

**William Busacker
Veteran**

**Interviewer
Unknown**

**Interviewed on September 12, 2015
Slingerlands New York**

I: Where and when were you born?

WB: October 5, 1918 in Utica, New York.

I: What was your pre-war education?

WB: Bachelor of Art and Master of Art.

I: Where did you get the BA?

WB: SUNY Albany

I: And that was called the “Teacher’s College” then.

WB: The New York State College of Teachers

I: Where did you get the MA?

WB: I got that at Albany too.

I: How did you learn about Pearl Harbor?

WB: I was a teacher in New York. Me and my wife were on a ride with one of the couples from the area. He (the husband) was a teacher at the school as well. We were on a ride to one of the reservoirs in the area. It came over the radio in the car.

I: What was your reaction?

WB: It was hard to believe, I guess.

I: When you were an instructor, you worked in various places throughout the United States?

WB: I was in Grand Rapids, Michigan and from there I got sent to Santa Ana, California for 3 or 4 days, then I got transferred to Lemoore Air Force Base.

I: While you were there, you were an instructor?

WB: Yes, I was an instructor. I instructed pilots and navigators and the weather.

I: Weather was pretty important for the pilots back then, wasn’t it?

WB: Yes, it was important for the meteorologists too. Several ended up committing suicide when they made predictions that were wrong.

I: You kept in touch with some of these people as they went out in the field?

WB: Yes

I: Where did some of your navigators and meteorologists end up?

WB: In Europe and in the Pacific.

I: After leaving Lemoore Air Force Base, where else did you go in the United States?

WB: All of the United States. I went from Lemoore to Marfa, Texas. From there to Arizona. From there to Smithfield Illinois.

I: In each of those places, you were an instructor, right?

WB: Yes.

I: What were some of your general duties? Did you have classes every day?

WB: Yup, all the pilot and navigator trainees at the bases had to take the courses.

I: What was daily life like? Get up in the morning, did you actually have the bugle song?

WB: No. Forget it, I don't remember it.

I: Did you have mess halls like they had on mash?

WB: No

I: How were the other officers that you worked with?

WB: A lot of us were former science teachers. They got into it a similar way as I did. We heard about it from a secretary at school. They announced that the Air Force needed people with a science background.

I: And you volunteered?

WB: Yes. We volunteered because we were going to get drafted if we didn't.

I: What is the funniest thing you experienced during your service?

WB: The time I applied for a transfer to one of the islands out in the Pacific and several months later had not heard anything about my application. I got in touch with the office at the base where I was and they were told I had been in the hospital for three months or something like that.

I: What was one of the most inspiring things that happened to you?

WB: One of my friends who was a pilot instructor, applied for a job with a commercial airline after he got out of the service. He was told that he was too short to be a pilot but had been teaching people in the biggest plane that we had.

I: Is there a person that you remember best from your service?

WB: Oh, that guy.

I: Who's that?

WB: He was from Montana and his wife was from California.

I: Is that Mr. Carlson?

WB: Yes, the Carlsons.

I: And you were friends for many, many years after the war?

WB: Yeah

I: He went back to his farm after the war didn't he? I know we went out and visited him in Montana.

WB: Yeah

I: Wheat farm you said?

WB: Yeah, he got paid for not growing crops because there was an abundance of wheat.

I: Did anything from your time as an instructor leave an impact on you?

WB: Not really.

I: Did you have any unusual services that were required during your time in service?

WB: When they told me I was supposed to fly through thunderstorms and hurricanes and stuff like that, I asked if I would get flight paid.

I: Did you do it?

WB: No.

I: How did you keep in touch with your family when you were stationed throughout the war?

WB: My family went with me to Grand Rapids then to California, and then to Texas. Then they went home for a while.

I: Did your wife and daughter rejoin you then?

WB: They did in um, where the hell was it, Smithfield, I guess.

I: What was the food like?

WB: We got a lot of milk.

I: How did you feel about the use of the atomic bomb?

WB: I guess I felt the same way most people felt about it. It was necessary.

I: How did you learn about VJ Day?

WB: I guess just relieved that it was over.

I: Do you remember where you were?

WB: [Unintelligible]

I: What were some of your social activities during the war?

WB: I played the trombone with a band at one of the bases I was at.

I: How did you cope with shortages and rationing?

WB: Food, I had no problems with.

I: In what ways did the war change your daily life?

WB: You never knew where you were going to be the next day.

I: After you came back from the war, you had various jobs?

WB: I became a guidance counselor, then an assistant superintendent.

I: Did you ever attend any reunions with your veterans?

WB: Yes, I went back to Arizona. I was in the reserves through the 50s.