

**William J Boyce
Veteran**

**Mike Russert and Wayne Clarke
New York State Military Museum
Interviewers**

**Interviewed on 28 October 2003
at Teresian House, Albany, NY**

Interviewer: This is an interview with William Boyce, a home interview in Albany, New York. It is the 28th of October, 2003; approximately 1 pm. Interviewers are Mike Russert and Wayne Clark. Could you give me your full name, date of birth and place of birth?

Boyce: William J Boyce, I was born in Saratoga Springs, New York, [unclear] Street.

Interviewer: When were you born sir?

Boyce: 1923.

Interviewer: What was your educational background prior to entering service?

Boyce: High school.

Interviewer: Do you remember where you were and your reaction when you heard about Pearl Harbor?

Boyce: I was at some place..... 'Thinking'

Interviewer: Were you at the movies or listening to a game?

Boyce: I think I was on my way, my friend and I, unknown name, were going to.

Interviewer: Did you hear it on the radio or did someone tell you about it?

Boyce: Someone told me about it.

Interviewer: Do you remember what your reaction was when hearing about that?

Boyce: My reaction?

Interviewer: How you felt about it.

Boyce: Probably the same as most people.

Interviewer: Okay. Did you enlist or were you drafted into the navy?

Boyce: I enlisted.

Interviewer: Why did you pick the navy?

Boyce: I picked the navy because the navy was...I think probably the navy was.....

Interviewer: Did you have any family members that were in the navy during World War 1?

Boyce: No, my brother and I were in the same ship. 2 ships we were on together. The Break on unknown was the first one my year. The second one was the USS unknown, which was a Kaiser, coffin.

Interviewer: Oh, one of the small carriers?

Boyce: Yes.

Interviewer: Yes, an escort carrier?

Boyce: Yes, an escort carrier.

Interviewer: Okay. Where did you go for, now you enlisted in July of '42, where did you go for your basic training?

Boyce: Great Lakes, Illinois.

Interviewer: Okay, and how long where you there, do you remember?

Boyce: I was there for service school, and I don't know, about 20 weeks, or 30 weeks. We started in July; we ended in March/February.

Interviewer: Okay. Now it says here that you were an electrician. Where did you go for your electrician training?

Boyce: Great Lakes, Illinois.

Interviewer: Oh, you did the same training there?

Boyce: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. When were you assigned a ship?

Boyce: Well we got to....We shipped out.....were assigned the ship....

Interviewer: Was your brother in school with you?

Boyce: Yes.

Interviewer: Was it the same time?

Boyce: We were on.....Can't think of his name... unknown body... unknown...we were on a navy program WLS Chicago.... Great Lakes, Illinois.

Interviewer: Now what kind of instrument did you play?

Boyce: I played the guitar... we were singing... I didn't play the accordion until I was 28 years old.

Interviewer: Oh, okay. So while you were in the navy you just played the guitar and sang?

Boyce: Yes.

Interviewer: What type of music did you play and sing?

Boyce: Country....Country music mostly.

Interviewer: Coming from Saratoga you played mostly country music, huh?

Boyce: Yes.?

Interviewer: That's interesting. Did you entertain on the ship?

Boyce: Yes, we were entertainers, before we went into the service we went up to the Great Lakes....to the.....

Interviewer: So you went to the Great Lakes to entertain before you were in the navy?

Boyce: In the navy...before... we went to north creek unknown lakes.

Interviewer: Okay now, when were you assigned to the Franklin Bell?

Boyce: I think we got to San Francisco.

Interviewer: What kind of ship was the Franklin Bell?

Boyce: It was a transport.... troop transport.

Interviewer: Okay. How long were you on the Bell?

Boyce: About a year.

Interviewer: Okay. Your brother was on there with you, you said?

Boyce: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. Now you were involved in the landings of unknown? You were on the Bell?

Boyce: We were on unknown Bay. Transport.

Interviewer: Okay. While you were on the Franklin Bell what did you do?

Boyce: Electrician mate, First Class....when I got through...

Interviewer: Was the Bell involved in any naval actions?

Boyce: No.

Interviewer: No, okay. So most of the action you saw you were on the Thetis Bay

Boyce: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay.

Boyce: We went to the Aleutian Islands...unknown...unknown.

Interviewer: Now your carrier provided air support for those?

Boyce: I don't know if we had air support.

Interviewer: Okay. Now when you went down to Taro, did your ship provide air support for there for Thetis Bay?

Boyce: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. Now you mentioned here that you found dead German, Japanese and American soldiers floating where was that?

Boyce: Tarawa.

Interviewer: Was it, can you tell us about that?

Boyce: Yeah, we were....I remember standing watching the electric shop down below, they'd bring the corpses....one after the other... put unknown down there....the door was right by our shop...electric shop...and I remember...

Interviewer: Where you able to watch any of the fighting from aboard ship?

Boyce: No....no...

Interviewer: Where did you....what did you do after you were involved in those actions?

B: We went to unknown Hawaii. Come back on the.... I can't think of the name of the ship.

Interviewer: You said your ship was in for dry dock, was it damaged at all?

Boyce: No, barnacles, siding and unknown

Interviewer: So you were discharged in December of 1945?

Boyce: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. What did you do after being discharged?

Boyce: I went back to the electric company.

Interviewer: Did you ever use the GI Bill?

Boyce: No.

Interviewer: How about the 5220 club?

Boyce: No. I didn't use that.

Interviewer: You just back to work?

Boyce: Right.

Interviewer: What did you do with GE?

Boyce: Electrician mate. And I was environmental testing and unknown

Interviewer: Did you ever join any Veterans organizations?

Boyce: No.

Interviewer: No? Did you ever stay in contact with anyone you were in navy?

Boyce: No.

Interviewer: Do you think your time in the navy hanged or affected your life in any way?

Boyce: No I don't think so.

Interviewer: Okay. You did get trained as an electrician which would help you later on in General Electric?

Boyce: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. Well thank you very much for your interview.

Boyce: Yes, it's quite alright.

Interviewer: Thank you sir.

'Video skips scene'

Boyce: With me... two ships... and a ... that's about it.

Interviewer: Now was your brother an electrician also?

Boyce: Yes, he was an electrician mate. I was unknown to go to the hospital corp, and then he wanted to go to the electrician mate school. And unknown is what it says with that. Great Lakes, Illinois.

Interviewer: Now after the war did your work as an electrician?

Boyce: Yes.

Interviewer: Did he work at GE?

Boyce: He worked at GE, and then he was in it for himself afterwards.

Interviewer: Both of you continued as musicians after the war?

Boyce: Yes.

Interviewer: Alright. Well thank you very much sir.

Boyce: Quite Alright.