Phillip H. “Skip” Schmidt

Tape 1 of 2

Question: Okay, first thing I got to do is get your first and last name, so Phillip H. Schmidt but you go by Skip --

Answer: Right.

Question: Okay -- one thing that I didn't know was -- where actually were you when you heard about Pearl Harbor?

Answer: Well, I was in school down in California -- in that school I was doing -- I was in my senior year, I believe it was. It was, yeah, the senior year.

Question: So you were still in high school.

Answer: I was still in high school, yeah, in 1941 and then I graduated that spring in '42. Yeah. We were there and we thought that -- in the school there was supposed to be no arms whatsoever like we have today. You've never seen so many arms, guns and pistols and machetes and things came up from underneath -- it was a boarding school -- underneath the beds. And we were sure that this one janitor was a Japanese spy. (laughs) And we were ready to protect everything. But, yeah, it was pretty scary because we were right there just outside of San Francisco, at Menlo Park.

Question: Down at Menlo --

Answer: Yeah. Right next to Stanford.

Question: So when that happened, being in high school, obviously it was a real serious concern.

Answer: Oh, yes, scared the piss out of everybody.

Question: So being 19, I guess 18 years old, roughly, 19, something like that, did you think at that time that you were going to become involved in this war?

Answer: Oh, yeah, yeah, and I -- I knew I was going to be involved, and the other thing was is we did all the preparations at school. We did all the things that you need to do to protect the school -- evacuation, all of those things. You know, we had -- we had guard duties, we, you know, it was really a very scary, scary time for everybody.

Question: So even in high school you were basically military ready, so to speak.

Answer: Well, I don't now about military ready but we were all thinking that we were going to be going into the -- to the war one way or another. Whether we were going to wait and let the draft take care of us or whether we were going to try to get in as end of a certain end of the service or what, yeah. And of course our parents were saying "Don't do anything (laughs) -- don't rush".

Question: Don't do anything - don't rush. But a lot of kids did sneak in underage.

Answer: Nobody that I remember from school there went into the service before they graduated. The school worked at it and the parents worked at it, trying to get you through. And after, of course, you graduated from high school, then you pretty well could decide what you wanted to do. But right after that, after I graduated, I had signed up for going over to Washington State University. We used to call it Washington State College, of course. And the

ROTC. And so went over there in ROTC. And then later I went -- went into the service and went in what was called V-5, which was the Naval Air Corps. And then I spent the rest of the war training, practically training.

Question: So between California and Pullman, how different was the aspect of the war? I mean, you were down by San Francisco and Menlo, meaning you were out on the coast and fear of attack. Was Pullman less aware of the war, more aware of the war or was it --

Answer: Oh, Pullman I think was just as aware of the war and everything. Actually, at Pullman you had, with ROTC and all that, was just -- it was obvious that there were war things going on. And of course a radio. We didn't have TV, but we had radio. And then all the correspondence and what the -- many of the people in school, when I was there -- of course they were leaving the school in droves, the fellows particularly. And everybody was hearing from their brothers who were going into the service and all that so you were very, very aware of it. Not quite the same as you would be if you were right on the coast, I guess, but -- yeah.

Question: Did they do, like black outs and things like that?

Answer: Oh, yeah, everything, yeah, everything was just -- yeah, we did that down at Menlo, too. Total black out.

Question: So what -- what did that -- I mean, did they ring a bell or how -- how did -- or just at night time, that was it?

Answer: When the sun went down and everything was covered up and there were no lights on the outside of the buildings. It was that simple.

Question: So did night life stop then or did life go on as normal?

Answer: Well, night life changed. We did different things. Of course it made it easier to sneak out of school if you wanted to go into town (laughs).

Question: Pluses and minuses to it.

Answer: Yes.

Question: So in Pullman, were they facing rationing, or being a college town, was it different over there?

Answer: For rationing, you say?

Question: Yeah, for food and things like that.

Answer: It was -- I was in a house and all of that was handled through the house. There were special conditions for that. Rationing had probably more exceptions than it had rules that I remember. I don't remember a lot of it because right from Pullman I went basically into the service and then I was there for 4-1/2 years. And I was one -- they kept sending me to a different school, a different school, a different school, and finally I was going to be a flyer I thought but then they decided that we were doing pretty well so they didn't need all the pilots so they washed about 13,000 guys out in three months and I started over as a -- working up -- from apprentice seaman on up and they kept sending me to different schools. I went to -- to gunnery school and radar school and to bombardier school and then we started doing some

training in Corpus Christi and finally our crew was put together with PBM's in San Diego and we were there just in time for VJ to happen. So --

Question: So where were you when that happened?

Answer: That happened, I'm in San Diego. We were getting our -- we were warming up the airplane to go to Oahu. And on over to the Far -- somewhere in the Pacific. And so we warmed our plane up every 20 minutes, and about every four hours we'd put fresh food and stuff aboard, and we kept it fueled up and we sat in the airplane and we watched what went on in town on VJ day. It was wild. So that was probably very lucky that we got -- and then shortly after that they busted up the air crew. Just said we don't -- we're not going to do that anymore. We're through with all that. The war is over and we're going to change the whole routine. And then shortly thereafter I was discharged and I asked to be discharged in -- at Bremerton because that's where I was from and so they shipped me up there and I was discharged and I was out.

Question: So you -- you were basically a war-time enlistee, then, meaning that as soon as the war was done --

Answer: Well, it took about two months to do all the paperwork and all the rest of the stuff to get the guys out and ship them out, but just within two months after the war was over, I was out of the service because I was beyond the time that I enlisted for, which was four years. It was 4-1/2 years about that I was in.

Answer: Oh, really, going through all the training --

Question: Yeah. With -- with all the training and everything else and then when the war was over, I was -- was actually done, cause that's all my commitment was for. It was just being extended because the war was still on, you know.

Question: So what -- how did you decide when it came time to enlist, to finally go ahead and sign up?

Answer: Well, I signed up because I wanted to go to Washington State and I signed up with the Army because that's the only choice I had if I was going to go to Washington State they had an Army ROTC there. And when I was at Washington State, hadn't been there before the year was out, they came along with what they called the Army-Navy-Marine Recruitment Board. Or I forget -- that's the name -- something like that. Andy they allowed you to make a choice. If you wanted to go in the Coast Guard, you wanted to go in the Marines, you wanted to go into the Navy. And I said I wanted to go in the Navy Air Corps and they said, well they have a V-5 program. Fine. And so I signed up for that and I was basically transferred to the Navy, but I left school before I graduated and when I left school, of course, then I went into the service and started V-5. They call it V-5. But it -- it was interesting. I no sooner got home and I found there was something there at my house in Olympia -- my folks' house in Olympia for me, and I opened it up and it was a discharge from the Army. Because they actually discharged me for about six months of duty in the ROTC so -- so I was already a veteran. (laughs)

Question: Double discharge then -- you were discharged from both the Army and the Navy.

Question: So one thing you've talked about was at Pullman, you said they were leaving in droves. So when you got to Pullman, was it -- not too many men left over there?

Answer: When I went to Pullman there was still quite a few young guys going to school, but most of the old fellows had well, if they were in RTOC and they were still in school working they would probably still be there. But some would leave school and volunteer for the services, one of the other services and just go. A number of them were just waiting to be called, they had volunteered for the service, and were in the service and were waiting for the time they said go. And many who had graduated from college or were close to graduating could go in or would go in as a rank as an officer, So, I spent most of my time in training.

Question: So different, like your brothers over in the fraternity or different classmates, that had gone into active service before you, there was correspondence coming back to the college?.

Answer: We had some of that from the guys who were really good friends. Most of the correspondence from the guys who went into the service was with their immediate family but

Answer: Yeah everybody was worried about the war what was going to happen, and what was going to happen personally of course. I don't any regrets, I was at seventeen different bases in the united states, only one overseas at Coco Sola Panama

Answer: I wouldn't say I enjoyed everything, but it was very interesting.

Question: So the guys your other friends at college that were signing up, did you discuss the possibilities of war or did you try to disassociate.

Answer: No that was the topic of the day, and everyday listening wondering how are we doing, how are we doing. In those early days you know it didn't look good, in fact probably people were more pessimistic than they needed to be, but it was a natural tendency. But you were effected so much by everything on a daily basis, you had like you say you had the windows covered up, you didn't spend the time uncovering them during the day because it's to damn hard to tighten them up at night. You have a little leak and then the damn uh, the civilian guard would come along and rap on your window or rap on your door and tell you you got to cover this up. So constantly you talked about the war, thought about the war, thought about going, thought about those things you heard about people getting killed, friends and relatives, all that, just ah, it was a worrisome thing.

Question: Did that dissuade yoou at all on whether to enlist or not?.

Answer: No, no you mean whether you should join or not to join. For me and all the other guys I knew, it was the other way around. You wanted to, the best job you could, wanted the best berth you could get. That's why some people chose the army and some people chose the navy. In the navy you had several different choices, just like you had in the army. Some guys just loved to be in the tanks, that wouldn't impress me to much, but neither would submarines.

Question: Did you lose any friends in the war?.

Answer: Oh yeah, yeah quite a number. Actually I lost a lot of my school mates from my high school, both here in Olympia and the ones down in Menlo. Yeah and quite a few of them were lost early in the war, and of course a lot of my friends were injured in the war one way or another, yeah.

Question: When you were in training, were they -- giving you all sorts of propaganda? I guess propaganda wasn't the word they used then but --

Answer: You didn't have -- I wouldn't call it propaganda

Answer: You wanted all the information you could get. Anything that was available, either written or radio. Constantly listening to the radios, because the war news was the most important thing. And you know, in those early days when we weren't doing too good, it wasn't very good news. But I don't remember any of my friends ever changing their -- their mode of thinking about what their real job was. Their job was do what you could for the United States. To hell with the rest of those bastards.

Question: There weren't very many people that questioned that.

Answer: Not within my realm of friends and relationships and where I was and working and everything, no.

Question: Now you had been to Germany.

Answer: I was in Germany in '39. And we saw -- we moved in to, went from Naples with my Dad and my father -- my mother and my father and my brother, one of my brothers, we drove through Europe. We drove up to Italy. We went into Brenner Pass and we stayed in a hotel in Innsbruck. And the next morning I was awakened, or we were all awakened, to noises and drums and beatings and it was May Day in Germany in 1939 and out of the window of the hotel we saw the jung frau and the black shirts and the brown shirts and the green shirts, and they were all marching. Marching, marching, marching. And then everywhere we went in Germany we saw troop movements and things. And when we came home my father wrote and told everybody he could -- wrote to the federal government and all, saying there's a war coming. Of course that was the same time when -- when -- we didn't think the war was coming. It sounded like things were getting organized diplomatically. Yeah. So it was a scary time.

Question: Now, didn't -- didn't you hear Hitler over the -- did you hear Hitler?

Answer: Oh, yeah. Every town had microphone -- or speakers rather, public speakers like on a post and it would be all around town. And when Hitler spoke, nothing moved. They shut down -- basically they shut down business. And he would talk for hours. And it would go on and on and on. And that really was very impressive on a 16-year-old kid. Just -- hard to explain. If you've seen the movie Winds of War, the first section of that, when I saw that, that was exactly what we saw when we were there in '39. But we saw, you know, troop movements on rail cars with guns and tanks and people in uniforms and everything else. It was very interesting.

Question: In retrospect when the war started and Germany was involved in the war, having heard Hitler speak, did you realize, do you think more so than other people, what power Hitler had?

Answer: Oh, yes, because I -- my brothers and my mother and father went to Switzerland and I stayed with a shirt-tale relative aunt in Worms. And we spent a lot of time talking about when Hitler came to power, the things that happened, and her son, whom I met, was in the Luftwaffe. They had a little farm and a brick yard and so I worked on the farm while they were gone. I just lived like a farmer. Got up early and used to scrub the hogs every morning with a big stiff brush. They loved that. But anyway, yeah, so I -- I heard it

from an entirely different aspect of when he came to power, how things had changed quickly, and how things were getting better and all of that, up to a point later when things started going the other way, and at that point, they were beginning to think things weren't too good. Yeah.

Question: So when you enlisted and thought of the war, was the war against the Japanese, in your mind, against the Japanese and the Germans?

Answer: Well, it was basically against the Japanese, because that's who attacked us. But then, you know, it didn't take much movement, to where we had began to join in with England and Europe to go against Hitler. We'd already been sending, you remember, all the war supplies and things to Russia and to England and everybody. But, yeah, so it was those damn Germans and Japanese.

Question: Had the internment camps already been started by the time you went to Pullman?

Answer: Japanese?

Question: Yeah.

Answer: It was when I was there -- it was just starting.

Question: So were there some Japanese-American students over there with you that --

Answer: I don't really remember for sure. That's interesting when you ask me that. If there were Japanese students, there weren't very many Japanese students. There weren't very many Oriental students at all at Washington State.

Question: Do you remember -- I mean did they make a thing of it in the news when the internment happened -- or was that something you were kind of unaware of?

Answer: What's that?

Question: Like the Puyallup Fairgrounds -- and were you aware that that was --

Answer: No, no, I wasn't really aware of it. The -- the -- just the information about the war, the news about the war was so prominent. Sure, there were things about it, but -- it was a big thing, the rounding up of the Japanese and moving them out. There was only one -- in Olympia there was only one Japanese person about my age that I really knew. There were a number of Chinese I knew, but -- but only one Japanese person.

Question: Do you know if he ended up in --

Answer: I have no idea, no idea

Answer: They were -- they were a family that were -- worked in the oyster business here.

Question: Oh, I might even know who that is.

Question: Now, you were out of town, but how in correspondence with your mom and dad, how did this affect business?

Answer: My business?

Question: The brewery.

Answer: Well, the brewery -- in the brewery business, much of the things the brewery used were also -- were needed for the war effort because of the grains, and so what the brewery did during World War II was cut back on their production to keep the quality up. And so pulled, basically, mostly out of California

Answer: So from that standpoint it affected the brewery. But they continued to produce beer, and produce a high quality beer, and were making good profits during the time. Also began making and shipping beer for the service, the 3.2 beer. And -- and

Question: What's 3.2 beer?

Answer: Well, the normal beer is 3.6 -- 3.6 percent by weight. And the service requires that the beer be only 3.2 percent. Some states require that. And so all the military beer, as it was called, was 3.2. And because of the location of Olympia and South Pacific, when we're getting towards the end of the war, that much of the beer was sent to the -- to the services and all through the Asian theatre and then also they began shipping to distributors, after the war was over, into the Asian are

Answer: So Olympia was one of the very first beers into South Pacific -- introduced to a lot of people through that, of course, yeah.

Question: Did the -- did the government require things of the companies and businesses. Did they -- or was it just because of shortages and they had to --

Answer: Well, they, they -- for the service beer they required special packaging with special markings and all that stuff over in military. But, no, I don't know that they had any really specific requirements just about operating the business. The amount of material they got and the kind of material they got was affected by the government indirectly.

Question: What was happening with like -- so your mom and dad were the only ones back at home -- all the boys were all gone.

Answer: Well, not really all gone. My brother, Bink, he went in the service -- he was a warrant officer. He was chasing a Kodiak at the time to begin with. But Bobby and Bump were both here. And they were here throughout the war. and then I was -- and my sister, of course. But then I was gone most of the time after -- after I finished up over at Pullman and went into the service. In fact, I only came home, I guess, three times in all that -- the whole, the whole war. Sometimes I was so far away that a short leave, it wasn't worth coming all the way back. And it seemed like everywhere I went, I would meet people and families and stuff and became -- got to know people all over the United States.

Question: Now, during World War II, being in a uniform was kind of like --

Answer: Made hitchhiking pretty easy. (laughs)

Question: Was there a lot of that?

Answer: Hitchhiking? Oh, yeah, that was a major form of transportation. For me, maybe as much as any other thing. Because you didn't have a car, there was no car available, couldn't afford one even if -- you couldn't buy one even if you could afford it because they were short ration, and so it was a great way to -- to go. If you were in San Diego and you wanted to go to Los Angeles, you get the bus or you could get on the highway and start hitchhiking, and that was a -- a three lane highway. But, yeah, you could get rides quite, quite easily.

Question: Did you tend to wear your uniform all the time then?

Answer: Whenever I was -- oh, you had to wear a uniform when you went ashore. You couldn't go ashore in civilian clothes.

Question: Oh, you couldn't.

Answer: Oh, no. No, (laughs) you're in the service.

Question: Not even when you went on leave?

Answer: Not even -- I don't know, no, no, we didn't have any civilian clothes with us whatsoever. Yeah.

Question: So the fact that you were in uniform had some advantages, I assume.

Answer: Yes. It had some -- yeah, it had some great advantages when you're going around town. It had some disadvantages too because a lot of people were not overly crazy about too many servicemen. In fact that's one of the things we did in San Diego because there was Army, Navy and Marines all over San Diego, and the guys I was billeted with -- we would go out on the town and what we'd do is we'd go out into the hills looking for a little family restaurant somewhere. We'd find one of those and at first we'd have a tough time getting them to even seat us, and once we got in, we get to know them, we'd have a great time. Yeah. So if you get too many in one spot it's difficult. But being in uniform there is an advantage, during the war anyway.

Question: I assume then that because of the patriotism, people were willing to do whatever they could for --

Answer: Yeah. It was just wonderful. Everybody, everywhere I went, everybody was just great. And, except when you had too many at one time, you know. If you had 20 guys walking down the street together, all in uniform, people were very hesitant about doing anything with them. But onesies and twosies was just no problem at all.

Question: You told a story before about being in uniform and the advantages, sometimes, like in gas rationing. Seems like you came home one time --

Answer: Oh, well --

Question: Tell about gas rationing and then the advantages of uniform.

Answer: (laughs) Well, one leave when I came home, my dad reluctantly was going to let me take the car so that I and some of my buddies could go do something, I forget what it was, and he gave me -- gave me gas stamps just enough so I could get five gallons of gas. And this was a Lincoln Zephyr. And so I pulled into Hank Bollander's 76 Station downtown

and he'd been around for a million years. And so I gave him the coupons and told him, "Give me five gallons of gas." He started pumping and while he was pumping he was talking to me through the window and he kept going and pretty soon I realized he was pumping too much gas and I said -- I hollered at him, you're pumping too much gas. And he ignored me and went ahead and filled the tank up, and I said, "Hank, you're going to get in trouble with the government. You can't just do that. You're only authorized for five gallons." Oh, he says, "the boys in uniform, I take care of them." He said, besides, I get a lot of evaporation from my tanks. (laughs) Great guy.

Question: And I assume there was a lot of that --

Answer: I would think so, yeah.

Question: -- for the people in uniform.

Question: -- Is it true, I mean, you read in the history books, but was there this sense, once the war turned around and they saw that America was on the offensive rather than the defensive, there truly was this unifying of the country?

Answer: Oh, I think so, yeah. Sure. There were people who worked the system, but I don't care what's going on; somebody's going to try to work the system no matter what. But, you know, there certainly was a unification.

Answer: But you were talking about the extra things that people did. When hitchhiking, you know, the first thing, when you get in the car, where you going? Well, I'm going to Los Angeles. And they get going, pretty soon, the guy say, well, I'm only going to so and so. And I'd say fine, and all of a sudden we'd pass were he told me he was going to turn off, and he said, well, he said, just, you know, couple more miles and there's another way I can get back easily. Just awful nice people, everywhere I went.

Question: And do you think that -- was that because of the war or was that because -- I mean, was that a change to a certain extent from America pre-war to America during the war?

Answer: Oh, I think that -- that people were, during the war, that there definitely was a change, because you didn't pay much attention to people in uniform prior to. It was all a part of the whole thing of pulling together, I think, it certainly had a lot to do with it.

Question: Did it make a difference, Navy, Army, Marine, which uniform you were in?

Answer: I don't think it made much difference. And the other thing is that I seldom heard of anybody who was picked up by -- or picked a person in uniform up, having any trouble with the person in uniform. Now, maybe there was some, but I didn't ever see any. I'm sure there was somewhere along the line, but --

Question: What's the biggest thing that you -- and I might know the answer to this. Ken and I were just talking about this, about different things people learned in different situations, and I know you told me something -- you were in the Navy one time and it had to do with having to wait around a lot.

Answer: (laughs)

Question: What's one of the biggest things you learned in the Navy?

Answer: Straighten up that line or none of you will eat. (laughs) Lines after lines after lines. But -- but there is just so many things, so many times when there's nothing, absolutely nothing to do except, you know, if you -- if you were on a plane or working with a plane, uou could -- lots of little things you could do to keep yourself busy, polishing and fixing things up and straighten stuff up, but there were lots of times when you just didn't have hardly anything to do and so you learned to be able to nap almost anywhere, I did. But -- and then you started to do things, you know. I always carried a penknife and so I discovered that -- down in San Diego, that the mop handles were pretty good to carve, and so I was carving things out of mop handles and the mops would be a little shorter after I got a piece cut off the top but they still worked. (laughs)

Question: Now coming at kind of the tail end of the war as you're going through training and all that, I assume that discipline had changed and a lot of people were over serving and some people were over here. Within this freedom, or within this, like you're talking about free time, waiting, did that leave a lot of chance for people within the service to kind of screw off, or was everybody so focused on --

Answer: Well, a screw off is a screw off. And they screwed off whether -- no matter when it was in the war. I don't think there was too much just generally screw off, unless it was -- you just didn't have anything to do at all. You would sit around and wait but you're waiting for somebody to tell you what to do next. But, the basic difference is that the more used you got to the service, the more you learned about everything, the easier it is for each person. You don't have to worry so much. It's so routine, you eat at the same time, you go to bed at the same time, you get up at the same time, and of course if you're on special shifting, which we were in some cases, then you might be on, eight on and eight off. But it is pretty routine. And there were things for you to do on base if you never wanted to leave base. Because you not only had movies but you had live entertainment. So you got to see, particularly bases in the United States, you got to see almost every big band, every great entertainer that -- if you were lucky, and if the show wasn't when you were on duty, of course.

Question: Who were some of the --

Answer: Well, when I was stationed at Norman, Oklahoma, the base band was then, was Tex Beneke and the Glenn Miller Band. It was just after Glenn Miller was killed. But he was the base band. Which was pretty nice.

Question: Was that part of the USO or was that just military?

Answer: I don't know how they got there. No, they were -- they were in the service. I believe they were in the service, but they were the base band.

Question: What's -- did you see some of the movies, Catch-22 and all that. Again, as the service went along and the war was tailing down, where protocol got a little looser. Did that change or was the regimen and the military procedure --

Answer: It changed with the -- I can speak for myself. It changed with the fellows coming back from the South Pacific into the bases where I was stationed in San Diego and around. They were very relaxed coming back. And most of that had to do with started from the top down. That the -- the admirals would -- they would be more relaxed and they'd let the men be more relaxed because they were out there fighting the damn war. And so, you know, many things happened. Ties disappeared. Guys would come back with long hair. If you were in the China Seas you'd have a gold earring in your ear. All kinds of different things

that -- that before, you know, I used to, because I was pretty good with a pair of scissors, I used to trim guys hair to get past inspection so they didn't have to go get the GI down at the Navy barber. People didn't worry so much about some of those details after that.

Question: So were the people coming back from the South Pacific -- were they on a leave or ending their --

Answer: No, they were just coming back. They just coming back and would be stationed in San Diego and they would arrive with their uniforms in not the greatest shape and their hair long and very relaxed. Their cap was crushed and, you know.

Question: Did they intermingle with --

Answer: Everybody, yeah.

Question: So what, when you met these people, were they relating horror stories or did they not --

Answer: Oh, most of them didn't talk much about, a little bit. They talked about the things that were humorous. The humorous things that I -- like now, the thing I remember mostly are a lot of the humor. A lot of the bad stuff is just washed away.
I know I told you that we got -- 13,000 guys in the V-5 got washed out at one time and I was in the first washout cadet company that went to Great Lakes to start over as apprentice seaman. Well, if you were in the Marines and wanted to be a Naval pilot or a Marine pilot, you were trained by the Navy. So two of the guys in this first company were ex-Marines who had been on Guadalcanal and were now apprentice seaman. Now they weren't overly happy. (laughs) But we got talking about what it was and everybody said, well, we got screwed. We got the flying screws. Well, they kept saying the flying screw. So I had a great idea one day. I took this -- was a notebook, and I took off, it was a vinyl cover or a plastic cover, and I took it off the back and I made a little stencil with wings and a flying screw on a slant in the middle of it and we stenciled our dungaree uniforms. And before we got out of Great Lakes I'd made about three more stencils. And we'd keep seeing this wherever we go. We'd see a guy with the flying screw wings and we'd say, oh, you were back at Great Lakes. Oh, how did you know? So, you remember those things. And the guys that came back from the service -- that came back from, I'd say, the Asian theatre, that came back -- they talked about some of the bad things, but they talked about a lot of the fun things. And I don't know, I think that it's, you know those hours that you waited and all the times that you were really upset, you don't remember those. I don't remember those, anyway. I think that the good times, the friends you made, some of the wonderful things you saw. But of course, there I was, 4-1/2 years and the only Naval ship I ever went on was because I ran into three guys I grew up with in Olympia that wanted me to -- to go with them. I walked up and I walked up the gangplank on the ship that they were on and then I walked back off, and that's the only ship I was on in 4-1/2 years.

Question: In the Navy.

Answer: In the Navy, yeah.

Question: Did the -- the guys that came back, when you saw them, I mean, did you see a difference in them, or was -- 'cause I've heard some say --

Answer: You mean the guys that had been -- who just came back from the Asian theatre? Because that's who mostly we saw. And yeah, they looked different. Immediately they looked different. Well, of course they were tan, number one, if they were in that are

Answer: But there was just a total difference about them. Just the way they moved, you know. It was just --

Question: They didn't have the attitude, we're going to come and tell all these young bucks what it's really like over there?

Answer: No, no, they were just old salts, you know. They'd wrung more salt water out of their socks than we'd ever seen, but other than that. No, they really were very good, yeah. But there was definitely, you would see one walking across the base and you would know immediately he'd just gotten back. It was that obvious.

Question: Oh.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: Did you gain an animosity towards -- when you looked at the war, was the war against a country or a person or people or what was the war to you?

Answer: To me the war was against a country. Or perhaps maybe better way to put it -- more against the power of the country. Because you know, I knew that -- that the German people weren't what the Nazis were, or Hitler was. I didn't know about Japan, but I just couldn't believe that -- that the Japanese people were different. But I wasn't sure about this Mitsubishi. And some of those names, really, now we're driving the cars. But you also had admiration. I was in -- after V-5, then I went to school as an ordinance man.

Question: Hold that thought --