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United States Army Air Corps

2nd Lieutenant

Pacific Theater

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Interviewer:

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Geoff: When did you join the Air Force and why?

Glen: In 1940, I think it was. I was in college at Colorado University and I got to thinking that we would be in that doggone war, there was no question about it. I knew some guys who joined the Army back in Canada and had gone over and fought with the infantrymen in England as pilots. I thought that would be a good thing for me to do. I was interested in being a pilot, and right after I got interested in that, information from the government came out that they would teach high school and college kids who wanted to fly. It wouldn't cost us anything. They'd teach us how to fly and give us a commission as a pilot. So I joined and flew with them and got my commission as a pilot. Then I went home and talked about it with my dad and my dad was a major in WWI, my stepfather there in Ogden. He was mayor of Ogden during the depression. He said, "Well, that sounds interesting to me. You got to think about that going on one of those." I said, "Well, I'd also like to join the Air Force here and maybe that's what I'll do" So I just decided one day that summer of 1940, I think it was, I'd join the Air Force and then I enlisted as a flying cadet and went down to California and went to school and eighty percent of the guys that enlisted were kicked out because they couldn't do it. At that time they weren't being funny and let people do things that they let go later during the war, you know. We had professional baseball players and football players and stuff that couldn't make it. I was a football and college player too and a ski jumper in college and won the boxing championship also and...

Geoff: So were you good in math too? Did that help?

Glen: Fair to middle. I liked math. That was one of my favorite things. I liked math and taught it later on after the war for eleven years in high schools in Bountiful.

Geoff: I know that helps as a pilot. So how did you pick to be a bomber pilot?

Glen: Well, I didn't pick. When I graduated from flying school they sent me to Salt Lake City and while I was there I found out there was a bomber group that flew B-24's and B-17's... B-24's first. I've forgotten a lot of those things and it has been so doggone long and I've been so sick, but I flew those for awhile and then I got into the B-17's and flew those and when the war started, I was a B-17 pilot.

Geoff: Do you remember where you were when Pearl Harbor was hit?

Glen: Ya, I was on my way to go skiing. I was just on the verge of going up the canyon and I heard it on the radio that they'd bombed Hawaii. I stopped and thought about it a minute and said, "I'm sure they'll want me to come back, but if this war starts I'll never be able to ski for a long time." I had skied a lot. My brother and I were good skiers and I thought, "I'll go up this one time and this will be the last time." So I went on up and when I came back, sure enough they had closed down everything on the base and I didn't see life on the base for another two or three weeks. Then I got transferred to... it tells about it in some of these papers that I have exactly what happened over there.

Geoff: Where were you based?

Glen: Right at the base. The big Air Force base didn't exist then. We were flying right there on the regular base out there in Salt Lake City. We were on this side of it. But the National Guard is in there now. We were there then and then our bomber group.

Geoff: When were you sent overseas?

Glen: Well I went from there to flying school to become a B-24 pilot also down in Southern Utah there and then I went back to Tucson, Arizona to a B-17 pilot range again. I flew B-24 and B-17's at that time and qualified for them each and I was up flying one day on an instruction pilot and checking out a few things and I got a call from the operator who said, "The Commander wants to see you immediately." So I landed and went into his office and he handed me some papers. They were top-secret papers and he had orders from me to go to Australia with these brand new B-17's with tail turrets in them. They didn't have tail turrets in them before that. He said, "You're to go down to Salt Lake City and take those airplanes to Australia." So, I went down there and there were a bunch of other pilots with the same thing, but I wasn't really in command, but I had to see that everything went right as much as I could because I was a little older than most of them were, even though I wasn't very doggone old. We got all ready and took off for Hawaii and when we got there, the Navy confiscated all of our airplanes and they wouldn't let us go to Australia. We had to fly missions for them during that battle of Midway.

Geoff: So you arrive to Hawaii... Was that a big deal to fly from the West Coast to Hawaii back then?

Glen: Well it was for us at first, but I had the best doggone navigator you ever saw and I didn't have any trouble at all. After we left and went from there to Australia, about half of the people that went out that way got lost and drown in the doggone ocean, but not my pilot. He said, "I know there has been a lot of trouble out here, but I'm going to do this the right way with no questions about it. I'm going to make sure that we go to the right of that island and make sure we're over there and then we'll know exactly where we're going to be as far as how far east or west we are, and when I get there I can turn and go right into that field." So he did that and we never got lost. Right soon after that, the guy from WWI that fought and went over there and tried to fly to Australia, he got lost and almost died out there in the middle of the ocean. I don't know if you remember about that or not... Rickenbacker. He almost died because he didn't have a good pilot.

Geoff: The battle of Midway is in May of 1942. You were in on the battle of Midway. Tell us about the battle of Midway.

Glen: Most of my missions were to surf ride to see before the war really started there to make sure we weren't seeing the Japanese. We knew they were coming in. It felt like they were coming in, but nobody had seen them so they sent us out. The planes that they had, those little boomer water planes that take off, they were so slow and took so long that they couldn't do much, so they used us to investigate that. So I flew a mission every day out there to see how far I could go out and see if I could find any of these Japanese planes.

Geoff: The Navy planes were not up to the job?

Glen: No, they were not up to the job at all, but they never admitted that. I went to a big meeting after the battle at Midway with the Navy pilots and they were mad as hell at their Officers for not helping them more than they did. When they sent their planes off to bomb and things got a little tight, some of the Japanese ships were bombing at them and they left their doggone spot that they were suppose to be in and some of their pilots landed in the ocean, and some of their friends didn't like it. They didn't like what happened at all, yet nothing is ever said about that, and nothing is ever said about the Air Force, that had anything to do with the battle.

Geoff: So you were fighting reconnaissance missions out of Midway trying to find the Japanese fleet?

Glen: That was one of the things. Later on when we found out the Japanese were coming, and we did spot them and we were bombing the Japanese and they were bombing us, our B-17's and some of the other bombers, and some had big bombs in the nose--but they were very interesting just like a bullet itself, the whole thing almost. They had several of those and they went out and they were responsible to go out and find the Japanese planes coming up from the southwest to invade this island.

Geoff: The Japanese ships?

Glen: Yes, the Japanese ships—troops and supplies and everything and they were going to invade it after they bombed it.

Geoff: Did you ever try bombing the Japanese?

Glen: Yes. We did some damage to them and we got about half of those airplanes that just had the bombs, they sank some of those but they got killed. We only had three of those left after the war, the kind that had the big bomb in the nose. They did some damage to the Japanese and nothing was ever said about it. But they turned them around to go back to Japan.

Geoff: So I've read that you were flying very high.

Glen: No, we weren't flying high. You can't do any work from high level with a B-17. We learned that ourselves. We stayed down low and looked for submarines and everything else and I sank one submarine out there.

Geoff: This is during Midway?

Glen: Yes, and nothing is ever said about that either.

Geoff: Tell us about it.

Glen: That's all I can tell you. I tried to get him to come in and he wouldn't answer me so I sank him.

Geoff: Were you skip bombing?

Glen: No, we didn't know anything about skip bombing at that time. We were just out on the water and dropped some bombs on them. That was easy. They couldn't get down in soon enough. We went on and investigated and came back. A lot of time when you're flying such a low level, that airplane would lose control very easy. It wasn't designed for low-altitude flying and I'd come in a lot of times with just one or two engines running and I'd just barely make it into the doggone base and land making a lot of noise because the engines were all going to pot and everything. But we had to fly low to check for the submarines and to check for the Japanese ships. See the Navy couldn't do that. Those planes were too slow that they had.

Geoff: How many missions did you fly?

Glen: I think it was about fifteen.

Geoff: And you were shot at quite a bit by the Japanese ships?

Glen: Not a whole lot. They were really surprised to see us. They didn't know anything was happening.

Geoff: Would they start maneuvering trying to get out?

Glen: Ya, then they'd turn around and go home. Those were the people that were not part of the Air Force. They did turn around and go home.

Geoff: Tell us when you started to develop skip bombing.

Glen: Like I said before, we sank some of their airplanes at high level but only when they were parked in the doggone ship. I wish I had the name of that big Japanese base where they had their biggest base, Rabaul. I'm pretty sure that's the one at the end of that plant that goes up to the east. We were quite a ways out there and we were 20,000 feet or something like that flying along and we could see the Japanese ships there anchored in the docks. That way it's easy to sink them because they're not moving, and sank one that same way, but I got about twenty yards from the doggone target then I lost an engine. We got way behind the doggone crew. I got three missions when I had somebody beside myself flying and that was one of them. This was the 19th Bomber Group I think I was flying with at that time. We wondered if we should go ahead and finish this mission or go on home because we're going to be all by ourselves when we hit that target and the Japanese are going to be all over us. And I said, "Look, I can see that damn target we're suppose to hit. And we're not very far from it. Let's give it a go." So we got there and sure enough there were 15 or 20 Japanese fighters sitting there, waiting for us. Our planes had already gone through and dropped their bombs and they had sunk a couple of ships on there too already, but our target was different. I was on the right side of the gang, so I went on in and sank the damn thing, and then I got caught by ten Japanese Zeros. I fought them as long as I

could and then I put my hand on the prayer and started praying because there is no way in the world we can get out of this. Then all of a sudden I noticed there were planes and a fight below and the doggone big plane came up over me and the great big plane developed over the top of me and they couldn't follow me. It was a big cloud. I knew that God helped me there, no question about it.

Geoff: So were your gunners firing at these Japanese?

Glen: Sure they were, and we sank one or two of them. But there were still a lot of them left. You don't get any credit for that you know when a bomber drops... you can knock down fifteen of them and you'll never get any credit. If the Navy fighter planes do that, they get a big reward for it. But we could shoot down a dozen of them and it wouldn't make a bit of difference for the bombers.

Geoff: So tell us about the skip bombing and how it all started.

Glen: After that we discovered that it was very difficult, especially if the Japanese were on their way down to invade our place and take supplies and replacements into their camps just over the side of the river over the canyons and mountains there. As long as they're moving, it is very hard to sink them. So we decided that we were going to find some way to help us now. General Kinney, he and others decided that we had to develop something. So we developed this system and said, "let's try this... get down real low level with the ship, drop your bomb, hit the ship, sink to the bottom of the ship and explode." So we developed that kind of a system.

Geoff: So I understand these bombs would skip like a stone.

Glen: Well ya, but not real high. They would skip, hit the side of the ship and with that five-second delay-fuse in the tail of the ship, it would hit there and set the fuse off and go to the bottom of the ship and explode. We sank lots of ships that way.

Geoff: How many Japanese ships did you attack like that?

Glen: Oh 15 or 20 of them. I sank quite a few of them, but not all of them.

Geoff: And you say this was at night?

Glen: That's the only safe way to do it. You can't fly those airplanes in daylight. They'll shoot you down in a hurry. We did it pitch black. We learned how to fly at night and the Japanese weren't too good at it.

Geoff: Did you have radar?

Glen: No, we weren't allowed to have anything like that. It didn't even exist at that time.

Geoff: So how would you find a ship?

Glen: We had some B-24's that were very good. They were long-range things and they weren't as good as the B-17 but they'd go out there and find and follow them as they left Rabaul, and then they'd give us the word like on that mission we were talking about where I sank a cruiser and a destroyer. General MacArthur... I had flown two missions that day. I had destroyed a supply depot and a Japanese camp where the soldiers were. I had destroyed two of those in that one day all by myself. I just went in there and bombed the hell out of it. We had ten sometimes fifteen bombs on our ships and we'd drop one or two at a time and you could destroy a lot of things that way. We were pretty good at knowing where to destroy them. We had pretty good pilots and co-pilots and I had torn the heck out of each of those and gone to bed and about midnight I got called up and they said, "General MacArthur wants every pilot that's possible to get out there and stop the Japanese. They're having a big push down the north end of that island." They were coming down the north side of that big island and then they were going to come in and bomb the sea and come into their area to get their supplies and we sent these B-24's out there to follow them and make sure we knew where they were. General MacArthur called and said, "We want those planes stopped at all cost. If we don't stop them, then we're going to be put back six months behind time in invading the Philippines." So I was just about ready to go and my navigator tapped me on the shoulder and said, "Hey Glen, as you know this is a death mission. We can't make it and we don't have enough gas to get back." And I said, "We won't?" And he said, "No we won't." I said, "Colonel Holladay (or whatever his name is, he was in charge at that particular time) that's a suicide mission." And he said, "Ya, I know it but that's what General MacArthur wants." I said, "You sure that's what he wants?" He said, "Ya!" So I said, "OK you come and go with me and we'll go right now." He said, "Just a minute." He walked back into the office and called MacArthur and he came out after about a half an hour and he said, "General MacArthur says if we wait about two hours or so, they'll be within our range and we'll be alright." I said, "OK, we'll go!" And we took off and went.

Geoff: So you sank a cruiser?

Glen: I sank a cruiser and a big destroyer. It wasn't a little one, but it was a big cruiser.

Geoff: So tell us about that. This is fascinating.

Glen: I'd already flown two missions and I was tired but I still had to do it and there wasn't any difference in any other missions as far as I could see but all I knew is that they had more airplanes and I recognized that we had to destroy them because they had so much stuff with them—different soldiers and supplies and things like that and we couldn't tell exactly what it was but you know at nighttime if you get in the right area you can see those Japanese at night because they leave a big trail or line behind them where you can see it in the night and especially if the clouds are high enough that you can see the zone across there and see that. So we just flew around them and came in and hit them and we drop our bombs into the ship and fly over the ship and then come around again. The first mission is not so difficult because they don't know you're coming but the next one they're going to be ready for you and they set their bombs up there pointing in that direction and you're coming in this way and as soon as they see you there they start firing and I fire right through a big supply of bombs, a big curtain of fire. I got over 200 bullet holes in that airplane every time I flew on those missions, at least that many.

Geoff: So do you remember anything more about this one particular mission--the cruiser's--a big ship? So you had to come around a second time?

Glen: Well ya, you can't sink a ship usually that quick so we always tried to get two or three missions on every ship like that even though we knew we were doing damage because when that thing explodes in the bottom of an airplane, it's going to tear the bottom right out and they're not going to go very doggone far. But you know, they wouldn't give us credit for anything unless we saw the damn thing sink. They wouldn't give us any credit. I had an airplane I shot down and my crew shot down and we knocked the wing off and saw the wing hit the water but then the other part of the airplane went underneath the wing and we couldn't see it hit the water and they wouldn't give us credit for the kill because we couldn't see the airplane fall. We saw the wing fall but we didn't see the airplane fall. That's how tough they were on us.

Geoff: So when you saw this cruiser get hit, what happened to it? Did you see flames?

Glen: Oh ya, when we came back a second time we could see fire but we sank it again. The second time around, of course they saw us and knocked our rudder control off. It was right on the tail of that gun you see as we came by and the pilot back in the rear was sitting there and they had a big steel plate behind his back that protected him and it did. The explosion hit right behind him and it destroyed the wheel control that went up you know and the big pipe went up behind him and it destroyed that completely. They had no rudder control. And they also just about restored him because it put some scratches on him here and threw his pants half way off and scared him half to death and after we turned around he came running up through his track hole there and threw his head on the floor and said, "I quit!" He called and told me that and I said, "Oh, c'mon now, we've got other missions to fly. Don't worry about that one. Just stay there. You can't do any good out there anymore anyway. Just stay there and get a gun and shoot off the side of the plane."

Geoff: So how do you fly a plane with no rudder?

Glen: Very carefully! Very carefully! It wasn't easy. It wasn't easy at all, and that wasn't half of it. That wasn't half of it. Later on when we were on another mission after that, we saw that plane go off and explode and then we said, "With that tail gone, we better go home. It's not going to be very easy flying the way it is." And my navigator spotted this big ship there trying to get away and I said, "Maybe we ought to sink that one too. MacArthur said 'at all cost' o.k., let's do it." You had to stay cool. If you got excited like so many of these they show in the movies where people getting excited and throw things and curse each other--none of that! We didn't have any cursing or anything like that. You just do your damn job! We just said, "OK, let's go do it!" So we went over and found this other ship and made three runs on it and sank it, but in the meantime they put a big hole in my right wing as big as that thing right there and right against the fuselage of the airplane from there out to the first engine out there... took almost everything out of there and damaged my control out there in my right wing and had a lot of bullet holes in addition to that.

Geoff: How long did it take you to get back to base?

Glen: Oh about eight hours.

Geoff: Tell us about how hard that was at night.

Glen: We had to fly up through those storms and over the Owen Stanley Mountains which go up to 19,000 feet sometimes and let down on the other side over there in New Guinea.

Geoff: And you flew many more missions after that?

Glen: Oh ya, sure. After that was the battle of Midway.

Geoff: How many ships did you sink?

Glen: I think it was eight of them, at least that many.

Geoff: And how many enemy fighters did your gunners shoot down?

Glen: I don't know because we didn't keep track of that. We didn't get any credit for it anyway. I sank quite a few of them... probably eight or ten.

Geoff: So when did you finally come back to the States?

Glen: I don't know. It was a full year after I was over there.

Geoff: And how many missions did you fly? I think you told me sixty or something.

Glen: At least that many, probably more than that. A lot of them I didn't get a lot of credit for, for instance that one mission right after the Midway battle. That was one of the missions where we came out as a group and that's when the B-17's and the smaller airplanes got in there and... they actually did more damage than the B-17's did in that battle. They went in there and did skip bombing and went right into the airplanes and dropped their bombs directly on them and they sank more ships than we did on that particular battle but we had sank a few too. They didn't go the long ranges that we did with the ships.

Geoff: Did you alter your B-17's in any way to improve them?

Glen: There was no way you could do it. That wouldn't have helped any. We had at least two bombers in the nose and the big one at the top and the guy on the tail shooting toward the front, and it was about as good as you could get. It would have helped to have extra guns in there, sure, but it's so quick and everything, it wouldn't have done a lot of good. I just told you a minute ago about that Midway battle there. After that battle we went back and landed at the base and the Base Commander and what's his name... they came up to me and said, "Glen, did you notice that there were a couple of those ships that were sneaking away that weren't quite destroyed?" And I said, "Ya, I noticed that." He said, "Let's load our guns up and go back and sink those buggers." And I said, "Well, if you want to." He was the Base Commander so we loaded the guns ourselves. We loaded the doggone machines ourselves and the gunners and

everything and I hurt my back a little on that. I had a bad back for a long time after that. We loaded them up and went out there and there were just three of us, three planes that went out there and we sank those ships and then we noticed that a lot of Japanese had boats of some sort that they were floating back in with supplies and equipment to the land where they were trying to go to. They were taking stuff into the Japanese bases there and so we went around and tried to sink them so they couldn't get their supplies in there, and we did that for about an hour.

Geoff: So you're getting attacked by three Japanese fighters, then what happened?

It took a long time to get away from there. We just turned around and started home. They'd come down and we went right down on the water, all of us until they couldn't get underneath us and shoot from under there. We were flying along pretty low and my navigator up front saw one of those airplanes come through on the right wing and he came out the other side and he started shooting at him. He got there out a ways and cut one of the wings off of that airplane and the wing came off and hit the water. We saw the wing hit the water and then the airplane was going this way and the wing hit the water there and the other part of the airplane went underneath the plane and we couldn't see it hit the water but how could it fly without the other wing? When we got home to the base they wouldn't give us credit for that mission. So we just figured it was no use counting the numbers we had shot down... to heck with them. They wouldn't give us any credit anyway. We're not pilots.

Geoff: You told me you had a really good crew.

Glen: I had a wonderful crew.

Geoff: Tell me about it. What can you say about them? They're just great guys. One of the guys, one of the best guys in the crew and the only one of them I know is still alive, he lives up in Montana and I went up to visit him one day and he said, "You know the first thing I remember when we were there?" And I said, "What?" And he said, "Well some of the missions we flew we did a great job. You know that time we went down to Las Vegas to have a party and we came out of that dinner dancing?" I took all the crew to dinner and dancing and then we were going to go out and find some girls and look around... outside that place there were two or three native pilots standing out there and they had been drinking out there a little bit and they walked up to me and said, "Oh, you're one of those Air Force pilots eh? These guys are not worth a damn." And he reached over to pull my wing off of my shoulder like that and I just reached over and grabbed his hand like this and flipped him on his back. He just flew right on his back and I picked him up and threw him against the wall, and that was it. I said, "Now are you guys going to take your friend and get out of here or what?" They left. My crewmembers laughed like heck because that was the best thing we ever saw.

Geoff: So tell me how you felt about the war when you look back on it and what we did. Do you have any feelings about that?

Glen: Sure I do. I think they did the best they could in many respects, however I think they were wrong in not giving General MacArthur more help. He had one bomb squadron to stop those Japanese from invading Australia. That's all he had—one big

B-17 bomb squad, and some B-25's and some fighter pilots and things like that. Is that enough to defend a whole nation? General MacArthur went back to Washington a dozen times and asked them for more help and they said, "We've got to send more airplanes to England. You're going to have to wait until we get that war in England won before you get a lot of help." So we had to just do with what we had. Now we finally did get a few extra planes. We got a bunch of B-24's instead of the B-17's and they lost 80% of their planes within two or three months after they were there because they didn't know how to fly in that weather. We tried to tell them and explain to them and they wouldn't listen to us. They'd lost almost all of their planes within two months.

Geoff: What was the weather like?

Glen: Terrible... there were big storms and things all of the time. And you had to fly over those mountains twenty thousand feet some of them, along that mountain range and they just couldn't handle it.

Geoff: That's in New Guinea, the very high mountains? I understand there is snow at the top of those.

Glen: Oh ya.

Geoff: So you look back and you think about it all, are you proud of what you did?

Glen: Yes I think so. I think they did about the best they could but the thing that bugs me, and I shouldn't feel that way I guess because some of my best friends are Navy people, but they seemed to get all of the credit for so many things and they were running things most of the time and I guess if I would have been in their position, I would have done the same thing, you never know. It's always easy to say what somebody else would do but I think they should have given us more help over there. We had a heck of a time. A lot of times we only had three or four airplanes to fly and that's all we'd fly.

Geoff: I read that at Midway there were only about fourteen or fifteen B-17's. Does that sound right to you?

Glen: Ya and those are the ones that we flew in there. I had orders to take them in there. We were supposed to go to Australia but the Navy confiscated them.

Geoff: Now you were under attack at Midway on the ground when you were there?

Glen: They bombed us over a hundred times in that one camp that we were in. We had those big holes outside of our tent and lived in the jungle in the tent and we'd hear the bombs getting closer to us and we'd just roll out our bed in the hole and ninety percent of the time it would be full of water. But we stayed there and when it was over we'd go home. We got bombed and strafed a lot of times there.

Geoff: So Midway was not a sure thing?

Glen: Oh no. We actually stayed in Australia for a while until we got the Japanese back far enough, and pushed them on a place just on the other side of the island there and pushed them farther west and got them way up there quite a ways and then we could just put our base right there on New Guinea.

Geoff: Have you ever been back?

Glen: No, and I sure wanted to go there. One of our friends, a native, married a guy from back there in Australia and he came over here and they were talking one day about something and he said, "Who are you?" And I said, "I'm Glen Lewis." He said, "Everybody is talking about that guy that flew through Sydney and flew down onto the Sydney Bridge and on the streets of the village there below the level of the streets then landed on the base." I said, "Ya, that was me."

Geoff: So tell us that. Tell us about what you did.

Glen: It was after one of those big battles and I forget which one it was and the Generals gave us two weeks to stick around and have fun in Australia and so we got down there and it was time for us to go home and I asked my Commander... I had a good guy who did good repair work and had a guy there working with me that was very good at it and he said, "We had some problems with that engine when we started it up and I had to do some repairs on it. We should give it a flying test before we head back to New Guinea bombing. We should test it and make sure it's going to fly up there." And so I said, "OK, lets go jump in it and go." So I went and jumped in it and they came and jumped in with me and we flew around up there a few times to see how it was going to go, then I saw that big bridge there and we went down to it and there was a big ship at dry dock, one of the big Navy ships that had been grounded during that big battle they had over in the Solomons and it's one they didn't want anyone to know about being grounded and they were fixing it up there and nobody was suppose to see that. I went up and there were some big buildings like in New York and one of the guys there said, "Hey, there's a girlfriend of mine right there in that building. Can you fly down over that building?" I went over there and couldn't get down there and there was not enough distance between those buildings and it wasn't wide enough for me to get down in there with a big airplane. And he said, "Oh it would be great if I could get down there and see that girlfriend of mine." And I said, "OK!" So I turned it over this way sideways and went right down in there and flew up and around and landed. When I landed there the police were waiting for me.

Geoff: You flew under the Sydney Bridge?

Glen: Ya, and then down that street.

Geoff: During Midway, tell us what you saw as a pilot. This is one of the most significant times of all of the war. Describe what you saw for us. If you were a camera, what would we be seeing?

Glen: That was the one there in the first part of the war wasn't it? Well, we didn't go out and see the Navy fighters there. We did our skipping around there and spotted them and came back, but we would never fly over those Japanese carriers. We didn't do any of that but we did go down

into that area where the Japanese had their big ground Navy coming up to invade the island after they had destroyed it with their Navy ships. The other people were coming in with supplies to invade and land on that island. We saw that and we just bombed them like we'd do these other areas we're talking about except we didn't do skip bombing at that time. There wasn't much you could see there.

Geoff: Were they shooting back at you?

Glen: Ya.

Geoff: Was it very accurate?

Glen: Ya it was. We lost some airplanes. If you notice that picture there it shows a B-17 crash-landing on the runway on the Midway Island there. Ya, they got shot up a little. I was very green at that time, however, so I didn't see a whole lot, but I saw enough to know that we were doing something and I did fly out to those other areas a few times. The Air Force didn't fly out where the big Japanese and U.S. cruisers were fighting... the big fleets. But we did intercept the people coming in to invade the island and we did fly out and sink a few people in the water and things like that. In that particular area where these people were fighting we weren't at a high altitude. We were down low on the ground trying to find people underneath the water and their doggone submarines. We were looking for those more than anything else in that particular area. That other area over there to the west and south a little bit where the Japanese ships were coming in is what we intercepted as much as possible. Those other planes that were sent over there were used to bomb them to stop them and they were killed almost all of them. They weren't Navy planes, but they were Air Force too. They were supposed to go on to the Australia thing too as far as I know, but I didn't know who they were because the B-17's were completely new. I didn't know where they came from but I knew there were a bunch of them there. When they got ready I asked them, I said, "What happened to those other airplanes?" And they said, "Well there are only three of them that are left."

Geoff: What year did you leave the Pacific Theatre?

Glen: When I left and went to Hawaii was 1943.

Geoff: During the battle of Guadalcanal and the Solomon Islands in New Guinea, there was a General shot down. Did you know the General who was shot down over Rabaul?

Glen: I don't remember that. But the Air Force Commander that flew from Rabaul down to help the people down in Guadalcanal was shot down and killed. Ya, I know about that and I was over there flying missions about that same time in that area but some of the other planes shot him down. I had nothing to do with that. There was a Japanese commander trying to help his people not get in and leave that island because that was important for them to keep that base, Guadalcanal, and it didn't work. Somebody found out he was flying out there and killed him and knocked him down.

Geoff: You were an instructor pilot later on?

Glen: Very soon after that I was sent to the States and became an instructor pilot. My first assignment after that was when we went from New Guinea... my first assignment was to learn winter ice control. In the winter we'd go to Colorado and go through those big things and see how I could live in ice and I had nothing to fly in to get my time in except some of those little single planes with one engine and that's all I had to fly in and I was taking off one time flying and I got commissioned to fly and they said, "OK, go out to the runway and get ready to take off." I started out toward the end of the runway and they called me, "Hey you're not clear to take off yet." I said, "What do you mean, I'm going..." They said, "You're twenty feet off the ground." I'd been use to flying those big airplanes and I was flying that tiny thing and I was twenty feet off of the ground, smooth as glass flying to the end of the runway. I went back down to the ground again. No problem, I could do that. After that I went back to a place there in Pocatello with an outfit there that was training to go out and do some combat. Jimmy Stewart was an Officer in the squadron I was in and he and I knew each other and I had dinner with him many times there. Then I went from there down to fly the B-24's and from there I went down to the place just south of Utah here, Arizona where there was a base there. I was flying B-29's there and I was flying around one day and I got a call from the office that said, "Glen you have to come in and land right this minute and come in and see the commander." So I did that and got in there and he handed me that set of orders that said I was ordered to go to Las Vegas and help them avoid being invaded. But anyway it didn't work out that way. I went and got the airplanes and flew to Hawaii. The Navy confiscated the airplanes, they took every one of our airplanes and from then on it was after that battle. Then about a month or so after the battle was over, they let us go and I went on down to Australia. After that it was just to fly those missions one after the other. Then I flew a lot of missions over Guadalcanal. That was one of the missions where when I was coming back from over there, it was a long ways from New Guinea from over there and back and I was flying home... after that I taught B-24's and B-17's and B-29's. I taught everybody there as an instructor pilot during WWII. Those guys that were going to fly the atomic bombs came there and I taught them and then I decided I was going to get out of the service because I wanted to finish my college education. I just needed one quarter of that and so I went back to school and they came back to school and they said they wanted me to come back again and they offered me a lot of big promises about finishing my college and not costing me a thing and they'd send me to M.I.T. and a bunch of stuff like that and get me a promotion and things and so I signed up the forms and I never got one answer. I did go to school myself.