

BIOGRAPHY

Michael Mickey Ganitch, born 11/18/1919 in Mogadore, Ohio.

Mickey moved to California in 1939, and then joined the US Navy 1/21/1941.

Went to Boot Camp and QM/Signalman School at San Diego, CA.

Joined the USS Pennsylvania (BB-38) at Pearl Harbor on August 15, 1941.

I was a member of the ship's football team.

Our ship was due to play the USS Arizona on December 7, 1941, at 1:00pm, for the fleet championship. Since my ship was in dry dock for repairs, we had to don our football uniforms before leaving the ship at 8:00am for a practice scrimmage.

At 7:55am, when the first air attack by the Japanese commenced, "General Quarters" sounded throughout the ship. Hearing the alarm, you report for your battle station immediately - in whatever you are wearing. As my battle station was in the crow's nest of the main mast, I reported there in my football uniform, minus cleats and helmet. The shoulder pads made it difficult to get through the trapdoor. One 500-lb bomb hit our ship during the second air attack.

Our ship was used as fire support for all major invasions of the North Pacific Ocean except for Okinawa and Iwo Jima. At that time we were stateside being outfitted with new guns.

August 6th and 9th of 1945, two atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki respectively.

August 12, 1945, the USS Pennsylvania was hit by a torpedo at Okinawa. The torpedo struck in the rear of the ship by the propellers, which is the living compartment of the quartermasters. From my crew of 26, I lost 20 of my 26 quartermasters that day. (The next day the Japanese sued for peace).

The ship was used for the atomic bomb tests at Bikini Atoll in 1946. I returned to the ship after each of the tests, as I was in charge of the animals that had been placed on the ship for observations of effects upon animals.

Reenlisted in 1947. Served aboard the USS Mount Katmai (ammunition ship) from 1948 until 1954.

Last part of service was recruiting duty in Oakland, CA from 1960 until October 10, 1963 when I retired from the Navy. Retired as Senior Chief Quartermaster.

1963 to 1966: worked in a bowling establishment.

1966 to 1986: worked for a fishing net manufacturer in East Oakland.

1986 to 1991: worked at various jobs

1991 to 1996, worked as Security Guard at NAS, Alameda.

Currently serving as:

The Pearl Harbor Survivors' Past State Treasurer, Past Chapter Secretary, and Editor of the monthly newsletter for PHSA Chapter No. 2, of the San Francisco Bay Area.

Chaplain for: Fleet Reserve Assoc.; VFW; American Legion; and my Masonic Lodge.

Adjutant/Treasurer for Disabled American Veterans.

Honor Guard for VFW.

Presently VA Volunteer driver, and other duties, (Over 7,000 volunteer hours) for the VA.)

49 years active in my church (Methodist) as head usher.

Married 51 years to my wife, Barbara.

4 daughters; 13 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren and 8 great-greats.