

Janis Kozlowski: Let's see ... how about mail – you said you got supplied fairly frequently, but did you get mail very often?

Charles Donovan: When a ship would come up, we'd get the mail with it. Yes, quite often.

Janis Kozlowski: And did you have your mail censored?

Charles Donovan: Yes ... definitely. After the War - yes.

Janis Kozlowski: And did you learn a lot about what was going on in other parts of the ... the War in other ... over in Europe, or in the South Pacific, while you were there – did you hear anything about that?

Charles Donovan: Well, we heard some of it, but we didn't really learn that much about it. We heard a little bit of it – that's all.

Janis Kozlowski: Well, much closer to home, I guess, from where you were – where were you when Dutch Harbor was bombed, and what do you remember about that?

Charles Donovan: I was on Umnak Island when Dutch Harbor was bombed.

Janis Kozlowski: And did you know it was happening?

Charles Donovan: Oh, yes, yes. We saw a couple of dog fights over the island – over Umnak Island - some of the planes in a dog fight.

Janis Kozlowski: What kind of planes, and what was the end result - do you remember?

Charles Donovan: Well, they, they had, the Japanese had the Zeros, of course. And then the Navy and Army had the P-38s and the P-40s ... and their bombers. But, the Japanese had bombed Dutch Harbor before they could really get prepared, and they lost quite a number of people up there during that bombing. And there was quite a bit of damage also.

Janis Kozlowski: You saw dog fights over, when you were there, did you ...

Charles Donovan: Once or twice, yeah.

Janis Kozlowski: OK.

Charles Donovan: But, none of them ... we saw the dog fights, but we didn't see any planes go down.

Janis Kozlowski: Did some of your planes that were based at [Umnak] did not return?

Charles Donovan: Oh, yes, quite often ... quite often.

Janis Kozlowski: And what was ... what were the causes of those crashes, did you ever hear, or know what happened?

Charles Donovan: Well, they used to - from Umnak, from Otter Point - they used to go out to Kiska and Attu – primarily Kiska at first, on bombing runs. And of course, the fighters would go out there too, but, mainly, the bombers, and the PBVs for observation. And I can remember this

one pilot from Tennessee, I forget his name right off the top of my head, but he was a pilot of a PBY. And he was on an observation mission over Kiska, and he momentarily lost control of the plane somehow or another. But, then he brought it back, and he was so close to the island, down to the island. He says, "Well, I'm down here, I'm gonna drop these two bombs I have." So, he did he dropped them.

Janis Kozlowski: [Laugh]

Charles Donovan: So [Chuckle] it was the first time that I could ever ... or I guess, that he had ever heard, also, of a PBY doing a dive bomb.

Janis Kozlowski: [Laugh] Yeah, that plane wasn't necessarily made for that purpose. But ... [Chuckle]

Lt. Athel Lee Gill
Now Listed as Dead

Lt. (jg) Athel Lee Gill, U. S. Naval Reserve, formerly reported missing in a plane crash 70 miles from Fairbanks, Alaska, September 18, has been listed as dead, according to information from the Navy Department recently received by his wife, Mrs. Dimple Maddux Gill of 929 Montrose Avenue.



The plane, a C-47 Transport Command, was on a routine flight from Anchorage to Fairbanks at the time of the accident. Lieutenant Gill was one of 19 persons announced by the War Department as missing in the crash.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. James Napoleon Gill of Silver Point, Tenn., Lieutenant Gill served as athletic coach and instructor at Smyrna High School prior to entering the service in January, 1942. A graduate of Smithville High School at Smithville, Tenn., and of Tennessee Polytechnic Institute at Cookeville, Tenn., he had been stationed in the Aleutian Islands for 23 months prior to the crash.

Surviving, in addition to his widow and parents, are three sisters, Mrs. L. A. Jared of Buffalo Valley, Tenn., Mrs. Melvin Holland of Decherd, Tenn., and Mrs. James Craig of Silver Point; and four brothers, Alfred and Floyd Gill, both of Silver Point, and Ewell Gill of Tullahoma, Tenn., and William L. Gill, aviation ordnance man third class, U. S., Navy, serving in the Pacific area.

Charles Donovan: No way.

Janis Kozlowski: Now, did you hear stories when the people came back from these different war fronts on Attu, or Kiska – or over at Dutch, for that matter too?

Charles Donovan: We didn't hear too many stories. The pilots, you know, they'd get together with their crews, and so forth. But, we, as radio personnel with the Navy, didn't hear too much about that. We heard about it, or course, but, you know, personally, we didn't get to talk to any of them about it.

Janis Kozlowski: Well, being a radio guy, did you hear any interesting messages?

Charles Donovan: No. Just basically the weather - that's all we were concerned about.

Janis Kozlowski: So was it ... did you not hear other things because they were coded, or you were just strictly, had one function?

Charles Donovan: We had one function, and we were only on the weather channel.

Janis Kozlowski: OK. So, there wasn't really ... you couldn't hear what was happening elsewhere – you couldn't contact ... you didn't hear airplane traffic, you didn't hear ship traffic?

Charles Donovan: No. No.