

Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Research Center

Transcript of an
Oral History Interview with
ANGELO A. PELLITTERI
Teletype Operator, Air Force, Korean War.

1996

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Pellitteri, Angelo A., (1930-1999). Oral History Interview, 1996.

User Copy: 2 sound cassettes (ca. 105 min.), analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Master Copy: 1 sound cassette (ca. 105 min.), analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Transcript: 0.1 linear ft. (1 folder).

Abstract:

Angelo “Tony” A. Pellitteri, a Madison, Wisconsin native, discusses his Air Force service before and during the Korean War with the and 1962nd Airways and Air Communications Service in Japan. Eleven years old when the United States entered World War II, Pellitteri talks about having five brothers serve in that war and working in his family’s bar, The Fox Den Tavern, which was frequented by African American soldiers stationed at Truax Field. On V-J Day, he recalls riding around the Capitol Square in his father’s truck and throwing newspaper confetti. He talks about his parents’ immigration from Italy around 1912, the homecomings of his older brothers, mailing his brothers home-canned spaghetti and miniature bottles of alcohol, and his brothers’ adjustments to civilian life. Pellitteri explains he was planning on attending college but, after breaking up with his girlfriend, decided to enlist in the Air Force through the “Barksdale Letter” program. He discusses getting his parents’ permission to enlist a week before he turned eighteen and being nicknamed “Tony” on the train ride to basic training at Sheppard Air Force Base (Texas). Pellitteri comments on being with the first new recruits to train at the newly reopened Sheppard Air Force Base, having a two-week delay in getting uniforms and haircuts, and exploring the forbidden areas of Fort Worth while on leave. After a leave at home over the holidays, he talks about attending “405 School,” or clerk typist school, in Cheyenne (Wyoming). During the blizzard of 1948, Pellitteri discusses having the unlucky duty of firing the furnace in the barracks, being sent out at midnight to scavenge coal from a broken-down truck, huddling in the mess hall after the coal ran out, and seeing the commanding officer ride in on a snow plow. Pellitteri speaks of having his training delayed when he was hospitalized by a bad cold and being excited when he was assigned to the 1918th Airways and Air Communication Service (AACS) Squadron in Okinawa with his training buddies. Caught in another blizzard on his way home for leave, he mentions seeing soldiers push a jackknifed semi-truck off the highway. Pellitteri describes the ship ride to Japan aboard the USS Morton, seeing Japanese civilians work all day on the ship in exchange for a meal, and hearing that the Japanese scavenged food from the ship’s garbage. He characterizes an eccentric radio operator he knew on Okinawa named Howard. Assigned to Yontan Airstrip, Pellitteri talks about learning to be and working as a teletype operator. During Typhoon Gloria in 1949, he details how his airfield was caught off-guard, the efforts to save the B-29 aircraft, and the extensive damage to the base. Shortly before his one-year tour would have ended in June of 1950, Pellitteri tells of receiving a “five bells” emergency message about the North Koreans’ crossing the 38th Parallel and a couple days later learning the war had officially started. He tells of volunteering to go to Korea, not being chosen to fill the limited slots, and later being happy that he hadn’t been sent to Kimpo Airfield, which

got overrun. He remembers believing MacArthur that they'd be home by Christmas and being surprised when the Chinese got involved. Pellitteri discusses being issued weapons, doing infantry training, and once being put on alert when the Chinese were considering attacking Okinawa. He portrays the role the B-29s at his base played during the war and relates seeing them land after missions. He tells of seeing the crew bail out of a damaged airplane so it could be shot down over the sea, and he recalls another airplane scare men on the ground by pretending to strafe them. After being shipped back to the States, Pellitteri states he was stationed at Westover Air Force Base (Massachusetts), where he met his future wife. After joining the Air National Guard, he reports he had a conflict with an officer that prevented his getting promoted, so he joined the Coast Guard Reserve Unit of Milwaukee until he reached the mandatory-retirement age of sixty. Pellitteri talk about his Reserve Unit's being activated for the Persian Gulf War the day after he retired and supporting them by mailing video equipment, movies, and other supplies overseas. He discusses the integration of his unit in Korea and getting along with Black and Native American soldiers depending on their personalities as individuals. After the Korean War, he talks about starting a family, working in his family's tavern, graduating from the Wisconsin School of Electronics, and working seventeen years for a diversified oil company in Madison. Pellitteri describes his career at the Department of Veterans Affairs as a property manager, evaluates the veteran home loans program, and relates how the program was self sustaining and changed over time to cover more veterans. He mentions making use of the Korean GI Bill to take vocational school courses. Pellitteri touches on joining The Reserve Officers Association, and he details becoming very involved in organizing and attending unit reunions.

Biographical Sketch:

Pellitteri (1930-1999) served in the Air Force from 1948 to 1952. He served six years in the Air National Guard and twenty-six years in the Coast Guard Reserve, retiring in 1990 at the rank of chief warrant officer 4th grade.

Interviewed by Mark Van Ellis, 1996
Transcribed by Marie Drumm, 2011
Edited by Joan Bruggink, 2012
Abstract written by Susan Krueger, 2012

Interview Transcript:

- Mark: The date is December 3rd, 1996. This is Mark Van Ells, Wisconsin Veterans Museum, doing an oral history interview this afternoon with Mr. Angelo Pellitteri, veteran of the Korean War, a native of Madison and a former employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Good afternoon, thanks for coming in.
- A.P.: Thanks for asking me, Mark.
- Mark: I appreciate it. Why don't we start by having you tell me a little bit about where you were born and raised.
- A.P.: I was born in Madison in the old Greenbush.
- Mark: I was going to ask the name and the home town.
- A.P.: I was born at 619 Milton St.
- Mark: Which is now a parking lot or something.
- A.P.: No, one of the Bayview Apartments is sittin' on top of it. And I was born on September 21st, 1930, so by the millennium will be my 70th year. And I was I was born here and raised here, went through St. Joseph's Catholic School for eight years, Edgewood High School for two, Central High School, which is now just an arch, for two years and then went into the Service, into the Air Force.
- Mark: Now you were probably a little young to remember the Depression, but I suspect you remember World War II.
- A.P.: I very much remember World War II. I still remember sitting by the Zenith radio on December 7th and I was eleven years old and listening to the description of what happened, very much concerned because I had a brother in the Service at the time.
- Mark: I was going to ask if you had relatives in the war.
- A.P.: Yeah, during World War II—I come from a family of nine boys and one girl. And of the nine boys, seven of us have served, five during World War II and two during the Korean era.
- Mark: Anybody not come back?

A.P.: No, we were very fortunate in having all of ‘em, all of us got back. But my mother was honored with five stars in her window during World War II, which is—

Mark: Why don’t you tell me a little bit about family life and life on the home front during the war. As a young boy, for example, did you go collect scrap and all those sorts of things?

A.P.: Oh, definitely, oh sure, yeah. In the early part of the war I was still eleven to fourteen, fifteen, and my family operated a bar on West Washington Avenue called The Fox Den Tavern. And my father and mother, all my brothers having left, there was no one left to help run the tavern, so I was working in the tavern. When I used to go to school—when I was in high school, I went to Edgewood—I used to come home from school and work in the tavern, limited to my hours, but I worked every day after school in the bar. And during the war years we had a—most of our clientele ended up to be soldiers from Truax Field and surprisingly, well not surprisedly enough, the, what we in those days referred to as Negroes and today the blacks and the African Americans, being in the Greenbush area where the very small black population met, they, the Negro soldiers from Truax Field, started to congregate down there and they actually sort of took over our bar as far as being where they could come and feel welcome. And that’s what happened during during the course of the war years.

When the war ended, which was really quite an occasion, VJ Day especially came, it was on a Sunday and I came home from a movie and heard that it had ended and my father had a Model A truck, a little Model A truck, and everybody was congregating around the square on VJ Day, so we got in, friends of mine, my buddies from school, we got on the back of the truck. My father drove the truck—keep in mind that my father was an immigrant from Italy, didn’t speak a lot of English—he spoke English but he was still an old, old world person—and I can still see him with that hat that he used to wear, and he drove around the square and it was just, just a matter of a big parade. Everybody was just—and we were sittin’ on the back of the, standin’ on the back of the truck and cutting up newspapers and throwing ‘em like confetti and we just—my father, I never saw my father as happy as I did that day. Yeah, because of course he knew his five sons were all going to come home and at that point nobody was hurt or killed, so he was really a happy man that day. And to see him even do that, to get involved in that milieu or whatever you want to call it, the crowds of people and people were jumping on his truck. And you know, he was kind of a particular person, but nothing fazed him that day, nothing at all.

Mark: Now being of Italian heritage and having an immigrant father, for awhile there we were fighting the Italians. I’m interested in how that perhaps may

have had an impact on you and your family during the war, at least in the early stages when we were fighting the Italians.

A.P.: Well, my parents were Americans; I mean, at that time they were Americans—

Mark: You say your father immigrated?

A.P.: My father and mother both emigrated from Sicily.

Mark: In what time period?

A.P.: Oh, in 19, ah—

Mark: Before World War I even?

A.P.: Yes, yes. I'm trying—1912, '13, something like that, just before the war. So they were Americans a long time before and they still had a lot of loyalty for Italy, but when the war came along they were more concerned with their families that they had over there than—they were not very appreciative of the regime; they were not, definitely not interested in Fascism. In fact, my father left Italy because of that. He could see Fascism coming up. At that time it was a monarchy, but he just wasn't happy. He came over as a young man, he came over at, I believe at eighteen. My mother came over at sixteen. But no, we never had any problems with—well, anywhere did we have any problems. In the Bush, all the Italians, no one ever spoke for Italy as being anything but part of the Axis, an aggressor. They felt sorry for the people over there because a lot of them were relatives, but when Mussolini got his little thing, nobody felt sorry for him at all. They do say, though—and they weren't there when Mussolini came into power at that particular—but they did say that they had heard he had done some good things, you know, for the country, but the war part was—

Mark: Made the trains run on time was the sort of catch phrase of the day, at least he made the trains run on time, but that didn't translate into any sort of affection for the homeland and didn't turn into any sort of loyalty.

A.P.: No, no, none whatsoever, because everybody, including us five in the Service, and everybody in the area had people in the Service, there was nobody, no one that would say anything for the Axis, and Italy was part of the Axis. They just, tough luck, you know; you guys picked your way and that's it. I'm sure there were some people who felt some loyalty, but they still had more loyalty to this country because they had people involved.

- Mark: Yeah. So when your brothers came home, all five of them, I'm interested in what the house must have been like after the war. I mean, here's these—
- A.P.: Of the five, two, three had—two were married before they went in, one got married—the oldest, the oldest one that went in, he got married right after he got in the Service. So they had their own families; they didn't come home to live. The other two were older. One of them did come home to live, but it was—homecomings for all of us were really quite an experience, being that we had such a large family, and even during the course of the war when any of my brothers would call up, call home, it was quite a big thing. I mean, because we had the bar downstairs and we lived upstairs, we had two phones, one up and one down, and we all tried to get on the phone at one time and it was, it was quite an experience. My parents were very emotional people and I think I take after them. But anyway, they appreciated when they, when the boys called and they really liked it and my mother was always packing packages for them. And I remember they bought a canning machine, a can sealer, so that my mother could package things in cans. She sent them spaghetti and sauce and I got some, when I was on Okinawa, I got spaghetti and sauce in cans.
- Mark: So the tradition continued?
- A.P.: Oh, yeah, yeah. She even used to pack little miniature bottles of booze, even though my brothers, none of us in the Service were ever drinkers at all, none of us. It just seemed like we grew up in the tavern business, my father always used to say, "It's made to sell, not to drink," but in the Service, in my brothers' time during the war, a little booze could be used for a lot of things amongst—if you just slipped a little booze to your commanding officer, you know, you just made points, or if to the mess cook or something, so my mother used to pack little miniatures of liquor in these cans, not a lot, a couple of them at a time and that was—
- Mark: Which I'm sure was frowned upon by the Army or the Navy.
- A.P.: Oh yeah. Well they would—nothing ever came of it, but my brother, in the Navy though, never got any, my mother would never, "He was too young," she said. [laughs] He joined when he was seventeen. No, she never sent me any of that, but I know that she did because I used to help her seal the cans. It was just a matter of a couple times that it happened, but we used to seal up a lot of spaghetti and a lot of meatballs and send it over.
- Mark: Now when your brothers came home, did you talk about the war with them? What did they say about life in the military, and what I'm getting at

is did that have some sort of influence on you eventually wanting to sign up?

A.P.: Well, they all had their own experiences to talk of, to speak of, and of all of them, only one—well, I shouldn't say, the one in the Navy saw combat, he was at the battle of Okinawa on a landing ship so he saw quite a bit. He never talked much about what happened. He never had any hits on his, on his ship so you can't say that he saw anybody hit on his ship. And one of my other brothers, the last one to go in, he went to Germany and he saw a little action, but most of his time was behind the lines. The rest of them were not involved in direct combat. In some hairy things, but not in direct combat. And they would talk about it. None of it ever scared me to the extent that, "Oh gee, I don't want to—" I suppose if somebody had really experienced some very bad times I might have been a little reluctant when it came my time, but ah, no, they talked about their experiences. Most of them were very interesting, especially my brother who was up in Alaska, search and rescue, where they used to go out into the tundra and bring these pilots out, tromp through the snow, and he had some pretty interesting experiences.

Mark: Now you've worked in Veterans Affairs for a number of years. As you look back, I'm interested to know if you perhaps at the time or in hindsight recognize some of the readjustment issues veterans often faced. You know, adjustment of language, getting new clothes after getting out of the military. They weren't involved in too much combat, so the psychological problems and the medical problems probably weren't there, but I'm interested if you had any observations on your brothers readjusting back to civilian life.

A.P.: No, none of them had a problem readjusting, none of them did. They came back and most of them found work. My brother who went into the Navy who was the youngest of the ones to go in, he is the next oldest above me, he was still young when he got back and kind of still havin' a good time, so he didn't, he wasn't too quick to look for a job and he took advantage of the 52/20 club and he took every penny of it; [laughs] he wasn't about to go to work. But the rest of them pretty much went right to work, did very little of that, getting any of that compensation.

Mark: The G.I. Bill, they didn't even use that or they already had professions?

A.P.: No, none of them were professional people and really—well, a couple of brothers took advantage of the G.I. Bill; they took flying lessons and that was the extent of it.

Mark: But they found employment?

- A.P.: Oh, yeah, they all had—
- Mark: Then training for something to do wasn't the problem? They came back without any problems?
- A.P.: No, they didn't have any problems coming back. They were able to, they were all, their type of employment was not professional. So some of them went back in the tavern business and—
- Mark: What about vocational school? You could use it for that too. In fact, I had an uncle who left for the service when he was seventeen to join in World War II and came back and used it to finish high school. Your seventeen-year-old brother—
- A.P.: He did, he did that. He did come back and got his GED. He went back, went right here to vocational school. Yeah, and he got his diploma because he had quit; he quit early. My one brother probably took advantage of it like I did, a lot of continuing education courses. He would go to vocational school in different courses to enhance, because he was quite a technical person and so he went to vocational school for various courses, not to get a degree but just to learn more. And I did that; I did that quite a bit. I took welding because I was in a job that knowledge of welding would have helped me, and I took some accounting because that would help me in my job, various things. I took some photography, print shop stuff because it would involve my job, that type of thing.
- Mark: On the Korean G.I. Bill?
- A.P.: Yes.
- Mark: Well, I'm coming to you. I've been asking a lot about your family in World War II. I'm up to your experiences now, and it's 1948 and you're eighteen and you entered the military. I'm interested in why you decided to join the military, particularly at this post-war period, and why you chose the Air Force in particular.
- A.P.: Well, [laughs] okay, and this is the truth. I mean, I had planned on going to the University; in fact, I was accepted at the University of Wisconsin. I had taken all the, what I needed at Central to get in, I was gonna go into Physical Therapy, Physical Medicine, and I had a problem with a girlfriend, just, we broke up during that summer and I was very depressed and I just decided I didn't want to be around. So I did; I, I decided just one day, I said, "I'm going to go; I think I'll join the Service."

At that time they had a program called the Barksdale Letter where you could apply with the Air Force, and I chose the Air Force because it had

just, it was just a year before it had become independent. It broke off from the Army Air Corps to become the United States Air Force. It was one year, in fact, to the day; it was the 15th of September, the day I enlisted. And I thought that would be more what I wanted to do. I wanted to get into, I applied—well, I wanted to get into medical, try to stay in the field that I was originally gonna go into. And I decided I can apply for the school ahead of time and they guarantee it; if you get it, that's what you're gonna do. So that's what I did. I applied for, first as a medic—you get three choices—then as a control tower operator and then as a final, I figured well, what the heck, clerk typist, you know. Well wouldn't you know it, the only one that was available was clerk typist, and at that point I said I wasn't going to hang around, so I decided I was going to take it. And I was walking up West Washington Avenue, going to the recruiting office, and I'm trying to remember where that office was, but it was uptown. But I ran across a school friend, a schoolmate of mine, a guy who graduated with me, and he lived on the opposite side of West Washington Avenue and he had walked over and he caught me right at his corner. He asked me where I was going. "I'm going to enlist; why don't you come with me?" And he did, and he enlisted at the very same time [laughs] and that was, we ended up—our enlistment date was September 15th of 1948. I was still seventeen years old; I didn't turn eighteen until a week later.

Mark: And so did you need your parents' permission?

A.P.: Oh, yeah, I had to get my parents' permission, and my mother was very, very disappointed because I was going to be the first to go to college. So I really disappointed her, but she, she didn't argue with me. I mean, she knew this was what I was going to do and that's—I says, "At least I'll go and I'll get some education, I'll get some, then I'll come back and I'll go." See, I was still qualified. At that time you could still qualify for the G.I. Bill 'cause the war had—anyway, it was still there. And so no, that's right, the G.I. Bill came in afterwards for Korea.

Mark: There was another Korean G.I. Bill, yeah. But having enlisted in '48 you might have qualified—it gets very confusing, as you well know.

A.P.: Yeah, I'm trying to remember. I know it qualified me for the—yeah, no, that's right; the G.I. Bill came in afterwards, it was that insurance that carried over from World War II, that's right, the old National Service Life Insurance. Anyway I says, "At least I'll go in, I'll get some more education, I'll come out and maybe I'll be ready to go back to school." So she signed.

Mark: You enlisted for how many years?

A.P.: Four years—excuse me, three years, it was a three year enlistment and—

Mark: What's this Barksdale Letter you're telling me about?

A.P.: What is it? Well it was, it was, you made an application—Barksdale was the head of the training command, Barksdale Air Force Base, and you, you went to the recruiter and you made an application and you applied for a school, a tech school, and you're given these choices. You go through the various fields and you decide what you'd like to do and you gave these choices and Barksdale made the determination as to what openings they had, and they sent you a letter and they said, "This is a school we'll guarantee you. We will guarantee that when you finish basic training, you will go to this school." There was no if ands and buts about it, you had a guarantee. If they couldn't send you to that school, they let you out. But they didn't let you out because they always got you into the school, one way or the other. But that was what they called the Barksdale Letter and that went on for about a couple of years, I think, was all that they had that. It was right after the Air Force got started and they wanted, were trying to get people to enlist in the Air Force because everybody at that time was just carryover from the Army. In fact, all of my, all the senior NCOs were all Army. I think the highest—corporal was the highest grade that had gotten promoted as an Air Force so—

Mark: So you went off to basic training somewhere. Why don't you walk me through your—

A.P.: Okay, we left Madison. Bill Lynch is my buddy; we left Madison on or about, before the 15th of September. And we left Madison, got on the train, went to Chicago, transferred, got onto another train, and at that time we were assigned a berth. The military always gave you a berth because you were going to travel overnight, except young kids that we were and naïve, unbeknownst to us, the conductor, or the Pullman person, whoever, sold, or gave away one of our berths and said that we had to sleep together. Well as naïve as we were, we didn't know. We figured well, the Army, the Air Force was making us sleep together. Well, we found out that that's— they'd never do that. What they did was, we found out that somebody gave away one of our, sold our berth and shoved us together, so we ended up sleeping together that night in a single berth, but at that time we met two, two guys from Waupun, Dick Kastein and I remember the other guy was Rosinski, but we met them and we sat and we congregated all—we had the lower berth, luckily he gave us the lower berth, so we all four of us were just sitting in that lower berth that first night on the train and introduced ourselves and I introduced myself by my name, Angelo Pellitteri, and one of the guys from Waupun, I don't know which one, says, "Oh you are a Tony, the banana peddler," jokingly making reference to my ethnic background, which I says, "Oh yeah." Well the nickname Tony stuck. To this day, to this very day, all my old buddies still call me

Tony, still write to me as Tony. And I see one that lives in Eau Claire at least three or four times a year and we still refer to, it's all Tony, it's all—and I have a brother, who is deceased now, but his name was Tony, so a lot of my mail used to go to him afterwards.

But we went to, got down to Sheppard Air Force Base and that's at Wichita Falls, Texas. And we were under the impression we were the very first flight of, unit of men, because we—on this train from Chicago, it just seemed like when we stopped at Wichita Falls that half the train was all going there. Somewhere along the line we picked up all these other guys, got off the, and here's this, over a hundred guys on this one train. And we were supposedly the first group of men to come from the outside world to Sheppard Air Force Base. Sheppard Air Force Base had been open just a couple of months prior because Lackland Air Force Base, which was the main training, basic training base, had become overcrowded so they opened up Sheppard and transferred all the people there in basic training had been transferred from Sheppard, from Lackland, and so we were the first ones.

Mark: The first ones trained at Sheppard for your basic training?

A.P.: From the outside world. There were other trainees there, but they had all been transferred over from Lackland. So the barracks that we went into, we were the first ones to use that barracks since 1946 that had been shut up. Of course we had to clean it because it was just like it was when it was shut up and we had to get it ready. The water was still brown from the iron, it had been sitting so long and—but we were there and it took—because we were the first group from the outside they didn't have a lot of facilities, so it took two weeks for us to get any uniforms and a haircut. And of course you being, having been in Service, you know that one of the first things you get is a haircut.

Mark: Yeah. And so what sort of discipline was there before you got the haircut and before you got your uniform and before you started your formal training?

A.P.: Well, we started our training right away. All we got was fatigues. At that time they gave us—the fatigues in the Air Force were the coveralls, that was the Air Force fatigue, so that's all they gave us, was two pairs of fatigues and shoes, boots, and we didn't have our haircut so when we used to walk down the various areas and the recruits that had come from Lackland, they saw us with our—and some of our people were from areas, metropolitan areas at that time used the duck tail haircuts—

Mark: I was going to say that it couldn't have been as much of a problem as it had been in, say, 1968, but it was very non-military and you could tell.

A.P.: Oh yeah. In my case I'd always had a butch, anyway, so when I went through the barber's line they took very little off of my head because I already had a clip, but some of these guys drew attention, and when we finally got to go get our haircuts the people went to see these guys go through because they were really cropping 'em off. But it was an interesting two weeks because they, everybody knew we were the outsiders. Everybody knew we were the outsiders. And eventually when we got our regular, the rest of our uniforms, we got our haircuts, then we just sort of blended in with the rest of the troops and went through our, at that time it was thirteen weeks basic training. And at the end of seven weeks you got one pass and we used to, and we could go to Fort Worth, Dallas. Which was closer?

Mark: I think Fort Worth was a little closer.

A.P.: To Sheppard?

Mark: Yeah.

A.P.: Okay, okay, well then—

Mark: But it's not much.

A.P.: Okay, then it's Fort Worth. But we were able to get one pass at seven weeks, and it's ironic because we were all young. We had, one guy was twenty-one-years old, we called him "Pops;" he was the oldest guy in the unit. But we were all young and naive and and when they told us where we weren't supposed to go, well naturally that's where we all went, just to see what it was like. And it was quite an experience. There is a certain red light district down there and of course they say, "Stay out of that area." Well, everybody goes down there just to see what it's like. And we did that; [laughs] we'd follow one or two guys up and and see what's happening and then get the hell out of there. That's the truth.

Mark: I believe you.

A.P.: No, I, very few of us took, wanted to get involved, but we wanted to see what it was like. Then we, we were on our flight one time and we got an opportunity to go to a football game, a high school football game at Burkburnett, Burkburnett, Oklahoma which is right across the border. So we got that opportunity. And after our thirteen weeks we graduated and I was assigned to what we call 405 School, clerk typist school at Cheyenne, Wyoming. I was able to get home for Christmas. I hit it just right so that I was able to spend Christmas at home, but not New Year's. I know I spent Thanksgiving down there and I only had one uncle in Madison who had

no children so we were all very close to him and he died on Thanksgiving Day and when I called home the family was all gathered, but I was not aware that he had died until I got home. That was a little disappointing thing, but we got home for Christmas and had a good time and then I had to go back, then I had to make it to Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Got to Cheyenne Wyoming approximately the 26th, the 27th of December of 1948, and wouldn't you know it, of course they were closed up for, the classes were closed down for the holiday. So everybody was there and just hanging around, and doggone it if we didn't have the worst blizzard. In fact, that was the blizzard of 1948 that made world headlines, because in that area of Wyoming and Colorado they fed the cattle out in the fields. Air Force C-47s flew over and dropped bales of hay. Anyway, we got this snow storm and as unfortunate and unlucky that I am, I got assigned—**[End of Tape One, Side One]**—during that period of time I was assigned to fireman duty, which is firing the furnace in the barracks, and we had this huge furnace with this octopus-style—it was gravity fed, but you had to hand stoke a fire pot, not even a stoker, it was a fire pot. And the worst part of it was the grates were all burned out so if you didn't get hunks of coal that were at least six inches in diameter, they would just fall right through, so that was the trick, is to pick out the coal and get it to sit in there and burn. Well, I got stuck with this fire duty and this blizzard hit; consequently, nobody relieved me. So I'm having—and we finally run out of coal. We ran out of coal, oh, it was finally about ten o'clock at night they told me that there is no more coal, you might as well go to bed. Now I'd been on duty for twelve hours. [laughs] Midnight they came and woke me up and by the way, I was sleeping with two other guys. It was so cold that me and my two buddies, one of 'em was this one guy from Waupun, another guy from Nebraska, we put the beds together and we took all of our blankets and all of our coats and we got under this, and they came and they, the CQ woke me up to go out because they had heard that there is a coal truck that had broken down a block down in the squadron area and they wanted me to go get a pail, a coal bucket pail of coal. Of course I was kind of upset because I'd been out, I'd been working and my buddies were there laying, and they were laughing of course. I wasn't going to say, "Well why not them?" I was just upset that it was me. But they were laughing because I was being called out and they had been sitting around the barracks all day. So anyway I did, I went out in that blizzard, walked I think it was two blocks in the blizzard, got to this truck and it was just crawling with airmen doing the same thing. With these little coal buckets, getting a bucket of coal. I don't know what they expected us to do with one bucket of coal because by this time the fire is out. It's not going to get started. But anyway, I went back, threw it in the fireplace and then went back to bed.

And then the storm lasted three days and we all finally ended up all huddling into the mess hall, which is a small building, and we all just sat there. Had nothing to eat other than peanut butter and jelly, so we ate a lot of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. And I remember that after the storm broke our commanding officer rode a snow plow in; he was a captain, I don't remember his name, but he was, he rode the snow plow in to see how we were doing, which we thought that was pretty neat that he would come all the way in to see if we were alright.

So that, that—and then we went through our period of time, went to school and somewhere along the line I got sick and I ended up in the hospital for five days; actually what they used to call nasal pharyngitis was just a really bad cold. So five days I was in the hospital, but I got set back in school so I was now a week behind my buddies, so they got through and graduated and they got orders for Okinawa, and this was two of my best buddies. Oh jeepers, and I was, had to wait another week. Well I graduated and surprisingly I got orders for the same place, going the same time, and I'll never forget that I was running, after I saw my name on the board, I ran through the squadron area and everybody I'd see, I'd scream and I'd holler, "I'm going to Okinawa!" and they thought I was crazy [laughs] because I was so happy that I was going with my buddies. They were already on their way home for leave before going overseas and then I was gonna do the same thing.

Well then I was going to go home and it would have been around Easter time of '49 and they had a couple of buses that were chartered, they were all going to go to Chicago, two of 'em, so we got on the bus at Cheyenne and we got into Nebraska and damn, we had another blizzard. So here we are, these two buses—of course all the traffic, there is no interstate at the time, and we're stalled outside of Boys Town. Traffic is stopped. A bunch of us got out and walked to the head of the the stop to find out what the problem was and between the two buses there were a hundred G.I.s. And we got up there and here was a semi jackknifed. And the driver was drunk and he wouldn't let anybody touch his truck. All we had to do was push him out of the way, everybody could move; he wouldn't let anybody touch his truck. Well a couple of guys got to talking to him and somebody literally got behind him and knelt down and they pushed him backwards over this guy and he went into the ditch. And they just told him to stay there and then a hundred guys got out there and pushed this—the tractor is all it was, was on the truck, on the road now. They pushed the tractor into the ditch and then we were able to keep going.

So we got to Chicago and it took us awhile. I know my parents were waiting at my sister's house and I didn't tell 'em that I had made arrangements to meet a girl. [laughs] She met me at the bus and we spent the night, just an innocent night, believe me, but went out to dinner and

then the next morning I went over to my sister's and my family was not very happy that I didn't come right home. [laughs] But anyway, that was it; went home, spent thirty days, got back on the train and went to Camp Stoneman, California, waited there for thirty days for a boat, found out that I was on a set of orders, a special group, special set of orders, of I think there were about eighty of us on that set of orders. I have the orders at home; in fact, you're gonna get all this stuff after my—I was gonna bring it today, but I'm having a reunion of my Okinawa buddies next year at my house and I wanted to have it there. We meet every two years now. There's twenty-five of us that meet. Anyway, we're all under, assigned to the 1918th AACCS Squadron, a group in Okinawa.

Mark: Now what is AACCS?

A.P.: Airways and Air Communication Service. It was part of the military transport service and they handled all the communications for the Air Force: that includes the control towers and the air traffic controllers, teletype and air-to-ground radio, that type of thing. And even though I was a clerk typist, I was being assigned over there as a teletype operator, which I had no experience in. So we spent thirty days at Camp Stoneman, got on the USS Morton and fortunately it was a military sea transport service run by civilians, they had civilian crew. We went from San Francisco to Seattle. We had over eighteen hundred people we dropped at Seattle, but we were really crowded that first three days. Of course we all got seasick because we were going along the shore, the coast, and the ground swells. Once we dropped the group of at Seattle, then the crossing was uneventful and our group of people that were on this one set of orders were assigned duties aboard the ship as security for the dependent's quarters. They had dependents on board and they had their own quarters and all of our duties were to keep everybody out of that area. So we had pretty much a nice duty going over until we got to Yokohama. Then we got to Yokohama and we dropped another big group of people and I got assigned KP. Here we were in port—

Mark: Off ship you mean?

A.P.: On the ship. Two days we are going to be in port, everybody else is getting off, and I had to get assigned to KP. So I and another guy were assigned to the lower galley which is where all the big steam kettles were and now this crew was civilian so that the cooks were all Filipinos. Well my buddy, this one guy and I were down there and we had to clean these big steam kettles and all the big pots and pans. We weren't down there very long and a Japanese man came down dressed in a suit and a tie. He was a dock official and he talked to the Filipino cook. Of course, the Filipinos at that time hated the Japanese for what happened in the Philippines. And this guy was just, this Filipino cook was just gloating. He

come to us, and just, he started coming to us and we saw this Japanese guy takin' off his coat, rolling up his sleeves and he comes to us and says, "You guys get out, you're done." He stayed there all day long for a meal, for one meal. Of course while we were there, they brought on a crew of Japanese men to chip paint. They chipped paint for two days on that ship for one meal, but that meal was a G.I. tray, and you know what that looks like, heaping, and I mean heaping to at least six to eight inches high, all compartments full of rice. Just six inches high, and they poured over the top of it—one night we had had barbecued ribs and they poured the juice, the sauce and maybe they got a rib. I mean that was it, and then they got a cup of coffee. Of course with the coffee they got sugar and surprised the heck out of me, they filled the cup half full of sugar. And you know the big G.I. ceramic cups, half full of sugar 'cause they hadn't had any sugar for a long time. And they chipped paint all day long for that one meal.

Mark: So conditions were pretty rough in Japan?

A.P.: For the Japanese?

Mark: You couldn't get off the ship, you were—

A.P.: Oh yeah, I didn't have a chance to get off the ship. Some of our guys did. In fact, they were involved in an automobile accident, the truck rolled over. They didn't get hurt. But the conditions were so bad in Japan at the time, the garbage scow came onto the seaside side of the ship and loaded the garbage, they put the garbage on it, turned right around and went to the dock and unloaded it. Instead of taking it out to sea, they unloaded it right there at the dock because they were gonna feed people with it. That was our garbage, and I mean it was garbage like you and I know garbage in the garbage pails, that's what they took and they were feeding people with it. And that was in 1949.

Well we, prior to getting to Yokohama, a couple days out of Yokohama on the ship I mentioned we hit a typhoon. We hit the tail end of a typhoon and that was quite an experience. We had an unusual character aboard our ship, part of our group. His name was Howard; I don't remember his last name. He was a big, tall Scandinavian-type looking boy, built, really a good—but Howard was actually a genius. He had the IQ of a genius, but he couldn't, didn't have an ounce of common sense, not an ounce of common sense. He talked to himself, he was eccentric as heck, but during the height of the storm we were all sick, naturally, and went up to the top of the deck and wouldn't go out on the deck, but peek out and I went up there one time and looked out onto the deck and here's Howard, leaning over the rail with one arm with his face right into the wind. And he is singing "We are stout-hearted men" [Angelo sings it], he is singing the whole song, he is actually trying to drown out the wind. Really funny. Oh,

I mean—but he was eccentric, Howard was. We'd get to know Howard a lot more.

Howard was a radio operator in the course of the two years on Okinawa because they just didn't know what to do with him. Luckily for the Air Force, on Camp Stoneman when he was on guard duty one night, he got caught sleeping so he got a article 104. Luckily for the Air Force because there was a time within the next year that the Air Force, in order—they had just started the Air—no they still had the West Point, they didn't have the Air Force Academy, but they were trying to get their own officers and they required everyone with an AGCT Score—was it AGCT?—anyway, a certain level, anybody with a certain level score had to go test for West Point. And we thought jeeppers, it's a good—and he was eliminated because of his court-martial and we thought, boy that's lucky, otherwise, you know, he'd have whizzed through that. He was a mathematical—he used to sit, that's why—he was a radio operator. Eventually they took him off of the radios because he wasn't paying attention to the aircraft, he was devising mathematical riddles. So they had to take him off the radios and they put him in teletype with us and a—but Howard was a—you didn't mess with Howard. He would walk down the, he'd be talking, having conversations with this person that's not there, but one, one guy who was quite a drinker thought one night that he was gonna pick on Howard. And Howard would take just so much. I mean he just—

Mark: This was on Okinawa?

A.P.: On Okinawa, yeah, and he, this guy kept picking on Howard and trying to pick a fight with him and he finally got Howard—and this guy was big, this guy was, and he picked on Howard just too much; Howard just whipped the hell out of him. Well, nobody monkeyed with Howard after that. Of course, we never did anyway, but this guy learned his lesson, he didn't monkey with anybody after that. He was a bully and he just got put in his place. But anyway, Howard was one of the characters that I met on Okinawa.

There are some others stories about Howard I won't even mention, but that time in Okinawa, I—when we got to Okinawa to the 18th Group, 1918th group, then we were split up, this group of about eighty guys, because the group had squadrons on Yontan, Okinawa, and then Guam and the Philippines and then they had detachments down in Okinawa. Anyway, we got split up and I got, was one of twenty to twenty-five guys that got sent up to Yontan, which is at the Yontan airstrip, which is an abandoned Japanese airfield. It was the main Japanese airfield, but it was coming over the cliffs, the B-29s wouldn't use it. So we were up there with this communications unit, AACS squadron, about two hundred up there; some guys went to Guam, some went to the Philippines, so we sort

of split up. Coincidentally, a lot of us met when we were coming back on the ferry that took us from Camp Stoneman to March, we were at March Air Force Base—not March, what’s the airfield there?

Mark: Near San Francisco?

A.P.: Yeah, then we went to Camp Stoneman.

Mark: Travis?

A.P.: No.

Mark: Travis is near Sacramento, anyway.

A.P.: Anyway, the airfield, we went there first and then went to Camp Stoneman to ship out, but then there is a ferry, you get the ferry in between. We met, coincidentally we met most of these guys on the ferry coming back. They all come on the same day. But I was up, sent to Yontan and some of us got assigned to clerk typist jobs that we were trained for and then the rest of us were, said we were gonna be what we call 237 teletype operators and we had to start learning, so that’s what they did. So the first thing they did is they started up a class down there and we started learning what teletype operators do for a living. And that was our job. We worked our shifts in the teletype, got to know it pretty good, you get to learn how to type real fast, you get to learn how to read tape, punch tape, and being as that we were also Okinawa control, which controlled all the aircraft within a hundred miles, which was the next room, and then we had the air-to-ground radios were in the next room that communicated beyond a hundred miles. It was all CW at that time. Dit dot, continuous wave.

Anyway, so we had all of it up there so we saw a lot. Then it was pretty much routine for—well, I shouldn’t say routine. We were there a month and we experienced our second typhoon. The first one was just a good storm. The second typhoon was Typhoon Gloria which to this day, I understand, still holds the record for the highest winds at sea level. A hundred—by the way, it’s in the April issue, 1950 April issue of *National Geographic*. I could have brought that too, but they wrote it up as the highest winds ever recorded at sea level, a hundred-seventy, steady winds of a hundred and seventy-five miles an hour and gusts to two-twenty. And it made *National Geographic*; it pretty much demolished the island. Our squadron area was really hit hard. We lost most of our barracks and we, we lost almost all of our buildings except the communications building, which is sort of dug in. We lost our antennas.

But I happened to be working that particular day and we were in the building that’s sort of covered with dirt and the commanding officer, when

the storm—what had happened is the storm was approaching us from the East and it appeared that it was gonna divert, it was gonna go North. So they gave us an all clear. Now we had a bunch of B-29s on Okinawa and normally when a storm is approaching they send them out, they send them someplace else so that they're not caught on the ground. But this storm was—we got the all clear and unexpectedly, the storm turned and hit us, caught us off guard. Aircraft were on the ground and they literally flew them on the ground. They put part crews in there and actually when the winds—they'd run the engines and when the wind would get strong enough to raise the front end, they would actually gun the engines and fly them on the ground until they would settle down again. They did this for twenty-four hours during the height of that storm.

But we got caught off guard because our orders were, where we were, we're up on this hill, that we weren't supposed to be there either. But we got hit with one side of the storm and it did pretty, quite a bit of damage, so they told, gave us orders that as soon as the eye hits we were to evacuate, go down to the main base, Kadena. Well, we didn't get the eye because that storm hit us with three sides. It shifted enough that we got hit with three sides of the storm, so when we got the calm, it was over. It was seventy-two hours and we were up there. We were off the air within the first twelve hours, our antennas were gone, so the commanding officer had given the orders to seek shelter wherever you can to everybody that was, that was out in the barracks, and of course at that time, being in the village was off limits. Ten feet off the highway was off limits, you just couldn't be, but he said, "Wherever you can go, go."

Some of the old timers who had experienced typhoons before knew how bad they could be. Us, us young guys really didn't know what we were in for, so we were naive and we weren't really afraid. The old guys knew what it was and they took off and they went downhill, and the hill that we were on is pockmarked with tombs and they went into the tombs and spent the night in the tombs. And those things are about that [making a gesture of the width?], you know, maybe six by six inside with a little ledge and there are bones in there. But they, they weren't about to spend a—and some of 'em went down there, some of the new guys followed, but I was working and I was in the inside so I just stayed there.

But I was lookin' out the window, excuse me, out the front door and saw our mail room was a back of a truck, the body of a big truck. I saw that just tumble down the squadron area. Our barracks were all Quonset huts and I watched the wind peel them like a banana. I saw it pick one up, pulled a—we didn't have much for guy wires there and just pulled it and just took it and dropped it over the side of the cliff. Our wash house, which was just a little building with—it went. Our latrine was two small

buildings with the holes and then with a little urinal in the middle, and that went. So that when the storm ended, we were hit pretty hard.

There is an interesting story that I like to tell. I wrote it as one of my thesis for when I was going to the University. When I came back and went to the University, as much as I didn't like English, I always got good grades on my themes because it was always experiences. The instructor would always read mine, one for the content and then second because it was, I was always abusing the language. [laughs] I mean it just, my, my grammar wasn't so good. But anyway, one of the stories I tell, it was a true experience of another individual, when they were running down the side of the hill to get to the tombs two of 'em were running and the guy behind tripped, and as he fell forward, he extended his arms and he grabbed his buddy and they both went down. When they both hit the ground, they heard this loud "swoosh," and they looked ahead of them; five feet ahead of them was a big sheet of corrugated steel that had come sailing down behind them and had they not fallen, they'd have been cut in two. It was really something to hear these guys, they came back, when they came back and told the story they were white as sheets when they were telling about it. But then while I was watching, I saw one guy—in those days we had ponchos. He was trying to make his way down the squadron area in the height of the storm and doggone it if the wind didn't get underneath his poncho and he literally started to fly; we thought he was a goner. But he was able to grab—I mean, he didn't get high in the air, but you could see his feet were comin' off the ground. He was able to grab on and hold onto something until he could deflate his poncho and he didn't stick his head out anymore. [laughs]

It was quite an experience. We were the hardest hit on the island as far as damage to military. The control tower went, and that was recorded in *Stars and Stripes* because the control tower operator was describing the storm to, to a, Yokota air, the control tower Yokota, describing what was happening around him and he was describing well that's going, he was telling about the airplanes on the ground, that's going, he said, "Oh oh, there is a—"this was quoted in *Stars and Stripes*—"there goes the roof, I'm gonna get underneath the desk." The next thing he said, "The desk is gone, I'm gone," and he left and that was quoted in a, they had intercepted that over the radios. In fact, I think I have the *Stars and Stripes* at home. But that was a some of the things that—then the rest of the year was pretty much uneventful, just normal things happening. In June of 1950 we were getting ready to go home because we got over there in June of 1949.

Mark: You had a fixed one year tour?

A.P.: One year tour and a three year enlistment. Then in June of 1950 I went to Japan on a ten-day leave before we were going home. I got back to

Okinawa on the twenty—jeeppers, the war started on the 25th of June; I got back to Okinawa on the 23rd from Japan. I was working on that day, the 25th of June, and then—are you familiar with teletype?—in the old days we had these big machines, these teletypes, now it's all computer, but they had these machines and when we were learning teletype you learned about the precedence of messages. And they start out with the precedence and that time OC was flash and it was always preceded with five bells, the word flash, five bells and then they did that three times. Of course we also got, oh, emergency messages and all typhoon warnings came in with five bells, etc. But when they were teaching us, they said if ever you see a flash message, go hide because that means war. That's the only time they use a flash message is an encounter with an enemy, an adversary. So I happened to be working that day and we heard the five bells and oh, another typhoon coming, go over there and look and doggone, it's a flash message. And it wasn't directly to us; we were, we were a relay station, and we were to relay it to Ryukyu's [?] command which is on Okinawa, so when they send out a flash message, they send it out on all circuits so that it gets through on one of 'em. And our job was then to make sure they get it down below. As it is they broke it in the middle because it was confirmed as being received. But that message described—it was an Army major describing the Chinese, excuse me, the North Koreans crossing the 38th parallel, how they were crossing, the tanks, and he was describing it from some position. Now I had that message. Somewhere along the line, in in my scrapbook—we always take our scrapbooks to our reunions—somewhere along the line it got lost. And I really, I keep asking the guys did anybody get it mixed up with their stuff, I'd like to get it back. But it was quite an experience. Then the war started and—

Mark: I want to talk about this a little.

A.P.: Oh, okay.

Mark: Was it completely unexpected? Was that completely unexpected?

A.P.: Oh definitely.

Mark: There were no other warnings, no other indications?

A.P.: Nothing at all. We didn't, we were not aware of anything happening—my meter's gonna run out—we were not aware of anything happening on anywhere and so this was, you know, we're seeing this flash message and this guy is talkin' about them crossing. We didn't at that time even know how it was going to affect us. Well, within a couple of days, well actually within—we did, the guys who were working, now we knew that something was happening. We see this thing happening and we know it means, being described by an American officer and we know we had

people in Korea so we thought there was something. Well all of a sudden now, oh God, now that means we're gonna be stuck here. When we got the message that war had started, not that particular day, when we got the message the war had started and that we were going to be involved, I happened to be working that day also. No, I wasn't working, but we went down and talked to the—somebody else—we went down and talked to, five of us went to see the commanding officer and said, "We want to volunteer to go to Korea." And he said, "I can't just send you to Korea." He said, "But I'll tell you what I'll do. If we get any requests, I'll give you first crack." Well, eventually we did get a request for five guys, but the people who were working the day the request came in hand carried it down to the orderly room and volunteered. Well then those of us that had volunteered previously got all upset about this and—[**End of Tape One, Side Two**]
—it went and started, it created quite a ruckus and finally this main officer says, "Hey, we'll draw lots. Anybody who wants to go, put your name in the hat and whoever gets—" Well of the original five, only one got picked, but luckily for all of us, those who didn't get picked, those guys, they were, they were on the last aircraft that left Kimpo when the, when the Chinese, when they eventually overran, they counterattacked and they overran Kimpo they were, they had saw some hard times, but they all got back, they got back to Japan.

Mark: What compelled you to want to volunteer?

A.P.: To get off the rock. To us that was the rock.

Mark: It wasn't patriotism, desire to be in battle?

A.P.: No, no, no, no.

Mark: You wanted to get the hell out of there?

A.P.: No, we just wanted to get off the rock. I mean, let's face it, that was basically it. We'd been there a year, now we, oh god, we've got to be here some more time. No, no, we want to get off it. So we thought anything could be different. Well no, had we known what would have, it entailed, now that we know, we're glad, you know. I mean, I'm glad that I wasn't that lucky. I mean, they went through some hard times, although they all came back okay. A lot of people don't know this: the very first American to be killed in the Korean War, the very first American was a man, a member of my unit. He was a member of the 1962nd AACS, double ACS Squadron, Detachment Two out of Naha Air Force Base; he was a control tower operator. He was one of the first to go to Korea and he was in the control tower at Kimpo before there were ground troops on the ground and was strafed by a North Korean, got killed. So he was the very first American to get killed in the Korean War, and it is not known to people

that much that that happened. Well anyway, then we started to sit out the war, but of course now we start to listen to MacArthur about going home for Christmas and—

Mark: Did you believe him?

A.P.: We thought we were gonna go. We thought well, who is this little quirky country going to step all over us, you know, and then we had the United Nations behind us. Unbeknownst to us, we didn't know that China was gonna come into the war, but that's another story because approaching Christmas in December of 1950, all of a sudden we were all called to—

Mark: Hang on a second.

A.P.: [gap in the tape] Yeah, in December of 1950 we were called together and all of a sudden we were all issued weapons. Now we never were—

Mark: On Okinawa?

A.P.: On Okinawa. We never had weapons, never had a weapon on Okinawa. All of a sudden we were all issued a carbine, one clip of ammunition, and we start having infantry training. Our first sergeant happened to be an old tank sergeant and all of a sudden we start going, getting all this training, defensive training. We were given two .50 caliber machine guns with no ammunition and no mounts. They were able to mount one on a Jeep, somebody in the motor pool, but the other one, we had to dig a foxhole for it because we overlooked the China Sea. We overlooked the beach where the Americans landed, which when the war started, when they attacked Okinawa, that's where they landed. The Japanese were expecting them on the other side; we actually landed on that side. So we were—we overlooked, we were about a half a mile from that beach and we could look right down on it. All of a sudden they're preparing us for this, and it's approaching Christmas and we're now, now we have to carry our rifles wherever we go. They didn't care where we go, we had to carry our rifles. And then we started having night patrol; we had to go out and stand guard over this. It was just something that we were not—why are we doing this? One night we got the call, "Everybody out, everybody out," you know, "man your positions." "Geez, what's happening?" Nobody knows, nobody knows what's happening. Just that, we just thought we were playing games. Well, we went to midnight mass, we had to carry our rifles with us, and I'll never forget because the choir director is leading the choir and he's wearing a forty-five under his arm and I thought, "Gee, this is really weird."

Well we got through that. It wasn't until I was out of the Service and sometime in the '50s I was watching, there was an old program, TV

program called Navy Log. You ever hear of that one? They told of true episodes in Navy Logs. And they told of a patrol bomber, December of 1950, patrolling the Straits of Formosa, and that's where we were, encountering a Chinese armada, an armada in the Straits of Formosa and reported it. The story goes that the Chinese sent an invasion force to Okinawa with the instructions that if they got beyond the middle they were to keep going, regardless, but if they were detected prior to getting to the center point, they were to turn around and come back. And this lone observation plane found them. And that's history, that's a fact. The Chinese turned around; that is at the same time that we were put on that alert. They were expecting the Chinese to hit us because they were, they were getting in, they were expecting to get involved in the war. Instead they came around and got involved to the north. But they were prepared to start a war with the United States, that's how close it came. And had I not seen that program, I never would have known that. Because those are true stories; they are based on fact. But anyway, we got through that time and of course our year, our extended year was up the following June.

Mark: Well, you said sit out the war, but is that really an accurate statement? Were there more troops coming in, for example? I mean, this isn't how the Korean, I mean the actual war in the Far East impacted upon what you were doing in the military community.

A.P.: Yeah, well we were—I shouldn't say we sat out the war because we were very essential because the B-29s were comin' out of Okinawa and we were, we saw a lot of instances where they didn't come back and because we had Okinawa control right there, the B-29s used to leave Okinawa and they'd leave in big armadas, I mean, there was a whole wing, a whole wing, sixty-four aircraft. But they'd take off and they'd fly out and they'd go different directions and Okinawa control would rendezvous them at a hundred miles out and then they would go in formation and make their attack. And when they came back, they would—but when they'd get within the control area, they'd split up, and Okinawa control would start putting them at different altitudes and different ways to come in and that was quite a job. What they used to do, what they do with radar today, these guys all had to do with a chalkboard and they'd move these aircraft and they'd keep moving 'em down five hundred feet each time as they would land and they would turn them over to the control tower operator. So it was quite a hectic thing. And these people were good, and all these people in control were either, were pilots at one time, all the officers, and they were a few enlisted men; well, some of them were pilots that had been, that took enlisted rates when the war ended. So they did one hell of a good job.

One day I was going down to—and normally they always came in, they come back in, they fly in, you'd see one coming there and one coming in

here, and they'd come in for a matter of hours at a time. One day I went down with a couple of officers in a Jeep and I was going to sick call and we're on main base at Kadena and all of sudden we heard this murmuring and this—I looked over my shoulder and I looked out over the sea and I could see this huge mass of airplanes. Knowing how they usually come in, this scared me, because I could see this thing covered the sky. Okinawa is only fifteen miles wide at the widest point and you're looking up there and as they keep coming in, but then as—it scared me at first, but then I realized that they're ours, because they never came in that way. And why that particular day they brought 'em in as a unit, I don't know, but they brought 'em in and you could visualize sixty-four aircraft in groups of four flights, which is sixteen, would be four sixteens and then it would be four fours, and they would come in and they'd peel off, first the sixteen and they just had this “ring around the rosie” thing and they kept landing every thirty seconds. It just, it was such a beautiful sight, I never did make it to sick call. I sat there and watched them most of the time. But that was quite an interesting thing.

Of course we had some other unusual things, some of them at other times didn't quite make it in. One came in short, it landed in the water. You could see 'em on the beach. One day they had one that was coming in that couldn't get his bomb bay doors open so they wouldn't let him land. So now we're hearing all this on the control and they, they told him to head it out to sea, or they said come in, drop off the crew. They bailed out, in fact, over our place and our people went out and picked 'em up, and then turn the ship around, head it out to sea and they would send the fighters up and shoot it down. And that's what they did and they headed it out to sea and we watched them; of course, then they send these four fighters up and they were F-51s and we were listening to them on—of course, this is going to be a field day, they get to shoot down an airplane. And I remember hearing the pilots talk during this. One pilot said, “Okay Junior, you're too young for this, go home.” It was funny because this one guy peels off and he leaves, he leaves the other three. It must have been somebody who was new and they didn't want him involved, whatever, but the other two start, the other three start shooting at this thing. Well what they were trying to do was get it to blow up. They could not get it to blow up. They shot it down and it just made its way down into the water and just splashed and we could see it because it was, we were so high and we were looking over the water.

And there were some other interesting, interesting things. We were right, situated right above Bolo point. Bolo point is a little point that juts out and the Air Force used it as a bombing range and strafing practice. [laughs] When we first got there, we were assigned the job of digging latrines. If you ever dig in coral rock, it's hard, but one of the, a couple of the guys had to go down and get some rock, down—so they decide to go down to

Bolo Point. You know they've got all this chewed up land there and they're out there and they had a PC, you know, a personnel carrier? Yeah, and these guys are out there and all of a sudden they see this airplane coming and they just, "Oh yeah, he's starting to come down low and it looks like, oh my God!" They didn't know—he was playing with them, but they were on his territory, you know, but they got scared. They tried to run that thing, keep it going, get out, and he just made a pass at them and they thought for sure they were goners. They thought he was gonna get—well, he was just playing with them is what he did. But they were really waving, they come back and they were white as sheets, they were scared. It was some interesting things that happened.

Mark: Because you eventually rotated back. Now there was sort of a point system during the Korean War for infantrymen for those in Korea. In your case, was it just an involuntary extension for a year?

A.P.: Yes, yeah. We had put in our time. Another year and then we got shipped back to the United States. Of course now we also got our enlistments extended, what they called the Truman Year. Everybody was extended one more year in the service so when I got back I put in another year. My enlistment would have been up that September, I got home in August, and I had to stay another year. I got transferred, I got sent to, excuse me, Westover Air Force Base.

Mark: Chicopee, Massachusetts.

A.P.: Chicopee, Mass., that's where I met my wife. She was in the Air Force and we got married there. And we've been married going on forty-five years. Everybody said it wouldn't last. [laughs] We fooled 'em. No, it was a good experience. Of course then you know that I got out, five years later I was talked into joining the Air National Guard, so I put in six years in the Air National Guard. I got out as a staff sergeant in the Air Force. Went in the Air National Guard as a staff sergeant, made tech sergeant and because of the political situation at the Air National Guard at the time I was having a conflict with an officer. He wouldn't give me my rightful position and so I just decided to get out. Then a guy who worked for me was in the Coast Guard Reserve and he told me about it and I went out there, enlisted in the Coast Guard Reserve as a, as E6, first class, made chief and eventually went up the ranks of the warrant officer grade to the W4 and retired there in 1990 as a Chief Warrant Officer 4th Grade with thirty-six years. And the day that I—mandatory retirement at age sixty. I turned sixty on September 21st in '90 and my unit, the Coast Guard Reserve Unit of Milwaukee, was the very first Coast Guard Reserve Unit to be called to active duty since World War II.

Mark: Yeah, I was going to ask if you got called up again.

A.P.: They left the day after I turned sixty. We knew weeks in advance that they were going. I tried to get—headquarters would have delayed my retirement. They said as long as I hadn't received the check yet, but district had to issue the orders and they didn't want a sixty-year-old man going over there. Which is probably—here again, I'm a firm believer in the Lord and he knows what's best for me and he didn't because two weeks after they left and went over there in October I had my first angioplasty, and ever since then I've had heart problems, so it wouldn't have been good for me. But they were all part of me 'cause I trained all of those people. I had been in that unit for twenty-six years. So I did what I could here, I set up a little supply system for things. They were the very first reservists to arrive in Saudi Arabia, you know. That Coast Guard was the very first reservist to arrive in Saudi Arabia. And they got there and there was nothing prepared for them. They had no facilities and they had nothing; they couldn't, they were missing, they didn't have a anyplace, a PX, to buy anything so we started shipping stuff to them. And one of the things that we started shipping was videos. We would—

Mark: Regular release movies and that sort of thing?

A.P.: Yeah, just go, I'd go down, I made a deal with a guy at Video Station who ran it, I said, "Give me the movies, I'll dub them," put three on a tape. I went to American TV and got them to donate a TV. I went to Madison Video Repair and they gave me a VCR and I shipped that over to them. And then every week I'd send 'em videos. And they would just have movies to watch, you know. And of course we also got some packages so we shipped a whole aircraft full of sundry items we collected out of Milwaukee. We took care of them.

Mark: Still doing your part.

A.P.: Oh, I tried to do what I could, you know, yeah.

Mark: I just want to go back to one thing in the Korean War period and then we'll discuss some of the post-war things. That involves the sort of social composition of the Air Force during the Korean War. This, for example, was the first major conflict in which the military was supposed to be integrated, although that varied from service and unit and that sort of thing, so I wonder if you could comment on your experiences?

A.P.: Okay, Truman signed the Jim Crow law, I believe in '47 or something, I was going to say '48, and in the time that I enlisted, I never, I, there were no blacks in my basic training unit, there were none in my tech school and when I was on Okinawa, we, we got two; two blacks were brought in, were shipped in. They were coming in like the rest of us. They came from

the States and that was our first experience. We had some problems. One carried a chip on his shoulder so he was hard to get along with regardless of what. The other one nobody had any problems with, he just blended in like everybody else. But the one created his own problems.

Mark: That was more a function of personality than anything else.

A.P.: Yes, yes, yes, and just like some of the other guys. We had a Native American; in fact, he's the guy that tried to beat up, just a coward, he had a problem. His problem was his personality. Yet we have another Native American who is probably one of my best friends, he is part of our group and oh, Donald; in fact I spent last winter, a week with him down in Florida. And we love him. I mean, it's an individual, it has nothing to do with their race.

Mark: Yeah, even beyond race the military is kind of a melting pot anyway.

A.P.: Oh, now today I have a biracial, I have an African-American son-in-law and they're still in the Air Force, my daughter, they are on Guam.

Mark: I was wondering your experience, you know, guys from the South and the East Coast and all this sort of thing and how everyone got together, was it—

A.P.: You know, because we didn't have many, we didn't experience many blacks, I didn't encounter any problems. The ones on Okinawa, you know, there were no problems, there were no problems. We didn't have any problems.

Mark: Okay, so after the war you went back to Chicopee for awhile and then got out of the Service, you stayed in the Reserves, but for the most part you were a civilian by this time?

A.P.: For five years I didn't do anything.

Mark: So once you got out of the Service, what were your priorities in getting yourself civilianized? What did you want to do and how did you go about doing it?

A.P.: Okay, I was married and had a child. My intentions were to go back to school and I did. I come back and signed up and went to University of Wisconsin. And I got through the first semester, very difficult, mainly because I was trying to work, support my family and go to school. And I just found out that the University was not for me so I went out of the University and I went into, decided to get into electronics. And I went to the Wisconsin School of Electronics, which is still out here. And that I did,

yeah. I went my two years there and I got my associate degree, whatever that was, but I had my opportunity to get into the field, this was in 1954, which would have been the ground floor. My buddy at that time did get in on the ground floor. We were talking about going to work for McDonnell Douglas down in St. Louis for a buck and a half an hour and ten cents more an hour if we worked nights. And this is 1954, but by that time I had a couple of kids and my, my father had just died so my mother needed—and I was working in the tavern while I was going to school and my mother, I was running the tavern for my mother and I said, “Well, I don’t want to haul off and go down to St. Louis.” He did. He ended up working on the X15. In fact, they sent him through and got him his engineering degree and the poor guy died of cancer at forty-five years old, but anyway, it could have been, I could have done that if I had wanted to take the chance. I’m not sorry because I stayed, worked in the tavern for awhile.

Well, I ran the tavern and did that for awhile, and got into the fuel oil business, got into, from the fuel oil business, got involved with an oil company in Madison, then worked my way up there for seventeen years and became a member, an officer of the corporation. It was a local company and we got diversified into RVs and fuel oil and real estate. I got my broker’s license, which I still have. Anyway, that worked out for seventeen years until my boss sort of, the energy crisis hit us and he sort of went way out. We could no longer work with him. He was a terrific person to work for fifteen years; we just, just couldn’t work with him anymore. He was always, we always used to work together and then all of a sudden, you, instead of being a coworker and all of a sudden now you were an employee and he just, it just wasn’t, for two years it was not good. And I took quite a flop to come to Department of Veterans Affairs. I had an opportunity to come to work; I had first applied for the property manager’s position, took the test and I was number six and they hired five, they hired the first five, so I didn’t make it.

Mark: Now you must have gotten veterans points?

A.P.: Yeah, but they all were veterans so the points didn’t make any difference; we were all veterans. And so I didn’t get hired and then they had a loan analyst job open up and I applied for that and first my application was turned back because the personnel manager we had at the time didn’t think I was qualified. So he just said to me, “No, you’re not qualified.” I said, “How come I was qualified for the other job and I’m not qualified for this job?” And the other job was more, is an extension, so I didn’t like that and it just so happened now, John Moses was a friend of the family. And he was interested and he asked me what happened, “How did you do?” And I told him what happened. [unintelligible] So he got the guy, “Why isn’t he qualified? He was qualified.” He backed off. So I was allowed to take the exam. I was allowed to take the exam. So out of the two hundred-five

people that took the exam, I did get in the first top five. So I was hired and I was on the job for one year and then the property manager's position, one of those people that had hired on left, and so I tested for that position and I ended up the top person, so I got the job. So from not being qualified, to, you know, I was just, he was just holding back the opportunity. Anyway I was able to go, after a year I became a property manager which became real estate agent and I worked at that job a total of seventeen years with the department, sixteen of them out in the field. And I can honestly say that I loved it.

Mark: So what did that entail precisely?

A.P.: Well, you know we had the home loan program and our position as property managers or real estate agents was to monitor the return of our investment. Technically that's what it was; the money went to the veterans through lending institutions and then they had to, they had to make the collections. They had to make sure the money came back, but when the money—and then we monitor them to make sure they're making the effort to get our money back and if we saw that that effort was, or maybe because they couldn't do something with the individual or they weren't doing enough on their own, we had to monitor that. When it got to the point that it was the individual veteran's problem, that they could no longer, then we got involved and we had to make the decision to foreclose. Once we foreclosed, the property came back to the department and we managed the property until it was sold again, 'til we got it off the inventory.

Mark: And what were your observations about the use of these programs? How many foreclosures were there, were they rare, were they not? Just your sort of general impressions of the home loan program, how effective you think they were in your own observations.

A.P.: Very good, the effectiveness was very good. We had problems, we had problems. We had a number of foreclosures and we had, you always had the bad apples. You're going to have the bad apples; they have the bad apples today; they're always going to have them. But you eliminate those, but we went through a period of time when the economy was not good.

Mark: In the '70s or in the early '80s?

A.P.: '80s, in the '80s, yeah. In the early '80s the economy was not good and that was causing a lot of problems. Well, we had a policy that if the veteran was having a problem, if it was a legitimate problem and there was no way we could see the end of the tunnel, then we had to do something. I mean, we would give them every break that we could, but if there was no light at the end of the tunnel then we—in most cases, the veteran

themselves would understand that. We were very successful many times in convincing the veteran, rather than foreclose and putting the department through a lot of extra expense, yourself through a lot, it would be best if you'd just give us a deed and just move out and let us take over the responsibility, you know, and we were very successful in doing that. We were able to convince a lot of people to do that. We always had to take some to court and you have to do that. But prior to my retirement in 1990, the last half of the '80s—when did Tommy Thompson come in?

Mark: I was in Massachusetts. '86 when he got elected, '87 when—

A.P.: Okay, that's when it started, that's when it started to turn around. And you can say what they want about Tommy Thompson, I saw it. The economy started to turn around. At the height of the program when I was involved, I alone—there was seven of us—I alone had a hundred forty-five properties. Excuse me, I had forty-five properties; they had a couple hundred in the department. I had, I myself had forty-five properties that I was managing at one time. And one would go, one would come, so there was regularly around forty, forty-five all the time. And that's a lot. When I retired in 1990, I had seven. Today I don't think they have five in the whole department. I think the last I heard is they had five in the whole department and they only have one man out in the field now. And there were seven of us out in the field. So I attribute that to the Tommy Thompson economics. I'm sorry, there is a lot we can say about the man in a lot of ways and I know that, but all I know is just the economy of the state turned around. I'm not a lover of Tommy Thompson, don't get me wrong.

Mark: I'm a historian; I say nothing.

A.P.: I know. I don't want you to say—I mean, he has his faults, but he has done something good for the state, I got to admit to that, and I've gone through a few governors, so yeah, and it did turn around. And the program is darn good. It got a lot of veterans into homes that probably would not have been able to get into homes. And now that they've liberalized it some, it's even better. Where they took some of these restrictions away.

Mark: More veterans can qualify?

A.P.: Yeah, and why, the policy, when John Moses was here and that's where it all started and then it carried through. He said a veteran is a veteran, you know, even though we had these rules. The veterans used to say, "Well, gee, I have to be in the gutter." Yeah, that's true, you know. But John started to try to get these things liberalized. John Mauer was probably the guy who started it and now they've really got it, you know, what, for a veteran to get benefits, what difference does it make what he's done with

his life? I mean, if a guy has done nothing with his life and he's in poverty and he's in the gutter, for whatever reason, so okay they give it. What about the guy who did all right? I did, you know, I worked, I worked all the time; why shouldn't I get benefits? Not that I want them, don't get me wrong, but I'm talking about individuals, and there were a lot of veterans out there that were resentful and I don't blame them, you know. How come, look at him, he's got it, I work all my life, he's got a better house than I have. But I bought mine, see, and now they've liberalized that. And I think it's right. And in the last, the last year or two when we were making these loans—[End of Tape Two, Side One]—and they didn't, rehab loans, I can't remember what they was, but anyway they were liberal, I was really, really happy because I was able to go out and talk to veterans like myself. Ones that had done something and they were now getting the chance to use the program. In other words, they had done something with their lives and they weren't, they didn't need any—but now they were, they were getting one of the bennies of being a veteran and that would make me feel good that these people were now getting a chance to use the program when they wouldn't qualify before because they'd worked hard and they'd put some money away.

Mark: I don't know if you can tell this from your position, but when veterans like this got those loans did they put them to good use?

A.P.: Good use, yes. There were a lot of rehab loans and I'd see guys getting new windows, you know, homes that were thirty years old, new windows, new siding, the kitchen, they were doing something nice.

Mark: Well, there is an economic stimulation part to this as well as well as helping the unfortunate.

A.P.: Yeah, that's right, and if you ever got the statistics, and I can't remember it, if anybody would get the statistics and then they would realize what the Department of Veterans Affairs as a whole, the monies that came in and what it did for the economy of the state. Every dollar, it was just—John Mauer did it one time, he had somebody put the numbers together and somewhere there were, where they had so many dollars, what it did for the economy. It was just fantastic, just fantastic. People forget that all the programs are self funding. People think that the veterans are getting something, you know, they're getting something for nothing. That oh, the taxpayer, "I'm paying for that." No they're not. They had a hard time convincing those people, "No, you're not paying for it." The guy who is taking the loan out is paying for it and everybody else like him because my position was paid for by the interest. Of course I don't know if you know that they had a problem with surplus. Even at the low interest, they were making money.

- Mark: On the trust fund?
- A.P.: Yeah, no, on the home loan program. The returns were so good, you know, the surplus started to accumulate too much and the IRS threatened to take away the nonprofit—oh yeah, that actually happened. That's when they started recycling money. They started taking the money and recycling it, putting it back out again, and that's where they could handle the disenfranchised veterans.
- Mark: I don't want to give you a parking ticket; I've just got one last thing I want to cover, and that involves veterans organizations and reunions and that sort of thing. I know you've had some reunions and we'll get to that, but I want to go back to the immediate time when you first got out of Service after Korea; did you join any groups?
- A.P.: Never joined, never joined any of them.
- Mark: Was there a reason? You didn't like them, never thought of it?
- A.P.: No, no, I'll tell you the only reason I didn't join is because I've never been one to join just for the sake of joining. You know, the VFW or the American Legion, people that belong to those were involved, and I couldn't see joining just to say I'm a Legion member or I belong to the VFW and never do anything. I belong to a couple of organizations, no veterans organizations. Oh, I do; I belong to The Reserve Officers Association and I belong to TROA mainly because of self interest, they both of them protected—the ROA protected the Coast Guard Reserve and the TROA protects our benefits, so that's the only two organizations I've ever belonged to.
- Mark: Even to this day. So when you got later in life and your priorities [unintelligible].
- A.P.: I've thought about joining the VFW and I say, we don't—why, just so I can go have a drink there, you know? Go eat dinner there? I don't join the Elks for the same reason. Really, people tell me “belong to the Elks.” Why? So I can go eat there, it's not a—so I don't believe in, I just don't believe in doing it; if I can't get involved, I'm not going to.
- Mark: Now these reunions, these are very typical among combat divisions and that sort of thing, but your unit is a little unusual in that you've got this reunion. How did that all that get started? When did you get involved?
- A.P.: Well, I got involved from day one; I'm the one who started it. Forty-five years ago, well let's see, we were out—when we got discharged and after a couple years, where I was located, being in Wisconsin, people happened

to be coming through and I'd get to see these guys. They'd stop and see me. And I had accumulated the addresses and I started a chain letter. Tried it a couple of times, but it would always get lost someplace where we'd send it out; okay now, send it on to this guy, add your letter and it would come around and you'd take the old letter out. Twice I did that and it got hung up, so finally we decided we're going to have a reunion. And the guy in Kansas City said he'll handle it. So okay, he handled the first one and I couldn't make it, I got sick and I couldn't make it and that was bad.

Well, then we waited five years and we had another one and I think we had it down there again. But I kept communicating with these guys and kept picking up addresses so they just sort of looked to me for—I sent out a Christmas letter every year and I let everybody know what's happening, keep addresses up to date and I sent everybody the addresses and the phone numbers and we did, we were having it every five years and then they decided—God, we had them in Oklahoma, California, Tennessee, we had it here once, twice, three times now in Independence because that happened to be centrally located. And anyway, this same group of guys were on Okinawa and we were all there and we all know each other from there, either with part of the original group that went over and some of them are the guys that came over that were supposed to be our replacements when we were supposed to go home and then the war started so some of them are those and then we've picked up a couple of strays who were on the island but not up at Yontan, they were down in—a couple of guys know them because they were down there, so we've got twenty-five now that are on this list and we just keep, I keep this thing—I don't want to take the credit, but just I send, I'm the only one, I send some, everybody gets something from me at Christmas time to let them know what's happening. They cut it down to every other year; now they want it every two years because we're all retired now. So the last one was last year, year ago. And that was in Kansas City and I was all set to go, but I came down with colon cancer and I had surgery and so I almost even went, even two weeks after the surgery, but doctors said “No way,” so I didn't go. But I had told my buddy from Eau Claire, who we see quite a bit of each other, I said, “I want to have the next one in Madison.” So well, when he got down there he volunteered me because I said—well, he's from Eau Claire so we are going to co-host it here next June.

Mark: In '97?

A.P.: Right, so we've got that all set up; we're going to be at the Ramada Inn out there on the beltline, on I-90. And we've got some things planned, but this group of guys is, you can't believe this group. People, they're amazed at how this small group can stay in contact. Last year I was down in Florida. One guy from Indiana—I wrote in my newsletter that I was going to go to Florida and I was looking for a place to go and he said, “C'mon

down, I can get you a place where I am here.” And I knew him very well. I went and spent five weeks down in his campground. And then last year I went and spent a week with him because the guy from Oklahoma, the Native American, the Indian guy, we call him Donald John, love the guy, anyway, he came and we spent, the three of us spent a week at the campground. Another guy from Texas, he’s always up here, but anyway he come down to see me down at Tampa. So we see each other throughout the time, but we get together every two years now.

Mark: And what is it you think that draws you guys together?

A.P.: I guess we love each other, I guess that’s about all. We’re just so close now, we just, we just have this bonding that we went through this period of time, nothing so, not like being in combat. No, it’s just that we went through a period of time that over the course—I am really thankful to God that he gave me the opportunity to keep this group together. And I know that it is something. My time is kind of limited so I know that somebody is gonna keep it up, I know that, because it just so happens—then you hear, funny incident here, before the last reunion, with this one particular guy that we’ve been—“Anybody ever run across George Shore?” “No, all we know is he’s in California.” I went out and bought a computer program with seventeen million phone numbers. One night, about 10 o’clock at night, I’m gonna try and look it up; son of a gun if I didn’t find his—I got on the phone and I called him, and I got him. It was really nice talking to him. He came to the next reunion and now he’s hooked, you know.

But we’ve had some guys that would hold out, that resisted coming. When they finally got them to come, they won’t miss it. They said, a couple of guys said, “Geez, I don’t know why I didn’t come before.” Geez, they really, every time they come, “I’m just sorry I didn’t come to the first ones.” Well, I’ve only missed the two, I was sick in both, but it’s really a time we look forward to. And you know, the funny part is we don’t, we don’t plan any activities per se. What we do is sit around and shoot the bull. And the amazing part of it is our wives because they, year after year, they sit there and they listen to us tell the same stories, never get bored, never say, “Why are you bringing that up?” or anything, they just sit there or they do their own little thing and they—we just sit there. Of course there is always the typical Heart game and—but we have a good time, we just, mainly getting together and sharing our experiences. We all bring our scrapbooks and our pictures and go through that again, tell the same stories over again.

Mark: Now that’s interesting because Korean vets haven’t been known for organizing very much.

A.P.: That’s right.

Mark: And it's interesting that you got started so early and keep it up for so long.

A.P.: Yep, well, this will be forty—well, we've known, we met each other in 1949, '49, some of us in '48. Next year it will be fifty years. Yep.

Mark: You've exhausted all my questions. Anything else you'd like to add or anything?

A.P.: No, you've got me to talk and I enjoyed talking about it. Usually you get to talking, you tell one of the stories, you tell one of that and I don't really consider I've had any exiting times, but some of these little interesting stories—when we get together, we tell other stories that we are all familiar with, you know. Incidents of this guy did this, you remember when this guy went to the village and lost his pants and you know, there are some interesting stories, typical things that I know that you've experienced if you were in a barracks at all, you lived with some other guys, you know that some quirky things happened to individuals. And you think about it, you tell somebody, remember this when this—that's what we do, we just talk about this guy doing that and that guy doing that, you know, and various things. It's interesting, but we have fun.

Mark: Well, I want to thank you for stopping in.

A.P.: Okay, well—

Mark: I appreciate it.

[End of Interview]