

USS Indianapolis Survivor Interview

1. How long did you serve on the USS Indianapolis?

about 2 weeks

2. What was your job on the ship?

Electronic Technician Mate 2/c (repair radios)

3. Did you know what the secret cargo was and did you know where the ship was headed or what the mission was?

Not the faintest idea - but there were many rumors - all incorrect.

4. Where were you and what were you doing when the torpedo hit?

asleep on a cot in "Battle 2" [a room just forward of the after stack, above the main deck]

5. What did you think when you heard the explosion?

I thought it was the explosive catapult used to launch our airplane.

6. Were you hurt by either of the torpedoes that hit the ship?

No

7. How were you able to get off the ship?

I just slid off the low side (starboard) of the main deck as we rolled over.

8. Did you have a life jacket or anything to hold on to?

a rubberized life belt (not a jacket)

9. What did you have to eat or drink when you were in the water?

ZERO!

10. How many people did you see get attacked by sharks?

I didn't actually witness any.

11. What types of fears did you have while you were in the water and did you think you were going to die? *Fear of sharks and fear of my shipmates, who were rapidly deteriorating towards the end. I did not expect to die, but worried about my parents, in case I died.*

12. Were you afraid when you saw Mr. Gwinn coming at you with his torpedo doors open?
NO - he did ^{not} come our way.

13. Were you picked by the PBY or one of the ships? *ship - "Bassett"*

14. What did you think about the court marshal of Captain McVay III? *a travesty of justice. a terrible thing.*

15. What did you think about the Navy bringing Hashimoto here to testify? *Incredible!*

16. Who do you think was responsible for the ship's tragedy? *The person who did not warn Capt. McVay, before we left Guam, that submarines had been spotted along our route. Further, that our non-arrival was not reported in Leyte and our S.O.S. was not picked up (or not reported)*

17. How did you feel about dropping the bomb on Japan?

I think it was absolutely the right thing to do.

18. Have you been to any of the survivor's reunions? *Yes. 2*

19. After that experience did it make you look at life differently? *You bet!*

You write a remarkably adult letter for a 6th-grader. I wish you the best of luck on your project.

H. J. MINER

Thank you for your help!

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I have so much memorabilia that I wouldn't know where to start making copies for you. 3/31/97