

I Was Just a Radioman

Taken from the memoirs of ARM H.P. Lawrence, a Pearl Harbor survivor, Black Cat, and decorated war veteran.

While at school, half of VP24 was sent to Midway. The rest of us, including me, were put on stand-by. They're calling it the Battle of Midway which happened in the early part of June, the 3-6th.

After school in June, I was put on another flight crew. PBY radio equipment consisted of two radio receivers (RU1) which had removable coils that gave you access to the frequency you needed.

A frequency meter lined up the correct frequency. The radio transmitter (GO9), and a directional radio antenna had to be turned by hand.

The antennas were on the wing between the two engines. The radio and transmitter antennas were strung from one wing to the tail and other wing with a lead in between the wing to tail to our radio station.

There was also a trailing wire antenna that we had to set up. Here you'd have to take out a shut off assembly that went to the bottom of the aircraft, and put in the trailing wire assemble into the pipe tube.

We also had a voice receiver/transmitter that the pilot used when he was in range for landing and takeoff. (Distance was line of sight or a little better)

My duties as a radioman were pretty straight forward. A radioman assured all of the radio equipment's was operable. After takeoff, we'd report that we were airborne. When on patrol we'd send CW signal in Morse code to let them know we were airborne.

We're required to stand watch on that frequency, and also set up the other receiver to listen for emergency signals. Also, we had to listen in on the intercom if we were needed.

Intercom and emergency frequency in one ear, and frequency watch in the other. It took a little while to get used to, but if anything came in from the base you would normally cut off the other two. This way you could keep your full attention on receiving Morse code.

Thank you for taking the time to read this excerpt from ARM H.P. Lawrence's memoirs.

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I Was Just a Radioman (The Memoirs of a Pearl Harbor Survivor, Black Cat, and decorated war veteran.)