

Joseph Fleischer

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The pages that follow constitute the transcript of an interview conducted as part of the Wilmette Public Library District's Oral History program, started in 1975 by a committee of the Friends of the Wilmette Public Library which has been chaired since its inception by Rhea Adler, a resident of the Village of Wilmette since 1932.

A copy of the tape on which this transcript is based is available for circulation, and may be obtained by checking with a Reference Librarian concerning circulation procedures.

This program would not have been possible without the cooperation of the many long-time residents of the Village interested in helping to preserve particulars of a fascinating past, and the patience, energy and effort of a small but dedicated group of interviewers, transcribers and typists who share the belief that the past is too important to be forgotten.

Richard E. Thompson

Director

ABSTRACT

Interviewee: Joseph Fleischer

Interviewer: Regina Fleischer

Date of interview: March, 1982

- Name and location of present home - birthplace and life in Albany Park area - Chicago
- Joined U.S. Navy in July, 1943 - training received at Farragut, Idaho - 30 day leave before entering active service - graduation - assigned to Pleasonton, Ca. - USS MORRIS DD4 17 - seasick -300 men assigned - duties - recreation aboard ship - part of Admiral Halsey's fleet
- Battles - Mariannas - Makin - Tawara - description of injuries resulting from battles - returned to Treasure Island (in San Francisco Bay)
- Assigned to a new destroyer and returned to Halsey's Fleet - Mariannas - Guam and Saipan - This was the largest fleet in history - describes men's assignments in a battle - team work, bonded brotherhood - friends within each department - officers and men on ship - description of Battle of Saipan - sea and air - awarded ribbons for eleven Pacific battles - different ways the men were killed at sea - end of war in Pacific - Japanese continued dive bombing - Admiral Halsey's directive - "Shoot them down, in a friendly manner."
- Second ship to enter Tokyo Bay - guided by a Japanese pilot (a graduate of University of California) - through the mine fields - ship remained in Tokyo Harbor until after General McArthur accepted the Japanese surrender aboard the battleship MISSOURI
- Were permitted shore leave on Japanese islands - found civilians sweet gentle people - contrasted Japanese military - souvenirs - pictures (by official ship's photographer), swords, epaulettes, buttons, pencils, razor blades - anything with Japanese writings on it - picked up at source
- Homeward bound - San Francisco Harbor - furlough - discharged April 23, 1946 - vacationed in Mexico - after almost three years in South Pacific returned to Chicago - 40 degree temperature in May - after spending most of time near turbines in 170 degree temperature
- Had been graduated from Roosevelt College -- enrolled at Northwestern University night classes in graduate school in MBA program - married in

April, 1949 reenlisted Naval Reserve May, 1950 · recalled to active duty
June, 1950 but deferred to January, 1951

Abstract, cont.

- Sent to Green Cove Spring, Fla. aboard decommissioned USS OSBURN
· a destroyer escort (in moth balls) to prepare it for sea duty - reported to Brooklyn Navy Yard
- Operated in Atlantic out of Brooklyn Navy Yard - training reservists from Third Naval District - returned to Chicago after serving 18 months and received discharge April 23, 1954
- Lived in Hyde Park, Hazelcrest, Illinois - family of four - when children reached school age family moved to Wilmette - children educated in local schools

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JF: My name is Joseph Fleisher and I reside at 236 Hibbard Road in the village of Wilmette. I've been asked to make this tape giving my experience, having served in the armed forces of the United States twice.

RF: (Indistinct)

JF: I was born in Chicago, Illinois and my parents who are now deceased were Sophie and Ben Fleischer. At the time I was first called into service, I resided at 4750 North Kedzie Avenue in Albany Park in Chicago, Illinois. At that time I was extremely patriotic and desired to do my part to fight for my country as most of my peers felt at that time. Approximately at the age of 17 I enlisted in the United States Coast Guard, but was rejected because I was 118 pounds which is about 5 pounds under the required weight. Approximately 6 months later, as the war was speeding up, I received my draft notice. I enlisted in the United States Navy. I entered naval service July 12, 1943 and received my orders to report to the Farragut Idaho Naval Training Station.

What are the thoughts of an eighteen year old city boy upon arriving in a wild, isolated, mountainous area? My thoughts were of adventure, exuberance, exhilaration. The air was brisk. - The scenery was magnificent - one of grandeur. Here I was in an area that consisted of six camps and I believe there were at least 5,000 men in each camp at any given time and the basic naval training was to last 30 days.

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Some of my memories included Lake Pend Orielle which is almost a bottomless lake, the mountains rising directly from the shore line. We were training on this lake in large sculling boats I remember the mirrored reflections, the magnificent sunsets and sunrises at this wonderful setting which was selected by Eleanor Roosevelt as she flew over the area in an airplane. It was chosen because of its seclusion which would be conducive to training and to take our minds off urban areas. Upon completion of the training, we received a 30 day leave of absence a furlough prior to reporting for active duty. I remember seeing wild animals - mountain goats, big horn sheep, reindeer - in this lovely setting which will always remain with me. When we completed our leave and reported back to the base, I remember the train ride.

RF: Where did you go for the leave?

JF: To Chicago - back home to spend our last time with our family and friends. As I stated, after returning to the base, upon graduation I was now a sailor. I still have never seen a larger body of water than the immediate shores of Lake Michigan. I was ordered to report to Pleasanton, California and I remember the trip through the mountains, through huge, tall stately Douglas firs. To those who have taken train trips through this setting, you can well imagine the feeling. When we arrived in California we were billeted in various barracks

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were given sea bags, had to do our laundry · scrub by hand · in these big community scrub basins. We were becoming men. From Pleasanton, California I reported to my first ship · the USS MORRIS a one stacker, full line fighting ship, the smallest line fighting ship - a destroyer. It was the DD4 17. When I boarded the MORRIS for the first time, it was at Mirror Island Naval Shipyard where it was being repaired from bomb hits which were suffered in the Aleutian Islands campaign and Alaska at Attu or Kiska. When the repairs were completed, we sailed under the Golden Gate bridge and went for sea trials.

RF: Was this the first time you had been aboard the ship?

JF: This was the first time I had seen the ocean, the first time I had been aboard any ship.

RF: What did you think of it?

JF: Well, I was very excited.

RF: Were you seasick?

JF: The first time we went through the Golden Gate bridge - these are some of the most turbulent waters in the world · and as I recall that seasickness, if I had a valuable diamond watch and anybody wanted it, they could have taken it. They were times we wished we were dead. We couldn't stand. We couldn't sit. We couldn't do anything. We were just spilling up our guts, so to speak - throwing up.

RF: How long did the sickness last?

JF: It was a matter of days as I recall. Perhaps three or four

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days.

RF: And then you got over it - then you were okay?

JF: Seasickness is caused by an unbalance in the pituitary gland. The system has to become acclimated to the rocking and the rolling, the pitching, the various motions of a ship. Rough waters really knock a ship about. Finally, oh yes, as I recall when we were seasick, we still had to perform basic chores. We had to turn to+as the phrase is. We had to do work - scrub the decks, swab the decks, etc. Just having an ill feeling in the United States Navy is not acceptable. You may feel very miserable, but you still have to do work. This also has a part in making a boy a man that much sooner.

RF: How many people were on that ship?

JF: Approximately 300.

RF: Where did they all sleep and where were they quartered?

JF: The crew's quarters were in the central part of the ship and towards the rear - the aft, the after-part of the ship. We had compartments. We had bunks that were mattresses on a spring that folded up - a tier of three or four high. There were also books suspended from the overhead which was the ceiling. In the navy, the ceiling is the overhead.

The walls are the bulkheads. The floors are the decks.

The windows are the portholes. The aisle - the corridors were crammed with hammocks swinging from these suspended hooks.

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The quarters were compact and crowded.

RF: What did you eat?

JF: We had a separate mess hall in the foreward part of the ship and we had to que up - form lines, form the chow line - prior to eating Remember when a certain portion of the crew was eating, the other part of the crew was on station - manning their stations at all times.

RF: What kind of work did you do?

JF: I just wanted to say that when the crew that was at chow had their chow, they then went and relieved the other part of the crew. We had watches - four hours on and eight hours off. Therefore, we had - for instance, the 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon watch and the 20 hundreds - 8:00 p.m. to midnight. When I was on the USS MORRIS for about a month as a seaman deckhand, notices were posted on the bulletin boards seeking volunteers to go striking. The term striking means many things to many people. In this case, striking means to strike out for a rating - to learn a specific field such as to enter the radar or gunnery field. I selected the Engineering Department. Not many seaman desired to be in the Engineering Department because they did not want to be below decks. They wanted to breathe the fresh air. They wanted to see where they were and where they were going and they could not take the intense heat. However, I felt that was an opportunity for me in engineering because I had been

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a student at the Lane Technical High School and I felt that I had somewhat of a background in this area.

RF: Could you tell us what you did in the eight hours that you were not on watch?

JF: Yes. We played pinochle. We wrote letters to our family and our friends. We read books and I have been a stamp collector since I was age 12 and I had joined an approval service. While I was in the navy I had been receiving stamps, which is a very, very bad place to receive stamps - in the South Pacific.

RF: Why is that?

JF: Because they can stick together.

RF: It's very humid?

JF: It was 166 degrees by the main turbans and I'm sure it was about 120 or 130 in the shade.

RF: Did you have a locker space where you could keep all these things?

JF: We had a foot locker approximately, oh, two feet by three feet and a foot and a half deep.

RF: And that's where you kept all your belongings?

JF: All of our worldly possessions were kept in that space in a seabag folded up.

RF: So now you were going to war? Did you know where you were going?

JF: The first battle that I participated in was the Narianss

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campaign.

RF: Did you know beforehand that you were going there?

JF: I can't recall all of the details. However, as I recall, we were told we were going to the battle area and one morning we arose to see ships in every possible direction - to the left of us, to the right of us, in front of us, behind us. On a clear day at sea you can see 20 to 25 miles. Perhaps the horizon is 22 miles. There were ships on every part of the ocean. As a matter of fact, this was the world's largest flotilla that was ever assembled. It was Admiral Bull Halsey's third fleet.

RF: Was there a reason why he was called Bull?

JF: As I'm making this tape, things are becoming more clear and I do wish to make some corrections. While I was on this first ship, the USS MORRIS, that first battle that I was going into was Makin Island - Makin Island and Tawara. I recall correctly that was Admiral Spruence's operation. I believe this was one of the largest naval battles in history with approximately 11 Japanese soldiers being killed to every American. We were involved in shelling the island. We were laying smokescreens.

RF: Which island was it?

JF: Makin island.

RF: Makin Island.

JF: I remember seeing cows grazing on this peaceful little island and there were towers - transmitting towers, radio station towers - that were receiving hits from our shelling and tumbling over and these cows, continued to graze. Later when this island

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was captured it served as a landing field for the flying fortress aircraft that were later to bomb Tokyo - General Doolittle's force. I remember there was a submerged vessel in the harbor at Tawara and, as the marines were landing, many of them were slaughtered because there were Japanese machine gunners concealed in this partial hull which was thought to be a wreck, but took many of our American boys' lives. Another vivid memory when I served on that ship - I had come off of the 12:00 to 4:00 a.m. watch in the engine room and it was hot. So prior to going to my quarters, I thought I would just relax above decks because it's very peaceful and serene with the trade winds in the South Pacific - above decks, that is - when the sun isn't shining. Here I was just lying there when all of a sudden a large blast - boom. It was as if my ship was moved, raising up in the water. Completely startled, I jumped up and saw momentarily this large blast from one of the carriers that was in our group which we were escorting. It had just been struck by a torpedo from a Japanese submarine. It was what they called a baby carrier. It was the LISCOMB BAY and it was a liberty ship that had been converted and made into a small carrier. I believe this carrier had a complement of around 1500 to 2000 personnel and my ship and three or four others in our squadron were flying the waters seeking survivors all that morning. Everybody on my ship that was not on watch acted as a doctor. We had wounded men scattered all about in every available space.

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(Indistinct) was on the decks and I remember one man that I personally attended. He was completely oblivious. He was out and he had an ear hanging. He had skin hanging and I sprinkled on lots of sulphanilomide on all of his open wounds.

RF: Was there a doctor aboard?

JF: Oh, yes. Every ship has a doctor and a medical staff.

RF: Were they supervising the rescue?

JF: They were very busy.

RF: How did you know what to do with this wounded man?

JF: I kept him laced into the sack into the mattress so that he wouldn't roll out and just instinct, I swabbed him with cotton because he was all covered with oil. Fuel oil is thick and gooey. Try to imagine thick, thick molasses - dirty, thick black oil - in the ears, on the hair, in the eyes. Everything was covered with oil. Somehow we pulled men out of the water, put them on the ship, on the deck and we had portable stretchers and we carried them, put them in any space that we could. On the other hand, I remember a handsome naval flier, an officer. He went into the - an officer's stateroom - helped himself to clothes. Of course, they were told to do that, but he says he took a shower, cleaned himself up. Didn't appear to have any scratches. These are some of the memories I have. Well, at any rate after the battle we were ordered back to San Francisco. Now, having been, so to speak, a seasoned sailor, a number

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of us were transferred from the ship to Treasure Island where we were assigned new construction destroyers. These were the latest. These were two smoke stack destroyers, the largest and most modern at that time. As I recall, this was 1943 and that destroyer cost about \$13,000,000 which was a lot of money in those days. Not so today because a single aircraft can cost \$4,000,000 or \$5,000,000. This was a beautiful ship - the USS (Indistinct) ED 683. I just remembered that our - one of our sister ships in my last squadron, the USS RUSSELL, did ram the submarine that sunk the LISCOM BAY. That just came back to me.

RF: (Indistinct) on the ship (Indistinct)

JF: After commissioning and having been in one major battle, we now felt rather experienced. The USS DOCUM was ordered to sea for shakedown proofs. After approximately a week at sea in which we loosened up all the motors, the engines, test all of the guns, fired at drones pulled by barges in sleeves pulled by aircraft, the gunners get their training. I was at that time assigned to a 40 millimeter, double magazine, double barrel repeating machine gun which was between two five inch turrets.

RF: How was it when you went into the battle? What type of thing did you have to do?

JF: Well, this was the largest fleet in history that was assembled. As I originally started to talk about this Halsey Fifth Fleet,

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which was also the Third Fleet. They were one and the same fleets which was used to confuse the enemy. The first battle I went into on this ship was the Marianna campaign which included Guam and Saipan. Some of my duties - remember I am an engineer now, I am in the Engineering Department and my duties were to see that the oil readings were proper, that the bearings on the various pumps were not too high so that the bearings weren't getting hot. It wouldn't burn out.

RF: What do you mean....

JF: We had to take the readings hourly and keep charts.

RF: Now when you went into battle - when the fleet went into battle, what type of thing did the men on the ship have to do?

JF: We were all assigned battle stations. At times I had a battle station which was really at the bottom of the ship because that's where we had the five inch ammunition and I had to pass up the ammunition on a conveyor belt to the next level which was a handling room. Other men took these five inch shells from that conveyor belt and passed it to loaders who had to properly drop it into the breach firing mechanism of this five inch gun, and I remember when we had to have gunnery practice or when we went into a battle, the ventilation system has to be turned off. Here we are three stories below the waterline - excuse me, below the deck, and

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dripping pools · pools of water - perspiring profusely and I remember so vividly thinking about Coca Cola. How, if somebody had come along, how we would pay ten dollars for a bottle of a cold drink.

RF: Now · excuse me · when you were done with the battle, you still had to stand watch no matter what, right · if it was your turn?

JF: Yes. I was an engineer, so I had four hour watches.

RF: So if your watch came after the battle, you had to continue with the watch, you did not switch watches.

JF: No, if we were on watch and the ship's warning system went off over the loudspeaker system - ding, ding, ding, ding, ding - which meant that they had picked up on our radar or on our sonar screens either a submarine, an enemy vessel, or a bogey, which was an unidentified aircraft. We all had to man our battle stations which means we just did not run out of the engine room. We had to wait to be relieved because another individual had a battle station from my post in the engine room. When I was relieved, I then went to my battle station which I have had a variety of.

RF: Will you tell me about the men on the ship? Were you all friends? Did you support each other? Did you help each other when you needed help?

J: Yes, this was team work. We could not have men fighting against one another. There were those that we might have

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little disputes, as men will have, in any group, but during battle we were - we really had a bonded brotherhood, so to speak. There was no such thing as race, color or creed at that time.

RF: What. about not during the battle? Were the men compatible?

JF: Basically they were compatible, but there were prejudices which I personally had faced army life - in high school and in the service, but basically they were all a bunch of good guys. We all had our clicks, our little groups, especially within the various departments. I was in the Engineering Department and most of my friends were in that group although we did have some people that we congregated with and discussed things with.

RF: What was your relationship with the officers?

JF: Officers were not allowed to become too personal with the men. Naturally every section had an officer attached to a watch and. we did discuss certain things, but they weren't that close or too friendly with the lower echelon, so to speak, but from this Marianas campaign - as I recall, this was the largest fleet in history, this Halsey's Fifth and Third Fleet. That was my first battle - the battle of the Marianas and Saipan

RF: That's with this ship? You already were in the other battle before?

JF: In the battle of Saipan there were large cliffs and, as I recall, we were one of the first ships ever to fire guns on one side of the ship while taking on ammunition from the other.

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Usually when you take on ammunition, you can't even smoke so that's an extremely dangerous situation, but that Saipan campaign - I remember there were bodies floating all around us. Some of them who had grappling hooks trying to capture a skull for a souvenir. I remember we were laying smoke screens, we were going through a mine field, we were being shelled, we were being dive bombed by bombers (Indistinct) by fighters and when we finally captured the islands, I remember the marines having wanted to do something - they wanted to visit a navy ship, a fighting ship and they came aboard and I remember these two marines having little match boxes with Japanese ears and they had taken these Japanese ears in retaliation for what the Japanese had done to some of the nurses they found.

RF: In other words, were these live ears - live people that they cut off the ears or were they dead?

JF: They killed these Japanese and cut the ears off as souvenirs.

RF: Right, so they were dead. Now how many battles were you in?

JF: It was either a total of nine or ten.

RF: Didn't you get ten battle ribbons?

JF: I believe my discharge reads, %Nine ribbons for the Asiatic campaign, two battles (ribbons)? for the Philippine campaign and at this Marianna campaign, I remember the Saipan turkey shoot whereby 540 aircraft were shot down. Our ship shot down six of these planes. Japanese?

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JF: Japanese aircraft. My ship went from the Gilbert and Ellis Islands, the Mariannas Islands, the Carolinas Islands, the Phillippine Islands, the Bowmans, the China Sea who were destroyer squadron 53 - the famous Black Cat radar picket squadron. We operated 40 to 45 miles ahead of the fleet and we had a halo following us. In other words, if we had been on station, reconnoitering, seeking anything - aircraft, vessels - finally, we were ordered to be relieved. Now we went to another area. The squadron that relieved us had the hell kicked out of them suffering many losses. This happened countless times.

RF: So you felt lucky?

JF: We felt that we had a halo! We shot down airplanes, captured a ship, sunk small vessels, participated in shelling the beaches; we sank mines going through mine fields, laying smoke screens. We were dive bombed, we were strafed but basically we came through unscathed.

RE: Where were you when the war ended?

JF: Off of the coast of Japan. I remember we had been through at least a dozen-typhoons. Some of the ships in my squadron were sunk by these typhoons having run out of diesel oil. The sea was too rough to fuel. Describing a typhoon is very difficult to someone who hasn't been in one. A ship is like a little pea.

RE: How about a (Indistinct)?

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rolling in a - this immense sea which was turbulent, violent - which was like fifteen story waves above us. When we were on the top of the wave the trough was fifteen stories below and we would bob up and down, at the same time pitching and rolling and we did lose one man overboard - a very fine person. He was one of our boxers - a very tough man - Fields. Couldn't rescue him. Another man was slapped against the bulkhead on the gun deck - the gun turret and that killed him. We had to bury him at sea.

RF: Now tell us about your experiences in Japan at the time of the signing of the peace.

JF: We were off of the coast of Japan when the word came that the war had ended. As I recall, Admiral Halsey had issued a directive, "The Japanese have surrendered. The war is over, however, they were still dive bombing us. Isolated planes were still firing at us so Admiral Halsey said, "Shoot them down in a friendly manner." We did have news bulletins. For instance, If you take a cruise today on a large ocean liner you have abbreviated news bulletins. We had the same thing in the navy. They gave us the baseball scores, the various types of information from back home. It also gave us a running account of the various theatres of action - the European fronts and so on.

RF: Did you come in to the - did you have any problems coming in to Toyko?

JF: As I recall, my ship was the second ship into Tokyo Bay. We

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had taken on guides. As a matter of fact, after the war ended, our ship's photographer, Mr. Beaudean, who eventually did end up as some executive in the film making industry in Hollywood, this gentleman was our supply keeper and he had sets of war prints made and he sent us letters after we were discharged and I did buy some because cameras were restricted. We could not have a camera aboard ship. You had better not be caught using a camera on ship during a battle, but the official every ship had an official photographer and I have a picture of this naval guide that we had.

RF: Was he American or Japanese?

JF: Japanese and he was a graduate of the University of California.

RF: So he spoke English?

JF: Yes.

RF: And he was the pilot that guided you into Tokyo Bay?

JF: Tokyo Bay was mined and we could not enter Tokyo Bay without guidance. These pilots had charts. They knew exactly where all of the mines - the mine fields were.

RF: They were instructed by their government to guide your ships?

JF: Yes, the Japanese had surrendered and I was in Tokyo Bay when General MacArthur did take the Japanese surrender aboard the flagship - the battleship MISSOURI.

RF: Did you go ashore?

JF: Oh, yes. We were ashore in Tokyo and at that time there was much, much devastation. As a matter of fact, I remember participating in the Makin Island campaign where these flying

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fortresses now had easy access to the Japanese mainland.

RF: And they were the ones that did the devastation?

JF: They did all of this devastation.

RF: How did you find the Japanese people receiving the American sailors?

JF: The Japanese people, in all of my contacts and experiences with them, have always been sweet, gentle people. I have never met a mean, tough Japanese.

RF: And yet you said you witnessed all kinds of situations where the Japanese would....

JF: That was the Japanese army. We were now in the Japanese homeland amongst all of the civilians. I went through bombed out factories. I accumulated an assortment of souvenirs - Japanese sword, epaulets from uniforms, buttons, pencils - anything that had Japanese writing on it. Razor blades - I came home with an assortment - a strange assortment, but something - things that meant something to me. I had picked them out of these bombed factories.

RF: What made you go to the factories?

JF: I was looking for souvenirs.

RF: Couldn't you find those in shops or....

JF: In those days there were very few shops that were operating. In time we did go to shops. Shops began to open on the Ginza, the main Tokyo section, and as I recall, I did bring home some lacquered boxes, a few of these Japanese gowns, silk and, as a matter of fact, I didn't have that type of income. I couldn't afford too much of an outlay. Those

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that had larger salaries probably brought home better merchandise.

RF: How long did you stay in Japan?

JF: Oh, it seems to me about a month before we finally received our orders to return to the United States.

RF: And how did that feel?

JF: I remember somebody making the remark, "Is this trip necessary?" We had homeward bound ribbons stretching the length of the ship and how wonderful that felt to go back to our country. I remember when we came into San Diego - San Francisco - we finally had docked. I was taking a shower and I vividly recall Patti Page singing, "It Might As Well Be Spring." +probably wasn't Patti Page - it might have been Jo Stafford or Helen O'Connell, but I remember it was, "It Might As Well Be Spring." +Finally, I was one that was given a leave and I was going home. I was so happy. I went out on liberty and I spent ten dollars on a bag of hamburgers and I brought them back to my buddies who had to remain on ship. At anyrate, after my furlough I then came back and was discharged. I received an honorable discharge April 23, 1946.

RF: Were you discharged at San Francisco?

JF: I was discharged at the Bremerton Naval Base because I had requested it. In other words, one of my friends, who had a business in Los Angeles, was kind enough to

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give me a letter to my captain stating that if I could be discharged on the west coast he would give me a job. The captain did comply. After receiving the discharge I received a series of, oh, lectures, discussion groups, and perhaps I was talked into it, I did the following day enlist in the United States Naval Reserve cause at that time if an enlisted man had a total of 30 years service, both active and inactive, he was eligible for a lifetime government pension.

RF: How old were you when you were discharged?

JF: Twenty- one.

RF: You were thinking thirty years ahead - that's pretty good.

JF: And I was not discharged until April 23, 1954 from the naval reserve. I did not re-enlist. Why? Because in June of 19 - when I was discharged from the Bremerton Naval Base I went down to visit my friends in Los Angeles and we had a marvelous vacation. We went down to Mexico and finally I returned to my home in Chicago. It was, as I recall, May 1946. Here I had served almost three years in the South Pacific under temperatures that ranged about 170 degrees by the turbines in the engine room. Now I've come home to Chicago in May. It's approximately 40 degrees. We were freezing.

RF: What did you do after you came home? Did you go to work or did you go to school?

JF: I took advantage of the Bill of Rights - the GI Bill .

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and I did go to college and receive my degree from Roosevelt College in 1950.

RF: You were still single or were you married?

JF: I was married, having done so April 9, 1949. Now I had enrolled at Northwestern University evening campus and I was enrolled in the School of Business seeking my Master's Degree in business administration. Recall, the United States became involved in the Korean War in June of 1950. I had received - in May of 1950 I had received a notice from the Navy Department advising me that my enlistment had terminated. Therefore, I was asked to re-enlist for another four year period which I did in order to complete my 30 years of service. That was May and in June we became involved with Korea. What a stroke of luck! Now I was a married man and I received my orders to report for active duty. I was, however, allowed to complete the semester. Therefore, I did not have to go until January of 1951. What a sad, sad day that was. My 21 year old bride accompanied me to Great Lakes.. It was eleven degrees below zero in Chicago. It was nineteen degrees below zero at Great Lakes and the shock of parting was pure misery. The good thing that came out of it was I was asked to volunteer for a specific type of service which, I thought, was a farce, a big joke, because I remember you do not volunteer for anything in the navy. However, the way everything was presented I took my

chance. Since I was an experienced seaman, having served on two destroyers during the war in the Pacific, I felt that I would also select a destroyer, having been familiar with this type of ship, and where was the war being fought now? In Korea in the Pacific. Therefore, I was going to be foxy. I volunteered to serve on a destroyer in the Atlantic and, low and behold, with this miserable cold, below degree - below zero degree weather in Chicago - I received orders to report to sunny Florida. The shock was unbelievable. I called my wife. She was miserable, thinking I was going to Korea. However, the allotment for machinists had been filled. A week prior to my entry they were flying machinists to vessels off the coast of Korea. Now that they had their quota, I was given this duty. We were ordered to report to Green Cove Springs, Florida which is in the Jacksonville/St. Augustine area. It is a large cove whereby decommissioned vessels were stored. The ship that I was assigned to, the USS OSBURN was a one stack baby destroyer - a destroyer escort. All of these vessels were decommissioned. They were in mothballs. What does mothballs mean? In addition to being a decommissioned ship, they were sprayed with what appeared to be a foot thickness of heavy goo which sealed all motors, engines, gun turrets from corrosion. We had to take diesel oil and bales of rags and scrape and clean and polish and

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shine the equipment back to normality. After a few months all was ready. My squadron was reported - was ordered to report to the Third Naval District in the Brooklyn Navy Yard because the United States had recently given four ships to the Italian navy. My ship, the USS OSBURN, only had a thousand miles on it - logged on it when the war ended before it was decommissioned and stored. Since it was a newer naval vessel, it and three others were ordered recommissioned to report for active duty. Our base was the Brooklyn Navy Yard in New York and from here we operated in the Atlantic.

RF: What were you doing?

JF: We were participating in war games - anti submarine warfare. We were training reservists from the Third Naval District. We would go on two week cruises and then come back to home port for two weeks. It was - as I recall, when I graduated from Roosevelt University, my wife and I took a vacation to Florida and met a couple on their honeymoon. They told us that if we ever came to New York we should make certain to visit them, as we did likewise telling them if they ever come to Chicago, to make sure they call us and I said, %f you wait to see us, it will never happen because I don't think we'll ever come to New York.+Now being stationed in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. I looked them up and they were instrumental in obtaining an apartment which we rented a room. My wife came to New York, obtained a job in the bookkeeping department of

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a local concern and then my ship came back to home base. At least my wife and I were together for the liberties that I was given. Ultimately, becoming pregnant, my wife had to return to Chicago where she could be near proper medical care. Our daughter, Janice, was born at the Great Lakes Naval Station hospital and the Fifth Army sped my wife by ambulance from 8200 South to Great Lakes in record time. She was only confined to a room for four days - in four days released. I didn't see my daughter for two and a half months because my wife said, "You are about to be released so when you receive your discharge, come home and stay home for good." Finally, I was released in July of 1952....

RF: How long did you serve?

JF: I came home to my beloved family.

RF: How long did you serve?

JF: ...but was not discharged until my enlistment terminated April 23, 1954 and this was the second honorable discharge I had received, having served twice in two wars.

RF: How long did you serve the second time in the Korean war?

JF: About eighteen months.

RF: How many men were on that ship?

JF: Also close to three hundred and I recall that some of the men in the complements of the vessel had to sell homes and businesses when they were recalled.

RF: Were your experiences during the Korean war similar to the experiences during the Second War in regards to the crew of

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the ship?

JF: Yes. We all had battle stations. My duties now....,

RF: I don't mean that. I mean personal relationships with the group.

JF: Well, I did have some altercations. I did meet some men that were rather prejudiced and that were....

RF: I asked you....

JF:...a mean lot so to speak.

RF: I asked you the same question during the Second World War and you said that you, uh, uh, had, uh, pretty good experiences. Now were the Korean war experiences as good or worse or did you have more of a problem the second time around.

JF: Well, I had more of a problem the second time around because more of the men were married and some of them wanted to pal around, bum around, drink and now that I was married, I was not that type. During World War II I was younger, wilder. Now I had an allegiance to my beloved wife and I did not wish to do all of this bumming and drinking. Possibly I alienated some of them because they thought I was too high faluting, so to speak - too cultured for them because they did come from a lower strata. After all, I now was a college graduate and had two and a half years post graduate work and many of these men did not even go to college and so possibly I alienated them because we were two different groups. From the USS OSBURN) I was transferred to the USS RISEE where I was the Engineering

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Department supply clerk. I ordered the tools for the Engineering Department. I was in charge of the Engineering Department storeroom. In addition to my duties as head of the Supply Department, in the Engineering Department my job was evaporator man. I distilled the ship's water. Upon my discharge from the USS RISEE DE 537, I returned to my beloved family in Chicago and had a few jobs before I went into my present occupation as an insurance agent. From Hyde Park we moved to Hazelcrest, Illinois - 17201 South California Avenue - which was in southern Cook County and was a subdivision on the site of the Lawn Evon Lawn farm. This was a wonderful area to raise a young family.

RF: How many children did you have?

JF: We had two children. The eldest was Janice, our daughter, and then our son, Marc. This area was forested. At the end of the block we had a wonderful little park and when the children began to get older, we began to think in terms of better education. Our families and friends resided north and we heard of these wonderful school districts in the northern suburbs so we had investigated eight suburbs. before settling upon our present home in the Village of Wilmette. The southwest suburbs are miserably, unbearably hot in the summertime and Hazelcrest, being a new suburb, did not have many established trees - especially in our subdivision. They were seedlings. We had resided there nine years and when we finally discovered Wilmette, one of the major factors

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in consideration of our moving was beautiful Gilson Park on the shores of Lake Michigan. After seeing these lovely surroundings with the magnificent beach, we decided we would purchase our present home which met most of our prerequisites and requirements. · price wise and space wise. For the past seventeen years we have been extremely happy residents. Our children have been educated at New Trier and Wilmette\$ various educational levels. Our daughter has presented us with a magnificent grandson and we look forward to many more years as contented, happy residents of this very fine village.

RF: Thank you very much.

JF: Thank you.
(End of tape)