY. We were towing targets for fighters or dive bomber pilots. They'd make runs on the sock that we were towing, you know. And they had colored ammunition so that when they -- they hit the sock, it would color the sock whatever color they were assigned. We were getting ready for this flight and I went over to meet him in his quarters and he was getting dressed and he opened a drawer and here was a great big picture of a very attractive woman. And I said my gosh, that's a good looking woman. Who's that? And he said that's my ex-wife. And it was a movie actress by the name of Jan Sterling. Now you probably don't remember her but she was very famous in the movies in the early days. Because she divorced Bill Crawford and later married one of President Roosevelt's sons, James Roosevelt, I think she was married to. Anyway, you know, my touch of fame. (laughs)

Question: And that was who she had divorced was this guy.

Question: Did you -- did you -- would you get correspondence from any of the pilots that had left, or were things happening so fast that they were gone, you --

Answer: Some of them, we would correspond with, but so many times the transfers were rather rapid from one place to another and you'd just lose them, that's all.

Question: Is the attitude still pretty gung-ho at this point?

Answer: Yeah, yeah.

Question: Really, I mean even seeing the news reels that would come over and knowing what --

Answer: (nodding head) And knowing what was coming, they were still ready to go. They were still mad about Pearl Harbor, mad as could be. And -- and that was always pushed. Well, of course in the spring of '42, they had the Battle of Midway, which we won rather decisively. And that was a tremendous boost to morale. But all the more of a, mmm, conscious or unconscious push to get out there where the action was, so on and so forth. I -- I had enough of instructing after a short period of time that, you know, I was ready. Assign me to the fleet, send me out, so on and so forth. I don't know why. I must have had some -- some ability that somebody else didn't show. I don't know. I got along fine with the PBY, I liked the airplane. Everybody else wanted to get into a bigger, faster airplane, you know. One with more guns and so on and so forth. Not that I was trying to slack off or anything else, I didn't care. But I wasn't really too anxious to get to where somebody was shooting at me. But I thought it was about time I did.
Little interesting side note. While I was stationed at Jacksonville in my instruction period, I, as I said, I had been a swimmer in high school and at Washington State I swam, not brilliantly, but I swam. I was on the swim team. And when I was flying instructor duty in Jacksonville, I would be assigned my flight schedule for about two weeks. And the first two weeks, I would fly a morning flight and an evening flight. The morning flight went out about 7 o'clock in the morning, came back about 11 o'clock. And I say went out, it went out over the Atlantic

Ocean, that was our training area, usually. And the evening flight went out, what was it, about 6 o'clock and came back about 10 o'clock. We'd start out at dusk, if it was in the wintertime, and I don't think it was, but anyway, it was dark by the time we'd finish. We'd come home and land in the dark. But in my time off, oh, my other schedule was an afternoon flight. Well on my afternoon flight, I had the morning off and the evening off. And I'd fly that schedule for two weeks. Well when I had my time off, be it in the morning or in the afternoon, I would go to the officers club pool and swim. And there was usually just one other fellow there. Turned out it was Robert Stack, of the movies. And we never formally introduced ourselves to each other but I knew who he was. He didn't know me from dirt, and it didn't make any difference. I never saw him in the water, but he was always out lying on the side of the pool or sunning himself or something like that. And we always had a hi, how are you, you know, goodbye, so on and so forth. And he was a supply officer, as I recall. Well, one evening I got a phone call and it was from a girl that I had known in Olympia and she was stationed at one of the outlying fields. She was a WAVE in the Navy, an enlisted female. And she wanted to know if I was the Bud Morck that she had known in Olympia and I said sure I was. Well this was a kissing cousin or something of your father's, and I guess I can mention her name now, it was Barbara Davis. And so I said, well, I don't remember how we arranged this because I wasn't, being commissioned -- I wasn't supposed to be seen with enlisted people socially. Well, anyway, I invited her out to dinner. I -- I told her I'd take her to dinner in Jacksonville, and I don't know where we met. But anyway, we went to, I think the name of it was the George Washington Hotel in Jacksonville, and they had a -- a small band that played there. And dinner music, dance music while you had your dinner, nice place to go. And so Barbara and I went to dinner and we got up and we were dancing. Well, Barbara, I don't know -- the calories had gotten away from her and she had gotten rather large. And we got out on the dance floor and were dancing, and I was looking over the top of her and all of a sudden I saw Bob Stack. And he had some very attractive woman who was draped on him like ivy, clinging dearly to him, because even then he was known in the movies. Good looking son of a gun. And in dancing on the floor, you're turning, you know, pirouetting, whatever. And came the time when he and I were facing each other over our respective partners backs, you know. And I saw him go like this. (looks up then down) At the back of Barbara

Answer: And he looked at me and he just mouthed the words, "War is Hell". And it broke me up and there wasn't anything I could do. I was so darn embarrassed. And so Barbara, of course, wanted to know what I was laughing at. And so I had to tell her, oh, I just thought of a very funny story I had heard or something. I got out of it some way, I don't know. That son of a gun, I could have killed him. But anyway, that's the last contact I've had with Barbara, unfortunately, and with Bob Stack. I -- I was always going to write him a letter and remind him of that but I'm sure he probably had other similar incidents, I don't know. But it stuck in my mind forever. And I still carry it as one of the funniest things that ever happened to me. Oh, gee.

Question: Did you -- cause it's interesting, especially being on the coast here is real different than being back in the Midwest or something like that, to -- the feeling towards the Japs and everything like that as they were called at that time. Did you -- did you know any Japanese people or did you serve with any Japanese people where you were at?

Answer: No. Ill feelings toward the Japanese had started, even when I was in high school. I remember we sat -- had swimming meets between Aberdeen and there were two different high schools in Tacoma that we swam against. And I got ready to start the swimmer's dive against one of the Tacoma teams and here was a Japanese kid that I was lined up against. And I thought I have to beat him. You know, we had ill feelings toward them then. That's too bad, it really is. But we were building toward a war and we were very

suspicious and there were a lot of rumors going around and, gosh sakes, that was in -- that was in 1938 when I was a junior in high school. Ill feelings toward them. I don't really know why. I had a Japanese kid in -- in my high school class, though, that I liked very much. Harry Saito, S-A-I-T-O. And I liked him very much. We weren't close friends, socially or anything like that. I don't know why, we just weren't, but at -- at school, we were good friends, you know. And always spoke to each other or stood and chatted and so on and so forth, whenever we had the chance. My understanding, he's dead now. When I went to my 50th high school reunion, he was dead then.

Question: It sounds like you had a pretty good knowledge of military and world history because of your dad. Or was it because of school? Was it more because of your dad?

Answer: Well, probably a lot of it, yeah. And of course, being stationed primarily on the East Coast, my war, frankly at the time, was always with the Japanese, even though I was on the East Coast and we were winding down the war with Germany. I, let's see.
After I left Jacksonville I went to the Banana River Naval Air Station which became Cape Canaveral, now Cape Kennedy. Anywhere, where the space flights are going from now. But at that time it was a very small Naval air station, and it was on an isthmus of land that was off the coast into the Atlantic Ocean. There was the Indian River behind it which was a long waterway, salt water. That I guess you could travel up the coast a considerable distance in this back water are

Answer: At that point it was called the Indian River, but it probably had a different name further up the coast. All I can remember from that Indian River that stuck in my mind was when we would make night take-offs in PBMs, then, you could see the phosphorescent trail in the water. Beautiful, just absolutely beautiful, behind you, and the airplane would lift off, and you'd see that glow, just disappear as the water would settle down, you know. That was pretty.

Question: How big a crew -- how many?

Answer: Crew -- how many?

Question: Yeah.

Answer: In PBMs, I think we ended up with a crew of, it was either seven or nine. We had two pilots, the third pilot, well, I was a PPC, patrol plane commander, then I had a first pilot and a second pilot. And then we had a flight engineer and we had gunners, which were radiomen or -- or mechanics, aviation mechanics, or what else. I don't know.

Question: So in all of the - you had a lot of kind of free time, you had to get up and get your flight hours in and everything like that. Were there any, maybe excursions that weren't approved that maybe you took off on sometimes?

Answer: No, we -- we never had use of an airplane that somebody didn't know about. We used to fly primarily south off the East Coast. That sometimes went as far as Cub

Answer: We went to Cuba couple of times. And we went to Puerto Rico. And we were, at that part of the war, I was attached to a training squadron there, but we were also a back-up coastal patrol. We could be called on for most any kind of duty out of there.
Incidentally, out of Jacksonville, while I was an instructor pilot there, I was called for a flight to go out and investigate a hurricane. And this, too, sticks very vividly in my mind, because I was still pretty green pilot. And I had a senior officer who was in command of the airplane

who got up and went back in the storm to get a sandwich back in the airplane and left me with a, a navigation instructor who was not a pilot who came up and sat in his seat. And we were flying through awful crud and the airplane was bouncing all over the air and so on and so forth. And he left it to me and I was just scared green, I'll tell you, I just, ohm. Very scary situation. We went into the hurricane at about 500 feet. Let me tell a little story first. Prior to the war, ships traveling in the Atlantic would broadcast weather reports of the area where they were, every hour at maybe on the hour, maybe at 10 after the hour or whatever they were assigned time. But they would broadcast these reports. Well of course, war time, that ceased. They didn't have those reports. So any time they would get reports of a storm coming, and the hurricanes formed in the south Atlantic, and would generally swirl up across the top of South America and swing and come up the East Coast, all the way composite plot of storm paths, some of them would hook behind Florida, go up into the Caribbean. And I guess they still do. Some of them would go up the coast and curve back out at sea, back out into the Atlantic. Some would go way up the coast and hit New England and up -- on up, even into Nova Scotia before they would dissipate. So the weather people, National Weather Service, wanted to know what these storms were doing, what path they were following, the speed they were going, what the intensity of the storms were and so on and so forth. Well when we got assigned a hurricane patrol, we flew into them. And we were after the eye of the hurricane. Well you get into the eye of a hurricane, it's very calm. The seas are pretty calm. There will be rolling swells in there and so on and so forth. But getting to that point is a lot of fun. And gee, we got bounced all over the place. And the altimeter on an airplane is actually a barometric pressure instrument. It indicates the altitude you have by measuring the pressure of the air. So when we would get into a hurricane, we would fly down and estimate 50 feet above the surface of the water and then set our altimeters at 50 feet of altitude, then there was a barometric pressure to read right there, we could get the barometric pressure. Of course it was considerably lower than what the normal barometric pressure was. But that 50 feet off the water was quite hairy because we were in the intense part of the storm where the winds would be running, oh, probably a hundred miles an hour, something like that. And it blew so hard that the waves that were picked up had the tops just lopped off of them. You know, the wind just blew the water out, turned it to foam, and blew it, almost -- it looked like the surface was flat. But there were rolling waves below it, you know. And when we finally got in to where we thought it was -- as intense as it was going to be, we flew down and got this barometric pressure reading. And of course by then my teeth were chattering. It turned out that this pilot that I was flying with had also flown typhoon watch, which is a hurricane, in the Pacific. And out off of Midway, someplace, he had flown a typhoon watch. So he was accustomed to this stuff. And it was about that time he got up and went back and got a sandwich and left me there flying this airplane. Oh, boy, I was scared. Anyway, we competed the flight and survived it. After looking out, I didn't do it too often. But I looked out a couple times, and the wings of that airplane were just -- I thought we were in a seagull, you know, the wings were just going like that. But that was built into that lovely old PBY. That was fun.

Question: Got to switch tapes here.