

**Louis Campese**  
**Narrator**

**Jennifer Beach**  
**Jordan Sislo**  
**Rome Free Academy**  
**Interviewers**

**Interviewed on January 15, 2003**  
**Rome Free Academy**  
**Rome, New York**

**Louis Campese**      **LC**  
**Jennifer Beach**      **JB**  
**Jordan Sislo**      **JS (camera person)**

**JB:** Could you state your name.

**LC:** Louis Campese

**JB:** What part of service did you belong too?

**LC:** Navy

**JB:** When did you enter?

**LC:** August 1940-August 1946

**JB:** Where did you enter service?

**LC:** Utica

**JB:** What wars, tours, campaigns or locations were you in?

**LC:** Pacific, South Pacific

**JB:** What were your jobs during field training?

**LC:** Chief Machinist Mate

**JB:** Did you have combat duty...When were you first under fire?

**LC:** Pearl Harbor

**JB:** What were you doing that day?

**LC:** Well, I was sleeping in bed, Sunday is a holiday routine...Someone a boatmate came down and said we were being attacked by the Japanese. So I went out on deck, I looked over I could from where I stood on the deck. I could see the earth and my battalion was all in flames. Somebody jolted me on the deck hollered that we were being attacked by Japanese. So, I turned around and started going to my (duty) my station and a Japanese plane came by and put a row of machine bullets thru in from of me. So then I went to my general quarter station which was 4 gun. We started to get the ship under way. I waited because the engines (needed time to warm up) you can't start them up cold and drag them

out. **LC:** continued...You have to warm them up and it takes almost an hour to do that in the Harbor. “They beached her,” (she was sinking). We went right by the Nevada they (Japanese) dropped a couple of bombs at us but missed. And we went out the channel formed up a Taskforce for the rescue the people who got out of the ships.—looking for a Japanese – “It probably was a good thing we didn’t fire them up!”

**JB:** Where were you taken after Pearl Harbor?

**LC:** Well after Pearl Harbor I went to Black Canal, Battle of Sabu Islands there we took a 5 Inch hit there and it knocked out the guns three and four. I went to Saipan, Guam, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, Leyte Gulf and Gulf off of the Philippines. We got stuck in a Typhoon in the Philippines We thought the ship was going to sink. (He added)– Which it did sink previous charges?

**JB:** What do you remember most about .....you feared?

**LC:** The most we feared was the Japanese Kamikaze’s they would dive dying and if you don’t; hit them you’re gone! We knocked a couple of them out; that were diving at us.

**JB:** So what was your daily life like?

**LC:** To our equipment?

**JB:** *rephrased* what were you doing inside of the ship?

**LC:** We had a watch a three Chiefs were in charge of the watch. We had a watch a piece.

**JB:** Did you...? (Unclear)

**LC:** Most of the time. We dropped a (demp?) Jack one time but we had a new officer out there and he was supposed to speed up the ship before I dropped the (demp) jack. We were doing a five knots patrolling and we already dropped the (demp) jack over doing 5 knots. I blew a hole in the oil trunk, knocked the roof out and it filled one inch with salt water. We had to shut that engine down. We had to go back to (Australia) and flush it out. Well while I’m at it I might as well tell you about Black Canal at a small Island off the canal and how we lost fifty-two feet of our bow. **LC:** continues.

We were out there shelling the air field. The Japanese used the (field) villa for their planes from the carriers which would fly over the Villa of Bella and then refuel and then go back to the canal. Which gave resource to their water tanks to stay on the Black Canal. We’d go there shelling the air field. The ship ahead of us went out to investigate a link. As they were coming back into formation: they lost their steering control and hit our ship, rammed and we lost fifty-two feet of our bow. We were waiting for (we were supposed to get air coverage) but that didn’t come till noon. So we backed out and went to one of the Islands and they setup food and dried out. While there our ship was bombed and we went back to the states. We stayed there States seventy eight days then went back again.... They took pictures ..

**JB:** (unclear).....?

**LC:** We got to Briar Island, recalling loses. We lost three in the first magazine they drowned. When we took that five inch hit we lost 13 men and 10 wounded....

**JB:** When did you end service?

**LC:** August 1946

**JB:** What did you do after Service?

**LC:** I went to Refrigeration code in Syracuse. Refrigeration air conditioning service man.

**Distorted section of DVD.**

**LC:** I guess that's all.

**JB:** Thank you very much.

**LC:** You're Welcome.