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BIRTH PLACE: Baltimore, MD

SERVICE: USNR
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DISCH RANK: Lieutenant O g)

DIVISION: Amphibious Forces
DATE OF ENTRY: May 2, 1944
DATE OF DISCH: Dec. 16,1946

SERVICE: TRAINING: Boot Camp - Bainbridge, MD May- June 1944
Student Officer School - Plattsburg, NY July - Aug. 1944
Underwater Demolition - Maui, HI Sept. - Dec 1944

COMBAT EXPERIENCE: D-Day Invasion of lwo Jlma Feb. 19, 1945
D-Day Invasion of Okinawa Apr. 1, 1945
Deck Officer USS Barrow APA 61 Jan. - Oct. 1945

MEDALS & HONORS: Pacific Area: 2 Battle Stars: lwo Jima and Okinawa

RESERVE: Inactive: December 16, 1946 - May 8,1956
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G I BILL OF RIGHTS: Attended Johns Hopkins University Sept. 1947 - June 1948
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Barbara B. Payne speaking. I am about to interview W. Barkley Fritz on February 23, 1995.

Let's review what we have been saying. I am interested in the way you got into the service and into the war. You were only 18, and you had graduated from college?

A. I graduated from Loyola College in Baltimore on October 10, 1943 when I was still 18, having graduated from Baltimore City College High School in 1940 at age 15. That was fairly unusual, but easily explained. During the Depression, the Public School System in Baltimore offered an accelerated course in which the curriculum for grades 4, 5, and 6 could be completed in 2 school years. I was one of about 30 students in this program at the Montebello Elementary # 44. Next, I attended the Robert E. Lee Junior High School # 49 completing the 7th, 8th and 9th grades again in two years. This two year Junior High was in center city and attracted students from all over Baltimore. It finally closed in 1960 after being in operation in this,-tormat for over ears.

Did you go to college in the accelerated program?

A. Well not really, but the war started in December 1941 and the college program was accelerated in1942 with most of us taking additional classes during regular semesters and a full additional semester was started during the summer of 1943 thereby permitting early graduation.

Q. Were you an officer? Had you been in the ROTC?

A. No, at the time Loyola College was too small to have such a program. I was drafted as an Apprentice Seaman in April 1944. At the time there were openings for those being drafted in both the Army and the Navy. I chose to go into the Navy since I had already applied for a direct commission in the Navy. Some 6 months had passed since college graduation and in the interim I had been serving as a teaching fellow at Georgetown Universitytaking Graduate courses and teaching mathematics to Army officer candidates in the A-12 Program. My draft exempt status ended in April when the A-12 Program was closed. I entered Boot Camp at Bainbridge, MD on May 2, 1944. My commission application was approved in June by the time I completed Boot Camp and in July I began a 2 month officer indoctrination program in Plattsburg, NY. The program there covered much of the same material as the program for enlisted men at Bainbridge. I still have the two books representative of each of the two courses: 'The Bluejackets' Manual" and "The Naval Officer's Guide". I also remember a young lady, Emily, who was a student at the local State Teacher's College.

Q. Where did you go then?

A. To an assignment overseas with the Combat Amphibious Forces in the Pacific. I went first to San Francisco. While waiting for Navy transportation to Hawaii, I remember having dinner with three Navy wives: Ella, Stella and Della. Ella Barkley Walter was my first cousin from Cambridge, MD. I also remember the Junior Officers' Club in San Francisco and Norma who was secretary to a friend of my father in the Maryland Casualty's Office in San Francisco.

I travelled from there to Pearl Harbor on the USS Saratoga, then the largest Aircraft Carrier and in fact the largest ship in the world. There was a need for young officers, or so it was thought, for Underwater Demolition Training (UDT). These individuals were later known as Frogmen. Presumably I had volunteered for this All-Volunteer outfit.

Q. Were you a pretty good swimmer?

A. I could swim. There were swimming pools at both my high school and college, but I was never a competitive swimmer. I do have two webbed toes on each foot, which the Navy Doctor noted, so I guess he thought I had a "competitive advantage" for UDT.. I did play on the Tennis Team in college, but I was more the studious type than the "macho jock".

Anyway, there I was on Maui where the Navy was training teams for the island invasions in the Pacific. When an invasion was imminent, the UDT units were to go in, locate and destroy any obstacles found on the beaches or in the water nearby. In order that the landing craft could make it through to the beach, an opening in the coral reef was often needed. By todals standards, I suppose, the UDT's were "ecologically unfriendly", but then no one has ever said that war was good for the environment.

Q. What equipment was provided for your underwater work?

A. We were equipped with a bathing suit, a water repellent parka (which of course wasn't used when we were in the water), a knife and a circular face plate to protect our eyes. Later on we received feet flippers. We were taught to swim using underwater strokes to reduce splashing, so as to be as invisible as possible. We needed to be able to see above and below the surface of the water in order to locate and destroy obstacles such as rails, block houses, coral reefs and so forth.

Q. What did you carry to blow them up with?

A. Some sort of explosives. I don't remember what we used.

Q. How did you set off the explosives in the water?

A. We used an igniter connected to a protective waterproof covered cable filled with a substance that burned without needing outside air. When ignited the cable burned at a relatively slow rate with the length of the cable determining how much time we had to get back to the boat and out of the way of being blown up by our own explosives. I believe we used condom rubbers to water proof connections. Basically we carried the explosive materials with us, performing the necessary final assembly on the rubber raft or on the beach.

As I recall, in training, some of our team would lower the raft and secure it along the seaward side of the landing craft to let others roll off the side of the boat onto the raft. We'd then swim toward the beach towing the raft or power it using a small outboard motor. On the way to the beach, we would determine exactly what needed to be destroyed. In training one of the hardest things we had to do was catch onto a sling on the side of the landing craft and climb back into the boat and out of the area before the explosives went off.

Q. Apparently you were not needed on an actual invasion?.

A. The Navy had expected casualties to be very heavy in these units, especially among the young officers who led the small groups of six enlisted personnel. Our training team of young officers were trained to be replacements for the casualties of the Leyte Gulf and Mindanao invasions involved in retaking the Philippines in late 1944 during the time of our training in Maui. However, fortunately for all of us, the

officers we were trained to replace, weren't killed: the original teams remained intact and we weren't needed. It was then that I was assigned for duty as a deck officer on the USS Barrow, the APA 61, an attack transport on its way to the invasion of Iwo Jima as part of the 5th fleet.

Sometime prior to my boarding the Barrow, a murder had taken place. The medical officers were involved. I don't know whether they were drinking or what was going on, but a group of officers had been transferred from the ship to testify at a court martial. No one talked about what had happened. I assume that everyone involved , including all those who had any knowledge of the incident, had been transferred. In retrospect, the individual officer I replaced may have been present when the murder happened.

Q. So you were on your way to an invasion, but not in the role that you were trained to do. How did you get to your ship?

A. When the UDT program was completed, I flew from Hawaii on a large seaplane built by the Glen L. Martin Co. I recognized the plane as a PBM, the one I had worked on as an engineering draftsman during my 1942 summer job in Baltimore. I remember thinking that if the plane crashed it could be because of some negligence on my part that summer. I was flown with others to Eniwetok Island where the USS Barrow was being refueled on its way to Iwo Jima. I am not exactly sure when I boarded it, but it was sometime in January 1945. As I remember it, the 700 Marines we were to land at Iwo Jima were already on board. I learned later that some of the Marines had boarded some of the Navy vessels as early as 40 days prior to the actual invasion.

My orders indicated that I was to be a regular part of the ship's company, serving as a deck officer in Division 1 with a secondary assignment as liaison to the Marine troops. The UDT unit that served at Iwo Jima had prepared maps with up to date tide and obstacle information, and although I did meet with the Marines to discuss the UDT data, I don't recall having much to contribute. In any event I was glad that I wasn't "asked" to go ashore with the Marines.

Q. Did your ship deliver the Marines there?

A. Yes. Our ship carried landing craft from davits which were used to lower the boats to the water off the side of our ship. We carried 15 of these landing craft, LCVPs (Landing Craft Vehicle Personnel). As I recall, the Marines climbed down rope cargo nets to the LCVPs after the boats had been lowered to the water. The landing craft was still tied to the ship, but depending on the condition of the wave action this could be a 'touch and go' operation. If it was possible to anchor the ship before disembarking our troops, we would do so. If this wasn't possible, our ship would be powered in an attempt to hold to a fairly steady position so the landing craft, using its own engine, could remain beside the ship while the troops were getting on board, This was sort of a "treading water" process for both the ship and its landing craft.

Q. Did you get to a harbor, or was there not one at Iwo Jima?

A. No. No harbor. (laughter) Iwo Jima is a volcanic island about 5 miles long and about 2 miles wide at its widest point. The island's strategic value, at the time, was that it was only 660 miles from Tokyo. Its beaches were somewhat steep and the island itself was essentially a pile of rock and gravel (much like coffee grounds), a dark grey ash that was soft, yet compact enough, for the Japanese defenders to dig extensive underground fortifications.

Q. Was it not settled extensively? Did people live there?

A. I am told that it was normally inhabited by less than a thousand Japanese before WW II. Because there was no significant source of fresh water, Iwo Jima was unihabited until the Japanese came to mine sulfur, prior to WW II. The caves, which were created as a result of the sulfur mining, were perhaps the basis for the Japanese fortifications which made their resistence so effective. Iwo Jima's use as a base for refueling planes and ships had begun perhaps even prior to WW II. I do not remember seeing any signs of vegetation on Iwo Jima, however some pictures taken at the time prove otherwise. It did not look inhabited, but there were tunnels, and all sorts of places where the Japanese had dug into the island and prepared protected fortifications. The American shelling and bombing in mid February apparently didn't do much damage in spite of its intensity. The Japanese were sufficiently far under the volcanic rock and had constructed adequate supports such that they were only defeated by the overwhelming superiority of American flame throwers and the Marine persistence to take the island.

Q. So you landed them there for the battle?

A. Yes, but not as part of the first wave. Several Navy personnel, enlisted men from our ship, piloted our LCVPs with groups of Marine troops to the beach and returned the landing craft to the ship. The rest of the crew of the APA 61 remained on the ship. There was some firing from the island, but our ship did not appear to be under attack from either shore batteries or Japanese Kamikazes. We were in the area for almost a week and I remember seeing the flag raising on Suribachi (the 556 foot volcanic cone at the south end of the island). I saw this through binoculars from the bridge of our ship when I was standing watch while the Barrow was anchored off shore. Eventually over 5000 American Marines and about five times as many defenders were killed during 5 weeks of some of the war's bloodiest fighting.

Q. Were there quite a few ships there at the time?

A. Oh yes. It was a large armada of 880 ships including the warships. Over 20,000 Marines were landed during the first days of the fighting. It was believed that the Japanese had originally had more than 23,000 defenders, however it was expected that a sizable percentage of these would have been killed during the 72-hour heavy bombardment by our Naval warships prior to the actual invasion. The shelling and

and bombing of Iwo Jima has been described as the most concentrated Naval bombardment of WW II. On shore it was entirely a Marine operation (major portions of the 3rd, 4th and 5th Marine Divisions). Unfortunately for the Marines, most of the Japanese defense forces were well protected underground in a series of connected tunnels during the bombardment and they fought to the death.

Q. How were these troops supplied once they had landed? Did you supply them or did others in the armada?

A. The USS Barrow was a relatively unique ship, but also somewhat typical of a type developed during WW II for the war in the Pacific. The Barrow was built in San Diego by National Steel's Shipbuilding Division and designated an "attack transport." She was designed to carry about 700 troops and their immediate cargo needs. We also carried a staff and facilities adequate to treat casualties, for example we had several medical doctors and a dentist as well as enlisted medical personnel. The landing craft were mentioned earlier, but besides these facilities we also had a cargo hold with cranes for moving supplies from the cargo bay to the landing craft or even directly to piers when this was possible. The 700 troops were in addition to a ship's company of over 100 officers and enlisted personnel. Compared to the much larger troop carriers used in port-to-port operations, we were much smaller, but appropriate for the invasions of the Pacific area. When fully loaded we were crowded, but while supporting the troops during an invasion, we had the space and the facilities to treat the wounded. I might add we had a Chaplain when we carried troops and the facilities to conduct burials at sea as we did on at least a half dozen occasions.

Q. Did they bring your Marines back to your ship?

A. No, although perhaps some of the wounded we treated may have originally been landed from the Barrow, but I don't know that. We did have casualties on board when we finally left Iwo Jima, but the main forces we had landed were picked up later by other ships.

Q. The Marines were on shore and in 30 days had secured the Island. Did they remain there, or did some of them come back, or did only the wounded come back?

A. As far as I know individual members of the invasion force left as they were wounded or, otherwise, shortly after the island was secured. New personnel - the Seabees or Army engineers - arrived to repair and build the new airfield, so that Iwo Jima could be used as an air base for the upcoming invasion of Japan itself.

Iwo Jima is half way between the main islands of Japan and the Marianas which were used as bases for the ongoing bombing of Japan. The Marianas, consisting of Guam, Saipan and Tinian, were some 1400 miles from Japan. Today we often forget how limited was the range of WW II aircraft. The use of the new Iwo Jima air base,

which was in operation in April of 1945, is said to have been responsible for saving the lives of 25,000 air men during the final months of the war in the Pacific. Some 2251 emergency landings are said to have been made at lwo Jima.

Q. So now the Battle of lwo Jima is over and you are moving on to Okinawa?

A. Yes, that invasion was on April 1, Easter Sunday in 1945. Okinawa was a much larger island

Q. Okinawa, then was a regular settled area, with fields, houses, roads....

A. Yes, a long island of 67 miles, relatively narrow, running north and south, covering some 463 square miles. The major city, Naha, was on the east coast on the southern part of the island. The American invasion plan involved playing an April Fool's joke on the enemy. The idea was to launch a feint toward the beaches near Naha, while the initial 0-day invasion forces were to be landed on the west coast. The Barrow was part of a squadron of 16 attack transports which approached the Naha area from the east and just at dawn on April 1 disembark our troops using our landing craft. The troops were to head toward the shore with instructions to get within sight of the beaches, draw enemy fire and then turn back and reboard their ships. The Japanese were to believe that they had driven off the invasion of some 12-15 thousand Americans.

Q. So did the plan work?

A. Yes, all went as planned. In fact, I don't recall much in the way of enemy fire at the time of the embarkation.

I did learn later that one of the ships in our squadron (the Avondale) had been bombed and badly damaged that morning. One of my best friends from college, Edwin Steffy, was an officer on that ship and he told me much later of their 'limping home' for major repairs.

Had the sea been heavy, a possible major problem for the Marines would have been in safely climbing the cargo nets, not falling into the ocean nor back into their LCVP's. Since they wore helmets and carried rifles and ammunition, this was not easy in any event, but they were well trained and, as I said, the reboarding was completed without mishap.

I don't recall an Easter Sunrise Service that morning, but the Chaplain did have an Easter Service later to give thanks, as we "retreated " to fight another day.

Q. What happened next?

A. During the rest of that day and the following night our squadron (without the Avondale) travelled to the west side of Okinawa and the Barrow anchored off shore at the north end of the invasion beach area. I went on shore on Monday April 2 with the

Lt. Col. in charge of the 700 Marine troops on our ship. For the time being, the troops remained behind. Once on shore, the two of us travelled around among the Marine forces that had landed on the previous day so he could complete plans for getting his group on the beach. At the time, there was no fighting and no enemy in the immediate ground area. Overhead the few Japanese aircraft, usually Kamikazes, were more interested in the ships than in the troops on the ground.

Q. I assume you went on shore in view of your liaison role with the Marines?

A. Yes. And I suppose because the landing craft were a part of my responsibility as Boat Officer. Also the Lt. Col. needed transportation to shore and back. At the time, the west side of Okinawa had a shallow coral reef off shore. It had only one relatively small opening which had been blasted out by the UDT unit just prior to the landing. The fact that the Japanese guns were not able to shell that opening during the invasion was key to the successful landing. Maybe our April Fool's joke fooled them, or perhaps their guns covering this area of the beach had been destroyed, or possibly they had never planned to defend this area of the shoreline.

At the time I welcomed the chance to actually be on Okinawa on 0-day + 1. It was exciting to be there and as I implied earlier, with the Kamikazes in the area, I may have been safer on the island than being back on the Barrow. One of the things I remember about the Marine Lt. Col. was that he was bald-headed, and seemed much older than I, but he was in great physical shape and I had some trouble keeping up with him as he checked contacts and completed arrangements for landing his forces. To this day, like most Americans, I have a lot of respect for the Marines and their ability to get a job done.

Q. I am really amazed at how supplies got where they were needed all *over* the world! Absolutely amazing how this was done.

A. That's another big story, one that I can't really comment on, except to say that we were given orders to go where the supplies were, load them on our ship and take them to where they were needed. On April 2nd, the landing beach at Okinawa was piled with ammunition, food and other cargo spread out over a large area.

Q. But people got the supplies they needed wherever they were, and without the aid of computers! Astounding!

A. Your mention of computers promptsme to note that I spent my career after WW II with computers, and I'm tempted to digress, however let me get back to Okinawa. Although I can't add much on the logistics phase of the conflict, I would like to add a few remarks on the war and my feelings at the time. We were anchored off shore at the north end of a major armada of ships. The island was mountainous to our left, looking north, and the Kamikaze aircraft with their rising sun emblems flew low from

the north over that relatively low mountain range, and immediately saw this armada of anchored ships. These Kamikaze aircraft were small Zero fighters with a pilot dedicated to giving his life and his plane loaded with explosives to destroy an American ship. Immediately many of the ships in that armada opened fire on the Kamikaze. From my perspective, it seemed that the planes often crashed on one of the ships doing considerable damage. Some were hit by gun fire and exploded in the air over the armada with debris doing some damage to the ships and personnel below. On other occasions, the Kamikaze's aim was bad or his plane was damaged and he crashed in the water among the many ships. I don't have any data as to how successful the Kamikazes were, however I do know that for me this aspect of the war was the most frightening.

Our ship was a two-stacker anchored in an area with primarily smaller LSTs, LCIs and other smaller ships. I know I was scared. We were often at General Quarters with all hands at battle stations for long periods when the number of such attacks were frequent. We fired our several anti-aircraft guns during these attacks, but from my General Quarters station on the Bridge I don't recall that we ever shot down a Kamikaze. Possibly some of our gunners on the Barrow will remember otherwise. My point is that I regarded our position in the armada as being precarious, although we never took a direct hit. I do recall about six burials at sea from our ship - later after we were underway in the open sea. I also remember a Kamikaze diving into a large well identified Hospital ship (I believe it was the USS Hope).

It was easy to develop a hatred for the Japanese, however my own feelings related mostly to their dedication to their cause and their willingness to die for that cause. The Japanese culture was such that it was not apparent that they would ever surrender. The battle at Iwo Jima made this clear. The three months of fighting at Okinawa that resulted in about 180,000 deaths on both sides including civilian Okinawans, served to further emphasize that we were not going to end the war easily, even after the May 8th ending of the fighting in Europe.

You haven't asked for my thoughts on the decision to use the two newly developed atomic bombs in our arsenal on Japan, but I'll tell you anyway. It's important to view this decision by President Truman in the context of the time. With the availability of Iwo Jima as an emergency landing field 660 miles from Tokyo, the bombing of the home islands of Japan was being accelerated. The firebombing of Tokyo from the Marianas was perhaps even more devastating than the nuclear bombing which came later. For those of us participating in the fighting at Iwo Jima and Okinawa, we "knew" from experience that this was an enemy that wouldn't surrender. The alternative to a possible quick ending of the war via use of "the bomb" was essentially a stalemate in the Pacific while our nation, tired of war, attempted to regroup its forces and gather up its will to begin a series of the bloodiest of all battles, an island by island invasion of the Japanese homeland. It was the use of our complete arsenal of atomic weapons that finally convinced the Japanese to surrender and to finally bring this war to an end. For most of us directly involved it was the best decision the President could have made at the time. And as they say, the rest is history, and the world will never be the same.

Q. Most people I have talked to feel that it was the economical thing to do, that there was less killing and destruction and hardship in the long run. It was tough on the individuals who got it, but it also helped the Japanese survive as a nation. It was believed that the the Japanese would fight to the last Japanese.

A. Another perhaps minor point in the psychology at the time were the radio messages of Tokyo Rose. She broadcasted daily taunting messages demonstrating that the Japanese knew all about what we were doing. For example, she would announce: "We know you are coming and we are ready to destroy you when you get here." She would then list our ships, the names of our top officers as well as the units of the Marine troops we had on board. This knowledge was somewhat scary as we were approaching lwo Jima or Okinawa. J do n't remember ever hearing how she had obtained this usually correct information. Actually in retrospect, I don't think that such goading was a good strategy for the Japanese. As a result we increased our resolve to fight on. We certainly weren't tempted at the time to pull back, "declar e victory" and go home.

Q. Getting back to your war experiences, what were your duties aboard ship?

A. I stood watch on the Bridge while we were underway at sea or likewise while anchored or in port. I remember that at age 20, I had unusually good eyesight, being able to spot the tops of ship masts over the horizon before others could. My night vision was also excellent. Officially , my title was Assistant Deck Officer of Division 1. I also se:ved as Boat Officer with responsibility for the LCVPs. I reported to Ensign Oscar Kummerlowe, who headed Division 1. Oscar was also from Baltimore. Among my duties I was Boat Officer of the Barrow's "Po rt Side Rescue Party." A Boatswains mate 2nd class, named L. B. Smith, really headed the group of 12 other enlisted men involved: Prince, Henderson, Scheuring, McGee, Ball, Davis, Vaughn, Durgee, Black, Hennessey, Rupp, and Landers. In all, there were a total of 39 enlisted men in Division 1.

Ralph Kenworthy, a young married officer, was my best friend aboard ship. Ralph was from Modesto, CA. I visited with him and his wife when we were in San Francisco and we stayed in touch until he died in 1991. His wife Gwen had died in 1987. In civilian life, Ralph had become a refrigeration engineer and worked for a California frozen food processor.

Back on board ship, I had an opportunity to learn navigation working with Lt. Charles DeMoss, who I remember as having been a high school math teacher before the war. Learning navigation on Lake Champlain while at Plattsburg had helped, but it wasn't the same as being in the Pacific trying to find some "pin point" of an island.

When underway for the invasions, we traveled together in a squadron maintaining a specific distance behind the ship ahead, being aware of the ship behind as well as maintaining proper distance from the ships on each side. In rough seas, this could be a bit tricky, but I was lucky, since we didn't encounter any major storms. The main thing you could do wrong was to run into the ship ahead. A real No No!

You had to maintain your assigned speed and keep in communication with your engine room and the nearby ships. It wasn't that difficult, but did require staying fully alert. Too much was at stake.

The only time I ever got seasick was on the way out of San Francisco on the Saratoga. The ocean swells off the west coast could be trecherous even on the largest Navy vessel afloat. Stabilizers weren't as effective then as they are on the cruise ships today. This was my first time at sea and at the time I was concerned. "Maybe I shouldn't have asked for the Navy".

Q. Were you around for the big typhoon?

A. No. Apparently Okinawa has had as many as 45 destructive typhoons in a year. But as I said, our ship never encountered a really serious storm during our 10 months at sea.

Q. Did you feel that Okinawa was as desperate and bloody a battle as Iwo Jima?

A. Well, certainly, but it was not at the time of the American landing. I read later that the Japanese plan at Okinawa was to protect the southern part of the island near their port at Naha, the area of our feint. They had no troops at all in the mountainous northern area, nor was the island as fortified as Iwo Jima. They were however expecting an American attack and they were ready. They fought a good 3 months' battle and the US death toll was over 12,000. The Japanese suffered the loss of 110,000 and another 60,000 Okinawans were killed. The battle was fought over a much larger area than Iwo Jima, involved many more soldiers on both sides and lasted 3 times longer. Army General Simon Bolivar Buckner, the Commanding General of all the Marine and Army forces on Okinawa, was the highest ranking US Officer killed during WW II.

Q. What did you do after you left Okinawa?

A. We were involved bringing supplies from the more remote areas to captured islands for the planned final invasions of the Japanese home islands. In this phase of the war we acted much like an ordinary cargo ship, except we were smaller and could go into smaller areas as well as use our boats to bring supplies to the ship directly from the beach.

On June 10,1945 we crossed the Equater for the first time and I "having been found worthy to be numbered as one of their Trusty Shellbacks ... was duly initiated into the **SOLEMN MYSTERIES OF THE ANCIENT ORDER OF THE DEEP..."** I was listed then as William B. Fritz, first name - middle initial, as were all service personnel during WW II. The crossing was at Longitude 162 degrees. I still have the very impressive certificate signed by **Davey Jones and Neptunus Rex** that was issued bearing a Seal of the Navy Department, United States of America. I remember my head being shaved and being dunked into a large pool of water as part of the initiation.

Later in June we were ordered to San Francisco to pick up personnel and cargo, some of the cargo was originally intended for Europe and some of the personnel were those who had returned from the last days of fighting in Europe. We were told we could have a few days leave, but we would be going back to the Pacific after loading. We were also told that we would not be going back to combat. The war ended with the surrender on August 15, while I was back in Baltimore with my parents and younger sister, on what is now known as VJ Day.

Although, I was ready to "retire", it was more than another year before the Navy was allowed to let me go. The "point system" in effect didn't give priority to young, unmarried, service personnel who had been in uniform for only 16 months. Our ship left San Francisco a few days after VJ Day with a full crew to return to a more friendly Pacific. We did much the same as before, moving cargo for the occupation forces in Japan. I remember being in New Guinea, the Philippines, Espiritu Santo as well as Saipan and Guam. I remember strapping on my standard issue "45 pistol" and a shore patrol arm band to help our sailors keep out of trouble on the streets of Manila. In my 10 months in the Pacific I did get to see a lot of the islands, but after 50 years I don't remember as much about that part of my service as I do of the more stressful days at Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

In late October of 1945, the Barrow returned to the west coast travelling up the Columbia River to a "heroes welcome" in Portland, OR. The local paper carried a front page picture of our ship taken as we approached our dock. On October 29th, our ship's crew had a celebration party at a nearby Country Club. I remember the date since it was my 21st birthday. While in the area I was hospitalized for an ear infection, which was eventually resolved by a modified radical mastoidectomy at the Bethesda Navy National Medical Center in Maryland.

Q. Did you get any R & R while you were in the Pacific?

A. Not personally, but after the war had ended I took some groups of enlisted men to beach recreation areas where they played softball and drank beer. I served as the umpire. It wasn't unanimous that my eyesight was as good as I claimed earlier. Jtls probably just as well I didn't become a baseball umpire.

Q. You're lucky that you had graduated from college at 18. Otherwise you would have been one of those Marines?

A. I guess so. We were all about the same age. Many of those who did come home took advantage of the G I Bill to get a college education before they went ahead with the rest of their lives. Maybe one of them was in one of my classes at Loyola College in Baltimore where I went to teach Mathematics for a year, before going on myself to a graduate program, on the G I Bill, at Johns Hopkins University.

My experience in the Service was a definite help to me in my career. The final assignment at the Naval Proving Ground in Dahlgren, VA certainly helped me in landing a civilian job working with the ENIAC at the Aberdeen Proving Ground, the first general purpose electronic computer that was in extensive use.

On January 1, 1949, I was introduced to Nancy Jean Cooper by her first cousin, once removed, Gladys Stavely at a New Year's Day Open House. We dated, fell in love and married on September 10, 1950. After 5 daughters, 5 sons-in-law and 8 grandchildren, we are still very much in love and still very much married. Gladys Stavely at age 91, as of this interview, is still living at Church Home in Baltimore and we still keep in touch.

Employment at the Westinghouse Air Arm Division in Baltimore, MD followed in 1955 and my career in computing continued. Eventually I taught Computer Science at the University of Delaware. Having lived at this time in history, I am not sorry that I played a small part in two of the major "adventures" of WW II.