

Jerry Daniel Deluca
Veteran

Wayne Clark
Interviewer

Interviewed on January 24, 2010
Slingerlands, NY

Q: For the record would you please state your full name, your date and place of birth please.

JD: Jerry D. Deluca, October 24, 1924, born in Hoosick Falls, NY

Q: Did you attend school in Hoosick Falls?

JD: I graduated from Hoosick Falls.

Q: Did you graduate during the war?

JD: Yes

Q: Do you remember where you were you heard about the attack on pearl harbor?

JD: Working. I worked at a post office.

Q: After the attack on pearl harbor did you continue working or did you go into service right away?

JD: I went into service

Q: According to this, you went into the service before pearl harbor. January, 1939?

JD: That's possible because we went down to Albany

Q: Do you remember if you were drafted or did you enlist?

JD: Drafted

Q: Where did they send you for basic training?

JD: To Florida

Q: Was that your first time away from home?

JD: Yes

Q: What was basic training like down in Florida?

JD: It wasn't good; it was hot. We moved around quite a bit trying to make up some good time. You get to know all of your men, and everyone was very good to our group.

Q: Once you completed basic training, did they send you on to any sort of school?

JD: No

Q: After you completed basic training, where did you go next!

JD: Went overseas

Q: You went overseas right away?

JD: Right away.

Q: Did you go over as a replacement or were you with a division?

JD: I went over as a replacement

Q: How did you go across? Did you go across by ship?

JD: Train

Q: You were in the Philippines, so you went by ship from the west coast?

JD: Yes

Q: Did you land in Hawaii first?

JD: No

Q: You went directly to the Philippines?

JD: Yes

Q: What division were you with?

JD: With the 30th

Q: You were with the Anti-Tank Company?

JD: Yes

Q: What was it like in the Philippines?

JD: It was hot. How would you like to go on a boat for two...

Q: Did you have any encounters with the Japanese?

JD: No

Q: No direct contact with the enemy?

JD: Only in that scrimmage I told you about.

Q: For the camera, do you want to tell us about the scrimmage?

JD: [no response]

Q: Your recall anything about the scrimmage?

JD: [no response]

Q: Did you lose any of your friends that were with you in your unit?

JD: One of the fellows was shot through the chest, and he was taken to the hospital

Q: Did he die?

JD: No. Somehow someone checked about a week or two later and they said he was doing fine.

Q: What were your living conditions like?

JD: Things were good as far as I was concerned.

Q: Were you living in tents or out in the open?

JD: In tents

Q: Any problems with any tropical diseases like malaria or dysentery?

JD: We were given pills for the malaria.

Q: Snakes, scorpions any problems with them?

JD: No we didn't have any problems

Q: You mentioned an incident, it says you were scared except for when you were in the dugout with the Philippine girls?

JD: I didn't say it. I don't think I said that. I wouldn't say that.

Q: It says you received a citation for saving a fellow soldier that had been shot. Was that the fellow you were just talking about?

JD: Yes. I was pinned down for a while.

Q: The Japanese did, so what did they have you pinned down with? Machine guns or rifle fire?

JD: No, not fire. It looked to us like a gun.

Q: A sniper? Or a machine gun or artillery fire?

JD: No the machine gun was the twenty-five in the fifties.

Q: How long were you in the Philippines?

JD: I don't even know. I wasn't in the service too long, only two or three years.

Q: Someone must have made a mistake when filling this out. It says that you entered in 1939, and got in 1946.

JD: Are you talking about school education?

Q: They made a mistake here. You were born in 1924, and you wouldn't have been able to go into service in 1939. So you went in after you graduated from high school. Do you recall what year you went into the service?

JD: No

Q: If you were born in 1924, you probably graduated in about 1942 or 43. So you probably went into service then and got out in 1946.

Q: When you were over in the Philippines did you see any USO shows or Bob Hope?

JD: We didn't have much time. We didn't have any places to set up our tents to stay.

Q: Do you remember hearing about the dropping of the atomic bombs?

JD: Yes

Q: When the war ended was there a lot of celebration?

JD: Yes, it was unbelievable.

Q: Once the war was over you were still overseas for quite a while, right?

JD: Waiting for our number

Q: Once the war ended, what did they have you do over there? Were you doing details or did you have nothing to do at that point?

JD: We had some job to do

Q: How was the food?

JD: The food was always good, and we always had enough.

Q: Did you get any time off to go into town? Places like Manila?

JD: We walked down streets. There was a president there right on the Main Street.

Q: President of the Philippines?

JD: I don't know. I think it was the President of the United States.

Q: I know General MacArthur owned a home in the Philippines there somewhere.

Q: Are there any experiences that you can recall that you'd like to talk about? Anything that you can remember?

JD: The thing that bothered me the most was when we were shoved upon by the enemy. They fooled us by using Filipinos who were running into our town from where they were. They said 'quick the Japanese are over there,' and we said we can't just go over there now because we have to get ready for possible fighting.

They would tell us that they didn't have any guns, and as soon as we got up there they started firing at us.

Q: Was that when your friend got wounded?

JD: Yes

Q: Did you get wounded?

JD: No, I just got hit by pebbles. Another experience is that the next night before we got there the Japanese set up some tents in a valley with easy access.

Q: That was the second night after the incident where the fellow was hit?

JD: yes. So we picked up our stuff and got out of there. Course the Japanese had these nice spots saved for them. (15:00)

Q: Any other incidents that you can recall?

JD: [no response]

Q: Did your unit ever capture any Japanese prisoners?

JD: We saw a couple people on the road. We asked them where they were going and they said, 'the war is over, the war is over.'

Q: What did you think of the Japanese soldiers? Were they good soldiers?

JD: Yeah they were serious.

Q: What did you think of your equipment? Was it adequate?

JD: I think it was.

Q: What kind of weapon did you carry?

JD: Machine gun. A big twenty-five clip.

Q: Was it a Thomson machine gun or a BAR? Was it a big heavy gun?

JD: No it wasn't a big heavy gun.

Q: You may have carried a grease gun. No small machine gun was lighter weight than the Thomson.

Q: Do you recall when President Roosevelt died? Did it hit you pretty hard?

JD: Actually he died, and you didn't have time to feel about it in that short time.

Q: When you got discharged you went home by train?

JD: Yeah

Q: Did you make use of the G.I. Bill at all?

JD: Yeah. They would give me twenty dollars a week

Q: So you were a part of the 52-20? You got twenty dollars a week for fifty-two weeks

JD: Yeah. I always gave my father twenty dollars.

Q: You eventually went to work for the post office?

JD: Yes

Q: Do you recall what year you started with the post office? Was it right after the war?

JD: When was the war?

Q: The war ended in 1945, you were discharged in 1946.

JD: Well then it has to be 43' or something

Q: So you were working for the post office before you went into the service?

JD: Yes, I did

Q: You retired as a postmaster?

JD: 1989

Q: What town?

JD: Hoosick Falls

Q: Did you join any veteran's organizations?

JD: The VFW

Q: Any others like the legion?

JD: And the legion

Q: Did you stay in contact with anyone you were in the service with?

JD: No, not really

Q: You didn't attend any sort of reunions, did you?

JD: No

Q: How do you think your time in the service changed or effected your life?

JD: Well I just realized that while it was going on I didn't pay much attention to...

Q: Did you have any family members that were in the service?

JD: Yes, my brother Tony. He died when he was forty-two years old.

Q: So he made it through the military?

JD: Yes

Q: Was he in the army?

JD: Yes, over in France

Q: Any other family members in the service?

JD: My younger brother

Q: Your younger brothers were they in during the war or after the war?

JD: Some of them were