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ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

THE HISTORY OF THE WAVES

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Captain Dorothy Council

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Interviewee: Captain Dorothy Council, U.S. Navy (Ret.)

Interviewer: Dr. Evelyn M. Cherpak

Subject: The History of the WAVES

Date: May 6, 1993

E.C.: This is the first oral history interview with Captain Dorothy Council, United States Navy, Retired. Today's date is May 6, 1993, and the interview is being conducted at her home at 360 Gibbs Avenue in Newport, RI.

Captain Council, I'm very pleased that you've decided to be interviewed for the Naval War College oral history program on the WAVES in World War II. We're going to go a little bit beyond that because I want to interview you about your whole Navy career, but our focus will be on that portion of it as well. I'd like to ask you where you were born and when you were born.

D.C.: Well, I was born in Northampton, Massachusetts, in 1912, December 28th, which means that I am now 80 years old.

E.C.: Where did you spend your growing up years?

D.C.: In Northampton, and I went to all the public schools in Northampton and then went on to Smith College, which is also in Northampton.

E.C.: Can you tell me about your parents, their names, their occupations?

D.C.: My mother and father, Elsie and John Council, kept the typical family home in Northampton. My mother did not work, except in the home which was plenty of work. My father was with the McCalin Hosiery Company practically all of his life.

E.C.: Was that in Northampton too?

D.C.: Everything was in Northampton, Massachusetts.

E.C.: Did you have any brothers or sisters?

D.C.: I had one brother, who was seven and one-half years younger than I. He died in 1988.

E.C.: What was his name?

D.C.: Harold.

E.C.: You mentioned you attended local elementary and high school in Northampton. Where did you go to college?

D.C.: I went to Smith, which was also in Northampton. A fine opportunity for any young woman in Northampton, because Sophia Smith had given money to pay for our education if we had been living in, I think it was, in the county I'm not sure about that at least a certain number of years, like fifteen or sixteen, which meant that actually it was your whole life. And I was born in Northampton, so I was able to take advantage of that.

E.C.: So this was a scholarship, I assume, for a Northampton girl. Your education was paid for.

D.C.: That's right.

E.C.: That's wonderful.

D.C.: It really was.

E.C.: Did you live at home during that time period or in the dormitories?

D.C.: I lived at home my first three years and then I moved up on campus.

E.C.: Do you remember what dorm you lived in on campus during your senior year?

D.C.: I'll think of it.

E.C.: Did you enjoy that experience . . . ?

D.C.: Yes, it was a fine experience for me. It meant that everything was closer, of course, because I was right on campus. But I enjoyed living at home my first three years, as I was free to keep up my relationship with people in the town as well as the students at college, so I had a very nice social life.

E.C.: The best of both worlds. What was your major at Smith?

D.C.: I majored in Economics.

E.C.: Very good. What career path did you want to pursue with your major or did you intend to pursue?

D.C.: Actually, I didn't have too much of an idea of what I wanted to pursue because I graduated in 1933 and that was part of the terrible Depression, much more so than we ever had since. It

was a case of getting your foot in the door of some company to do almost anything just to prove yourself.

E.C.: So you had no definite career goals as far as going into finance or banking because of the terrible economic situation then. You graduated, as you mentioned, in 1933, which was the depths of the Depression. Where did you work after you graduated?

D.C.: I went to New York City.

E.C.: Great!

D.C.: Yes, it was great. At age 20 I was in the big city.

E.C.: Pardon me, you graduated earlier than most people graduate at 21 or 22. You must have been advanced.

D.C.: Well, particularly advanced because we had nine grammar grades in Northampton at that time plus four years of high school which means thirteen whole years. I started school in September the year I was going to be six, but I skipped several grades along the way, which may or may not have been a good idea. Sometimes I think I graduated too soon. However, this is what happened to me. And I did graduate from Smith College at age 20.

E.C.: And you enjoyed your Smith experience.

D.C.: I enjoyed my Smith experience very much. I'm awfully glad that I majored in Economics because there are so many courses that counted in that major that had nothing to do with Economics such as Sociology—one sociology course, one psychology course, even one religion course counted in my major, which meant that I had a nice broad background when I graduated.

E.C.: Exactly. Those were the days when there were required courses.

D.C.: There were requirements.

E.C.: There were stringent requirements and you had to fulfill them as well as ones in your major. Well, you took off for New York City at the tender age of twenty.

D.C.: That's right, and I was fortunate to get a job at R.H. Macy and Company in their training program, which they had at that time for college graduates. That was quite an experience, too.

E.C.: Tell me about that. This is the famous Macy's that's now going under.

D.C.: Well, its kind of hard to cover everything. I will say we had to start as sales clerks and then you could gradually work your way up, but everyone had to be a sales clerk first, which was good, and we had two weeks training as a sales clerk. I wish they'd do that for sales clerks now. We were taught how to sell.

E.C.: Now they just stand there.

D.C.: All they do is write a check. But that was quite an experience and I worked in several other departments at Macy's.

E.C.: Where did you start?

D.C.: In the toy department, because it was the fall and they were getting ready for Christmas and it was busy, busy, busy, and then I went to several of the other departments, the blouse department, the suit department. One winter I worked in the winter clothing department with all of the ski clothes, and I had good experience at Macy's. Very, very good. And then I had an opportunity to go up to Greenwich, Connecticut. At that point I think I really wanted to leave the big city.

E.C.: Can I ask you where you lived in New York City when you were at Macy's and just how long you were there? Was it a year or whatever?

D.C.: Well, my mother and father did not want me to go to the big city and not have a place to live and so they inquired around and found out that there was a women's city club, run by the WCTU. My mother had a friend who had lived there and they had regulations, you had to be in at a certain time at night unless you told them you were going to be out. And so this was the agreement that I went to New York and I lived at the Women's City Club, where I met three very fine friends and we took an apartment about a year or two later. But that was . . . but that was where I started, and it was good to start there at that age.

E.C.: Certainly. You needed a protective environment.

D.C.: It was a good transition into my older life.

E.C.: That's very nice. And then you moved into an apartment with several of your friends in New York. How many years did you stay in New York with Macy's?

D.C.: I was there for five years and then I had an opportunity to go with Franklin Simon in Greenwich, Connecticut, and moved up there which was something I really wanted to do. I wanted to get out of the city and live in a smaller town and Greenwich was close and beautiful. I enjoyed my time there.

E.C.: Now, what did you do at Franklin Simon?

D.C.: Well I was. . .

E.C.: It's another clothing store.

D.C.: That's right, and I was in charge of the women's department, all the women's clothes.

E.C.: Were you a buyer then?

D.C.: No, the buying was done in the New York store.

E.C.: So, you were in charge of the women's department there. How long did you stay at Franklin Simon?

D.C.: It was about two years. And it was a very difficult job. It was six days a week and very, very often late at night because we were a young group in that store and we had things like windows to decorate and things like that beside our regular job. So it was a time consuming job and I found that I wasn't having that much time for social life and so I decided to give up my job and go and take a course in typing and shorthand just to take time off but still be learning something.

E.C.: Now, where did you live in Greenwich? Did you have an apartment?

D.C.: Yes, I had an apartment. Well, I had a little house actually.

E.C.: Well, interesting, did you share it?

D.C.: No, when I lived there it was very small and I had that by myself.

E.C.: And where did you take your course in typing and shorthand?

D.C.: I can't remember the name of the school.

E.C.: Well, was it in Greenwich?

D.C.: It was in Stamford actually.

E.C.: Oh, I see.

D.C.: Stamford, Connecticut, but I can't remember the name of it. It's no longer there I'm sure because this was back in the 30's.

E.C.: Exactly. Do you remember how long you were enrolled in this course?

D.C.: No. I really don't think that's important as far as my career is concerned. The important thing is. . .

E.C.: What did you do after that then, after you finished the course?

D.C.: When I went to school, I went with, what was the name of the place, I can't even remember the name of that place either.

D.C.: These are just sort of in between things until I joined the Navy and that was in 1942.

E.C.: So you worked in various positions in jobs, secretarial more or less.

D.C.: Several jobs and actually that was not a secretarial job. I answered correspondence that came into the organization, did research on the answers and then typed up the answers and sent them off, many of them I signed myself. It was a little different kind of job. The kind that I liked. I worked on my own.

E.C.: Good, good. And this was in the Connecticut area?

D.C.: That's right.

E.C.: Now, did you have any Navy background in your family?

D.C.: None. I still don't understand why I wanted to go into the Navy but one spring, the spring of 1942, I went home. I was living in Connecticut. I went home to visit my family in Northampton, Massachusetts, and decided to go up to the college. Out of the clear blue sky I walked in and said, "I know that the Army is taking women now. Is the Navy interested at all?" And the answer I got was: "How did you know?" I didn't know at all but the one who was in charge of personnel went to a file cabinet and took out a letter that was addressed to me, and she told me as soon as the bill was passed for the Navy to take women that these letters were going to be sent out to all graduates of the college, because the training school, one of the training schools, was going to be at Smith. Actually after I was accepted into the Navy and was sent to training school, it turned out to be Mt. Holyoke but that's alright.

E.C.: So the bill was passed toward the end of July of 1942 establishing the WAVES. Did you wait until you received the letter from the college or did you respond after the legislation passed?

D.C.: The legislation was passed and it appeared in the newspaper, and there was a telephone number to call if you were

interested and so I did call and went through the process of being selected to join the Naval Reserves.

E.C.: Where did you sign up?

D.C.: New York City.

E.C.: Oh, in New York City you signed up. Did you have to take any test prior to entrance?

D.C.: Oh yes, we went through a tough test, written, physical, and interviewing.

E.C.: Because you were going to enter the officer corps.

D.C.: That's right, and they had 15,000 applications and they could take 300 at that point for that month, and so I was very fortunate that they selected me.

E.C.: Absolutely, that was quite a turn out. I wasn't aware it was that enormous.

D.C.: There was a war going on.

E.C.: Oh, absolutely, absolutely.

D.C.: And women just wanted to, just as now, women wanted to do their part. Our part was quiet different in those days than what it is now, but there was a feeling that you owed your country something.

E.C.: It was patriotism; that was the motivation for most of the women at that time because it was the last great patriotic war, more or less. Well, where did you go for training once you were accepted in the WAVES?

D.C.: I went to Mt. Holyoke College for five weeks; we were called the five week wonders.

E.C.: And what did this training consist of?

D.C.: Well, the usual. You had courses everyday and you took examinations everyday on the history of the Navy and the way the Navy works and we did a little marching, not too much, but we did some marching. After all, those of us who went into the service at that time were not just out of college. There were alot of them just out of college, but we had women, they took women up to age 50 and we had them; they were professors at colleges. It was a time of, as you say, great patriotism because our country needed manpower. They didn't have enough manpower so then they needed woman power and we responded.

E.C.: What rank did you come in as?

D.C.: As an ensign, probationary, because you always had that until you finished indoctrination school and then you became an ensign, USNR.

E.C.: You were the five week wonders, as you said. Now you must have lived in the dorms at Mt. Holyoke, I assume.

D.C.: Oh yes, we lived in Rocky. Rocky, I suppose it's Rockefeller. I don't know the Mt. Holyoke College campus that well, but we lived in Rocky.

E.C.: Did you have a roommate there?

D.C.: You had lots of roommates in indoctrination school. I happened to live in a single room and so I had three roommates and the double rooms had eight people. There were double decker bunks. Just enough room to get out of your bunk and get to the door there, there wasn't much room.

E.C.: Did you have wake up calls or like so?

D.C.: Typical indoctrination school. Yes. Up early, early to bed, busy all day long.

E.C.: With your courses and your study. Were there exams at the end of your five weeks?

D.C.: There were exams every week.

E.C.: Who were your instructors? Were they men, women or both?

D.C.: We had both. The women were just coming into the service, you see, so there weren't many of them who were senior enough to be instructors so we had some men instructors and some women instructors.

E.C.: Do you remember who the CO of that training unit was?

D.C.: No.

E.C.: Did you have any free time during these five weeks at all?

D.C.: We had Sunday off. That was it.

E.C.: So that was your free time. You could do whatever you wanted during that time. Did they have any planned social activities?

D.C.: Oh no. There was nothing like that. This was all work; there was a war going on. They had to hurry up and get us on active duty.

E.C.: What were your uniforms like? Can you describe them at all?

D.C.: Same as they are now. They were designed by Mainbocher; one of the finest designers we had at that time, and they have continued the same uniform. It was always dark navy blue, and we felt well dressed in our uniforms.

E.C.: And you had to wear them during the indoctrination.

D.C.: Oh, we didn't get them until we graduated because we were so new they hadn't come off the line yet.

E.C.: So you wore civilian clothes during your indoctrination.

D.C.: But we finally got our uniforms and our hats, but there were no purses. I can remember even reporting for duty, my first duty, with everything in a paper bag but just like that, because there were no purses yet. We were new.

E.C.: Oh yes. Just getting things underway. Do you think the training went smoothly despite the fact that you were new. Were there any glitches that you can remember?

D.C.: I don't remember any.

E.C.: So things went smoothly despite the fact that it was a new organization. Did you make any lasting friendships from this experience at Mt. Holyoke?

D.C.: Not really lasting. Not like the ones that I made when I was on active duty. When you work with people, it's different from just going to school with them.

E.C.: Did you ever meet or see Mildred MacAfee, the Director of the WAVES during this time period? Did she ever make an appearance?

D.C.: At indoctrination school? No, not indoctrination school.

E.C.: Did you have a commissioning ceremony when you left indoctrination school?

D.C.: Yes, we all had to be sworn in plus we'd been sworn in in New York as Reserves, but that was just probationary and then the "P" was taken off of the designator and we then became ensigns,

USNR. There wasn't a great ceremony though, not like the swearing in ceremony in New York.

E.C.: Something very low key. After you finished your five weeks at Mt. Holyoke College where were you assigned?

D.C.: I was assigned at Washington, D.C., in the communications division as the personnel officer for communications, which was rather unusual for an ensign right out of school but you see I'd worked for nine years before I went in the Navy and so I had had enough background in business. They felt that I was old enough and had enough background so that I could be put in charge of the Office of Personnel of Communications in Washington.

E.C.: And this was an assignment. You didn't have a choice in the matter then, or did you put in for any specialty?

D.C.: There was nothing like that during the war. You were sent.

E.C.: Were you given any advanced training in the field of communications at all?

D.C.: No, because I was not a communicator you see, I was in personnel, this was all personnel. I had plenty of experience with personnel from my jobs as a civilian.

E.C.: Can you tell us about this first assignment in the communications division as personnel director?

D.C.: Not anything of particular interest. There were 900 communicators, officer communicators in the Washington area, of which half, 350, were women. I had all the records on those officers, the 900. It was a big job, a very interesting job. We were working six days a week, sometimes seven, if you had the duty on Sunday. So it was busy.

E.C.: Was it an eight hour day?

D.C.: Eight, nine, ten, depending on what had to be done.

E.C.: So it was very busy. Where did you live in the Washington area? Did you live on your own?

D.C.: Oh, yes. I lived in several different places. I had a room first, then I had an apartment, and then I moved into a house with three friends I had met there. We were kind of nomads.

E.C.: Yes. Do you remember what your pay rate was in those days as an ensign?

D.C.: No idea.

E.C.: But you managed to live in the Washington metropolitan area on that.

D.C.: You did particularly well if you shared. You had to be careful.

E.C.: What was wartime Washington like socially and politically?

D.C.: It was busy. Everything was happening because there was a war going on. It was exciting. You lived every minute. You were either working or socializing or sleeping or eating. There was very little off time.

E.C.: Did you meet any nationally known figures during this first assignment, anybody of importance?

D.C.: I'm sure that I've met some, but as far as knowing any of them I can't remember them.

E.C.: Ernest J. King or someone like that?

D.C.: You backed up against the wall when you saw him coming. But, no, I've met alot of people. People entertained us. We were new, but temporary, just temporary acquaintances.

E.C.: Did you feel the effects of rationing at all?

D.C.: Oh yes. Very little meat. And since we were working six days a week we had to market after work which meant everything was gone because the housewives had bought everything during the day. I can remember the little meat market where I used to go and the owner came over to me one night and kind of whispered in my ear and said "I have a special package for you when you check out." And when I checked out there was a package and there was a price on it which I paid, took it home and it turned out to be a little chicken which he had saved.

E.C.: That was a present.

D.C.: It was a present, right. We had ration coupons, of course, too.

E.C.: For gas, food, whatever, sugar and alike. I assume you worked with other WAVES and with men in this assignment.

D.C.: I worked with very few WAVES. Most of my assignments all through the service had been mostly with men and many, many times I was the first woman to have a job. We were pioneers; they were trying us out in different jobs and after the war we continued to be tried in different jobs, so that if anything happened again we wouldn't have to go through that business of "Can she do it? Can a woman do this,?" because there are many many jobs that we could do. But the men felt that because we were women we couldn't and

we understood this. It was man's organization that we were in. We understood their attitude, most of us did, and were able to prove ourselves.

E.C.: Did you feel you were discriminated against in any way?

D.C.: Oh, yes. You had that very often, but I personally never let that bother me because as I said I knew that I was in an organization that men had been running and they just didn't feel that a woman could do the same jobs as they did. In those days it was accepted and this didn't bother me. I can't remember any time when I would feel that I couldn't handle a situation of discrimination just by smiling or turning aside or just going ahead and doing my job.

E.C.: Did you feel you were being treated fairly, for the most part?

D.C.: For those days, yes. I think that today women would resent much more things that happened to us than we did. And I'm speaking of my own feelings. There were some women who resented it very much and who showed it, but as far as I was concerned my thirty years in the Navy were thirty glorious years.

E.C.: That's wonderful. That's a nice tribute. Well, let's go on to your next assignment. You were located in COM 14, I believe, next.

D.C.: That's right. That was Hawaii. At that time a territory, not a state.

E.C.: Now what year was this?

D.C.: That was 1945.

E.C.: Was the war over?

D.C.: No, the war was still going on. I was there when the war ended, which was a pretty exciting time. All the sailors screaming as they wandered around the bases—"home alive in '45."

E.C.: Oh, isn't that interesting? I've never heard of that expression.

D.C.: It was a very exciting time to be in Hawaii.

E.C.: Oh, I'm sure. Where were you located physically in Hawaii?

D.C.: Well, actually right outside of Honolulu. In Honolulu, again, I was in communications; you were known by alot of the senior people if you stayed in one activity like that and although I was never a communicator, I never had that kind of a job. I did go from one personnel administrative job to another in personnel administrative work, in communications divisions because I was known, and they would either ask for me or I'd be assigned because I knew some of the language.

E.C.: Certainly. So you were sent to Hawaii at a very exciting time. Do you remember participating in any of the celebrations at the end of the war, V.J. day?

D.C.: Well yes, socially, but those were personal kind of things, not anything big.

E.C.: Did you have your own apartment in Honolulu'.

D.C.: No, that's one place that we lived in the barracks, in officer quarters. We had BOQ's for the men, Bachelor Officer Quarters, and then we had WOQ's, Women Officer Quarters, that were separate buildings, side by side, and it was rather typical of any type of quarters living. Then toward the end of my tour out there a group of Quonset huts that had been put up by the seabees, up on a hill, was turned over to the base by the seabees. And they turned them into Women Officer's Quarters.

They were, as I remember, four rooms, two door rooms with a separate dining room and a big lounge in that Quonset hut, it was a tremendous Quonset hut, and we had to be nominated by our Commanding Officers to be assigned up there, and I was nominated by my Commanding Officer and so I was able to move up there out of the WOQ.

E.C.: Oh, that's wonderful. Did you enjoy your assignment in Hawaii?

D.C.: I loved it.

E.C.: How long were you there?

D.C.: I was there just about fourteen, fifteen, months I guess.

E.C.: It's a tropical paradise that's for sure.

D.C.: Well, it is very different from what it is now.

E.C.: Oh, absolutely.

D.C.: Honolulu was a little city with dirt streets. It was quiet different. I loved it at that time. It was almost like a fishing village.

E.C.: Sure, not catering as much to the tourists as they do today.

D.C.: I've been back a couple of times and I have no desire to go back; it is not my Hawaii.

E.C.: No, Hawaii of World War II was very different. Were you at the base which is just outside the city where the ARIZONA was?

D.C.: I was in headquarters right there and can't quite remember the name of it.

E.C.: So your position there was in personnel and administration and communications. Do you remember who your CO was at that point?

D.C.: Oh, I had several. The one who was my CO for the longest period was Captain Kenneth Forester, who was a communicator and a very fine one I understand. I didn't know too much about the communications business itself.

E.C.: You were involved in just administrative work, signing people or filling out their papers for assignments or whatever. What rank were you at that time?

D.C.: I was actually a lieutenant when I went over there. But I was given a temporary promotion to lieutenant commander while I was there. I was a lieutenant only for five months.

E.C.: Oh, that was very short. I guess the wartime situations or promotions were faster. Did you ever see Nimitz when you were in Hawaii?

D.C.: Not there. I saw Admiral Nimitz in California actually when I went to a fair outside of San Francisco and I was looking for the sheep. I don't know why I love sheep and goats, but I was looking for the sheep and I came across this man who stopped and said "Could I help you?" Evidently I looked as though I was looking for something, and I looked at him—he was in civilian clothes—and I stammered, because, obviously, it was Admiral Nimitz.

E.C.: You knew who he was?

D.C.: Well, you knew from his pictures and it was Admiral Nimitz, obviously, and I stopped and the only thing I said was, "sheep." And he laughed and showed me where the sheep were. That was my experience with Admiral Nimitz.

E.C.: That's great. That's very cute. Did you see Spruance or any of the greats of WWII?

D.C.: No.

E.C.: You moved on then after that to COM 12 San Francisco.

D.C.: Again, in Communications as the Administrative Personnel Officer.

E.C.: And how long were you in this assignment?

D.C.: Four years.

E.C.: That was quite a long stay.

D.C.: Yes, from '46 to '50.

E.C.: Was there anything outstanding or unusual about this postwar tour of duty?

D.C.: San Francisco was outstanding. Wonderful city to be stationed in.

E.C.: Were you at Treasure Island?

D.C.: No, I was in San Francisco in the main building. It was a federal office building. I don't know if it's still there or not.

E.C.: And doing the same kind of work? How large was the office of the unit that you were with, COM 12?

D.C.: It was headquarters. COM 12.

E.C.: Oh, was it?

D.C.: It covered all the outlying communication stations as well as the one in San Francisco itself and, of course, I had a temporary promotion to lieutenant commander in Hawaii, which I lost when I was transferred, but then I was given another temporary promotion in San Francisco, so again I was a lieutenant commander.

E.C.: You liked the lieutenant commanders' pay, I assume.

D.C.: That's right. It was good.

E.C.: Did you work with any other WAVES or women or were you again mainly in an all male office?

D.C.: Well, I was an administration and personnel officer I had civilians working for me, and in the enlisted personnel office I had five enlisted men (a chief and four junior enlisted), but as far as on my level, as the head of the office was concerned, I

dealt only with men. There were no other women who had jobs like that.

E.C.: I assume you enjoyed San Francisco and your Navy career there.

D.C.: Loved it.

E.C.: Oh, good.

D.C.: Yes, four lovely years.

E.C.: Your next assignment then was with BUPERS as Women Detail Officer. Where did you move to at that point?

D.C.: Well, the Bureau of Naval Personnel which is in Washington, D.C.

E.C.: And what did this assignment consist of? What was your job? What was your function?

D.C.: Assigning all the woman line officers to jobs throughout the Navy.

E.C.: Well, that was quite a responsibility.

D.C.: A very big responsibility, but just before I left San Francisco I was selected for lieutenant commander, permanent lieutenant commander, and had to take exams; that was one of the very few years that they had promotion exams—four days of examinations.

E.C. Were they terribly difficult?

D.C.: They were terribly difficult, particularly for a line officer who had never been to sea. We had to study. We had to really cram in order to pass any of those examinations. I had taken a lot of correspondence courses and so I had some background for each one of the tests that I had to take, but I still had to cram an awful lot. They gave us a list of books that we could read in order to get ourselves up to date on some of these things. But it was not easy.

E.C.: No, I can imagine it wouldn't be.

D.C.: And I took the exams in San Francisco and took a physical examination, and when I got to Washington I was informed that they had lost my physical examination papers, and so I could be promoted because I was selected, but I couldn't be promoted until I passed another physical. And so for the first week that I was back in Washington I had to be a lieutenant because my lieutenant commander rank in San Francisco had been only temporary, and

although I was selected for permanent lieutenant commander, it hadn't come through yet. But, fortunately, it was in the summertime so I didn't have to change stripes on my navy blue uniforms. All I had to do was change to my railroad tracks on my gray uniform.

E.C.: Oh, that's kind of amusing. Well, you retook the physical, I'm sure.

D.C.: I retook the physical and passed it. And so I was promoted to permanent lieutenant commander, USN. And of course at that point when I was in San Francisco the law had been passed so that we could be in the United States Navy, not just in the United States Naval Reserve.

E.C.: Right.

D.C.: I had applied for that and was selected and so by the time I was promoted to permanent lieutenant commander in Washington I was also USN instead of USNR.

E.C.: That's wonderful. So you were permanently promoted and a full fledged member of the Navy vis-a-vis the Naval Reserve. How many women were in the Navy at this time period? Can you give me the dates that you were in Washington?

D.C.: I have no idea.

E.C.: OK. That must have been the '50's though. Do you remember how many women were in the Navy at this time?

D.C.: Numbers come and go after this many years. I really don't know. I kind of remember something like seventy thousand during World War II, but I'm not sure about that.

E.C.: What kind of billets were these women assigned to? What kind of jobs?

D.C.: All kinds of billets. We had women who were Supply Corps Officers, we had one woman who was in the Bureau of Ordnance as a Specialist; and, of course, the enlisted people were in all kinds of jobs, particularly the yeomen and the storekeepers but also all the communicators. There were limits as to what jobs they would let women have, but we had a good, wide public relations, of course, things like that. We weren't flying the airplanes, and we weren't driving the ships.

E.C.: That's just come about recently. Very recently. Did you ever receive any complaints about the way your assignments were directed?

D.C.: Oh, yes. You'd always get complaints, but they were few and far between, and most of the time you could work them out. If it was a real problem, a physical or personal relationship kind of problem, you could work it out.

E.C.: Good. Was that an enjoyable time for you?

D.C.: It was a very interesting time. That job was nerve racking because you're dealing with your friends, or your potential friends. And what you do is rather permanent as far as their lives are concerned you're affecting peoples lives by where you send them. And sometimes you got a thank you, and sometimes you got a complaint, but most of them were thank yous, fortunately.

E.C.: It must have been long hours, too.

D.C.: Long hours and at a time when we didn't have air conditioning. We sat in our own perspiration in the summertime in the Bureau of Naval Personnel, but lots of good friends, lots of good friends.

E.C.: Oh that's good, so that made it worth while. Well, the next four years, 1953-1957, you were assigned to Newport.

D.C.: That's right, the Central Torpedo Office, which does not exist anymore.

E.C.: What was it's purpose?

D.C.: It's purpose was to keep the records on all torpedoes and torpedo parts, once more I was an Administrative Personnel Officer. But at the Central Torpedo Office we had seven officers; I was the only woman officer. And no enlisted, but all of the other employees were civilians. And so I then had to learn all about the civil service rules and regulations which was another opportunity to learn something else about how the Navy runs. And I did the hiring and firing, did very little firing, but alot of hiring when people left, transferred, or just quit their jobs. It was a very interesting job and completely out of line as far as anything I had ever known before. I didn't know a thing about torpedoes, but I did know about administration and personnel.

E.C.: Certainly. Where was the office physically located? Was it where NUSC is now?

D.C.: That's right. There was a separate building. Actually we had two buildings. One of them was a building where they made all of the plans for the torpedoes and the torpedo parts, but it was a separate activity.

E.C.: Yes, because the torpedo station had moved off of Goat Island by that time.

D.C.: Yes, but we weren't part of the torpedo station. We were a separate activity. The Central Torpedo Office came directly under the Bureau of Ordnance and we had all of our relations with the Bureau of Ordnance. The only thing that the Torpedo Station did for us was to furnish cleaning help and things like that.

E.C.: You were in Newport for four years and where did you live during that time period? Do you remember?

D.C.: In the 1950's. . .

E.C.: You were mentioning that you lived in Newport during this time period, on Ayrault Street. You had a nice apartment you mentioned. What attracted you about the town of Newport during the 1950's?

D.C.: During the 1950's, Newport was almost a small fishing village; it was very different from what it is now. But the people in Newport were so warm, I made alot of friends, such good friends in the stores, for instance, that when I came back ten years later they greeted me by name. The Newporters were the friendliest people I had met because it was a small town.

Everybody knew everyone else and if you made any kind of an effort to get involved in the town it was appreciated.

E.C.: Did you get involved in the town and town activities?

D.C.: Well, not so much in activities, but I used to go to the Council meetings and I knew what was going on in the town. I was interested in Newport. I was interested in everything that was going on here and I found that it was a very cosmopolitan little fishing village.

E.C.: Even in those days?

D.C.: Even in those days. We had theater, and people from New York who came, New York actors and actresses, who came to Newport and it was an eye opener as far as a small town was concerned. I loved it.

E.C.: Of course there was more society there then, more of the Bellevue Avenue crowd.

D.C.: Well, yes, but of course, that wasn't my crowd.

E.C.: No, but it attracted people from New York, the theater and whatever.

D.C.: But most of that was townspeople. It really was. It wasn't the summer people.

E.C.: Can you describe the Naval presence in Newport during the 1950's? What was here? Was the presence larger and more apparent?

D.C.: I really have no idea. Of course, we had more ships because we had the destroyers--the Atlantic Fleet destroyers--here. So we had many many more ships, but we also had some schools.

E.C.: Did you ever meet Admiral Wadleigh during this time period? John Wadleigh he was a communicator too?

D.C.: No.

E.C.: Did you know him after you were settled in?

D.C.: Admiral Wadleigh? Oh yes. Not then, I knew the Wadleigh's well; they were in Paris when I was there, but I really didn't know them there. It wasn't until I came here to retire that I got to know the Wadleigh's.

E.C.: Because he was in the same field. Well, you stayed in Newport, you enjoyed it. Did you intend at that time to ever return and retire here? Did that thought ever enter your mind?

D.C.: It probably did—way in the back of my mind.

E.C.: But you had a way to go in your career before you decided to retire. Your next assignment was back in Washington as BUPERS rep and liaison in congress. That sounds fascinating.

D.C.: It was. It was an eye-opener. I was mostly disappointed.

E.C.: Why?

D.C.: Because I saw the seedy side of Congress, as well as the great side. Sitting there everyday, you met alot of the Congress men and, obviously, some of them were just put in by their parties to sit and hold a seat for a couple of years until they found someone else who might be a little bit better, but we were representing the Navy, those of us in the office. I was the only one who was assigned by the Bureau of Naval Personnel, but I worked in an office with other people and we were servicing both the House and the Senate at that time, so it was a very busy time.

E.C.: Now you say you were in the House and the Senate almost everyday.

D.C.: We had an office there in the House. In one of the House buildings right next to the Armed Services Committee, as a matter

of fact. The House Armed Services Committee was right next to it.

E.C.: What was your position there? Were you to present the Navy's point of view?

D.C.: We'd get questions from the members of the House and the Senate. Some of them for their own information, but alot of it because their constituents would write and either complain or want something special. And so, the offices of the representatives and the senators never did their own research. They just brought those questions to us and then we would have to get the background and the answer for them.

E.C.: Certainly. So you did research for these men. Did you meet any outstanding senators there or Congressmen that you could remember for any special reason?

D.C.: Well, of course, I met Margaret Chase Smith, who was then in the Senate.

E.C.: She was a promoter of the WAVES, too.

D.C.: Well, that's right. There were so many; I couldn't even start listing them. They were all very very different. Some of

them I liked very much, and some of them I didn't. But it didn't have anything to do with my job.

E.C.: Did you ever socialize with any of the senators or Congressmen? Were you invited to parties?

D.C.: Every once in a while one of them would give a party for our office. Partly because we did so much work for them.

E.C.: Well, that must have been very exciting.

D.C.: It was a very interesting job.

E.C.: The throes of Washington and associating with the Congressmen and the Senators. You must have been there in the Eisenhower years then. Did you ever have a chance to see Eisenhower or Kennedy, for example?

D.C.: No.

E.C.: Do you have anymore comments about this particular assignment?

D.C.: It was so different from any assignment in the Navy, because you weren't really working for the Navy. You were working for the congressmen, which I resented a little. I

realize that it was a very important job because you have to keep on the right side of the Congressmen, both the House and the Senate, for money.

E.C.: Certainly.

D.C.: Each one of us felt very responsible for representing the Navy in the best light.

E.C.: Oh, of course. They passed the appropriations bills. So you have to put your best foot forward. From 1950-1952 you were with UCOM Logistics Division.

D.C.: 1960-1962.

E.C.: 1960-1962. And the Administration and Personnel Office. Where was this located?

D.C.: In Paris. Just outside of Paris.

E.C.: This was your first European assignment then.

D.C.: My only European assignment.

E.C.: First and last.

D.C.: I was getting pretty senior at that time.

E.C.: What was your rank?

D.C.: I was a commander.

E.C.: And when were you promoted to commander?

D.C.: When I was at the Central Torpedo Office.

E.C.: That's great. What were your duties there and for whom did you work in Paris?

D.C.: Well, actually the European command was supposedly an Army command, but the Army people said it wasn't all Army. All the Armed Services of the United States were at the European Command. We worked with Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, there were no Coast Guard there. But it was a very different kind of a job. Again, I was the Administrative and Personnel Officer for the Logistics Division, and so we had civilian secretaries who would leave, and I'd have to hire or transfer from one office to another to take care of any problems that would come up, personnel problems that would come up; and do general administrative work, which included alot of communications all over the European command. It was a very interesting job and a difficult job because I was living in a civilian apartment house

where no one spoke any English, except one woman who actually owned the building. She was a countess, and she owned the building and she spoke very fine English. She had been to school in England, had an accent, but spoke very fine English. Her husband spoke no English at all. But it was dealing with people after work who didn't speak English.

E.C.: Did you attempt to learn French?

D.C.: Well, I had some French in school and I did a brush up course before I went to Paris, but I don't have an ear for languages and, therefore, my French was never that good.

E.C.: It takes years to develop fluency, anyway.

D.C.: It does, and since I was working with people who spoke English all day, during the week, I didn't really have that much practice.

E.C.: You didn't have the opportunity.

D.C.: That's right. But when I'd go out to market after work (I never got home before six) I would make an attempt to learn how to say something that I wanted. For instance, at the meat market—I would go to the meat market and ask for something and they wouldn't have it. So I ate alot of chopped beef because

beefsteak hatchée I could ask for if they didn't have anything else I wanted. But I stood in line with all of the cooks from the area because you had to queue in order to buy anything. They didn't have supermarkets in those days. You had to go to a separate shop for your meat and for your vegetables and for your fruits and for your bread, and each one was a separate stop, so it took a long time to market.

E.C.: Oh, yes.

D.C.: I have one thing to tell you though about my butcher. I went to the same little meat market around the corner for my meat and I went through all of this business of asking for things. One night I went in and he handed me a package and told me it was a gift. Now, he spoke no English but we got along; we understood each other and he said it was a gift. I took it home and inside the package was a cox comb and a recipe written out in French telling me just to boil it. Well, I had to taste it because I had to thank him for it, but I didn't want to be too enthusiastic because he'd give me another cox comb and I really didn't care for it. I didn't care for the texture or anything about it. But he was very very nice that way and he always took time with me in spite of the fact there would be a long line behind me. When I received my orders to be transferred back to the United States I went to each of the stores where I had done business to thank them for helping me and for putting up with my poor French and to

tell them I was going to leave and going back to Les États Unis. I went to the butcher and told him that I was leaving for Les États Unis and thanked him very much. And in perfect English he said to me "we are going to miss you, madame. This is after two years. And I said: "You speak English, monsieur" and he said: "yes, but you wanted to practice your French." Now you know how some people say how cold some of the French are: I didn't find that at all.

E.C.: No, I didn't either when I was there.

D.C.: I found that it depended on how you treated them as to how they treated you. You just didn't go over the border. You had to be introduced.

E.C.: Yes. They are formal.

D.C.: They were quite formal. I was invited to one dinner party where there were eight or ten people and they all spoke French and no English, except one woman, and they put me beside her so that she could say: "Now they are talking about Fabiola" and then a few minutes later "Now they are talking about something else," so she kept me on the right track. Well, I had one very interesting experience. The street I lived on was sans unique, a one way street.

E.C.: And this was in the city.

D.C.: In the city. Big apartment houses on both sides. And I parked my car on the street.

E.C.: Oh, you drove. You were brave.

D.C.: Yes, I drove. I had to drive back and forth to work because the office was outside of Paris. But I noticed that on the third or fourth floor of one of the apartment houses there were beautiful flowers growing in a flower box and the lady who lived there was out in the morning when I would go to work with hat and gloves on picking her flowers and watering them. I looked up one morning and did something that the French don't do. I called to her and told her that her flowers were beautiful and she nodded. A few days later the concierge in my building came to me to tell me that the lady down the street said that l'americaine had left her lights on in her car. Now she knew where I lived but she didn't know my name so she had walked down or taken the elevator or something or other and walked up the street to the concierge to tell her that l'americaine had left her lights on. To me that was above and beyond.

E.C.: The French are very nice. They will greet you in the shops and the stores; they certainly don't do that in this country.

D.C.: Well, I don't know. I didn't find the French were anywhere near as warm as they are here. But that was another day, that was in the 1960's. One other thing that happened: One morning I had just left my apartment house with the concierge saying, Bon courage. (When we say "Have a nice day, "they say "Have courage.") Bon courage every morning, I was walking down to my car when a young man was coming toward me and, of course, we say good morning if you meet somebody on the street. They do not. They didn't in those days and as he went by he said something that I didn't quite get until he was almost past and then I realized he said "Belle Chapeau, madame" and I turned around and he turned around at the same time and we both laughed. My Navy hat.

E.C.: Right, your chapeau.

D.C.: He just thought that was beautiful. "Belle Chapeau, madame."

E.C.: The men do notice what you wear, at least the men over there are very complimentary in that regard. Did you have an opportunity to travel much in Europe during this assignment and, if so, where did you go?

D.C.: Well, everywhere, because France is so close to every other country, every European country, is close to every other

European country, so for a weekend you can go anywhere and so I did alot of traveling in Europe while I was there. Yes. I did alot of traveling to France first of all because I wanted to know that country better than I knew any of the others and then, of course, I had been to Europe a couple of times on vacations, too.

E.C.: So you saw more of it during this time period. Well, you stayed in Paris, I assume, it was a couple of years, two years at this job and then you returned to Newport.

D.C.: No.

E.C.: No. Pardon me, I glanced down to another question.

D.C.: Bainbridge, Maryland.

E.C.: Now, your position there was CO Recruit Training.

D.C.: Recruit training for women. Commanding Officer of Recruit Training for Women, young enlisted women coming into the service, and it was a very different kind of assignment. It was almost like being headmistress of a girls school, if you'd never been a school teacher, and I've never been a school teacher. But a very challenging job. A very busy job, with a graduation every two weeks and new classes coming in every two weeks. The school was actually run by enlisted people, chiefs. I had five officers and

fifty enlisted, and I was at that time the only woman line commanding officer in the United States Navy.

E.C.: Oh, isn't that something? Quite an honor.

D.C.: They had just made it a command. It had been an officer in charge job. But they made it a command and I was commanding officer had all the responsibilities of a commanding officer, which was tremendous. I enjoyed it. I learned so much from the eighteen, nineteen year olds we had coming in because they had already been screened. They were tops; they were brilliant. They were coming into the Navy because they wanted to be in the Navy. They were looking for opportunities. I learned alot from them. I really did.

E.C.: That's wonderful. What rank were you then at that time?

D.C.: I was a commander.

E.C.: You were still a commander.

D.C.: Well, I was a commander for thirteen years because a law had to be passed for us to be promoted to captain.

E.C.: When was that law passed? Do you remember?

D.C.: That law was passed while I was at the War College in the 1960's. When I was at the War College, they used to put out a list of the staff by rank and I was always the senior commander. It didn't matter who came or went. Any man who hadn't made captain would have been out of the Navy. But since we couldn't make captain we could stay for twenty-six years if we made commander.

E.C.: Oh, really.

D.C.: The law had not been passed allowing us to be promoted to captain and so I had retirement orders.

E.C.: Is this at Bainbridge?

D.C.: No, when I was at the War College. I'm a little ahead of myself.

E.C.: Yes, we are.

D.C.: No, Bainbridge was a fine experience, two years was enough. Because you naturally have problems with eighteen and nineteen year olds every once in a while.

E.C.: Absolutely.

D.C.: And not very often but some of them were serious problems and you had to handle them, and so two years was enough for that job.

E.C.: And after that you did come back to Newport and the War College for a four year stint. Now what was your assignment at the Naval War College?

D.C.: Well, at that time my title was Assistant Secretary, which sounds a little strange. The Secretary was a Navy Captain and it was in the Administrative Department again, Administration and Personnel, and I was the assistant.

E.C.: Do you remember who your CO was at that point, the Secretary?

D.C.: The Secretary? Yes, he was. . .

E.C.: Must have been a Navy captain probably.

D.C.: Oh, yes.

E.C.: Because that term was used when I was there.

D.C.: No.

E.C.: Secretary, now Dean of Administration.

D.C.: That's right.

E.C.: But they made the switch. Well we don't have to cover that if you can't recall it. Did you enjoy your second Newport tour?

D.C.: Very much.

E.C.: Why?

D.C.: It convinced me that I really wanted to retire in Newport. Yes, I love the city.

E.C.: Who was president of the War College at that time?

D.C.: Well, we had four while I was there. Everybody said I got rid of presidents of the War College, but the one who was there longest and the one I knew the best was Admiral Hayward.

E.C.: Oh, yes.

D.C.: Chick Hayward.

E.S.: Yes.

D.C.: We got along just fine.

E.C.: Yes, he's very easy to get along with. I've interviewed him for our oral history program, too, and he's still in town.

D.C.: That's right. In the winter—I mean in the summer.

E.C.: Yes, in the summer.

D.C.: Yes.

E.C.: Well, did you decide to retire to Newport based on that last tour? Were you involved in anything in the town at that time?

D.C.: Oh, alot of things. I was taking an art course at the old Art Association, which is now the Art Museum. I took a cooking course. No, the cooking course was in the 1950's when I was here. I got involved in several things in Newport when I was here.

E.C.: And you say the people attracted you to the town.

D.C.: Absolutely. Warm, helpful.

E.C.: And the location, of course, is charming. Well, you stayed at the War College for four years as Assistant Secretary. Prior to retirement, I assume, you were back in Washington with the Secretary of Defense Office. The military personnel branch . . . What was your job there?

D.C.: Well, it was all the allowances that are given to service people. Not just Navy, because this was the Department of Defense. Some laws that were being passed were sent over to us for review but very often we would start a new law for allowances. One that was very important to me while I was there was transportation and movement of household goods for enlisted people. It didn't seem right to me that an enlisted man, for instance, who had been in the service for four years and was probably ready to reenlist, had to pay for his wife's or his family's transportation wherever he went. Whereas an officer, brand new, could come in and have his transportation paid. So I wrote it up. It wasn't a law. It was a regulation that had to be signed by the Secretary of Defense. And it was fought by, particularly the Army, because they had so many people, it was going to cost money. It was also fought by the comptroller of the Secretary of Defense because of the money problem, and my feeling was that we had to be fair to these young enlisted people and find the money some place. And so I suggested, wrote up, a proposal where any person who had four years in the service and was an E-4, which meant his rating, would have his family and

household goods transferred when he was transferred. Well, I finally got my boss to sign it. Then I took it up to the Secretary of Defense's Office. I had three proposals to give them but I recommended one, and that was the one, and I was told to put it in writing and bring it back and it would go into the Secretary of Defense, so out of my back pocket I pulled it out in writing. I had already written it up and I said, "Well, here it is," and a day later I had the word it had been Okayed by the Secretary of Defense.

E.C.: Fantastic!

D.C.: And that was pretty exciting because it was a new program for the services, all the services. I was interviewed and made a statement for the radio to go out throughout the world and just told them this had been passed and I signed off by saying, "This is Captain Dorothy Council at the Pentagon."

E.C.: You had been promoted by then.

D.C.: Oh, I was promoted while I was at the War College. They passed the law and I was one of the first six promoted to captain.

E.C.: That's quite an achievement.

D.C.: Well, it was a big step. But I signed off, and I had a letter a few weeks later from a young sailor who was down in Central America somewhere; it was addressed to Captain Dorothy, Welfare Department, Navy Department, Washington, D.C.. It went to the Bureau of Naval Personnel. I was the only woman line captain with the first name of Dorothy and so they sent the letter over to me.

E.C.: They found you.

D.C.: They found me. And he wanted to know was it really true what he heard on the radio. And so I wrote him a letter and said "Yes, if you're an E-4 and you've had at least four years service, yes. If your married, it will pay your transportation, the transportation for your wife and/or family when you're transferred." And it was a nice feeling.

E.C.: Oh, yes. It's quite an achievement, quite an accomplishment for all the services.

D.C.: Well, one of my bosses said "if you don't do anything else in this job you've earned your money." And that was a nice compliment.

E.C.: Oh, certainly. That's fantastic. And that was in the 1960s, I think, wasn't it?

D.C.: 1968-1972.

E.C.: 1968-1972. So that's fairly recent that the law was passed, within the last twenty-two years or so.

D.C.: Well, which law was that?

E.C.: Well, the regulation I mean regarding the paying. It's not that long ago really.

D.C.: Well, that's over twenty years. It's taken care of most of the enlisted people who have now retired.

E.C.: Right, that's quite something. Did you receive any formal recognition for that in the way of medals or citations or commemorations of any sort?

D.C.: Yes. I received a medal when I retired because of that particular thing.

E.C.: And what medal was that?

D.C.: It was the Legion of Merit.

E.C.: Was there anything else outstanding about this assignment, other than what you mentioned, the regulation that was passed?

D.C.: Oh, one very important thing. In the Pentagon I had an office that had a window. Very unusual.

E.C.: Yes, very unusual, right. And you were one of the six, first six women who were promoted to captain. That was quite an accomplishment, too, in those days because it's still very difficult in today's Navy to make captain. I don't think it's terribly easy.

D.C.: Well, it isn't what you do just before you make captain; it's your whole career.

E.C.: Of course.

D.C.: And you don't work to make captain. It comes to you.

E.C.: Well, that's quite an honor. Where did you retire? Did you have any ceremony when you retired?

D.C.: I retired the first of December 1972. The ceremony was held in my boss's office; he was an Army General. And it was small, the kind of retirement that I wanted. But one nice thing was that the Secretary of the Navy asked me and my brother and sister-in-law, who came for my retirement, to come and just have a little conversation in his office, which was nice.

E.C.: That is nice.

D.C.: That was Secretary Warner.

E.C.: Oh yes. He was Liz Taylor's husband then, his claim to fame. Well, that's great. Did you receive any medals for your Naval service other than the Legion of Merit?

D.C.: Well, I had all of the usual ones, the World War II Victory, but the important one was, of course, that one. Oh, I have an Army Commendation medal from my work in Paris, which is rather unusual, but that was the award that they were giving there.

E.C.: Oh, wonderful.

D.C.: And so that's my Army Commendation.

E.C.: Crossing services. How would you sum up your Naval career? Did you enjoy the Naval service? Did your duty assignments meet your expectations?

D.C.: As I have said before, thirty glorious years. I couldn't have asked for anything better. I had great assignments both as far as location was concerned and as far as jobs were concerned. I was given much more responsibility as a woman than I would have

had in civilian life. I know that. And one thing about being in the service that allot of civilians do not understand is the challenge of being transferred to a new job with all new people, new boss when you don't even know what the job is going to be. Particularly for a line officer it could be, each of my jobs as Administrative and Personnel Officer was different they were never the same.

E.C.: You have to be flexible. You have to adapt.

D.C.: That's right, and you learned. Every job teaches you something. It's really a wonderful, wonderful career.

E.C.: And you meet alot of different people and see alot of different places, which is very interesting. Do you have any advice for women entering the Navy today?

D.C.: It's a little difficult, because they have so many more opportunities than I had. They could give me some information.

E.C.: Well, that's true. More jobs are opening up for women in the Navy. When you retired in 1972, where did you settle?

D.C.: Right here in this apartment.

E.C.: You came back to Newport. Did you work at all? Take a job after you retired?

D.C.: Well, I had a very exciting time from the time that I retired. A friend of mine, Captain Winifred Love, was going to retire the same time that I was. We knew that and we decided about a year before that that we would give ourselves a retirement gift of a trip around the world on our own.

E.C.: Oh, wonderful.

D.C.: And so we started reading magazines and articles and newspapers and books. She was stationed in Washington at the time and, well, it was even before that, I guess, when we weren't even stationed in the same place, we just decided that would be a nice thing to do. And so I retired the first of December and she retired the first of February the following year, '73. When I retired I took the winter off. Well, first of all I had to get rid of everything in Washington, either put it in storage or give it away or what have you, and get rid of the apartment. And then I went up to Connecticut and stayed with my brother and sister-in-law temporarily while I visited many friends whom I hadn't seen for a long time but were in the New England area, and spent January doing that. Then the first of February we started off. And we had fairly definite plans as to where we wanted to go and what we wanted to see, but we knew that we could change our

minds, which was fine, because we didn't have a job to come back to. And so we left on the first of February and we had a round the world ticket from Pan Am, so we knew we'd get home.

E.C.: Sure.

D.C.: Also, it was cheaper, much cheaper, and it still is to buy a around the world ticket than it is to go from country to country. But we had our around the world ticket and we had all of our passports and visas, and we started in Morocco.

E.C.: Oh how interesting. How exotic.

D.C.: We flaked out for a week to get used to being retired. And we stayed at a beautiful, old hotel. And we went to Beirut, which was then so beautiful.

E.C.: The Pans of the Middle East.

D.C.: It was gorgeous. When I see the pictures of what's happening there, but then we went on and we went to Lebanon, Iran, Pakistan, India, up to Kashmir. We had a house boat on Lake Mulay. We went to Nepal and even to Little Sikkim, then back to India and then to Thailand, down to Malaysia, to Singapore, to Bali up to. . .

E.C.: Takarta?

D.C.: No we didn't spend anymore time there. We were just in Bali. The weather was so bad was humid, so humid that we couldn't stand it. Everyone was leaving because it was just impossible. Then we went to Taiwan and from Taiwan to Japan, from Japan back to Hawaii, where we stayed for a week to relax after our four month tour. We left the first of February and we came back, actually we stayed in San Francisco for a couple of days and we got back to Washington on the first of June. So it was exactly four months.

E.C.: The Middle East and the Far East. Wonderful.

D.C.: Well there's so many of those countries you can't go to now. And we were two older women who went everywhere. We went out at night. We went to restaurants. There was no feeling of fear at all in those days. No problems. Everything was a great adventure. And we stayed every once in awhile in a place for two or three days or a week just to rest up, write postal cards, catch up on laundry and just plain relax.

E.C.: Absolutely. You could do that.

D.C.: We had no schedule. It was a wonderful way to travel.

E.C.: Oh, it certainly is. Did you make reservations ahead of time at certain places?

D.C.: We had a reservation in Beirut, which was made by the Pan Am agent who was scared to death about us two older women going on this trip by ourselves. We were old enough to be her mother, and she couldn't imagine her mother doing this.

E.C.: Well, maybe her mother wouldn't.

D.C.: She made the reservation for us in Beirut, but it was just one of those great big Pan Am hotels and this was not what we were looking for. We were looking for local hotels. We would always inquire, ask about the finest local hotel where the salesman stayed because they were all on a

E.C.: Limited budget.

D.C.: Well, not so limited. You know they travel well. And so this is what we did and we'd stay there and some of the little hotels we stayed in were absolutely charming. And, of course, we got local food that way too, instead of all American food. This is what we were anxious to do and we got to talk to the native people and we dealt with their currency. We took turns. In one country I would take care of the money and in another country Winnie would take care of it. That way we'd learn about it and

what we did was to make our arrangements for the next country before we left.

E.C.: Oh, that's wise.

D.C.: So that we always had a hotel room.

E.C.: Oh, certainly.

D.C.: And after we got there we could change if we didn't like what we had, but we'd done enough studying of each country to know approximately where we'd like to stay, what hotel. And we stayed in all different kinds of hotels.

E.C.: Oh that's very very exciting. What a nice way to wrap up your career.

D.C.: It was a fine way to wrap it up. And it gave us memories that no one can take from us.

E.C.: Well, that's true. So true. A very exotic part of the world. And then after that you settled down to life in Newport, I assume.

D.C.: That's right.

E.C.: Did you work at all after that?

D.C.: No, I certainly intended to.

E.C.: You did?

D.C.: Oh, I thought how could you work all of your life and just all of a sudden not work.

E.C.: That's what I think, too.

D.C.: At least a temporary job. A part time job or something. Absolutely not, first of all I had to find a place to live. And I've always been very very particular about where I lived even when I was on active duty. Each place I lived was going to be my home, not just a temporary thing, but my home. And so I always spent alot of time looking and I spent alot of time looking here in Newport. We came back the first of June and I came right up to Newport and I actually didn't find this place until, oh, it must have been about the first of November. I spent all that time looking around Newport and checking and finally it was recommended that I look at these two apartments that they might be able to put together for me.

E.C.: And that's what happened.

D.C.: And that's what happened.

E.C.: Well, it's certainly a lovely spot.

D.C.: And by the time I did all of that and my furniture came, it was the day before Thanksgiving in 1973 and, of course, the first of December was the deadline for a year for the Navy to move my furniture.

E.C.: That's right.

D.C.: I want you to see my little friends who come and he may take his bath and he may not. Usually they get in there and sometimes two get in there at once and it pretty exciting.

E.C.: You just made the timing.

D.C.: By the time I did all of that I wasn't interested in going back to work.

E.C.: You got involved in the community and I'm sure you've been involved in activities within the last twenty years or so in Newport. Captain Council, I wanted to ask you about your activities in Newport. What are you particularly committed to or involved in here?

D.C.: Well, when I first came back I went back to my art classes at the Art Museum. I had just a marvelous teacher who is now dead, Marion Carey, and just loved my oil painting classes. I also was very involved as a member of the Board of Directors at the Art Museum over a period of about eleven years. You could serve only for a couple of years, but then the year that I had to take off from being on the Board I was usually Budget Director or something like that and so I would still sit in on the meetings, and so for eleven years I did that. I'm still on the Board of the English Speaking Union here in Newport. But I had to give up a couple of other things that I did because I'm getting older and as time marches on it takes a toll. I found that I didn't have quite the energy that I had before and so I've given up alot of things that I was doing. I'm a great promoter of the Newport Music Festival. I'm in the Preservation Society. I feel that those activities with the Art Museum are very necessary for a small town not to get lost because they give a certain prestige to the city that it wouldn't have otherwise. I was very involved for awhile with the Armed Services YMCA, Employer Director there. Oh, there were several other things.

E.C.: You mentioned the book club that you're interested in.

D.C.: That's a very fine book club.

E.C.: Well, that keeps you very very busy. Are you a member of the WAVES National perhaps?

D.C.: No.

E.C.: No. Do you keep in contact and socialize with some of the local Navy people in town?

D.C.: They are my best friends. So many of the men served at the War College at the same time I did. And I knew their wives from social activities and when I came back I found that so many had either returned as I did or they just stayed here after they retired. And so these are my friends.

E.C.: There is a very active Navy community here.

D.C.: Very active.

E.C.: And of course you have all the facilities on the base that you have access to.

D.C.: Right. I feel I live in three cities really. This side of the island is one city. Certainly the colonial section is another city. It's a completely different looking city and then I have the Naval base which is another city.

E.C.: Yes, Newport has these little communities.

D.C.: For a small city it has definite areas that are very appealing.

E.C.: It does. Is there anything else you want to comment on or add to this interview?

D.C.: No, I feel as though we've had a long interview.

E.C.: Yes, almost an hour and a half. Well, I want to thank you very much for your remarks on your naval career.

D.C.: We'll see what we can edit out.

E.C.: And we appreciate it very much. And I know it will be a fine contribution to our oral history program. Thank you.

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