

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE

NEWPORT, RI

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

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WAVES

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ALMA R. NYGAARD KILLAM

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THE HISTORY OF THE WAVES

Interviewee: Alma R. Nygaard Killam

Interviewer: Evelyn M. Cherpak

Subject: The History of the WAVES

Date: April 22, 1996

C: This is the first oral history interview with Alma Ruth Killam for the WAVES in World War II Oral History Project. My name is Evelyn Cherpak. Today's date is April 22, 1996. The interview is taking place in my office in Mahan Hall. Mrs. Killam is from Temple, Texas, and her son, Tim Killam, is a student at the Naval War College here in Newport, Rhode Island. Mrs. Killam, I'm so pleased that you consented to come in today, taking part of your vacation time for this interview on your career in Photo Intelligence in the WAVES in World War II. I'd like to begin by asking you where and when you were born?

K: I was born in Highland Park, Michigan, which is in the middle of Detroit. It's a little city by itself, but it is Highland Park, Michigan, February 19, 1924.

C: What did your father do for a living there?

K: My dad, in his early years, was an ornamental plasterer. His father had been a sculpturer and plasterer and he was the artistic one in the family. They did that ornate, ornamental plastering in theaters and buildings in Detroit with the ornate decorations on the ceilings, etc. After that he was a salesman.

C: Oh, that's a lost art, the ornamental plastering. That's beautifully done.

K: After the Depression it was not popular, and then we moved to Lansing. In Lansing, he was a salesman.

C: What did your mother do?

C: Did you have any sisters or brothers?

K: One sister, fifteen months older than I.

C: You spent your growing up years in Lansing, I assume.

K: I was seven when we moved to Lansing.

C: Did you graduate from high school there?

K: Yes, Central High School.

C: And in what year?

K: 1942, January. That is when we had split classes.

C: So, the war was in full swing, or just starting by that time. Do you remember what your reaction was to Pearl Harbor? Can you tell us about it?

K: That was a Sunday afternoon and I had gone to a movie and, strangely enough, the movie I had gone to was "Dive Bomber", which took place at Pearl Harbor and was about Navy aviators. We came out of the movie and got home and found out that they had bombed Pearl Harbor, and so I have always connected those two. We knew people who had sons, classmates who had brothers there, and we knew that this was going to change our lives.

C: Were you shocked or horrified by this?

K: Oh, yes. We had current events every Friday in our Social Studies class, and on current events day we each had to make a report. On the Friday before, December 5th, mine had been about the Japanese and how things were calming down with peace in the Pacific, and there wasn't going to be a war or anything; then all of a sudden along came Sunday when the Japs bombed. So we were aware that there was unrest there, but I don't think we had the same feeling about what was going on in the adult world that children do now.

C: Yes, I think that's the case.

K: You know, we were in school and we were getting ready to graduate and it was a school assignment and that was it.

C: You weren't thinking that seriously about the world situation. What did you decide to do after you graduated from high school?

K: Unfortunately, I had originally planned to go to college, but before I went to college I let it go and wanted to get married, and the last thing in my mind that I was interested in was going to college. I got a job and worked, and we were going to get married, and then it didn't work out.

C: Where did you work, may I ask?

K: OK. I worked at State Police Post first and then I went to work for Abrams Instrument and Aerial Survey Corporation.

C: And what did they do?

K: The Aerial Survey part did aerial surveys for companies, and the instrument part made photographic instruments that interpreted the photos.

C: How interesting.

K: I should have brought that because as a matter of fact, this is a little aside, Tim had someone who is doing photo intelligence now who was going to talk to me. I don't know who he set up, so I brought all the folders and everything about the instruments that they made.

C: That's interesting.

K: I didn't think about bringing that. You might have been interested to see that.

C: To what use were they put? Who used these instruments?



K: At the time, before the war came along, it was companies. They used them for geologic surveys because what they would do, of course, is take the aerial photographs and then using the instruments they would make a three dimensional picture, similar to the old stereoscopes. The photographic instruments were used to plot the elevation so that they could actually make a map, and that was what I did when I got into it.

C: Oh, so you were involved in map making.

K: Not in the company there. I was a secretary. I became involved in it in the service.

C: Oh, I see. And did you stay there until you decided to enlist in the Navy?

K: Yes, I was there until I enlisted in the Navy.

C: Did your family have any Navy connections?

K: No.

C: Were any of your friends or relatives in the service?

K: No, my grandfather had been in the Civil War. But that was the only one, and one uncle was in World War I. But they were Army.

C: How did you hear about the WAVES? Do you remember how you heard about them?

K: Well, of course, we were aware that women were going into the service. I hadn't really particularly thought about it until after I broke up with my fiancé and I realized I wasn't going to get married. At that time we were frozen on our jobs. You couldn't just say, "I want to go someplace else to work." But going into the service I could leave my job and go off by myself.

C: What attracted you to the Navy, versus, let's say, the Army or Marines or Coast Guard services for women?

K: I'm a twenty-year old; I'm a blonde; the Navy blue was much more attractive on a blue eyed blonde than the Army khaki or the Marine whatever.

C: Green, I guess.

K: Green. That seems like a very shallow reason for picking the Navy, but I liked the Navy blue.

C: Well, that's good. A lot of the gals said the uniform was very attractive. Did you have any strong feelings of patriotism? Was that part of your motivation, would you say?

K: Well, yes, because (I didn't have any brothers) I graduated a month after Pearl Harbor. I graduated in January, as I said, in 1942, and obviously the boys in our class were going off. There were some who had been in the Reserves; in fact, some had been called up before the actual graduation ceremony and there was a thought that these guys were going. And, yes, there was a feeling of being a part of our times, too.

C: Serving your country and becoming involved in the war effort.

When did you join the WAVES?

K: When? I enlisted in September 1944 and then went on active duty in November, November 15th.

C: Where did you go to enlist? Where was your recruiting center?

K: Detroit, Michigan, but that was where I went for the induction. I can't remember where I got an application, at our local post office, I'm sure, and submitted it, but I actually went to Detroit for induction and physicals and all that.

C: Did you have to take tests there, too?

K: Yes.

C: Beside the physical and the induction. Did any of your friends, any of your female classmates join along with you?

K: No, this was something that I just decided to do myself and did on my own; however, in November when I actually was leaving and got to the railroad station I found that a girl I had known at church who had graduated in June, after I graduated in January, was also going and she had joined completely on her own. So we went to boot camp together.

C: How did your parents feel about your joining the WAVES?

K: Well, they were very surprised. Obviously it wasn't something that I had discussed with them or let them know that I was even interested in or anything. I just went in one day and called my mother and I said, "I just joined the Navy."

C: What was her reaction?

K: Well, she was very surprised obviously. I don't think she was particularly pleased, but they did sign the papers, because as I was twenty I had to have my parents consent. They did sign, yes.

C: Oh, that's good.

K: And afterward they were very proud of the fact that I was in.

C: And you brought along the little plaque or cloth that they hung in their window.

K: Yes, Yes. They had a service flag and anyone who had a son or a daughter in the service could get a service flag; for those who had lost a son or daughter it was a gold star. Ours was a blue star.

C: And that was hung in the window and indicated you were in the Navy. Did your sister join the service?

K: No, she was married and had a child before this all happened. I think she was always a little envious that I had the opportunity to do something like this.

C: It's exciting going away.

K: It was.

C: Was there any publicity in the local papers about your joining the WAVES?

K: I don't remember any. There may have been a line or two saying we had left, but there was no specific thing that I recall.

C: Did you have any parties before you were sent off?

K: No. I didn't have any farewell, going away parties, best of luck to you or anything like that.

C: How did you get to Hunter College and boot camp? How did you travel there, and did you travel en masse with other WAVES?

K: That was exciting too because we didn't travel a lot in those days, and I'd never been out of Michigan. Ardeth was a girl that I've mentioned, Ardeth Fox, who was with me. We met at the station. We took the train to Detroit and by ourselves had to

transfer to the other station which was an adventure. Neither one of us had ever done this before. We transferred to the other station where we joined another group. So, on the trip from Detroit to New York, we were part of a group and had a leader with all of our papers and all that sort of thing, and this was an overnight trip on the Pullman. I'd never slept on a train before and that was an adventure for all of us. I don't think many of the girls had ever done that before. Then we reached New York and took the subway to the Bronx, and like you see in the picture, there we are with our little suitcases walking down the middle of the street, en masse, and, of course, they had to stop the traffic and everything. They had the street blocked off for a new contingent of the WAVES, marching from the subway station to Hunter College.

C: So you were indoctrinated already with the marching.

K: Oh, yes.

C: What was your initial impression of Hunter College?



K: It was big and it was different. Of course, I grew up, as I say, in Lansing, which is three miles from East Lansing where Michigan State is. I was used to a college campus but not like the Hunter College campus. Being in the heart of a city was a big difference.

C: Oh, absolutely.

K: We were quartered not in dorms but in apartment buildings and obviously the furniture of the apartments was not there; it was the stripped down double deck bunks and table and chair.

C: Very spartan, I'm sure.

K: Very much.

C: How many roommates did you have in the apartment?

K: There were eight of us. This was a two bedroom apartment. So there was a double bunk in each of the bedrooms and then the living room had . . .

C: Did that have bunks in it?

K: Yes, that's right. They had bunks there too, but that's where our tables were. I was trying to think because of the living room. Yes, there were.

C: So you had eight roommates. Did you make any lasting friendships with these women?

K: No, we were friends while we were there, but we all scattered, and I've never had any contact. I still remember them, but, no, we didn't have any contact with them afterwards.

C: That's what so many of the gals said.

K: Yes. If you're going to a service school with someone, I think you're more apt to keep in touch, but we all scattered.

C: Sure, going to different duty stations. How was your day structured during boot camp? Do you remember?

K: I don't remember a whole day. I remember parts of what we did. We got up early in the morning for muster and then going and rushing and getting yourself ready and your bed made and your cubicle all cleaned up and everything before you go to mess.

C: Did you march to mess?

K: Oh, yes. We marched everywhere. We assembled in front of our own apartment building and marched everywhere. We went as a group and, of course, we had mess and then we started classes and I can't remember specifically, but I remember we had identification classes on the plane and ship identification, that sort of thing. We had some current events. I can remember hearing about some things that happened in the war while we were in boot camp. Of course, that was when the Battle of the Bulge was going on and they said "there is something that is very strategic, very important that's going on at this time," but we didn't study it in depth or anything like that.

C: Right. So this was about November '44.

K: November, yes.

C: When you were at Hunter College.

K: We were what they called the holiday regiment. We were there for Thanksgiving and Christmas and just missed New Year's.

C: That's kind of an interesting time to be there. Do you remember what other classes you took besides ship and airplane identification?

K: Oh, I'm sure we had some other service connected protocol and that sort of thing. I know at somewhere along the way we were taught that. I don't remember specifically sitting in a class, but we must have.

C: Did you have exams?

K: Oh, yes, we had some tests.

C: Were your instructors women, Navy WAVES, or were they men?  
Do you remember?

K: I can't remember. I think probably they were mostly women.  
There may have been some men.

C: By that time I think women may have been prepared for that  
kind of thing. Did you find the classes easy, challenging, or  
difficult?

K: Well, school has always been easy for me, so I enjoyed it.  
It wasn't something that I worried about studying and taking  
tests and that sort of thing. Maybe that's why I don't really  
remember it so much.

C: No, it wasn't difficult. Do you remember the Navy food? The  
Navy chow? Did you have any comments on that?

K: Well, I gained a lot of weight. I was starving all the time  
I was there. Probably because of the marching and all. I  
cleaned up everything on my plate and then from everybody around

me that didn't want theirs, even lamb which I hate, but I even ate lamb stew, two helpings.

C: Did you like the marching and the drilling?

K: Oh, I did. I loved it. I took to all that side of it. I really enjoyed it. And, of course, being there at that time of year. It would probably have been a lot different had I been there in July when it was hot and miserable, but in November it was brisk and it was neat; I was from a northern state so was used to the snow and the cold weather. I can remember the coldest part though was when we would march around the reservoir and that was lower, flatter, and you didn't have the trees and the apartment buildings to protect you as much and it was cold marching there. But our drilling was mostly done in the armory. We didn't use the drill field. And our graduation ceremonies and everything were in the armory.

C: Did you ever have a chance to meet Captain Amsden or to see him?

K: No. I didn't see or meet anybody.

C: Mildred McAfee Horton?

K: No. No. The high level people. I just was never in the position to come into contact with them.

C: Right. I wondered if they had come to your graduation ceremony.

K: No, they probably did, but this is graduation and you're just concerned with keeping in step and turning your eyes right when you're supposed to have your eyes right and not really worrying about what dignitaries might be there.

C: Did you have physical ed.?

K: Yes, we did. I can't remember what all we did. I'm sure we did some push-ups and stretching and things like that. I remember it being more as exercise. I don't remember playing

games as much like basketball, volleyball, that sort of thing.  
We may have but that was not something that I remember.

C: Did you like the discipline of military life?

K: Oh, yes.

C: Did you have any trouble adjusting to the regimentation of  
military life?

K: Well, I didn't because I'm not a rebel. And I know one of  
the girls in my high school class had gone in earlier and  
couldn't take it. She couldn't take the discipline and she got  
out within that six week period. It seems as though if you  
really wanted to get out I think you could in that six week  
period when you were in boot camp. It just was not going to be  
and she just couldn't tolerate it.

C: Your cup of tea.

K: But as I say I really enjoyed it.



C: Did you have any time off, any free time on the weekends in New York?

K: We had boot leave one weekend. Weekend boot leave was a Saturday afternoon and a Sunday, and we were coached very thoroughly before we went. And, you know, that was one of the things that I remember about boot camp that seems to be so different than the women in service today. Because it was impressed on us, actually we must have had some classes on this, because it was impressed on us you are a lady first and then a sailor. And you are expected to conduct yourself as a lady at all times because you are a representative of U.S. Navy women, and we kind of had the feeling that we were a little bit, not on display, but were kind of aware this was the beginning. Even though I went in later, there hadn't been a long period of time that women had been in the service and we were kind of on trial. How we acted was going to have a big effect on how women were going to be perceived in the service.

C: Absolutely. I think that's so true. What did you do on that boot weekend off? Do you remember? Did you go into New York City?

K: Went into New York City, and don't forget this is December at Christmas, so I went Christmas shopping in the big New York stores, which I enjoyed. There was a group of us who went and oh, we did go around; we went to the Stage Door Canteen. There was a USO center that we went into and met up with some other service people, but I didn't go to tourist places, the Statue of Liberty or anything like that.

C: Did anything unusual or memorable happen while you were in boot camp? Or anything amusing?

K: I haven't even thought about boot camp for years and you look back and it's a blur. I don't remember anything special other than just enjoying it and liking it.

C: Oh, good.

K: And I was so glad that I had joined the Navy, even though it was such a short time. Maybe I wasn't in long enough to get disenchanted with it.

C: Well, you graduated six weeks after you went to Hunter. How was your specialty determined and just what was your specialty?

K: Well, we had tests to see what our aptitude was and I did very well, except I'm not mechanically minded, where you have all these gears and which one you turn to get this one to turn, that isn't my line but all of the academic ones I do know about. But I had one thought in my mind. I wanted something different. I didn't want to be a secretary and I didn't want to be in clerical and so I wanted to do something that was different. When I found that I had been in a civilian job that gave me a little bit of knowledge about something that seems a little bit more, a new field, I tried to get into that; however, there was no specialty school. There was no school for that particular thing, photogrammetry, which was photo intelligence. And most of the people that went into that had had more civilian experience in that particular field.

C: Now, you did enter that field, the field of photo intelligence.

K: Well, that's what they sent me to Washington for. But the rating for that was specialist X striker, and that was not listed for me.

C: You got to Washington. You were assigned to Washington because of your interest in this field and your aptitude. Where were you assigned to in Washington?

K: When I first got there, they didn't really know what I was supposed to be doing in Washington and I was assigned early on to West Potomac Park to the records section. I guess they didn't know what else to do with me.

C: That almost sounds like a yeoman job.

K: It was, yes. And so I worked there. And then I kept trying to say can I get into this other field. And so I am sure that I

made the request. I don't specifically remember it, but obviously I would have to have requested it, and then I think it was later in May that they did finally send me over to Receiving Station, the Navy Yard at Anacostia, the Photo Intelligence Center.

C: Well, let's double back to West Potomac Park. You were in the records center and what did you do there? What was your assignment?

K: Filing the records when the ships come in, keeping track, putting things into the servicemen's jackets, all of the routine, just exactly what I didn't want.

C: Yes, the clerical end of it. Did you work with many other WAVES there?

K: In that office there were probably about five of us, yes.

C: Where were you domiciled during that time frame?

K: Oh, that was, I liked that part of it, when I was there at West Potomac Park; it was right on the Potomac River. They were temporary barracks that backed up to the Lincoln Memorial and the Jefferson Memorial. We were right next to the tidal basin with the Japanese Cherry trees in bloom in the spring and it was beautiful and, of course, being in that particular area I was able to walk and see much more of Washington. I was glad I was there at that period of time.

C: What kind of barracks did you live in? Can you describe what your barracks was like?

K: It was just kind of temporary wooden buildings and we had cubicles that, let's see, there were four because there were two double bunks and then we had our closet. It was just a closet to hang our few things and it was very sparse, but then there was the quarterdeck in the main part of the building where they had a lounge area and tables and they had a little area where they had booths and you could get soft drinks and whatever they had in the machines and you could go and have Coke or whatever. That sort of thing, so there was an area that was a lounge area and if you

had a date you could go back there and have time to sit at a table and whatever.

C: Did you have mess facilities there? Where did you eat?

K: We must have. Yes, we must have had a mess hall.

C: Because you would have had to eat there, I would think.

K: Well, that was right along with it. Our quarters were right where I worked so it was all along there.

C: Oh, I see, kind of an extension of that area.

K: With several buildings, but I didn't have to get on a street car and go across town or anything to my duty station. Where I lived was right there at the duty station.

C: Yes, you were right nearby. Do you remember your roommates from that time frame?

K: I do remember one. Audrey Stenard was from Appleton, Wisconsin. She was my bunk mate at that time and she was going with a serviceman she had met when she had gone to Walter Reed Hospital to go around and see the servicemen. She had been there quite a bit longer than I had. He had been a glider pilot and had lost a leg and she eventually married him. He was from Rhode Island, by the way.

C: Oh, for heaven's sakes.

K: Yes, Providence, I think.

C: Have you ever kept in contact with her?

K: No, no.

C: Do you remember how many hours per day you worked at this time frame? Did you work on weekends?

K: Probably eight hours. No, I didn't have weekend duty.



C: No weekends?

K: No.

C: Do you remember what your pay was?

K: About sixty-five dollars a month. Something like that.

C: What was your rate?

K: I got to Seaman First Class. As I say, the next one was the strikers; the specialist X. Of course, the slots were all filled. That was one of the things about coming in that late in the war. Everything that was glamorous was already filled up.

C: Taken by those who had come in earlier.

K: The slots were filled.

C: What did you like about this assignment and what did you dislike about this assignment in the records section?

K: Well, I liked the people. The job was boring. But I liked the people. We had our Chief who was in charge of our little room which was about the size of this room, probably a little bit larger. She was a first class yeoman petty officer and she was a little short gal, and real nice. I enjoyed it. There were, I think, probably about three or four others of us who were there. It was a very congenial group.

C: Oh, that's good. Did you have much of a chance to see war time Washington?

K: When I was there, yes. I did go and, of course, I met my future husband two weeks after I got to Washington.

C: And how did you meet him?

K: Our barracks there at the WAVE Quarters was giving a dance and they invited servicemen from specific areas and he happened to be a Navy diver who was stationed down at Solomons Island, Maryland. And his group was invited to come up and that was the

only way they could get off base. So, of course, the guys were tickled to death to come up to Washington to a dance and that's where I met him.

C: Oh, how interesting.

K: Of course, when we started dating I went to a lot more places than I would have had I been by myself.

C: Sure. Where did you go in Washington?

K: Oh, we did the Smithsonian from top to bottom, including the old building, the old castle, and I was very disappointed when we went to Washington later on and I found out that was just administration offices. We did that and we did the memorials, the Jefferson and the Lincoln that were close by, and the Washington Monument, museums, and the Capitol and all of the things that we had read about. I was thrilled to be in Washington.

C: Oh, I'm sure; it's an exciting atmosphere.

K: I was very young. Right in the middle are places I had studied about for years and here I am. There's the cherry blossoms, and it was just a very thrilling time for me. You can tell I was very naive in those days.

C: Well, it was nice to be enthusiastic about something.

K: Oh, I was.

C: What was the aura in wartime Washington? Was there a sense of urgency and crisis?

K: I wasn't in an area that I would have come into contact with a lot of the things on that line. When we went out we were more like tourists and ran into other tourists. It was exciting. I had the sense of being where things are going on. And, as a matter of fact, before I went in, when I worked there at Abrams, one of the girls I worked with had gone to Washington. She knew somebody there and she came back and was telling us all about it and she said you know it is such a wild place. She said, "I'm

going on the bus and the second day I'm there the bus driver doesn't know where to go and I'm telling him where the bus route is." It was kind of an upsetting time. But I'm sure it wasn't all like that.

C: No, no.

K: It was just that kind of an exciting atmosphere.

C: Yes, a lot of things going on; this is where things are happening.

K: Right, and you know, too, they said what was the deal. There's eleven girls to every man in Washington and I thought I was real fortunate I found one right away.

C: Where was your husband from in the states?

K: He was from Gardener, Maine.

C: Oh, a New Englander then.

K: Yes.

C: Oh, did he have an exciting wartime career?

K: He had much more than I did. He was a sailor; he was a Navy diver when I met him. And he had been a part of an underwater demolition team and they went in ahead of the invasions and blew up what was there and whatever. He was in Normandy and was there and then went over to Saipan. He was at Casablanca and most of the places that they had that type of thing. He was first class when I met him, first class petty officer. He was a Navy salvage diver. The old hard hats. And that was something new to me, too.

C: Did you keep up with the war news through newspapers and news reels or movies when you were in Washington?

K: Didn't take a newspaper. I would occasionally see it there in the barracks. Most of us were too busy doing our own thing to really be that concerned about it, although we were aware of

things that happened and did know what was going on and when VE Day came along, we knew what was going on and that sort of thing.

C: Sure, sure. How did you manage to get out of the records office and get over to photo intelligence in the Navy Yard in May of '45?

K: I can't really remember, but I'm sure that I must have requested it. Probably pestered them a little bit. Because I wasn't really happy with the work. I liked where I was living. I liked the people, but it wasn't what I had expected a Navy career to be.

C: Right. So you got yourself over to the Navy Yard in Anacostia. And just what did you do there for the next six months in photo intelligence?

K: Well, when I first went in, as I said, I had, as a result of where I worked as a civilian, taken advantage of their classes at Abrams Instrument Company. They had classes for Marine Corps fellows coming through learning this photo intelligence

interpretation. So I had taken advantage of evening classes to learn the instruments and how they worked. I wasn't an expert at all, but anyway that's what they put me in. At first was the tracing of the altitude. Like you have a mountain and you got your stereoscopic pictures and you look and the instrument actually can trace the height and so that was what I was doing at that time. Unfortunately, this was an office that there were four fellows in.

C: Were you the only woman?

K: And I was the only woman. And here I am the naive little girl. I wasn't one that was going to be keeping up with the guys. I think that I kind of cramped their style because they toned down what I'm sure was their usual language and camaraderie and I think that they felt a little bit hampered at my being there.

C: Were they ever overtly hostile?



K: No, just the opposite. That's what I mean; there wasn't harassment in those times. And the guys, at least anybody I ever came in contact with, did not have all this sexual innuendo they have such a time over now. Just the opposite. They went out of their way not to say something or do something that was going to be offensive to a woman.

C: More polite.

K: Exactly.

C: And respectful.

K: Exactly. And I think that after a while they were a little bit uncomfortable being on their best behavior is what I'm trying to say. They probably said, "Can't you find someplace else to put her?"

C: What was your work? What exactly did you do there?

K: Well, that's what I'm saying, in that particular office, that was what that particular section did. They were doing basically the same thing I was doing, but were much better at it because they had been doing it. But I'm sure they said, "Can't you put her into something else?"

C: So you were there for a good six months.

K: Yes. Then, eventually, I went to a different section in the PIC.

C: Oh, you did?

K: Oh, yes. That was my first experience, but then I ended up in the map painting room because what they did at the photo intelligence center was take the photographs, go through all this drawing and then eventually they made a mold, because the end product was rubber three dimensional maps of whatever the area was, the terrain. They would be used in an invasion so that before any of the troops or the pilots went in they'd see the actual structure. And so I ended up in the finishing area where

where we painted the maps after they had gone through all this process of plotting and then they made the mold that was the right three dimension and then they would use that and use the latex rubber and when that set then came out. Of course, it was just a green field and so then the final step was painting. And I was in the detail painting which was interesting. Because we would say, "oh, this is a good looking one." I remember we did Tokyo and Imperial Palace and the big long pool, whatever it was, and so it was an interesting thing.

C: It does sound kind of interesting. Now did you work with men or other women in that office?

K: Both, when I was in finishing, and there was more camaraderie there because you intermingled with the people more. On the first assignment, all I ever saw were those four fellows. In the finishing section we were much more relaxed because it was a job that was exacting, but not in the same way as when you were looking through an instrument. That was an interesting time and, of course, the people were quite artistic. As a matter of fact, I do have our paper from the Receiving Station.

C: Oh, you have your newspaper, The Salvo. Oh, isn't that great!

K: And that was from the Receiving Station and there was much more there than PIC; there was the Fire Control and there were several other schools there and I will show you this one place. These two shots. That's from the photo intelligence.

C: Oh, well, I'll have to xerox this. That will be very nice. It'll be great. I'll take that to xerox, if you don't mind, when we finish. So you stayed there through October?

K: Yes.

C: 1945.

K: Yes.

C: Well, let's double back a little bit because I'd like to find out how you reacted to VE Day in May '45. Do you remember the events surrounding that?

K: Well, unfortunately, VE Day came along just at the time I was going on leave. I was getting ready to leave the next day, so that I didn't get in on all the excitement and everything. I didn't have as much of the excitement as I might have, had I been just at a regular working time.

C: Where were you going on leave?

K: Home, to Lansing, and, as a matter of fact, Steve went with me, so that was an interesting time.

C: To meet your parents, obviously.

K: Yes.

C: Do you remember VJ Day in August '45 and the events surrounding that and your reaction?

K: VJ Day was a little different. Again, I was at Bethesda Naval Hospital having my tonsils out when VJ Day came along.

C: Oh, my heavens.

K: Yes, because that had been scheduled and I didn't know the war was going to end then.

C: Of course not.

K: We were married in July, the 13th, Friday the 13th, and they announced the atomic bomb on the Monday, I think, right after that weekend. I had been having trouble and the doctor said, "well, we better take your tonsils out," so I was in Bethesda when VJ Day actually came along, but I hadn't had my tonsils out yet. I was just there waiting my turn so they said, "well, you can have leave, if you have not had the surgery yet," and so, you know, wartime Washington. My first thought was to get with my husband. I rushed over to our apartment. In the meantime, he

had rushed to the hospital to see me, so we never did get together on VJ Day. But it was a madhouse.

C: Oh, I'm sure it was.

K: Oh, yes.

C: What was going on? Can you describe the atmosphere?

K: Oh, people in the streets. I didn't get into the excitement as much as I would have had I not been trying to get to my husband of six weeks. But I remember being on the street car and it stopped because there would be so many people. But the way you see it in the movies, that's the way it was and I'm sure New York was the same.

C: Oh, yes, lots of jubilation at the end of the war.

K: Oh, yes.

C: I meant to ask you when you were at the Navy Yard were you billeted in the same place that you were at the records center or did you have to change?

K: Oh, I changed, because this was across the river in Anacostia. I was in the barracks that were there at the receiving station, because they had a WAVE barracks area there.

C: Oh, okay, so you had to transfer obviously.

K: Yes. I was completely away from West Potomac.

C: And then when you were married you had found an apartment?

K: Yes. Well, actually it was a room. Apartments in wartime Washington were very, very scarce. But we had just a room there and then later on we did find an apartment. Not as nice as we would have like to have had, but it at least had a kitchen.

C: Right. Did you have to have any special permission as a WAVE to marry during your service?



K: I'm sure that I would have had to. I don't know that we had to have permission to marry. We had to have permission if we wanted to wear a wedding dress, to go out of uniform, and so I had to get that with permission.

C: Where were you married?

K: Married at the base, the receiving station at the chapel in the Navy Yard.

C: Who officiated?

K: And this was another thing I was particularly pleased with. The chaplain on our base happened to be Francis B. Sayer, Jr., who later became dean of the Washington National Cathedral, and who was Woodrow Wilson's grandson.

C: Oh, that's quite an honor.

K: That was quite special and we were able to get his picture with us after the ceremony.

C: And you wore a civilian dress?

K: Not a big wedding dress; I had a street length dress that I bought with the idea, "well, I can wear this later," which, of course, I never did. But it was dressy and we had just the two attendants. Steve's best man was one of his fellow divers who came up from Solomons and the girl who had gone from my hometown with me, Ardeth, was my maid of honor because she had ended up in Washington at the Navy Yard across the river. She went into IBM and was doing the early data processing.

C: Well, that's interesting.

K: She was able to be my maid of honor.

C: Oh, how nice.

K: And we are still friends by the way. She lives in Santa Maria, California, and so I'm in touch with her and I always think when I get to California I'm going to get to see her, but I haven't.

C: Well, you might. Coming soon.

K: But, well, we still are friends, yes.

C: Oh, that's great.

K: And incidentally she married a fellow who was at the fire control station on the base where I was.

C: Oh, isn't that interesting.

K: So we each married Navy men.

C: When was your husband discharged from the service?

K: Oh, he was discharged on October 5, 1945. When the war ended points were given toward discharge, so many points for service time, etc. Steve had lost two ships, had been sunk. He had survived two ships sinking so that was extra points and with his time in and everything he was able to be discharged in October. I was discharged two weeks later because I was married to a discharged service man.

C: You were discharged, I assume, in Washington?

K: Yes.

C: What was the procedure that you had to follow for that?

K: Well, they had a regular ceremony. Of course I had to apply for it. And give the reasons and whatever because it wasn't a matter of the war is over so everybody goes home. They had to have an orderly procedure and so it was specific reasons why you went. Had I not been married I'm sure I would have stayed in probably for several years because I did enjoy it that much, and

had I not been married I'm sure I would have made more of a career out of it.

C: Some women did stay in a little bit longer. The Navy made provisions for women to stay in beyond the duration and six months and, of course, in 1948 the legislation was passed, The Women's Armed Service Integration Act, so you could have rejoined.

K: Yes.

C: Did you receive any medals when you were discharged?

K: No. All I got was the lame duck.

C: The ruptured duck?

K: Yes. The ruptured duck, that's right, ruptured duck.

C: Were you happy or sad to leave the service?

K: I was sad in a sense that it was cut short. Because I did enjoy it and at the same time happy to get out and get on with our lives and settle down being a housewife which, of course, that was the thing in those days. I did work for a period of time but not for a career.

C: Exactly. Did you have any preconceived expectations when you entered the WAVES as to what the organization would be like or what your opportunities would be like?

K: I don't think I really thought that much about that. I don't think that I figured I can go and get a career. I don't think that was something that I was concerned with at that point.

C: Did you feel that the WAVES was a smoothly run organization?

K: Oh, yes, as far as I knew. I didn't have anything to compare it with. And it certainly seemed to me. There were little things that people didn't like; that's always true. Some people are going to be unhappy with anything that comes along.

C: That's right.

K: But I guess I've been the one that, this is the way it is. I know after VJ Day we were still there and still working, of course, but obviously they didn't need invasion maps after that so what are they going to do with these kids that are working. Well, we were helping with other things, and I knew they would be unloading for instance and they'd have something like the old fire brigade where we'd get in line and pass it from hand to hand. Some people got very upset about that and I didn't.

C: You got to do it?

K: Yes.

C: Did you ever hear of any discipline problems in the WAVES?

K: Not that I recall. As I say, maybe some of those things would have come had I been in longer.

C: You didn't encounter any?

K: No.

C: Did you know of anyone who was asked to leave the WAVES because of pregnancy?

K: There was one girl, yes. I didn't know her. She was just a part of the group. This is when we were in Washington and obviously she was pregnant. That's what they should have done, particularly for those times, and she was the only one I knew of.

C: Did you ever encounter anyone being asked to leave because of homosexuality?

K: No, of course, in those days we didn't look for it. I remember when we were in boot camp one of the crew was obviously. I mean we felt that he was, but there was nothing ever said. It was not a subject that anybody worried about or talked about. It wasn't a big deal.



C: That's right. Did the WAVES have a strong sense of esprit de corps and camaraderie?

K: I think we did more in boot camp, the group that you are with. Now as a full group, I don't know. In boot camp, we all had a real good group. Maybe that's one of the reasons why. Because we all were enthusiastic about it and enjoyed being there. And we were close.

C: Did the WAVES experience in the war change or redirect your life in any way?

K: Well, for one thing, marrying someone from another area. Had I stayed in Lansing, chances are I would have married someone from Lansing and I would have stayed there and my family would have been raised and I would have my children around me and my grandchildren around me.

C: Yes.

K: Instead of being scattered all over.

C: That's true. Did the war make you more independent and self reliant?

K: I think so because this is something that you do on your own and to enlist particularly as I did, all by myself, with no priorities, no one with me. Now in my case I had a good life growing up and everything and I didn't have any problems, but if you have anything in your life that you want to just put behind you, you go into the service. When I went in, you start completely from scratch. They don't care who you knew; they don't care what you did particularly. I mean you start pretty much fresh. And I was at the top of my class, but if the person next to me had been at the bottom of the class they don't care. It's what you do now. And what you make of yourself. You know when you go off to college that isn't always easy to do because you carry what you have been before.

C: Oh, that's true. Do you feel that the WAVES experience broadened your horizons?

K: Oh, obviously.

C: Did you enjoy meeting people from many different parts of the country, other WAVES?

K: Well, I'll tell you one thing. You said, "Did it change my life?" I was very quiet. I was the one who was the studious one and did beautifully in school. I had a lot of friends but not a lot of social life. I could talk to somebody one on one but in a group I didn't open my mouth. I married an extrovert. My husband was one who never met a stranger, no matter where. I was on the wall at the dance and he came and picked me out. Well, you can imagine what that did for me and so, as a result, after fifty years with living with him, I got to where I could say something to somebody. So, yes, it did and that is something I'm sure I wouldn't have had because I don't think I would have married someone like that. I don't think I would have been in a position to have dated somebody who was that much different from me.

C: But it worked out all right.

K: It worked, yes. After a few years, he said he couldn't get a word in edgewise.

C: That's a riot.

K: It did change my life. Very much.

C: Kind of altered your personality a little bit.

K: Exactly.

C: Oh, that's interesting. Did you feel that what women were expected to do and to be changed when the war was over? Do you think it stimulated women to go into careers or to have more self confidence?

K: Again, I think that probably when I went in I met Steve so early that I didn't really get into being a working WAVE to see how that is. However, the Chief that I told you was the head of our particular section there in the records room, she was saving

very diligently for her college education and she had over a thousand dollars saved when I knew her, which in those days that was a pretty princely amount. And she very definitely was planning to go on to a career. Now, she's the only one that I remember actually talking with, discussing something like that with. The rest of us were just kind of going along day to day without really thinking that much at that point about a future career. But, as I say, I think had I not been married and gotten out as soon as I did I think very definitely I would have liked to have stayed in. The job that I really wanted, unfortunately, I was ineligible for, because I have always been a puzzle person. I would love to have gone into cryptography.

C: Oh, yes. And WAVES were in cryptography.

K: Yes. Unfortunately, my dad was born in Denmark and, although he had come to this country when he was ten years old, eight years old anyway, just a small boy, and he had no connection with Denmark, you had to have been a second generation American to go into that sensitive area.

C: Oh, I see.

K: It's unfortunate because my scores would have put me into it and it is something I would really like to have done. But that's something I couldn't do anything about.

C: Right. That was beyond your control.

K: And for security reasons in that type of an assignment they couldn't have someone who maybe still had ties to. . .

C: A foreign country, exactly.

K: Exactly.

C: Well, did you write letters home to your parents when you were in the WAVES about your experiences?

K: Yes.

C: Did they save any of those?

K: Evidently not.

C: Oh, that's too bad. There's a great interest in women's letters from that time frame as historical evidence.

K: As a matter of fact, just a little aside, my children, I've never thrown away any of their letters or cards or anything and my desk was stuffed. So as I've been cleaning out things I have been sending back to the kids all of the letters and cards and everything that they had sent us. For my older son - his kids get a real kick of that. He said it's just like a diary.

C: Oh, it is. That's great. That's wonderful. I hope they keep them. Where did you end up living after the war?

K: After we were discharged, we went back to Michigan. As I say, I was from Lansing which is college area, and Steve started going to Michigan State and then I went to work.

C: Where did you work then?

K: I'm trying to think. When I went back, I worked for the State of Michigan in the Social Welfare Department and then I went to work as a secretary again for Dail Steel Products, manufacturing plant.

C: How long did you stay in Lansing?

K: We were there three years and then Steve went back into the Army. We both still wanted adventure and whatever and going back into the Navy, he had been in the Navy Reserve, but he would have had to drop back down, and going into the Army he got a comparable rating to what he had been in the Navy. So he went in as Staff Sergeant.

C: Did he make a career of it?

K: No. He went on. Eventually, he got a commission and then when our kids were getting to the point where it was going to be school time and moving around we decided that when his term was up we left.



C: You left?

K: We left, yes.

C: And where did you settle at that point in time?

K: Well, we've moved around a lot. After deciding we didn't like to move around in the service, we went to Vermont and we were in Vermont and then we went to Michigan and then we went back up to Maine and then we went to Texas. So we have been kind of moving around. We've been in Texas twenty years.

C: Well, then you're settled there.

K: Yes. I guess that's going to be it.

C: That's going to be it. Did you attend any WAVE reunions after the war?

K: No, the first that I've had any contact with was when I worked there in Temple at the VA Hospital and they started a Women's Veterans Program and they are trying to do some things for the women veterans. I have been to a couple of those meetings and it's mostly WACS because we are right by Fort Hood so that we don't have nearly so many Navy women.

C: Sure.

K: There is no organization there. There probably is in Dallas and I imagine in bigger cities there is a contingency.

C: Do you have any other comments to make on your WAVE service in World War II?

K: Well, one thing that was interesting that I did have an opportunity to do when I was there in Washington, of course, President Roosevelt died, which was a big blow to everybody, but I did have the opportunity to march in his funeral procession.

C: Oh, that's interesting. How were you selected for that?

K: Well, they asked for volunteers, as a matter of fact. I thought that is something I really would like to do and so I volunteered and I was selected. I was in a group of WAVES who marched in his funeral procession, so that was a special thing to do.

C: Oh, absolutely, absolutely. That must have been very touching.

K: It was. The only thing that was unfortunate about it is I didn't get to see any of the funeral procession itself because, of course, we had our own unit there and we were waiting until our turn came. But it certainly was a historical time.

C: It was. It was a historic event and you were part of that, which is very interesting. I didn't know the WAVES marched in his funeral procession.

K: Yes, there was a group. And, as I say, they asked for volunteers. On Saturday, I'm thinking it was a Saturday. And a lot of people didn't want to give up weekend time.

C: Did you ever have a chance to see Eleanor Roosevelt?

K: No, I didn't.

C: She was involved with the WAVES.

K: Yes.

C: Supporter of them.

K: The other thing that I did have an opportunity to do then, remember on Roosevelt's birthday, they had the birthday balls. A group of us were able to go to some of the birthday balls. We did not see him but we saw a lot of notables and celebrities, and these were by invitation only. People went out of their way during the war to do things for service people and one fellow would be able to go in and people would give him their

invitations so that he could go back out and bring in some of the rest of us. We were gate crashers, if you want to put it that way.

C: At these birthday balls. Isn't that interesting. Did you have to wear your uniform?

K: Oh, yes. You did not go out of uniform if you were off your home turf, on your base. In fact, even on the base you didn't go around in civilian clothes. But, yes, it was uniform only and, of course, we got to service dances and things like that.

C: Did you ever meet any notables or rub shoulders with them?

K: Not personally. We would go to the USO areas and there would be big bands playing from time to time. Sometimes they would be bigger than others, obviously, and so we did see some personalities. But the ones that you see were not the ones we got to go to. Even in boot camp, mostly by the time we would have the opportunity to sign up, everything was filled up. Obviously, everybody wanted to go to see the notables.

C: Right.

K: And I don't think I was ever able when I was in boot camp to go to one of those.

C: Yes, they had Frank Sinatra and other people coming to entertain.

K: Yes. In fact, in that book it shows many of the people who came to entertain, but I was never able to get onto the list. Because that's a popular thing to do.

C: Oh, absolutely. The Navy gave you some entertainment.

K: Oh, yes.

C: Provided opportunities for you.

K: And, as I say, I am sure, had my career lasted longer there were a lot more things that I would have been able to tell you.

C: Oh, sure. Do you feel that the civilian perception of women in the WAVES was a positive perception?

K: Oh, yes. I don't think I ever had a feeling that I was resented because I was a woman in uniform. In fact, at that time you felt safer because the service was the thing and there was an entirely different atmosphere in World War II and I don't think it will ever be again. I don't think it ever has or ever could be the same, but you were set apart by being in uniform. When you were traveling, you were usually traveling under orders and even when you were on leave there was this special gate that the service people were allowed to board the plane or the trains before the civilians, and, of course, it was nice to be able to write that little "Free" up there in the corner on your envelope when you sent a letter home instead of putting a three cent stamp on.

C: Oh, so you had free postage?

K: We had free postage, yes.

C: That I didn't know.

K: Yes.

C: How interesting.

K: We could write, of course. You have your return address which is your service address and then up in the right hand corner you just write "Free" and that was your postage, free mail. So that was one of the little things.

C: Perks.

K: But I can remember going to one of the dances where I used to really go, three or four of us girls would go together. Well, there was one time that everybody else happened to hook up with somebody and I didn't and I walked home by myself at ten o'clock in Washington D.C., quite a distance and I was not the least bit afraid. No one messed with the uniform.



C: Right, right.

K: I mean that was just the times.

C: Right, oh, they were much, much different.

K: Yes.

C: So you think that civilians held you in high esteem?

K: I had the feeling that they did. I'm sure there were some who didn't, but I didn't encounter that.

C: Were you ever stopped on the street by civilians to congratulate you on your service?

K: No, it never went that far. No, I never had that experience; it would be something, wouldn't it?

C: Yes, it would be. Do you have any other memories you want to share with us today, Mrs. Killam, about your WAVE service?

K: Well, just as we're talking and speaking about being on the street and everything, our boot leave in New York City that I told you that we were pretty well versed before on how we were to conduct ourselves, and I'm sure you have heard this tale before about saluting. Oh, yes, that was drilled into us. If you have a doubt, you salute. So the doormen, of course, were saluted regularly, and anyone with "scrambled eggs" or a suspicion of it, as you never knew when it might be a foreign officer. We didn't know foreign officers, so here are these little WAVES trudging along and saluting everything that comes along that looks like, even resembles a uniform. So we were properly indoctrinated.

C: Oh, absolutely.

K: On how to comport ourselves. I hope that we did make a good impression on people.

C: Oh, I think that it did.

K: But one thing I might say, having two daughters going into the Navy. It was a little different even when they went in. Now they went in during Vietnam. They still had some of the feeling that we did of not being like the guys. When they went to boot camp, the men were on one side and the girls were on the other. They did not have boot camp together; they did not have co-ed dorms or anything like that. They were still treated more like ladies, but they have told me since that they did face some sexual harassment from the guys. So that there was that much change. They went in during the 70's and so in that twenty-five, thirty years there was a change in the attitude and, of course, now it's entirely different. I don't know that I care about having the girls go in now.

C: Right. The whole world has changed.

K: Exactly.

C: I think you know the men weren't that threatened by the WAVES because they were there for the war and six months, and they were not going to be taking their jobs permanently.

K: That was another thing I was going to say. When we went in, we went in to release a man to go and fight. When you asked about did I think of a career afterwards. No, I don't think I did because that wasn't what we went in for.

C: No, and the Navy didn't offer you that opportunity either.

K: No, because we were there to release a man so he could go and fight. The WAVES didn't go over and carry guns and fight, but we took the shore station duty so that the man who was there could go and fight.

C: Absolutely, so it's entirely different.

K: We didn't have the feeling that, and, of course, maybe I'm a little more aware of it, as I say, I live right by Fort Hood where the women are right with the men on everything that they do and are fighting to have more control and officer jobs.

C: More opportunities.

K: More opportunities to be higher on the ladder.

C: Combat opportunities.

K: Exactly, that's what they are fighting for is the combat opportunities.

C: Which is encroaching on their turf.

K: Yes, it's a whole different attitude.

C: Oh, it is.

K: So I'm glad I went in when I did. I was enthusiastic about it, but I wouldn't be as much now.

C: Yes, it's a different world.

K: It was.

C: Do you think your service in the WAVES inspired your daughters to join?

K: Actually they did not grow up with the idea of doing this.

C: Did you ever talk to them about your experiences?

K: Oh, yes. They knew that I had been in the WAVES, and, of course, that's where I met Steve. It had been a part of our lives in the sense that he went back in the service and everything so they had been exposed to service life and moving around and meeting new people. So that I don't know. They had not talked about this. My older daughter just said she wanted to go in the Navy. As a matter of fact, it had never occurred to us that she might be able to because she had rheumatic fever when she was a child. And we didn't know that she would be able physically and she's done beautifully, but she decided and then the younger one decided she wanted to also. The Air Force almost got her.

C: And your son is in the Air Force here at the Naval War College and then you had another son who you mentioned was in the Navy.

K: Yes, he was the first one who went in when he got out of high school and that was in '68. He went in the Navy. He went in submarines.

C: He did not make a career of it?

K: No, he was in probably about eight years, six or eight years, after he finished his enlistment period. He was on subs and was at Holyloch, Scotland, for a period of time and he had a chance to go around and see some things and different areas. At one point he was submerged for thirty days under the polar ice cap. I would have had claustrophobia.

C: Yes, I was just thinking about it.

C: So you are a service family. Your children have entered the service at least temporarily.

K: Yes. And our two daughters each married sailors.

C: A Navy family.

K: A Navy family. And the one daughter's husband is still in; he's due for retirement in two or three years, I think.

C: Very good. I've enjoyed interviewing you about your year in the WAVES in World War II. You've added to our body of information on this time frame and on the contributions of women to the service. I want to thank you very much.

K: Thank you. I have enjoyed it. Thank you for giving me the opportunity.

C: You're welcome. Mrs. Killam, as an addendum, we were talking about the spirit of the country, the spirit of unity in the United States during World War II. Can you comment at all on how the population was unified and how people in the service felt a great sense of patriotism at this time?



K: Well, the atmosphere of the times was so different. If I were going to be in a war period at all, World War II is one that people were different. I don't think it ever was before and I don't think it ever could be again--we were so unified. Everything was for the service people and the war effort, the little kids collecting things for the war effort. Mom and dad doing things for the war effort, the victory gardens, but the whole country with their attitude of working together for victory.

C: What about people in the factories, even if they weren't part of the armed services? What kind of contribution did they make?

K: Exactly. The people in the war plants were as enthusiastic, and they were working for the awards that were given for at home people who were working for things. The factories that got the big E for their excellence in their contribution to the war effort and the things that were done special for the service people. When your transportation, we were all on orders, when you would be going even home on leave and there would be this

special gate at the train station where the service people were allowed to board first because they had to get to their place wherever it might be and just the whole atmosphere. There were no protest marches; there were no strikes. I'm sure some people were not happy with the war. That's not the point, but the whole tenor of the times was we're going to win this war and right from Pearl Harbor it was such a shock to the country that we were just galvanized into action right away. And it lasted through the whole time. In fact, I like to see some of the old movies that were made. If you see a war movie that was made in '42 or '43, you didn't know how the war was going to end up. You didn't know whether we were going to win. And when the movie ends they didn't know. The people who were making it didn't know. And it has a little different feeling.

C: So it was a very special time in our history.

K: Very special.

C: And I doubt if it will be duplicated again.

K: I think warfare is entirely different. It's so fast. Look at the Gulf War, a hundred days.

C: Technology has had its impact.

K: Exactly. And you don't have the same type of warfare in World War II. Our involvement in it lasted for four full years and during that time we didn't know whether our men, or our sons, or our sweethearts, or brother was going to come back. And some people had to wait a long time.

C: Oh, absolutely. Some people were over there for four years.

K: Exactly.

C: It was a special time and a very special era in our history.

K: Well, another thing, too, people in our generation tend to talk about it when we get together.

C: Oh, that was a high point in your life.

K: It was, because before that time we had grown up just in a depression and everything, and you didn't have much that you were looking forward to. It was just like you lived day after day. Then all of a sudden our whole world was turned upside down. We didn't grow up under a cloud of war. This was something that wasn't even in our thoughts. We weren't thinking about this and all of a sudden our whole world is turned upside down and for people in my particular age group it was at a very critical time because we were just starting. I was on the verge of graduating. The boys in our class who were just getting ready to start looking for what they were going to be doing with their lives. And all of a sudden they were picked up and thrust into an entirely different type of environment and life than they had ever envisioned. And it was just a big point in our lives.

C: Oh, it was a big turning point.

K: And for everybody who lived through those years we talk about it. You get old people together and sooner or later the conversation goes to what did you do in the war.

C: And if you weren't involved in the war, I think you felt that you were kind of out of the big picture.

K: Exactly. And those who were not able to participate in the war effort felt they were kind of on the side lines. Because everyone who possibly could became involved. Of course, there were those who were the draft dodgers, but they are not the ones we're thinking about. But those of us who were able, were willing, and wanted to do what we could; and those who were unable physically, or whatever, really felt left out.

C: Yes, that was sad.

K: It was a sad time.

C: Well, thank you very much for these additional comments.

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