

DB32691

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4Elsie Hornbacher: Rosalie Crosbie of 617 West Front Street, Traverse City, Michigan, zip
5 code 49684, telephone 946-8711, is recording her experiences during
6 WWII. Rosalie was with the Red Cross. [00:25] Is that right, Rosalie?
7
8Rosalie Crosbie: Yes.
9
10Elsie Hornbacher: This is June 20, 1984. Elsie Hornbacher is the interviewer for the Lansing
11 Unit of the Women's Overseas Service League. [00:40] Rosalie, you're no
12 longer connected with WOSL in Traverse City, are you?
13
14Rosalie Crosbie: No, there's no, uh, a club or organization out there.
15
16Elsie Hornbacher: I see.
17
18Rosalie Crosbie: Mm-hm.
19
20Elsie Hornbacher: Well, we were real happy to see you the other night at our patio party after
21 all these years apart. [00:57] Um, you were with the Red Cross?
22
23Rosalie Crosbie: Yes.
24
25Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm, go 'head.
26
27Rosalie Crosbie: Um, I joined the Red Cross in, uh, uh, June of 19, uh, 45 – think of it.
28
29Elsie Hornbacher: [01:09] 1945?
30
31Rosalie Crosbie: Yes. Um, and, uh, had the training in Washington, DC, and, uh, Fort
32 Belvoir, Virginia, and went overseas, uh, early in July 1945.
33
34Elsie Hornbacher: 1945?
35
36Rosalie Crosbie: And the war had ended.
37
38Elsie Hornbacher: [01:26] Well, that was toward the end of the war?
39
40Rosalie Crosbie: That was, yes. It was towards the end of the war. Um, the war had ended
41 in Europe, but it was still, uh, in – going on in the Pacific. And, um, well,
42 I went over on the, um, *Queen Elizabeth*. Um, uh, we, uh, were, uh, went
43 up the Firth of Clyde in Scotland and crossed over in England. Um, then
44 we took an [Exchequer 01:53] across to, uh, uh, France and, uh, uh, Le

1 Havre. It was a – uh, we had – they held us, uh, almost in – oh, ov-, over a
2 day in the, um, before they let us go ashore because there were still mines
3 in the, uh, water there in the, in the...
4
5Elsie Hornbacher: [02:15] In the English Channel?
6
7Rosalie Crosbie: ...in the English Channel, right. And, um, we, uh, were a few days at, uh,
8 Le Havre. They put us on a night – all-night train, uh, to Paris. And, uh,
9 we were there, um – well, let's see. It was the celebration of the...um, hm
10 [chuckle].
11
12Elsie Hornbacher: What month?
13
14Rosalie Crosbie: This was July yet.
15
16Elsie Hornbacher: Oh, July.
17
18Rosalie Crosbie: Uh-huh.
19
20Elsie Hornbacher: Then wouldn't that...
21
22Rosalie Crosbie: [Inaudible 02:40] it...
23
24Elsie Hornbacher: ...be comparable to our American Revolution? Their, uh...
25
26Rosalie Crosbie: Yes, um...
27
28Elsie Hornbacher: Oh, what is that name? Do you remember it?
29
30Rosalie Crosbie: Uh, this slips my mind. [Inaudible 02:51]...
31
32Elsie Hornbacher: Bastille Day.
33
34Rosalie Crosbie: Bastille Day, that's right.
35
36Elsie Hornbacher: That's right.
37
38Rosalie Crosbie: Right. Uh-huh.
39
40Elsie Hornbacher: Uh-huh.
41
42Rosalie Crosbie: I was there for that.
43

1Elsie Hornbacher: I was over there during it. That's how I happened to remember. A few
2 years ago.
3

4Rosalie Crosbie: Right. Mm-hm.
5

6Elsie Hornbacher: Go 'head.
7

8Rosalie Crosbie: And, um, from there, uh, we were assigned our different, uh, [where
9 03:04] were different ones who couldn't go. I was sent to southern France
10 at, um, Marseilles and, um, then, uh, I was on the staging areas we had.
11 Uh, but, but first they were sending the soldiers, um, over to, to, uh, Japan
12 and, you know, our Pacific [inaudible 03:23]. And, uh, but the war ended
13 in August and then they sent them home, of course, from the – there. And,
14 uh...
15

16Elsie Hornbacher: Uh, this wasn't an occupation country like Japan or Germany. [03:41] Um,
17 and I suppose the boys stayed in France for some reason?
18

19Rosalie Crosbie: Well, they were stationed there at, uh, there was, at this, uh, staging area.
20

21Elsie Hornbacher: [03:48] Oh, but it wasn't an occu-, occupied then?
22

23Rosalie Crosbie: Not yet. Uh-uh.
24

25Elsie Hornbacher: Uh-uh. Uh-uh.
26

27Rosalie Crosbie: No. Unh-unh. No, no.
28

29Elsie Hornbacher: [03:53] It never was?
30

31Rosalie Crosbie: No, but it never was, no.
32

33Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.
34

35Rosalie Crosbie: And, uh, there were five Red Cross, um – well, they were just wooden
36 frame structures, you know...
37

38Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.
39

40Rosalie Crosbie: ...set up in a hurry. Uh, and thousands of soldiers, of course. Um, we just
41 couldn't do very much in the way of recreation just more or less giving
42 them doughnuts and coffee and, uh, uh, because there were so many of
43 them. And I was there that summer and fall until, um...almost, almost

1 Christmas, and they closed out the staging areas pretty much [inaudible
2 04:38].
3
4Elsie Hornbacher: [04:38] This would be 1946 then or 1945?
5
6Rosalie Crosbie: Yes. This was, um, '45.
7
8Elsie Hornbacher: '45. Yeah, uh-huh. [04:46] How long did you stay there then, Rosalie?
9
10Rosalie Crosbie: Uh, I was...hm. It was still in 1946 and then...
11
12Elsie Hornbacher: [05:00] You came home in '46?
13
14Rosalie Crosbie: No, no. I was – from there, uh, after the staging areas closed out, I was on
15 the, uh, they did- – were beginning to send the depen-, the new, the
16 soldiers over for occupation...
17
18Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.
19
20Rosalie Crosbie: ...forces. I was put on, uh, the dependent trains, uh, where they met the,
21 the soldiers' wives and children at Bremerhaven in Bremen and, uh, then
22 we took them, uh, on the, on the trains to five different, uh, areas all over
23 Europe. Uh, one train went to Berlin, one to Paris, one to Heidelberg, uh,
24 Vienna, uh...and I just can't recall the fi-, fifth train. Uh, then we would
25 pick up – or take the, the, uh, brides and, uh, or their wives, children to
26 these, to the soldiers that were stationed there and they had decided to stay
27 awhile over in Europe. And then we would pick up the war brides and
28 take them back so they could go back to the States. And, uh, so we, I was
29 a train hostess and for six months, I did that.
30
31Elsie Hornbacher: [06:14] You mean you rode on the train?
32
33Rosalie Crosbie: I rode the trains and we rotated as to, uh, which train you would ride. And
34 I rode the first, I met the first boatload of, uh, women, uh, um, that came
35 over.
36
37Elsie Hornbacher: [06:28] Were there any particular memorable experiences you had during,
38 uh, these train rides to the different cities with the war brides and so forth?
39
40Rosalie Crosbie: Uh, the first train, um, that I rode was the Berlin r-, ride. Uh, it was, uh,
41 and we met the first boatload of, um, women and children that were
42 coming from the States for the soldiers. Uh, this was, um, written up all
43 over the United States and there were reporters there and photographers
44 from, uh, all the leading, uh, newspapers and magazines and, uh, *Life*

1 magazine. A couple of reporters from *Life* magazine were there on our
2 train, took all kinds of pictures and, uh, we – they met the, the, uh, women,
3 of course, with, with a lotta fanfare and the, uh, there were bands playing
4 and they gave'm corsages and, of course, the children're all sick and they
5 were crying and we, we Red Cross girls. There were five of us – no, there
6 were more than that at first because there were three girls to a train. Uh,
7 later on, they reduced it to just one girl per train so this, um...these
8 women, of course, were all tired and everything so we had all kinds of
9 things to give them at first, you know? Uh, Kleenex and toothpaste and,
10 uh, pop and all kinds of, um...
11
12Elsie Hornbacher: [07:54] These products weren't available on the European markets, were
13 they?
14
15Rosalie Crosbie: No, so they were happy to have them, mm-hm.
16
17Elsie Hornbacher: 'Cause I remember we couldn't even buy a bobby pin in Japan.
18
19Rosalie Crosbie: Right. So, uh, and, uh, so we had – rode this train to Berlin. We had to go
20 through the, uh, Russian zone. Uh, it was about before you went into
21 Berlin, and they slowed the trains down to about 15 miles an hour, uh, and
22 the, and the Russian soldiers came on the trains, walked through it. Uh, I
23 don't know what they were inspecting, but, uh, so we were late for about,
24 um, oh, maybe s-, 6 to 10 hours, real late the train getting into Berlin. And
25 the soldiers, of course, were all waiting in the station there. And with one
26 voice, they all, “Where have you been?” You could almost hear [it 08:39].
27 [chuckle] And they pi-, they didn't even wait for the women to get off the
28 train. They just piled onto the train. I was crushed up against – it was real
29 exciting and, uh, uh, you know, they were so happy to see their wives.
30
31Elsie Hornbacher: [08:53] In 19-, in 1945, we were still friends with the Russians.
32
33Rosalie Crosbie: Yes, but they were still, um, quite suspicious more or less and, uh, as I
34 say, they had to inspect the train.
35
36Elsie Hornbacher: Oh.
37
38Rosalie Crosbie: They walked through it, you know. They got on the train. That's why it
39 was stopped and the, and, um, they were very...
40
41Elsie Hornbacher: Yeah, that's right. [09:13] A part of Berlin was assigned to the Russians.
42
43Rosalie Crosbie: Yes, right. And, uh, I had three days in, uh, Berlin then to look around
44 before the train went back and, uh, so...

1
2Elsie Hornbacher: [09:22] Was there a great deal of rubble there?
3
4Rosalie Crosbie: Yes, mm-hm.
5
6Elsie Hornbacher: [09:26] Uh, what would you say?
7
8Rosalie Crosbie: Well...
9
10Elsie Hornbacher: A, a fourth of it was, uh, just destroyed or less or, uh, just a rough
11 estimate?
12
13Rosalie Crosbie: At least, least a fourth. Uh-huh.
14
15Elsie Hornbacher: At least a fourth of it was destroyed?
16
17Rosalie Crosbie: Yeah. And, uh, you s-, saw the women in the streets kind of cleaning,
18 trying to clean up all the rubble, you know, and picking up.
19
20Elsie Hornbacher: [09:48] Do you think the people had enough to eat there?
21
22Rosalie Crosbie: I...
23
24Elsie Hornbacher: That is the Germans?
25
26Rosalie Crosbie: ...I think it was Ge-, yes. Um, no. I think they had trouble getting food
27 very much.
28
29Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm. [10:02] Uh, did you notice any, um, effort, uh, by the Germans to
30 get out of Berlin at this time?
31
32Rosalie Crosbie: Uh, not so much. I, of course, wasn't there...
33
34Elsie Hornbacher: In the city, yes.
35
36Rosalie Crosbie: ...right in the city very long.
37
38Elsie Hornbacher: I can understand this.
39
40Rosalie Crosbie: Um, and they seemed to be dazed, uh, more, uh, shocked, [yeah 10:21],
41 you know, [type 10:21] and, and the looks on their faces [as well 10:23].
42
43Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm. [10:25] Did they make any effort to contact you verbally or, uh?
44

1Rosalie Crosbie: No.
2
3Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm. [10:31] They were [inaudible 10:31]?
4
5Rosalie Crosbie: Mm-hm. Um, of course, uh, Frankfurt was also, uh, badly damaged and,
6 uh, who-, whole sides of the building were off and everything and even,
7 uh, it – 'cause I was there in '46 you see, and that was nearly a year later
8 and, uh, still, uh, sometimes you could smell, uh...
9
10Elsie Hornbacher: Human.
11
12Rosalie Crosbie: Mm-hm.
13
14Elsie Hornbacher: Uh...
15
16Rosalie Crosbie: They, they were tryin' to...
17
18Elsie Hornbacher: ...human corpses.
19
20Rosalie Crosbie: ... clean it up, right?
21
22Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.
23
24Rosalie Crosbie: Um, so I was able to travel all over Europe where our men were stationed,
25 our soldiers were stationed during that six months on the trains. Uh, they
26 kept, uh, reducing the, um, number of girls that worked on the, so that by
27 the end in October – we had started this in, early in the spring.
28
29Elsie Hornbacher: [11:25] Uh, '45?
30
31Rosalie Crosbie: Yeah. This is '46.
32
33Elsie Hornbacher: '46, okay.
34
35Rosalie Crosbie: And, um, um, by the end, there was only one girl to a train and we didn't
36 have any supplies to give'm. [chuckle] You know, the...
37
38Elsie Hornbacher: No Kleenex?
39
40Rosalie Crosbie: No, nothing. [laughter]
41
42Elsie Hornbacher: Back in those days...
43
44Rosalie Crosbie: And, uh, it got to be kind of a...

1
2Elsie Hornbacher: ...uh, there's a shortage of toiletries...
3
4Rosalie Crosbie: Yeah, right.
5
6Elsie Hornbacher: ...where a Kleenex came in handy.
7
8Rosalie Crosbie: Then after a while, they took the Red Cross girls off completely...
9
10Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.
11
12Rosalie Crosbie: ...and, uh, they could fare the best way they could getting [there 11:53].
13 [chuckle]
14
15Elsie Hornbacher: [Obviously 11:54].
16
17Rosalie Crosbie: [Inaudible 11:54]. Um, I was assigned from there to, uh, Salzburg,
18 Austria to a Red Cross club, and there's where I really did much more
19 recreation and planning [of 12:08] that.
20
21Elsie Hornbacher: [12:08] What did you do before you were in the service?
22
23Rosalie Crosbie: I, uh, was always interested in recreation. I, uh, started planning, uh, ga-,
24 uh, collecting games and planning parties from the age of 14. And, um,
25 worked, uh, I was sent – when I was 17 the church to a national recreation,
26 uh, training for a few weeks. And, um, I started a business on my own,
27 uh, for, uh, in planning parties and evenings and advertised in a local
28 paper, uh, wo-, uh, just more or less did it on, from my own experience.
29 Uh, I was always interested in dramatics, uh, and was in several of the
30 Lansing City plays and in the – took a course in radio drama at the college,
31 Michigan State University. Uh, I, I had...
32
33Elsie Hornbacher: [13:07] That's in East Lansing?
34
35Rosalie Crosbie: Yes, in East Lansing. They, uh, when I was interviewed for Red Cross,
36 they thought that I had sufficient background in recreation so that, uh, I
37 was taken in...
38
39Elsie Hornbacher: [13:23] Do you happen to remember what your pay was overseas?
40
41Rosalie Crosbie: I was paid \$150 a month plus expenses.
42
43Elsie Hornbacher: I see.
44

1Rosalie Crosbie: And, uh...
2
3Elsie Hornbacher: [13:34] And where did you sleep? Did you have a, uh, hotel to stay in or?
4
5Rosalie Crosbie: Some places we had hotels and, uh, given rooms. Um...the
6 accommodations were pretty good.
7
8Elsie Hornbacher: [13:46] Uh, did you have a home base? What was your home base?
9
10Rosalie Crosbie: It depended on where I worked. I, uh...
11
12Elsie Hornbacher: [13:53] It varied from month to month? Is that it?
13
14Rosalie Crosbie: Uh, well. Yes, I was changed from month – when I first went to, uh,
15 France and so-, to southern [Spain 14:02], I think I changed two or three –
16 well, we were, at Aigues, France.
17
18Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm. Aigues, France. [14:10] Is that near, uh, so-, is that in southern
19 France?
20
21Rosalie Crosbie: Southern France, um, but we had to ride 20 miles to the staging areas
22 every day, back and forth on trucks.
23
24Elsie Hornbacher: [14:20] How did you ride – in trucks?
25
26Rosalie Crosbie: Mm-hm.
27
28Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.
29
30Rosalie Crosbie: And we rattled around in the truck. And, um, then when I was sent to
31 work inland off the staging area, I was living in a hotel for a while. And,
32 uh, we had a little, little club, uh, for the, um...the, the so-, the officers at
33 first. And, um...then – I, anyway, I moved about three times at the time I
34 was, uh, in southern France. Uh, when I was sent on the trains, they first,
35 uh, had us, uh, uh, they gave us a nice, all five – all of the Red Cross girls
36 in a, kind of a house. You know, we had the place. We didn't have that
37 very long. They decided that was too expensive, I guess, so they set us up
38 in Frankfurt and that was our, we had just rooms in the hotel there. And,
39 um, but, of course, we were riding trains back and forth all the time.
40
41 When I was in Salzburg, Austria, uh, we were, uh, set up in, uh, a hotel by
42 room and also there were others that were around. My roommate was a
43 girl who was, uh...she was not in Red Cross. She was, um, she was a
44 librarian. She worked on a, uh, a mobile, uh, li-, libr-, a truck, you know,

1 that w-, went around to all the different small towns. Uh, she'd go with
2 the truck and had to – was tryin' to think what she was – must've been [the
3 wax 15:55] or something. I don't know just what her – I saw that we were
4 billed with other, uh, services not only just our own.
5
6Elsie Hornbacher: She was probably, uh, Department of Army Civilians.
7
8Rosalie Crosbie: That's what she was, right.
9
10Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm. Right, yeah.
11
12Rosalie Crosbie: Couldn't quite think. Um, then, uh, and, and, of course, in Salzburg, uh,
13 the, the actual Red Cross club was, had been a, uh, former gambling
14 casino. It was a beautiful building, had three floors, a re-, big ballroom.
15 And, uh, then, uh, we serviced, uh, men, uh, that were coming over there
16 in the occupational – the – many of them much, were much younger
17 because they were 18-19-year-olds and most of them hadn't had any, uh,
18 war experience. They hadn't been [inaudible 16:42]. Uh, but, uh, we had
19 all kinds of facilities for them. They had – there was a barbershop there,
20 uh, and, uh, there was, uh, game rooms of ping pong and there was
21 reading rooms where they could be quiet. And we had a, a program going
22 constantly, of, uh...
23
24Elsie Hornbacher: Different activities.
25
26Rosalie Crosbie: ...activities. Mm-hm.
27
28Elsie Hornbacher: [17:05] Back in 19-, uh, '45 and 1946, \$150 a month was a pretty good
29 salary, wasn't it?
30
31Rosalie Crosbie: Uh, well, it...
32
33Elsie Hornbacher: [17:13] Maybe a little above average?
34
35Rosalie Crosbie: ...yes, it was in the – it was average.
36
37Elsie Hornbacher: Average. Mm-hm.
38
39Rosalie Crosbie: Uh, some of the girls that went into Red Cross had to take cuts in pay
40 because they were getting...
41
42Elsie Hornbacher: [17:22] 'Cause they'd get more at home?
43
44Rosalie Crosbie: ...much more at home.

1
2Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.
3
4Rosalie Crosbie: Uh, with me, it wasn't so bad, uh, and, uh, with your, with your, uh, you
5 know, board and room taken care of...
6
7Elsie Hornbacher: Yeah. Oh, yes.
8
9Rosalie Crosbie: ...you had extra money. I sent...
10
11Elsie Hornbacher: Considerable.
12
13Rosalie Crosbie: ...money home, and, uh, to my mother [for her 17:40].
14
15Elsie Hornbacher: [17:41] Actually, uh, [throat clearing] all of your personal, uh, um,
16 belongings could probably have been put in a foot locker over there,
17 couldn't have they?
18
19Rosalie Crosbie: Yes. We traveled around with, mm-hm.
20
21Elsie Hornbacher: [17:53] And uh, uh, traveling...
22
23Rosalie Crosbie: Uh-huh, uh-huh.
24
25Elsie Hornbacher: ...uh, to that extent?
26
27Rosalie Crosbie: Yes. Yes. Um...see, I was trying to think.
28
29Elsie Hornbacher: [18:00] Did you have any funny experiences over there?
30
31Rosalie Crosbie: Well, I jumped off a moving train. Uh, [laughter] I was on the wrong
32 train. When it started out, we were talking to one of the other girls and,
33 uh, so it just started very slow but I thought I could get off in a hurry and I
34 took a flying leap and sprawled on the pavement [all over 18:20]. Didn't
35 hurt myself too much except my pride, of course, but, um, and, uh, but I
36 got off that train in a hurry. So then, uh, another time, we had these
37 potbellied stoves in the Red, in Red Cross clubs and the, while this was...
38
39Elsie Hornbacher: [18:39] Don't have the central heating systems over there?
40
41Rosalie Crosbie: Not in those clubs on, uh, in southern France. They're just little wooden
42 shacks build up, you know, set up. So this was, uh, and I was cold and I
43 had the, you know, kind of a raincoat-type, uh, on and, uh, buttoned up
44 real good and had, uh, my purse over my shoulder so it kinda and I was

1 leaning to, or sitting, standing too close to the stove anyway and I felt
2 pretty warm. And of course, I did the thing you shouldn't do, I started
3 [chuckle] running. Someone grabbed me and beat the flame out. Ruined
4 the coat but I was saved. [chuckle] And, uh...
5
6Elsie Hornbacher: [19:23] Did you hafta pay for your clothing over there?
7
8Rosalie Crosbie: We had, I remember I drew \$500 out to go into Red Cross. We had to buy
9 our uniforms, yes.
10
11Elsie Hornbacher: [19:35] Oh, you did buy them?
12
13Rosalie Crosbie: And, uh, uh-huh.
14
15Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.
16
17Rosalie Crosbie: And, uh, of course, Red Cross didn't get any, uh, we were civilian. We
18 weren't, uh, considered the army so, uh, we weren't, uh, when we got
19 home, we weren't given any special benefits like the – um, so some of'm,
20 you know, thought that it was a little underpaid or something they didn't
21 get so much but...
22
23Elsie Hornbacher: [20:00] Had Salzburg been bombed?
24
25Rosalie Crosbie: Uh, no. No. It was intact and very nice and, uh, a very picturesque place.
26 And, uh, often saw them wearing their native costumes and, and we had...
27
28Elsie Hornbacher: [20:19] The lederhosen?
29
30Rosalie Crosbie: Yes. Uh-huh, uh-huh. And we had, uh, entertainment all the time in the
31 Salzburg club and we had these folk dances and, uh, that's where I first
32 saw folk dancing and...
33
34Elsie Hornbacher: [20:33] Uh, you utilized...
35
36Rosalie Crosbie: ...the, uh, native dances.
37
38Elsie Hornbacher: ...you utilized the talent of the Austrians...
39
40Rosalie Crosbie: We did.
41
42Elsie Hornbacher: ...didn't you then?
43
44Rosalie Crosbie: Uh, yes and, uh...

1
2Elsie Hornbacher: Good musicians?
3
4Rosalie Crosbie: ...we had 150 Austrians...
5
6Elsie Hornbacher: Dancers?
7
8Rosalie Crosbie: ...working for us. The five girls are running the club but 150 staff took
9 care of it. Did the cooking and the serving and the – in fact and, of course,
10 there was one man who was the head over these. He was very, very bright
11 and, uh, most of these...
12
13Elsie Hornbacher: [21:02] An Austrian supervisor for the entertainers?
14
15Rosalie Crosbie: Yes.
16
17Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.
18
19Rosalie Crosbie: And, um, all you had to do was tell him what you wanted and he just had
20 it done. We could cha-, every week we changed a, a theme for our dance
21 or something. Uh, you know, we'd have a western or a New York City or
22 something or Hawaii or some, uh, theme, uh, we wanted. Uh, they would
23 just – they had artists and, um, working for them and, uh, next thing you
24 know, you had a whole stage set. I mean, they just had it all beautiful for
25 you.
26
27Elsie Hornbacher: [21:36] Did the Austrians seem to appreciate you Americans being there?
28
29Rosalie Crosbie: Well, yes, they acted as if they did. Um, they were having a very rough
30 time, uh, getting food so that every so often we would have to shake down
31 the, um, staff 'cause they were naturally sneaking out food to their families
32 who were, who were havin' a hard time. And, um, I didn't blame them. I
33 might've done the same thing, you know. You can't – you could – they
34 could have food themselves but they weren't to take it home and, um, that
35 was rough when you to see your [own 22:08] family. And, but they, uh,
36 had to be strict or we'd have lost – [chuckle] you know, you can't run
37 things with them just taking it blind.
38
39Elsie Hornbacher: Yes.
40
41Rosalie Crosbie: Uh, also the black market was rampant, of course, and, um, uh, they would
42 get – there was nothing to buy in the stores. You couldn't see anything,
43 uh, just paper goods. And, you know, I don't – I didn't see how they ate.
44 Uh, you know, there was no food, no clothing. Uh, all of it black market.

1
2Elsie Hornbacher: [22:36] Did they appear – they, they had shoes, didn't they?
3
4Rosalie Crosbie: Yes.
5
6Elsie Hornbacher: [22:41] Most of them, uh, and, uh, were they warm? Did they have
7 enough clothes to keep them warm?
8
9Rosalie Crosbie: Well, I don't know. I know they wanted blankets badly and, uh...
10
11Elsie Hornbacher: [22:48] Oh, they wanted blankets?
12
13Rosalie Crosbie: Uh-huh.
14
15Elsie Hornbacher: [22:50] Coats, any old clothes you had?
16
17Rosalie Crosbie: Anything, anything.
18
19Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.
20
21Rosalie Crosbie: Oh, they were having, uh, troubles. And, um...
22
23Elsie Hornbacher: [22:56] This is the Austrians?
24
25Rosalie Crosbie: Yes, and the Germans, of course, too.
26
27Elsie Hornbacher: [Inaudible 22:59]. Mm-hm, yes. They're right across the border from
28 Bavaria there...
29
30Rosalie Crosbie: Mm-hm, mm-hm.
31
32Elsie Hornbacher: ...in Austria.
33
34Rosalie Crosbie: Uh...uh, when I was – after the soldiers were, were pretty well sent back
35 home in, um, in December of 1945, then I was assigned from then until
36 spring to a unit of, of soldiers who were investigating the graves and the
37 identities of the, uh, soldiers that had died overseas, killed. And, um, so
38 that was the, about three or four or five months that I was there when we
39 were – had just small, little small Red Cross club. Uh, there was only two
40 of us girls working, uh, on that.
41
42Elsie Hornbacher: [23:53] Where is this again? What city?
43
44Rosalie Crosbie: This is in southern France, Aigues.

1
2Elsie Hornbacher: Aigues.
3
4Rosalie Crosbie: And, uh, Aigues, France. And, um, so when – then we didn't have any, of
5 course, girls for the dances, uh, for the soldiers so, um, we went to the
6 town, uh, mayor and, um, interviewed and head of the, of the college there
7 and we had an interpreter. We, um, asked them to, if they would, we
8 could, you know, send their girls, uh, who were interested to those dances
9 with our soldiers and they were very happy. So, um, we recruited about
10 100 girls a week. Uh, they would bring them in, uh, their own buses and,
11 um, many of them couldn't speak English but, uh, they managed to have a
12 good time at the dance. [chuckle] And so, in that way, we, uh, worked
13 with the community and, uh, they were very – they always sent
14 chaperones and, and we had a lotta nice dances that, uh, winter and, and
15 the spring, in the spring.
16
17Elsie Hornbacher: [24:58] You bussed the girls then back home, didn't you? The men...
18
19Rosalie Crosbie: Yes...
20
21Elsie Hornbacher: ...didn't take them home?
22
23Rosalie Crosbie: ...we always got them back and there always had to be, um, a lotta
24 supervision, you know, several people coming with them. Um, we had an
25 assigned, a young man assigned to us anyway who was our interpreter for
26 anything we wanted in the town. Uh, the, uh, I got to see the Mardis Gras
27 in, uh, Aigues, France, which is, uh, the, um, father, I guess, of the Mardis
28 Gras here, you know? I mean, it, uh, they took, patterned it from, in New
29 Orleans after this one that they had there, which they carry on the
30 celebration. That's in the spring and they carry it on for several days and
31 that was a lotta fun. In, um, in the – during the fall of 1945 while we were
32 – still had the fellas there waiting to, to go over, to go home, they were so
33 restless and so unhappy, uh, and the process was very slow. Uh, but, uh,
34 we couldn't do much of anything to make them happy.
35
36 We had, uh, I remember, uh, the World Series in, in October and, uh, so
37 we decide-, we had one little, little radio, uh, or at least one electrical
38 outlet for it. And, um, we had that set up in the club with, uh, some
39 speakers on it in some way to make it, uh, so more could hear. Um, but
40 the club got filled up so that another soldier couldn't even squeeze in there
41 and they were standing outside the window. We had it in a window.
42 Um...and, oh, so many of'm outside, of course, didn't hear anything. One
43 of the fellas, uh, decided that, uh, told me that maybe we could move that
44 radio a little bit so they could hear outside. And, uh, so we went to the

1 trouble of doing it all and, well, the soldiers outside could hear but then
2 the ones [laughter] on the inside couldn't and they were so angry and, uh,
3 so – I – the – I knew I couldn't try to please'm anymore so I went and hid
4 because they were having – they weren't about to be happy about what I
5 had done and, uh, I was afraid I was might get hung or something.
6
7Elsie Hornbacher: [27:16] Can you account for the reason, uh, for their only having one
8 radio?
9
10Rosalie Crosbie: We may have had more. I don't think they had any more outlets in that
11 that they could connect it.
12
13Elsie Hornbacher: I see.
14
15Rosalie Crosbie: And, uh...
16
17Elsie Hornbacher: [27:27] And no batteries?
18
19Rosalie Crosbie: ...there weren't any batteries available, you know, that type of battery.
20 And, uh, so that we only had one radio in the club. Now, I don't know
21 whether some of the soldiers might've had something. But, uh, it was hard
22 for them to get any news, of course, from home that, you know, [inaudible
23 27:42]. They came – they had a strike at one time. Uh, early in
24 December, I can recall them...
25
26Elsie Hornbacher: [27:50] What year is this?
27
28Rosalie Crosbie: ...coming down the...'45, the winter or the fall of '45 and into, uh, while
29 they're waiting to be sent home after the war has – had ended [everywhere
30 27:58].
31
32Elsie Hornbacher: [27:58] They had a strike? What did they do?
33
34Rosalie Crosbie: Yes, they walked down the – and about 20, uh, across, uh, and rows and
35 rows of them. They came – I don't know, they were gonna tear up the, the
36 headquarters there where they were assigning'm or something. I didn't
37 think they were...
38
39Elsie Hornbacher: [28:15] Because they weren't going home?
40
41Rosalie Crosbie: ...they weren't goin' home fast enough and they thought they were –
42 somebody was draggin' their feet or something but, um, somebody, uh,
43 they had quite a time, uh, quieting them down and, uh, I don't know.
44

1Elsie Hornbacher: [28:26] There were hundreds or thousands of them?
2

3Rosalie Crosbie: It, well, it seemed like there were hundreds of them and, well, of course,
4 there was thousands on the staging area but a lotta of m.
5

6Elsie Hornbacher: [28:36] What is the staging area?
7

8Rosalie Crosbie: It is where, uh, the boys are sent to, uh, after they've finished one
9 assignment or through with their – and they're waiting for the next, um,
10 wherever they're gonna be sent, uh, next. And, uh, the staging area on, uh,
11 Marseilles, of course, they were, it was – the, they just had tents all around
12 and waiting for their, uh, to be assigned, to be sent.
13

14Elsie Hornbacher: [29:05] The men were sleeping in tents?
15

16Rosalie Crosbie: Yes. And, uh...
17

18Elsie Hornbacher: [29:08] Was this in the summertime or winter?
19

20Rosalie Crosbie: Yes and, of course, it's warmer there anyway all winter but, uh, and, uh,
21 it's – there was no – it was just kinda red dust all, uh, you know, the sand.
22 It wasn't – it's kinda like a clay, just clung to everything. It was hot. Um,
23 no trees or anything. It was, it wasn't, uh – they sent us Red Cross girls,
24 uh, a few times to Nice, France for three days. There was an American,
25 uh, well she was an American woman and an Englishwoman that owned
26 this castle on the, in the Mediterranean and, uh, for kind of a relief on the
27 – but, of course, the soldiers didn't get any such, uh...
28

29Elsie Hornbacher: Treatment.
30

31Rosalie Crosbie: ...treatment, [chuckle] no. Uh, but a staging area is where – when I first
32 went there, they were being sent, uh, being processed to go to the Pacific
33 because the war was over in Europe. And, uh, when the war ended in the
34 Pacific that summer and August, they were sending them home from
35 there. They just, they just had to sit there and there was nothing to do for
36 them and wait until, of course, and they were so sick of war and...wanted
37 to get home so badly. So, um, I don't know if that was a term they used...
38

39Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.
40

41Rosalie Crosbie: ...as an area where they – but there were thousands and thousands of
42 soldiers. And as I say, we couldn't do anything – they couldn't even sit
43 down in the clubs. They just went through and, um, stood up and drank

1 their coffee and ate their doughnuts and went on so somebody else could
2 have it. It was that crowded.
3
4Elsie Hornbacher: [30:47] What kind of, uh, work were the soldiers doing at this time or
5 were they just waiting?
6
7Rosalie Crosbie: Just waiting. And they know waiting is awfully hard to do. [laughter]
8
9Elsie Hornbacher: Well, yes. Uh, hurry up and wait...
10
11Rosalie Crosbie: Yeah, right.
12
13Elsie Hornbacher: ...is the old army phrase.
14
15Rosalie Crosbie: No, they were not, uh – oh, some of the fellas were helping us, you know,
16 the – felt like it and, uh, we had, we had a lotta of [inaudible 31:06].
17
18Elsie Hornbacher: [31:06] Uh, there were no activities planned for them other than, uh, at the
19 club?
20
21Rosalie Crosbie: No.
22
23Elsie Hornbacher: [31:12] Did they wander around town and, uh, whoop it up?
24
25Rosalie Crosbie: Well, they were pretty well...
26
27Elsie Hornbacher: [31:17] Wasn't anything to...
28
29Rosalie Crosbie: ...they weren't...
30
31Elsie Hornbacher: ...whoop up downtown, was there?
32
33Rosalie Crosbie: ...no. And, uh, you know, they weren't allowed, uh, too much to wander
34 around.
35
36Elsie Hornbacher: [31:24] Oh, they weren't? Oh, they had to stay more or less within a...
37
38Rosalie Crosbie: Yes, uh-huh.
39
40Elsie Hornbacher: ...certain given area?
41
42Rosalie Crosbie: Yeah, well they didn't want'm, uh...
43
44Elsie Hornbacher: [31:30] And they didn't have a Jeep?

1
2Rosalie Crosbie: ...all over the place.
3
4Elsie Hornbacher: They couldn't travel?
5
6Rosalie Crosbie: No.
7
8Elsie Hornbacher: Well, this is a...
9
10Rosalie Crosbie: We had, um, uh...
11
12Elsie Hornbacher: ...distressful...
13
14Rosalie Crosbie: ...we had some – on the staging – I was given – they, they, as they came,
15 uh, uh – we were given, us Red Cross girls – they couldn't take a lotta
16 things on the boat. I was given a Jeep and, um, uh, a type-, three
17 typewriters and, uh, um, guns. I think a couple guns. And, uh, so, you
18 know, they had, uh – one fella was – I remember quite, uh, [chuckle] he
19 took his Jeep apart and sent it in pieces [over 32:03] [laughter] something.
20
21Elsie Hornbacher: Oh.
22
23Rosalie Crosbie: And, uh, the – but they couldn't take these things with'm on the boat and
24 they didn't know what to do with'm so they gave'm as gifts to us Red
25 Cross girls. [chuckle] Well, I had this Jeep for a while but, of course, after
26 a while, they came, the army...
27
28Elsie Hornbacher: [32:16] Did you drive it?
29
30Rosalie Crosbie: ...came and picked it up. [laughter]
31
32Elsie Hornbacher: Oh. [laughter]
33
34Rosalie Crosbie: Well, they didn't – the men had taken all these things from, uh, the army
35 and from the, uh – when they went through Germany, of course, they just
36 ransacked the homes and took all kinds of things.
37
38Elsie Hornbacher: [32:30] Uh, we were – oh, they ransacked homes?
39
40Rosalie Crosbie: Oh, yeah.
41
42Elsie Hornbacher: [32:33] Well, we were wondering before, when you were saying about the
43 men waiting, how long did they hafta wait?
44

1Rosalie Crosbie: Some of them waited for months from, you know, from, uh, in the fall or
2 early summer or something to – and then, uh – they were given, you
3 know, they had to wait their turn. Those who had been there the longest
4 g-, went first or something but there was all kinds of red tape and holdups
5 and, uh, some of'm were there for months with nothing to do and so they
6 got pretty stir crazy.
7

8Elsie Hornbacher: I can understand that.
9

10Rosalie Crosbie: Um, they were very upset there. Um...the, I...did I repeat? Did I s-, it
11 was at the Mardis Gras and the...
12

13Elsie Hornbacher: Yes.
14

15Rosalie Crosbie: ...yeah, I said that.
16

17Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.
18

19Rosalie Crosbie: Um...skipping back to, um, the Red Cross in, uh, Salzburg, Austria. I s-, I
20 met General Eisenhower. He visited our club in the Red Cross and he and,
21 uh, several other generals with lesser stars. Um, most of the girls, uh,
22 staff, were following the general around, you know, and sticking quite
23 close to him, so I kinda entertained one of the young-, one of the not
24 younger but lesser generals. He had three star on his cloak and, um, so
25 when we were standing outside, it was quite chilly, uh, and he took his
26 cloak off and put it on my shoulders. So afterwards, the soldiers, uh,
27 kidded me a lot and called me general. [chuckle]
28

29 And, uh, then I also met the Duke of Windsor when – that was when I was
30 in southern France. Uh, he went through with his, um, troop. [Boy
31 34:12], he had a lot of cars and – along traveling with him. They stopped
32 there to get gas and, and supplies. And, um, I was quite a little ways – I
33 was sitting on the porch of the, the hotel there. One of the soldiers, uh,
34 said he knew him. [I wouldn't dare 34:30] but he took me. He said – and
35 I had a little camera, a little box camera and, um, he said, “Do you wanna
36 take his picture?” And I said, “Sure.” So he took me right up there and I
37 asked if I could take his picture, and he said, “I would be very pleased.”
38 [chuckle] He was very, uh, [chuckle] you know, charming and polite. I
39 could see, uh, um, the Duke of – the Duchess of Windsor. She was in the
40 car and she – I had, got her in the picture. She was looking out the little
41 car window. Uh, but this fella that took me up there wanted his picture
42 with the Duke, so he was standing and he – you know, that's the reason he
43 took me there. He, uh, knew I had a camera so he was standing there, uh,
44 with him and, but when the pictures were developed, I, I wasn't very good

1 at aiming it and I had kinda left him out. [laughter] Well, he wasn't happy
2 with me at the end. Oh, dear.
3
4Elsie Hornbacher: Oh, great.
5
6Rosalie Crosbie: Well, then, um, also I visited the, Nuremberg – had the good fortune to
7 visit the Nuremberg trials, uh, uh...
8
9Elsie Hornbacher: [35:32] We-, were...
10
11Rosalie Crosbie: ...one time. This was...
12
13Elsie Hornbacher: ...you there when a trial was actually in proc-...
14
15Rosalie Crosbie: Yes, they were – actually, it was in process.
16
17Elsie Hornbacher: Hm, I've seen the building.
18
19Rosalie Crosbie: And this was during the, uh, times I was riding the trains...
20
21Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.
22
23Rosalie Crosbie: ...and I guess I went to Nuremberg and was there for a day or so. So, um,
24 yes, I went in and that was very interesting. Of course, uh, they do that all
25 the time but this was done in so many different languages and so we each
26 could, uh, we had earphones and, uh, you heard – and these interpreters
27 were standing right or sitting right up there and, uh, you heard the whole
28 process in your language. You know, and, of course, I heard it in English.
29 And, um, because it was a, a – so and that amazed me, those interpreters.
30 They could interpret so fast right along with it. Um...
31
32Elsie Hornbacher: [36:14] You don't remember who was interviewed at the time? Anyone –
33 it wasn't anyone as prominent as Klaus Barbie or any – oh no, he wasn't.
34 That's right, he was...
35
36Rosalie Crosbie: Well, it was one of the...
37
38Elsie Hornbacher: ...protected by the Americans, wasn't he?
39
40Rosalie Crosbie: Yeah.
41
42Elsie Hornbacher: Because he knew too, he knew a lotta things we wanted.
43

1Rosalie Crosbie: Right. Uh, it was one of those and I have...that, had charge of publicity or
2 something with the, uh, in the, with the young people that – who was on
3 trial at the time. And, um, he was one of the bigger shots in the...
4

5Elsie Hornbacher: German.
6

7Rosalie Crosbie: ...German Reich, uh-huh. And, uh, I don't re-, just, we were only there
8 one afternoon, you know, and watched, listened to it.
9

10Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.
11

12Rosalie Crosbie: But I thought that was very interesting.
13

14Elsie Hornbacher: [37:01] The building itself is rather austere, isn't it?
15

16Rosalie Crosbie: Yes. Uh-huh, uh-huh.
17

18Elsie Hornbacher: Uh, I was surprised. We-, as I remember, wooden floors.
19

20Rosalie Crosbie: Mm-hm.
21

22Elsie Hornbacher: No carpeting.
23

24Rosalie Crosbie: Right, mm-hm. Yeah. And, uh, I can remember [during 37:14] sitting in
25 the – you know, they had all the ones that were on trial just sitting there
26 waiting for their turn or something and I can remember seeing him in the
27 box there and waiting for the – so, um...
28

29Elsie Hornbacher: [37:31] Was – what was the atmosphere? Very solemn, was it not?
30

31Rosalie Crosbie: Yes, I would say it was. Mm-hm. And, uh...
32

33Elsie Hornbacher: I can understand [it was 37:39].
34

35Rosalie Crosbie: ...mm-hm. [Mm-hm 37:40], different. And the lawyers were trying to get
36 them off but I think this particular one that I – and I'm just sorry I can't
37 remember his name, um, was convicted, you know, at the end 'cause I
38 followed that up. Uh, then – and while I was in Salzburg, I know that we
39 gave, uh, a party for the, um, children of the dependents, one Halloween
40 party in our club. And by this time you see the teachers were over there
41 and, uh, they enjoyed that. We had a party of probably about 20 children.
42 And, uh, they really, uh, these are the American children, of course. On
43 Christmastime at the, uh, club, we gave a party for the Austrian children
44 and children of the, those that worked there. We had a party for 500

1 youngsters, uh, in, in the club. Um, of course, they couldn't speak
2 English, uh, but, um, they enjoyed themselves. And we – one of the fellas
3 dressed up as Santa Claus and [chuckle] had the children on his lap and
4 [chuckle] it, that was fun.
5
6Elsie Hornbacher: [38:48] Did you find one big enough to be Santa Claus? I mean rotund?
7
8Rosalie Crosbie: Yes, we kinda fixed him up. [laughter]
9
10Elsie Hornbacher: [38:53] You didn't hafta use [inaudible 38:54]?
11
12Rosalie Crosbie: Well, I think did, yeah, somewhat.
13
14Elsie Hornbacher: Oh. [laughter] The army keeps the men pretty...
15
16Rosalie Crosbie: Yeah, pretty thin, uh, but, uh...
17
18Elsie Hornbacher: ...it keeps'm thin. Mm-hm.
19
20Rosalie Crosbie: ...they, of course, had their, uh, like I remember on the 6th of December is
21 a...
22
23Elsie Hornbacher: Saint Nicholas comes.
24
25Rosalie Crosbie: Yes and, well, they had a...
26
27Elsie Hornbacher: And he tells the children they better be good or they're gonna be thrown in
28 the river.
29
30Rosalie Crosbie: And they came through with a – one of'm had a switch. It wasn't Saint
31 Nicholas.
32
33Elsie Hornbacher: Oh, yeah.
34
35Rosalie Crosbie: That was the...
36
37Elsie Hornbacher: The children were scared of him.
38
39Rosalie Crosbie: ...getting out the, uh – this was, um, somebody driving out the, the spirits,
40 the bad spirits. And they were runnin' through the club with a switch
41 and...
42
43Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm. And he comes in...
44

1Rosalie Crosbie: ...uh-huh. They had, uh, quite of the few of their native customs at
2 Christmas, which're different than ours.
3

4Elsie Hornbacher: As I remember, he'd come – he dresses in white, doesn't he?
5

6Rosalie Crosbie: Well...
7

8Elsie Hornbacher: And he tells the children he'll put'm in a sack and throw'm in the river.
9 And I understand this custom is, uh, uh, being frowned upon today.
10

11Rosalie Crosbie: Yes.
12

13Elsie Hornbacher: Even back 30 years ago, uh, they were trying to discourage it because the
14 children were scared stiff.
15

16Rosalie Crosbie: Yes, they were.
17

18Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.
19

20Rosalie Crosbie: Uh-huh. Yeah, they did that and, uh, that was interesting for me, of
21 course. Um, the other, uh, thing that, of course, the black market was so
22 rampant at the time. And, um, our – we didn't have to worry about, uh,
23 especially if you didn't smoke and we could g-, we were allowed a carton
24 of cigarettes a week and, um, so you could use that for tipping. A, a just a
25 few cigarettes, you could get a whole lot done. Bags carried or anything,
26 uh, for a, a carton of cigarettes. I had my laundry done and, uh, every
27 week and, uh, did a beautiful job. Um, and fixed, cleaned up your room a
28 little bit. And, uh, and then, of course, you could turn your cigarettes into,
29 um, the local money, marks, and then turn that, uh, in turn to, um, the scrip
30 that they had and turn that and go back and – into America – send it back
31 home as a money order. And for – a carton of cigarettes turned into
32 several hundred dollars [by the 41:07] time you got it home if you wanted
33 to. That went on for several months before the army could get ahold,
34 control of that. And, uh, everything was – the black market was played
35 heavily over there.
36

37Elsie Hornbacher: [41:21] Uh, now is it about time for you to come home from overseas?
38

39Rosalie Crosbie: I'd been over there at this time, uh, over two years, um, and it was 1947,
40 uh, in the spring when they changed, uh, the clubs. They were slowly
41 changing'm over to, uh, civilian, uh...
42

43Elsie Hornbacher: Clubs?
44

1Rosalie Crosbie: ...uh USO or I guess it was called over there.
2
3Elsie Hornbacher: Yes, I remember going to this club in Austria...
4
5Rosalie Crosbie: Yes.
6
7Elsie Hornbacher: ...too.
8
9Rosalie Crosbie: Uh-huh.
10
11Elsie Hornbacher: Uh, we met there and had dinner there. I think we could stay overnight
12 there. This is when the, uh, uh, teachers from, uh, Trieste were, uh,
13 transferred from Trieste to...
14
15Rosalie Crosbie: Mm-hm.
16
17Elsie Hornbacher: ...some other, uh, assignment.
18
19Rosalie Crosbie: And so it – well and for me, of course, I was ready to come home. My,
20 my mother died in July of – the 7th of 1947. And, uh, in the meantime,
21 um, they had – I, they, I, they couldn't get me home, the Red Cross, even
22 though I was in Red Cross, in time for the funeral. So then I wasn't in
23 such a big hurry. I mean, I couldn't get home for the funeral so, uh, but
24 they were already, uh, changing over the clubs [to the 42:32]...
25
26Elsie Hornbacher: [42:32] Did you get your notice immediately of her death?
27
28Rosalie Crosbie: Well, I knew that she was dying and that I talked to someone...
29
30Elsie Hornbacher: Oh, we knew by letter. Right.
31
32Rosalie Crosbie: Yes. Uh, and I talked to one...
33
34Elsie Hornbacher: [42:41] Were you able to call home long distance?
35
36Rosalie Crosbie: I called – well, someone – yes, I called home then. I had called earlier. I
37 talked to my mother in March. Uh, we had that – by that time, they had
38 set up long distance so that we could do that.
39
40Elsie Hornbacher: [42:52] Oh, you could telephone?
41
42Rosalie Crosbie: So I could telephone. Uh, they knew that I was gonna call and they're
43 waiting for it. I mean, it had all been arranged and, and I think I talked
44 several minutes.

1
2Elsie Hornbacher: We didn't have these facilities when my brother died in 1949 in Tokyo.
3
4Rosalie Crosbie: Uh-huh.
5
6Elsie Hornbacher: In fact, I didn't get the message. Uh, it was 1952, uh, I believe. I didn't
7 get the message for five days after he had died.
8
9Rosalie Crosbie: Hm. Well, well I knew. As I say, I talked to my mother in March of 1947
10 and, uh, my mother – and I had talked with, uh, my mother's friend who,
11 you know, let me know how serious it was. And, but then – and I tried to
12 get permission to get home but I – they couldn't do the thing fast enough
13 and, and she passed away on the 7th. Uh, so I had had telephone
14 communications. Then, uh, uh, by this time, they were changing over in
15 the, the clubs so I had put in my to go home but I didn't really get home
16 until September of '47 'cause all summer, uh, I don't know, slowly
17 processing to get, uh...
18
19Elsie Hornbacher: [44:04] Had your assignment terminated or had you decided to leave?
20
21Rosalie Crosbie: I asked more or less to leave.
22
23Elsie Hornbacher: [44:09] You asked to leave?
24
25Rosalie Crosbie: Uh-huh. But I, I, I still had a choice. Uh, some of them went to Vienna, a
26 little club. I could've stayed a little longer but they were pretty much
27 winding down and I had been over there enough time and I wanted to get
28 home, of course, for personal...
29
30Elsie Hornbacher: [44:25] There were men still over there waiting to go home in 1947...
31
32Rosalie Crosbie: Well, no. They had re-enlisted and...
33
34Elsie Hornbacher: ...and still [inaudible 44:28].
35
36Rosalie Crosbie: ...and they were staying there...
37
38Elsie Hornbacher: I see.
39
40Rosalie Crosbie: ...because of that. No, they were – had sent all of those home that really
41 wanted to go home long before that.
42
43Elsie Hornbacher: I see.
44

1Rosalie Crosbie: No. It was the re-enlistments by this time.
2

3Elsie Hornbacher: [44:39] Now, when you went home, what did you do then?
4

5Rosalie Crosbie: Um, well, I came home on the Washington. Uh, that was the name of a
6 little tugboat. I mean, [chuckle] [it's 44:47] much smaller than, than the
7 Queen Elizabeth. [laughter] Took two weeks coming home.
8

9Elsie Hornbacher: [44:53] Two weeks?
10

11Rosalie Crosbie: On the boat coming home...
12

13Elsie Hornbacher: From Europe? Oh.
14

15Rosalie Crosbie: ...and we went over in five days on the Queen Elizabeth.
16

17Elsie Hornbacher: Uh-huh.
18

19Rosalie Crosbie: And, uh, yeah. Uh, it was a leisurely trip home. [laughter]
20

21Elsie Hornbacher: [45:04] Well, uh, did it rock and roll? The little ships, uh...
22

23Rosalie Crosbie: Yeah, right.
24

25Elsie Hornbacher: ...they make you seasick much, uh, easier than the larger ships.
26

27Rosalie Crosbie: Right. Um, so I, I visited in, in Washington, DC. I was in no hurry
28 exactly to, you know, get home. I knew there was a lot waiting for me to
29 do [by that time 45:24] and there was quite a, a – I had [sighing] a lot of
30 adjustment to make, I'll say. And, um, some of the girls had, had been
31 over there a year and wanted to go home. You know, there was a – and,
32 um, then when they got home, they found things weren't like they thought
33 they might be and they wanted to go back. So some of those re-enlisted
34 and got sent to the Pacific or something. But, I mean, I had decided to
35 stay over there 'til I got it outta my system. I mean, that's it. I did
36 everything that I thought I could do and, and, um, so when I was, went
37 home, I was ready and, uh, I...
38

39Elsie Hornbacher: [46:02] Home was Lansing?
40

41Rosalie Crosbie: And home was Lansing. Uh...
42

43Elsie Hornbacher: [46:05] Lansing, Michigan.
44

1Rosalie Crosbie: Yes. And, um, when I got here, my brother was, uh – he had been in the
2 Pacific, uh, but he had gotten home months ahead of me. Of course, a
3 whole year, I guess. Uh, but, uh, Mother was very ill and, and died. Uh,
4 he had – didn't – hadn't done a thing to the house. They hadn't put away
5 her clothes or, you know, or anything. So when I got home, I had all that.
6 And also, the house was in poor condition. We had – yeah, on St. Joe in
7 Lansing. And, um, they were remodeling it but, uh, on the phone when I
8 called my brother – I was in the States, of course, then and, and I said,
9 “Well, I suppose there's a lotta dishes waiting and everything in the sink?”
10 And he said, “Well, there's no sink.” And, uh, [chuckle] so that's how – it,
11 it really was a sad house. [chuckle] Much to do, which in a way, was very
12 good for me because, um, when I did get home and I had to go through
13 Mother's things. It's just as if she had left to go on...
14

15Elsie Hornbacher: On a trip.
16

17Rosalie Crosbie: ...and – on a trip or something and, yes. And, uh, he hadn't touched
18 anything. I had to go through everything and it took months. And, um,
19 and also he was working on the house and getting [it 47:20]. Um, I – the
20 next – I don't think I worked for 6 or 7 months and then I, uh, applied at
21 the, uh, Howard Silvers, which was a trucking, um, and, uh, and worked
22 there, uh, two years, I believe, before I, uh, got married and went to
23 Wichita, Kansas. [chuckle]
24

25Elsie Hornbacher: [47:44] Rosalie, did you have any problems readjusting yourself, uh, when
26 you came back to the States?
27

28Rosalie Crosbie: Yes, and I, uh, I think all of the girls that were overseas did. Uh, some of
29 them had, uh, far more maybe adjustment to make than I did. Uh, as I say,
30 I had so much to do and kept me busy and, um, some of them didn't have
31 all those maybe problems to meet when they got home and, uh, they just
32 had a very rough time. Uh, when I got home, the thing that, uh, bothered
33 me, nobody wanted to listen to me to hear any of my wonderful
34 experiences. [chuckle] And, um, you know, I wanted to talk. Uh, they
35 were, uh, the war had been over two years and, uh, long gone for most
36 people [they were 48:30] – when I come home, I was still in my uniform.
37 The uniforms we had were short around the knee and, uh, we were – had,
38 um, uh, their dresses were longer than, much longer. Uh, I couldn't get
39 outta my uniform fast enough because, uh, you know, I just wasn't, uh,
40 didn't get all the respect that I'd had when I first went over. [chuckle] Um,
41 and as I say, no one, uh, was really interested in anything that, uh,
42 happened over there and that was a long, you know.
43

44Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.

1
2Rosalie Crosbie: So I never got it outta my system, really. I'm, uh – being asked now to
3 repeat [chuckle] all this, you know, is p-, one of the first times anyone has
4 really, uh, been interested, that much interested in what, uh, went on in
5 those days.
6
7Elsie Hornbacher: [49:13] So we were sort of left out when we came home because we
8 didn't, uh, know about the, uh, little gossip next door, so we couldn't
9 contribute there. Nobody was interested in what we had to say, which was
10 such a part of our background that it took some time to build a repertoire
11 of new experiences.
12
13Rosalie Crosbie: That's very true and, uh, I don't think anyone that did serve overseas or, or
14 the soldiers too, of course, all went through that adjustment. But, um, uh,
15 that is, uh, is quite traumatic. And, uh, it's a shame that more people aren't
16 willing maybe to listen or at least pretend they're listening to [this 49:55]
17 because it's hard.
18
19Elsie Hornbacher: Thank you, Rosalie, so much for this interview. We really appreciate it.
20 By the way, before you, uh, uh – we put a stop to this tape. [50:04] Uh,
21 you are a charter member of the Lansing Unit of WOSL, aren't you?
22
23Rosalie Crosbie: Yes. [chuckle]
24
25Elsie Hornbacher: [50:09] Uh, do you happen to remember the year that we were
26 established?
27
28Rosalie Crosbie: Uh, when I first got home from overseas, I was called. They were, they
29 were organizing it then, so this was in 1947. Would've been, um,
30 probably, uh, probably that winter of '47 or, no, that would be '48 then,
31 wouldn't it?
32
33Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm.
34
35Rosalie Crosbie: I might've been called in the, in the fall of '47. Got home in September.
36 Uh, they had a small, little small organization, maybe 6 or 7 girls and, um,
37 so I was a member until I got married, uh, uh, which was a year about
38 later. Went to Wichita, Kansas, was gone for a couple years from
39 Lansing. When I came back, uh, by this time, the, uh, group had, uh, you
40 know...
41
42Elsie Hornbacher: Grown?
43
44Rosalie Crosbie: ...got – grown a good deal and, um, I joined again and, uh...

1
2Elsie Hornbacher: [51:00] Then, uh, when did you leave Lansing? What year?
3
4Rosalie Crosbie: I left, this the second time?
5
6Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm. Yes, uh-huh.
7
8Rosalie Crosbie: Yeah.
9
10Elsie Hornbacher: [51:10] When you left permanently.
11
12Rosalie Crosbie: Uh...
13
14Elsie Hornbacher: I wouldn't say you left permanently. You return once in a while but...
15
16Rosalie Crosbie: Uh, oh, when I went to Traverse.
17
18Elsie Hornbacher: ...we don't see you.
19
20Rosalie Crosbie: I left – I went up there in, uh, uh, '68.
21
22Elsie Hornbacher: 1968.
23
24Rosalie Crosbie: Spring of 1968, spring of '68.
25
26Elsie Hornbacher: [51:21] So you have been gone for 16 years.
27
28Rosalie Crosbie: Sixteen years.
29
30Elsie Hornbacher: Mm-hm. Right. Thank you, Rosalie.
31
32Rosalie Crosbie: You're welcome. Thank you for having me.
33
34
35/dd