

Arthur Harrington
Veteran

Philip Leonard
Hoosick Falls Historical Society

Interviewed on 31 July 2003 at the
Louis Miller Museum, Hoosick Falls, New York

I: Interviewer

AH: Arthur Harrington

I: What is your name and where do you live?

AH: Arthur Harrington, from Hoosick, New York, on Route 67.

I: On route 67, how long have you lived in the Hoosick Falls area?

AH: All my life.

I: All your life. So were you born in Hoosick Falls?

AH: North Hoosick.

I: You were born in North Hoosick, that's where you live now?

AH: I live just up the road, East.

I: Is it around where you used to live when you were a kid?

AH: That's correct.

I: Will you tell us a little about when you were a kid and before you went into the service?

AH: Well, I went to St. Mary's Academy, and in the meantime, we used to go swimming during the summer up to the White Creek pool, we used to keep that maintained pretty good, we enjoyed ourselves up there. Then I went to Noble & Wood School; I went and learned to be a machinist.

I: Can I ask you a question about going to school? When you went to school at St. Mary's, how'd you get down to St. Mary's?

AH: Walked. Walked from North Hoosick, when I lived North, to Hoosick Falls everyday.

I: You walked down and back everyday?

AH: Down and back, in all kinds of weather.

I: That's the old joke, but you really did it huh?

AH: We did it.

I: Then you went to work in Noble & Wood?

AH: Noble & Wood, yup. Then I left there for a better job, down to the Watervliet Arsenal, where I would work on the 75 mm, I did the finished job on the gun breach with a wet grinder. We had a close tolerance to make sure it worked good. Then I left there and took a leave of absence, they were going to keep me there but I got down to the Marine Corps recruitment office ahead of the Army, and I got sworn in so they couldn't keep me at the Arsenal, so I joined the Marine Corp.

I: I see, but you could've gotten a deferment probably?

AH: Well I think, at the time, they used to draft the people and keep them there, but you're under Army status.

I: So you went into the Marines? When was that when you enlisted?

AH: September 10, 1942.

I: 1942, alright, then what happened?

AH: Then I went to Paris Island boot camp, that was a whole different ball game. I left there and went to a place that's called Camp Lejeune now, but they used to call it New River. I was there and they gave us a 72 hour pass, and two of us came home for 72 hours. A guy by the name of Clifford Danford and myself, better known as Cliff Danford.

I: And he was from Hoosick Falls?

AH: He was from Hoosick Falls.

I: Did you enlist together?

AH: We all went together, yes, there was a bunch of us.

I: Do you remember any of the names? So we can have them on tape.

AH: There was myself, Stanny [unclear], Cliff Danford, [unclear], Williams, and Harold Cutler.

I: So you did basic together?

AH: We all did basic together, yes.

I: Alright, then what happened?

AH: Then we got separated after, they said "you go here and you go here". They took all the bigger, polished guys to make machine gunners out of us.

I: You were a machine gunner?

AH: 30 Caliber, yup. I did demolitions too. Setting mines, stuff like that, booby traps.

I: Alright, then what happened? Where did you go and what happened?

AH: Went from there and they transferred us to Camp [unclear], in San Diego, from there they sent us up to Camp Pendleton in California, went back to San Diego, we departed from San Diego and we went to Auckland, New Zealand, where we camped in a little place they call Rockford, just 60 miles north of Auckland. Auckland is the main capital in the north in New Zealand. It's a beautiful country. Then from there we went to

Guadalcanal, where we jungle trained. We trained there then we hit the island of [unclear], which is in the Solomon Islands. We took that and secured that, turned it over to the Army, and came back to the Guadalcanal, did some more resting up and training again, then we landed in the Mariana Islands. I got wounded there on the land, we came back to [unclear], to a Naval Hospital. I had a chance to go aboard a heavy crew, where there were lots of men on the cruiser, but I rather go back to my old [unclear]. Took me about a month to get back there, then we went from there to Iwo Jima.

I: You were on Iwo Jima too? Sam told us there were three or four other guys from Hoosick Falls.

AH: Yeah there was, a neighbor of mine at the time that I lived on Abbott Street, it was Harold McCloocis. (?)

I: So you were in Iwo Jima, so that was the third beach that you were on. Then what happened?

AH: Then I came back to the states and I was stationed at Hart's Island, New York., right in the Bronx, a Naval Prison. It was a good duty though. Had every weekend off, every night off. They would charge a Court Marshall to take them down to the Brooklyn Navy Yard for trial. They would transfer them down to Philadelphia, stuff like that.

I: So in other words, you were involved in three Marine landings. The Marines went out first and then the army came to secure it?

AH: We turned it over to them, yes.

I: So do you have any interesting other stories about the guys you've seen or while you were in the service, or anything about the service that you could tell us about?

AH: I'm still in contact with my fellowship; we had a Company Commander, or our Platoon Leader I should say, but may have become a Company Commander. He looked us all up and he got us all together, and he came to see me about two years ago, just this Easter about a year and a half ago. Captain Jimmy Putnam, nice guy. We have a couple of them in Pennsylvania, one out in Ohio, and another guy down in Long Island, he got into being an inspector for the New York City Police Department.

I: Alright, so after your Marine career, you were back working in the States and back in New York. What happened then? They discharged you?

AH: On October 30th, 1945 I was discharged.

I: You had enough points and you had been through a lot so they sent you home?

AH: I had 126 points.

I: So you were really up there. Alright, then you came home and you went to work?

AH: At the Polygraphic in Northern Bennington. I was inside, but I couldn't take working inside so I had to get out.

I: A lot of fellas have been saying that. And then what did you do?

AH: Then I left there and I went to work at the Hoosick Paper Mill for a while, I worked as maintenance out there. Then I got a chance to go to work for the State, I worked for the state and I retired after I had thirty years with the EOT and the Civil Defense Commission too.

I: So you worked for the state for thirty years?

AH: Yes, I retired in 1978.

I: Then you went back and now you've become our judge?

AH: Yup, I was the judge when I was still working for the State.

I: How long have you been judging?

AH: For over 22 years.

I: You've been the judge in town here for 22 years?

AH: I just went back there for four more. I don't know if I'm going to stick out the four or not, but I'm there.

I: You got married, and you had how many kids?

AH: Two daughters.

I: Okay, I know your daughters too.

AH: Two daughters, two grandchildren, and a great-granddaughter.

I: Alright, great. Can you tell us a little about Hoosick Falls as far as you're concerned? A little about your feelings about it?

AH: The whole town is great, there's a lot of nice people.

I: I see, I can't think of anything else. You went to school at St. Mary's, you walked down you told us.

AH: Rain or shine, even in the wintertime too.

I: There wasn't any type of transportation? Did people have cars?

AH: No, not at the time. Very few people had cars. At the time, my father didn't have one.

I: Well good, we thank you Art.

AH: I appreciate you asking me this, and that I could help you out. I even have a picture here that I can show you. It's a picture of the old Delaney's Hotel, I used to work there part-time every once in a while. That's when it was in good shape, but they're restoring it now and it looks great.

I: Thank you very much, I appreciate you coming.