

**Wisconsin Veterans Museum  
Research Center**

Transcript of an  
Oral History Interview with  
**HOWARD L. SCHLISE**  
Ensign, Navy, World War II

2005

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**Schlise, Howard L. (1914-2006).** Oral History Interview, 2005.

Approximate length: 42 minutes

*Contact WVM Research Center for access to original recording.*

**Abstract:**

In this oral history interview, Howard Schlise discusses his service with the Navy in the Pacific Theater during World War II, his duties as commander of a PT boat, and his most memorable experiences during the war. Schlise was a schoolteacher in Kaukauna (Wisconsin) in 1942 when he received his draft notice for the Army and decided to enlist in the Navy instead. He was given the choice of commissioning as an ensign or a lieutenant and he describes how he decided upon ensign. Upon completion of his naval education at Princeton University, he was sent to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Fleet in Guadalcanal. Schlise talks about his first assignment as a maintenance officer in the boat pool, increasing the number of available small boats. He was then assigned to the PT boat base at Tulagi and was given command of a PT boat. He discusses the kinds of missions he went on while in command of this boat, including delivering messages and transporting soldiers and officers. Schlise recalls some of his passengers, including Admiral Halsey and Bob Hope. He discusses being ordered to Great Lakes (Naval Station) while home on leave, and the war ending while he was there. He spent his last few months in the Navy discharging Navy personnel. Schlise describes being offered to stay in the Navy as an officer, and how he came to the decision to work with his father in construction instead. He discusses some of his more memorable moments while in Guadalcanal, including the times he visited the cemetery and a Marine base.

**Biographical Sketch:**

Schlise (1914-2006) served in the Navy from 1942 to 1946. After he was discharged he worked as a partner in his father's construction business, and as a teacher for a few years.

Interviewed by: Terry MacDonald, 2005.

Transcribed by: Russ Faulkner, 2014.

Reviewed by Jennifer Kick, 2016.

Abstract written by Jennifer Kick, 2016.

## Interview Transcript

MacDonald: This is an interview with Howard L. Schlise who served in the United States Navy during World War Two. The interview is being conducted at approximately 10:20 a.m. on [REDACTED] on the following date of May 21, 2005 and the interviewer is Terry MacDonald.

Tell us a little bit about your background as to the year you were born and where you were born.

Schlise: I was born in Sturgeon Bay February 23, 1914.

MacDonald: Did you graduate from high school?

Schlise: I graduated from high school here and after graduation I went to Whitewater, the University in Wisconsin here and graduated from there and then I taught at the high school in Kaukauna for six years and at the vocational school in Kaukauna. I started in the [inaudible] department at that school.

MacDonald: Did you have any other family members?

Schlise: I have a brother Joseph and, that is—father was John Schlise, mother [inaudible].

MacDonald: How did you happen to go into the Navy?

Schlise: I was being drafted in the Army in Kaukauna.

MacDonald: What year was that?

Schlise: That was 1942 and I didn't want to go into the Army so I went down to Milwaukee and enlisted in the Navy. I was accepted and they asked me—they asked me first of all what—if I wanted to go to officers school and I said sure and they asked me what rank I would like to apply for, ensign JG [Junior Grade] or lieutenant because that year I had been offered the principalship of Kaukauna High School for the next year so I was qualified for those ranks, I guess. Anyway, I said I knew nothing about the Navy at all I better take the lowest rank there was and that was the rank of ensign. I went—they sent me to Princeton University. I went to Princeton and took that course there and then they sent me to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Fleet wherever it may be and I ended up in Guadalcanal.

MacDonald: After your officer training did they send you to any other training or—?

Schlise: Right straight out to Guadalcanal.

MacDonald: Okay. And you were the 3<sup>rd</sup> Fleet so did—

Schlise: 3<sup>rd</sup> Fleet. I was sent out to 3<sup>rd</sup> Fleet wherever it may be.

MacDonald: Ok, were you assigned to ship when you got out to Guadalcanal?

Schlise: When I got out to Guadalcanal I was given the job as maintenance officer at the boat pool at Guadal [Guadalcanal]. And at that time, do you want me to go into detail there? All right, at that time they only had 10 percent operating boats that can—10 percent they said they wanted me to try and build it up. Well, I went in there and I, I started two repair barges, took crews off the boats that weren't working and they worked four hour shifts day and night and within one month I had the operation up to 90 percent. And as a result of that Commodore Quigley, who was in charge of the base, he thought that was pretty good. So, it wasn't too long and they had an accident on a PT [Patrol Torpedo] off of Guadal and they knocked out the bow, part of the bow so Commander Quigley, I mean, Commodore Quigley asked if I would be interested in taking over the PT when it came back from dry dock. I said, "Sir, I know nothing about PT's or nothing about small boats" I said, "the only boat I ever outfitted was a row boat, sixty foot row boat at Sturgeon Bay." Well, he said, "We don't have time to get a crew from the States" so he said "I'll send you to the PT base in Sasape." Which was located outside of Tulagi and he said, "You'll be trained over there." So, I said "Fine". They sent me over to Tulagi and they assigned me to a captain, I think his name—he was a lieutenant at the time but now he's a captain, lieutenant, I think his name was Peterson. I think that was his name. And he took me aboard his boat and I made several trips with him to learn something about the PT operation and so on.

MacDonald: Can you describe what a PT boat is?

Schlise: A PT? Well, what I had was an Elco, seventy-seven foot. It had three Packard engines, uh, twenty-five—twenty-two and a half —twenty-five hundred horse motors. And, uh, we traveled in cruise around thirty-five miles an hour, thirty-five nautical miles an hour, and you couldn't get much more than that, about forty maybe forty-two that was about it.

MacDonald: And they were gasoline engines?

Schlise: Gasoline engines.

MacDonald: How big of a gas tank did you have on the boat then?

Schlise: We had three. Three engines and three gas tanks. And they were big ones.

MacDonald: What was the boat made out of?

Schlise: Well it was made out of plywood planking. Plywood planking. And, uh, that's about all I can tell you about the construction of them. They were seventy-seven feet long.

MacDonald: How big a crew?

Schlise: Well, I started off with a crew of ten but the crew was usually around twelve to fourteen. There was an executive officer, I had an assistant and the first—when I first took the PT over I was given—they had the engineering, engineering man was still aboard. And they gave me a, uh, a Chief, Chief Willitz [sp ??] and he was an old, old timer so he was really able to help me out. So he stayed with me for some time and after that Chief Willitz left and I got a ensign Chadler, Hubert Chadler and so he was my assistant for the rest of the time.

MacDonald: What kind of duties did the PT boat do?

Schlise: Well, [clearing throat] this PT that I had was stationed on Guadalcanal and was on special—any special missions out of there. Say messages had to be delivered some place, for instance as an example, one day commodore called me and said I had to take a message to a place called Mobutu [??] and I said I was tied up at that time in the lagoon, it was called Langa [??] lagoon. I said, "Sir," I said, "It's so rough I could never get out of here today." So it wasn't long that the commodore came, he had to check that himself I suppose. He said "Yes, it's too rough." He said, "You call in a boat off the screen." We used to have a screen out there all the ships were anchored on and that [??]. So, I called in a ship to the Port Directors Office. I got PT 1228 and PT 1228 was built here in Sturgeon Bay. I was taken out to the ship in a small, small boat and, uh, it was pretty rough getting out there and getting aboard that PC [??]. But anyway, they took me over to Googoozoo [??] and I asked them where this PC [narrator seems to interchange PT with PC] was built and he told me, "Sturgeon Bay." And he said—I said, "Where did you take it?" He said, "I took it right here in Sturgeon Bay." And they came up here, and he said he stayed with—a fellow by the name of Melvin Fusley [??] bank

president, his name was Fetzer, here in Sturgeon Bay, stayed at his place and then the whole crew stayed here until the boat was finished and then they took them on over.

MacDonald: Hmph

Schlise: That was an example of one of the trips. And what else did you ask me about?

MacDonald: You were going on special missions.

Schlise: Oh yeah. Well then I had a lot of special missions but uh one mission in particular I—they had spies and Japs [Japanese] up in the hills and uh they wanted to send a squad of soldiers up there to get these Japs out of there. Well, I had to take them over on several locations along the shore and drop them off and I got them in so that they were well up to their armpits when they jumped off and they went in. They each carried a rifle and one had a bazooka. The fella with the bazooka he forgot his rifle on board so it was left aboard and it was theirs. So, when I came back so I brought it along home and I have that rifle in my home. By the way, those fellas [MacDonald coughs] that I had to go back after them, I had to go back after I think four or five days or something like that. I was supposed to pick them up at a certain time over there. I went over there and they weren't there. I cruised up and down the coast there to see if they were out at a different location so but I never found them. Afterwards nobody ever heard from them so I got the idea that Japs got them instead of them getting the Japs. That's the kind of duty I was doing running dispatch duty and then I used to take it to the Russell Islands and so on all the way out there. They used to have these Australians that were beach watchers there and, you must have heard about that, we had to check on wherever they were. So, that's what I was doing primarily.

MacDonald: The PT boats were armed with some sort of machine guns weren't they?

Schlise: Oh yes sure, sure.

MacDonald: Did you ever have any combat action with any, uh—

Schlise: No, I didn't actually have combat action. Well, for instance one time the Japanese submarine was spotted out there and they went after them with destroyers. They, they must have scored a pretty good hit because the Japanese submarine headed for shore and came up on the shore. I had to take the landing party down there to row aboard the submarine. The sharks were out there oh boy. I remember my dad

had sent me some fishing line from, from home here that the fisherman use, the heavy twine that's white so I threw it out and tried to catch one of the sharks. They wouldn't bite it at all and so I thought well then I had some other fishing gear so I would just use regular fish lines out there [inaudible] but they would not touch anything on a white line.

MacDonald: Huh. So, you boarded this Jap sub that and then what was that like?

Schlise: The Japs were all off of course.

MacDonald: Ok

Schlise: Japs were all off they had run and hid in the jungle.

MacDonald: Were you able, were they able to salvage the submarine?

Schlise: No, no. Maybe to this day it is still standing on the shore. It's just sticking up the bow is just sticking from the shore.

MacDonald: Did you spend your whole time in the Pacific Theater then?

Schlise: Yes. Well, not all of it I spent most of it there. I spent a year and a half there, two years and then I came back I was supposed to be assigned to the uh, invasion of Japan. I came back for that, that of course they dropped the bomb and that ended it.

MacDonald: You mean you were assigned to the invasion or you did were you—

Schlise: I used to do a lot of the reconnaissance out there. For instance, when we went to Guam, Saipan and Tinian and what is that one where they, the flag with the four fellas?

MacDonald: Iwo Jima.

Schlise: Iwo Jima yeah. Iwo Jima, well I helped stage for that and, I had to go over to a place called Purvis Bay. That's over in the Florida Islands and pick up—that's where the fleet, the [inaudible] Fleet was anchored. And I had to pick up the skippers on all the destroyer destroyers, cruisers and so on and bring them back to the Enterprise. The Enterprise was Halsey's [Admiral William Halsey, USN] ship and bring them back to have the, have the visit with Halsey, you know. Then after

I would lay off and then I'd go back again and pick them up again and take them all back to Purvis Bay. That was the kind of duty.

MacDonald: Yeah.

Schlise: I saw Halsey quite a few times, I had Halsey aboard my PT.

MacDonald: Is that right? Because he was the Commander of the Pacific Fleet wasn't he?

Schlise: Yeah. Yeah. I had him aboard my PT.

MacDonald: Did you get to talk to him at all?

Schlise: Oh sure I got to talk to him. He was—he even saluted when he came aboard. He was a real nice gentleman.

MacDonald: Oh.

Schlise: One time I had to go out and pick up Halsey and his nurse. He had a nurse he would carry with him. [inaudible] hospital. Then I was [inaudible] enough that I was up there when Bob Hope came out. [00:14:21.23]. He visited the troops and I took him from Guadal to an island called the Russells. Which is, oh I would say it took us, I'm just judging, it took us a couple hours, maybe three hours to get to the Russells.

MacDonald: That would have had to have been interesting taking Bob Hope then huh? What was he like at that time?

Schlise: Bob Hope was a real sociable man. He stood out on the bridge there with us and talked and so on and he got a couple actresses with him. They were friendly, we talked fine. But then I also had another one that I dropped off one time. The fella that played that violin and so on what is his name? Who was the real popular one at that time? Anyway, of the two groups I took out, took up there Hope was one of the best.

MacDonald: When Bob Hope came to Sturgeon Bay one time did you get to see him at that time?

Schlise: No, I did not know he was here.



MacDonald: Ok. [Coughing] Then you mentioned that you were, you were going for the invasion of Japan then they dropped the bombs over there. What was the, what was the reaction to the sailors who were with you?

Schlise: Well, I tell you I was sent back to the states to prepare. [inaudible]. I got a—I had a thirty day leave and after ten days I received orders to go immediately to go to Great Lakes. I was going to be sent to a school down there. So, I had to give up my last twenty days of leave and I went to Great Lakes. Well, when I got down there they put me in what they called a, they called it a—anyway, demobilization school. While I was there at that school they dropped the bomb. They must have known ahead of time that when that bomb was dropped that that was going to be the end. So, right after that I finished up school and they sent me to Jacksonville, Florida to discharge Navy personnel. And of course were actually [inaudible] [00:17:01.04] happy, happy as could be.

MacDonald: Oh, I bet. Yeah. And so how long did you stay in then after.

Schlise: I stayed in until March of the next year. This happened, I remember this had to have had happened in August, and I stayed in until March.

MacDonald: Mmm hmm. So what happened when you got discharged then?

Schlise: Oh I [MacDonald Coughing] was offered a fulltime service in the Navy if I wanted to stay, at the rank of Lieutenant. I called my dad and told my dad I was going to stay in the Navy but I was teaching school. In teaching the wages were nothing like they are today you know. We made about eighteen, fifteen to eighteen hundred was about all you'd get. I told dad I was going to stay in the Navy because the wages was much better and I kinda enjoyed the Navy. He said, he said he would call back a couple hours later he said, "Howard, that's no place for a married man." He said, "You come home and I'll make you a full partner in the construction company." He said, "If you don't like it you can always go back to teaching." So I came home and worked with my father in the construction company and I stayed there until Dad's death.

MacDonald: So, when did you get married? When you were in the Navy?

Schlise: I was married when I went to college. My wife and I have been married seventy-one years; it will be seventy-two years in in November. It's a long time.

MacDonald: Yeah, so you went with your dad in the construction business then huh?

Schlise: I went into Dad's construction business really and that's where I finished up. Then I stayed, after dad died, I stayed in construction another two years and labor was a problem so I gave it up and sold all the equipment. There was a vacancy in the high school up there so I took that job, I was semi- retired. I took that job and stayed there for I think it was five, five or six years. Five years. Ever since that time I have been retired.

MacDonald: When you got out did you join any veteran's organizations at all?

Schlise: The VFW [Veterans of Foreign Wars].

MacDonald: Right away when you got out?

Schlise: In '48. 1948.

MacDonald: I know you are still active and you belong to the military funerals and things.

Schlise: Oh sure.

MacDonald: Did you hold any post in the um, in the offices in the VFW?

Schlise: No, no. I didn't want to.

MacDonald: Did you use any of your VA benefits you were entitled to?

Schlise: None.

MacDonald: None at all? Looking back on your Navy experience what would you say—how did you feel about going into the Navy and serving the country?

Schlise: It was fine, but you know I never will forget Guadalcanal. My wife wrote me and said that a certain young man was killed over there. I thought I would just check out where he was buried and the cemetery is massive in Guadalcanal. Just acres of crosses. I went all through them looking [MacDonald coughing]. His name was Grouff [sp??]. Do you know a Martin Grouff by any chance?

MacDonald: No.

Schlise: That was his brother. Anyway, I finally found a Grouff, the right name and everything but the rank was wrong. So I wrote back and said I've got the wrong man. But there was another man name of Grouff. The cemetery just amazed me the size of that cemetery and all the soldiers and Marines who are buried there. Another time I—Mary wrote me that her sister was going with a young man that was in the Marines. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Marines were at Guadalcanal they came into a place called Suader [??] and so I saw that on the park directory that they were in there. So I got a Jeep and I went out there to see if I see if Rasmussen [sp??] was his name, Rasmussen. And the Marines lived real rugged. I found his tent, he had his camp set up. The camp site, his tent—his cot set up on some boxes and I said “What's this all about,” you know. [inaudible] so he's got these little boxes. He wasn't there he was there handing movies out [??]. And while I was there, what was her name, Sally? This girl we used to always, see you get older and you forget things, anyway this girl would publish on the radio she was from Japan and she was an American girl.

MacDonald: Mhmm. Axis Sally wasn't it? Or is that Axis Sally that they call her?

Schlise: No.

MacDonald: Tokyo Rose?

Schlise: Tokyo Rose! Tokyo Rose. Okay, it was Tokyo Rose and she came on and she told them how that contingent of Marines, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marines down there they were all going to be annihilated when they went into this invasion because the Imperial, the Japanese Imperial Marines were there waiting for them. They had spies up in the mountains they seemed to know all the information on the Americans. So, anyway I just remembered that because it wasn't long after that they went—I think that was the time they went to where they put the flag up, those four guys.

MacDonald: Did you meet any or see any other people from Sturgeon Bay when you were overseas?

Schlise: I saw one fellow, Blackie Carbeshure [sp ??]. He was with the Marines and uh he heard that I was on this PT over there and he came over to visit me. Blackie Carbeshure. And then another fellow, Patty Ritt from Sturgeon Bay, he was flying and he came into Henderson Field and he knew I was there so he came to see me, so I saw him. Oh yes, I saw one fellow from Sturgeon Bay, Gene Schram do you know him?

MacDonald: Gene? Sure. Gene Schram?

Schlise: Yeah. He was alderman or something for a while wasn't he? Here in town.

MacDonald: Gene Schram the one on the, the one on the memorial markers out here? Is that the one?

Schlise: Which markers?

MacDonald: Up by Saint Joe's cemetery.

Schlise: I didn't know there were markers out there.

MacDonald: The headstones, Gene Schram.

Schlise: Well anyway, Gene Schram, ok. Anyway, I was going to go to New Zealand on leave, rehabilitation leave. I got aboard I got aboard this boat, liberty boat at Guadal, and I went down to the ward room and a fellow the executive officer was standing there talked to me and said, "Where are you from in the states?" I said, "Wisconsin". He said, "Don't tell me Sturgeon Bay because I hear about that place all the time." I said, "Well that's exactly where I'm from." He said, "How big is that?" I said, "About five thousand". He said—Leon, Leon Schram—"Leon Schram," he said, "is the junior [??] officer aboard". So I traveled on that ship. I'm trying to think of the name of the ship, I should know the name of the ship too; I can't recall. All the way to New Zealand, he was a real, real nice man. He wanted me to share his quarters with him because I was in a state room close to the boiler room, hotter than the devil. But I did not want to because he had hurt his back and [inaudible] Leon Schram.

MacDonald: [Coughing] Well, what did you think of your military service then? Overall?

Schlise: I enjoyed it. I was glad that I was just an ensign because if i would have been any more than an ensign I would have never got the duty that I got. I was just lucky. See, the Commodore he turned out to be Captain Quigley, or Captain Hershey after that. When I got this PT, Quigley he said, "Now I want you to still supervise the maintenance, because that program worked out so good, but I will give you an officer." So, he gave me an officer and he took care of most of it and I just supervised most of the time.

MacDonald: You said when you first were over there and were assigned to the maintenance of the—only 10% of the ships were operating?

Schlise: 10% of the small boats.

MacDonald: Small boats ok.

Schlise: The loading and unloading, LCN's [Landing Craft Navigation] uh, LCV's [Landing Craft Vehicle] and then we had the picket boats. They had, oh they had well over one hundred boats. Way over one hundred. They must have had.

MacDonald: Did they just get worn out?

Schlise: No, no. They weren't being taken care of to start with. The motors, we had an awful a lot of trouble with motor trouble. That's one of the primary—when we started, when I started the barge I had motor necks. Then I also had yeoman, the secretary at least. He would have sheets prepared for every boat and every night they would have to check out and if there was anything wrong with the boat they would record it. From that it would go to the barge and then that night or somebody would take those in when the repair work was done. They did that and it wasn't long, they had most of the boats, or all of the boats, back in shape again. They just didn't take care of them that was all.

MacDonald: Mhmm.

Schlise: Anyway, I got a commendation on that one from Quigley.

MacDonald: Well good. Um. Do you have anything else you would like to say about your World War Two experience?

Schlise: I don't know. I'm sure there's a lot of things you can think of afterwards. My memory isn't as good as it used to be. I never gotten sea sick in my life and I got aboard this PC from Sturgeon Bay and it was terrible weather from here to Rock Bay and it rolled and it tossed and everything else and I got sea sick. I told the fellows "If you got a bunk I could lay down on" They said [inaudible] [00:28:58.24]. I got into the room and he called me up and said are you sure you want to go into the room because they had never been there. And then they got done with whatever they were doing and we delivered the message. Took me back over to the canal I got off of that PC I wasn't a shore—I wasn't a shore a half hour

and I was perfectly all right. I didn't vomit at all but I sweat [inaudible]  
[00:29:22.26] and that was your Sturgeon Bay PC.

MacDonald: Yeah, [Laughing] [Coughing] okay Howard I want to thank you for the interview.

Schlise: There's a lot of things a person can't think of when you just sit down, I should have written them down. The main thing was that I cruised the shore and so on and pick up officers off these ships and take them back and I was in on the—

[Break in recording] [End of Tape 1, Side A] [00:30:00.16]

MacDonald: Side 2 tape 1 of Howard Schlise.

Schlise: The other job that we did was picking up flyers that would crash. They did have Army crash boats that did that but out there we did most of that with the PT and I saw several of them go down. I saw one plane actually saw it go down, I watched from the Port Directory and he came too close to the water he hit the water and tipped over and went forward. So we rushed out there. All we found was spare gasoline fuel we never found the soldier.

MacDonald: Was that like a fighter plane that went down?

Schlise: PT 38. Not PT 38—P 38, P38. That's the type of plane it was, fighter, real good plane. And all of a sudden.

MacDonald: Did you pick up quite a few guys out?

Schlise: Oh yes we picked a lot of them up we picked up maybe four or five at once. And then the other time, the other thing that happened out there was the USS Serpens, remember when she was torpedoed at the base there; not on the base but when she was she was out in the in the anchorage, anchorage around Guadalcanal. There were all these different ships that came in and they went in through locations and they were supposed to anchor. It's called the anchorage and they kept these screen going around it all the time of PC's [Patrol Craft], Destroyers and Destroyer escorts just to keep so the Japs could not get in there. Well, somewhere or another they had gotten in and they torpedoed this boat the ship and she was loaded with ammunition to the top. The USS Serpens was her name. Everybody on the boat was killed, everybody. The funny thing was it wasn't too long before that happened the officers went in to get their orders from the port directors and they had gone back and they were back out there. When it blew up there was only one

person that was saved on the whole ship and he was the man that was in his bunk and he was blown out. Whatever happened he didn't have any idea but he, he was located on the bow of the ship and all he had was a broken collarbone we brought him back. He was the only man of that whole ship that was saved. They took him to a hospital, hospital 108 I think they called it; field hospital 108. Anyway, I went to two years ago I went to a PT reunion and there were 500 people there. But of the 500 people there were only 12 officers of the wartime. They were all children of those officers and the families and the parents, aunts, uncles and so on. They called them um, chips off the old block. My daughter took me out there.

MacDonald: Where was that at?

Schlise: That was in, it was in, what the hell? It's terrible when you can't remember it all.

MacDonald: Was that the only reunion you went to?

Schlise: Marion! Marion! Where did Sally and I go to that reunion? Where!? Yeah, the same place as the Kentucky Derby.

MacDonald: Kentucky Derby would be in Louisville, Kentucky.

Schlise: [Coughing] So, there was a lot of people there. One of the fellows there asked me if I had been at Guadalcanal with the ship had blown up. I said, "Yes." Well he said "The fellow that was saved", he said, "I was at the hospital there when he was brought in. He was in the next bunk from me." He was talking about this fellow [inaudible]. Just one man out of the whole ship.

MacDonald: It's interesting after sixty years, close to sixty years that you would meet the guy that was you know in the next bunk there. Wow. So was that the only reunion you went to over the years?

Schlise: That was the only big reunion I went to. Truthfully, I did not know about those reunions until my son was someplace and he saw a fellow wearing a PT jacket. He told him that his father was on a PT. So he right away took my name and I got involved in this.

MacDonald: What was the number of your PT boat?

Schlise: My first, my first the one that got banged up I was on that was 23—26! 26. Then afterwards I was assigned to 38. There's a picture on my desk of the one PT. There it is.

MacDonald: Howard is showing me a picture of his crew aboard the PT boat. How many PT boats were in that squadron or group that you were at? A lot?

Schlise: No, at Guadalcanal there were only two of us. Two PT's. Over at Tulagi, of course, that was the main base. Then you had—they had dry docks there and they had McFarlane's Crypt [??] and that led up to the camp. The camp was a series of quonset huts. If for instance, I was under bomb attack several times. One time I was on that PT the very first, when i was first assigned to the PT. I was over at the PT base and my PT was on dry dock and it came over the loudspeaker, "All PT's head for the bushes and PT 26 man your guns." So, I was the only one on the dry dock so I manned the guns. But bushes out in the islands over there the jungle was so thick it hangs way over. All you do with your PT you run in along the shore and be covered with all the overhang.

MacDonald: At that time were you attacked by the Japanese?

Schlise: Yes, the Japanese came over but they didn't come over the PT base. They came over Tulagi proper and dropped their bombs there. They did not come over the PT base. So, we were not under attack. We weren't very far from it you could see it, that's only I'd say maybe a couple of miles. When this ship I told you was torpedoed it was such a concussion that the camp at Guadalcanal itself the camp was two, two or three miles from where the ship was anchored. It blew all the screens and everything off the windows up there.

MacDonald: You said it was full of ammunition and it could have had all kinds of explosives on there, huh?

Schlise: [inaudible]

MacDonald: It must have just been almost like an atomic bomb going off there.

Schlise: Yeah. You asked about the bombing, sure we had Japs come over to bomb and we had we had bomb shelters. What they were was a hole in the ground they were covered with logs, more ground on top of that. You would just crawl down in there. When the alarm went off that's where we headed for. I'm sorry I just can't



remember all those different things. Anyway, they would come over and that's what we would do.

MacDonald: Did your PT boat ever be attacked when you were out on the water?

Schlise: No, although I had a Jap plane once go over and he didn't come down and he didn't attack us.

MacDonald: I just want to ask you another question. You said you rescued four or five airmen. What was their reaction whenever, 'cause—

Schlise: Well, the funniest thing was the one time we picked up a young guy and he thought it was a big joke. He laughed, he was in good shape. He was in his little, what do you call it?

MacDonald: Life raft thing?

Schlise: He was there and he was happy as hell. He, we picked him up and he was happy. There was no hard feelings or nothing. [laughing]

MacDonald: He must not have been out there very long then.

Schlise: They expect something like that once in a while, I suppose. He was happy as hell to get out of it and that I was there to pick him up. The Coast Guard, there was a Coast Guard ship torpedoed out there. Anyway, the ship was down. The whole ship went down and there was, oh about eight or ten Coast Guardsmen that survived. They were brought back to Guadalcanal and they were signed in the Navy, they just became part of the crew. One day in came a Coast Guard officer to be assigned to the Port Directors office. Of course these Coast Guardsmen they just flew up there to see him, to see this Coast Guard officer. The Coast Guard officer he got orders from those fellows back to the states to their home stations. Within thirty days they were all gone back to the states. The Coast Guard really stuck together. The ship that I took, Corcavola [sp??], that was the name of the ship that I took that Schram was on. That was a Coast Guard ship too by the way. There were a lot of Coast Guard ships out there. [inaudible]

MacDonald: You did quite a bit. Thank you for the interview and I'm going to stop it right now.

**[End of Interview]**