

**William Cox
Narrator**

**Wayne Clark and Mike Russert
Interviewers**

**November 21, 2005
Warrensburg Residence
Warrensburg NY**

**Interviewers: INT
William Cox: WC**

INT: Could you give me your full name and your date of birth and place of birth please?

WC: July the 19th 1921

INT: And where were you born?

WC: Well I was born in Rutland, Vermont. But we moved out of there, about a couple of months after we moved to Glens Falls so actually I've

INT: So you lived most of your life in Glens Falls then, huh?

WC: Yeah, yeah

INT: And what is your name? You didn't tell us your name, your full name.

WC: Oh I didn't?

INT: Nope

WC: Well that's a complicated thing. What do you got?

INT: William Cox

WC: That's what you got, that's' all you got?

INT: Yes sir

WC: Well let's leave it at that

INT: Oh ok

WC: Mix it up with some other names you don't know a damn thing about

INT: Ok, ok

WC: Well no, I had, you know, a family affaire, changed my name and blah blah blah. I don't want to get that mixed up anymore.

INT: So where were you, where were did you go to school, in Glens Falls?

WC: Yeah

INT: How much uh, how much schooling did you have before you joined the Army?

WC: They gave me a, uh, what do you call it when you graduate?

INT: Diploma?

WC: Yeah they gave me a diploma, well I was on my way out anyways, and the war come along and interrupted things and I only had a short time to go before I woulda graduated anyhow so they gave me my diploma.

INT: Ok, do you remember where you were and what you remember about the bombing at Pearl Harbor, when you heard about it? When did you hear about that?

WC: Oh I was home, playing uh, playing bridge. One of the, well I don't know, the time elements of uh difference. When did they hit there, according to the time here, in the morning?

INT: They hit there in the morning so it would have been the afternoon or later after noon when you heard

WC: Yeah, we were playing, we were playing bridge when I heard about it

INT: How did you feel when you heard about that?

WC: well, in the first place, I never heard of Pearl Harbor. And in the second place I don't think anybody else had ever heard of Pearl Harbor. Except perhaps somebody that spent more time in the service afterwards and then, but uh, I looked up on all the maps I had. They didn't even put Pearl Harbor on the map. Never got on the map for a couple of years afterwards.

INT: Did you enlist or were you drafted?

WC: I was drafted.

INT: ok, and you went into the Air Corp.?

WC: Yep

INT: You were drafted 1942?

WC: Yes

INT: Where did you go for your basic training?

WC: I went in, and I don't know, its kind of mixed up. New Jersey I think, I went in

INT: Was it for Dicks?

WC: Yeah

INT: and where did you go for your training?

WC: Where did I go for my training? Oh Jesus, my training, my training, my training.

INT: Usually they sent uh fellows to Florida for uh

WC: I think so, yes you're right. I remember cause I, me and a spider met one day when I was going on a walk around. He was in a hole about 6 foot deep so I was pretty safe. I just laughed at him and took off.

INT: Now you um, you went into the Signal Corp.?

WC: Yep. The Signal Corp. attached to the Army.

INT: what kind of specialized training did you have for that?

WC: Well I had a couple of things but they only nailed me for one of them

INT: what was that

WC: uh, I could fix radios

INT: oh ok, so you

WC: I could build radios. I made radios and the other guy, he got killed, my friend. He got into the service, into the navy and they bombed the hell out of him.

INT: so you became a radio repairman

WC: I become a radio repairman

INT: Now uh, it mentions you were stationed out in the south pacific. What did you do, where were you stationed out there?

WC: The south Pacific? I don't know, you'll have to help me cause I don't

INT: Well

WC: I can say yes and no, easy.

INT: well you don't have a lot written down in that here. What was it, an aviation unit you were with?

WC: I believe so, yes

INT: Do you remember if, did they have bombers or fighters or?

WC: They had bombers.

INT: Now did you repair the radios for the planes?

WC: well yeah I was supposed to, but nothing ever broke down

INT: So you had a lot of free time?

WC: Yeah I had all the time on my hands I wanted.

INT: was your unit ever tanked or bombed by the Japanese while you were there?

WC: no

INT: and I notice from the form here you had a story though, about how you were in camp and eating lunch something happened. What happened?

WC: oh yeah! Right off the bat, it was comical, Jesus. Well we got there around noon time and so they were eating, so they sent us down to eat and just as I took my first forkful of food and put it in my mouth I hear this **airplane noise** and crash about a building or two beyond me.

INT: So was it one of our own planes crashed?

WC: yeah, and uh I guess he committed suicide. Now I don't know if you've got any report on that

INT: No

WC: That's what I heard, I don't know that for a fact, but uh, somebody thought that it was a malfunction of the plane, but he deliberately, it looked like he deliberately crashed the plane.

INT: were any other people killed or injured?

WC: uh, I don't believe so, no

INT: Do you have any other stories you remember about when you were on the pacific?

WC: Stories?

INT: Yeah that you remember...Now you said that sometimes the pilots let you fly with them?

WC: oh, uh yeah yeah. I used to hang around. I was right close to the airport, and so uh I could walk out there and so id go out and finally I got acquainted with a pilot and so one day he says "How'd you like to fly?" and I says "yeah id like to" and he says "well hop on". He gets in the plane and I says "Where do you want me to hop on?" "Hop on the

wing! Hang on!". Jesus, you've gotta me kidding me. So he rides around the thing till I got used to it, you know, what to see if ill get sick or anything. It was great you know, so uh he finally stopped and says "ok, get in" and I says "Thanks!" I didn't the he really was gonna go up with me on that wing. Id cost the government too much money if anything happened to me. And he goes "Yeah you're right" and says "Hop in". I went up with him basically every night for I don't know how many years.

INT: So this was a two seater, a fighter?

WC: Yeah, oh yeah I was up there and they had a gun tour on the side and I was having a ball up there fighting my own war.

INT: Did you shoot the gun?

WC: OH no, no it didn't work I guess

INT: So how many times did you go up with him?

WC: Oh quite a few times. We went up mostly in the evening which was nice

INT: so it was just on patrol. Did he ever

WC: He was putting in time. He wanted to build up time. I think there was another fellow too, I can't remember. There was one or two. But anyhow they was there to build up time, flying time. So it don't make no difference to them, but if I wanted to go they took me with them. So I didn't get anything out of it.

INT: do you have any other interesting stories that happened to you while you were out there?

WC: Well nothing

INT: Did you ever get to see any USO shows?

WC: No, I never did. Yeah that was strange too. A couple of them were right near by but I didn't bother to go see them. I don't know, I was sort of like antisocial.

INT: Were you stationed in the Philippines?

WC: Uh, no. well I was really far up. I really never know. See I was uh in the Signal Corp. attached to the Air Force to begin with and uh I never knew where I was or who I was with, you know? But I was the repairman for radios but it was kind of interesting cause there was no radios to be had and on top of that they trained me, they gave me some training in radar. That is radar repair. They figure I knew radio...radars the same thing except more powerful, you know. A guy could really get killed fixing one of them things if he didn't watch his step. But after awhile they let me fix them. So I was fixing

them things just for time, but I never got credit for it. They didn't want to give me any. I don't even know who it was now. I can't get them to talk, they can't tell you who they are.

INT: What kind of problems did they have with the radar?

WC: With the radar?

INT: Yeah

WC: nothing! Nothing. It was a clear cut, nothing would go wrong! God burned me up a little bit. So I just made routine check on them. Adjusted, I adjusted the tubes and made sure they were all all right. They weren't, well, I changed it or all of them, whenever I thought, so

INT: Ok, are there any other stories you want to tell us that you recall...so you think our radio equipment was pretty good then since you didn't have to do a lot of repairs?

WC: It was built; it was a solid rock. Nothing ever went wrong with those damn things. That is, as far as I was concerned. I was hoping they would but they didn't. I was prepared to fix them, but the radio wasn't prepared to go wrong! Jeeze

INT: Now you went back to the states in 1944?

WC: Yep.

INT: Then you were discharged?

WC: Yeah.

INT: did you ever use the G.I. Bill at all?

WC: Well I think I did. I think I got tied up with some radio course or something but I dropped it because I didn't really have the time to devote to that and work too. That went to the way side.

INT: now you used your training, how worked in the radio shop at Grant's Company?

WC: The radio shop? No that's a department store

INT: Did you ever work in a radio shop?

WC: Nope.

INT: Oh. You were a salesman at Grant's after. Did you stay in contact with anybody, did you make any friends in the service who you stayed in contact with?

WC: I made a lot of friends but ill be damned I could find a single one of them after I got out. I found one and I can't even remember what his name was now. He lived in New

Jersey I think. But he was entirely different and uh in fact he was the company drunk and I says “lets go out and have a beer or two” “Ah no! I don’t drink anymore” he was reformed. That wound that up. I went home, I dint see nobody.

INT: did you try any veterans’ organizations?

WC: No, no I’m not really a joiner, you know? I’m more or less a loner.

INT: How do you think your time in service had an affect on your life?

WC: On my life?

INT: yeah, do you think it changed your life or affected your life in anyway?

WC: Well it educated it. I got educated to the point I learned things I never probably would have learned about life, you know?

INT: did you think you would ever travel like you did?

WC: No

INT: so it gave you some travel experience then?

WC: Yeah, it did. Well, that and associating with men. That’s a strange feeling to be in camp with a whole bunch of men, you know what I mean? That can make you a little worried to start with. But uh, nothing ever happened so

INT: Ok, well thank you very much for your interview

WC: Yep! Sorry I can’t give you anymore

INT: that’s ok

WC: I appreciate it