

Mildred Dost and Marian Boyer

Part 1

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Phone interview by Thomas Webb; facilitated by Lynn Farthing who was with Dost & Boyer

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[0:03:53 START]

FARTHING: So, now I'm going to turn this conversation away from myself and Mildred, you're on! You and Thomas! [laughs]

DOST: Okay. Any questions you wanna ask me?

WEBB: Um, well, do you have any questions for me before we get started, just about the process or anything?

DOST: [speaking at the same time] No. No, I was just gonna tell you it took me a long time to get into the service. [laughs]

WEBB: Okay.

DOST: Because I was in an accident and was badly injured and... They told me that I wasn't gonna survive the accident, number one, and I did, and then they told me that I would never be out of a wheelchair or anything and I am, and I did.

WEBB: [speaking at the same time]. Okay.

DOST: And so, the first time I went for a physical I was turned down right away, the second time I - that was in Cleveland where we were born, and the second one was in New York City and they turned me down. And then I thought I might as well forget about it. But in the meantime, one of my classmates from nursing school wanted to get a physical so I offered to go with her, and when I went with her, I was able to take another physical. And the doctor said, "If you think you can do it, I'll sign for you, but you'll be on stateside service. You will never go overseas." And that's how I got in the Army [U.S. Army].

WEBB: Okay. Well let's just back up a little bit. And we always sort of start these interviews with a very basic question and that's just: When and where were you born?

DOST: In Cleveland, Ohio—

WEBB: Okay.

DOST: –in November 22nd, 1920.

WEBB: Okay. And we're going to be interviewing your twin sister next, so I have to ask: which one of you is older?

DOST: She is by fifteen minutes.

WEBB: Fifteen minutes, okay.

DOST: And my mother -

DOST AND BOYER: [speaking at the same time] Didn't know there were two!

BOYER: No, but nobody knew there were two of us. This is back in 1920 before they had much knowledge of [laughs] babies and how often they are twins.

WEBB: So, you were a surprise set for your parents.

DOST: Complete surprise.

WEBB: [laughs] Well, that's really neat!

BOYER: We weren't really prepared. There weren't two beds, there weren't two outfits for clothes or anything.

DOST: [whispering] No, surprise.

WEBB: Yeah, as somebody that—you know, I've got a five-year-old now and a two-year-old, and there's so much prep work that [laughs] goes into all that—

BOYER: Oh, absolutely.

DOST: [whispering] They don't all work. [laughs]

WEBB: Well, let me ask you something else that I typically ask this generation. And just, growing up in Ohio, whether or not the Great Depression affected your area or your family in particular, but if you noticed any kind of ramifications from the Great Depression as you were growing up?

DOST: Well, I don't think it was any worse than it was then, but we were more adapted to taking care of things. Everybody worked together and there wasn't a lot of—other things going on. Our grandmother was [laughs] a great cook and a great baker and she made sure that we were well prepared for food.

WEBB: Okay. Was it a large family?

DOST: Well, we had a couple of aunts and uncles that all lived in the same place with us, so. But our family they were just...my sister and I, you know.

BOYER: And mother.

DOST: And– [laughs] well, and mother, somebody had to mother.

BOYER: [unintelligible whispering]

WEBB: So, what was–

DOST: Our father was in World War I...

WEBB: Okay, well that was one of my questions, whether or not military service was something that had sort of permeated in your family or if you were the first ones, so. He was in World War I, what branch?

DOST: He was in the, uh–not [U.S. Marines], he was in the Army, but he was in the...

BOYER: Uh-huh.

FARTHING: Go ahead Marian, fill it in.

BOYER: The same thing that my–

DOST: He built the planes and the–Corps of Engineers [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers]!

BOYER: [speaking at the same time] That's right, he was an engineer.

WEBB: Okay.

FARTHING: Which branch was it?

DOST: Army.

FARTHING: Sorry. [DOST and FARTHING laugh]

BOYER: So, we were in two different branches after we went in.

WEBB: Okay. Well I wanted to ask–what your education was like growing up, before nursing school.

DOST: Just elementary school–

BOYER: And high school!

DOST: And then high school, yes. And then [after] we graduated from high school; we went right into training. In those days you didn't go to some college or something, you went right to nursing school in the hospital! And this is where you worked, and you were trained. You never had any kind of salary or anything, but you worked for three years before you graduated. It's the way they should train nurses now. [laughs]

WEBB: I... Mildred, you know, having read through the notes that Lynn was so nice enough to put together and that you guys wrote out, I was curious whether or not your car accident, and maybe some of the experiences that you had prior to that, if that's what influenced you in to going in to nursing. Or what was kind of the catalyst for you wanting to do that career?

DOST: Well, as a little child I always wanted to be a nurse. And then after that accident, it kind of put the damper on the whole thing, the whole idea. But I'm a very strong person—

FARTHING: [In the background] Honey, they wouldn't let you be a nurse.

DOST: And I wanted it. They didn't even, the doctors said I can't be a nurse...they told me I wasn't going to survive the accident, so I needn't think—that I'd never be out of a wheelchair.

BOYER: And [they told her] she couldn't be a nurse.

DOST: But I survived. [whispers in background]

WEBB: Well, maybe just since other people are going to be listening to this and they don't have the same access to the notes that I have as the interviewer, you know, what kind of car was it, maybe what—you don't have to go into too many details if you don't want to, but—

DOST: Think it was a—Ford. It's in there somewhere, I said it was a way back. [laughs]

FARTHING: And can I just jump in here one moment, Thomas, sorry.

WEBB: Sure, yeah, no problem—

FARTHING: I hear you deeply, and these, been—Mildred [is] totally fine, aren't you Mildred, talking about that accident.

DOST: Oh, yeah.

FARTHING: And everything these two ladies are totally okay to talk about that, whatever you want to talk about. Am I correct ladies?

BOTH: Yes–

DOST: We are survivors!

FARTHING: Yes. [WEBB and DOST laugh]

WEBB: That's great!

FARTHING: Yeah, so don't feel–

BOYER: [speaking at the same time] Bad.

FARTHING: –don't feel hesitant. Right? Am I right ladies?

BOYER: You're right!

FARTHING: Okay.

WEBB: Well, if I ever ask something that, you know, you don't really want to go in to, you know this is a casual conversation so you can always decline to answer. But I guess I would be curious about the circumstances surrounding that car accident because it seems like such a pivotal moment in your life and it influenced, you know, the delay into getting into nursing school and into the military later on. So if you wouldn't mind talking–

DOST: No–

WEBB: –about that.

DOST: –and number one, this accident happened at a time–there were no ambulances on the road, there were no police making... looking after accidents. This happened with a young man who was a drunk driver that ran into us, and I went through the back side window–

BOYER: [softly] It was riding on the wrong side of us.

DOST: [speaking at the same time] – [wrong side] of the car. And I didn't know if there was anybody... in the accident with me that was injured too, or what happened, but there was no way of knowing. And there were two young men who picked me up from the roadside [and] took me to the hospital and I didn't know if anybody was hurt–

BOYER: [speaking at the same time] The car was a drunken driver, on wrong side of the street...hit [our car]. There were no seat belts...no EMTs...no ambulances...or anything like that. Two young men picked Mille up...they were in a car behind ours. They saw the accident happen. They put Millie in their car—and they transported us to the hospital. Mildred did not know if anyone else had lived through it. Upon awakening, she realized her grandmother was in the hospital bed next to hers. After she was released from the hospital the two young men who'd saved her life came to visit her...at our home—to check on her.

DOST: —and it was a horrible experience. And I was only semi-conscious, I know, but it was a hard experience. Marian, you wanna add to that? [laughs]

BOYER: [laughs] Well, the sixteen year-old was a drunk driver—

DOST: [speaking at the same time] Yes.

BOYER: —and he was driving on the wrong side of the street, so he hit us head on and at that point he went out the side...

DOST: [softly] Window.

BOYER: —back window, the—there wasn't such a little window at that time and then she landed in the street. And if they hadn't come and picked her up, the car, when it fell over, would've landed on her.

WEBB: Uh-hmm. Was anybody else hurt in that accident?

BOYER: I think—

DOST AND BOYER: My grandfather —grandmother —

BOYER: —had a bad —

DOST AND BOYER: —shoulder—

BOYER: —or something, but that's all. And I was sittin' next to her and I didn't get hurt at all.

WEBB: Uh-huh. And then, so you've described, kind of, the lack of resources, how did you —

BOYER: Pretty much so.

WEBB: How did you let your family know that this accident had occurred and how did they get to the hospital then?

BOYER: Well, I –they must have contacted my mother right away, because they told her she couldn't possibly've lived.

DOST: [unintelligible] –we were only eighteen years old.

BOYER: [speaking at the same time] Could not possibly have lived! And they didn't touch her for about five days, because they thought she was gonna die and she still lived! I know she –

DOST AND BOYER: [unintelligible talking, laughing]

WEBB: Well, that's outstanding and thank goodness that, you know, that they were wrong in their... [laughs]

BOYER: Yeah, they certainly were.

DOST: Amen. Actually, we were blessed. If we hadn't been blessed, we wouldn't have survived.

BOYER: That's right!

WEBB: Yeah. So –

BOYER: Somebody greater than the ones of us– [DOST laughs]

WEBB: Yeah.

BOYER: –living here had something to do with it all.

WEBB: Yeah. So, you know, having just started talking to you on the phone I'm already detecting there, you know, is that idea of twins and, you know, how they sort of finish each other's sentences or really are connected in ways that non-twins don't understand. Was that your experience growing up?

DOST: Yes, exactly.

BOYER: Yes, it was. We have a bond that other siblings do not have!

DOST: You said it perfectly.

BOYER: And they can't quite understand it either. [laughs]

WEBB: Yeah. So, you went through elementary school and then high school.

DOST: Right.

WEBB: And then what were—

BOYER: There were both post-graduate—

DOST, BOYER: Courses.

BOYER: Post-graduate courses, I did mine in surgery, believe it or not, at Cook County in Chicago.

WEBB: Huh.

BOYER: And that was an education all by itself—and she did hers in obstetrics in Jersey City, New Jersey.

WEBB: Oh, okay... And what [stutters] obstetrics? I'm probably not saying that quite right.

DOST: Yeah, well, I'm—my primary duties were in labor and delivery.

WEBB: Okay... So, then quite a bit different then...

DOST: Surgery, yeah.

WEBB: What you would be doing even into the military?

DOST: Well, I did—that's where I wound up in the military and a doctor that I knew was stationed there and he got me transferred into the O.B. [Obstetrics] department.¹

WEBB: Okay.

BOYER: Because she had the training for that.

WEBB: Yeah.

DOST: Right. And I was almost in someplace else and I didn't really wanna go but it didn't happen.

FARTHING: Tell him about Colonel Sparks! [laughs]

DOST: Well, she was our chief nurse and she was from World War I. And she—when she found out that I was transferred, she was gonna send me to a chemical warfare plant! But that never happened.

1. DOST noted that a doctor with whom she had worked in Cleveland, was substituting for the doctor making the placement for nurses. He had said to her, "If you think you can do it [obstetrics], you will do it." [as explained later by DOST].

FARTHING: Because that doctor -

DOST: That doctor interceded and told Colonel Sparks that I belong up in Obstetrics. Still...

WEBB: Wow.

BOYER: And he was in charge [outranked Colonel Sparks, a World War I veteran, who had wanted to place her elsewhere.]

DOST: [speaking at the same time] You don't expect to wind up in O.B. when you join the Army. [laughs]

WEBB: No. [laughs] No. Uh, what are, what were...

DOST: [Speaking at the same time] He was in Cleveland originally. [i.e. this doctor had been working in the Lutheran Hospital in Cleveland, where she had been training].

WEBB: Huh?

DOST: ...Pardon?

WEBB: What were the steps to get into—

DOST: Yes?

WEBB: —nursing school? I know that you, Mildred, had to—apply is not the right word, but you had to try to get in numerous times, so—

DOST: You're right.

WEBB: They obviously had some kind of qualifications that they were looking for. What were those?

DOST: Well, they did a complete physical on me with X-rays and everything... And, anyway they took Ollies [???] and they told me I was—I did not pass so— [EX. Ollies?]

BOYER: [in background softly] I have—

DOST: —and then I went another time with, when I was in New Jersey and I went to... to New York to have my test and they told me also that I could, could not...

BOYER: [softly] This keeps buzzing.

FARTHING: [in background] Yeah, because I'm gonna go get the other phone, I think that [the] charge may be down. It's — [louder] go ahead, go ahead!

DOST: Oh, okay.

FARTHING: I'm gonna step in— [inaudible]

DOST: I thought I heard some extra noises on the phone. [WEBB laughs] Anyway, I didn't— didn't pass that second time and then I went in to teaching O.B. nursing. That was my thing.

WEBB: So, besides the—

DOST: After that, one of my classmates wanted to go for a physical and I said, "Well I'll —," I said, "I haven't passed but I'll be glad to go with you." So I drove her down to Ohio [DOST later clarified that it was the Lutheran Hospital] in Cleveland and told her that I would stay with her while she went. And while I was there somebody talked me into having another physical and that time I passed!

WEBB: Uh -hmm.

DOST: So, it took me three tries.

WEBB: So—

DOST: I'm [a] very stubborn person. [laughs] WEBB: [laughs] Well that's good for us! Beyond the physical that you had to take, were there any other kinds of testing, or—

DOST: Well, they did all kinds of x-rays and everything, 'cause every bone in my body from the waist down was broken.

WEBB: Okay. And then how 'bout—

DOST: And they wanted to be sure I was healed before they let me join in the Army.

WEBB: Sure. How 'bout—you know, any kind of written exams or anything to get into nursing school?

DOST: Well just the usual kinda tests that they do for nursing school. We went for two days in a row that we had to take tests... And we did, we both passed those, so we got into nursing school together. But they never let us work on the same work together.

WEBB: Oh!

DOST: 'Cause we looked too much alike at that time. [WEBB And DOST laugh]

WEBB: That could be kinda confusing.

DOST: Yes!

WEBB: Okay. Well, so you're in nursing school, you're working with... labor, and then—

DOST: Well, I started out with just working with the men. And then when this doctor arrived on the post, he's the one that got me to enter to O.B.

WEBB: [softly] Okay. So, you've—

DOST: And, he was quite a doctor. And he not only did that, he got it situated that he was the only doctor on O.B. that was called for patients. So sometimes [...] he [...] went to a movie there [BOYER coughs] [and] you would hear him being called because they were having a delivery with them. And he would be called. Most of the other doctors—

FARTHING: [softly] You want some water?

WEBB: Yeah. [BOYER coughs]

WEBB: So, you're a little bit ahead of where I am in my questioning, because I think you're already talking about your time in the military.

DOST: Right.

WEBB: And I wanted to ask [BOYER coughs] before we get too far ahead. First of all, where were you when you heard about the Pearl Harbor attack and how did you hear about the Pearl Harbor attack?

DOST: What did—how did I hear about the what?

WEBB: Pearl Harbor? [BOYER coughs]

DOST: My sister's coughing and I can't hear. [DOST and WEBB laugh]

BOYER: [softly] Can't hear any— [coughs].

WEBB: We'll give her a minute. [BOYER coughs]

DOST: Is she be okay?

FARTHING: [softly] Yeah, I'm watching her.

DOST: She's being watched. [BOYER coughs, WEBB, DOST, and FARTHING laugh]

FARTHING: Don't you love to be watched when you're coughing, Marian?

DOST: And, I'm sorry, I didn't hear which question you asked. [BOYER coughs]

WEBB: I was just curious where you were and how you heard about the Pearl Harbor attack.

DOST: ... Oh, we were—we were both doing our nursing and we heard about it, but we hadn't graduated from nursing school yet. So, we couldn't do any joining, any services until we graduated. And then we both won scholarships to do postgraduate work and that's what we did. [BOYER coughs] And then as soon as we were through with that we didn't apply. 'Cause I said it took me three physicals.

WEBB: Yeah... [BOYER coughs] So the attack at Pearl Harbor was kind of the beginning— [BOYER coughs]

DOST: Right.

WEBB: It was really what kind of... [BOYER coughs] Oh, energized the US population into wanting to be in the military.

DOST: Right, right.

WEBB: So—

DOST: A lot of people joined at that time.

WEBB: Yeah. So, I'm curious what it was that got you interested in joining the military. [BOYER coughs]

DOST: Just wanting to join and do our part? ...And then like I said I did three times—tried three times before I actually got in. But I think I got in just shortly before my sister did.

WEBB: Okay, so you were first?

DOST: Because she always wanted to be an airline steward and in those days you had to be a nurse and—

BOYER: [speaking at the same time] Be an RN. [Registered Nurse]. [coughs]

DOST: Yeah, be an RN. And then after that, they decided that they didn't want the nurses to go into being airline stewardess[es], they wanted them to go into the nursing only.

WEBB: Yeah. So, what was—

DOST: You know it. [BOYER and DOST cough] It must be contagious! [Webb laughs, BOYER coughs]

FARTHING: She's getting a cough drop here. Do you need a cough drop?

DOST: No, I'm fine. You okay now? Oh, she's getting a cough drop so she'll be able to talk in a minute. [laughs]

WEBB: Okay, well, let's give her a little time to catch her breath. Sounds like you guys have it pretty bad. I know it's been a pretty awful flu season up here, so I'm sorry you're going through that.

DOST: Well, you know what's happening here? You know, at this time of the year everybody from up north wants to come down to Florida where there—where it's warm.

BOYER: And they bring this with 'em.

DOST: [softly] We have an influx of the northerners coming...[laughter]

DOST: [softly] I know in our health center alone we have many, many people who have colds right now.

FARTHING: Um-hmm.

DOST: We have visitors who have [unintelligible]... I think my sister's just about ready if you wanted to talk to her for a little bit too.

FARTHING: ... He's—I think he's just giving us time to—for Marian to—

BOYER: I'm alright now.

FARTHING: Okay.

WEBB: Okay? You guys ready to go again?

BOYER: Yes, I'm all right.

WEBB: Okay!

BOYER: And Millie told you already that I always wanted to be an airline stewardess!

WEBB: Yeah!

BOYER: And so, we had to be an R.N. in order to join. And so, I pursued my career in nursing. And then, before I was done nursing, we found out that they no longer were taking nurses in the military for that reason. So anyway, that's when I was taking my postgraduate course with a nurse mate from nursing school and so she and I both went to Great Lakes [Naval Station Great Lakes] and we joined the Navy [U.S. Navy].

WEBB: Why did you pick the Navy over maybe a different branch?

BOYER: I don't know, I just did! [laughs]

WEBB: Okay.

BOYER: I just did. I don't—I had no reason, but they told us that they knew if we wanted to be patriotic then we should join the service.

WEBB: What—

BOYER: So, she and I both went up to Great Lakes and that's how we joined.

WEBB: It seems like a lot of the decisions that you guys made [were] maybe influenced by your fellow classmates or your friends. What did your family think about you joining the service?

BOYER: Well, we didn't talk too much about it, but the American Red Cross called my mother up before we had a chance to tell her that we joined! [WEBB laughs] And told her she should be very proud of her two daughters. So, they kinda jumped the gun on us and we didn't get a chance to tell my mother until we got home! But anyway, she was, apparently was all right with it 'cause she never gave us a hard time about having done it, you know, without permission, actually.

WEBB: Yeah.

BOYER: But we didn't need permission: we were twenty-three years old.

DOST: Uh-huh.

WEBB: Okay.

DOST: At that time.

BOYER: And since we have been in this— in the service, and when we took our longer flight up to Washington D.C. to see the monument for World War II, there was a stewardess on the airplane who wanted our picture because we're twins, we were dressed alike and everybody wanted our picture. [WEBB laughs] But we said, "Okay."

And then she asked the sponsors of the trip if they would get permission to use—get our name on the document saying it was okay to use her picture. And then pretty soon somebody called me up and talked for a long time and I guess it was her first love to get—do the ancestry on people so she discovered that one of my father's grandfathers, probably number nine up the line, way up—

WEBB: Yeah, yeah.

BOYER: —had settled originally in the New England states. They came from England. And because he was there then, he was in one of the first battles of the Revolutionary War.

WEBB: Oh, wow.

BOYER: So that's how we got into the D.A.R. [The Daughters of the American Revolution] and we're still active in that. So, we are patriots, I think.

WEBB: Yeah! It goes—

BOYER: Anyway—

WEBB: It goes way back.

BOYER: It goes way back. And we didn't even know that. You know? When people start—checking all your—all your information they find out a bunch of things we never knew.

WEBB: Yeah.

FARTHING: And that was Marian talking in that last bit.

WEBB: Okay.

DOST: Yeah, she [is] just about ready to sneeze. [laughs]

WEBB: So, Marian, because of the car accident they told Mildred that she would be stateside only with the Army. Did they give you any kind of promise like that or was there—?

BOYER: I was—I was not injured at all in the accident. So there was no reason to do that.

WEBB: Was there the potential that you could've been sent overseas?

BOYER: The farthest I got was to Hawai'i the last five months of World War II. I was there on V-J Day [Victory over Japan Day] and that was my last tour of duty because the war ended. So, I got to go home!

WEBB: Okay. So, when you—you sign up for the military, they do—you know, for the men that I've talked to, they do a physical, and then they send 'em to basic training. Do they do a similar thing for nurses? Did you have to go through any kind of—

BOYER: Some of—some of the pictures I have there show that first—I went to Portsmouth, Virginia first, and we did have like about three weeks of indoctrination. And we were taught how to march by the Marines and all the necessary things that you need to have, you know, and to make things in triplicate and all that kind of stuff, we learned all that kind of stuff. And of course, then we had to go get our uniforms, and they allowed—the Navy allowed us—a certain amount of money to go get our uniforms. But we had to wear what they said. [laughs] And that's what we did.

WEBB: Now I will probably bring her up again during this conversation, but I did an interview with a Vietnam-era nurse from the Marine Corps. And she talked about her uniform, especially you know in Chicago, in the north during the winter months and how terrible it was. Do you remember anything good or bad about your uniform?

DOST: No, I guess because—after the war was over, we went back to wearing street clothes. We didn't wear our uniforms after the war was over. [talking in background] I didn't...

DOST: Yeah. When the war was over, the war was over. You know?

BOYER: For us. I think anybody still in the service... 'cause we were discharged—in fact I was discharged at Great Lakes on my birthday [November 22] and Thanksgiving Day in 1945. But uh...

FARTHING: And again, that was Marian talking. And Mildred is giving me signals that the picture that you may have gotten through the phone text today, that was of course of Mildred donating her uniform to the—

DOST: [faintly speaking in background]

FARTHING: Go ahead, Mildred.

DOST: [in background, unintelligible] They make rounds [travel] all over the country and they show all of these things and tell about them. They know when people are

realizing how important the world was... [unintelligible] Because we really [unintelligible] worried about. Anyway, they take—they make tours, and they tell people all about wars and they have all of these—I gave 'em my boot locker, everything I had from the Army because I thought they had a worthwhile project going on, and they are the ones that took the pictures. [softly] And I think it was good that they did that.

FARTHING: [in background] And that was a winter uniform!

DOST: [softly] Well whatever I had, I gave the Army [i.e. DOST had donated her uniform, footlocker etc. to an organization which runs a travelling exhibition. It is stored on a bus or van and a couple does educational outreach on World War II]].

FARTHING: Oh, okay, good... [DOST speaking unintelligibly]

WEBB: Lynn, I could hear that, but I am wondering if Mildred is still on a phone?

DOST: Yeah, we both have phones, yeah—all three of us in fact.

WEBB: Uh-hmm. Okay. [zipper noise] Well, I think that, you know, that project sounds really good, and of course that's very much what we're trying to do here in Chicago at this museum and library, is just make sure that people understand, not necessarily just what happened in World War II but what the military's all about in general. So these stories really help go a long way in doing that. Um... [clacking noises] I think in some of the notes that Lynn took it describes some of your classmates and maybe how your class size dwindled—

BOYER: Right. Over the years I mean, we—at the age of ninety-six we don't have, there's only three of us left. Millie and I and the girl that joined the Navy with me in Chicago—she's—there're just three of us left out of eighteen.

WEBB: Okay. When—?

BOYER: [speaking at the same time] So over the years we've lost a few.

WEBB: Yeah. When you were actually in the military though, your class started at eighteen or were there—?

BOYER: Well, they started at twenty-four originally, and within the first six months we were down to [eighteen].

WEBB: Do you know—and maybe you don't—but what kinds of things were happening that kinda weeded those other young ladies out?

BOYER: Well, if they weren't really adapted to being nurses—not everybody can be a nurse—and I think they realized that after six months—

FARTHING: And—

BOYER: So, then we were down to eighteen finally, twenty-four to eighteen and then to eleven.

FARTHING: And if I may, just in case, that was at the nurses' training in Cleveland that—

BOYER: Right—

FARTHING: —that Marian's telling you about that was before the military.

BOYER: [speaking at the same time] —and half of the class did join the service.

WEBB: Okay.

BOYER: Half of the class joined the service.

WEBB: Oh, half the class did. Okay.

FARTHING: So—'cause they were in—yeah, so. Sorry to but in, but I thought maybe you were maybe thinking that was—

WEBB: I was, so, it's—

FARTHING: Yeah. [WEBB laughs] So, yeah, so that was, they're telling you now about their—they were in nurses' training and then the war broke out.

WEBB: Okay.

BOYER: [speaking at the same time] Right.

FARTHING: So, in nurses' training, I think you were reading the notes—

BOYER and DOST: Yeah.

FARTHING: —that I took that you start with—how many you, you two—Marian, Mildred, how many, twenty-four?

BOYER: Twenty—!

DOST: —four in the class.

FARTHING: In the class.

DOST: And then there were eighteen finally after the first six months.

WEBB: Okay. Well, was there—

DOST: But, uh—

WEBB: —a similar experience then once you were in the military or did the class kinda stay the same size? ...And maybe class—

BOYER: Well, pretty much so—

WEBB: [speaking at the same time] —isn't the right word.

BOYER: I mean as many [coughs] as could stay, did. [coughs]

FARTHING: [softly] Isn't that awful. Could —did you graduate in '42 from nursing?

BOYER: In '42 and the war broke out in '41 so it's—it had been on for one year.

WEBB: Well, that brings up another question I have, and a great point, and that is: How aware of what was going on in Europe and beyond were you as it was occurring?

BOYER: Well, we were probably about twenty-two when the war broke out, 'cause it was in 1942 that the war started, so it was probably from that time on, and I got out when I was 25. So, I was in three years.

WEBB: Okay.

FARTHING: You too, Mildred?

DOST: [softly] And we both got married in the war time, Marian and I both, and I was married at Fort Knox, Kentucky 'cause I was still in the Army. She was married in June I think, and I was married in November.

BOYER: Five months difference.

DOST: [softly] She went back to New Jersey and I went back to Ohio, you know? We stayed for a long time.

WEBB: ... Marian, as you were going through your training, did you have to do anything different in regards to the Navy? Did you have to do any kind of swimming exercises or anything along those lines?

BOYER: No. No, I didn't have to do anything different and because I worked in surgery it was kind of a specialized area. The only thing we had to do was teach the corpsmen to be

scrub nurses like we were! [laugh] Because [there] might come a chance where that's what they were gonna have to do! And so we were preparing for that. But that was part of our job.

WEBB: Okay. So, what were other parts of your job?

BOYER: ... Not, not really any part—other part to the job.

WEBB: ... Okay. So were you training these corpsmen to do these kinds of things—

BOYER: [speaking at the same time] The nurses usually do—

WEBB: —then at the hospital?

BOYER: —but on occasion they might be out someplace where they might have to do some of the things that we did! And to be a scrub nurse you have to assist the doctors.

DOST: Well, they do in surgery.

BOYER: And that might be something different from them depending from whatever else they had to do. I don't know. I know they worked on the wards where the patients were, the—you know the servicemen that got hurt but... I mean it was kind of a specialized area. So, we had to teach them some of the things that we did so they would be able to do them—if the occasion or course came up.

DOST: [softly] I was [working] with a corpsman who could—when I was at Fort Knox, Kentucky, I was working with him on the male ward. And we had a lot of men who worked late at night on [unintelligible].

BOYER: [speaking at the same time] The hours were crazy.

DOST: [softly] Anyway, this one particular corpsman [i.e., enlisted medical specialist], he knew more about something that I did because there was [unintelligible] and we had never [unintelligible] never had to do anything like that, and he's the one that taught me how to do that, so I give him credit. [laughs] He was wonderful! And every nurse that came on the service after I was [there], he had to teach them! [laughs] Because none of us really knew how to do that, it was for [unintelligible], make sure that [unintelligible]. [softly] Anyways, I just wanted to add that because I've been taking his credit for that.

WEBB: Yeah, it's, that's—

BOYER: It was a two-way street.

DOST: [softly] Hmm. It certainly was.

BOYER: They showed us things and we showed them.

WEBB: If I could just stop for a minute. Lynn, are you still listening?

FARTHING: Yeah.

BOYER: Uh-hmm!

WEBB: The phone that Mildred is talking into, either the volume is really low or something.

FARTHING: Okay.

WEBB: It might've turned off.

FARTHING: Mildred—I was wondering about that —Mildred can, try to bring the phone down or it may be the charge. Now—now speak into them and see if he can hear you better. Can you hear him better?

DOST: [speaking in the background] I can hear him fine.

FARTHING: Okay. Now can you hear her better now.

WEBB: It's still pretty low.

FARTHING: Okay. Let me get—I've got the other phone right hear so let me just change that out.

WEBB: Okay.

FARTHING: And then I'll [crackling noise] Mildred, I'm gonna give you this phone and I'm gonna hang that one up and let it charge [beeping noise] a bit. Okay, are you there, can you hear me Thom?

WEBB: I can hear you.

FARTHING: Can you hear me?

WEBB: Yup!

FARTHING: Okay, you might have to—this phone's not quite as good volume so, and I don't know, [softly] hold on one let me see... One second please, Thomas, because I'm gonna see if I can find the volume... On... The...Okay keep—whistle or something so I can tell. [Laughs]

WEBB: [laughs] Well I won't do that, but.

FARTHING: Okay, let me see. [softly] See if you can hear him now, that's Thomas again, so.

DOST: [clearly] Okay.

WEBB: Okay, I can hear you much better. That's—can you hear me?

BOYER: You can hear me too?

WEBB: Yeah. [breathes in] This is almost like the party line, isn't it? [laughs]

BOYER: Pardon?

WEBB: The party line? Did you ever have—?

DOST: No, we—we grew up—

BOYER: We know what it's like to have the first telephone in the house. [talking in background]

WEBB: Yeah. I—

BOYER: [softly] Video—

DOST: Yeah, we know the first of everything.

WEBB: [laughs] My grandfather always tells me about the party line and how neighbors would—

BOYER: Oh yeah.

WEBB: —sometimes chime in, so. That's kinda— [laughs]

DOST: And the only one that'd use that [laughs] was the grandmother. [WEBB laughs] Nobody touched that phone. [laughs]

WEBB: Yeah... Well, I think it was Mildred was talking about learning from the corpsmen—it brings up a question that I have, and that is how you were treated by the different levels of military. I assume you had a, you know, a supervisor, that kind of thing, but were you well treated as women in the military?

BOYER: Well, and we always had doctors who covered the wards so if there were any questions you could always ask them?

WEBB: Okay... Did you ever run into any problems? I talked to a Donut Dolly and she talked about the very specific list of things that they were allowed and not allowed to do as

women, kind of, serving in the military. So, I was wondering whether or not there was a list of dos and don'ts that you guys were maybe obligated to follow that others weren't.

DOST: I don't remember going through anything like that specifically... And we had a—we had a chief nurse from World War I. [breathes in, BOYER coughs in background] And she was very strict.

WEBB: ...Okay.... Let's see here. So, the kinds of patients that you had, Marian—

BOYER: [very softly] Yes?

WEBB: —were those individuals that were hurt?

BOYER: A lot of 'em were—we did a lot of re-amputations, one that was done maybe on the field and then we'd send them to the hospital to be cleaned up some and made more useful. And I think we did a lot of hernias, I think we did a lot of knee—not replacements, but when they had injuries to their knee they'd come through surgery and that basically was most of what we had.

WEBB: So was there, a... Uh, how should I say this. Now, we refer to things as PTSD. Was there a role that you had where you were also there to kind of calm the patients and help them work through some of the things, or was your role strictly surgery and then somebody else—?

BOYER: My role was strictly to work in surgery.

WEBB: Okay.

BOYER: So I mean it was a specialized area and that's where we were stationed and I think the post-graduate course had a lot to do with where we got placed because they wanted to use that knowledge that we had and the—what we were able to do. So, and that's a wise decision for them to make to make use of the best that they had available.

WEBB: Okay.

BOYER: So. That's the way it was. And there were women in the service then, a lot of women that joined the service also when we did and, but they were — the WAVES [Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service]? And the WAACs [Women's Army Auxiliary Corps]? And different kinds of services and they were useful too 'cause they found their spot for what they were capable of doing and so they were no problem to us. We worked along with all kinds of people.

WEBB: Was there ever a sense of competition?

BOYER: No, there was no competition whatever!

WEBB: Okay.

BOYER: Everybody was there to help. I think World War II brought out a lot of things in people that they didn't even know they were [laughs] capable of doing. But they did! And everybody worked together very well. We didn't have any competition whatever.

WEBB: So how long were you... stationed. You were stationed in California?

BOYER: I was stationed at Portsmouth, Virginia for about ten months, I was in—at Camp Pendleton [California] for about ten months or more, and then I went to Pearl Harbor [Hawaii] the last five months of World War II.

WEBB: And what was the...mood like at Pearl Harbor? I know that this is well beyond the attack, but were there kind of lasting ramifications from that?

BOYER: [speaking at the same time] Mostly what we did the last five months that we were there we got a lot of patients from far out in the—islands that were coming through. And they would come and be there for maybe one day and they'd just get them ready to go back to the States. And so that was —it was just the station where they could just come through and be checked out and go on back home. So it was, you know, it was at the very end of the war. So—and then we got to go home too.

WEBB: Do you remember where you were at for V-E Day [Victory in Europe] Day?

BOYER: ... It was V-J Day [Victory over Japan Day] and I probably was working [WEBB and BOYER laugh] when we heard that it had happened. And then after that, I was there when they signed the treaty and then they went over also to a ship and [that was] where the final papers were signed. And I was there for all of that. [laughs]

WEBB: But what about victory over Europe, were you...?

BOYER: I was at—in Virginia then and we got [unintelligible, the news] for V-E Day.

WEBB: What was the mood like, do you remember?

BOYER: It's hard to remember what people were thinking. It was not—it was not the end of the war like we had in Japan there or in Hawaii. It was a different sort of thing. I

mean, they had some victory there and it—but it didn't end the war. Do you know what—there's a little difference between a victory and actually ending the war.

WEBB: Yeah.

BOYER: To me.

WEBB: ...Yeah. That makes sense. [breathes in] Kind of just the first step. [laughs]

BOYER: To winning a war! [laughs]

WEBB: Yeah. [breathes in] Well, what kind of things—you've talked about the strenuous schedule that you were on as a nurse. What kinds of things were you allowed to do when you were not on duty?

BOYER: Well, I sent you some pictures. Out in California, we had a lot of hills or mountains and stuff, we could—we could go out hiking, we could sunbathe, we could walk around, and they even had horseback riding out there, but I didn't wanna do that one. [WEBB and BOYER laugh] But there were lots of things offered, and they did some archery—I think I made up some pictures of some of the things we could do. But there was always something to do. And some places they had bowling alleys and places where the men could really take part in sports.

WEBB: ...When you were not on duty, did you have much interaction with the men, or did they try to keep you guys separated?

BOYER: Well, we just did our job and we didn't—and I did marry an enlisted man—

DOST: [softly] So did I.

BOYER: —just before the war ended.

WEBB: Okay.

BOYER: And somebody I had known for a while, and [DOST starts coughing in background] you know, they, they fraternized about get—being together but it never affected our sense of duty or anything, so it... And I had a wonderful marriage at forty-five years, so, I mean—

WEBB: And, what was his name? [pause, static noises]

WEBB: Are you still there?

BOYER: Yes?

WEBB: What was his name?

BOYER: His name is George BOYER and he's on that – we made a thing, and in fact, came from [unintelligible] Millie found it, and it's a thing where, it's a... credit or an honor for the military, and they have a place where you can buy a...

DOST: Plaque.

BOYER: A plaque or a paid brick or something. Anyway, they put your name on it. Your rank and your...full name and it's very, very nice but we—they sent us one of those after we joined that. It's a kind of a role of honor.

WEBB: Yeah. I mentioned this Vietnam-era nurse that I talked to, and she said something to me that really stuck with me, and that was that there were some instances where her nursing training told her to do one thing, but her military training told her to do something else, and sometimes that conflict really caused her a lot of—unsettling. Did you ever have any instances whereas a nurse you wanted to do one thing but as a military person you were required to do something else?

BOYER: Never in anything I had been in contact with. I mean, if it happened, I was not aware of it. But it was nothing that affected me ever... You do the best you can do under the circumstances.

WEBB: Yeah...So once the war ends, V-J Day, how did they—you said you got out fairly quickly after that, how—what was that process like?

BOYER: I guess they—just preparing them to be able to leave. Once they signed the treaties... And so it wasn't too long, we closed the hospital down that we were at and they just got things ready to leave.

WEBB: So, you didn't necessarily—some of the men that I've talked to that served had a whole points system, they got a point for, you know, every month that they were in or something like that, um, and that was—

BOYER: [speaking at the same time] We didn't have anything like that.

WEBB: You didn't have anything like that.

BOYER: Un-huh.

WEBB: Okay. So, what did you do then after the military?

BOYER: I moved—my husband and I moved to New Jersey. I was married before the war ended and so I lived there until we moved to Florida.

WEBB: ...And you continued on with nursing?

BOYER: Did I get any what?

WEBB: Did you continue on with nursing?

BOYER: Somewhat. When I could. I had a family by that time and in nursing you usually have to take calls, to be available and I had a toddler. And in fact, they asked us—both of us—to come back for... the next war. [laughs] There've been so many it's hard to remember.

WEBB: Yeah. The Korean War?

BOYER: The Korean War. We both got letters to come back... We were reserve at that time and I guess they have a right to ask us to come back, but there was no way we could. I know today they have families that go as a whole family—

DOST: [speaking softly in background] Hold it up. Okay.

BOYER: And... But back then, you know, you couldn't take a toddler to war. [laughs]

WEBB: Yeah... What was the duration of your time in the reserves then?

BOYER: [DOST speaking in the background intermittently throughout] I don't know whether they ever actually said, "You're no longer in the [US Army] Reserve," but maybe as you get older—I don't think there was any point where they—well, they probably, after that they decided you know I wasn't gonna be available.

WEBB: Okay. Okay.

BOYER: I have not joined any military organizations, but I support them all and I support American Legion, and... V.F.W. [Veterans of Foreign Wars] because I think I qualify for V.F.W. having been in Hawaii when it was not a state yet.

WEBB: Yeah.

BOYER: It was still a territory —and the V.F.W. and the D.A.V. [Disabled American Veterans], I just got a letter the other [laughs] day for the D.A.V. and you know any more they have a thing where you send donations into the processing center, and I said, "I'm—I don't know for sure how that works." 'Cause it doesn't look like you—whatever you send doesn't go to the area you originally send it in for but it goes to a processing

center. So I don't know how that's working—but I don't like the idea of sending it in to a central location. So anyway, I support these organizations but not going through that processing center, so—you have another address for 'em or if they're local you can do it locally, 'cause they all have their own areas. So.

WEBB: I'm right—

BOYER: That's the way I do it.

WEBB: Yeah, I'm right there with you of being a little suspect of just sending things off, that's...

BOYER: But anything I can do locally, I do locally.

WEBB: Yeah.

BOYER: And I've even reached the point where I give donations to people [that] have the diseases and they're all getting 'em, their funds through this processing center also. So in order to do it locally, I give funds or donations to people who actually have some of these diseases [static noises] because these are the people who are struggling, trying to get all their medications and all their treatments and their doctors' visits and all, [unintelligible] have any problems doing that. So. Well I'm not sure where my dollars [are] gonna go, you know, and I know they say they're doing all kinds of research, but you don't hear too much about the different kinds of research they're doing. So anyway, I do what I feel I can do and [unintelligible] so. That's my feeling. [i.e. BOYER is describing how she has become uncomfortable with large and distant charity organizations and focusses on local charities. She wants a measure of accountability that local charities seem better suited to offer the donor.]

WEBB: I'd like to... You know, you've talked about your sense of duty... The sense of community that sort of formed out of World War II but, I'm just—you know I'd like to go back to that moment when you decided to join the military and you're already—

BOYER: Well, I joined it because I was prepared to go [laughs] be an airline stewardess and then they no longer were using nurses in the airlines. So that's when I decided well then I would be patriotic and I would join.

WEBB: Yeah. Okay!

BOYER: Because that was their reason for not using nurses anymore in the airlines and so they said, "Then join the service!" [softly] So I did.

WEBB: ...Uh, Mildred, are you still on the line?

BOYER: Yeah, she's still there.

DOST: [softly] Yeah. I'm just listening but I can't hear very well.

FARTHING: [loudly] Can you—do you wanna sit here and use this phone?

DOST: [softly] No, no, no, I can hear her.

FARTHING: Yeah, but can you hear him?

DOST: Not always.

FARTHING: Why don't you sit here—[louder] just a moment, we're gonna trade seats 'cause I'm on the line phone and so I think that will be better for Mildred. Sorry, I had to go take a call, so I've been gone for—ten minutes or so. Okay, she's coming over. Oh, that's okay, no, we're in no hurry Mildred. Now do you wanna get closer—are you comfortable or do you wanna be closer to the table?

DOST: [softly] I'm okay.

FARTHING: Okay! Sorry that's gonna be a little—but I think you'll hear him better, you tell us.

DOST: [clearly] Can I hear you?

WEBB: I hope so!

DOST: Oh yes. [static] That's very clear. I'm past listening to my sister talk. [laughs]

WEBB: Um... So, I wanted to ask you a little bit about your particular role, because I think it's very interesting. So, if I understand it right you were about to be sent to chemical warfare?

DOST: Well, but I never went.

WEBB: A doctor intervened?

DOST: I never went. No. [DOST had explained above that a doctor who was the replacing the regular selector, was one with whom had worked with in Cleveland. He assigned her to obstetrics as opposed to chemical warfare].

WEBB: And instead you went, and you were doing the OB nurse.

DOST: Right.

WEBB: So, you were basically interacting with—

DOST: [inaudible, cutting in and out] I'm sorry, I didn't hear you.

WEBB: You were basically interacting with the families—

DOST: Right.

WEBB: —of men overseas.

DOST: Right.

WEBB: So maybe a little bit different than your sister's experience... You probably were called upon to kind of calm their nerves. Right?

DOST: Well, a lot of times... The patient's wife was there, and the men were in the service there.

WEBB: Yeah.

DOST: And their wives came down to see them, and they were ready—almost ready to have their babies and so I took care of them but the husbands [BOYER coughs] were still there.

WEBB: Okay.

DOST: [inaudible] Fort Knox.

WEBB: So, it wasn't necessarily families that were stationed in the area, it was more of a visiting...

DOST: Well, and they came down to see them and they could —they would get a place to stay. To have a place—a lot of—'course at Fort Knox [it] is a permanent post and very busy and very active all the time.

WEBB: You were also in the military quite a bit longer than your sister.

DOST: Very short time after. The—after she got married, she, you know, got out sooner and I was still in because I was married at Fort Knox, Kentucky. And I was there.

WEBB: What was the process for you leaving? Did they just say, "Okay we're done with you?" Or was there a whole—

DOST: Well sure, and I was married too then and so I just put in to be discharged. And it took about three months.

WEBB: Okay. And then what did you do, after the military?

DOST: Not much of anything. Because I was married and then had a baby shortly thereafter [WEBB laughs] and I stayed home with my family.

WEBB: Well, that's a lot of something that's [laughs] not much of anything. [DOST and WEBB laugh]

DOST: And I had to—oh, I had three babies in a row then and stayed home and then my husband was in an automobile accident and I was off—that time and my children were still little and one of my—my mother-in-law came and stayed with the children so I could go back to work. And I did go back to work for a while.

WEBB: In the nursing area?

DOST: In nursing, regular nursing, not OB, I was doing regular nursing at the hospital where I trained. Not where I trained but where I worked for a while.

WEBB: Did you notice any differences between the time that you did the training and the time that you went back to work about kind of the role of [BOYER coughs] women in the workforce?

DOST: I would say there's quite a bit of difference between what goes on now and what we did when we were in training, I tell ya.

WEBB: Yeah. [BOYER coughs]

DOST: And we just had nurses at our school of nursing and we didn't have any nurse's aides or anything, just nurses, and now they have [BOYER makes sound] they have all different grades of nurses and that—and that's completely different from what we had. And our doctors and nurses were the nursing people that trained us, we didn't go to college or anything, the doctors that were working at the hospital were our doctors who taught us what's going on and our nurses were there to teach their part and keep track of what we were doing and how we were doing it and was—they were very much stricter than what they are now. We went at the right time, we feel.

WEBB: Do you feel like—and this could be a question to both of you—do you feel like you are properly recognized for your role in World War II?

DOST: Marian's [saying] yes and... I'm not so sure how to answer that. [BOYER and WEBB laugh] It was a long time ago... We're recognized on Veterans Day, they do—

DOST: Yes.

BOYER: —a good program here on Veterans Day.

DOST: [simultaneously] They do it here too. Yeah.

FARTHING: And how 'bout –if I can just–what you told me even last time I was down here about the–when they came to get you and you went to Washington, D.C. Did you tell him about that yet?

WEBB: Yeah, they mentioned the Honor Flight.

FARTHING: That was–that's a big deal!

BOYER: That's Honor Flight, yeah.

FARTHING: [softly] A big deal.

DOST: Uh-huh.

BOYER: They came to–sponsors are on the pictures–

FARTHING: I'll bring the pictures.

DOST: And this is the group that took us on the – [Honor Flight trip to D.C.]

FARTHING: She's pointing to pictures now, yeah. And I'll bring those.

BOYER: And that one couple. They [i.e. the sponsors] pushed the wheelchairs for us.

DOST: Nobody– [over BOYER talking] nobody was allowed to go without riding on a wheelchair. Some people said, "Oh I can do that." But if something happens [over BOYER talking] in order to stay there you have to go to the hospital [unintelligible]. It's a one-day trip! [i.e., Farthing explained that in order for the WWII veterans to participate in the Honor Flight Day, they had to agree to sit in wheelchairs, pushed/rolled by their Honor Flight sponsors, namely somewhat younger veterans. Although some participants were disturbed by this BOYER and DOST were surprised by this upset. They view the world through the lens of medical professionals]

FARTHING: And they flew you down, right?

DOST: Yeah. It's been Fort Myers [Florida]–

BOYER: Down and back.

DOST: –we flew up to Washington D.C.

BOYER: And back in the same day.

DOST: It's a long day.

FARTHING: And they had attendants for each vet. Right?

BOYER: Oh yeah.

DOST: Yeah!

FARTHING: Each interview.

DOST: And they took—some of the time, we were on buses, and we did get to Arlington [Cemetery] but we didn't get to all of the monuments... We got to Iwo Jima [monument] and we got to World War II monuments but the others we didn't get to see 'cause it took so long to get into Arlington.

BOYER: [softly] Right.

WEBB: And what was the public's response to seeing this—?

BOYER: They were absolutely wonderful, we felt—

DOST: They were very gracious—

BOYER: We felt like it just like it was at World War II. People were so—

DOST: They came to the airport to greet you. It was a beautiful day—

BOYER: [speaking at the same time] They were at Fort Myers. They made sure we got something to eat.

DOST: Uh-huh.

BOYER: We had a breakfast. And then we went off and we landed finally in Washington D.C. at Ronald Reagan Airport.

DOST: Uh-huh.

BOYER: And that's where we left from and then we flew back and it's only—not that long a ride it's not—

DOST: No.

BOYER: —it isn't even two hours I don't think. And that's how we got to be a D.A.R. [laughs] On that flight.

DOST: 'Cause they took, the stewardess that was on the flight—

BOYER: You just never know. But the people—they was all there with their flags and waving and shaking our hands and thanking us...

WEBB: Yeah.

BOYER: Amazing.

DOST: [softly] It was amazing.

BOYER: It was just like it was yesterday. [WEBB laughs] And it was five years ago, we were ninety-one then.

DOST: And we were both widowed by then.

BOYER: Yeah.

DOST: We were... One of our husbands—

BOYER: They never got to see it 'cause it wasn't finished until after they were gone.

DOST: Uh-hmm.

BOYER: Which is amazing.

WEBB: Mildred, I'm not sure if you were on the phone when I asked this question: Where were you for V-E Day or even V-J Day? Do you remember those days?

DOST: ...She was back in the States—

DOST: Yeah, I was back in the States, but I was still...

WEBB: Do you remember if there was any shift in mood or commotion [laughs] of people celebrating?

BOYER: How did people react to it in other words?

WEBB: Yeah.

DOST: [softly] To tell you the truth I'm not even sure.

BOYER: V-J Day, they had fireworks and all of—

DOST: I remember I was riding in a car and I heard it on the radio that it was V-J Day. That's all I remember: whatever happened after that I don't know. It's a big commotion everybody was cheering you know. But I was in the car, and I heard it on the radio, and I got there, and I said, "Better turn your radio on because it's important!" So

everybody turned it on. And I remember everyone was working—but I remember that, turning it on, on the—on the radio.

BOYER: Well, they all were—people respected them as being the end, the end of an era, you know?

DOST: You know, you know, like it won't be all that long and maybe we'll see the end.

WEBB: Marian, you said that you also married a service member. Do you recall if there was any concern during the Korean War that he would be called back? I know you said that you got letters—

BOYER: [speaking at the same time] Well, only when I knew it wasn't possible to go. [laughs] And they accepted that. Maybe that's when they decided we would not be in the position ever to return. You know?

WEBB: Yeah.

BOYER: When you have small children, your place is at home with them. [laughs]

WEBB: I think so, yeah.

DOST: [softly] And I wrote to my husband for almost four years before I met him. He was in the service before I was, and he was also Army.

FARTHING: [softly in background] Tell him! Yeah!

DOST: He was—yeah, he was Army and he was also an engineer which our father was. [DOST and Webb laugh] Ironic, yeah, that that happens. And then I met him afterwards, he came to see me when I was at Fort Knox, Kentucky. And then we got married. About a week after my sister was married, we got married.

BOYER: Five months!

DOST: Five months.

BOYER: She came to my wedding and she didn't even tell any of us she was getting married!

DOST: Well, we never wanted a big wedding! [DOST and WEBB laugh] My husband and I, we never wanted a big wedding and he'd come down to see me and then we went out—we went downtown, and picked out rings and everything, and then I asked the doctor that was there if he would be best man at our wedding and his wife was matron of honor and the chaplain at Fort Knox married us. And we got married at like five o'clock in the afternoon and he said, "Why didn't you wait until six o'clock

[and] then we'll have a big crowd of people here?" [laughs] I said, "Well, we wanted a quiet wedding!" So that's what we did. And then they took us out to dinner, and she made us have some cake 'cause she thought we were devilish because we didn't tell anybody. [WEBB and DOST laugh] But that was fun. And we were happy we married.

FARTHING: [in background] And he was the best!

WEBB: You said that you—

DOST: And he was the best, yes.

WEBB: You said that you wrote to him? How did you meet him?

DOST: Pardon?

WEBB: You said that you wrote to him for several months?

DOST: Four years during the war. He was—he was also from Cleveland.

WEBB: Okay.

BOYER: Yes.

DOST: And you won't believe it, I had my picture taken with him when we were little kids at camp. We used to go out together with his folks and theirs, and I had the picture here. But anyway, I never knew him before, but somebody from the church, a minister, asked if some of the girls would be willing to write to some of these servicemen and he was one of them. So, I started writing to him and that's how we met! And yet I knew him when I was a little kid and but didn't know, didn't remember.

WEBB: It's a small world!

DOST: Life is strange.

WEBB: Yeah. [DOST laughs]

BOYER: Somehow, I think it turns out the way it's supposed to be.

WEBB: I think so.

BOYER: Somebody greater than us makes those decisions. [laughs]

DOST: And we bought a place down here and moved out here. [unintelligible]

FARTHING: And it might be—I don't know if this would be a note of interest but what about when the tornado took your house?

DOST: Well, yeah, we were in—

FARTHING: I know that's not military, but it did happen to her.

DOST: Well, we were in Fort Knox if—for a short time after our children were grown and we bought a place out in Florida here and we were in church—and this on a Sunday morning—and when we got home [BOYER speaking in background] we didn't have a house because [WEBB laughs] it was torn completely apart, nothing left to our house. There was—

FARTHING: [in background] And the house next to you—

DOST: Yes! The two houses on either side of us were fine. But anybody who had their car parked in the parking lot, none of their cars were working because the damage was so damaging to cars. But there weren't many houses that were badly damaged.

BOYER: [whispers] '93.

FARTHING: Nineteen ninety-three.

WEBB: [softly] '93.

DOST: Or '36 something like —not '36, anyway it was during the winter. I got pictures of it and I got all this—I wrote a book, a life story so that I—my kids would remember how life was when we grew up and how it is now. [laughs]

WEBB: Yeah.

DOST: But I don't know if it'll make any difference, but I hope so.

FARTHING: [softly] It already has.

WEBB: Yeah.

DOST: And this gal that's here, she's wonderful! Coming to talk to us and take all this down.

FARTHING: My privilege, it's just an honor.

BOYER: And keeping notes—

DOST: Yes, and she keeps notes on this too. [DOST AND WEBB laugh] I'd like to get back and talk to her.

FARTHING: Oh, no, no, you stay there Mildred, you—for you, this is for you, I'm just here because I'm interested.

WEBB: Well, I will be honest I think we've gone through all of my questions. Was there anything else about the military that you really—

DOST: He's gone through everything; he wants to know if we have any more questions.

FARTHING: Yep, he's gonna ask you something now, just, yeah, go ahead Thomas.

BOYER: He can ask—call us if he wants, if we wanna give him our number.

FARTHING: Okay, go ahead. Now go-ahead Thomas with what you were saying?

WEBB: I just wondered if there was anything from your time in the military that you still think about and, you know, that—think of it as a special time or something that you really took away from that experience?

DOST: It was an education, let me tell ya. [BOYER laughs] For us, you know, we... We weren't even thinking about a lot of the stuff that happened.

BOYER: [whispering] That was true!

FARTHING: That was Mildred.

DOST: Uh-hmm.

BOYER: I agree! You learn so much.

DOST: Uh-hmm.

FARTHING: And that's always what they always say to me, Thomas, is—when talking about it, it—they always interject, "We learned so much, it was such an education."

WEBB: Yeah.

BOYER: And people surprise ya sometimes. Really... It's because a lot of people don't really know what it's like.

DOST: [softly] Uh-hmm.

BOYER: Because they haven't been there.

DOST: Uh, no. We were—that's true, I think. People don't understand things that happen if they weren't there at the same time.

BOYER: That's something you never forget.

DOST: You can never forget it.

WEBB: Well, I think—

DOST: [speaking at the same time] It was very nice talking to you—

WEBB: [speaking at the same time] Yeah—

FARTHING: [speaking at the same time] Now, there was one thing—I was away because I had to take a phone call, but there is one thing that's been on my mind, if I may Thomas—

WEBB: Oh, absolutely.

FARTHING: Mildred, you were explaining to me a few days ago—I don't know if you went here yet but think this is important—you were saying when you were at that first place where the wounded people were and they were so worried about their loved ones coming in to see them. Do you remember—?

DOST: Oh, yes.

FARTHING: Could you—Thomas, did you go there yet?

WEBB: Well, we tried to touch upon that, but if there's a specific story—

FARTHING: [speaking at the same time] There's a—I think if you tell—explain to him—

DOST: Well, when I was first in the service, you know I went to Fort Knox, [it] was the second place that we went. For basic training to another place and we worked on the wards and... The patients were all men and they were badly injured. Either they'd lost their eyes, or they lost parts of their body. Anyway, they didn't want the girls and their wives to come and see 'em! They—you know, they didn't want anybody to see 'em the way they looked and that to me was a very, very heartbreaking time. I didn't know what—you know, I was young too at that time and I didn't know quite how to feel about it. Hopefully, you know, I was only there for the—for basic training that first period of time and I don't know what happened after that.

FARTHING: And then, and then—Mildred, one other thing then, you went somewhere else and you were taking care of another—didn't you tell me then you had that experience

and then you went somewhere else where there was a different set of kinds of wounds or they were on down, and then what was that?

DOST: Well, they weren't nearly as bad as this other one to, you know, to come from one and then go to another where they're, you know, perfectly normal. They haven't—many of 'em haven't gone out on heavy duty.

FARTHING: Uh-hmm, uh-hmm, no! Yeah. Yeah. So.

DOST: I keep wantin' to give her back the phone. [FARTHING, DOST, and WEBB laugh]

FARTHING: Okay, I just wanted her to [coughing in background] —that was so —she was so moved by that--

DOST: That first time was [a] very... detrimental, really, experience.

FARTHING: 'Cause I remember her—you telling me Mildred that that was so poignant and touching for you, of course as a young girl—

DOST: Sure.

FARTHING: —that they didn't want their loved ones to see them like that.

DOST: No.

FARTHING: And she was so moved, Thomas, by—I could, I mean I was sitting here across the room from her the—last week, and we really—it was really touching to me and to, yeah.

DOST: And the patients were like that, but the people that came to see them they didn't know quite how to cope with that.

FARTHING: Uh-hmm, yeah, yup, uh-hmm, yeah, okay. So that's all, I just wanted to go there in case you hadn't while I was—

WEBB: Yeah, well I'm glad you did, I think that's—

FARTHING: Okay, sorry, 'cause I don't wanna butt in here but [laughs] you know.

DOST: I didn't tell you that one.

FARTHING: Yeah you did! Yeah, that—I'll always remember that.

WEBB: Lynn, you've spent the last couple days in—I'll be very honest with you—in a real oral history situation, that's what I would love to do. I was wondering if there were any other stories like that that you may have gleaned that I'm not aware of.

FARTHING: Well, I must say that... The other day when we were talking on the phone—Marian and I have been keeping in touch on the phone in the evenings and especially since Mildred's got this flu that's been going around, I was concerned for this interview. Well I really wish that I had thought soon enough—this trip, during this trip because we've spent quite a bit of time together—

DOST: Right.

FARTHING: —we've had dinners, and because I had that other time with them, we, the cultivation of memory has been so deep and profound. And I suppose if I could stay longer it would—we would go even more places, but I wish I could've recorded every conversation we've had for you and for the library. I realized it too late or I would have been recording it. And I think as I go home and get into my regular life, more will come to me but it—this has been profound, the experience of my life, and [I'm] so grateful to them for their welcoming experience.

DOST: You know, some of these experiences you kind of keep to yourself. I don't think that I've ever said anything like that to any of my children, you know, because you don't want them to see how you're feeling.

WEBB: Yeah.

BOYER: Or know how hard it was, yeah.

DOST: That was—and that was before I was really into the military 'cause that was [during] my basic training and that all happened then! And then I went on to Fort Knox and it was entirely different, the whole situation.

WEBB: Well, I think that that sums it up very well, not only what I'm trying to do but why it's so important that you share those kinds of things, because if you don't then, you know, your kids or me or my kids will not know, so, I really—

DOST: [speaking at the same time] And you know I think that we got pictures of that—

FARTHING: [speaking at the same time] Which I will bring with me.

BOYER: Good.

FARTHING: Uh-hmm.

DOST: And before now even, they've been doing this for a long time, and I gave 'em all my uniforms and all my foot locker. Everything I had I gave 'em because they are really dedicated to World War II and—[as described above]

WEBB: Yeah.

DOST: —people should realize what it is. [the importance of this organization in education] And they take things from one camp to another and talk [about WWII, along with displaying memorabilia] and I don't know if they're still doing that, and I've written 'em up in my books—

WEBB: Yeah.

DOST: —with pictures. But to me that's very important that they are doing that, and they were both in the service.

WEBB: Okay.

DOST: The lady and her husband [who travel around exhibiting and teaching about WWII] But I think [unintelligible] that's in there.

FARTHING: [softly] Uh-hmm. And he has that picture.

DOST: [softly] Oh, he has it.

FARTHING: Yeah, yeah.

DOST: Okay.

FARTHING: Yeah. So. Is that it?

DOST: Yeah, I thought—

WEBB: Yeah. I, you know—

FARTHING: Are you good on this end, Thomas? [laughs]

WEBB: Yeah, I'm—I've gotten through my questions and yeah, I think it's really good. I would like to tell—

DOST: Very nice to talk to you—

WEBB: It was wonderful—

DOST: Glad to hear there are people that are so interested in what, you know, has happened in this world. We don't know what's gonna happen from here on in.

WEBB: That's very true! But as you've said a couple of times, it's not totally up to us so, there's something—someone else watching out for those kinds of things. You know, I think you ladies are very special and I certainly appreciate you taking the time today.

DOST: Well, we appreciate your being here, doing that.

FARTHING: And I'm sure I can speak for Marian and Mildred, we talked about this, probably if you ever needed to touch base with them again now that they've met you could—could he call back here anytime he wants?

BOYER and DOST: Yes!

WEBB: Okay.

FARTHING: Yeah. So, at any rate, thanks for being there Thomas for all of us and—

WEBB: All right.

DOST: And thank you very, very much.

FARTHING: [speaking at the same time] I'll see you in a week or two.

WEBB: Okay. [FARTHING, DOST, and BOYER laugh, unintelligible speaking]

FARTHING: With all the documents that they've—they're so wonderfully made and their neighbor helped them too.

WEBB: Okay.

FARTHING: So, helped to get the printed and they're great pictures.

WEBB: Well, I hope you ladies get over the bug that's lingering there and—

DOST: I hope we'll get over it real quick. [laughs]

WEBB: Yeah. [laughs] And hopefully we get to talk—

BOYER: We haven't had one of these for a year and we're ready to send the bug back north. [all laugh]

WEBB: Send it with Lynn! [laughs]

FARTHING: Yeah, yeah, yeah!

BOYER: [laughs] Okay.

FARTHING: All right Thomas, thank you for everything. [coughing in background]

WEBB: All right, thank you.

FARTHING: Uh-hmm.

WEBB and FARTHING: Bye-bye.

[1:22:05 END of PART 1]

Mildred Dost and Marian Boyer

Part 2

June 4, 2019

Phone interview by Leah COHEN

Transcribed by Olivia Palid

Edited by Leah COHEN

Web Biography by Oliva Palid

Production by Angel Melendez

[0:03:58 START]

COHEN: Well, I'll just introduce us all. My name is Leah Cohen and on behalf of the Pritzker Military Museum and Library, I have the pleasure of talking today with twin sisters Mildred Dost and Marian Boyer who both served as nurses during World War II, Mildred Dost in the [US] Army and Marian Boyer in the [US] Navy.

BOYER: Right.

COHEN: This interview is a follow-up of the interview of them from December 22nd, 2015, when they were interviewed by Thomas Webb and Lynn Farthing. So I'll maybe I'll ask Marian.

BOYER: All right.

COHEN: Could you talk a little bit about the indoctrination process and was this the part-?

BOYER: Millie just picked up the other phone, so just a minute and make sure it's gonna be clear enough that you can understand it.

COHEN: Okay.

BOYER: I think you can hear her speak pretty well.

DOST: Okay.

COHEN: [speaking at the same time] I can. Thank you. So, I'll start off - who would like to start first 'cause it's in effect the same question?

BOYER: Okay, well just go ahead.

COHEN: Okay. Could you talk a little bit more about the indoctrination process and Marian, was this when you were at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Portsmouth, Virginia, and Millie, was this when you were at Fort Billings?

BOYER: Yeah, that was her first indoctrination, she ended up at Fort Knox in Kentucky. [laughs]

DOST: Right.

COHEN: So what did you what did you do during the indoctrination process?

BOYER: Well, they told us what it was to be in the service and all what all was the things that we needed to be aware of and would be able to participate. They told us how to get our paychecks and all the little items that you need that are kind of necessary and we had to learn to march. We had an indoctrination of three weeks and they taught us to march. But everything about being in the service is what we learned.

COHEN: Did you learn how to use guns?

BOYER: No, we never had - they never gave us a gun. We were not combat at all I guess because we were nurses. I was, I had special training in operating room nursing. And so that's what I did, and I did that pretty much in the Navy also. So they utilized what I had learned someplace else. [laughs]

COHEN: Oh, oh, so before your indoctrination, you already had had training as a nurse?

BOYER: As that kind of a nurse. I was already a nurse; I had my R.N. and all that but I was already there. But this was something I did as a post-graduate from my training that I went to [static] Cook County in Chicago and that was an education all by itself.

COHEN: Oh, so was this the post-graduate course that you had described? Was this the post-graduate -?

BOYER: No, you're you're kind of faded and -

COHEN: Oh, oh sorry, sorry. I'll talk up. When you did more training, was this the post-graduate course?

BOYER: Well, that was following my original training as a nurse. But this is what I wanted to be able to do something a little bit more, so I did do post-graduate work in operating

room surgery. And that's what I did there at Cook County for my post-graduate course and then when I was in Chicago is when I joined the Navy.

COHEN: I see. I see.

BOYER: The war was on, and they wanted nurses at that time in the service because they were needed badly then. So another girl, another classmate of mine and I were both up there doing our post-graduate work. We both joined. [laughs]

COHEN: Wow. What- could you talk about your training? Did you have to take a lot of courses in anatomy and physiology or spend most of the -?

BOYER: [speaking at the same time] Well, that's all part of your nursing, original nursing experience.

DOST: We both went to the same nursery school.

COHEN: Which nursing -?

BOYER: Same nursing school and we - that's where we got our original R.N. degree. [static] We didn't go any farther than our post-graduate work, we didn't go in any [static] to get any other degrees in nursing but we did do that [static] one.

DOST: And then the war came.

BOYER: [laughs]

COHEN: [laughs] Which hospital did you train in?

BOYER: Lutheran Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio.

DOST: [At the same time] Ohio.

COHEN: [softly] Okay.

BOYER: And we did that at the same time... We were twins.

COHEN: Was it fun, studying with your sister?

BOYER: We always did! Yeah, we were we were we've been together ever since before the war. [laughs]

COHEN: Wow. [laughs]

DOST: And we look alike.

COHEN: [laughs] Did you play pranks on people?

BOYER: No, we didn't.

DOST: But we, this year in November, we will be ninety-nine years old.

COHEN: Wow!

DOST: And I need to tell you, my sister Marian - we're twins. She almost saved my life because I almost died once, and she has looked after me ever since. And she's the one that also helped me stay into nursing and have a nursing degree and got into the Army, but I was a nurse for babies. And I -

BOYER: She worked in O.B.!

DOST: O.B., yes.

COHEN: I'll just clarify that Millie talked this last paragraph and Millie; how did Marian help save your life?

BOYER: Well, we were both in an accident by somebody driving on the wrong side of the street hit us head on, and Millie went out a window 'cause at that time there was not such a thing as air conditioning, so we had the window of the car open and it was a bigger window than the usual windows that you see in automobiles today. And on impact, when the car hit our car head-on, she went flying out the window because it was open. And landed in the street. And she was para-- - she was injured, everything in her was broken from the waist on down. And so from that time she was -- they told my mother and me at the same time, and I was only nine years old also -- and she said, you know, she wasn't gonna make it. They told my mother she couldn't possibly survive, and six days later she's still alive and they had to do something because she was still alive.

COHEN: Wow.

BOYER: So that's, that - I don't really feel like I was responsible for saving her life, but she just has enough in her to want life. [laughs]

COHEN: [softly] To want life.

BOYER: And so that's where she is.

COHEN: Wow.

BOYER: And she's been that way ever since.

COHEN: Wow.

BOYER: So, but -

DOST: And then in the Army, I was transferred to the O.B. department because that's where I had done [work] before. And it worked beautifully for me.

COHEN: What did you like about working in O.B.?

DOST: I just loved it. [laughs] I guess I always liked babies. [laughs] Anyway, and they told me when I had that accident that I would never survive, never have any children or anything. And...

BOYER: She's got sixteen great-grandkids! So it--Somebody was wrong!

COHEN: You disproved them all!

DOST: But anyway, I always loved nursing, always, I always wanted to be a nurse. But after I had this accident, they said that'll never happen, that'll never happen. But it did, and I kept trying and I took I don't know how many physicals and exams just to see if I would pass and go into the military. Well, it so happened I did pass, and I did go.

COHEN: You know, Millie -

DOST: I took many physicals. [laughs]

BOYER: Finally, somebody said, "Oh if you think you can do it, I'll let you in."

DOST: [Laughs] That's right.

COHEN: So, so -

DOST: And that's how I got in.

COHEN: So that's what Lynn [Farthing] was saying too, if I understood correctly, Millie had tried a few times to take the physical in order to get into the Army. And one-time Millie was driving her friend to take her physical, and went for another test -

DOST: Test.

COHEN: - and there was a doctor there who knew you, is that correct?

DOST: Well, that was not the same doctor that examined me before. But the doctor-

BOYER: [at the same time] But he was on vacation!

DOST: -was on vacation. So this one was there, and he - I told him all the facts and how I was turned down three times and so he said, "If you think your can do it," he said, "I'll examine you and we'll see if you can really do it." And so I passed the test and everything and he made me and then I went to Fort Knox, Kentucky 'cause I could not go out of the States, I had to do this in the States.

COHEN: Why did you have to do this in the States or was this for all women, had to be...?

BOYER: Well, because of the injuries she'd had in an accident, they didn't qualify her to be going outside of the States and then the other war zone, in other words.

COHEN: I see.

BOYER: They wanted to keep her within the States.

COHEN: Okay that - I see what you're saying. And how did your, did your injuries affect you in the day-to-day? Like, were there any, was there any job that you were not able to do physically?

DOST: No.

COHEN: No, that's good.

DOST: No, I could [laughs] I could do anything they asked me! [Both laugh]

BOYER: [at the same time] Some of the things they never asked her either! [all laugh]

DOST: I had that kinda temperament then, I guess. I was, I always wanted to be a nurse so bad and then when they came and told me I couldn't do that anymore... it broke my heart, I guess.

COHEN: Aw. When did -?

DOST: But anyway, I am a qualified nurse now and I have helped deliver many babies!

COHEN: Wow.

DOST: 'Cause that was my dream was to be a... to help deliver babies.

COHEN: Were people even more happy than usual, having babies when there's a war that's raging on? ...Like, like do you think people were even happier than normal to have babies when there's a war?

DOST: Well, I just helped deliver babies that whose fathers were in the war. They were in the service and their wives were there with them and they, when they got pregnant, and they had babies they were delivered in the O.B. department.

COHEN: Were the fathers serving overseas or were all of them based at the... nearby?

DOST: Well, these were pretty much soldiers that were in the service and in the United States at the time, and that's when they were delivered. When wives came down to visit and they delivered at that time, usually.

COHEN: Wow. [laughs] Millie, I think you mentioned in the previous interview that you had a Colonel, Colonel Sparks who had been a nurse in World War I and she had wanted to send you to a chemical warfare plant?

DOST: [at the same time] Oh yeah, because... one of the doctors that I had worked with at the hospital before I was in the service or even attended the service... he saw I was there, and he asked for me to be transferred. And he was... adamant about it and said... I wouldn't be able to do that then, she said that was gonna be it I was gonna be sent to chemical warfare place and that's where I would be doing my work. Well,

this doctor I knew from a previous time of the... service in in... in the O.B. And so he made it his job to get me transferred back; and I was. And let me tell you, this lady that - she was from World War II.

BOYER: One!

DOST: One, and she was a nurse. But she had been there for a long time, and she was very adamant about this. But you know after this all happened, she was so pleasant to me, and I wound up living in quarters next to her.

COHEN: [laughs]

DOST: And my quarters had all been taken apart because I was gonna be sent someplace else. And she was just the nicest person to me I, you would ever know afterwards, and I lived next to her and knew her very well, got to know her very well and she was a wonderful lady.

COHEN: Oh.

DOST: That's all I can say about her, but she really was. And I thought this was gonna be a terrible life for me if I'm gonna be with her, under different circumstances. [laughs] But she just turned up and she came down to the station where I was gonna be leaving to go to that other place and she said, "I want you to go back to your... quarters in the surgery and you're gonna be on O.B." So that's the way it ended and that's where I went and I was all my time in the service was at Fort Knox, Kentucky in the O.B. department.

COHEN: [At the same time] Wow. So... did the doctor who had intervened... was he very impressed with your work and for that reason wanted you to continue working there?

DOST: Well, he knew me from where I had worked before in O.B.

BOYER: When we were still student nurses -

DOST: Nurses.

BOYER: - he was doing O.B. there. [laughs]

COHEN: Oh, oh, when you were - so both when you were students and and later on.

DOST: Yes, we were both at the same service at same time.

COHEN: Yeah... I think that in the interview, you both talked about the hospital corpsmen or corpsman? The, it's my understanding that a hospital corpsman is a health-services technician who's either part of the military medical unit or part of a civilian paramedical corps. So were the corpsmen that you dealt with part of the U.S. forces? ...I'm not sure I'm saying the word right. I think it's-

BOYER: Okay in the Navy they were corpsmen.

COHEN: Oh, in the Navy-

BOYER: Corpsmen. And they worked in surgery just like I did.

DOST: Yes.

BOYER: And they had the same sort of duties, but we - they they were not... trained specially to work in the surgery where I was but we had to do some teaching with them. But they turned out to be wonderful at... wonderful work to work with. And... we needed 'em, and they learned to do a lot of the things, I think, in the hospitals before they ever got transferred overseas and were working in the fields with the medics and injured because... Then they, a lot of these same men they were hurry or injured when they were out in the fields, working. They would come back to the hospitals, and we would re-amputate anything that they had to do just very quietly in during wartime. They they didn't have everything out in the field like they have in the hospitals so they would come back to us, and they would - we would get them back to their health.

COHEN: Okay so first they would like work with you like as colleagues but then if some of them were hit while in the front, they would - come back and would be treated there. Is that, is that...?

BOYER: Yeah. Some of them were trained to work out in the fields but they didn't have the same equipment and things that we had in the hospitals to work with them... So it worked out very well, actually. [laughs]

COHEN: So would you say that the relations between men and women were were good in the service? Like, between let's say, like you and the corpsmen or the doctors and the nurses?

BOYER: Well, in the service the corpsmen were were... were not officers, they were enlisted men. And then in the service, we were officers. And we always felt bad because an R.N. is an R.N. whether they're in the service or out of the service and their duties are similar. We always felt bad that they didn't get their degree when we got ours. That we could be officers in the service, and we were. But today that's been changed and today the corpsmen that have training to be R.N.s are R.N.s and they are officers. That's so that's one big change that happened after the service was over because now an R.N. is an R.N. whether he's male or female. [laughs]

COHEN: Yeah... Was there a sort of a reverse snobbery toward men who were working - you know, as corpsmen or otherwise?

BOYER: No, they they were always very... very nice to us, always... respectful. They were, they were just perfect gentlemen. And they they learned, and they were grateful for what they learned and later on I'm sure, a lot of them maybe went on to get the

schooling to get the diploma and they got they got the... and I'm sure learning what we learned or taught them in the Navy helped them to get what they needed to get to get their R.N. So a lot of 'em are R.N.s today, as you know, if you've been in the hospital that some of the nurses are males, they are R.N.s. But that was the one thing we weren't we didn't like it either that they would they had the same education we had and yet they didn't have a degree. And now, now that's changed for the good. [laughs]

COHEN: Right, right it's been it's been righted. Yeah. Yeah.

BOYER: So there was no rivalry there, they everybody was doing their job and every wanted to do the best job that they could do in the service.

COHEN: Yeah.

BOYER: And it was for the benefit of the men serving.

COHEN: When you were serving, were you able to write and receive letters from your mother and was your father alive?

BOYER: Write, but we know -

DOST: For sure.

BOYER: If there was anything they thought we should not be saying, that was cut out. [laughs] They cut things out of our letters.

COHEN: [laughs]

BOYER: Or to us or from us, that were – of if anybody in our family has something that we couldn't answer, that was cut out too. [BOYER and COHEN laugh]

COHEN: Would you ever see, receive letters that were censored? Like, that were - that had like a line scratching of the words?

BOYER: Well, they just eliminated them or cut 'em out! They weren't even there!

COHEN: I see, I see gotcha. [laughs]

BOYER: ...But all that is so long ago.

DOST: Oh gosh, yes.

BOYER: So long ago. It's well over seventy years.

COHEN: Well, it's wonderful that you remember! You know, we're opening the - an exhibit on D-Day tomorrow night, and I'm very pleased that within the last year there's been like two D-Day veterans that have shared their experiences.

DOST: I even wrote a book about it...

COHEN: [at the same time] Oh! Oh. What what is the name of the book?

BOYER: She never had it published! It's more something that she wanted her, for the family to have.

COHEN: Oh that's that's very useful. That's very good.

DOST: Yes, it is.

COHEN: It is, 'cause this way you have a record. Yeah.

DOST: And I had started to write that and then something happened, and I was... was gonna be sent someplace else, and I wasn't. But... you know it made me... not write the book anymore. And a lady that was a... a publisher knew I had started to write it and she said, "Well you better pick up your pencil and write that book and finish it." She said, "Because it's not it's not something you should just stop doing because something went wrong for you." So anyway, I did finish the book.

COHEN: You did finish it?

DOST: Oh yeah.

COHEN: [at the same time] Yeah. No, no this is really - that's really helpful and I'm sure it's invaluable to your like family and friends.

BOYER: Well, I think that's what she did it! Mostly -

DOST: For the family.

BOYER: [at the same time] - to let the children know what it was like growing up when we did! And it was far different than what they're growing up today.

COHEN: Yeah. And you know I'm jumping ahead, and I do have a lot of questions in between, but one of the questions I was going to ask you is what message would you like to impart to the young or to future generations?

DOST: ...Do anything that you can to help anybody with a problem, not matter what it is.

COHEN: [Softly] Wow... Marian, do you have something to add?

BOYER: Pretty much the same thing she has but we didn't learn anything different. I mean it's something either you know it and you wanna do it, or you don't have it. So it's it's that simple but, you know? We always helped, and while nurses most of the time are in a position where they wanna be helpful.

COHEN: Yeah.

BOYER: Wanna do things to help -

COHEN: [at the same time] Help.

BOYER: - people be better.

COHEN: You're right, right, that's true, like by definition, yeah. Yeah. One thing that you had mentioned in the previous interview was your uniforms, but I didn't catch all of it. Would you like to describe what they looked like, if there were differences between summer or winter uniforms? Did you enjoy wearing them? Did, did civilians treat you with respect when they saw you in them?

BOYER: I think most of the time, most people did.

DOST: [at the same time] Did.

BOYER: I mean, very respectful and you know and they they always - when we mentioned that we have been in the service during World War II, people will say to us, "Thank you so much for your time and for your service!"

DOST: Yes, everybody.

BOYER: Everybody responds. There was a time when you were getting a lot of...protests. You know, when the whole country was protesting about this or that or the other thing. We never got that to us, but I know there were some soldiers that said when they came back from Vietnam, people would spit at them.

COHEN: Yeah. But but for -

BOYER: But we never got that.

COHEN: No.

BOYER: We've always gotten a positive reaction.

COHEN: That's, yeah, that's - yeah. I know that I've heard a few interviews where people were very proud of their uniforms.

DOST: Right.

COHEN: Did did you did you enjoy wearing your uniforms and what did they look like?

BOYER: Well, mine were typical Navy.

DOST: [softly] And mine, mine were...

BOYER: With the gold braid on it if you -

DOST: [at the same time] Mine were [words not heard 29:24 ??]

BOYER: - were an officer and all that. But you know they were they were very nice, and they tried to keep pretty much but you, you - depending on where you were stationed would be what kind of uniform you wore too because if you were in very cold climates, you had an overcoat you could wear.

COHEN: Oh that's true.

BOYER: And if you were in very warm, then you had a a, you know, a less heavy... wardrobe than when they were in the really cold. And it was different from that standpoint. But they had summer and winter uniforms, so to speak.

COHEN: And and and Mildred, what did you wear in the Army?

DOST: I wore a typical nurse's uniforms, just like any -

BOYER: Yeah, we wore... on duty, we wore our --

DOST: White uniforms!

COHEN: Okay, okay... You mentioned in the other interview a project - I think it's an educational group - that travels around in a van showing people military gear. Had had one of you -?

BOYER: [at the same time] Millie did that.

COHEN: Millie did that? Millie do you wanna -?

BOYER: She donated a lot of her uniforms to a group that was -

DOST: In the -

BOYER: Doing things about World War II.

COHEN: Oh, so were they trying to educate people about war and so on?

DOST: These were people who had been in the service, and they just wanted to be remembered, I think. They were they were proud of it and they they asked me if they could you know if I would mind giving 'em any of my uniform and I said, "Absolutely you can have it." So I gave them my uniform.

COHEN: That's yeah that's that's very that's very nice.

DOST: And they were still serving at the time. [laughs] It was put to good use.

COHEN: Yeah, yeah. Oh, I had I was wondering if the question, Marian, for those of us who are not so familiar with medical matters, could you describe what would be a typical day in surgery for you? Like what what your responsibilities were, what was a typical type of operation, etcetera.

BOYER: Well, the things it would be is sometimes it's you got a patient who was hurt so badly that there wasn't much you could do to help them. And so there wasn't, you know, some of 'em did not make it. And we was so it was sad. Some of it was sad. But when you made it and somebody got really got so much better and was able to be back on their two feet and walkin' around and everything, then it was a happy day.

COHEN: Yeah.

BOYER: [at the same time] But you had some sadness and some grief.

DOST: And you saw some people who badly injured who did not with their wives would come to see 'em and they didn't want their wives to see 'em the way they looked. Or they had arms or legs missing, you know, and they were very unhappy to have their wives come to see 'em even. Which was very, very sad.

COHEN: Yeah. What what - what would they do like would there be a change like for example, like after they would get prostheses would they want their wives and girlfriends to come then?

DOST: ...Well we didn't always see them later like that.

BOYER: No. But then you had some come in that were blind and they weren't going to get any better. And they were - the rest of their life they were gonna be blind. But you know, there's something about people, in spite of... things like that that happen to 'em, they come up on the top, too.

DOST: Yes.

BOYER: It it all depends on the individual.

COHEN: It - nowadays they talk a lot about resilience, and it sounds like from what you're saying that like a lot of people have a strong drive to get well or as well as possible.

BOYER: ...Well I think anybody [33:40 DOST says something not heard] that's hurt wants to be better.

DOST: Yes.

BOYER: It's just a... natural thing that comes to everybody, I think.

COHEN: Uh-hmm, uh-hmn.

DOST: And the people helping them wanna see them get better.

COHEN: Yeah. Yeah.

DOST: [at the same time] That's for sure.

BOYER: It takes a lot of encouragement for these, some of these people to get better. But, you know, you do the best you can with what you have to work with.

COHEN: That's true.

DOST: [at the same time] That's the way life is.

COHEN: Yeah... This is a little bit of an odd question, but I think you had mentioned, Marian, that there had been a lot of hernias. Like are were hernias brought on by by men who were carrying very heavy gear or or there's no connection?

BOYER: ...I'm sorry I don't -

COHEN: Oh, oh sorry. I think you had mentioned either in the previous interview or in the pre-interview questionnaire that in surgery when you were there, there were a lot of men who were there for hernia operations?

BOYER: Yes, a lot of 'em - well, a lot of 'em probably got injured lifting or doing heavy, heavy work, and I'm sure there was a lot of it. I know there were men that built bridges and all that kind of stuff. But I'm sure they might get injuries that would not...would be more dangerous or would be worse for them then some of the other things. But there was a lot of things and over time, they - medicine has gotten to the point where I think they try to fix anything they can. [laughs]

COHEN: Yeah, yes, so okay that... that makes sense... In the interview, you talk about the Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. -

DOST: [softly] Beautiful.

COHEN: Where - it was beautiful? Do you wanna talk about that before we go on?

BOYER: Well, we both got to go by a service organization. This was a rotary club here in Bradenton that that sponsored one trip. And we did go on that one, that was an all-day trip on a Saturday, and we saw a lot and it was a wonderful experience. And something we got to see the Wall. [The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall].

COHEN: Oh, you got to see -

BOYER: Which -

COHEN: - the Wall?

BOYER: Yes.

COHEN: [at the same time] Wow.

BOYER: We got to see that, and we got to see Arlington Cemetery and there was lots of things that we got to see that we would never have seen except for having made this trip.

DOST: This was way after the war.

BOYER: Yeah, this was - well, it took 'em a long time to build the the wall even. [COHEN and DOST laugh] But we did get to go and neither of our husbands ever got there and they were both in World War II, also. But they were both gone already by that time... so.

COHEN: I'm sorry that they, you know, could not be there but I am glad that you that you two were able to go.

BOYER: Right. It was a wonderful experience.

DOST: [at the same time] Uh-hmm.

BOYER: And it was a service organization that did it, you know, there are a lot of service organizations that do a lot. I know the VFW here does a lot. For them - especially those that are left homeless and can't make it they they have a Christmas party for them every year. And and it's a wonderful experience. So we've been invited to go to that every year that we've been here. And and that's interesting to show how much people do appreciate them and how much they do for 'em and how grateful they are!

DOST: Uh-hmm.

COHEN: [at the same time] They are. Right, right that they --

DOST: Yeah.

COHEN: --really care for the other veterans.

BOYER: But they I mean there are people who do care and are concerned for them 'cause I know it's very hard for some of 'em. Very hard.

COHEN: [softly] Uh-hmm. Are are are some of the younger veterans, let's say from Iraq or Afghanistan... like interested in hearing about your experiences in World War II?

DOST: [softly] ...Yeah.

COHEN: Like like like when you go to the Christmas dinners for for veterans who are in need, are they curious, are they interested in in hearing about, you know, your experience in World War II?

BOYER: Well, what happened - the last Christmas we went to there were women there and they were young, very young.

COHEN: Oh!

BOYER: And they I don't know they were children of veterans or how they happened to be there, but they were young enough! But the one girl came up and said, "Thank you very much because you gals were forerunners for us."

COHEN: It's -

BOYER: 'Cause they were they they they had started being in the service and probably would go back to it once they get back on their feet. But it's hard telling, but they were grateful to think that there were women who who they follow now because they - we made it possible for them to go. That's the way they feel.

COHEN: No, it's true like you you led the way.

BOYER: That's what they think.

DOST: Uh-hmm.

COHEN: Yeah [laughs].

BOYER: I'm glad we could do that!

DOST: [at the same time] And they were and [laughs] they were right!

COHEN: [laughs] Did did you feel at the time that you were like a pioneer or a radical?

BOYER: Well, they made us feel like we were maybe a pioneer.

COHEN: Yeah.

BOYER: [at the same time] Like we started something that now they could do, and people would accept them.

COHEN: Yeah. Yeah! This is it's interesting...

BOYER: There were a lot of good things happened, they weren't all bad.

DOST: You know it, people forget all that.

COHEN: Well, that that leads me to like another question for the two of you. Like, what are some of the things that you learned when you were serving that helped you with your life after the Army? ...It it can -

BOYER: Well [laughs] because we're nurses, we went on working!

COHEN: [laughs] Right right right you worked in the same profession. Were there other things as well that like other - doesn't have to be a skill but but it could be a little more... more vague, like like I remember hearing some veterans say that they weren't so structured and focused [before they entered the service] but they felt that the Army had helped them in this respect. So, I don't mean that, but I just mean

are there other things that you learned when you were serving that were -- that you applied to your life afterward?

DOST: I really don't know how to answer that.

BOYER: [at the same time] Don't know how to answer that.

COHEN: [laughs] Okay, okay. [Laughter] Yeah, no, sorry! That's okay. Oh, oh I know - just there was one little question I had. In the previous interview, I think you were mentioning that there were wheelchairs in use for the veterans who were on the Honor Flight to Washington. Do you do you recall what you were saying about that? That some people objected but it was just a precaution?

BOYER: [at the same time] Well, there was some people that said they've walked a lot and they don't need anybody, but everybody had went by wheelchair and everybody had somebody as a... courier, so to speak -

DOST: [at the same time] Yeah.

BOYER: - where somebody pushed somebody else. And we went and another couple that were active in the rotary club, one of 'em pushed me and one of 'em pushed Millie, so a husband and wife. But everybody went and had to be in wheelchair.

DOST: And I was the one that was pushed. [laughs]

COHEN: Okay.

BOYER: [at the same time] So was I!

DOST: I, now I'm back on... using a wheelchair, not wheel...

BOYER: A walker!

DOST: Walker.

BOYER: Now she's back to a walker.

COHEN: [at the same time] Now you're back to a walker. Good! This is no that's good.

DOST: And I was normal for quite a while, and I worked many hours in the O.B. afterwards.

COHEN: Like oh oh like, you worked many hours as as a nurse after.

DOST: You're right.

COHEN: Which is such a physically demanding job! That's, as you know.

DOST: Well, it was for me because I was in bad shape for a long time. And and they even took me in to nursing and everybody said, "Well, they'll they'll never take you in for nursing." But they did and I got through fine! ... whole time and and we stayed in

nursing how is this all the time. We didn't go home that night and then come back the next day, we we worked all the time and I, nowadays sometimes they live at home and still go into nursing.

COHEN: So did you live in the military hospital itself? Like was there a section for the... nurses?

BOYER: Right.

COHEN: Yeah.

DOST: Right.

COHEN: How how many hours a day did you usually work?

DOST: [at the same time] We worked - we we always worked a full day. We always did.

BOYER: I think in the service your hours were a little bit different. There was one thing I know in the Navy one month out of a month, out of a year, you worked nights and you worked at home on--without any night off.

DOST: We did that too.

COHEN: Wow. Wow.

DOST: The Army did the same thing. There was twelve-hour shifts!

COHEN: Twelve-hour shifts... Oh my goodness.

DOST: And you did that for a whole month before you got any time off.

BOYER: Yeah. You worked a month without a night off.

COHEN: Without - so so twelve hours every day for one month before you could get -

BOYER: Then we had a whole - then they usually gave us a three-day weekend. [laughs]

COHEN: [laughs] But.

DOST: 'Til we got back on duty. Yeah.

COHEN: Yeah...

BOYER: But you know everything was done so... so much alike all along the line that you just sorta get used to it.

COHEN: Right, like you got into the routine of doing it a certain way.

BOYER: Well, you know, we knew that one month out of the year, we would work a whole month without a night off. We just knew that so every year we knew it was gonna be coming... So I mean you just accept -

COHEN: Yes.

BOYER: - there was things. Besides that it was wartime and the soldiers were out there. They were fighting and giving their lives and we were working to keep 'em all going.

COHEN: Yes like it was it was you knew it was necessary, important work.

BOYER: Right!

COHEN: Yeah. Yeah, no it's a...

DOST: But I was lucky because I was on O.B. and that's what we did all the time, every every time was the same.

COHEN: Yeah, like the same like procedures.

DOST: Procedure and everything.

BOYER: But the one thing we knew is that we were needed and so we were there to do what we were - what we chose to do.

COHEN: So if -

BOYER: We didn't get drafted, nobody made us go! [laughs]

DOST: No.

COHEN: So if I understand you correctly, like you both wanted to serve the country and to give of yourselves in in however you could.

DOST: Right.

COHEN: Uh-hmm.

DOST: That's exactly what we did. [laughs]

COHEN: [laughs] ...On a more romantic note, would each of you like to talk about how you met your husband?

DOST: I just got a whole list here of what how I met him. [laughs]

COHEN: [laughs]

DOST: I got it all written up. And it was done when I was - before I went in to the service, even. And if you like it, I'll send it to you.

COHEN: Sure, sure, if you have a copy your - or would either one of you like to sum it up briefly for the time being?

DOST: ...I'm I'm sorry, I didn't hear what you -

COHEN: Oh, oh would -

BOYER: Would you like to to sum it up or just briefly, very briefly.

DOST: Well, I can tell you very briefly it's a - one of the girls that I was...

BOYER: In training.

DOST: [at the same time] Going in to training in to into the Army with, she...

BOYER: A minister of her church.

DOST: [at the same time] Church to t write to some of the boys and see if you can get 'em interested in joining the service. So I wrote to some, one of 'em there. It turned out he [laughs] he became my husband.

COHEN: [laughs]

DOST: This was I was writing in the the Army... Nurses' Corps, and I wrote exactly who I was and what I was interested in and how how I would like to be able to help some of the boys in the service. And pretty soon he answered the letter! Very quickly. And we started writing back and forth. And eventually, I married him. [laughs]

COHEN: [laughs] What was your first meeting like in person?

DOST: Well, he's somebody that I knew when I was four years old, but I didn't know that I knew him. [laughs]

BOYER: [at the same time] Knew him.

COHEN: Oh my goodness. [laughs]

DOST: But anyway, his sister wrote and told me, "Did you know that you knew him when he was only four years old?" And I said, "No I didn't". So she sent me a picture. And for some reason, he's the one I wrote to and one of the girls asked me if I would write to somebody in in the service. That they would be happy to hear from me! So I wrote to him and he answered the letter and we started writing back and forth and then he came down to see me with - at Fort Knox where I was with the Army. And he stayed there for a few days and then he went home and then he met his mother and then he met my parents and first thing you know, we got we got married at Fort Knox!

COHEN: Oh my.

DOST: So that was something [laughs] different that happened to some people.

COHEN: It's a it's a it's a lovely story.

DOST: Pardon?

COHEN: It's it's lovely!

DOST: Yes. He he's gone now, he passed away and about - shortly after my sister's husband passed away, my husband also [softly] passed away. So anyway, now my sister and I are living together!

COHEN: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

DOST: Again! [laughs]

COHEN: Yeah. [laughs] But Marian, how did you meet your husband?

BOYER: I worked with him. He was a corpsman.

COHEN: Oh!

BOYER: But he was a corpsman that was a little older than most of the corpsman were. I think they took him into the service when they were fairly young. But my husband was a little older than that already, and so we worked together. And after I was transferred up from that unit and I was - I'd gotten orders to go out to California - so I yeah, naturally, I went. But from there on, we wrote letters back and forth just like [laughs] Millie did.

COHEN: [laughs]

BOYER: And I got to know him and I got to know his family and he got to know mine and so when the war was over... Yeah, it was over when we got married. And got married before Millie did. [laughs] But she didn't want - they didn't want anybody going to their wedding, she [COHEN and BOYER laugh] that was their wedding, so anyway we didn't get to hers. But [DOST saying something in background 50:19 not heard??] she did come to mine. [COHEN and BOYER laugh] So anyway, and my husband passed away... [sighs]

DOST: Couple months before [50:19 not heard ??] passed away.

BOYER: Yeah. About a month before. My husband died in November, just after my seventy-fifth birthday.

DOST: And then mine passed away in...

BOYER: In December of that same year.

COHEN: [at the same time] Goodness.

BOYER: Yeah, so it was - things happen to us pretty much the same. The only thing is she's got three children, I had two, and neither of my girls have any children. But her her three children have multiplied to sixteen. [all laugh] So I said, "She's got enough for both of us!" [BOYER and DOST laugh]

COHEN: Absolutely. [laughs] And it it sounds like you and your sister and your husbands, all four of you, were friends, or yeah.

BOYER: Not before!

DOST: Not before.

BOYER: No, not - we didn't - neither of us knew our husbands at all and they didn't know us!

COHEN: [at the same time] Oh oh oh I meant - oh I meant -

BOYER: During - before the war!

COHEN: I meant after you were married, I had - were were you all friends? Like with both couples.

BOYER: Oh yeah we were couples and we - we visited back and forth, and she was living in...

DOST: My son [i.e., my husband] was four years old when I would playing t with him but didn't know that - who he was. [DOST and COHEN laugh]

BOYER: Right. She's still remembering that she was, she knew her husband when he was only four-years-old and -

DOST: And his sister wrote and told me that! [DOST and COHEN laugh] But then I didn't know at the time.

BOYER: I didn't know - I didn't know any of my family [rather] my husband's family, and he didn't know any of mine up until the time we got married. But things happen fast in the war.

COHEN: They happen fast, yeah, that's true. People have to decide quickly, yeah.

BOYER: Things you don't expect to happen.

COHEN: [laughs] No.

BOYER: But life goes on.

COHEN: Yeah! Yeah.

BOYER: Life goes on.

COHEN: In in that way, I'm curious: did you meet a lot of different people while you were nurses whom you would've not have met otherwise? Like people from different parts of the United States.

BOYER: Well, I think that happened -

DOST: [softly, at the same time] Oh no.

BOYER: - very easily on the -

DOST: During the -

BOYER: - on the force[s].

DOST: [at the same time] Wars, yeah.

BOYER: Because, and I think people are living in different places than they ever lived in before in their lives! And that all happened with World War II. I think, because people met each other, they married, and they moved to someplace other than where they grew up!

COHEN: Yeah, lot of change, a lot of - yeah, yeah. Is there something that you would like to talk about that we did not talk about today or - well, I know it's been four years but [laughs] but did you walk away from the previous interview thinking that there was something you would've liked to have said?

BOYER: I don't think we left -

DOST: [at the same time] Yeah.

BOYER: - anything unsaid.

DOST: [at the same] No.

BOYER: [BOYER and COHEN laugh]

COHEN: Okay.

DOST: Yeah, we talked quite a bit.

COHEN: [laughs] Well, I I really thank you. Lynn had said that you're very uplifting women and and I feel that way myself and thank you.

BOYER: Okay. I'll tell you - it was a great experience in our lives.

COHEN: It was a great experience. How how so?

DOST: Well, because we we we didn't ever expect to be in a war ever, you know? It's just things, you just don't expect things ever gonna happen to you.

COHEN: No.

DOST: And then they do.

COHEN: And they do and and you... rise to the occasion. Yeah, yeah. Before I before I end I'm just wondering: did you ever receive a challenge coin from the Pritzker Military Museum and Library?

BOYER: No we didn't.

COHEN: You didn't. Well, in that case I'll be very - I'll be very happy to send you two challenge coins from the Museum as a token of our thanks to - for you service and as well as for giving these interviews.

DOST: [softly] I didn't hear.

COHEN: Oh, oh sorry, sorry. Well, I said I'll be very happy to mail you - to mail each one of you a challenge coin to thank you for your service and for giving these interviews.

DOST: I think we would appreciate that very much.

BOYER: [at the same time]..very much.

COHEN: Oh, okay then.

BOYER: We have gotten so many awards and so many things and it's kind of - you might - are we really, were we [laughs] really worth that much, you know, to other people? But apparently, we were! We might've made of an impression that we didn't intentionally try to do. You know what I mean? [laughs]

COHEN: No, I I I I know -

BOYER: It just fell into place!

DOST: Well, and the war came, and we just decided to go - we were were old enough to go in.

COHEN: Yes, yes, and and and that feels like we want to recognize that...

BOYER: This is a matter of doing something you'd like to do, that you weren't challenged to do. [laughs] You know what I mean?

COHEN: Yeah, yeah.

BOYER: Nobody said you've gotta do that. We were not drafted. We - we voted to to go on our own.

DOST: [softly] Mm-hmm.

COHEN: Yeah -

BOYER: But I know a lot of people were challenged to go by being drafted.

DOST: We weren't old enough at the time. We went into training.

BOYER: Yeah, right after high school we went in training, so, yeah.

COHEN: No, it sounds like it was a decision that came from your hearts.

BOYER: Well, we we wanted to be there where we could help.

COHEN: Yes, yes.

BOYER: And we had the knowledge and the know-how to do things that would help.

COHEN: That would help, that's that's true.

DOST: [softly] Mm-hmm... And it was very nice talking to you.

COHEN: Very nice talking -

BOYER: Very nice? Yeah!

COHEN: Very nice talking with you too. I can send you the transcript of the first interview probably by next week. And then we'll type up the, you know, the the transcript for this interview. Yeah, so nice talking with you and and and thanks very much!

DOST: Thank you very much.

BOYER: [at the same time] Thank you for taking the time to do this.

COHEN: Thank you. Bye now!

BOYER: Bye now!

DOST: Bye.

COHEN: [softly] Bye.

DOST: [laughs] Right now we got – [clicking sound]

[57:14 END OF PART 2 AND OF INTERVIEWS]