

War Era Story Project 2012

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Current home town: Columbus, Ohio

Age: 86

I graduated high school in May and enlisted in the United States Navy in June, 1944. I completed boot camp in Sampson, New York, in October. I arrived at the San Francisco, California, receiving station and did my gunnery training at Point Lomp, California. I was made a first loader of the 40mm anti-aircraft gun and fired at balloons and towed targets. In San Francisco, I was assigned to a new ship, the *USS Oneida* PA22, an amphibious transport that was armed with one five-inch 38-cal. gun mounted on stern, quad 40-mm guns on bow and aft, 20-mm guns amid ship and aft. The ship had two LCM landing craft and 10 LCVP landing craft, with one fast landing craft for directing landings.

Training in landings was conducted on the California coast. In November 1944, the *Oneida* sailed for the Hawaiian Islands with troops from Hawaii, then sailed to Eniwetok Island. The ship's crew, enlisted men followed a routine daily at sea that specified reveille time at 06:00, typically. Breakfast was 07:00 and muster at 08:00, followed by a three-section watch schedule: four hours on watch, eight hours off, which included a rotation system so all who stood watches would not constantly have the same hours of watch duty. Chief petty officers' watches were arranged differently, as were officers' watches. The crew aboard navy ships was assigned to divisions. Quarter masters, radar men and radiomen were in H division (navigation). Deck crew included boatswain, gunners mates, cooks, yeomen and mail men. Laundry men and storekeeper were in the supply division. The propulsion division consisted of engine crew who served below decks managing the steam boilers and drive shafts and propellers.

The *Oneida* landed tenth army troops (support and replacement marines) on Okinawa in April 1945. Finally, when Japan surrendered in May 1945, the *Oneida* was at Ulithi awaiting preparing for landings on the Japanese mainland. Many lives were saved due to the surrender.

I returned to the USA and received a battleship discharge certificate (honorable) in San Francisco. I married my childhood sweetheart. I was recalled in the Korean war, where I served two years aboard the LSMR 401 in Korean waters. I qualified for and passed the test for 1st class radar man rating. I returned home in April 1954 with another battleship discharge.

I suffered no serious injuries in the navy. My duty assignments afforded travel, hazardous duty, interesting days, boring days, good chow and poor chow. The *Oneida* ran very low on supplies for about one week while near Australia. During my Korean service I was interviewed and offered a commission as ensign if I would sign over to regular navy for 4+ years. Over time I have lost contact with my ship mates and friends, and assume most have departed his life.

The G.I. Bill afforded financial assistance providing me wherewithal to earn a BSE degree in agriculture at The Ohio State University. I had an interesting career in the great outdoors and the wonderful Ohio country! Life has been good. Helen and I raised three fine sons. She departed this life in August 2010 and was a wonderful woman!