

**ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW  
#409**

**TOM MURRAY ANDERSON, JR.**

**USS *UTAH*, SURVIVOR**

**INTERVIEWED ON  
DECEMBER 6, 2001  
BY CAPTAIN DONALD FRASER**

TRANSCRIBED BY:

CARA KIMURA

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**USS *ARIZONA* MEMORIAL  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

Donald Fraser (DF): This is oral history interview number 409, conducted by Captain Donald B. Fraser, United States Naval Reserve, for the National Park Service and the USS *Arizona* Memorial at the Ala Moana Hotel in Honolulu, December 6, 2001 at approximately 12:40 [p.m.] The interviewee is Mr. Tom Murray Anderson, who was an ensign in the United States Naval Reserve aboard USS *Utah* on December 7, 1941. Mr. Anderson, for the record, please state your full name, your place of birth and the date of birth.

Tom Anderson (TA): Tom Murray Anderson, Jr. and it's April—I mean Spokane, Washington and April 26, 1920 is my birthday.

DF: What did you consider to be your hometown in 1941?

TA: That'd been Tacoma, Washington.

DF: What were your parents' names, sir?

TA: My father's name was Tom Murray Anderson, like mine, and my mother's Helen McGregor Anderson.

DF: And did you have any brothers or sisters?

TA: Had one brother and that was it. His name is Warren Barry Anderson. Just the one brother.

DF: Is he older or younger?

TA: Younger than me.

DF: Younger than you. Where did you go to high school?

TA: We went to Rochester Union High School near Tacoma and then I also went to Stadium High School in Tacoma, where I was a track man in my senior year.

DF: What events?

TA: Oh, I just ran the half-mile. I won the first and the last race that I had so I was unblemished record, except the state, they beat me over there at the state. They tricked me, I guess, double-teamed me or something!

DF: Eight-eighty, that's a tough race. How did, what attracted you to the navy and how did you come into the navy?

TA: It was through my mother. She had read in the paper that they were starting this V-7 program in which they took college graduates and people with at least two years of college and then to run them through the ninety day wonder midshipmen's school. That's how, from my mother. And that was down in Aberdeen, Washington where I was going to school. And so she got me in the navy.

DF: And when was that?

TA: See, I signed up, well it would be, it was probably about June of 1940.

DF: Did they—I'm not that familiar with the V-7 program. Were you a college student?

TA: I was a college student. See, the requirements was that you would be a college graduate, unless you had, like me, I had math and science, strong course in math and science and that got me in as a two-year certificate of graduation.

DF: So you had a two-year, you were in college for two years?

TA: For two years, yeah.

DF: And then did you come on active duty at that point or...

TA: Well, I went to, they had kind of a shakedown cruise for all the candidates. I was on the *Tuscaloosa* for a month and some others were on battleships and different—and then they decided whether they were going to send us to midshipmen's school or not. Then I graduated to midshipmen's school, then I was on, they call it the *Prairie State* in New York. And then we lived on

that ship. It wasn't like it was later but then I put in the three months course there, in New York, on the *Prairie State*, which is another name for—what was it—the *Illinois*, the USS *Illinois* is the old battleship it was.

DF: And then, and when you completed that training, what was your next assignment?

TA: Then I volunteered for duty immediately. I wanted to go to—I had no job and no prospect of one so going into the navy was getting me into a productive situation there.

DF: And this is 1940?

TA: Yeah, 1940, yeah. Well, I graduated in February 20, 1941 and we started in November, then we graduated in February.

DF: And at that time, did you, were you assigned to *Utah*?

TA: Yeah, that's right. We were all put in for what we would like to have. I know I put in for Asiatic duty, but I didn't get it. Thank god. But a lot of us did, they wound up over in the Philippines and places like that. But plus I got on board the *Utah* and was at San Pedro, California. That's where she was stationed at the time.

DF: And when did *Utah* come to the Hawaiian Islands?

TA: Oh, we came twice actually. When I got aboard, we came out in about April of 1941 and then they decided to remodel the ship and they sent us back up to Bremerton, so we went. And then after we had been remodeled, putting on modern anti-aircraft batteries and whatever, then they sent us back to Hawaii to continue the bombing and the—what is it called—two different kinds, horizontal bombing and dive bombing by the squadrons of the navy. And so we had just finished that Friday then Saturday we came into port and Sunday we were sunk. It went that fast.

DF: So let me understand you. You really, *Utah* was not really—how long was *Utah* in Hawaii when it returned the second time?

TA: Oh, let's see. We left there about September, I think it was. Yeah, we left there for—so September, October, November about three or four months we were there before. They were conducting the bombing practices on board the ship. So then we were just, we were all done with that on Friday before, Saturday before December 7, pardon me. And so we were all set to start stripping off all this protection. 'Cause when we were being bombed, we had directors, gun directors and gun mounts that had to be protected from the bombings. So they were just ready to start stripping all that off and getting, so everything was loose on the ship so that when it rolled over these timbers and things, they plugged up a lot of the access for the men to get off. Some just couldn't get off because they were just blocked by all this six-by-twelve timbers, twenty feet long were pretty heavy things to be moving around. So...

DF: Let's—I want to get back to that. It sounds very interesting. But I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about life in Pearl Harbor for a junior officer, such as yourself, life in Hawaii. What the liberty was like, shore leave, I should say.

TA: For officer, I was a junior officer at the time.

DF: Yes, sir.

TA: So when I went aboard the *Utah*, I was privileged to get a stateroom. Most of the time a junior officer wound up in the bunkroom by Turret One, I guess. But I was one of the three of the V-7s that were assigned to the *Utah*, so we all got staterooms \_\_\_\_\_ pretty good situation there.

And as far as being in Honolulu, well, I wasn't much of a guy for going on shore, what liberty or shore leave. I just pretty much stuck pretty close to the ship most of the time. But anyway, the attitude at the time was well, just, no big deal. The Japanese weren't any threat to us as far as we were concerned. I mean everybody kind of looked down on them and there was some kind of a story that some commander claimed, "Well, I've got the Japanese fleet surrounded. What'll I do with them?"

And said, “Oh, just let ‘em go.”

They weren’t going to sink the Japanese fleet at that time, ‘cause they had a—we just didn’t have any respect for them like we should’ve had as part of this surprise. They were so good, they did such a job on us there at Pearl Harbor. Of course, they had it all their own way then, but still. We know they did an excellent job of working us over, that’s for sure.

DF: Maybe talk a little bit more about what *Utah* was doing. She was the, helped with pulling the targets or helping with the targeting practice?

TA: Well, see the *Utah* was acting as a target for the area, high-level bombers of the army and the dive-bombers of the navy, so we were geared up to deal with that. And see, of course, we didn’t leave the ship when it was being bombed. In the old days, they used to drop 500 pound bombs on the thing and they’d go through a couple of decks once in a while, but with us we had 100 pound water bombs and then the small flash bombs for the dive-bombing practice so that’s what we were doing. And it wasn’t really dangerous. As I remember one time, one of those flash bombs landed on the

turret right on top of my head and it sounded like it was going to come right through the turret there but it just made so much noise, you know, just a hell of a bang and a crash! And so...

DF: So what was happening was the aircraft had dummy ordnance, not real ordnance?

TA: No. They had what they call little flash bombs. They had, so they made smoke and they also made a flash. So they could tell if they were getting hits or not but it wasn't intended to do any damage to the ship. It did a little damage, but not very much.

DF: But *Utah* was in fact a target.

TA: It was a target. Yeah, it was being a physical target. I remember one time they did hit us with a fifty-pound bomb. It shook the whole ship.

\_\_\_\_\_ the fifty-pound bomb. You wouldn't think there would be much of an impact, but it was. It just shook the whole ship, just from that one little bomb.

DF: And you referred a little bit to some of the protections that were aboard the ship to protect the equipment. Could you talk a little bit more about that?

TA: If you've seen some of the pictures of the *Utah* as it's being rolled over, there's this structure on top of one of the turrets and we called them doghouses. They were made of light metal, like a half-inch steel like this, just to protect the—they had directors and gun mounts that were underneath these doghouses. And so they, of course, they physically prevented anything from—we couldn't shoot any of our ordnance because they were covered up with those doghouses and then because they had planks on top of the deck of the ship so that the bigger bombs would just shatter the planks, but they wouldn't really do any damage to speak of. So the ship was pretty well covered with those timbers, six-by-twelve, twenty feet long, pretty heavy timbers. And so when the ship did start rolling over, those timbers slid around and blocked exits and entrances and I guess hit people also. So it became a real catastrophe when it started. And I was lucky as I was able to get off without getting hit, but I was on the quarterdeck at that time so I was

pretty good. They didn't have too many timbers right there, as I recall anyway.

DF: Could you tell us about that morning? Were you, you were aboard the ship? Were you up and already about your business or in your stateroom?

TA: No, see, what happened, I had had the watch that morning. I was officer of the deck in port and I was to relieve the deck at quarter to eight. We always relieved the deck at fifteen minutes ahead of time and getting ready to relieve. And that particular morning I'd been on a party the night before and didn't get into bed until about midnight I guess and so when it came time, I almost overslept my watch and I had, I didn't—my wallet and everything was back in the stateroom, so I just—and then I reported to the deck and then things started happening about the attack.

A kind of a strange thing happened there. There was a call out for the fire and rescue parties, as I recall. Some other people don't seem to remember that, but any time there was a fire, they had what they called the fire and rescue. Every ship would put a whaleboat in the water and then go to the

scene of the action or whatever it was. And so we had a lot of boats in the water at the time and but we didn't know we were under attack. Even headquarters didn't know we were under attack. And the first thing after this, they dive-bombed the seaplane base there in Ford Island. And but they were still—and then \_\_\_\_\_ this thing, the smoke and the fire, they called away the fire and rescue party instead of going to general quarters right away.

And in my particular case, I saw a dive-bombing attack take place. We saw the bombs fall, we didn't know what they were. I'd never seen a thing like that. \_\_\_\_\_ and something fell out of it. And \_\_\_\_\_ they said the bombs that were being dropped on Ford Island.

And then I saw another plane came down the side of the ship and did \_\_\_\_\_ and there's the meatball on the bottom of the wing. Then we knew what was going on, but not until they'd see that, the Japanese insignia on the bottom of this plane. And then of course, then I run over and turned in the general alarm. We had officers coming aboard the ship and they

didn't report to the quarterdeck, they just came up. Of course some of them just went down below decks as fast as they could go. And I tried to say, "What's going? What are you guys all excited about?"

But they didn't stop to say anything about it. They just kept on running.

DF: Well let me ask. The quarterdeck, were you, did you have a brow over to the shore or were you running boats from the quarterdeck? How were people coming and going?

TA: From the boats.

DF: From the...

TA: We were tied up to a mooring platform but we didn't go to shore. There was no place to go ashore except just on Ford Island. So everything was with the small boats. So we had starboard port and starboard brows. Of course the officers went on the port side and the enlisted men on the starboard side is the way it usually worked there.

DF: Where was the quarterdeck?

TA: Well, it was just beyond the smokestacks. It was sort of the after part of the, in between Turrets Two and Three, I guess it was. 'Cause there was a space there, it was kind of an open space there, what they called the quarterdeck.

DF: Oh, PORT-CHIPS?

TA: Yeah, SORT-SHIPS, yeah.

DF: Okay.

TA: Yeah.

DF: Okay, I was trying to understand where you were on...

TA: Yeah, so I \_\_\_\_\_ to the gangplanks were on either side of the quarterdeck and I was on the starboard side \_\_\_\_\_ then I went over

to the other side where the fellows were coming on board the ship. This was just before we had been torpedoed as I remember. I went to the port bow and told the boats, I said, "Get around the other side of the ship."

I knew that something was going but I wasn't really aware what it was but for them to get around where they'd be more protected from the attack if we were torpedoed on the port side. And some of the boats didn't get out of the way in time and they were sunk, 'cause just the blast of the thing sunk some of the liberty boats there.

And then of course I was standing right next to that one that the torpedo hit that sent a column of water I suppose a hundred feet, and all of it come down on top of me. I was standing there with my white uniform, knocked me down and it just, I didn't think it was ever going to stop coming. It just kept pouring and pouring down on top of me and I guess I kind of panicked when that happened. It wasn't just going to end anyway.

And then of course I went in and turned the general alarm in and got us started anyway. It turned out that that was a lifesaver. Some of the men that

were in the brig of course were always released any time you went to general quarters. So by sounding that general alarm, then I got the guys out. I didn't know that 'til fifty years later, for the fiftieth anniversary, and a guy told me, he said, "You know, I was in the brig and you saved my life when you turned in the general alarm!"

So they just turned him loose.

DF: Did you see the attack on Ford Island yourself? Or from your position on the quarterdeck?

TA: No, I didn't see that at that time. But later on I was on Ford Island when they were still attacking and then we saw the planes going overhead and the anti-aircraft fire wouldn't come anywhere near the Japanese planes apparently. But then we started hearing this shrapnel coming down all around us, kerchunk, kerchunk, kerchunk. We better get undercover somewhere. So we got into a warehouse and it turned out to be full of ammunition but it wasn't hit. It come awful close to being hit.

But then after the attack, we went outside and we found there was a big bomb hit about twenty-five yards from the corner of our building and the concrete wall just waved like a piece of canvas when that thing had exploded right next to the warehouse there.

DF: If I could take you back a few minutes.

TA: Yeah.

DF: It may have seemed like hours. While you were still aboard *Utah*, could you describe the attack on *Utah* itself and the events that unfolded and how she was lost?

TA: Like I said, the first thing I saw planes go past here. They didn't attack us, but they just flew past and then went over towards Ten-Ten Dock, to the strafing I guess. And then I went to the other side of the ship and actually I didn't see very much of the attack because although we were torpedoed on that side and like I said knocked everything out. And so it was pretty fast. It wasn't a lot of speculation about, you know, what was going on at that time.

Just—and of course, I had sent messages to the head of department that Jap planes were attacking, \_\_\_\_\_ we actually were hit. But he never did come to the quarterdeck, just for some reason this officer, Michaels I guess his name was, he started inspecting the ship after it had been hit and he never did come to the quarterdeck. So I had to kind of, don't know really what the problem was there, but he was at least notified that we were under attack but we hadn't been hit at that time. So when we were hit, of course, was that the torpedoes on the port side. And then of course everybody knew then we'd been hit with something all right. And by getting the general alarm going and then alerted them there was a serious situation. But as far as a lot of preliminary, I don't remember much about that.

DF: What happened after the torpedo struck?

TA: Well, the ship immediately started to list. But the force of the torpedo just kicked it over about ten degrees, just right, just immediately started the thing and after that it just kept rolling over to the port side. And then it went over real fast there. It just weren't any speculation about what was going to

happen. People were getting off the ship and sliding down lines and walking on the bottom and that's where a lot of 'em got killed as the Japanese come over and strafed the bottom of the ship while it was rolling over. I was far enough over the left side, the right side that I didn't get involved in that. So I was just lucky, I guess. 'Cause we were getting off the ship on the starboard side. Of course it was rolling the other side. So we just walked across the bottom and stepped off onto the—well, we had boats were in the water and they picked up people from the water. So that's sort of the way it was there.

DF: She rolled away from the shore?

TA: Yeah, away from the shore, yeah.

DF: And so the people, when they left the ship, they tried to leave towards the shore...

TA: Yeah, toward the shore, yeah. 'Cause all they had to do is just walk on the bottom as it was rolling over and then as I says we had ships, boats in the

water, so most of us, some of us got onto what they call the mooring platforms and then they picked 'em up from there \_\_\_\_\_ from the ship to the mooring platform and then the boats took 'em over to Ford Island. And we got away from the ships that way.

DF: Is that how you got away from the ship?

TA: Yeah.

DF: You went onto the mooring platform?

TA: Yeah, yeah.

DF: And then a boat...

TA: Boats picked us up and took us to shore. There was one incident, there was a Lieutenant Jones that had got into the water on next to the ship there and I tried to pull him, but he didn't want to get on, he wanted to stay down where he felt it was safe, I guess. But something just happens to people who panic

sometimes, you know, and they just want to get away from the action if you possibly can. Because I was ready to jump in and pull him out and then somebody else got a hand on him and pulled him out too. But that was one of the incidents that happened there, trying to get onto the mooring platforms.

DF: How much free board, if you will, was there from the mooring platform to the boat? Could you just step into the boat or did you have to...

TA: Ooh, well see, we had gangways and then what you'd do, you'd go down the gangway and then you'd get onto where the ships they had, they had a— what do they call it? It was a boom that went out from the ship and the boats tied up to this boom so you could walk out on the boom and then drop down into the ship, but you had some ladders, I think, like a Jacob's ladder, that you could go down to get down into the boats there.

DF: Trying to visualize the scene. So you were, the boat took you to Ford Island?

TA: Ford Island, yeah.

DF: And what transpired at that point, to you?

TA: Well, to me, I was on the beach and I could still see men coming off the ship and I yelled at them, “Get off of there!” and I said, “Abandon ship!”

That’s the closest thing I could come to at that time anyway. And when we got on the beach, they’d been doing some excavation, some pipelines and things and there was a big ditch there and I ordered the men all into this ditch. But then there wasn’t any room for me when I got them all in the ditch. It was, the stuff was coming straight down of course. But then a lot of the strafing was going to the sides so if you’re in the ditch, they’d be somewhat protected from the fire there. And that’s about the time we heard the shells—what do they call it—the shrapnel hitting the ground all around us there. Took shelter in that warehouse with, full of fifty caliber ammunition but I don’t think that would have been much of a hazard ‘cause it wouldn’t explode probably in a big bang. It would just go one at a time or something like that.

Anyways, so that's what happened on the.... Then they came around later on with trucks and picked us up and took us over to sub-base as I recall. I remember I had the, I was in a white uniform at the time and I was all covered with mud and oil. I finally took the jumper and just threw it away, 'cause I just didn't want to attract attention to myself as a white, with those white uniforms and then that black, dull background there.

DF: What was the, what were you thinking? Or were you thinking? What...

TA: Well, I don't think we were thinking much of anything. I remember that I never felt scared really. Some people—it wasn't until sometime later, a couple of weeks later. We had an alert that we were going to have another air attack. Well that made me scared that time, but not this time, particularly just things were happening that you just—I don't know how to describe it actually, but I don't recall anybody panicking or being really scared. You're trying to get out from under the attack all right, but it wasn't like later on when you're scared shitless that they're coming and going to do it over again

to you, so that was kind of the way it was. I don't recall it being panicked really.

DF: What could you see when you were at Ford Island and then later that day?

TA: Well, one of the things that happened there, you know, there was a midget submarine that was sunk inside Pearl Harbor and we saw that happen. We were on the beach at the time and we saw this big—they depth-charged the thing and a big cloud of black mud went way up—it wasn't a nice, white thing like you see in the movie, but this was just all black mud. And there were some Marines there and they told us, "Get back from the shore," protecting us from the attack of that, on that midget submarine.

And then, see then, they rounded us up and I think I was taken over to the sub base and then they put us to bed, just out on the baseball field at night. And that particular night is when the *Enterprise* planes tried to come in and land at Ford Island and we saw that happen. Everybody was shooting, just a big cone of fire was going up towards where these poor guys were trying to land on Ford Island. I think they got a few of them but it was—we didn't

get any sleep that night. We were just laying out there on the ball field. It wasn't until the next day they started getting organized with anything.

I remember they gave us some clothing. I had a set of red, I mean blue dungarees with a big, red ball in the corner. The Marine said, "Get that thing off of there before you get shot as a Jap spy!"

They had this kind of a big, red ball was on the front of the uniform. That was just a trademark, I guess, for the company that made those things. And we made plenty of noise when we walked back 'cause the Marines were ready to shoot anybody on sight too. They were all armed and ready to go. And so it was a pretty hairy night there. I think, I can't quite make \_\_\_\_\_ but when we were taken from the navy yard into the airfield there, the sub base, but that's where we spent the night anyway, at the sub base.

Then the next day or two, they had salvaged one of the Japanese submarines and they were up there pulling the torpedoes out, but they didn't make any provisions for what was going to happen when it came out. The thing, it

popped out suddenly and hit the ground and everybody scattered in all directions, but the thing didn't go off. It didn't explode. But it would've been all of us killed if that thing had exploded because even though I was a couple hundred yards away that, you know, the direct blast of something like that would just about get anybody there. But anyway that was the closest call we had when we pulled that darned torpedo out of the Japanese submarine.

DF: Did you—what was your division and—two questions—what was your division and did you take an accounting of your division after the attack, to muster?

TA: See. I think at that time I was in the—I had just transferred from the C and N Division to where I was, my general quarters station was in the magazine down about the fifth deck, \_\_\_\_\_ I don't remember exactly what division I was in. It just happened so fast you know that I was transferred to a new division and I wasn't able to get to my station of course, since I had the officer of the deck that morning. And as far as accounting for the men, I don't recall I ever did that. Somebody else did that, I guess. We didn't have

to account for—well, I know that somebody did of course, but that was after we had got on the beach and we were in the—what do they call ‘em—barracks. We were assigned a barracks with all the *Utah* survivors there. The captain and all the men and all the people were there.

(Conversation off-mike)

END OF TAPE ONE

TAPE TWO

DF: Could you again go through, after you got onto Ford Island, kind of what was, what activity did you engage yourself in and what did you see? What did you witness?

TA: Well, we can start with I got the men in the trench there. That was the first thing. And then it was, then there wasn't any room for myself and another officer, a fellow named Hogan that, so we were just kind of at odds. And

then we started hearing this shrapnel coming down all around us, kerchunk here, kerchunk, kerchunk. And we better get under cover somewhere. So we get into this warehouse and we were in there when the Japanese dropped a bomb on Ford Island. It came within about twenty-five yards of where we were in this warehouse. And when that went off, then we had to come outside and see what was going on. And as I remember looking up and seeing this high-level bombers coming over the top and at that particular time, and they weren't anywhere near us. The anti-aircraft fire was totally ineffective. They were about 1000 feet below where they exploded, but the thing is, you know, your fire directors sits or doesn't work until this gyro stabilizes so in the beginning, then none of the generals of course were stabilized so the fire was very ineffective anyway. 'Cause it takes at least a couple of hours to get the gyros going again. So we were just local controlling all this firing back at the Japanese.

DF: Do you remember seeing people coming out of the water on the other side of Ford Island, where the other ships were?

TA: No, I didn't see. We were picked up by a truck and taken around to where the ferry was. And I remember the one that \_\_\_\_\_, the *Nevada* was going down the stream and she was all on fire. And the bridge was all fire, a column of fire. The bow was—and the bridge of the ship. And then they got us over there to the navy base. Anyway, that's the one thing I do remember seeing that *Nevada* going down the stream, all on fire.

DF: Do you recall the cruiser that was behind her?

TA: No, I don't. Let's see. There's so much. You've seen so many movies and pictures, kind of hard sometimes to differentiate what was actually happened or if that's something that you saw in the movies. But no, I don't remember anything about that. I remember there was just some story about one of the cruisers went to sea on the other side, the north side of Ford Island. And that's where, of course, they'd go around the island when they were leaving. They'd come in from kind of like counter-clockwise thing. So everybody was going away from us then when we were on that, 'cause then I was on the other side of the island, so I wouldn't have seen that.

DF: Did they put you to work? Did you...

TA: Well, yeah, I was put on the inshore, not the inshore, but the—what do they call it—the manpower pool. The first few days, the ships that were there, they would call for drafts of men because almost all of the ships that were sunk, they absorbed those crew members in short order because most of the ships were undermanned, maybe seventy-five percent manned of their crew so they sucked up practically all of the survivors right away. It didn't take long. Three hundred men to go to this ship, or 200 men to go to that ship. And so there was a manpower pool and they would just round up as many as they needed and sent 'em out to some ship and away they'd go.

So that was \_\_\_\_\_ and then finally I got involved in what they call the inshore patrol. They were going through the manpower pool pretty good. Like I say, got most of them taken care of and they had to find something else for us to do. So I volunteered for the inshore patrol and they put me on a Japanese sampan for a year, a fishing boat. The *Kasuga-maru* was my ship for a year down there. So I got sent to Hawaii.

DF: What was the name of it?

TA: *Kasuga-maru*. It actually was a YP-169 is what it was but it had the name on the ship, on the board, and it was carved right into the stern of the boat. And then they had the Japanese flags on board and so those guys were Japanese when they were at sea and they were Americans when they came back to base. So I had no confidence that they would—if we'd have been captured, they would've been all just right out there with the Japanese, I'm sure. That's just the way it was because we had—there's a place called Kewalo Basin—is that still out there? Honolulu area? That's where all the fishing boats tied up and so we were sent out there to choose a boat for our inshore patrol. And some of the guys sneaked up on some of the Japanese fishermen and they were talking, "We got Nippon!"

They were listening to the Japanese radio. They were all excited about that. I don't know what they were supposed to be doing, but anyway they were pretty much loyal Japanese, I think. You know, they talk about they did such a great job of volunteering for service. Well, that's the Japanese way anyway. The families always get together with the families when they're

sent out to war. So there wasn't anything, special preference, patriotism, as far as I was concerned. There was quite a few of them were rounded up shortly after Pearl Harbor as suspicious characters, I guess you might say. So anyway, it was kind of a different situation.

One of the things that they did, all the officers were out there in Pearl, they gave us all forty-fives right after the attack, so we were all armed and prepared to enforce our will if there was anything that we wanted them to do and you knew that we'd shoot. Anyway that was one thing, we were all armed. In fact, I had my pistol through the whole war, I think. I never had to turn it back in until it was over with.

DF: Where did you live when you were in this duty?

TA: Well, of course, for the first, the ship was my home in the beginning. And then, of course, then later on I married a Hawaiian lady and I brought her over to the States. And we lived with my folks. And I didn't really have a home until after the war was over. But I lived with my family.

DF: Oh, my question was when you were part of the inshore patrol, security...

TA: Oh, oh, oh, oh. We lived on the boat. That was our home. Well, we did have—what am I trying to say? I think we could go, I think they had—what do they call that? The sub, they had a sub base, but I don't recall we ever spent any time at the sub base. Just because they had us pretty busy patrolling. We'd go out at night and then patrol all night and then come back in during the day and take care of whatever we had to do. But really, the boat was our home.

Oh then later on we were sent down to Hilo, Hawaii and the old gunboat *Sacramento* was our home. We were on board the ship for meals and sleeping, and whatever. But we'd go out with the boats at night and patrol the harbor out there at Hilo.

Then we started making trips around the island, clear around the island of Hawaii. We'd, about every ten days, we'd go and make the rounds. And the job was just to harass any Japanese submarines that might be out there, to keep 'em down so they couldn't charge their batteries and things like that.

So but I think that if we'd ever come across a Japanese submarine, I wouldn't be here today because there was no way that we were going to be able to attack, unless we just happened to be right on top of it.

They told us that you couldn't drop depth charges less than 300 feet because it would be dangerous to us, but we figured that by god, if we got a Japanese submarine, we're going to go alongside and drop all our depth charges, blow both of us up. We were the first kamikazes, I guess! But we knew it was the stupidest thing. You're going to go out and if you lived long enough to get alongside a sub, you're not going to drop the depth charges at 300 feet, no way. You're just going to blow the whole place up. That was our attitude, anyway.

DF: Did you have command of the YP?

TA: Yeah, I was. They made a mistake. I was supposed to be called officer-in-charge but COM-14 assigned me as commanding officer of the YP-169. Said that I really wasn't supposed to be and when you're a small boat,

you're not a commanding officer, you're just an officer-in-charge. But I was commanding officer!

DF: And how long did you serve in that capacity?

TA: For about a year, I guess. They built a sub base down at Hilo and things were starting to shape up. We were getting rid of those old boats. You know, they had a thing, the inshore patrol was made up of, oh, converted yachts and fishing boats and all kinds, anybody that they could put a depth charge on and send 'em to sea. Did you ever hear of a thing called the ping line out there in front of Pearl Harbor?

DF: I have heard of it.

TA: Yeah, they'd have ships that weren't assigned to any particular duty. They'd put 'em on this ping line and the idea was to of course make that impregnable for no Japanese submarines could come in and out. So that was quite a situation there. They'd have an extra boat come so they'd have to

shuffle all the boats in their ping line and then they'd lose one, they'd have to shuffle 'em all. So they had concentric orbits around.

They were just—we didn't have any way to tell where we were except somebody breaking the blackout and then we'd figure out where that was and use that just to navigate our boats, 'cause we didn't have any sound, you didn't have any radar. All they had was—you didn't have a Fathometer on board, you just had—what did I have? All I had was just the engine and—anyway, there was no way to tell where you were out there, except by the reference of other boats. It was pretty haphazard.

I remember one time I just made a turn and a boat came right up my track. I just barely missed the guy out there. So it was pretty hazardous place to be.

DF: Did you stay in the navy?

TA: I made lieutenant before the war was over and I decided to get out of the navy. I'd been, oh, passed over a couple of times and I know I went before an interview with a captain, I guess, in Seattle. He says, "Well, it's better to

make your mistakes then instead of now,” to kind of encourage me but I just decided I’d rather be a forester than a naval officer.

And I married a Chinese-Hawaiian woman at the time and they weren’t really welcome in the wardroom, in those days, the minority people, you know, so. It’s one of those things, I made the decision just to get out of the navy. I stayed in the reserves, though. I did do that. I had a wife and three kids and \_\_\_\_\_ jobs in the naval reserve helped to put some meat on the table. And so I put in my twenty years in the reserve. I guess they figured I didn’t want to be an active duty really, ‘cause it just wasn’t a thing to do, I think, at that time.

DF: When you think back on December 7 and the *Utah*, losing the *Utah*, what comes to mind? What’s the most memorable, the most significant thought and feeling that you recall?

TA: Oh, a lot of the comrades that I had lost. Some of them that had been real close to me, they were lost that day and I know that’s something we can never replace. Just the fact that they weren’t there any more is kind of hard

to accept the fact that we had lost them so quickly. I don't know. It's just kind of hard to single out any one thing to me anyway. But the fact that we were attacked in such a surprising manner. Does that answer your question at all?

DF: I think so. Is there anything that you'd like to say that we didn't think to ask that...

TA: Oh, I think you're pretty thorough here. And have I covered all your questions to your satisfaction, you think?

DF: Oh, I think you have, sir. I thank you very much.

TA: Okay.

DF: I thank you for your service.

TA: Thank you, captain.

DF: Let me ask you one more question. I did think of one, I'm sorry. Have you been back before now?

TA: Oh yeah, we've been back about every five years. We started in 1966 with the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association and I came back in '71. And I didn't make it for '76. That was about the end of my job. I've only missed, I think, a couple of them now. I didn't make it for the fifty-fifth, 'cause my wife was going through dementia so she couldn't come this last time and then she finally passed away. So I've been very active in the Pearl Harbor Survivors chapter in Seattle and one in Tacoma. But now that I can't get around much, I've got this Parkinson's [Disease] and I've got the—what they call that stuff? That eye condition. Oh, what the hell is that? Cataracts. I'm scheduled for some cataract operation pretty soon. So that's just some of the things that happen to you too. Did I answer your question?

DF: Yes sir, you have and I thank you very much.

TA: Okay.

DF: Thank you very much. And thank you for your service.

TA: And thank you sir for interviewing me here. I've been told to get in and tell my story. I guess it would give me a chance to do that too.

DF: We appreciate it.

TA: All right. Thank you very much.

END OF INTERVIEW