

Taped interview - December 18, 2003

Good tape quality.

SIDE 1:

Interviewers: Give your full name

Schenck: Oh, give my name now? Martin B. Shenck

I: This is Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> 2003... Your birthday Martin?

S: Sept. 7<sup>th</sup> 1922

I: We are at Martin's residence 1526 Cub Run Highway... Interviewers are Mike Kenny and Mike Johnson from Western Kentucky University.

**World War II:**

I: Martin were you drafted or did you enlist?

S: I enlisted.

I: You enlisted... where were you living at the time?

S: Perth Amboy, New Jersey

I: Why did you join?

S: I didn't have nothin' else to do.

I: Okay.... Why did you pick the service branch you joined, and what branch was that?

S: The Navy.

I: Okay... why did you choose the navy

S: I was on the Higgle 48 and it was a beat up job, like a destroyer and we used to make run into the harbor and out to New York.

I: So your first service was on the East Coast

S: Yeah

I: Okay, how long did you say on the East Coast before you transferred? What year did you join?

S: I joined in 1937.

I: How long were stationed on the East Coast then?

S: About the time that I enlisted and I was called to active duty.

I: Now did Pearl Harbor... I mean when did you first go out to Hawaii?

S: I went out to Hawaii in 1938.

I: So you were there about a year

**and then on down the tape....**

They talk about Pearl Harbor.... He was on the Helena, which was refitted after the attack

Shark attack and rescue

Submarine duty - served there till the end of the war

After the war they went to San Francisco --

He left the Navy at the end of the war and then enlisted in the army.

Peace time training

**Korea:**

getting a little confused  
7<sup>th</sup> infantry division...

Saw combat...

First base at Poisson

He was in Korea about 6 months

Went up to the Yaloo River... fought Chinese

Said Korea was cold, but couldn't remember the battles

Never wounded

Fought all the way back down to the Diemsee

Went to Europe in 1947 with the Army

He went to France first, but then ended up in Germany at the constabulary.

Russians on one side... they were guarding the border.

He stayed in Europe till he was activated for Korea. He was in the 7<sup>th</sup> ID

**Vietnam:**

11<sup>th</sup> Armored Cavalry 1966, 2<sup>nd</sup> squadron, Echo troop

Stationed around Swan Lock... used to go up into the iron triangle

Rubber plantation - Michelin mentioned

Track vehicles 113 (a box with six wheels on it)

Vietnamese woman on a fence... grabbed her and pulled her onto their vehicle

He was platoon sergeant with about 40 people under him

Cleaning out bunkers where there were bombs and things that had been left. Concussion would kill a lot of the men. They would be bleeding from their ears and they would have no teeth.

Spray dust (Agent Orange) to knock down trees. Killed everything including a deer that popped up in front of him.

The enemy tried to ambush them as they took tracks out. The would blow charges on the side of the road.

He was shot in the leg in Vietnam while he was outside the track.

He won a purple heart in Vietnam.

Delivered a baby in one of the rice patties.

They called him Swamp Fox in Vietnam... because he was a good tracker.

**Memorabilia:**

Solomon Islands campaign ribbon

Combat infantry bag

Sliver Star

Gun

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Purple Heart - 2 (he was wounded once in the shoulder and once in the leg)

Good Conduct Medal - Army and Navy

WWII American Defense Medal

Asiatic Pacific Campaign Ribbon

American Campaign Pacific Ribbon

WWII Victory Medal

Germany Occupation Medal

National Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal

Vietnam Campaign Ribbon

Philippians Ribbon

Taiwan Ribbon - Republic of China

State of New Jersey distinguished service record

**Military Life:**

Almost never wrote... maybe once a year.

Good hunting in Cambodia.

One good luck charm - a medal that he kept in his pocket. A Religious medal. Sent to him by his sister when he was Korea. Taped it up to keep it safe. He still had it in his pocket during the interview.

All his brothers served in the armed forces in different areas.

SIDE 2:

Can't remember the day he left the army.

August 20, 1970 is when he left.

He went to work the following year at the GE factory in Louisville, KY.

A member of the POW, American Leaders, Kentucky Colonel, Pearl Harbor Survivors and, 11<sup>th</sup> Armored Cav. Association.

Never went back to Pearl Harbor as a civilian.

Got his college degree in 1999 in Anthropology. Went on a trip to Honduras.

Never had any flashbacks from combat.