

HERBERT BUEHL
USS ARIZONA, SURVIVOR

#244

INTERVIEWED ON
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TRANSCRIBED BY:

CARA KIMURA

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Michael Stucky (MS): The following oral history interview was conducted by Michael Stucky for the National Park Service, USS *ARIZONA* Memorial at the Sheraton Waikiki, on December 4, 1996, 8:45 p.m. The person being interviewed is Herbert Buehl . . .

Herbert Buehl (HB): That's right.

MS: . . . who was on board the USS *ARIZONA* on December 7, 1941. Sir, for the record, would you please state your full name?

HB: Herbert Vincent Buehl.

MS: And when were you born?

HB: I was born January 20, 1922.

MS: And where was that?

HB: Monroe, Wisconsin.

MS: And in late '41, what was your hometown?

HB: Janesville, Wisconsin.

MS: Very good. What made you join the Navy and when?

HB: Well, I guess that's the only service that my dad would sign me up for, because in [1940], if you were eighteen years old, you had to have your parent sign the papers so that you could join the Navy. And he had talked to a friend of his that he worked with who had a son that went into the Navy and he was convinced that the Navy was a good place for me to join. So that's what I did, I joined in October 8, 1940.

MS: Did the economy have something to do with this, or was it more adventure, or . . .

HB: Well, very definitely, it was during the period of time of the depression. I didn't have the money to go to school or my folks didn't either. Jobs were at a premium. There wasn't much that a person could do and so I just figured that I'd join the Navy and get my education through the Navy.

MS: Now, your basic training was where?

HB: It was at Great Lakes, in Illinois, Chicago, Illinois.

MS: Do you remember about how long that was?

HB: It wasn't very long. I went in October 8 and before Thanksgiving of that year, my training was over. So it was about maybe a month and a half at best. Because the Navy was concerned about getting their complement on ship, up to the standard. And so they just, basically, had us there long enough to get our shots and do some calisthenics and training of that sort.

MS: So really the more particular types of war training that you were going to do was going to take place on board ship?

HB: That's correct.

MS: When did you board the *ARIZONA*?

HB: I went to the *ARIZONA*, I would say -- I went aboard the *ARIZONA*, I would say about December 7 of 1940.

MS: So you had almost exactly a year . . .

HB: Almost exactly a year on board. That's right.

MS: And what was going to be your job?

HB: Well, we had to take tests at school. That would be at Great Lakes. And my tests qualified me to be in the black gang, and so when I went aboard the *ARIZONA*, we all lined up on the fo'c'sle, or the forward part of the ship, and they read our names off as to what area we would be assigned to. And so I was assigned to the black gang. And at that time, I didn't know what division I would be in, but when I went down to the black gang group or to the office that they had, they said I would be a motor mac. Well, my dad always insisted that I should be an electrician so that I would have a decent job, so I convinced them that I should be in the electrical gang. And the ensign that was doing this work, he said, "Well, we can't keep changing these names around all the time."

But the first class that was the yeoman there said, "Well, it really doesn't make any difference."

And so they put me in the electrical group.

MS: Now, was the training really kind of a watch over somebody's shoulder, OJT kind of deal, then you get in there and do it?

HB: Well, pretty much so. As an electrician, there were four different gangs, what we call four different gangs. You'd either be in the power or in the lighting gang, or the IC gang, or the power distribution. And they assigned

me to the power distribution group. And then, there was one fellow there that kind of took me under his wing, a person that we referred to as our "sea daddy," so to speak. (Chuckles) And he just told me that if I ever had any questions, I should come to him and he would tell me the straight scoop so that somebody wouldn't try to get me into trouble.

But other than that, we had books that we read and so while I was on watch, I would read these books and we would study those, along with the work that we were to do and then we had our various jobs that we had to do in that particular group, to do the job the way we should. We tested all the circuits and all of those things, and they showed us how to do all of that.

But after about, oh I would say, six months, which would have been, I would say, about July, I told the chief that I would like to get into a different group. And so, they assigned me to a lighting gang. And then, my battle station was changed from the distribution room to the after repair party, which is what saved my life, because if I had been in the distribution gang, I'd still be there.

MS: That's right.

HB: Right.

MS: We will take a break now.

HB: Okay.

END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE

TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO

MS: Herb, what kind of activities did you have for December 6?

HB: A very good friend of mine and his brother, Kenny Keniston [F3/c] and his brother, Don Keniston [S2/c], and I went ashore. And we went over to Honolulu and we decided first to take in a movie in the afternoon, and then we went to a very nice restaurant and we had a very delicious meal. In fact, I can remember the dessert was a strawberry shortcake and we told the waitress that she shouldn't hurry, that we weren't in any big hurry. And so it was about nine o'clock when we got out of there. And so we just went out and walked around town and just took in some of the sights that were available. And when it got to be about eleven o'clock, we went to the barn where the busses would pick us up to take us out to Pearl Harbor, and they also had a restaurant there, and so we decided to get a waffle.

That seemed to be kind of a treat. And so we all had this waffle, just one waffle with syrup on it, and had that. And then we got the bus to go back to Pearl Harbor, and when we got there, we got the last launch that was going to go back to the ships.

And we had some other crewmembers from other ships that needed to get back, and so consequently, we really overloaded this launch. We couldn't even sit down. We all were standing up. And I would say the water was about eight inches from the gunnels and the coxswain said, "Whatever you guys do," he said, "don't move around or act funny," he said, "or we're going to tip this thing over and we'll all be in the drink."

And so we stood just as quiet as could be and he didn't go very fast, and he said, "Now, what I want you to do is call out the name of your ship so that I can drop you off at that ship."

And this would have been all battleships. And so, he dropped these men off -- I suppose we made two or three stops before we got to the *ARIZONA*. And then the rest of us got off at the *ARIZONA* and went below and actually went to bed.

Now, on the *ARIZONA*, we didn't have bunks like they have today. You either slept in a cot or you slept in a hammock. One or the other. In my case, I had graduated from a hammock to the cot, and so it was a little better sleeping. And we had bins alongside of the compartment, towards the outer bulkhead, and that's where we would store our cots and the hammocks, if we had any. And anyway, that morning, we had done that, and we had set up the tables which hung on the overhead. (Inaudible)

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

MS: What time did you get up in the morning?

HB: Well, we used to get up about 5:30 in the morning, because we had to clean up and get ready for chow, which was usually at six o'clock. But, by the way, my rating at the time was fireman, third class, just so that you know where I stood at the particular time. Even though I was an electrician striker. But we slept in the same compartment that we ate in and at the time, we had picked up all of our bedding, which was cots and the hammocks, and stored 'em in the bins that were located along the outer bulkhead. And we had set up the tables, which hung on the overhead, and we had our breakfast, and everything was going smooth. There was no problems [or] any kind of trouble. We'd gotten the tables back up in the overhead, and my very good friend, [*Ken*] Keniston was over by his locker, getting ready to go to Catholic services, which were over on the *NEVADA*. And the two of us were standing there, talking

about what we were going to do that day, 'cause we did have liberty. We could have stayed overnight, but we didn't. We weren't making that kind of money that we could stay, so we had to come back and sleep on the ship and so forth. And while we were standing there, [a] chief petty officer come running down through the corridor and said, "The Japanese are attacking. Close your battle ports and man your battle stations."

And so for a minute, we just kind of froze. But the First Class Electrician's Mate that was there said, "Well, if it's so, we might as well do it."

So we ran to the battle ports and closed 'em up, and then ran to our battle stations. Now I never even said good-bye to my friends. We just -- everybody was quiet. We just ran to our battle stations and mine was about four decks down, by the number three gun, and also the radio shack. And the first man there was supposed to get the headsets on and make contact with the engine room. That was our control center. And I did that, but I couldn't raise anybody. And so I stood there with the headsets on for a few minutes, and whether it was a bomb or a torpedo that hit the ship, I don't know, but it knocked the lights out. So I took the headset off and laid it down, and went over to the doorway that was on the top of a ladder that went down to the passageway between the number three and four gun. And I just stood there because I hadn't been given any permission to leave my battle station, and as I stood there, there was this terrific explosion. And it was just like a tornado had gone through the ship and it just pushed me from the top of the ladder to the bottom. And I have no idea how I got down there. All I know is that I was standing on the bottom of the ladder and so I just took my hands and I rubbed my body all over, and checked my arms and legs to see if I had any broken bones, or was bleeding, and I wasn't.

So I stepped through that doorway, into this passageway, and as I did that, there were several other men down there with me. But by now, the explosion had consumed all the oxygen in the air, and we weren't able to breathe. I mean, you just couldn't breathe.

So I dropped down on my hands and knees and I opened up the four dogs on the bottom. They were what held that door, made it watertight. And thank goodness somebody opened the four on the top, and we're doing all of this without being able to breathe. I mean, we just knew we had to do this, and there was some fellows that were losing it a little bit, but most of us had contained our senses. And when we opened the door up, there was oxygen on the other side, and so we could breathe. So we all went through the door and one of the men said, "Let's close that hatch so that we don't lose any more oxygen."

And as we stood there -- and I say this, one of the men, because we didn't know who they were. I mean, it was all black as pitch. And he said, "I think we ought to find out who the senior person is here," because whoever the senior man was would then be in charge.

And so we found out we had three ensigns and four enlisted men down there. And the one ensign then said, "Well, I'll report our condition."

And he found a battle lantern and went up the stairway, or the ladder, up through the number three gun, and out through the hatch that was in the overhang of this gun. And when he got outside, he found out that the ship was burning forward of us, and that it was completely damaged. There just wasn't anything left of it.

So he crawled back in again and came down and told us that we might as well abandon ship because the ship was on fire and there wasn't anything that we could do, and he would be the only one that would be able to tell us that we could abandon ship. And by that time, the water had already started to leak into the base of this number three gun, and so we all knew that we had to leave.

We crawled up through the number three gun, out through this hatch and there's a handle on that hatch that you can take a hold of and that's one time I thought I would be on the deck, and here I was maybe ten feet or better up in the air. And so I swung over to the ladder that was on the side of the turret and crawled down and then went on the Ford Island side of the turret, thinking, you know, that way, if they were shooting at us, that hopefully they wouldn't be able to hit us. Well, we had to have another little consultation there and we decided we're going to take the life raft off of the side of the ship, or this turret, and throw it in the water. But we'd forgotten about all the oil that had leaked out of the ship. And so when we jumped in the water, we couldn't find that life raft and this oil was covering all of our body, and so we were getting tired. It just isn't possible to swim because your skin breathes too, and we were just getting so tired.

And so I swam over to the quay, which is this large cement object out there that you can see today and climbed, put my hands up on the bumper and fortunately, there were two men standing on that bumper, and they pulled me up to my waist. And they said, "Now, you've got to get up the rest of the way yourself because there are other men that we have to pull out of the water."

But I was so tired that normally I'd have just fallen back into the water, but I knew if I did that, I'd most likely drown. So you get this extra energy and I forced myself up on this bumper. And as I did that, one of the other fellows had gone to the after end of the ship and we had some thirty-foot

launches tied up there. And he got one of those launches and started it up and brought it around by us. And he told us to jump in. He said, "I'm not stopping because there's Japanese fighters all over the place."

And so, I just jumped into this launch and I hit one of the benches. And since I was so oily and everything, I just about slipped [to] the other side. But I grabbed onto the gunnels so I wouldn't go over the side, and then I told him, I said, "There's a lot of other men in the water that we should maybe save."

And he said, "I'm not stopping." He said, "We've got to get over there to that Ford Island."

And so I took all of the boat hooks and anything I could get my hands on that could float and throw it on the water so that if there were people swimming, and if they got that far, then at least they had something to grab on to. And then we went over to the dock and climbed up on the pier and went into the basements over there.

MS: What house did you end up in?

HB: Well, it was one of the end houses. It was like a bomb shelter, 'cause it had a walk-in basement. And we went into this basement, and they told us that they wanted to get some mattresses to lay down for us, so that we could lay on these mattresses. Well, when they found the mattresses and brought 'em down there, they said, "Don't go in there and lay on those mattresses. We're getting the women and children from the island and bringing 'em down here so they can have a place to stay." And he said, "We want those mattresses clean."

So I walked to the end of this basement and when I got to the far end, they had set up a card table or something like that, and there were a couple of officers there taking the names of the men that got off the ship. And so when it was my turn, they asked me my name, which I gave to them. And they wanted to know what my serial number was.

And when I was in boot camp, they told me I can forget everything I ever knew, but don't forget that number, and I never have. It was 300-19-34. And I just assumed it was correct. They never said, "Well, that doesn't sound right to me."

So after looking it up later on, I knew that was the right thing. That's what they wanted to know.

And so, they said, "All of you that don't have clothes, we should maybe go up on Ford Island and go in some of the houses and see if we can't find

some men's clothes."

And so, one of the officers took us up there and he said, "Now, when we go in this house," he said, "I don't want you to touch anything, take anything other than men's clothes, and that's it."

And so that's what we did. We took the men's clothes and we went back to the house that we had just come from and distributed these clothes. And I put on these clothes that just about fit me. He was a little bit bigger around the middle at the time than what I was, so it was a little hard for me to keep 'em on. But anyway, I had something to cover me up. And then they said, "We want you to go up to the hangars. They need men up there at the hangars to make machine gun belts." They said, "The *ENTERPRISE* is out."

And I don't know if it was the *LEXINGTON* or which other carrier it was, but there were two carriers that were out, and they didn't have any munitions for the planes. And so we were supposed to make up these belts for the planes.

And so the rest of the afternoon, that's what I did. But by the time that it was time to go to eat, I was feeling kind of woozy from all of this oil and everything, but I did go over and get something to eat. But when I came back, I was feeling worse all the time. So I just found a corner where I could kind of curl up and try to get some sleep, but even in Hawaii, it gets cool at night, and I couldn't sleep at all. And by morning, I felt terrible. And so I told 'em that I had to go to the sick bay and see a doctor.

So I went over to the sick bay and fortunately, one of the fellows that I went to boot camp with was a pharmacist's mate and he knew me. And he said, "Herb, I'll take care of you." He said, "Now, you take your clothes off and hang 'em on the end of the bed and then crawl in bed."

And I said, "You sure you want me to get in bed?" I said, "I'm awfully dirty."

And he said, "Yeah," he said, "we don't have time right now to give you a shower." But he said, "You get in bed."

And he said, "We want a doctor to check you over."

So I would say about fifteen minutes later, this doctor came in and when he came walking over towards my bed, he said, "Where'd you get those clothes?"

And I said, "Well, I got 'em from one of the houses over on Ford Island."

And he said, "You know, you stole those from me." And he said, "I've got a good mind to court martial you."

Well, at that time, I thought, you know, being court martialed was [*the*] simpler thing of all, you know. And so he grabbed his clothes and he walked out of there and never did check me over. And so the pharmacist said to me, "Don't let it bother you, Herb." He said, "Tell me what your sizes are and I'll get you shoes and pants and shirt and socks, and whatever you need." And he said, "And now, you go in and see if you can't get the oil out of your hair at least."

So I went into the restroom that we had there and I tried to clean the oil out of my hair, but when I bent over, I'd get so dizzy that I just about fell over. And so I came out and I told 'em, "I can't do this myself." I said, "Somebody's going to have to help me."

So they sent somebody in there and I think they washed my hair at least about three or four times before they got the oil all out. And then I took my shower and cleaned up and they helped me with that too, 'cause that oil just sticks to you, you know. It's awfully hard to get off.

So I got cleaned up and got back in bed and put on some new skivvies, of course. We didn't wear pajamas or anything like that. We put our skivvies back on. That was our nightwear. And so I climbed into bed, and then I told this pharmacist, I said, "You know, I can't take a deep breath. It just feels like there's a knife being stuck in me when I breathe real hard."

And he said, "Well, I think we've got something here that can help you."

And so they got like an Indian pipe. It's a water pipe type of thing and he put water in the base, and then some sort of brown liquid in the top part of it. And it must have been electric, where he could plug it in so that it would form steam and then I would inhale this. And he said, "Now, when you inhale this," he said, "each time, try to breathe a little bit deeper and just keep doing that."

So I did it all day long. But that night, about, oh, I would say, six o'clock, or just before dusk, somebody hollered out, "There's a foreign object in the air and we don't know what it is." And he said, "We want everybody to get under the beds."

And so there was another fellow in there with me and he was a little worse off than I was yet, and so I helped him get under the bed. And I no sooner got under there and they said, "It's okay. We checked with the weather

men on the base here and they had let off a weather balloon to see which way the weather was blowing."

Because, you know, the planes would come in to land and they wanted to know what direction the wind was blowing from.

And so, anyway, we got back into bed, and then, the next morning I was feeling better, so they said, "You can report to the receiving center there at Pearl Harbor."

So that's what I did. I went over to the base and when I got there, I told 'em, "I've got to see a pharmacist again," 'cause I was -- I had trouble with boils -- one on my right shoulder, and then they were coming on my left leg.

And I said, "I want somebody to take a look at that and see what they can do."

So this old chief took a look at me and he said, "Oh, I can take care of that."

And he said, "You just pull up your pant leg," and he said, "I'm going to shave your leg off, you know, shave the hair off your leg," really. "And I'll freeze these," -- I think I had about three spots where these boils were coming in.

And he just cut 'em off. I never looked at what he did, but anyway, he cut 'em out. And he said, "You're never going to have any trouble with boils any more," and I never did. I never had a problem.

And he bandaged 'em up and I had a lot of [real] respect for those pharmacists. I thought they knew a lot, really. You don't have to go to a doctor every time to get taken care of. (Chuckles)

So anyway, then after I had that done, that night, I slept somewhere there. I don't remember all of the facts on this, but I slept somewhere. But then, the next morning, they said, "We want to make a book of silhouettes of these Japanese planes. Now, anybody that's ever worked on model airplanes," report to a certain individual that was going to be in charge of this.

Well, I was just going to report to him and the word came over the loudspeaker that the men whose names were being called out were reassigned. And so my name was called out and I was going to be sent aboard a destroyer, the *USS FARRAGUT*. And they said, "We're going to take you down to the dock and there will be a boat to take you over to the

ammunition ship. All of these destroyers will be coming in either tonight or tomorrow, and they'll come over and pick you up."

So we went out -- and there were several of us, many of us, that went over there from the various ships that they were going to be assigned to. But there wasn't any place for us to sleep on that ship, so they said, "Just take a life jacket that's in the bins up above the walkways where you're going to be sleeping and use 'em for pillows. And lay with your head against the bulkhead and your feet out in the walkway," so that's what we did.

And about midnight, a chief come down through there and very casually, hit us all on the bottom of the feet and he said, "You gotta get up. There's a destroyer that has just come in and it needs to be loaded with ammunition."

Now, when somebody hits you on the bottom of the feet, it doesn't take you long to stand up, I can tell you that. It just seems like an automatic thing. And so, anyway, they took us below decks, down into the compartment where they had stored the shells and so forth, and we formed a regular line that we can pass this ammunition to the destroyer. And after we completed that, they let us go back up and sleep some more.

So the next morning, we had breakfast, and then about nine o'clock, the *FARRAGUT* sent over a whaleboat to pick me up. And so I went aboard the *FARRAGUT* then and they put me in with the electricians, although they said that they couldn't rate me at the time because they didn't know if I was capable of doing the work. So it took about three months before I got my rating. And then I made third class.

MS: And there was a difference in the current systems between the two ships?

HB: Oh, they [*were*] terrifically different. On the *FARRAGUT*, being a destroyer, your battle station could have been anything. I was --- when we were down at the Coral Sea, I was a fuse setter on the number two gun. Then when we got the radar, they had me on the radar for a period of time and they wanted me to change my title to a radar man. And I told 'em that I wasn't interested in it. But I guess one of the reasons that they did this, when we were in the Coral Sea and on my watch, on the radar, we picked up ten Japanese planes coming in. We didn't call 'em that. We called 'em bogies, 'cause until you could identify 'em, you just called 'em bogies.

And they were about, I would say, roughly fifty miles from us. And the captain on the ship said, "Just keep watching 'em and tell me their distance."

And so every ten miles, I'd tell him how far they were from us. And he said, "I think we better warn the other ships."

We had three cruisers with us and three other destroyers. And so they ran up the flags for battle stations, and signaled over to these ships and told 'em that there were three -- well, a number of bogies coming in and that they should go to battle stations.

And the one -- our cruiser said, "Well, we haven't been able to pick 'em up."

And our captain said, "I don't care if you've been able to pick 'em up or not." He said, "If you don't want to get blown out of the water, you better go to battle stations."

And so that's what they did. And consequently, we just gave those Japanese a real run for their money. We --- every time they tried to hit us in from the side, we always turned towards 'em, which meant we didn't have as many guns to shoot at 'em, but they didn't have so much to shoot at either. And they did send two torpedoes down either side of us, but we -- I don't know if we knocked down any of those planes, but we sure scared the living daylights out of 'em and they didn't come back, I can tell you that.

MS: Didn't you say before that there was a difference between the *ARIZONA* and the destroyer -- there was AC and DC systems?

HB: Right.

MS: The electrical . . .

HB: Right.

MS: Which was which?

HB: Well, the *ARIZONA* was the DC ship. That's direct current.

MS: Right.

HB: And the *FARRAGUT* was an AC ship, which is alternating current. Now, the difference is when you touch a wire or a switch on a DC ship, it'll knock you off of it. On an AC ship, if you happen to do that and you're sweaty and you're grounded, or whatever, you hang on, because it's alternating back and forth and you can't -- unless somebody would throw a blanket over you or do something, so that they wouldn't get a shock and pull you off. You just couldn't get away from it.

And so that concerned this chief, you know, that I wouldn't maybe know how to do all that or parallel the generators, and all of that. But I'd done that so many times before that that just was no problem at all, you know.

So but the difference is on a big ship, you were assigned a specific job. And usually it was within your classification, whatever it was. But when you're on a smaller ship, you could do anything. I dropped depth charges, like I said, was a fuse setter, worked on the radar and whatever I was called on. Because they usually assigned the higher rates to the engine room, or places like that, and then the rest of us had to fill in whatever had to be done. And your first job is a military [*man*], whatever that is. You're a military man first, and so that's -- and I like that, from the standpoint that you learn so many different things to do.

MS: Let's stop right there and we're going to do . . .

END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO

TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE

MS: Now, we've had fifty-five years.

HB: Right.

MS: Hard to believe it's been that long.

HB: I know it. That's real hard.

MS: And you come back and you see your ship and the memorial . . .

HB: Right.

MS: . . . and I'm sure that, you know, the memories flood back.

HB: Right.

MS: What is your reaction? I mean, what are the feelings that come?

HB: Well, I'll tell you, the first time hit me the hardest. I mean, this is the third time I've been back, and the first time was the hardest because it's kind of like facing all your friends that you don't have any more. And at that time, I would get real jittery. It was like you had, you know, how you feel when you get real cold. You know, you just shake? Well, that's just the way I

was. And if anybody talked to me about the *ARIZONA* or whatnot, it wasn't that I didn't try, but I had a real hard time trying to talk.

But this time, that wasn't the case. I've been able to kind of get over that and I've prayed for all of these men on the ship. And I decided that I wanted to find out if I could find the address of this very good friend of mine, Kenny Keniston. And fortunately, the park service had that. And I want to try to get in touch with some of their family.

But another thing that I have to tell you that I was really impressed with, when we went up to Punchbowl and had that service. Just before the service was over, it rained. Just a little bit. It was just a mist, but it was just like tears from heaven. That these men remembered us too.

MS: Spirit is still there among . . .

HB: Oh God. I'm never going to forget it.

MS: You said it was the first time that hit you the hardest. When was that?

HB: Well, that was back at the forty-fifth anniversary, when my wife and I came back.

MS: It's been that long since you've had a chance to come back?

HB: Well, I've come back every five years, but I don't know how long I can continue to do that.

MS: Sure.

HB: But we wanted to come this time and of course, the thing that was so important this time, which we never even knew about until just a couple of months -- maybe a month ago -- and that's that the park service was going to make plaques of the known men, anyway, that survived the *ARIZONA*, and that they would be there in the visitors' center, under the mural. And I really felt very honored about that, that we too wouldn't be forgotten. And it's like I wrote in my letter to Mr. Campell, who's the president of the USS *ARIZONA* Reunion Association. I said, "We maybe gone, but at least we won't be forgotten."

MS: Does that summarize a bit of some of your feelings about where we should be as far as the lessons?

HB: Oh, very true. I think we should never forget Pearl Harbor. And always be alert. We just can't let down our guard. It's like a city with a bad police force, and that's the same way our service is to its nation. And they've got

to be prepared for anything that might possibly happen. We have never, in my opinion, been an aggressive nation. Anywhere we have ever gone, it's been to try to help people live a better life and to stop that fighting. And even that hasn't really succeeded like we had hoped for.

MS: Well, let's hope that with some of these messages, we can get that across finally and learn those lessons once and for all.

HB: Right. Well, I appreciate what you're doing. I really do. And I think it's going to be up to you people in another ten years, or maybe a little bit more, to keep this message alive, because all of us are going to be gone. I'm one of the youngest ones and I'm seventy-four, will be seventy-five January the twentieth of '97. So you can see there's not too many more years left there.

MS: That's right.

HB: And so many of the men have passed away already and we're going to have a service out there -- I think it's on Thursday. Isn't it Thursday?

MS: I believe so.

HB: That will inter four of our shipmates.

MS: Well, I'm sure, again, some of those memories and feelings will be very strong for all of you . . .

HB: Oh.

MS: . . . and this experience will be intermingled.

HB: That's right. That's very true.

MS: And thank you for your appreciation of our efforts, but without you and your efforts and the sacrifice of your entire generation, we wouldn't have any opportunities at all, so thank you.

HB: Well, I'll tell you, we were glad to do it. We really were. I mean there wasn't a man that I know of that wouldn't have fought to the death to preserve our nation. Because freedom is a gift that has to be fought for sometimes, and it has to be appreciated and understood.

MS: Yes.

HB: It sure does.

MS: Thank you, Herb.

HB: Okay. Appreciate that too.

END OF INTERVIEW