

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Gary Leib

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Veterans Remember Oral History project

Interview # VRK-A-L-2010-044

Gary Leib, Korean War era sailor serving on the fleet aircraft carrier USS Boxer, was interviewed on the dates listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Veterans Remember* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Oct 5, 2010 Location: Leib residence in Winchester, Illinois

Date: Oct 6, 2010 Location: Leib residence in Winchester, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Transcription by: Audio Transcription Center, Boston, MA

Edited by: Betty Workman & Rozanne Flatt, ALPL volunteers

Total Pages: 88 pgs Total Time: 2:22 + 2:25 / 2.37 + 2.42 = 4.79 hrs

Session 1: Early life through initial year of duty off coast of Korea

Session 2: Duty on the USS Boxer off the coast of North Korea

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on 10/26/2010.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in
Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Gary E. Leib, *Veterans Remember*, VRK-A-L-2010-044

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Gary E. Leib was born on November 19th, 1929 in Winchester, Illinois, and grew up splitting his time between Winchester and nearby Arenzville, Illinois. He talked about growing up during World War II, and his experiences in a variety of jobs following high school graduation in 1947. Leib enlisted in the Navy in July of 1948, and went through a series of postings and training programs before being assigned to the USS Boxer, an Essex class fleet aircraft carrier then undergoing training maneuvers in California. The Boxer deployed to South Korea in time to support the amphibious landing at Inchon in September, 1950. By November the Boxer had returned to the states for major engine repairs.

In March, 1951 the Boxer returned to the Korean theater. For the next two years it rotated between one month cruises in the Sea of Japan off the coast of North Korea, and Yokasuka, Japan for replenishments and R & R for the crew. Gary was assigned as an aviation boatswain's mate third class, and described the ship's operations in detail, especially his duties on the flight deck where he helped launch and land aircraft, duties that were inherently dangerous. He discussed one incident where he was blown off the flight deck by an aircraft's full-power slipstream. Leib was cited for bravery when he helped save nine fellow sailors during a devastating fire on the ship's hanger deck on August 6th, 1952. As a ship's driver, Leib often drove for the ship's officers when in port. His tour of duty was involuntarily extended for a year, but Leib left the Boxer in late August and returned to the states in September at the conclusion of his tour of duty.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Growing up in Winchester, IL during WW II; CV-21, USS Boxer during Korean War; Task Force 77 during Korean War; flight operations on an aircraft carrier; shore leave in Yokasuka, Japan during Korean War; Inchon landing; aircraft explosion and fire on USS Boxer, August 6th, 1952; Corsair aircraft; AD-3 Skyraider aircraft; CVE-106, USS Block Island; bombing of bridges on the Yalu River; *Bridges at Toko-Ri*

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