

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE, NEWPORT, RI

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

THE WAVES IN WORLD WAR II

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CHARLOTTE SAFFORD HUME

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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE

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INTERVIEWEE: CHARLOTTE L. SAFFORD HUME

INTERVIEWER: DR. EVELYN M. CHERPAK

SUBJECT: HISTORY OF THE WAVES

DATE: OCTOBER 7, 2003

EMC: This is an oral history interview with Charlotte Safford Hume. The interview is taking place at her home at Laurelmead in Providence, Rhode Island. Today's date is October 7, 2003. My name is Evelyn Cherpak. I'm the curator of the Naval Historical Collection at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. Charlotte, I'm so please that you were able to give us some time today to have me interview you on your career in the WAVES and your career in the Navy after that. I'd like to begin the interview by asking you a few personal questions. Where were you born and when were you born?

CSH: I was born in Waltham, Massachusetts, on the 7th of April 1922

EMC: You're a New Englander.

CSH: Yes.

EMC: What did you father do for a living there?

CSH: My father, Carl M. Safford, was a piano teacher and church organist. He graduated from The New England Conservatory of Music. My mother was also a piano teacher.

EMC: Very interesting. Did you have any sisters or brothers?

CSH: I had a brother two years younger than I.

EMC: Did you spend your growing-up years in Waltham?

CSH: Yes.

EMC: Can you tell me where you graduated from high school?

CSH: From Waltham High School, in 1939.

EMC: What did you decide to do after that?

CSH: Well, I had a choice. My father said that I could take what was called a postgraduate

course in high school but I didn't want that. I thought that I didn't want to be either a teacher or a secretary, but those were the two choices. So I went to Hickox Secretarial School in Boston and graduated the following year.

EMC: Did you work after that?

CSH: Yes. I worked for The Employers' Liability Assurance Corp, Ltd for two years as a secretary to the head of the Forms Department. However, between 1939 and 1942, my mother, two grandmothers, an aunt and my father all passed on. So I moved to Arlington, Virginia to live with my mother's twin brother and his wife. Fortunately, I had taken and passed the Civil Service Exam for Clerk/Stenographer during that time, so with a letter of introduction from my employer to the Executive Office of the Secretary of the Navy, I was appointed to the Office of Procurement and Material and Insurance and was there for the next two years. It was wartime, of course, and in that atmosphere of patriotism and national fervor to join the service, I decided to join the Navy as a WAVE.

EMC: Oh, that's interesting. Well, how did you learn about the WAVES? How did you hear about them?

CSH: Well, my office at first was in the Navy Department on Constitution Avenue. But we were moved to a satellite building on 18th Street near Pennsylvania Avenue and just behind it was a building that had been taken over as a WAVES barracks. So, naturally, they were very visible. I had some encouragement from my family when I discussed the possibility of joining the WAVES, so I took the plunge. The Navy was my first choice although I considered the Marine Corps briefly and even visited their local recruiting office. But I really preferred the Navy and what they had to offer. What the Marine Corps offered was rather limited. Also, I had a cousin who was a Naval Academy graduate and I was always intrigued by his activity in Communications involving highly secret matters. I learned much later that he had invented the first cryptographic systems for the Navy with which they were able to break the German codes and saved many lives by preventing U-Boat attacks on our ships both maritime and Naval. His name was CAPT Laurance Frye Safford. I enlisted in July of 1944.

EMC: The war was well along then. Can you tell me first where you signed up? Did you sign up in Washington?

CSH: In Washington, yes.

EMC: And were you called or sent to training immediately?

CSH: Yes, I believe so.

EMC: Where did you do your boot camp training?

CSH: I went to Hunter College in the Bronx. We attended classes, marched in formation everywhere, cleaned every week for inspection and I loved every minute of it.

EMC: Oh, you did? Great. Well, you lived in the apartments then with the other women.

CSH: Yes.

EMC: Do you remember how you felt about the classes? Did you find them challenging, interesting?

CSH: Well, just living in the barracks was a bit of a challenge for me at first because I was quite a shy person and had never had this sort of communal experience before. However, I adjusted quickly, and eagerly and thoroughly enjoyed the various classes.

EMC: You adjusted easily to military discipline?

CSH: Yes - that was no problem.

EMC: Some girls had the opportunity at Hunter to participate in activities like the newspaper or the singing platoon.

CSH: I don't remember that such activities were available at that time.

EMC: Do you remember if your roommates were easy to get along with?

CSH: Most of them, yes. I recall one who was reluctant to take a shower and the other girls gave her what they called a G.I. shower. But that was the only incident that I recall.

EMC: Were they from other parts of the country?

CSH: Yes

EMC: Did you like meeting people from different parts of the country and the diversity that you encountered?

CSH: Yes I did.

EMC: You were tested there, I presume, for your billet assignment.

CSH: Yes

EMC: When you graduated after eight weeks, where were you assigned?

CSH: I went to Yeoman School at Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls.

EMC: Did you travel there by yourself?

CSH: No. It was my first train trip that went anywhere other than between Waltham and Boston. So this was a big deal for me.

EMC: Did you leave directly from New York?

CSH: Yes.

EMC: Did you go via Canada?

CSH: No, I don't think so

EMC: Some of them did.

CSH: I don't think we did. It was a fairly large contingent of WAVES in a number of cars and we had to stand a watch at night.

EMC: Isn't that interesting. Well, you arrived in Iowa of all places, Cedar Falls, which was very different, and you were domiciled there. What kinds of classes did you take, and how long was your training there? Do you remember that?

CSH: It was probably two or three months, but I'm not sure now. There were classes in both typing and shorthand as well Navy orientation. Having graduated from secretarial school and then the next two years of using both shorthand and typing, I did very well. In fact, I remember breaking several speed records.

EMC: Oh, that's great. Did you ever encounter any civilians when you went into town? Do you remember if they ever reacted to your being in the military?

CSH: Yes. We went into a few stores but I don't really remember any special interaction with civilians. They were probably used to seeing WAVES by then.

EMC: Did anything amusing or outstanding happen at Cedar Falls, anything out of the ordinary that you would remember?

CSH: This is probably silly, but the breakfast pastries in the morning were the best I had ever eaten.

EMC: Oh, the food was good.

CSH: Yes. Beyond that, I do remember one of the instructors who was from Texas. Her name was LTJG Ulane Zeek. She was a fine teacher and thoroughly enjoyed the work because she was teaching women who were eager to learn and were more adult than she was used to.

EMC: Enthusiastic?

CSH: Enthusiastic, yes, about her teaching.

EMC: Were they all women, all WAVES?

CSH: I think so. However, I believe that the Officer-in-Charge was a male officer, probably a Lieutenant Commander. But all the WAVE instructors were excellent.

EMC: Oh, that's good. So you got good instruction, preparation for your assignment. I assume you had a graduation?

CSH: Yes, I'm sure we did.

EMC: Did you have white-glove inspections when you were at Yeoman School?

CSH: We did, indeed. Every Saturday morning. Then we marched and stood for regimental review on the parade ground, which was really quite inspiring and made us feel very proud to be in our Navy uniforms.

EMC: Did you pass all the time?

CSH: Yes.

EMC: Oh, that's good. So you still had to march.

CSH: Yes, and I believe that we marched to classes also. Then we had Saturday afternoons off.

EMC: Oh, that's good. They gave you a little leeway there.

CSH: But just to be in a college environment to me was very special. Up to then, college was out of the question for me. So I just loved the whole experience.

EMC: Do you think that kind of inspired you to go on to college after you left the Navy?

CSH: Oh, indeed, yes.

EMC: After you left the WAVES, did you ever have a chance to meet Mildred McAfee during this time frame?

CSH: No, not during that time. However, I did attend a talk that she gave in connection with an ecumenical meeting of some kind and I spoke with her afterwards and told her of my Navy connection. I was very thrilled to meet her.

EMC: What was your impression of her as the WAVES director?

CSH: Outstanding both as a woman officer and as an educator.

EMC: Admirable then.

CSH: Admirable.

EMC: Yes, that's good. We've just heard positive things about her.

CSH: Oh, very much so.

EMC: Well, when you finished your training, usually two months or three months for yeoman school - I think it was three months – did you express any preference for where you wanted to be assigned?

CSH: I think I probably said any place but the South. Of course, I got NAS Norfolk.

EMC: Why did you not want the South?

CSH: Well, but not for a very good reason - probably because of the hot weather in the summer, having lived in northern Virginia for several years. I was the last one to get orders. All the other students had gotten theirs but mine took a little longer to come through. At that time it was said that Norfolk was called "the hell hole of the South"! And years ago, it was said that signs on the lawns said "Dogs and Sailors Keep Off. That was the reputation. However, I was determined to see it in the best light and to enjoy the experience.

EMC: What office were you assigned to at Norfolk?

CSH: My assignment was with the Flag Unit, Commander Air Force, Atlantic Fleet, Naval Air Station. Admiral Bellinger was Comairlant, as I recall.

EMC: Oh, so you worked for an admiral.

CSH: Well, not directly. The Flag Unit had been on board ship but when WAVES were assigned to it, it was moved ashore. So the sailors were a bit resentful about that because they had to be in proper uniform rather than more casual dress. However, they got over it soon enough.

EMC: Did you have any harassment by them?"

CSH: Oh, no.

EMC: Did you work with these men, with these sailors?

CSH: Yes. I can't remember any more detail, but I made some very good friends among the sailors. Then I was selected from the general administrative office to be Yeoman to the Air Materiel Officer, Commander Lester Chambers. He was an aeronautical engineer.

EMC: So did you move out of that office to another office?

CSH: Yes.

EMC: What kind of a boss was he?

CSH: He was a fine naval officer and southern gentleman and he was wonderful to work for. Prior to assignment to his office, I was called by my last name, which was the normal custom for enlisted personnel. However, CDR Chambers called me by my first name which I appreciated.

EMC: Well, it's kind of the British way of doing things, too. The Royal Navy used to do that, call people by their last names. Now what kind of work did you do for him?

CSH: Whatever was expected of a Yeoman - secretarial work really, with shorthand, typing and filing.

EMC: Was your schedule five days a week?

CSH: Yes.

EMC: You didn't have to work on a Saturday?

CSH: No, I don't think so.

EMC: Were you alone in the office? I mean were you the only WAVE in that office?

CSH: Yes, as I recall.

EMC: Now, where did you live during this time frame?

CSH: I lived in the WAVE barracks on the Naval Air Station, which was part of the Naval Operating Base.

EMC: What kind of barracks were they?

CSH: There were four to a cubicle. And they were distributed according to their specialties or rates, such as aircraft machinists and other related rates. My cubicle mates were yeomen or storekeepers. There was some rowdiness at times, coming in late and making a lot of noise, but that was all part of the scene and I enjoyed meeting all these different people.

EMC: Did you mind the lack of privacy in these accommodations?

CSH: Bootcamp prepared me for barracks living, so it wasn't a problem and I had very compatible cubicle mates. Also, Yeoman School was further preparation although I think there were only two to a room there.

EMC: What type of recreational activities did either the base provide or did you take advantage of in Norfolk?

CSH: One thing I did was to take a course in music appreciation in town at a local school, which was delightful. I had a car, so was able to get around for various activities with other WAVES and sailors such as going to Virginia Beach and visiting Norfolk's fabulous azalea gardens when in bloom. I was also active in church activities on the Base. Our denomination had a Wartime Minister who lived in Norfolk and held church services on the Base. He and his wife often invited us to his home for dinner after church, which we enjoyed. Chow hall food was not exactly gourmet but we did appreciate having freshly baked bread and butter and some of the things that were not readily available to civilians. Oh yes, we all had to take exams for promotion to the next rating so we spent some time studying. I made Yeoman Second Class while there.

EMC: Well, it sounds like you made good use of your time off.

CSH: Yes.

EMC: So it wasn't the hell hole of the South.

CSH: No indeed, although I didn't go into town that much. However, coming home on the streetcar after my class in a car full of sailors, I was careful not to catch the eye of any sailor who was a bit tipsy as I didn't want to attract attention.

EMC: Now, did you ever fraternize with officers?

CSH: Yes, I did.

EMC: That's a no-no.

CSH: I knew that but at our church meetings there was an Ensign whom I dated, and we went off base to have dinner, for instance.

EMC: Well, a lot of people did it on the sly and the Navy never knew.

CSH: Oh, I must mention about the USS MISSOURI when it came back to Norfolk after the end of the war with Japan. Several of us went down to the pier to see it and were invited to come on board, which we did. It was most impressive to see the seal and the plaque on the deck that marked where the armistice was signed that ended the war. I might add that one of the residents here at Laurelmead, Dr. Elihu Wing, was medical officer on the ship at that time.

EMC: Isn't that something!

EMC: He'd be wonderful to interview, too, because he was in WWII.

CSH: He had just graduated from medical school and was assigned to the MISSOURI after it came back. So he cruised on it for the next two years, which included taking cadets from the Naval Academy during the summer. Pretty neat duty!

EMC: Right. Well, they signed the treaty there with the Japanese on September 3, 1945, ending the war. Oh, that's fantastic. Small world. Well, how long were you in Norfolk?

CSH: Until I was discharged in 1946, so almost two years.

EMC: Almost two years. When were you discharged?

CSH: It was in April of 1946.

EMC: So you stayed on a good six, seven months after the war ended.

CSH: Yes. I enlisted on July 17, 1944 and discharged in April of '46.

EMC: Oh, okay. That's good. You were just 24 years old then when you were discharged.

CSH: Yes.

EMC: Very young. I just want to double back and ask you a few questions about your work: Did you find your work as a yeoman to the Commander challenging, or did you find it routine? What were your feelings about the assignment that you got?

CSH: Oh, I thought that I had an especially fine assignment to be yeoman to the Air Materiel Officer for Comairlant. We felt very close to the war in a sense because of involvement with the aircraft.

EMC: Did you have a Secret clearance?

CSH: I don't think so.

EMC: You dealt with unclassified materials.

CSH: As far as I can remember.

EMC: Was there anything you didn't like about this assignment?

CSH: No, but there was one rather embarrassing experience - I was walking in front of the enlisted chow hall one noon and tripped and fell flat on my face.

EMC: Oh, no!

CSH: Not a soul came to help me up although I hardly expected it. They must have had a good laugh. I wasn't hurt except for my pride although I did tear my hose.

EMC: Oh, how awful.

CSH: I did have a rather exciting experience when CDR Chambers took me along in his SNJ trainer for a ride when he was going up for flight time one afternoon just after lunch..

EMC: Oh, that's fantastic. Where did you fly to?

CSH: Well, we just flew more or less in circles in the surrounding area - doing landings and takeoffs. Then he proceeded to do a few gymnastics such as barrel and snap rolls etc and I lost my lunch! And there were no paper bags available.

EMC: Oooo! Turned upside down or something?

CSH: Yes.

EMC: Now he must have been used to that. Oh my heavens!

CSH: So that was an experience I'll never forget.

EMC: How did you feel about your pay? Were you able to survive on it?

CSH: Yes, no problem. In fact, I was able to save enough money so that I could support myself pretty much when I went to college.

EMC: Oh, that's good. Did you have to buy war bonds?

CSH: I don't think we had to, but we could and I feel sure that I did.

EMC: Some of the WAVES did. Did you have any contact with civilians at this time?

CSH: Only in connection with my church and, of course, the music appreciation course I took in town. Then I had another Service connection - a friend who was a SPAR Ensign in the Coast Guard and was stationed at the air station in Elizabeth City, N.C. I drove down to visit her several times.

EMC: Oh, that's great. Is she still around?

CSH: No.

EMC: That's too bad because I'm interviewing SPARS as well. So you were well treated by civilians.

CSH: Yes, as far as I was concerned but one of my WAVE friends had an interesting experience. She was on a train, in uniform, and sitting near the front of the car. A woman came out of the Ladies Room, stomped up to her and said in a loud voice, "There's no hot water in the Ladies Room!"

EMC: Did you keep up with news about the war?

CSH: I'm sure that we did.

EMC: Did you go to movies during that time frame, where they had the news clips?

CSH: Probably.

EMC: Well, the war was over on August 15, 1945. Do you remember the VJ-Day celebrations?

CSH: All I remember is that I was rehearsing on the Base with another member of our church for the Sunday service and we heard a lot of noisy voices celebrating in the distance. I don't remember taking part in any celebration, however. But I'm sure that we expressed much gratitude at the news and at our services the next day.

EMC: What was the highest rate you received in the Navy as an enlisted woman?

CSH: Yeoman Second Class.

EMC: As you said, you stayed on until April of 1946.

CSH: Yes. The Navy was not ready to discharge everybody at the same time and there was still work to be done.

EMC: You were obviously needed.

CSH: Yes.

EMC: I guess you had to earn points.

CSH: Yes, that's right. I'd forgotten about that. I was sent up to Washington to be discharged from there because that's where my home was, in Arlington, Virginia.

EMC: Right, the nearest place to be discharged. Do you remember anything about the discharge process?

CSH: Not really although I have a faint recollection of being asked to help them with the processing as it was a large installation with many to be discharged and, of course, I was a Yeoman.

EMC: And you yourself were discharged there.

CSH: Yes.

EMC: Did you receive any ribbons?

CSH: Yes, the American Campaign and the Victory ribbons.

EMC: Right. All WAVES received those. How did you feel about leaving the Navy?

CSH: It was the natural next step to take and by then I was eager to apply for college. But I really loved the experience, loved being part of the Navy, and when I found that I could, I enlisted in the Inactive Reserve and participated in monthly meetings.

EMC: So you loved it. That's great. What was there about the Navy that drew you in and that made you like it so much?

CSH: Oh, I'm not sure I know how to explain it.

EMC: Was it the discipline, the order?

CSH: I'm sure that was part of it. I enjoyed being able to use what I had been trained to do up to that point. It gave me more confidence and encouragement to go forward, as I had always been very shy and not too sure of myself. I enjoyed wearing the Navy uniform and took pride in wearing it properly. In fact, I was called "GI Jill" once when I suggested to another WAVE that wearing her hat on the back of her head was not quite proper. We were in the Ladies Room some place and she had had a bit too much to drink.

EMC: Do you think the sense of belonging and the familial feeling and sense of place and purpose was a factor?

CSH: Yes, indeed. You describe it exactly. And it helped me feel more comfortable being and working together with men.

EMC: Because the Navy builds a cohesive force. That's what I'm bringing out in my paper at the Oral History Association meeting. The Navy did try to create a feeling of camaraderie and loyalty to the organization.

CSH: They certainly succeeded in that as far as I was concerned.

EMC: Oh, good. Well a few general questions about the WAVES and World War II. Do you think that the WAVES had a strong sense of esprit de corps?

CSH: Yes, definitely.

EMC: So you didn't find too many grouzers in there, complainers?

CSH: No. I really don't remember any evidence of that sort. Patriotism was still at a very high point during that time and we were all working together for a worthy purpose. Also, it brought people together from all parts of the country, which was a sort of unifying element. So there was great spirit. I suppose there were little things to complain about which would be normal in any situation but they certainly didn't override the general spirit.

EMC: Did you have any preconceived notions or expectations when you joined the WAVES about what it would be like?

CSH: No. I had led such a relatively sheltered life up to then that I had only expectations of having a wonderful new experience along with the feeling that I was doing the right thing and would be able to meet whatever challenges came along.

EMC: Did you find that the WAVES, a new organization in 1942 when it was established, was smoothly run by the time you joined?

CSH: Yes. And I think that the women were feeling more accepted by then, too.

EMC: Did you know anyone who was discharged for disciplinary reasons?

CSH: No. I don't recall any.

EMC: Very few were. Do you think that your service in the WAVES during the war made you more independent and self-reliant?

CSH: Yes, definitely.

EMC: Do you think it broadened your horizons?

CSH: Yes, in many ways.

EMC: Did you have any career ambitions as a result?

CSH: Yes. It prompted an even deeper desire to go to college.

EMC: You trace that back, I presume, to being in a collegial environment?

CSH: Well, no, not entirely. It was always in the back of my mind, as I had taken the college course in high school. But college was not possible at that time, so I went to business school, which gave me a good foundation for what was to come in my career.

EMC: Did you maintain any service friendships when the war was over with any WAVES that you met?

CSH: Yes, I carried on correspondence with several of them.

EMC: I know there were several WAVE reunions immediately after the war in Boston and New York. Did you go to those?

CSH: No, I was either working or going to school so was not really interested in attending.

EMC: Well, after you were discharged, did you go back to Arlington, Virginia?

CSH: Yes, I did, and continued to live with my Aunt and Uncle there.

EMC: What did you begin to do?

CSH: First, that summer, I wanted to get away to some place that would be cool. I saw an ad in the paper for a summer hotel in Ogunquit, Maine, called The Cliff House. I wrote and asked if they had a job available and they hired me as a desk clerk. It was an ideal summer job! While there I met two families whose friendship had a long-lasting impact on my life. One was a family that had escaped from Germany early in the war. They lived in New York City - he was an international lawyer and his wife and two young children were there at the Cliff House for the summer. They had literally walked across the Pyrenees to board a ship in Portugal. He was one of a group of intellectuals invited to come to this country. They were wonderful to me. When I was in college in New York City, they sort of adopted me, had me for dinner frequently, and broadened my education immeasurably. I kept in close touch with them over the years and had many opportunities to visit them.

The other was a couple also from New York City, who lived on Riverside Drive - a totally different family and they were most kind and generous to me, too.

EMC: What was their background?

CSH: He owned a travel business in New York called "Ask Mr Rogers". After he retired from that, the State Department sent him to London to work at their Embassy to help the British to improve aspects of their tourist industry. He was there when I went on leave to Europe with another WAVE in 1953, and he invited us to his office in the Embassy at Grosvenor Square, which was very exciting, and took us to see some of the sights of the city.

EMC: Oh, that's great. That was wonderful.

CSH: After the summer job in Ogunquit, I went back home to Arlington and took a temporary job with Capitol Airlines (which ultimately became United Airlines) as secretary to the Director of Industrial Relations. George Washington University was offering free testing at that time to help veterans determine what their interests and talents were and what career lines they most likely would be successful in. The results affirmed what I had hoped, that I was indeed capable of success in college studies and I applied to both GW and American University. I was accepted by both and decided on A.U. as the smaller of the two. It was a good choice as it turned out. Along with many other veterans who were eager students, I found the atmosphere there exhilarating and inspiring and did very well. However, I felt that perhaps I needed a greater challenge so I applied to Barnard College in New York, was accepted and found indeed that greater challenge. After I arrived, I discovered that a former head of the WAVES, Jean Palmer, was Director of Admissions.

EMC: Oh, that's great. What year did you start college in?

CSH: The summer of 1947 and went right through to the end of the next summer term in 1948. Then that fall, I started my Junior year at Barnard.

EMC: When did you graduate from Barnard?

CSH: It was 1950. I still had a couple of credits to complete, so went back to AU that summer, completed them and subsequently received my BA degree from Barnard that fall. Incidentally, my degree was signed by President Eisenhower, who was President of Columbia at that time and Barnard was one of Columbia's colleges then.

EMC: What was your major?

CSH: Government. They didn't call it Political Science at Barnard because they didn't consider it a science.

EMC: Government, right. Oh, interesting. It is quite a tale. Now, did you have enough funding to pay for this, or did you go on scholarship?

CSH: I had the GI Bill as a foundation. I received \$500 a year to pay for everything. But I had saved enough money so that I was able to make it, along with a scholarship my last year at Barnard. While at AU, I had several temporary jobs also, which helped. In New York, I lived in a tiny apartment on Riverside Drive which was part of a two-room-and bath servants' quarters in a large apartment owned by two sisters.

EMC: Oh, yes.

CSH: I had a room that was about the size of a walk-in-closet these days. The other room, which was slightly larger, was rented by a woman who worked for Audubon. The small bathroom was in between. I paid all of \$8.00 a week and had kitchen privileges.

EMC: I've heard of those. Somebody just mentioned those to me recently.

CSH: Really? This was at 102nd Street and Riverside Drive - a really lovely location. I had an easy walk up to Barnard either on Broadway or the Drive, or a ride on the subway.

EMC: Did you like being in New York City?

CSH: I loved it!. It was very exciting and I was able to do many fun things. My two "families" also took me to interesting places and programs.

EMC: Well, that's great. You graduated in 1950. What did you decide to do after that?

CSH: For some reason, I really wanted to go overseas. So I applied to CIA and went through that process.

EMC: Did you get accepted by the CIA?

CSH: Yes but it took quite a few months before the security clearance came through. So they had me doing temporary secretarial work including interviewing other applicants, taking them to lunch and then writing an evaluation. For instance, if they salted their food before they ate, that was to be reported, as that was frowned upon and taken into consideration..

EMC: Oh, really!

CSH: Yes.

EMC: Oh, dear. I wouldn't have been accepted. I pepper my food before I eat it. What a faux pas. What a riot.

CSH: After my security clearance came through I was assigned to an office having concern with the Balkan countries. As my aim was to go overseas, I went through all kinds of training and was at the point of applying for a passport and getting shots when everything went on "hold". The secretary to the department head was called to be secretary to Mr. Dulles, then Director of CIA, and they asked me if I would stay and replace her. At first I said no, but after they asked me several more times, I felt I'd better give it some serious thought. I found out afterwards that I would have had to give up my commission in the Inactive Reserve as I was going into a covert situation overseas.

So after some very prayerful thought overnight, I decided to stay, and it certainly turned out to be the right decision. However, I didn't want to have a career as a secretary and applied to be a report's officer in the same department. That went through but I found that I really wasn't cut out for research of that sort. It was very confining. However, it was all a most fascinating and enlightening experience.

EMC: That's quite interesting.

CSH: Then I thought about requesting recall to active duty in the Navy.

EMC: What year was this that you thought about going back into the Navy?

CSH: This was 1952.

EMC: So you spent about two years at CIA.

CSH: Yes. My uncle encouraged me to go back on active duty and I proceeded to do that.

EMC: You had been in the inactive reserve, I presume.

CSH: Yes. I had enlisted in the inactive reserve in 1947. Included in the yearly two weeks of training duty was two weeks as CAPT Joy Bright Hancock's yeoman in BUPERS in '48 while in college. That was very special to me as I thought very highly of her. CAPT Hancock was interested in the fact that I was in college and I have a feeling that she was instrumental in the Navy's offering me a commission upon graduation from college. It came in my junior year so of course I had to wait until I graduated. Then I was commissioned a LTJG because I was too old to be an Ensign! So in August 1951, I was assigned to Composite Unit W-14 at Potomac River Naval Command. I attended monthly meetings with all the other reservists at CIA, in the Departmental Auditorium in Washington. We had some very fascinating programs including a talk by that famous Marine General "Chesty" Puller. Normally speakers in the Q & A portion would answer each question as it was asked, but the General took all the questions first and then proceeded to answer them in perfect order. It was awesome.

EMC: It was inactive, then, not active.

CSH: Now I'm not sure whether it was inactive or active reserve. I did two weeks of training duty during the summer and attended a monthly meeting.

EMC: Well, that must have been active reserves?

CSH: I'm still not sure what it was called - I had always thought of it as inactive reserve. In July, 1952, I had two weeks of training duty at the Patuxent River Naval Air Station.

EMC: Pax River?

CSH: Yes. Earlier, while still enlisted, I had training duty at the Anacostia Air Station. I think I was the only woman and in order to get to the office without going through the men's quarters I had to take the stairs on the outside of the building up to the second floor. Also, there was some confusion as to what Head I was to use. While I was there, we had a hurricane warning which meant that they had to fly all the planes out of the area. I almost got a flight on a PBM - a seaplane type - but it didn't go through. Probably just as well.

EMC: When were you recalled to active duty?

CSH: In December of 1952. I had been appointed LTJG, USNR 1105 in November 1950, in the Inactive Reserve. So in December I was ordered to Newport for indoctrination. At that time the students were already commissioned before they reported. I was the only LTJG. However, as a student, I had to salute an Ensign who was one of the instructors. At graduation, she was the first one to salute me, for which I gave her a dollar bill - you know that custom?

EMC: Yes.

CSH: We became very good friends and remained so for many years. Her name was Nancy Hollenbeck and in later years, she became the first woman All Navy golfer. She and another retired WAVE officer (CAPT Mary Lou Conner, SC, USNR) were instrumental in making the golf course more available to women at the Army/Navy Country Club in Arlington, Virginia.

Here at Laurelmead I discovered an interesting coincidence. The head of the Chaplain School at Newport was CAPT Zimmerman and his daughter, Mrs. Virginia Chase, is a resident here. I got to know him after I graduated, as I was assigned to the Naval Schools Command there as Officer Personnel Officer and my office was in the same building as the Chaplain's office.

EMC: Oh, okay. Well, the Chaplain's School now is right on the corner.

CSH: Yes.

EMC: Finished the Women Officers' School training. Let me just ask you a question about that: Do you remember who the head of the School was?

CSH: It was LCDR Anne Willauer.

EMC: Do you remember what your training was like during this time frame?

CSH: Oh yes, It was vigorous, challenging, most interesting and a valuable learning experience.

EMC: But you had classes?

CSH: We had classes every day and we marched to and from our quarters to the various activities. We also had to be a qualified swimmer and had to jump from the high board into the pool wearing life-preservers. I wouldn't want to do that again! We also had a session in a building where they released a gas and we had to put on gas masks. We also went out on a Destroyer one day, which was exciting, except that it was quite rough and some of us got a bit sea sick While stationed there, I was allowed to go on board a submarine which was running the Degaussing Range while submerged! It was terrific! I had lunch on board while submerged and I was so excited about it all that I didn't start to eat right away. Finally one of the officers at the table asked me to please start eating as they were politely waiting for me to start first. Good Navy etiquette!

EMC: You were very enthusiastic about anything Navy. Well, did you enjoy your position staying on in the Women Officers' School?

CSH: Actually I was at the Schools Command, which included the WAVE and Chaplain schools and also Cooks and Bakers and Torpedomen schools. So I had a fairly large staff of enlisted men and women and also a male JG who was Enlisted Personnel Officer. Incidentally, he and I have remained friends ever since and exchange Christmas cards every year.

This was my first supervisory job as an officer so it was very important to me. I feel that I developed a good relationship with my "crew" based on the excellent training that I had been given thus far and enjoyed it very much. As an illustration, on Wednesday afternoons our office held Field Day which meant that the sailors were to wax and buff the decks, etc. So on one such day I noticed that there was not the usual Field Day preparation so I mentioned it as I went out of the office and when I returned, they were hard at it. The next morning as I walked into the office there was a feeling of anticipation in the air. There on the wall was a sign that said: "The boss may not always be right, but she's always boss." I thought that was rather neat. I also learned how to get along with a Navy Chief who was not very happy to be working for a woman.

EMC: Did you live in town then?

CSH: Yes, I lived on Ayrault Street.

EMC: Oh, yes, that's a nice section.

CSH: I rented two rooms in the Babcock's house. He was manager of one of the supermarkets in town and he and Mrs. Babcock were very nice to me. The house was across the street from the apartment where Dorothy Council lived, incidentally.

EMC: Did you know her at that time? And did you know Winnie Love also?

CSH: Yes, Winnie Love relieved Anne Willauer as Officer-in-Charge of the WAVE school so I got to know her quite well. Dorothy Council was in another part of the Naval Station but I got to know her, too.

EMC: Oh, yes, they were quite outstanding.

CSH: Winnie was outstanding in every way - as a woman, as a Naval officer and as a role model.

EMC: Yes, a real role model.

CSH: She had a marvelous sense of humor and expressed herself in unusual terms, which was very engaging, and, of course, she was very intelligent.

EMC: Not the norm.

CSH: I can't quite say "no" to that as there were many very outstanding women officers but she was a particularly good role model for me as I got to know her quite well then and over the years.

EMC: Oh, interesting. Did you ever meet Winifred Quick Collins?

CSH: Yes, quite a few times. She was also an outstanding woman and I admired her very much.

EMC: How long were you in Newport in this position?

CSH: From 1953 to January 1956. I'd like to mention a particularly interesting experience I had with Mrs. Kalbfus, the widow of Admiral Kalbfus. She was most friendly to the WAVES and every week, had a cocktail hour for members of the WAVE school staff. I was included in the group and visited her a number of times. Mrs. Kalbfus had a couple who maintained her household and on the occasion of their going on vacation for a couple of weeks, she asked if one of the WAVES would stay with her during that time. I gladly volunteered. She was quite a remarkable woman with wide interests, had a delightful sense of humor and was an avid reader of The New York Times. She was a volunteer social worker in Newport, among other activities. During that time, she asked if I would like to have a dinner party and invite some of my friends. It was spectacular! The table was beautifully set including place cards held in small sterling silver submarines. The entree was a large platter containing a whole salmon from Iceland, decoratively prepared for serving. Every detail was perfect and it was a lovely party. I thought that it was a most kind, gracious and generous thing for her to do.

Later on, she asked Winnie Love and me if we would accompany her to an annual anniversary part at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Alexander Hamilton Rice, who lived at MIRAMAR, one of the famous mansions on Bellvue Ave in Newport. She and the Admiral were always invited but after he passed on, she didn't want to go alone. However, that year she decided to accept it if we would go with her. It was summertime, so we dressed in our white dress uniforms, since neither of us had appropriate evening clothes. It was to be an all-night party, but Mrs. Kalbfus did not wish to stay that long, so we arrived early and left early. Mrs. Rice was a survivor of the TITANIC disaster. It was quite an exciting social experience for both Winnie and me.

EMC: Oh, so a good three years you lived there.

CSH: Yes, and from there I was ordered to duty under instruction at the General Line School in Monterey, CA, in the first class of WAVES. There were 13 of us among several hundred male officers.

EMC: What did you learn there and what was your course like?

CSH: Well, the course was set up for junior officers who had completed their first sea duty and this was to prepare them for reintegrating into the shore establishment. I'm sorry that I'm not able to describe the subjects we studied but it was a marvelous experience and it gave us a broader understanding of Naval administration, operations and procedures.

EMC: How did the men react to you 13 WAVES being there?

CSH: Well, we were distributed among the classes so there were at least two in each class. The reaction differed from indifference to collegial but I think that overall we established a very good relationship. The students worked hard there, but I think more so in the postgraduate courses, as it was difficult for the wives and families to adjust to the length and intensity of the courses. The Navy made a substantial effort to have activities for the wives to help the situation.

EMC: So you got quite an education there in naval subjects.

CSH: Right. Yes.

EMC: How long was this?

CSH: I was there for five months as a student. But after two tours of other duty, I was ordered back to the Naval Post Graduate School as Assistant Administrative Officer. But, from the PG School, I was sent to the Aviation Plans Division, Office of Chief of Naval Operations, as Administrative Officer.

EMC: Oh, Washington.

CSH: Rear Admiral William Gentner was Chief of Aviation Plans. He had a Chief Yeoman and he and I shared a small office outside the Admiral's office. I also administered the mail room down the hall for our division.

EMC: Oh, that sounds like an interesting post.

CSH: It was very interesting, yes.

EMC: What exactly were they doing and you were doing there?

CSH: Well, it was quite a large division concerned with planning for all aspects of naval aviation including the Marine Corps, of course.

EMC: Did you have to travel?

CSH: No, I didn't travel but the Admiral did. He was called to testify on the Hill a number of times also.

EMC: Did you work with other women, other naval officers?

CSH: No, I think I was the only one in that division.

EMC: Were you accepted, did you feel?

CSH: Yes, very much so.

EMC: No discrimination?

CSH: Not that I was aware of. I screened all the correspondence to be signed by the Admiral and had to send correspondence back for corrections at times but it wasn't personal, so I had a very good relationship with them.

EMC: So you had quite a bit of responsibility.

CSH: Yes, I did, and I really enjoyed this duty. Even enjoyed being in the Pentagon! However, I stood an all-night watch every month, which was a different experience. I had to accompany the "burn" run down to the basement of the Pentagon armed with a .45 pistol in a belt around my waist! They disposed of all the classified trash there and turned it into massive sheets of purple pulp. I felt rather silly walking through those halls armed with a pistol. Later on they replaced the pistol with a night stick carried by the sailor who accompanied me! Incidentally, during indoctrination, we all learned to handle and shoot the .45 pistol, so I was qualified to use it. While at Newport, I belonged to the Naval Station pistol team and shot both the .45 and the .22 at many pistol competitions around the area.

EMC: Oh, that's good. What was your rank then?

CSH: I was a Lieutenant.

EMC: How long did you stay there?

CSH: Until 1959.

EMC: Did you have any particular incidents during your duty in the Pentagon?

CSH: Being invited to attend several social functions given by CNO, Admiral Burke and his wife at their quarters at the Naval Observatory was very special. I had gotten to know Mrs. Burke while we they were stationed in Newport and before he was appointed as Chief of Naval Operations. She attended the same church that I was a member of and invited me to their home there on several occasions. I even had the temerity to invite them, along with Winnie Love and Dorothy Council to see pictures of a space-available trip another WAVE and I had taken to Europe. I'm sure it must have been boring to the then Captain Burke, but they were most gracious.

EMC: Oh, you did travel then.

CSH: Well, I did on leave.

EMC: Oh, this was a European jaunt you took then?

CSH: Right. We were able to go space-available in both Naval and Air Force aircraft. So that was marvelous.

EMC: So what did you think of Admiral Burke?

CSH: It was very exciting when he was selected as Chief of Naval Operations. Of course, I thought very highly of him, and of his wife, as she was a very special lady. When she passed on a few years ago, the press referred to her as the First Lady of the Navy. She was very highly thought of and respected not only in this country but in foreign countries as well.

Another incident involved an invitation from VADM Pirie (I think he was the Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Air - I'm not sure of the exact title) to go with his party to Bermuda one weekend. He was to present a charter to a Navy flying club so it was an over-nighter. It was arranged for me to stay at the home of the squadron commander and his wife. They even had a data for me that evening and early in the morning, she toured me around the area before we took off to return to Washington. I thought that they were exceptionally nice to me, which I appreciated very much.

EMC: That's wonderful. They treated you royally. Well, it sounds like a good tour of duty that you had in the Pentagon.

CSH: It was a great tour. I worked with a wonderful group of officers, both Naval and Marine aviators for the most part, and I couldn't have asked for a better relationship with them, as well as with the enlisted men in our Mail Room.

EMC: You met some interesting and important people. Did you meet any other admirals that became prominent?

CSH: No, I don't think so, except for ADM Ward, who was Vice Chief of Naval Operations at the time. He came into the picture later when I was assigned back to the Naval Postgraduate School as Assistant Administrative Officer for both the Engineering School and the General Line School, which had been combined. The Superintendent invited important people to speak each month to the students and one of my jobs was to write the introduction to the speakers for the Admiral. So when Admiral Ward came to speak, the opening remark included the comment that to list the Admiral's past assignments in the Navy was like trying to put an Operation Order on the head of a pin. To my delight and amazement that got a laugh from the audience.

EMC: That was your entree from Admiral Ward. Well, after '59, when you finished with your tour in Washington, where did you head for next?

CSH: Well, I was assigned to recruiting duty, from 1959 to 1961, in Detroit. I was WAVE Officer recruiter and Assistant Enlisted Program officer.

EMC: That must have been a challenge.

CSH: It was indeed, yes.

EMC: What were you doing there exactly?

CSH: Well, I visited most of the colleges in Michigan to recruit women for the Navy.

EMC: For women?

CSH: Yes. Usually I traveled with a team of male officers (general line and aviators) who were recruiting for men from the same colleges. We usually set up a booth together. Fortunately it was prior to Vietnam so the attitude at the schools was more receptive to the military than it was later on.

In our contacts with many people, some would comment to us that they wished they had stayed in the Service after World War II. It was a great experience. I was enthusiastic about being in the Navy and loved telling others about how special it was to serve and of the great opportunities for

women, including equal pay with the men.

EMC: Did you have a quota that you had to meet for recruiting?

CSH: I'm sure there were quotas for all of us - male and female; officer and enlisted.

EMC: Well, that was a challenge, wasn't it?

CSH: Yes

EMC: Trying to get people to sign up.

CSH: But it was enjoyable and another opportunity to expand one's abilities and to represent the Navy in many communities and different events. For instance, it was seen as desirable to attend county fairs and other special activities such as the annual cherry festival (and I've forgotten just where that was but they were famous for their cherries). The Detroit Navy League women donated a Michigan flag to the Recruit Training Command for Women at Bainbridge, MD at a time when they were collecting state flags. I was asked to make the presentation and it was Mrs. Arleigh Burke who accepted it at the event.

EMC: So you spent two years in Detroit, far away from the sea.

CSH: Right.

EMC: Where were you assigned next?

CSH: I received orders to the Naval Postgraduate School as Assistant Administrative Officer. That was 1961 to 1964. It was a wonderful assignment!

EMC: That was a good long stretch. What was your rank by then?

CSH: Well, I was selected for Lieutenant Commander while in Detroit but was actually promoted after I got to Monterey.

EMC: Oh, during that three-year time frame you were in an administrative billet.

CSH: Yes, I was not a student this time, but Assistant Administrative Officer in the office of the Director, General Line and Naval Science Schools, and also Assistant for Women.. One of my many duties was assisting in the preparation of and participation in the graduations of students from both the General Line School and the Naval Science Schools.

The Administrative Officer was a Captain and early in our working relationship I realized that he was quite resentful about a WAVE Captain, who had occasion to come down from San Francisco

on business at the School. He made some rather critical and unpleasant remarks about her. But I was able to deal with that satisfactorily and he softened his attitude noticeably as we worked together. In fact, we became very good friends and he and his wife were most kind to me.

EMC: That's good.

CSH: Yes.

EMC: Because men, I think, of that era, even through the seventies, were not too welcoming to women in the Navy.

CSH: I had a few experiences, such as a chief at Newport, which I mentioned before. But I found that you either worked it out or eventually they got reassigned or your tour was up. I'd like to say that a lot of prayerful thinking helped a great deal in smoothing relationships.

EMC: You worked it out in this case.

CSH: Yes, it worked out very happily.

EMC: Which is good. Did you enjoy this position, this assignment?

CSH: It was a wonderful assignment!

EMC: Monterey again - a beautiful place.

CSH: Yes. I lived in a small apartment house in Pacific Grove where there were also several Naval Aviators studying for master's degrees in aeronautical engineering. One of them lived next door to me and later on during the Vietnam war, he was one of the prisoners of war who returned with Admiral Stockdale after eight long years - Bob Schumaker.

EMC: Oh, no!

CSH: After his return, he was selected for Rear Admiral and was assigned as Superintendent of the Naval Postgraduate School. Just before we left Oregon in 1986, we went down to Monterey and had a brief visit with him. It was amazing - after those horrendous years as a prisoner he looked marvelous and was happy in his assignment. He seemed to be unscathed by the experience.

EMC: That's amazing.

CSH: It was really something.

EMC: Well, you've finished your tour in Monterey. You were there through half of 1964.

CSH: Then I had orders to the NINTH Naval District, Great Lakes, as Executive Assistant to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Naval Reserve and Training. It was a big job!

EMC: Oh, was it? What did that entail?

CSH: Well, the NINTH Naval District was composed of eight states in the mid west. There were Naval Reserve Training Stations in each of those states and one of my responsibilities was to prepare rough fitness reports for the CO's of those stations. I was also Assistant for Women and the Admiral consulted with me a few times about their uniforms. All I remember now is that it called upon all my abilities and experience to handle all the responsibilities and demands of the job. I had stepped into the shoes of a highly respected WAVE Commander and felt that I had a lot to live up to. It was a busy and very interesting tour.

EMC: When were you finally promoted to Commander?

CSH: The first of April, 1968.

EMC: What was your next assignment?

CSH: In 1966, I was ordered to the Bureau of Naval Personnel as Head, Programs Support Branch, Office of the Assistant Chief for Naval Reserve and Naval District Affairs, Washington, D.C. That was another most interesting tour of duty. Then from there, I was ordered to the Recruit Training Command, RTC(W), at Bainbridge Maryland as Executive Officer in June, 1968. CAPT Frances Biadaz was the CO. She was a good friend of mine from the Naval Postgraduate School. She was a very brilliant woman. Along the way she earned a Ph.D. in foreign affairs and later on worked very closely with Admiral Burke when he was CNO. Unfortunately she has passed on but after quite an unusual and outstanding career. As I remember, she taught Celestial Navigation early on and was the only woman, at least at that time, to wear special wings on her uniform.

In April of 1969, I relieved her as CO. At that time, that was the only command billet for women in the Navy and the only recruit training program for enlisted WAVES. The CO was responsible for the coordination of the basic indoctrination program for WAVE recruits. The command received 2400 young ladies annually for training from all 50 States plus Puerto Rico and Guam. During their ten-week long training program, they received academic preparation for Navy careers and were provided with a basic indoctrination to military life. Approximately 350 recruits were in training at any one time.

EMC: Well, that must have been very responsible.

CHS: It was. It was a wonderful opportunity.

EMC: Did you enjoy that position?

CSH: Yes, very much. We had many fine young women going through the training but there were always a few who had problems with the discipline, and the interaction with other recruits because of their backgrounds and experience. Some were held back to finish with another company and some were discharged for incompatibility. I felt very protective of the Navy, not wanting to send anyone into the field who would not uphold the standards that were expected of them.

EMC: Right, Right.

CSH: It was tough because the policy was to retain and retrain as many as possible.

EMC: Oh, I see, give them a break.

CSH: There was a big emphasis on keeping as many on duty as we possibly could.

EMC: Well, that was a problem area for you.

CSH: Yes, it was. However, aside from that aspect, it was a privilege to be part of this training which, on the whole was rewarding, exciting, and inspiring in so many ways. We had a wonderful staff of both officers and enlisted women who were dedicated, professional and responsible and who worked hard to turn these young ladies from recruits into Navy Seamen. At my Change of Command, the Staff asked if I would allow them to "pipe" me ashore. This was a very moving experience for me and I accepted with heart-felt appreciation and gratitude.

I was relieved on the 19th of May and reported to my new duty assignment as Director of Naval Personnel, FIRST Naval District Headquarters in Boston, MA, with Additional Duty as Assistant for Women.

EMC: Who did you work for there?

CSH: Admiral William Wylie.

EMC: Oh, yes. What did you think of him?

CSH: Oh, he was wonderful to work for. His daughter, Betsy, was of course a WAVE officer and I believe she was the first WAVE officer to be sent to Vietnam, at her request. One of my duties was to arrange ceremonies on board the USS CONSTITUTION for the Admiral to present medals to veterans returning from Vietnam. He also sent me out several times to present medals to the families of deceased veterans, which was a bit of a challenge. He thought it would be good experience for me.

EMC: Sure, difficult.

CSH: But it was very interesting and rewarding duty. I had a great office staff headed by a Lieutenant who was highly intelligent, responsive and very reliable, plus a fine civilian secretary.

EMC: Were you at the Charlestown Navy Yard?

CSH: No, we were at the Fargo Building not too far from the Navy Yard where the CONSTITUTION was moored.

EMC: That's where you were located.

CSH: Yes.

EMC: Was this your last assignment?

CSH: Yes.

EMC: Where did you meet your husband?

CSH: Well, CAPT John W. Hume was the Group Commander at the Coast Guard Station at Woods Hole on the Cape. The Minister for the Armed Services for our church headquarters in Boston invited both of us to a party at their home on the 9th of December 1969, and we were married on the 22nd of February!

EMC: Wow! That was a whirlwind courtship.

CSH: I'll say it was.

EMC: When did you have a chance to see each other?

CSH: He would drive up on Saturday or Sunday, going back each night and sometimes I'd go down there on the weekend and stay overnight at a local hotel.

EMC: Oh, that's very interesting. Well, you obviously hit it off dramatically.

CSH: Yes

EMC: You didn't have much time to plan a wedding, did you?

CSH: No, but we had a small ceremony at the Naval Air Station chapel in South Weymouth, as I lived in an apartment in South Weymouth.

EMC: Oh, you did, and you commuted into Boston?

CSH: Yes. I commuted with a couple of male officers who lived in the BOQ at the Naval Air Station, who also worked at the Fargo Building. One of them was Captain Dick Alexander who got involved in a situation during the Vietnam War which resulted in a change in his assignment from sea duty to the District.

EMC: Oh, Dick Alexander I know very well.

CSH: Do you?

EMC: Yes. I interviewed him about two years ago.

CSH: Did you?

EMC: Right.

CSH: I enjoyed knowing him very much and thought very highly of him.

EMC: He and his wife are in Newport and his wife, Hope, is on the board of the Newport Historical Society.

CSH: Oh, no kidding!

EMC: Oh, yes. He remembers talking about the Vietnam era, and also going out on old boat rides on the Charles River. Was he in your office?

CSH: No, he was Operations Officer and his office was on the floor above ours.

EMC: Interesting. Small world. So you were married in 1970.

CSH: Yes. We were both on active duty at that time and in July of 1970, he got orders to the Coast Guard Headquarters in Boston as Chief of the Operations Division. He moved into my apartment until we found a house to rent in Wellesley and commuted together into Boston. So it worked out well for both of us.

EMC: When did you finally retire from the Navy?

CSH: I retired the first of May, 1971.

EMC: Where was your retirement held?

CSH: It was on the USS CONSTITUTION! I have several pictures of the ceremony if you'd like to have them. I was the first woman officer to retire on board the CONSTITUTION.

EMC: That would be great. Oh, so you were the first woman officer.

CSH: Yes. Then several years after that, a very famous woman officer, Grace Hopper, was honored by her retirement there. She was either a Rear Admiral or a Commodore.

EMC: Quite an honor. Well, Admiral Wylie was there for your retirement, obviously.

CSH: Oh yes. He read my retirement orders. John's Admiral was there also. One of the local papers, the Globe, I think, was doing a special on women in the military just at that time. So they took pictures of me, which appeared in the paper that weekend and also on the TV news.

EMC: That's great, that's great.

CSH: Since I had been on board the CONSTITUTION many times to arrange medal ceremonies, the Commanding Officer and crew all knew me and I was greatly honored by having them "pipe" me ashore at the end of the ceremony.

EMC: They still do that. Well, you've had quite a career in the Navy, beginning in the WAVES in 1944, and then returning to active duty in 1952 as an officer, and retiring in 1971. It's been quite a span. If you had to sum up your career in the Navy, how would you do it and what was its significance for you in your life? That's a tough one, I know.

CSH: Well, it was a really marvelous opportunity to serve our country, which was the main reason for joining in 1944, but also for my advancement in life and ultimately a career. To be able to continue in the Navy after WWII in the Reserve and then go to college under the GI Bill and become a commissioned officer upon graduation, was a development not even dreamed of at the outset. And then to earn the "scrambled eggs" of a Commander - that was the icing on the cake!

EMC: That's true.

CSH: It certainly was a most significant experience in my life and I feel most grateful and very blessed. The contacts with a broad variety of people in this particular context was life-enhancing and I can't help but feel that I contributed in some small way to that context, too. It was confirmation also, that I had the needed abilities to be successful in the way that I was led to take. As I look back to a very shy, rather timid child lacking in poise and confidence, I am all the more grateful. When I graduated from high school, women either went to college or business school or got married. Unable to go to college, my father sent me to secretarial school which turned out to be a good foundation for the future.

It's gratifying, also to see how careers for women in the Navy have broadened to include greater responsibilities and higher ranks than ever before. I firmly believe and have felt all along that women have been and are a great asset to the Navy for the particular qualities that they inherently bring to positions and events. And the timing was right and ripe for this to happen not only in the

Services but across the whole spectrum of life in this country.

EMC: Well, that's great. Thank you so much, Charlotte, for your memories of your naval career. We will have this transcribed. Then we'll do some editing, both you and I, and you'll get a final copy for your own library. Thank you.

CSH: Well, I thank you for doing this. As I reflect again on my Naval career, I can't help but think that I couldn't have worked or been associated with a finer organization or a more wonderful group of people - officer, enlisted, civilian. Each duty station confirmed this fact and each one added new facets to this experience.

EMC: Great.

(End of Interview)