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**Veterans History Project**

**Interview Summaries**

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*Biographical sketches of people who served as interviewers for this project on a regular basis can be found at the end of this finding aid.*

**JAMES M. ADAMS**, older brother of Mozelle (Adams) Core, served in the Army Air Corps in Africa, Italy and England with the 14th Troop Carrier Squadron, 61st Troop Carrier Group during World War II. He grew up in Cedar Hill, in rural Robertson County, Tennessee, and he speaks about his family's operation of a general store there during the Depression. He was drafted in 1940, and was on an airbase in Dothan, Alabama when Pearl Harbor was attacked. He tells about how five men, including himself, had to "scatter" all the planes on the base, in case of attack. Adams was among the troops sent to North Africa. Adams' main duties were to diagnose and repair malfunctioning parts on C-47 transport planes. These planes carried cargo and supplies to and from bases. Adams speaks at length about his experiences in Algeria, including health issues related to poor nutrition, the joy of obtaining fresh fruit, R&R at the Isle of Capri, and living conditions in the desert. He also tells about several instances of close calls or friends who died in accidents – showing that death and danger were present well behind the frontlines in "secure" areas, as well. During the invasion of Sicily, planes from his base carried paratroopers of the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions, and were fired upon mistakenly by U.S. naval vessels. After serving for a time in Italy, his unit was sent to England. Prior to the invasion of Normandy, a number of planes were grounded due to a faulty solenoid. Adams diagnosed the problem and found a makeshift, but effective solution to the problem, getting the planes in his squadron up and running. Other squadrons were having similar problems, and he taught them his solution. For this work, he was awarded the Bronze Star. These aircraft were used to pull glider planes during the invasion. After VE day, Adams was sent to Natal, Brazil, where there were constant flights into the base from Europe, by way of Africa, and from Brazil to the United States, as troops, equipment, and supplies were being sent back to the United States in the aftermath of the war. When Adams returned home, he went to work in his father's grocery store in Madison, Tennessee, and helped put his younger siblings through school at Vanderbilt. (Approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Oct. 16, 2007. Digital recording: VHPAdamsJ (MP3 file). Transcript #518. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel)

**MOZELLE ADAMS – see Mozelle (Adams) Core**

**DOMINICK AKINS** is a Vietnam War veteran who served in the U.S. Army from July 1965 to September 1968 during which he served two tours of duty in Vietnam. He grew up and went to school in the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania area. In the summer of 1965 when he completed high school, he decided to enlist in the Army rather than be drafted. His goal was to become a paratrooper and after completing Basic Training and Advanced Infantry Training at Ft. Gordon, Georgia, he was sent to Jump School at Ft. Benning, Georgia. Upon completion of Jump School he was sent to Vietnam. Even though he held a jump badge and wanted to be assigned to an airborne unit, the Army assigned him to an infantry unit instead. A major portion of his story deals with his first tour in Vietnam. He

talks in some detail about his experience of being assigned to a unit not far from the Cambodian border (and also not far from the Ho Chi Minh Trail) where they were frequently involved in fire fights. The heaviest of these occurred about two months after he arrived in country. During several of these fire fights he saw several of his buddies die. "It was almost inevitable that someone was going to get killed," he said. After completing his first tour, he was assigned to the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina and remained there for almost a year. Then, he was reassigned to Vietnam, arriving there during the Tet Offensive of 1968. In another bit of irony, he was again assigned to another infantry unit, this time one based up in the mountains. The interview stops abruptly at this point because Mr. Akins' had a previously-scheduled appointment with one of the service-support groups at Operation Stand Down. Therefore, there is very little discussion of his experiences during his second tour in Vietnam, and the effects his Vietnam experience had on him. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview dates: Oct. 14, 2006 and Dec. 5, 2006. VHP TAPES #359 & 360. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson. Interview was conducted on October 14, 2006 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

In a second interview conducted two months later, Mr. Akins begins with his second tour in Vietnam. Because of his previous experiences there, he did not want to go back, knowing the likelihood of getting killed. While he says that he felt the battles in which he was involved during his second tour were not as intense as those he experienced during his first —partly because he now knew what to expect —he also comments about not seeing much change in the situation there. It "seemed like there was no end" to the fighting, he said. He also talks about the effects the Vietnam experience had on him. On the positive side, he said that he "became a man" during his first tour, at age 19, when his squad leader was killed and he realized no one would take care of him. It was his responsibility to take care of himself. On the negative side, he talks at length about how he has been affected by PTSD\*, which manifested itself in the form of flashbacks, night sweats, substance abuse, and divorce. He was diagnosed with PTSD just a few years before this interview. As he described how the memories of the Vietnam experience continue to linger, he noted that it has been almost 40 years since his Vietnam experience and yet "I can still remember things "as if they happened two weeks ago." (approx. 1 hr. 5 min. Interview date: Dec. 2006. VHP TAPES #361 & 362. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**BEN COOPER ALEXANDER**, trained and ordained as a Methodist minister in the Tennessee Conference, entered the US Navy from his reserve unit into active duty as a Naval chaplain. He served on active duty in two time periods, March 1944 to June 1947; and June 1951 to June 1953. He continued serving with a Naval Reserve unit until March 1970. He described his experience as a

Navy chaplain, based first on land (San Diego and Pearl Harbor); and subsequently on ship duty in the Pacific theatre of operations. His ship duty during the Korean war took him to Yokosuka, Japan, where his ship gave support to U.S. troops then fighting in Korea. Neither he nor his ship was engaged in direct conflict or battle with the enemy, but he provided preaching, worship opportunities, teaching, coaching, and counseling while on board ship. Although he was unaware of it at the time, due to tight security, he later found out that President-elect Dwight D. Eisenhower and his party of aides and officials were aboard his flagship cruiser, the *U.S.S. Helena* (CA-75) in the Pacific during the Korean War. An especially memorable event for Alexander, serving in his role as chaplain, was collecting from the sailors on board ship a large amount of clothes, food, blankets, and similar items to be donated to a Korean children's service center. This effort had been arranged by a Master Sergeant in the U.S. Army. Alexander said he had never seen an Army sergeant cry, but this one did when he was overwhelmed with the amount of goods donated by the Naval personnel. After his discharge from active duty in the Navy, Alexander returned to Tennessee, where he served as pastor of several Methodist churches in Middle Tennessee. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: June 30, 2003. VHP TAPE #166, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson)

**EDDIE ALEXANDER** served in the Army in the 197<sup>th</sup> Battalion from 1973 to 1976 during the Vietnam era. He was primarily stationed at Ft. Benning, Georgia, where he received training as a medic. He never served overseas in Vietnam, although he had brothers who did. He tells about his training, the influence of God and his faith in his life, and how the military had a maturing affect on him, helping him to grow from a boy into a man. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Nov. 1, 2003. VHP TAPE #200. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewers: Jennifer Henderson, Lipscomb University student and Marty O'Reilly, Nashville Room volunteer. Interview was conducted on November 1, 2003 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**WILLIAM HARBOUR ALEXANDER** grew up in Olive Hill, Tennessee. He joined the National Youth Administration and became a project supervisor in several construction jobs in the late 1930s. He joined the Navy in January of 1942, and was quickly selected for a new special unit being formed. He was not given much information, but it turned out that he was one of the first 200 men selected for service in the 1<sup>st</sup> Construction Battalion – an organization later known as the "Seabees." His first assignment was at Tonga Tabu, where he helped build an army hospital. Later, he was sent to New Hebrides where he helped build a large naval hospital. He returned briefly to the states in 1944, when he married, was transferred to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Construction Battalion, and returned overseas, being stationed on Guam for the remainder of his service. There, he was responsible for constructing a large water storage facility, and built a large "rock crushing" operation, designed specifically to crush coral for use in building an airstrip. Suddenly he was stricken with a mysterious illness which caused him to lose his

balance; he was evacuated and was treated at a number of different hospitals, finally being discharged in late 1945. The doctors were never able to determine the nature of his illness, but after some time in the states, he appeared to have recovered, no longer experiencing symptoms. He speaks briefly about his difficulty remaining at a single job for more than a few years because of "restlessness" which he says was brought about in part by his experience in the military, but he nevertheless went on to have a career as a building contractor after trying his hand at farming, car sales, and other occupations. (approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: July 26, 2005. VHP TAPES #324 & 325. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**JAMES HALLIE ALLEN** was drafted into the army in 1942, serving first as an office worker and then as a half track driver in the combat engineers. He begins this 1986 interview by telling about his basic training in various places in the United States before being shipped to Europe aboard the *Queen Mary*. While on route overseas, Mr. Allen and others developed German measles and had to be hospitalized in Scotland. Upon rejoining his unit, they followed the Normandy invasion into France and were captured by the German S.S. Troops. He describes in detail his experiences in three different stalags, the Siegfied Line, and the brutality of war from all sides. The bulk of his interview concentrates on his experiences as a German prisoner of war. He was later liberated by the Russians. Mr. Allen thought of his service in the army as a "good thing," for he believed it helped him grow up and mature. (approx. 20 min. Interview date: circa 1986. VHP CD #3, Track 1, transcript. Interviewer: Tricia Browning.)

**MARION RAY ALLEN** tells about his military career, in two separate time periods. In 1950 he spent less than a year with the Tennessee Air National Guard, enlisting at the age of 16 and lied about his age. In an incident that left him quite shaken, he narrowly missed being aboard a plane in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina which was bound for Nashville, returning from a training mission. The plane crashed just seven minutes after takeoff, killing all aboard. As war began in Korea, his mother intervened and he was given an honorable discharge due to his age. He later enlisted in the Navy and served in the boiler room; most of his duty was near Yokosuka, Japan, but his ship served in a support role during the Korean War. He was never directly involved in combat, but once while on leave in Hong Kong, he and his buddies were nearly assaulted by some Chinese thugs. The timely intervention of the MPs, who arrested Allen and his buddies, saved them from a rough beating. Allen returned home in 1956 and worked at Ford Glass Plant in Nashville. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: June 23, 2003. VHP TAPE #163, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson)

**JOHN BRUCE ALLYN** is a Persian Gulf War veteran who served in the U.S. Army from December 1971 to July 1996. While in Law School at Vanderbilt

University, he joined the Army ROTC program and upon graduation, was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant. However, since the Army had no active-duty space open for 2nd Lieutenants at the time, he was assigned to an active Reserve unit for eight years. His initial Reserve duty assignment was as a Transportation Officer in a unit that served as a command and control medical brigade. Sometime later, he also became the unit's Nuclear/Biological/Chemical (NBC) Officer. At the same time, when not on duty with the Reserves, he was practicing law in the civilian community. His reserve unit was mobilized in November 1990 and in mid-December, the unit shipped out for Saudi Arabia as part of Operation Desert Shield. They went to a location in the desert approximately 40 miles from the border between Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iraq. The unit's responsibility was to provide rear-echelon medical support/treatment for Coalition troops. Casualties in the conflict were far less than originally anticipated. After the battles during the brief war came and went, he remained in Saudi Arabia and in March of 1991, he suffered a severe attack of appendicitis and had to be operated on immediately in a field hospital. After surgery, he was medivac'd to Germany and later shipped back to the U.S. for demobilization from active duty and transfer back to the active reserves. Allyn reflects on his experiences and says he felt sorry for the Iraqi soldiers who were sent to their deaths by Saddam Hussein. He also described some of the horrors of war that he observed firsthand while he was in the medical ward in Saudi Arabia recuperating from his surgery. He talked about seeing an Iraqi boy who had his leg broken in two places by a member of the notorious Iraqi Red Guard and about the great sadness he felt upon seeing the graves of Iraqi children in the graveyard behind the medical unit—children who had died on the way to the hospital to be treated. (approx. 2 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Feb. 19, 2011. Digital recording: VHPAllynJ (MP3 file). Index available (filed with transcripts, #547). Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**HAROLD A. ANDERSON** served in the U.S. Army from March 1942 to November 1945. He was born and raised in Michigan. He left school early to go to work and just a few months after the war broke out, he decided to enlist. He was sent to Ft. Jackson, South Carolina for basic training, specializing in weapons repair and was attached to the newly-formed 106<sup>th</sup> Division. He spent several months after basic at Ft. Jackson and then, in the early summer of 1943, he was sent to Ft. Benning, Georgia where he received commando training. In the early fall of 1943, he shipped off to England where he and his group trained with fellow commandos, the British Elites, in preparation for the invasion of France. The story he tells is rich in anecdotes about his wartime experiences from the invasion of Normandy into the Ardennes Forest and the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium. Among the stories he tells is one about going into Omaha Beach in advance of the invasion to take out a German pillbox located on one of the cliffs overlooking the beach, and he tells about the carnage he saw from his vantage point high above the landing beaches. He also talks about his experience at St. Lo where almost 6000 Allied troops were lost, as well as going into the town of Bastogne with Patton's army. Most of his division was forced to

surrender; he spent a week behind enemy lines, evading capture, and killed a German officer who had spotted him. Eventually he linked up with Gen. Omar Bradley's 1<sup>st</sup> Army in friendly territory. (approx. 3 hrs. Interview date: June 2, 2004. VHP TAPES #243, 244 & 245, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPAndersonH (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson, with assistance from Mr. Anderson's daughter, Lonnie Peddle.)

**FITZGERALD "JERRY" ATKINSON**, brother of James P. Atkinson, was attending college at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, when Pearl Harbor was attacked. He promptly quit school and enlisted in the Marines. He was assigned to a tank battalion and saw action at Peleliu and Okinawa. At Okinawa, on June 17, 1945, he sustained seven wounds, (earning him the nickname, "The Sieve") and rescued a fellow marine from a burning tank. For his actions on that day, he was awarded the Navy Cross. At one point he even sustained wounds from friendly fire, and he describes with some humor how he signaled his troops with his red socks, thereby saving his life. (approx. 1 hr. 15 min., Interview date: Jan. 13, 2003. VHP #119 & 120, transcript. Audio also available in digital format: VHPAtkinsonF (MP3 file). Interviewer: Bob Richardson)

**JAMES P. ATKINSON**, brother of "Jerry" Atkinson, covers his military career with the U.S. Marines, in training at Quantico, and then engaging in action in Korea between 1951 and 1953. He describes in great detail the most horrendous of his battle experiences when he was serving as a platoon leader with the First Marine Regiment, First Marine Division in cold, bitter winter snowstorm conditions, near Kum-gok and Un-gok, Korea. He was ordered to take his troops up a hill where he and his platoon faced severe attacks from the combined forces of Chinese and North Korean armies. Time and again he committed his patrols to attack the enemy using diversionary tactics, not realizing how outnumbered and overwhelmed they were by the enemy forces. In one sector on January 18, 1953, he was badly wounded, so much so that his right leg was completely useless. He could not move forward even on his belly to regain his weapons, and all of his support troops had pulled back. He was completely alone and unable to move his body, suffering intense pain. He was, nevertheless, determined to live, and to never give in or give up. He lay in the snow, hoping the enemy soldiers would view him as dead. A small patrol of Marines was sent out to search for him, and they slowly brought him back to safety, and to a MASH unit, where he began his long, long rehabilitation and recovery. He describes his recovery and rehabilitation, which took 2 years or more, before he was granted physical disability. He talks about the medical services he received, in a number of different places, before he finally wound up at the Naval Hospital in Bethesda, Maryland. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: June 2, 2003. VHP #157 & 158, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPAtkinsonJ (MP3 file). Interviewer: Bob Richardson)

**PHYLLIP B.---**, who asked that his full last name not be used on this interview, is a Persian Gulf veteran who served in the U.S. Army from April 1989 to March 1994. Part of his tour of duty was spent in the Middle East during Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm. He decided to join the military while attending college at Murray State University in Kentucky, during a campus visit by an Army recruiter. He left school and enlisted in the Army. After basic training at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina, and communications school at Ft. Gordon, Georgia, he became a wire systems installer – a job which normally would not put him in a combat situation. He was assigned to active duty in Germany as part of a NATO operation. He served two six-month temporary duty (TDY) assignments to the Middle East in Saudi Arabia. He tells about having been at the Kobar Towers facility in Dhahran in 1996, installing communications, and leaving the building just five hours before a terrorist bomb exploded, destroying the building. He also tells about being in Saudi Arabia during Iraqi Scud missile attacks and witnessing US Patriot missiles destroying the Scuds in defense during the Gulf War. Phyllip also discusses the long term effects of his service on his life after the war, including: suffering from PTSD\* after having seen seriously wounded American soldiers; having some physical ailments which may be Gulf War syndrome, although he says doctors deny the existence of such a condition; and finding himself homeless for a period after getting out of the military. (approx. 1 ½ hrs. Interview date: July 14, 2003. VHP TAPES #174 & 175, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format, identifier: VHPB---P. Interviewer: Larry Patterson, with the assistance of Operation Stand Down.\*) RESTRICTED: Interviewee identified by first name, last initial only. Restriction expires Jan. 1, 2050.

**ANDROMEDIA BAGWELL – see Andromedia "Andy" (Bagwell) Noel**

**ELEANOR BAILEY – see Eleanor (Bailey) Blackman.**

**ELIZABETH BAILEY – see Elizabeth Evelyn (Bailey) Witter**

**JUDITH ELIZABETH (LeCOMTE) BAKER** served in the U.S. Army and Reserves from 1984 to 2006, with some breaks in her service. She was mostly stationed stateside, although in 1988 she toured as a singer in the Army Soldier Show, visiting numerous bases in the U.S. and the Pacific and Asia, including some performances for other branches of service. Her Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) was as an environmental health specialist, inspecting and assessing conditions of kitchens, buildings, recreational facilities and other issues on or affiliated with Army bases to ensure safe and healthy conditions. She enjoyed her work and felt she was truly making a difference in people's lives. She was also quickly seen as a leader, appointed to several positions during her military career. Later, she became an administrative specialist where she helped keep the operations of her unit running. She speaks freely and often, with great passion, about her Christian faith and how God has guided and protected her



throughout her life and career. She was not sent overseas during Desert Storm or the “War on Terror,” although she often came close, and she credits God with protecting her and her family. In addition, Baker tells a little about what conditions were like for women in the military during the mid-1980s and how once she had to defend herself from cat-calls made by enlisted men. She also speaks frequently about her love of music and performing as a singer in a variety of capacities. (approx. 2 hr. Interview date: March 22, 2012. Digital recording: VHPBakerJ (MP3 file). Interviewer: Linda Barnickel).

**YVONNE (CORNU) BALLS** served in the Navy WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) during World War II. She grew up in Chicago and Atlanta, and attended college at Fontbonne College in St. Louis, where she graduated in 1943 with a degree in French. She decided to join the Navy, and trained in Massachusetts, specializing in communications. She was assigned to Miami, Florida where her duty was to encode and decode messages for the 7<sup>th</sup> Naval District protecting the Gulf Coast. She provides some details about her communications duties, and recalls one incident when she saw smoke from a German submarine that was sinking off the coast. She also shares various anecdotes about life in Miami, where there were several other military bases. She met her future husband, a pilot, there as well. She speaks about the variety of nationalities represented in Miami – Cubans who came there to live, and Chinese, Dutch, French and other sailors who were there for special training. (Approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Dec. 13, 2006. Digital recording: VHPBallsY (MP3 file). Transcript #502. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel, with assistance from Mrs. Balls’ daughter, Janet Gwinn.)

**RALPH ASHBY BARNES**, who goes by “Ashby,” served in the Marine Corps from May 1989 to May 1995. Raised in Houston, Texas, he decided to join the Marine Reserves during his freshman year of college. During the summer of 1989 he attended basic training in San Diego, and in the summer of 1990, he was sent to Camp Geiger, South Carolina for specialty training as a mortar man. While there, Iraq invaded Kuwait. Just after Thanksgiving in 1990 (while he was a junior in college), his reserve unit was activated for Operation Desert Shield. On New Year’s Eve, he shipped out for the Persian Gulf. His unit, India Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 24<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, 4<sup>th</sup> Marine Division, was initially assigned to guard the airport at King Abdul Azziz Naval Air Station (KAA NAS) in Saudi Arabia. While there, Operation Desert Storm began and Coalition Forces began their advance against Iraqi forces. Barnes talks about watching Marine Harrier jets take off with a full load of ordnance and returning empty, and he tells about some nearby Scud missile attacks. His unit was soon transferred to another compound near Al Jabayl, where they were assigned to guard the headquarters of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF). He spent the remainder of his time there and returned to the United States in April 1991. (approx. 2 hr. 30 min. Interview date: March 2, 2011. Digital recording: VHPBarnesR (MP3 file). Index available (filed with transcripts, #548). Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**RAYMOND C. BARNETT** – see Fred B. Carnahan.

**SAMUEL D. BARNETT** served with the 1st Marine Division in Korea for a little over one year. He tells about his duties in a headquarters company, positioned behind the line units where his company guarded the generals and other high ranking military officers. On occasion he was assigned to a line company, where he was involved in direct military action against the North Koreans. This fighting was carried out during a period of "see-saw" military engagement, in areas both north and south of the 38th parallel. He suffered frostbite, which still troubles him in his feet, and he had several "near misses" which could have been fatal. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: May 5, 2003. VHP TAPE #148, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPBarnettS (MP3 file). Interviewer: Bob Richardson)

**ROGER DU VAL BASKETTE, SR.** served as a gunner in the 90<sup>th</sup> Chemical Mortar Battalion, III Corps, U.S. Army from 1943 through 1946. His battalion entered action in France, moving on to Belgium and Germany. One of the most dramatic events he was involved in was the seizure of the bridgehead at Remagen, where fire from his battalion helped the Allies in their efforts to build a bridge, enabling supplies and troops to cross the river and secure the opposite shore. He provides many descriptions of his unit's involvement in these actions. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview dates: Jan. 27, 2003 and Feb. 3, 2003. VHP #122 & 123, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPBasketteR (MP3 file). Interviewer: Bob Richardson. Note: Beginning portion of side 2, tape 1, damaged recording.)

**EDWARD BRUCE BAXTER** served in the U.S. Marine Corps from September 1965 to April 1969. He grew up both California and Oklahoma. After finishing high school, he enlisted in the military. After receiving basic training and tactical training, he was deployed to the Philippines—where he would be based for deployment into Vietnam—and assigned to a Battalion Landing Team. The story he tells about his Vietnam experience is rich in anecdotes about the horrors of being in battle where he saw many of his fellow Marines die, about being shot at in a "friendly fire" incident where American Army helicopters accidentally mistook his unit for the enemy, and about receiving abusive treatment when he returned home, once people found out he had served in Vietnam. Bruce speaks with intense emotion about his experiences, most memorably when he tells about what happened to him and his fellow Marines during one of the major battles he was involved in called Operation Hastings. (approx. 2 hrs. 5 min. Interview date: Oct. 26, 2004. VHP #284, 285 & 286. Also available in digital format: VHPBaxterE (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson. Note: Portions may be difficult to hear, due the veteran lowering his voice during especially emotional and intense memories.)

**JOHN L. BELL** was born and raised in Nashville, Tennessee and the outlying areas. His father died in Europe during World War II and his mother died while he was still young. He lived with his aunt and grandmother in Nashville and

attended elementary, middle and high school in Nashville. He joined the Army at the age of 16 after seeing a movie about Marines with two of his friends. All three of them went through boot camp together and were sent to Europe during the Korean War. One of his friends accidentally killed a Frenchman on a bicycle and was immediately sent to Germany; the second of his friends asked to transfer to combat duty and was sent to Korea. He and his friend who went to Germany returned to Nashville together around the same time, but his third friend remained in Korea for the duration of the war. John's experiences during the war were happy though he said there was a fear of Russian forces overrunning the forces in Germany and his base was the next line of defense. John said that he spent most of his service transporting goods for building the base as it was just a field when he arrived. He remained a PFC through his entire tenure in the army because all servicemen in Europe were frozen at their present rank; the only promotions were for those engaged in a combat zone. John was part of a segregated unit and said that they were always separated, perhaps not consciously, but that white and black troops rarely interacted. John was discharged from the service and used his GI bill to pay for living expenses while finishing high school and attended TSU for two years studying history. John became an electrician and continues to live in Nashville today. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: July 30, 2004. VHP #257. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Evviva Weinraub.)

**KATHRYN L. BELL** joined the Air Force in Ohio in 1966 when she was eighteen years old and was sent to Norton Air Force Base in California for Basic Training. She was disappointed in her first assignment as a cook and felt she did not belong. After making the volleyball team she spent a lot of time practicing, as much as 12 hours a day, playing games and going to tournaments, which made her undesirable as a cook. She sought ways to change, and after 5 years was placed in Air Transport thinking she would be a stewardess, but instead was put to work getting passengers with their luggage on the correct plane. She loves the Women in the Air Force (WAFs) and was sent several places in the U.S. as a volleyball player, even making the Olympic team. She made Master Sergeant and became a drill sergeant at Lackland and Kelley Air Force Bases. She loved the camaraderie with the other WAFs to the extent that she feels like they are her family. Okinawa and Grenada were two bases outside the U.S at which she was stationed. After her service, which ended in 1986, she made many friends through the Women Veterans Network, so much so that she traveled to their meetings in Nashville, Tennessee even when she was living in Ohio. She wanted to retire near a great VA facility and moved to Nashville in 2006. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Oct. 13, 2006. VHP TAPE #354. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Betty Richards. Interview was conducted on October 13, 2006 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down,\* where Ms. Bell was volunteering.)

**PEARLENE E. BELL** grew up in a rural area near Ashland City, Tennessee. She recalls her school days when she had to get up at 4:00 a.m. to milk the cow,

churn the butter, feed the horses, and do other farm chores, before she hitched up the horse and buggy to go to school with her younger siblings. She tells about helping her father during tobacco harvest each year, and how that made her late starting school each year. At the age of 17, she had an arranged marriage to an older man, and they moved to Louisville where he found good-paying work at a railroad tie factory. When World War II broke out, a man came to their neighborhood recruiting war workers for Uncle Sam. Pearlene signed up to go to welding school. After just two weeks, she was doing so well that she was asked to go to work immediately, instead of staying the additional four weeks for the completion of the class. She worked as a welder at Jeffboat Shipyard in Indiana. She tells about many of her experiences there, especially the way she was treated by other workers there. As the first African-American woman welder there, she experienced discrimination and harassment by some of her co-workers, while others, including her foreman and another man that she routinely worked with, supported her. Seeking redress for the wrongs that had been done to her, she took action and wrote to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Agents came to the shipyard and investigated the situation. "I didn't have any more problems after that," she said. When she wasn't at the shipyard, she taught informal classes to her neighbors in Louisville, helping them with language arts and mathematics, and helping them study for tests necessary to enter some war work positions. After World War II, she entered nurses training, becoming one of the first African-Americans in her training hospital. She began in pediatric nursing, but then switched to private duty nursing, which she performed for most of her career. After her first husband passed away, she returned to the Nashville and Ashland City areas in the 1980s, when she married "the love of her life," Otho Bell. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Sept. 8, 2004. VHP # 277 & 278, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPBellP (MP3 file). Interviewer: Linda Barnickel)

**HARVEY E. BENNET** is a Vietnam-era veteran who served in the U.S. Navy from June 1965 to November 1969. He grew up in Maine and Virginia. While in college at Georgia Tech, he said he enrolled in the Navy ROTC program and was awarded an ROTC scholarship in his sophomore year. After college, he was commissioned as an ensign and was sent to damage control school for further training. He was assigned to the destroyer *USS Tattnell* from mid-1965 to late-1967 where he started as an electrical officer and then became the ship's Damage Control Officer. His ship was mostly deployed to ports on the Eastern coast of the U.S. as well as to the Mediterranean. In the early part of 1968, he was assigned to the aircraft carrier *USS Ranger* as an auxiliaries officer. The ship was deployed to the Philippines and performed a series of 3-month missions to the Gulf of Tonkin off the coast of Vietnam. Bennett says that during this time, he observed the macho "bomb-'em" attitude of the fighter pilots and the "gung ho" attitudes of his superiors – and he began to question the validity of the U.S.'s involvement in the Vietnam War. He knew he could not express his anti-war sentiments to anyone on board ship. A number of his anecdotes about his service use a sense of ironic, dark humor illustrate the insanity of war, including

describing drunk officers; cheers from the crew below-deck when a plane from their own carrier crashed on board – sparked by their resentment of the holier-than-thou attitude of the pilots; speaking out against the war on a radio talk show, while still on active duty; and how he and another anti-war sailor attended peace rallies at Berkeley while on leave. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Apr. 3, 2006. VHP TAPE #347 & 348. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPBennettH (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson).

**ROBERT BERG** joined the Marine Corps when he was seventeen in 1942. Although he did not see combat during World War II, he saw plenty of action during the Korean War. Serving with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division, he was at the invasion of Inchon and later fought at the Chosin Reservoir, facing odds of 12 to 1 against the Chinese Army. His wartime experiences are prefaced by his telling of the suicide of his father when he was just nine years old, and he also tells about the death of his first wife, after two months of marriage. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Sept. 4, 2002. VHP TAPE #76 & 77, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPBergR (MP3 file). Interviewer: Richard Randolph)

**DAVID WENNING BESSIRE** joined the Army Air Corps in 1940, leaving behind his family in Nashville, Tennessee. After a short training period as a radio operator, he was sent overseas attached to a B-17 crew. He was attached to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Group, the 320<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, and the 314<sup>th</sup> T.C. Group. He flew a total of 45 missions, with 29 being in the South Pacific, sometimes as gunner and sometimes as an engineer. After World War II, he joined the Active Reserves and was called back to duty at the beginning of the Korean War. He was stationed in the South West Pacific, the European Theatre, Ashiya, Japan, and Korea. He had three close calls with death. He told about a time that his aircraft was too heavily packed with ammunition and had a hard time gaining altitude. Facing a mountain the pilot found a divide between the peaks and got the ammunition to the destination. Another time the gas in a fuel tank was switched to an engine and the gas came into the cabin. When the war ended, feeling the need for excitement, he joined the Tennessee Air National Guard at Berry Field in Nashville. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: June 24, 2003. VHP TAPE #164 & 165, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Betty Richards)

**OLIVE BILBY – see Olive (Bilby) Greenwood.**

**ELEANOR (BAILEY) BLACKMAN** attended schools in the Nashville area, and went to Ward-Belmont College for two years, where she took business courses, wanting to get a job right after her two years there. She secured a temporary position with the Baptist Sunday School Board, and then became permanently employed there. She soon married a Tennessee native, who was living in Hartford, Connecticut. Mr. Blackman was employed by Hamilton Propeller, a division of United Aircraft, and he was therefore considered essential to the war

effort. During World War II, Eleanor volunteered as a Gray Lady for the Red Cross in Hartford, went to in California, then Florida, and eventually came back to Nashville. She worked in hospitals, at USOs, at the blood bank, and as a hostess at the Nashville Airport. While in Hartford, Eleanor and her husband roomed in a house owned by German Jewish refugees who had escaped to America. They had board and room with eight other boarders, all male, and gave over their ration books to the owners so that they might purchase food for everyone. The scarcity of cigarettes, butter, and other “luxuries” still are vivid in her memory—especially during the times in Hartford—where the war seemed much more a presence than it did in Nashville. When Mr. Blackwell was attached to the Navy and went overseas for six months, Eleanor returned to her family in Nashville—along with her three sisters, who had also moved out and now moved back. One of her brothers-in-law couldn’t go into the service and remained as a help to the family during that time. She recalls the celebrations on V-E and V-J day and also the reactions of her friends and family to the bombs in Japan. They settled back in Nashville and raised their son here while Eleanor maintained her relationship with the Red Cross. She felt that was an important contribution to the war effort and worries that today’s women don’t have the time to devote to volunteer work the way that her generation did. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Nov. 1, 2004. VHP TAPE #288 & 289. Also available in digital format: VHPBlackmanE (MP3 file). Index available. Interviewer: Alice Swanson)

**HERMAN CARLTON BLANTON** is a World War II veteran who served in the U.S. Army from March 1941 to September 1947. He grew up in the Ebony, Virginia area. He attended school through the third grade but decided to drop out of school after that so he could help his parents on the sharecropper farm on which the family lived. In late March of 1941, before the attack on Pearl Harbor, he decided to enlist in the Army. By enlisting during peacetime, he assumed he would only have to serve one year, based in part on what an Army recruiter had told him. He was sent to Ft. Story, Virginia for basic training and was assigned to Camp Stewart, Georgia for additional training. While there, he was in the hospital being treated for mumps when war broke out. He received notification that he would now be in for the duration of the war. He went on maneuvers in Needles, California, then returned to Virginia in preparation for deployment overseas. He left Virginia not knowing where they were being sent. After nearly a month of travel, they were deployed to Italy. After arriving in Naples, he was assigned to a graves registration unit. He tells about the primary functions of graves registration, which included removing personal effects from the dead soldier, putting one of the deceased’s two dog tags with the soldier’s personal effects, and leaving the other dog tag with the body, and burying the bodies after last rites had been said by an army chaplain. Blanton repeated this process over and over as his unit advanced through Italy. Sometimes bodies would arrive for registration stacked high like a bunch of logs, brought in on big trucks, as many as 100 to 150 bodies at a time. (Approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Nov. 28,

2007. Digital recording: VHPBlantonH (MP3 file). Transcript #526. Interviewer: Larry Patterson).

**STEPHEN MICHAEL BLAZER**, who goes by his middle name, served one tour with the 82nd Airborne Division as a Blackhawk helicopter crew chief based out of Khandahar, Afghanistan in 2007. He began his army career in 2004 after he quit school at Middle Tennessee State University. During his senior year in high school, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 occurred, and this had a profound impact upon him and his classmates. He sees his generation as stepping up to defend America just like his grandfather's generation did after Pearl Harbor during World War II. Originally hoping to join the Air Force and become a pilot, he instead joined the Army. He provides a detailed accounting of his training experiences at basic, advanced infantry training in helicopter mechanics, and jump school. In 2005, his unit was sent to southern Louisiana and New Orleans to assist with operations in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. In 2007, he was sent to Afghanistan where he went on many missions, usually transporting troops and supplies. He tells of one instance where a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) arched over his helicopter, a very near miss. He told his father about it shortly after it happened, and this, as well as many other experiences, helped draw them closer together. In another instance, he tells about a "hero mission" where their duty was to bring back the body of a fallen soldier - in this case, a German. Due to a shortage of body bags, the body was covered with just a poncho. Blazer was carrying one end of the stretcher when the backwash from the rotor blades lifted up the poncho, exposing the gruesome remains. These two images - the close call with the RPG and the body of the dead soldier - are two of the most searing memories from Afghanistan. In addition, Blazer also talks about the terrain, climate, Afghan culture and religion, and U.S. allies. He also tells about his reaction to hearing about the death of Osama bin Laden in 2011. When he returned to the U.S. from Afghanistan in 2008, he was with two of his friends one night when one of them committed suicide. Witnessing this event had an even more profound impact upon him than his service overseas. Blazer made immediate efforts to get transferred out of the 82nd Airborne due to conflicts with commanders who blamed Blazer and his surviving friend. Blazer and his friend eventually initiated a Congressional investigation over the matter. Blazer did receive his transfer, and served for about a year in Honduras where he mostly went on medical missions. In 2010, he served about six months in Iraq, but he deliberately chose not to talk about his Iraq experiences in this interview. In January of 2012, he left the army and used his GI benefits to attend college at Belmont University, where he is studying music production and business. (approx. 2 hr. 30 min. Interview date: March 7, 2012. Digital recording: VHPBlazerSM (MP3 file). Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**LACCIE W. BLEVINS** joined the U.S. Navy in 1941 and studied aviation mechanics prior to receiving flight training. He flew B-24 "Liberator" bombers in Europe and then in the South Pacific, completing more than 20 combat missions and receiving the Distinguished Flying Cross. He feels his experiences during the

war and in the Great Depression had a dramatic impact on his life, building character and inner strength. Son of a Baptist minister, his faith in God helped sustain him during times of adversity. (approx. 1 ½ hrs. Interview date: Dec. 7, 2002. VHP TAPE #113 & 114. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Richard Randolph)

**HARRY STANLEY BLUM, JR.** served as a radio operator during World War II in the 110<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, nicknamed "the Bloody Bucket" because of the fury of their assaults on enemy. He received his officer's commission and was shipped to Wales, and was wounded in the Huertgen Forest campaign. He describes the experience of being among 15,000 infantrymen marching through Paris as a method of showing strength to quell any problems with the French. (approx. 40 min. Interview date: Feb 19, 2004. VHP TAPE #218. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Betty Richards)

**HOWARD BOATMAN**, a National Guardsman in Louisville, Kentucky, was trained as a fire direction specialist with a field artillery unit. Activated in 1968, he was sent to Vietnam in October 1968 as commander of an artillery battalion. His battalion was engaged in heavy fire-fighting almost from the time of his entry into Fubei, near the DMZ. He continued with that kind of fighting against the North Vietnamese until October 1969, when his battalion was replaced and returned to Louisville after one full year of service in Vietnam. He tells about one close call when his unit was attacked at night by rocket fire from NVA mortar battery placements, while he was taking a shower. He immediately fled from his showering, and hit the trenches on the wooden floor of his tent. Even though hurt by the fall, it saved his life, since the shower location was blasted to bits by enemy mortar shells. Following one terrible fire-fighting battle, his unit had to return to the scene of the battle, in order to carry out the dead American bodies, parts of which were strewn all over the ground where the battle had taken place. It was a terrible ordeal for them, and the memory of it continued to be strong in his memory for the next thirty years. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Aug. 20, 2002. VHP TAPES #67 & 68, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPBoatmanH (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**REBECCA BONHAM – see Rebecca Alma (Bonham) Landers Jennings.**

**ALBERT J. BORGMAN** was drafted into the army in 1942, leaving behind his life as an Iowa farmboy. After a long trip across the Pacific, he was stationed with the 259<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company in Egypt. His anecdotes about this aspect of his service include both humorous and serious incidents, usually involving men who were drunk, absent without leave, or visiting brothels. After being posted in Egypt for some time, Borgman requested transfer to the paratroops and the Secret Service. He worked for the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), and dropped behind enemy lines in Greece, where he worked as a medic with British and American operatives to disrupt German supplies and communication. After the



war he had a variety of careers, including construction work. He later served as a civilian in Vietnam, driving a bulldozer to help build roads and aiding in other construction projects to support the American war effort in that country. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: June 12, 2002. VHP TAPE #38 & 39, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel)

**MARY I. BOWERS** joined the Army in 1977 while she was in her senior year at St. Cecilia Academy in Nashville, Tennessee. She joined the Army because she wanted to take advantage of the GI Bill to help her pay for college. She finished high school, turned 18 and went to basic training at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina, where she was in the last WAC class to go through basic. After this, her units were all gender-integrated. She then went to Advanced Individual Training where she received training to become a clerk typist, with secondary training for a postal clerk. She was then sent to Wurzburg, Germany, where she was part of the headquarters company of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division, serving there nearly two years. Her male colonel was supportive and encouraging and maintained high military standards and expectations. One of her fondest memories from her overseas service is when she was sent on temporary duty to work at a Girl Guide camp (the European equivalent of America's Girl Scouts) in Greece. While Mary was serving in Germany, she developed a medical condition for which she received initial treatment in Germany. She returned home to Nashville during Christmas 1978, expecting to return to Germany after just a couple of weeks at home. She had a doctor at Vanderbilt examine her, and he suggested that she seek further treatment. She went to Walter Reed Army Hospital where it was determined that she had received inadequate care and had been misdiagnosed in Germany.

While at Walter Reed, she was sexually assaulted by a man in the military. When she reported the crime, virtually nothing was done to assist her. She was taken to a laundry closet while the crime scene was investigated. Questions by the military police implied that clothing she wore or actions she had taken must have prompted the attack. She says that the MPs did virtually nothing to apprehend the assailant, and when she returned home to her family, they, too, did not believe her. She was sent to Ft. Lewis, Washington to receive further monitoring of her medical condition, though her trauma was still minimized or ignored by the military authorities. She received an honorable medical discharge and returned home to Nashville, where she began to attend groups at the Crisis Center. Eventually, these helped her to move from seeing herself as a victim to seeing herself as a survivor - a key point in her recovery.

She used the GI Bill to attend nursing school at Vanderbilt, and she later continued her studies at the graduate level in California. Mary concludes her story by reemphasizing her pride in having served, and declaring that women in the military "have been helping out for years," and that they deserve to be acknowledged for their contributions. Her intent in sharing her story was to talk about the "good, the bad and the ugly," acknowledging that there was some of each. (approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: March 31, 2011. Digital recording:

VHPBowersM (MP3 file). Index available (filed with transcripts, #549).  
Interviewer: Linda Barnickel)

**JEFFERY TODD BOYD** was a 2nd Class Petty Officer on the *USS Tuscaloosa*, an amphibious vessel whose home port was in San Diego. He served from 1983 to 1986. He was a Radar Operator with the Combat Information Center (CIC). Among other journeys, his ship went on a patriotic goodwill tour to Bangladesh. While walking into town seething with poverty, Boyd and his buddy came upon a street vendor selling baby clothes. Boyd stopped, thinking he might find something to send home for his infant son. As he was looking he felt a tug on his sleeve and a ragged little girl with her naked brother stood there. He bought the two children clothes. He said that the story of how the military can do good was one of his major motivations for wanting to be interviewed. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Nov. 20, 2004. VHP TAPE #306, index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Betty Richards. Interview was conducted on November 20, 2004 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**HENRY BRYAN BRACKIN JR.** tells of his experiences as a medical officer assigned to psychiatric patients two hospitals from October 1950 to October 1952. He was at Fort Knox, Kentucky for only six months, working with the 3rd Armored Division of the Army. His longer duty was on the staff of a large naval hospital in Oakland, California, where he was in charge of an unlocked psychiatric ward, then on duty in a locked ward, where he gave electro-convulsive treatments ordered by other physicians on the staff. He also assisted in giving insulin coma treatments for schizophrenic patients. After discharge in 1952, he returned to medical practice in Nashville, following a residential course in psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: May 3, 2004. VHP TAPE #239 & 240. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson)

**SOPHIE KNEIDINGER BRAKE**, the daughter of German immigrants, joined the U.S. Marine Corps "because they had the best hats." Sophie had decided to join the military because she was sick of hearing all of the men she worked with at the air depot complaining about how little money they made. She thought \$50 a week sounded pretty good. Sophie went through basic training at Camp LeJeune and received advanced airplane repair training in Oklahoma. When she finished her advanced training, she was sent to California repairing and rebuilding planes. Sophie met her husband, also a Marine, in California and moved to her husband's hometown of Nashville after the war. (approx. 1 hr. Feb. 20, 2004. VHP TAPE #219. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Evviva Weinraub)

**SAMUEL L. BRANNON**, a veteran of World War II, served in the U.S. Army from September 1944 to July 1946. At the age of 18, he was drafted into the Army and

was sent to Camp Croft, South Carolina for basic training, where he went AWOL overnight twice so he could visit his family in Marion County, Tennessee. He managed to avoid getting either caught or punished because some of his fellow trainees helped cover for him. After basic training, he was sent to Luxembourg in the winter of 1944 after the Battle of the Bulge, assigned to the 359<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment of the 90<sup>th</sup> Division, Third Army. One of his sergeants asked him and his fellow soldiers this question to prepare them for the experience of facing battle: "Do you believe in God? If you don't, you'll be talking to him in the morning." The sergeant went on to give them these words of advice: "Be careful, take good aim and shoot fast." Brannon tells about various battle experiences he was involved in as they fought their way northward from Luxembourg into Germany, particularly the crossing of the Moselle River, where his company was decimated. He also describes the fighting to take several hills and actions near Mainz, Germany. He was reassigned to the 1258<sup>th</sup> Combat Engineer Battalion. After they worked their way into Dresden and Leipzig, they were then routed into Czechoslovakia. After the war, he served on occupation duty in Germany, and he tells several interesting anecdotes about his interactions with the German civilian population. Brannon also saw the concentration camp at Dachau shortly after it was captured by the Allies. He explains that the generals had ordered different troop companies to go see these camps because they were afraid people wouldn't believe that places like these existed. Brannon describes what he saw inside the camp and declares: "I was there and it was horrible." (approx. 1 hr. 50 min. Interview date: Apr. 14, 2003. VHP TAPE #143 & 144, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPBrannonS (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson) Note: The recording is frequently punctuated by the sound of a ringing telephone, and at one point, a siren.

**TILLMAN WILLIAM "BILL" BRATTON** describes the various experiences he had over a four year period, from February 1968 to February 1972, serving with the U.S. Marines, in Vietnam, Okinawa, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, in the Mediterranean Sea with NATO forces, and in Albany, GA. His training prepared him for mechanical engineering duties, maintenance and handling of mobile vehicles and electrical generator machinery, as well as in combat, where he engaged in fire fights, mainly defensive maneuvers, with the North Vietnam Army near the DMZ line. His first encounter with the NVA, shortly after he arrived in Vietnam, occurred when enemy mortar fire killed two of his buddies (an African American and a Hispanic American) just four feet from his bunker location. In a highly emotional scene, he managed to wrap their broken bodies and remove them very carefully and cautiously to the rear, for shipment back to the U.S. It was a catastrophic event which he will never forget. Another incident was when he jumped on top of two Marine buddies in a fox-hole, and saved the lives of all three of them from an enemy mortar attack. Without realizing it, he was wounded in his face and head with shrapnel, causing him to experience temporary loss of hearing. For this he received the Purple Heart, and was rehabilitated physically on a hospital ship, from which he returned to duty.

(Approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Oct. 22, 2007. Digital recording: VHPBrattonT (MP3 file). Transcript #520. Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**IRA EDWARD BREWER** says he served in the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines; rose to the rank of general in the Army; was awarded the Medal of Honor; worked closely with upper echelons of the Reagan and Bush administration; and has a statue in Hopkinsville, Kentucky in his image and honor. He tells about coming under fire in Panama as part of special forces troops in action to capture Manuel Noriega. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Nov. 20, 2004. VHP TAPE #304. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewers: Katie Shelton and Chris Kellum, Lipscomb University students. Interview was conducted on November 20, 2004 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**HARRISON BRIGGS** served in the Army Air Corps as a pilot, in various theaters of war, from 1943 to 1961, with the exception of the period between December 1945 and 1951. He talks about his various assignments in sequence. His first tour of duty was working as a ferry plane pilot, flying C-46s and C-47s in the China-Burma-India theater during World War II. In 1943, he flew "the Hump" into western China in C-46s, carrying gasoline into Kunming, China, for use by General Claire Chennault and the Flying Tigers. He would then haul Chinese troops back to India, so they could be used to help protect the Burma Road. He was fired on frequently by Japanese ground troops, but never sustained any major damage to his aircraft. After being recalled in 1951 to the Korean War, he was based on the southern island of Kyushu, Japan, where he flew C-46s into Korea, carrying ammunition into a number of the bases, right on the edge of combat zones. On his return flights to Japan, he brought back wounded patients and bodies of soldiers, killed in action. In 1954 he returned to the U.S. where he piloted C-119s and C-130s, drop planes for paratroopers. He subsequently served in Japan, Thailand, Burma, and Vietnam. He returned to the U.S. and retired as a major in 1961. (approx. 90 min. Interview date: May 29, 2002. VHP TAPE #25 & 26. Transcript available. Also available in digital format: VHPBriggsH (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**MILDRED (KINDRED) BRIGHT** grew up in Rockwood, Roane County, Tennessee. After high school graduation, she enrolled in nursing school at Erlanger Hospital in Chattanooga. When the opportunity to join the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps came six months into her training (1943), she joined and received the assistance that provided to complete her nursing education. At Erlanger, she spent long days in classes and at work in the hospital under a strict regimen of training. She tells about the different kinds of patients she worked with, including a short stay at another hospital where the patients came from the various top-secret atomic bomb facilities, including Los Alamos and Oak Ridge. She recalls the introduction of sulfa and penicillin, the segregated nature of hospitals at that time, and treating polio patients confined to iron lungs. She primarily focuses on her work at Erlanger, where she worked with patients from nearby Camp Forrest

in Tullahoma, and civilians from the Chattanooga area, including miners from Whitwell. Her fiancé, whom she met while he was at Camp Forrest, was killed in active duty during the war. Her subsequent marriages (she was widowed twice) resulted in an interest in the Holocaust--her first husband helped liberate one of the death camps--and an interest in travel to war locations in Europe. She also talks considerably about her career as a nurse after the war. (approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: June 23, 2004. VHP TAPE #249 & 250. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPBrightM (MP3 file). Interviewers: Linda Barnickel with assistance from Alice Swanson.)

**REUBEN BRINTON**, a native Nashvillian, served in the U.S. Navy from January 1943 to February 1946. After completing basic training, he was assigned as a signalman aboard the newly-commissioned aircraft carrier USS Langley, serving in the Pacific as part of Task Force 58 and later as part of Task Force 38. As part of Task Force 58, he talked about how much of the task force's function was to go in a few weeks ahead of the ground assault troops and "soften up" the battle site for the ground troops by bombarding it from the air as well as shelling it from the sea. He talks somewhat at length about the experience of the Langley in the battles for the Marshall Islands, New Guinea and the Mariana Islands. Of special interest in this part of his story were his comments about the experience of finding himself under attack by a Japanese "Betty" (bomber) on the very first night the ship arrived in the Marshalls. He goes on to talk about how the battle group's name was changed from Task Force 58 to Task Force 38 after the battle for the Marianas and was then placed under the command of Admiral William "Bull" Halsey where the Langley saw action in the battles for the Philippines, Iwo Jima and Okinawa. He speaks frequently about experiencing attacks by Japanese kamikazes and by Japanese torpedo bombers, and describes many of the battle actions in detail. (approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: Mar. 5, 2003. VHP TAPE #133 & 134. Transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPBrintonR (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**TOMMIE RAY BROADWATER**, born and raised in Mississippi, joined the Marine Corps three years after graduating from high school. After basic training, he was assigned to an infantry unit in Vietnam but on his flight over, his orders were changed and he was assigned to a unit based in Okinawa. During his time in Okinawa, he was recruited into the Criminal Investigation Division (C.I.D.) to look for soldiers addicted to drugs so that he could report what he saw to his supervisor and they could return the soldiers to the states clean. He was specifically told to get close to the black soldiers at lunchtime and report what he found. After a few months, the other soldiers began to realize who he was and what he was doing so he was pulled from his C.I.D. duty. A few weeks later, his whole battalion was taken on maneuvers and spent 24 hours in the waters around Vietnam. That was the closest he came to Vietnam during his entire tour but it was long enough to give him veteran status. After his time in Okinawa, he was in the Philippines as part of the force attempting to give control back to the Filipinos. He was then based in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba where he received

advanced training in rehabilitation and corrections. He married his high school sweetheart during this time period and then was based at the Naval Air Station in Jacksonville, Florida as a Brig Warden for the remaining two years of his four-year term. During the end of his tour, he was offered early release due to medical reasons, which he refused. He nevertheless was released early and has since suffered from PTSD<sup>®</sup> and bi-polar disorder. He returned to Mississippi after leaving the service, where he resumed working for his pre-war employer, Bell South. He moved to Nashville around 2001 when he relocated for work. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Apr. 29, 2004. VHP TAPE #237 & 238. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Evviva Weinraub)

**PRESTON E. BRONAUGH** served in the U.S. Army from 1971 to 1975 at a variety of locations, including Fort Campbell, Fort Knox, and Fort Benjamin Harrison. He also served overseas in technical and support services, mostly doing accounting, in Thailand during the Vietnam War, and in the Panama Canal Zone, where he was discharged. As an African-American veteran, he remembers how his service was eventful due to his being discriminated against because of his race, and he talks about how even as a child, he felt like an outsider – partly because his family moved often due to his father's military service. He speaks often about his family, especially his close relationship to his mother. After a bout with alcohol and drugs, he has reached a point where he feels comfortable with who he is. He expresses his faith in God, and his optimism about the future. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Oct. 13, 2007. VHP TAPE #363. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson. Interview was conducted on October 13, 2007 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**OSCAR BROOKS** served in World War II in Army supply in the China-Burma-India theater, at the same Karachi Air Base with fellow Nashvillian and friend Morris Levine. No one in their unit was killed during the war, though Brooks recalls that several new B-17s were destroyed and their crews killed attempting a landing at a nearby British air base. Since Brooks gave the library a typed account of his war service (a chapter copied from his longer autobiography), the 'interview' was really Mr. Brooks' attempt to identify persons and places in many of Mr. Levine's wartime snapshots. (approx. 1 hour. Interview date: Oct. 28, 2002. VHP TAPE #100, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Ronnie Pugh)

**CLARENCE EUGENE BROWN** is an African-American Vietnam-era veteran who served in the U.S. Army from January, 1968 to December, 1969. He grew up and went to school in Nashville, Tennessee, graduating from Pearl High School in 1966. In early 1968, he was drafted into the Army and was sent to Ft. Campbell, Kentucky for basic training. Following basic training, he was sent to Ft. Sill, Oklahoma to attend artillery training school. He was then sent to Germany. Brown speaks freely about his descent into heavy drinking during his service,

and he also talks about racial tensions in the military. He had a gung-ho attitude when he first went into the Army, expecting to be sent to Vietnam, but his view changed to the perspective of: “Here I was: in a white man’s uniform fighting a white man’s war.” Noting the fights that would sometimes break out on post at Ft. Campbell whenever Southern white soldiers would get in the faces of the Northern black soldiers, he commented how the black troops would fire back with responses like “Why is this honkey talking to me like this?” He also talked about racial tensions at Ft. Sill when some of the white soldiers said—upon learning of Martin Luther King’s assassination—“I’m glad he got killed.” And still, despite his continued heavy drinking after he left the military and his journey into drug addiction as well—two activities that he said resulted in the end of his marriage, the loss of his relationship with his children and his eventual homelessness—he speaks at the conclusion of the interview about how he is working on becoming fully clean and sober and how the greatest obstacle he has had to overcome is “just making it through the day.” (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Oct. 27, 2009. VHP Tape #374. Interviewer: Larry Patterson. Interview was conducted on October 17, 2009 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**JOHN POPE BROWN** served during World War II in the Army Air Corps and later in the Korean and Vietnam Wars in the Air Force, primarily in logistics and support. He recounts events surrounding the dropping of the atom bombs on Japan, as told to him by Col. Paul Tibbetts, and tells about serving in the reserves after World War II. He was soon called back into active service and was involved in the Berlin Airlift, and served on supply missions to Pusan during the Korean War. In 1963 he was assigned to Headquarters Command and also did recruiting work for the Air Force Academy. During the Vietnam War, he was on special assignment for the Pentagon to assess logistics in Vietnam, and in the late 1960s and early 1970s he worked with members of NATO. [Note: Although originally a 3-hour interview, only 1 ½ hours of tape were created. The first half of the interview is missing, and, according to the interviewer, concerns Col. Brown’s life before the military, his entry into the military, and most of his World War II experiences. However, the fragment that survives about World War II picks up with Brown’s completion of training.]. (approx. 1 ½ hrs. Interview date: June 7, 2002. VHP TAPES #30 & 31, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**BETTY JANE (MARKER) BUCKSPAN** was born and raised in Wisconsin; attended three years of nursing school in Chicago, and, upon graduation in 1945, was recruited by the Army with the incentive of starting at an officer rank. She attended Basic Training at Ft. McCoy, Wisconsin—only 30 miles from her home—and was then assigned to closing hospitals at Camp Grant, Illinois and at the Mayo General Hospital in Chicago, a hospital that was in a converted hotel. Her father served in the Seabees during World War II and her mother worked a “Rosie the Riveter” type job during the war. Before working, her mother tended a large garden and canned food to support the family during the Depression. Betty went from Illinois to Washington (Madigan General Hospital at Ft. Lewis) with

other nurses being reassigned in a cross-country trip—Route 66—in a new Studebaker that one of the nurses managed to get even during wartime. The hospital at Ft. Lewis was built on the “cottage plan,” so the nurses were nicknamed “ramp tramps” stemming from their travels from cottage to cottage by ramp. Penicillin shots had to be given every three hours to be effective, so much of the night shift was spent going from patient to patient giving shots. Betty met her future husband at Ft. Lewis, and they were married there in 1947 when he was going to be transferred to Ft. Lee, Virginia. They had to be married for Betty to be separated from service. As career military, Mr. Bucksman served in World War II and later in Vietnam for 15 months during the early part of the war there. (approx. 50 min. Interview date: Sept. 20, 2004. VHP TAPE #281. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Alice Swanson)

**ALICE (MARTIN) HUFFMAN BUGEL** was born and raised in Roanoke, Virginia. This Army nurse veteran of World War II attended the three-year nursing school diploma program affiliated with the University of Virginia Hospital in Charlottesville, Virginia, and continued to work there after her graduation in 1938. As an Army nurse, Mrs. Bugel was part of the 8<sup>th</sup> Evac., a warfront evacuation hospital planned and put into place by University of Virginia physicians. The hospital held seven hundred fifty patients and existed entirely in tents. It offered the first round of treatment for soldiers injured in battle. During Mrs. Bugel's time in the Army, penicillin became available. It was treated as a medicine more guarded than morphine. The hospital traveled to fifteen different locations over a period of two and a half years in Italy. She arrived home in 1945. (approx. 1 ½ hrs. Interview date: Sept. 13, 2002. VHP TAPES #80 & 81, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPBugelA (MP3 file). Interviewer: Kathy Bennett)

**ROBERT E. BURGESS** served in the 14th Infantry Regiment of the 25th Infantry Division from 1950 to 1952. He got into a lot of tough action in the hills of Korea, fighting in some very difficult engagements with the North Korean/ Chinese Army, during the early stages of the war. In the Iron Triangle area (which connected Pyongyang to the north with Chorwon and Kumhwa toward the southwest and southeast), Robert's unit had to fight out in the open, sleeping as they could in tents, in very, very cold weather conditions. He tells about one incident when he hastily sought cover, diving into his bunker and injuring his hand on a very hot charcoal burner. His left hand was burned pretty badly, and when the medics found him, they told him to return to the aid station for treatment of the burned hand, telling him it would earn him a Purple Heart. Robert told them "no way," saying he would have been terribly embarrassed to get a Purple Heart for what he considered an accident. (approx. 1 ½ hrs. Interview date: Apr. 7, 2003. VHP TAPES #141 & 142, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson)

**RODNEY R. BURNS**, from Needham, Massachusetts, served in the Marine Corps from December 1941 until August 1973. He served in World War II, the



Korean War and two tours in Vietnam as a gunnery sergeant. During World War II, he was in F Company 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines of the 1st Marine Division, fighting in three major battles at Guadalcanal, in the Solomon Islands, and at Okinawa. He went in during the aftermath of the Chosin Reservoir during the Korean War, and during Vietnam served at Hue, Phu bai, Danang, and Chu Lai. He left the Marines as a sergeant major after serving 30 years. After his military career ended, he attended Tennessee Technical College for two years, where learned heating and air conditioning, and later started his own business. (approx. 1 ½ hrs. Interview date: Dec. 6, 2004. VHP TAPES #292 & 293. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPBurnsR (MP3 file). Interviewer: Betty Richards)

**DAVID A. BUTLER JR.** describes his experiences as a U.S. Army enlisted man and non-commissioned officer [E-5 Sergeant], in the 327<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division. He tells of his active service between January 28, 2003 and February 2, 2007. He was on active duty as an infantryman on two separate tours of duty in Iraq. The first one was a six-month period when he was part of a special detail, set up to guard an oil pipeline in Kuwait and Iraq. His second tour was for a period of twelve months, in which his unit trained soldiers of the Iraqi Army and participated in the offense and defense of an Iraqi city. He was impressed with the high morale of his fellow-soldiers, and of their commitment to carry out the mission assigned to them by their military supervisors in the field. One time, his unit was bombarded with mortar shells that had been attached to grenades. This attack injured some of his buddies and damaged their Humvees. They followed that attack by searching the city area for remnants of the devices. They discovered where they were located and arrested the Iraqi who was in charge of making and using the devices. He was captured and turned into the authorities, for which his unit was commended. On a second occasion, his armored Humvee was damaged by an IED explosion. In one of these episodes, one of his buddies was killed; and another was wounded severely, several times approaching death. The wounded soldier survived and was restored to full recovery and good health. It was a very close call, and Butler was very emotionally impacted by the entire experience. Happenings of this kind kept David and his buddies alert, with a strong camaraderie, and good troop morale. (Approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Apr. 23, 2007. Digital recording: VHPButlerD (MP3 file). Transcript #509. Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**JAMES CARLEW** is a veteran of both World War II and the Korean War. His interview provides a unique perspective of what it was like to be a black man serving in the military during times of both segregation and integration. In 1943, at the age of 15 and with parental consent, he decided to drop out of school and enlist in the navy. He was sent to Great Lakes, Illinois for basic training. He then was stationed at Annapolis, Maryland where, among other things, he worked as a barber at the U.S. Naval Academy. Because the military was still segregated, he and his fellow black sailors were housed on board a ship anchored at port

adjacent to the Academy. He stayed at Annapolis until the Fall of 1944 and was then sent for stevedore training where he learned how to unload ships. In 1945, he shipped out for Okinawa. He arrived there after the initial battle for the beachhead had subsided; his first assignment was to bury dead Japanese soldiers. This was the first time he had seen dead bodies, and he was just 17 at the time. His primary assignment was to provide logistical support by unloading ships and supplies. At the age of 18 at the conclusion of the war, he returned to Nashville, finished school through the 10th grade and worked at several odd jobs. When the Korean Conflict broke out, he decided to enlist in the military again— this time in the Army instead of the Navy. After being sent to Ft. Jackson, South Carolina to go through basic training again—where, by this time, all of his training was conducted in an integrated rather than a segregated environment—he was immediately shipped out to Korea where he was assigned to a tank battalion near the front lines. His primary duty was as a tank gunner and he talked at length about the experience of being at the front lines and being shelled by enemy troops. After a tour of approximately nine months in Korea, he was reassigned to Ft. Gordon, Georgia where he and two other black soldiers were court-martialed for what seemed to be a minor infraction, resulting in Carlew losing his stripes. At that point, he said his military career was over and he was honorably discharged shortly thereafter. (approx. 1 hr. 50 min. Interview date: Mar. 25, 2004. VHP TAPES #231, 232. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPCarlewJ (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**FRED B. CARNAHAN**, of Goodlettsville, Tennessee, reminiscences with fellow serviceman Raymond C. Barnett of Texas in this 1993 recording. They recall their days serving as platoon sergeants in the 320<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 35<sup>th</sup> Division in Europe. They recall many incidents, including taking German prisoners, the hedgerow fighting of Normandy, and the Battle of the Bulge. (2 hrs. Interview date: Mar. 28, 1993. VHP TAPES #115, 116, index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Nashville Public Library did not conduct this interview and does not own copyright.)

**THOMAS M. CAROLAND** served in the U.S. Army from July 1949 to October 1953 during the Korean War. He grew up in Robertson County, Tennessee, and enlisted in the Army shortly after his 18th birthday. After training at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina and Ft. Benning, Georgia, he volunteered for duty in Korea shortly after war broke out. In September 1950, he arrived in-country at the port city of Inchon where the American invasion was in progress. Three months later, in a firefight, his squad was surrounded by North Korean troops. Four days later, his squad was captured by North Korean guerillas. He and the rest of his squad were sent to a North Korean POW camp located approximately 200 miles north of the 38th parallel, where conditions were squalid. After about 13 months in captivity at that prison, the Chinese came and took control. Carolan was transferred to a POW camp located near the Yalu River, just south of the Manchurian border, where he spent another 18 months in captivity. In total, he was a POW for almost 3 years. He talks at length about his experiences in both

camps, including the squalid conditions of the North Korean camp, in contrast to the slightly better conditions he faced with the Chinese. He also tells about the experience of seeing 21 of his fellow soldiers go over to the Chinese side while in prison. He was released in August 1953 as part of a prisoner-of-war exchange. (approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: June 15, 2005. VHP TAPE #320, 321. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPCarolandT (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**EDMUND F. CARROLL** rose rapidly to become First Sergeant in the 35<sup>th</sup> Signal Company, 35<sup>th</sup> Division during World War II. He, like many of his fellow signalmen, had worked previously in the telephone industry. He tells of his experiences in training camp, the development of unit cohesion and pride in his unit. He relates several stories about the impact of rapid advances upon the troops, and some of the combat actions they were engaged in. Although a portion of the interview was improperly recorded, some of his most moving stories, about comforting a wounded buddy, and revisiting Europe, are still accessible through the transcript. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: May 14, 2002. VHP TAPE #20 & 21, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel. Note: first half of tape 2, side 2 damaged recording.)

**DAVID CARSON II** describes his experiences in the U.S. Army during three major deployments in the 1990s, serving in Saudi Arabia during the Persian Gulf War, and in Somalia and Haiti on humanitarian and peacekeeping missions. Carson enlisted in the Army a few months after his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1989 to, in his words, “smooth out the rough edges.” After basic training, he was sent to Ft. Benning, Georgia to attend airborne training, and was then assigned to Ft. Bragg, North Carolina where he attended psychological operations (psy-ops) school to become a Psychological Operations Specialist. When he finished psy-ops training in May 1990, he was assigned to a psy-ops unit at Ft. Bragg as an area specialist on Iran. He was deployed to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in September 1990 as part of Operation Desert Shield, where he remained throughout Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm. He was based in the same building as Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf and his story includes humorous anecdotes about bumping (literally) into Gen. Schwarzkopf on two different occasions. He also describes his personal interactions with the Saudi people, who were very pro-American. He tells what it was like to experience the earth-shaking sound of a nearby Patriot missile battery firing at an incoming Iraqi Scud missile. At the end of a 7-month tour in Saudi Arabia, he was rotated back to Ft. Bragg for a short period and was then deployed to Mogadishu, Somalia for three months in connection with the U.S.-led humanitarian relief operations there. In contrast to the experience of being in a rear area in Saudi Arabia during Desert Storm, he talked at great length about the experience of finding himself in the thick of the storm when he got to Somalia. There, he says, “I learned about war.” This portion of his story is filled with numerous anecdotes of being in a country where there was very strong anti-American sentiment. Included in these anecdotes are such

things as seeing random killings in the streets by Somali rioters and having his military vehicle pelted by rocks from angry civilians. After his tour in Somalia, he was rotated back to the U.S. again for approximately a year and was then deployed to Port-Au-Prince, Haiti for one month in connection with the conflict there. In sharp contrast to the anti-American sentiment he saw in Somalia, he talked about experiencing a very pro-American sentiment in Haiti but still described the climate there as “dangerously friendly.” (approx. 3 hrs. Interview date: Feb. 23, 2004. VHP TAPE #220, 221, 222, index available. Also available in digital format: VHPCarsonD (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**KATHY K. (CREAGER) CASH** entered the Air Force as a 2nd Lieutenant in 1972 serving as a nurse. Part of her motivation for joining the military was to travel, and throughout her military career, which ended in 1995, she was stationed in Turkey, Greece, the Azores, and a number of other posts. She tells about her first assignment, when for a brief time she worked with returning POWs from Vietnam. She speaks at length about her experiences in Turkey, where she was stationed during the Greek-Cypriot War. She tells of seeing the explosions of shells in the distance on Cypress and the atmosphere on base – which was shared with the Turks – at this time. She shares in great detail the ordeal that her and her husband went through to get married in Turkey. He was also in the military, and in order to get married, a couple had to follow the rules of the country in which they were stationed. Cash tells about the many hurdles they had to overcome to get married – most of which involved bribery of Turkish officials – an apparently standard method of business in that part of the country at the time. She tells of other incidents, including hitting a young Turkish boy who crossed in front of their vehicle in the street, and taking him to a hospital for care. She also tells about being stationed on the Azores, where the Army took care of the boats; the Navy flew planes; and the Air Force was responsible for the operations of the base on the ground. As her career progressed, she began working in the health promotion field, and was instrumental in developing health and wellness training which was adopted by the Surgeon General for use throughout all the armed forces. The recording concluded before she had the opportunity to add that she served at the command level as a liaison to the National Wellness Association and spoke at their conferences. She gave orientation programs for the military, and wrote the first Air Force orientation manual for health promotions managers, and it was still in use eight years after it was first published. After she retired from the military, she found that her variety of experiences made her very marketable to civilian employers. “The civilian sector respects the product that comes out of the military,” she said. (2 hrs. Interview date: July 27, 2008. VHP TAPE 352 & 353. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel)

**ALBERT J. CASTON** joined the Navy in 1967 when he was attending Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. He had received his draft notice, and decided to enlist instead, joining the Navy in the hopes of avoiding service in Vietnam, but he considered it his patriotic duty to serve his country. He did well in boot camp

and became a cook. He worked for a year and a half at a survival school in the States, and when it was time for him to rotate to a new assignment, he turned down the first two orders, hoping that the third orders - which he had to accept - would keep him in the States or in a safe area. However, his third orders sent him to MACV headquarters in Saigon. Although officially assigned to headquarters, he never actually worked at the headquarters site. He was responsible for the operations of a brig for a time, and was assigned to commissary support activities during Operation Sea Float in the summer of 1969. This operation involved a Navy SEAL team acting in an area off the coast of the South Vietnamese and Cambodian border. Although they did not know it at the time, the operation played a role in providing the U.S. with leverage during the Paris peace talks which were taking place at the time. In the fall of 1969, he returned to Saigon where he worked in a transit barracks, maintaining a brig. He extended his term of service for six months in order to get an early return to the U.S. When he was discharged, his total travel time from Vietnam back to his front doorstep at home was less than 96 hours, and no provision, support, or training was offered to returning veterans. He believes this was a great failing. He tells about some of the difficulties that Vietnam veterans experienced upon their return home, and discusses the value and importance of some of the services provided by Operation Stand Down. He notes that even today, the majority of veterans receiving assistance at Stand Down are of the Vietnam era. He also compares the post-war and reintegration experiences of Vietnam veterans with those of returning veterans from the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. He believes that today's veterans are treated better and receive more support and services than their earlier counterparts from the Vietnam War, and he sees this as a positive lesson learned. He also speaks briefly about obtaining his medals, and a little about his son who presently works for Operation Stand Down. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Nov. 3, 2011. VHP TAPE #379. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel. Interview was conducted on November 3, 2011 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down,\* where Mr. Caston was volunteering.) RESTRICTED: No quotations without prior written permission from interviewee. Expires Nov. 1, 2021. See administrative file for more details.

**JAMES W. CHATHAM** was drafted into the Army Air Corps in 1942. He was stationed in New Guinea where he served in a support role for the airbase, which was continually bombed and strafed. His Christian faith gave him strength and sustained him in combat. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Sept. 27, 2002. VHP TAPE #91, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Richard Randolph.)

**JOHN F. CHILTON** was an eighteen year old college sophomore when the Korean War began. He enthusiastically signed up for the Marines, but learned there were some slots in the Air National Guard and was able to enter service sooner with them. He was stationed stateside and trained in radar, joining the 116<sup>th</sup> Air Control and Warning Squadron, part of the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force. He was very disappointed to never be able to use this skill; the war was over before the

airmen were sufficiently trained, and he left the service in 1952. He speaks generally about his experiences in training and about the political and military situation at the time, as well as good friends he made during his service and the importance of his military experience in his life. He then spends about half of the interview talking about later presidents, politics, and military situations, such as the Cuban missile crisis and the "War on Terrorism." (approx. 50 min. Interview date: Apr. 22, 2003. VHP TAPE #147, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Betty Richards.)

**DERALD GENE CLARK** first worked during World War II at Rose Rubber Products in Nashville, but quit there due to difficult working conditions. He then worked as a civilian at Berry Field (Nashville Municipal Airport) from June 20, 1945 to August 16, 1945. Only 16 years old at the time, his position there was that of a junior warehouseman, serving with the Air Transport Command, 556<sup>th</sup> AAF Base Unit. His work was to keep track of stored aircraft parts, some of which were distributed to military units in other U.S. locations. It was an ideal job for a 16 year old boy. When the war was over in August, he was terminated. The Davidson County judge sent him a letter, reminding him that he was granted a work permit to aid the war effort, and now that the war was over, he should return to school. He did so, finishing high school in Nashville, and later graduated from Vanderbilt University, majoring in political science. He served for many years in the Tennessee National Guard, but his unit was never activated. He embarked on a career as a hospital administrator working at Vanderbilt and in Johnson City. He briefly talks about race relations in the early 1960s in Nashville, particularly the admission of the first black child to the Junior League Home for Crippled Children and supervising the predominantly black housekeeping staff at Vanderbilt Hospital. (Approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Nov. 12, 2007. Digital recording: VHPClarkD (MP3 file). Transcript #523. Interviewer: Bob Richardson. Note: Interview begins approx. 1 min. 30 sec. into first track.)

**CLAY COBLE** served in the U.S. Marine Corps from January 1944 to August 1946. He grew up went to school in Hickman County, Tennessee. When he was in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, he decided to drop out of school and enlist in the Marine Corps. Following the completion of training at San Diego and Camp Pendleton, he was deployed to the Pacific. He saw his first combat action the assault on Iwo Jima, which he describes in vivid and explicit detail. One especially memorable story he tells is that of seeing a Japanese soldier in the act of committing ritual suicide as Coble's unit was overrunning the Japanese position. He says he just stood and watched as the soldier committed hari kari, deciding to let the soldier take his own life rather than shoot him. At Iwo Jima, he witnessed the famous flag-raising on Mt. Suribachi from just 300 yards away. His unit also served as part of the occupation forces in Japan. (approx. 2 hr. 15 min. Interview date: Sept. 2, 2004. VHP TAPE #273, 274, 275, index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**STACEY R. COILE – see Stacey R. (Coile) Hopwood.**

**ALVIN NORMAN COLLIER** is a Vietnam-era veteran who served in the U.S. Navy from June, 1973 to August, 1974. He was born in Nashville on August 17, 1952 and grew up and went to school in the Nashville area. He left high school before graduating and worked odd jobs in the local area. Then, just two months before his 21st birthday, he decided to enlist in the Navy. He was sent to basic training at San Diego, CA and after completing basic, he was assigned to Long beach, CA for duty as a Boatswain's Mate aboard the LST (Landing Ship, Tactical) *Cayuga*. Although his ship was assigned to a tour of duty in the South Pacific, it did not see action in Vietnam. Then, as the result serious injuries he sustained during a freak accident that occurred in connection with a fire that broke out on board the ship as it was docking in a foreign port, he found himself being discharged from the Navy. Since leaving the Navy, he said has been homeless off-and-on and his story contains a memorable reflection from him about how he has been able to keep a positive attitude about life during those periods when he has had to deal with being homeless. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Oct. 15, 2005. VHP TAPE #330. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**CORINA E. COLLINS** is a Vietnam-era and Gulf-War-era veteran who served in the U.S. Air Force from August 1973 to September 1994. Her father was in the Air Force and she grew up on several military bases, attending school nearby. At the age of 18, she decided to enlist in the Women's Air Force or WAF, which was later integrated into the regular Air Force. She received her basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas, and then went to electronics school at Keesler Air Force Base in Mississippi, where she was among the first group of women to go through basic electronics school since WWII. Her story focuses not only on the varied assignments she had while on active duty but also on her having to face gender discrimination (from both her male superiors and her male co-workers) and having to struggle for acceptance and equal treatment from these people during much of the early part of her service career. Not only was she in the pioneering group of women who served in what were thought to be traditionally men's roles, but by the time of her retirement, conditions had changed significantly to the point that she was able to advance to the rank Master Sergeant. One memorable anecdote is about being assigned to Panama a couple of weeks after the U.S. invasion of that country to oust General Noriega. Even though hostilities were supposed to have ended, she could still hear shots being fired in the area near the base where she was stationed—to the point where everyone who had to cross the highway that ran through the middle of the base, had to be escorted by armed guards, in order to get to the other side of the base. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Nov. 20, 2004. VHP TAPE #309 & #310, index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewers: Larry Patterson, Nashville Room volunteer and Dr. Rhonda Collier, Lipscomb University English professor. Interview was conducted on November 20, 2004 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down,\* where Ms. Collins was volunteering.)

**WILLIAM "BILL" COLSHER**, a native of Winchester, Tennessee, was drafted for service in World War II before he finished high school in Nashville. He trained at Fort Oglethorpe, Fort Bliss, and Camp Chaffee, and was sent to the European theater as an infantry scout in the Ninth Division of the First Army. Colsher was captured on his second scouting mission (October 7, 1944), and remained in German POW camps until war's end in May, 1945 (seven months). He talks mostly about prison camp experiences – harsh diet, hoarded peanut butter, his work digging stumps, and three times being threatened with death by guards who thought his name was Jewish. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Mar. 12, 2002. VHP TAPE #5, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewers: Linda Barnickel and Ronnie Pugh.)

**JAMES M. CONLIN** grew up and went to school in the New York City area. During high school, he played on the football team and served as team captain during his senior year. Following graduation from high school in 1936, he received a scholarship to New York University where he majored in business administration. Not long after graduating from NYU, he was drafted by the Brooklyn Dodgers, a professional football team, but was cut from the team after two months. In the fall of 1940 he was hired by Bethlehem Steel in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania as a laborer and eventually advanced to the position of foreman in the furnace section of the company. At the time he was employed with Bethlehem Steel, he said the company was primarily involved in manufacturing gun barrels for large artillery canons/guns used by the Army and Navy and they continued to do so after the U.S. entered the war. During the interview, he mentioned that he was exempted from military service because he was working in an industry that directly supported the war effort and the primary focus of his story about service on the homefront centers around his experiences working at Bethlehem Steel. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Feb. 10, 2006. VHP TAPES #343 & 344. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**"JOHNNIE" BRUCE CORBITT** grew up during the Depression in a farming family from Humphreys County, Tennessee. He realized his childhood dream to become a pilot when he joined the Army Air Corps during World War II at the age of 19. He flew P-47 Thunderbolt fighters on 95 combat missions from D-day to VE-day in Europe. He also served during the Korean Conflict. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Jan. 20, 2003. VHP TAPE #121. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Richard Randolph.)

**MOZELLE (ADAMS) CORE**, grew up in the rural Robertson County community of Cedar Hill, and moved to Madison, Tennessee when she was age 16. Her older brother, James M. Adams, served in the Army Air Corps during World War II. Mozelle tells about the importance of education and religion in her family from



an early time. She tells about the affect the Great Depression had on her father's general store in Cedar Hill, including numerous robberies at the store when it was unattended overnight, as well as her father's "carrying" customers on credit. Her father decided to move the family to Madison so that the children could have greater educational opportunities. After moving to Madison, she attended Isaac Litton High School, where she was active in theatre, the debate team, and the school newspaper. She then continued her education at Ward-Belmont as a day student. One summer, however, she was stricken with tuberculosis. She stayed on bed rest at home for a number of months, and it was during this experience that she came up with the idea of a newsletter, called "Contact," for her Sunday School at City Road Chapel Methodist to send to men serving overseas. She recalls a number of her friends, schoolmates, and Sunday School classmates, and also tells about her acquaintance with Bob Core, who later became her husband. She tells about social events and activities during the war, rationing and its impact on her father's grocery business in Madison, and the devastating effects of her father's stroke on the family. After attending a second year at Ward-Belmont, she then completed her studies at Vanderbilt, majoring in education. (Approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Nov. 5, 2007. Digital recording: VHPCoreM (MP3 file). Transcript #521. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**LARENZO CORLEONE** served in the Army from 1980 to 1983 as a member of a "top secret" unit, Charlie Company, 2 – 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, and served in Egypt following Anwar Sadat's assassination. He talks about peacekeeping operations in Egypt in an effort to avoid conflict with the Lebanese. He briefly discusses the secrecy of his deployment and how Lebanese troops were prevented from entering Egypt. He talks about living on the streets before he joined the service, and how his parents did not know he had been deployed until his return to the U.S. He also tells about his transition from military life back to being a civilian. (approx. 20 min. Interview date: Oct. 15, 2005. VHP TAPE #326. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewers: Jessica Harvey and Lori Hugh, Middle Tennessee State University students. Interview was conducted on October 15, 2005 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**WILLIAM D. "BILL" CORLEW** volunteered for the Navy in 1944 when he was 17 years old. He was assigned to the *U.S.S. Okanogan* (APA 200), and saw action transporting troops and removing casualties at Okinawa. They also came under attack from Japanese kamikaze planes. He tells about life at sea, and his gratitude for the atomic bomb for ending the war. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: July 15, 2002. VHP TAPE #52, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Thomas Zerfoss.)

**YVONNE CORNU – see Yvonne (Cornu) Balls.**

**TIMOTHY ALLEN CORSO** is a Desert Shield/Desert Storm veteran who served in the United States Marine Corps from June 1983 until May 1991. Born in North Dakota, he grew up in rural Johnson County, Iowa. In 1979, while still a teenager, he and his family moved to Hendersonville, Tennessee, where he graduated from high school. Although his father was a Vietnam veteran, it was one of his high school teachers who was the most influential in his decision to join the military. For a time, he served as a mechanic on Sparrowhawk helicopters aboard navy vessels. During his career he served in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division, the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit and Marine Wing Support Squad 274. During the Persian Gulf War, he served in reconnaissance operations and was stationed in the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. He describes Saddam Hussien as an evil, "little man," and frequently compares him to Adolph Hitler. Corso describes some of his closest friends in the military and interactions with British allies who had specialized desert training. He talks about interactions with local civilians and their culture and customs, and reflects upon his sense of the similarity of the human condition, despite wide differences in beliefs. He also tells about his shock and disbelief when he encountered enemy propaganda which declared "to be a Marine you had to kill your mother." While overseas, one of his most memorable experiences was receiving letters from Schwab Elementary School, a special needs educational facility near Hendersonville. When he returned home, he made it a point to visit the school to show his appreciation and gratitude. His homecoming was a difficult one, however, and he struggled with depression and PTSD for more than a decade after the war. At the time of this interview in 2008, he was working at the VA Hospital, and he tells about PTSD and other hardships he sees in veterans who are returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Mr. Corso was accompanied by his girlfriend during the interview. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Sept. 23, 2008. Digital recording: VHPCorsoT (MP3 file). Transcript #535. Interviewer: Andrea Blackman.)

**ORRIE COUCH** is a veteran of WWII who served in the U.S. Army from September, 1942 to July, 1946. He was born in Nashville on August 21, 1917 and grew up in the Nashville area. After completing his undergraduate studies, he attended Vanderbilt Medical School and graduated from there in 1940 with a specialty in internal medicine.

While he was attending medical school, he was also in ROTC and upon graduation, he not only received his M.D. but also was commissioned as a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant in the U.S. Army. He was serving his residency at the University of Iowa when Pearl Harbor was attacked and was then called into active duty in the fall of 1942. He had several short-term assignments as a medical officer at Army hospitals in Mississippi and Texas followed by an assignment to New Guinea in the late summer of 1943 to help set up a field hospital there. In the early part of 1944, his unit was transferred to the southern part of the Philippines. There, he served as a combat physician at a battalion aid station near the front lines where his job was to initially treat the wounded who had been brought in straight from the battlefield by administering first aid (and pain medication, if needed) to get them stabilized and then send them on to a field surgical hospital (behind the

front lines) for further treatment. His unit's next assignment was training in preparation for the invasion of Japan. Because the invasion never took place, he was then reassigned to Korea where his unit took over a hospital which was formerly occupied by the Japanese. His primary duties there involved public health work with American G.I.'s. (approx. 1 hr. 20 min. Interview date: July 2, 2003. VHP TAPES #167 & 168, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**ROBERT "BOB" or "DOC" CRANKSHAW** is a Vietnam-era veteran who served in the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps from 1965 to 1972. He tells about his childhood in the Chicago and Nashville areas, and describes growing up in a home where both of his parents were “raving alcoholics.” In December, 1965, at the age of 19, he enlisted in the Navy. He made this decision to avoid being drafted into the Army, which he thought would mean certain combat in Vietnam. After training as a hospital corpsman and some stateside duty, the Navy then transferred him to the Marine Corps, where he received additional medical training. He was then assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> Civil Affairs Group at Camp Pendleton, where he spent approximately 18 months. In the summer of 1968—he was assigned to WESTPAC (the Western Pacific Fleet Command) in the Southeast Asian theater of operations. After arriving in Vietnam, he was initially assigned to a battalion aid station at at Dong Ha (in the mountains of Quantri Province—close to the Demilitarized Zone/DMZ)—for staging to a remote area just outside of Dong Ha. He says that mostly, he did “soldier work” there which included going on regular combat patrols as well as finding himself involved in combat firefights at times. He also talks about what it was like losing friends in combat. His tour of duty came to an abrupt end when he was seriously wounded in action during a firefight. He and some of his fellow Marines were taking cover in a foxhole, when a North Vietnamese soldier started shooting at them at close range with an AK-47 assault rifle—killing several of his buddies and very critically wounding him. He provides many anecdotes about his service, told in a matter-of-fact way, with great detail. He tells about his return home and his post-war experiences, and comments about the impact he feels the war has had on his life, including finding himself homeless for a short period of time as well as suffering for many years from the effects of PTSD\*. He frankly discusses his problems with anger which stems from the war and his childhood, and he tells about the impact it has had on his relationship with his own children – and how it has taken many years for them all to heal. He summed up the lasting impact of the war on him when he said “The war didn’t happen in Asia. The war happened in Nashville, Tennessee.” (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: July 17, 2003. VHP TAPES #178 & 179. Transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPCrankshawR (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson, with the assistance of Operation Stand Down.\*)

**OSCAR CULLOM**, a native of Nashville, entered the Army when he was 17 years old. He was raised by his great-grandmother, and was given written permission to join the military before he graduated from high school. Oscar

trained in Colorado with his best friend through the “buddy buddy system” and eventually shipped out to Vietnam during the early stages of the war. During Oscar’s first tour, he was a gunner on a Huey. He saw combat, but primarily provided fire cover for transport vehicles. When he re-enlisted, he was promised any posting he wanted but ended up as a foot soldier. He was given a great amount of respect because he had completed one tour previously even if he had never been out on patrol. His most frightening time in Vietnam was during the Tet Offensive. Oscar loved his time in Vietnam and would do it all again if given the chance. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Nov. 26, 2003. VHP TAPES #209 & 210. Also available in digital format: VHPCullomO (MP3 file). Index available. Interviewer: Evviva Weinraub)

**DOROTHY (GIBBS) DALTON-MCMAHON** entered the Women's Army Corps at age 20. She was sworn in on the steps of the War Memorial Building in Nashville. Sgt. Alvin C. York was present so the Tennessee company was called the Sgt. York Company. She was carefully trained and became a payroll officer, attached to the Army Air Corps. She served from November 1943 until January 1945 in Maine and New Hampshire. In recent years she has held several offices in State VFW offices and VFW Post 88, and has served on honor guards for funerals. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Nov. 2, 2004. VHP TAPE #290. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPDalton-McMahonD (MP3 file). Interviewer: Betty Richards)

**CLARENCE JACKSON “JACK” DAVIS** joined the Marine Corps Reserve to help finance his college education. Within six months, he found himself on the frontlines in Korea, in an infantry company bearing the ominous nickname “Bloody George” (Company G, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division). He tells about actions near “The Punchbowl,” where he was wounded upon two separate occasions. He then transferred to an artillery unit where he was a truck driver. Despite moving further from the front, his unit still came under frequent intense shelling. He tells of the effect of prolonged combat, and the difficulty of readjusting to civilian life upon his discharge from the service. (approx. 100 min. Interview date: June 4, 2002. VHP TAPE #27 & 28, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format, filed under “Davis, Clarence.” Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**JEFFREY JEROME DAVIS** served in the U.S. Army and Army Reserves during Operation Desert Storm. He was part of a supply unit, the 861st Quartermaster, attached to the 82nd Airborne Division. He served in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia from November 1990 to July 1991. His training took place at Fort Lee, Fort Bragg, and Fort Campbell. Davis describes his training as well as his deployment. He specifically mentions his duty of packing cargo parachutes used in air drops to the rebels fighting Saddam Hussein. His work also involved preparation of deliveries by helicopter and truck to the 82nd Airborne. He describes witnessing enemy Scud missiles flying overhead, being intercepted by U.S. Patriot missiles. He also tells about a trip into Kuwait City after the liberation.

(Approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Dec. 8, 2009. VHP Tape #375. Interviewer: Rose Mary Reed, with the assistance of Operation Stand Down.\*)

**LENNA C. DAVIS** grew up in Nashville. She married and moved to Madison, Tennessee, where she and her husband operated a dairy farm along Gallatin Road. During World War II, her husband was exempt from military service, due to his occupation. The couple attended City Road Chapel Methodist Church in Madison, where Lenna helped produce the "Contact" newsletter, sent out to members of the Hayes Young Adult Sunday School class who were scattered all over the world, serving in the military. She talks about why this newsletter was important and how it influenced morale both for those at home as well as those serving abroad. She briefly reminisces about some of her Sunday School classmates and other members of the church, and tells a little about what it was like operating a dairy farm in the late 1930s through the 1950s. Her and her husband sold their farm in the 1980s when they retired; their farmland has now been built up. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: June 28, 2005. VHP TAPE #299, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.) Note: There is a "buzz" throughout the recording, but the speakers' words can still be heard quite clearly.

**VERNER "RED" DEAN** grew up near Joelton, Tennessee, and enlisted in the Army in the summer of 1941. After completing basic training in Virginia, he was sent to Camp Forrest, Tennessee, near Tullahoma, where he worked in the induction center until early 1943. He then went to Indiana for training to become a medical corpsman. In the fall of 1944, he was shipped overseas to Belgium where he was attached to the 106<sup>th</sup> Division as a frontline combat medic. His unit was operating very close to the Belgian/German border in the Ardennes Forest when the Battle of the Bulge broke out in mid-December,. About four days into the battle, his unit "took a wrong turn" and wandered just inside Germany where they were surrounded by the enemy and were forced to surrender. From then until the end of the war, over five months, he was a prisoner of war. He provides extensive detail about the conditions at the prison camp: dirty, cold buildings; wooden slats for a "bed" and a very thin blanket to cover up with; no bathing or bathroom facilities (only a bucket of water in the barracks and a trench outside to use for a latrine); very little food to eat—most of which was inedible anyway; and abusive camp guards. He tells of a stark reminder to discourage any thoughts of escape. A prisoner was shot while trying to climb the prison fence. His dead body was left there as a "reminder" to the prisoners of what would happen to them if they tried the same thing. Dean was liberated by Russian troops in late May 1945. (approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: Aug. 4, 2004. VHP TAPE #258 & #259. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPDeanV (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**ALBERT DENUNZIO III** is a veteran of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm who served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1987-1991. He was born in

1965 in The Bronx, New York, where he grew up and went to school. After graduation, he attended Vanderbilt University where he was enrolled in the school's Naval ROTC (NROTC) program, but then decided on a path in the Marine Corps rather than the Navy. He attended Marine Corps Officer Candidate School the summer prior to his senior year and was commissioned a second lieutenant upon graduation. After completing Air Support Control Officer School at 29 Palms, California, he was assigned to a unit at Camp Pendleton. In September 1990—one month after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait—his unit, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Aircraft Wing, First Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF), was deployed to Saudi Arabia as part of Operation Desert Shield. Among other aspects of the operations, he tells about the time President George H.W. Bush and Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf visited their camp during Thanksgiving. DeNunzio also met Sen. Bob Dole and asked him to let his wife and family know that he was all right, which Dole graciously did. DeNunzio indicated that the hardest part of the experiences during Desert Shield was waiting and wondering what was going to happen: Going to war? Not going to war? If so, when? Once Desert Storm began, his unit moved north toward Kuwait and operated inside the country, just behind the frontline of battle. They experienced periodic shellings from the enemy and saw Iraqi Scud missiles flying overhead. In addition, they traveled through the heavy smoke from oil well fires set by Saddam Hussein's retreating Iraqi troops. The smoke was so thick at times that it was literally impossible to see his hand in front of his face. In addition to relating his experiences during the Persian Gulf War, DeNunzio contrasts the method of conducting operations during Desert Storm and the war in Iraq which was ongoing at the time of the interview in 2009. He credits the success of Desert Storm to the "Powell Doctrine" which espoused entering into military operations with heavy superiority in troops and weaponry. He contrasts this with the "Rumsfeld Doctrine" of trying to fight a war "on the cheap" with fewer resources in troop strength and material. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Feb. 7, 2009. Digital recording: VHPDeNunzioA (MP3 file). Transcript #539. Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**WARD DEWITT, JR.**, a Nashville native, served in the Navy amphibious corps during World War II. He spent most of his early service in training, and after the war was assigned to duty aboard LST 881. He tells about witnessing both of the atomic bomb tests at Bikini Atoll, and provides vivid details about this experience. (approx. 100 min. Interview date: May 9, 2002. VHP TAPE #13 & 14, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPDeWittW (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**ALLEN R. DIEFENDORF** was drafted into the Army in 1943, and later transferred to the Army Air Corps and Medical Corps. During the war he was posted stateside for various training activities, and in October of 1945, he was assigned to duty as a dental assistant at a station hospital on Okinawa. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: June 10, 2002. VHP TAPE #35, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**WILFRED E. DILLARD, SR** served in the US Army from 1943 to 1946, and in the Army reserves, based in his home town of Nashville, until 1960. He entered the Army, knowing wherever he went, as an African American, that his units would be racially segregated. His service as a Sergeant First Class was as a mess sergeant, serving with a segregated medical company in France, Germany, Italy, and in the Pacific theater of operations. That, he strongly felt, was his greatest contribution. He was called upon to prepare hot food on board ship, and behind the front lines in Germany, France, and Italy, to support the front line troops. He maintained this same position, when he was shipped out in 1945 before the war's end, in the Marshall Islands and in Okinawa. Returning home to Nashville following the war's end, he remained active in the Army reserves, working as a mess sergeant in summer camps. In civilian life, he worked at the VA Hospital, serving meals to patients there; and then worked in the downtown Nashville U.S. Post Office. He was an active citizen in Nashville, supporting the mayors of his city, especially Ben West and Beverly Briley. He lived in the midst of racial and social changes in the city, and had been very active for 72 years as a faithful member of the Gordon St. United Methodist Church. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Feb. 13, 2006. VHP TAPES #341 & 342. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson)

**WILLIAM WESLEY "BILL" DILLON III** served in the U.S. Navy from June 1944 to June 1946. Upon completion of radio operator school, he was assigned to duty as a radio operator on board a destroyer operating in the Pacific theater of operations, much of it as part of the famous battle group known as "Task Force 38" which was commanded by Admiral "Bull" Halsey. After Japan surrendered, his ship anchored in the harbor at Tokyo and the crew was given the opportunity to go ashore into the city of Tokyo, becoming, in effect, part of the very first Allied "occupation forces" on the Japanese mainland. One of the most interesting stories he shared during the interview was his description of a near-miss by a kamikaze attack, when one of the shot-down Japanese planes flew right over his ship, missing impact by just 10 feet. What makes this particular attack especially significant is that it took place on August 13, 1945 — four days after the second atomic bomb was dropped. (approx. 1 hr 15 min. Interview date: Feb. 5, 2003. VHP TAPES #124 & 125, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**JOHN A. DONOFIRO**, who served in the U.S. Navy from 1939 to 1960, a total of about 21 years, talks about two things: his early Navy service at Great Lakes, near Chicago, where he alternated between coaching in athletics in various sports, and participating in the sports themselves, including boxing and his experiences as a cook (in ship galleys mostly) for Navy personnel in the Pacific theater of operations, during World War II and post World War II, the Korean War, and the beginning of the Vietnam War. He loved cooking and this service gave him great satisfaction, knowing that he was providing basic food needs for hungry troops. He was present at the Navy's A-Bomb test in the Bikini Atoll,

where he discovered a wild female dog which had survived the atomic blast. He tamed it, and kept it as his pet, giving her the name Plutonium, or Pluto for short. He brought her home when he returned to the U.S. in late 1947. Unhappily, he had to release her when the Navy decided to keep the dog for further radioactive test effects. During the Korean War, John served as the cook on the crew of a minesweeper, in the waters off the east coast of North Korea. He and his crew experienced some close calls when mines were spotted and surfaced, and were detonated by firing at close range from the ship's crew. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Mar. 24, 2003. VHP TAPE #137, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson)

**ANN (GARDNER) DOYLE** grew up in Nashville as one of four girls, and she attended the public schools, first in the Harding Road area and later, after the depression caused a move to lower-cost housing, in East Nashville. Her father was in the produce business, and her memories are of having enough to eat and some to spare for the hobos. She attended East High School and, when Hume Fogg became a vocational school, she went there to learn commercial graphic arts. She graduated in 1941 and wanted to enlist in the Marines; however, they had an age restriction of 20, so she volunteered to be an Air Raid Warden and worked a variety of jobs waiting to enlist. It never occurred to her to be anything but a Marine, although to this day she isn't quite certain why that was the case. In 1943 she was qualified to enlist and was inducted into the Marines in early 1944. At basic training at Camp Lejeune, she met other women who would become life-long friends. During basic training the worst detail was scrubbing the showers because of all the women's hair that got trapped in the drains, and the lack of privacy in the converted men's barracks made showering and everything else most embarrassing. Ann was assigned to transportation and sent to El Toro Marine Corps Air Station in California. Despite being only 5' tall, Ann managed to drive trucks filled with personnel, aircraft engines, and, in one memorable case, sludge. Off duty times were spent in Los Angeles and Hollywood gazing at the homes of the stars. Because of the extremely low pay, most of the women took an outside job to supplement their earnings, even though that was supposed to be prohibited. In Ann's case, the Nut Factory—a large warehouse with conveyor belts carrying nuts to be sorted—was the first stop. She also tried to wait tables, but both jobs were less than satisfactory. After Japan surrendered, civilian men were brought in to drive the trucks at more than twice what the women Marines were earning, and the women were assigned to clerical duty. Ann spent most of her service as a Private; however, she was promoted shortly after the war was over to Private First Class and just before being discharged to Corporal. After returning to Nashville, she used her GI Bill to get her pilot's license – probably the first woman in the state to use the money for that purpose. (Approx. 1 hr 45 min. Interview date: Aug. 10, 2004. VHP TAPE # 262 & 263. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPDoyleA (MP3 file). Interviewer: Alice Swanson)



**GLORIA DRAKE – see Gloria (Drake) Taylor.**

**LANDSON DRUMMOND** was born in 1949 in Ensley, Alabama, and grew up and went to school in several different towns. He eventually came to Nashville and attended Pearl High School. He then went to Tennessee A&I College (now Tennessee State University) for one year and then enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in July 1968. After basic and advanced infantry training, he was sent to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina to attend supply school. He then went to jump school at Ft. Benning, Georgia. One particularly interesting story he tells is about bringing his best friend, who was white, home with him and going to the Grand Ole Opry together in Nashville. When Landson, who is African-American, visited his friend's home in Mississippi, his friend's father – who was a member of the Ku Klux Klan – welcomed Landson into his home, and defended his presence there – because the father was himself a Marine. Landson said race was not an issue in the Marines, “because we're all green.” While attending supply school at Camp Lejeune, Landson volunteered for duty in Vietnam, where he was initially assigned to a base just west of Danang. He was then sent to Khe Sanh to help relieve the embattled 1st Cavalry of the Army that was surrounded and under heavy siege by the North Vietnamese Army. Most of Drummond's story centers around the experience at Khe Sanh where the Marines' mission was to clear the trail to Khe Sanh, do night patrols and destroy any enemy they encountered. He speaks of how the Marines were left up in Khe Sanh to fend for themselves from May through December of 1969. He said he was exposed to Agent Orange when it was dropped on them while at Khe Sanh and that it ultimately put him in the hospital with diabetes and a dangerously high glucose level. When he returned from Vietnam, he was accused of being a drug addict, a baby killer and a murderer. His parents got the shock of their lives when he came home - they had been notified that he had been killed in action. (approx. 2 hr. Interview date: Nov. 18, 2008. Digital recording: VHPDrummondL (MP3 file). Transcript #538. Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**ALICE (MIKEL) DUFFIELD** was one of only four surviving World War I veterans in the State of Tennessee, and the only female veteran from that era, when she was interviewed in March of 2002. At 105 years old, she shares stories of life in the coal mining district of western Arkansas, and tells about her experiences serving as a nurse on the homefront during World War I. She worked at Camp Pike, near Little Rock, Arkansas, and treated African-American troops during the influenza epidemic of 1918. She passed away just five weeks after this interview was conducted. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Mar. 4, 2002. VHP TAPE #1 & 2, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPDuffieldA (MP3 file). Interviewers: Linda Barnickel and Audrey (Duffield) Henry.)

**AUDREY DUFFIELD – see Audrey (Duffield) Henry.**

**MARGARET (GOOCH) DUFFY** was born in Madison, Tennessee but grew up primarily in Nashville. Born in 1912, Margaret was from a well-to-do family. Her father was a coal broker and raised cattle on a farm in what is now Brentwood. During the Depression, Margaret's father lost his ranch and did rather poorly in business but despite the financial hardships her family was facing, her parents continued to send her to the Peabody Demonstration School (now the University School of Nashville). After completing high school, Margaret attended her mother's Alma matter, Belmont College. She completed two years of school and began working with the Welfare Commission (later the Federal Emergency Relief Administration) in 1932. She worked there as a social worker for about 7 years. She refers to this time period as her higher education though she did end up attending Peabody College at Vanderbilt University while working a rather hectic schedule with the Traveler's Aid Society. During her time at the Traveler's Aid Society, Maggie was loaned to the Red Cross as a caseworker during the Cumberland River flood of 1937. In 1941, Maggie was asked to join the Red Cross as the Director of the Home Services Department. During World War II, Maggie asked for overseas duty and was sent to Sydney, Australia where she worked in the field director's office for two years. When the war ended, Maggie went to Manila and worked with POW's who were returning home. This period had a dramatic impact upon her. She remained in Manila for some time while troops were being sent home. The second half of her time in the Philippines was spent helping the Filipino Red Cross prepare for independence. In 1946 she was asked to help the Japanese Red Cross in Tokyo restore their programs. She was part of a group that introduced the idea of volunteerism into Japanese society and also worked in Korea to help them recover from Japanese occupation. Maggie remained in Japan through the beginning of the Korean War and lost a number of friends when the North initially invaded Seoul. She returned to the United States briefly and then was sent to Europe in 1954 as a Red Cross Director. Her primary job responsibility was to promote volunteer programs on military bases across the continent. Maggie returned home in mid 1958 and began working for the Eastern Area Headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia, where she met her husband. She retired from the Red Cross in 1977 but continued to volunteer with them for nearly 20 years. She moved back to Tennessee to be closer to her family. (approx. 1 hr. 25 min. Interview date: Aug. 5, 2004. VHP TAPE #260 & #261. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPDuffyM (MP3 file). Interviewer: Evviva Weinraub.)

**CHARLES WESLEY DURRETT II** is a Vietnam veteran who served in the U.S. Army from November 1966 to November 1970. He was born in Nashville in 1947 and grew up and went to school "all over the place" but returned to Nashville where he attended high school at Hume Fogg. After high school, he spent a year at Vanderbilt University and then decided to join the military. He enlisted in the Army and was sent to Ft. Jackson, South Carolina for basic training, then went Ft. Monmouth, New Jersey for electronics training as a result of his pre-enlistment request to become a member of the Army Security Agency. When he completed electronics training, he was sent to Vietnam as a member of the 144<sup>th</sup>

Aviation Company (Radio Reconnaissance), 224<sup>th</sup> Aviation Battalion (Radio Reconnaissance), 509<sup>th</sup> Radio Research Group. He was based in the southern part of the country at an installation that was relatively safe, primarily because it was surrounded on all sides by other military groups. That “safeness” changed dramatically in March of 1968 when the Viet Cong launched the Tet Offensive and much of what he tells about focuses on his experience of being there at the start of the offensive and hearing mortar shells fly overhead into the installations around his. So concerned was he about the possibility of a “satchel bomber” running through camp, that he quickly came to the conclusion that he “would have killed anyone who looked suspicious” without hesitation. Two items in his story were especially noteworthy. One involved his comment about being called a “baby killer” by a peace demonstrator when he arrived back in the U.S. The other concerned how he responded to the question about what impact the Vietnam experience had on him, to which he replied: “It made me aware that I could kill somebody.” Though she does not speak during the interview, Mr. Durrett’s wife, Marjorie “Margie” was present during the interview. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Mar. 29, 2008. Digital recording: VHPDurrettC (MP3 file). Transcript #530. Interviewers: Larry Patterson and Sharone Hall.)

**FRED DUSEL** served in the U.S. Army, receiving training as a communications specialist, focusing on the skills of cryptography; later he took special forces training, specializing in jungle warfare, and also received medical training. Following two tours of duty in Korea and Taiwan, he re-enlisted for duty in Vietnam. He was heavily involved in secret missions, with Cambodian mercenaries, and later with A-Teams in the jungles of Vietnam, engaging in clandestine operations. In every battle situation, he provided medical services for his wounded buddies. Once he was nearly killed in an ambush. He received the Soldiers’ Medal for saving a fellow soldier from certain death; he received a minor wound, which he treated himself, so never actually earned a Purple Heart. He served for 15 bloody and harrowing months in Vietnam. Despite the obvious hardships, Dusel also tells a few humorous anecdotes, including a particularly memorable incident in an NCO club near Saigon, where, still dirty from field operations, he had a confrontation with a spit-and-polish sergeant, who called Fred “a disgrace to the uniform.” Fred calmly began shaving his beard with his dagger, using his beer as shaving cream. Fred’s assessment of his time in Vietnam was that it was a waste of time. He felt that the South Vietnamese troops were a hindrance to the war effort; their behavior, attitude and cooperation were not worth the effort of the U.S. troops to be there in this futile and unpopular war. He went through serious physical, mental, and emotional problems after his return to the U.S., which he discusses frankly. (approx. 3 hrs. Interview date: June 6, 2002. VHP TAPES #32, 33, 34, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.) PORTION RESTRICTED: See transcript.

**DAVID C. ELAM** was a corpsman for the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Regiment C Company during the Vietnam War from 1967 - 1968. He doesn’t talk much about

specific battles, but he discusses his time as a corpsman, what brought him to joining the military and why he stayed on as a reservist through 1994. He talked about some of the things that he saw while working in a hospital, but for the most part, he remembers being on patrol. He recalls one evening when they were told that the North Vietnamese were going to cross at their location, he talked about how throughout the night, he kept seeing tanks with large guns and huge battalions of troops crossing in front of him. He knew it wasn't real and when day broke, nothing had happened. He said he doesn't feel that his story is unique or that he experienced anything traumatic. He says that he never saw any of the things that war movies equate with Vietnam, such as rampant drug use, but that he did see some horrible things, mostly in the hospital though, not on the battlefield. David made it clear that he thought the U.S. government didn't do what they should have during the Vietnam War. He said that he felt that in order to keep up morale, we needed to win, not capture something and give it back again. After he was discharged, he continued to serve in the Naval Reserves and was activated during the Persian Gulf War. He served stateside, training medics for combat action. He was one of only two medics in the reserves who had seen combat before, and so his experience was particularly valuable in this training. (approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: May 13, 2004. VHP TAPES 241 & 242. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPEIamD (MP3 file). Interviewers: Evviva Weinraub and Willie Joy.)

**CARL WILLIAM ELI** was drafted into the Army, serving from January 1952 to June 1953 on the Korean peninsula with the 809th Engineer Aviation Battalion. In that year and a half he handled airstrip maintenance work in several different locations. On his own, as TDY, as well as with his unit, he not only did engineer maintenance, but was involved in direct combat with the North Korean Army in the southern and northern sectors of the Korean peninsula. During one of the attacks, he thwarted the enemy fire with a machine gun in a trench, and was able to maintain the American position against heavy North Korean gunfire. In another incident, a U.S. fighter plane crashed, pinning a small Korean boy under it. Carl tried valiantly to rescue the boy, and in doing so he injured his back. He was taken by the medics back to an aid station, where he recuperated for a couple of weeks, before returning to his unit in the field of combat. He continued his active service in Korea until June 1953. (approx. 1 ½ hrs. Interview date: Apr. 21, 2003. VHP TAPES #145 & 146, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPEIiC (MP3 file). Interviewer: Bob Richardson).

**THOMAS E. ERVIN, JR.** served during World War II in the Army Air Corps with the 443<sup>rd</sup> Group, 315<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron, stationed primarily in China. He served as a radio operator on cargo missions, dropping supplies to the troops and occasionally transporting personnel. He tells of several close calls with weather and mechanical trouble, and of the influence his faith and the faith of others had on his experiences during the war, as well as after the war when he became an ordained minister. He also tells briefly about being captured at the

end of the war by Chinese Communist forces, and being imprisoned for three days in a bamboo cage before being rescued by American Military Police. (1 ½ hrs. Interview date: Nov. 20, 2002. VHP TAPES #107 & 108, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**ALLEN ESKIND** was a U.S. Naval officer who spent three years in the Navy, mainly in the Pacific theater of war, between the summer of 1942 and 1945. His chief assignment was as executive officer commanding an LCI (Landing Craft Infantry), which took him into military landings and enemy action in Hollandia, New Guinea, and the Philippines. His LCI took part in the huge invasion at Leyte Gulf, which was full of problems and mistakes by the Japanese and difficulties presented by the weather. A typhoon came up, delaying and hindering the landing efforts by the American troops. He tells about the controversy over the landing strategy, in which General Douglas MacArthur went against the judgment of admirals and other commanders, because he insisted upon returning to the Philippines in order to fulfill his "I shall return" speech. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: May 9, 2002. VHP TAPE #17 & 18, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPeskinda (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**ANDREW G. EZELL** grew up and went to school in rural Giles County, Tennessee. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps in early 1945 and was sent to Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi for basic training and aircraft mechanics school. The war ended while he was in school and in April 1946 he was deployed to the Philippines, where he worked on aircraft at a base just outside of Manila. After separation from the military, he attended college and while there, he joined an Army ROTC unit. Upon graduation, he was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Army and was initially assigned to duty in the Transportation Corps. Between August 1965 and January 1970 he served two 12-month tours in Vietnam. His story about his first tour (which was to a unit based in the Vietnam highlands) includes descriptions of frequent enemy mortar attacks. One of these attacks killed a member of the company very near to his when it landed on them. During his second tour, he was assigned to duty in the city of Saigon where he always had to be on guard. He carried a gun with him at all times, unable to trust anyone there. (approx. 2 ½ hrs. Interview date: Apr. 26, 2006. VHP TAPE #349, 350 & 351. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**HANSON E. "BUD" FARMER** served in the Navy in the amphibious corps during World War II. He tells about training at Little Creek, Virginia, and about his experiences while in London while it was being bombed. He was in the second wave of assault boats in an LST at Utah Beach during the Normandy Invasion, where his craft took over 17 hits from enemy fire, making it unseaworthy. He received five shrapnel wounds and was evacuated, eventually returning to the U.S. for recuperation. Upon his recovery, he was then sent to the Pacific, participating in the invasion of Okinawa. He contrasts the defense methods of the

Germans and Japanese, tells about watching the pre-invasion naval bombardments, and compares his experiences during the two invasions. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: July 12, 2002. VHP TAPE #51, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPFarmerH (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**LUCIEN HARDY FARMER** served in the U.S. Coast Guard from 1975 to 1978. He attended boot camp at Alameda, California, and was stationed at Panama City Beach, Florida and Galveston, Texas. He was very committed to his service, and feels it was an honor to serve his country. He was especially proud to participate in the trial of a ship captain who was carrying a load of benzene, and was intoxicated, causing his ship to block a major waterway near Galveston, Texas. Farmer testified in the trial, resulting in the punishment of the captain. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Oct. 18, 2008. VHP TAPE #371. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson. Interview was conducted on October 18, 2008 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**CHRIS SCOTT FIESELMAN** served from 1979 to 1982 in the Army with the Second Infantry Division in Korea, and with the Seventh Infantry Division at Ft. Ord, California. His primary duties were as a personnel records specialist, and a radio and teletype operator. He tells about his training, and retraining, in the Army, as well as his time overseas in Korea. A little over a year before this interview was conducted, he began writing for the local Nashville "street paper," known as *The Contributor*, produced by and for the homeless community. (approx. 30 min. Interview date: Nov. 4, 2011. VHP TAPE #380. Interviewer: Luke Herbst. Interview was conducted on November 4, 2011 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**EDWARD ROBERT FINKELSTEIN** was born and raised in New Jersey in a suburb of New York City. He describes his childhood as normal and without prejudice. Ed said that he never really knew that there were problems with people of other races or religions as growing up, he lived in a very diverse community. Ed received his first draft notice after his first year of college in Iowa. He was working while attending school and actually began his second year unsure of whether he should be attending his first day of boot camp. After finishing his undergraduate work, he began working on a Master's degree in guidance counseling on the weekends while working a full time job when all of his draft appeals ran out and he was told to report to boot camp. Ed's brother-in-law told him about the Chaplain's assistant program so during the first week of boot camp, he went to the head Rabbi's office. At the end of Boot Camp, Ed was sent to secretarial school in Brooklyn and eventually was trained as a chaplain's assistant. Mr. Finkelstein's base camp was located in the valley of a "hot zone" in Vietnam. He was one of the few men at his camp that regularly walked around with a firearm despite the fact that they were regularly under fire. Ed did have the opportunity to use his counseling skills during the latter part of his tour when he began helping the military perform drug counseling. Ed says his experiences

in Vietnam were generally positive but significantly different than most, based on his job. Ed finally had his homecoming parade on Veteran's Day 2003, when he participated in the Ride to the Wall with thousands of other Vietnam Vets. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Feb. 26, 2004. VHP TAPES #223 & 224. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPFinkelsteinE (MP3 file). Interviewer: Evviva Weinraub.)

**MARCUS T. FLOYD, JR.** served in South Vietnam and Cambodia in the 11<sup>th</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment. He tells about his experiences in basic training, about his family's reaction to his service, and about some of his combat experiences. He tells about his departure from Vietnam to return home, when a buddy made him say goodbye to the rest of the outfit – causing him to miss his helicopter out and forcing him to stay another day. He was very nervous that Fate might be against him that night, since he wasn't supposed to be there. He returned to the United States, where he experienced some hardships after the war. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Nov. 1, 2003. VHP TAPE #204. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewers: Mary Beth Lee and Brittany Redmond, Lipscomb University students. Interview was conducted on November 1, 2003 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**CORINNE W. FORBES** was suddenly and with great persistence courted by her soon-to-be husband, W. Francis Forbes, during World War II when they met on their way to a dance at the Army Air Classification Center on Thompson Lane in Nashville. He was eight years her senior, and with her just 17 years old, they eloped to Kentucky to be married. Subsequently they were married again by an Army Methodist chaplain at Berry Field upon the insistence of the bride's mother; and thereafter were married by a Catholic priest upon the insistence of the groom's mother. Mrs. Forbes tells about these incidents and about life in general during World War II when she was growing up in the Green Hills area of Nashville. She also talks about her work with the Civil Air Patrol, including training she took for spotting planes during World War II, and her activities in later years during the Vietnam era when her son, Chris, was a member of the Air Force Youth Auxiliary. This organization provided training for young men and women in drill, first aid, and search and rescue operations in preparation for their entry into the Air Force. Corinne's job with the group was primarily to keep records, to serve as a chaperone, and to receive training and help train the young people. She took great pride in her work, advancing to the rank of captain, and was active in the Civil Air Patrol for many years. She also speaks briefly about her involvement with Disabled American Veterans, and the personal significance of her many activities in direct support of veterans and the military. (approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: Oct. 15, 2005. VHP TAPES #332 & 333. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**W. FRANCIS FORBES** began his military career in the Navy, but wanted to fly planes and obtained a transfer to the Army Air Force. He describes flying as a ferry pilot during World War II and the Korean War. His job was to ferry aircraft from plants or bases in the U.S. or the theater of operations to wherever they were needed. As such he was unarmed and flew to places such as England, Germany, France and Italy. He described being shot at by “Jerries” as he flew into a combat area to deliver an aircraft. His only defense was to gain altitude in order to escape. On one such mission he was hit in the wrist by fragments of the enemy’s bullets. During his service, he married his wife, Corinne, and became a bishop in the Eastern Orthodox Church. (approx. 30 minutes. Interview date: Oct. 15, 2005. VHP TAPE #331. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Charlie Smith. Interview was conducted on October 15, 2005 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down,\* where Bishop Forbes was volunteering, giving the blessing at meals.)

**JACQUELINE FORMAN – see Jacqueline (Forman) Stephens Horridge.**

**HAROLD EMMETT FOSTER JR.** is a Vietnam veteran who served in the U.S. Army from September, 1969 to April, 1973. He grew up in the Nashville area. After completing high school, he enlisted in the Army and was sent to Ft. Campbell, Kentucky for basic training. Following the completion of basic training, he was sent to Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri for vehicle maintenance school, after which he requested assignment to Vietnam. His tour of duty lasted approximately a year and a half and for the entire tour, he was stationed at a firebase nicknamed “Camp Bayonet” (located about 5 miles west of Chu Lai). Mr. Foster’s story of his Vietnam and post-Vietnam experience contains both humorous and serious stories. Of the former, he tells about how he burned his draft card while in Vietnam in the hope that the Army would view him as “unfit” and discharge him. Among the more serious anecdotes he tells is when he witnessed a young girl, about four years old, pull the pin on a hand grenade and kill both herself and several of his friends. He also speaks his 30-year bout with PTSD<sup>®</sup> as the result of his experiences in Vietnam. (approx. 1 hr. 20 min. Interview date: Dec. 7, 2005. VHP TAPES #339 & 340. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**GILBERT S. FOX** describes his career in the U.S. military from December 1941 to March 1946. Both as an American and as a Jewish citizen, Gil very much wanted to be sent to Europe, to Germany, where he could fight the Nazis, whom he despised for what they had done to so many Jews. He never got his wish fulfilled. Specifically, he tells of his experience in the U.S. Navy, first as a trainee, then as a training instructor at the Midshipman School at Notre Dame, 1941-1943. He then covers his advanced training in Little Creek, VA, in amphibious warfare from 1943 to 1944. He began ship duty as Executive Officer of LSM 80, based in Houston, TX, in September 1944. His sea duty aboard that ship took



him to the South Pacific, where he visited a number of islands: Hawaii, New Hebrides, Guadalcanal, the Solomons, Eniwetok, Guam, Saipan, Ulithi, the Philippines; then on to Okinawa, and to Japan. His active engagement with the Japanese enemy on his ship was in 1944 and 1945, primarily in Okinawa, where his ship landed, sent tanks onto the beach, and then did ship-to-shore duties, carrying in supplies and troops, and carrying out the wounded. It was, by his own admission, the scariest time of his military service. His ship and many others were subjected constantly to kamikaze attacks by Japanese planes. He saw a cruiser just 100 yards away, badly damaged by a kamikaze attack. Fortunately, his own ship never suffered damage from enemy fire during this episode. His second most harrowing experience was facing weather as an enemy. More than once his ship was caught in huge, heavy typhoons. He also tells about entering a Japanese harbor shortly after the surrender, not knowing whether there would be a hostile reception from Japanese civilians or the military. As they came near the landing site, they were astounded at the reception from the Japanese people. Hundreds of civilians - no troops - were lined up with their cameras, taking pictures of the incoming American troops and ships! After landing, Gil Fox's crew discovered mounds - like haystacks - on the beach containing hundreds of bows and arrows, guns, and other firearms. In the event of the invasion of the islands by the US troops, every civilian was ready to fight and to die for the honor of the emperor and their empire. Mr. Fox was discharged on March 28, 1946, with the rank of Lieutenant Senior Grade, and returned to civilian life in Nashville, TN. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Mar. 1, 2004. VHP TAPES #225 & 226, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPFoxG (MP3 file). Interviewer: Bob Richardson. Note: portion of tape 1, side 2, near the beginning of the side, damaged recording.)

**ARLEA JO FRANKE-WYLIE**, who goes by “Jo,” is a veteran of Operation Desert Storm, having served in the U.S. Army from October 1989 to March 1994. She was born on-post at Ft. Hood, Texas and moved frequently as she was growing up. Her parents divorced when she was just two years old, and when she was a teenager, her mother surrendered custody to a married couple in Oregon, who raised her to age 18. Shortly after graduating high school, Jo enlisted in the Army to get GI Bill benefits to pay for college. She went to basic training at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina. While there, Jo’s female training partner told her that she was in love with her. Jo immediately asked to have a different training partner, but did not give any details as to why she sought the change. Jo faced immense pressure from her commander to not only divulge the reason she sought the change, but also faced implications and accusations that she herself was a lesbian - which was not true. Jo never did tell anyone about her training partner’s sexual orientation, despite the pressure to do so. In the end, the training partner eventually disclosed that she was a lesbian, and resigned from the Army. This incident took place before the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy had been implemented in the Army. After basic, Jo had a brief interlude before attending AIT, and she managed to get back in touch with her father, a Vietnam veteran. She then attended Advanced Infantry Training at Ft. Gordon, Georgia, where she

studied communications. Her first assignment was in Germany, where an “old school” first sergeant once told her, “You’re not mechanically inclined and do not understand what you are doing, but I understand that’s a handicap you’re working under.” The “handicap” he referred to was her gender. This first sergeant did not think women should be in the military, and he made his opinions quite clear. Jo said that her male peers among the enlisted personnel never harassed her, but rather, non-commissioned officers often did. While in Germany, she received word that her father had less than six months to live. She went home on leave, and while there, saw the news about Saddam Hussein invading Kuwait. Her father tried to talk her out of going to the Middle East, even though they both knew that was probably where she would be sent. Her father died not long after her return to Germany. The rest of Jo’s story concerns her experiences in the Middle East during Operation Desert Storm serving in support, communications and logistics with the First Infantry Division. In early January of 1991, she was sent to Saudi Arabia. She tells about what it was like watching a Scud missile being shot down by a Patriot missile, describes traveling in Kuwait through the dense smoke from burning oil wells, and tells about advancing into southern Iraq where she saw - and smelled - burned-out military equipment and burned and decaying corpses of Iraqi soldiers, civilians, and children. Jo also tells about one incident where several Iraqi soldiers surrendered to her unit, mostly because they were in need of food and water. When she came home, she received a warm welcome, which was extremely meaningful to her. Several years later, Jo was medically discharged. She suspects some of her problems might be related to Gulf War Syndrome, since she had to breathe in the fumes from the burning oil wells, though she has never been officially diagnosed with this disease. (approx. 5 hr. Interview date: November 24, 2010. Digital recording: VHPFranke-WylieA (MP3 file). Index available (filed with transcripts, #546). Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**JOHN M. FRASE** tells about growing up in the small town of Muscoda, Wisconsin and how his family was devastated by the Depression. He worked as a mechanic among other jobs and lived in boarding houses in order to pay his way through college. In 1944, his schooling was interrupted by the draft. He was sent to Europe in the 354<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 89<sup>th</sup> Division under the command of General Patton. He tells of the unbearable cold at the Battle of the Bulge, and the two days of deadly assaults across the Rhine, where his unit sustained 50% casualties. Later, his unit discovered a concentration camp at Ohrdruf, and after VE-Day, he served in the Army of Occupation in Vienna. (approx. 1 hr. 15 min. Interview date: July 24, 2002. VHP TAPES #40 & 41, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel)

**SUSAN L. FREY** served in the Navy from 1972 to 1988, performing police duty at various stations in the United States and the Philippines. She excelled in marksmanship, and was recognized as a leader among her female, and some male, peers. She tells what it was like to be the first woman on her ship, the first

woman to serve at a particular base, and the first female military police officer in her unit. She discusses the progress of the Navy and the integration of women in the service from her initial enlistment until the time she left the armed services. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Nov. 20, 2004. VHP TAPE #301. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPFreyS (MP3 file). Interviewers: Rebecca Boykin and Matt Swinea, Lipscomb University students. Interview was conducted on November 20, 2004 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down,\* where Ms. Frey was volunteering.)

**JOHN L. FRISBY** served as a staff sergeant in C-2-7 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division and also as part of the 369<sup>th</sup> Armored Infantry in the U.S. Army during Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, from 2000 to 2006. He led his troops into one of Saddam Hussein's palaces. He was seriously wounded by being blown out of a Humvee, and was at Walter Reed Army Medical Center for seven months. Two comrades also died in that attack. Though his wounds have healed, his body has shrapnel in it that will be there forever. He speaks about the brutality of war that he experienced, including hearing about Iraqis who would hand an American soldier a baby – with a bomb strapped to it. He shared his very strong opinions about Muslims in Iraq, religion and politics in the Middle East, and the political situation in the United States. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Oct. 13, 2007. VHP TAPE #366. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Betty Richards. Interview was conducted on October 13, 2007 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\* Note: This interview is frequently interrupted by announcements over a loudspeaker.)

**FREDERICK F. FRITZ** served in the Marines from 1972-1978, serving two tours of duty in Vietnam where he saw some fierce hand-to-hand combat with the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army. Some of his combat actions occurred in tunnels occupied by Viet Cong, who sometimes fought with, and sometimes fought against, American forces. Ambushes were frequent. Because of the time period of his service, the bulk of his activities in Vietnam were in support of troop withdrawals from that country, as the war was winding down. One of his great surprises after his service was finding so much help, support and assistance from veterans groups, and he mentions Operation Stand Down in particular. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Oct. 13, 2006. VHP TAPES #355 & 356. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson. Interview was conducted on October 13, 2006 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**JOHN FURGESS** tells about his college preparation, with ROTC at Middle Tennessee State University, which led him to volunteer for the Army, in which he served - active and reserve - from November 1965 to October 1993. His active duty tour in Vietnam covered some three years, with the Americal (23<sup>rd</sup> Infantry) Division. The most dramatic moment of his duty in Vietnam came at the height of

the Tet offensive, when the enemy launched a horrendous mortar attack, which resulted in the explosion of a huge US ammo dump, creating a "nuclear" cloud, and rocking everything and everyone nearby. John and the others were knocked down from the shattering power of the blast. Fortunately, he was not injured by the blast which occurred very close to where he was. That episode became a turning point in the entire war. When John returned to the U.S., he immediately became very active in the National Guard, and also the various veterans organizations in the Nashville area. He believes he helped many of the Vietnam veterans to make a safe and sane transition from their gut-wrenching experiences of war in Vietnam to a settling down into every day life and family activity. One step he took was insuring that an emotionally disturbed veteran visit and hang around the National Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington. He continues to be involved in many veteran organizations, including the Tennessee Veterans Affairs Department, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and the American Legion, often holding positions as a director or commander. In 2004-2005, he was National Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. (approx. 1 hr. 15 min. Interview date: Jan. 14, 2008. Transcript #528. Digital recording: VHPFurgessJ (MP3 file). Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**T. GRADY GALLANT** served in World War II with the U.S. Marines from September 1941 to November 1945. He describes his first overseas military assignment, which was the invasion and fighting on Guadalcanal. His special weapons unit underwent 170 air raids by the Japanese, and lots of shelling and fire attacks from Japanese ships. After the 4 month fight on Guadalcanal, he was then sent to Australia for some R & R. After further training back in the States, he shipped out for an assault on Iwo Jima in early 1945. He recalls the totality of bloody war that he witnessed on Iwo Jima. His reflection on this battle was that the whole island of Iwo Jima should have been made into a shrine in memory of both Japanese and American soldiers who suffered there. (approx. 2 hr. Interview date: June 27, 2002. VHP TAPES #46 & 47, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPGallantT (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**ANN GARDNER – see Ann (Gardner) Doyle.**

**TED M. GEORGE** served in the Army Signal Corps in Europe during World War II. He served in England, France, Belgium, Holland and Germany servicing and repairing aircraft radios. One noteworthy incident he describes is when he installed a system for a single bombardier to signal other bombardiers in a flight when to drop their bombs. A mission resulted in U.S. and British troops being bombed by allied forces. George was relieved to find out – only recently, by watching the History Channel – that the friendly fire was not a result of any work he had done. (approx. 50 min. Interview date: Jan. 20, 2004. VHP TAPE #191. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Charlie Smith.)

**DOROTHY GIBBS – see Dorothy (Gibbs) Dalton-McMahon.**

**JOE GIBSON** is a Vietnam veteran who served in the U.S. Army from April 1968 to September 1971. Orphaned by the age of 7, he was raised by his aunt and uncle in Charlotte, North Carolina. After high school, he toured and played the saxophone in bands that backed up several well-known rhythm-and-blues artists like Maurice Williams and the Zodiacs, the Four Tops, and Al Green. At the age of 20 he enlisted in the Army to avoid being drafted. In the summer of 1968, after basic and advanced training, he was sent to Vietnam. He was assigned to an outpost near the coastal town of Bahn San where he spent about 40 days working in the supply function, after which he was cross-trained to become a helicopter crewmember in an aviation unit that was flying combat support missions. He was assigned primarily to the Cobra gunship where his duties were to assist the pilot and to fire the mini-guns at enemy forces on the ground. In addition, he went on occasional ground combat patrols where he often came under enemy fire. During the course of the interview, he shares many rich anecdotal stories, and "tells it like it was." One of his most memorable accounts begins, "I remember the first time I ever had to kill someone [in combat]...". He tells about the impact the war has had on his life, and he concludes with a reflection upon his post-war experiences, including finding himself homeless for about two years and suffering from the effects of PTSD<sup>®</sup>. (approx. 2 ½ hrs. Interview date: July 22, 2003. VHP TAPES #181, 182 & 183. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson, with the assistance of Operation Stand Down.\*)

**PAUL E. GOMER** joined the Navy at the age of 17, in December 1941. He served aboard the battleship *U.S.S. Nevada* when it returned to the mainland for repairs after Pearl Harbor, and served as a shell-loader through the Aleutians campaign. Later, the ship was transferred to the Atlantic to provide convoy escorts to Ireland and England, and participated in shelling inland positions during the invasions of Normandy and Southern France. Later he was reassigned to service in the amphibious corps, and participated in cargo landings at Okinawa. In addition to providing accounts of his service in these campaigns, he also tells about humorous incidents during liberty at various ports, as well as more serious occurrences, such as teaching English to a young Japanese woman – who in turn, taught him Japanese; witnessing an Army man "go ape" and intentionally run over a Japanese policeman; and how two homosexual sailors were ostracized, given separate quarters and special duty – but allowed to remain in the service. (approx. 1 ½ hr. Interview date: Sept. 23, 2002. VHP TAPES #78 & 79, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel)

**MARGARET GOOCH – see Margaret (Gooch) Duffy.**

**THOMAS D. GRAVES** served with the Army Air Corps from 1942-1945. He wanted to be a pilot above all else, and enjoyed all of his pilot training, especially the advanced training for piloting the B-25 light bomber. En route to a base in

California, he left a slow-moving troop train in Winslow, Arizona, hopped a Navy flight from a nearby deserted airfield, and arrived at his destination in California hours before his train-bound buddies. After training, he served overseas from 1944-1945. He flew 65 missions in bombing raids on Japanese military targets in Burma and in west China, using a small town in India as his base of operation. Tom and a fellow B-25 pilot conducted a low-flying mission in Burma, where they used all of their bomb load and their fire power to destroy a Japanese ammunition dump. The fire and smoke were like a giant mushroom cloud, and instantly he knew his mission was successful. It gave him such great pleasure and satisfaction to finish this bombing raid with good results, and with no damage whatever to his plane, or that of his buddy pilot. (approx. 1 ½ hrs. Interview date: Dec. 9, 2002. VHP TAPES #111, #112. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**DWIGHT GRAY** served in the Air Force during the Persian Gulf War, primarily as a fire direction specialist on the ground calling in bombing runs. This often put him quite close to both enemy and friendly fire. He was hit by shrapnel from friendly fire, was in a coma for 7 weeks, and could remember nothing when he awoke. He did not even recognize his own mother. He had to rely on the doctors and nursing staff to "prompt" him on his visitors' names, and their relationship to him. He tells in great detail about his injury and his long road to recovery. He received a medical discharge, and despite his problems with memory loss, he nevertheless tells about many aspects of service during the Gulf War, including battling the heat and sand, the threat of chemical or gas attacks, and the overall nature of the conflict. He also draws comparisons between the Persian Gulf War (Operations Desert Storm & Desert Shield) and the Iraq War (Operations Iraqi Freedom & Enduring Freedom) which was ongoing at the time of this interview. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Nov. 20, 2004. VHP TAPE #307, index available. Also available in digital format: VHPGrayD (MP3 file). Interviewers: Abigail Ruthie Hill and Ashley Stevens, Lipscomb University students. Interview was conducted on November 20, 2004 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\* )

**OLIVE (BILBY) GREENWOOD** was born in Terre Haute, Indiana. She moved around a bit as a child but eventually settled in Michigan. She attended the University of Michigan where she obtained a degree in Liberal Arts. Olive always wanted to be an actress and pursued theater and any acting position that became available. She moved to Florida to be with her sister when the World War II began, where she worked for a doctor. She decided to join the Red Cross after she heard a radio advertisement looking for women with a college degree, who were at least 25. She had thought about joining the armed services, but they wouldn't send her abroad (and she didn't like some of the uniforms). When she joined the Red Cross, she was required to submit a letter of recommendation. One of them was from her camp director who Olive is sure wrote quite a bit about how much she loved camping and the outdoors. She believes this is the reason she ended up serving in Burma and not at a cashier

locale. While in Burma, Olive worked at the Red Cross canteen in Ledo for a month before moving on to a more remote location. She remained in a town on the Burma Road for about 10 months before being recalled to India. While in India, she took an R&R trip to Kashmir with her future husband. When she returned, she was reassigned to another remote location in Burma. Her future husband was to be sent off to Japan and he asked her to marry him. She agreed but was forced to resign from the Red Cross. He asked permission from the theater chief and they were married in India. She was sent home on the first transport and while on board, they received news that the Japanese had surrendered. Her husband was on the next ship home and they moved to his hometown of Nashville, Tennessee. She has lived here ever since, working as a school teacher primarily for deaf and hard of hearing students in the Metro School District. (approx. 1 hr. 15 min. Interview date: Aug. 12, 2004. VHP TAPE #264 & 265. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Evviva Weinraub.) RESTRICTED: Copyright retained by Olive Greenwood until Jan. 1, 2020 or the time of her death. Mrs. Greenwood passed away on Feb. 4, 2012; copyright has passed to the Nashville Public Library.

**CHARLES W. GRIFFIN JR.** joined the Marine Corps Reserve in Nashville in 1948 and was sent to active duty in Korea in 1950, where he served with Easy Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> Marines, in which a number of Nashvillians served. Although he did not go to boot camp, he felt confident in his training. He participated in the landings at Inchon and the push inland. His company held Hill 1282 at the Chosin Reservoir for three days before they were relieved, taking losses nearing 75%. Griffin tells numerous anecdotes about the men he served with, as well as comments about the supply situation and the weather. He was wounded twice within a month, the second wound requiring evacuation. In addition to his combat experiences, Griffin talks briefly about the integration of the Armed Forces, fighting alongside Turks and New Zealanders, and the fighting qualities of the North Koreans and Chinese. (approx. 1 hour, 45 min. Interview date: Aug. 8, 2002. VHP TAPES #59, #60. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**MANY-BEARS GRINDER** began her career with the National Guard as a civilian clerk typist in California in the 1970s. Not long thereafter, she joined the Guard, went through basic training, and was among the first women to serve after the Womens Army Corps had been discontinued due to gender integration. She later became an officer and rose through the ranks, eventually holding the rank of Colonel in the Tennessee National Guard. She was in the process of being promoted to general when governor-elect Bill Haslam offered her the position of State Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, which she accepted. Within a single week she went from preparing to be the first woman general in the state National Guard to becoming the first woman commissioner of veterans affairs, and attending Governor Haslam's inauguration. The early part of her military career

was spent in the California National Guard, where she performed a variety of duties in personnel, finance and other types of desk jobs, which at the time were considered suitable and traditional work for women. She wanted a challenge, and she specifically sought out jobs throughout her career that would stretch people's ideas about what women could do. She became an officer, and joined the Tennessee National Guard with a unit from Knoxville. She was the only woman in that unit, and although at first some of the men were skeptical, they soon saw her abilities and her leadership by example and came to respect her. After a short time, she transferred to the National Guard headquarters in Nashville, holding the position of comptroller and then personnel officer – a duty which involved, in part, notification of families when there had been a fatality. While there, she worked with a young woman named Billie 'Jean Smith, who would become her future daughter-in-law. In 2007, now a colonel, Grinder volunteered to serve in Afghanistan in a new position as the Head of Secretariat, International Police Coordination Board. In this position, she helped establish consistency in training and equipment for the Afghan police, which were supported by many different coalition nations, resulting in widely varying practices and equipment. In addition, she coordinated training of female Afghan police, who often were viewed by their male counterparts as janitors and cooks, until they needed the women to assist with searching and/or arresting female suspects. Grinder was responsible for the development of the first Islamic Policewomen's Conference, which brought in women from 19 Muslim countries around the world for training, networking, and camaraderie. In her daily work, Grinder often found herself the only American, only military member and only woman in her area, and she worked extensively with the male-dominated Afghan police. Asked how she was able to perform her duties in meeting with and talking to these men, given their view of women's place in society, Grinder replied that she was "seen as an honorary male" because she was from the West and because of her duties. After a year in Afghanistan, she returned to National Guard headquarters in Nashville. Her son, Sam, and his wife, Billie 'Jean, both helicopter pilots with the Tennessee National Guard, were sent to Iraq in 2009. In early 2010, Sam had already returned home, and Billie 'Jean was to follow just a few weeks later. Just two weeks before she was due to return home, she was killed in a helicopter crash in Iraq. Many-Bears tells this story with deep sadness and emotion, emphasizing the cost that is borne by those in the military, and their families. Many-Bears knows what it means to be a military family; her father served during World War II; her brother and her husband served in Vietnam; her son and daughter-in-law were in Iraq; and she herself was in Afghanistan. Her many experiences, both within the military through her own career, as well as in her family roles as daughter, sister, spouse, mother, and grieving family member, give her a unique perspective on veterans and their families, and the issues they face not only during wartime or active duty, but also throughout their lives. She speaks deeply of this commitment at a personal level, but also advises everyone to recognize and honor the sacrifices of so many. It is this commitment and passion which she brings to her current position as State Commissioner of Veterans Affairs. (approx. 3 hrs. Interview date: Dec. 20, 2012. Digital recording: VHPGrinderMB



(MP3 file). Index available. Transcript #558 - extracts from portions of tracks 29-32 which are difficult to hear, partial transcript. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**H. P. "JACK" GUNTER** was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1951 when he was working at the *Nashville Banner* newspaper as a photographer. Initially he was assigned to a medical unit, but through the aid of Congressman J. Percy Priest, he was reassigned as a photographer with the Public Information Office Section, Headquarters, 45<sup>th</sup> Division. He spent 9 months in Japan, where his photographs were featured in the *45<sup>th</sup> Division News* and distributed to wire services. When the 45<sup>th</sup> Division entered Korea, Gunter was on the frontlines and routinely under fire, documenting his division in combat. In addition to numerous anecdotes about his service, ranging from humorous stories to descriptions of Korean children at work in an American press office, Gunter also tells briefly about his involvement after the war in covering the Civil Rights movement as a *Banner* photographer, including the speech of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at Fisk University which was interrupted by a bomb threat. (approx. 1 hr. 15 min. Interview date: Feb. 26, 2003. VHP TAPES #130, #131. Transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPGunterH (MP3 file). Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**JAMES H. H.---** is a Vietnam-era veteran who served in the U.S. Army from July, 1968 to December, 1971. He was born in Nashville, but was sent to Cincinnati at an early age to be raised by a great aunt who lived there. After graduating high school, he enlisted in the Army. After basic training, he was assigned to Ft. Sam Houston, Texas to attend medical corpsman school, and then shipped out for Vietnam in January of 1969. He was first assigned to a medical resupply/replacement unit and then eventually to the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division at a fire support base about 10 miles north of Lai Khe, near Saigon. Some fellow medics told him that the average life expectancy of a medic in Vietnam was 17 days. He tells about being critically injured just five weeks after he arrived in country, when the medical armored personnel carrier (APC) on which he was riding drove over a Viet Cong booby-trap. It threw him almost 100 feet from the wreckage of the APC. He tells about the hospital at Cam Rahn Bay where he didn't regain full consciousness until almost nine days later. After spending about two months recovering from his injuries, he was returned to service in Vietnam, because the Army said he was in a critical specialty field. In total, he spent approximately one year in Vietnam and in January of 1970 he was reassigned to Ft. Bragg, North Carolina for the remainder of his military tour of duty. It was at Ft. Bragg that he said he got involved in using drugs—having started with the recreational use of marijuana and then eventually moving into the use of heroin. He also tells about his post-war life which includes: frequent relapsing bouts with drugs, his experience of being homeless for almost six years and how he became disillusioned with the concept of war and became desensitized to the concept of death as a result of his experience in Vietnam. (approx. 1 hour, 45 min. Interview date: Sept. 10, 2003. VHP TAPES #192 & 193. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer:

Larry Patterson, with the assistance of Operation Stand Down.\*) RESTRICTED: Interviewee identified by first name, middle and last initials only. Restriction expires Jan. 1, 2019.

**MELVIN EUGENE HACKER**, a California native, joined the U.S. Navy underage with his parents' permission in March, 1943, serving as a radar operator aboard the U.S.S. Zeilin and the U.S.S. Warren in the Pacific Theater of World War II. His ships brought troops, armament, and supplies to such major Pacific battles as Tarawa, Guadalcanal, and Iwo Jima, and later brought American occupation forces into Japan. The Zeilin was damaged by kamikaze attack in March 1945. Mr. Hacker moved to Nashville after the war to work for Northern Telecom. (approx. 1 ½ hours. Interview date: Oct. 22, 2002. VHP TAPES #98, #99, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Ronnie Pugh.)

**CHARLES EDWARD HAILEY** was only 15 at the onset of World War II. He felt it was his duty to enter military service, so he took -- and passed -- exams for the Navy Air Corps. He was on their extensive wait list (being under 18) until being drafted into the U. S. Navy in 1944. The Nashville native was sent to Boot Camp at Great Lakes, Illinois, and assigned to the battlecruiser *USS Alaska*, in the Pacific Ocean. The *USS Alaska* was one of the newest ships in the Navy, having been requested by President Roosevelt, and boasted the heaviest anti-aircraft concentration of any ship in the Navy at the time. The *USS Alaska* was part of Pacific Operation #CB-1 and a member of Task Force 58.5, which went straight into battle at Iwo Jima. At the rank of Deck Seaman -- "the lowest of the low" -- Hailey was first loader on the front left 40mm gun battery. Having "never seen a boat bigger than those on the Cumberland River", Hailey's first time under fire meant he manned his battle station 24 hours a day for 3-4 days. The *USS Alaska* also participated in the invasion of Okinawa, where it was instrumental in the recovery and towing of the battleship *USS Franklin* which had been hit by kamikaze attacks. Hailey's crew was credited with downing five kamikaze planes during Iwo Jima and Okinawa. After Okinawa, the ship began readying for the invasion of Japan when an announcement came over the PA that the atomic bomb had been dropped. Hailey feels that invading Japan would have meant very brutal battles. After coming home, Hailey had four things on his mind: an education at Vanderbilt University, a career as an engineer, meeting a wife, and starting a family. He met his wife Ceacy (who is also the interviewer) while on an engineering job in Mobile, Alabama, and spent 36 years as an engineer. He strongly supports today's military actions and sees his World War II experiences as "part of the price of freedom". (approx. 45 min. Interview date: October 24, 2003. VHP Tape #376, index. Interviewer: Ceacy Henderson Hailey (wife). Note: Copyright retained by donor. Nashville Public Library did not conduct this interview.)

**ARTHUR A. HALL JR.** was born and raised in Nashville, Tennessee. He joined the Navy at age 24, just after Pearl Harbor. He served in the Pacific aboard the *U.S.S. Bowers* (DE 637) as a mechanic. He describes his experience serving in the engine room when the ship was struck by a kamikaze at Okinawa. Nearly half of the *Bowers'* crew was killed or wounded. Hall mentions several of his shipmates by name, and tells of their fate. Ironically, just ten days prior to the attack, Hall's battle station was changed from the port quarterdeck gun to the engine room. This change in duty saved his life. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: July 2, 2002. VHP TAPE 48, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**BLANTON HALL** served two tours of duty in Vietnam, from 1963 to 1968. He was in many firefights, and says the hardest part was seeing his comrades killed and being helpless to prevent their deaths. He became very angry as a result of his experiences. He was wounded during his second tour of duty, and received a medical discharge with disability. Upon his return, he had difficulty readjusting to civilian life, suffering from flashbacks and PTSD<sup>o</sup>, and used drugs to cope. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Nov. 1, 2003. VHP TAPE 201. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Richard Randolph. Interview was conducted on November 1, 2003 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**JAMES LEO HARPER** served in the Navy during World War II from June 1943 to April 1946. He was raised in Nashville, attending first two years of high school in Nashville and finishing his last two years at Columbia Military Academy. After graduation, he chose to enlist in the Navy rather than get drafted. After induction, he was sent to Georgia Tech for Officer's School but said he didn't like the experience so he failed out of it on purpose so he could get into regular service. He attended basic training and radio school in Bainbridge, Maryland. He was then offered the opportunity to volunteer for the Submarine Service. It appealed to him because he would receive hazardous duty pay. He attended submarine school and advanced radio training at New London, Connecticut and sonar school in San Diego, California. He tells about some of his experiences during submarine school, including the Navy's efforts to detect and weed out persons who had claustrophobia. He also tells about training with a Momsen lung. By late 1944, he completed all of his schooling and was assigned to active duty aboard the sub-tender, *Tampinato* in Guam. In early August 1945 he got the opportunity to move from his position as relief crewmember to that of replacement crewmember aboard an active duty submarine, the *Pintado*. His active duty time turned out to be relatively short, however, because the sub left Guam for war patrol on August 7th and on the eighth day out, they received word that Japan had surrendered and the war had ended. For the remainder of the interview, he talked about his post-military life from discharge up to the pre-sent day—focusing primarily on his many successful years and activities in the field of real estate appraisal. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: November 15, 2011. Digital recording:

VPHarperJ (MP3 file). Index available (filed with transcripts, #550). Interviewer: Larry Patterson).

**JAMES G. "JIM" HARRIS** describes his training for serving in the 70<sup>th</sup> Tank Battalion of the US Army, first at Fort Knox, and then for two years fighting with that battalion in Korea, in 1950 and 1951. He left Korea in July 1951 as a staff sergeant tank commander, and returned to the States, where he continued giving tank training at Fort Knox, until he was discharged in July 1952. In the fall of 1950, he was an M-26 tank driver, fighting the North Koreans in an area north of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel, near Kumchong. His tank, and others in his battalion, fired on the enemy T-34 tanks, shooting the turret out of one tank and demolishing two others. Following that fire-fight, his tank battalion came out into a valley, facing five enemy tanks; they picked off all five of them; knocking their turrets off. His unit lost none of their tanks, and over all they knocked out seven of the enemy tanks in one day, which up to that time was an Army record. After the Chinese entered the war, many of the US troops posted near the Yalu River were overrun, and Jim Harris saw many of his buddies killed. His unit quickly headed back south, being forced to leave their tanks behind, and proceeding on foot. He describes his tank battles in the winter of 1950-51, when enemy bazookas fired on his tanks. Enemy fire hit the tank turret right in front of Harris's, and the shrapnel hit him. He returned to the aid station, was patched up quickly, and returned to action. Following that episode, he was tempted to stay in Korea, being promised a promotion to a master sergeant, but he said he had had enough, and decided to go home. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Aug. 11, 2003. VHP TAPES 186 & 187, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**TOM C. HARRISON** grew up in Nashville, Tennessee. On December 8, 1941 he joined the Navy, but was turned down for naval aviation when a physical exam indicated he had limited peripheral vision. Upon the advice of a naval officer, he crossed the street to the Army physical examination site, and they enlisted him into the Army Air Corps on the spot, although Harrison knew he would be confined to service on the ground. He tells about training he received in armament and bomb sight maintenance, mostly for the B-24. He was posted overseas as part of the 385<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group which flew B-17s, where he was responsible for armament maintenance and supply. While stationed in Britain, he helped invent an electronic device which would prevent accidental shootings of wings and tails on their own plane by door gunners who were concentrating exclusively on shooting down the enemy. (approx. 80 min. Interview date: July 8, 2002. VHP TAPES #49 & 50, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**WYETH "SLIM" HARTWELL** served in the Marine Corps during World War II from August 1943 to February 1946 and during the Korean War in the Army from September 1950 to October 1951. On the first tape of this interview, he talks primarily about his experiences during WWII and on the second tape, he talks

primarily about his Korean War experience. He grew up mostly in rural Arkansas and near Little Rock. At the age of 18, he volunteered for the Marines. After basic training, he was initially assigned to communications school in San Diego but was later transferred to Camp Pendleton for training to become a radio operator and an amphibious tractor unit driver. In April of 1944, at the completion of LVT training, he was assigned to the South Pacific theater of operations where he was initially based in the rear echelon area as a clerk during the time of the invasion of Saipan in the Marianna Island chain. Not being content with being stationed in a rearward area, he asked to be reassigned to a forward combat area. He tells about his service as a radio operator and assistant driver on an LVT during the initial assault on Iwo Jima, transporting troops to the beaches on the first day's assault. He also tells about the time he spent on the beach area while the battle continued to rage farther inland. He spent approximately 30 days on the island, after which he was eventually assigned to Hawaii to do repair work until the end of the war. He returned to civilian life, got married, worked as a printing instructor in a junior high school in Ft. Smith, Arkansas, when he joined the Army reserve to supplement his income. In the summer of 1950, as war broke out in Korea, he was ordered to active duty and sent to Ft. Hood, Texas for two weeks of indoctrination training. He was quickly shipped overseas, where he was assigned to an artillery unit based approximately 35 miles southeast of Seoul. He tells about his unit's involvement in the defense of Seoul, and describes artillery battles his unit was involved in when the UN forces were in the process of trying to push the North Koreans back up across the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: June 4, 2003. VHP TAPES #159 & 160, transcript. Also available in digital format: VPHartwellW (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**WILLIAM M. HARVEY** is a Vietnam veteran who served in the U.S. Army from 1963 to 1967. Prior to his Army service, he served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1958 to 1962. He grew up in Jackson, Mississippi and moved to Atlanta, Georgia where he attended high school. He left high school at the age of 17 and enlisted in the Marine Corps. He served a brief tour in Okinawa and while there, went through Reconnaissance training. Upon discharge from the Marine Corps, he returned to civilian life for a year, but in 1963, he decided to enlist in the Army. Following completion of jump school at Ft. Benning, Georgia he went to Ft. Bragg, North Carolina to attend Special Warfare School. This enabled him to become a member of a Special Forces team (also referred to as a "Green Beret"). After then completing an additional two years of training, he received orders in 1966 to go to Vietnam. In Vietnam, he said his Special Forces team's primary mission was to support and train the South Vietnamese Special Forces troops—not to directly engage the enemy themselves. He shares a number of anecdotal stories, among which were his story about how he and his fellow team members always dressed in black pajamas while in the field (as the Viet Cong did) so that the Viet Cong would not recognize that they were American soldiers. He also tells about a time when his team was out on a mission in the Central Highlands and spotted a group of Viet Cong who also saw his group, with the

result that, “nothing happened!” Near the end of his tour in 1967, he was hospitalized for hepatitis and was discharged from both the hospital and the service. His conversation concludes with stories about what he experienced after his discharge from the military, including developing throat cancer which has left him with only one remaining vocal chord. The cancer is attributed to exposure to Agent Orange during the war. He described the general nature of his Vietnam experience as, “Wine, women, machine guns, drugs, and you were the law!” He also shares his belief that America was not trying to truly win the war, and tells about avoiding making friends while overseas, because they might be killed. Finally, he describes the overall impact the Vietnam experience had on him: “It probably destroyed my life. You become different. It makes you different [and] there’s no rehabilitation in the military [to help you adjust to the return to civilian life].” (approx. 2 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Apr. 5, 2007. Digital recording: VPHarveyW (MP3 file). Transcript #507. Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**THOMAS LARRY “PAPPY” HASTINGS**, a native of Cornersville and Lewisburg, Tennessee, served with the Air Force from 1964 to 1973. He tells about basic training in Texas and advanced training with a security squadron. He had brief tours of duty stateside, most notably at a Strategic Air Command Base in Omaha, Nebraska, however his major tour of duty was in Vietnam at the Ton Su Net airbase. He had no direct experience of combat, but served in a security setting, administering the affairs of Air Force units in Vietnam. The airbase was located near Saigon and his duties there were pleasant. However, there were some close calls when ill-prepared Vietnamese pilots made mistakes when taking off and landing their aircraft, including some near misses with heavier aircraft such as 747s, C-5s and C-130s. He returned to the U.S. in 1972, when he joined the Air National Guard. Around 1990, in a civilian job with a pencil company near Lewisburg, he was injured, and this sparked his involvement with the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), a group in which he remains very involved. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Oct. 15, 2005. VHP TAPE #329. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson. Interview was conducted on October 15, 2005 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down,\* where Hastings was working as a volunteer with Disabled American Veterans.)

**HORACE BENSON HATCHER** an African American veteran of the Vietnam war who was homeless at the time of this interview, describes his experience in Vietnam as fighting two enemies: 1) racism as an African American experienced it in the US military system; and 2) communism in the embodiment of the North Vietnamese enemy. He tells about his service in Vietnam, serving as part of support troops who would go in to combat zones to assist troops already engaged by the enemy. He tells of the loss of two of his childhood and high school classmates during the war; the experience of coming under fire for the first time, when he let his guard down for just a moment, as he was fascinated and distracted by looking at a rubber tree; and the adrenaline rush of combat. However, one of the most dramatic episodes he discusses relates to his post-war

experience in prison in Williamson County. He was caught shoplifting. For this act he was charged and then convicted for a felony, rather than a misdemeanor, which he felt was a miscarriage of justice. He spent 6 to 9 months in a Williamson County prison, where he suffered greatly from the constant noise of explosions in an adjacent rock quarry. Already suffering from PTSD\* from his wartime experiences, the nearby blasting made his situation unbearable. His repeated requests to be relocated were denied. This experience naturally alienated him from the prison and justice system, and he articulates a curious irony: what he sees as a brutal act of injustice that was perpetrated upon him by those who were responsible for maintaining and upholding the system of justice. During the course of the interview, he came to the conclusion that his search for human dignity and freedom from the alienation that he feels from his work, home, family and himself must begin now, and he expresses a desire to obtain professional counseling and therapy in order to begin the healing process. A portion of the interview includes Mr. Hatcher reading from a short autobiography. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Nov. 20, 2004. VHP TAPE #305, index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson. Interview was conducted on November 20, 2004 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\* Note: Due to a recording error, approximately 30 minutes of the interview was never recorded, immediately following the conclusion of Side A of the tape. Side B begins when the recording error was noticed, approximately 1 hour after the interview began.)

**JAMES COWAN HAVRON** was 34 years old when he joined the Army in 1942, and recruited 50 other men at that time to make up an ordnance unit. After basic training in New Jersey and California, Havron and his unit shipped to the Aleutian Islands, where he was stationed throughout the war and rose from First Lt. to Lt. Colonel. He remained on active duty until 1949, when he returned to his law practice. (approx. 1 hr. 20 min. Interview date: Sept. 16, 2002. VHP TAPES #74 & 75, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Frank Rickey.)

**SAMUEL M. HAYDEN** served during World War II as a clerk-typist in the 323<sup>rd</sup> Ordnance Ammunition Company in the U.S. Army, with his highest rank being staff sergeant. He talks about performing office duties for his company, in the U.S., France, the Philippines, and finally in Japan. He was never involved in combat with the enemy, but faithfully performed his duties as chief clerk within his company. He had clerical skills from his education before entering the army, and these he used regularly and faithfully wherever the Army sent him. He was proud of the medals and ribbons he received, particularly the Philippine Liberation ribbon with one bronze star, and his Good Conduct Medal. (approx. 50 min. Interview date: Feb. 2, 2004. VHP TAPE #199. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**E. WALLACE HAYNES** grew up near Ripley, Tennessee and lost his father at the start of the Depression. He tells of the hardship of farmers during that time. In

this emotional interview, he tells of the circumstances which motivated him to enlist in 1942, and he describes his experience of being aboard the U.S.S. John Penn when it was sunk off the coast of Guadalcanal in August 1943. Not long thereafter, he was aboard the U.S.S. President Jackson when it was hit by a 500-pound bomb, which failed to explode. Haynes was just 25 feet away. He witnessed the first flag-raising on Iwo Jima, and was then sent stateside, where he and other sailors battled forest fires in Idaho. (approx. 1 hr. 20 min. Interview date: June 27, 2002. VHP TAPE #44 & 45, transcript. Also available in digital format: VPHHaynesE (MP3 file). Interviewer: Linda Barnickel)

**JOHN BERNICE "J. B." HENDERSON** served as a pilot in the U.S. Navy during World War II from March 1942 to May 1946. He "got his wings" on November 17, 1943, and married a few days after. He shares his opinion about the enemy and his fighting capability, as well as enemy propaganda, like the Tokyo Rose radio broadcasts. He discusses his reactions to concentration camps, the dropping of the atom bomb, and VE and VJ Days. After the war, he returns home to the family farm, and though he is offered jobs in the airline industry, including pilot and air traffic controller, he doesn't want to leave the farm. He keeps his connection to flying through twenty years in the reserves. At the end of the interview he shares a few stories about some close calls, both during and after the war. He also tells briefly of "buzzing" construction workers on I-40 between Memphis and Nashville. He is very passionate about America's role in the world today, and the need to fight for freedom, especially in light of the September 11, 2001 attacks. (approx. 40 min. Interview date: November 8, 2003. VHP TAPE #377, index. Interviewer: Ceacy Henderson Hailey (sister). Note: Copyright retained by donor. Nashville Public Library did not conduct this interview.)

**AUDREY (DUFFIELD) HENRY** grew up near Jenny Lind, Arkansas and tells about life on the World War II homefront as a schoolgirl, including scrap drives, rationing, and watching tanks from nearby Fort Chaffee drive down the road. Her family moved to Oak Ridge, Tennessee, the "Secret City" where work on the Manhattan Project was underway. Her father was a grocer, and she tells about the intense security, even for those families not directly involved in the manufacture of the atom bomb. She also talks about what it was like to come to a community which was still just being established. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Mar. 4, 2002. VHP TAPE # 3, transcript. Also available in digital format: VPHHenryA (MP3 file). Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**DONALD D. HENRY** served as a quartermaster in the Navy from 1952 to 1960, including the Korean Conflict. He served in the Pacific and also Japan. He witnessed the atomic test on Kwajalein atoll, ran in supplies and brought out bodies from Korea, and performed sea rescue in the Aleutians. (approx. 30 min. Interview date: Aug. 28, 2004. VHP TAPE #276, index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Charlie Smith.)



**JOHN JAMES “JIM” HENRY** was a teenager in Florida during World War II and served as a radar repairman in the Marine Corps during the Korean Conflict. He tells of his father’s service during World War I; his own service in the Civil Air Patrol during World War II, including spotting an enemy submarine off the Florida coast; and training Marines for radar repair work during the Korean War. (approx. 20 min. Interview date: Mar. 4, 2002. VHP TAPE #4, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**LUKE ROBERT HERBST**, in this first interview, tells about his early military career beginning in high school, his first tour in Iraq, and his struggles and recovery from PTSD. Luke joined the Wisconsin National Guard early in 2001 during his junior year in high school, at age 17. He had already received basic training prior to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, though he did not complete his senior year of high school until later that fall. He had received Advanced Individual Training as a cook, but after 9/11 he decided to join the regular Army, feeling that he could better serve his country in some other capacity. He attended Artillery School at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, where he trained to become a forward observer. He was then sent to Ft. Hood, Texas, where he was assigned to the First Battalion, 82<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery Regiment, (1-82), 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division. His forward observer duties meant that he was routinely attached to other units, so he worked mostly with C Troop of the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment. He was deployed in early 2004, first to Kuwait, and then to Baghdad. Within two weeks, while performing routine but dangerous patrols along Route Pluto in the Sadr City section of Baghdad, Luke and C Troop had already suffered two major attacks, including the attacks of April 4, 2004, known as "Black Sunday." His unit had numerous men wounded and two men died. One death, in particular, affected Herbst deeply – that of his roommate and close friend, Justin Johnson on April 10, 2004. From then on, he said, "I just assumed I was going to die." Luke tells of these events and numerous other attacks – mostly IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices) and provides glimpses into the grim reality of combat: a truck returning to base with blood literally dripping from its bed; nonchalantly continuing to eat in the chow hall while under a mortar attack; and a chaplain who recommends making jokes about their losses as a means of coping.

As attacks along Route Pluto and elsewhere in their area of operations increased, it was determined that additional snipers were needed to deter enemy lookouts and insurgents. Although Luke had not received formal training in Sniper School, because he was an Expert Marksman, he was placed into service as a sniper, and most of his OIF-2 tour was spent in this capacity. He tells about a few of these events as well, including one mission where he was serving as spotter in a team of two, providing guidance to his teammate who was doing the actual shooting. They found their target – two men on a moped – and took them out, but Luke still feels, in his words, "haunted" by this event, concerned that they may have been innocent people. Skipping forward some years to when he left the military in 2009, Luke tells about some of his struggles with PTSD, difficulties with some treatments, including adverse reactions he had to various medications

prescribed for it, and the success of group therapy through the VA Hospital in helping him to overcome it. (approx. 2 hr. 30 min. Interview date: May 6, 2014. Digital recording: VPHHerbstL1 (MP3 file). Interviewer: Linda Barnickel)

In this second interview, Luke Herbst picks up his story from his discharge from the Army in 2005, after his first tour in Iraq. He returned to Wisconsin and quickly entered college, with the urging and support of one of his Army buddies who also had just been discharged. Luke's plans included joining ROTC, completing college, and returning to the Army as an officer. All of these plans were suddenly derailed, however, within two months of his beginning school. Problems with paperwork at the university relating to his GI Bill benefits placed Luke under extreme financial hardship. In desperation, he joined the Wisconsin National Guard, which offered a lucrative signing bonus. He specifically chose the unit to join based on the fact that it had just returned from a deployment, and therefore, was not expected to have another deployment anytime soon. But Luke was soon called up anyway, to serve in a different WNG unit, which was being deployed. His classes had hardly begun.

As part of Headquarters Headquarters Battery 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the 120<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, Luke was first sent to Camp Shelby in Mississippi, just in time for the hot and muggy season. His commander made them wear full body armor, even when not performing training missions, in a misguided and uneducated attempt to help them get acclimated to the desert. As an experienced veteran, Luke felt this was an unnecessary and foolish measure, because in Iraq, body armor was never worn while on base. Luke found his experiences with the WNG very different from his Army experiences, and it took him some time to adjust. After several months of training, they were sent to Iraq. Now a sergeant, Luke's missions involved serving as a convoy leader, in charge of three Humvees which escorted truck convoys of supplies to various bases all over Iraq. As a result, he saw most of the country, and observed its diverse peoples and terrain, as well as the wide variety of living conditions on various Army bases. He tells about his experiences working with independent government contractors with KBR (Kellogg Brown & Root) who were involved in supply distribution, and the difficulty, stress, and pride of responsibility of safely running convoys through hostile territory. Luke also tells many details about daily life, living conditions, morale, and diversity within the military (including having a staff sergeant who was Muslim, and serving with an openly gay man in the era of "don't ask, don't tell").

After his tour, Luke again returned to Wisconsin and entered college. At this time, he had begun to experience symptoms of PTSD and was seeking medical treatment, which involved taking a variety of pills. Shortly after his return from Iraq, his original WNG unit got called up in what appeared to be a repeat of earlier events. During his medical assessment prior to what would have been his third deployment in four years, he was deemed medically unfit and he received a medical discharge. His plans for a future career as an Army officer evaporated. He was able to remain in school to study anthropology, an interest that had developed as a result of his experiences overseas. Meanwhile, he continued to

medicate his symptoms of PTSD, finally deciding to quit all medications he was on. He got involved in group therapy at the VA, and this began his healing process.

Throughout this interview, Luke shares details of his many experiences during his two deployments, as well as what it was like to be a veteran returning home, trying to adapt to a life outside the military. Other subjects he speaks about briefly include: the effect of the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal on morale and operations; his opinion of the anti-war protests of Cindy Sheehan, whose son, Casey, a member of Luke's unit, had been killed on "Black Sunday;" the role of religion in the war, which was minimal, compared to the way the war was portrayed at home; and numerous anecdotes about military and civilian life. (approx. 2 hr. 15 min. Interview date: July 22, 2014. Digital recording: VPHHerbstL2 (MP3 file). Interviewer: Linda Barnickel)

**MARY KATHERYN HERRON-COLE** is a native Nashvillian who attended Pearl High School and Tennessee State University, and who served in the Women's Army Corps for about one year starting in 1954 and in the Army Reserves for a very brief period in 1974. She tells about her pride and knowledge in her work at Fort Dix, New Jersey, where she was an OR nurse, sterilizing and preparing the operating room and cleaning up after operations. Although she had studied nursing for one year at Tennessee State University prior to her enlistment, she says that her work at Fort Dix seemed to be viewed by the doctors as "a maid." She was discharged without explanation when she returned to Fort Dix after a leave when she went to visit her boyfriend, who was also in the service, stationed in Georgia. They spontaneously decided to get married during her visit, and shortly after that, she was discharged. She does not know if her leave or her marriage may have been the reason. In addition, by this time she had been promoted to corporal, but the Army had no record of this promotion at the time of her discharge. She speaks numerous times about her family, including her grandparents - a doctor and a nurse - who inspired her to go to nursing school; her parents including her father who was Canadian-American and ran Complete Shoe Service shop in Nashville; and her children, including one daughter who served in the Navy. She also mentions throughout the interview, the devastating impact that the loss of her "service connected" check had upon her life. She does not know why it was reduced, then eliminated, after having received it consistently for eleven years. She lost this check in the late 1980s and believes this loss of income led in part to the deaths of her parents and her sister - because she was not able to provide and care for them as she would have liked. She also tells about how it had a negative impact upon her own family - how at times she had difficulty feeding her children due to this loss of income. She talks about living at the Women and Children's Shelter in 2000 and how she has often had to move every year, or several times a year. At the time of this interview, at the age of 76, she had returned to school at TSU to study non-profit work, hoping in part to pay back some of those organizations who had helped her. She also briefly talks about her work as a temporary laborer, spending 12 hours a day on

her hands and knees, helping to pull out damaged carpet at the Opryland Hotel after the devastating floods of May 2010. Although she does not speak in great detail about her time in the military, she does tell about the importance of her service connected check and what its loss has meant to her in her life. Her story is interspersed with numerous anecdotes about health issues, family, cars, and other subjects not directly related to her military experience. (approx. 1 hr. 15 min. Interview date: November 19, 2010. Digital recording: VPHerron-ColeM (MP3 file). Index available (filed with transcripts, #545). Interviewer: Linda Barnickel)

**ANN STAHLMAN HILL** is the daughter of *Nashville Banner* publisher, James Stahlman, and she tells briefly about growing up in Nashville, and her father's connections to many prominent people. One event Mrs. Hill particularly recalls is a time when Admiral Byrd came to visit and stayed at the Stahlman home, because her father was aiding Byrd in raising funds for his polar expedition. Through her father's influence, Ann and her sister had the honor of christening the cruiser, *USS Nashville* – the first time two individuals were allowed to christen a ship. Ann attended Ward-Belmont in high school, and then went to Vanderbilt University where she majored in English. Through a special program, she was allowed to continue her education through graduation, and then entered the WAVES in the Navy. She was sent to the East Coast for her initial training, learned coding, and then was assigned to duty in New Orleans, where she worked in a small office which delivered coded messages to ships. She describes her life and duties in New Orleans, and mentions attending Mardi Gras after the war ended. She returned to Nashville, married, and was instrumental in founding the Nashville Children's Theatre. In the second half of the interview, she shares many memories about her work with the theatre, which garnered international acclaim. She was also active in an organization known as ASSITEJ, the International Association of Theater for Children and Young People, holding several offices. She tells about several productions, including *Prayers from the Ark*, *Really Rosie*, and *Dinner at Belmont*. She also mentions how the process of school integration affected Nashville Children's Theatre, and the stand the theatre took to ensure that African-Americans received equal treatment at hotels and other accommodations used by the theatre. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Dec. 15, 2009. Transcript #541. Digital recording: VPHillAS (MP3 file). Interviewers: Linda Barnickel and James Tyre Havron, Jr).

**JULIUS CHARLES HILL** is an African-American Vietnam-era veteran who served in the U.S. Army from November 1970 to June 1972. A native Nashvillian, he graduated from Tennessee State University in June of 1970 and a few months later, was drafted into the Army. After basic training at Ft. Campbell, Kentucky, he was sent directly to his first duty station at Ireland Army Hospital at Ft. Knox, Kentucky. He was sent here instead of receiving additional military training because he had worked in the Medical Records section at Vanderbilt Hospital during his last two years of college and this experience gave him what the military described as "civilian-acquired skills." At Ft. Knox, he was assigned to the

Erroneous Induction Board which was designed to weed out people who were not medically fit for military duty but who were drafted just the same because military recruiters were using them to help fill their recruitment quotas. He was "the only black, the only male and the only military person" working in that office. Ten months later, he was assigned to overseas duty in Korea at the 121st Evacuation Hospital where he worked as an admissions and discharge clerk. He did not like Korea. Some months later, he was able to get released from the military service under the Army's "early out" program. Much of his story describes race relations in the military. For instance, during basic training, he saw disparity between punishments the black soldiers were given as compared to the white soldiers, and he tells about being called "Buckwheat" by a white soldier. He did not like being in the military and believed the war unjust because of the disproportionate number of blacks and poor people who got drafted and sent to the front lines. (approx. 1 hr. 15 min. Interview date: December 30, 2011. Digital recording: VHPHillJC (MP3 file). Index available (filed with transcripts, #551). Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**LEE ANDREW HOBGOOD** served in the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division from 1984 to 1987 during the Cold War era. He speaks frankly about some of the difficulties he has experienced since his military service, including being homeless, but he remains proud of his service to his country. (approx. 20 min. Interview date: Nov. 3, 2011. VHP TAPE #378. Interviewer: Luke Herbst. Interview was conducted on November 3, 2011 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*) RESTRICTED: No access to interview or quotations without prior written permission from interviewee. Expires Jan. 1, 2013. See administrative file for more details.

**GEORGE W. HOLCOMB, JR.** was a graduate of Vanderbilt Medical School and completed his residence in surgery at Harvard Children's Hospital in Boston. In Japan he was Chief of Thoracic Surgery and Assistant Chief of General Surgery in the Osaka General Hospital during the Korean War from 1952 to 1954. During that time he spent six weeks in Korea on temporary duty assisting treatment of battle casualties. In one incident at the Osaka General Hospital, Holcomb had the unusual opportunity of performing a new kind of surgery, using a vein transplant procedure on a wounded soldier, whose left leg was in terrible condition, 18 hours after being wounded in battle. His quick and careful surgical treatment enabled the soldier to keep his leg from being amputated. While in the latter stages of his medical service at the hospital, he was invited by his commanding officer, a colonel, to take part in an important medical mission conceived and launched by President Eisenhower, in the French Indo China war (later Vietnam). When Dr. Holcomb asked if it was a military order, which he would gladly have obeyed and undertaken, the colonel said, "No, it is not an order, but a volunteer opportunity." Accepting the colonel's offer would have meant extending Holcomb's length of service. Holcomb regrettably – and

thankfully – declined the invitation. Shortly afterward, his two-year commitment and assignment with the Army medical service came to an end, and he returned home. (approx. 1 hr. 15 min. Interview date: Apr. 5, 2004. VHP TAPE #233 & 234. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Index available. Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**JAMES RONALD HOLMES** was a Specialist 4th class assigned to 20th Engineers of the 35th Land Clearing Battalion of the 538th. James grew up in religious family in Anniston, Alabama. His father was a musician and sang with the Blackwood Brothers. He was stationed at Fort Benning, Fort Hood and Pleiku, Vietnam in the Central Highlands. He was assigned to the engineers while in Vietnam. He recalled stepping off the plane when he was stationed at Pleiku, and said the sight of Cam Ran Bay in the South China Sea was the most beautiful sight in the world. One night, he was building a road in the Central Highlands of Vietnam when elite North Vietnamese soldiers marched within ten feet of the engineers. He thinks the reason they were not bothered was because they were clearing a path and building an asphalt road. His men had only rifles and were virtually unarmed. (Approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Apr. 5, 2007. Digital recording: VPHolmesJ (MP3 file). Transcript #506. Interviewer: Betty Richards. Note: Track 11 on original recording was a technical check and was therefore deleted. No interview content is missing.)

**DARRELL LINWOOD HOLT**, a native Nashvillian, enlisted in 1966 in the Air Force, to avoid the draft. After basic training he became a medic and was stationed for a time at Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama, where he worked in a surgical ward, primarily dealing with orthopedics and obstetrics and gynecology. He was sent to Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines in the spring of 1968, where he was assigned to a medical ward, dealing with routine medical matters such as malaria, and other conditions and diseases. Given the circumstances, he was grateful that he was not sent to Vietnam, nor did he have to serve in the trauma unit. However, Clark AFB received incoming “hostile action” casualties from Vietnam. These casualties were usually the victims of plane crashes, and often admitted less than twelve hours after the event occurred. During these times, Holt and all other medical personnel assisted with unloading the casualties from transport planes and ambulance-busses and bringing the men into the hospital. Holt tells briefly, but with gripping detail, the nature of the casualties he saw – men missing arms, legs; the filth of war and wounds; and buckets of severed limbs to be taken to pathology. On a lighter note, Holt also tells about recreational activities and trips taken while in the Philippines. He describes the close-knit nature of the women and men he served with in all of his assignments, with emphasis on the group at Clark. As a medic, wherever his assignment, he says his superior was always a woman, a head nurse, and he took orders from her. After about a year and half at Clark, he was reassigned to K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, arriving there in the deep of winter. The climate came as quite a shock. There, he roomed with an African-American man, who gave him a cultural education, informing Holt that “colored”

was not the proper term to use to refer to his people. Overall, Holt found his time in the Air Force rewarding. He emphasized, "I learned there were a lot of really good people in this world," referring especially to his coworkers. After his discharge, he obtained degrees in elementary education and special education, and taught in the Nashville Public Schools for 27 years. (approx. 2 hr. Interview date: February 1, 2013. Digital recording: VPHoltD (MP3 file). Interviewer: Linda Barnickel) RESTRICTED: No quotations without prior written permission from interviewee. Expires Jan. 1, 2047 or date of death. See administrative file for more details.

**AARON CLYDE HOPPER** was the first World War II army draftee from Calloway County, Kentucky. He served in the army in the Pacific theater of operations. In this interview from 1986, he concentrates mostly on his experiences as a Japanese prisoner of war. He was serving on the Bataan Peninsula when it was overrun by the Japanese. He was captured in the Philippines and later moved to Manchuria, China, where he endured severe cold and living conditions while working for the Japanese in their machine plants. He describes in detail the awful conditions of life under the Japanese both in the Philippines and in Manchuria, and relates examples of the indomitable American spirit he and others displayed while sabotaging the Japanese machinery. Mr. Hopper was in excellent physical condition before being captured or would otherwise not have been able to endure such deprivations. Through it all Mr. Hopper retained his belief that the United States was in the right and today holds no bitterness toward most of his captors. At the time of this interview he was living in the Jackson, Tennessee, area as a retired postal worker. However, even late in life, he was still troubled by health issues related to his time as a POW. (approx. 30 min. Interview date: circa 1986. VHP CD #3, Track 2, transcript. Interviewer: Tricia Browning.)

**STACEY R. (COILE) HOPWOOD** was a high school senior with high test scores looking for a future. A Marine recruiter telephoned her and asked her to come visit him. She did, and following training at Parris Island, she was assigned to a military police unit. She made corporal and was assigned to Marine Corps Air Stations at Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii and El Toro, California during the Persian Gulf War. She served a total of six years in the Marines, and is very active in the Women's Marine Corps League. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Nov. 1, 2003. VHP TAPE #205. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Betty Richards. Interview was conducted on November 1, 2003 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down,\* where Ms. Hopwood was volunteering by working at a booth for the Women Veterans Network.)

**JACQUELINE (FORMAN) STEPHENS HORRIDGE** was the child of a career military officer. Born in Colon, Panama of American parents, Jackie had to apply for citizenship when her family returned to America. Jackie lived in the Philippines and in Hawaii prior to the outbreak of World War II. At age 13, Jackie had an undiagnosed illness and was receiving care at Tripler Hospital in Hawaii

when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. She sat under her hospital bed rolling bandages before being evacuated out of the hospital to a shelter on the base. She recalls feeling excited during and immediately following the attacks. She was surprised when her family returned to the continental U.S. in January 1942, and she found herself treated as an outsider and a self-proclaimed "freak." This was because of her upbringing in such faraway places as Panama, the Philippines, and Hawaii. Her mother, her two brothers and a young adopted friend from Hawaii made her time in Texas more enjoyable. She eventually settled into a normal life in Ft. Worth where she no longer felt like an outsider despite not having her father around. Her father was away for the entirety of the war and the family was not reunited until after the war, when they were rejoined him in Germany. Jackie remained in Germany for over a year and attended classes there before returning to the States where she attended school in upstate New York to be near her fiancé, a West Point Graduate. She was married almost a year later and continued to travel with him across the globe, as he was a military officer like her father. He was a Nashville native and her love of his family made her decide to settle there when he retired. After her husband's death, she remarried a few years later to another career military officer who, oddly enough, had served in Ft. Worth, Texas while she was living there and lived only two blocks away with his wife and child at the time, but they never met. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Apr. 15, 2004. VHP TAPES #235 & 236. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPHorridgeJ (MP3 file). Interviewers: Evviva Weinraub and Alice Swanson.)

**JOSEPH CHRISTAAN HOWELL** joined Delta Company of the Marine Corps Reserve in Knoxville in 1990 because he felt the need for more discipline in his life. Less than a year later, he was deployed to Saudi Arabia during Desert Shield. There, his duty with a Marine unit known as "Diamond Alpha" was to clear lanes through minefields for M1A1 Abrams tanks of the Army. Therefore, he was literally on the very front lines of the American advance when Desert Storm began. Their advance ended about three days later, just outside of Kuwait City. One problem he encountered during Desert Shield was that the heels of his boots fell off. The same problem happened with a second pair. When his mother found out about this, she became so irate that she called telephone information, obtained the phone number of General Norman Schwarzkopf in Florida, and called his home! Although he was away in Washington, DC at the time, Joe's mother talked to Mrs. Schwarzkopf, told her about the problem, and Mrs. Schwarzkopf assured her that she would communicate the information to her husband. Meanwhile, Joe's unit advanced. Thousands of Iraqi prisoners came in, and were sent to the rear. Although sometimes Joe's job was difficult, most of the minefields were already marked by the Iraqis, making identification easy. As part of the breaching teams, Joe travelled in an amtrac which carried a large load of plastic explosives, used to detonate mines. He said there was a certain sense of comfort knowing that if they were shot at and the vehicle exploded, it would be an instantaneous death. As a result, his experiences gave him great confidence, not only in his mission and the men he worked with, (in both the Marines and Army),



but also in himself. He says his military training then, and still today, gives him the confidence that he can handle any circumstance that comes his way. While overseas, Joe took many personal photographs during all phases of the operations. His work was so impressive that shortly after his return to the States, he obtained a job in Knoxville as a photojournalist, a field he has pursued ever since, now living in Nashville. (approx. 2 hr. Interview date: November 16, 2012. Digital recording: VPHHowellJC (MP3 file). Interviewer: Linda Barnickel)  
RESTRICTED: No quotations without prior written permission from interviewee. Expires Jan. 1, 2072 or date of death. See administrative file for more details.

**VICKIE LYNN HOWSE** served in the Air Force from 1975 to 1980. She tells a little about her jobs in the Air Force, but spends much of the interview telling about being on the Cannon (New Mexico) Air Force Base softball team. She traveled extensively throughout the country while on the team, and went to Germany on TDY to play, as well. (approx. 30 min. Interview date: Nov. 4, 2011. VHP TAPE #382. Interviewer: Luke Herbst. Interview was conducted on November 4, 2011 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**JAMES A. HOYAL** served in the Marine Corps as a rifleman in the Korean War, and served in the Air Force as a chaplain during the Vietnam War. In the first tape of this two-part interview, he talks about his experiences on the front lines in Korea. He describes his unit's role in guarding the hills in the "Punchbowl" area, north of the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel. He tells about serving as a "point man" on patrols, and describes his feelings about seeing a comrade die, and the loss of his tentmate to a landmine. In the second tape of this interview, he describes his experiences as a chaplain in the Air Force during the Vietnam War. He speaks about the feelings of the B-52 crews who flew bombing missions over Vietnam daily, including his own missions, when he would slip aboard one of the aircraft. He compares his feelings as a chaplain and officer during this conflict with his previous combat experience in Korea. He relates an incident about an enlisted man with serious problems at home, and how he was able to "influence" the commander into allowing the man a leave home. He describes how chaplains have to maneuver within a military system to accomplish their work. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview dates: Sept. 15, 2003 and Nov. 23, 2003. VHP TAPES #197 & 198. Index available. Also available in digital format: VPHoyalJ (MP3 file). Interviewer: Charlie Smith.)

**ALICE HUFFMAN – see Alice (Martin) Huffman Bugel.**

**WILLIAM BAILEY “BILL” HUGHES** enlisted in the Merchant Marine at the age of 17 during 1944. His first assignment was to a hospital ship bound for Naples, Italy, which would transport wounded soldiers back to the U.S. He tells a moving story about these soldier's reactions to being back on American soil. After he

turned 18, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and he tells about his training days at Camp Blanding, Florida. He then transferred to the Army Air Corps, due to flat feet. In 1946 he was sent to Germany as part of the occupation force, and he shares several anecdotes about interactions with the German people – both civilian and soldiers – and how he came to see many of them not as members of the enemy, but rather as people like himself. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Oct. 14, 2002. VHP TAPE #85 & 86, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**SYLVIA (RISMAN) HYMAN** was born and raised in a multi-ethnic section of Buffalo, New York, where she attended Albright Art School, later embarking on a teaching career. When war broke out in 1941, she joined the Red Cross, driving an ambulance in Buffalo. She then took advantage of an opportunity to serve abroad, and she tells about her stateside training, her arrival in England, and her work at one of the largest bases in England as a Red Cross Club Director. She tells about the spirit of the British people, and mentions witnessing a V-2 rocket attack in London. She also tells briefly about her distinguished career in later years as a sculptor. (approx. 1 hr. 15 min. Interview date: June 18, 2002. VHP TAPE #42 & 43, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPHymanS (MP3 file). Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**HARRY T. INGLE** is a veteran of both the Vietnam War and the Persian Gulf War. He served tours of duty in the U.S. Army on two separate occasions: first, on active duty from 1969 to 1970 and then later, in the Army Reserve from 1975 to 1996. He was born on August 26, 1948 in Nashville, Tennessee and grew up and went to school in the Nashville area. In this first of two interviews, he talks about his experiences in Vietnam. In 1969, while still a student at Tennessee State University Ingle was drafted into the Army and sent to Ft. Campbell, Kentucky for Basic Training. After completing Basic Training, he was then sent to Ft. Polk, Louisiana for Advanced Infantry Training (AIT), and then received orders for Vietnam. One of the first things he noticed upon his arrival there was how soldiers who had already been in Vietnam for some time tended to not become too attached to the new people, sometimes leaving the new arrivals to figure out things for themselves. Ingle was based out of a small town located northwest of Saigon, not far from the Cambodian border. His first contact with the enemy was just three or four weeks after he arrived at the base camp. Although his unit was sent on many patrols, and the area was full of Viet Cong, during the first five months of his tour there, there was not a lot of contact with the enemy. During the last half of his tour, however, they had contact with the enemy almost daily. Once, he almost inadvertently shot a young Vietnamese boy who was on a motorcycle following their troop transport into the jungle. Thinking the boy was a Viet Cong and not realizing that he was just an enterprising Vietnamese youth trying to sell things to the American soldiers, Ingle said that when their troop transport finally came to a stop, he aimed his rifle straight at the boy and about to pull the trigger when some of his comrades stopped him. After that incident, he said he didn't get too friendly with anybody there because you "didn't know who

to trust and not to trust.” (Approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: Apr. 25, 2007. Digital recording: VHPIngleH (MP3 file). Transcript #513. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

In a second interview conducted about four months later, Ingle begins his story in 1975, five years after his separation from the U.S. Army following his service in Vietnam. While working as a Certified Nurse Technician in a local hospital he was persuaded by friends to join the Army Reserves, where he received training as an Army medic. In civilian life he became an emergency room technician. In the Reserves, he was attached to an MP (Military Police) unit whose primary mission was Prisoner of War (POW) operations. His unit was activated in mid-December of 1990 as part of the military buildup in the Middle East for Operation Desert Storm. In preparation for the unit’s deployment, he talked about helping to get the younger medics who formed the bulk of the membership of his section (people who were in about the 18-21 age group and who had never been in a combat situation as he had) mentally prepared to go to war. He said that the unit arrived in the Middle East on the day hostilities with Iraq broke out and that they were initially based in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. He went on to say that not long thereafter, they moved approximately four hours away from Dhahran and set up a POW camp just inside Iraq—one that was the largest POW camp in the Desert Storm campaign, holding approximately 10,000 POW’s.

He provides rich details about what the camp was like as well as what the overall Persian Gulf experience was like for him. He tells about prisoners arriving day and night by the truckload under heavy armed guard. Some of these prisoners included members of the Iraqi Republican Guard. He also talks about the various processing stations they would go through before being put in the main compound—one of which was the medic-station tent where his section would give the prisoners their initial medical evaluations.

Ingle’s story is full of rich description and detail. One story he tells is about Saudi clerics coming into the POW camp to conduct study groups with the prisoners. The clerics would also try to convert the U.S. soldiers to Islam. Ingle says the military temporarily released 25 U.S. soldiers from duty because they wanted to go to Mecca.

Ingle’s story also deals with the many issues his unit had to face while they were there, such as: the hot climate; sand getting in people’s noses and lungs and causing respiratory infections; people management problems, especially conflicts with the way the NCOIC (Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge) was running the section’s operations and treating the people under her; the perceptions and resentment of some of the U.S. soldiers that the POW’s were getting better things, materially, than they were; and the constant concern and fear about the possibility of being hit by chemical weapons.

His story concludes with some comparisons and contrasts between his Vietnam experience and his Persian Gulf experience. He also provides comparisons between the return of veterans from Vietnam and what he feels our troops who are currently in Iraq and Afghanistan are likely to face when they

return home. (Approx. 2 hr. 15 min. Interview date: Aug. 8, 2007. Digital recording: VHPIngleH2 (MP3 file). Transcript #514. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**CHARLES P. JACKSON** was working for General Electric in Nashville when Pearl Harbor occurred, and one month later, he received his draft notice, which he returned with the notation "I've joined the Air Corps," which he did the next day. Stateside, he received gunnery training, then glider training, but was reassigned when the Air Corps had reached their quota for glider pilots. He then became a pilot training on B-25s, and was sent to the China, Burma, India theatre, where he completed 63 bombing missions into Burma with the 12<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, 82<sup>nd</sup> Squadron. (approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: Aug. 28, 2002. VHP TAPE #71 & #72. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Frank Rickey.)

**OLIVER LEROY JACKSON, JR.**, also known as "O.J.", served two tours of duty in Vietnam performing water purification tasks. He was born in Ypsilanti, Michigan. When he was young, his parents divorced and his mother moved to Nashville, Tennessee. As a result, he went to school in both states, spending time with both parents. Six months after finishing high school, he enlisted in the Army. He went to Ft. Campbell for basic training, and was then sent to Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri where he learned how to operate a mobile water-purification station. At both locations, Jackson admits he had difficulty adapting to military discipline. On three different occasions, he chose "his way" over the "Army way" and extended his leave on his own initiative, thus becoming AWOL, but each time he returned to his post. His attitude about discipline eventually changed once he experienced combat. After training at Ft. Leonard Wood, he was sent to Vietnam in May 1967. There he was assigned to the 8th Engineers Division of the 1st Air Cavalry Division based in Bon Son, near An Khe in central Vietnam. His base came under frequent attacks by the Viet Cong. As a result, he learned to never trust anyone, because local Vietnamese would be friendly during the day, but, "they'll kill you at night." A little more than halfway through his first tour, his unit was sent northward to the Hue and Phu Bai area, near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) where the fighting was more intense. He was there when the North Vietnamese attacked during the Tet Offensive in early 1968. He had become friends with a local family and was visiting them when the Tet Offensive came through. Unable to leave to get back to his base, the family hid him in a bunker under their home for three days while the fighting was going on. In May 1968 his one-year tour was over and he went home to Nashville for a week of leave—after which he was sent to Ft. Stewart, Georgia for training on an advanced type of field water-purification system. In October 1968 he got orders to go back to Vietnam for a second tour of duty and returned to the Hue/Phu Bai area, this time with the 326<sup>th</sup> Engineer Division of the 101st Airborne Division. He went on missions in various areas in the northern part of the country. Although there was fighting going on around him while he was there, this tour was "relatively routine" compared to his first tour. He took his discharge in October

1969, and after returning home, he “burned everything Army” that he had. (approx. 2 hr. Interview date: July 28, 2010. Digital recording: VHPJacksonO (MP3 file). Index available (filed with transcripts, #544). Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**JAMES H. H.---** – see entry alphabetized under last initial.

**REBECCA ALMA (BONHAM) LANDERS JENNINGS** was born in Camden, Alabama in 1920, one of nine children of a preacher/farmer and a homemaker. During the Depression, the farm and her mother’s ability to sew and can kept the family from feeling much of the impact of that time. Her father always stressed the need for education, and Mrs. Jennings went on to Tuskegee University after high school where she completed a year and met her husband, Mr. Landers. After they were married, they came to Nashville to attend Fisk University. However, when war broke out in 1941, Mr. Landers went into the Army and was sent to the European Theatre. Mrs. Jennings tried staying home but decided it would make more sense for her to join up too. She joined the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) and first served as a file clerk. She describes basic training, marching, barracks inspection, and the excitement of taking train rides across the country, particularly to Arizona where she trained to be an X-ray technician. She served in that capacity for the balance of her two years, mostly at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, and remembers fondly the evenings spent with other WAACs playing bridge and knitting. After she returned to Nashville, she attended Tennessee A&I (now Tennessee State University) and graduated from there. She did graduate work at Middle Tennessee State University and worked for the inner-city schools in Nashville and later Metro-Davidson County Schools, first as a third grade teacher and for the longest period, as a kindergarten teacher. Her first husband, a preacher, was killed in an “accident” in Montgomery, Alabama, and she raised their three children for a while by herself, later marrying Mr. Jennings, also a minister. Her two sons (now deceased) were active in the sit-ins during the Civil Rights movement in Nashville, and she realized that just telling them not to go was not going to stop them, so she just prayed for their safety. Her daughter currently lives in Chicago and serves on the Boards of Fisk University and Dollar General, so she is able to visit Mrs. Jennings at least once a month. Mrs. Jennings was widowed a second time. Today, she enjoys family and time with her friends, still playing bridge. (Approx. 45 minutes. Interview date: July 25, 2005. VHP TAPE # 323. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Alice Swanson)

**DAVID LESLIE JOHNSON** served in the Marine Corps during Operation Desert Storm, and was frustrated by the fact that he was posted in Okinawa, Japan during the Persian Gulf war. Just as they were about to ship out to the Gulf, President Bush withdrew the armed forces from Iraq. He tells about intense Marine training and how fatigue affects the body, including one time seeing

hallucinations after a 26-hour field march exercise. After leaving the military, he struggled to find jobs because of his lack of a college education. At the time of this interview, he was looking for a second chance and hopeful about getting back on his feet. (approx. 30 min. Interview date: Nov. 1, 2003. VHP TAPE #202. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewers: Rachel Collins and Courtney Shultz, Lipscomb University students. Interview was conducted on November 1, 2003 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**MICHAEL HALL JOHNSON** served in the 91<sup>st</sup> Bombardment Wing and the 9<sup>th</sup> Strategic Reconnaissance Wing from 1967 to 1970 during the Vietnam War, and was stationed at Glasgow Air Force Base, Montana; Beale Air Force Base, California; and at Kadena Air Force Base in Japan. In this interview, he tells about where he grew up in Opelika, Alabama, his family, and what the Air Force was like. He did not see combat but was stationed overseas and gives his general impression of the local inhabitants, both foreign and U.S. governments, and his experiences before, during, and after the war. As an openly gay man in the military, Johnson believes his sexual orientation was not really an issue to his colleagues in the Air Force, because of the nature of his duties. He believes that if he had been in a different branch of the service, or had different duties, his experience would have been very different, and less positive. (Approx. 2 hr. Interview date: June 30, 2009. Digital recording: VHPJohnsonM (MP3 file). Transcript #540. Interviewer: Andrew Thompson.)

**SAMUAL MANARD JOHNSON** served in the Navy during a career spanning twenty years. After completion of basic training in 1990, he was assigned as an electrician's mate to the aircraft carrier, *John F. Kennedy*, a ship where he spent most of his service for ten years. A-7E Corsairs from the ship flew many missions in support of Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm. A few years later, the *Kennedy* was again sent to the Mediterranean, where they flew in support of NATO efforts in the former Yugoslavia. Johnson recalls the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, when the *Kennedy* was in Florida. The ship quickly cruised north, arriving off New York City that same day, where two large plumes of smoke hovered where the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center once stood. Not long thereafter, Johnson took a lateral conversion and became a Master-at-Arms, serving for a time on shore duty at Norfolk Naval Station and Sewells Point Police Precinct. Due to the Global War on Terror, the military had an increased need for military police and others to assist in the detention and supervision of captured enemy combatants and terrorists. As a result, Johnson trained with the Army at Ft. Bliss, Texas which included Army basic training and detainee operations. From February to September 2006, as part of the Navy Provisional Detainee Battalion, he served in Iraq at Fort Suse as a Theater Interment Facility Guard, receiving a personal letter of commendation from Brig. Gen. Kevin R. McBride of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Military Police Brigade of the U.S. Army for his exemplary work. Following Fort Suse, his unit went to Forward Operating Base Bucca, and

received a Navy Unit Commendation for their work of a similar nature there. Johnson returned to the United States and was assigned to Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia, with Strike Fighter Squadron 131. In 2009, he served at the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, for about six months. Johnson's comments about his work at Guantanamo are limited, due to the fact that it was still in operation at the time of this interview, although he does provide a fair level of detail about his activities in Iraq with the Naval Provisional Detainee Battalion and other work as a Master-at-Arms. Other subjects he discusses throughout his interview include several refits of the *John F. Kennedy* that he was involved in, as an electrician; commentary about distortions made by the media for political purposes, particularly as it relates to operations at detainee facilities, and at Guantanamo Bay; the extreme heat in Iraq (140 degrees) and living conditions; and a variety of other subjects. Johnson retired from the Navy in 2010. (Approx. 3 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Dec. 7, 2012. Digital recording: VHPJohnsonS (MP3 file). Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**WILLIE C. JOHNSON** enlisted in the Marines right after graduating high school in 1968. Initially trained as a cook, the escalation of the war quickly meant he was reassigned to combat duty in Vietnam. Coming from a religious background, where his father was a minister, combat presented particularly difficult moral challenges for Johnson. He, like many of his fellow marines, coped by using drugs and alcohol. He tells many stories about the nature of the fighting in Vietnam, including stories about the brutality of the conflict. He was injured by a piece of shrapnel from a grenade thrown by a fellow American soldier. He is proud of his service to his country in Vietnam, and hopes that others will understand why he was fighting. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Nov. 1, 2003. VHP TAPE #207, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewers: Rachel Miller and Lauren Stubbs, Lipscomb University students. Interview was conducted on November 1, 2003 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**WILLIE H. (WILLIAMS) JOY** is Vietnam War veteran, serving overseas in the Marine Corps in 1968 and 1969. His early years were spent in Middleton, Tennessee, where, at the age of 5, he was adopted and raised by his great-aunt and great-uncle, who taught him the values of hard work on the farm, the importance of church, and academic excellence. He saw much combat in Vietnam, sometimes averaging three fire-fights in a single week, and one time serving on a patrol for 45 straight days. It was hard for him to see his friends killed and maimed. Witnessing such events made him angry, and he took it out on the enemy. He tells about the adrenaline rush caused by combat, and how marines had to be careful to not get addicted to it. He contracted malaria in October 1969, was hospitalized in Japan, and returned to the United States to be discharged in December 1969. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: June 6, 2003. VHP

TAPE #161, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPJoyW (MP3 file).  
Interviewer: Richard Randolph.)

**PATRICIA KAUFMAN – see Patricia Knapp.**

**ELLIS WAYNE KELLY** served in the Army from May 1970 to January 1972. The major part of his tour in Vietnam was spent as a foot soldier with the Americal (20th) Infantry Division, in the area around Duc Pho, in the northern section of Vietnam. His six month of fighting the Viet Cong guerilla troops included lots of enemy engagements, particularly attacks from booby traps and sniper firing. He was wounded severely enough to require evacuation. He was covering for a close friend and comrade during an engagement with the enemy. He reached out to protect his buddy, and in doing so, both he and his buddy were hit and wounded by enemy fire, primarily by shrapnel from booby traps. In contrast to his combat actions, Kelly also tells about the many Vietnamese children he encountered and befriended, playing with them often, acting as their friend and companion, even in the midst of a very unfriendly war. (Approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Oct. 1, 2007. Digital recording: VHPKellyE (MP3 file). Transcript #517. Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**LESLIE DORRIS KELLY** former U.S. Navy captain, tells about his experience with the submarine force in the U.S. Navy, beginning with his entrance into the U.S. Naval Academy in 1942 to his retirement from the Navy in May 1968. His distinguished service between 1950 and 1955 was on the *USS Nautilus*, the first nuclear submarine, where he served as the engineering officer. Kelly recalls his interview in 1950 with Admiral Hyman Rickover, when he was personally selected by the admiral to serve as the first operating officer on a nuclear powered submarine and as chief engineer. He remained assigned to the *Nautilus* for three years. He also recalls his tour of duty in Washington in the 1960's when he worked for the Secretary of the Navy in the Office of Program Appraisal at the Pentagon. On short notice he was asked to prepare a speech for the Secretary to give to the Congress on anti-submarine force levels. He worked late into the night writing the speech. Kelly was surprised and pleased when the Congressional Record was published, and he found that his writing had been used word for word by the Secretary of the Navy. Kelly was awarded the Legion of Merit for that achievement, as well as for other contributions he had made to the U.S. Navy (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Oct. 25, 2004. VHP TAPE #282 & 283. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPKelleyLD (MP3 file). Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**CHARLES EDWARD KIMBROUGH** is a Korean War veteran of African-American decent who served in the US Army from June 1947 to June 1953. At the end of his sophomore year of high school, he decided to enlist in the Army to allow him to help further his education. After basic training at Fort Knox,



Kentucky, he was assigned to a Military Police (MP) unit in Inchon, Korea. When the Army started drawing down troops in Korea in 1948, he was reassigned to Japan and attended medical tech school, and reenlisted in 1950. War broke out in Korea just three weeks later. He was quickly sent to Korea where he served as a combat medical aide. Shortly after his arrival, he was wounded by small-arms fire and shrapnel during a North Korean attack on the Pusan perimeter. After spending seven months in the hospital recuperating, he was shipped back to the U.S. where he was eventually assigned to Fort Benning, Georgia as a medical corpsman. While there, he rose to the position of wardmaster, in charge of enlisted personnel who work in a hospital ward. He was asked to train a white corpsmen who worked in the operating room to take his place as wardmaster. Kimbrough objected and asked for a transfer to another location. He was sent to France where he served the remainder of his enlistment term. Kimbrough provides a unique perspective about life in the Army both before, and after, Truman's Executive Order desegregating the military in 1948. During the segregation period, he spoke about an encounter with racial prejudice before going to Fort Knox for basic training, where two white soldiers told him to get off their side of the street and cross over to the other side. On the other hand, he said he noticed that during the post-desegregation era, the bond among soldiers "made things easier." He went on to say that even though things were better in the military as far as race relations went, he still encountered racism whenever he was in the civilian community. The latter portion of his interview concerns his life after his service, when he went to Tennessee A&I (later, Tennessee State University) on the GI bill to get his undergraduate degree. He attempted to go to medical school at Ohio State University and Meharry Medical College but was not admitted. Therefore, he took advantage of an opportunity to go into the veterinary medicine program at Tuskegee Institute. Following graduation at Tuskegee, he became the first African-American to be licensed as a veterinarian in the state of Tennessee. (approx. 3 hr. 15 min. Interview date: Jan. 23, 2010. Digital recording: VHPKimbroughC (MP3 file). Transcript #542. Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**MILDRED KINDRED – see Mildred Bright.**

**WARREN KING, SR.**, born and raised on a farm in Patrick County, Virginia alongside six brothers and six sisters, was drafted into service in the U.S. Army in 1943. Trained at bases in Texas and Pennsylvania as a medic, he crossed the Atlantic on the Queen Mary and in the summer of 1944 joined the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, 22<sup>nd</sup> Regiment, Co. B in France. He was captured by the Germans during fighting in the Hurtgen Forest on December 3, 1944, and survived internment in various German camps until liberated by Russian forces as they neared the Elbe River the following spring. When the Russians demanded compensation for each liberated GI, King's release was delayed, so he joined a small group of fellow prisoners which walked across German countryside two days to the American lines on the west side of the Elbe. (approx. 1 hr. Interview

date: Nov. 5, 2002. VHP TAPE #105, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Ronnie Pugh.)

**RICHARD BERT KLINE** grew up in the Chicago area, and became heavily involved in the drug scene early in life. A self-proclaimed loner, he didn't like school and had no interest in obtaining a job. His father became so upset over his behavior that he gave him an ultimatum: join the military or leave home. Richard joined the Marines where he was trained as a machine gunner, and shipped out for Vietnam a year and a half after he enlisted. He was wounded twice. The second time he nearly lost his leg, and he spent almost three years at Bethesda Naval Hospital undergoing painful reconstructive surgeries. He is homeless, and has been since his discharge, because he feels that the VA and the government don't really want to help Vietnam veterans. (approx. 35 min. Interview date: Nov. 1, 2003. VHP TAPE #203. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Evviva Weinraub. Interview was conducted on November 1, 2003 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**PATRICIA KNAPP** had just finished high school in 1941, and at age 17 wanted to enlist in the Navy, but was turned down several times because she was underweight, only 90 pounds. She went to work for a period of two to three years; and finally, at age 20, she was approved as a Navy enlistee, weighing in at 95 pounds, in June of 1944. She tells about her experiences serving with the U.S. Navy during World War II in the WAVES (Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service) from 1944 to 1946. She was trained as a communications specialist, but served most of her time in service as a flight attendant with the Naval Air transport. She attended to the needs of passengers, including military dependents, as well as wounded soldiers, in flights made between Seattle and stations in Alaska, in the Aleutian Islands. Some of her more memorable passengers included Jack Benny, Gene Kelly, and Victor Mature. She remembered Jack Benny very well because he insisted that his violin be placed in a seat next to him on the plane, treating it lovingly, as his friend and seat-mate! Her time in service was very enjoyable, mingling with civilians as well as many other WAVES women in the service, based mostly in Seattle, and also in Minneapolis. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Aug. 7, 2002. VHP TAPE #57, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPKnappP (MP3 file). Interviewer: Kathy Bennett.)

**SOPHIE KNEIDINGER – see Sophie Brake.**

**WALTER C. KURTZ** is a Vietnam veteran who served in the Army as a member of the 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron, 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division from 1966 to 1969. He served one tour of duty in Vietnam from May 1968 to May 1969 as a first lieutenant, and was involved in armored cavalry attacks on the North Vietnamese Army. One major fire-fight that he was engaged in wiped out an entire regiment of NVA troops, including tanks, causing the enemy over 100 casualties. By

contrast, only 20-30 U.S. troops were lost. He was awarded four Bronze Stars, one of which was awarded for valor when he rescued a badly wounded soldier and got him medical attention quickly. (approx. 1 hr. 15 min. Interview date: Oct. 20, 2008. Digital recording: VHPKurtzW (MP3 file). Transcript #536. Interviewer: Bob Richardson)

**JAMES R. LADD** served in the U.S. Army from March 1943 to November 1945. He grew up in rural Williamson County and enlisted in the Army at age 19. After basic training at Ft. Benning, Georgia and tank crew training Ft. Knox, Kentucky where he trained on the Grant Special Operations tank, he was shipped overseas in preparation for the invasion of Europe. His combat story begins after his tank battalion landed at Omaha Beach in Normandy in July of 1944, when the southern part of France was under Allied control. Much of the story he tells from that point on is devoted to his tank battalion's many combat encounters with German forces as they proceeded northward into the occupied portions France, Belgium and Holland and then eventually into Nazi Germany itself. He provides a vivid, detailed account of action "in the thick" of the Battle of the Bulge during December 1944. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Nov. 25, 2002. VHP TAPES #109 & 110. Transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPLaddJ (MP3 file). Interviewers: Larry Patterson and Bob Richardson.)

**EUGENE T. LAMPLEY** was born on January 4, 1922 in Jingo, Tennessee, a small hamlet in Williamson County that is now known as Fairview. Mr. Lampley and his brothers, all talented baseball players, formed a winning team called the Lampley Lizards. Mr. Lampley's military experience began when he signed up and trained with the elite 3<sup>rd</sup> Raider Marines, and was sent to Pacific islands where he contracted elephantiasis. He completed the remainder of his service stateside due to ensuing health problems. He was night watchman at the Port Chicago, California naval depot when two ships exploded, killing three hundred men, mostly African-American sailors who were loading ammunition onto the ships under unsafe working conditions. Lampley, the closest individual to the epicenter of the explosion who survived, noted that poor training and mishandling of explosives led to the accident. Surviving sailors refused to return to the dangerous worksite and were court-martialed for mutiny. Mr. Lampley was one of many who petitioned for a presidential pardon for the Port Chicago sailors. President Bill Clinton granted a pardon to sailor Freddie Meeks in 1999. (approx. 1 ½ hrs. Interview date: July 29, 2002. VHP TAPE #53, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPLampleyE (MP3 file). Interviewer: Kathy Bennett.)

**REBECCA LANDERS – see Rebecca Alma (Bonham) Landers Jennings.**

**JUDITH LeCOMTE – see Judith Elizabeth (LeComte) Baker.**

**DANIEL EUGENE LEE** spent two years in military service with the U.S. Army. He tells of his basic training at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, starting in November 1970. Because of his delay in getting overseas orders, he remained at Fort Campbell for about ten months, and learned the skill of being a personnel specialist. When he shipped out to Vietnam, where he spent ten months, housed in two bases near Saigon, he continued his work as a personnel specialist. This work was needed and valued during his tour of duty there, since the Army was gradually pulling troops out of Vietnam. Lee lived in very comfortable conditions during his time in Vietnam; he was never engaged in combat with the enemy. Occasionally, he stood on guard duty. He was appreciated for his work, and he made friends among the Vietnamese nationals who were assigned to work with him and his unit. He resisted becoming involved in sexual encounters, or in drug usage, which dominated the lives of most of his colleagues in the Army in Vietnam. He was, however, very fond of a young Vietnamese woman who worked as a secretary for the Army chaplain on the base where he worked. After ten months, he returned home, very fit and trim, not easily recognized even by his own mother when he arrived in Nashville. His commentary on returning home was that he had a difficult transition; it was a culture shock for him, coming from an easy and comfortable life style, where he was waited on by Vietnamese nationals. He was also bitter about the way the war ended, a waste of time and money. He felt the war was motivated solely by U.S. economic and political interests, and closes with the comment: "I love my country, but I fear and distrust my government." (approx. 1 ½ hrs. Interview date: Aug. 27, 2002. VHP TAPES #69 & 70, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**WALTER R. LEE** was born and raised in Nashville, and was drafted into the Army in 1943. When he was called up, he made a plea to God: "Please don't let me kill anyone." To his knowledge, he never did. He saw action with the 320<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment of the 35<sup>th</sup> Division in five battles in Europe, including St. Lo, Metz, and Bastogne. After two days of fighting in France, his company of 200 men was reduced to 24 effectives, but he says he never wavered in his desire to avoid killing. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Sept. 5, 2002. VHP TAPE #29, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**ROBERT ALLAN LEFTWICH** tells of his experiences, both in the U.S. and in the Pacific theater during World War II, as a U.S. Marine, when he was trained as an airplane crew chief of VMSB single engine planes, otherwise known as dive bombers. His primary battle experience was spent at Guadalcanal Island in the Solomon Islands in the Pacific, where he fought the Japanese for a period of six months, during 1942 and 1943. The scariest time for Bob was during his six months tour of duty in Guadalcanal. He and his fellow Marines were bombed and strafed day and night by Japanese fighters and bombers, and shot at by snipers, from the air, on the ground, and from coconut palm trees. Occasionally, the Marines would drive a bull-dozer in early evening or early dawn straight into a

coconut tree, dislodging a Japanese sniper, who would be shot in mid-air as he dropped to the ground. After losing practically all of their aircraft from Japanese bombing attacks, an urgent request was sent to General MacArthur to send more Army and Navy attack planes against the enormous fleet of Japanese warships moving to reinforce Guadalcanal. The US forces arrived in time to demolish all but one of the enemy ships; Bob calls this the turning point of the war in the Pacific. The natives of Guadalcanal were very friendly to the Americans and despised the Japanese. The Marines enticed the natives on occasion to go out hunting for Japanese soldiers. For every Japanese head they brought in to the Americans they would be rewarded with a can of fruit, a precious commodity in that setting. Bob tells that often they would return to the US Marines early in the morning with sacks loaded with Japanese heads in order to collect the cans of fruit! After Guadalcanal, he was sent to New Hebrides and then to New Zealand, where he re-trained for handling new equipment, a new kind of dive bomber. While there, he ate good meals and enjoyed the company of young New Zealand women, in contrast to the living conditions on Guadalcanal. He returned as a staff sergeant to the U.S., where he was discharged in California in November 1945. (approx. 1 hr. 40 min. Interview date: Mar. 8, 2004. VHP TAPES #227 & 228. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**DEAN ALAN LEMKE** served in the Air Force as a cook and engineer from 1966 to 1970. He served at Sewart Air Force Base in Smyrna, as well as Da-Nang, Tuc Hoe, and Cam Ram in Vietnam. He worked primarily as a cook, and he tells briefly about Vietnamese who would help in the kitchen on the base during the day, but who would work for the enemy at night. He speaks little about the war, however, saying he has many secrets, which he will take with him to the grave. Instead, he tells about his life after the war in Georgia; Nashville, Tennessee; Waterloo, Iowa; and other places. He spent a great deal of time in Georgia as an EMT, where he was nicknamed, "Yankee," since he was from Iowa. He tells about some of the scenes he worked as an EMT, including suicides, domestic violence, and homicides. He also tells his relationships with his ex-wives and other women; speaks briefly about his relationship with his children; and speaks at length about his work with homeless people and his own experience of homelessness. He says more than once that what he has experienced in the United States since his return from Vietnam was worse than what he experienced overseas. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Oct. 15, 2005. VHP TAPE #327. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewers: Jessica Stutts and Joanna Beaman, students at Middle Tennessee State University. Interview was conducted on October 15, 2005 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**ELISE LEVY – see Elise (Levy) Steiner.**

**JOHN WILLIAM LOCKRIDGE** saw service in the U.S. Army during both the Korean War and the Vietnam War. Rather than talk about his military experience,

Mr. Lockridge tells about his anger and sense of betrayal at having his home taken away from him while he was serving in combat in Vietnam. He describes this situation in detail, and also briefly tells about his feelings relating to the era of school desegregation and Civil Rights in the 1950s through the 1970s. His interview was cut short due to lunch being served at Operation Stand Down. (approx. 20 min. Interview date: Nov. 20, 2004. VHP TAPE #300. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewers: Cal Long and Leah Phillips, Lipscomb University students. Interview was conducted on November 20, 2004 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**ROBERT V. LONGHAUSER** described the experiences he had as a member of the U.S. Army's First Division, where he served in Vietnam from 1967-68 as a reporter/recorder for the awards and medals section of the First Division. He was based in Di An and in Laikhe, participated in the Tet Offensive, and was exposed to a fair amount of enemy combat, with both the North Vietnamese Army and the Viet Cong guerrilla fighters. After his tour in Vietnam he completed his military service at Fort Bliss, Texas, with an Army artillery unit.

Longhauser felt the war was not really justified because of repeated mistakes and inept leadership on the part of the U.S. forces. Once when he was on duty to record, report, and recommend honors and medals to U.S. troops, he was told by a superior officer not to approve the awarding of the Congressional Medal of Honor being proposed for an army officer named Terry Allen. Allen, he said, was being nominated for the medal because of political connections. The facts of the case showed that Allen was responsible for a misguided and foolish order he gave that resulted in the death of an entire unit of U.S. troops wiped out in an enemy ambush. On a lighter note, Longhauser tells about one of his comrades who was a sleep-walker, sometimes even when enemies were nearby.

Longhauser and his fellow soldiers found a way to handle this strange behavior by tying a rope to the man's leg, securing him to a stake in the ground. A happy memory for Longhauser in Vietnam was being able to use his musical talents as a guitar player to provide on-the-spot musical concerts for the troops in the First Division. (Approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Apr. 9, 2007. Digital recording: VHPLonghauserR (MP3 file). Transcript #508. Interviewer: Bob Richardson)

**MICHAEL C. LYLE** first tells of his family history, before he talks about his experience as a freshman in college at the University of Arkansas when he was activated for service during the Korean War with the Arkansas National Guard in 1950. He was a Gunner in the 937th Field Artillery Battalion, 142nd Field Artillery Group. He was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas before deployment and returned to Fort Chaffee, Arkansas. His unit stayed in position sometimes for two or three weeks and harassed the enemy at night with shelling. This unit was made up of a close knit group of young men all from the small town of Mena, Arkansas. He was in Korea for a year before being rotated back home. Lyle does not give extensive detail about specific actions he was engaged in, but rather tells about his experiences in a broader fashion, talking about subjects such as weaponry,

the enemy, and the war in general. He took advantage of the GI Bill to get a degree in Civil Engineering. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: May 16, 2003. VHP TAPES #153 & 154, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Betty Richards.)

**RICHARD OWEN MACDONALD** signed up for service in the Navy because his family was a seafaring clan from Maine. He joined the service during the end of the depression because there wasn't much else for him to do. His stepfather had a position with the WPA inspecting bridges around Maine and Richard had a real opportunity to see how the depression was affecting the people in Maine. His service began in Rhode Island with medic training in Chelsea, Massachusetts. His first ship was based out of New York and traveled through the Panama Canal delivering supplies. He did that a few times and then his ship began to run the route from San Francisco to Pearl Harbor. Richard's ship, the *USS Pyro*, was docked in Pearl Harbor during the attack on December 7, 1941. About a year after Pearl Harbor, his ship was assigned to the Aleutian Islands and eventually he was sent to the South Pacific for the remainder of the war. He was in Florida when he heard about VJ day and soon after, shipped out to Naples, Italy, as part of the Occupation forces. He remained in Italy for a few months and then returned home. Richard continued his enlistment and was going to leave the Navy after his third tour when the Korean War broke out. Richard remained in the military through the Korean War working on a ship that broke through Arctic ice. He finished his tour of duty as a recruitment officer in Nashville, Tennessee, where he remained after his service was complete, working for the Federal Reserve Bank until his retirement. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Mar. 24, 2004. VHP TAPES #229 & 230. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Index available. Interviewer: Evviva Weinraub.)

**DONALD W. MCGEHEE** served as a U.S. Marine from July 1941 to October 1945. He tells about his training, and then his assignments in the U.S. and in the Pacific theater, which were for the most part training other troops how to engage in hand-to-hand combat with the enemy. He himself was never engaged in actual combat with the enemy, but he was always on hand to train and encourage others to fight the enemy in close combat tactics and fighting skills. He admits his failures along the way, when he was disciplined for drinking and fighting several times, resulting in his demotion. Yet he learned the hard way how to overcome his mistakes and to become a skilled trainer and a valuable citizen after his military service was completed. He had a unique skill and leadership quality that enabled him to be appreciated and valued by his peers and his superiors in the Marine Corps. One area in which he was commended was the ground defense training he provided to Air Corps and Marine personnel in both the US and the Pacific theaters during the war. One noteworthy assignment was his work with the unit commanded by Joe Foss, an Air Force combat hero, whose exploits included the shooting down of 26 Japanese planes and earning the Congressional Medal of Honor. He worked with Foss's fighter

unit on two different occasions; on one of them, he was introduced to and worked with Colonel Charles Lindbergh, famed 20<sup>th</sup> century aviator, who served as a consultant with the US Air Force in the Pacific. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Sept. 13, 2004. VHP TAPES #279 & 280. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**JOHN J. MCGONAGLE** is a Massachusetts native who was in his second year at Boston College when World War II began. At the age of 22, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps in January 1943, with the intention of going into pilot training. He received his flight wings in December 1943 and spent time in Barksdale, Louisiana doing bomb-run training. In the summer of 1944, he was assigned to the 319<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing on the island of Sardinia where he flew low-level bombing missions into central and upper Italy. As the allies advanced farther into Italy, the 319<sup>th</sup> moved to the island of Corsica. In October of 1944, on his sixteenth mission, his plane and two others were shot down over northern Italy. He was forced to bail out over enemy territory. He was quickly captured and the remainder of his story focuses on his experiences as a prisoner of war (POW). He was confined from October 1944 to the war's end in May of 1945—a period of approximately eight months. He tells about being held in several different confinement facilities in Italy and eastern Germany. He was interrogated by the Gestapo, was hospitalized in Mantua, and moved to several locations in Germany. In January 1945, he was imprisoned in a camp very close to the Russian border and remained there until the camp was liberated by the Russians in May of 1945. His story concludes with an account of what it was like while the Russians were in control there and how the Americans came into the camp about four days later and “liberated” them from the Russians. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Jan 8, 2004. VHP TAPES #213 & 214. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**CHARLES E. MCGRUDER** is a World War II veteran who served in the Army Air Corps from November 1943 to April 1946. He tells about growing up in segregated Alabama, including a story about having to move from his parents house into a rooming house in town, in order to be within walking distance of his high school. At that time, blacks were prohibited from riding on school buses. At the age of 18, he had just completed his first year of college when he was drafted into the Army but instead of having to go into the infantry, his entrance test scores were high enough to get him transferred into the Army Air Corps, which was for the "best and the brightest." He was sent to Keesler Field in Mississippi for basic training. He tells about how white troops and black troops were kept completely separated during training, and how all facilities were segregated, including barracks, mess hall, and the PX. He was sent to Amarillo, Texas for aircraft mechanics training. After completing his training, the remainder of his duty assignments were all stateside. He was assigned to the 477<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, one of the first all-black bomber organizations, where he worked as an aircraft mechanic at duty stations in Kentucky, Indiana and South Carolina. He also had



a short training tour in Florida where he attended gunnery school and earned his aircraft gunner's wings. He also tells about some of his post-war experiences, including being one of seven students who integrated the formerly all-white Xavier University in Ohio and attending Meharry Medical College in Nashville. He was also the first black doctor at Maumee Valley Hospital (Ohio) and the Chicago Lying-In Hospital, where he completed his internship and residency. (approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: Jan 16, 2004. VHP TAPES #215 & 216. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPMcGruderC (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**OTIS J. MCKEEHEN** was a printer, married and an expectant father when he was drafted in early 1942. He attended radar school, then taught there until 1944. He served in behind-the-lines radar support during the Battle of the Bulge, then followed the US Army into occupied Germany. In September of 1945, he was sent to Japan to provide radar support to the Occupation Forces. Some of the anecdotes he shares includes watching a Bob Hope USO show, seeing a 10-year-old Polish boy suddenly grab a weapon from a soldier and shoot several German civilians, and joining an English-speaking Japanese family who befriended him in Yokohama for a special Christmas dinner. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Aug. 22, 2002. VHP TAPE #66, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPMcKeehenO (MP3 file). Interviewer: Jim Lummus, with assistance from Frances McKeehen, wife of Otis McKeehen.)

**DOROTHY MCMAHON – see Dorothy (Gibbs) Dalton-McMahon.**

**CHARLES MCNISH** served in both World War II and the Korean War. He grew up in the Nashville area and was drafted into the U.S. Army at the age of 18. He served in the Army during WWII from October 1941 to February 1946 and during the Korean War from January, 1950 to April, 1952. During the course of this interview, he talked somewhat in depth about his experience during WWII, but his comments about his experience during the Korean War were of a more general nature. He spent several years performing infantry training, first as an enlisted man, and later as an officer, in 1944 becoming a rifle platoon leader at Camp Walters, Texas. In November of 1944, he was sent to Belgium where he served in General George Patton's Third Army. He soon found himself facing combat in the infamous Battle of the Bulge and he tells about what a ferocious experience it was to be on the front lines. He went on to serve in the occupation forces in Germany until December of 1945. After returning to the U.S., he decided to stay in the active reserves — an action that eventually resulted in his being called back into active duty status in December of 1950 following the outbreak of the Korean War. In Korea, he also served as a rifle platoon leader. He compares the experience of fighting the Communist Chinese troops in Korea to that of fighting the Germans at the Battle of the Bulge and notes that what he encountered in Korea was just as ferocious as what he had encountered during the Battle of the Bulge. (approx. 50 min. Interview date: Mar. 3, 2003. VHP

TAPE #132. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Transcript.  
Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**JESSIE (WALLACE) MCNUTT** was a student at Iowa State University when war broke out in 1941. She joined the Army as a dietician in 1944. Although she was expecting to remain stateside, she instead was promptly sent overseas, where she served with the 100<sup>th</sup> General Hospital in Wales, England and France. In late 1944, she was transferred to the 77<sup>th</sup> Evacuation Hospital in Belgium. On the way there, she and her drivers were met by long lines of military vehicles coming from the opposite direction. Soldiers were urging them to join the convoy, telling them they were going the “wrong way.” She finally arrived at her post, located at Verviers, within miles of Bastogne and Malmedy. While there, she witnessed German infiltrators parachuting from planes, heard the dying cries of a Red Cross worker who was killed when a bomb hit the hospital, and was forced to take cover when the hospital was strafed several times by German airplanes during the Battle of the Bulge. The rest of her service was quiet by comparison. She shares anecdotes about training, following or waiting for troops to solidify positions so they could advance and setup a hospital, and incidents that happened while overseas. (approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: Oct. 17, 2002. VHP TAPE #87 & 88, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPMcNuttJ (MP3 file). Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**ROBERT “BOB” MACON** served in the Army a total of 30 years, from June 1944 to June 1974. While engaged in battle at Bastogne during World War II, his infantry squad of seven men were teamed up with a tank in the assault against the German lines of strong resistance and fixed embattlements in defensive positions. His squad leader, just ahead of him, was wounded in his leg, and got caught in the track movement of the tank they were teamed with. Robert reached out, hanging on to his squad leader with all his might to save him, to keep him from being crushed to death. He was able to rescue him, in what seemed an interminable struggle for survival. After the war, he served as part of the Occupation, where he worked diligently with German police units, merchants, farmers, parish priests and other Germans in town after town, helping them to rebuild. He also was helped by his wife, a German woman, whom he had married earlier, during his service in Germany. He returned to the U.S. and quickly headed for Korea, when the war broke out there. He also served for about 2 years in Vietnam. He returned home again, and did various kinds of training with the Army, as a master sergeant, and finally was discharged in 1974. He regards all of his service as important duty with and for his country; but he intentionally focused on his experiences in World War II because they seemed to him to be critical and very useful years for him, for his military units, and for the rebuilding of Germany after the war. (approx. 1 ½ hr. Interview date: Mar. 10, 2003. VHP TAPE #135 & 136, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPMaconR (MP3 file). Interviewer: Bob Richardson)

**PAUL MADDEN** is a veteran of both World War II and the Korean War. In September of 1941, he received parental permission to enlist in the Navy (being only 17 at the time) and was sent to Norfolk, Virginia for basic training. After completion of basic training, he was sent to gunnery training school, where he was stationed when Pearl Harbor was attacked. After he completed his training, he was assigned to serve as a member of the armed-guard crews that traveled on board the civilian merchant ships which carried freight and supplies. He tells about various experiences aboard ships making supply runs from the U.S. to Europe and North Africa as well supply runs between various North African ports. He tells about his merchant ship coming under attack by German aircraft during an air raid while it was docked at the port of Tunisia, and describes going to Omaha and Utah beaches at Normandy on a supply run the day after D-Day and seeing the carnage from the day before. In late 1944, he served on shore patrol at Antwerp, Belgium, where he saw and heard lots of German V-1 and V-2 rockets overhead. After separating from the Navy in 1945 and taking a turn at civilian life for a few years, an Army recruiter encouraged him to consider joining the Army, saying that they were very much in need of artillery anti-aircraft personnel. Such being the case, he enlisted in the Army in July, 1949 and was initially assigned to personnel school rather than artillery school. In January 1951, after attending OCS, he was commissioned as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant. In February of 1953 he was assigned to Korea where, just three days after his arrival there he was assigned to an artillery battalion based at an outpost between the towns of Chorwon and Kumhwa, where they routinely exchanged fire with North Korean artillery across the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: May 7, 2003. VHP TAPE #149 & 150, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**ALICE MARTIN – see Alice (Martin) Huffman Bugel.**

**GEORGE R. MARTIN** served in Army Ordnance, Pacific Theater of World War II. He was trained at Fort McPherson, Georgia; Camp Shelby, Mississippi; and took maneuvers in Louisiana and Texas. His unit, primarily responsible for keeping jeeps and other vehicles running, then shipped to Camp Doomben, Australia, and was later stationed at New Guinea and the Philippines. He was in the Army from March 1, 1942 to December 7, 1945. (approx. 90 min. Interview date: May 9, 2002. VHP TAPES #15 & 16, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Ronnie Pugh.)

**MARY D. MAYNARD – see Mary D. (Maynard) Ross.**

**ALICE MIKEL – see Alice (Mikel) Duffield.**

**CHARLES J. MILLER** grew up in Tennessee during segregation. As a young African-American man, he was tired of being forced into menial jobs and facing

insults, just because of the color of his skin. He left his job as a shoeshiner and walked across the street to the Army recruiter's office. He was soon sent to Korea where he saw heavy combat action in a black unit, officered by whites. He tells about the discrimination he and his fellow soldiers faced, and he tells what it was like to come under fire. He tells vividly of the sights, sounds, and smells of battle and death. He also talks about an FBI investigation after the war, in which the only photograph of him in uniform in Korea was taken from his mother, and his fruitless efforts to have it returned to him. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Jan. 18, 2005. VHP TAPE #296. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPMillerC (MP3 file). Interviewer: Dr. Charles E. McGruder.)

**RAY MOORE** is a Vietnam-era veteran who enlisted at the age of 18 in the Navy, serving from August, 1964 to August, 1968. Part of his tour of duty involved time spent in aircraft carrier operations off the coast of Vietnam, in the Gulf of Tonkin. After finishing basic training, he was based at Alameda Naval Air Station for approximately 18 months and worked as a weapons handler, helping to unload the weapons from aircraft that had just returned from flight missions. In late 1965, he was transferred to Subic Bay Naval Base in the Philippines where he was assigned to duty on board the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise. On board the Enterprise, he worked in weapons assembly where he helped get bombs and missiles ready to go up to the flight deck where they were then loaded on the aircraft. During the course of his story, he talks about experiences he had during the Enterprise's runs from Subic Bay to the coast of Vietnam for bombing missions over Vietnam and then back to Subic Bay—missions which, he said, tended to last about 30-45 days at a time. One incident is especially memorable. He tells about observing a load of 500-pound bombs which were sitting on the elevator waiting to be transported from the weapons assembly shop to the flight deck and noticing that someone had removed the safety pins from all of the warheads in these bombs—a situation which, he said, not only made the warheads highly unstable but could also have resulted the weapons accidentally detonating in the lower part of the ship and thereby setting off a massive explosion of the other weapons stored in the area. After recognizing the critical nature of the situation and taking quick action to help prevent disaster, neither he nor the sailor who helped him defuse the problem were given any recognition by anyone in command for what they had done. In total, he spent a little over a year and a half on overseas duty. His story concludes with his post-war experiences (which included finding himself homeless for a period of time) as well as his comments about the impact he feels the experience of serving in the Vietnam War has had on his life, including: his distrust of, and disillusionment with, the U.S. government after the war; his adjustment problems after he first returned home; and his becoming resentful of both the military and of authority. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: July 16, 2003. VHP TAPES #176 & 177. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson, with the assistance of Operation Stand Down.\*)

**JOHN E. MORGAN** served in the Marine Corps during World War II and in the reserves during the Korean War. He recalls many anecdotes about growing up in Nashville during the Depression, including living with his widower father in houses left vacant by other families. By the age of sixteen he was working for the *Nashville Banner* newspaper and quickly became a photographer there. He tried to enter the service immediately after Pearl Harbor, but was initially refused on the grounds that he was a married man, with two children. Later, in 1943, the Marines called him into service. He spent many days at sea in the Pacific, eventually arriving in Guadalcanal. From there, he saw his first combat on Peleliu where he was among the first waves to attack. He describes several scenes there, including a couple of "close calls." He also was at Okinawa, where he shot both still photographs and motion picture film. During the Korean war, although he strongly desired overseas service, he remained stateside, serving as a platoon leader and instructor. When he found out he would not receive overseas service nor have an opportunity to use his photography skills for the Marine Corps, he left the service. He continued to work as a photographer at the *Banner* until the age of 63. One of his most memorable news events he covered was the Columbia race riot of 1946, where he witnessed, and was nearly injured by, one of the first shots fired. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Aug. 25, 2004. VHP TAPES #268 & 269. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**HUGH B. MOTT** entered the Army in 1942. As a 1st Lieutenant, he served as a combat engineer with the 9th Armored Division, which saw action against the Germans in the Battle of the Bulge, and later in the move toward the Rhine River against the retreating German army. In both situations he displayed courage, bravery, and leadership in key bridge locations, blowing up or preventing the destruction of these bridges, in order to accelerate the forward movement of US Army troops as they moved toward Berlin. At the Ludendorff Bridge, near Remagen, Germany, on March 7, 1945, in the midst of machine gun fire and sniper shooting from the Germans, his team walked and climbed all over the bridge to cut wires and remove TNT charges placed there by the Germans. By their unhesitating action and cool courage, Lt.Mott, his two sergeants, and two other enlisted men were instrumental in preventing the immediate destruction of the bridge and enabled the First Army to establish a bridgehead on the east bank of the Rhine River. Mott reported that "we went on the bridge at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and stayed on it until 9 o'clock the next morning, but we had removed explosives enough to make it safe for our traffic to begin crossing by 2 o'clock in the morning." For his extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy, Mott was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. After securing the Remagen Bridge he was assigned to rebuild a bridge across the Danube River and to take charge of a German POW camp. His colonel friend, a battalion commander, leaned on him as his "fair-haired boy" to serve with him in the Far East to fight the Japanese. But Mott refused, preferring instead to return home and leave active duty in the Army. (approx. 1 ½ hrs. Interview date: May 13, 2003. VHP

TAPES #151 & 152. Transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPMottH (MP3 file). Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**JAMES H. NEESE** served in the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division of the U.S. Army in North Africa and Italy during World War II. Among other things, he tells of being wounded by what he called a “bouncing baby” German mine and briefly hospitalized in Naples. He saw action in the landings at Anzio and the fighting around Monte Cassino. (Approx. 1 hr. 20 min. Interview date: Aug. 15, 2002. VHP TAPE #63 & 64. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Ronnie Pugh.)

**THOMAS B. NESBIT** served during the Vietnam War from 1966 until 1986 straight from the U.S. Naval Academy into the United States Navy. He was first assigned to the *U.S.S. Yorktown*, an aircraft carrier. He was sent to aviator school and took flight training afterwards becoming a navigator on a Navy P3 airplane. His military service mainly was in the Pacific Theater. Their mission was to track the surface traffic down the coast and also track underwater Soviet traffic. His highest rank was Naval Captain at which he retired. He was never in actual combat but played a very important part in tracking the enemy probably saving many lives. After the war ended he was the Naval recruiter for Tennessee for 3 years. (approx. 1 hr. 15 min. Interview date: Dec. 27, 2007. Digital recording: VHPNesbitT (MP3 file). Transcript #527. Interviewer: Betty Richards.)

**SILAS T. NEWSOM**, a Nashville native, describes his active service with the U.S. Air Force over a 20-year span from 1963 to 1983. He was based at: Lockbourne Air Force Base, Columbus, Ohio; the US Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado; Ubon, Thailand; Kelly Air Force Base in Texas; Bitburg, Germany; McGuire Air Base in New Jersey; Pleiku, Vietnam; and Malmstrom Air Force Base, in Great Falls, Montana. Throughout his career, he served as a technical sergeant assigned in support to various units, and his duties varied. One story he tells is about an incident in which Vietnamese insurgents climbed over a fence in his compound at Pleiku -- one of them was killed, and several others were captured. He also tells about being stationed in Germany where he had to help capture some German civilians known as the "Biermannhoff Gang", a subversive group, who were engaging in some sort of mischief. Among his various duties, Newsom performed police work, protecting the security of military installations. He also trained others and worked in support of troops who needed help with personal matters. He took great satisfaction in the latter duties, which included assisting airmen having difficulty with health problems (alcohol and drugs), with depression, and with marital problems. He also was very proud of his six years of service at the Air Force Academy. He felt great joy during his retirement ceremony in 1983 after serving 20 years in active duty, as well as when he received the Air Force Commendation Medal. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Jul 28, 2008. Digital recording: VHPNewsomS (MP3 file). Transcript #534. Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**LAWRENCE NICKELL** served in a mortar company of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment, 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Europe during World War II. He tells of action during the breakthrough at St. Lo, action in and around Metz , and of a particularly brutal day near Goin where his company was decimated. (approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: May 21, 2002. VHP TAPE #22 & 23, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**ANDROMEDIA "ANDY" (BAGWELL) NOEL** served from 1943 until 1946 as a Gray Lady at Thayer Veterans Hospital on White Bridge Road in Nashville, Tennessee. She was thoroughly trained for her duties. Thayer was a hospital where soldiers were brought directly from overseas. Gray Ladies were trained to aid in soldier rehabilitation before they returned home. She read to soldiers, wrote letters to their families, made phone calls for them and tried to help them adjust after their injuries. During this period of time her husband was a POW in Germany. The Red Cross helped her get information from him. In addition to sharing in detail some of her reminiscences of hospital work, she also tells some of the stories told to her by her husband upon his return from captivity at the end of the war. (approx. 35 min. Interview date: Nov. 1, 2004. VHP TAPE #287. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPNoelA (MP3 file). Interviewer: Betty Richards)

**RICHARD NORVELL JR.** served in the Army Air Corps in World War II as a transport pilot and in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War as a non-flying commanding officer of a unit in South Carolina. He already had his pilot's license before the U.S. entered the war in 1941, and anxious to see action, he tried unsuccessfully to enter the Royal Canadian Air Force. He joined the U.S. Army Air Corps after Pearl Harbor, and was stationed throughout the war at various bases in the South, ferrying planes from base to base. One assignment took him to France, and for a time he served in India, ferrying Nationalist Chinese troops into China. After his discharge, he joined the Tennessee Air National Guard, and his unit was activated for service in Korea. He did not have a current pilot's license at that time, and found himself desk-bound, to his frustration. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Aug. 19, 2002. VHP #65. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Frank Rickey.)

**JOSEPH R. O'DONNELL** a native of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, now living in Nashville, spoke of his military career, a five year stint as a U.S. Marine during and after World War II, from 1944 to 1949. He enlisted in the Marine Corps at age 22, was trained at Parris Island, South Carolina, and then stationed at San Diego. As a Marine photographer he was assigned to overseas duty in the Pacific theater, and he says he worked by himself for four years as an individual photographer, concentrating on taking pictures of the two cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, just after the atomic bomb blasts. He lived wherever he could find shelter, and created his own dark room to develop film and prints. Along with his

photography work, he interviewed Japanese civilians and came to appreciate them and their tragic losses. He tells with some emotion about the scenes he witnessed, including watching a young boy placing his infant brother's body on a funeral pyre. While in the service, O'Donnell says he was never in regular contact with a Marine, Navy, or Army base in Japan, nor did he take orders from anyone in the US military during his four year assignment. During that time, he says, neither he nor the bombed cities were visited by U.S. officials or military personnel. He was also unaware that his body might be contaminated and exposed to health hazards by the radiation on the ground and in the air. As a result, he has suffered severe injuries to his spinal column and his stomach. After his separation from service, he worked for the United States Information Agency (USIA) as the White House photographer, and he kept a photographic record of his association with five US presidents - Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon. He says that Truman never owned up to the decision to drop the bombs; instead blaming Roosevelt, saying in effect, "it was his decision, not mine." Some of O'Donnell's most noteworthy photographs from his White House years which he mentions include the meeting between Truman and General MacArthur on Wake Island, when Truman relieved MacArthur from command during the Korean War, and a famous photograph of young John-John Kennedy saluting his father's casket. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: July 7, 2003. VHP #169 & 170. Transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPODonnellJ (MP3 file). Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**JOHN F. OHLINGER**, a recruit for the Naval Academy football team, graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1969. He was commissioned an Ensign by the U.S. Navy following successful flight training and designated a Naval Aviator. His first assignment was in Vietnam based in Saigon, where he flew an 850CH-46A helicopter as a combat support pilot from 1970-1971. This meant ferrying people and supplies wherever they were needed. They had 2 days work and 5 days R and R, and he took classes at night in Russian History. He served two tours in Vietnam. He later became a flight instructor for a helicopter training Squadron eighteen HT-18 in Pensacola, Florida. His successful career as a naval pilot included command of a Top-gun training squadron in the Philippines and over 4,000 hours of accident free flying. He said one of the most exciting events was deciding to see how high a helicopter could go without oxygen masks or parachutes. They flew up to 11,000 feet which was 8,000 feet above the approved height. (Approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: July 31, 2007. Digital recording: VHPOhlingerJ (MP3 file). Transcript #512. Interviewer: Betty Richards.)

**EULA (SIMS) OWOLO** is an Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm-era veteran who served in the U.S. Air Force from January 1989 to October 1992. She provides a unique perspective on her service from the point of view of a woman (generally); a female officer (specifically); and a black person in the military. After graduation from high school in 1984, she received a full scholarship to Tennessee State University (TSU) where she enrolled in the school's AFROTC



program. She believes that because of her gender, she was not offered the same opportunities of promotion to higher cadet ranks that her male counterparts received. She also tells about a group of white students from another school who were enrolled in the TSU program who seemed to receive preferential treatment in the form of extra study sessions to sharpen their skills, and she hints that this may have been because of their race. Upon graduation from TSU in 1988, she received her commission as a second lieutenant and was sent to Keesler Air Force Base in Mississippi for electronics training. Following that, she was assigned to the 694th Electronic Security Wing at Ft. Meade, Maryland as an assistant program manager. While at Ft. Meade, she worked with secure communications systems that were being developed in response to the demands of Operation Desert Shield, specifically, systems that would be designed for use in desert conditions. Her primary duty was to monitor the program and work closely with the engineers. She experienced some difficulties with the civilian men not taking her seriously—saying that they wanted to hear instructions from another man, even if it was the same as what she told them. She experienced similar difficulties as a female officer when some of the enlisted men didn't salute her when they walked by. She also talks about difficulties she experienced as a black female officer, noting that it was very difficult to be promoted to higher rank. She remained stateside for the duration of her service, and left the military in 1992 when she received a medical discharge. (approx. 2 hr. Interview date: March 9, 2012. Digital recording: VHPOwoloE (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**LARRY R. P. PATTERSON** describes his military service with the US Air Force and its Strategic Air Command for a period of four years, from May 1967 to August 1971, during the Vietnam War era. His active duty locations were all within the United States, including Lackland AFB in San Antonio, Texas; Keesler AFB in Biloxi, Mississippi; Westover AFB near Boston, Massachusetts; and Robins AFB near Macon, Georgia. His occupational specialty was handling communications. He recalls the moment during training in Texas when he realized he was in for "keeps," committed to a duty for his country from which he could not escape or turn back. He also describes a time on board a B-52 bomber when he looked down the bomber floor and saw in front of him a huge "trash can", which was a container for a nuclear bomb! He also recalls an incident when he had a terrible, gripping experience of facing down a senior officer who had called his bluff about a failure of Larry's assignment which, according to the officer, Larry had not fulfilled properly. Inwardly disputing the senior officer's contention and claim, and with a closed fist on the table, Larry was about to strike him with all his might, but he held firm and resisted the temptation to hit the officer, an act which he knew would have ended his military career. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Mar. 13, 2006. VHP #345 & 346. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPPattersonL (MP3 file). Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**VINCENT PATTERSON** joined the Merchant Marines when he was just 16 years old. He convinced his parents it was not as dangerous as the other branches of service. His goal was to go to sea after watching ships at the New Orleans Port. He served in both World War II and Korea on transport ships, called Liberty ships. The Merchant Marines carried equipment and supplies, food, fuel and troops through submarine-infested waters. On his first trip he saw a German sub blown out of the water in the Gulf of Mexico. (approx. 1 ½ hours. Interview date: July 31, 2003. VHP #184 & 185, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPatternVWaddleL (MP3 file). Interviewer: Betty Richards. A joint interview with veteran Lillard Waddle.)

**CHARLES GORDON PEERMAN, JR.** tells of his entrance as a cadet into the U.S. Navy through the V-12 program at Vanderbilt in 1946-47, and his subsequent service as a medical officer in the Navy from 1950 to 1953, during the Korean War. He tells about his two years of service in Japan and Korea as head of a surgical team, treating wounded U.S. and POW troops on the ground in Korea, on hospital ships in the waters around Korea, and in the evacuation hospital at the Yokosuka Naval Base in Japan. Two specific events stood out for him. One developing a way to treat severe frostbite on hands and feet of US troops where there had never been any precedents for this kind of medical treatment. Another event he recalled was his medical treatment in Korea of a Marine whose legs and one arm had been blown off in battle, rendering him useless to continue functioning on the field. Later, in Japan, he visited that same soldier at an evacuation hospital, after the soldier heard Dr. Peerman's name being announced over the loudspeaker. It was a bitter-sweet revisiting for both of them. He described another curious happening, when he was treating wounded patients from an all-wooden US minesweeper that had been blown up by North Korean aircraft pilots. This was one of the last wooden ships in the U.S. Navy, used in the interests of diverting metal mines, which could not be attracted to a wooden ship. The wounded troops had to be treated very gingerly by the medics, since there were no metallic shrapnel pieces from the ship that could be detected and removed by use of x-ray equipment. (approx. 1 hour 30 min. Interview date: May 23, 2005. VHP #297 & 298. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPPeermanC (MP3 file). Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**GEORGE GRAHAM PERRY, JR.** served in the U.S. Army during World War II as a member of the 14<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Division, attaining the rank of colonel. He served in North Africa, Sicily, England, and Western Europe. In this interview conducted by his son, Perry tells about his service in these various locations, including Normandy, St. Lo, Carenten, the Battle of the Bulge, and the advance on Berlin. He also tells about some of the artifacts he brought home. Perry tells about his colonel who set out to be a hero, and was killed when trying to locate a German 88 gun. Perry sang in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Brigade quartet, and performed at a Christmas party for General Patton. There they changed the lyrics

to the tune of "the alma mater song," calling it instead "Blood & Guts" in Patton's honor. Patton listened intently, clicked his heels at the conclusion of the song, and marched out of the room. (approx. 2 hr. 30 min. Interview date: circa 1991. VHP CD #7 & 8. File format: Windows Media Player Audio. Interviewer: George Graham Perry III.)

**DONALD OLIVER PETERSON** tells of his experiences between July 1943 and February 1946, when he served as a 1st Lieutenant in the Army Air Corps with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Squadron, 22<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Group, 5<sup>th</sup> Air Force. He describes his various pilot training programs at military installations in the U.S., which prepared him for a position as a navigator assigned to a B-24 bomber aircraft. He then tells of his various engagements in the Pacific theater, which included bombing Japanese installations in the Philippine Islands (from Samar Island), Clark Field in the Philippines, then to Formosa, the harbors of Hong Kong, and Shanghai. After the atom bombing in Japan closed out the war, he flew a reconnaissance mission over Okinawa and Japan. He returned to the U.S. on the B-24, stopping at three island ports on the way to San Francisco. He shares several humorous incidents, including when he was in Los Angeles in December 1944 and was photographed with Sophie Tucker, the "Red Hot Mama," who told him, "Put your arm around me, Slim!" Another humorous incident occurred in the Philippines during a USO show. A pretty American show girl invited a sailor to come up on stage. One did, went right into the arms of the young singer, and a near full-blown riot ensued. He also tells about more serious subjects, however. On one Philippine mission his B-24 lost two outboard engines, and couldn't maintain altitude. His experienced pilot friend headed toward a fighter airstrip near Lingayen Gulf, going through mountain passes, losing altitude, and finally landed on too-short a strip, but he managed it well. A curious Filipino -- who had never seen a US plane this big - invited the crew to his stilt-house for dinner. They were served delicious cooked bananas and potent rice wine. As six-foot Don stepped down a ladder to the ground, he put his hand on a tree to steady himself. The teenage daughter was right there. She looked at the tall Peterson and said, "You are so big!", and zoomed under his arm to freedom. On a more somber note, he tells about a reconnaissance mission over Japan on September 1, 1945, at the war's end, when his B-24 flew over Hiroshima, Tokyo, and returned to Okinawa. What he saw of Hiroshima blew his mind and heart, and left a terrible shock to his system. He had flown 39 combat missions, but had never seen anything like that before, and hoped that he never would have to again. Don has since dedicated his life to peace, not war. (Approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Nov. 5, 2007. Digital recording: VHPPetersonD (MP3 file). Transcript #522. Interviewer: Bob Richardson)

**MORRIS RICHARD PHELPS**, a Gallatin native, enlisted in the Navy four months prior to the Pearl Harbor attack and served a six-year term which included the entirety of World War II. His ships transported and landed troops in North Africa, Italy, and southern France, and also landed occupation forces in Japan. After

the war, he participated in atomic tests in the South Pacific, to which he attributes the deaths of two of his later infant children. (approx. 1 hour. Interview date: Sept. 30, 2002. VHP #82. Transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPPhelpsM (MP3 file). Interviewer: Ronnie Pugh.)

**BILL R. PHILLIPS**, who was Deputy Mayor of Nashville at the time of this interview, focuses on his one year of duty with the Air Force, serving in Vietnam during 1969-70 as a staff sergeant, working as a news reporter, and an adviser to the South Vietnamese Army. He reported to both the Marines and the Army, primarily in Da Nang, with occasional visits and service in Saigon. He speaks of his close relationship with a Vietnamese combat photographer, Sgt. Tu Vu, which lasted for the entire year of his service in Vietnam, where they protected and supported each other in their times of need. The Vietnamese sergeant came to Phillips' aid when Phillips went through an agonizing bout of diarrhea and dysentery. Tu Vu took him to be treated by a doctor, who turned out to be a veterinarian. During one mission, Tu Vu was wounded in a skirmish with both Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops. Phillips, knowing how wounds can become infectious and miserable, convinced a U.S. medical team to evacuate Tu Vu on their helicopter, which allowed him to get first-class treatment, enabling him to fully recover. Phillips later commented, "It was the natural thing to do for a buddy." Phillips recounted his memories of his experience by reflecting how opposed he was to going to Vietnam at the outset. But in later years, he realized it was the experience he would not have wanted to miss in his life, because he felt it made him a more mature, disciplined, and caring individual. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Jan. 4, 2005. VHP #294 & 295. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPPhillipsB (MP3 file). Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**VICTOR CLAUDE PIRTLE** is a Vietnam-era veteran who served in the U.S. Navy from 1966 to 1969. He grew up and went to school in Iowa, then joined the Navy. The primary focus of his story is on how he went from being a "gung ho" sailor to becoming an opponent of the war in Vietnam. The other part of his story focuses on how he acted upon the strong anti-war feelings he developed and the consequences he experienced as a result of acting on those feelings. His story begins at his first duty assignment which was overseas to Guam Naval Air Station (NAS), where he served as a clerk in aviation supply. His unit's job was to order materials for the aircraft based at NAS Guam, including munitions, especially both conventional and napalm bombs. He talks about his gradual realization that what he was doing "was ordering things that killed people." At the same time, he was growing disillusioned about the war because of stories he was hearing about what was actually happening in Vietnam, most of which came from his wife who was involved in the anti-war movement. He said that "by the end of the Guam tour, I was ready to get out of the Navy—by any means possible!" Toward that end, his first action after coming back to the U.S. for a short visit after his service in Guam and his next duty assignment aboard the aircraft carrier *U.S.S. Enterprise* was to seek out both the ACLU and anti-war people in Berkeley to help him file the necessary paperwork to become a

Conscientious Objector (CO). He decided to go AWOL when the *Enterprise* docked in Alameda, California, prior to its leaving for Vietnam, but he was picked up by the Shore Patrol fifteen days later and placed under house arrest. When he was released from house arrest, instead of reporting back to his ship, he went to a friend's house where he stayed for a while. After more than forty days of being AWOL, when he could be declared a deserter, he sought assistance from an ACLU lawyer, who helped him turn himself in, after his conscientious objector paperwork had been filed. When he returned to the Navy, he was put in the brig for several days, court martialed and sent to a psychiatric facility at Oak Knoll Naval Hospital. After approximately two months at Oak Knoll, he was told by a Naval lawyer that "a deal had been made" (with no details given to him) and that he was going to be discharged from the Navy with an honorable discharge for medical reasons. These experiences were devastating to him, resulting in the failure of four marriages. He had terrible recurring nightmares about a fire that occurred on board the *Enterprise* while it was enroute from Washington state to Alameda, California. He "self-medicated" for many years to escape these memories. He also had difficulty returning to civilian life because of the pro-war view of many people in the country. He has spent ten years trying to get PTSD benefits from the VA, without success. He said, "I felt raped [and] violated by the experience of war." (Approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Nov. 27, 2007. Digital recording: VHPPirtleV (MP3 file). Transcript #525. Interviewer: Larry Patterson).

**ALBERT LEE POWELL** served in the Air Force from 1954-1958 and was in the Tennessee Air National Guard until 1990. He carried cargo to troops during the Vietnam War. He was selected to fly President Eisenhower's plane on Eisenhower's "Good Will Tour" to embassies around the world. He was the pilot of the first plane to land in Vietnam for "Operation Christmas Star," carrying in Christmas gifts as well as supplies to the military. He piloted the plane that flew in by instrument and dropped supplies into Korea especially in the valleys after the war. He also discusses missions to Madrid, Spain; South America; and elsewhere. (Approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Oct. 16, 2007. Digital recording: VHPPowellA (MP3 file). Transcript #519. Interviewer: Betty Richards.)

**KENNETH RICHARD POWELL**, from Connecticut, was drafted into the Army in 1942, where he served initially with the 3rd Army Medical unit. He later transferred to the Army Air Corps, in which he had a great interest. After training in several bases in the U.S., he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant. He earned his pilot wings, and became a co-pilot of a B-17 bomber with the 8th Air Force, based at Deenethorpe, England. In June 1944, his plane was shot down by German planes, on his third mission, while bombing the city of Munich, Germany. He spent the rest of the war in a large prison camp at Barth, Germany. He tells his story of confinement, describing various activities he engaged in within the camp, including using his crafting skills and ingenuity to build heaters, stoves, a clock, and other useful items for the prisoners. His Christian faith sustained him in prison, where he was assisted in worship and Bible study by various Army chaplains, assigned to the camp as volunteers. The

entire camp was freed by Russian troops in May 1945. To celebrate, the former prisoners and Russian troops constructed a massive BBQ pit, and feasted on American BBQ beef. Powell returned to the US, coming into New York, then to Fort Devens, Massachusetts, where he was discharged. He says, however, that he continued to serve another two years in the military before returning to civilian life. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Apr. 14, 2008. Digital recording: VHPPowellK (MP3 file). Transcript #531. Interviewers: Bob Richardson, with assistance from Mr. Powell's wife, Kathleen, and their daughter, Kenna Eaton.)

**PHYLLIP B.---** – see entry alphabetized under last initial.

**VAUGHAN PRITCHETT** served in the U.S. Navy from January 1965 to January, 1969, enlisting at the age of 19. After basic training, he was sent to Pensacola, Florida for specialty training in cryptographic operations, and was assigned to the *USS Jamestown* (AGTR3) an intelligence-gathering ship which operated in the South China Sea, primarily off the coast of Vietnam. For the last two years of his Navy tour, he was assigned to shore duty in Japan, continuing in classified intelligence operations. Since much of what he did was highly classified, he does not provide many details about his work. Instead, he describes what life was like at sea, including riding out typhoons on a small ship; the difficulty of getting to his ship assignment while it was at sea; and his experiences in the various ports of call including Hong Kong, Taipei, Bangkok, Thailand; Subic Bay, Philippines; and Yokuska, Japan. He tells about sailors' priorities while on shore leave, including getting a good meal, being a tourist, and meeting women – and speaks frankly about prostitution and venereal disease. Pritchett speaks repeatedly about the pride he has in having served his country, and his faith and confidence in a new generation of veterans. He tells briefly of his activities protesting the Vietnam War when he was in college after his service, and sees no conflict in having served in the military and protesting the same war. He concludes with a direct statement for his son, and future generations, reflecting on his pride in service, his country, and the importance of honor. (approx. 2 hr. Interview date: Feb. 13, 2003. VHP #126 & 127. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.) RESTRICTION: No publication or other reproduction without Mr. Pritchett's permission. See transcript for full restriction.

**MYRTLE QUALLS-WULF** was born in Missouri on March 3, 1919 and moved to Nashville to live with her aunt after she graduated as valedictorian of her high school class. She enrolled at Watkins Institute, but it was to be many years before she completed college, again with honors, and an advanced degree from David Lipscomb and MTSU respectively. She married, had two children, and was operating a boarding house with her husband at the outset of World War II. Mr. Qualls was in a defense job, had children, and was 4-F because of flat feet, so he did not serve, although other members of his and her family were overseas. Mrs. Qualls-Wulf applied at AVCO (later Vultee) and was tested, accepted, and worked on the assembly line as a literal "Rosie the Riveter," responsible for assembling the tail-gunner seat and mounting it on the B-24s that

were in production at that time. A woman from Portland, TN that had one young child was looking for a place to stay, so she received room and board from the Qualls and a small salary for staying at home and taking care of the children. When Mrs. Qualls-Wulf became pregnant with her third child, she had to quit working for health reasons; however, she recalls many stories about rationing, work on the farm, and conditions during the Depression, leading up to the War, and after the war. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: June 23, 2005. VHP #322. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Alice Swanson.)

**ALVIN H. RAFF** served in the U.S. Army from September 1942 to March 1946. He grew up in the Chicago area and he tells about life growing up in one of the Jewish communities there. At the age of 20 he decided to enlist in the Army with the understanding that he was going to be in a select group of 200 people who were to take part in a specialized program designed to send them to civilian schools for training in Signal Corps operations—after which they were to be commissioned as Lieutenants in the Army. However, when the Army decided to discontinue this program during his ninth month of training, he was sent instead to Camp Crowder, Missouri as a private where he went through basic training and received additional training in Signal Corps operations. After completing basic training, he was then sent to cooking school and in late 1943, he was assigned as a cook at Pine Camp, New York in a newly-formed, highly-secret special operations unit. They were sworn to secrecy for 50 years; only recently has that restriction expired. He says that the unit's mission was to employ deceptive communications procedures on the battlefield designed to confuse the enemy. This deception was to take place through the use of audio-recorded sounds of tank movements, troop movements, and similar noises, which were played through loud speakers that were installed in specially-modified tanks. In the late winter/early spring of 1944, his unit was shipped to Italy where they engaged in night operations, getting close to an enemy position and playing these recorded sounds in an attempt to convince the enemy that they were surrounded and outnumbered. One noteworthy success they had with such an operation was when an entire German unit surrendered to their company, when in truth, it was Raff's company who was outnumbered by the Germans. Another noteworthy story he shares is his description of watching Italian civilians hanging Mussolini's corpse, and their virulent reaction to the dictator – beating his body even after he was dead. In addition to his military experiences, Raff also talks about what it was like being a Jew in the U.S. military, and at times being confronted with anti-Semitism among his fellow soldiers. (approx. 3 hrs. Interview date: June 22, 2004. VHP TAPES #246, 247, & 248. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPRAffA (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**DOROTHY (RICHARDS) RAND** served in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC), which later became the Women's Army Corps (WAC), from 1942 until 1945. She served for a short time in New York at Aircraft Warning Centers, and

soon went overseas. It took three attempts and 45 days to get across the ocean, and on one occasion their ship was grazed by a torpedo. Meanwhile, the other half of the WAC unit had arrived in England nearly a month earlier, and feared that the rest of their group had been lost at sea. After reuniting in England, the 174<sup>th</sup> Headquarters Company WAC was assigned to General Eisenhower's headquarters, Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF). Rand tells about German bombing and strafing runs in London and the English countryside; being stationed at Versailles after the liberation of Paris, including an assassination attempt on Eisenhower; relations with local civilians in England, France, and Germany; and the devastation of Frankfurt, Germany. She also speaks about women in military service in general, and the importance of finally having a memorial to female veterans. (approx. 1 hr. 20 min. [followed by comments while looking through her scrapbooks – approx. 45 min.] Interview date: Aug. 13, 2002. VHP TAPES #61 & 62, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPRandD (MP3 file). Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**THURMAN L. RANDOLPH** was drafted into the Navy in December 1943, where he served in the amphibious forces aboard LST 739, participating in five invasions in the Pacific, including Leyte and Okinawa. His gun was credited with shooting down 3 suicide planes. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Sept. 4, 2002. VHP TAPE #83 & 84, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Richard Randolph.)

**RUBIN RATKIN** grew up in New York City and served in the U.S. Navy from June 1943 to November 1945. He initially avoided the early rounds of the draft because of being married and having a child, but ultimately he was drafted into the Navy. After basic training, he was assigned to duty aboard the *U.S.S. Calamares* a World War I era civilian cargo ship that the Navy had taken over and converted into something akin to a “floating grocery warehouse.” Its primary mission was to restock ships in the fleet with food and other supplies. He began his tour of duty on the *Calamares* as a basic seaman and advanced to the position of storekeeper. His story contains reminiscences about his travels throughout the Pacific — primarily Australia and New Zealand, as well as other ports of call. One story he tells is about the astonishment he felt when his ship first sailed into Pearl Harbor in late 1943 and he saw remnants of the devastation from the attack of December 7, 1941. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Feb. 5, 2004. VHP TAPE #217, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**LARRY EUGENE REID** is a Vietnam veteran who served in the 4/47<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division of the U.S. Army from November 1967 to June 1969. He was born in Winchester, Tennessee, but grew up and went to school in the Nashville area. In the late fall of 1967, he was drafted and sent to Ft. Campbell, Kentucky for basic training. He then went to Ft. Lewis, Washington for advanced infantry training, and was sent to Vietnam. Reid’s story is filled with many interesting, and often bittersweet, anecdotes about his experiences in



Vietnam. For example, when asked what his initial impression of Vietnam was when he arrived there, he said that what caught his attention first was “the smell”—“the smell of smoke in the air, the smell of sewage [from human waste that was being burned], and the smell of farm animals.” As he was going through acclimation training there before being assigned to a regular duty unit, he felt like he was “on a different planet.” He was assigned to the 9th Infantry which, as part of a joint Army-Navy group known as the “Mobile Riverine Force,” was based close to the Mekong River and operated primarily in the Mekong Delta. Not long after his arrival, his base came under attack by the Viet Cong. An enemy grenade landed not far from where he and three of his fellow soldiers were standing at the time. PFC James Fous, who was about 10 feet away from the other three, threw himself—without hesitation—on the grenade to protect his fellow soldiers. He was killed instantly, and was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Reid also talked about reaching for his canteen later that day and noticing a hole in it—only to discover the hole had been caused by a piece of the grenade that had killed Fous passing through it. Reid felt certain, then, that he could not survive a year in Vietnam. Two days after the incident with Fous, Reid had another close call. He was on point when a firefight broke out, and his team leader was killed not far from him. He could not understand how his leader was killed, and he had survived. Reid talks in some depth about the impact his Vietnam experiences had on him during his post-war life. He was eventually diagnosed with PTSD<sup>o</sup>, which has manifested itself through anger, four marriages (three of which ended in divorce) and a lot of disillusionment about the merits of the war he served in. Although she does not speak, his wife was present during this interview. (Approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: May 10, 2007. Digital recording: VHPReidL (MP3 file). Transcript #510. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**STANLEY RENAS** enlisted in the Army in January 1941 and served two years as a cadet in the West Point Preparatory School in Fort McPherson, Georgia. He served in the Army Air Force Tactical Training Command (AAFTTC) in Sioux Falls, South Dakota where he was trained in radio maintenance. He spent the next 2 years in India, in both Assam province and Karachi. He returned home soon after the war was declared over and worked on his undergraduate degree from Columbia. He was recalled to active duty during the Korean War and was initially sent to the Classification Center in San Antonio, Texas and worked as a psychological warfare officer. He was then sent for a refresher course in German at Georgetown and then worked for Voice of America in New York City for 6 months. He then began working in Boise, Idaho on psychological warfare techniques. Eventually this program fell apart and he spent the remainder of his time in the Philippines as an intelligence officer briefing high ranking officials. When he returned home, he remained in the reserves for a while but eventually left, feeling that with a wife, children, and a small business, he did not want to have to be ready to ship out in 30 days as required. (approx. 1 hr. 45 min.)

Interview date: July 15, 2004. VHP TAPE #253 & 254. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Evviva Weinraub.)

**DOROTHY RICHARDS – see Dorothy (Richards) Rand.**

**HENRY STANLEY “STAN” RICHARDS** served in the Air Force during the Korean Conflict. He was stationed in Greenland as a supply officer. The remote post at Thule monitored Soviet activity, and was within bombing distance of Moscow. He tells of the loneliness of the post, the living conditions, and day to day activities. He also mentions the influence of his older brother, Thomas, who became the man of the family when their father died. Thomas served in Europe during World War II and was with the Army at the Chosin Reservoir in Korea. He encouraged Stan to serve in the armed forces, but urged him to join the Navy or the Air Force, rather than the Army. (approx. 45 min. Mar. 29, 2002. VHP TAPE #6, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**ROBERT P. RICHARDSON, JR.** enlisted in the U.S. Army in the summer of 1944 after his graduation from high school, and was discharged in the summer of 1948. He served as a POW Interrogator for Army Intelligence, using the Japanese language, in which he was trained to be an interpreter and translator. He served for two years on the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel in Korea, where he interrogated Japanese prisoners of war, along with many Koreans, who came south as refugees from North Korea. His work as a commander of an intelligence unit was during his assignment with the 32<sup>nd</sup> Infantry regiment of the 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, which occupied south Korea following World War II. After the war, he had the opportunity to witness a day of the proceedings in the War Crimes Trials in Tokyo in 1946. He tells about the uproar caused by U.S. Army Major Moore, an official interpreter for the trials, who made an embarrassing and prejudicial comment during the testimony given to the court by Henry Pu Yi, the last emperor of China, and the puppet emperor of Manchuria, installed and used by the Japanese. In Pu Yi's response to a question put to him by the trial prosecutor, Major Moore asserted, in effect, that one could not trust an Oriental to tell the truth. After a considerable uproar and temporary halting of the trial, the major was reprimanded by the president of the tribunal, and then made a full and complete apology for his remarks. (approx. 90 min. Interview date: Apr. 8, 2002. VHP TAPE #9 & 10, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPRichardsonR (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**SYLVIA RISMAN – see Sylvia (Risman) Hyman.**

**ANN (STEVENS) ROBERTS** is a veteran of WWII who served in the Women Marines from November, 1944 to May, 1946. She was born in Huntsville, Alabama and moved to Nashville when she was 12. After graduating high school, she worked for National Life until she was 20, when she decided to join the Women Marines—technically, the Women's Reserve of the U.S. Marine Corps

(since the women's unit had not been officially merged into the Marines at that time). She was sent to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina for basic training. At the time, women were not assigned to combat areas so after basic training she was assigned to what was essentially the data processing office at Cherry Point MCAS in North Carolina and then to a similar position at the Navy Department's Marine Corps office in Washington, DC. Her story includes reminiscences about her experiences during basic training and her other duty assignments. One anecdote includes a humorous story about a trip to New York, when she and some of her fellow Women Marines never had to pay for a meal because civilians always took good care of the people in uniform. She also recalls being at work in Washington, DC on the day President Roosevelt died. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Oct. 21, 2003. VHP #194. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewers: Larry Patterson and Evviva Weinraub.)

**JAMES DALE ROBERTSON**, who prefers going by the name Dale, is a Vietnam veteran who grew up and went to school in the Nashville area. He attended Tennessee Tech University where he took part in the school's Army ROTC program, attending an ROTC summer camp between his junior and senior years. Upon graduation in June of 1969, he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant and was then sent to Ft. Sill, Oklahoma to attend a three-month training program to become a field artillery officer. His next assignment was to Ft. Benning, Georgia, where he took additional training. In July 1970, he shipped off to Vietnam, where he served with D Battery, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 320<sup>th</sup> Artillery (Airborne), 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division. He was sent to a forward base in the northern part of South Vietnam (just below the Demilitarized Zone). He alternated between assignments there and at the battalion's main base of operations in the Qui Nhon area. While assigned to the forward base, he served as a forward observer attached to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion (Airborne) of the 506<sup>th</sup> Infantry, and directed artillery attacks by batteries of 105mm and 155mm howitzers. During one of these assignments, about two months after his arrival in country, he was shot in the lung. He was evacuated to a hospital at Phu Bai where doctors removed the bullet and his left lung. He eventually was transferred to a hospital at Fort Gordon, Georgia, where his recovery took another two months, until he received a medical disability discharge. He shares some of his thoughts and doubts about the war, feeling that even during the time that the war was a mistake. He also had little confidence in the generals who were in charge. (approx. 2 hr. 15 min. Interview date: July 8, 2010. Digital recording: VHPRobertsonJ (MP3 file). Index available (filed with transcripts, #543). Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**KEITH BARON ROBERTSON** grew up in Jackson, Tennessee. After finishing high school, he enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1972. After completing basic training, he went to Ft. Hood, Texas to train as a combat engineer. While there, he transferred to a Special Services unit as a boxer (having been a boxer in school) and joined the boxing team. He fought in 7 matches at various Army posts and had a record of 4 wins and 3 losses. After being discharged from the Army, he boxed professionally for a short while, but had to give it up because, as

he indicated in the interview, the repeated blows he took to his head ended up damaging his nervous system. He says he has been homeless for the last 15-20 years. (approx. 30 min. Interview date: Oct. 18, 2008. VHP TAPE #370. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson. Interview was conducted on October 18, 2008 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**HARRY ALAN ROSENBERGER** grew up in the rural community of Micanopy, Florida. His family was Mennonite – originally from Pennsylvania – and their values of treating all people with respect and dealing honestly with them were what his grandparents and parents instilled in him. He enlisted in the Army in July 1940 and after completing just a few weeks in basic training, was sent to the post finance office for training in finance. After a short tour of duty in Bermuda, he went to Officer Candidate School (OCS) and after commissioning, eventually returned to the Finance Office. Assigned to U.S. installations during most all of World War II, he was then assigned to a unit in Chungking, China near the end of the war. He remained in service after the war, and when the Korean War broke out, he was assigned to Korea in July 1950, where he was attached to the 2nd Division. As the division was moving north toward the Yalu River, the train he was on got surrounded by the Chinese. He said they were stranded without food for two weeks until reinforcements came and forced the Chinese out of the way. After that, he, along with the unit's other non-combatants, were moved to the rear echelon in Seoul. Throughout his story, there are frequent references to the Mennonite beliefs that were instilled in him, such as: "You never exploit someone who has less. Every human being is as important as every other human being." He tells how these beliefs carried him not only through the military but through civilian life as well. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Jul 24, 2008. Digital recording: VHPRosenbergerH (MP3 file). Transcript #533. Interviewers: Larry Patterson, with assistance from Mr. Rosenberger's daughter, Jody Robinson.)

**ERIC ROSENFELD** was born in Germany, where his parents owned a dry goods store in the village. His father died when anti-Semitism began its rise in Germany and he was sent away to school north of his village. Eventually, Eric was sent to live in an orphanage with other Jewish children where he received training in cabinetry. Eric left the country with the last group of refugee children. He saw his mother for the last time waiting on a train platform in Germany. She later died in Auschwitz. When Eric arrived in the United States, he lived with his cousins in New York and worked with his brother. He was transferred to an office in Chicago where he lived until he was drafted two years after he arrived in the United States. Mr. Rosenfeld was given citizenship soon after being drafted. Eric arrived in Europe and was part of a replacement regiment. He said he spent much of his time waiting for something to happen or for someone to send him out. He eventually became part of an intelligence group who interrogated POW's. At the end of the war, Mr. Rosenfeld returned to Chicago where he met

his wife and began a family. Mr. Rosenfeld moved to Nashville in the late 1970s as head of the company he began working for when he initially arrived in the United States. (approx. 2 hr. Interview date: Dec. 11, 2003. VHP #211 & 212. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPRosenfeld (MP3 file). Interviewer: Evviva Weinraub.)

**KENNETH L. ROSS SR.** enlisted in the Army Air Corps in early 1942 and was trained as a bombardier. He did well, and although he had not attended college and was under 21, he was made a 2nd Lt. at the age of 20. He stayed in the US for the duration of the war as a bombardier instructor, leaving as a captain in 1945. Afterward, he attended refrigeration school and retired from Ford Motor after 38 years. Mr. Ross is active in his veteran's group and has attended many reunions over the years. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Sept. 12, 2002. VHP #73, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Jim Lummus.)

**MARY D. (MAYNARD) ROSS** grew up in rural West Tennessee near the Carroll County town of Mckenzie. She lived on a four-generation farm with her maternal grandparents and her great-grandparents. She tells about life in this small town and the influence of growing up in a multi-generation household and the closeness of family. She credits her grandmother with giving her the encouragement to join the Army after high school in 1973.

She describes her early training, and her stint in communications, patching through phone calls from soldiers in Vietnam to families in the United States, a job she found very satisfactory. She was on the line with the radio operator at the American Embassy in Saigon when the line went dead as the compound came under attack. Later, the radioman called her base to let them know he was OK; he had evacuated on the last helicopter out.

Deciding to pursue a career in the military, Ross took specialized training in psychiatric care. She worked in hospitals stateside and in Germany in the years following Vietnam, and during the Cold War. She tells about the emotional difficulty of such work. She tells about life in Berlin during the Cold War and the periodic "shows of force" made by both the U.S. and the Communists, and a frightening incident during an anti-American demonstration when a kind German police officer helped her and a friend avoid an accidental but potentially volatile confrontation. She had her daughter in Berlin, and she discusses briefly what it was like to be pregnant in the military.

She eventually returned to the U.S. for further training, being told that if she wanted promotion, she needed to leave Germany. During her first day at her new training assignment, she and her roommate were propositioned by a male instructor. After her training was completed, she reported the incident and other occurrences at the same base. Her superiors strongly discouraged her from reporting the matter to higher command, telling her repeatedly, "Don't you know you are going to ruin the careers of several men?" She acknowledged the ramifications of her actions, but nevertheless pursued the matter. A very short time after her report was forwarded to higher command, she was sent back to

Germany – an ironic reversal of what she had been told about the necessity of leaving Germany to increase her chances of promotion. She says she doesn't know if the two actions were linked, but to this day, she believes that standing up to the discrimination she and other women soldiers received may have cost her a promotion to E-8.

After receiving training as a medic, she was eventually assigned to the 101st Airborne Division as a Staff Sergeant. By this time, she had divorced and remarried in 1990. Her husband was an infantryman in the 101st, and her daughter was in the second grade. Within two weeks of their marriage, both she and her husband found themselves in the vast desert of Saudi Arabia, as part of Desert Shield, in response to Sadaam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. Ross tells about the excruciating difficulty of leaving her daughter, about the guilt she felt, and about "doing the right thing" in answering her country's call to duty. She speaks at length about her service during Desert Shield and Desert Storm, including various aspects of the environmental conditions; weathering a sand storm; witnessing the effects of the burning Kuwaiti oil wells; concerns and preventative measures taken in anticipation of NBC (Nuclear, Biological, Chemical) attacks, and possible links to Gulf War Syndrome; and a wide range of other subjects – including using a herd of camels as a practical expedient to detect and avoid minefields. She tells about the grief she experienced when she had to treat and evacuate one of the members of her own unit, who eventually died, and she tells of one frightening episode where she and her medical unit of twenty soldiers were the only American forces deposited on an airstrip in the desert. The infantry was supposed to have arrived beforehand, but were nowhere to be seen. Bedouins were nearby, and it was uncertain how much of a threat they posed. She describes the tenseness and isolation, and the responsibility she bore as the ranking individual in the situation. After a number of hours, the infantry finally arrived. In the midst of the advance into Iraq, she tells of the disbelief and shock of finding out that a cease fire had been declared. She said that the withdrawal from Iraq actually saw more American casualties - mostly from land mines and accidents – than did the advance. She mentions the support of her commanding officer and his stubborn advocacy to see that she was awarded the Combat Medical Badge for her service in the Gulf – making her one of the few women to receive such an honor. Ross reflects further on her military career, on the experiences of women in the military, and discusses briefly her involvement in establishing the Women Veterans Network, a support group for women veterans throughout the state of Tennessee. She also mentions briefly her work with Operation Stand Down, an assistance organization for homeless veterans, where she serves as president of the Board of Directors. (Approx. 3 hrs. 15 min. Interview date: Oct. 2, 2006. Digital recording: VHPRossM (MP3 file). Transcript #500. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

In a second interview, Ross continues telling about her service in the Gulf. She also describes the many changes she saw during her time in service as the Army moved away from separate WAC units to full gender integration – except for the

very most frontline combat positions. She also speaks at length about PTSD® in general, and specifically as it relates to women in the military, including some occasional personal examples. She says that in addition to preparing to face an external threat to our country, female soldiers sometimes faced very personal attacks, nearly always of a sexual nature, from their own fellow soldiers. Ross says that PTSD can be caused by either repetitive stress, like that experienced by medical workers from seeing trauma time and time again, or by a single specific incident, like sexual assault or rape. In addition, Ross also talks about the difficulty of making the transition from the military to the civilian world, explaining that even day-to-day decision making was difficult at first, since the military had always made those decisions for her. She also discusses how her and her husband's service affected their family life and children.

She speaks with great emotion about the personal importance of the Women In Military Service to America (WIMSA) memorial, and what it meant to her to be there for the dedication. She was deeply moved by seeing Rhonda Cornum speak at that event. While in the Gulf, Ross's medical team was called to the helicopter crash site where Cornum went down, and although they searched diligently, they could not find Cornum. "She is a true hero," says Ross. The trip to WIMSA resulted in the formation of the Women Veterans Network in Nashville, a support and fellowship organization for women veterans, in which Ross has been very active. Ross also tells about her involvement in Operation Stand Down, and the operation of Angel's Landing, a transition home for homeless women veterans in Nashville. Finally, Ross tells a little about her work as a member of the Tennessee State Veterans' Homes Board, being the first woman to serve on that board. (Approx. 2 hrs. 30 min. Interview date: Nov. 20, 2006. Digital recording: VHPRossM (MP3 file). Transcript #501. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**ROBERT ROURKE SR.** was just 18 years old and working for the American Telephone and Telegraph Company when he was drafted into the Army Air Corps in 1943. He tells numerous stories, many with a humorous touch, of his training in the United States as well as his experiences overseas. He also mentions being escorted by the "Checkerboard Squadron" of the Tuskegee Airmen. Rourke and his crew were sent to Italy as part of the 484<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group with the 426<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron. On his first mission, the plane had engine trouble and crash landed in Yugoslavia. He and his crew were rescued by Tito's Partisans, who were their allies, and were treated kindly for the month they had to wait before returning to their base in Italy. Another memorable mission was in Dresden, Germany having to fly through blinding flak and seeing other planes getting blown up. The crew eventually finished 35 missions. After the war, he returned to work at Union Carbide and later went into business with a friend to form the Dealy Rourke Personnel Service. (approx. 50 min. Interview date: Apr. 15, 2002. VHP TAPE # 11, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer Linda Barnickel)

**DARRYLE GLOVER RUCKER** served in the U.S. Air Force from 1960 to 1969. He comes from a military family. His grandfather was a cavalryman in the famous "Buffalo Soldiers" during the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and his father was an enlisted man in the Air Force. Darryle grew up on several military bases and went to school wherever the family happened to be stationed at the time. At the age of 18 he decided to enlist in the Air Force. After doing a short stint as an electrical specialist on aircraft, the Air Force sent him to missile school where he received training as a systems specialist on the Atlas Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM). He was stationed at a missile base in Cheyenne, Wyoming during the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, when he honestly thought they would be given the launch codes at any minute. He also tells what it was like to be an African-American in the military during the periods before and after the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1965. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Nov. 20, 2004. VHP TAPE #308. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewers: Larry Patterson, Nashville Room volunteer and Leah Phillips, Lipscomb University student. Interview was conducted on November 20, 2004 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down,\* where Mr. Rucker was volunteering.)

**DAVID RUTHERFORD** served in both the U.S. Merchant Marine and the U.S. Army Transport Corps from March 1943 to June 1946. He grew up in the Nashville area, and after graduating from high school in 1941, he went to work as a machinist at the Vultee Aircraft plant. In 1943, at the age of 20, he decided to enlist in the Merchant Marine Service rather than be drafted into the Army. He was sent to St. Petersburg, Florida for basic training where he learned military procedures and maritime operations and after basic, he was assigned to the U.S. Army Transport Corps and for a short period, he helped train new cadets. Most of his story focuses on his experiences as a crew member on board a fuel-tanker ship in the European theater. He talks at length about what he experienced as his ship hauled fuel across the English Channel from its home port of Dover, England to France and Belgium, without the benefit and safety of a naval escort. After the war ended in Europe, he was then assigned to a troop ship and made two trips to South America transporting Spanish-speaking troops back to their home countries in Puerto Rico and South America. One memorable anecdote is when he tells about sitting on the beach at Dover, watching a British and a German plane involved in an aerial dogfight, and then deciding to go inside after a while because he got tired of watching it. Also memorable was his post-war story about working for Senator Al Gore, Sr. along with his reminiscences about Al Gore, Jr. when the younger Gore was just a little boy. (approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: Nov. 13, 2003. VHP TAPES #195 & #196. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPRutherfordD (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson)

**SUE SAMS – See Jack Robert SPENCE**



**ALFRED HARVEY SANDERS** served two periods of time in the U.S. military. The first was with the Army, from the fall of 1939 to October 1945, with the 122<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery Band, part of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division, which served in the Pacific. The second period, from 1948 to 1962, was with the U.S. Air Force. Harvey preferred to describe his experiences in the first period, during World War II. He entered the service in Chicago, at age 16, because of his interest and skills in music. He was assigned to an army band, retaining this assignment through the war. He was trained not only to develop and direct a musical band for his Army unit, but also to serve as a combat infantryman. He served both of these with zeal, dedication, and distinction. His division and regiment were engaged in the fighting against the Japanese from Australia and New Guinea all the way up to and including the battles in the Philippine Islands. Harvey returned home in October 1945. Although he was engaged in heavy fire and close contact with the Japanese, particularly in New Guinea, and later in the Philippines, few in his unit were wounded, and none were killed. While crossing the Pacific Ocean, their ship was tracked by a Japanese submarine. On deck, Harvey and his fellow soldiers watched as an Australian destroyer came to their defense. The crew of the destroyer finally made a direct hit, as Harvey and his fellow troops on the ship watched the submarine explode and break up into pieces before their eyes. (approx. 1 hr. 15 min. Interview date: Feb. 24, 2003. VHP TAPES #128 & 129. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**JEROME C. SANDERS** grew up in Gary, Indiana, and entered the Air Force in 1963 at the age of 17 under what he described as an “involuntary” enlistment. He went to the Air Force Recruitment Center just to take the entrance test—or so he thought. However, a rather unscrupulous recruiter, apparently anxious to meet his recruitment quotas, told him that he was going to have to go to Chicago to finish up the test. So he drove him and some others to the Induction Center in Chicago where they were given physicals and then taken into another room where they were promptly sworn and then put on a plane to San Antonio, Texas to go to basic training—even though he was underage and his parents had not given their permission. When he called his mother and she asked “Where have you been?” he surprised her (and himself) with, “I’m in Texas!” After completing basic training, he was assigned to a supply unit. In that regard he commented that “Blacks were [assigned as] cooks, supply or Air Police. If your name didn’t sound white, you did not make rank!” He was assigned to Dow Air Force Base in Maine, but said he found the civilian community in nearby Bangor to be unfriendly toward Blacks and eventually volunteered for Vietnam just to get out of Bangor. He spent his first year (1964-65) in Thailand, where U.S. forces were serving as advisors only—just before the war started heating up. After one year back in the States, he volunteered again for Vietnam and this time was sent to DaNang in the north for a year (1966-67) to help set up warehouses. He summarized his Vietnam experience by saying “I grew up in Vietnam”—referring to the impact of seeing body bags stacked up high on the flight line and how he

learned not to make friends there because “you don’t know how long they’re going to be around.” During the remainder of his story, he talks about his disillusionment with the VA as far as its treatment of veterans and the difficulty in getting needed services. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Oct. 18, 2008. VHP TAPE #372. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson. Interview was conducted on October 18, 2008 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**JAMES WILSON SCARLETT** served in the U.S. Army from 1952 through 1991, seeing combat action during the Korean War with B Company, 9<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division, at an outpost in the Kumhwa/ Chorwon Valley area—located just a few miles south of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel and very close to the front lines. He tells about the experience of facing combat just 3-4 weeks after his arrival in Korea, and he talks at length and in detail about the experience of having to fight in sub-zero temperatures, combating frostbite as well as the enemy. By his second winter in Korea, the Army clothing and cold-weather gear was much improved, and it helped make the cold more bearable. After the truce between North Korea and South Korea was signed in 1953, his unit was assigned to help dismantle the large number of landmines that were still in place; he came close to almost accidentally stepping on one of those landmines. His story continues with his experiences during his second tour of duty during the mid-to-late 1950’s, all of which was spent stateside as an Army drill instructor at Ft. Chaffee, Arkansas. His story concludes with his experiences during his final tour of duty, all of which was also spent stateside in various career areas—ultimately culminating in his deciding to enter chaplain’s training in 1972 and then being assigned as a Chaplain’s Assistant from 1972 until his retirement from military service in 1991. He also comments upon the contrasts he observed between young men serving in Korea, and those who served in Vietnam, and reflects upon the lessons to be learned by the present generation from veterans of the Korean War. In addition, he speaks frequently about his Christian faith and the role his Korea experience had in influencing him to turn his life over to God. (approx. 1 hr. 40 min. Interview date: may 22, 2003. VHP TAPES #155 & 156, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPScarlettJ (MP3 file). Index available. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**FREDERICK W. SEE** served in both the Vietnam War and the Persian Gulf War. During Vietnam, he served in the 27<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery. He trained at Fort Sill, Oklahoma and was stationed briefly in Germany, before being sent to Vietnam. He particularly recalls nightly strikes against his base, especially during the Tet Offensive. One notable anecdote he shared was about a time he was with his unit in the Vietnamese countryside. A local farmer began waving his hands wildly at the troops. Neither See nor anyone else in his unit spoke Vietnamese, but recalling that Vietnam had been under French rule for many years, See tried communicating with the farmer in French. The farmer told See that his troops were in the middle of a minefield. They carefully extricated themselves by

retracing their steps, and avoided any casualties. During the Persian Gulf War, See served in Saudi Arabia in the military police, coordinating intelligence efforts with members of the Saudi military, and guarding and interrogating enemy prisoners of war. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Nov. 1, 2003. VHP TAPE #208. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPSeeF (MP3 file). Interviewers: Chase Slusher, Lipscomb University student, and Charlie Smith, Nashville Room volunteer. Interview was conducted on November 1, 2003 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down,\* where Mr. See was volunteering.)

**GORDON SHIVAS** served in the US Army from July 1942 to August 1945. After completing basic and advanced training in the Army Air Corps, specializing in bomb sight maintenance, bombardier work and navigation, he was commissioned a 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant in June 1943. He was then assigned to flying B-25-Gs, patrolling the Caribbean waters looking for German submarines. He then trained for bombing flights on B-29s. He was sent to Florida, California, and Arizona, and was finally discharged when the war was over in August 1945. He regretted never being able to serve in Europe, however, he did have one close call. He accompanied a B-25 pilot to fly into Memphis from Clovis, New Mexico. On the way the plane lost one engine. The pilot returned to Clovis, and in his landing approach almost crashed into a B-17, and had to make a belly-landing. No one was killed or injured. He also states that during the training programs preparing for patrolling in the Caribbean, there were more plane accidents in the training exercises than in the “real battles.” (approx. 50 min. Interview date: July 12, 2002. VHP TAPE #24. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**LUCILLE (THOMPSON) SHOW** served in the Women Marines towards the end of World War II. She joined the Marines because she felt that if her brothers could serve in the military, so could she. After basic training at Camp LeJeune, she remained there providing administrative assistance. She was transferred to Pearl Harbor, and en route, VJ day was declared. She remained at Pearl Harbor until the last shipload of soldiers returned to the United States. She returned to San Francisco on the last ship, exactly 4 years to the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor – December 7, 1945. She got back to her family in Ohio by hitchhiking across the country, making it home in time for supper on Christmas Day. She feels that her experiences were typical of women in the military at the time, in that her duties were primarily administrative in nature. She used the G.I. Bill to obtain an Associates Degree in Business Administration and later moved to Nashville. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Nov. 4, 2003. VHP TAPE #190. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Evviva Weinraub.)

**GARY DAWYNE SIMONDS JR.** served as a gunner in the 1/278<sup>th</sup> Regimental Combat Team of the Army National Guard from 2002-2007. His unit was among the first National Guard units to be activated and deployed overseas to Iraq

during Operation Iraqi Freedom (III) in 2004 and 2005. While there, he participated in over 300 patrols during their tour of 364 days. His unit was constantly in danger from Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and Vehicle Borne Explosive Devices (VBEDs). In one incident, he and his driver switched places, so that Simonds was serving as driver. Exhausted, he began to get sleepy and drift off of the road. That action actually saved their lives when an IED exploded on the opposite side of the road. In another incident, he describes what it was like to be on the scene in the aftermath of one of the largest VBED explosions to occur in Iraq. He also tells about some of the grim humor of soldiers and how soldiers become “hardened” due to the circumstances around them. Simonds tells in some detail about his initial idealism, what it was like being in hostile territory, how his experiences in Iraq have changed him, and some of the difficulties he and his family have had upon his return home. (approx. 35 min. Interview date: Oct. 17, 2009. VHP TAPE #373. Index available. Interviewer: Rose Mary Reed. Interview was conducted on October 17, 2009 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**JOHN BRENT SIMPSON** is a Vietnam veteran who served in the U.S. Marine Corps from March 1968 to October 1969. He grew up and went to school in Orlando, Florida. His father worked for a traveling amusement show whose winter base was in Orlando and his mother chose to stay there to raise her children. Simpson is also part Lumbee Indian (a North Carolina tribe recognized by the state but not by the Federal government), inherited from his father’s side. At the age of 16, Simpson left high school and worked with the circus for two years. Then, in early 1968 he decided to enlist in the Marine Corps and was sent to Parris Island, South Carolina for Basic Training. He was then sent to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina for combat engineer training and then jungle warfare school at Camp Pendleton, California. By the late summer of 1968, he was on his way to Vietnam, where he was based at Camp Carroll, near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). Much of his story centers around his experiences while he was there. Shortly after his arrival, the remains of an American soldier were brought into the camp after they were discovered by a patrol. The soldier had apparently wandered out past the perimeter during the night where the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) captured him, tortured him, skinned him, and then wrapped his body in barbed wire before abandoning it. Simpson also spent time at another installation, so close to the DMZ that he could see flags being raised every morning at nearby NVA camp. When President Lyndon Johnson called off the air bombardment campaign in North Vietnam, his location was pounded by North Vietnamese heavy artillery. He dealt with the situation with this philosophy: “You just don’t have a lot of control over what happens to you. You do the best you can to just come home.” One of the more memorable stories appears as a “postscript” to his interview, when he talks about a mission where his unit was sent out to lay landmines along a portion of the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The engineer teams were hiding in tall Buffalo grass after accomplishing their mission, waiting for helicopters to come pick them up. Simpson saw an NVA soldier walk right

past where he was hiding. He was faced with the possibility of having to jump up and kill the NVA soldier with his knife to keep the soldier from giving way the teams' presence. Fortunately, the soldier didn't spot him but instead ended up walking right past him. (Approx. 3 hrs. Interview date: May 16, 2007. Digital recording: VHP Simpson JB (MP3 file). Transcript #511. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**PERNELL A. SIMPSON** served in the U.S. Army from April 1990 to September 1993 and then in the Army National Guard from March 2003 to July 2007. He grew up and went to school in Nashville, graduating from Cohn High School. When he enlisted in the Army in 1990, he was already married and had a young child. He went to Ft. Sill, Oklahoma for basic training and then to Field Artillery Training School at Ft. Ord, California. After being assigned to a unit there, they trained and prepared for possible deployment to the Persian Gulf. However, he stayed at Ft. Ord for the duration of his enlistment and worked in the Accounts Payable office. He was discharged in 1993 and was divorced shortly before that. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, he tried to enlist in the National Guard, but his enlistment was delayed until 2003. Since he left the National Guard in 2007, he has been homeless and that although "grace and mercy" keep him going, he feels frustrated by not having "a place." (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Nov. 4, 2011. VHP TAPE #381. Interviewer: Larry Patterson. Interview was conducted on November 4, 2011 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down. \*)

### **EULA SIMS – See Eula (Sims) Owolo**

**KATHERINE ANN SKOPIK** served in the Army from 1981 to 1990, primarily performing electrical maintenance, inspection and repair on a wide variety of equipment. She was given opportunities as a 20-year-old she would not have had in her hometown, and traveled across the world, in charge of a support unit. She tells of her training and the broadening of her horizons and outlook on life through her military experience. She found her assignments fulfilling, and gained leadership experience. She served in Texas, Germany, and Arizona as a member of various support units, including range, vehicle maintenance, and electronic support. With few regrets, she enjoyed her military service and learned and grew through the excellent, challenging, and sometimes negative experiences it provided. She also speaks about the respectful treatment she received as a woman in the Army, especially as military units moved toward gender-integration, rather than single-sex units, as had been the case prior to her service. One highlight of her military experience came in Bad Toelz, Germany, where her unit provided technical support for a range of units and operations. Her work in support of the 10<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group resulted in the appreciation and respect of one of the U.S. Army's elite units for her and her team, giving her a most cherished souvenir, her own green beret on behalf of the 10<sup>th</sup>. She tells briefly about the tension and protocol along the East/West German border at Hoff during the Cold War. She also shares interesting reflections on European

terrorism that was occurring in the 1980s, and her reaction to the events of September 11, 2001. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Nov. 15, 2008. Digital recording: VHPSkopikK (MP3 file). Transcript #537. Interviewer: Sharone Hall)

**ROBERT W. SMARTT, JR.** was a pilot of a B24 flying out of England during World War II, serving with the 490<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group of the Eighth Air Force. He flew 35 missions, mostly over Germany, and also flew a few relief missions to Holland, delivering food. He was discharged as a first lieutenant. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Sept. 17, 2003. VHP TAPE #180. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Betty Richards.)

**MARION “SONNY” SMITH** is a Vietnam-era veteran who served in both the U.S. Navy (1957-1961) and the U.S. Army (1961-1977). He grew up and went to school in Orlando, Florida and Flint, Michigan. After he graduated from high school in 1957, he decided to enlist in the Navy and was sent to Great Lakes, Illinois for basic training and Gunner’s Mate school. He was then assigned to a destroyer that was based in Norfolk, Virginia and frequently deployed to the Mediterranean. In 1961, he separated from the Navy, worked odd jobs for about three months, and then, in November of that same year, decided to enlist in the Army to become a paratrooper. He had to go back through basic training again, and then went to paratrooper or “jump” school at Ft. Benning, Georgia. He was then assigned to the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate), which operated as a somewhat independent unit, not under the command of an Army division. At the time he was assigned to the 173rd, it was based in Okinawa and its mission there was to train in jungle warfare tactics. After spending approximately two years in Okinawa, he was sent back to the U.S. and assigned to the 101st Airborne Division. In the late summer of 1966, he was notified that he was going to be reassigned to the 173rd again and deployed to Vietnam for what would turn out to be the first of two tours there. He noted that the 173rd was the first ground unit to be deployed to Vietnam and that their primary role was a defensive one. He said that for the first six months of his first tour of duty, the unit’s mission was to secure Bien Hoa Air Base and then they were assigned to a jungle warfare school in country to learn how to avoid booby traps. His story is filled with numerous anecdotes about his experiences there and his descriptions of the impact the Vietnam experience had on his life. Among the things he talked about during the course of the interview was the initial impression Vietnam made on him when, as he was getting off the plane he flew in on, he saw caskets being loaded on another plane for shipment back to the U.S. He said that he started counting down the time he had left on his tour – one year – the moment he arrived. Once, while on patrol, he heard a sniper’s bullet go by just above him, and saw it fall near him. He observed significant changes in troop morale between his first tour, during the early stages of the war when morale was high, and his second tour, in the later stages of the war, when morale was low. During his second tour, he also tells about the presence of drugs, primarily heroin; degenerating discipline; and instances of “fragging” - troops throwing grenades

against their own officers. He also tells about how his Vietnam experiences affected his home life, including the dissolution of his first marriage, and his avoidance of discussing the war with his second wife. (Approx. 2 hrs. 15 min. Interview date: Sept. 25, 2007. Transcript #516. Digital recording: VHPSmithM (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**THOMAS WILLIAM SOUTHALL** is a veteran of World War II, serving in the Navy, and a veteran of the Korean War and the Vietnam Conflict, serving in the Army. He grew up in the Nashville area, and was a student at Tennessee A&I when he received his draft notice for the Army during World War II. He decided to immediately go to the Navy recruiter's office, which he felt was a safer branch of the military in which to serve. He went to Great Lakes, Illinois for basic training, followed by an assignment to Hampton Institute in Virginia to undertake electrical-engineering-related studies. He was assigned for the remainder of his World War II service to the Navy base in Portland, Maine, where he first ran a maintenance shop and then was assigned to duty on board one of the ships that was charged with guarding the entrance to the harbor. Both of these duty assignments are especially significant to him, because as an African-American in the segregated U.S. military, he was put in charge of a maintenance shop composed largely of white sailors, and assigned to duty on board a ship in a role that blacks were traditionally excluded from. After his discharge, he spent some time in the private sector, primarily in radio communications operations, when he was urged by a work friend to join the Army Reserve. His reserve unit was activated in 1951 during the early stages of the Korean War. He spent part of his time stateside and was also assigned for a time to a psychological warfare (propaganda) unit in Germany. After war was over, he decided to make a career out of the Army. In 1966, when the conflict in Vietnam started heating up, he spent a year in the country where he was based near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), serving as a communications advisor for a South Vietnamese infantry division. (approx. 2 hrs. 30 min. Interview date: Aug. 26, 2004. VHP TAPE #270, 271 & 272. Transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPSouthallT (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**MARY SPEAR – see Mary (Spear) Stamps**

**JACK ROBERT SPENCE and SUE (SAMS) SPENCE** tell what it was like to be a married couple during the Vietnam War. Jack served in the U.S. Marine Corps from June 1950 to May 1973, including a tour of duty in Vietnam. He grew up and went to school near St. Louis. He enlisted in the Marine Corps after graduating from high school. His enlistment date was just two days before the Korean War broke out. Regulations specified that a person under 18 could not be sent into combat; because he was only 17, he did not have to go to Korea. He tells about basic training at Parris Island in the fall of 1950, after which he spent several years as an administrative clerk in various locations, including Okinawa. In 1958

he attended Marine Officer Candidate School (OCS) to become commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. Following several months of post-OCS training, he then became an Infantry Officer and served in non-combat roles including as an Infantry Instructor at Camp Pendleton, California. In September 1965 his unit was sent to Okinawa, where after two months, they were reassigned to Vietnam, just a few miles south of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). He said his Vietnam experience was relatively uneventful for him because he was there before the action really started "heating up." After he returned home from Vietnam in the fall of 1966, he was assigned to duty in Little Rock, AR and was appointed the Casualty Notification Officer there. In this capacity, he was responsible for making in-person visits to family members (parents, spouses or other loved ones) to notify them that their child/spouse/loved one had been killed in combat. He said in that position, it was necessary to be forthright about the individual's death, and that it was sometimes difficult to stand and listen to the family's grief. On one occasion, he made a call to the wrong family. Jack Spence's wife, Sue, also adds her perspective about what it was like to have her husband serving overseas in a war zone. She tells about her involvement with a support group for wives of military personnel (from both enlisted and officer ranks and from multiple branches of service) that met weekly and how they made themselves available to each other anytime anyone wanted or needed to talk. She tells of one incident when her phone rang at 2:00 in the morning. Fearing it would be bad news about her husband, she answered it, but it was one of the other wives who just needed to talk. Sue describes the tension as, "Days you can handle. Nights were horrible." (Approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: Nov. 13, 2007. Digital recording: VHPSpenceJandS (MP3 file). Transcript #524. Interviewer: Larry Patterson).

**SUE (SAMS) SPENCE – See Jack Robert SPENCE**

**ANN STAHLMAN – see Ann Stahlman Hill**

**MARY (SPEAR) STAMPS** was a ten year old child on the homefront in Clay County, Tennessee at the beginning of World War II. Her mother, Nova, was the Red Cross worker who went to homes and told families when their sons or husbands had been killed. She told of many changes that took place in their household. Mary was pushed into making adult decisions while caring for 3 younger siblings. She was left with the money and did the grocery shopping and whatever else was necessary to maintain a home. A sister broke her arm while her mother and father were in Florida; so she had to find a doctor. One major change that took place in their household included packing up and taking a train from Tennessee to California to be with her dad, Lt. Col. Frank A. Spear, Chaplain. They stayed there 3 months before he was shipped out to the Philippine Islands. She told of some of his experiences at Leyte, Red Beach and the Kamikaze pilots. (approx. 1 hr. 15 min. Interview date: June 30, 2004. VHP TAPE #251 & 252. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Betty Richards.)



**CHRISTINE STEELE – see Christine (Steele) Wasson**

**ELISE (LEVY) STEINER** grew up in New Orleans, Louisiana. Following high school, she went to Sophie Newcomb College for nearly two years. She met her future husband, Bernie Steiner—a Harvard student—during her first year of college, and by the time she enrolled as a sophomore, they were engaged and planning to marry. He was from Nashville, so, after their wedding in 1936, they located in Tennessee. Elise had already begun her volunteer involvement with the Red Cross in New Orleans, and she was attending a Red Cross luncheon in Nashville when Pearl Harbor happened. Her husband went into the Navy and she followed him to Boston until he was sent overseas—she then went to live with her parents in New Orleans. Mr. Steiner was not a good sailor, and after a year of seasickness, he was sent back to the states to Millington Naval Air Station. When the Navy learned of his wife's whereabouts, they transferred him to a hospital near New Orleans to continue in the service as a bookkeeper. Elise worked consistently for the Red Cross in Nashville, Boston, and New Orleans, and she continued this involvement when her husband was discharged and they returned to Nashville and he went back to work with his family's firm, Steiner-Liff. She recalls taking wool to the volunteers knitting the scarves for the servicemen; meeting the troop trains coming through Nashville and stopping long enough for sandwiches and coffee, (sometimes in the middle of the night); and working to coordinate correspondence and activities for veterans and for troops being trained in the Nashville area. She has been a volunteer for the Red Cross for 63 years; has served as chair of many committees; served also on their Board of Directors; and at the time of this interview was still very active with the local Nashville Chapter. (Approximately 1 hr. Interview date: Dec. 7, 2004. VHP TAPE #291. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPSteinerE (MP3 file). Interviewer: Alice Swanson)

**JACQUELINE STEPHENS – see Jacqueline (Forman) Stephens Horridge**

**ENOCH STEPHENSON** had a 31-year career in the armed forces, but remains very humble and circumspect about his work. He was a fighter pilot during World War II, serving 3 1/2 years on active duty in the Army Air Force. He escorted B-17 and B-24 bombers to their targets in Europe. During the Korean War, he helped train Dutch Air Force pilots as part of NATO operations. (approx. 40 min. Interview date: Dec. 8, 2003. VHP TAPE #188, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Betty Richards.)

**ANN STEVENS – see Ann (Stevens) Roberts.**

**PAUL STEVENS** talks about his career with the U.S. Navy, from 1942 to 1965, and his experience as a civilian following his military career. Paul committed himself to flying planes, and served as a fighter pilot for the U.S. Navy, primarily in the Pacific theater of operations during World War II. He did a great many patrols, and then describes his bombing and strafing raids on Japanese targets,

on land and on sea, in areas such as Australia, New Guinea, the Philippines, and the coastal areas of Hainan and Formosa. He also served as a test pilot in the U.S. in various places, and in Washington, DC (which he never enjoyed). Paul tells many intriguing and interesting stories in the course of the interview; a few highlights are shared here. In May 1942 he was flying a patrol over the Indian Ocean in violent weather conditions. He became exhausted, in despair, thinking he would ditch his plane, and end it all. He had unwittingly flown into the eye of a hurricane/typhoon. He tried climbing up over the weather system, heading for Perth, Australia. He again went through terribly violent storms at 6000 feet, and finally landed in Perth. He was then severely reprimanded for not covering his "search sector." In September 1943, he flew night raids and patrols. One night he came up on a Japanese submarine; he released two 250 lb bombs. There was a huge blast, when the sub exploded, lifting his plane up with lots of shrapnel going in and through his plane. He was finally able to get his plane under control. He says he scared hell out of the sub, and equally scared himself almost out of existence, because of the impact of the explosion. In March 1945 he was on another patrol, coming up on Hainan; his plane was shot at by a gunner on a ship's deck, which knocked out one engine; he limped on home. Later on, he shot up 3 ½ ships, along with a number of smaller ships. He was able to shoot down a Japanese officer, Admiral Yamagata, along with a heavy cruiser. For these actions he was awarded the Navy Cross, two Silver Stars, a Distinguished Flying Cross, and another Air Medal. His squadron was awarded a second Presidential Unit Citation. (approx. 3 hrs. Interview date: circa 1985. VHP TAPES #92-#97. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interview conducted by the American Airpower Heritage Museum, Midland, Texas and reproduced for inclusion in the Nashville Room collections with their consent. RESTRICTED: Copyright to this interview is retained by the American Airpower Heritage Museum, Midland, Texas.)

**DAVID MARSHALL STEWART** was born in 1917 in East Nashville, but grew up in the West Tennessee agricultural town of McKenzie, where he attended Bethel College and then went to library school at George Peabody College in Nashville, graduating in 1939. After a short stint as a director of a county library in rural Arkansas, Stewart was drafted into the Navy, prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. He attended officers training, and was commissioned an ensign. He was assigned as communications officers to the *Saranac*, a tanker. They carried gasoline, oil, and high octane fuel to refuel ships and carrier-based airplanes at sea. Their first voyage was from Baltimore to Venezuela, passing through the Panama Canal, to Australia and then to Hawaii. They traversed the Pacific Ocean many times, including returning to the continental United States several times to refuel for their operations. During the invasion of Saipan, the ship and another tanker were virtually abandoned by the rest of the fleet, thus leaving them almost defenseless. However, the ships had anti-aircraft guns and shot down many attacks from Japanese bombers. One scored a hit before he was shot down, damaging the engines of the *Saranac*. Within only a few days of this incident, Stewart received orders to return to the States for additional training

as a staff officer, attending the Naval Academy at Annapolis for special classes. He was then assigned to the headquarters of the North Pacific Fleet in the Aleutians, where he sent out a barrage of false messages to deceive the Japanese into thinking that an invasion of Japan was being planned from the north. After the Japanese surrendered, Stewart was called back to the East Coast, based in Philadelphia and New York, where he assisted with operations to return American forces from Europe. One of his last duties was to escort Albert Einstein from Princeton to Washington, DC for a meeting. Stewart then tells briefly of his post-war career, working briefly at the Library of Congress, with the CIA, and finally, returning to Nashville in 1960 to serve as director of the Nashville Public Library. He speaks briefly about the many changes he witnessed in the city and government of Nashville, as well as the library, during his tenure as director until his retirement in the 1980s. (Approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: Aug. 28, 2007. Digital recording: VHPStewartD (MP3 file). Transcript #515. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**JAMES W. STILL** volunteered for the Marines in 1963 after two years of college. After training, he was assigned to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 9<sup>th</sup> Marines, 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Division and shipped out for Vietnam. He tells of both humorous and serious experiences during his service. One particularly funny event occurred when he was given a strong tranquilizer as he was being sent to a hospital boat. When he awoke, he was in a white room, in a white bed, wearing white clothes. For a moment, he thought he was in heaven – but then he saw "the ugliest nurse I had ever seen" and knew he had survived. When the nurse asked him why he was smiling, he told her exactly what he was thinking. Naturally insulted, the nurse made James her special charge, and gave him his shots with sadistic delight. He also speaks frankly about how the war affected his later life. The pain and trauma of the conflict caused him to repress memories for decades after the war, mostly through alcohol. Looking back, it is the camaraderie of the service that he treasures the most. He hopes that by sharing his story, he can make an impact on the lives of others. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Nov. 1, 2003. VHP TAPE #206. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewers: Katie Hitzing and Lanie Barker, Lipscomb University students. Interview was conducted on November 1, 2003 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down,\* where Mr. Still was volunteering with clothing distribution.)

**ROSS A. TAGGART** grew up in Idaho, and joined the Navy in 1938 at the age of 17. He served aboard the first aircraft carrier, the U.S.S. Langley. During his first combat action, the ship was bombed by the Japanese and he had to be rescued from the sea. Within three days, he again was being rescued from the ocean, as his second ship suffered a similar fate. He was wounded at Iwo Jima due to an accident, and he spent a year and a half recuperating in a veterans hospital. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Oct. 10, 2002. VHP TAPES #89 & 90, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Richard Randolph.)

**LEMUEL TANKSLEY** enlisted in the World War II Navy during high school, and took specialized training in amphibious landing, on LSTs, LCTs, and LCIs. He trained further for duty in the engine room of an LCT, and left Norfolk with his crew of ten, joining a convoy to North Africa, in preparation for a big invasion of Italy. He describes the mammoth landing at Anzio Beach, over a 3-week period, in which his LCT was never hit or damaged. His next assignment was in the CBI theater, where he carried fuel into Burma for US planes, up to the summer of 1945. He was then assigned to the Pacific fleet, hauling tanks to Okinawa and Saipan, to be used in the invasion of the main Japanese islands. His units saw no action, due to the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which ended the war; and he spent his last few weeks in Japan, before returning home. (approx. 1 hr. 15 min. Interview date: July 30, 2002. VHP TAPES #55 & 56, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**GLORIA (DRAKE) TAYLOR** is a veteran of the Persian Gulf War and served in the U.S. Army from December 1979 to December 2000. She grew up and went to school in the Stanton, Tennessee area. Three years after finishing school, she decided to enlist in the Army and was sent to Ft. Dix, New Jersey for basic training. After completing basic training, she was then sent to Ft. Devons, Massachusetts for advanced training – military intelligence training in the area of radar analysis. Her first regular duty assignment was to Ft. Ord, California where she also learned jamming and anti-jamming techniques and was then assigned to a jamming team. During the course of the interview, she not only shares stories about some of her duty assignments as a jammer—the most significant of which was an assignment to Saudi Arabia during Desert Shield/Desert Storm—but she also shares her observations on the changing perceptions of the role of women in the military. (Approx. 2 hrs. 30 min. interview date: Dec. 23, 2006. Digital recording: VHPTaylorG (MP3 file). Transcript #503. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**GREGORY D. TAYLOR** served in the Army from 1980 to 1990. He trained as a forward observer with various artillery units, and began his service at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma. He had two tours of duty in South Korea, two tours of duty in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and also served in Germany. He has difficulties with his memory due to brain surgery, so many of the details of his service he could not recall. However, he did tell about encountering legal prostitution in both Korea and Germany. (approx. 20 min. Interview date: Oct. 18, 2008. VHP TAPE #369. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson. Interview was conducted on October 18, 2008 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**LUCAS J. TERRY** had just returned from active duty in Iraq a few months before this interview was conducted, and was discharged exactly one month prior to this interview. He served in the Navy as a Seabee, building roads, fortifications, and performing other construction activities as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom and

Operation Enduring Freedom, both part of the war on terrorism that occurred as a result of terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001. He speaks frankly about his experiences overseas, including telling about seeing a buddy killed next to him, and a guard who was killed by a suicide bomber. He candidly discusses the emotional and psychological toll his experiences had on him, and his struggles to cope with the effects of PTSD<sup>®</sup>, including nightmares, outbursts of anger, and drug use. As part of his drug rehabilitation program he was attending Operation Stand Down. He believes he has learned to overcome his addiction and PTSD<sup>®</sup> symptoms, and feels confident that he is now making a new start. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Nov. 20, 2004. VHP TAPE #302 & #303, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewers: Leigh Little and Valerie Lincoln, Lipscomb University students. Interview was conducted on November 20, 2004 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\* )

**JOHN A. THOMAN** grew up in Baltimore, Maryland, and New York City. He was educated in mechanical engineering, and tells of working in the aircraft industry prior to World War II and during the early war years. When he tried to volunteer for the Navy, he was rejected on account of poor eyesight. The Army also turned him away. He continued working in the aircraft industry, and describes his arrival in Nashville in the early 1940s, where he was employed by Vultee Aircraft. He mentions homefront conditions, and tells of being drafted into "limited service" in the Army Air Corps just six months after his marriage. He served at several airbases, mostly as a mechanic, and was assigned to special service working on experimental aircraft for the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA), the predecessor of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. (1 hr. Interview date: Nov. 9, 2002. VHP TAPE #54, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**GARRY THOMAS** was born in South Bend, Indiana and lived in several states, following his father, who was a stock car racer. He enlisted in the army in 1972 at the age of 17, with his mother's written permission. He was inducted at Fort Hood, Texas and was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 4th Field Artillery Division. Shortly after he entered service, President Nixon ended the Vietnam War. Thomas reached grade E-3 (private first class). His first assignment was as a cannoneer and was sent to Fort Campbell before being sent to Fort Lewis, Washington. From Fort Lewis he was on a detail to transport wounded and prisoners of war back stateside. His detail was to send the men in need of immediate medical care to the medics and on to the planes. He was hit in the head with a piece of metal which caused convulsions. He left the Army when his enlistment was up. After the war he was a car salesman, getting his own franchise. He came to Tennessee to work with Operation Stand Down and is now interning for a State Senator. He hopes to return to college and get a degree. He felt the Disabled American Veterans and American Legion have been of great help to him, though he feels the Veterans Administration has not

been very helpful. (Approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Jan. 6, 2007. Digital recording: VHPThomasG (MP3 file). Transcript #504. Interviewer: Betty Richards.)

**HERMAN THOMPSON** grew up in Birmingham, Alabama and joined the Navy in 1944. He enjoyed his basic training, but as an African-American, he was prevented from serving in any combat role. He served as a steward's mate first class, and was stationed on Guam. (1 hr. Interview date: Nov. 9, 2002. VHP TAPE #106, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPThompsonH (MP3 file). Interviewer: Richard Randolph.)

**JOE THOMPSON, JR. (first interview)** served as a reconnaissance pilot in Europe during World War II. He was one of a select group of airmen to join British Royal Air Force (R.A.F.) pilots early in the war, to gain experience and training. He flew missions over the Normandy coast, and into Belgium and Germany from bases in continental Europe. These tapes, rather than a formal interview, instead are narratives to accompany a display of photographs taken by Thompson during the war and exhibited at the Tennessee War Memorial Museum during the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Normandy Invasion. The photographs described, as well as many others taken by Thompson during the war, now are part of the Nashville Room's Collections. (approx. 3 hrs. Interview date: circa 1994. VHP TAPES #117 & 118, transcript – filed separately with Joe Thompson Jr. materials. Nashville Public Library did not conduct this interview. Also available on CD in standard audio format: VHPThompsonJ2. Interviewer: Lucas G. Boyd.) ~~RESTRICTED: Publication use restricted; see transcript. Restriction expired Jan. 1, 2010.~~

**JOE THOMPSON, JR. (second interview)** provides additional details and reminiscences prompted by reviewing contact sheets of photographs he took while in service during World War II during this series of interviews conducted from December 13, 2004 to February 7, 2005. Not a photo-by-photo type of interview, but rather story by story, Mr. Thompson tells many personal anecdotes about his service, such as his time spent with a family in Belgium; the nurse that was his girlfriend in the early days of his involvement in England; the interpreter in Paris and her family; and the connections made with comrades and with Europeans that have been maintained to this day. Many photographs feature the planes, tanks, trucks and living accommodations of that time, which Thompson also describes in detail. One of the more unusual anecdotes is about one of his comrades who invented a hot water apparatus which they used on the beach at Normandy for shaving. Thompson tells about the liberation of Paris and welcome by Parisians, and the narrow hedgerows traversed by tanks and other heavy equipment. Mr. Thompson repeatedly stated that taking these pictures was his connection to sanity in such dangerous circumstances. (approx. 5 ½ hrs. Interview dates: Dec. 2004 – June 2005. VHP TAPES #311-#319, summaries and transcripts, filed separately with Joe Thompson Jr. materials. Also available in digital format: VHPThompsonJ (MP3 file). Interviewer: Alice Swanson.)

**LUCILLE THOMPSON – see Lucille (Thompson) Show.**

**JIM THURMAN** grew up and went to school in the Nashville area in the 1940s and 1950s. While he was in his first year of college at Georgia Tech, he was offered the opportunity to attend nursing school at the University of Sheffield, England. After he completed his studies, he became a company nurse/paramedic at Sheffield Hospital where—among other duties—he worked a lot in the Emergency Room and also joined a search-and-rescue team based there at the hospital. As a result of his extensive experience in a trauma-room setting, as well as his experience in civilian search-and-rescue operations, in the early 1960's, he became part of a privately-funded, seven-member search-and-rescue team based in the U.S. and supervised by FEMA (the Federal Emergency Management Agency). Around 1962 or 1963, when the Vietnam War was first getting underway, his team decided to volunteer its services in Vietnam. While in the country, the team was attached to various branches of the military, usually either the Air Force or the Army. Mr. Thurman said their primary mission was to “pack and stabilize” injured and wounded personnel. His story is filled with many rich and memorable anecdotes about not only his experiences in Vietnam, but also about his post-Vietnam experiences in search-and-rescue. Among those stories was one where he found himself being called “baby killer” on his return home because he was dressed in hospital scrubs at the time and was mistaken for a member of the military. Even more memorable were his stories about his search-and-rescue assignments to Oklahoma City just after the Federal Building was bombed on April 19, 1995; his assignment to the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, just about an hour after the first plane hit the first tower; his assignment to Indonesia in January, 2005, just a few days after a devastating tsunami had hit the country; and his assignment to New Orleans, Louisiana following the devastation from Hurricane Katrina in the fall of 2005. (approx. 2 hr. 15 min. Interview date: Nov. 30, 2005. VHP TAPE #336, 337 & 338. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPThurmanJ (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**MARIE TOOTLE** left her job as a teacher in Georgia and enlisted in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC), later the Women's Army Corps (WAC). She had two brothers serving in the Marines, and felt it was her duty to serve her country, in the hopes that her efforts would help bring them home sooner and safely. After training as part of the first WAAC group at Des Moines, Iowa, Tootle was assigned to duty as a first sergeant at Ft. Meade, Maryland, a processing center for men about to be shipped out to Europe. She tells about life on base, and about the sudden fame she found when she appeared on the cover of *Yank* magazine, and she received over 100 letters from men wanting to be pen pals with her or other women in her unit. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Mar. 31,

2003. VHP TAPE #140. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewers: Betty Richards, Linda Barnickel)

**JAMES KNOX TRIGG** served in the Army Air Force, and Air Force, for over 30 years, primarily serving as a ground crew chief. He flew to Guam during the closing days of World War II; and tells of numerous cargo missions into Korea from Japan during the Korean Conflict. Alzheimer's disease has robbed him of most of his memories of his service during the Vietnam era, including his service during Operation Mule Train, but he recalls serving in Greece in the late 1960s, when he and his family were placed under house arrest out of concern for their safety during a revolution in that country. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: May 6, 2002. VHP TAPE #12, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**ROBERT DUDLEY "BOB" TUKE** served as an officer in the Marine Corps from 1969 to 1973 (active duty) and from 1973 to 1979 in the Marine Corps Reserve. He served one tour of duty in Vietnam, and one tour in Japan and Okinawa, before his return to the United States. Tuke was a member of Combined Action Company 2-4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Combined Action Group, III Marine Amphibious Force. Most of his engagements with the enemy in Vietnam came as part of a combined action force, primarily consisting of the twelve Marines in his platoon. During the Tet Offensive, a village was destroyed by the Americal Division of the U.S. Army. In the midst of this action, Tuke had to call on jet air support because of an impending attack by the North Vietnamese Army. His unit of twelve Marines was facing an onslaught of over 100 North Vietnamese troops. The Air Force let him down, but helicopter support with gunships firing saved Tuke's Marines. At one point a huge howitzer shell or piece of shrapnel flew in and just missed Tuke and his buddies. In another incident, Tuke slept right through a horrendous mortar attack, for which he received a great deal of ribbing and kidding. Later on, Tuke promoted a sergeant in his unit for bravery in action. After his platoon landed in San Francisco, the sergeant whom Tuke had promoted ordered beers for everyone at the bar and many of the men were under the legal drinking age of 21. The bartender challenged him to show IDs for everyone, whereupon the sergeant grabbed the bartender, pulled him over the bar, and told him he was looking at the only ID he needed, pointing to the stripes on his uniform. Upon returning to civilian life, Tuke entered law school at the University of Virginia and at Vanderbilt University. (approx. 1 hr. 15 min. Interview date: Aug. 2, 2004. VHP Tape #367 & 368, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Sarah Tuke (Bob Tuke's daughter)).

**DAVID LEE VINCENT** was born in Nashville, Tennessee in 1928. The son of a laborer and a domestic, David signed up for the Army when he was 17 years old. A self-described "wild child," he left for his military service without telling his family where he was going. As an African-American, David decide to join the Army as opposed to any other branch of the service because he didn't want to



become a servant, as he would have had he joined the Navy. David was trained in Georgia and then went to New Jersey before he was sent to Europe. David joined the service after the war was over and became an MP during the occupation. Mr. Vincent was based in Italy during his entire 3 years of the service. He spent a brief period of time for training in Germany but spent most of his time at a base near Pisa. While an MP, David traveled around Italy and enjoyed Florence quite a bit. For a time, he toyed with the idea of returning to live in Italy after his tour was complete. David said that he didn't run into much in the way of difficulty dealing with the Italians and that most of the problems he ran across were with the American troops who thought of themselves as above the law. David makes it clear though that he isn't really rankled by racist comments and if he experienced difficulties in that regard, he likely ignored them. When David returned home, he used his GI bill to attend college at Tennessee State College, a small African American college in Nashville. He graduated in three years and attended Law School at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He continued using his GI bill to complete Law School and only needed to pay for his last month of school out of his own pocket. After graduation, he moved to Columbus, Ohio and was among the top 4 of all who took the bar exam that year. He was surprised that he didn't get more job interviews until he was told that he didn't fit into the "partner track" because of his race. Mr. Vincent eventually moved back to Nashville, where he worked for a large law firm for a year before starting his own firm. Mr. Vincent has been in private practice since 1962 and is a criminal defense attorney in very high standing in the community. Mr. Vincent was involved in the Civil Rights movement in Nashville and strongly believes that protest and dissent are the best form of patriotism. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: July 21, 2004. VHP TAPE #255 & 256. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPVincentD (MP3 file). Interviewer: Evviva Weinraub)

**LILLARD WADDLE**, a World War II veteran, joined the Merchant Marines after several attempts to join the Navy. He always wanted to go to sea. A newspaper account of the Merchant Marines convinced his parents to sign the papers for him to join. At nineteen years of age he was sent to Merchant Marine School in St. Petersburg, Florida. He was present on 27 voyages through the Panama Canal. His ship John Carter Rose was sunk and the crew were in two lifeboats adrift for seven days. They were finally rescued, went back to port and went out again. (approx. 1 ½ hours. Interview date: July 31, 2003. VHP TAPE #184 & 185, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHP PattersonVWaddleL (MP3 file). Interviewer: Betty Richards. A joint interview with veteran Vince Patterson.)

**JESSIE WALLACE – see Jessie (Wallace) McNutt.**

**ORMAN EUGENE “GENE” WALLER**, also nicknamed “Wally,” served as a Master Sergeant in the Air Force from January 1962 until October 25, 1985. He was a crew member (load master) on a C-130 transport plane. He was on-the-job trained while working towards a college degree in Okinawa. He was a member of

the Pacific Air Force in Tactical Air Command and the Military Airlift Command that evacuated Saigon. He had 3,786 hours on flight missions. He participated in the Choi Hoi mission of dropping propaganda leaflets encouraging the Viet Cong to come to the U.S. side by giving monetary rewards. At the time of his interview, he had cancer related to Agent Orange exposure. Many of his fellow Air Force associates have cancer he thinks is caused by Agent Orange. At the time of his interview in 2008, he was a disc jockey with his own studio. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Mar. 25, 2008. Digital recording: VHPWallerO (MP3 file). Transcript #529. Interviewer: Betty Richards.)

**JACK D. WALKER**, a native Nashvillian, served in the U.S. Army from September 1950 to December 1953 during the Korean War. At the age of 22, he was drafted into the Army, following his father's advice: "if your country calls, you're to answer the call." After completion of basic training and officer candidate school, he went on to airborne infantry school at Ft. Benning, Georgia, and later served in a training capacity at Camp Rucker, Alabama. He received orders for deployment to Korea in early 1953, where he served as a military advisor, training South Korean troops as part of the 34<sup>th</sup> Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG), which was assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> Republic of Korea Division or I-ROK. Although he was assigned to Korea in a non-combat role, he notes that the places where he did most of his training were located just north of the 38th parallel in what was essentially North Korean territory. He was severely injured in a jeep accident, and after his recuperation, returned to duty briefly as a staff officer with the 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division. In addition to his personal wartime experiences, Walker also provides information of a more general historical nature about the Korean War and the events leading up to, and resulting from, this war. In particular, he emphasizes its importance as America's first action to contain communism. (approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview date: Mar. 26, 2003. VHP TAPE #138 & 139, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**NICHOLAS "NICK" J. WARGO, SR.** grew up on a farm in West Virginia. He was drafted in late 1966 and served in the Army, becoming a helicopter maintenance mechanic. Military service was seen as a responsibility and a virtue in his family, and he had shared this attitude when he responded to the draft. After stateside training, he arrived in Vietnam during the Tet Offensive in 1968, where his plane landed on a runway at An Son while it was under attack by the North Vietnamese/Viet Cong. Stationed at An Son, he performed maintenance on Chinook transports and Huey gunships, until he volunteered for service as a Chinook gunner. He tells about missions relocating friendly South Vietnamese villagers along with all of their possessions (including animals); transporting North Vietnamese/Viet Cong prisoners who were so tightly bound that they were picked up like luggage to be hoisted aboard the helicopter; and serving on missions using the defoliant "Agent Orange" – when the affects on the landscape could be seen immediately. (approx. 2 hrs. Interview date: Oct. 30, 2002. VHP

TAPE #101 & 102, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPWargoN (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**WILLIAM J. WARREN** was a private in the 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. He trained in the Carolinas. He served as a cook at Ft. Campbell for his entire military career. He worked 24 hour shifts, and lived off base, riding a bus every other day to and from his home in North Nashville. He feels that he played a vital part in the Korean War because he kept the troops moving by feeding them. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Sept. 25, 2003. VHP TAPE #189, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Betty Richards.)

**CHRISTINE (STEELE) WASSON** was born on July 20, 1923 and raised in rural Marshall County. Her father, a farmer, died when she was seven, and her mother was left to raise five children alone; however, she did have the help of many neighbors. The family was not particularly aware of the Depression because so much of their sustenance came directly from the land or from their neighbors' farms. Mrs. Wasson graduated from high school in Cornersville in 1941, and her mother managed to borrow the \$100.00 needed to get her enrolled at Nashville Business College. Mrs. Wasson tells of waiting tables and cooking to pay for room and board while attending school and of her close supervision by her landlady (also her roommate, along with another student) resulting in long evenings of practicing shorthand after the dinner work was done. When the school determined that her secretarial skills were perfected, she was dismissed to seek employment. She first worked for a piece goods manufacturer as a secretary, and, in 1943 when Nashville was being set up as one of three classification centers in the country, she applied to the government to work there. The Nashville Classification Center was on Thompson Lane, close to where the cemetery is, and reachable only by dirt roads and either bus or carpooling. It was a small city (approx. 560 acres) with Mess Hall, PX, Barracks, theater, a chapel, and offices and meeting rooms to process the over 10,000 servicemen who came through there. Mrs. Wasson was assigned to the Faculty Board as a secretary—this was the agency that determined aptitudes and assignments of those not found to be pilot material. She would take down the proceedings all day as the soldiers were interviewed by military personnel and doctors (including a psychiatrist) and then would have to type these up from her shorthand before the end of the day. In 1944 the Classification Center closed and the facilities were converted to a Convalescent Hospital for returning troops. Most of the troops were suffering from mental problems caused by warfare; however, there were some that also had physical wounds. Mrs. Wasson was secretary to the Director of Training—much of the therapy involved getting the men retrained to get back to useful civilian life. While the women didn't actually "date" the soldiers, some social engagements were held in groups at sites in Nashville. In 1945, when the hospital was transferred to New York State, Mrs. Wasson elected to transfer to Smyrna Army Air Field—where daily missions were still flown to combat areas. Mrs. Wasson continued in various military services until 1957,

and stayed as a Federal Government employee until her retirement. (Approx. 1 hr. 15 min. Interview date: Oct. 31, 2005. VHP TAPE #334 & 335. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPWassonC (MP3 file). Interviewer: Alice Swanson.)

**IRVING WAUGH** was a civilian correspondent for Nashville radio station, WSM during World War II. He first began covering local military activities, such as soldiers stationed in and around Nashville. In the summer of 1945 he went overseas, where he covered the 32<sup>nd</sup> Division's activities on Luzon, and was a member of General Douglas MacArthur's press corps. He followed events in the Philippines, at Okinawa, and just prior to the Japanese surrender, made the first network broadcast from Japan aboard a B-17 on the Atsugi airfield. He witnessed the Japanese surrender aboard the *USS Missouri*, a ceremony he says was arranged and staged by his WSM colleague, Jack Harris. (approx. 1 hr. 45 min. Interview dates: Aug. 18, 2004 and Aug.24, 2004. VHP TAPE #266 & 267. Index available. Also available in digital format: VHPWaughI (MP3 file). Interviewer: Ronnie Pugh.)

**LORIN LEE WAUGH** served from December 1943 until December 1945. He joined the Signal Corps, where he gained experience in radio operations, and then enlisted in the Army Air Corps, where he was assigned to Air Transport Command as a radio operator. He tells about serving on transport and cargo missions along the route from Casablanca to Cairo, and his reassignment to the China, Burma, India theatre, serving out of Chabua, India and Cheng Kung, China, where transport missions regularly flew over the "Hump" of the Himalayas. One shocking – but true – anecdote related by Waugh is when Chinese troops were being transported, and one soldier got very airsick. The Chinese captain asked the pilot what should be done, and the pilot jokingly told him, "toss him out." The Chinese captain took these instructions seriously – and proceeded to carry them out, throwing the sick soldier out of the plane without a parachute. (approx. 1 ½ hrs. Interview date: Nov. 13, 2002. VHP TAPE #103 & 104, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**WILLIAM W. WELLS** tells about his service as a fighter pilot in the Army Air Corps during World War II, flying missions over Europe. He describes two missions in particular. One of his accounts tells of flying into Russia, where he observed some of the devastation of the Eastern Front, and where he came under fire from both German and Russian forces. With instructions to land in Russia, his crew was confined to the base, under penalty of being shot. Another special mission, which his commander said was second only to the invasion of Europe in its level of secrecy, involved flying escort to a special bomber that was painted white and loaded with over 27,000 pounds of TNT. It was to be radio-controlled near the target, once the pilots had bailed out. Their objective was to eliminate a German buzz bomb launch site. While they were over the English

Channel, the bomber prematurely exploded, killing all aboard, including Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. The blast knocked Wells' flight 5000 feet into the air. Wells also tells briefly about his involvement in the Korean Conflict, where he was posted stateside, and training in jet aviation. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Aug. 7, 2002. VHP TAPE #58, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Jim Lummus.)

**GEORGE CHARLES WESTOVER** served in the Marine Corps from 1940 to 1962. He had been fascinated by the Marine Corps as a boy, and thought it sounded like an adventure with great opportunity to travel and see the world, so he enlisted in 1940. He was aboard the battleship *USS Tennessee* as a bugler on Dec. 7, 1941 when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. He tells about the destruction of the neighboring battleships by bombs and torpedoes and a variety of duties he performed on ship during the attack, mostly going wherever he was told or needed. In 1943 he performed administrative duties at 3rd Marine Division headquarters, and was stationed briefly at Guadalcanal, after it had been secured and then went to Guam. In sharp contrast to his administrative work, working in an office well behind the lines, he was then assigned as captain to a "pioneer platoon". They were equipped with flamethrowers, demolition charges, and rocket launchers. He participated with the 21st Marines, 3rd Marine Division at Iwo Jima, and tells about the difficulties of fighting and advancing cave by cave against stubborn Japanese defenders. He returned to the U.S. before the war ended and remained in the service, choosing to make it a career. He went overseas at the start of the Korean War, participating in the landings at Inchon with George Company, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines. He also talks at length about the difficulty and tactics used in advancing against the outskirts of Seoul, especially the fight on the Ma Po Boulevard. After this operation, he was reassigned, and as a result, he did not go with his unit to the Chosin Reservoir, where the Marine Corps took heavy casualties. However, he does tell about his unit's experiences there, because he had a very good friend who was given up for dead, but a corpsman saw a small puff of breath in the cold air, realizing he was still alive. Miraculously, he survived. Westover then tells about the rest of his military career, where he performed training duties and a variety of other assignments. (approx. 3 hr. 15 min. Interview date: Dec. 5, 2012. Digital recording: VHPWestoverG (MP3 file). Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**JOHN WHITAKER** served in a Marine infantry company during the Korean War, and was present at the attack on the Chosin Reservoir. He was company clerk at the time his unit defended a pass, even though they were authorized to withdraw. The pass they kept open allowed for resupply of troops at the reservoir. His commander received the Congressional Medal of Honor for this action. He spoke of long, severe exposure and fighting in weather minus 40 degrees, and colder. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: June 19, 2003. VHP TAPE #162, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Charlie Smith).

**MALCHIGA C. WHITWORTH** describes his service in the Army and the Army National Guard from 1948, at age 18, to 1979. He served in various theaters of war in Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, and Germany. His duty was to organize and maintain equipment and resources. He also had the responsibility of administration and management of Army ordnance units in all the various theaters where he served. His rank during his enlisted service ranged from PFC to Sergeant, during his time with the National Guard. He was commissioned in the Guard as a 2nd Lieutenant, and received promotions during his active service, rising to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, when he was discharged in 1979. Being involved in maintenance administration never put him in direct contact with the enemy, in Korea or Vietnam. However, in several of his duty assignments, he was clearly exposed to harm and danger. One such occasion was during an investigative patrol he was on in the jungle area of Vietnam, where there was the risk of being ambushed by the Viet Cong. Fortunately, he was not fired upon, nor was he injured by enemy fire. At one point during his tour of duty in Germany, near Mannheim, at the height of the Cold War, he was placed in charge of troops in field exercises preparing for military conflict and battle engagement with the Soviet military establishment. He pointed to that experience as one that really scared him. (Approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Feb. 26, 2007. Digital recording: VHPWhitworthM (MP3 file). Transcript #505. Interviewer: Bob Richardson.)

**WILLIAM R. WILCOX** was raised in Brooklyn, New York, and educated at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he joined the Army ROTC program. He entered active duty as a lieutenant after his graduation in 1942. After nearly two years of stateside training, his chemical mortar company was sent to the South Pacific. They entered combat on October 20, 1944 in the invasion of Leyte, where Wilcox's landing craft was hit by Japanese artillery, and he was wounded. He later tells of the death of a beloved lieutenant, James Gordon, and fighting in the Philippines. (approx. 90 min. Interview date: Jun 12, 2002. VHP TAPE #36 & 37, transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel.)

**BILLY GARLAND WILLIAMS** served in the Army from 1966 to 1968 during the Vietnam War. He moved frequently when he was growing up, but spent most of his early years in Hawaii, and most of his time as a teenager in California, where he graduated from high school at age 15, and continued his studies at the University of California – Berkeley. He got drafted into the Army, which took him away from a good-paying job at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard. He had originally hoped to become a medic, but received training in heavy weapons. He went to jump school at Ft. Benning, Georgia, then was sent to Ft. Campbell, Kentucky, where he joined the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne. While there, his girlfriend was killed in a car accident when she was on her way to visit him. He was

heartbroken, and volunteered to be sent to Vietnam, where he became a member of the 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade. Once overseas, he attended a week of jungle training, in which the last night was devoted to ambush training. He describes these events in great detail, particularly the last evening, when one of his men fell asleep on watch; Viet Cong were spotted, and three VC were killed. He tells about some of the brutality of war, including witnessing or hearing about comrades in his unit who would stab a playing card with the 173<sup>rd</sup> logo on it into the eye of a Viet Cong corpse, and one man who kept ears as souvenirs. After his jungle training his unit was moved to Duktho in the Central Highlands, where a good friend was killed just prior to Thanksgiving. He tells about the perilous difficulty of being told not to make friends (because they will die) and the absolute necessity and importance of friends to help carry him through the horrific experiences of being in a war zone. In the Central Highlands, they faced NVA, and he tells about being ambushed in a village, where he was wounded. He tells about his rehabilitation from his wound, and the difficulty and total lack of preparation for reentering the civilian world. He describes some of the PTSD<sup>o</sup> symptoms he has suffered through the years, which become particularly difficult for him around the holiday season, due to the loss of his friend at Thanksgiving, and his being wounded several weeks later. He worries that veterans returning from the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq will suffer as he did. He began to receive treatment for PTSD in 2002, and has found it helpful. (approx. 1 hr. Interview date: Oct. 13, 2007. VHP TAPE #365. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson. Interview was conducted on October 13, 2007 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**HARRY WILLIAMS**, eager to get into military service before he finished high school in Macon, GA, enlisted in the Army Air Corps, wanting to be a bomber pilot to fight against the Germans during World War II. After considerable training, he became a pilot (aircraft commander) of a B-17, at just 18 years of age. He headed for England, to train for flights and take part in bombing missions over Germany. In one dramatic incident, on December 24, 1944, Harry and his crew left on a mission to fly low and bomb the city of Giesen, Germany. Three of their four engines were shot out by heavy flak, and the crew was forced to bail out using the bomb bay, since other hatches were damaged. All crew members landed safely in enemy territory in Belgium, eventually being rescued or making their way to American lines. He eventually completed 35 missions, 10 more than the usual amount, and was discharged in June 1945. (approx. 100 min. Interview date: Apr. 1, 2002. VHP TAPE #7 & 8, transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPWilliamsH (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**WILLIE H. WILLIAMS – see Willie H. (Williams) Joy**

**LARRY WILSON** enlisted in the Army in 1975, right after he finished high school in Memphis, Tennessee. After his initial training, he was sent to Ft. Devens,

Massachusetts to serve as a cryptographic expert with Army intelligence, but was then turned down. He then went to Fort Bragg for paratrooper training, something he was very excited about. He then served in Germany during the Cold War, rooting out and destroying East German communists. Later, he was sent to Grenada as part of Operation Urgent Fury. He participated in search and destroy missions to take Cuban troops as prisoners of war. When he left the service in 1986, he found that employers considered him to have no employment experience, since he had served in the Army constantly from a young age. Relations with his family were strained, so he had difficulty finding work and support. Today he is being helped tremendously by Operation Stand Down. They are helping him to reenter the workforce and bring him hope. (approx. 1 hr. 30 min. Interview date: Oct. 14, 2006. VHP TAPES #357 & 358. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Bob Richardson. Interview was conducted on October 14, 2006 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

**ELIZABETH EVELYN (BAILEY) WITTER** served first in the U.S. Army from 1983 to 1999, initially joining to help pay for college, and tells about her service with a supply unit stationed in Germany. In 2004, she enlisted in the Army National Guard to put in more time for military retirement and was discharged in 2006. As a member of the Army National Guard in the 1071<sup>st</sup> Maintenance Company, she did not think she was in any danger of being sent to Iraq – but after just two months in her new unit, they received orders to go overseas. The news came as a shock to her, especially because by now she was married and had a daughter. When her unit was deployed, they went first to Kuwait, then to a Forward Operating Base (FOB) near Ramadi, where they were exposed to frequent attacks on base. It was especially fearful when crossing a large open area on the base – something that was necessary to perform daily tasks. This open space was subject to mortar attacks and other hostile action, and once the base was attacked by a suicide bomber at the perimeter. Part of her unit's responsibilities were to refit and repair Humvees and other vehicles for service after they had been damaged in attacks. This included the difficult task of cleaning them out after casualties had been taken. Upon her return home, she tells about the welcome and support from the American people in general. Within a short time, however, she began experiencing severe depression, requiring medical treatment, and also began suffering from PTSD<sup>o</sup>, and began drinking heavily. Within two months of her arrival home, her husband served her with divorce papers and she found out her teenage daughter was pregnant. In the year since she had been out of the service (at the time of the interview), she has continued to struggle with depression and PTSD, but is seeking help. In addition to telling about her experiences in Iraq and with PTSD, she also speaks frankly early in her interview about sexual harassment from military superiors, both during her initial period of service in the 1980s, as well as her more recent military experience. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: Oct. 13, 2007. VHP TAPE #364. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel. Witter's friend, Fred Davant was also present during



the interview. Interview was conducted on October 13, 2007 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\* Note: This interview is frequently interrupted by announcements over a loudspeaker.)

**HAROLD L. WRIGHT** said that at 16 he got a car, but his dad would not sign for him to get a license. He got mad so he went into town and joined the Marines. They found out he was 16 so they made him wait until he was 18 to actually go to boot camp. He said when he turned 18 the Marines called him and told him it was time to go to boot camp, but by then Mr. Wright said he had his drivers license and he did not want to go, but he had to, and was later sent to Vietnam. After eleven months in the jungle, he got a R and R and went to Hong Kong. When he returned to the States, it took 31 days to get back on a Navy boat, and he landed in San Francisco. He said his homecoming was a pleasant one; they were marched off the ship and people were there to cheer them on. After getting off the ship they were immediately taken away and kept under lock and key for two weeks, to help them readjust to life in the states. (approx. 1 hr., Interview date: Oct. 15, 2005. VHP TAPE #328. Index available. Also available on CD in standard audio format, digital identifier: VHPWrightL. Interviewers: Sirci Stinson and Cara Brown, students at Middle Tennessee State University. Interview was conducted on October 15, 2005 at a special annual event hosted by Operation Stand Down.\*)

#### **MYRTLE WULF – see Myrtle Qualls-Wulf**

**ROBERT YAZZIE** is a veteran of WWII who served in the U.S. Marines from 1943 to 1945 as a member of the Navajo Code Talkers. A fullblood Navajo, and member of the Redhouse clan, Robert was born in Rehoboth Mission, New Mexico on May 30, 1924, grew up there in the state and attended Indian elementary and high schools run by religious groups. In 1943, at the age of 19, he enlisted in the Marines, as the result of a visit by a Marine Corps recruiter to his high school. He was initially sent to San Diego for basic training and was then sent to Camp Pendleton, California in the fall of 1943 for more training. It was at Camp Pendleton that he was selected to be a Code Talker. His group (numbering about 200 fellow Navajos) was the second one to be sent to code talking school—the first group being the pilot group that was initially used to test out the potential effectiveness of using Navajo Code Talkers in battle conditions. After code talking school was over, he was sent straight overseas—first to Guadalcanal, by this time securely in Allied hands. From Guadalcanal, he was sent straight to Bougainville where he faced light fire from Japanese, including a close call when Japanese bullet whizzed by just above his head. He was then sent to Guam where he was one of four Code Talkers assigned to a regimental headquarters communications center located behind the front lines. Here, he said he was placed on “standby” status—primarily in case the enemy broke through the front lines and attacked the headquarters facility. From there, he said he was transferred to Okinawa where he was also placed on “standby” status in

a communications center and was eventually transferred back to Guam where he was when the war ended. He somewhat downplays his role in the war as a Code Talker, and much of the remainder of his story involves a rather lengthy discussion about his life after the war, which involved working as an industrial welder—an occupation in which he took great pride. (approx. 2 hrs. 10 min. Interview date: July 7, 2003. VHP TAPES #171, 172, & 173. Transcript. Also available in digital format: VHPYazzieR (MP3 file). Interviewer: Larry Patterson.)

**THOMAS ZERFOSS** served in the Army of Occupation in Bremerhaven, Germany at the conclusion of World War II. Already in medical school when war broke out, he continued his studies at Vanderbilt University as part of the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP). He served as a pediatrician, assisting children of American families stationed overseas. He tells about the devastation of Wertzburg and Bremerhaven in the immediate aftermath of World War II, and the challenges he faced as a young doctor abroad. (approx. 45 min. Interview date: May 14, 2002. VHP TAPE #19. Transcript. Also available on CD in standard audio format. Interviewer: Linda Barnickel. )

\* **OPERATION STAND DOWN** is a non-profit agency in Nashville which assists veterans who are homeless, who have been homeless, or who are otherwise in need.

◊ **PTSD** – Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

## **INTERVIEWER BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES**

**LINDA BARNICKEL** grew up in Oklahoma and attended the University of Tulsa where she graduated with a B.A. in English. She then obtained her Masters Degree in English at Ohio State University. She moved to Madison, Wisconsin where she spent much of her free time pursuing her interests in genealogy and military history by exploring the resources of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. In 1997, she enrolled in library school at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where her specialization was in archives, taught by staff members of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. She received a Master's Degree in Library and Information Studies in 1999 and became a reference archivist and part time records manager at the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka. After two years, she became head of reference services. In 2002, she came to the Nashville Public Library, where she quickly became involved in the Veterans History Project, which was just beginning at the time of her arrival. When one staff member left, she was given full responsibility for the project, including the

recruitment and training of volunteers and the development and planning of many aspects related to the project. She has had a lifelong interest in military history.

**KATHY BENNETT**, staff member of the Nashville Room, Nashville Public Library from 2002-2005, organized and began the Library's Civil Rights Oral History Project. She was previously employed as a school librarian for Metro Public Schools prior to her arrival at the public library, and returned to work in the schools in 2005. Her husband, Harvey Bennett, is a Vietnam-era Navy veteran, who was interviewed for this project.

**JIM LUMMUS** was inspired to become an interviewer for the Veterans History Project after reading books based on oral history, such as those by Studs Terkel, and others, most especially, *The Good War*.

**LARRY R. P. PATTERSON** grew up in a small town located in the mountains of Western North Carolina where his parents owned and operated a retail clothing store. After graduating from Hendersonville (North Carolina) High School, Patterson first attended Clemson College (now Clemson University) and then transferred to the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, where he graduated with a B.S. degree in Business Administration in January of 1967. In May of that year, he entered the US Air Force's Officer Training School at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, and served until August 1971. (See Interview Summary for further details about his military experience.) After leaving the military, he moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee with his wife and two children, where he worked a variety of jobs and also pursued flight training under the GI Bill. He received his Flight Instructor Certificate in the summer of 1976. After divorcing in late 1978, he moved to Murfreesboro, Tennessee to attend graduate school at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) and received his M.Ed. in Aerospace Education in December, 1979. He worked for a time in several aviation-related positions and then worked for seven years with the Tennessee Performing Arts Center in its Ticketmaster division. In November, 1989 he received an invitation to become a classroom instructor at a flight school in Murfreesboro and eventually became the school's curriculum director. While serving in that capacity, he returned to graduate school at MTSU to work on a Specialist in Education degree (Ed.S.) in Curriculum and Instruction and graduated in December, 1993. He decided to continue his graduate education and in January of 1994, enrolled in the Doctor of Education program at Tennessee State University—eventually receiving his Ed.D. degree in Curriculum and Instruction in August of 2001. In early 2002, he decided to become semi-retired and became involved in various volunteer activities. Having conducted oral history interviews with a group of tribal elders from the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians as part of his doctoral dissertation research, he decided to continue the oral history experience by volunteering with the Nashville Public Library as an interviewer for their Veterans History Project and Civil Rights Oral History Project. Now, after “officially” retiring, he continues doing volunteer

interviewer work with the Nashville Public Library, and also does volunteer work with both a hospice group and with Vanderbilt University Hospital.

**RONNIE PUGH** is a staff member of the Nashville Room at the Nashville Public Library. His specialization is country music history, and he is the author of *Ernest Tubb: The Texas Troubadour*. He conducted many oral histories with persons in the country music business when he was employed at the Country Music Hall of Fame, prior to his arrival at the Nashville Public Library in 2002.

**RICHARD RANDOLPH** is a licensed psychologist. He received degrees from Belmont University, Middle Tennessee State University, and Tennessee State University, and has also studied at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and the Vanderbilt Divinity School. He has worked with the Metro Public Schools and the Board of Parole Field Services. He is also very involved in Toastmasters International, and serves as a deacon at Trinity Baptist Church. His father is World War II Navy veteran Thurman Randolph, a participant in the Veterans History Project.

**BETTY RICHARDS** comes from a family which “has been involved in every war the United States has participated in” with the exception of Iraq and Afghanistan. She is intensely interested in our country and its history, and her husband, Henry Stanley Richards, is a Korean War era veteran who served in Greenland, and participated in the Veterans History Project. She is a retired school teacher and a member of two hereditary organizations, as well as participating in community service opportunities. She appreciates people who serve our country in the military and their families. In addition to her volunteer work as an interviewer for the Nashville Public Library’s Veterans History Project, she helps with Operation Stand Down, has served as State Chairman of Veterans Affairs for the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and the Daughters of 1812 Society, and since 2001 has been Veterans Affairs Volunteer Service representative for the National DAR.

**ROBERT P. RICHARDSON, JR.** was born in Taichow, Kiangsu, China, on October 8, 1926, the son of missionary parents. He received home schooling through the sixth grade, and attended Shanghai American School through the 9th grade (1938-41). He came to US at age 14, living in Augusta, Georgia, and completed school at Darlington School, in Rome, Georgia in 1944. He entered US Army in 1944, and received training as a Japanese language specialist. He served as an interrogator/translator in Army intelligence, first with GHQ, Tokyo, Japan, then in South Korea at the 38th parallel, for two years, assigned to the 7th Infantry Division. He was separated from the service in June 1948. (For more details about his military service, see Interview Summary.) In 1951 he graduated from Southwestern at Memphis (now Rhodes College), and married Pat Cooper of Little Rock. In 1954, he graduated from Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia. He served for forty years as a Presbyterian minister, in five pastorates in the southern states and in two national staff positions. He retired

from his last pastorate at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Nashville in 1994, and remains very involved with the church. Richardson is the father of three daughters, and the grandfather of six grandchildren. In retirement, Richardson volunteers by serving and visiting outpatients and inpatients at Vanderbilt Clinic and Hospital and has volunteered for many years with the Nashville Public Library. He began working as a volunteer interviewer for the Veterans History Project in 2002, and has assisted in many other ways with that project.

**FRANK RICKEY** served in the Navy during the Korean War.

**CHARLES A. "CHARLIE" SMITH** was born in Virginia but raised on Long Island in Levittown. He attended New York State University College on Long Island, now known as Stony Brook, and graduated with a BS degree in Chemistry from C. W. Post College in Brookville. After graduation he worked for Grumman Aircraft on Long Island as a materials engineer. He worked on such aircraft as the A6, E2, F-14, OV1, Gulfstreams I and II and also worked on the Lunar Module and the OAO orbiting astronomical observatory. He was an on-air consultant during the Apollo flights to both ABC and CBS television networks. Smith left Grumman to work at Rockwell International in Downey, California as a materials engineer on the Space Shuttle Orbiter. The last two years were spent working on tile and thermal insulation at McDonnell Douglas in St. Louis (a Rockwell subcontractor) and at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. After the first orbital launch of the Shuttle he left Rockwell and went to work for Avco Aerostructures in Nashville, Tennessee as director of materials engineering and the research and development laboratory, where he worked on a number of programs including the BAe-146 Regional Jet, the L1011, the B-1, the C-5, the C130, Gulfstreams III and IV, the Shuttle External Tank, Titan IV missile, V-22, and others. When he retired from Aerostructures, he bought a company with another retired Aerostructures employee, called Stripmasters of Nashville. They do environmentally-friendly paint stripping using dry ice, sodium bicarbonate or plastic media.

**ALICE SWANSON** grew up in Cheyenne, Wyoming as an only child surrounded by tons of cousins. Her mother was a part of a pioneering Wyoming family and her father worked for the Post Office for over fifty years, ending up as Postmaster. During World War II, he spent his time as a Civil Defense warden, monitoring for air-raids, which was considered a legitimate, if never realized, threat, due to the proximity of Fort Warren. Her mother took Red Cross training and practiced bandaging on Alice and her cousins. After high school, she attended the University of Denver getting a BA (Magna cum Laude) in Theatre with a minor in English. Then, in her words, she "did the only obvious thing for a woman to do at that time" and got married and had three children. Moves to Missouri, Florida, back to Missouri, and then to Memphis followed, with the constant being a summer professional repertory theatre called Arrow Rock Lyceum in Arrow Rock, Missouri, founded by her and her husband and populated by the entire family throughout the eighteen years of his involvement. She

received her MA in Theatre and Communication Arts from the University of Memphis (then Memphis State) and completed 45 hours above that degree in educational supervision and administration. After a divorce in 1972, she spent 10 years working as an Arts in Education Program Director for the Memphis City Schools with occasional forays into acting and directing for community theatre with Theatre Memphis and Playhouse on the Square. After her children were grown and had left home, she moved to Nashville to take the Arts in Education position with the Tennessee Arts Commission. This position progressed into information systems network administration and technical support for the last few years of her 16 years there, and since her retirement, she has “continued her love/hate relationship with the computer” by programming web sites for a firm in Nashville and doing freelance web design work for various organizations in the area, including the Nashville City Cemetery, among others. She has volunteered for the Nashville Room at the Nashville Public Library for a number of years in several capacities, most recently (as of 2007) as both a transcriptionist and oral history interviewer for the Veterans History Project.

**EVVIVA “VIVA” WEINRAUB** grew up on Long Island, New York. Her mother, a book editor, passed away when she was 9. Her father remarried when she was 11. He is a radiologist on Long Island and her step-mother is a social worker. After attending public schools on Long Island, Weinraub attended Boston University, where she studied history and anthropology, graduating in 2000. Her history studies focused primarily on Modern American History, 1945 to the present with emphasis on Vietnam and the counterculture movement. She worked full time at Boston University during her last two years of school and continued working there until 2001, when she got married and moved with her husband to Daejeon, South Korea. She worked as an English and history teacher for two years, during which time she had the opportunity to travel throughout Southeast Asia, Japan and China, in addition to traveling in Korea. In 2003, she moved back to America and lived in Nashville, Tennessee, where she became involved as a volunteer interviewer in the Veteran’s History Project at the Nashville Public Library. She left Nashville in the fall of 2004 to pursue a Masters degree in Library and Information Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park.