

**Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Research Center**

Transcript of an
Oral History Interview with
WILLARD BOSMAN
Metalsmith Third Class, Navy, World War II
2005

OH
649

Bosman, Willard. (1921-2007). Oral History Interview, 2005.

Approximate length: 45 minutes

Contact WVM Research Center for access to original recording.

Abstract:

In this oral history interview, Willard Bosman, a native of Garner, Wisconsin, discusses his service in the US Navy during World War II as a welder and ammunition handler aboard troopship and landing craft. Born in April 1921, he was drafted in 1944. Leaving commercial fishing, and farming, behind, he was inducted into the service in Milwaukee, and sent to Farragut Naval Training Station in Idaho when he opted for the Navy. Bosman sketches his boot camp experience at Camp Bennion, one of the four camps constituting Farragut NTS. After further training with the Marines at Oceanside, California, he was assigned to the troop transport USS *Bland*. Bosman recalls that he made seven trips back to the States, after missions that involved ferrying troops, and picking up casualties, off of the Philippines; or to Okinawa, to Iwo Jima, or to the mainland of Japan and China subsequent to the declaration of peace in August 1945. He recounts being caught in a typhoon off Okinawa. He avers that, though sometimes he found weevils in the johnnycake, generally the food aboard ship was good. The typical troopship, at 2500 souls, was crowded, but Bosman found living conditions “very good.” Except for convoying invasion troops to Okinawa, his ship traveled alone; Bosman attributing their safe passage to a diminished Japanese air and submarine presence. Bosman conveys a sense of the two-day process of unloading landing craft: the smokescreen created to blind the enemy; coxswains wading into the water to keep the boat true; return trips; and digging foxholes onshore. He discloses that, in letter writing, he and his wife had developed a code so that she might know the secret of his location. After transporting troops home with war’s end, and decommissioned at Treasure Island, San Francisco, he was mustered out at Great Lakes Naval near Chicago in February 1946. He talks about the service of his brothers; his use of the GI Bill; and the business he ran. Upon reflection Bosman feels that, while at the time the service was a lonesome place to be, he is glad that he was there.

Biographical Sketch:

Bosman (1921-2007) served aboard the Navy transport USS *Bland* during World War II. He carried out his duties in the Pacific theatre of conflict. He was mustered out of the service in February 1946.

Interviewed by Terry MacDonald, 2005.

Transcribed by Telise Johnson, 2012.

Abstract by Jeff Javid, 2016.

Interview Transcript

MacDonald: Willard Bosman--aboard the USS Bland during World War II. This interview is being conducted at approximately 2:00 p.m. at the following address of 178 West Park, Forestville, Wisconsin, on the date of March 31, 2005. And the interviewer is Terry MacDonald. Well, Willard, can you give us a little background of your family life as to when you were born and where?

Bosman: Well, I was born on April 4, 1921, in Door County [Wisconsin] in the Town of Gardner. And I lived there till—I went to the consolidated school, Door County Consolidated School, eight years. And my dad did commercial fishing, and he did custom threshing in the summertime, but in the wintertime we did commercial fishing. And we ran an eighty acre farm. He brought up eight kids.

MacDonald: Wow.

Bosman: In fact, there was eleven, but three of 'em died. On that eighty-acre farm which he had to keep his boats and [reaper] binder. Then my dad retired; my brother took over the farm.

MacDonald: How many brothers did you have, Willard?

Bosman: I had three brothers. There was four boys and four girls survived.

MacDonald: Were the brothers older than you or younger than you?

Bosman: I had one younger and two older. See, Joe went out to the Y, the Y Garage. And then Clifford had a radio shop. And I and Andy had the body shop and a used car lot. And we operated that for thirty-five years.

And—well, I went into the service. I was drafted when I was twenty-two years old.

MacDonald: What year was that?

Bosman: That was in 1944. I think that was in June or July; I can't remember what month, June or July. But there was a whole group, I think 147 that went from Door County at that time.

MacDonald: So, when you went down, did you go to Milwaukee then?

Bosman: We went to Milwaukee for induction, and we had a fifteen day leave. [*Bong* sound in the background] And we came back, and then we went back to Milwaukee by bus, and we took a train from Milwaukee to Farragut, Idaho.

MacDonald: How did you get in the Navy? Did everybody go in the Navy that went down?

Bosman: No, we got our choice. First he says, "I want fifteen good men for the Marines. You, you, you, you, step forward." He looked up our records, and says, "You, step back." That was one time I was glad I was short. "You, step back."

MacDonald: He did pick you out for the Marine Corps, though.

Bosman: Oh, yeah. He had picked me out, and then he read my records, and he says, "You, step back." So, I was in the Navy, and I went back to Farragut, Idaho. And when I got back there my name was on the board for Oceanside, California. So I was glad I was going to California, anyway.

MacDonald: Did anybody else from Door County go to Farragut with you at the same time?

Bosman: Well, no. Some went to Camp Bennion. Some went to Camp—I think it was Camp Hood. And some went—there was four different camps there. Well, we were in Camp Bennion, and then Joe Martinson went to—I think he went to Camp Hood. He had dental work he had to do, so he went to Camp Hood. And I was there for two months training. We trained with the Marines.

MacDonald: What kind of training were you doin'?

Bosman: Well, we were right on the ocean, and so—and then we went to—oh, what was this lake [Lake Pend Oreille]? Can't think of it now—where we load the boats and rowing and all that crap, which we never used. And in Farragut, Idaho, we had rifle training.

MacDonald: What was it like in boot—that was boot camp out in Farragut?

Bosman: Yeah.

MacDonald: Was there [laughs] anything out there?

Bosman: Oh, on the "Grinder" [fourteen acre drill and parade ground], out on the "Grinder," walkin' the "Grinder." And we'd go for whatcha-call training—rifle. And there wasn't just too much. We did most of our training in Oceanside. We trained with the Marines, and then we trained by ourselves.

MacDonald: What kind of outfit were you at in Oceanside?

Bosman: [laughs.] It was a god-damned all tents. And if you went out at night and you happened to get your cot under a hole in the tent, you come back and your cot was wet [Laughs]. And you'd have to move your cot. It was a very poor camp.

MacDonald: Was that warm down there at that time of year?

Bosman: It was warm, but it was raining the whole time. And I had my wife down there for a month. We were there during Christmas. And I called her, and I says, "Come on down for Christmas." I had got an apartment in Oceanside, nice little apartment, and she came down. She didn't want to come. So finally, I says, "Well, if you don't want to come, it'll be the last letter you're going to get from me." [laughs] She packed her suitcase and came down. And when she got to Green Bay, she met Betty Meyerson in the train station. And Betty was going to Farragut, Idaho, but she had a little girl. And she said that little girl was a pistol all the way out. They were on a train for, I don't know, four or five days? She said, "When I saw Betty, I just hugged her." And she said, "We cried together. We were both goin' to the same place, goin' together." And here she was at—but she came down there, and never saw Betty after that, until we came back. But she met a gal from Minneapolis, and they were friends. And in the daytime they would stay together. And he claimed that she was married, but I doubt if she was married. She had a wedding ring on, but then she told my wife that it was her mother's or something, grandma's—I don't know. But anyway, they got by with it. So then from Oceanside, we went to—see, I forget these names—where they were building ships. And we got on this One-Thirty-Four [APA 134, attack transport ship], but it wasn't finished. And we were on there eighteen days before we launched it.

MacDonald: Okay, so it was a brand new troopship, huh?

Bosman: It was a brand new one. And from there we went out to San Diego on a shakedown cruise.

MacDonald: How big was the troopship?

Bosman: About 450 feet. It was a good size. We hit that typhoon in Okinawa that time, and she would take water on the bow. And that bow was about sixty or seventy feet out of the water. She'd go so high that the prop would go out of the water, and it would spin. Then she'd hit the water, "Whoompf!" You'd feel that sucker go back. And we had a five-inch gun in the back, and we had one, two, I think, three .30 millimeters. And then the others were all little .20 millimeters.

MacDonald: What was your job aboard ship?

Bosman: Passing ammunition. And then I was in the repair, in the R [Repair] Division, repairing. I was a welder. We did crack a seam out in that storm, and we had to go down into the storage and weld it on the inside because [laughs] nobody could get that on the outside. Yeah, I was in the R Division, and we used to—I made seven trips back to the States. I never got a leave. We came back one

time with—this was in the Philippines. We picked up casualties, and they were in casts from their legs up to their chests, and some were from the chest down. And we had a quarters up on that first deck. It was called the officers quarters, and the officers slept in there. But when all these casualties came aboard, we put the casualties up there. One guy came up to the ramp. They says, “You’ll never make it.” They pushed him off.. Can you imagine how that poor guy felt? God!

MacDonald: Wow.

Bosman: Yeah, came up the ramp. They says, “You’ll never make it,” and they pushed him off.

MacDonald: So when your troopship—you took guys basically from Hawaii or San Diego, overseas, or—?

Bosman: Well, we usually picked up—well, it all depends. We picked up troops when they were done fighting in the Philippines. We picked up troops in the Philippines and we also picked up casualties. And we took the troops off to Okinawa. Then when we got done there, we picked ‘em off of there and took ‘em to Iwo Jima. And then we picked up a load of troops from Iwo Jima, and we took ‘em to Japan. I was in Japan on September 7th. They declared peace on August the 16th, I think it was. It was the 16th there. We were over the International Dateline so it was 16th, but it was 15th here. And on September 7th we went to Japan, and we made two trips to Japan, one in Tokuyama Harbor. And then we went to Tientsin, China. We took troops at Tientsin, China. And we were in two different places: Tientsin was one, and I can’t think of the other name. But there was two places. We made two trips to China and two to Japan. And then we came after that—we went to Japan first, then we went to China, and we came back with a load of casualties.

MacDonald: How many troops did a troopship typically carry?

Bosman: Twenty-five hundred troops.

MacDonald: Mostly Marines or Army or a mixture?

Bosman: We took Marines, we took Army, both. We had Marines on board, and we had Army.

MacDonald: Now, what was your living conditions like aboard ship?

Bosman: Oh, it was fair.

MacDonald: Was it separate from—

Bosman: It was fair. We ran out of food one day, one trip, because we had so many—we kept the troops on for twenty-seven days one time, couldn't get rid of them, and we ran out of food. So on the way back we stopped at Midway and loaded up with supplies. But the R Division was in the fantail quarters. And we always had something to eat there because we had the key to—we'd stand security patrol. The R Division stood security patrol, and they had a key to every compartment. So we'd get bread. We would get meat. We'd get canned food, whatever we wanted [laughs]. We always had something back, and these poor troops were up on the fantail. And that smell! One time on Midway we went out for supplies, and some of the guys were detailed for work, to haul supplies and that. One guy comes with a slab of bacon about that long. He says, "Drop the line! Drop the line!" So they threw a line over and we hauled that stuff [laughs], bacon and down in the hold. And we had bacon for a while to eat. But our bread--and the cakes, we called 'em "johnnycake," but it had these little weevils in it. And you'd pick 'em off, there was nothing left. So we'd just eat the whole goddamned works[?]. And the weevils, they were cooked, so they didn't hurt any. You know how your flour gets. So when they made cakes, that goddamn—they were all in. And they couldn't pick them out. So we ate it, and it filled our stomach.

MacDonald: So the food was halfway decent, then, huh? You got food regularly.

Bosman: The food was good until we ran out of supplies.

MacDonald: How about your sleeping quarters? Was it crowded like, you know—

Bosman: Oh, yeah, there was—I think there was three bunks in each. You could fold 'em up, see. And then we had lockers where we could keep our clothes in. And it was very good living condition. When it was rough, we were rolling in that darned thing. You didn't have no seat belt or anything, but you were rolling and that. Then you rolled enough, you'd go to sleep.

MacDonald: So you said you went through a typhoon. Can you describe what that experience was?

Bosman: In Okinawa there was a typhoon that we hit. And they said we made an eighty-degree roll. Whoo! I stood watch up in the crow's-nest, and I would go, and I'd look straight down. I'd go back over here and look straight down. The guy ahead of me got sick, and he heaved all over. And I got the weakest stomach in the world. I went up there and, I, "Oh, my god!" I says to one of my friends down below, I says, "Send me up a bucket." We had a rope that we could send up stuff, and I says, "Send me up a bucket of water." I said, "Guy heaved in here. It's all over." So I threw up the hatch, and I got my head up, anyway. And he sent me up a bucket of water, and it all comes down like that on the boatswain's mate. [Terry laughs] "You son of a bitch. Should make you come down here and swab this deck!" I says, "If you think for a minute

you could come up here and stand it,” I says, “come on up. I’ll go swab the deck.” He never said a word, and he just flushed it down [both laugh]. I can just imagine the poor guy, though. I never got sick. I was down in the cargo holds workin’ and never got sick.

MacDonald: When you were in Okinawa, Willard, were you landing the invasion troops—

Bosman: Yeah, in—

MacDonald: In Iwo or—

Bosman: See, actually the amphibious was the first one on shore. We would have to go and on the first boat. They called ‘em Peter boats [LCVP, landing craft, vehicle personnel]. They had with the ramp on the front. And then they’d take us in, and they’d take as many troops as they could. But we’d have to go out there and hold the lines, keep that boat straight. And we were in water over our ankles. Our shoes were full of sand and water. And then they would go back, and they would get more troops with their luggage. And when the ship was unloaded we would jump on the last Peter boat, and we’d go back to the ship, get aboard, and we’d get out of there. And that one night that we had Japanese planes waiting, and they had these little Peter boats. You know what they used to make smoke? They had a little Briggs & Stratton engine on the back, and they’d pour diesel fuel in it [laughs]. And smoke would go over the ship, see, so the planes couldn’t see us. And the old skipper, “Make more smoke! Make more!” [Terry laughs] And those poor devils are pouring on the—yeah, and they’d go around the ship and cover the ship. But you could hear those planes go over. They had a funny sound, “brr,” kind of a buzzing sound. But nobody got—no ships got damaged or nothing. The sister ship, [One-Thirty-Five], my uncle was on that[?]. And we went into Portland, Oregon, to have the bottom scraped. It was full of barnacles. And we were in there several days, and they scraped the bottom[?]. And my uncle comes aboard, and he says, “Willard, what are you doin’ here?” He knew I told him what ship I was on. And he knew that one was a sister ship. And they got torpedoed in the fantail. So they were in there for repairs.

MacDonald: So you had a little reunion then, huh?

Bosman: Yeah, yeah.

MacDonald: Good.

Bosman: See, my wife knew where I was all the time. I had a code made out to her.

MacDonald: Oh, is that right, huh—in your letters?

Bosman: In names. “Did you see Mary?” And, “Did you see Dolusic?” “Did you see Joe?”, names of different people, see? And she’d look at my code, and she knew where I was.

MacDonald: You knew.

Lillian:
[Mrs. Bosman] Yeah.

Bosman: She knew where I was.

MacDonald: Huh! ‘Cause you weren’t allowed to put anything down.

Bosman: No, you couldn’t tell ‘em where you were. But if I’d said, “Did you see Mary?” they don’t know. But she knew what it meant.

MacDonald: Yeah. Hmm! So how long were you on the ship going back and forth?

Bosman: Ah, [inaudible]—about twelve months. They said we put 90,000 miles. I can’t believe it, but that’s what they said. Ah, well, when it’s from here to the coast to Okinawa or Japan, that’s over 5,000 miles.

MacDonald: Yeah, that’s pretty far, yeah.

Bosman: Yeah.

MacDonald: Of course, if you tripped back and forth in between.

Bosman: I was into Hawaii three times, and we went to different—like it was maybe comin’ through the Philippines and then back again. We were always going, and we traveled alone.

MacDonald: Oh, really?

Bosman: We were in one convoy. That’s when we hit that storm in Okinawa.

MacDonald: Well, do you think that was because the Japanese more or less didn’t have much of a naval air?

Bosman: Not much air, and they didn’t have too much in submarines, either.

MacDonald: Subs either, huh?

Bosman: No, but if they saw one ship out there—

MacDonald: They really didn’t do anything with it.

Bosman: Let it go. But we traveled in the convoy I think we were fifteen days—LSTs and LCNs [Landing Craft, Navigation] and the patrol boats, and everything we were goin'. See, when we traveled alone we made eighteen knots.

MacDonald: That's pretty fast.

Bosman: Yeah, we were at eighteen knots. And traveling with a convoy we were only going about ten or twelve knots. And they spied something on the horizon. So they sent an escort out there to see what it was. And they says, "It's a tug, must've broke loose from Okinawa." And they said, "It's floating all by itself." So they says, "Okay, we'll put somebody aboard and somebody designated to tow it." And we got picked to tow the damn thing. I think we had five men aboard. And then we used to send food on the line. And we towed them for, I don't know, four or five days.

MacDonald: Hmm. When you were on the invasion—some of the islands, when you were taking the troops in, were you there when they were doing the bombardments prior to that?

Bosman: We usually got there afterwards. It was pretty well—because if it took two days to unload that ship we were on the shore for the beach for two days. And we dug in, dug a foxhole, and crawled in. See, we'd go by numbers on the boat, and there was usually two or four guys for each boat. And we'd run out there and grab the line, and then we'd hold it until it was unloaded and would throw up the ramp, back out, and go back to the ship. I mean, these guys, the coxswains on the boat, were taking a heck of a chance because, of course, they don't want us to waste their ammunition. They didn't have that much left, I guess. Usually the Marines were the first ones that went in. And the Army was after that. The Marines were ones that really caught it. Well, I have to give them credit. They were tough.

MacDonald: You were over in the area, then, of the Philippine Islands and stuff, when they dropped the atomic bombs, then, huh? You were somewhere in that—

Bosman: Yeah, we were there. They asked one day—we were out there when they signed the peace treaty. And one of the ships that came [inaudible]—I don't remember which one it was—somebody else maybe would remember it. I can't.

MacDonald: Well, what was the thought when they announced onboard your ship—and I don't know if you had any troops or anything at that time, but—

Bosman: Oh, yeah, we had troops.

MacDonald: What were the thoughts when they announced that they dropped the atomic bomb?

Bosman: We were really happy, we were happy, yeah, and that they gave old what's-his-name—what the heck was his name, the president of Japan—Kachiko or—

MacDonald: Hirohito, or somethin' like that.

Bosman: Hirohito, yeah. But when he came aboard ship and signed, he knew darn well that if he didn't sign it they'd drop another one. It was too bad all those people had to die. But, I mean, how many people, how many men, did *we* lose? It wasn't all—I'll tell you, I saw a lot of casualties come aboard. And, you know, how a [inaudible] flesh smells. In one corner I would hold my nose to walk through there. It stunk so bad in there. I'd hold my nose.

MacDonald: When the war ended then, did your ship have to bring a lot of troops back, transport the troops back to the States?

Bosman: Oh, yeah. After the war ended, we—a certain amount that were going home, sure.

MacDonald: Did you make more than one trip?

Bosman: Ah, see, I got off in San Diego. And then they were gonna go around the whatchacallit canal and go over in New York and decommission us. And there was a guy on there from New York. He was really a good guy--jolly. The minute that anchor would go down he would come up on the deck. We had more fun with him. When he heard that anchor go down, down in his rack, and he wouldn't move. He'd get so sick he wouldn't move. He wouldn't eat—nothing. And, like when we were out to sea, well, most of the time he was in his rack. We'd bring him ice cream. That's about all he'd eat was ice cream. And when I got off—I can't remember what his name was--I said, "Let's see if we can switch." He was from California. I said, "You get off here. I'll go around." "No," he says, "you get off." So I got off, and then I went to Treasure Island [San Francisco, CA]. That's where I got decommissioned. Then we came back to Great Lakes [Naval Station, near Chicago, IL].

MacDonald: Great Lakes?

Bosman: Yeah, I got mustered out from Great Lakes.

MacDonald: And what month was that—in 1945 or '46?

Bosman: In '46, February of '46. I'll never forget that, because my brother got married right after I got back, and I stood up for the wedding.

MacDonald: One of your brothers or more, were they in the service, too? Did they go in the service?

Bosman: Why, I had two brothers in the service. One was in the Army over in Germany, and the other one was in boot camp with me. And Elmer was—did you know Elmer?

MacDonald: No.

Bosman: Elmer Bosman was—and we all got in the same camp. **[End of Tape 1, Side A]**

MacDonald: And Willard was talkin' about that his brothers were in the service at the same time.

Bosman: Clifford got cat fever, and I think he had heart problems, too, at the time. And he got mustered out in Farragut. And he came home. But, Elmer was on a—he got his share of the ocean, too. He was on an escort, I think. Yeah, I was lucky I got on a big ship.

MacDonald: Mm-hm. Now, when you came back, Willard, you came back to Door County, then?

Bosman: Yeah, I came back to Door County.

MacDonald: And you were married. Did you use any of the VA benefits? Did they have some benefits for you?

Bosman: Yeah. I worked for Mac's Implement [& Supply, Sturgeon Bay, WI] for seven years. He sent me to school for magnetos. At that time, the old 10-20's [McCormick Deering Tractors] had magnetos on 'em, and I was the magneto man. I'd service all the magnetos. And I went to school in Green Bay for, I don't know, four or five months. And I worked under the GI Bill.

MacDonald: Oh, good.

Bosman: So, Mac had a cheap man and an all-around man. That building over by the Ford garage? I put that up. And the one that we were in, I put that up—all the cement block. There's a lot of twelve inch block in there. I said when I came back, you know, we didn't work hard in the service. I don't know, were you in the service?

MacDonald: Mm-hm..

Bosman: We didn't work hard. I often wondered, "What am I going to do when I get out?" [Terry laughs] But I worked, and--.

MacDonald: Did you use any of the other benefits, as far as being able to spend money—purchasing a house or business or anything?

Bosman: I'll tell you a story about that. When we built that building [*clock chimes in background*], we had three veterans, and we had \$10,000 of our own that we had saved up. And we thought that we'd have enough. We ran short, and we applied for a government loan. They wouldn't give it to us.

MacDonald: Is that right?

Bosman: They wouldn't give it to us.

MacDonald: Now, was that at the county here level you applied for that?

Bosman: I don't remember.

MacDonald: Because you had too much money.

Bosman: Because we had started. Because that's what they told us, "You turned the shovel." Yeah, they wouldn't give it to us. But, uh, we made it.

MacDonald: Willard's been referring to the business that him and his brothers—he built the building. He operated the businesses in Sturgeon Bay for many, many years.

Bosman: Thirty-five years.

MacDonald: Well, Willard, you met a lot of people in the service. Did you keep in touch with anybody?

Bosman: Uh, yeah, I had a buddy in Redwood City, California, that I wanted to see. I saw him twice. I had a buddy in South Dakota, in Wall, twelve miles out of Wall. I went and saw him twice. And I had a buddy in Marinette that I saw a couple times. He was a baker. Otherwise I don't remember. I mean, there was quite a few from Door County that I saw afterwards.

MacDonald: Did you join any veterans groups when you got back?

Bosman: Well, the Legion. I did join the—oh, my, they're up on the—what the heck? But now I belong to the Legion. This was before the—they're up on Eighth Avenue, that old school that was—

MacDonald: Oh, the VFW Hall.

Bosman: VFW, yeah. I joined that when I got out. But then I dropped out of that, and I joined the Legion.

MacDonald: Did your ship ever have any reunions?

Bosman: No, no.

MacDonald: Okay.

Bosman: No, we never had a reunion. And I've been watching for that in the Legion magazine, but never had a reunion. We were scattered from so far around that we would never—

MacDonald: How many crew members were on that—aboard ship?

Bosman: Oh, I don't remember—300?

MacDonald: What were your thoughts about, overall, your military service and your service during the war? Do you have any thoughts about it, as far as how it affected your life?

Bosman: I'll tell you, I think that I didn't like it when I was there. You're lonesome, you know? Want to go home. But now that I went through it without a scratch, I'm glad I did it. I saw a lot of area that I would have never seen. I did take my wife to Hawaii after I came back.

MacDonald: Oh. When was that, what year, roughly?

Bosman: Oh, there was a group. We belonged to a square dance group. Oh god, that's thirty years ago because that's changed so much. I was there twice while I was in the service.

MacDonald: It must've changed considerably from when *you* saw it [laughs].

Bosman: Oh, yeah, thirty years ago, yeah. Because that was fifty, what, fifty-five years—'41 to '46 to 2000. Yeah, that's almost sixty years. I was a young whippersnapper then.

MacDonald: Mm-hm. So your time in the military--that was more or less everybody was going in at the time, right?

Bosman: Yeah, yeah. You're not the only one. So you didn't mind it. We had guys in there, and you had more fun. We had Dr.—uh, he was a dentist in town..

MacDonald: Dr. Tom?

Bosman: No, it would be the old guy. Upstairs on 3rd Avenue.

MacDonald: Higman?

Bosman: No, uh, Dr.--was it Farr? And his kid was in with us.

MacDonald: Oh, okay.

Bosman: And that poor kid, I felt sorry for him. He was just a plow jockey, is what he was [Terry laughs]. He'd march [laughs]—I did razz him. And he was in—I don't remember whose bunk he was above. And right about the time you figured he was asleep, they'd get their feet up there and get him cold. And he'd scream [both laugh]. He wouldn't take a shower with the rest of the guys. And they says, "You get in there and take a shower, or we're going to give you a [inaudible] shower." They picked on him. Finally he got discharged. They discharged him. And he joined the Army.

MacDonald: Oh, really? [laughs]

Bosman: And he got in, and last I heard he was in California someplace.

MacDonald: Hmm.

Bosman: Yeah.

MacDonald: Well, Willard, I know that you and your brothers have spent, like you said, thirty-five years in the car business, repair business, and stuff in Sturgeon Bay and made quite an impact on the community in all those years.

Bosman: Yeah, you know, when we built that building over there, they says, "That building is going to sink away in spring." We put thirty inches of fill in there. And where Jim Knutson and I—Clear View Optical that is there, that's all fill. But when they built the highway they wanted someplace to put their rock, their broken-up cement. So the guy come in, he says, "Can we fill this in for you?" "Yeah, if you put a good coating on top." So they filled that in. Finally, we ran out of room. And we didn't want to put it in the other guy's property. And then they came and put road gravel on top. They did a very good job. But the first lot was a hundred feet, and that we had to fill in ourselves. And Myron Alberts started filling from [Wink] Larson's hill. Finally, he says, "I can't do nothing with that. I'm stuck out there." So, then he quit. So Vernon Olson was in that, and I was a good friend of Vernon Olson's, and I went over. I said, "Vernon, what can you do for us?" "What's the matter?" I said, "We need fill." He said, "I laid all my men off." And he had those little six cylinder trucks, Ford trucks, you know? Five yard box. He says, "Will you drive the trucks? I'll get somebody to fill 'em." "Okay, we'll do that." So two of us guys got on the trucks, and we drove the trucks. And he had Morrow.

Old Morrow was a tall guy, he was on the pay loader. And we filled that. And we had Slavik lay the cement down there. But, he wouldn't lay it in the fall. He says, "You wait till spring." But we worked on cobblestone. Repairing cars. And we had twelve-inch planks that we ran the cars on, so they wouldn't sink in. Can you imagine, you would go one step forward and two back? We got so goddamned tired at night, we just got home, sat right in the chair and wouldn't move.

MacDonald: Yeah. Do you have any other thoughts about your military experience overall, any other comments about it? Because we certainly appreciate the time you served in the Navy and what you did during World War II. Any other comments about it?

Bosman: No, not really.

MacDonald: Okay.

[End of Interview]