

TAPE NO. 33M  
Coast Guard: John "Muddy" Waters  
Retired

Today is the first day of May and I am in Orange Park, just outside of Jacksonville, with a guy known as "Muddy" Waters, John Waters and I won't take any more away from the tape, so John, it's yours.

Thank you, Sam. Well, I'm out of the Class of '43, we graduated a year early in '42 due to the war coming on and I'll talk a little bit about that later on. What happened the night of Pearl Harbour.

I'd like to start back a little bit before I came into the Academy. I was born in Eastern North Carolina, you know the Southerners, the old Confederates are somewhat like the Prussians - the war years, when the warriors came back. I remember when I was a small kid in the 2nd or 3rd Grade and every Confederate Memorial Day, it's now called Veteran's Day, all the kids would bring flowers to school and we would march around the cemetery - around this big Memorial with the Confederate Soldier with his gun up there - and throw our flowers on the grave and the Parade was led by the College Band and the National Guard marched in it and this was only 10 to 15 years after WWI. I can still remember the old open touring cars and about 8 or 10 Confederate Veterans in their grey uniforms, riding there and we would throw our flowers onto the grave and I remember the other kids in the 3rd Grade said, "they've got a 1000 Confederate Soldiers buried under there." (I don't think there were any, I think they were buried in another part of the cemetery).

I was impressed with the Military at the time and I used to go down and see such things as "Hell's Angels" and "Wings" and sit through three performances, this was around '33 or '34', and I can remember coming out of the movies and saying, "I'm never going to get a chance to fight the Red Baron, and all." Well, you know what has happened since, we have had about three wars and a bunch of other engagements!

So, I couldn't quite wait so when I was 16 years old, I was a big guy, I played football, boxed in High School, I lied about my age and got into the National Guard at age 16! By the time I was 19, at which time I entered the Academy, I was a Sargeant. I probably shouldn't say it now - somebody from the General Accounting Office may be watching - I'm still collecting retirement for these years in the National Guard Service, whilst I was still a minor. Anyway, I went on the 1938 Third Army manouvres in Mississippi, which was the first big manouvres since WWI, and then I went off to North Carolina State College in '38 on a football scholarship. They transferred me over to the Head Quarters of the National Guard. Most of the football team belonged to the National Guard because we could make \$10 or \$15 per

month that way.

After being at State for a year I began to think that football was not it was in all the world. I could see the war coming in Europe so I asked for an appointment in one of the Academies. I went off on manoeuvres with the National Guard again - came back covered with red buttons and hadn't had anything to eat but corned beef hash for three weeks, and this will get you Sam, one Sunday the word got out that Field Kitchen was going to cook up some chicken. I was a Sargeant then and I walked over to see if I could get a little advance chicken and I happened to notice the cans they were taking out - these thngs were canned in 1917 - before WW1. I don't think I ate any chicken that day!

In any event, when I got back from the '39 manoeuvres I had two letters waiting for me - I had taken the competitive exam at the Coast Guard Academy. One letter said, "you will be attending \_\_\_\_\_ as a Coast Guard cadet of the United States Coast Guard, report to the Marine Hospital at Norfolk." The other was from a Congressman saying "you have been appointed to the Military Academy at Westpoint, you are to report to Fort Bragg."

Well, I didn't know quite what to do at that point. Actually, I kind of had my eye on the Naval Academy. This was during the Depression, so you didn't shop around much, so I figured the best thing to do was to go back up to North Carolina State and ask the Colonel up there - the R.O.T.C. Professor, a regular Army guy and WW1 hero! So I went up and I said, "Colonel, what should I do? I've got an appointment to Westpoint and I've got another one to the Coast Guard." He said, "Waters, it really depends on whether you want to keep eating out of a mess kit or you want to eat off of a white linen table cloth!" He said, "you're both going to be in the war when the War gets going."

So, I thought about that and I said, "that's pretty good advice", plus, I figured the Coast Guard was going to see more action in Peace time. I thought about that some 4 or 5 years later, when I was on a Trooper and we were sitting at the Ward Room table, had a beautiful white cloth and the waiters, the Mess boys with their white jackets, serving the food and at every porthole these G.I.'s were looking in at us. I thought back to what the Colonel had told me and I thought, "I think I'm better off eating off a white table cloth."

Anyway, I entered the Academy in July of '39 and they took 75 people in and at that time the average class entering the Academy had been about 60. When I got there, there were only about 25 left in each Class. The Academy was routinely washing out about two thirds of the people and nobody quit - they just washed out.

So they picked up some of us that had had some experience in the Military and the National Guard and we stood Duty Officer watches and because the upper classes were at sea on the Cruisers and I could remember the morning of September 1st, 1939, the switchboard watch called me as I was the Cadet O.D., and said "The Germans have invaded Poland", and I woke up the Commissioned Officer of the day, Joe Cerins, and I said "Sir, Germany has invaded Poland" and he said, "Are you sure" and I said, "that's what the switchboard watch tells me, Sir", and he said "Well, a couple of more years and we are going to be in it!" I can remember that day very well....

Well, within 10 days, somebody was doing some fast thinking because they ordered 75 more Cadets into my Class, so we had 150 - that was by far the biggest class that the Coast Guard had ever had. We were over half of the Cadets in the Corp. Of course we couldn't do much about it.

Anyway, one can tell a lot of stories about the Academy. One of my favorite ones is, and the only problem about this is that about 15 to 20 guys claim to have been in on this, and there were really only 4 of us. You can remember on the night of the Ring Dance - I don't know whether it was when you were in the Academy, or not, Sam - but the 4th Class could ransack the upper Classmen's rooms - tear them up - I don't know when the custom started but it was there when I was there - so the night of the Ring Dance, the second Class and the third Class were at the Ring Dance and there was one third classman that we had an unholy hate for. Later I found that he was a pretty decent guy - but you know fourth class hate third class as a general principal.

That night, instead of ransacking all the rooms on the deck we made all the rooms ready for inspection, waxed the deck and the whole works, except this guy's room and we drew a chalk mark right down the middle between his bunk and his room mates, fixed his room mates half up and then we took everything and we took his bunk apart, screw by screw and threw the screws out the window, took his clothes down and shook talcum powder - it was a real job, and nothing was higher than this above the deck. Well, while we are in the middle of all of this the door opens and here is the Commissioned Officer of the day, a Lieutenant J.G. and "Long John" Forty, and we all snapped to attention and I said to myself "we're going to get Class 1 for destroying Government property", and "Long John" looked at that and he said "My.....my..... I don't think I've ever seen a more complete job", and he turned around and he walked out!

So, the rest of the time at the Academy, was like everything else, except to get down to Pearl Harbour. The day of Pearl Harbour. Everybody who was over 15 yrs old can remember

what they were doing that day, to this day.

I remember that afternoon I was sitting down writing a letter to the Commanding Officer of the "Pamlico" at Newberg, and his name was Harvey Deihl, (now you knew Harvey, I'm sure) tough guy, but when I came to the Coast Guard I had the idea, being from Eastern North Carolina, that the Coast Guard was the "Pamlico", it was a 158 ft. cutter and laid alongside the finest residential area in Newberg, North Carolina, drew only about 3 ft - to get up those rivers, and all..... and they had three Officers aboard and Sunday afternoon or Saturday morning you would see those officers there in their whites and a crew of about thirty in their white uniforms and I thought "Boy, this is Military glory", and I wanted to go down and visit the "Pamlico" and Harvey Deihl whilst I was on leave. I didn't live far from there.

Somebody came in and said that the Japs had attacked Pearl Harbour and, to make a long story short, there was a lot of excitement and the next thing you know the enlisted men at the Academy had put Lewis machine-guns on top of the building. (I don't know where they thought the planes were coming from).

Then at 6.30 that night somebody had some war plan that they actually adhered to - a messenger came round and said "Attention in the wings, please Sirs, the class of '42 will graduate on December the 18th, '41." And the young men let out a cheer.

You know, all those young men, as soon as war starts, think, "Boy, this is it - let's go". About one hour later the messenger came around in the wings again and said, "Attention please Sirs, the class of 43' will graduate on June the 19th, '42."

Well, everybody let out a yell and there wasn't much studying done that night. I think somebody went and opened some war plans that afternoon down in Head Quarters. We studied pretty hard the rest of the six months we had to go. One thing that eased the situation a little bit, Sam, was my Class averaged about 2.1/2 yrs in college before they went into the Academy, you know, it was the Depression, and the competition was intense. Frankly, when you came out of some of these Southern High Schools you had to have some College to even have a chance - most of these guys came out of High School came from Massachusetts and California.

My Class had just 3 yrs at the Academy - although in fact we had some College graduates. Well, when we graduated some of them got married that day and I had one Class mate, we had ten days leave before reporting, who waited until the tenth day and then he got married in Boston on the tenth day and then he went off.....and he was later killed when his ship was torpedoed and I asked his wife after the War, when I

came back in '46 from China, "it was a terrible thing that you and Bob never got married until the last day and then he was killed a year later."  
She said "John, we had been married ever since Bob was a Third Classman - he was a College graduate.

So anyway, we went off from there to the War and I got to Boston and had picked the "Ingham". I was high enough up in the Class and got my choice. When I got to Boston, nobody knew where the "Ingham" was. She was operating with the British Task Force somewhere up in the North Atlantic and so we fooled around in Boston for a little while wishing we could get on into the War, and all, I made some contacts with the Navy and they had an Attack Teacher in Boston - there were only two on the whole East Coast and they were British - and I got myself assigned to this Attack Teacher. So I spent a month as a Sergeant Instructor to this Attack Teacher. Of course I had never commanded attacks.....but you could follow the bug.

Well, one Friday, there was a Lieutenant Commander, his name was McFadden, in charge of this thing and he said "I want you to come here on Saturday and Sunday. You've got two Coast Guard Commanders coming through here - and I want you to run them through the Attack Teacher, so I said "Yes Sir".

Two guys, Jimmy Hershfield and George McCabe. Of course these guys were like God - you know, three stripes plus McCabe was going to be my skipper on the "Ingham", if I ever got to the "Ingham". (I don't think either one of them knew anything about anti-submarine warfare - or anything like that - nobody much in the Coast Guard or the Navy - either one!)

These guys were seamen and experienced Officers and we went through the thing and I think did fairly well - that was Saturday. Then we came back Sunday, and I had the impression, looking back over the years, that these guys had had a pretty big Saturday night - they looked a little under the weather it appeared to me but I wasn't going to ask them about it, but boy that day they couldn't do anything wrong, they got one hit after another. They said - "Thank you" and they shoved off and within 4 months both of them got a "U" boat! McCabe on the "Ingham" and Hershfield on the "Campbell", and I always said to myself "Gee, you're a good instructor!"

Well, at that point, Sam, they finally found out how to get us to the "Ingham" so they picked up a bunch of us and they loaded us aboard an old converted lake freighter. (Picture shown) The reason I want to show you this is because you have to realize that aboard this antiquated, old tub they loaded about 275 Army, Navy, Coast Guard and Marine personnel, of whom there were about twenty were Coast Guard

Officers. I remember Bob Lecky was aboard, he was a Lieutenant Commander/Engineer, going to one of the three '27's - there was Larry Davis, there was Casey Phillips, who I think was going to the "Delane", who was later killed on the "Leopold", they had about four or five of my Class aboard and they had several Reserve Officers.

Anyway, they put them aboard this antiquated, old tub and we sailed in a convoy from Boston. We hadn't been at sea for but two days when we found that there weren't enough Life Jackets to go around so the Executive Officer, all of the people on this old tub were Naval Reservists, came around and said there weren't enough Life Jackets - they forgot to get enough so he thought it would be a good idea if the Officers were to give up their Life Jackets for the Enlisted men!

Well my thought was that it took a heck of a lot more to educate me than an Army Private, because a Private .....but, never-the-less it was about all you could do was to go ahead and do it, which we did. Fortunately, we didn't know what was going to happen because we might have turned that ship around, but the Germans had broken the British Naval Code before we left Boston and they already knew the routing of that convoy. We had a very weak escort consisting of a Canadian Destroyer and three Corvettes. And, to make a long story short, Doenitz, the German "U" boat C and C mustered a patrol out of about 15 "U" boats, called "Group Field" south of Greenland, south of the Denmark Straits, in the Greenland area, where we had no air cover, and the night of November 1st they attacked. Sank 7 ships that night and the battle went on for the next four days.

To make a long story short, we lost 15 out of 37 ships and there were 5 ships in the column with "Gemini" and after that night Jim and I were the only ones left and the standing joke was, to get a little black humour, that the Germans would not waste a torpedo on the thing!

Several funny things happened there and it helped if you got a little bit of humour then amidst all this slaughter - I mean it was a terrible slaughter, hundreds of men were lost with their ships.

We were down in the galley waiting for the hot bread to come out - they were baking bread - it had been quiet for a couple of hours and a ship had been torpedoed a couple of hours before, and the cook was cutting it up and had put Spam on it when suddenly there was a violent explosion and we were lifted about two feet in the air and then we all went sprawling and somebody yelled, "That's us boys" - we thought we had been torpedoed - and Bob Lecky started up the ladder ahead of me - the ladder was not wide - somehow, when we got to the top of that ladder I was ahead of Bob Lecky. I was an Ensign and he was a Lieutenant Commander but I guess I

moved fast.

Well, it turned out that we hadn't been torpedoed - but an ammunition ship that had been hit to our fore-end had dropped astern burning and had blown up 12 miles astern of the Convoy. The explosion was so violent. There was a small Navy tug with it, and his engines went off line from the shock. The Quarter Master on the Canadian Destroyer entered on the log "Ship hit", and it was probably one of the greatest explosions that had ever occurred - up to the time of the nuclear bomb.

The submarine that had torpedoed this ship earlier that night had dropped back to finish the job - the skipper was a guy named Voegelson, a former Luftwaffe Pilot who had gone back into the Navy and become a "U" boat skipper and his boat was U132, so he dropped back and apparently made another approach on that thing. He was never heard from again after that night so he was either on the surface alongside going to dispatch her or..... but here's an interesting thing - he was the guy who torpedoed the "Hamilton". A lot of us from the Coast Guard were. Another time we got word that a Task Force out of Iceland was closing the Convoy. The "Ingham" and two American Destroyers, the "O'Leary" and the "Skink" and it was about 9 0'clock that night and the Germans got another one - blew up another vessel on the port bow. After she was hit the whole sky lit up in front - star shells - and it was George McCabe on the "Ingham" with those two Navy Destroyers and, he told me later, that when he heard the explosion and saw that ship blow he thought the Germans might be in front of the Convoy and he thought he would distract their attention, so he ordered all three ships to fire star shells, which they did. Everybody said, "Thanks God the Americans are here", because we didn't have a very high opinion of the Canadians at that point.

The rest of that night went quietly and the next morning there was a sight I'll never forget..... I had never seen the "Ingham" before, I had seen some 327's. George McCabe took her down between each column of the Convoy at twenty knots and she was burying her bows on every third or fourth one and he had his crew at General Quarters and his biggest American flag streaming straight out in the breeze and he was putting on a show of encouragement and everybody was sitting there cheering and they were throwing their caps in the air and we had been saved - the Cavalry had come - and I saw grown men with tears running down their cheeks and I fell in love with the "Ingham" and I have to this day and I just got the word this morning, by the way, they're letting out the contract now to tow her from New York down to Charleston. She is going to be preserved there as a National Memorial - she's a National land mark. So that my grandchildren will be able to walk on

the deck, you know.

Well, Sam. I not going to reminisce about that one - it was a terrible one because I had written all about this in the book "Bloody Winter" and in '85 I wrote a revision of it to include what the British had revealed at Yalta - it wasn't there when I wrote the first copy, and it has been widely used as a reference and it is basically the story of the battle in the North Atlantic between November of '42 and May of '43 and that was when we had that all-out fight up there. The last chance the Germans had after Stalingrad was to cut our supply lines to England and we had terrible losses up there.

(Sam) Who published this book?

It was first published by \_\_\_\_\_ and now it is published by the Naval Institute Press.

(Sam) It's available through.....?

Oh, yes. It's available now. This covers that winter but we had one terrible convoy up the Delta. The finest escort vessels were the 327's. They were such fine sea boats but the other thing that contributed to the high kill ratio of submarines, was the fact that they still had their pre-War crew aboard. The Coast Guard couldn't find them to pull their crews back off and the British historians say the same thing, that no doubt the experienced seamen in the Battle of the North Atlantic were the Coast Guard. Of course with those long legged ships we could make three crossings, whereas the Destroyers couldn't do it.

What I'm rather proud of is that between the outbreak of the War at Pearl Harbour and when Doenitz withdrew the Wolf Packs on May 1st, '43 and said, "we've lost the battle of the Atlantic", but kept the "U" boats out there the rest of the War, so we would have to provide escort for our convoy, but the Battle was decided. I visited with Doenitz in Hamburg after the war and talked about it and he said, "we knew then that we had lost the War." But, what I'm getting at, is, during the 18 months of crisis there, 68% of all submarines sunk by the American surface vessels were sunk in the Atlantic by the Coast Guard. That's not a bad record. I remind some of my Navy friends of that when we get talking about it.

In February and March the situation was extremely bad - the food supply in England was down to 6 weeks and, at one point, the Eighth Air force had 3 weeks fuel supply - it just looked very black and at this point Churchill went to Roosevelt with it and he ordered the Navy and Air Force to send 100 Liberators to the Atlantic and we began to get the first Escort Carriers and then we got the D.E.'s and it



turned the tide and after May we took convoys through to the Med. and we had no problems - it was just a mop-up operation. In as much as that is all down in black and white in the book I'll skip on passed that.

I was detached from the ship in '44 and went to the "Admiral Hughs". One of those big 30,000 ton wagons carrying about 5,000 people and we roamed all over the world with it.

We were as far east as Marseilles and we picked up, right at the end of the War in Europe, we picked up 5,000 of Paton's troops, mostly Engineers, and took them to the Philippines, and we were in Guam, New Guinea, all over. We took the first load of wounded that came out of EWOL and we had 4 surgical teams aboard and they operated all the way back to San Francisco.

We never had any real combat on that ship because it was too valuable a ship to risk anywhere lightly, plus the Japanese in early '45, as you will recall, they were just about gone. So we weren't bothered much. We had one bogey make a run on us north of Truque, I was the gun boss and I opened up on him at about 4,000 yards and fortunately before I used the B.T. proximity ammunition I had loaded each one with a timed fuse, and I had four or five in, and boom, boom, boom, boom and suddenly all these lights came on out there and it was a P.B.Y. That night I went down and I got on my knees and I said "Lord, Thank you", because I would have had a guilty conscience all my life for shooting down that thing at 18 knots.

We went into Guam, I recall there was an awful lot of Japanese still wandering through the hills out there, and there was a submarine moored about 4/500 yards away from us and three guys off that submarine decided they were going hunting.

They weren't going to hunt deer or anything, they were going to hunt Japs. They found their bodies several days later, they went missing. There were stories all around about shooting Japs, watching the movies and up in the trees and later I read that two guys turned themselves in 37 years later.

Then we went up to Manilla and moored in Manilla and got into the Liberty boats.  
Some of the Liberty boats from the ships came under fire. All over Manilla harbour there were Japanese Man of War sitting with there super structure and decks, it was very shallow water, and when they had been sunk by Third Fleet's strafing planes they settled to the bottom but the crews were still in there and they would snipe at the Liberty boats going in and while we were there the Marines were engaged and going out and they would spray the things with machine gun fire and then they would pour oil all over

them and set them on fire. The Japs just wouldn't give up.

Well, I had enough of transport life about then and I saw somebody in Head Quarters and I said "give me a combat ship anywhere, any ocean" and so they gave me command of the "D.E." up in the Aleutians. About the only real action I saw up in there was when they ordered me to go to Petro Pavlos in Siberia, Russias came into the War, and I was supposed to deliver a special team. I still don't know what they were, they were probably Officers, Strategic Services but I don't know really what they were and I they didn't say anything to me and I didn't say very much to them. I picked them up at F.2. when they got off the plane.

I was supposed to meet a Russian Destroyer off Petro Pavlos and they said don't go in without meeting it as there are mine fields there. Well, when we got to this spot there wasn't any Russian Destroyer there so we contacted Dutch Harbour and they said to go to Acompton Bay(ph) - so we went to a place down the coast called Acompton Bay and went in and dropped the hook. Nothing....just steep cliffs around there and here we are up in Siberia! Then we discovered we had no radio contact. The hills had cut it off and here I am - a 25 yr old Lieutenant with a ship and 250 men sitting in a fjord in Siberia, saying, "Where do I go from here?"

Then a boat came rowing out, after about an hour, with two Russian sailors in it and a Russian Lieutenant- he didn't speak any English and I didn't speak any Russian and then fortunately the Exec said, "we've got a Ukrainian aboard named Kundersac, a gunner's mate and he could speak it." So we got Kundersac up there and sure enough.....

That night we showed a movie. Fred Astair dancing, you know, and we gave the Russian a cigar and he held it between his fingers and smelled it and you could tell he didn't know what was going on. Well, he smoked that cigar and he inhaled it deeply like a cigarette and he got sick and he had to go up.

The next day we took off and headed for Petro Pavlos and this guy did only one speed and that was full - so we went up at 22 knots. and we were never more than 3 or 400 yards off that rocky coast. Then he would get ready to give an order to the whale and couldn't think of the words, I said, "Point to it, point to it." Anyway, we finally got into Petro Pavlos, beautiful big bay, could have held the whole Third Fleet and I decided to give the Russians a look at what real seamanship was like. So I said to Lieutenant Popoff, I said, "Lieutenant, I'll relieve you, I've got the ship now", and up in this big bay there were three Frigates from the Coast Guard that we had given to the Russians, a couple of P.T. boats and 3 or 4 P.B.Y's.

Well, I took her up at 22 knots, swung her around, back down full, let go the anchor, colours changed and I got my boat in the water. I turned to the Exec. and I said that I would show these Ruskies what smart ship handling is, so I got in the boat and went ashore to pay my respects to the Admiral while the party we were delivering were getting their stuff together, and when I got up there, there was a Liaison Officer, Russian Navy Liaison Officer - said he had been in the Merchant Marine and had visited Seattle often and he spoke in English and he said the Admiral wanted to see me. Well, I was informed that I had washed 40 boats ashore, done damage to the piers and this and that and the other. He also had a complaint that some of my crew were on deck with cameras - you know, they were photographing the Frigates which some of them had served on - all American equipment. We finally packed that up, I don't know what excuse I used for coming in at 22 knots, we were pretty smart young guys back then.

(Sam) There's another word you might add after 'smart'....

Smart ass...we were a pretty tough crowd too, you know, after four years of war but the next night the Admiral invited me and all my officers up, after we had delivered that secret party ashore, so we sat down at the table and they had various goodies, including a lot of caviar, and there was a bottle of Vodka sitting beside each plate and a Russian sailor behind each seat and they had these big tumblers. The Liaison Officer stood up and he announced that the Admiral wanted to make a toast to the President of the United States, so I poured a small amount in my glass and when I put the bottle down the Russian sailor filled it up. I said all right..I'll just take a sip of this, so I took a sip and everybody stood and the Admiral looked at me and the Liaison Officer said - "The Admiral is waiting for you to finish your drink." So I said - "these boys want to get started fast", so I held my breath and threw it down. The sailor filled it up again.

Well, to make a long story short, I got up and proposed a toast to Generalissimo Stalin and I don't remember much after that but except that one of the Officers told me that I proposed a toast to the Junior Sons of North Carolina. I don't remember going back to the ship.

I woke up at about 12 o'clock the next day and called down to the doctor to bring me up some Coedine. The Doctor said "What's wrong Sir?" I said, "I've got a hang-over." He said, "you don't take Coedine for a hang-over!" I said, "Doctor, don't argue with me, bring up the Coedine because I've got to go ashore."

So, I went ashore and paid my respects to the Admiral and he didn't show up for three days but I tell you one thing,

I learned at that point that these Russian drinking parties you hear about are.....awful..

We were the last Coast Guard ships to leave the Navy. They kept us as the occupation force in China. We were based on San Tow. John Pointy was relieved when we were in China. He was the Division Commander, "Long John" from the Academy, he was one of my instructors Bill Earl took over the Division. Jug Earl. We didn't get released from the Navy from the Seventh Fleet until '46. They finally released us.

We had a few adventures in China, up in Manchuria. That was when the Communist Eighth Route army was down and fighting in action -  
At night in the harbour we could hear the gunfire up in the hills.

I also had a few little adventures up in the Yellow Sea with the Communists. The only trouble I got into there was being a smart ass. Like one night I missed a junk with about 4/500 Communist Chinese troops coming across from to San Tung Peninsular and when we got too close I just made up my mind that I was a Man of War and I wasn't going to turn aside for him. I turned the search lights on and I don't think I missed him by more than 50 yards. There was mass confusion - the reason I did that, Sam, I wasn't careless or mean or anything but the first time we went into San Tow and I had a British pilot on board and the harbour was jammed with junks and I would say "Pilot - look out for this....." and he said, "Captain if you stop, if a Man of War stops and tries to miss them you will cause mass confusion, they will get out of your way." and they did. They didn't expect a Man of War to stand aside for them.

I wasn't quite convinced. So, when we left San Tow the first time I tried to avoid them and I almost hit several of them and I thought "He's right - the Chinese have been so long accustomed to Man of War ships going their own way - that's what I was doing that night up in the Yellow Sea, but it was dumb on my part.

Anyway, at Pearl Harbour, Bill Earl got detached to sit on a Court Martial or Board of Investigation - I forget which now. At which time I took over the Division. They called it the Boys' Division. Bill Earl, I think, was 28 year old, and the rest of the skippers were all in my Class, I think we averaged 25.

So, when we sailed from Pearl, I was the Division Commander. I was twenty-five years old and I think the next Junior man was 15 numbers my Junior in the Academy. We were carrying about 150 Army troops - demobilized - to the West Coast.

(Sam) This was on a D.E.?

A D.E. - it was only going to be a 4 day run!

(Sam) From Pearl?

Yes. So we packed them aboard. So all together we had we had 7 or 800 Army troops - we put them aboard, everything moving East. We got half way to San Diego when unbelievably Com. Des. Pac. said - "destination changed to Charleston - proceed direct from present position Panama Canal to Charleston."

So we came back and said "Hey, we've got 7 or 800 Army troops here - request permission to proceed San Diego."

They replied, "Negative, comply my....."

Well, I knew I didn't have enough provisions or anything else, plus it was going to be a miserable trip all the way to the Canal plus these guys were all going to the West Coast. Some-one was making a stupid decision.

So I came back again "Have 7-800 Army troops, inadequate rations" and, if they didn't order me to go 300 miles to the north and rendezvous with a Destroyer tender and transfer..

Well, the weather was getting steadily worst and I took the ships and we all went up there and we steamed in column alongside this Destroyer. He had a Four Stiper aboard and I explained my situation - by this time the seas were 15 ft. You can imagine trying to transfer men, and he said "This is ridiculous", and I said "Sir, I'm glad you said it." So he went to Des Pac. with it and finally they released us and we went to proceed to San Diego to get discharged.

And we entered San Diego Harbour with our Homeward Bound pennants streaming out - well the ships had been overseas since about '43, the Signal Station up on the hill there up on North Island, sent a signal that said "Com. 42 report to Com 11 on docking."

Well, I figured, "I said too much in all those messages and I'm going to really get it." So I reported to Com.11 after I got in and I'm still kind of shakey and I'm still a 25 year old kid and the Chief of Staff was very nice to me, and I thought well, he's protecting me from the Old Man. The Old Man was Jesse Oldendorf - Vice-Admiral Jesse Oldendorf - who was already a legend. He cross the "T" with the Japs in the Serengeto Strait with his battle wagon and sunk 5 or 6 Japanese ships.

Well, he said, the Admiral will see you now and I came in and here's this legendary man I've read about in the papers and this, that and the other and he walks around and sticks out his hand and says - "Welcome home, Commadore." That must have been the highest point of my life at that point.

Anyway, I told the Old Man about what had happened out in the mid Pacific - about being diverted and run over.....

He said "Young man, let me give you a bit of advice here." He said, "probably what happened is some flunky got your message and the Operations Officer and Chief of Staff were out playing golf and what you should have said was - explained that you had these 7-800 soldier on board and that unless otherwise directed I am proceeding San Diego."

I have often thought about that advice since and I have used that a number of times and then after I got to be a Captain I didn't use "unless otherwise directed just "am proceeding".

So, that's my memory of Admiral Jesse Oldendorf - the only time I ever did see him but I've always remembered the advice he gave me.

After the War, Sam, we took the ships around to Charleston - they preserved them there at Charleston - and then we took them to Green Coach, which is right here on the river where I live. I never expected that I would be here all these years later. And we laid them up there with the Reserve Fleet and then they gave me command of the "Aurora" - 165 ft. I was delighted to get her.

(Sam) Where was she stationed?

She was at Charleston and she was going to Mayport which then was Coast Guard at Mayport. In 1946 the Navy had left Mayport and given it to the Coast Guard and they had two J.R.F.'s down there and they were going to have the "Aurora" and we finally got the ship pretty well put together and I then got orders to Washington.

I reported to the Search and Rescue Agency and Bill Shavel was the Head of it, and Jack McCuppin was there and Al Worker and Dean Martino and quite a collection of impressive guys but everybody in that place was except me, and I'm a "Black Shoe" and these guys were always holding their pay check up to me and I didn't have a very good opinion of then because in the Atlantic, we never had any cover out there, at least we thought we didn't. We thought the sat and drank all the time while we fought the War. Anyway, I was Chief of the Emergency Equipment Section and I had under me, to command, one clerk/secretary, and she was pretty dumb and lazy and you have to figure it, from being a Division Commander and having a Vice-Admiral calling you Commodore and three months later you are sitting behind a desk with a cubby-hole with a clerk/secretary who won't do much telling, so, I finally said to Bill Campbell, I said, "I think I'm going to get out. I think it's going to be at least 10 years before I even get going and you know it was a big come-down after the War, for everybody."

Of course he said that there was never going to be another war and this and that, of course, it was only going to be about a year before we got going on the routine again.

So I put into George Washington Medical School, and they accepted me. I told Bill Shavel, "I'm going to go ahead and resign" and then he said "Have you ever thought about being an Aviator?"

"No", I said, "I haven't."

He said, "the pay's a lot better and its a lot of fun", and he got Dick Burke to come down - he was Head of Aviation.

He said - "I got one slot open still" and I said, "when is that, Sir", and he said, "that's next week."

I said, "Sir, I would like to think about it overnight."

He said, "make up your mind now whether you want to do it or whether you don't."

I suddenly got to thinking how am I going to support a wife and child through 4 years of Medical School and Internship and I figured it probably couldn't be bad to be in Aviation so I said, " I'll do it."

That was 10 o'clock that morning and I got my orders that afternoon and I went out to the parking lot back at Head Quarters at 5 o'clock, I was in a car pool, and Lee Baker was there and he said "come over here a minute Waters."

He said, "I hear you're going into flight training?"

"Sir", I said, "I got my orders today."

He said "It's too bad you had to ruin a promising career."

I don't know if you remember back in '46, Aviators were not considered very..... They were in the same position Naval aviators were back in about the '30's. Anyway, from there I went over into Aviation and most of my Aviation career was pretty well covered in "Rescue at Sea" which was published in '66. The first book I wrote. A new edition is coming out this Fall, in September by the Naval Institute Press, updating rescue at sea for the next 25 years.

In other words, the first book I wrote was primarily biographical, an account of Search and Rescue for the first 25 years, and that of my contemporaries from WW11 up to '66.

So, when the Naval Institute Press asked me if I would update this to include the changes that had taken place up to the 200th anniversary of the Coast Guard I said, "Well, things have changed so much, I'm not sure that I'm in a position to do it but I'll give it a try." So I went down and stayed at some Air Stations, went aboard the ships and found there had been some big changes but a lot of things were just the same.

We don't have Ocean Station Vessels anymore so that chapter I just concluded by saying that Ocean Station Vessels were  
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terminated. We don't do any open sea landings in sea planes anymore, so there was very little to say about that. In fact, one of the last open sea landings was made by me, about 200 miles off Salem, and that was included in the first edition so there was nothing much more to say there.

What has changed a lot is things such as that Haitian interdiction deal, all the Cuban things that went on and the emergence of the helicopter. There has been a tremendous effect there.

See, when I first came into aviation we could go about 60 miles off shore in a helicopter but you had to be accompanied by a fixed wing as you had no navigation gear. You could do 65 miles an hour and they were very unreliable machines. Now they do 175 knots, they can navigate, they've got a radar - they've got the whole integrated system - twin engine and one result, of course, is that all the life boat stations that used to be up and down the coast have been closed down, and all. Most of the Coast Guard Stations now are located at harbour entrances and inlets and the second thing that has changed radically is the explosion of pleasure boating. It is just phenomenal.

Before WW1, most of the people getting into trouble at sea were larger ships or coastal traffic, commercial traffic, fishermen. Now, most of the people getting into trouble are yachtsmen but, what was the figure I saw just the other day?.....

that the millions of Americans the participate in boating and that constitutes just about 80% of the Coast Guard sorrow - and of course the other big thing is the Law Enforcement which came with the drug deal.

I notice one big difference, having read all the histories o the rum wars, and all, and having heard some of the old Chiefs tell stories about it, and I'm sure you've heard a lot of stories too, because most of that crowd were in the Destroyer force which were still in the Coast Guard when you came out of the Academy.

Prohibition was very unpopular with the American people. Everybody figured there wasn't much wrong with drinking and everybody drank and they wanted their liquor and anybody that got in the way, they didn't like it, and so the Coast Guard had no popular support and I hope, the way I'm reading right now is, that the public doesn't feel that way about this - they think it is an evil thing - they're worried about their kids getting into it and I think the Coast Guards has got support.

The only problem is, with running things like cocain, you can conceal it all over the place and it is so difficult to find compared with a load of Scotch whiskey. Also, the



smugglers now-a-days are using jets, and everything else, instead of the old wooden boats they used to use. The other thing that is worrismatic about it is that, after being out in the Southern District last Summer and talking to everybody out there, they've got a feeling that they may be only catching up to 40% of the marijuana coming in, because it is bulky.

They are very successful with those choke points down in the Caribbean Islands because they've got those cutters down there with a helicopter sitting on their deck. They've got Airborne Early Warning working with them and they can pick up anything on the surface coming in. They can have a helicopter on top of him 75 miles away in less than an hour and they have choked them so badly at those choke points that now they are taking the stuff and flying it up the West Coast of Mexico, landing on the Pacific Coast of Mexico and bringing it across.

So, the other thing they are doing, they told me last Summer, is they are shipping the stuff out of South America into Germany and European ports. From there they trans-ship again, in a double-blind cover, to England and then ship it in, in commercial cargoes, figuring the Coast Guard is not going to be looking for a European cargo and they put them into such things as orange juice containers and everything else. So its a very difficult thing to try and break up but at least there is no question, like in the rum days, of taking them in and letting them loose. We were told that when the rum runners murdered a Secret Service man off the Florida coast they couldn't get a Florida Sheriff to hang him so they brought him to the Coast Guard base at Fort Lauderdale and hanged him on the base there. Well they give them 20, 30, 40 years or life for smuggling now. That's another big difference I see today.

Another one is vastly different is the women - they've got a lot of women. I've seen women in command of these 110 footers. An account which I am using in the new edition of Rescue at Sea is of a 21 year old Rescue swimmer - a girl - went into the water for 25 minutes off the Pacific Coast in 25ft seas a rescued an Air Force Pilot - I wouldn't have wanted to do anything like that when I was a 21 yr old football player. So, these women can do the job and when you sit down and think about it, Sammy, I look back during the War, when I was a gun boss - you used to think of the gunners as being tough, hard types -there is nothing a woman couldn't do..... even more today with the modern equipment. It's just like you're manipulating a computer and a woman can do it as well as a man, and that is with so many things.

Incidentally, this last Summer I was at an Air Station in Miami and I went out on a flight with them going down to the

Caribbean and looked in the left seat and here was a young Lieutenant J.G. female and she said "Captain are you worried" and I said, they did a nice job.

Well, we've talked about some serious things, wars and all but I would like to kind of conclude this thing by bringing up some humorous things I've run into in the service.

One thing I had to go to was a Ship's Reunion and you find that all the old guys have forgotten all the bad things, I guess the mind just rules it out, and they only think of the good things and they bring their sons and their grandsons and they tell how great it was and they fall on each other's necks like brothers, which is more or less all right.

I really enjoy going to them myself but after going to several of these reunions and hearing them tell how great it was and knowing how it was myself, I now understand why we've had a war about every 26 years since the founding of the Republic because the younger generation come along and the older generation talk about it and they have left out all the horror, all the boredom, so, when I look back on my Coast Guard career, I look at it with pleasure. If I had been independently wealthy I would have given them back their pay because there was so much satisfaction in it, especially as it is hard to think of a more satisfying thing than Search and Rescue, where you are saving people. Before I retired I went through my flight log book one time and I calculated I had saved over 500 people personally but only two of them ever sent me a letter and said "thank you", but that's not the point. The point is that I had the satisfaction already.

(Sam) Were you in helicopters?

I was in helicopters, sea planes, four engines, I flew them all. They don't do that anymore. They either fly helicopters, or fly just jets. In those days we flew everything. I don't think we were as good at it as they are now, but we might fly five or six different types.

I came across on my boat one night from the Bahamas, a couple of years ago, we were two Navy Captains and a young man from Touche Roche, who was over to the Bahamas to bring a report for me that I was consulting on and we sat up all night on the crossing - crossing the Gulf Stream and into the States, telling sea stories - and you know how that goes - you get three or four professional sailors or soldiers who served thirty years and they can go all night long like that and the next morning that young guy, he was about 25 or 30, he said, "My God, if you guys would just record these you'd have a book". He sat up all night listening to our stories. I got to thinking about that and the funny incidents, and I had been collecting some notes and I'm hoping that I will be

able to come up with a book of the humour in the Coast Guard. There is an awful lot of it!

I've said enough about the horror and the bloody winter. A lot of funny things do happen in the time of war. I remember when George McCabe was skipper of the "Ingham" they sent us back astern to chase a straggler back up - a British straggler, and, of course, it was very dangerous. The "U" boats used to trail the convoy and look for them. George McCabe sent him over a signal and said "Imperative you close convoy at best speed, immediately, you are in great danger", and the British loved sending Biblical quotations and the British skipper sent back "To Ingham - Psalm 23 4-8." McCabe said, "Go get my Bible from the top right drawer of my desk". It said "Ye though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for Thou art with me - Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me". George picked out, I don't know the quotation, but it said - "I return to tend my sheep" and he left it like that!

We had another convoy and they sent a British Destroyer back and told them to close convoy - about the 5th time he had been sent back in two days - and the merchantman said "I'm making my best speed" and he said to him "Liviticus 14-52 - and that read "Oh, my God yesterday, today and fore-ever".

I guess you knew Jimmy Craik - Admiral Craik - a Lieutenant Commander, he was the Exec. on the "Ingham" and he was another. He was a man with a very dry sense of humour. We got a new doctor aboard the ship - a young Lieutenant and Craik got together with the Engineer and he and Craik read up on some obscure disease, I don't know what it was, so obscure, nobody had ever heard of it before.

When they sat down at Mess - none of us were in on this except the Exec. and the Engineer - and he said, "I've got this terrible letter about an Aunt of mine and she has 'such and such' a disease and he said to the doctor, "What's the prognosis on that". The doctor said, "Well, I will have to look it up - that's a pretty rare disease, I don't think I've seen that since my first year in medical school," and Craik, who has read up on it says - "the....dah dah...etc., and he says, "Isn't that right Doc?" Then he would ask another question and of course the Doctor didn't know. The Exec. would then ask another question and the Doc was completely flabbergasted! Finally Craik left to go up to the bridge and the doctor said "That's the smartest son-of-a-bitch I have ever seen in my life".

Another one, this was about 4 months later, this was the night after they had sunk the troop transporter, the "Henry Mallory" with about a 1000 troops on board and everybody was kind of uptight and jumpy and we

were running up to rejoin the convoy, we had been back picking up survivors all night - Baird got over 200, I think, we got something like 15 or so. As we got within about 10 miles of the convoy, star shells were breaking up and we knew they were still under attack, and we picked a small target to join the convoy at general quarters and we challenged, and they didn't answer - asked for a 25deg. starboard firing angle so that we could bring all the guns to bear. At about 1500 yards they swung left and the Old Man yelled "Search light on." I didn't see a thing out there, then No.3 gun said "On target" and at that moment the Old Man stepped out onto the wing of the Bridge and he yelled "Fire" and I said "Commence, commence, commence" and Boom..... and suddenly all the lights came on. It was a British Corvette and he sent a signal over and he said, "your gunners are as fast as my yeoman signalman is slow, I suggest we compromise." I was always glad I was such a lousy gunner. There were heavy seas - but as soon as they fired that salvo, they reloaded - so all the guns were loaded and the 3 inch guns with the brass casing get unloaded through the muzzle, so rather than say - fire the guns, the term was - unload through the muzzle. Well, the Old Man's up on the bridge and looking through his glasses up ahead at the convoy under attack and I come in and I say "Captain, permission to unload the guns through the muzzle, Sir", He wasn't paying much attention to me and probably didn't even consider what I had said. He said, "permission granted", so I went back to the Chief Gunner's Mate and I said, "Train all of the guns at 90 deg. angle starboard and I'm going to C.I.C. and when the bearing is clear of the radar, I tell you, you go ahead and fire."

As soon as it was all clear I said "Fire" and Booom..... and five guns went off. At that point the Captain was down in the Code Room, which was right next to the cabin and they were decoding a message and the Doctor was there too. He said that when the guns went Boom.....a piece of cork fell out of the ceiling and hit the Old Man on the head - the Old Man was reeling about and he had a pencil in his hand and he turned two full circles and said "Oh, Jesus Christ, we've been gigged", and the Doctor said the second time he circled he grabbed the pencil and the Old Man went shooting up to the bridge and said "Gunnery Officer report to the Bridge on the double". Now this was after we missed the Corvette.

He was pretty well agitated with me at that point. He said, "What do you mean by firing a full salvo without my permission?" I said, "Captain, you gave me permission." He said, "I did not". I said, "Captain right here on the bridge I asked you permission to unload through the muzzle" and 'click'..... he said "Oh! All right, forget it."

(Sam) Who was the Commanding Officer at that time?

That was Captain A.M. Morrison. He was a real fine man and later that night he stopped the ship, a British freighter had been torpedoed, he turned on the search light to get the people. The British had about 18 people in one of those big metal boats and it came alongside and they got a little excited at the end and instead of waiting for us to drift down on it - they capsized and there were 18 people caught between that big metal boat and the ship and with the next sea - just crunch..... and we only recovered 2 of them. Swimmers went over into the water and the Old Man ordered all the lights on - even though that submarine was probably some place pretty close - I later found out after the War when I went over to Germany to search the records, he was close, he was about 3000 yards away and he was the guy who had torpedoed the "Henry Mallory" and he was one of their top aces, , and he was out of torpedoes. Then we found another Britisher all alone in a metal boat and we backed down on him and threw the lines and he said "you want me to tie it onto the boat" and they yelled "hell no, tie it onto yourself", and they hauled him over the stern. It was night and I guess ~~the~~ thought we were a British ship, he was a little Cockney and he said, "thanks God we got a Navy".

In April of '43, by agreement between the British and the Americans, the British took over the North Atlantic and the Americans were pulled back to take the Mediterranean run. So when we pulled out of Iceland, the "Balkan" was the Destroyer Tender up there and Baird and Ingrahm took her to escort her back to Norfolk and the "Vulcan" had not been out of that harbour for over a year, but they had seen the Escorts coming back in loaded with survivors, hearing these horror stories, you know, so they were jumpy when we sailed. We had about a half mile to a mile visibility - we were not 10 miles from Iceland, one cutter on either bow, and Senator Balkan came up on TBS and said "We've got a small target submarine at 2,000 yards and we are getting ready to commence firing". They had 5 inch 38 guns on there and Mark 37 direct fired by radar and I said to the radar "What's the "Vulcan" bearing?" and he gave me the bearing on the "Vulcan" and it was 2000 yards I grabbed the t and I said "Check Fire, Check Fire and that ain't a dammed "U" boat that's the "Ingham". I was afraid they were going repeat what we did with the Corvette, but they would have probably been more accurate with a 37 Director.

One of our favorite skippers was Commander Hap Moore, he was my seamanship <sup>9</sup> at the Academy, terrific seaman. One night I had the deck and, at that point, we had not got the new SG Radar with the big, bio scope you could look at - you would ask the Radar - "give the range and bearing to the corner ship on the Convoy." I had the four to eight watch and so I took the bearing and it was 2,000 yards and that was all right but then it began to get light and when it began to get

light the Convoy was no where around! It was a straggler and there I sat - the Convoy was 7 to 8 miles up ahead, so I called the Engine Room and said, "Stand by to answer bells for full speed." I wanted to get to hell back to the Convoy. About that time I smelled cigar smoke coming up and the Old Man coming to the Bridge. He said, "Mr. Waters, where's the Convoy?" I thought - "here goes my career." I said, "Sir, they're about 8 miles up." He said, "Who is this?" -

(We had a momentary power outage and the camera went blank)

I don't know how much of that last story that we missed there but with these thunder storms around the power fluctuates a little bit.

Anyway, as far as Hap Moore goes, he was a very fine seaman, and all.

They detached us and sent us down to Panama for what they called Rest and Recreation, see, we had been at sea and running these Convoys since before Pearl Harbour, at least the ship had - and they sent us down to Panama to work with some of our submarines. New submarines that were going through to the Pacific and we picked up the "Rabolo" in Balboa and went out to the Pearl Islands in the Pacific to work with her and she would make runs on us and we would make runs on her and we were a very sharp ship at that point we could teach her every day we were in port in Panama and I rode the "Rabolo" for a couple of days - anyway, the third or fourth night we were out we had a movie and we invited the "Rabolo" people over, about two thirds of her people. So we had a movie that night called "Action in the North Atlantic" with Humphry Bogart. Well, in that picture it shows a submarine being depth charged and it shows German sailors trying to fight their way up with the water pouring in, and all, and here are these American submariners on the way into the Pacific watching this. Well, if that wasn't enough, the next day we went out and we had recently got the "Hedgehog", rocket propelled charges and the water conditions were beautiful, you could pick up a submarine at 3500 yards and we fired these dummy "Hedgehogs", and when the "Rabolo" surfaced she had two "Hedgehog" projectiles stuck in her conning tower.

That night the Skipper and the Exec. came over with two or three of her officers, and they were very serious, and they said "Do the Japanese have those things?" The Old Man said that he didn't think they did. Then one of our chaps piped up and said that anyway he didn't think the Japanese were as good as we are! They were lost about six months later and I think about 3 of them survived the War in a prison camp, so that was our time in Panama.

The other thing that happened, Sam, when we were in Panama that happened to have about combat experience. We went through the Canal - they brought us back across the Canal one time to escort a Convoy from Trinidad back up to Guan Ton. then they returned us back to work with the sub. again. We went through the Canal just ahead of the "New Jersey", this was in December '43, and that night we all moored in Balboa, the Battle Wagon and us and we get two thirds liberty. 3,000 Battle Ship sailors ashore.

I used to like to be Shore Patrol in Panama because you could see all the shows free and it was a lot of fun. So there was a place called "Kelly's", where they had "Blue Moon" girls who promised the sailors that if you buy me drinks here I'll be off at midnight and of course drinks were just Cokes and didn't cost.... This place was packed with Battleship sailors and I'm in the back with my Shore Patrol team and I think I had four Enlisted men and two Navy Officers, each with a Shore Patrol. There must have been 2 or 300 Battleship sailors in that place. Well, a girl comes out and starts performing a strip-tease and these sailors start banging their beers and shouting "Take it off!" So she did. And when that happened some of those sailors started up onto the stage. So I yelled across to these two Navy guys, "move them down front", and we had about 12 or 13 Shore Patrol and they locked arms across that stage and they were beating the sailors over their heads with their sticks and the three officers stood by, and I turned around and there's this girl standing there with nothing on and I yelled, "You b..... get off the stage" So we had to sheet up the stage where we had fought them off but it was winding it up a little bit there and I thought Shore Patrol was going to get beat up by everybody.

We came back through the Canal in '47 and I had the Exec. warn our crews about the "Blue Moon" girls but it didn't do any good they all went ashore and spent all their money.

Let me see if I marked a couple of other things down here, Sam, that I wanted to get to....

Dick Burke, who was a very fiery type one of the early Aviators. Dick Burke was the C.O. at Elizabeth City during the war and we had some enlisted pilots down there called A.P.'s. In the first part of the War some of them were 3rd Class and 2nd Class Gunners" Mates and they were flying the same planes that the Officers were flying.

Well, we had one guy, pretty hot pilot, thought he was, and took one of these OS2U float-planes he came up to the ramp doing about 70 and he didn't throttle back in time and he went right up the ramp - blooom. Dick Burke came charging down from his office and climbed up on the wing and he read the riot act in his inimical Irish way and this Second Class

Gunners' Mate sat there with a cigar in his mouth and his goggles and helmet on and said "Captain! What do you want for \$90 a month - Lindenberg?"

Another one that Bill Sharvel told me, Bill Sharvel and Dick Burke were always friends, but they were always fighting. This was '42, Dick Burke was the C.O. there and Sharvel was the Exec. and an Army Bomber sank a submarine off Cape Hatteras and there were survivors in the water and they lost them for a day or two and then another plane found them and they sounded the alarm, so Bill Sharvel had one of these aluminium flying boats and he was going to take it out and pick up these Germans and at the last minute these was another message coming in so Bill Sharvel hopped out the plane and went in to grab that and whilst he was gone Dick Burke goes and jumps in the plane and he takes off and Bill Sharvel stood there and shook his fist and said "I'll never forgive you as long as I live" Anyway, Burke landed off shore there and picked up a bunch of these Germans, there were in a terrible condition and they got really involved in pulling these guys out of the water and the only arms they had on board was one sub-machine gun and one of Burke's crewmen handed it to one of the Germans and said "Hold this".  
The only guy aboard the plane who had a gun was the German.

One other famous character that I'd like to bring up was Donald MacDermott, who was one of two Coast Guard Aviators in the Hall of Fame.

I served as his Operations Officer and all the stories you've heard about him are true. He was a fabulous person. He professed to be an atheist - his father was a Baptist Minister - and he was flying from Fort Benning down to Elizabeth City in a Beech craft and over Baltimore - he had a Marine Colonel as a co-pilot, and over Baltimore he said "If there's a God in Heaven let him knock me out of the sky" and at point he had been on his nose tank and he ran out of fuel - both engines went bloom, bloom.....and he reached down and turned it to the wing tank and he said to the Marine and he said -"That was just the nose tank ran out of fuel, that had nothing to do with what I said, and the Marine said, "I know that Captain but if you don't mind, don't say anything else about the Lord until after we land".

You know you can't talk about Military men unless you get to some of their stories....about some of their drinking bouts, and all. When I was in China I came back and my boat picked me up. there were drunk sailors from the Flag Ship, the Cruiser, laying all over the dock in this cold January weather and the Shore Patrol said "Sir, would you take some of them back to the Cruiser, they're going to die out here in this cold", and so I said, "Where are the Cruiser's boats?"



"Well, they won't send any more, they're disgusted with them." So they loaded about 20 of them on our boat and we pulled up alongside the Cruiser and they hailed us and my coxswain yelled "Savage", meaning Commanding Officer Savage is aboard and he yelled up "come and get these drunks." They were all passed out and they said, "we don't want anything to do with them." I stood up and I yelled "This is Savage, you get the hell down here and get these people off this boat." So they let a cargo net down and my crew loaded all 20 of these Navy sailors, all of them unconscious, and as they took the cargo net up with all these arms and legs sticking out I heard one of them say "For Christ's sake, guys!"

The last I have to tell is on my self, I think it was Sandy Gray, who was in Washington, in 1950 I located a ditched airliner about 500 miles east of Jacksonville and got a Navy Destroyer to come out and I had been awake for about 30 hours and hadn't eaten since the day before and I ran into a Navy Class Mate from Flight Training and we went up to his place in B.O.Q. and we opened a bottle with my crew and after about half-an hour, with an empty stomach and no sleep, we were not feeling any pain and the steward came and said there's a Captain in Watnam who wants to speak to you so I went down and picked up the phone and he said "We want you in New York by 6 o'clock tonight to be on the National News", I believe it was Sammy Gray who was calling and I said "Sir, I've got a dirty flight suit I've been flying all night" He said "that's even better" I said "I haven't shaved" He said "Even better" "Commercial Air's been authorized, if not we'll send a plane from St. Petes to pick you up.

I said "Sir, I can't go"

He said "and why the hell not" and I said, "Sir, because I'm drunk".

He said "Oh, well you had better not go."