

John Lupardi

WWII



When did you enter the military?

“In January Thirty-first, 1945. But I enlisted in June, 1944, in High School. “

How old were you when you entered and how long were you in the military?

Was eighteen years old.”

What boot camp did you go to? How long was the boot camp? Did you go to a second Boot camp? If so then why?

“Balata, Mississippi. It lasted two months. I went to mechanics school.”

What Branch of the service where you in?

“I was in the army air-force. They didn’t have a separate branch for air-force back then, the air-force was a part of the Army. That happened later on. I was an airplane engine mechanic.”

Did you join the military voluntarily?

“Yes, in High School, that’s what I said, in June. In my that’s what we were all doing, we weren’t running away to Canada like they do now. No, we were all volunteer, a lot of them volunteered for the navy, they left, didn’t even graduate. Went into service before even graduating...that was sixty years ago, huh.”

What made you choose that particular branch of military?

“Because I like the air force and airplanes, used to fly airplanes on weekends I enjoyed it. So it was a chance to sign up and join the army air-force.”

What equipment did you use on a daily basis?

“It’s hard to say, I mean, what was the daily basis. We had shooting range, that was part of boot camp then we came out, but I was an occupation, basically. In Germany, unit green was Germany, and I was in air-force supplies so I was, with the equipment, we, well if you needed a wing or an engine they came to our supply house and us mechanics worked on the airplanes.”

What rank you did you achieve?

“PFC, that’s all I wanted.”

Were you wounded while you were in the military? If you were in what way were you wounded?

“No, I wasn’t in occupation, the war was over. all I did was, uh, the only occasion was when I was in Germany, we used to pick up the troops that were on trial, and had them working for us around the air field. We used to carry a submachine gun and you had ten or twelve people that you’d have to watch while they cleaned up the yard, and that was that. That was as close as I got to action.”

Were you in any famous campaigns or battles?

“No.”

Did you receive any awards or medals for your service?

“American Campaign Medal, Army of Occupation Medal, WWII victory medal. That’s it.”

What did you have to do to get those medals?

“Nothing, you just had to be there.”

What did you do on a “normal or average Day” while you were in the military?

“It’s hard to say, I mean it varied. While I was occupation we’d just sit in the trailer and wait for the orders to come in and then we’d have to give the parts that were needed.”

What type of firearm(s) did you use?

“45, pistol.”

Were you in the Berlin air lift?

“No.”

Did you use any heavy weapon Artillery?

“No. I didn’t do any of that.”

While at war, what helped you pass the time?

“Eh, writing letters back home, to your parents and girlfriend. Well what we did, in occupation, they were selling old jeeps, and me and four of the guy bought a jeep and we used to take turns on weekends traveling around Germany. We went to Hitler’s hideout. We drove all over. We had R and R, which is rest and recuperation. That was the biggest thing.”

Did you get any care-packages?

“No. Though my mother used to make cookies. Everybody had a mommy.”

What helped you through the hard times?

“Just counting the days that were left. So I could have an idea of when I’d get out. I had a strange thing, I had Truman’s red apple. I got out in two years. I was shipped home and discharged at fort Dix.”

After you came home from war, did your perspective on anything change? Did you carry anything from the military with you after the war?

“No. I, uh, went to radio school. I took advantage of what they called the ‘GI Bill’ I like radios so I went to college. There was a school there and I came back and started working on radios.”

I see you brought some pictures, could you tell us about them?

“This picture, well were could it be taken, it was must have been at a camp. They were always taken pictures there.”





Where were you when this picture was taken?

“Well that’s our barracks. That was in Germany. Because you went across France and brought us to our came, I was there for a year. I got off easy compared to most people.”

Is there anything you would like to add or say that I missed or is there anything that you would like to talk about?

“It’s sort of strange that it was Sixty-seven years ago.”