

1 Interview of Josephine Boecker on her service in the American Red Cross in the Pacific
2 Theater during WWII
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6 Josephine Boecker: Spelled B-O-E-C-K-E-R. I served with the American Red Cross in the
7 South Pacific from 1943 to '46 in New Guinea, the Philippines and Japan.
8 I live in [inaudible 00:17] Hills at 2103 [inaudible 00:20] and the
9 telephone number is 586-9508 and the exchange is 714 [throat clearing].
10 In 1943, I received a letter from the National Headquarters of the
11 American Red Cross saying [your files came 00:42] and I had served on
12 the staff [security status 00:44] [doing the art 00:46] projects and also did
13 family welfare at the military. They asked if I were available for war
14 service since there were great [army need 00:56] experienced workers in
15 military welfare in hospitals and camps. They could not guarantee where,
16 where the jobs would be, but asked if I could come to the American
17 University in Washington, D.C., which they had taken over for housing
18 and training personnel in 3-month intervals. Although I had been engaged
19 [a few times 1:16] with war work as well as full-time teaching in Los
20 Angeles, this challenge seemed very important. I had been making
21 investigations of people applying for commissions in the armed forces and
22 strategic industries, issuing ration books to families for gasoline, sugar,
23 and so forth and [inaudible 1:35] during my 3 months' vacation. The latter
24 was done in the swing shift of a 24-hour factory [schedule to get me 1:44]
25 home about 2 a.m. An interview with the West Coast Headquarters in San
26 Francisco was the very first step required by the ARC followed by an
27 investigation, pre, presumably by the FBI.

28
29 [1:59] When clearance was established, I was able to get a leave of
30 absence from my job with the L.A. Board of Education for 1 year. They
31 [inaudible 2:07] permitted it to extend it to three. Joining a group of other
32 recruits in mid-September, we journeyed to Washington, D.C. by train and
33 began a grueling 3 months of training. Assignments and lectures were to
34 consume long hours but [inaudible 2:25] directed by people who had just
35 come back from various war fronts. We were specially instructed in
36 restrictions in our movements, conversations, and speculations [chuckle].
37 Since we would be dealing with large groups, we prac-, we practiced
38 planning and directing all sorts of activities on which we were graded.
39 Sometimes we went to nearby army [military base 2:50] and sometimes
40 groups were invited to join us for entertainment. The purpose of all this
41 was to get the men to participate, help direct, and thereby replace their
42 worries with fun. After evaluation, some recruits were dismissed. Some
43 changed their o, from overseas assignments to a stateside location. Some
44 shifted from camp to hospital work and so forth [throat clearing]. Since we

1 were on the East Coast, most of us assumed we would be sent to North
2 Africa or Europe, but alas, we were wrong. [Inaudible 3:20] we started
3 long staging at the [inaudible 3:23].
4

5 [3:23] Mrs. Roosevelt came to our graduation ceremonies, and having just
6 returned from the South Pacific, she shocked us temporarily by saying,
7 “Do not go. If you have any doubts about being able to cope regardless of
8 the circumstances, don’t go.” She shook hands with each of us and wished
9 us well, a real inspiration. [microphone noise] S-, we were outfitted with
10 one winter uniform, one summer uniform, each with folding over
11 [inaudible 3:59] caps, and 2 seersucker dresses with matching caps. One
12 heavy overcoat came with a red flannel button-in lining. All clothes were
13 in shades of gray. Shoes, purse, underwear, hose, and other needs were
14 purchased by us in a quantity to last 2 years in any climate. We also
15 needed to purchase a regulation foot locker or flat trunk of regulation size.
16 The quartermaster corps issued us a pup tent with pegs, a gas mask, mess
17 kit, canteen, pistol belt with first aid kit but no gun. Army blankets were
18 included, but of course no sheets. Fortunately, I had acquired a [inaudible
19 4:41] unbleached muslin sheet which served very well. I sent to California
20 for an empty coffee can in which to pack liquids and discourage rust of
21 [inaudible 4:50].
22

23 [4:51] For most trainees, the last 2 weeks of training was spent at Saint
24 Elizabeth Psychiatric Hospital, but another girl and I were sent to pa-,
25 Camp Patrick Henry Hospital in Virginia. P-A-T-R-I-C-K H-E-N-R-Y. It
26 was good experience with patients and realistic enough to have prisoners
27 of war there taken from enemy ships. We ate with the foreign doctors who
28 were prisoners in charge of their own men. The commandant’s w, wife
29 gra, very graciously, uh, invited the 2 Red Crossers to spend a weekend at
30 her home in Williamsburg, which was a real joy for us. While waiting for
31 transportation to an unknown destination, I was placed in a hotel with a
32 few others. Although it was bitter cold in Washington, I hiked about every
33 day, soaking up the scenery as if it had to be a symbol. On the way to the
34 Pentagon, [inaudible 5:50] many shots against strange diseases or walk
35 over to headquarters for mail, I stopped at the White House gates and
36 visited with the guards. It was fascinating to see all the colorful uniforms
37 of foreign leaders coming and going. It was very dramatic.
38

39 [6:06] Finally, a former instructor at the college assembled 50 women and
40 put us aboard a train headed west. It was of such an old vintage that the
41 green plush seats were almost black with coal smoke and fixtures quite
42 Victorian. We were given 2 meals a day along with the soldiers and a few
43 civilians on the train. At one time, I shared a seat with the owner of
44 Seabiscuit, the most famous horse of the day, and later with John-

1 Frederics, the hat designer. I pondered whether they were actually on
2 some kind of war work, as we never knew. On reaching Chicago, we were
3 taken to a hotel for a few hours while the railroad company brought up a
4 new train for us. It seems we had been directed to the wrong one in
5 Washington. We enjoyed the chance to lie down for a bit at the hotel as we
6 faced the probability of sitting up all the way across country. A chance to
7 clean up was welcome, so we removed considerable soot, and I recall
8 turning my blouse wrong side out in order to have a clean collar. Our new
9 train was cleaner but just as crowded as we proceeded to San Francisco.
10 The very most picturesque part of the trip was a beautiful snowstorm as
11 we crossed the Rockies in December.
12

13 [7:21] On arriving in San Francisco, the 50 girls were crowded into 3
14 suites with the beds 3 feet apart and our gear stored between us at the
15 ready if the call suddenly came to move out. It was the Christmas season,
16 and although we were not allowed to call our families, we were, of course
17 n – we were allowed to call our families, but we were not permitted to tell
18 them why we could not be home for the holidays. I remember faking the
19 story that I was waiting for assignment to another hospital to train. Very
20 much earlier, we had explained to our families that there might be delays
21 in mail while we were en route and that we would not have a regular
22 address but an APO, uh, army post office [inaudible 8:11] overseas
23 [inaudible 8:13]. Although we were in uniform, we were supposed to
24 attract as little attention as possible at one of the largest hotels in San
25 Francisco. Since we had no idea where we were going, it was not hard to
26 keep that a secret if asked the question. We were encouraged to move
27 about in small groups and communicate by phone every 4 hours if outside
28 the building.
29

30 [8:34] We waited for orders through the holidays not knowing we had
31 been scheduled to sail on Christmas Eve of 1943. Only when we boarded
32 on January 3 did we see the deck stacked with Red Cross cases with
33 Christmas boxes [inaudible 8:50] ship had been delayed. About 4 p.m., we
34 were ordered to report to the lobby of the hotel for transportation in full
35 gear including helmets, pistol belts, [some with 9:01] canteens and mess
36 kits, our gas masks and totes and several layers of clothing. Fortunately,
37 the truck took our bedrolls and foot lockers to the ship earlier, but our
38 suitcases, Musette Bags, shoulder-strapped bag of personal things, and
39 rain gear were a heap of weight. The last straw was receiving one more
40 unexpected request. After army busses had delivered us at the docks in
41 Pittsburg, California, not only the women but 24, 2,500 men were, uh, the
42 Red Cross then handed a case of phonograph records to carry. We stood in
43 line for hours as they checked our credentials, and, uh, those of, of the Air
44 Force [inaudible 9:44].

1
2 [9:45] Our ship was a Holland American craft under contract to the army.
3 It had not been back to Holland in 4 years as the Nazis were occupying
4 their country. It was called the Noordam and had carried 400 cruise
5 passengers but was converted now to carry over 2,500 of us. Women's
6 bunks [inaudible 10:07] six to a cabin [inaudible 10:09] was originally
7 used. Only salt water was available for bathing or laundry, and port holes
8 must be kept closed at night for a blackout. Compared with the men, we
9 were lucky, as they had to sleep in bunks six deep in the hold with so little
10 air they spent almost the whole time on deck. As a result, it was hard to
11 keep on the, walk on the deck without stepping on someone; however,
12 cooperation was good. Two meals a day were all the crew could provide,
13 as the lines were so long. Sometimes we got so hungry we put a roll or a
14 fruit in our pocket for later or traded it to somebody who was hungrier.
15 Little did we know that before we reached the destination, our electricity
16 would break down, which had kept the food from spoiling and which
17 converted sea water to potable water. We got down to 1 canteen a day per
18 person and the equator got closer and closer.
19

20 [11:13] The transport chaplain had brought a supply of magazines,
21 paperback books, games, and all, of all kinds from the States, and from the
22 first day at sea, he assigned the Red Cross workers to recruit talent aboard
23 and to distribute all kinds of supplies such as stationery cards, toilet
24 articles, and even some hardback books. Talent shows sprouted at once.
25 The transport had a pump organ [inaudible 11:39] and I believe some
26 instruments. Also, GIs had actually brought their own guitars and horns
27 and so forth. They had great talent. Comedy, opera, ballads, and so forth
28 were fitted into schedules to keep various activities going in the daytime,
29 but unfortunately no lights were ever allowed at night. For safety reasons,
30 not even matches could be lighted or any trash knocked overboard.
31 Garbage had to be handled in [inaudible 12:05]. All kinds of tournaments,
32 contests, deck horse racing with wooden dice and guessing games were
33 invented as well as current events by radio, boxing matches, and even
34 floor shows with fancy costumes the men had made. Church services in
35 various denominations were held on deck with large participation. The
36 saddest thing that happened was the death of a boy thought to have been
37 seasick until he died of pneumonia. The burial at sea was a most
38 impressive ceremony of a military honors type and brought home to all of
39 us how volatile life was even though we were trained to treat war service
40 lightly possibly to relieve tension.
41

42 [12:48] During the last 2 weeks of our month's trip of zigging and zagging
43 across the Pacific, heading for Australia in the case of the women, we
44 were required to dress and report to our boat stations in life jackets at 4

1 a.m. Because the silhouette of the ship on the horizon is sharpest at that
2 time to enemy submarines, we stayed in our lifeboats until sunrise or
3 usually an hour. This was strictly enforced by having a search of all cabins
4 to make sure no person was missed. Although secret orders handed to us at
5 sea by our Red Cross director read, "Proceed to Australia," the ship was
6 not able to get there. Because of the problems she was having with food
7 and water due to electrical failures, our captain headed for Base A at
8 Milne Bay, New Guinea. We could see it, spelled, a, this is spelled M-I-L-
9 N-E Bay, New Guinea. We could see and hear bombing before that area
10 and were ordered to go below instead of to our lifeboats since it was at
11 night and we needed a blackout. Finally it subsided, but sleeping was not
12 easy. When our ship approached Milne Bay closely, the shore lights and
13 traffic moving at night surprised us, but we were glad they felt secure
14 enough to be working at night. We anchored in the deep bay as the
15 beaches [inaudible 14:15] impossible to build docks there.

16
17 [14:17] We were shocked to find almost 200 other ships anchored there
18 ahead of us when daylight came. By having to unload all supplies and
19 people by landing barges, it was a slow process. We were told about
20 100,000 troops were there representing many types of units. There were
21 some tent hospitals but no town whatever. Australians had been in charge
22 of some coconut plantations, and they took [inaudible 14:44] into labor
23 camps. They also transported all the women, that is the Papuan women, to
24 camps beyond the mountains for their safety. The natives were extra,
25 excellent help to us at ti, times. Our, captain of the ship found it
26 imperative that his passengers disembark as soon as possible and
27 discovered that by going north to a port cal-, port called L-A-E, Lae, it
28 might be possible. When arriving at Lae, we found dock facilities and
29 were able to deliver our Air Force boys, who were greatly needed. We
30 received a fine welcome there, and the 50 women were invited to tour the
31 base, but this meant standing in trucks for several hours traveling over
32 rough, dusty roads.

33
34 [15:30] As we toured the area, I shall never forget the thrill of hearing
35 Beethoven's Fifth Symphony coming from a palm-thatched Red Cross
36 recreation hut in the dense jungle. A GI was playing his heart out on a
37 little Aussie p, piano that had somehow survived in that damp climate. It
38 was at this oasis that we were introduced to battery acid, their name for
39 powdered Red Cross lemonade. It tasted wonderful to us in our hot dirty
40 state. We also sampled the Aussie biscuits, simple cookies pa, packed in
41 huge tin boxes. After our tour of the tent cities composing the base, we
42 were invited by our host to stay. However, the army had other ideas, so
43 back we sailed to Milne Bay, waiting for further orders. Finally by
44 midnight in a pouring rainstorm, a loudspeaker came on with "Now Hear

1 This. All Red Cross personnel will assemble your gear and proceed ashore
2 on landing barges.” We were so loaded with layers of clothing, hot and
3 wet, that the only happy thought I could muster was they’re doing this for
4 your own good, since the rain will camouflage your arrival. When we hit
5 the beach and staggered ashore with all our gear, we found it included
6 climbing up an incline after which we started to fall in the foxholes.
7

8 [16:52] Tents had been set up for us with four canvas folding cots to a tent
9 and 1 nail for each of us to hang out clothes on the center pole. There were
10 no floors and when we awoke in the morning, we were amazed at the size
11 of the insects and wondered when we should stop referring to them as
12 animals such as the land crabs. On our second day, men arrived to nail a
13 tall stick with a T across the top to the foot and head of our cots. Over this,
14 a boxy brown mosquito net fit perfectly with even enough to tuck under
15 us. We ser-, soon learned that we were in the favorite area of the
16 Anopheles mosquito and that frequently required spraying with DDT
17 [throat clearing] against malaria. Also, we were required to sign a paper
18 each day before entering the mess hall that we had taken an Atabrine
19 tablet to suppress malaria. It turned us yellow and, but that was a better
20 alternative than getting malaria, especially the cerebral type. Near our
21 compound, they had built an 8-hole latrine, and our flashlights, flashlights
22 were needed to use it. Our compound was enclosed by a light wire fence
23 and tar paper for privacy, but the ocean side remained open. However, it
24 was all coral and we couldn’t use the be, the beach there.
25

26 [18:14] One guard occupied the small guard house at the road entrance to
27 the main base. Whenever we left the premises, we had to sign out with an
28 armed guard espec-, usually the driver, and give destination. I have
29 digressed from the very nice reception we received after we arrived in our
30 new home on that rainy night at midnight. After collapsing on our cots
31 briefly, the Port Authority housed next to us sent an invitation to join them
32 for food. The mess boys had stayed up to bake us chocolate cake and with
33 hot coffee, it caused a revival. Fortunately, we were allowed to share their
34 mess hall until reassignments came various times. The usual question of
35 “Where are you from?” made us feel welcome as always, but for me, it
36 had a very special [break 19:05]. As each one took a turn identifying her
37 home territory, mutual contacts were shared.
38

39 [19:11] When my turn came and I said I was from near San Pedro,
40 California, a big cheer went up as their local hero known as the Big Swede
41 was from there [laughter]. I could not imagine who they meant until they
42 described how he had done the impossible by moving cargo in and out of
43 that base no matter what the size of the equipment, working day and night
44 until he had had to be sent on leave. They were so proud of him and

saddened by his leaving that they said they would've gone anywhere with him to get the job done that lie ahead. Finally, one of them had a clue to his name. It was Colonel Harold [Nervick 19:51], my classmate through high school, who had worked on the docks since a, a, boyhood. He had been student body – we had been student body officers together, trying to accomplish all we could, and then at graduation, we both received [inaudible 20:06] L.A. city and took the [inaudible 20:21] oath to leave our city better than we found it [chuckle]. However, this was stretching the city limits a few thousand miles beyond its foundry. He had become an outstanding athlete, gone to college, developed qualities of leadership, and served his country superbly when it needed him. Somehow it seemed to me that San Pedro High School deserved much of the credit for instilling service in its students as one of our main goals. That was during our formative years.

[20:43] No matter how impossible the conditions were in the [New Guinea 20:46] jungle, we did make a difference. By morning, we were full of curiosity about our new surroundings. Having located a place to sleep and a place to eat, the next [inaudible 20:57] of this quest was for water. That, we learned, was contained in canvas Lister bag with a spicket at the bottom hanging near the gate to share with the guard. It was heavily chlorinated and delivered by truck. Plainly it did not hold enough for 50 girls [chuckle] to do their ablutions or laundry, so most of us gingerly washed our hands and splashed our faces with the same water. An older lady who had been installed as supervisor of our compound had requested a drum of water be delivered and put on a scaffold for some kind of shower facilities. That's when our helmets came in handy. Both for washing and for laundry, they were a wonderful help. By filling the helmets ahead of time, we could be sure of a minor rinse and also by combining the laundry of our underwear with a shower, we could stretch the water. Eventually, we even acquired a bucket. The ironic part of all this was that the Aussies told us we were living in an area that often had 280 inches of rain a year, a destructive force that had never been harnessed.

[22:04] Almost from day 1 in New Guinea, our city clothes and shoes were useless. The red clay mud sucked the shoes into a hopeless mire. Nylon hose were no protection against the jungle or the mosquitos, so we were sent to the, uh, quartermaster [inaudible 22:21] and outfitted with men's khakis and high top [foreign 22:25] shoes. They were so heavily soled we could hardly lift our feet. But they could survive the sticky mud. Someone had ordered boots for that climate, but when they arrived they were fleece-lined arctic boots, hardly suitable for 120-degree heat. At times we wore'm anyway when the water got too high. For malaria patrol,

1 uh, both men and women had to wear long sleeves and long pants at all
2 times no matter what the job entailed. One order even put the women on
3 our base into leggings until they screamed discrimination. They were ugly
4 canvas things that laced from our ankles to our knees. Fortunately, I was
5 given some Aussie leggings only 3-feet wide, white canvas and with only
6 2 buckles, and that did the job nicely and looked rather sharp. They were
7 neat when we went formal by putting on a white shirt.

8
9 [23:18] As soon as possible, we reported to the Red Cross director at the
10 base, who was the most kindly fatherly type of man names Charles [Brice
11 23:25]. He relayed assignments to all the girls by way of Australia to
12 report to hospitals and camps all over the Pacific Area, but I was told to
13 stand by to join a complete hospital staff en route from Los Angeles. It
14 was namely from the White Memorial Hospital and had a detachment of
15 military personnel which was going to construct the 47th General Hospital
16 of 1,000 beds, and that would take some time and replace the tent
17 hospitals. It was to use prefab sides and roofs and had screening. To avoid
18 the malarial conditions along the swampy shores, it would be built up on
19 the mountainside. That seemed a good idea until ambulances and other
20 vehicles found the red, slippery mud almost beyond navigation on the
21 steep slopes. [Inaudible 24:15] were needed to get between the wards and
22 transport food up the hill from the mess hall. However, the view was nice
23 on a clear day. I asked to be put to work at once and visited the operating
24 hospitals to observe the conditions. They stay, seemed to be fully staffed,
25 but I noticed that the lack of recreational facilities of any kind on the base
26 housing 1,000 men in tents was greatly lacking.

27
28 [24:42] A hard-working Red Cross man named Sam was trying to convert
29 a deserted mess hall into a club near the center of the base and was really
30 glad to get some help. It had a floor with mostly open sides and a palm-
31 thatched roof. We put in some counters for serving food and dispensing
32 equipment for sports and games with bright paint and some furniture
33 mainly from the canvas director's chairs we were able to get and paint the
34 wooden parts, it became cheerful. Old packing boxes served as a, tables
35 and, and, uh, cupboards and stages after they were broken apart and
36 rebuilt. By enlisting the help of the men who came to investigate our
37 progress, the club opened before long with a day and night schedule of
38 activities from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. An adjoining sports field had been
39 cleared and a nearby outdoor theater created by rolling in tiers of logs for
40 seats at the movies. These were usually rained out, however. Immediately,
41 the club became so overcrowded, we realized every outfit on the base was
42 in need of similar facilities, so we sent for Captain [Marley 25:52], the
43 officer in charge of navy, of the native Papuan labor and enlisted his help.
44 Having no materials or supplies to speak of, it was only logical that we use

1 the great skill of the natives in making use of palm trees to create large
2 buildings as they had for generations.

3
4 [26:12] However, instead of starting from the ground up as the saying
5 goes, we first had to find the ground under the dense jungle, clear it, and
6 level it. Bulldozers were hard to come by as they were needed for endless
7 work on roads and air strips. So it often took some maneuvering to get
8 them. One camp director of recreational activities jokingly wrote home
9 that she had heard of girls getting diamonds for their time, but all she
10 wanted was a bulldozer. When the site was ready, truckloads of natives
11 were brought in and using pidgin English through the Aussie leader and
12 stick drawings in the dirt, we were able to convey what we needed. Tall
13 palm trunks were used for the uprights and bracing of the roof, all tied
14 together with tough palm-leaf thongs. When given hammers and nails,
15 they tossed them aside, as their way of doing things was better. After the
16 frame was made strong, [inaudible 27:11] thatched roofs were made of
17 layers of palm leaves lashed together. Then any siding or partitions desired
18 were deftly woven with strips of palm leaves and attached to frames made
19 of [inaudible 27:23]. A club could be divided into parts in many ways such
20 as [craft shop 27:29], writing or reading rooms, discussion groups of
21 whatever the men suggested be included in the program.

22
23 [27:36] While climbing over any of the structures and securing the parts,
24 the natives could be heard singing hymns in four-part harmony taught to
25 them by missionaries. Their exotic appearance with body decorations all
26 over them and strange ornaments in their ears and noses as well as in their
27 huge mass of hair startled us at first, but they were willing workers unused
28 to money but appreciating small gifts since there were no stores there. We
29 could never have created large centers for the recreation of men waiting to
30 go into battle and trying to keep up each, each other's morale without the
31 great help of the natives in New Guinea.

32
33 [28:16] Segregation of the races was still practiced in the army during
34 World War II, and 5,000 colored troops were housed next to our women's
35 compound. So one of the first clubs built was for them. Its opening was
36 probably the biggest band concert ever held. For several hours, droves of
37 men came from miles to help them celebrate terrific talent. The mess
38 sergeants really did help us out that day by serving huge quantities of
39 refreshments and a bang-up time was had. Next, a big anti-aircraft outfit
40 had a most attractive and popular club built, and as we learned by doing
41 [throat clearing], we came to exchange talent among different groups and
42 work more closely with special services. Because of our lack of facilities
43 for housing USO talent, especially the women, we got some of the short

1 stopovers and daytime performances at our outdoor lounge [throat
2 clearing] areas, which were very much appreciated.
3

4 [29:17] Finally, the 47th General Hospital was completed up on the hill,
5 and patients came by ship, plane, and from our former tent hospitals. Our
6 Red Cross head of staff had a – she was a social worker, and she had a
7 secretary plus three of us to help her with the recreation work. We had no
8 rank but all wore the patch on our sleeve saying military welfare worker
9 [throat clearing]. Nineteen nurses and ARC girls shared one long room for
10 sleeping. It was like a ward with cement floor and screened siding. Aside
11 from our canvas cot, we were on our own to scrounge whatever packing
12 boxes, mail crates and so forth to serve us as furniture. Somewhere, I
13 found some burlap and used it around a packing box to make a dressing
14 table. Enough burlap was left to pad the top of a [nail keg 30:05] for a seat
15 and give it a skirt. Then a mirror mysteriously arrived off a Dutch ship
16 somewhere [chuckle] and voila, I had a dresser.
17

18 [30:15] The constant rains still kept our clothes damp and moldy, so a
19 carpenter rigged us a small clothes cupboard with a light in it to dry them
20 out. Yes, we had some kind of generator up on the mountain to provide
21 some electricity, but when I put my summer uniform in the lighted closet,
22 the rats found it and ate a big hole in it. They also ate the leather band off
23 my wrist watch and carried it up on top of a cupboard where I fortunately
24 found it and had a patient make me an aluminum band from the scrap of
25 an airplane. We had heard of pack rats, rats before.
26

27 [30:49] Our hospital wards usually had 20 beds in a long room, then a
28 nurse's station, and another 20 beds so that at times one nurse could work
29 both wards, especially at night. They were a hard working group of girls,
30 and the doctors' specialists in many fields. Since officers could not
31 fraternize with the rest of them for disciplinary reasons, they did not have
32 [nursing 31:13] American Red Cross recreation centers. Thus, they created
33 their own various types of clubs using their own mess halls [inaudible
34 31:22] recreational purposes such as an occasional dance. However, the
35 doctors at our hospital built their own club in their spare time, and one of
36 the first things brought in was a wonderful collection of classical records.
37 What a great morale booster it was to be lifted out of the dreary and often
38 frightening existence into another world by fine music. Of course, they
39 had live music too, for an occasional dance, having talented musicians to
40 provide a [winning 31:50] atmosphere. The surroundings were humble,
41 but the spirit was there.
42

43 [31:56] Once the doctors offered the hospital detachment of enlisted men
44 the use of the club if they could round up enough Red Cross girls in the

1 base to stage a dance. With so many girls coming and go on assignments,
2 it was hard to count on any particular number, but we wound up with 17.
3 Of course they were outnumbered 20 to one, but they were good sports
4 and solved the problem by cutting in on each other a lot and the music was
5 so contagious that the boys continued to jitterbug with each other as well.
6 It was perpetual motion for a while, but the food was good and everybody
7 had a good time. Although our large Red Cross building was the first to be
8 constructed in our complex, it was the last to be occupied by us because it
9 was needed to store building equipment and supplies for the hospital
10 against the perpetual rain. For months, our staff had to carry daily supplies
11 to the 1000 patients in the wards up the mountain in wooden boxes.

12
13 [32:52] They needed writing materials, [book scraps, 32:55], supplies,
14 tools, cards, games, and [inaudible 32:57] materials when they could get
15 them. Ambulato-, ambulatory patients were a wonderful help to the
16 wounded and ill. They kept up their morale by keeping them busy with
17 conversation, asking them advice about things, and showing them how to
18 make all kinds of jewelry from Aussie coins, and friends from home sent
19 us tools when they heard about the work being done with silver,
20 plexiglass, aluminum, and brass. The jewelry was often made by filing
21 Aussie coins [thin 33:24] and etching them with Papua designs such as the
22 scene of the magnificent ship West Point, which had just sailed into harbor
23 with 10,000 men aboard. Palm trees and beaches were popular scenes too
24 and delicate plates were made by hand to create bracelets from the coins.
25 The plexiglass and aluminum came from wrecked planes. Brass shell
26 casings were made into everything from lamp bases to salt and pepper
27 shakers. Coconut shells, too, were also cut into ornament. When drawing
28 supplies were available, the men had wonderful talent. Art was a big thing
29 when holidays came along. The wards even had contests to see who could
30 get the prize for the best decorated ward, which took ingenuity with
31 supplies so limited or nonexistent.

32
33 [34:08] Once we got the invitation to go some distance to judge an art
34 show put on by special services. They had supplied all the materials for
35 unlimited subject matter. It was for a large encampment, and the show was
36 so popular that 5,000 attended on the 1st day and broke down the floor of
37 the mess hall where it was held. It was the hardest thing I've had to judge
38 as the variety and techniques were wonderful. Many subjects were
39 religious, many abstract, but very few were of stereotype girlie, girlie, uh,
40 uh, type. A few wonderful cartoons were among them, startling us by their
41 perceptions of death. In essence, each man seemed to be expressing what
42 was most meaningful to him as he may have been going to his last battle.
43 It occurred to me that art is a great therapy. I often wondered how many of
44 the creations done by the veterans ever reached home. Besides the

1 damaging damp climate in the South Pacific, certain bugs ate the colors
2 they liked right off the pictures. Other bu-, bugs ate the brushes, while
3 most paper warped badly.

4
5 [35:16] One day while sitting in a Jeep with an armload of supplies picked
6 up at the warehouse for our patients, I [throat clearing] was waiting for the
7 driver. Suddenly a GI came up and asked where he could buy such things.
8 I explained that these had been ordered from the states as not only
9 available [any closer 35:32]. He described the paintings he had been
10 working only because of the hava, hazards of the jungle. He seemed
11 anxious to get his collection home, and when I asked where he intended to
12 share them, he said, "In my own gallery, the Crocker in San Francisco. I
13 do hope they survived, but if not, I dare say the impressions of the
14 [inaudible 35:52] people and the animals will always remain [inaudible
15 35:56] and that they would use them often.

16
17 [35:57] When our recreation center was finally cleared out, we were able
18 to set up all kinds of activities for the hundreds ambulatory, ambulatory
19 patients from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. We had a nice stage, and damaged
20 parachutes served as, as, uh, stage curtains. Music and comedy was
21 available among the men for many shows, and we worked with special
22 services as well as traded talent with other outfits. All kinds of things were
23 available at the tables, places to write and read in quiet and crafts for those
24 who wanted them. Lemonade, coffee, and cookies were available twice a
25 day, and the large size of the place was a challenge, oh, was a change,
26 pardon me, from ward life. We advertised tournaments and contests ahead,
27 getting the patients to sign up for them. Requests for discussion groups
28 were popular but when some soldiers asked to learn English, we were
29 shocked. Then we heard that some had almost no schooling whatever and
30 could not read or write, write their own letters while others spoke Spanish,
31 being from Puerto Rico. The best ideas came from the men, also the men
32 did most of the work unless they were physically unable. That was our
33 main purpose, to involve the servicemen in their spare time with so many
34 things that they would not have time to brood or create unnecessary
35 anxiety.

36
37 [37:16] Out of 1,000 patients, you often had 200 in the psychiatric ward.
38 At first, we treated them much the same as the others, but as time went on,
39 we were restricted from their area. Even though most of them had not been
40 in combat, they could not cope with their situation for many reasons and
41 had to be restrained or confined. Our chief psychiatrist, a Dr. [Evan 37:39]
42 had had his own hospital in the states and held a seminar with us every
43 Saturday. At that time, he enlightened us with the help of some of the

1 patients as to the causes and therapies used in their situation. It was most
2 valuable. [throat clearing]

3
4 [37:55] One day, I received an unexpected phone call from a captain
5 friend saying he wanted me to take 29 chickens off his hands, as his, uh,
6 his outfit was leaving for action in the Philippines. Since all of our food
7 with the army had been canned, powdered, or dehydrated, I had
8 appreciated on occasion a real egg or a piece of fried chicken from the
9 captain. Apparently, he had acquired the brood from some Aussies, but he
10 kept it a dark secret. Only at Christmas and Thanksgiving had the army
11 surprised us with flying in frozen turkeys, a real treat and a big surprise.
12 But how to keep 29 chickens a secret on the strict hospital base was not
13 easy. So I had to indulge in intrigue to save their lives. I remember a very
14 able sergeant I had known to be ingenious and told him that if he could be
15 – told him that he could be the proud owner of the brood if he made a
16 certain phone call and found a very isolated place to keep them. If at some
17 time he felt inclined to share an egg or a piece of chicken with me, okay,
18 otherwise, I had no knowledge of'm whatever. [Inaudible 39:11] to take
19 care of the whole problem, and I always had the feeling that somewhere a
20 commanding officer might also be shari-, sharing in the secret along with
21 a few GIs and myself. I always wondered how they kept those chickens
22 quiet [chuckle].

23
24 [39:26] After more than a year in service, I hitchhiked a ride to Australia
25 on a hospital plane for 2 weeks leave [throat clearing]. I was at the top of
26 the list for eligibility and was given papers to go out to the air strip and
27 wait for a plane. However, there were times when the mail plane couldn't
28 get in for 2 weeks because of the weather. So after sitting on my duffel
29 bag for most of the day, I was surprised by the arrival of a hospital plane
30 touching down without patients. The crew was going on leave to Australia
31 and insisted I go with them. We had a beautiful 4-hour flight and they al-,
32 also radioed ahead to confirm my reservation in the Red Cross leave
33 residence. The people there in Australia were wonderful to us. They
34 couldn't do enough. Strangers on the street invited me to their homes
35 because of my uniform but also because they could tell where I was from.
36 How could they tell? Because the Atabrine tablets to suppress malaria
37 turned us yellow, and they were so grateful for our help to their men in the
38 jungle. Also, they appreciated it, our, our presence that is, because their
39 homeland had been bombed. They showed me all around the city and later
40 the same thing happened in Brisbane, which was quite tropical.

41
42 [40:49] A novelty in their transportation system was that for a huge copper
43 penny, you could ride a tram all over the [city 40:56] city. Private
44 automobiles sometimes burned charcoal, and it looked like a, a washing

1 machine kind of tank on the back of their car. Then another surprise was
2 that on Wednesdays, everything closed down. Absolutely everything
3 stopped for the horse racing. What we really enjoyed the most was their
4 wonderful fresh lamb, vegetables, fresh milk as well as desserts. We also
5 enjoyed the real plumbing. That was nice, too. It was such a novelty to be
6 in a home again that I caught myself ready to swing a leg over the chair to
7 seat, be seated at a table. For so long we had eaten from our mess kits and
8 divided trays at long wooden tables with longboard seats nailed to them,
9 that the only way to sit was to swing over the board. I was consoled by an
10 Aussie who said that after a long stay in the jungle, he found on the
11 journey home he sat at his own table swinging his hands at imaginary
12 insects [chuckle] to keep them away from his food. It also felt strange to
13 handle delicate china and glassware after a long period of
14 drinking from canteens or quart-sized irregular coffee cups that fit over
15 our mess kits. It was also a luxury to have a comfortable bed with clean
16 sheets and instantly ready water by just turning on the tap.

17
18 [42:18] Laundry had always been a problem at [base 42:20] and we had
19 only the most primitive facilities, namely a long wooden board with a long
20 scrub brush and, uh, [12-inch 42:31] block of brown soap to scrub with.
21 We tried to rinse them in the bucket and find some place to hang them to
22 dry, which usually took two or three days. One day, word spread that a
23 washing machine had arrived, and we could hardly wait to see it. It turned
24 out to be a wooden tub with a hand [plunger 42:49] [laughter] with which
25 we could beat the clothes. The main problem was that there was seldom
26 enough water available to fill it, so it was of little benefit. Leaving any
27 container whatever in the open to get rainwater ran the risk of increasing
28 mosquito larva, and the endless tin cans also had to be smashed flat before
29 they were buried to make sure that a malaria hazard was not, uh, too great
30 with standing water. Because our clothes often smelled moldy, I was
31 surely grateful to have had the foresight to [inaudible 43:25] perfume in
32 the States which was, uh, my secret weapon against the elements
33 [chuckle].
34

35 [43:31] In retrospect, it seems a miracle that so many people could be fed
36 so well under such primitive conditions during the years I was overseas.
37 [throat clearing] Giant cans of [inaudible 43:42] from Australia as well as
38 [staples 43:44]. Powdered eggs were not bad if they could be aerated by
39 beating them up. Juices were all powdered too, and the only one that
40 seemed to defy staying in solution was tomato juice. It just sank and
41 stayed there in [inaudible 43:58] of mud. Dehydrated food was a
42 wonderful invention at that time. Because of the flour – uh, because of the
43 climate, flour was often already adversely affected before it reached us.
44 Sometimes it was fun to hold bread up to the light and see all the little

1 critters' skeletons in there [inaudible 44:20] since it had been baked and
2 they were transparent, we thought they were harmless. Canned butter had
3 preservatives in it to extend but a sign in the mess hall said, "Don't put
4 butter on the tray but on your bread, as we can't get it, we can't wash it
5 off." [chuckle]
6

7 [44:33] The kitchen girls had an excellent job providing for, uh, 1,500 of
8 us at our hospital. They did wonderfully and, and, uh, nobody ever seemed
9 to lose weight. Of course, when an invitation came to go aboard a ship for
10 a meal, we welcomed the change usually to fresh food as they had the
11 refrigeration for it. They were very generous in the navy about sharing
12 things with those of us in the jungle. One seaman came bearing a 2-gallon
13 can of ripe olives, which surprised our people at the next meal. Another
14 brought a gallon of Coke syrup when they found out we had no PXs
15 whatever or soft drinks. So we stretched that a long time. One very
16 welcome gift was a pair of tennis shoes I really appreciated. Some sailor
17 had noticed the condition of my shoes falling off my feet and just
18 appeared with his offering. The climate rusted the nails out of our heels
19 and soles, so [inaudible 45:29] added to the mold was very bad.
20

21 [45:32] Whenever we used our mess kits, it was necessary for us to go
22 through a ritual of sterilization. We lined up, often in the rain, and
23 deposited our refuse in the first huge can for later burial. Then we used a
24 sort of malt and soapy [inaudible 45:47] to clean the pieces in a second
25 can. The third step was to rinse it all in a sterile solution of some kind in a
26 third can. I used to add one more thing whenever possible like holding the
27 whole thing in the rain to let nature [chuckle] cleanse it. We seldom were
28 given [pay 46:02] rations except when in transit. My choice was a [mulch
29 46:07] called ham and eggs, which was really tasty. [It was an easy to
30 open 46:12] can and wait for syrup and [plastic 46:14].
31

32 [46:13] Sometimes the doctors made strange requests of the Red Cross
33 and we were normally able to cooperate. Hepatitis among the troops
34 reached a large number at one period, and the patients were isolated even
35 at the outdoor movies. Since an impaired liver cannot convert fluid to
36 sugar as if it were a chemical plant, a substitute must be used. The medics
37 asked us to get cases of plain sugar candy with our Christmas candy types
38 since no chocolate or fat could be tolerated by the body. We were able to
39 rush in many cases of hard candy to sustain the men until they could be
40 flown home. Many years later, I profited by this knowledge when I got
41 hepatitis in Guatemala. By using bread, starchy food, and sugar, I was able
42 to make it home. At that time, there were no other remedies. Another
43 unusual request made to us was for a patient who had been hiccupping for
44 a week and could not stop. His doctor asked me to get carbonated drinks

1 from the navy, so an S.O.S. brought some fast, and his problem was
2 solved.

3
4 [47:23] Malaria [throat clearing] in its different forms was a great worry
5 throughout the South Pacific as was encephalitis, also mosquito-borne,
6 and considerable care was taken to control these against epidemics. Jungle
7 rot, a skin disease in both dry and wet forms was a baffling problem on
8 which teams of doctors collaborated without reaching many conclusions.
9 Most of us got some form of the disease. Probably from the constant
10 dampness or airborne mold. Many of the men lost all of their hair
11 permanently including eyebrows and eyelashes. Nervous tension was one
12 explanation, but I always they had many causes [throat clearing]. Uh,
13 sometimes the entire body was af-, affected by it and, uh, then again it
14 was, uh, rather limited. We already had penicillin and sulfa drugs by then
15 to ward off infection, but aside from getting the patients home out of that
16 climate, little else seemed to work well.

17
18 [48:29] Many missionaries had come and gone over the decades in New
19 Guinea, but Cecil and Ro – Russell Abel, who lived on Kwato Island, had
20 been born there 50 years earlier because their father, Charles Abel had
21 founded a mission there and also on the mainland. The family had
22 widespread religious and educational influence over a large area from the
23 time that cannibalism was practiced. Their knowledge must have been a
24 great help to the allies during the war. The women and children in the
25 family had fled to Australia, but the two brothers continued to head the
26 school and community of Kwato, spelled with a K [throat clearing]. When
27 the Japanese had miraculously crossed the Owen Stanley range of
28 mountains a dense, and, uh, dense jungle from northern New Guinea bases
29 and arrived at Milne Bay, they were stopped by engineers building the air
30 strip. Experts all said nobody could cross that range, so they were not
31 expected by combat troops. It was coastal assaults that were expected.
32 Fortunately, the engineers stopped the sudden push of the Japanese there
33 permanently. Today when people argue about whether women should be
34 in combat, I often think that engineers who were surprised by the enemy,
35 enemy were not combat unit, but they succeeded.

36
37 [49:52] The Abel brothers and their educated mission boys were a great
38 surprise to Americans when they heard British English being spoken.
39 They had a good education and the vocational training of all kinds was
40 very fine as well as religious training to prepare the, uh, students for
41 evangelizing later [throat clearing]. Cecil Abel invited 2 Red Cross girls
42 and 2 nurses to spend a week at a time in Kwato for R and R. Having
43 worked very hard to establish a number of recreation centers, I was one of
44 the lucky ones, and what a delightful surprise it was. We took a week's

1 supply of army rations in cans and traded them for a week's supply of
2 fresh fish, vegetables, fruits, and flowers. A small boat took us down to
3 the island, which was near Samurai, another island that had been a
4 commercial center but was now a prison. As we pulled into Kwato's dock,
5 boys in red cotton wrap-around sarongs came to greet us and take our
6 gear. When I tried pidgin English on one to inquire if he had been born on
7 Kwato, he answered in Oxford English, saying, "Well, actually, I come
8 from the mainland some distance from here, but now I consider this my
9 home." Lovely girls came to greet us too, wearing only short skirts of all,
10 uh, varieties of flower prints. They took us up a winding path to the crest
11 in the island where a charming rambling frame house was built around an
12 open courtyard for group activities.

13
14 [51:27] Nearby was a miniature gray stone church in gothic style like a bit
15 of England. We were to learn that wonderful music was created in that
16 church with a piano and singing in such lovely harmony, harmony it was a
17 revelation. Cecil Abel maintained an informal manner in leading the
18 singing, the sermon, and the current war news all from his piano bench
19 [chuckle]. This was such a con-, contrast to war zones, it seemed like a
20 touch of paradise. Our rooms were cheerful and comfortable in English
21 décor with lots of fresh breeze. The students seemed to be at home in all
22 the rooms, lying on the floor of the living room during their lessons and
23 even doing algebra. Our biggest surprise came with dinner. English silver
24 and china graced the table, and the girls, although in topless clothes, had
25 been taught to serve formally. Garlands of flowers were threaded from the
26 chandelier to the table corners and patterns of bl-, blossoms were made on
27 the tablecloth. Each girl had flowers in her hair and put some in ours too.
28 The food was delicious, supervised by an older lady who was the only
29 lady to wear a dress. Every meal was served on a different part of the
30 veranda except dinner, and each was a surprise and a delight. Wonderful
31 handcrafts were also taught in the center room as well as games of all
32 kinds. I had never seen happier people anywhere.

33
34 [52:58] Early each day, conch shells were blown to call the boys to
35 formation and various jobs assigned from wood building to plumbing to
36 agriculture, so discipline was well accepted. Girls were assigned their
37 turns at all household chores, sewing, designing with flowers which were
38 ev-, everywhere, and, uh, one night dinner was so late we were alarmed
39 because they were trying to create an American flag on our table with
40 flowers. The spacious house looked down on a cricket field, and sheep
41 grazed on the meadow. That area had wa-, once been an awful swamp, and
42 natives had been taught how to fill it by dynamit-, dynamiting part of the
43 island and filling it in and then planting wonderful vegetables and flower

gardens. The natives also enjoyed playing cricket. They had their own frame buildings and even had their own hospital.

[53:54] Some native boys on leave came over and took us to another island called Logea, which was not then inhabited but kept nice for people to visit. This was the first time we could ever go swimming, as the coral reefs were too dangerous and poisonous to our cu-, to cut our skin in Milne Bay. The color was gorgeous, but the undertow so bad I almost drowned on Logea. Fortunately, the navy men held onto us and brought us in when the surf knocked me down and ground sand in my face. So much for paradise. Whenever things get rough these days, I can recall beautiful days at Kwato and wonder if it, if it's still the same. If it were not so difficult to reach, I should love to revisit it. The Queen of England bestowed knighthood on Cecil Abel for his service to humanity.

[54:48] On returning to Milne Bay, we found considerable activity among the troops moving north to the Philippines and a big reduction in our patient load. About the saddest memories I have of the service are the sight of long convoys moving out to action. Although they had been anxious to get the war over and done with, the good boys proud of reality, most of us would never see each other again and [crying] less would not make it home. Those who could not resume duty were sent home as far as transportation could be found, but eventually we had to take our patients with us going north. Closing down a large institation-, installation took time, and when the Red Cross director arrived ex-, unexpectedly, he suggested I use some of that time to visit Hollandia and confer with them [on the best ideas 55:41] for the future.

[55:47] When I returned to Milne Bay, most of the news we got stressed the successful landings at Leyte Gulf and General MacArthur going ashore there in January of '44. We knew it was going to be a long, hard fight there with the Japanese so entrenched and the fact that about 7,000 islands make up the Philippines. Fortunately, when a transport took our hospital staff and the last of the patients to sea, we were able to go to Manila and we looked forward to civilization at last after so long in a stone age jungle. However, Manila was a shock of destruction with the impressive old government buildings crushed into awful heaps of rubble filling most of the streets. The smell of death was everywhere and the people quite emaciated. They didn't even have water much of the time and very little food. People took shelter in any bombed out buildings that were partially standing, and hospitals had been set up in bombed out schools [throat clearing] that were intact enough. We helped out where we could, but things were in such a paralyzed state at that time that it was, uh, quite hard to settle in anywhere. A part of the university had some kind of dormitory

1 where we were housed part of the time, but very soon nervous – uh, the,
2 uh, nurses and Red Cross were put on a train and sent up north to San
3 Fabian, where we had tents waiting for us.
4

5 [57:22] The trip, trip took several hours on what appeared to be a narrow
6 gauge track, and we were surprised to find it in operation. We had been
7 given C-rations to open when we got hungry but just about mealtime a
8 tropical storm blew right through the train quite fiercely. It was then that
9 we tried to close the windows and found out there weren't any. Either
10 there had never been any or they'd been blown out by the war. Anyway,
11 we sat two facing two in our seats and put raincoats over our head so that
12 we could open our, our rations and, uh, eat a meal with the rain blowing
13 right through. When we got to San Fabian, the steamy heat was almost
14 worse than the debilitating climate of New Guinea, so we did not sleep
15 much the first night. Very early next morning we were jolted by the sound
16 of a band next to us. They were marching along playing a very familiar
17 tune, "On Wisconsin." At first, we thought it was in our honor, so we
18 looked out and found it was for a child's funeral and that we were housed
19 next to a, uh, a cemetery. That seemed to be the custom to have happy
20 music at a child's funeral, and we thought, well, maybe that was a good
21 idea to send a spirit up to heaven.
22

23 [58:42] Since the 47th General Hospital group would soon be finishing the
24 two years of service expected by the army, it was not likely they would
25 ever set up another large operation, so we filled in at various units
26 wherever we were needed. Some places didn't have a name aside from the
27 army, uh, base there. Some of us went to [inaudible 59:04] north, an
28 important area as far as plans for the invasion of, of Japan were concerned.
29 Actually, it seemed many divisions were gathering now up north. In one
30 little town, we were housed in what had been a frame residence instead of
31 the usual bamboo village homes. When I commented that it must've
32 belonged to a rich family and it was too bad it was so riddled with bullet
33 holes, I was told it had been headquarters for the Japanese army command
34 and [chuckle] shot up by our troops. Schools had not been in session for a
35 long time, so a nice school only partially damaged was serving as a
36 hospital. When I was sent there as a temporary worker, there was no bed
37 for me, so a nurse on night duty left word to give her my bed. We never
38 did meet, and I appreciated the double duty that her bed did.
39

40 [59:55] When the time came for the 47th General to return to Los Angeles,
41 [lovely blonde girl 1:00:02] acting as director for Red Cross and driving
42 her own Jeep paid me a visit. I wish I could remember her name, as she
43 was a brave girl, driving everywhere alone. She explained that although
44 the two years that I had promised to serve with ARC were almost over,

1 there was no way they could send inexperienced people into the invasion
2 of Japan. They had no right to hold me longer, but they would appreciate it
3 if I could join another girl and together we would be sent to the strategic
4 unit planning the invasion. It was so secret, it did not have a name but
5 consisted of a clu-, a cluster of people on the north coast coordinating
6 communications in the command of the, oh, operation. We would not
7 know what our job would be until later. The nurses of the 47th got word
8 that a transport was waiting for them in Manila and they would make the
9 trip by, of several hours by bus while the men would be left behind to pack
10 up the hospital.

11
12 [1:01:02] After our fond goodbyes, they left me sitting on my duffel bag
13 beside the road all alone waiting for an ambulance to come down later
14 from the north and take me to the headquarters in Manila for re-outfitting
15 for the cold winter in Japan. After waiting several hours, the chaplain
16 came to visit m-, with me and said I could have his quarters for the night if
17 my transportation did not arrive, as the women's area was already down.
18 Finally the ambulance came, picked up my gear and me, and we went off
19 on the roughest ride I've ever had. The board seats and rough roads were
20 enough to shatter one's bones after a few hours. We used to joke about the
21 possibility that all of our organs were rearranged by [laughter] the rough
22 rides in weapons carriers, Jeeps, trucks, and ambulances. I was just
23 thankful that so far I had not to had, had to use my license to drive a Jeep,
24 as the roads were so damaged and I had never had instructions in driving
25 military vehicles. Added to the safety hazards of the Philippines were the
26 water buffalo pulling carts and commonly found on most all the roads.

27
28 [1:02:10] Late that night, we arrived back in Manila at what appeared to
29 be the same dormitory we'd used before. There was no water most of the
30 time, so when enough pressure came on, we grabbed our canteens to fill
31 them and try to get clean. Food lines were long, and there were always
32 native families waiting for our refuse at cans marked edible and inedible
33 garbage. I tried to believe they needed the food for their pets but was not
34 convinced. On reporting to the Red Cross headquarters the next morning, I
35 was told the clothing depot was across the [Pasig 1:02:43] River with the
36 bridges blown out. I believe it was there that I met my companion worker
37 and was loaned a Jeep and driver briefly. We took a circuitous route
38 around a bay and located the place where we would, we would be
39 outfitted, outfitted for the winter. Several hours were required to fulfill our
40 mission, I recall, and I think a pontoon bridge was to, used to return to
41 headquarters. Unfortunately, we learned that a high-ranking official had
42 been waiting for that Jeep all day and was most unhappy with us.
43

[1:03:17] Therefore, we used our independence by deciding to use the foot, foot bridge across the huge river on the next day to pick up our, our, uh, winter clothes. That almost cost our lives. The foot bridge was about 12 inches wide and made of scraps of thin board wired together. We held onto cables attached to the bridge by wire. With people going in both directions, it was very hard to pass. I started out briskly, trying to get the ordeal over, but by the time I got to the center of the wide river, I froze, probably looking down [at one's footage 1:03:52] was dizzying. In any case, the distance across looked endless, and I was prepared to end it all as I had no strength left. Miraculously, at that moment I found a man was holding on to me saying, "Take it easy and we'll make it together." Boy, did I lean on him, and somehow we did find the strength together without looking down. The bridge was swinging badly on its cables, and I owe my life to that man. Whoever he was, he was a guardian angel.

[1:04:23] Besides a winter uniform, we were each issued a light blue jersey sports dress with epaulets and Red Cross buttons [throat clearing]. As I recall, we also received women's khaki slacks and shirts and shoes, so at last we were out of men's clothes. Originally, we had worn men's clothes of necessity because of the rugged climate and malaria, but also the thinking was that we should be as inconspicuous as women as possible. Because the Filipino people needed work so badly, many of those were put to work at our installations. The girls were anxious to wash and iron our khakis, which usually meant taking them to a stream and beating them on the rocks, letting them dry on the prickly bushes, which caused, uh, holes and putting starch on them made from rice, which left big white spots, but anyway we were grateful for their work. The only cloth available to us in the open markets was made from palm and called abaca. We tried to find some made of pineapple, pina cloth, which was often a very, uh, pineapple, uh, silky, and, uh, used in formal clothing, but that was impossible.

[1:05:38] At one small town where he, we were stationed, the populous gave us a thank-you dinner in the town square. Ladies wore their beautifully embroidered pina formal dresses with butterfly sleeves. The men wore their embroidered pina shirts air cooled for that climate. There was a typical national party of music and dancing. The performance of the little children was just charming. After many heartfelt expressions of gratitude to the Americans, we were called on to reciprocate. Since we could not sing or dance, we just did our best to thank them for their courage in the war and great cooperation we had had. It was a beautiful gesture, the tribute they had given us, and we just hoped they understood our appreciation in English as none of us spoke Tagalog. Both the Japanese occupation and the liberation of the Philippines caused so much

1 suffering and destruction that we got only a glimpse of what it had been
2 like for the thousands of prisoners in Santo Tomas. Crowded into the
3 unspeakable conditions there, many had not survived. Most, in fact.

4
5 [1:06:48] This recovery of the islands by the allies continued. The
6 Japanese Army under General Yamashita retreated up the mountains to the
7 summer capital of Baguio. They blew up all the bridges and roads behind
8 them so that American forces pursuing them were to suffer heavy losses.
9 Friends described how officers had to be commissioned in the field as
10 their other officers fell. Being at a disadvantage attacking from the lower
11 levels, the Americans were helped by natives even to the extent that
12 women of the Igorot tribe picked up Jeeps and carried them over the
13 bomb, bombed out areas. This was a tall, rugged tribe used to rugged
14 terrain. Finally, the anti-tank corps succeeded in capturing the Japanese
15 general, but he remained arrogant and demanding even in prison. The
16 liberation proceeded. As soon as our official business was completed in
17 Manila, we reported back up to the north coast to join the strategic unit
18 plan-, unit planning the invasion of Japan.
19

20 [1:07:49] Much to our surprise, natives had been hired to build us a little
21 bamboo house on the sand [throat clearing] in front of the command where
22 they could keep an eye on us, they said. So that made us feel safe. It was 3
23 feet above the sand to whi-, allow for the tides and it had bamboo sides 3
24 feet high to allow for breeze. The roof was thatched palm and the floor of
25 poles of bamboo tied together. Our only problem was that we were often
26 jolted by the foot of the canvas cot slipping through the bamboo floor.
27 Only once did the tide flow blow rain hard enough to make lakes of our
28 beds. The men had strung an electric light to our little house and all we
29 needed to, for privacy was to turn it off to undress at our cots or hang
30 clothes on the usual nail in the center pole. Luckily, we were allowed to
31 eat with the men who composed the unit. As soon as we found they had no
32 materials or facilities for recreation, we took a truck and made a long trip
33 of about 80 miles to the nearest warehouse to set up a place where they
34 could sp-, uh, spend their spare time.
35

36 [1:08:55] Every time we asked the officers what our duties would be in the
37 coming invasion, we were told, "You'll know when the time comes."
38 They also added we would have a mobile unit and we must be in touch
39 with them constantly as plans might materialize at any time. Meanwhile,
40 we worked at a, at, at a, a field hospital, and it was there that on August 6
41 of 1945, we heard the announcement that an invention called an atom
42 bomb had been dropped in two places on Japan, which might end the war.
43 [throat clearing] There was almost total silence in response as the patients
44 seemed stunned by the news and afraid to trust the possibility that it was a

1 hoax. They had been so geared to getting it over no matter what the cost to
2 them that their relief was in shock. All of us were eager for more news,
3 and in due time the U.S. radio confirmed that the two bombs had been
4 dropped in Nagasaki and Hiroshima and that their intensity should abate
5 the necessity of invade, invading Japan, thereby saving endless lives.
6 [throat clearing] We had been going on the assumption that the U.S. would
7 need 25 more hospitals than it already had in the north Philippines if we
8 invaded and used many divisions.

9
10 [1:10:17] We continued to work in the nearby hospital in ord-, until we
11 were ordered to report to the hospital ship Comfort heading for Tokyo on
12 August 25, 1945. Our mission was to join the first group of nurses going
13 to Japan to set up an army hospital in what had been formally Tokyo's
14 [inaudible 1:10:41]. The [Sakichi 1:10:49] Hospital had become vacant,
15 and we found much equipment that we didn't understand and had to be
16 moved out. It was located near the ma-, main intersection of the Ginza
17 right downtown in Tokyo and it was also near St. Luke's private hospital.
18 Our new name for it would be the 172nd Station Hospital [inaudible
19 1:11:16] 500 beds. Sailing on the hospital ship Comfort was a very
20 pleasant experience with real beds and bunks, clean sheets, and good food.
21 Ours had just been rebuilt in Okinawa after receiving a kamikaze hit
22 which went through the decks to the operating room, and quick action on
23 the part of the crew was all that, that, uh, put out the fire and saved many
24 lives. Giant red crosses on the deck and sides had been no protection from
25 the kamikaze suicide attack. We hoped that it would now prot-, they
26 would now protect us. We had some apprehension as to the security we
27 would receive on arrival in Japan, but our advanced forces had spent some
28 weeks working on that problem.

29
30 [1:12:07] As we approached the coastline, we saw Mount Fuji appear
31 serenely out of the clouds, and I wondered how any country in view of
32 such a serene view could've become involved in such a nightmare just
33 ended. Suddenly, we saw a plane approach and I hoped to god it was ours.
34 When we saw the American insignia on the plane, we realized it had come
35 out to greet us or escort us, and we swelled with pride. Ships could not
36 dock in Tokyo harbor as it was too shallow and filled with wreckage, so
37 we docked in Yokohama. The army had weapons carriers waiting for us to
38 take us about 22 miles to our hospital. These were light trucks with board
39 seats along the sides, canvas top, and, and, uh, canvas flaps across the
40 back. They had always been our chief means of transportation. We tried to
41 see out the back, but it was mostly just destruction everywhere. Being at
42 the rear, I tried to keep behind the canvas flap in case of snipers. As we
43 approached Tokyo, where 7 million people had lived, the area was mainly
44 leveled except for those buildings we intended to use and those protected

1 by protocol. Our hospital was beside a canal and looked modern on the
2 outside. However, much renovation had to be done and equipment moved
3 out that we could not use.

4
5 [1:13:33] Eventually, we hired about 700 locals to help as they had to be
6 fed anyway. As they were so small, we assumed they were juveniles. They
7 looked that young. Then we learned from some that they were veterans.
8 The women employees had to be housed in a, a, a separate frame building
9 at the back of the hospital, and a desk there was occupied by a Japanese
10 lady who checked us in and out. Upstairs were small bedrooms with 4
11 beds and a, uh, beds to a room and a sink and [inaudible 1:14:07] as well
12 as a clothes closet. When we investigated the community bath facilities,
13 we got a shock. There was a 12-foot square tub in which we were
14 supposed to rinse off after soaping up. Instead of Western type toilets,
15 there were little long porcelain basins set in the floor with a raised curve at
16 the front. We had experience with [inaudible 1:14:28] but this was a
17 challenge. Finally for Christmas that year we received a shipment of
18 western toilets and an engineer had also been located who could install
19 showers for us. Heat was not a common thing in Japan at all, so the first
20 winter we had to use four or five army blankets and could hardly turn over
21 from the weight. Finally some steam radiators were installed and in our
22 offices we had to use pots of charcoal for heat.

23
24 [1:14:57] As soon as we were ready for patients, we had cleared a large
25 room of equipment and set up a recreation center. Instead of war
26 casualties, we now took care of illnesses and accidents of the occupation
27 forces from a very wide area. We had not been set up to care for patients
28 very long when offers came from the Japanese to ask what they could do
29 for the patients. My first contact was from a former member of Japanese
30 parliament who seemed sincere, but I had to delay an answer while
31 discussing the subject with superiors. The natural reaction from American-,
32 from American patients I thought would be negative. However, he came
33 back again with a suggestion that little children wished to sing and dance
34 in their costumes for the Americans. That was an irresistible offer and of
35 course the little tots were charming. They were treated to refreshments so
36 the ice was broken for future contacts. A choir was then sent to entertain
37 soon and included Negro spiritual songs in a program sung with a
38 Japanese accent. Individual artists also painting and flower arrangement
39 and other talents were hired to, uh, work among the, the wards. They
40 became a regular part of our program. [throat clearing]

41
42 [1:16:22] As usual, a recreation room became too small and an engineer
43 was found who could explore the possibilities of expansion. He came up
44 with the idea of building a large glass recreation center on the roof to

1 include offices as well. It, I believe our building was five stories tall and
2 had quite good elevator service, so it was decided to proceed. The main
3 problem was that our kitchen was in the basement and when the boys
4 carried gallons of hot coffee to, uh, patients in elevators, that is to our rec
5 room, it made the trip quite far. When the project was completed, we had a
6 fine view, cheerful sunshine for the patients, and also plenty of room for a
7 weekly gathering to hear bands who came from various outfits to entertain
8 them. We even had navy volunteers who came ashore [in a combo group
9 1:17:15] to do their bit. Of course, these were on rare occasions, but it
10 helped morale of the whole personnel.

11
12 [1:17:22] Of all the contests and tournaments offered, the very best was an
13 eye to the future contest. A patient could use his own media to develop his
14 imagination, and the prize for the winner was a free trip to Shanghai
15 provided by the army. Some boys made recordings of their ideas of the
16 future. Some wrote essays on, or wrote poetry. Others did cartoons or
17 illustrations. One of my patients constructed a model community airport,
18 which he thought would become quite common. He did such a great job
19 that a photographer who came to survey the con-, contestants chose a
20 picture of him working on his airport and of me beside him for the cover
21 of the next national issue of the American Red Cross magazine. This was
22 in 1946, and most of the veterans of the past few years had gone home and
23 a new young group of servicemen were taking their places.

24
25 [1:18:26] When we arrived in Tokyo in the fall of '45, the former Japanese
26 Bankers Club had been taken over already by the Red Cross for a
27 servicemen center. It was an imposing red castle-like building in the center
28 of town. Being so [throat clearing] central, it was a good place for all of us
29 to coordinate our activities and exchange all kinds of, of, uh, talents
30 among the various units. We agreed not to waste time and talent by not
31 using available exchanges of what all, already was there. Um, we even
32 extended an invitation to the prison, which sent inmates to sing and
33 perform for the patients under the, uh, guise of a, of a, a guard, under the
34 control of a guard. [throat clearing]. Housing was so nonexistent that I
35 suggested to our commanding officer that we clear out one wing of the
36 hospital filled with Japanese storage and create a dormitory for the USO
37 troops. The idea was soon accomplished and with a few beds, mirrors, and
38 wardrobes, we were able to house the USO girls who came to Tokyo. I
39 believe the men were also provided quarters there, and they ate, they all
40 ate with us at the hospital.

41
42 [1:19:48] From our central location, they could travel to many
43 occupational forces to entertain them with American-type diversion in the
44 otherwise foreign and bleak setting. Usually the local restaurants, shops,

1 or other recreational centers run by Japanese were all off limits to
2 Americans at that time. Soon, however, a big movie theater was opened
3 for the GIs in Tokyo named for Ernie Pyle, a beloved reporter who had
4 died. Long before, a concert hall for a symphony and other musical
5 programs was, uh, rebuilt and finally reopened. It had two problems.
6 There was no heat in it, so pianists had to wear gloves. Other musicians,
7 too, wore gloves until their part of the performance came along. And even
8 though we carried blankets to the hall, we almost froze. At the
9 intermission period, we were invited to the manager's office where a little
10 electric heater was on, but it was no real effect at all. The second problem
11 was that the seats were all too small for us, especially with our layers of
12 winter uniforms, top coats, and blankets. We rarely stayed through a
13 whole program, although the Japanese mu-, musicians were we-, well
14 versed in classical music. Eventually, heat was added to the hall.

15
16 [1:21:14] Speaking of small seats, one of the few places to go when a
17 friend would come to see us was Tokyo's old Imperial Hotel bi-, built by
18 Frank Lloyd Wright. It has long ago been replaced by a modern
19 skyscraper, but at that time it was occupied by the high ranking officials.
20 My first time there was to take a visiting navy officer to tea on the
21 mezzanine floor. He was 6 feet 3" and I was 5' 10", so we were not too
22 comfortable in the tiny chairs [inaudible 1:21:43] find our knees up under
23 our chins. We expected low tables and knowing that the Japanese sat on
24 the floor for meals, we expected that too, but this was like playing
25 dollhouse and we were afraid of breaking the chairs and getting splinters.

26
27 [1:21:59] Later as we tramped through the snow of Tokyo taking pictures,
28 we found ourselves on the Ginza, a main shopping street. We felt like
29 giants as the average person came about to our elbows and we had been
30 trained to keep a low profile everywhere we went. But this was quite
31 impossible. Little shops had sprung up for the GI trade but offered, uh,
32 gaudy stuff that we didn't want, so my friend decided the best barter most
33 everywhere was the carton of cigarettes. They had been re-, uh, issued to
34 us regularly and those of us who did not smoke reaped the rewards. With
35 his help, he traded cartons of cigarettes for jewelry, carvings, and so forth.
36 I had a notion that much of this trade had been buried until it was safe to
37 bring out the loot. My friend made some nice trades for us. Finally, the
38 main intersection of Tokyo advertised the opening of a department store,
39 which had been bombed out except for one corner. At last, I thought, I
40 could buy some shoes or clothes, but to my surprise the only item of
41 clothing there was a thing I had never seen. A paper vest. I had heard of
42 some emergencies when people put layers of paper between clothing for
43 warmth, but this item of rough, heavy paper was actually cut for regular
44 use. As far as shoes were concerned, I doubt if there were any in the whole

country. I should've known. The average person there did not wear shoes, and I could never learn how to walk on wooden blocks.

[1:23:50] We were so fortunate to have a good cafeteria in our hospital basement. With hostilities over, transports of food, uh, were brought in and everything was so well organized, it was a great improvement. Patients were easier served by elevator than the former outdoor elements, and the management was so good they even cooperated with us in producing sandwiches and cookies for the local groups who came to, groups who came to offer entertainment to the patients. Our food was quite a novelty for them, who were accustomed to only rice and fish. When the first Christmas came, we had carols broadcast for days throughout the hospital, a party on Christmas Eve with punch and cookies, but the biggest surprise was the most unexpected arrival of 500 boxes of chocolates to be given out Christmas morning. With them came holiday wrapping and ribbons, so we dived into the endless job of wrapping 500 boxes secretly. That was hard, and it was also hard to sneak all the boxes into the wards to surprise the patients when they awoke on Christmas morning. Frozen turkeys had been flown in from home and the chaplain had prepared a booklet with the names of all of us in the 172nd Hospital personnel at Tokyo in 1945, including a menu and a picture of the hospital, and I treasure this, uh, as a, as a nice record of the, of the, uh, Christmas.

[1:25:17] Security was quite strict at our hospital all the time I was there. A sturdy, high fence surrounded it with a guardhouse and telephone at the entrance. Women could never go out unless accompanied by an armed escort, and even drivers were armed. Fortunately, we had our own motor pool for official business, but we never knew whether it would be a truck or a Jeep. We still wore our pants for climbing in and out and warmth. Our frame dormitory at the rear of the premises checked us in and out with a time of return usually required. In the basement of the building, men were hired to do our washing and pressing for us. The officers club was also a separate building at the rear of the hospital grounds. It was open from 4 to 10. It was very small but allowed for dances and entertaining friends, and I was really amused one evening when a navy officer who was quite dignified was detained on coming to see me because he was wearing gray pants, khaki shirt, blue coat, and a white hat. He really looked like an imposter to the guards. But all his clothes were lost en route from Hawaii and he had to borrow whatever he could to [inaudible 1:26:31] [chuckle]. It was amazing how easily friends could find us in one country after another just by calling Red Cross, but how they acquired transportation was a miracle.

[1:26:44] As I mentioned before, the navy was always helpful and generous to us. After having had a huge Christmas dinner and big day at the hospital, they insisted on taking us out to the communications ship called Mount Olympus for dinner, and it was sumptuous. Plans had already been made to take over the Grand Hotel in Yokohama for New Year's Eve, so we accepted knowing there was a lot to celebrate. Everybody seemed to have a wonderful time as their spirits could not have been higher in contrast to many past New Year's. Camaraderie could not have been more genuine and I never expect to surpass that group joy [choking up].

[1:27:24] More help had arrived at our hospital, so two of us were given a week's leave in Kyoto. It had been declared an open city so was not touched by the war. We took a train, although the station in Tokyo had been destroyed, and we arrived at a pleasant leave hotel there. Fortunately, we teamed up with a journalist, an older man who was retired, and took in the historic places of Kyoto as well as local entertainment. They were well traveled and fun to be with, so we had a restful vacation. On returning to Tokyo, I put in a request to return to civilian life but had to wait about four months for transportation. So many ships had been destroyed and so many men waiting for a transport home that was a crunch. We even had to give up our ships to Japan to bring their own men home from prisons o-, across the Pacific. Since they would not be using the silverware in those ships, our hospital received some welcome gifts.

[1:28:26] By strange coincidence, I had an unusual experience while taking a shower one night. After a long day's work [throat clearing], I was shampooing my hair, pre-, preparing for retirement when called to the phone. It was a secretary who was a guest at a general's house for dinner telling me that she had been talking about our work and the general who was in charge of public relations wanted to meet me. So he had sent his sedan to pick me up. I tried to explain that I was soaking wet, especially my hair, and could not possibly be seen. The explanation was overlooked and I was told to come anyway. The dilemma was such that I held the sedan at the gate until I could dress but still dripped with wet hair overdue for a cut and I was a mess. The welcome received on arriving at General Frayne Baker's home was so gracious that I felt at home at once. His job was to bring together leaders of the Japanese government and culture with the Americans.

[1:29:29] One of the first such gestures was to be the entertainment of six Red Cross girls by the emperor's head at a tea ceremony and head chef. It would be held at a private home with large gardens at 4 o'clock. So we accepted. By coincidence, all the Americans were extremely tall and

1 created a sensation as we went down an unpretentious sort of alley to a
2 lowly typical home. We were all seated on the floor, and I felt all feet. The
3 most, a most dignified lady demonstrated the tea ceremony to us with 300-
4 year-old bowls used as cups and someone explained each part of the
5 ceremony in English. Gunpowder tea was used, which was new to us, but
6 we made the proper turns of the cups and the proper comments after so
7 many turns. Bright green and pink cakes were passed but must've been of
8 soy flour and no sugar. After all the guests had a turn at the tea ceremony,
9 we, we admired the décor and rose to leave after about an hour. This
10 caused the chef to get very excited as he had planned high tea or supper
11 for us and the language barrier took a while to resolve itself. After
12 stretching for a while, we sat back down on the floor and to the delight of
13 the chef, he showed us a book about 6 inches thick that he wrote after
14 studying in Paris. The many pictures looked like the crown jewels. We
15 were s-, then served the most delectable western style food such as sliced
16 [lovely 1:31:10] ham, beautiful tomatoes and salad which surprised us and
17 placed a, pleased him so much that he clapped. There were decorated
18 cakes then as I recall, and we enjoyed it greatly.
19

20 [1:31:25] This was followed by many pleasant evenings at General
21 Baker's house where we met so many interesting people. Because of the
22 acute housing shortage, wives were not allowed in Tokyo for the first year
23 of occupation, so we were surrogate hostesses at times. When General
24 MacArthur was visited by officials from some distance, the government,
25 no, governor, pardon me, the governess known as [Givy 1:31:52] for Mrs.
26 Givens, a British lady, who was interned for 3 years in Santo Tomas in the
27 Philippines, asked us to come to the embassy and help entertain the crews
28 in assistance. While the snow was still heavy, we were invited to visit
29 Nikko, a cluster of temples and shrines that were especially colorful
30 against the white ground and branches of the pine trees laden with snow. It
31 was an all-day trip which in, we enjoyed very much. Through beautiful
32 natural scenery and Nikko was probably the loveliest place in Japan.
33 Besides the temples, there were pagodas, torii gates, and shrines all
34 undamaged by the war. The dominant color was [red blackened 1:32:37]
35 with floors, poles and sides but several other colors, gold and carvings,
36 were also designed beautifully inside and out. The natural scenery was
37 preserved in many parts in Japan.
38

39 [1:32:49] On my last evening in Tokyo, we were invited to an informal
40 supper at General Baker's and I was honored to meet the emperor's
41 brother and his wife as well as his cousin, a marquis. A lovely American
42 couple there was the political adviser George Atcheson and his charming
43 wife. He had spent 20 years in the orient and was soon after that appointed
44 American Ambassador. [throat clearing] We had a most interesting

1 evening and he tried to talk me out of returning to the States as he needed
2 help badly in his office. He would've been a wonderful experience and,
3 and help to work with if, if I had to, taken the offer but I felt I must return
4 home after 3 years away in war service and protect my leave of absence.
5 As soon as I returned home, I sent Mrs. Atcheson a box of all kinds of
6 kitchen necessities that are not available elsewhere and received a lovely
7 note from her [throat clearing]. It was not long after that that I read in the
8 paper that he was, Mr. Atcheson, mysteriously disappeared on his way
9 home to Washington about final peace arrangements and his plane radioed
10 to Honolulu for a landing and was never seen again. No debris was ever
11 found, according to the publicity, although strenuous effort was made to
12 locate the source of the tragedy. It was a great loss to our country.

13
14 [1:34:37] After waiting for [inaudible 1:34:39] for transportation, I was
15 finally sent to the staging area in Yokohama which held many of us until a
16 ship was available. I was glad that before leaving Tokyo I was able to
17 [inaudible 1:34:52] to attend the war crimes trials as a historical
18 experience. As the prisoners were brought in, I was impressed with their
19 appearance being quite average, wearing open collar civilian clothes, Tojo
20 bore no resemblance to the military cartoons we were accustomed to see.
21 Nor were the other officials on trial. I wonder that the international jury
22 took so long to study the evidence before making their final judgment.

23
24 [1:35:26] Another experience I appreciated was an opportunity to attend
25 graduation exercises at a teacher's college for women. These people were
26 going out to teach in, uh, the various Japanese schools and they were
27 wearing uniform dress, [navy spin 1:35:43] skirts in white and they all
28 wore their hair in long braids. It was quite a large class, and the ceremony
29 lasted [inaudible 1:35:59] some time. A picture of the emperor was on the
30 stage but it was covered with a cloth. Many tributes were made to their
31 school and parents and government, gratitude for their education and they
32 bowed several times toward the [pulpit 1:36:16]. I wondered if that was a
33 common custom [inaudible 1:36:25] to bow in the presence of the emperor
34 it was, it was part of a ritual. [Inaudible 1:36:33] to classes [inaudible
35 1:36:35] indicated great stress on, stress on conformity. Even in art, the
36 effort was placed on making the best copy of any subject or structure or
37 painting so it was obvious how tradition was s-, so strong in Japan.
38 Perhaps education has been changed by now.

39
40 [1:36:54] My last hurrah when the GIs came [inaudible 1:37:01] When
41 orders came to board [inaudible 1:37:04] headed home and I gave them
42 my credentials [inaudible 1:37:05] said the space was filled. But my name
43 was high at the top of the list on the [roster 1:37:15]. So a general muster
44 was called to find the culprit who [inaudible 1:37:22] the ship. USO girls

1 were returning from [inaudible 1:37:28] in Japan and one [inaudible
2 1:37:32] lady [inaudible 1:37:31] section of the women's quarters and she
3 had slipped her 6-year-old boy into my bunk and [inaudible 1:37:39]
4 where I was intended to be. It was still [inaudible 1:37:44] for ages while
5 we checked [inaudible 1:37:48]. The [inaudible 1:37:48] began to fill with
6 GIs chanting "Let her on! Let her on! Let her on!" I waved to them
7 gratefully and [inaudible 1:37:54] by shouting. I could sleep [inaudible
8 1:37:58] orders and due to the condition of my will that I too would be
9 safe in bed. I had to borrow a [inaudible 1:38:09] in which to [inaudible
10 1:38:08]. They led cheers for me until [inaudible 1:38:13]. It was a
11 wonderful tribute, and [inaudible 1:38:14]. At this point, [inaudible
12 1:38:22] what I got [inaudible 1:38:25] when I finally [inaudible 1:38:26]
13 aboard ship. It was a good [inaudible 1:38:29] across my stomach so I
14 could not turn over for the next 2 weeks coming home. However, with the
15 continued atom bomb tests going on in the Pacific area, it was a wonder
16 that they even let us cross the ocean at that time.

17
18 [1:38:44] When we approached Seattle, it looked like a fantasy land of
19 lights, speedy traffic, and excesses at every [turn 1:38:55]. Also, Los
20 Angeles looked the same [inaudible 1:39:00] to us later on, and the
21 cultural shock was very hard to deal with. By going to work almost
22 immediately, I was able in time to adjust to it, but it was hard. I am forever
23 grateful to the American Red Cross for trusting me to do what needed to
24 be done and come back with [inaudible 1:39:16]. In this case, a military
25 welfare worker. If I'd ever been classed as captain, I would've [had to be
26 1:39:24] prisoner of war of the Geneva convention [inaudible 1:39:28].
27 Also by having no rank, we could speak freely to all ranks. I looked at my
28 diary. These memories are [the practical 1:39:37] side of war and not
29 meant to cover philosophical or romantic or sensational aspects. At this
30 writing, it is February 15, 1985.

31
32
33/jw
34