



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE
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PRESS RELEASE

Texas Commissioner Buckingham Continues Series on General Land Office's Voices of Veterans Oral History Program

The Story of Texas Veteran Victor Egger

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AUSTIN — Today, Texas Land Commissioner and Veterans Land Board (VLB) Chairwoman Dawn Buckingham, M.D. introduced the next series installment highlighting the VLB's Voices of Veterans oral history program. In this episode, we hear the story of Texas Veteran Victor Egger.

To listen to Mr. Egger tell his story, visit VoicesofVeterans.org.

Mr. Egger was born in El Paso in 1921. At only 13, he had the goal of becoming a prestigious Naval Officer in a white uniform. After finishing basic training, he was assigned to the USS Philadelphia. He worked hard on the ship. He was initially assigned to a battle station below deck that was hot and near many explosives.

He was promoted to First Class Petty Officer for his dedication, a very unusual rank to reach at such a young age. He was also assigned to the Hornet, a new aircraft carrier. When asked about what he experienced when Pearl Harbor was attacked, Mr. Egger said his first thought was, "Oh, hell." He expressed that he and the other men "were scared. We didn't know what was going on besides the raid."

Mr. Egger also described his involvement with the historic Doolittle Raid. He explained how, after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the morale of the American people was down. He spoke of the mission leader, Lieutenant Colonel James H. Doolittle, as "a daredevil" who rallied his men to make this potential "one-way trip" with honor and dignity. Mr. Egger was proud to have played a part in helping the larger B-25s successfully take off for their dangerous mission to bomb Japanese industrial centers and inflict both physical and psychological damage upon the enemy.



VOICES OF VETERANS

name Egger, Victor		
military branch Navy	rank LCDR	conflict WWII, Cold War
date interviewed 04/30/2015		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interview available on voicesofveterans.org

Victor Egger served in the U.S. Navy from Sept. 1939 until his retirement as a lieutenant commander in 1959. He was present as an enlisted sailor aboard the USS Hornet when the Doolittle Raiders began their daring mission to bomb mainland Japan for the first time during WWII.



U.S. Navy Veteran Victor Egger, Voices of Veterans

When the Hornet sank, Mr. Egger remembered climbing down the cargo nets to get to a nearby boat. He asked one of the injured men if he could get him anything. The man's only request was to have his rosary. Mr. Egger bravely went to retrieve the item but was trapped when an attack damaged the door to the room he was in. Luckily, sailors coming down to investigate the attack found and freed him, and Mr. Egger escaped to give his fellow fighter his rosary. After this harrowing ordeal, he spent some well-deserved time home on survivor's leave.

Later, Mr. Egger served with the U.S. Marine Corps as a part of Amphibious Forces or the "Gator Navy." He was also very proud of his work in helping bring back survivors of the sunken USS Houston. Mr. Egger retired in 1959. He has achieved the goal he set for himself at 13 to be a U.S. Naval Officer and much more.

For about 18 years, he volunteered at a Naval Air Station and Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, showing his love for helping service members. Mr. Egger also took the time in retirement to rewrite his memoirs for his family, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren to enjoy.

Veterans can email VoicesofVeterans@glo.texas.gov to tell their stories. Please note that the Veteran must be a resident of Texas at the time of their interview.

Voices of Veterans is a state agency's first Veteran oral history program. It records the stories of Texas Veterans through their time in service and after returning home from combat.

The VLB records interviews with veterans over the phone or in person. Their interviews are then permanently archived in the Office of Veterans Records at the GLO, where they join the historical documents of other Texas heroes such as Sam Houston, Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, and William Barret Travis.

Veterans' interviews are also available to researchers, historians, genealogists, and the public. These precious records inspire future generations and remind us of our Veterans' sacrifices.

To listen to the over 500 archived stories of Veterans documented through the GLO's Voices of Veterans oral history program, visit VoicesofVeterans.org.