

Serene Sandmeyer

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Question: The first thing I'd like to do, just so I have it on tape, is if you'd give me your first and last name.

Answer: Serene Sandmeyer.

Question: S-A-N-D-

Answer: M-E-Y-E-R.

Question: And Serene?

Answer: Just like the word, S-E-R-E-N-E.

Question: S-E-R

Answer: E-N-E.

Question: I like that name.

Answer: Most people say -- are you? (laughs)

Question: Now you grew up where?

Answer: In Yakima, most of my life, well, I lived in Seattle for a few years as a little girl, but most -- my high school years I was in Yakima, in Selah, actually.

Question: That's where my ex-wife was from was from Selah.

Answer: Oh, is that right? Hm-hmm.

Question: So I know where Selah is. Spent some time there.

Answer: Right.

Question: Now where did you meet up with this character that I just talked to?

Answer: I was going to business college in Yakima and my roommate was working at the Bell Wyman Dodge Plymouth Agency where Ben was working. And through her I met him. And eventually she moved over to Seattle. She obtained employment over there. And so it left Ben and I together. And we went together a year and then we were going to get married, and then the war came along. And three months later he says come on down, let's get married anyway. So I went down to Wichita Falls and married him.

Question: Huh. And Wichita Falls is --

Answer: Texas.

Question: Texas.

Answer: Yeah, Sheppard Field, he was at Sheppard Field.

Question: Now do you remember where you were, cause you were a little bit younger than Ben. And do you remember where you were when you heard about the war?

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Answer: Yes. Pearl Harbor was bombed, we were over in Seattle, taking my sister and her husband for a ride, when we heard it on the radio in the car.

Question: And what did you think at that point?

Answer: It was awful. We knew it was going to happen, it was -- it was disastrous. And as -- while we were over there we drove down Jackson Street and a white child was picking on a Japanese child and my sister said, "It's started already."

Question: Wow, that quick.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: Boy, that is -- that is amazing to think about how that all happened.

Question: Now at this time you were just sweethearts and you weren't engaged or --

Answer: We were engaged.

Question: Oh, you were engaged.

Answer: Yeah, well we got engaged after the harbor -- after Pearl Harbor was bombed.

Question: Oh, so, how soon after Pearl Harbor was bombed did you get engaged? Before he knew he was going in the service or --

Answer: I think so. I think so. I'm not positive on that. I know I had his diamond before he left. (laughs)

Question: So he's down training in the service now, he's enlisted, you sent him off and he went to Texas, you're back home in the Selah, Yakima area.

Answer: Right.

Question: And you're engaged. Are you still thinking, I shouldn't be engaged, he's in the service now, he might be going over to fight, or are you so in love that you think --

Answer: I was very happy to be engaged to Ben. (laughs)

Question: So then he calls you up or how did you --

Answer: He wrote to me. People didn't call much in those days on the phone. But I called my father, my sister I should say, in Seattle and told her that I was going to go down and marry him. And I was 19. And she said, oh, Pat, do you think you're doing right? She nicknamed me Pat. Anyway, and then my father wrote me a letter and said he disowned me. Not to even bother write back. And then he saw definitely I was going he came over to see me. And my father was a very evangelical-type Christian man. And the main thing in his mind was that I would keep a Christian home. And then he was -- he said I see I can't talk sense into your head, but he said, what could happen, you could go down there and you could get pregnant and your husband might get killed in the war, and then I've got another baby to raise. (laughs) And I know how he felt because when I was born, my mother died. And he was not a real young man then, he was 48, so here he is in his 70s, and -- but it didn't work

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out that way. And he was very nice, he sent us some money, you know, and when the war was over, he built our home.

Question: Oh, wow.

Answer: Hm-hmm.

Question: So he wasn't so concerned that you were marrying Ben --

Answer: No.

Question: He was more concerned that you're marrying somebody that's going to go --

Answer: Off to war.

Question: Ahhh.

Answer: Right.

Question: And did you, in your mind, did you think that at all, or --

Answer: I was hoping he wouldn't have to go overseas. Did he tell you about it? Hm-hmm. We were married two weeks when they had a call for all the men in his regiment or whatever you call it to get out to the field. And we dragged our feet a little bit cause he was on a legal pass and then he did go out just to see 1500 men being shipped out. And it was misread of the orders. They sent the classes. The wrong class out. And so he stayed on, finished his schooling, and then they kept him as an instructor.

So we were lucky, we were -- we were there a year, and then we were transferred to Salina, Kansas. And while we were there, there was no place to live. I managed to get us a sleeping room just by going through the church I was brought up in. Somebody told me they would take somebody in to sleep. And to keep from going bananas, I took a civil service exam and that's how I got a job at the school where he was teaching. And I typed -- they had to -- they had to compile all their B-29 books, was just starting out, and I typed them all. In those days it was all on stencils. (laughs)

Question: So you -- the manuals that they were creating for these new planes --

Answer: Yeah.

Question: As they created them, you were --

Answer: I was typing them, hm-hmm.

Question: Were you a good typist?

Answer: At that time. (laughs)

Question: That's, you know, it's funny to think that in the not too distant future, kids aren't even going to know what a typewriter was. Even nowadays --

Answer: I know, yeah. And they had the old typewriters then -- they were not electric.

Question: And carbon paper.

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Answer: Right. And stencils.

Question: Wow. I see some of this -- I just looked at my great aunt had -- they had gone through her house and documented everything by the accountant. It was neatly done and typed perfectly and, you know, there wasn't a mistake. And I was like -- I don't know how, you know, but practice makes perfect.

Answer: Right. Well, I had been through business college, you know, before we got married.

Question: Oh, that's right.

Answer: Hm-hmm.

Question: So what was that like, being a 19-year-old bride. Now had you ever been out of -- I mean out of Washington, prior to --

Answer: No.

Question: So you get on a bus?

Answer: Well, what happened? I was signed up to go on a train. And I walked -- in Yakima, in the spring they have a special opening and they have all the stores displaying their new clothes and so on and I ran into two ladies that had gone to business college with me. And I said guess where I'm going, I'm going to Texas. Well, so are we. And then one of them was already married and the other was going down to get married like I was. So I cancelled my train reservations and went on the bus with them. So I wasn't alone, which made it nice. And the bus driver we had, liked to sing, and we just sang our heads off going down there. (laughs)

Question: That's pretty amazing. Now that's neat that you had somebody to go with you that you knew --

Answer: Yes, it was nice. I wasn't all alone. True.

Question: And did -- when you were down there, did you still --

Answer: No, they weren't in the same place. They kept going south to another place.

Question: So now you're in this town in Texas.

Answer: Hm-hmm.

Question: What was the wedding like?

Answer: It was an "I do" in the church. There wasn't a wedding. It was just before church that we got married. Made up with some couple from Arkansas, stood up for us. I think it was called Little Plant or something like that. Some of the things are a little bit hazy, you know it's been a long time ago.

Question: It's like, yeah, it will be 59 years.

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Answer: Right.

Question: Wow. Congratulations. In March, is that -- March?

Answer: Right, next month, hm-hmm.

Question: So then no big wedding, I assume no big honeymoon either.

Answer: No, no. We were just so happy to be there together, it didn't matter.

Question: So you get married, he goes back to the base and you are living in a church at this time or where are you living at this point?

Answer: Oh, we managed to find a little apartment in Texas, so we had a little apartment there. And actually what it was, it was a big old Southern mansion that a lady had bought and she divided it into sleeping rooms and small apartments. And there -- it was full of service men and their wives. So we got well acquainted with a lot of people. And then across the street from us was a -- was a funeral parlor. And the people in the back would sit outside and we got -- being we were there a whole year, we got very well acquainted with them. So when Ben was transferred to Salina, Kansas, I rode up with a civilian instructor, and the day before I left, why the people that had the funeral parlor, took all my things in the hearse down to -- to the shipping place to ship my things up to Salina, Kansas. (laughs)

Question: So it must have been a real different -- I mean there's a lot of greatness in America right now, but it must have been a real different time because it sounds like every where you went there were people that were willing to help people.

Answer: That's right. The atmosphere was that way all over the country. Cause there were so many people involved.

Question: Was that a big change from prior -- because I mean, we're just getting out of the depression and Pearl Harbor happens. Did you see an attitude of people change or --

Answer: Well everybody was trying hard to win the war. You were either industrial, working in the plant of some kind or your son or somebody was in the service. Everybody was affected. At least most everybody, put it that way. Or else they were on the farms raising food to support the country. They're the ones that didn't have to go to the service.

Question: When you were in Yakima, had they interred the Japanese-American citizens at that point yet?

Answer: No.

Question: So, okay, you didn't know. Cause I had interviewed one gentleman, in fact his name was Shig Honda, who lived in Selah, and he got interred in Wyoming.

Answer: Oh, hm-hmm.

Question: They came and took his family farm away and --

Answer: Oh, gee.

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Question: And he talked about that. About instantly, when he went to school the next day, the teacher all of a sudden. Cause he was a young, young boy, elementary school, and the teacher --

Answer: Oh, really. In Selah?

Question: Yeah.

Answer: Oh, really. Hmm.

Question: Shig Honda.

Question: So from Texas then you moved --

Answer: To Salina, Kansas. We were there four months and it was extremely hot. And of course there's no air conditioning in either Texas or Salina, Kansas. And they had an epidemic of polio while we were there. So all the -- all the places where you could go for pleasure or to church, they were all closed. Parks were closed, the movies were closed, because in those days there was nothing to help you for polio. And I would go out to get the bus to go out to the field in the morning and we would see the hospital -- the aisles were lined up with beds. There were so many children affected by it. So there was nothing to do there except go to work and look at each other. (laughs) But it was -- it was - you know, at a time when you know that your husband could go overseas and something could happen, every day is precious. Cause you just don't know what the next day's going to bring. You know, I was very fortunate to get on with the school with him. And then we were transferred to Denver. And when we got to Denver, he had -- he didn't pass his physical for his commission. He had a hernia rupture, so he had to go to the hospital for surgery. Did he tell you this? And so I lived in a sleeping room while he did that, and I worked at the Field. And then when he got out of the hospital, they gave him a six weeks leave, and they wouldn't allow him to go home because he'd be picking up suitcases. So in that time we had time to look for an apartment. And we found a nice apartment. And I didn't -- I really -- well, I took an indefinite leave, and then I didn't go back because he had his commission and I didn't need to go back. And then when he went overseas, of course, I went home and stayed with his parents.

Question: Now I assume when he got his commission he was making more than the big \$20 a month that he wrote you about.

Answer: Right, right. Yeah, he was making about \$300 a month then. At that time that was -- that was good wages, cause he was flying. Flying, you get 50% of base pay. And then I got pregnant when we were in Denver, and our little boy was two weeks old when he left for overseas.

Question: Now tell me about that, because a lot of this happened during the war. Things like that.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: Here you are, somewhat of a newlywed, two week old child, and now your husband's --

Answer: Going overseas.

Question: How did you find out he was going to be going this time?

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Answer: Well, he partly volunteered. What happened, they needed a group of instructors to go over and -- because they were losing too many airplanes for lack of information on cruising control. So he -- he -- I was a little bit upset with him that he would offer. But he did and came through it fine. But it was traumatic, sure. We felt -- see we'd been together over three years, so I wasn't a newlywed, really. And -- but parting is hard under those circumstances.

Question: Did -- was it like we see in the movies where you took him down to a plane or a train and you had your son or what -- do you remember that?

Answer: Yes, but it wasn't quite like that. There was another couple in the apartment building where we were living that drove him down to -- to -- I don't know how he went over. Well, he flew from the base. Right. So took him out with his suitcases. We parted in the apartment. And in the meantime his mother came down to help me go home. And I stayed with his parents till he came home.

Question: So when he left his mom was there --

Answer: Yes.

Question: So you had family --

Answer: Yes, yes, I did. And she came to help me and I was fine the whole way and she was sick the whole way home. Which was too bad.

Question: So when was the next time you saw him then?

Answer: Our little boy was five and a half months old when he came back. Five months old. So, and the only thing, you know, we didn't have TV, but we'd hear on the radio, and I'd hear about the typhoon that they had in Okinawa and I was so worried about him.

Question: So you knew where he was then?

Answer: Oh, yes.

Question: Cause a lot of people -- in the early stages of the war -- they

Answer: Well, the war in Europe was over. And of course I knew -- I knew what bases he was at, yeah, he wrote and told me. He sent me a coconut. Have you ever seen a coconut in the big shell? He wrote my address on it and sent it to me that way. I'd never seen anything like that.

Question: So he put your address -- sent you a coconut from Okinawa?

Answer: Yeah. Yeah. I don't remember what base he was at when he sent it but, yeah, I got it just like that.

Question: So did you have a lot of mail going back and forth?

Answer: Oh, yes, we wrote every day. Sometimes our letters would accumulate before we'd receive them.

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Question: So you could keep -- you had a good idea of what he was doing and --

Answer: Yes, yes.

Question: Now he also said something about somebody named Chick or something like that?

Answer: Chick Pressler? Right.

Question: So how did that -- what was --

Answer: Well Chick was an instructor right with him, and what do you want me to tell you about him.

Question: So you -- everybody started writing -- is that it -- you kind of did this wife to wife, husband to --

Answer: Oh, yes, yes, we did. And we wrote to them for years. And then all of a sudden, no letters anymore, so we figured something happened to them because the letters came back no forwarding address.

Question: Did you ever meet them?

Answer: Oh, yes after the war.

Question: Oh, you did.

Answer: Oh, yes. Well, I knew them before they -- before they left.

Question: Oh, so you'd met them at the base.

Answer: Oh, yes. But they did come to see us once in Washington. Hm-hmm.

Question: Because I think that's a neat -- I haven't heard of anybody else that did something like that. Because you could actually really hear how Ben was doing or whatever from Chick who may give you a little different perspective of --

Answer: Well he didn't write to me personally.

Question: Oh, he didn't?

Answer: No. But I wrote to his wife, yes.

Question: Oh, to his wife, you kept writing -- okay.

Answer: Right, right. And then when he got home, why then we corresponded, the four of us, --

Question: Now did you get letters that -- was the military still blacking things out, or --

Answer: No.

Question: So at this point --

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Answer: No, no.

Question: Now do you remember where you were when you heard that they had dropped the bomb and the war was coming to an end?

Answer: Yeah, I was living with his folks. In Yakima.

Question: And did you have any idea how long it would take for him to get home?

Answer: Oh, I was hoping next day. (laughs) But he had orders to go to Okinawa. Why they didn't change them, I don't know. There's no reason to go there. But that's the Army for you. (laughs) He was sent there anyway and he was there about a month I think, before he got home. Something like that. In Okinawa.

Question: So I assume during this time in Yakima there were other soldiers coming home and --

Answer: Oh, sure. Yeah.

Question: Were there parades and things like that? I know like in the big cities like New York, we always hear about that but --

Answer: I don't remember a parade. I remember we went downtown when we heard the Armistice was signed before the end of the war, and it was, you know, horns being blown and people laughing and happy but I don't remember a parade.

Question: Do you remember Ben coming home?

Answer: Oh, yes.

Question: How did he get home? Where did you catch up with him?

Answer: Well he came back -- what he did, he had to go back to Denver and be discharged there. And then I saw him when he came to Yakima. He came about Thanksgiving time.

Question: Wow. Did he come by bus or --

Answer: Train. Did he tell you about it?

Question: Hunh-ha.

Answer: Well it was kind of fun. As he was coming, the people that lived next door to his parents, he was an engineer on the train. So he asks somebody that was on the train if he could talk to him. And he says sure, so he had to walk through a coal car and what not to get down to the engine. But then he visited with him the rest of the way home, which made it fun for him and the engineer, I mean both.

Question: Boy, that's neat. So he comes streaming into town and he's -- driving the train, kind of.

Answer: Right.

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Question: Did you go down to the train to meet him or --

Answer: Oh, sure. Yeah, we knew he was coming. Fact we met a couple trains ahead.

Question: Boy that must have just been -- it must be difficult to even put into words what the feeling was. I mean now you --

Answer: When he came home, we all cried. Yeah. Best thing I ever did in my life was to marry Ben. We've had a beautiful relationship.

Question: Boy, that's neat. Even if your dad was against it at first?

Answer: He got over it. He wound up liking Ben better than any of his son-in-laws.

Question: So what happened after the war. The war is over now, Ben comes home, you have to put together a family. What --

Answer: Well, he went right back to work at the Dodge-Plymouth Agency he was employed in before he went in. And the situation was there was no housing, nothing had been built during all those years. So my father was working in Seattle on a house and he says just wait until I'm through and I'll come and build you a house. So he did. But everything we tried to do -- you had -- you could hardly find it. You had to know somebody to get nails, you had to know somebody to get flooring, you had to know somebody to get roofing. It just wasn't -- you just didn't go down and buy it. Even though you had a GI priority, it didn't mean anything. And it took almost a full year to build a house because of that. Every time we'd get someplace, we'd get stuck for what we needed.

Question: I didn't realize -- nobody told me that part. Cause everybody says, oh, when we came back and the GI bill was there, we went to school or we did this or that --

Answer: Hm-hmm.

Question: -- but from the time the war being over and depression being right before that, everything was gone.

Answer: Hm-hmm, yea. We did -- forget about the GI bill. Ben was offered to keep his commission if we'd go to Germany. Germany was all bombed out and we didn't want to go to Germany; we had a little boy and we wanted a home. That was the main thing in my -- our minds. So he -- and then he worked for this Dodge agency for about five years and then he started his own shop and he and that for 15 years and then he went to the college and taught there 16 years. And when he -- when our kids were grown, then I went back to school and brushed up on my skills and I worked with the dental hygiene program for 13 years.

Question: Oh, really?

Answer: Yeah, so we were both employed by the same college, hm-hmm.

Question: So you guys kept working at the same school all the time?

Answer: Yeah, it's funny. That's the way it worked out, yeah.

Question: What a great -- what a great life.

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Answer: Yeah.

Question: From your experience as a newlywed and as a woman's point of view and being on the home front, for your great, great grandchildren, generations that you and I will never meet. Do you think there's a message from World War II that should be left with them?

Answer: I think war is insanity. And of course we had no choice in World War II, I don't think we had any choice in the situation. But everybody loses. You look at it and everybody loses. Even though we say we won, look at what we lost. It's -- when you have some insane people like Hitler and so on, sometimes there's nothing else you can do. But it's a losing proposition. That's my opinion of it.

Question: Did you have any brothers?

Answer: No.

Question: So you didn't have any other family that was --

Answer: No.

Question: And is Ben an only -- no.

Answer: No, he has a -- he has a brother.

Question: Was his brother in, too?

Answer: He was in for a year and then he got a medical discharge. Hm-hmm.

Question: Boy, see, now to that, to me, had to be even more difficult on parents to have all your children in the war.

Answer: Yeah, right.

Question: Did you see, and you talked a little bit about it with Pearl Harbor first of all, but as you moved around, did you see animosity. I mean were you ever in cities where there were Japanese-American citizens and the animosity or --

Answer: I never was witness to that, no. The Japanese -- I just didn't see any of them. I thought -- when I look back at what had happened to the Japanese, it's too bad their possessions were taken away from them. But they were also being protected. You know, the feeling toward -- they made the Japanese look like they were kind of weirdos during the war. Those pictures they drew of them, they were all teeth and they weren't hardly human. And that's -- that's -- well, that's war.

Question: You would get a lot of that propoganda, wouldn't you, from the US?

Answer: Right, right.

Question: So was it -- was it through news reels at the movie house or where would you -- paper or --

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Answer: Both places, yeah. In the news reels and then of course in the newspapers, literature, magazines, same thing. Like the Look Magazine or Life or -- yeah, the Japs were -- looked like they were not quite -- they looked like they were something from Mars. Really. All teeth and - distorted -- distorted images.

Question: I think like you said, that's the hardest part about war, you have to somehow de-humanize --

Answer: True, true. And I used to think sometimes, here's say, and Germany -- like Ben had family in Germany, his ancestors way back. These two cousins are in the war -- one's from the United States, one's from Germany. And say their both Lutheran. So their mothers are on their knees praying for their safety and they're standing there with a gun pointed at each other. It's insanity.

Question: That's an interesting perspective. And that's what my hopes are eventually is to be able to -- actually I've interviewed one Australian who fought for the Germans but on the Russian front. I want to hear that other viewpoint so we understand that these people, you know. And they could be cousins, they could be distant relatives.

Answer: Right, right. We're all one human race.

Question: They talk about -- some of the people that we interviewed that had been in the Bulge and stuff like that. This is where you get the whole surreal point of war. They had just determined it wasn't Geneva Convention, but they had said this is No Man's Land. The Germans were on that side, the Americans were on this side, they could wave at -- we could wave at them, they could wave at us. But they agreed not to shoot each other. But as soon as they walked out of the city, they would shoot each other.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: And they also were starving at one point and there was a cow in between them out in this battle. The Germans put their little flag up and the Americans put their little flag up and they marched down and they slaughtered the cow and they divided it up and they went back and they took their flags down. You know, so you look at that part of the war and it doesn't -- it doesn't make sense.

Answer: Yeah, and the way I feel about war is that a few people in the world control things and the rest of us are pawns. We have to do what we have to do. We don't have very much say about it.

Question: And that's where Hitler was a very good example --

Answer: Right.

Question: -- what he did --

Answer: Well, when you read about the different tyrants that have been in this world, so to say, it's pathetic. But it always -- the pawns have to suffer. If you can put it that way.

Question: Did you face, in places where you were, did you face the rationing?

Answer: Yes.

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Question: So did you have to have the --

Answer: Rationing points, yes.

Question: Yeah, so what types of things couldn't you get that you really missed during the --

Answer: Well, being there were only two of us our ration cards didn't go very far. For instance, when I was pregnant I had a real yearning for catsup. And I wanted it so bad. So I held up my ration points for a long time and I bought it and when I came home, the apartment I had had a tile floor and I dropped it. And I sat on the floor and cried. (laughs) There went my catsup.

Question: And you're probably thinking, do I pick the glass out of the catsup --

Answer: (laughs) No, I didn't because that's dangerous. But, yeah, it was silly to be that upset about something but I was.

Question: Well it's those little things of life though that are comforts or whatever.

Answer: Another thing that happened to us, when Ben was in the hospital, I was robbed. When I was in Denver. I woke up one morning and my purse was missing. And it bothered me to think somebody had been in my sleeping room and I didn't even know it. So I -- they called the police, and they said, where we lived -- we were in a district of -- of apartment buildings, hotels and so on, and they said that they had had 250 women's purses stolen. And so many times they would find the purse somewhere, the person would take things out of it. They never found mine. But one thing that was in my favor -- I had taken the money out. Why I had done that, I don't know, and put it in my dresser. But he did get my ration cards and all my identification. So I had to go through all that again, to supplement that.

Question: So were the ration cards for specific items or points or --

Answer: Yeah, points, hm-hmm.

Question: So so many points to get butter or --

Answer: Right, right. And when we were there, there was a gentleman owned a private store. And he was a very finicky person, if you touched an orange, put that down, nothing wrong with it. And why he took a very strong liking to my husband, I wondered if he had a son like him or something. So he was very nice to us and when we first got our apartment, why he -- I didn't have my ration books yet. So I went over there and he gave me butter and bacon. He didn't carry meat, but -- and fish, without any ration points. Till I got my cards. And then when Ben got his commission, he was given about two days to get a uniform. So he came to this little store and with the idea of see if I was there, cause I had the checkbook. And he -- I wasn't there so this gentleman said how much money do you need. He said well I need \$250. He says -- he went to hand it to him. And my husband turned him down. No thank you, I'll find my wife, I'm sure. But to think he would do that and not really know us that well, he just liked Ben very, very much. So -- he was Greek descent. And I don't know -- I didn't ask him if he had a son that -- or if Ben just looked like his son or what, I don't know. But he was very nice to us. So we had being robbed, but then we had somebody very kind. So you never know who you'll meet in this world.

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Question: That's what -- and again it sounds like such an interesting time. I've talked to my dad some about that -- when he was coming home and in his uniform and the people that -- they really understood what these soldiers were doing.

Answer: Yeah. Yeah, there was a very strong camaraderie feeling in this country at that time. Very different than the Viet Nam War. I felt sorry for the boys that were in the Viet Nam War. Because they weren't respected and it wasn't their fault.

Question: Back to the pawns.

Answer: Yeah, right, back to the pawns.

Question: And you know, that's a hard one, as we look at history. Because the kids that are in high school right now, Viet Nam is to them what World War II was to me, I mean time wise.

Answer: Right.

Question: And World War II -- a lot of them at this point aren't really aware of it. They don't understand the difference.

Answer: Yeah, I know. And of course the ratio is extremely different of people affected.

Question: Oh, definitely, definitely.

Answer: Right.

Question: And also the idea of -- a world war that either everybody from wherever drew together against or for -- for your country against another country.

Answer: Hm-hmm.

Question: Boy, what a nice story, so 59 years, two sons. Did your sons -- your husband served and I assume he's real proud of what he did, too. Humble.

Answer: He enjoyed it. He enjoyed the education he got out of it. He was one of these fortunate ones that didn't have to have a gun at somebody, you know. He -- he did receive a very good education.

Question: You know, that's the amazing thing because at first he said I wasn't at the front. Well, but there were many, many, many people -- a majority of the people were not at the front.

Answer: True.

Question: But without all the things that these other people were doing -- I mean we wouldn't have had the planes to fly, we wouldn't have had the food, the ammo, whatever it was that they needed was there. And it was interesting to listen to Ben talk about -- here's this brand new plane and they bring it and they say we don't know how to fix it or -- needed to figure this stuff out. So they had to go and figure it out or we wouldn't have been able to use it or --

Answer: That's true, yeah.

Serene Sandmeyer

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Question: Wow. Well thank you very much.

Answer: It was a pleasure, thank you.