

**Samuel Vincent Caporossi
Veteran**

**Interviewed at the
Herkimer, Fulton County Historical Society
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Samuel Caporossi: We went to Sampson New York. We spent about twelve weeks there, at the United States Naval Training Station. After we went to Newport Rhode Island. There I received my training ship. We were there for about eleven weeks. When we left Sampson, we traveled to Philadelphia to pick up my ship, The USS Fargo. When we left Philadelphia we took the Ship out to sea for a shakedown cruise, we traveled to North fork Virginia, Guantanamo Bay Cuba, and then San Juan Puerto Rico. When the shakedown cruise was over we had to return back to base because the ship was in shambles, it went through hell during the trip. We took the ship to Philadelphia for dry docks so our men can repair it and it took about four weeks. Then we returned to sea, where we traveled different parts of the country.

When you were dark uniforms in the service that means you are in cold country. When you are in warm country you wear white uniforms.

I really loved my ship, it was a light cruiser. The crew and I paid attention to everything we did on it.

When I did abort ship I was a deck help. Meaning I helped out on the deck and followed orders, like polish the brass and fire the guns. Like the fifty calibers, forty millimeter, six inch thirty eights. We would have target practice shooting at planes with a sleeve on them. We practiced with fifty calibers and twenty millimeters that had tracers on them. One of the guys who was a gunner's mate led the plane too far in front. Instead of hitting the sleeve it hit the back end of the plane and it went down, and in the water. We had to go out put a hook on it and bring it back on the ship because they had to repair it. We had an old ship that was brought out to sea because it was no longer needed. We were about a mile away from the ship and we kept shooting these six inch thirty eights at it. Every time it hit the ship it would light up the sky but you couldn't sink it. We shot about fifty rounds at it when it finally sank.

We traveled around different countries and saw many different people. We went to Japan for a little while. We were anchored next to the USS Missouri because they signed a peace treaty with Japan. Japan was a great time, it was fabulous. I loved it. I had a Japanese girl and she wanted to come back with me but I couldn't get her aboard ship. So I had to leave her there, she got a little upset because the SB's wouldn't let her board the ship.

I received a good conduct medal for World War II.

Interviewer: Why did you go into service?

Caporossi: I wanted to go into the Navy because I was eighteen years old and I was going to be drafted into the army. I did not want to go into the army, that is my I joined the navy.

Interviewer: So basically the assignment of your ship was to patrol?

Caporossi: Yes sir, to patrol the coasts on both sides, Atlantic and Pacific. We were out at sea for most of the time. What stressed everyone out the most was that we were out at sea for about nine months at a time.

Interviewer: Did you rub into any skirmishes at all?

Caporossi: Very few, we had Jap subs all around us so we thought they were going to attack us but they never did.

Interviewer: Did you have to chase them down?

Caporossi: Well one night we on watch with the captain from eight to twelve and he told me the plan was to keep an eye out. Plus we had all the lights on the ship anyways. As I look around I see something out there that looks like a submarine. So I told the captain and he told everyone to get to their general quarters. Turned out it wasn't a sub, it was a whale. He said to me "at least you were sure of what it was" we had a good captain, he was a good man. He would do whatever we did, if we went around the track twice, he went around the track twice, he was a great guy.

Interviewer: What was your basic training like?

Caporossi: Basic training was rough. I was on fire watch most of the time. I was assigned to that in the winter time. Everyone was assigned to a different barrack. We had a big one where we ate and meet our people when they came up on the weekend or whenever they could come up. Outside of that it was nice. I was supposed to be there twelve weeks; I ended up there sixteen weeks. They were supposed to ship me out of Shoemaker California; instead they shipped me out of Newport Rhode Island. That's where I got my training ship. They had an old destroyer down there; from there we went to Philadelphia to get my cruiser. That thing could move, when we took it on a shakedown cruise it went twenty-two knots an hour. It was a good ship. I miss a lot of guys on that ship that I might not see again, but who knows. I've seen a couple guys that were on it. One is from Syracuse and the other is from Utica but the rest are from all over the country, half of them are not even around anymore.

Interviewer: Did they ever have reunions?

Caporossi: We had one reunion about ten years ago but I couldn't make it, it was in West Virginia. The guy that lives down there had our outfit. His name was John Camebon, he wanted us to meet down there for a reunion but I couldn't make it. I wish I could have but I couldn't.