NAVAL WAR COLLEGE, NEWPORT, RI

## ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

## WOMEN MARINES IN WORLD WAR II

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ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM NAVAL WAR COLLEGE 2012 Naval War College Newport, Rhode Island World War II Veterans

- Interviewee: Doris Sheldon Blaney
- Interviewer: Evelyn M. Cherpak
- Subject: Women Marines in World War II
- Date: February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012
- EMC: This is an oral history interview with Doris Blaney. Today's date is February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The interview is taking place at her home on 8 Mansion Avenue in Narragansett, Rhode Island. And as we were talking before the interview started, I mentioned that I saw a news-clipping about her in one of the local papers, and her efforts on behalf of war veterans. Doris, I'd like to begin the interview by asking you where and when you were born.
- DSB: Providence, Rhode Island, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 1921.
- EMC: And what did your father do for a living there?
- DSB: My father was a motion-picture operator, projectionist.

- EMC: At one of the theaters in Providence?
- DSB: Yes.
- EMC: Do you remember which one?
- DSB: Well, when I was born, he was in one of the old Nickelodeons, the Bijou, but most of his career was at Lowe's State Theater in Providence. That was owned by Metro-Golden-Mayer.
- EMC: Oh, wow. Did you ever get to go to the movies for free?
- DSB: All the time.
- EMC: Oh, that must've been fun.
- DSB: Oh, yes.
- EMC: And there were double features then for --
- DSB: Oh, well, I never had to watch double features. I would get a headache.
- EMC: Oh, really?
- DSB: 'Cause I was supposed to be wearing glasses and didn't.
- EMC: Oh, but anyway, that must've been fun for you. Was your mother a homemaker?
- DSB: No, my mother, just before I was born, she met my father in the theater. She sold tickets in the old Bijou Theater.

EMC: Oh, really?

DSB: Yes.

EMC: Oh, isn't that something? That's amazing.

DSB: And in the old days, all the big companies had outings in the summer. They would close down the business and everybody would attend these outings. This was true of most of the manufacturers, et cetera.

EMC: Oh, yes.

- DSB: Well, the theater union used to do that. And my mother and father went in a three-legged race. And Spencer Tracy babysat me while they were the threelegged race because he was in a repertory theater in Providence at that time.
- EMC: Oh, exciting. That can be a claim to fame. Did you have any siblings, brothers and sisters?

DSB: No, I'm an only child.

- EMC: You were the only child? Were you brought up in Providence?
- DSB: No, I was brought up, from the time I was nine, in East Providence.
- EMC: Oh, okay. Did you go to school there?
- DSB: I went to school in East Providence, yes.

EMC: Did you go to high school?

- DSB: High school was in East Providence, yes.
- EMC: And when did you graduate?

DSB: 1939.

EMC: At the end of the Depression?

DSB: Yes.

EMC: How did your family survive the Depression?

DSB: We did very well because people went to the movies just to keep warm. So the theaters made money during the Depression.

EMC: Yeah, they did.

DSB: My father made the best salary ever, in his whole life, during the Depression. After that, it went down.

EMC: Right.

DSB: When times were good, theaters weren't.

EMC: Just like today. Theaters have fallen off today, to some degree.

DSB: Yeah.

EMC: So you survived it? You didn't feel deprived then? DSB: I was never deprived, no.

EMC: Okay, that's great. Did you decide to go to work after high school?

DSB: Yes, my father wanted me to go to college. And he had the money. But it was a sign of the times. I thought I was going to get married. And I thought college

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would be a waste. And I've been kicking my self ever since.

EMC: Oh, so what did you do?

DSB: I went to a machine operations school. I learned to run a bookkeeping machine, which is no longer in existence. And I worked at Congdon and Carpenter in Providence.

EMC: Congdon and Carpenter?

DSB: Yeah, steel, metal and industrial supplies. As it turned out, it was a war industry.

EMC: Oh, well, that was good.

- DSB: Well, it wasn't until we had a war, and then, it became a war industry.
- EMC: Right, war industry. I just want to get a piece of paper here. So did you stay at Congdon and Carpenter until you enlisted?

DSB: Yes.

EMC: Okay. Well, do you remember where you were on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941?

DSB: Vividly.

EMC: And where were you? And what was your reaction?

DSB: Well, my boyfriend, later-to-be husband, and I were having dinner with some school friends, who had married right out of high school. And we were just

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about to sit down to dinner when we heard it. And my husband worked for the Providence Journal.

- EMC: Oh, he did?
- DSB: And he said, "I've got to go to work. We're going to put out an extra."
- EMC: So he did.
- DSB: So he did.
- EMC: Now, was he a high-school sweetheart?
- DSB: Yes, I started going with him when we were in junior high school.
- EMC: Oh, wow.
- DSB: Ninth grade.
- EMC: Oh, my heavens. So it was a long romance.
- DSB: It was.
- EMC: Well, did he, once war was declared, did he decide to join?
- DSB: Immediately. He was a skier. He was a top-ranking skier and not thee top. He had just started competing. And he, well, he was a good skier, let's put it that way. And he taught skiing. And they turned him down 'cause he was Four "F." He had trouble with one of his eyes. So three weeks later, they drafted him.

EMC: Oh, really?

DSB: In non-combatant. He went to Maryland to the - you know, I never can remember it, but they made arms.

EMC: Oh, okay.

DSB: And he did very well. And he went in and, within months, he was a corporal.

EMC: So he went in the Army?

DSB: Right. He was in the Army. My father had been in the Navy.

EMC: Oh, really?

DSB: His father was a Marine, my husband's father was a Marine.

EMC: Oh, okay.

- DSB: That's not why I went in the Marines.
- EMC: The Marines? Oh, that's interesting now, all these military connections in your family.
- DSB: Well, in World War II, you know.
- EMC: Yeah, oh, of course, and World War I.
- DSB: Yes, and they were close.
- EMC: Yes, they were.
- DSB: What did you ask me?
- EMC: I asked you where you were when the attack on Pearl Harbor occurred.

DSB: Yes.

EMC: And what your reaction was?

- DSB: Well, it's one of those things you just can remember. EMC: It was a shock, I imagine.
- DSB: Indeed. It compares to the day we heard Kennedy had been shot.
- EMC: Right.
- DSB: Yeah.
- EMC: Everything kind of stopped.
- DSB: Yeah.
- EMC: Yes, I can understand that. Well, that was December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941. And your husband-to-be was drafted.
- DSB: Yeah.
- EMC: Fairly quickly, despite his eye problem.
- DSB: And then, he never did know why or how, but just about the time he made corporal, he was called in to the headquarters and told he'd been transferred. And he was sent out to Fort Lewis in Washington for the Mountain Troops.
- EMC: Oh, he was a good skier and, I guess, that's why they put him in there.
- DSB: And he was a good soldier.
- EMC: And a good soldier.
- DSB: And, I think, they found that his eye problem did not diminish his he had the problem since he had the

measles as a very small child. And he learned to compensate.

EMC: Oh, that's good.

DSB: So he never had any real problem with it.

EMC: Right. Oh, well, that's interesting. His experiences will be good to comment on as we go along.

- DSB: Right.
- EMC: Well, when did you decide to join the Marines?
- DSB: I'm afraid it was kind of a selfish thing. I was tired of sitting around. I would go years without even seeing Russell. And it was the early parts of the war, in this area, we had all kinds of military, Navy, Army, SeeBees.
- EMC: Oh, yes.
- DSB: And there was a lot of party-time. You have to, you know, at my age, I was 21, 22. My husband - well, my boyfriend had been away. And we both decided, early on, that it was going to be a long war. And we'd only known each other - we'd only dated each other, not knowing term they use now, but we both decided that we would date other people.

EMC: Oh, well, that's good.

DSB: So we did. And I got sick of partying. I got sick of getting passed over at the office. I took a man's job

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because he got drafted. Later in the war, they were drafting older men with families, so that the young ones could go to fight. And the Marines were advertising, "Free a man to fight." I had a young jet jockey. He would stick his head in my office one day and say - I said, "Can I help you?" And he says, "Just want to see who freed me to fight." A joke, but, you know?

EMC: Oh, yeah.

DSB: But then, I was going to go - I wanted to go in the Navy.

EMC: Oh, why did you want to go in the Navy?

DSB: Because, with my high school education, I could probably make OCS. I knew I could do it. I wasn't stupid. Of course it all depends on the toss of the dice, too. But I felt as though I could advance more in the Navy. And I went with a friend of mine to Boston, who wanted to go in the Marines. And I went up to keep her company. So, of course, up there, they said, "Well, you might as well take the physical because, you know, you're going to do it anyway for the Navy, and you'll know whether you can pass or not." So at the end of the physical, when they said, "Put up your right hand," I did.

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- EMC: Oh, they kind of just swept you in?
- DSB: And that's how I joined the Marines.
- EMC: The Marines? Oh, so not by any intent, so to speak.
- DSB: No, I had planned to join the Navy.
- EMC: Great. Well, that was the Navy's loss and the Marines won. How did your parents feel about your enlistment in the Marines?
- DSB: My mother didn't speak to me for three weeks.
- EMC: Really?! Why?
- DSB: Nice girls didn't go in the service.
- EMC: That was the feeling in those days. And that lingered for a long time.
- DSB: And I said to her, "Now, what kind of friends do I have now?" And she said, "Well, you have nice friends." And I said, "What makes you think I'm going to do any different anywhere I go?" I said, "Trash attracts trash."
- EMC: That's true. That's true. How did your father feel? DSB: My father never, ever, in my whole life, said I shouldn't do something, or disapproved. But I always knew, because he would always say, "It'll be a good experience for you."

EMC: Oh, that's great.

- DSB: That's when I knew he didn't approve. He wouldn't say, "You shouldn't do it." I ran for school committee one time. And, but see, I ran for the Republican Party, and he was a Democrat, and he said, "It will be a good experience for you." And it was, 'cause I lost a landslide because that was the year Kennedy got elected. And the Democrats swept everything.
- EMC: Oh, that's true.
- DSB: They completely put out the whole political system here in Narragansett.
- EMC: Do you remember the date you enlisted in the Marines? DSB: February 17<sup>th</sup>, 1944.
- EMC: And this is February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012. What a coincidence. Well, I assume, you went back home after that and waited to hear?
- DSB: Yes. And I went on active duty May 17<sup>th</sup>.
- EMC: Oh, isn't that something? You were called to report on May 17th, 1944? Well, where did you go, initially, after you received the call?
- DSB: We did our boot camp at Camp Lejeune.
- EMC: That's in North Carolina.

DSB: Yes.

- EMC: And can you describe that experience, as you remember it?
- DSB: Well, I can tell you the very last day, when we had the last review, the day we graduated and went in to real service, out of boot camp, was my birthday. It was June 21<sup>st</sup>. And I mentioned the fact that it was my birthday while we were lining up. And this little girl in front of me - she barely made the height limit - she was just 20. She had been waiting to be 20 to enlist, because you had to be 20. And she says, "Why did you wait so long," because I was 23. And I said, "I didn't wait long enough." So that explains boot camp.
- EMC: Oh, okay. What exactly did you learn at boot camp? Did you have classes?
- DSB: We learned, well, how to march, how to step over your friend if she fainted in front of you, how to follow the rules and regulations. One morning, we got up and fell out. We did exercise every morning. And we fell out and it was raining. We all put on our rain coats. And when we got out there, we were all in trouble, 'cause it was not posted for us to put on rain coats. That was when we learned that, if it was summertime,

you had summer uniforms. If it was freezing cold, and you learned to follow the rules.

- EMC: Right. The rules and regulations.
- DSB: Yes. Yes.
- EMC: Of the military. Now, did you live in a barracks?
- DSB: Yes. I was in a squadron with a hundred girls.
- EMC: How did you like that?
- DSB: Eight of them were named "Doris."
- EMC: Oh, my heavens. That was a popular name.
- DSB: It still is, at that level.
- EMC: And did you find that strange or intimidating in any way?
- DSB: No, I think I've always been pretty much able to go with the flow.
- EMC: Okay. So the loss of privacy didn't bother you?
- DSB: No, not really, not after a few days.
- EMC: Did you have bunk beds?
- DSB: Yes.
- EMC: Was there anybody else from Rhode Island there?
- DSB: No, but, on the train, I met a girl from Watertown, Mass. And then, down in Washington, we changed trains in Washington, I met up with one from - a Doris Dingham from - I still remember - Doris Dingham from Michigan, and Doris Kerwin from New Jersey. And the

other one that came from Massachusetts, her last name was Duff. So we called ourselves the "Four Ds." And we pretty much went through boot together.

EMC: Oh, that's nice.

- DSB: And then we were all assigned to Camp Lejeune I mean Camp, Cherry Point.
- EMC: Oh, Cherry Point, North Carolina?
- DSB: Yeah.
- EMC: How did you get used to the summer down there when you were in training? It's kind of hot and humid.
- DSB: Yeah. The coldest I was ever in my life was in February in North Carolina. I remember that. And one of the days that everyone got the worse sunburn was Christmas of 1945.
- EMC: Oh, really? Oh, well, the temperature varies.

DSB: No, four, 1944.

- EMC: It can be 70 one week and it can be 40 the next, so you never know.
- DSB: All the girls got sunburn right through their teeshirts.
- EMC: Oh, my heavens. What did you think of the Marine Corps uniform?
- DSB: I liked it, although at recruitment, when they asked me if I wanted to go in, I says, "I don't know why I'm

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doing this. I look like hell in green," which I did. My color was not good for green.

EMC: Yeah, and it is that drab kind of olivey green.

- DSB: Oh, it's a beautiful color. It was we had to wear bright red lipstick and a bright red nail polish. We were show pieces for the Marines. The Marines didn't want us.
- EMC: I know. I can imagine.
- DSB: They did not want us.
- EMC: Now was your drill instructor there a man?
- DSB: A woman.
- EMC: Oh, and how did she treat you?

DSB: A typical drill instructor.

- EMC: Barking out orders?
- DSB: The very last day she marched us through a ditch.
- EMC: Oh, my heavens. So you had to go in to the ditch and march out?
- DSB: We went down and climbed up.
- EMC: Oh, my heavens.
- DSB: Dress uniforms.
- EMC: Yeah, it got all messy, no doubt.
- DSB: I learned how to shine shoes. I knew how to do a spit polish.

- EMC: Did you have captain's inspections then of your barracks?
- DSB: Oh, we had every week and, sometimes, a surprise.
- EMC: Now was anybody punished in any way if things weren't ship-shape?
- DSB: Yeah, we had a couple that disappeared overnight.
- EMC: Oh, really? How did the other girls react to the training and boot camp?
- DSB: Most everybody was expecting it, I think. I think we expected it.
- EMC: Were there any complainers?
- DSB: A couple that went out on sicknesses that they developed.
- EMC: Were you in contact with any men during this timeframe?
- DSB: No. We were in the old Para-Marine area. The Marine Corps used to have parachute troops. And they trained them at Camp Lejeune. Well, we didn't train down at Parris Island.
- EMC: No, no, of course not.
- DSB: Well, the first ones did. But we trained in the old and we had our own perimeter, which we, at night and day, we did guard duty. But the men did guard duty around us.

EMC: Oh, really?

DSB: Yes.

EMC: Oh, how interesting.

DSB: And you weren't allowed to talk to them, either.

EMC: Of course not. So you were very segregated at that point in time. How were the meals there?

DSB: The best. We had good meals. We had very good meals at Cherry Point, but then, part of that, later on, I learned to eat liver in the Marines, 'cause they cooked it well. They cooked it.

EMC: They do.

DSB: Yeah. Now, I know how to cook it. But my mother used to make it like shoe leather.

EMC: Yeah, it's a tough meat to cook.

- DSB: I love liver. But, anyway, the food was good. I had been a civilian long enough to be aware of rationing. We didn't have butter. We didn't have sugar. We didn't have silk stockings. And I would see these girls load their plates up with butter and sugar and throw it away. It appalled me.
- EMC: Yeah, I can see that. Things were tight. And there was a lot of rationing then. Well, let's advance to your job at Cherry Point, North Carolina, where you

were transferred. And when were you transferred? Was it '47?

DSB: Well, after we finished boot camp, you waited for your billet. And I didn't have one. See, I went in as a bookkeeper. And they don't have bookkeepers. So I suddenly became a clerk-typist. I'd never learned to type in my whole life. I still can't type. When I had my job, later on when I worked, I had a girl that - I had a secretary, because I still couldn't type, and I took typing in high school.

EMC: Yeah, everybody did.

DSB: But I was never a good typist. But, anyway, everybody went on mess duty. And I was offered a job as a secretary to the mess, you know, head of the mess. Well, mess duty was something you didn't want to get involved in because nobody would even talk to you if you were in the mess.

EMC: Why?

DSB: 'Cause, well, they complained about the food. They complained, you know, but, anyway, so I turned that one down. And I was waiting for a billet and I was assigned to the photo lab as keeping the stock. And the job called for a master sergeant. So I immediately took my PFT Test, and then, I made it, and

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then, I took my corporal's test. But, meanwhile, we had a hurricane in 1944. And I walked. My office was in the observation tower, where Tyrone Power walked by my door every single day.

EMC: Oh, really?

DSB: Oh, yes.

EMC: Southern girls have said they saw him.

DSB: Yes. In fact, he had to drill on the top of one of the hangars because he'd get such an audience that his group couldn't, you know, he was in charge, so he had to train his men every day. They had to exercise.

EMC: He was very handsome.

DSB: Oh, yes, yes, yes. And his brother-in-law was also there. And he was married to Annabella. And it wasn't his brother-in-law. I think he was a friend of his from Hollywood, William Dozier. They both went in together and stayed together. But, regardless, you asked me - oh, in between, they started shifting girls around. And I hadn't been moved and all the rest of the girls had. And when word came down that work had been cancelled, I didn't get it. So I walked to work in a hurricane.

EMC: Oh, my heavens.

- DSB: And I got there and they said, "There's no work." And I turned around and walked back. So, naturally, my shoes were soaking wet. I was a pretty new Marine. And word came down at one o'clock that we had to report. I put on my white shoes because my other ones were soaked. And I got called in to the office by the lieutenant. And she wanted to know why I was wearing white shoes. And I told her. And she said, "You're not happy here, are you?" And I looked at her and I said, "No, I'm not." I should've kept that big mouth shut, 'cause it was a fabulous job. And I was accomplishing a lot.
- EMC: Oh, and this was in the photo lab?
- DSB: This was in the photo lab.
- EMC: Yeah.
- DSB: So she expected fully that when anybody got transferred they were put right in the motor pool, fixing cars.
- EMC: Oh, my heavens. You had no training in that.
- DSB: And that's what she thought happened to me. She didn't like me. Why, I don't know, but she didn't like me. But, anyway, regardless, I didn't like her either. But, no, she didn't stand up for her girls. She was in charge of all - we had women aerial

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photographers. And we got a new head of the station. And he took all the girls out of the planes and put them in to developing film, trained aerial photographers. So, anyway, I guess, she knew how I felt about that. I was very fortunate when I went for my interview for transfer. The young lieutenant who interviewed me looked at my record and she said, "Oh, did you know John C. Congdon?" I said, "Yeah, I worked with John C. when before he got called in the National Guard." He was the son of the president. But we all worked together because, in the old days, all those big companies, they put their sons through the jobs from truck driver right up through to the top. So, they knew the business. And so, I knew John C. as an equal, not as my boss. So she said, "Oh, where would you like to go? How about Lake Worth, Texas?" That was the cream. Every girl in the Marines wanted to go to Lake Worth. I don't know why.

EMC: Why?

DSB: I don't know why. And I said, "No, I'm an only child. And my family is suffering bad enough." I said, "I can get home weekends from here."

EMC: Oh, really? Did you ever?

DSB: Oh, several times.

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- EMC: Oh, so you wanted to stay at Cherry Point?
- DSB: I didn't really but I --

EMC: Had no choice --

- DSB: I felt badly for my parents. My father and I were very, very close. So I got assigned to a job out in the Junior Officer's Quarters as a secretary to a lieutenant in Navy Public Works. It was a job I shouldn't say that - it was a created job, let's put it that way.
- EMC: Oh, yeah.
- DSB: And what I was, was the liaison between her and the civilian staff down on the base, because she was a little hard to handle. But when my corporal's test went up before the head of the station, one of my Four Ds" was his secretary, 'cause she was a Katie Gibbs girl. She didn't know how to do anything, but she was a Gibbs girl. So she got one of the best jobs on the station. And she came home that day and quoted to me. She said, "When the colonel looked at your papers, he says, 'What in hell is she doing there? I can't send this to Washington because Marines can't work for the Navy.'" The job should've been either Navy, which they had none of on that station, except for medical or civilians, and they couldn't do that

because the office was right next to the bar in the middle of - I don't know how many - young Navy bedrooms. So they put the only military person they had and that's where I spent my time.

- EMC: Oh, really?
- DSB: I didn't do anything.
- EMC: Oh, really?
- DSB: I did. But we maintained all the housekeeping and all the housing for the junior and senior officers.

EMC: Oh, so you ...

DSB: It had nothing to do with the JOQ and, well, it was but, I mean, it was staff, not the building itself.

EMC: Did you find that boring?

- DSB: No, it was fun. It was fun because I was a bookkeeper. And it kind of fell in to, you know, keeping the records, and that sort of thing.
- EMC: Yeah, and what you had done previously.
- DSB: And I learned a lot because it was a southern station in the '40s. And you could not promote even one single black person above the stupidest, lowest white person, I mean, above. And we had one man who was really entitled to a promotion, but 1,200 people threatened to walk out if we did it.

EMC: Oh, my heavens.

DSB: The whole station was going to walk.

EMC: Good, Lord, yeah, prejudice was so ingrained there.

- DSB: I kept that from that happening. So that's about the only thing I can say I gave to the war effort.
- EMC: Oh, dear. When you were at Cherry Point, what did you do for recreation and a social life?
- DSB: Well, we could go to the beach. That was another thing. My boss was really very upset that she did not get, again, I was entitled to be a master sergeant, and they couldn't promote me. She had a PFC instead of a master sergeant for her secretary, which made her look bad. She handed me my liberty card and she said, "Here, whenever you want to go off the station, you just go."
- EMC: Oh, really?
- DSB: So, a couple of times, I went. Oh, I had to be entitled to the time. But a couple of times I went home on leave, what they used to have as "68s," "72s" came off your leave time. But "68s" didn't count. So a group would get together and drive towards New England, drive all night.

EMC: Oh, yeah, you have to.

DSB: And I'd get home for a few hours and I'd go back.

- EMC: Wow. That's a long, long drive. And they didn't have the super highways then.
- DSB: No. No.
- EMC: So, okay, you couldn't take a plane, I guess?
- DSB: I never was lucky enough to get a plane.
- EMC: Because it's a Naval Air Station.
- DSB: Yeah, I could've. People flew in and out of there all the time. Every time I wanted to go somewhere, there was never anybody going.
- EMC: Did they have church services in the chapel?
- DSB: Oh, yes, they had all. Yes, all the. I used to go to church every Sunday.
- EMC: Did you engage in any extracurricular activities, like sports or singing?
- DSB: No.
- EMC: Okay. Do you remember what your pay was?
- DSB: Yes, \$54 a month.
- EMC: Did you send any of that home?
- DSB: No. I barely survived.
- EMC: Oh, really? What did you use the money for?
- DSB: Oh, I don't know. They issued us stockings but we only had a \$200 uniform allowance, and \$50 a year, which \$1,250 a guarter, I think.
- EMC: I thought it was \$54 a month?

- DSB: Well, no, but we had a clothing allowance.
- EMC: Oh, okay. Right.
- DSB: And \$1,250 a month. It didn't keep us in stockings.
- EMC: Oh, really?
- DSB: No, especially me. I've always been famous for my --EMC: Runs.
- DSB: But then, we suddenly had nylon stockings.
- EMC: Wow, that was a switch.
- DSB: And they were so heavy, you know. They were not nice like our silk stockings. But we wore them. In fact, they lasted so long we'd re-dye them because there wasn't any color left in them.
- EMC: Oh, for heavens sake.
- DSB: Yes.
- EMC: Oh, did you have any social life, any dating with Marines when you were there at Cherry Point?
- DSB: Yes, I met quite a few people. And we girls would go out and we - I'm trying to think - I think we mostly worked. And I knitted then. I knit now.
- EMC: Did you make any special friends during this timeframe, girlfriends?
- DSB: We did but it didn't last after the war.

EMC: Okay.

DSB: I lost track.

- EMC: Some people did and some people didn't lose track.
- DSB: Yeah.
- EMC: But did you write letters home at this time?

DSB: Oh, yes, I wrote to my dad.

EMC: Do you still have these letters?

- DSB: No.
- EMC: Okay. And you won't have any letters that your parents sent you? Oh, that's unfortunate.
- DSB: I have one. I have one.
- EMC: Oh, that's --
- DSB: He tells me he couldn't find a robe. I was looking for a new robe.
- EMC: Oh, okay. Did you write to your boyfriend?
- DSB: Yes, almost every day.
- EMC: Oh, you did? Oh, wonderful.
- DSB: And I've got two or three those.
- EMC: Oh, that'd be great.
- DSB: No, not mine, the ones he sent me.
- EMC: He sent? Obviously.
- DSB: But we weren't supposed to keep mail because we had a terrible roach problem.
- EMC: Oh, really?
- DSB: Anything with glue.
- EMC: Yeah, paste they'd eat.

- DSB: They didn't want us to keep any mail because of the roaches.
- EMC: Oh, because the World War II letters are wonderful. It gives a great picture of what people were doing and thinking and the whole tenor of the times. So and there are many books that have been written on letters, using these letters.
- DSB: Yeah, right. No, I didn't save many of those things.
  EMC: Oh, well, that's too bad. Did you save any of the documentation, your enlistment or your discharge?
  DSB: Yeah.

EMC: Well, we can look at those later.

DSB: I know but that, I've got them right here for you.

- EMC: Yeah, great. Thank you. We'll look at those later. Was there anything you disliked about your billet?
- DSB: The fact that I was stuck at PFC. I'm embarrassed about it 'til now. It looks like I was stupid.

EMC: Oh, private first class, right?

DSB: Yeah.

EMC: Right. Where were you housed when you were at Cherry Point?

DSB: We were in dorms, you know, but we could kind of separate them up with bunks and make them in to, like, little individual holes, knot holes.

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- EMC: Yeah, so you had some sense of privacy?
- DSB: Well, the bunks were three high.

EMC: Wow!

- DSB: But, some places, two high, sometimes, three. I always took a top bunk.
- EMC: Oh, so you had a ladder to get up there?
- DSB: No, you had to climb.
- EMC: Oh, my heavens.
- DSB: And if you had a bunkmate who turned in early, they would get upset.
- EMC: Yeah, because you'd be climbing up --
- DSB: Waking them up when you climbed in.
- EMC: Oh, oh, my heavens.
- DSB: And I've never been one to go to bed early. When I was home, from the time I was young, every other night, my father would come home at 11. He worked shifts, five to 11 or 11 to five, depending on the day. And when he came home, he and I would drink coffee and talk 'til about 1:00 in the morning.
- EMC: Oh, my heavens.
- DSB: So I've never been an early-to-bed person.
- EMC: Yeah. Oh, well.
- DSB: But you know why you always pick a top bunk? EMC: No.

- DSB: 'Cause nobody can sit on it and mess it up.
- EMC: Oh, that's true. Yeah, they don't want to go up there.
- DSB: No.
- EMC: It's too high. Oh, that's good. Well, when VJ-Day came along, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1945, do you remember your reaction to that event?
- DSB: Well, I was waiting to hear from my husband.
- EMC: To-be?
- DSB: No, my husband.
- EMC: Oh, when did you get married? You didn't mention that.
- DSB: I was married August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1944.
- EMC: Oh, really? Now that's important. How could you have left that out?
- DSB: In Memphis. Well, you didn't ask me that.
- EMC: Oh, how did I know? Most people didn't get married. Well, some people did, but I had no idea.
- DSB: That was an adventure.
- EMC: He must've been home on leave?

DSB: He was.

EMC: And you got leave?

- DSB: We were married August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1944. The day I finished boot camp, I got a letter asking me to marry him, again. We'd been going over this for years.
- EMC: Oh, I thought boot camp was finished in '43?
- DSB: Boot camp, no, it was all in '44.
- EMC: Oh, because you said you joined in --
- DSB: I didn't go in `til '44.
- EMC: Oh, because you said '43.
- DSB: I was in 18 months.
- EMC: Yeah, you said you went in on --
- DSB: In `44.
- EMC: Well, yeah, you said May 17<sup>th</sup>, 1943.
- DSB: Well, it should've been '44.
- EMC: We'll have to correct that. All right. We'll correct that.
- DSB: Yeah. Right.
- EMC: It's 1944?
- DSB: So he drew a line on the map. He was stationed in Texas.
- EMC: Oh, he was?
- DSB: And I was stationed in North Carolina. Halfway through was Memphis, Tennessee.
- EMC: Oh, really?

- DSB: So I wrote to Memphis and found out the only thing we had to have was a blood test in three days. So we each got our blood tests in our base. And it was three days before we got to Memphis.
- EMC: Did you go separately to Memphis?
- DSB: I went my way and he went his way.
- EMC: How did you get there?
- DSB: Train.
- EMC: Train. Oh, okay.
- DSB: And I didn't know about the Southern Railroads. You know, in the East, railroads were pretty reliable, not in the South.
- EMC: Oh, really?
- DSB: The one I took stopped at every post all the way to Florence.
- EMC: Oh, my heavens.
- DSB: And to Camp Bragg.
- EMC: Fort Bragg, yeah.
- DSB: Fort Bragg.
- EMC: Oh, my heavens.
- DSB: And I got to Memphis twelve hours late. I should've gotten there eight in the morning. I got there at eight at night.
- EMC: Oh, you couldn't get married then?

DSB: You would think so, wouldn't you? So we had arranged that we would check with the Red Cross and leave a message for the other one to pick up. Well, I called and there was no message.

EMC: Oh, dear.

- DSB: And we didn't know it was a Navy town, hospital, et cetera, et cetera. There wasn't a hotel room anywhere at 9:00 at night.
- EMC: How about the "Y?"
- DSB: So, well, I called the Red Cross again and the message was there. So he came and met me and he told me that the city clerk was so upset that I hadn't arrived to sign the papers and he had been there all day waiting. She had the papers at her home. And we went to her house by cab. And I signed the papers and she says, "Now, where are you going to get married?" And I said, "I guess we're going to find a Justice of the Peace. We don't know anybody here." She says, "Well, just wait a minute." And she arranged with her minister to marry us.

EMC: That night?

DSB: That night. We were married at 20 minutes to 11 in front of the minister's fireplace. His wife and children got out of bed, took their hair out of

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curlers, were dressed in all their best. The wife played the piano. And I had a lovely wedding.

- EMC: Oh, isn't that something? Were you married in your uniform?
- DSB: I was. And when we walked in the minister's door, he says, "How long have you two known each other?" And I said, "Nine years." And he said, "Let's get married." But he had turned down every other service couple before us because they had all just met.
- EMC: Oh, yeah. Right.
- DSB: So the next day, they invited us to dinner. Again, we were choking on the food because we knew what it had cost them in ration points. We had roast lamb, butter on the table, sugar.
- EMC: Oh, my heavens.
- DSB: And then he took us for a ride so we could see the Mississippi.
- EMC: Oh, isn't that nice?
- DSB: Gas points.
- EMC: Yeah. Isn't that nice?
- DSB: But we hardly ate anything because we both knew that we were eating their month's ration points, you know?

But when we left there that night, we went right to a restaurant. We were starving.

EMC: Oh, my heavens.

- DSB: Because, you know, you just couldn't do that.
- EMC: Well, did you find a room anywhere?
- DSB: Oh, he already had a room. He had gotten there early in the morning. So he found a hotel.
- EMC: Oh, okay. Yeah, because when you got there --
- DSB: And when I first talked to him, he already told me about the city clerk. I said, "If you think I waited nine years and I'm going to spend my last night in a hotel room, not married." He says, "Wait a minute. Wait a minute. I'll be right there," `cause they had set it up. They knew I was going to get married.
- EMC: Yeah. Oh, oh, well, that's great. Now that's quite something. So August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1944 you were married?
- DSB: Yeah.

EMC: And you went to boot camp then.

DSB: In 1944.

EMC: Yeah, June 21<sup>st</sup>?

DSB: No, May 17<sup>th</sup>.

EMC: May 17<sup>th</sup>? All right. That's when you went to boot camp?

DSB: Yeah. Right.

- EMC: And you graduated --
- DSB: June 21<sup>st</sup>.
- EMC: 1944?
- DSB: Right.
- EMC: And then you went to Camp Lejeune I mean then you went to Cherry Point?
- DSB: Right.
- EMC: Okay.
- DSB: And I was discharged in October.
- EMC: Of what year?
- DSB: That same year, 1945, when the war was over.
- EMC: Okay. Discharged 1945? Now, what happened? How long did you spend in Memphis? How long was your leave?
- DSB: I got there on --
- EMC: Well, you were married on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. And did you have a week or --
- DSB: No.
- EMC: Just a couple of days?
- DSB: We had just a few days, `cause I only had seven days, and he had five.
- EMC: Oh, a lot of its travel time.
- DSB: So I left. I think we were together three days. And he put me on a bus. It was the only time he ever sent me off. I always had to send him off somewhere.

- EMC: Oh, okay. Away you went, back to so did you have to request permission to get married?
- DSB: No, but I had to apply for the leave and tell them what it was for.
- EMC: Oh, okay. So, but they didn't weren't concerned about that? So you had a whole other year and about fourteen months before you were discharged?
- DSB: No, I served eighteen months.
- EMC: Well.
- DSB: Well, around eighteen months.
- EMC: Well, from August '44 to October '45 is about fourteen months.
- DSB: Okay, in May, June, July, August.
- EMC: From that, yeah. Right.
- DSB: Eighteen months.
- EMC: Right. I'm just counting the time from the marriage to your discharge in October '45.
- DSB: Yeah. Oh.
- EMC: So he went back to his base?
- DSB: He went back to Texas.
- EMC: And you went back to Cherry Point.
- DSB: Yeah.
- EMC: And, of course, you wrote a lot of letters, I think. Did you call, use the phone?

- DSB: No, we didn't because he was out in the field most of the time.
- EMC: Okay. And then he got transferred, you said, to Fort Lewis.
- DSB: Oh, he had already been transferred. He was already in the Mountain Troops at that point.
- EMC: In Texas and then he was transferred, you said, to Fort Lewis.
- DSB: I think they were going to send him to the Pacific. They decided that the Mountain Troops wasn't worth the trouble.
- EMC: Oh, no, I wouldn't think so.
- DSB: But I think Mark Clark, a general, I think it was Mark Clark, but I'm not sure. But one of them changed the government's mind and they were sent to Italy. I remember getting a letter from a young man I knew and he was in the mountains in Germany. And he got hurt. In fact, he had a silver plate in his head. And he wrote me and said, "They better get Russ over here soon because they're killing us," 'cause he was in the cavalry - not the cavalry - the Armored Division. And those tanks did not work in those mountains.EMC: Right. Oh, heavens. So you received letters from other people, too.

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DSB: Oh, yeah.

- EMC: Friends Oh, you were busy writing letters, then.
- DSB: Well, I don't know about that, but --
- EMC: You did every day. That's more than anybody did today, you know.
- DSB: Well, I didn't really write as many as I was supposed to, but.
- EMC: But you did. Well, how did your friends feel when you came back and told them you had been married? Were they thrilled?
- DSB: Well, they knew I was going. They knew, yeah.
- EMC: Right. But were they thrilled?
- DSB: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.
- EMC: Oh, that's great. Did many other girls get married? DSB: Yeah.
- EMC: From your group?
- DSB: Yeah.
- EMC: Oh, so that was quite (inaudible).
- DSB: They had a lot of older girls who went in looking for husbands. I will say that.
- EMC: Yeah.
- DSB: Wartime, there were no men.

EMC: That's right.

- DSB: Remember that song, "They're either too Young or too old." And it was true.
- EMC: Yeah, all the men were in the service at your age. Well, I asked you, how did you react to August 15<sup>th</sup>, VJ-Day?
- DSB: I was waiting to hear from Russ. He was due to come home on leave from Italy. And it's really his story rather than mine. On his way from Boston to Providence on the train, they heard about the surrender, August 15<sup>th</sup> --

EMC: Oh, so he was home? He was home?

- DSB: No, he yeah, he was in the United States. And he was on his way home. And the Red Cross wouldn't notify me until he got his leave. And he had three weeks' leave. So I was waiting for that and, of course, we were all excited when the war was over. But we, you know, it was kind of an anti-climax because and we got our three weeks together. And that's when we had our honeymoon. We were home on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, next year, 1945.
- EMC: Okay. So you were both home, then? But you weren't discharged yet?

DSB: No, he wasn't either.

EMC: And he wasn't either? And yet, but you have three weeks' leave. So where did you go?

DSB: We rented a house down in Charlestown, Rhode Island.

EMC: Oh, okay, home beach.

DSB: On the beach.

EMC: Home beach.

DSB: On the beach, well.

EMC: That's nice.

DSB: There's a story to us being here. But he's from East Providence, also. And my father, from the time he got his first car, every day off he had, he and I would come down, 'cause my father was born in Wakefield. And all his family, for over 300 years, were born in Wakefield. So he would drive. We'd come down and he and I used to go fishing and digging quahogs. And he'd show me this place and that place. And I grew up with a sense of home in a place I never lived.

EMC: Interesting.

DSB: Yes.

EMC: Yeah, very.

DSB: So when Russ got his license at 16, my father would let him have the car every Sunday during the summer. And we used to come down here to the beach.

EMC: Oh, all the time.

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DSB: Yes. And then, some Sundays, I mean, in the summertime, a couple of times, he worked on a party boat out of Galilee. And so, he liked the area. But one of the things we loved it so much, and I can remember him looking at me, saying, "You know, we could move here after the war. But we'd have to buy a big mirror so we could sit and watch ourselves starve to death," `cause he didn't know what he'd do. He knew he wasn't going to go back to the Journal, because he'd been living for three-and-a-half years in sub-zero temperatures. He'd been living outside and he says, "I can't go back in to an office." And when he came out, he had several offers. He could've taught skiing up in the mountains. The ski industry was just starting.

EMC: Right, Vermont, New Hampshire.

- DSB: Or he could go fishing, which he'd never really done. So I said, "I don't care whatever your decision is." I said, "As long as there's a paycheck (inaudible0, do what makes you happy."
- EMC: So what did he decide to do?
- DSB: Go fishing.
- EMC: Be a fisherman?
- DSB: Be a fisherman.

EMC: Oh, okay, go out in the ocean.

DSB: So that's how we're here.

- EMC: Yeah, that's how you landed here. Well, after your three weeks, you had to go back, didn't you, to Cherry Point?
- DSB: Well, before we left, before we both went back, the war being over, see, his next billet was he was on his way to the Philippines, because they were still fighting there, and 'cause it was after August 7<sup>th</sup>, or August 6<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>.
- EMC: Fifteenth was the --
- DSB: I don't know --
- EMC: VJ-Day.
- DSB: No, I meant the bomb.
- EMC: Oh, it was earlier.
- DSB: That ended the war.

EMC: Yeah.

DSB: I can remember that, too, exactly. But he got word saying his leave had been extended. But I couldn't get mine extended because mine, because it was the first one. And they knew, now, I'd probably get discharged. So he came down. He stayed in a hotel in town and came out to get me every day. At night I went and stayed at the hotel. I had my own liberty card.

EMC: Yeah. Oh, that's good. So, you finally got out in October? And where were you discharged?

DSB: Right at Cherry Point.

- EMC: Oh, okay. So you went through all your paperwork.
- DSB: Yeah, he was discharged, I think, a week or so ahead of me.
- EMC: Oh, and he had to go back to Texas?
- DSB: And then, because he was no, they sent him to he went from Texas to Italy. And then, when they came, they went to Camp Hale in Colorado.
- EMC: Oh, okay.

DSB: Camp Carson. Camp Carson.

EMC: Oh, Camp Carson in Colorado?

- DSB: Yeah. And that's where he was discharged from.
- EMC: So you came back to Rhode Island at that time?

DSB: Um-hum.

EMC: And settled in here in Narragansett or in Charlestown?

DSB: Well, we had to live with my parents for about a year, because there were no houses in '46, absolutely nothing. And I don't know how many we looked at and we finally got a rental - I mean a house on Great Island.

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- EMC: Where's Great Island?
- DSB: It's near Galilee.
- EMC: Oh. And it is an island?
- DSB: Well, it's connected by a bridge but it is an island.
- EMC: Oh, okay.
- DSB: Yeah.
- EMC: I had never heard of it.
- DSB: Well, we lived there from 1947 'til I think I left about '83. He died in '80.
- EMC: Oh, he did?
- DSB: Yes. He was just sixty.
- EMC: Oh, how young.
- DSB: Yeah.
- EMC: Did the war affect him in any way?
- DSB: No. He had colon cancer.
- EMC: Oh, dear.
- DSB: So which he denied he had, you know. He could've been saved.
- EMC: Yeah, in today's --
- DSB: But --
- EMC: Oh, that's a shame. Sorry to hear that. Well, to get back to your service, how did you feel about your service in the Marines at the time that you were in the Marines?

- DSB: I felt as through I wasn't really doing anything of any value, which is why I joined, you know, to do something important.
- EMC: How do you --
- DSB: I look back and, I guess, it was important in its way.
- EMC: Yes, every job that anybody does has its importance. Did your service in the Marines have any impact on you later in life?
- DSB: I don't think so.
- EMC: Did you receive any medals for your service?
- DSB: No.
- EMC: No medal? No Good Conduct or --
- DSB: I don't think I was in long enough for a Good Conduct. It tells me here what I'm (inaudible). No, I'm serious --
- EMC: Yeah, look at that.
- DSB: Honorable Discharge, Honorable Service.
- EMC: Yeah, you got something. That's great. Where did you work after the war when you came home?
- DSB: Well, my husband and I had been waiting for so long and married, I mean, went together for so long, we wanted children. I was twenty-five years old. So we immediately had a son. And then, almost immediately, we had one, two, three, four sons.

- EMC: Oh, wow!
- DSB: Between '46 and '51, I had four sons.
- EMC: Oh, that kept you busy.
- DSB: Yeah, so I didn't work.
- EMC: No, you worked very hard.
- DSB: And then, three-and-a-half years later, I had a little girl. And then, when she was eight, I went to work for the Town of Narragansett as a payroll clerk.
- EMC: Oh, yeah, it's continuing your bookkeeping experience, in a way.
- DSB: And then I became deputy treasurer and then I was treasurer of the Town of Narragansett.
- EMC: Oh, wow!
- DSB: A few years, two or three years.
- EMC: That's great, great. And when did you leave that job? When did you retire?
- DSB: You know, I never can remember but it was in the early `70s, right after we built the high school, I know that.
- EMC: So about thirty years ago?
- DSB: Um-hum.
- EMC: Or so, thirty-five years ago?
- DSB: Yeah.
- EMC: Did you belong to any military organizations?

DSB: Never any military, no.

EMC: But --

DSB: I mean, I belonged to about everything else.

EMC: But were you active with the Ladies' Auxiliary of the VFW Post 916?

DSB: I joined in '84.

EMC: Okay. And are you still a member of that post?

DSB: Yeah, that was what we just raised the money for.

- EMC: Right. Can you tell us about that effort, your recent effort?
- DSB: I was secretary-treasurer for 25 years until this year. I decided it was time I quit.
- EMC: Well, tell me about your latest fundraising effort with that group that made the newspapers here.
- DSB: Well, I was state president. The auxiliary state president always has a project. And Theresa Christie, who's - it's all in that article - our state president decided prevention for suicide in the military would be a good project. Well, normally, when a president's project comes up, you donate what you can and we don't have much money. So we usually donate about \$50. So someone got up and said, "I'm make a motion that we donate \$50, like we usually do." We're going to have a raffle. But you gotta remember, we're a very, very

small unit. We're barely keeping our numbers to keep our charter. So we've got about thirty people and fifteen, anything less than fifteen, you lose your charter. So, everybody just got together and did it. And it was wonderful.

- EMC: And what did you raffle off?
- DSB: Oh, I can't even begin to tell you how generous people were. We had a flat-screen TV, which was donated by one of my grandsons and his mother, a party package from Liberty Rental, which was a canopy, you know, set up, take down, lights, tables, chairs, worth about \$780.
- EMC: And people bid on these items?
- DSB: Well, they bought raffle tickets.
- EMC: Oh, they bought the tickets? Okay.
- DSB: And the other big one was I can't --
- EMC: Donations, though?
- DSB: Yeah, but it was a big one. Oh, a chair from Sheldon's Furniture that was worth about \$500.
- EMC: Wow, that's great.
- DSB: And then, other than that, I've still got stuff here that hasn't been given out yet because this was a ticket I sold. And she's in Florida for the winter, so she'll get it when she gets back.

- EMC: Oh, wow, that's (inaudible).
- DSB: That basket's worth \$150.
- EMC: I can see there's quite a few things there.
- DSB: Emporium.
- EMC: Yeah, that's very nice.
- DSB: And we had scotch. We had money donated. Lots of people just donated money. A law firm paid for one of our printings, a realty company's \$1,500. I'd be selling tickets and somebody would come by and they'd say, "Oh, I don't want a raffle ticket. Here's \$10." Or, "Here's \$5." And it was wonderful.
- EMC: Oh, great.
- DSB: About \$3,500.
- EMC: Is that what you made in total?
- DSB: Yeah, just about. I haven't ironed out all the little details yet.

EMC: Right.

- DSB: I think the only expenditure we had was one printing of the tickets, 'cause the rest was donated.
- EMC: Oh, well, that's great.

DSB: Yes.

EMC: That was quite an effort, and as I said, you made the newspapers as one of the prime organizers.

- DSB: Well, oh, the other thing we had it at the Elks donated their hall free of charge. And so, we had a cocktail hour four to six for the drawing. And I had six or seven restaurants who donated food for that. And the hall was full.
- EMC: Oh, that was wonderful.
- DSB: And we ran out of tickets.
- EMC: That's great.
- DSB: We ran out of raffle tickets.
- EMC: Oh, for heaven sakes. You didn't print enough.
- DSB: Well, if we printed any more, it wouldn't have been kept cost-effective, 'cause, originally, we printed 250 and hoped we could sell that many. The second time, again, we weren't sure if we could sell them. And then, the third time, we figured, "Well, we're not going to sell any more than that." We could've.
- EMC: Oh, that's fantastic. Well, you're very active. You were very active and busy doing that kind of organizing.
- DSB: Oh, now I'm playing. I'm working at the farmer's market in the Inside Market.
- EMC: Oh, really?
- DSB: Yeah, I'm knitting and tending a booth.
- EMC: Oh, fabulous. Where is the farmer's market here?

- DSB: It's right across, you know where the Pump House is? Do you know where Kenyon Mill is?
- EMC: No, I don't, no.
- DSB: You don't know anything about that?
- EMC: No, I don't know anything around here. I barely come to this side.
- DSB: Okay. Well, it's pretty local, pretty central.
- EMC: Oh, okay.
- DSB: Yeah. And it's so much fun.
- EMC: Great. Well, that's wonderful.
- DSB: I'm working again.
- EMC: Again, yeah. How many days a week do you do that?
- DSB: Oh, it's just that Saturday ten to two. I won't do it in the summer. They have an outside one in the summer, but I'm not ready to face the weather yet.
- EMC: Yeah, sit out there for four hours.
- DSB: Not at ninety.
- EMC: In the heat. Well, do you have anything else to say about your experiences?
- DSB: Well, as I say, I always figured I didn't do much of anything.
- EMC: Well, everybody who joined served. Do you want to speak a little bit about your husband's problems after

he came home from the service? You said it affected him.

I think it did. It was a long time before he could DSB: sleep through a thunderstorm. He'd start yelling orders to his men to get down and be thrashing around. EMC: So the loud noises of combat came back to haunt him? Yeah, the thunderstorms and we used to get some DSB: humdingers on Great Island, because there wasn't much built up there in that. Right now, every lot's been sold and they're all "McMansions." They took all these little, tiny cottages and they ruined it. I won't even go up there. But we used to get the wind right from Wakefield all the way down to Salt Pond. If you look at a map and you'll see what I mean. And we used to get some really good thunderstorms.

EMC: Did he speak about his experience?

DSB: No.

EMC: Never?

- DSB: He might've mentioned a little something, some joke or something funny or, you know, but until I read - he was given a battle-field award, a Silver Star - until I read that, I didn't even know what he did.
- EMC: Well, a lot of the veterans didn't talk about it until later, if at all.

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DSB: Yeah. I think that's probably with me. I never, you know, I didn't talk about it. Most of my friends didn't even know I had been a Marine.

EMC: And your children, you didn't speak to them?

DSB: Well, they knew it.

- EMC: They didn't query you about it. Did any of your children join the service?
- DSB: I had two in the Coast Guard during Vietnam. One of them was stationed, temporarily, on Governor's Island. And he could get - he was going to school - and he could get home. But he had to wear his uniform to get home. And the Coast Guard was not highly famous with the Marines. And there was a little bar he used to go to on his way to the bus, waiting for the bus. And he'd show up there, in his Coast Guard sailor suit, and this Marine was hassling him. And my son, Steven, who is very funny, he's very funny, he reached in his pocket and he pulled out my picture. And he says, "Oh, yeah, my mother was a Marine." After that, everything was gold.

EMC: Oh, that's cute. Quite a story.

DSB: If a woman could be a Marine, anybody could.

EMC: Right. Well, you said that the Marines didn't like the women in the Marines.

DSB: They didn't.

EMC: Did you face any hostility from them?

- DSB: Little things, like, 'cause I was very happy with the red nail polish and lipstick, 'cause that was the color I was wearing anyway, "Silver Slipper," Revlon "Silver Slipper." And it matched the cords on our hats, a very designer Lilly Daché designed our hats.
- EMC: A designer.
- DSB: We were supposed to be show pieces. The only really work that many of us did was in the motor pool.
- EMC: Oh, yes. Yeah, if you were changing tires or putting oil in a car.
- DSB: The girl I went in with-she ended up in the motor pool. She learned to pull down an engine and rebuild it.
- EMC: Wow!
- DSB: Yeah.
- EMC: That's amazing.
- DSB: And she looked like "Miss Deb of 1942". I don't know.
- EMC: Well, these gals had mechanical ability or were trained very well.
- DSB: I'm not sure she did.
- EMC: She did it. She learned.

- DSB: I think part of it was we both worked at Congdon and Carpenter. And she was a salesman on the phone. And she sold industrial supplies. So they probably figured she knew all about it.
- EMC: Oh, boy.
- DSB: So.
- EMC: Oh, that was something.
- DSB: So did you want to look at these?
- EMC: Yes, I will.
- DSB: That's it, right?
- EMC: Well, if you have nothing more to say, I want to thank you for your time and your interview. We appreciate it very much. And I will get it transcribed.
- DSB: Okay.