

Australians at War Film Archive

Keith Arnold - Transcript of interview

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Tape 1

00:40 **OK we'll start right back at the beginning. Can you tell us ...**

Start from the beginning yeah.

Can you tell me where you were born and where you grew up?

I was born in the suburb of Naremburn in North Sydney in a Private Hospital on the 21st of February in 1927. At that time my mother was in the latter stages of tuberculosis

01:00 which then, which subsequently put her into a sanatorium where she finally died about eight months later in 1929. So being an orphan child and Dad being a working man I was boarded into what could be termed a founding home I s'pose. It was out at Balgowlah on the down near Manly and I was boarded in there for up to about four years

01:30 actually and my Dad got involved with one of the aids there who became my stepmother and they married in 1931 when I was four years of age. From that stage on, cause up to about four years of age you're not conscious of what happens but I do have one memory of

02:00 something happened in there. I used to ride a flivver which was a tricycle type of tricycle that I could get this, now I didn't know about the death of my mother or the fact that you know Mum was my stepmother until I was about nine or 10 years of age when she then dropped the bombshell on me. She said you it's about time you knew that I'm not your true mother but it didn't matter to me because she was the only mother I knew see so until I grew up, became an adult she was a, she was as good as

02:30 a true mother to me. Strict disciplinarian. We were regimented in that family. We had to do things at a certain time at a certain day a certain way and which actually set me up fairly well for the army cause when I went into the army it made no difference. I was still regimented as if my stepmother was a sergeant telling me what to do and what not to do and I started school at Neutral Bay Primary School. I think I was only there for oh I must have

03:00 started at five years of age. We moved our address into Cammeray, to a house in Cammeray and I went then to Mosman and I was only in Mosman for 5th and 6th class and then we moved then, over to Cammeray when my parents brought a house there. This was in 1939 which was the beginning of the war and I went to Cammeray School. Finished primary school there then went to North Sydney Tech Central where I did a year and a half

03:30 and in 1941 I, no good at school was real dreadful. I was a dreadful student oh dreadful. No concentration no, all my reports used to tell me he's got the intelligence but he won't concentrate so that was me. So then I went to work. I worked for the Daily Telegraph and the job was known as a copy boy and there were four or five of us boys, they were all only 14s, 15s and we had to hoof it all over Sydney

04:00 and pick up the copy for the advertisements for this Daily Telegraph and the Sunday Telegraph. Around about 1942, it would have been '42 most of the men throughout the whole organisation joined the army and there was nobody left so they put me in charge of this Department and then, at that stage I was only 15 years of age not a great deal of responsibility about me and I buggered up an ad. I put the wrong ad in the wrong paper on the wrong day and I

04:30 got into serious trouble and they showed me the door so I went down to the road to the Sydney Sun. They wanted copy boys so I stayed there at the Sydney Sun until I got my call up. I tried for the navy in 1944. I was rejected on bad teeth dentally, not mentally, dentally unsuitable and so stuck it out till I got me call up. I got me call up in '45 it would have actually arrived at the end of January

05:00 cause it was before I actually turned 18. Did me medicals, passed through everything came into the army in 5th of March 1945. Did me basic training at Cowra three months. I was then regraded to A2 [Second Class Health] because of a bad leg I had and they put me into a clerical situation. I did three

months clerical course at Georges Heights in Sydney and then just got posted then to Bandiana at Albury base depot there just

- 05:30 as peace was declared so I didn't see, I thought oh well no action now. Posted back to Sydney. Had volunteered for Japan. I thought, well might as well see something while I'm in the jolly army and then I got pushed out to Bathurst transit camp in about February, it would have been February of '45 [actually 1946] and in April 7th of April '45 [actually 1946] we sailed for Japan.
- 06:00 I was we were the second draft. The first draft went up to on the Kanimbla and we went up on the Manoora and arrived in Japan just prior to Anzac Day of 1945 [1946]. Did 18 months there in the base ordnance depot, did 18 months, came back to Australia. Didn't know what I was going to do at that stage. I wanted to be a commercial traveller or salesman but me Mum says no you don't talk well enough. I did
- 06:30 in those days, I didn't talk no. People said to me, Keith what do you think of so and so I'd say yep or what do you think of such and such oh yep and that's about all I used to say. I didn't talk, didn't talk much, no. I soon learned how to afterwards. So anyway I spent five years chasing sheep round paddocks and that got me down to Canberra actually and I was on a small property down there 2000 acres right on the on the side of the Fairbairn Aerodrome
- 07:00 and the property in actual fact was where Minister Fairbairn and all his mates were killed when the plane crashed into it in 1944 I think that was. The plane didn't lift high enough off the airport and smashed. It's only a little hill, only a piddly hill. You could nearly bow to the top of it, it was so small but this plane smashed straight into it yeah an old Dakota [Lockheed Hudson]. Killed Fairbairn and oh about four or five of the abovementioned ministers, it took that time yeah. I met a young a girl there, married her. We had three
- 07:30 children. We lived in a government house what they called Department of Interior home in Canberra at Yarralumla and that marriage lasted 25 years and we split up. She divorced me. I remarried again with another young lass, the one that's up there in those photographs in 1980. She divorced me in 1983 so it didn't last long but we're still best of mates. I go and see her every week down the Gold Coast. We're still very much, I love her very, very much.
- 08:00 After about, what it was five years I was chasing sheep round the place and when I got into Canberra and married I thought well this is silly. If you're working on a sheep property or these properties you have a blue with the boss, he kicks you out you've got no home to go nothing to go just pack up and put everything in the back of your car and tootle off see. So I thought well that's no good so I moved into town and I spent 14 years as a dry cleaner's deliveryman. Good one too. Gee I had a good run.
- 08:30 I used to take in all the Embassies and all that round Forrest and Deakin and all those suburbs round there. They used to give me wonderful Christmas boxes. Jesus they were generous. I'd go home with dozens of beer and bottles of wine and cartons of cigarettes bottles of whiskey oh yeah they were marvellous they were. Was a wonderful 14 years I did that and when I went to Walton's. I've always wanted to be a salesman and sort of a salesman being a laundry driver I s'pose. You've got to be personality and it personally was you know
- 09:00 and you've got to be conscientious got to be punctual so I joined Walton's as one of their outside reps and that was a job. I was earning about 56 dollars a week in 1968 about \$56 which was about average wage in those days. I went to Walton's and by the early in at the next year within about three months I was earning \$130 and \$150 a week oh it was marvellous.
- 09:30 I had refrigerators we had washing machines we had everything we ever we ever wanted we did. That was a great they were a great firm to work for too I loved it yeah loved working for them. But then when the marriage broke up I moved away from Canberra tied up with that other young lovely lady and we lived on the on the central coast for about 10 years. Her daughter then decided she wanted to come up to Queensland and Joanie said to me well we might as well go too. I said fair enough go where the warm
- 10:00 where the weather's nice and warm so that's how we finished up here and by that stage Walton's had collapsed and I still never worked out how it did except that poor old Sir John Walton who was nature's gentleman God he was a beautiful man Sir John Walton and probably sounds funny saying a man's beautiful but he was. He was absolutely thorough gentleman. There was no bullshit about me. He'd walk used to come in the staff entrance the same as everybody else and as he walked through to
- 10:30 to the lift to go up to the ivory tower cause Walton's was opposite the Town Hall on the corner of Park Street, Park and George Street and the ivory tower up there and he'd say to every all the all the staff there by name good morning June good morning Mary good morning Mabel good morning John yeah marvellous marvellous old man. So any rate I switched from that then to selling blinds and awnings and things and didn't do too badly at that.
- 11:00 It certainly made a living out of it. Then I'm starting then getting to the late '50s by this time see and all this bloody activity was a bit tough so I've always wanted to sell real estate so I'll give that a bash. I picked the worst time in the world was one of our recessions up here and was then '96 when rotten bloody Keating oh gees I detested that bloody man when Keating was Prime Minister and all the
- 11:30 insurance the interest rates went up to 17, 14, 16, 17 was that I finished up paying 17 and a half

percent in 1986. Had to go bankrupt had to declare myself bankrupt '86 for a house bloody ridiculous interest rates and of course it, I wasn't the only person. Houses all round Woodridge, Kingston, Springwood all these suburbs round here they were they were all just they were all just handing in their keys couldn't pay their mortgages

- 12:00 and they had repossession houses. You could go down some of those streets in Kingston and every second house would have a repossession notice stuck on the front door. Oh it was a dreadful time really was dreadful time. So bad in fact that the agent I was working for was a PRD [Realty company] Franchise and he went down the coast to one of their seminars or one of their get togethers see and all blokes from Sydney everywhere were there and a few of the Sydney blokes had got their heads together and they collected a few dollars. They
- 12:30 knew houses were a lot cheaper up here than they are down there of course still are and they wanted to buy a hundred houses for investment and they said they made a stipulation. They said they it course the fellow I was working for Ryan is his name, Ted Ryan he was quoting how cheap houses were up here. You could buy houses for 35, \$36,000 see. In fact there's one across the road there's a brick fronted
- 13:00 house that would have been sold for about \$36,000 in 1986. It sold just recently for 52 which is still a bloody cheap house. Yeah last year it was on the market for \$52,000. So any rate these people want a hundred homes and they didn't want to pay any more than \$40,000 for them see so Kelly says yeah oh we can do that bloody easy real skiting Irishman he was. He says we can do that easy. We can get you a hundred houses. So he came back and he told us all about it. He
- 13:30 says I want all you blokes to go out there he says. Make a list of every house that's under \$40,000 and under see so we did that. We had about six travellers with us salesmen and he rang up all these other agents around the place and he told them. You know within three months they had over a hundred houses and they averaged \$36,000 each and they sold the bloody lot and we didn't get a crack out of it as a salesman. We didn't get a bonus either oh he was a rotten dog
- 14:00 so by that time of course I was getting on to age and in 1992 I turned 65 years of age and went on the beautiful old pension yeah and then in 19 199 when I turned when I when I turned 70 course I tried to get the Veteran's pension but you can't because I didn't see overseas service and I'm not I'm not a gold card I'm not on a
- 14:30 on a service pension. I'm still on an aged pension but I do get a disability because of my hearing and I've got emphysema and they give me a 70 per cent disability allowance for that so I live quite comfortably here housing commission. I moved in here actually I moved in next door there in 1992 when these were built and Joan and I were living apart and she wanted to go back to Sydney again and she said to me would you come back to Sydney with me? I said oh I don't want to go back to Sydney or back
- 15:00 to the Central Coast anyway. I said I don't want to go back there I like Queensland too much. She begged me. Whatever she asked for she got. I said alright so I packed up here went down to down to The Entrance with her. Oh I couldn't stick it. Got down there three months later I had to come back to Queensland so I only got as far as the Gold Coast and then she stayed down for a while then she came back up cause she's got a daughter up here whinging daughter
- 15:30 I won't say what not on print. She's a thorn in my side still is she still is a thorn in my side so any rate she came back to back to down the Gold Coast. So she had a funny turn. She got up she got up one morning we were living separately. I had a lovely cabin down there in the bush back in the, towards the mountains gee it was a lovely spot. The birds, hand feeding birds,
- 16:00 butcher birds'd come and sit on your hand and feed. Butcher birds, magpies, rainbow lorikeets oh God it was a beautiful spot but Joan had rang me up one morning she said I've had a bad turn she said I can't stand up she said I'll fall down so I said I whizzed down to see we were only half a couple of miles apart and I whizzed down and got the doctor up to her. The doctor said you had blood pressure bad blood pressure see things went on any rate so I said I'd better come back and look after you so I packed up my little
- 16:30 cabin went back and we shared this flat for a while and turned out a condition that can't be cured it's in the back in the middle ear sort of a sandy thing gets in there and throws the equilibrium out yeah vertigo vertigo they call it yeah so that lasted 18 months and things weren't going too well. I'm sure it's the daughter that causes our trouble because
- 17:00 we're very compatible but oh dear she can her moods change. I think it's the girl that does it so I put me name down for housing and I asked for it up here and within a month I came back here to this one straight next door yeah so I'm quite comfortable here. The people aren't quite as nice as they were in the mid you know a funny mob now but it's nice and comfortable and only costs me \$107 a fortnight. Can't live better than that can we? Still got enough money left over to buy me beer and have a couple of beers a can
- 17:30 at night and go to the reunions and all those sort of things yeah so I've got a good life actually but I miss her miss her like crazy even I'm sorry I spent the day with her yesterday. Every her pension day I take her to the shops and so when I come back distressed yeah anyway that's life.

Excellent.

So that's about my life in a little nutshell.

18:00 **Right back to the beginning.**

Right.

When you were when you were born

Yes.

and your mother died soon after

Yes.

Do you have any memories of I guess those early years before you?

No you don't remember. There's no you know can you remember anything when you were two or three years of age? No you don't know. I've worked out over the years that you

18:30 you your memory doesn't start to roll along until you're about five. I've got photographs there when I was for my 4th birthday I don't remember that I've got no idea no but I do remember I've got always had that in the back of my mind from as far back as I can remember I can see myself sitting on this fliver do you know what a fliver is? Have you ever seen one? It's an ordinary tricycle but instead of having pedals it's got a push bar. Know how the railer man's

19:00 trolleys that's how a fliver works with a handle backwards and forwards and I can see me sitting on that fliver and all it had was just a shaped wooden seat flat seat going down a slopy concrete path in front of this big building double storey big building with steps up to the front of it and I'd, the memory then stops. Now what happened I might have fallen arse over turkey or something I don't know but the memory stops when I'm on that bike

19:30 and I can see a like probably a six foot high brick wall or stone wall and an archway and the path actually did a turn and went up that path. In all the years that I lived in Sydney I used to go swimming at The Spit I used to go swimming at Balmoral that was our good, that was our pervy beach we used to go there to meet all the girls down there in Balmoral. I never went up to Balgowlah to have a look at Dalwood homes

20:00 it was only around the corner. You wouldn't be conversant with Sydney I s'pose are you do you? You know when you go from The Spit and The Spit Road goes up the mountain you're heading up to Balgowlah? Well when it got to the top of that hill when instead of going down towards Manly it used to turn backwards was French's Forest Road and then now it still goes right out there well that's where it was. My next door neighbour used to live in French's Forest and but that's going back a few years and she said that house was still there. Apparently it was a big old,

20:30 perhaps a property house or something like a big I can still see that red either red stone or sandstone but big double storey I can still see that yeah but never been back. I'd like to like to have gone back yeah but my step Mum she came over from Melbourne and had nothing to do. She was born of a very wealthy family so for Victorians. Her father was a very wealthy man and she came to Sydney

21:00 had nothing to do saw an advertisement at Dalwood Homes wanting someone to care for children an assistant aids I'd suppose they'd call them nurses aids something like that so she trotted out there and got the job and apparently she and I clicked and I used to call her my nurse nobody elses. I was apparently very possessive very possessive of her and well Dad turned on his charms I s'pose and yeah they got married and then she became my stepmother.

21:30 **Do you have any memories of the time in care or any stories that people told you?**

No, no that's the only thing I remember. Of course me stepmother did tell me I was dangerous dangerously ill when I was two years of age. I ate some poisoned grapes or some sprayed grapes that hadn't been washed and I got gastro enteritis very nearly died. I was so gastro enteritis is an inflammation of the gastric in the stomach and dehydration is the big thing that's what actually kills dehydration

22:00 and I got so to so thin that I was just a skeleton in skin and they used to carry me around on a pillow. They couldn't touch me hurt me too much but I recovered from it. By the time I was four years of age I wasn't a bad lookin' little bub actually. Photograph's in there four year old yeah wasn't a bad looking kid yeah but of course I didn't realise this that I did as I got older I used to think about things course you do and I used to think about that bloody fliver and I said to Mum one day

22:30 I it was after she told me that I'd been in Dalwood Homes and that she was my stepmother so by that time I think I was about nine or 10 I'm not sure of the exact period and I said was there ever a fliver out there at Dalwood? Oh yeah she said the kids used to ride round but she said I never remember you in on one but apparently there was yeah so where all that just in that four years and I wouldn't have been any more than about two I s'pose that's the only memory yeah. My memory didn't

23:00 start to develop to be conscious of everything till well after me fourth birthday Mum and Dad married in

'31. I would have been five then wouldn't I? Four and a bit, four and a half or something. I can remember from about five years of age place we lived in Cremorne, in Spoffoth Street Cremorne, number 41 I think it was. Just opposite a little group of shops. Wouldn't be there now I don't suppose,

- 23:30 wouldn't be there now but that that's my first recollection of Mum and Dad us together and Mum was pregnant then and she gave birth to my brother in 1933. Also I had an elder brother. Dad had a very sad period. Dad was a very quiet man never talked much never talked about the past. Sorry I never asked,
- 24:00 quizzed him either you know. As I got older I should have should have quizzed him but I'm not one for asking questions. I think well if somebody tells me OK work something out meself but any rate when he and my real Mum got married in 1920 something thereabouts I've got the birth certificate marriage certificate there actually they had a son. It was a bang bang marriage apparently and she was Jewish and of course they had to get married and he wasn't very popular
- 24:30 because Jewish girls don't marry gentile men no, so but any rate they had this boy and he was the apple of Dad's eye. Dad never talked about anybody else except Bruce and Bruce died six years of age in September of 1926, meningitis the brain blows up and six years of age that broke Dad's heart. Well he died in September of 1926 I was born in February of
- 25:00 1927 and me Mum died in 1929 so he had three or four bloody pretty traumatic years didn't he but he was a very quiet man yeah. He was a ledger keeper for a Jewish fellow by the name of Klemo, Klemo and Co. They had a shop they were jewellery and diamond importers in Clarence Street. Dad worked there for many years many years. Probably how he met
- 25:30 me Mum because he probably would have he was boarding with my grandmother. I never knew me grandmother or my grandfather on either side. They were all dead before I was born. Dad was born in Mudgee on a property just outside of Mudgee in 1887. He was the eleventh ninth the ninth child and the seventh boy. My grandfather came out from Ire from
- 26:00 England I've got the actually got the ship's what's a name there when he came out on a ship called the Alfred and he landed at Moreton Bay of all places Moreton Bay in 1858. He was 18 years old and for some reason I can never find out why but Dad never talked much why he went all the way down to Mudgee. It's a long way to go to Mudgee from Moreton Bay but Moreton Bay was the
- 26:30 spot see and by a strange coincidence that the ship the Alfred it must have been a regular did the trip backwards and forwards cause my brothers grand my brother's wife's grandparents came out on the Alfred in 1840 and landed at Moreton Bay and they also went to Mudgee. Now in 1840 there wasn't very much in Mudgee. We'd only settled Bathurst in 18
- 27:00 I don't know what is '20, '27? Mudgee was the second town out outside of the Sydney. Bathurst was the first settlement and then Mudgee was the next so it's a fairly old ever been to Mudgee? God it's a pretty town. It's a lovely town. I went back there a few years ago. I tried to find something about me history. Got a little bit but not enough but gee it's a pretty town lovely shops. All they all the old buildings have been restored and I've got photographs of all them. The churches
- 27:30 that the Roman Catholic, the Congregational the Church of England, the Police Station the Council Chambers they've all been renovated and the original Jesus they're beautiful and if you go there at the right time the country round there is absolutely glorious but it's cold in winter cold in winter and pretty jolly hot in summer but gee it's a lovely town yeah went down there down there yeah couldn't help much.

How about your father

28:00 was he involved in World War I at all?

No, no Dad was I don't even know whether Dad volunteered cause being World War I it was all volunteer no conscription as you know and whether he tried or not I don't know but he was too small any rate. Dad only stood five foot four yeah yeah he was only a little bloke. There he is up there the old chap yeah yeah and he while I'm talking about my Dad he was dying for the day he'd

- 28:30 turn 65 and he could retire. Tell you another thing that I think is amazing. Dad was a ledger keeper right and this P Klemo was the typical scrooge Jew the one that gives all Jews a bad name. I'm a Jew by the way because me mother was Jewish I'm a Jew and he had to stand at a podium. Couldn't have a seat didn't have a desk he stood at a podium and he did all his ledger
- 29:00 keeping and that by hand. Beautiful hand Dad had and of course ledgers in those days were about that bloody long right and selling gold and jewellery and diamonds and so forth there's some big figures. Now you're both you two are two young to remember pounds shillings and pence but when we added up pounds shillings and pence you had to go up the pennies and convert the pennies by dividing by 12 to get the shillings and the remaining pence right then you went down and got the shillings and you divided that by 20
- 29:30 to get the pounds and the shillings right so you did three transactions. Dad could go right up the top in one. He'd go dt dt dt dt dt and he'd convert all those pennies and all those shillings and all those pounds to do it once and he said to me once I can't get over a thousand pounds. If he found if he found 1,332 pounds 19 shillings and 11th halfpenny that thousand pound threw him

30:00 out. If it was 999 no worry but that 1,000 somehow used to throw him out yeah but he he went from that in 19 about 1943, '43, '43 I s'pose staff shortages and he went to work for the Department of Ammunition and I don't know what sort of work it is some sort of clerical work but yeah.

Can you tell me about

30:30 **when your step mum told you that she wasn't your real mum?**

Didn't worry me.

How did she tell you?

Just like that she actually said probably told me to sit down something like that. She said I've got something to tell you. I can see it in the in the dining room at 11A Rangers Avenue, Cremorne and we had a big round oak table and high backed chairs oak high backed chairs

31:00 so I think she probably sat my down there might have been standing up probably sat down with that and said I've got something to tell you. I said oh yeah. She said I'm not your real mother. I said oh oh right. She said your mother died when you were two. I do remember saying oh well it doesn't matter you're the only mother I remember and that was it but gee she was tough

31:30 she was tough. She had a beautiful sep a contralto voice. She only stood about five foot two or something. She hadn't previously sung actually with the Melbourne Philharmonic Choir. She was a talented pianist classical pianist cause all the I've got music there in classic it's all I ever listen to of course brought up with classic. She could play that bloody piano until arthritis got bad. Even then she could still play. She could still play Chopin.

32:00 Beethoven was a bit hard for her but she could still play Chopin but when she was brought up as I said by very wealthy parents. They had a very big home very big home in Camperdown, Victoria and that that is now a big private hospital. It's a very big place apparently. It was known as Monamithca. What it meant I haven't got any clue from probably explained to it and of course we were brought up with etiquette.

32:30 We you were told how to use a knife and a fork. We never had we used serviettes. We had we never had jam out of the dish out of the jar or anything like that. No jam went everything was tipped out into service. We had the right spoons at the right place and the butter knife and all that sort of thing and we had to speak properly. Probably why a lot of people still think I'm a lot of people think I'm a Pom [English] because maybe I am not harsher I don't know but maybe we were taught and she had taught elocution

33:00 so we were taught we were taught to speak properly and all that sort of thing but no she was she was she was pretty hard but later years I found out that she wasn't such a nice person after all. She was she went very religious very churchy. Everything was God. Oh God this and she used to go on so I used to get up to mischief. Not bad mischief but I loved to be out I loved to be out loved to be out the bush

33:30 down the water oh I loved down in the water oh I loved that water down round Mosman Bay and places like that. I'd come back on Sunday she'd say you're late oh you're wet again you've fallen in the harbour you know fancy falling in the harbour oh that was great fun wasn't it yeah you thought that was lovely. Tell you a bit more about that. Oh I could tell you about it now I s'pose while we're there. Well when we lived at Cremorne we used to go down to Mosman Bay and there's Mosman Walk was over there. You come round the Bay there's

34:00 Old Cremorne Wharf here and you go round the point which is George's Point round here to Cremorne Wharf see. All that was my playground, all of that was my playground. God it was beautiful and we'd, we met up a couple of us mates we'd meet up. One from up the road there, Tuppy Back's property he'd come with me and somebody else'd we'd pick up down the bloody road and we'd go down to Mosman Bay. We wouldn't do anything, we'd look in the water holes for the bloody fish and so forth but we'd had two things we used to do fairly regularly.

34:30 We'd pick up a handful of mussels. Cause in those days beautiful clear water not like it is now, pick up a handful of mussels like that light a fire put the mussels in it cook 'em and we'd have those bloody roasted mussels. So that was fairly frequent. It's like well not as frequent as you could because we we'd well we didn't have matches. Had to be one of the older boys who'd smoke had matches, they'd light the jolly fire and the other thing was we'd go underneath the wharf particularly

35:00 at Mosman and at Cremorne and we'd get all the pennies and threepences and things that used to fall out of bloke's pockets. See the trams used to go right down there. People'd come back from Sydney from the city to work and they'd rush up through the wharf and the wharves had gaps in the, right see up through the wharves, hop on their tram to go well wherever they were going to see and all these coins'd fall out and wow if we found a sixpence whacko wasn't that something

35:30 course there weren't too many sixpences around in those days. You could travel from oh I s'pose I used to travel for a penny or a tuppence in the in the tram from Cremorne, Cammeray to Sydney you know. Yeah we'd find this penny underneath had to do that at low tide of course but gees that was a wonderful place wonderful playground really was yeah. We'd just wander around the rocks not get up to any mischief and old Cremorne Wharf it was down low and you had to walk a Jacob's ladder.

- 36:00 I don't know how many steps in it they were wooden steps were made to get up to the street level and there was a little bit of a car park up there but no-one had cars in those days. You wouldn't have there wasn't a car owner in Cremorne and Mosman in those days. They were too bloody expensive, they were 275 pounds but all these bloody steps see and just along this step cause we used to come down the cliff we'd scramble down the bloody cliff. Well just short of the wharf
- 36:30 the old wharf was down here it was a very old fashioned wharf. I don't know whether it's still there was this massive great Morton Bay fig [tree]. Oh God it was a massive tree and somebody'd actually climbed up there probably oh could have been as much as 15 or 20 feet and tied a rippin great ship's hawser rope on it rope about two about like this and that used to hang from that with a bloody great knot in the bottom of it
- 37:00 and a length of ordinary string cord hanging from that. Course the cliff's like this see so picture this we're here this tree's right up here you see and this rope's hanging down so we'd grab hold of the bit of cord we'd pull it back up to where we were see and sit on the on the lot wow and away we'd go this bloody thing we'd swing right out over that bloody water. We'd swing right back again. God it was fabulous it was fabulous it was like flying
- 37:30 a kite it was. Because you know we'd go up as far as we could. Tug on this bloody great rope back up the hills sit on it and away we'd go. She'd sail out there and then you'd sail back again absolutely marvellous absolutely marvellous. We did that without getting up to any mischief or vandalism not like the bloody kids these days but another thing these days you wouldn't let a seven or eight or nine year old kid go down
- 38:00 straight down to the bloody water. You'd be afraid of some paedophile getting hold of him. We didn't have any of those worries. The only thing that worried me Mum was that I'd get drowned but I learned how to swim I learned how to swim. Come home Sunday dinner. Mum always had a roast dinner. We always did those days our parents Sunday was a roast dinner. Roast leg of lamb and that'd be on the table about 12 o'clock Sunday see and I'd come in about two o'clock. Was only starvation
- 38:30 that sent me home. God I'd get the roasting gee would I get a roasting but oh no anyway and then you've fallen in the harbour again? I think I fell in like purposely or something at times I think yeah I'd come back soaking wet. Only had shorts and a shirt on any rate but any rate Mum as I said she got all religious and oh all she did was talk about Christ and God and
- 39:00 even then she used to listen to ABC [Australian Broadcasting Corporation] and they used to have a Minister come on there. There were several of them oh nine o'clock 10 o'clock or something in the morning and they'd give a bit of a give a bit of the bible or some bloody thing I don't know. I'm not a religious person now as you can well imagine and there was one Minister a Reverend Purnell and he's a congregationalist
- 39:30 and his church was over at Neutral where was that bloody church? Neutral Bay, yeah Neutral Bay and Mum wrote to him or phoned yeah didn't yeah she had a phone wrote to him or something I don't know but any rate they got together and they had a bloody relationship and she's all this bloody pure and everything and I didn't think too much about it until I was very much you know oh crikeys I was well into me 20s or 30s
- 40:00 I s'pose I thought to meself I don't think that thing was all that bloody pure and I said to Mark my brother not the last time up here the time before I said a year ago we were talking about it and I said Mark what did you think about that relationship Mum had that's his pure mother so I've got to be careful what I say I don't say anything disparaging about it cause it's his own mother see. I said what do you think of the relationship with Mum and the Reverend Purnell?
- 40:30 Oh didn't say much. I said do you think it was as innocent as it looked? No no he said but we'd come home from school he used to come over see and course Mum used to say that they were sitting there reading the bloody bible and this sort of jazz and we'd come in from school and Purnell'd Reverend'd be sitting there we'd say evening Reverend and then Mum'd be sitting there all chummy. Oh she was
- 41:00 convinced she was going straight to God. No way in the world oh yeah heaven was divided into tiers and if you were reasonably good person you went to this tier and if you were a better person you went to that one. She was going right up the top she was going to sit at God's feet when she died. Yeah yeah cheated on me poor old Dad.

Tape 2

- 00:36 When the Depression hit in '20, '28 '29 '30 actually it didn't hit too bad until the 1932 that it really got hit badly. Dad got put off for a while from Klemo's but then Klemo found out he couldn't do without him cause the everything spun round Dad and he took him back on
- 01:00 reduced pay and Dad was actually only on unemployed about four months I believe so any rate Dad was Dad was only earning about four pounds a week. Had a wife and two children to look after and thirty

shillings a week to pay in rent. Now two pound 30 shillings out of two pound didn't leave much to eat to for feeding and clothing and so on and I can remember waking up to Cremorne shops and heading, the butcher was up there and I'd go up on Saturday morning with a little

- 01:30 list and I'd get a halfpenny for that. That was me pocket money, get a halfpenny for that and it'd buy one all day sucker, gum stopper you know so I'd go up to the shops. Now don't forget the butter, don't buy the butter at the supermarket, there wasn't supermarkets, at the grocers. Go next door at the delicatessen they've got butter, bulk butter it came in a 52 pound cake, the butter and we used to cut it with a like a cheese cutter you know the
- 02:00 cheese with the little wires on it like that and it cut it into 52 one pound blocks of butter and instead of being 11 pence a pound it was 10 pence about so we got that butter but then butter went off the you know. When things were, through the war and you only had limited amount of butter any rate and then course we got onto margarine then yeah yeah. Gees I hate that margarine. I will not have margarine
- 02:30 in my house now, no I have butter even if it might have some oil in it as well. I get that that mixed stuff but I will not have straight margarine, oh God it's disgusting stuff but it was dreadful in those days made out of whale oil mm. Oh it was disgusting stuff. Gee it was dreadful yeah. Where were we up to?

We've just been talking about the sorts of things that you?

Well see if we're still back in still back in Cremorne I s'pose

- 03:00 about, well about the Scouts. I joined the Scouts when we were when I was 11. Me Auntie Blanche, me Mum's Step Mum's sister came over from Melbourne and she loved me. She reckoned that I was just the ant's pants. People used to. Me Mum used to tell me I was such a dreadful boy and all this that and the other and threaten dire things to me but everybody used to think I was a beautiful little boy. Probably I was a perfect little conman probably
- 03:30 but any rate Auntie Blanche said time he joined the Scouts he's 11, it's February 194, when was I 11, '29, '39, '38, '39 time to join the Scouts. I thought oh yeah that sounds a pretty good bloody idea so she took me into town oh Auntie Blanche she took me into town to the Scout shop. The Scout shop used to be in Barrack Street and they had all these Scouts. Course scouting
- 04:00 was very, very big in those days. There were troops everywhere see and all these coloured scarves and all these coloured jackets. Some wore khaki some wore grey some wore white. No all these she brought me the whole uniform the whole bloody lot scarf and the shirt and the socks and the socks and the toggle and the whole bloody works. Photograph in there of PT Arnold in his Scouts. Loved the Scouts. Scouts was good. I went wherever I could whatever they had
- 04:30 on I would go. Go to their camps and there they'd have a camp several camps long weekends. Occasional a week but very rarely were they a week. We couldn't afford to go to Jamborees they were too expensive but I loved the Scouts and as a training principle my mother used to use scouting as a lever you don't do the right thing you don't go to Scouts see and one
- 05:00 of the things I had to do was every Tuesday night was to put the garbage bin out collection on Wednesday morning. If I forgot to put the paper the garbage bin out which I used to do you don't remember Monday, Tuesday or any other bloody day when you're a kid. You come home from school the schools finished and whatever you're doin' and if I didn't put it out I didn't go to Scouts on the Friday see so I'd remember to put the garbage bin out the next Tuesday and I'd go to Scouts and Scout Master'd say to me where were you
- 05:30 last Friday Keith? Oh I forgot to put the garbage bin out. You forgot to put the garbage bin out? Yes yes Scout yes Alf, Alf Hughes, yes Alf. If I don't put the garbage bin out I can't come to Scouts. Oh they used to make a joke about this poor old Keith don't put the garbage bin out yeah yeah but I loved the Scouts oh gee I loved 'em.
- 06:00 I went to my last Scout meeting on the Friday and I went in the army the following Monday. Yeah bloody oath right to the very end I went God I loved 'em. It was a life of its own the scouting particularly when we went out on camps. Remember one camp we went to down at Menangle. I don't know one just on the banks of the Nepean. I don't know how we got permission to go in there. Any rate we did and we put our each patrol had its own tent. We put our tents up. I was in the
- 06:30 Kookaburra patrol. We put up our tents and I was I was put on the right on side the entrance flap. There were who was in the patrol eight I think. No there was 12 of us. Six that side, six that. It was a big cab with big its own fly and all the rest of it. I'm down here in the middle. Moonlit night I remember that quite distinctly. Beautiful moonlight night it was and I'm there and something woke me up
- 07:00 and I looked up like this. There's a bloody cow it's got its head inside the inside the tent and it's right up above my face like this bloomin' cow. Well I don't, I s'pose I got a hell of a laugh see. I said at the time, bloody cow in the tent. Well we all flew out and the cow backed out. Fortunately she didn't pull the tent down. How she did it I know. Well we chased that poor bloody cow throwing cow pats at it and the buggar of a thing picking up these cow pats and heave these at the bloody cow.
- 07:30 Oh it must have been about 2 am I s'pose. Yeah I remember that real well yeah. Yeah the Scouts, gee I loved them. I was going to tell you something else about Cremorne it's just gone out of me memory now.

Had it in my mind to switch onto the Scouting yeah. But we moved from Cremorne soon after then and moved over to Cammeray. Cause Mum was able to as I said Mum was from wealthy people

- 08:00 and they she had some money her brother used to sort of an estate thing a maturity and you used to get this monthly so Mum was able to put that into her house. We brought this house at Cremorne, at Cammeray. Cost them 500 pounds and it cost another 500 pounds to renovate it. One of the old federation style you know with the little veranda
- 08:30 little veranda yeah yeah. There was something I was just going to tell you. Better not tell you that it's going on film. I found out a girl was different when I was over at Cammeray, Cremorne yeah, Forlassy Forare was her name. They lived right opposite us in Rangers Avenue and they were Fijians and she, I don't remember what she looks like but I know she was a very, very pretty girl
- 09:00 olive skin and dark hair. I think her father was Australian and her mother was Fijian but they'd come from Fiji but Forlassy used to come over and at it was our playmate see and by this time Mark had been born. Mark was born in the other house yeah. Mark then would have been oh 12 months was about 12 months old I s'pose Mark was. He's six years younger than me. That's Mark there
- 09:30 and he's a bugger for not wanting to eat his dinner you know at this stage sitting in the high chair and Mum used to stuff this bloody food into him see and he wouldn't open his bloody mouth not for anyone and Mum had to distract his attention so she'd create little poems and things see and one was his favourite. Cause it if I you heard it so often it stuck in my mind see. Forlassy Forare said oh there you are
- 10:00 when you went to her place to play. Said, "Oh no wait a minute Forlassy Forare," said, "Oh there you are when you went to her place to play." She said, "Oh I've forgotten it now. What was it now? I thought I'd remembered that. What was it? Four lines it was four lines, Forlassy Forare." Any rate Forlassy Forare used to come over to (UNCLEAR). Now this house in Cremorne was
- 10:30 ground level at the front. In fact it's one step down and the front veranda's very, very close to the there's only the front fence. It's only a short one see and then the back the block went down like that oh hell it was steep and there's a path a path down the side. It was one of our what they call a semi attached. There's a semi here and they're both one wall centre wall right down joining the two flats see two houses and
- 11:00 ours was right on the right hand side and the path went down the back and down the back there was a flight of wooden steps that could have been anything up to 15 or 20 steps it was that steep see and now Forlassy and I are doing what kids at six and seven do running round the back yard or something. Don't think we had a dog in those days. Any rate I wanted a pee see so I ducked down in the corner outside. Mum was upstairs. If she'd have known she would have murdered me any rate. So I went down
- 11:30 behind the bush down the, Forlassy was with me see and she looked and got a surprise. She said something like I haven't got one of those and I said you know, well what's yours like so she dropped her little panties and I said oh fancy that so that's how I found, when I found that girls were different to boys yeah. Forlassy Forare, dear or dear but you know how you can see, I can see that I can
- 12:00 that as plain as anything she was standing on my left hand side yeah oh dear oh dear yeah. Oh not very much happened and I don't suppose between those days we moved over to over to Cammeray. You know that would be about the extent of that of my lifetime at there yeah. Yeah but when I said Mosman School I was there I was there for a year and a half. Went out there into 5th form
- 12:30 class and stayed in 6th oh and 6th was a cold class. It was in Mosman was built of sandstone was old sandstone building. Oh shit it used to be cold in winter in that and we had to our teacher was a Mr McIntosh and he wore black pinstripe suits.
- 13:00 He had nicotine stain all around his mouth and he'd stand down the back of the class rolling cigarettes and he wouldn't stick it down he'd put that back in his pocket with his pockets his pockets must have been full of tobacco and unstuck papers. Oh he was a bugger of a teacher oh he was a dreadful man. He said to me one time
- 13:30 God it's amazing what you can remember isn't it? I can see it now. He said Arnold what are you doing? Meaning are you up to mischief see so Keith says nothing sir. I thought so come out here. Bloody he gave me three or four cuts the rotten dog he did yeah. I thought nothing wrong see I said yeah. The rotten bloody old mongrel he was so any rate we moved over we moved over to Cammeray and I finished Primary School in 6th form Cammeray
- 14:00 and Mr Ingram was the teacher there. He was as straight as an arrow took about six foot two tall like a bloody great scare crow he was Mr Ingram yeah. I did I repeated six over there. I wasn't intell [intelligent], one of my relatives or something asked how did you do in your exams Keith and I said oh pretty good pretty good. Yeah right where did you come? I said oh 36th and she said how many in the class? I said 39.
- 14:30 I wasn't dead last but bloody close yeah bloody close.

Did you enjoy school?

No I hated school. I was frightened scared. Oh you have no idea I was sick in the stomach all the time. I was scared of school scared of the teachers scared of authority cause and whether it had anything to do with Mum I don't know but I used to be so sick in the stomach oh my stomach used to turn

What were you afraid of?

15:00 over. I don't know just frightened of the teachers I think.

Frightened of them?

Frightened of them. Wasn't frightened of bringing back a bad report or anything like that. Didn't worry me it happened bugged it you can't change it but I think no I hated school. Uncomfortable I was uncomfortable all the time at school yeah. I wasn't a complete dunce I don't suppose but I found it hard. I did lack concentration

15:30 I know that. I'd used to I'd be dreaming lookin' out the window yeah like Forest remember Forest you know he used to look out the window. That was Keith lookin' out the window. That was out that was that was life out there in here wasn't bloody life. So I went to first form at Crows Nest Central and after that you that was a composite class. We did shorthand we did bookkeeping

16:00 and we did a little bit of tech drawing and we did some a bit of woodwork. I enjoyed tech drawing. My mother was an artist I've got a little painting up there was my mother's. See that little painting up there up the top? That's Wollongong. She painted that way before I was born and had one other painting that she'd done it was about the size of that oh no it was bigger than that on the canvas and it was a horses head looking over the top

16:30 of a, the bottom half of a stable door and a horses head is one of the hardest things to draw in perspective. It's so easy to distort it. It was absolutely perfect it was. A horses head and a border collie dog lying down at the at the foot and a pair of Hames, you know Hames sittin' there and me stepmother found what she thought was borer in the

17:00 wooden frame cause it was just tacked to a wooden frame and she burnt it. Just said to me this has got borer in it I'll have to burn it.

What's?

The painting.

What's?

She thought the borer would get into the house. It wasn't borers. It was probably dry rot in it or something in it that it'd been you know borer doesn't come into a frame for hanging on the wall but any rate we saved that little one up there any rate yeah but

17:30 I always enjoyed the tech drawing I used to enjoy that. I liked drawing lines I enjoyed that. I probably could have been a draftsman if I'd have stuck to it probably could have been but then I went into Dad wanted me to go into clerical work cause he'd been into clerical himself see wanted me to go into clerical work so when I went into second form I took shorthand and business principles. My shorthand teacher was a Mrs Evans. She was fat, she was yelly, she'd scream

18:00 and she'd pick up the duster and heave it 'pchoo' she would do it like you know those wooden dusters with the felt on the back Jesus she could heave that bloody duster yeah. Cause all the boys'd be making signs behind her back see and she'd wake up much whether she saw a reflection I don't know she wore glasses but she could run around and she'd pick up that bloody duster and heave it Mrs Evans yeah gees I hated her. So in June of 1941

18:30 was King's birthday weekend I went to the Daily Telegraph working for the Daily Telegraph.

Before we talk about the time at the Telegraph [newspaper, Daily Telegraph]

Right.

Can you tell me what your memories are of hearing that war had been declared?

All I remember is it was a Sunday and of course I'd be down at the Bay and I came when I came home Dad actually met me at the front door I think on the veranda or something

19:00 cause we'd been talking about the possibility of war you know for months beforehand and he said to me, "Well son war's been declared". I said "Oh yeah right fair enough." Been declared so what? I was only 11 12 11 had to be 12 cause we were just about to move in '39 wasn't it? Yeah, so I was 12 yeah. I thought probably be over before I even start to think about it

19:30 cause everybody said the war's going to be over by Christmas you know. Thought this is going to be a cinch this is knock the bloody German's over going to be a piece of cake yeah. When we, well that was all then of course of course all in the war and Dad course Dad was too old to even think about joining up even if he wanted to and then course as I said that was the period we moved over to Cammeray. Now when

- 20:00 we got over to Cammeray those old federation houses were only two bedrooms. There was a bedroom in that front portion that sticks out and then you've got the little veranda there and then the second bedroom the main bedroom's behind it and there's the lounge and then the dining room the kitchen and the bathroom and whether the parents had put this on or not or whether it was part of it but there was a third bedroom had been attached to it at back was like a skillion but a part of the house it went off the lounge room
- 20:30 that was my bedroom. So I was in there and I was very bronchial as a kid oh gee I used to get great bronchitis oh shocking and I'd get very delirious oh gees they used to frighten me those deliriums. Oh you've no idea the fear. I used to visualise massive great balls oh they were so big and they'd roll on top of me,
- 21:00 they'd roll on top of me and then somehow or other they'd pick me up and I'd be on top of them and they'd be trying to tip me off and it was oh so far down oh they were so big and they had an awful texture oh they were dreadful. I used to get these every time I got bronchitis I'd get deliriums high temper I'd go very high temperatures very high temperatures. So any rate when we got over to over to Cammeray
- 21:30 they decided that it would probably be good for me to sleep out in the fresh air. Oh I thought that's a good idea I like that idea so we put a camp stretcher or a bed out on the front veranda. I'll show you a photograph one of these of the house there. It was way up on top of a oh probably 30 or 40 foot quarry a quarry had been cut out our house way to buggery up there. From the front veranda we could look right over to The Spit away across right over to Middle Harbour
- 22:00 and over to The Spit and oh gee beautiful spot, beautiful view on this front veranda we put a canvas blind down there for the inclement weather see and if I woke up in the middle of the night and I found I was wet well it was raining so I thought oh well I'll pull the bloody blind down see so I'm all snug up there in 1942 and next thing Mum was shaking the living daylight out of me. She says there's an air raid Keith there's an air raid. Sirens are going like mad and there's shells booming and bangs going
- 22:30 and explosions going, the submarines see. Oh was a hell of a bloody din. Well we had certain things we had to do. Dad was an air raid warden so he pops out, puts his helmet on and away he goes. Mum comes out, wake me up see. Wakes, she already woke Mark up, Mark's inside the house see and it's several things we had to do. One we had to turn off the gas down at the meter. Two was to fill the bath with water
- 23:00 right and we already probably had a bucket of sand somewhere, bucket of something or other. So any rate Mum comes out wakes me up. There's an air raid there's a raid and she says go and turn the gas off. Yes righto Mum so I toddle down the steps turn the bloody gas off go back to bed. Bang there's bangs going down the we can't see the harbour from where we are see. It's only just over the road really when you think of it. If you go as the crow flies it's probably only about a mile down to where and all these bloody explosions going off
- 23:30 see. So I got back into bed. Next thing came storming back out again. She said what are you doing back in bed? I said "Mum if I'm going to get blown up I might as well be in bed as anywhere else." "You're going to come inside and look after me. Mark's already underneath the table." We still had that big old oak table. "Mark's already underneath the table. I've filled the bath your father's gone I'll I'm you've got to come in and look after me." "Alright Mum." So we sat down oh it didn't last very long. They put the, you know LP siren [?] on
- 24:00 fairly quickly actually. I don't know it could have been an hour maybe I don't know but any rate yeah. Oh if I was going to get clobbered cop it in bed bummer it and that's what I was going to tell you. Jumping out while we were at Cremorne I was into Sunday School and Sunday School was just up near my Public School at Neutral Bay see so I used to walk from
- 24:30 Cremorne choop choop choop choop choop oh a mile or a bit more to Sunday School see and I was forbidden several things. I was not allowed to read comics. The only no comics were bad for you. The only comic I could read was the Sunday Telegraph comic cause that was only Ginger Meggs, it's harmless see. Not allowed to read comics. Two, I was not allowed to go anywhere near Military Road, main road Military Road lot of traffic, trams
- 25:00 and a few cars, there weren't many cars. So I was seven so it was 1934. I go to Sunday School and I knew there was a comic exchange shop see and what you did there you'd buy half a dozen comics and you'd exchange 'em take 'em back after you'd read them and you'd exchange 'em and cost you another couple of pence to buy more oh stacks of these bloody comics you see and they had 'em lined up open in the in the window to display you know so I
- 25:30 knew that was there. Oh wanted to see those comics so after Sunday School instead of straight home round the corner into Military Road and there's the comic book across the road, double tram lines and a bit of traffic going up. You didn't have much traffic in those days, '34, 1934 people didn't have many cars there wasn't much traffic. The trams were the big thing but any rate for some reason or other two cars were parked against the kerb next door to each other probably
- 26:00 no cars another 150 yards up there but Keith decides he's going to step off the road straight into the

comic shop between these two cars. I took a step forward and phchoo and I stepped back again. Four blokes on bikes they were actually professional cyclists see. Two and two abreast sshst they're doing about 60 kilometres an hour away they go down Military Road see I see them go alright. I take a next step and stepped right in front of one.

- 26:30 All I knew from taking that step forward was to subconsciousness again out in the middle of the second tram line I'd been thrown half way across this bloody Military Road tram line. There's a tram coming down the bloody track clank clank clank about, you don't know how beautiful those bloody old trams were clank clank clank clank you young fellers missed the joys of life being born so late. Anyhow this bloody trams be round and I thought
- 27:00 I must have tripped over the tram line see so I pick meself up down I bloody go again. The trams' still clank clank I can't get up. Tram stopped about there. The driver woke up that something happened see and I couldn't get up again. My leg kept collapsing. Didn't feel it didn't feel a thing so somebody on the footpath saw what happened and came over and he said oh I said oh I can't stand up. He said oh I think you've hurt your knee
- 27:30 see so he picks me up and carries me and puts me on the footpath and then it turns out that he's got a car was one of these cars parked there and he happened to know Dad see so I told him when I told him what my name was. I said I don't know what happened he said oh I think you just hurt your knee. What happened to the poor old cyclist I've got no idea. He must have had a hell of a dint in his bike oh he must have done. He must have nearly turned that bike inside out. I have no idea what happened to the cyclist,
- 28:00 no idea at all. So anyhow he popped me into the front seat of his car and the pain started see. Leg started to throb oh gees oh it's sore so anyway popped me home laid me on a we had one of those lie lows on the front veranda in that house one of those cane lie lows things popped me onto that. By this time me leg's goin' up like this see bones shattered. Of course they got the old doctor down
- 28:30 Dr Deakin was the local doctor. They got him down. Oh he said he said he's broken his leg so when I told him the story of what happened Christ was looking after Christ told you were told not to go across Military Road. This is God taken out his repr, I thought oh God bloody things. They straightened my leg out oh shit that hurt oh Jesus yeah. Up to Mater Misericordia Hospital x-rayed. Oh gees that x-ray scared me oh
- 29:00 I was so scared. Everything about that bloody room scared me and the x-ray they had to do it with (UNCLEAR) Speed Gordon (UNCLEAR) didn't mean to probably thought it was a bloody laser gun or something. I can see it now Jesus I can see that bloody thing up there. Well it'd shattered me thigh that bike had two inches. They had to take two inches of that bloody bone out. It was just shattered like broken glass yeah and then they wired the two broken pieces together
- 29:30 and it it's only when I had a hip replacement I actually finally saw it in an x-ray this little twist of wire they wired together and they put me in traction for three months in Mater Misericordia. Leg up in a bloody frame. Did a pretty good job but it was still then about three quarters or nearly an inch short yeah I used to have to sit much like that that's how me foot was until 1999 and they gave me a hip replacement
- 30:00 and they gave me me leg back and me two ankles can touch now after 64 years me two ankles can look at each other yeah I'm grateful for that yeah yeah three months in traction yeah. Used to give me some trouble but not bad though not bad considering. I was never allowed to do very much then. I couldn't play football. I used to I used to play football I wasn't allowed to but they always feared that if I got a bash there it'd smash it again. It was pretty bad for a while.
- 30:30 Yeah that's one of the things I really yeah.

There's when the attack in Sydney Harbour happened

Yeah.

You mentioned that your dad picked up his helmet and ran out of the house. What was his?

An air raid warden an ARP [Air Raid Precautions] Air Raid Warden. They used to have to go out with the with the gas mask and they had a tin helmet on and patrol the streets to an air raid warden yeah.

Why did he decide to join up for this?

- 31:00 I s'pose he I don't know. Maybe because he didn't do anything in the in the First World War couldn't do anything in the second and thought he if he should do something for the community I s'pose. Nearly every nearly every male in the suburbs that were still at home the elder males were air raid wardens yeah. Their job was to wander round and any sentries dropped down well they you know call something call the Fire Brigades or whatever you might yeah they were air raid wardens
- 31:30 yeah Dad.

Did you guys in the family follow the news of the war much what campaigns were happening or?

No, no we didn't actually. I s'pose well we must have we must have cause we only had radio of course don't forget we only had radio and we used to listen to the ABC news at seven o'clock at night.

32:00 Dad used to read the used to bring home the Mirror but no I've got to admit that we were very offhand about around about it until it started to go on for years of course and then when we thought it Australia became involved with the Japs and it looked like it might be going on for a few more years and then I would probably be old enough to join up

32:30 but we didn't get told much. Censor censorship was oh strict censorship was strict oh yeah. They didn't tell us they didn't tell us. They never told us about all the ships that got sunk out in Tasman in the Tasman Sea you know. It's only been since I've been reading that I realised there's over 20, 20 I think it was 23 ships were actually sunk in the Tasman Sea throughout the war. The Jap subs came down here and sunk 'em.

33:00 We did hear about the Centaur [hospital ship] because that was that was pretty traumatic when that got torpedoed.

What did you hear?

The hospital ship yeah.

Can you tell me about hearing about that?

No I don't I don't remember all that much about that. Just know that there was all this you know oh how dreadful they've torpedoed a hospital ship and then of course a lot of rumours circulate still circulate that we actually had arms on board the ship by then we were we carried arms

33:30 yeah and that the Japs had known it. The Japs [Japanese] maintain that they didn't realise it was a hospital ship. I've read, I found the book from the Japanese point of view that the Jap sub forces and the actual Jap that sank it. He maintained right to the end that as I said he didn't realise it was a hospital ship. Cause he reckoned the seas were high

34:00 enough that they were obscuring but it was fully lit. Every light on the ship was aglow. See this bloody great Red Cross on it yeah but apart from that we didn't hear a great deal we didn't hear very much at all really about the war.

Did the war I guess affect your life much? Was there much of a change after war was declared?

Yeah I had to eat bloody margarine

34:30 but being quite honest no. The war did not affect us very much in Australia very much well my opinion is any rate because probably because I was too young. If I'd have had elder brothers that went to the war it probably would have had a bigger impact. The only impact it had was the fact that everything was blacked out. We had to put blackout curtains on our on our windows and we were limited to what we

35:00 could buy in food. Tea was limited butter was limited sugar was limited but it didn't affect us that much because we were only very moderate eaters we and one thing in my stepmother always maintained that the butter was to be spread on and spread off again so we put it on and scrape it off again. No it really didn't really affect us. No our lifestyle didn't

35:30 change all that much not really.

Was there much of a change around Sydney? Did were there more troops around and military ships?

Oh yeah course troops were everywhere. All you saw was khaki. Every man you saw every able bodied person was in khaki. If it wasn't a Yank it was Australian yeah and everything in town of course was blacked out. All the buildings had blacked out windows and they had anti shatter stuff on the windows and all the big buildings had sand bagging round them

36:00 and that the GPO [General Post Office] for argument's sake it had oh six or eight feet of sandbags all the way from I don't know whether the GPOs still the same it had that big concourse down and marble pillars all along Martin Place and it used to come round into George Street. Well right from that place in George Street all the way down right round right and back up then into Pitt Street was all sandbags with only

36:30 a couple of little openings there just to get in into the building yeah. That was that was the big but it didn't affect our lives. It was well didn't me it was there that was it was there. I was one of those fellers that I s'pose I always am I still am if it's there well it's bloody there what are you going to do about it you know part of life yeah it was just part of life I suppose.

Did you enjoy sort of going into the city

37:00 **and watching the troops and the movement and all that sort of thing?**

Didn't ever see any I never ever saw any of those march past marching down. I was working apart from you know from '41 onwards in which was all the all the years never had an opportunity although there weren't all that many. I think they if I remember rightly the 7th Div, I think the 7th Div marched down Sydney

- 37:30 marched down from George Street but I wouldn't be sure about that but when the 6th went over the first that was the first division to go overseas with 6th div although they sneaked away very quietly. There was there was no fanfare cause we didn't tell much. If they said too much and too many flag wavers well we're telling the Germans and the Japs that we were bloody well coming didn't they you know but the Japs didn't know. They were stupid any rate cause the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mary and Aquitania, the Mauritania
- 38:00 four of the biggest ships in the whole bloody world all sitting in Sydney Harbour hey? Jesus they were big ships that Queen Mary, the Queen Elizabeth but there were four of them there were Mauritania the Aquitania the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mary all in Neutral Bay Neutral Bay Harbour. That's how big our Harbour is darlin'. When Phillip walked in there when Phillip rowed in there he said this every ship of the line of the world can park here. Bloody near could cause we had
- 38:30 those four massive great ships. We had our Australian ships we had the American warships yeah. I don't think that that Chicago one there but we still had American ships come in. See they went. They went off on the on the first on the first convoy and then it would be oh probably six months or more before they came back for the second convoy but we just saw them there and they said oh yeah the troops and more troops go the 7th Div's goin' over, the 9th Div's
- 39:00 goin' over and then the 8th Div's goin' over to Singapore and all that sort of jazz and as far as I was concerned oh well that's it you know we're at war they've got to go. It was nice seeing those big ships. I did have an opportunity before yeah while I was still in the Scouts so it must have been just prior to the war a British aircraft carrier the Indefatigable came into
- 39:30 Sydney Harbour and we were able to tour over it. Gee that was a nice sight to us boys eye opener. Oh to see such a massive great ship and it wasn't one of their biggest aircraft carriers, was an aircraft carrier. Wasn't one of their biggest but it seemed so big to us blokes. We'd only seen the Manly Ferries you know. Manly Ferry we used to love the Manly Ferry yeah if the sea was rough oh gees we used to love that. Go over purposely try and catch the last ferry over
- 40:00 from Circular Quay to Manly the last ferry when the weather was too bad we'd go on that. Jesus that was that was something. They used to have to go right outside the Heads because the waves used to come in there something incredible. They couldn't go across them see into Manly used to go way to buggery out and have to do a quick turnaround and come in on the surf and get across that way. Oh we used to love that. Roy Treed and I, me mate, best mate old Roy,
- 40:30 Roy and I. We loved to get on that last ferry last ferry to Manly then we'd catch the tram back or the bus back from Manly.

Tape 3

00:38 Talking about the atmosphere around Sydney

Oh the atmosphere around Sydney yeah.

OK. Yeah you were talking about blacked out windows and

Oh yeah well that's about that's about the only thing that was obvious that the war there was a war about. Everything was well there was sandbags there were sandbags on everything

- 01:00 that's right I described about the Grace GPO and the clock was taken down of course you we not know why I don't know so the Japs wouldn't know what time it bloody was what time it was when they bombed us I s'pose. I don't think they came in there to look when they threw a few shells into Bondi. They shelled us a couple of times you know apart from the subs. They shelled Bondi a couple of times. Didn't do very much damage I
- 01:30 think most of the shells landed out in the in the on the beach and they also threw a couple into Newcastle when on one occasion. Again it didn't do no casualties very, very little very little damage. Bit much like the air raids on Townsville. They dropped all the bombs in bloody Townsville Harbour one didn't not one landed on shore apparently yeah. They did they bombed Townsville a couple of times. Never dropped one on shore all landed in the bloody water but
- 02:00 that was all. Our life went on pretty much the same as normal you know because the job I was doing had to had to be done. The papers had to come out every day and it was just that I was involved in with the newspaper. Cinemas went on the same as everything else. People went out to the pictures every night. They still went to their restaurants.

- 02:30 We didn't have any clubs or anything like that. Pubs shut at six of course. They did that for bloody years before the war so that didn't change anything pubs shutting at six o'clock. I know something I forgot to tell you too when I was talking about old Auntie Blanche. That was another thing she did. She took me to my first long feature film and I saw Errol Flynn in Captain Blood. Well and it was on bloody tele the other day and I didn't know it. Yeah it was on tele
- 03:00 on Fox on Tuesday and I didn't know. I would have watched it just for the sake of seeing it again. Captain Blood yeah. God I reckon that was fabulous sitting up in the State Theatre watching Captain Blood. Oh that was fabulous film that yeah that was with me old Aunt Blanche but yeah well that's how life just went just went on the same.

What rumours were going around Sydney about the war and about danger to Sydney?

- 03:30 Oh that was well nothing like we've got now. It's nothing like the feeding we're getting now about the terrorists and all the business nothing like that at all except that they kept telling us particularly after the fall of Singapore that was a hell of a bloody shock to us because like everybody else throughout the world we thought Singapore was impregnable. They had those 14 inch bloody guns pointing out to sea for Christ sake. Nobody's going to land on
- 04:00 Singapore. We've got big 14 inch cannons yeah problem was the buggers couldn't turn round inland so we didn't have what we've got now. Nothing like what we've got now nothing. Enough to say that Singapore had landed the Japs were coming down at the business and our blokes were fighting for the lick at their lives up in New Guinea.
- 04:30 Coral Sea livened things up a little bit but again we didn't hear much. We didn't know the Lexington had been sunk in the Coral Sea. We didn't realise what sort of a battle it was. We just got the, from my point of view others might have found it different. It might have been in newspapers. I didn't read the newspapers bugger it I didn't read a newspaper. I'd turn over the next page and look at Bluey and Curly the cartoon strips and I didn't read the didn't read
- 05:00 the newspapers I thought what's happening is bloody happening.

Was there much fear at all of the Japanese invading?

No I don't think we did. No when the subs were in the harbour that scared the possum in a few people but Coral Sea. When we thought we might have been fairly close fairly close to an invasion then I think but I don't think it altered our lifestyle not in my case. We

- 05:30 thought well if it landed if it happens it happens you know. I don't know. My personally I was I always had a great admiration for our soldiers our troops they still do they're my heroes the Australian soldier. He's a better bloke than I'd ever be. I could never put up with what some of our diggers did. No bloody way could I have. Course you never know what you can do when the circumstances are put in front of you
- 06:00 but life just went on we thought oh well. We didn't know Darwin had been bombed 52 bloody times we had no idea. Nobody knew that had happened till after the war way after the war 52 times. We didn't know Broome had been bombed and all those bloody flying boats and all those people killed there. All those people from the from the islands all the Dutch people all the evacuees from from Java and those places. There was there was
- 06:30 something like half a dozen or more flying these massive bloody great flying boats and they were in Broome Harbour. The Japs came down and blasted the bloody lot. Killed hundreds of people there hundreds of 'em cause they'd only just landed in these flying boats yeah we didn't hear anything about that.

Why is that?

Censorship not to cause panic I s'pose. They kept as much from I think they kept as much from you know in the First World War they used to

- 07:00 put out lists of the casualties casual lists and put em I don't think we ever did that here pretty sure we didn't not in the Second World War. That was that was a big feature of the First World War all these lists used to be all the, with the casualties, great lists hundreds and hundreds but we didn't do that in the Second World War.

Was there anything that you heard which made you feel like joining up?

Oh yeah wanted to have a crack at the Japs bloody oath oh yeah

- 07:30 yeah that's why I wanted to join the navy. I tried to I thought we could get to Roy and I yeah we went down to the navy together. He got knocked back because he hadn't completed his schooling but Roy couldn't say he was not bright. He is a good bloke bloody good mate but he didn't finish school he only finished went to 6th class see and I don't think he passed the education test to get to the navy. No we'd thought we'd probably get into the PT [Patrol Torpedo] boats or
- 08:00 Fairmiles. We had a crack at that. We thought oh that would be great caper flying round the boat and boats that do 45 knots on the bloody water. We thought that would be great caper but we didn't we

couldn't get in there and Roy wasn't 18 until July of '45 so he probably never ever got a call up but by that time they wouldn't have been doing any more call ups. I think I was one of the last drafts called up actually.

What kind of things would inspire you to join up?

To do what?

What kind of

08:30 things would inspire you to join up?

Be part of modern part of it more than anything. Modern part of it because we knew all these terms we knew enough of the battles. We didn't hear the great detail we didn't realise that in the Middle East for argument's sake that the battle went from one end right up to the other and then right back again

09:00 and then right up a third time see. We heard about El Alamein when we started the push when Montgomery, we thought found all the artillery the greatest artillery barrage of all history. We heard about that because it was good stuff good news we were on the bloody way back again. We heard about Tobruk. We didn't probably didn't realise just how drastic Tobruk was but we heard about the 9th Divvy [Division]

09:30 of course how they'd stuck that out for 10 bloody months gave it to the Poms and the Pom's lost it straight away but they did alright they did that in the First World War any rate we took some blokes when we took Gaza our Light Horse took Gaza in the First World War and because the Poms wanted to be the first in there they told us to retire so that the Light Horse backed out and retired. It took them another three months before the Poms got into Gaza and they lost something like 100,000 bloody men doing it.

10:00 Yeah our Light Horse galloped in jumped the hedges. Gaza apparently is surrounded by thorny hedges thorny hedges and the Light Horse just jumped in jumped over there and right into the middle of Gaza. We've got the town and they the bloody Poms called 'em back that was three months while they did the bloody same in they did the same in New Guinea in Middle East they pushed us back well they got pushed back. We had, we hung on for 10 months, the 9th Div

10:30 see.

Was there much of these kind of stories of the Poms during the war?

No no. Well I can't say no it wasn't I wasn't aware of it let's put it that way you know.

What kind of stories would they be telling you?

We heard the good news we heard the good news of, well we heard about the Sydney sinking the Bartolomeo Colleoni in

11:00 in the Mediterranean. We heard about our Scrap Iron Flotilla which was the hen, the Waterhen. What was some of those other bloody destroyers? Forget now. Waterhen was one of them. I remember Waterhen cause I had a mate after the war that was in the Waterhen, got blown out of it. They called the Scrap Iron Flotilla, we heard about that because that was pretty important and

11:30 it was encouraging news see when you hear about how they were supposed how they were able to beat away the Luftwaffe [German Air Force] and how they were able to get the stores and everything which could be better news but they kept the bad news from us pretty much yeah.

How was it communicated?

Quarter of an hour or half an hour ABC news and whatever was front line on the Telegraph and the Mirror. The Telegraph and the Herald in the morning and the Mirror and the Sun in the afternoon were the two Sydney papers

12:00 and if it was good news it was bloody blazing right across big black you know Tobruk held out held out Tobruk. Sydney sank the Bartolomeo Colleoni yeah and all that sort of jazz but we didn't have hear about the Sydney being sunk for a long while though when she went down we didn't hear about that for a long while. That was bad news that was discouraging news which was probably a good idea I s'pose. We heard enough about Tobruk

12:30 but nothing great detail you know but they just said that our troops had been our 39th Battalion choccos that were the first to meet the Japs up there and they'd fought their way with fighting withdrawal all the way back down. By that time of course the 7th Div [Division] had come back from the Middle East and Curtin and Churchill they had a big argument about that as you know and Churchill wanted a

13:00 garrison at bloody Calcutta and India and Burma and anywhere on there that he could and landing even landed some of them some of the 7th got landed on Java and then the rest of them went straight up to New Guinea and they relieved the poor old militia. They were they were good troops those bloody militia they were good troops. Most of them were untrained you know. One bloke had to ask the CO [Commanding Officer] how to fix his bayonet on. Another bloke had to

13:30 ask how to change his magazine on his Bren. No training and yet they fought those bastards. 10,000 Australians, 40,000 Japs.

Would people talk about the war regularly?

I s'pose there were groups that did. I wasn't in a position to. During those early war years we had a as I said our house was built up on this bloody great quarry

14:00 well there were three shops built into what had been the quarry base. T'was a little general grocery store a bloke by the name of Fusedale owned that. I used to do a bit of work for him part time afterwards. Oh he thought the sun shined out of me. He was a nice old bloke. Mean as duddy dirty (UNCLEAR) but a nice old bloke. Fuso was there. There was a delicatessen I think was the next one. Was only the two shops that's right two shops then a couple of houses in this bloody chopped out

14:30 piece of quarry sandstone quarry and Fusedale was a member of Toc H [charitable organisation] that was an old English that was formed in something in the Boer War I think that was actually formed and their idea was to I don't even know what Toc H stood TOC capital H what it stood for but they were s'posed to be backing up the fighting men. Bit like Legacy I s'pose

15:00 and they used to have this meeting in a garage which was two or three doors down car garage and he got me to go down there. And we used to set up doing making camouflage nets with the bloody thingo disso and we had we'd do things like that so you we'd be talking about the war pretty much there I s'pose but I don't think we did talk that much about the war

15:30 honestly I don't remember. Not enough for it to be you know in my conscious unconscious mind, subconscious mind.

So thinking about that what was it that made you like change to want to join up?

Be in it I s'pose. Well everybody was going. See from the as I say from the time I started work in '41 that was when things were starting to get

16:00 between '39 and '41 things were fairly quiet right and then course from '41 things were hotting up a fair bit and when I saw all the all the mates all the blokes go from the from the Daily Telegraph all the able bodied males they all go you sort of became part of that then yeah. In fact one of the fellers there he was actually the Man the Department Manager bloke. What was his name? Wouldn't have a clue. I liked him he was a real

16:30 oh he was a larrikin type of bloke he was and he was joined he joined up and he went in the 2/2nd Pioneers he was. He joined 2/2nd Pioneers and he was up in New Guinea. He must have been with not the choccos he was AIF [Australian Imperial Force] so he must have been with one of the REOs [Regulars?] I s'pose before 7th came cause a few drafts

17:00 went up there as REOs and he came back on back on leave about it for about 12 months later and yeah I wanted to know if he killed any Japs I remember asking that cause I was only 15 you see. Did you kill any Japs sort of thing but Pioneers they did the hard work they didn't do much fighting that's bloody hard work the Pioneers yeah but it was the fact that the

17:30 that the war was there. You were conscious of it all the time even if you weren't talking about it. As I said earlier everywhere you looked was khaki see. Everywhere was khaki. There wasn't a wasn't a male able bodied male in Sydney was all khaki. Didn't matter where you went or what you did you found them down on the beach you found 'em at Bourke you found 'em walking down George Street or in the in the theatres the diggers'd be wandering into there and then

18:00 you'd probably see some then they'd disappear because they'd be going overseas and then a new batch'd come along and new call ups and so on but being the type of person I am I s'pose I wasn't inquisitive. The news said it was such and such I said oh well that's happened but I was desperate to get in the forces oh yeah bloody oath I wanted to have a crack. Don't know whether it was wanted me do it or I know when they graded, grouped me

18:30 A2 in the out of the air force. I said well I remember saying I joined the army to fight Japs not to bloody push a pen see. He said mate if you're pushing a pen I told you you're helpin' cause for every front line soldier there's three behind him isn't there yeah and they're just as important as the bloke that's got the gun yeah. But oh yes I was desperate I really wanted to join that navy in '44, yeah I wanted to join that.

Why the navy particularly?

19:00 Because I could get in at 17. Had to wait to 18 for the army see oh yeah oh and I was a baby faced boy. At 18 I could pass for 14 year old. I could get half fare on the on the trams. Oh I was baby faced very baby faced I was. You know I don't show me age now I don't suppose really. A lot of people tell me I don't look me age but any rate don't feel it either but no that was the only reason the navy

19:30 to be fighting and I but oh happy to be on the water I like the water yeah never got seasick I never got seasick. Even when we even when we went to Japan we hit two cyclones on the way out, boy that was a mess still.

And did you try for the navy?

Hm?

And you tried for the navy?

Oh yeah tried for the navy yeah went down enrolled and everything. Yeah, did a medical and all the rest of it but I had bad teeth

- 20:00 dentally unfit yeah they marked it yeah but the army soon (UNCLEAR) that they pulled 'em all out for me said we'll fix that up for you feller yank, yank, yank, yank yeah I had bad teeth yeah. Well you know considering the condition my mother was in see and they probably didn't expect me to survive anyway so they in those days there wasn't a pre natal training that the mother's get these days
- 20:30 plenty of calcium and all that sort of business and she probably went through the pregnancy hoping that I'd be still born probably and might have even helped to might have taken the TB [tuberculosis] out of her system for her. Well these funny things were in those days you know when you're talking back in 1927 there were a lot of superstition things you know and not a damn sight more superstition about those sort of things than there is these days yeah see I was
- 21:00 probably born with chalky bones. That's why that that leg snapped as much as it did and why me teeth were crook. Oh they were dreadful. Couldn't hold a filling. Couldn't have a tooth filled in it'd fall out again. Tooth'd crumble all round it. Oh gee that was the thing to do. Couldn't afford a dentist. We used to go to the dental hospital in up in Redfern. In those days they didn't have electric drills they had pedal operated drills. The doctor dentist just used to push this bloody pedal and of course it'd go 'zzt zzt zzt zzt zzt'
- 21:30 of shit oh yeah oh they were bloody murder they were, oh Jesus. I used to have to go I'd leave school and go down to Man I was at Mosman then Mosman school. I'd hop on the tram to go down to Mosman wharf and onto the ferry over to Circular Quay straight after school half past three or three o'clock whatever school got out three o'clock wasn't it? Then the bus up the tram up then to the dental hospital and get this oh gees that used to
- 22:00 be oh God that used to be purgatory it was purgatory oh gees and then catch the bus back home again. Now I did I did that at probably eight or nine year old see. Now you wouldn't let a kid of nine year old now catch a tram and a ferry and another tram would you? You'd wonder what the hell had happened if you yeah used to go over oh that went on for several years
- 22:30 these well oh that wasn't every week probably every couple of weeks or something we went there and they put a gold filling a gold inlay in between these two front ones. Well that bloody thing kept falling out teeth are crumbling yeah.

So did you have a, what was the feeling like walking into a dentist?

Oh absolute purgatory mate oh purgatory oh you've got no idea. Today's current drills and everything

- 23:00 it got later laser and then you know they actually give you an injection well they didn't do that to didn't give you an injection those days. They just drilled away and if it hit a bloody nerve it hit a bloody nerve and that oh yeah, oh I'll say we used to do some screaming. Oh God I used to be sick in the guts with nerves oh God yeah.

So why would your teeth matter to the navy?

Oh probably I'd say because

- 23:30 well medical situations on a on a war ship are pretty bloody basic. They probably got a Chief Petty Officer as a medical orderly or something or other and dental dentistry would pretty be pretty basic even if non existent probably see yeah.

Take us through a medical. What was the process?

Now you've got me thinking haven't you hey now you've got me thinking

- 24:00 I know we had to bend over and say aah. Pull your cheeks apart and say aah, so aah. It's to see if we had piles, haemorrhoids. We had piles on them too oh dear. No, a medical consisted of a chest x-ray
- 24:30 sounding the chest with the old stethoscope bloody business tap tap here and tap tap there and tap tap there, back of the mouth look at your tongue in and out feel the for glands that sort of business. Pee in a bottle and they'd check on give that a test of some sort. Put a bit of litmus paper something out to see if it turned blue or what colour. Check the old feller out to see that there were no sores on that or anything like that and as I say bend over
- 25:00 pull your cheeks apart and say aah but you went aah. Looked at your feet between the toes looked at your hands between the fingers all that all that sort of things yeah that was a medical. Generally took overall a couple of days. You'd go in and of course you had to queue you were in a bloody queue of three four five hundred blokes see and lot of standing around in the army mate a lot of standing around in the army

25:30 and there's one rule in the army. You never stand up if you can sit down and you never sit down if you can lie down so you lie down and wait, wait, wait, wait, you wait you wait for hours in the army wait for hours so you go through you're do this little bit of a section you might come back the next day for another bit of the bit of the medical.

What kind of things would you chat about in line?

26:00 I probably how we well one bloke might be going crook about getting his bloody collar up hey somebody might some of the blokes got called up didn't want to go in the army no but we were called up. Everyone every everybody as soon as they turned 18 doesn't matter who they were they got a call up and the only way you could get out of it was if you were doing university studies for and only certain courses that had to be probably doctors and the like sorts that do

26:30 university otherwise they went in too if they were non essential courses. You might be going crook about that or he might be going crook about leaving his misses or another bloke might be talking about his thank Christ I'll be able to get away from the misses for a while you know so all these all these different attitudes. Wouldn't have a clue who could have been in line. When I went for the navy Roy was behind me. Roy and I went in there together. I was in front and Roy was behind and he was chatting away about

27:00 you know what we'd do when we get in the bloody navy yeah. Oh we were sure we were real sure we were going to get in Roy and I were yeah we were sure we were going to get in the navy yeah but neither of us did yeah but as the talk general talk general talking. Blokes'd be puffing away on their fags I s'pose and somebody else might be saying where'd you come what'd you do what'd you do in civvies. One bloke who might be from might

27:30 be out from out west somewhere. He might have been a jackeroo or might have been a rous-a-bout or a, you know publican and all sorts of things but that's general conversation yeah yeah. Not like the bloke that that joined the queue in Russian, joined the queue see and he said to the bloke in front he said what're we queuing for and the bloke turns round and he says oh for bread and the bloke at the back says oh yeah alright so they're standing there and a couple of hours later and the queue's not movin' so the bloke at the back says

28:00 who calls this queuing business and the bloke says oh that's that bloody Petrov, bloke Petrov. Oh yeah who's he? Oh that's the bloke down at the Kremlin. Oh the other feller says I'm goin' down to shoot that bastard so away he goes see and three or four hours later he comes back the queue hasn't moved he joins in behind it and the bloke says well how did you go? He said I the bloody queue was longer than this one so I couldn't wait yeah.

28:30 Were there any stories of people managing to get out of service who were called up?

Not until not until we got into service we heard of heard of a few stories but not all not all that many. You had to be pretty good to get out of a call up by gees you did yeah you had to be pretty good to get out of story get out of it.

29:00 By that time we were givin' the Japs a bit of a bloody hiding and of course the Yanks had been in it for three years then and they were pushing things along pushing things along pretty well and I think most I think most of us hoped that the bloody war'd last long enough for us to get stuck into them not wasting our time as much as anything I s'pose yeah but when we when we

29:30 got into it no I don't I don't ever think I ever heard of any stories of blokes wanting to get out. I know of fellers that got put out once we got in. One poor bugger he was he was a sad case actually. We were in Cowra basic training and they'd only been there a few days and this bloke turns up and he's got all

30:00 scaley skin oh he looked dreadful like a bloody like a fish he looked like oh dreadful and was a dreadful colour looked like dirt looked like he'd never had a scrub in his life and a couple of the fellers in the hut, the tough fellers, cause one thing about it if you're in the army if you don't if you don't abide by the basic rules you're in bloody trouble. And one thing you'll find about the Australians is they bath, they hate being dirty right and

30:30 if they when they saw this bloke and never saw him go to the shower see and they thought he was dirty so they grabbed this feller see they said we'll get the, you won't they grabbed him one bloody day took him over to the bloody showers and with a bloody scrubbing brush scrubbed the poor bastard. Turned out he had a skin complaint and the poor bugger used to go to the shower at five o'clock in the morning when everybody was still asleep see so of course he got out but that's the sort of thing that does happen in the army. You don't get dirty

31:00 in the army, you wash even if you don't want to bloody shave you still wash you keep you keep yourself clean because you're dealing with all these fellers. Even the worst conditions, even in Changi, even in the blood on the railway they captives there they washed themselves that's why we had fewer the Australians had fewer deaths in on the railway than the Poms did. Poms were dying two to one to us cause they didn't wash. Their hygiene was bad. They didn't have hygiene, see the first thing the Australians did he'd dig himself a pit toilet but the Pom's

31:30 didn't they'd just go and do things in the blood in the bush and they were they were sick. They were dying two to one from our fellers yeah.

How did you feel when they said you couldn't be in the navy?

Oh broken hearted I was yeah ,oh yeah. I was I'd worked myself I thought I was goin' in yeah I thought I was goin' in yeah.

And what about your brother?

Me brother was too young he's six years younger than me yeah yeah.

- 32:00 Yeah he met although he got into they he got the NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organisation] call up in '52, 1952 he did his three months, six months or what six months I think they did and then they were on reserve for something or other for another two years afterwards. Yeah he did that yeah.

And how were the Japanese depicted to you?

Hmm?

How were the Japanese depicted?

Oh by that by that time

- 32:30 they were they were depicted to us as pretty bloody fanatical. We didn't hadn't heard anything about the atrocities at that stage. We did know about the atrocities in China before the war because that was big news when the with the rape of Shanghai that was pretty big news but by that stage or throughout the war when we heard the way they bloody come down there through the islands they pushed everything
- 33:00 way in front of us. They were we thought Jesus they're not we're not goin' to stop these buggers you know and then we when they started to we started to slow them down once we beat 'em at on Kokoda and particularly at Milne Bay Milne Bay was the one Milne Bay was the big turning point when they landed at Milne Bay and forget now what the Italians were. Most of 'em were choccos were garrisoning at Milne Bay and they repulsed 'em they turned 'em back. Air force helped a lot there the air force did
- 33:30 a bloody good job there but we sort of heard how fanatical they were because they'd stick out they'd die we knew that they were out to die before they'd surrender before they'd give up yeah. We were surprised that there were prisoners of war out there at Cowra actually the Japs cause we didn't think any of them would be captured the way cause that was fairly common knowledge they were fanatical yeah and then the way they hung on at Buna
- 34:00 and Gona, Sanananda those places they hung on there, they were bad fights, bad wars.

And how were they represented in say the press or cartoons or?

Oh those slant eyed bow legged slant eyed bow legged with glasses yeah. Oh early in the piece they were going to be done over like a hot dinner that they were bow legged they were

- 34:30 small they were small statute they couldn't shoot they couldn't do this. They proved us bloody wrong didn't they and they told us that the plane their aeroplane's were no good and that our Wirraways oh they were goin' to knock 'em out of the sky and poor little Wirraway. Can only do 120 knots the Wirraway and the Japs came in with these bloody Zeros [Japanese fighter aircraft] doin' 300 and we that caught us napping by crikey it did yeah but see that was about as much as we heard throughout
- 35:00 the war and it was a long fairly long while after the war until we heard about the atrocities. We didn't have hear about the railway for a long while Burma railway that was that was very quiet for a long while. Cause a lot of those blokes didn't get back till well about the time we'd gone to Japan six months after see yeah.

And was there a fear once they started moving down south describe how?

Oh after Coral Sea we were gettin' a bit edgy

- 35:30 but as far as I was concerned life just went on the same. Went to work and went home and earnt 10 bob a week.

How did that perception of bow legged small easy to beat fighters how did that change during the war or did it change?

Oh well when we found out that they were such tenacious buggers and then we'd heard about their, the samurai business and all that sort of jazz. See that started to filter back from the blokes that that were coming back

- 36:00 see. That's when we heard about it more when they were relieved when the 39th and all those choco battalions when they started to come back to Australia see then we then we heard about that how they how they stuck it out. They stay in, to die didn't matter.

Did their representation in the media and press change?

Yeah well probably had to probably had to because the truth came out. That they weren't

- 36:30 they were tough little buggers the Japs were and they were they were tougher to beat actually tougher to beat than the Germans or the Italians. Course the Italians weren't we captured the Italians in their 10s of 100s of thousands the Ities were no trouble at all. We used to have we had photographs come in in the paper and you still find 'em in books that you read 10,000, 10,000 Ities picked up at Bardia or something or other and one Aussie in the front with his bloody rifle slung over
- 37:00 slung over his shoulder yeah takin' 'em back to POW [Prisoner of War] camp or somethin' yeah yeah. So our idea's changed dramatically there. We knew they were going to be hard to beat and I suppose when as we started to go in and the years started to go we were worried about attacking Japan. We were very worried about that because that was obviously news was if they were fighting so bad
- 37:30 in the on the islands just what would they do when we got to fight them on their own territory you know? We knew that was going to be bad that was going to be a bad show yeah. Then they dropped the bomb. That did it that did it.

Describe where you were and what?

When they dropped the bomb when they dropped the bomb was I down at cause they dropped that

- 38:00 15th of August it is they dropped the bomb only about a month before didn't it about July?

August I think.

Was it August? Early August I thought it was oh well that's early August yeah. That date isn't as important as the 15th of August I s'pose. Well I would have been down at Bandiana, down at Albury the big BOD, Base Ordnance Depot

- 38:30 down there would have been down there by then.

What were you thinking when you heard the news?

Don't know haven't got a clue. In fact everything about that little period there is blank. I've got no idea. I can't visualise a thing. I can't visualise me barracks or where I was. All I know that there were these bloody big sheds got no idea complete blank that little period there. I was only down there for about two weeks.

What about VP [Victory in the Pacific] Day?

Well I was down there

- 39:00 nothin' nothin' much. We had some sort of a bit of a local dance or something I think that most of the troops got organised and got a local dance but I don't remember any celebrations. Cause I didn't drink in those days I smoked I didn't drink. I know quite a few of the blokes left camp and got out into the countryside of Albury and I remember we went to I was detailed with a few
- 39:30 other blokes in a truck and we went out the back of Albury, Bandiana somewhere out there to a boutique vineyard. First time I'd ever heard of a vineyard in Australia in those days. A boutique vineyard and they made some arrangements with the vineyard to supply us with some wine for officers I don't know whether it was an officer's party or whose it was but that's the only memory I've got of that period. Total blank
- 40:00 yeah. End of tape

Tape 4

- 00:38 **OK**

Right back to the newspaper work.

Yeah tell us about yeah when you first got the job what it was like?

Was probably the up until then the greatest day in my life. I was away from school

- 01:00 I was grown up. Still only allowed to wear shorts my mother wouldn't let me put long trousers on oh God I must have been 16 or more before she let me put long trousers on oh yeah had to be I don't know why but any rate it didn't worry. I got through on trams on half fare didn't I little tiny little feller I was fairly light weight the shorts and young looking. I used to get into town and out of town for a penny but it would that because I got 10 shillings a week was the first pay
- 01:30 and out of that I had to give me Mum half five bob so five bob had to get me backwards and forwards buy me lunch and whatever else you need and then me entertainment so I never had very much money very not very much money at all. My old mate Roy he was he was a great stand by. He always had money. His mother was a separated woman but she had she worked as a barmaid and she always had money and Roy always had money and we were able to go to the pictures three or four times a week.

Roy'd shout

- 02:00 yeah but any rate at the at the newspaper job I used to get free picture shows. We'd go the State, the Regent, the Capitol we'd (UNCLEAR) the Lyceum or the Mayfair, we went to the Cameo what's another theatre in Cam, oh that's about enough any rate because the Greater Union theatres they were all their theatres. Greater Unions or Hoyts [cinemas] and they'd give complimentary passes to the
- 02:30 the office and the office they didn't want 'em they'd give 'em to us so we'd I'd get Roy and we'd go to free pictures. We went to the State for free, yeah gettin' 'em for the State for free they were pretty bloody good in those days yeah 10 bob a week. Well we had to hoof it. We, there was at the Tele well we'll combine 'em cause they're sort of linked in together for those four years.
- 03:00 Only about three or four of us. At the most there would have been five of our boys. We used to sit in a bench and as one went on the end we'd move up so there was no favouritism or anything and the boss'd be sittin' there with his ledger and all the things that he had to do and he'd say right next one so we'd go up. Got to go down to J Walter Thompson, was a big advertising agent. He still is I think, J Walter down to J Walter Thompson. You've got to get the copy for so
- 03:30 and so and such and such. Right so we had to walk down to J Walter Thompson and they had an office where the bloody hell was that? Somewhere down near the lottery office down Barrack Street somewhere down there so we'd walk off down there and walk back again and then you'd go to the end of the seat and it'd move along get up there. The next one might be to Grace Bros [department store] oh Grace Bros was a ripper. Used to get a penny each way used to get a tuppence for goin' up there because
- 04:00 you were able to catch a tram was a tram fare run see but we never caught the trams. They didn't expect us too. Time didn't matter. If we if you took an hour to do the message it didn't matter didn't make any difference to what gone and come back with so we'd walk up to the to Grace Bros and from the Sun to Grace Bros it's a fair bloody hog hike you know where Grace Bros are way round in Broadway. Bloody fair hike but oh I used to like that cause half way up through Chinatown, Bathurst
- 04:30 Street there was a bus converted into a hot donut stand see and for a penny buy one of these big hot jam filled donuts. Big ball they were about that bloody big well they seemed to be that big. Sheesus they were beautiful and I'd eat I'd get me fair they'd give us our fare before we went see so I'd be walkin' up and I'd get one goin' up to Grace Bros (UNCLEAR) walk up to Grace Bros all the way up George Street round Haymarket
- 05:00 all the way back into Bathurst Street buy another one on the way on the way through there and then down into Elizabeth Street and down home. Oh that bloody walk'd take us two, probably take us all morning two hours. One day I was oh tired lazy or something and I thought bugger it I'll scale a tram see so I hopped on the wrong side of the tram. See the old tram you ever seen a Sydney tram? No
- 05:30 God no education this boy. Well Sydney trams the old ones they had two open sections at the back here and with two sets of chairs facing each other and these all seats ran through the tram right and they were made out of slats polished like cause all the bums sittin' on 'em. Well there were two of those they were open. Then there was the two closed sections. They had slidin' doors that closed. You'd get in there on the bad weather.
- 06:00 If you're on the outside ones in the bad weather there was a canvas blind that you're able to pull down. The poor bloody conductor is out on the in all the weather. God they had a shocking job out on the running board and there was two and then these two were duplicated up the front see and the driver's compartment was in a little point up there and a little point down the back here and we could hide round the back on the back on the wrong side of the tram. Scale it sit down the conductor wouldn't be able to see you driver's up the other end so I'm sittin' up on the bloody tram
- 06:30 I was goin' to jump off at Liverpool Street and where was I heading for? Why did I have to get off at Liverpool Street? Forget now any rate I can see that and I hopped off the and I didn't didn't realise I'd forgotten that I was on a double tram and I was sitting on the front carriage not the bloody back carriage see. So I jump off. Next thing I've got the bloody another carriage there behind me there was a tram coming up down up the other track towards me. Well panic arse over turkey
- 07:00 one tram hit me and I'm bouncin' down the bloody tram. Lucky I didn't get run over tram, a wheel finished up about that close about that close to me leg. Sprained an ankle so got an ambulance down took me to bloody hospital spent half the day in the hospital and they strapped up this bloody ankle. Wasn't broken was only badly sprained so that was an experience. That was another life I saved. Have had a few lives saved I'll tell you a couple more later
- 07:30 yeah but no that I enjoyed it cause it's out in the open and another thing we used to do oh my consciousness used to trick me a little bit. At the back of the State Theatre actually in George Street there was a loading a loading bay a loading bay going in and an open space and they had a little was like a puncher Judy box. You know what puncher Judy
- 08:00 show box is? Like a puncher Judy box but it was a little cinema and the film was behind the screen and they used to show trailers of the films that are on yeah. Well I used to stand there stand there in front of that and watch that. Well that bloody thing'd go for half an hour see and then it'd rewind and go

through 'em again showing the films at the Capitol at the State at the various theatres and they'd show these trailers but they called them trailers previews they'd be

- 08:30 and I sit there well that'd be half an hour gone I'd watch that and then I'd go on to do me job come back again and see if it's changed. Oh same old thing so but they used to change those things oh every whenever there was a new show and their shows used to change probably every week or something like that so that was always a free bit of amusement yeah. But those donuts they were the thing those hot jam donuts oh I used to love them.

And in the office what would what could you pick up as a

- 09:00 **as a young copy boy?**

Precious little precious little because the offices were downstairs. We had nothing to do with the composing room or anything like that. We were just I don't know what would you call us? There's a term. What's that term they use for somebody that's just a run around get for me collect

- 09:30 for me there's a word? Gopher we're just gopher's that's all we were yeah. We had no chance of learning anything or doing anything no. If you stayed long enough in the position like that and went into adulthood you probably could get into onto one of the desk jobs one of the desk jobs but that was only there was no brain required for that or because that

- 10:00 the editor and the sub editors they worked out what was going to go into the paper next day and they just wrote out these things and such and such Ipana've got a two by three for Wednesday Caltex have got something or Solvol or something you know all these different advertisements and all they got was a sometimes was only paperwork. Sometimes you had to bring a mat back or sometimes it'd be a metal

- 10:30 see it all depend what the advertisement was and what it was for and the Sun office of course there was the Sun, the Daily Sun, the Sunday Sun, Pix, Women's and Womens' Weekly were the Sun magazines in those days.

With the make up of the office you mentioned that all the able bodied men went to war?

Yeah they were.

Were there changes during the war to the to the?

Oh had to had to work on short staff. When I first went

- 11:00 to the Tele [newspaper, Daily Telegraph] I've got to remember now how many there were. Wasn't a big office. Actually the Daily Telegraph it was only a part section of a U shaped office. In the front there was a cashier. Gee she was a lovely girl God I was in love with her. She was married her name was Nancy and she called her husband Sluggo Nancy and Sluggo. Nancy was beautiful

- 11:30 black haired brown oh she was in her late 20s. Oh I was wrapped in that girl. God I was in love with her. Oh she was a lovely person as well Jenny. I forget which one now that I had me eye on but there was they were only a small office. There was no more than more than two seniors and then and the gopher's but you know as I say at one stage there were five of us there see but as the war went on papers got smaller

- 12:00 the ads got less too. There wasn't the money spent on advertising yeah. When the beginning of the war the Daily Telegraph might have had 20 pages say the morning Tele. In the war it was down to about four cause there was no paper. Paper shortage ink shortage all those things were short you know see so that changed everything completely yeah. When they'd all went and they gave me the job which was a ridiculous thing to give a

- 12:30 15 year old boy it was fairly responsible kind of a job there was only two of us. There was only me and one gopher and he was older than me and we took it in turns. I said well I'd rather go outside I said you can sit you can sit in the bloody office if you want. I'd rather be outside yeah doin' the walking. I enjoyed it outside. I liked the outside.

What about women? Were there women being employed?

Yeah a lot of women

- 13:00 in the see a lot of the jobs they were restricted jobs they were essential jobs because the paper had to come out so some of them had to be compositors. The liner type operators was a protected job because liner type was the gee they were fascinating to watch those liner type operators. 'Tick tick tick tick tick shh' and then they shh away you go shh away you go then but I they were fascinating things. You ever seen one?

Describe them for me?

Big

- 13:30 typewriter and on the side here was all bloody levers and a box big box and of course it had all the letters in it and as the liner operator hit the key one of the arms went down it would pick one it would

pick that letter up see and pop it into a what would you call it? Oh how could I say it? It was a like

14:00 a U channel. Like a piece of aluminium U channel about so sized or the width of a width of a column in a paper. Well all these letters'd go toong toong toong toong toong and drop into this bloody thing see and then you'd press another bloody button or lever or some bloody thing and that'd go shootin' up in somewhere else where there was all the molten lead stuff and that would make a cast out of that see and then that'd all fall back oh they were fascinating. They were clicking and clanging and all these things all these

14:30 things goin' everywhere. They must have been buggers of things to type cause they weren't like a typewriter. Couldn't go toot toot toot you had to go toong toong toong toong toong yeah they must have been buggers of things to use yeah yeah but they were fascinating. Oh cause there was oh crikey there was two or three banks of those could have been 12 or 14 15 of these bloody liner type operators yeah and all this clack clack clack clack clackin' noise yeah but they had to keep them but in the

15:00 they were able to replace the men with a lot of women in the editorial section where the papers used to come out because that was only a matter of oh what did those women do? Jesus there was some tough oh there was some tough buggers down there. Oh there was some bloody roughies in that lot I'll tell ya. I was lucky to get out of there with my virginity one day. Oh Jesus they were rough.

Tell us about that?

Hey?

Tell us about that?

Oh no oh there was two of them grabbed hold of me were going to do all sorts of bloody things to me they were

15:30 going to take me trousers down oh shit they scooted very bloody very quick smart. Oh they were Jesus they were rough yeah but they I don't know even what they used to do up there but there were banks of these girls and they wore a blue smock uniform thing. I don't know don't know what they were doing. Wasn't composing room was up they did something with the papers. Might have been inserting inserts, I don't know. They called

16:00 it the Rotogravure Department, Rotogravure. Could have had something to do with the Pix with the Women's Weekly perhaps I don't know yeah but Jesus there was some roughies in there. Some bloody nice lookin' ones in there as well there was but roughies Jesus they were rough. Oh I had an experience one time at the Tele. I where our office as I say where our office was actually on street level and we had to go out into Castlereagh Street

16:30 and in a door to get upstairs to the composing room see and there's a lift used to go up to all the different floors the advertising manager and the Managing Director and all the rest. Who owned bloody Tele? I forget who owned Tele in those days. Doesn't matter any rate and these terrazzo steps two flights of them up to the composing see so we used to have to

17:00 take the copy at certain times through the day out and up the steps the composing room. Something was a bit was a bit late getting done and right on knock off time five o'clock or whatever knock off I think it was five o'clock knock off time these had to go to the composing room see so I took 'em it was my turn to take 'em so I take 'em out go fly up these bloody steps dump the stuff in composing room come flying down again and I'm flying down three steps at a time side on doonk doonk doonk doonk doonk I hit the last one crooked

17:30 snapped a bloody ankle and went phoong flat on my face in the footpath of Castlereagh Street. Sprained that ankle oh it was crook for bloody years yeah sprained the ankle Jesus I did go for a sixer so I didn't get home early after all. Finished up going to bloody hospital having my doing my ankle but yeah used to fly down those stairs gees I used to run. Cause when you're 14 your eyes are quick your reactions are quick but I just missed that last step hit that on the edge pchoo

18:00 ploonk flat on me face yeah.

Did you feel a big change with women working in more women working there?

It all happened so very quickly yeah it all happened quickly. I didn't I didn't seem to have been there very long and then all the all the blokes all the blokes disappeared see. It happened suddenly because in from in 19 194

18:30 well the end of '41 it would have been cause '42 things were gettin' desperate. We were fightin' bloody Kokoda in '42. Singapore fell in '42 so would have been the end of '41. The blokes were joining up by the 10s of thousands. They were coming out of the woodwork to join up yeah so all these blokes disappeared out of civvies and then come, comin' back in khaki in a couple of

19:00 days time so there any transmission like that was totally non existent as far as I was concerned. It just happened just happened yeah and I wasn't in a position to see the female changing from male to female because as I say our little office was only very, very small yeah.

And you said you used to collect ads adverts.

Yeah we'd pick up the ads [advertisements] yeah.

What kind of ads would they have in the paper?

Exactly the same they've got in the papers these days.

- 19:30 They were a certain size and they were sized by the number of inches by the number of columns so if it was a three by one it was three inches down and one column wide. If it was a three by two it was three inches down and two columns wide so they're exactly the same as they are now. We had the entertainment section was generally half of one page and they'd be advertising all the different theatres
- 20:00 and different shows. The Mayfair Theatre for two something like two years the Mayfair showed Random Harvest was a film. Random Harvest was one and Mrs Minerva was another two films and they lasted five years between 'em two films and they were at the Mayfair in the Mayfair Theatre. But the other ones the Tivoli the Tivoli was my downfall. They put in these advertisements for whatever review was coming
- 20:30 on it was a review type of place the Tivoli. Some were pretty raunchy. That was where old Roy Reen made history Roy and Moe with his 30 stories and yeah they were pretty raunchy and the woman who managed it she was a pretty rough type. She looked as though she could have been a brothel madam gee she was a rough lookin' old piece and I put the bloody wrong ad in for it put next week's
- 21:00 show in today's paper stuffed things up bloody properly so that's when they gave me the big A. I went from the Tele to the Sun [newspaper]. But I did that see being I s'pose young enough 14, 15 and being the type of bloke I am if it happens it happens. If I walk outside and I see it's snowing I think oh well I'm not worried about how it or why it's snowing it's just snowing and that's sort of been my as a kid oh well it's happened you know
- 21:30 never ask questions oh well it's happened that's the way it goes the way the cookie crumbles yeah.

How was the Sun different to the Telegraph?

No different at all no different. It's a better well it was a nicer place to work cause it's a nicer building. The old Telegraph building was a very, very old building. It's one of the originals oh probably built way back in the early 20th century I s'pose.

- 22:00 I'll tell you tell you a funny story about that. When I moved to The Sun an old bloke joined the company joined this Department and he had already retired so he's well he was over 65 see Mr Hammond. Gee he was a lovely old bloke he's a real fatherly bloke a round face bald headed rather rotund and he used to talk to us see and he
- 22:30 had been at The Sun when was a younger man see he worked at The Sun and he worked on night shift see and he apparently walked come in to start night shift at seven o'clock at night whenever it was and in those days next door to the Telegraph were residential buildings see and he's walking up here this night seven o'clock and all dood up like and somebody emptied a jerry pot out the bloody out the window one of these residentials right on top of the poor old bugger. Saturated him with bloody jerry full of pee
- 23:00 the poor bloke he was he used to laugh about that he said I couldn't go home again he said I had to go to work and so I said spent the rest of his night shift smelling like a bloody sewer yeah but poor old he was a nice old bloke and in that office we sat on this bench four or five of us. Door out was there desk was in front there where the Manager what was his? He was a nice bloke I liked him and round the corner there behind a partition
- 23:30 was our counter where we used to sell papers over the counter and people would come in there to put in advertisements and in 1942 to '43 the papers were full of migrants asking for temporary residence in Australia. I bozo bozo bozo born in Lithuania now resident in Australia dt dt dt dt dt wish to apply for dump dump dump dump dump oh these ads these ads came in by the 100s and 100s
- 24:00 pages and pages of the buggers all the foreigners we had here. Well that counter was there poor old Mr Hammond sat over there in a desk over there was sort of by himself see and I'm sitting here one lunch time and I've got a meat pie and the bloke next door to me's got a bloody meat pie and we're munching on those and I heard a funny noise behind and I looked round and there's poor old Mr Hammond down on the floor see. Fell off the chair dead, dead as a dodo. Had a heart attack died on the spot like that.
- 24:30 By the time we got the nurse sister down from the First Aid room the poor old chap was dead see and the bloke next to me said what was that and I said oh poor old Mr Hammond he's just died. This kid was just about to take a bite out of his pie and he shit he says I can't eat that. I said it's not goin' to hurt ya. Oh no I couldn't eat that old Mr Hammond's dead down there yeah. Poor old Mr Hammond gee he was a nice old bloke yeah but that's dying on the job.

You just got me curious with that

- 25:00 **migrants would advertise**

Yeah.

What would they advertise for again?

For naturalisation yeah.

What would they need?

I don't know what happened after that advertisement. No not they didn't want naturalisation for residence or some bloody thing or other but all these ads they were only two or three lines and they always started I whatever his name was Joe Blow, Joe Bloggs born in Lithuania, Greece, Italy, Hungary all these

25:30 countries now resident in Australia for x amount of years wish to apply for don't know whether it was residency or something like that yeah otherwise they'd go away over in a bloody internment camp yeah oh they came in by the 100s and 100s and 100s thousands of 'em.

What did they need someone to do?

I don't know. After they put those ads in I've got no idea what happened to 'em.

OK alright and then you joined

26:00 **up the service the army. Can you tell us about joining up?**

Great day great day. I loved puttin' on that khaki and I was lucky too. Most of the poor buggers when we joined up round about then they had the they gave us Bombay bloomers mostly. They were fairly wide legged shorts see but they made sure they fitted us. Not like here in the army they gave you chucked anything and they if they didn't fit you

26:30 just wore 'em and too bloody bad. They made sure they fitted the shirts and the jacket ST jacket and so forth the trousers were alright but shorts were baggy Bombay bloomers. They were horrible lookin' bloody things baggy shorts but I got a nice little pair of tailored shorts Jesus. They were nice they fitted me nicely they looked good. They were a little bit darker than the normal khaki and boots were a shocking bloody yellow. Oh God they were dreadful almost a like a baby poop yellow they

27:00 were dreadful and you had to get that bloody boot polish into 'em to get some colour in. Mine were beautiful. They were a lovely tan they had a lovely polish on them yeah oh God I felt pretty good as soon as I put that uniform on yeah I was made yeah I was made and I had good clothes. Prior to that I had bad clothes I had hand me downs and baggy trousers I felt uncomfortable dressed and I, but we had no money

27:30 see we were we were we were a pretty poor family. Dad was still only getting about four pound a week and I was only gettin' 10 bob and givin' Mum five bob so that wouldn't buy too jolly much and I put on clothes that that made me feel good yeah and I felt good too. Oh I liked that slouch hat yeah yeah felt good.

So would you walk around in this uniform?

Bloody oath yeah I wouldn't go up to I wouldn't

28:00 well I didn't have much opportunity to because once as soon as we had to bloody and we were off to Cowra. I think we only had a couple of days before we were choofed off yeah that was pretty that was jolly quick cause it was a full was a full intake thousands of blokes. We filled, we were a full company full battalion actually we were a full battalion yeah yeah so we didn't last long but I

28:30 felt good yeah I felt good very proud of it yeah. I was proud of that slouch hat and that that bloody rising sun on the side of it. Always have I still am still am very proud of it.

Tell me about Cowra?

Dust bowl dry and dusty as buggery it was. Settled into it alright as I said earlier we with me stepmother life was pretty regimented and it was easy for me to slip into army life didn't mind it at all.

29:00 We only had palliasses of course. That was a bit hard palliasse a straw palliasse on the bloody floor no canvas stretcher or anything in those days and two blankets and to get another you had to have a lady friend and hot dusty. I didn't mind it I enjoyed it I enjoyed you know I enjoyed the, you know I enjoyed the bull ring because I felt as though I was doing something

29:30 I was getting somewhere. I joined the rifle range. Didn't like the rifle much but I enjoyed the bloody Bren gun oh I loved firing that Bren gun. Gees it's a ripper of a gun. I don't know why they ever got rid of it but any rate worst thing I found with Cowra was the fact that it got so cold so early. We went March April May now wasn't even the middle of winter. By the time we got into May I was freezing at night. I used to take me boots off. I'd put clean

30:00 socks on I'd leave me SDs [Service Dress] on service dress heavy service dress. I'd put a great coat and I'll roll up in these two bloody blankets they gave us and I'd still be cold I'd be lookin' for morning to get up again oh Jesus I was cold. Cause I hate the cold weather. It's such a sharp cold well you know Orange is like it that that frosty cold bites right into ya. Sydney we hardly ever got cold weather. Got the cold southerlies in August used to blow a bit

- 30:30 and we'd put a coat on but oh I was that bloody cold and hungry gees I was hungry because they reduced your meal. Your meal was a certain amount per serve see and I was that bloody hungry that I'd buy a pound of block of cake and I'd eat the whole bloody lot of it fruit cake but I couldn't afford much. You only get we only got two pound two a week so I got a rise when in the in the army. I was on two pounds in civvy I got two pound two going in the army
- 31:00 so I saved two bob but yeah I'd get this bloody block of cake from the canteen fruit cake devoured it oh Jesus I was hungry. I ate a whole lot of these. I couldn't They couldn't fill me cause you know purpose it was done on purpose to reduce your reduce your intake of food reduce your stomach as much as anything so that at any stage you could survive on minimum rations I s'pose yeah. Didn't mind the tucker it was pretty good tucker I think. I never had any

31:30 complaint about it yeah.

In Cowra this is after the breakout?

It was after the breakout yeah yeah. That was something like we went in the March I think that was the year before that was '44 I think I couldn't be sure about the breakout. I think it was '44 about six months or so before we did yeah.

Was the story still going round Cowra at the time?

Oh yes yeah yeah they were still talking about it because we lost a few lives but the,

- 32:00 that the Japs hung themselves with anything that they could and how our guards there were choccos they weren't AIF and they got a hell of a surprise. They were over powered quickly and we heard that that a couple or that one of the blokes in particular one of our Australians who got knocked over and the Japs actually sawed his head off on the barbed wire see we heard all those stories. It was pretty atrocious but we killed a lot of Japs I think it was something like 20 odd of those that got it might have been more.

- 32:30 I have read about the breakout in book form since but yeah we lost a few lives yeah.

What were you learning in the army at this stage?

Oh basic training as your rifle drill and marching. Christ we marched up and down that bloody bull ring about turn right turn left turn open ranks close ranks number from left to right number from right to left. Do a left wheel do a right wheel

- 33:00 and then we did a bit of PT [Physical Training] not very much. We did PT in the mornings and but the hardest part was carrying that bloody rifle when we first went there. Cause we didn't have any muscle developed. We were all young blokes we except the fellers who were doing manual work they cause the old 303 weighed seven and a half pound or something from memory and when that's on your arm like that there's a bloody lot of weight in it oh and if you let it go down
- 33:30 you had the old serg up ya pretty jolly quickly but that was the hard part until that arm got strong enough to hold a rifle and changing arms and presenting arms and then we go down to the rifle range get a bit of rifle practice yeah. Straight out then I was a bit shy of the rifle. The .303's [rifle] got a hell of a bloody kick and whether I didn't lie cutely enough which is sort on an angle to it I
- 34:00 used to lie too straight to it I think and it used to hit me in the face when she'd buck and I'd get a whoppin' a whop in the bloody face but the Bren gun oh that was beautiful that was a beautiful gun. It used to lie down and you'd hold a the butt there butt there and there and just go bt bt bt bt bt bt wouldn't move it wouldn't move. They could they could fasten a Bren gun into a vice and fire off the whole 32 rounds and every round'd go behind the

- 34:30 other one same hole yeah. It was actually it was too accurate for up in the jungle yeah. I heard of blokes actually chopping the tops off a coconut tree down with the Bren they'd go dt dt dt dt dt dt 32 round but gee it was a lovely gun cause it was a cushion butt yeah never fail never move. Oh I could hit the, I was a good shot on that I was A plus on the Bren [machine gun]. Was only bloody A on the on the rifle and the A had a

- 35:00 peep site too the Bren had a peep site which is beautiful too. You just line that bloody thing up like that bang hit anything yeah she was a beauty yeah.

And was it here that they that you got into the orderly works?

Oh from there yeah from there. We did a couple of route marches. I went to I managed to do a five a five mile. The next one was a 10 and it bugged me up because

- 35:30 me thigh the muscles would never were never tied together properly on my thigh. I've got an awful scar down there it was a real butcher job yeah. Cause in actual fact when they did that they thought they might have to reopen my leg they thought they might have to either plate it or even take it off. They didn't expect it to lift open it up like it did and I used to get these awful pains and so went to the MO [Medical Officer] and I was I was regraded A2 instead of A1 which then took me out of the infantry
- 36:00 and put me into a clerical position clerical situation.

And what did you think about this at the time?

Didn't like it that's what I said I came to shoot Japs not to carry me bloody pen round and the officer the sergeant or the officer whoever he was said look son he said if you're doing sitting with the pen he said you're going into ordnance and he said ordnance is necessary right up the bloody front. He said you could be one man behind the man up the front and he said your pen is very important to him because

- 36:30 you're supplying him with the ammunition to fight the war with so don't begrudge being a clerk but it didn't matter see the war was over then yeah but I didn't like didn't like the idea but still I adapted to it I thought oh well still army and they sent then they transferred out to Georges Head, Bradley's Head or Georges yeah Bradley's Head I think they call it.

Did all the blokes there think they were going to see action?

Oh we all thought we were still going to see action yeah

- 37:00 yeah because at that time there was no talk about the atomic bomb. At that time they were talking about invading Japan, the island of Japan see. Iwo Jima was still, they were still fighting on Iwo Jima which was one of the last islands as you know up towards Japan they were still fighting that one out there. We still had blokes on Tarakan see we were still losing troops there on Tarakan. That was that was that was a bloody abortion that
- 37:30 was bloody old McArthur and his bullshit. I hate that bastard. I hate that bloody McArthur as much as I hate Keating. Oh he was a mongrel yeah he was bad to us gave us bad time but oh bloody old Blamey was a useless big old prick any rate he was a bloody hopeless bloody man but Curtin of course gave MacArthur carte blanche he said here the only thing we're going to do is that that you pass your orders through Blamey to the Australians
- 38:00 he said. We don't you give any orders to the Australians but McArthur hated the Australians hated us hated our troops cause we're too bloody good we showed those bastards up the choco Yankees see and he thought MacArthur never went, even flew over bloody New Guinea. The closest he got to it was Brisbane when their, when the headquarters moved from Melbourne to Brisbane. That was the closest he got. Blamey didn't even
- 38:30 see much. He went up to Morotai after Kokoda after the boys came back from Kokoda and gave them a bloody roasting and they misinterpreted words he said but he talked about being rabbits. He bloody near got the boys nearly rioted on him they nearly shot the bastard but MacArthur thought that that the Kokoda Track or the top of Kokoda was just a ravine thing like he's got in bloody Texas and USA and he thought we could barricade it see. He didn't realise that we were
- 39:00 we were climbing bloody mountains at 45 degree angle in at jungle and rain and bloody oh you know. No idea and he said that our blokes weren't trying he said because your casualty lists aren't big enough.

Was there any talk of this at the time or was this?

I don't know I don't really know. I no I don't think so because I don't think we realised that that at that time what was going on. We knew he

- 39:30 was the C and C [Commander in Chief] of South West Pacific and all that sort of bloody jazz but I don't think we realised that that at that stage.

How did people feel about the Americans at the time?

We didn't like 'em much. The girls did cause they had plenty of money yeah oh they had money galore. They had the time of their life. We had a big war you know we had a fight up here at Townsville. Two whatsanames were passed in two

- 40:00 troop trains and the Yanks were go were coming what were the Yanks doing? Oh they were coming back and our blokes no, visa versa what the hell? No the Yanks Yanks were on the move up.

Tape 5

- 00:36 **Just where did we finished we were talking about being in Cowra**

In Cowra yeah yep

The breakout just after that.

Yep.

Yeah just I guess some more questions about Cowra. What sort of things would you do there on a every day basis? What was a typical day?

Oh as I say before just you know bullring training rifle training marching

- 01:00 right turn left turn quick march slow down halt and all that sort of jazz. I was only thinkin' the other day we had one bloke there oh he was a big bumbling feller his name was Bennett. For some reason or other he pinched my jumper. Now he was twice the size of me and why the hell he'd want to pinch my jumper I don't know but Bennett could not coordinate his hands and legs you know. If he put when he put the left leg forward he couldn't swing his right. The left one
- 01:30 would go with his left hand and he'd he was hopeless. He just could not coordinate. He'd walk normally he'd walk normally swinging his arms like a normal person but as soon as he had to march quick march left the left arm and the left hand foot'd go out yeah Bennett so he got choofed out he was no bloody good, no good at all but we used to do that hours after hours after hours. Rally, reveille used to be at six thirty I think
- 02:00 breakfast at seven. Seven thirty out onto the bull ring parade ground and then we'd probably march for four bloody hours and then knock off for lunch for an hour lunch and then another four hours in the afternoon bit of bayonet training or something or other and PT on a different day. Occasionally we had a sports day. I think we had a sports on a Friday afternoon or something or other
- 02:30 but we did that seven days. We didn't have any days off for the three months we did it for full seven days. Church parade on Sunday morning for those that went too and I should have said I was a Jew and I wouldn't have had to go but at that stage I wasn't even conscious I was Jew cause I wasn't aware that with Jews the relationship goes with the wife with the mother not with the father like not like the Dutch gentiles but still any rate I went to a church. I wasn't anti church in those days. That's developed over
- 03:00 the years when I've realised that all the wars and all the trouble in the world from way back through to history has been caused through religion hasn't it? Even if you take the aborigines they didn't have religion but they fought with each other because they had different ideas of their snake Gods and all this sort of thing rubbish and American Indians they fought with each other because one had one sort of a God
- 03:30 and the other one had a different sort of a God and they reckon the two Gods were clashing. Religion now look at it now look at it now. We're in for a big, big, big, big trouble with these bloody Muslims believe you me. Nostradamus predicted in I think he lived in the year 500 or some bloody thing or other didn't he predicted all the great war Second World War and he said the war of all wars will be between the Muslims and the rest and I have think this
- 04:00 might be the start of it cause we'll never stop 'em now that those buggers have got those bombs going we'll never stop that Muslims never. They're trying to wipe out all the Christians and they think they think that we're anti them but we're not, we're tolerant. They're silly buggers they think of some silly bloody things don't they? They reckon if they die heroes they're going to go to God to heaven they're going to have five 13 maidens waitin' up there for them virgins. Now where do all these
- 04:30 virgins come from that's what I want to know. If they knock off 13 girls not virgins any more oh I don't know never mind that's now

So back at Cowra you started working you did the clerical course after you did

I did after that but while I was still at yeah I did the clerical course at Bradley's Head or Georges Heights they call it it's got both names.

- 05:00 That's where that the old Sydney the forecastle of the Old Sydney is you know up there on the point as you go from Taronga Park and that old that's off the original Sydney that's Bradley's Head or we'll call it Georges Heights and they've that's where they had the clerical course there. It was a three months course crash course. We learnt touch typing right from the very start. We never looked at a keyboard and we had
- 05:30 to pass at 45 words a minute and I was never really good one but a bit rough at the moment. Gee I didn't realise how stiff me fingers were getting when I was typing that bit particularly the little fingers. Little fingers are too weak now to hit the end keys and then of course we learnt all about charge sheets and all the different paraphernalia that the army uses. I've forgotten her now the A4 AB83 which is the pay book and
- 06:00 the A4 which is a charge sheet and all these others we went through all of those. Didn't matter whether we were going into any infantry or if we were going into artillery or into ordnance we learnt all about all their paperwork that would come through the orderly room yeah three months crash course. It wasn't bad enjoyable enough yeah. Close to used to go home every night. It was just like just like going to school actually. We'd go home every night cause I only lived in Cammeray then. Hop on a tram and go, to go home.
- 06:30 If I wanted to I think we had barracks there. I don't think I ever stayed there because a lot of the fellers of course weren't Sydney blokes so must have must have been sleeping quarters there but I slept at home used to get out early.

And can you tell me about the orderly room that you'd learned to organise?

I was never in an orderly room. When I was in the what they called the control room of the BOD Base Ordnance Depot or actually

- 07:00 when we first went up to Japan was the 21st Advanced Ordnance Depot and apparently after I left they moved from where we were out to Katachi [?] and then they changed to a Base Ordnance Depot but that's all I was just an just an ordinary old typist I had nothing out there but type for this bloody good typewriter good big old Remington. Cause there were two of us and there's also a Japanese girl, little tomadatchi [friend] of mine Miyoko Totarouki she was a nice little gee
- 07:30 she was a nice little girl yeah. She wanted me to stay in Japan yeah she was nice little girl. Yeah we all had, we all picked up friends while we were over there. Sorry we're getting a bit ahead of ourselves we should stay in Australia until I get up there cause when after that that was finished I then went to as I say Bandiana. Piece of cake came back to Sydney to return stores depot and I was there just to fill in fill in time but that was great. Never had to wash
- 08:00 your shirt or shorts or anything else. We used to put on new ones every mornin' brand new shirt every morning we'd change our gear as soon as we got to the depot. Cause all the stuff at that stage mountains and mountains of stuff were coming from overseas and everywhere else the troops were comin' back see and so we just put on a clean shirt clean pair of shorts yeah but that was just to fill in. I think I was only there probably for oh I was there for about three weeks I s'pose that's about all yeah pretty short time.
- 08:30 Cause then we choofed out to Bathurst. We were called up then out to the transit camp at Bathurst.
- Before you went to Bathurst where were you when you heard that the bomb had been dropped or that a couple of weeks later?**
- Oh at Bandiana yeah at Albury yeah.
- What was your reaction like?**
- As I said to Kiernan [interviewer] I don't remember.
- Well I mean not necessarily when the bomb was dropped but at the end of the war**
- 09:00 **like when you heard the?**
- Well there was no word, we were stuck down there at the back of Albury and my mind's a blank I don't remember what we did. Have not got a clue I can't even get a mental picture of the camp or the barracks anything completely blank.
- I s'pose what I mean is when you realised that you weren't actually going to be going out to see any action?**
- I don't know I don't know what went through me mind love but they asked for volunteers pretty quickly because they decided that they would create a
- 09:30 an occupation for us so they asked for volunteers pretty quickly and I got into that pretty jolly smart. I thought oh well if I'm goin' to see action I might as well go and see Japan any rate and get a free trip overseas from the army but I haven't had a honest I have not got a clue I'm a total blank yeah.
- Did you take any leave in that time?**
- No not down at I just before we went to Bathurst we got pre embark what's called pre embarkation
- 10:00 yeah we got what'd we got oh seven days 14 days I s'pose which we had before actually I went to Bathurst and I met that lady then that beautiful little 17 year old.
- How did you meet her?**
- Went to some friends' of mine at or actually Roy had relatives she was a sort of odd sort of relative of Roy's and they lived at Terrigal and we used to go down there quite frequently
- 10:30 for the weekend and of course beautiful spot to go and swimming and all that sort of jazz jasmine and we went down it was Australia Day weekend 1945 in the Long Weekend so we went down for the weekend and I walked in there and here's this most gorgeous lookin' creature Jesus she was beautiful course she still is isn't she something no idea yeah felt
- 11:00 fell head over heels in love with her but that only lasted three days cause it was just on the end of my leave. Went back to Bathurst we head off the Bathurst then and when we got to Bathurst then we were able to get a bit of leave because we weren't going overseas straight away. They were creating one draft which was to leave in towards the end of March and they were going up on the Kanimbla.
- 11:30 We would then be the second draft we'd be going up in April so we got a bit of leave and I went down to see Joan and she went to stay with her sister in Manly and so we stayed there had only had three or four days leave, whatever it was and I stayed a couple of days extra and I got seven days CB [Confined to Barracks] for being bloody dead we weren't doing anything you know anyway so I got CB, yeah
- 12:00 I got seven days see, stayed two days extra. Needn't have done I put meself in I'm a silly bugger I'm too bloody honest. When I got back to camp I handed me leave pass into the orderly room. If I'd torn the

bloody thing up nobody'd known the jolly difference but any rate I had to front up when I got two days seven days CB.

Did you have a good time in those you know was it worth it the leave?

Oh yes yeah yeah oh yes very much so. She,

12:30 we were both keen on swimming and we'd swim like a fish and she was just so lovely just such a lovely person.

So was she your girlfriend at the time or?

Hmm?

Was she your girlfriend?

Well she became me girlfriend at that stage from then yeah yeah after we first after we first met yeah yeah. We had the had the same feeling for each other yeah. God she was beautiful. Haven't got a photograph of her at that age I could I did have but I had to tear it up when I got married of course

13:00 yeah was with another lady but that'll come later on yeah but any rate, the Bathurst story. Well I was at Bathurst and the Kanimbla draft was on it's way out. I thought now this is a bloody chance for me. We weren't doing anything all we did was hang around the huts all day. Didn't do marching or training anything at all and most of the officers were re were sort of packing up. They'd been in the army five and six years and they didn't give a bugger what was happening so

13:30 I went up to when the draft was getting organised and I said to one of the truck drivers I said any chance of getting a lift down to Sydney and he said yeah he said don't worry to me he said as long as I can pretend I don't know you there. I said oh that's alright. He said well if we leave about seven o'clock or whatever it was tonight or tomorrow night or next or whatever and he said oh I'll leave the flaps undone and he said just hide yourself in the back there and just shut up. I said alright so and

14:00 when the time came I toodled off and climbed into the back of the truck and I'm sittin' down there right in the back of the truck and lookin' out at the opening see and the before the young feller the driver come along and latched it up an officer stuck his head in the door in the flap see. Oh good day so and so good day Arnold, he said you going on leave? I said yes sir and being such an inquisitive sort of a bugger he said have you got your leave pass?

14:30 Have you got your leave pass? I says hmm haven't got one sir. So what's your company and I told him so he said go and report to your company commander so I went down to the orderly room and saw the company commander. He was a Major I haven't got a clue, what's his name is now bloody nice bloke. He'd had about six years up and I told him. He said you silly bugger silly thing to do he said why didn't you ask for leave? I said oh I already had leave I said over

15:00 stayed and got CB I wasn't game to try it again. Oh he said get down to your hut and come and see me in the morning so I went down to the hut and I'm sittin' there we're all sittin' on at that stage we're off the floor. We're on camp stretchers in Bathurst then so we're sittin' down and we're chattin' away generally and next thing the Major walks in and he sort of looked at me and he sat on an empty stretcher over there camp stretcher sat down and he said

15:30 one of the blokes from this hut was a bit bloody lucky today he said tonight he said he's going ack willy [Absent Without Leave, AWL] and he said and he's getting a lift on the Kanimbla draft and he said the truckie picked to sit in he said when he was going over the other side of Katoomba he said it went off the side of the road and overturned. He said the boy was very lucky he said he looked at me. He said that lad was very lucky he said he would have been dead now.

16:00 Turned out I was sitting on the whole tray of the truck was ammunition boxes and the truck I went up to the workshop later on the next day and the truck had actually gone right over just landed on its lid like that bang and the steel frame and everything was flat flattened would have been like a bloody pancake yeah. So the officer that pulled me out of that truck did me a bloody good turn that day didn't he yeah so I'm not meant to die

16:30 yet. I never the trams couldn't run over me and that truck couldn't kill me and the Japs couldn't kill me yeah. So I decided to be a good boy then I just stayed in camp and waited for the draft and we left it on the 7th of April on the Manoora yeah.

Did Joan write to you?

Yes, yes for a while but

17:00 she got family trouble somewhere bit too private to talk about but we lost contact. While I was up there she moved and had to stop writing and we lost contact for many, many years 32 years actually we lost contact for yeah.

Do you think if you've stayed in Sydney you mightn't have if you hadn't been part of the force going to Japan?

Oh quite probably yeah yeah things would have been entirely different if

17:30 I hadn't gone to Japan yeah yeah. I did try to get out at one stage but they said no you volunteered to go and you're bloody well going which was probably a good thing as it turned out yeah. Was family problems still got family problems actually with her yeah yeah. They're a funny mob these bloody Maltese they're very, very, very tight knit and they don't like to look outside their little tight knits very much and she's very, very much Maltese and so is her family so is her family yeah

18:00 but yeah so we sailed the wild blue yonder.

Around that time you know when you were sort of you know you're a young bloke in Sydney in your army uniform and that sort of thing did you get up to you know many girls and stuff?

No no I was not allowed to meet girls. Was one of these other rules of my stepmother. I got into very serious very serious troubles course she used to lecture me oh

18:30 Jesus I hate lectures and she used to lecture me and it was always something about the bloody bible in her lectures you know what Christ said and all this sort of business and when I was in 6th class at Cammeray school oh the girls I don't know why the girls used to fall all over me and I was that bloody shy God I was shy you've no idea how shy I was. Still am still am very shy I s'pose but one in

19:00 particular Beryl, Beryl, Beryl gee she was lovely she was a blonde oh she was nice yeah and I could walk I only two blocks away from school see and school got out at three I had to be home at five past three right and I could come down the street and our house because was situated at when it was actually built it didn't have any front entrance and there was a little narrow lane between two houses we got in the back entrance

19:30 so I'd choof all down here and I'd get to the lane and here'd be Beryl and two or three other girls standing there waiting to corner me see and I'd stop to talk to them see. I think to meself oh shit I'm going to get into bloody trouble but I can't get away and oh I was oh I used to get in a hell of a and I'd get inside and Mum five minutes later where have you been? I was talking to a couple of girls Beryl and a couple of girls up there. Well you're not to be standing

20:00 on the corner talking to girls. You're not to be this and you're not to bloody that and you're not to something else. I was still 17. I was 17 and 18 and working and the local church, Church of England church used to run dances at night in the in the church hall organised by the church. I was not allowed to go to the dances. 17, 18 I was not to go to the dances. Places of iniquity or some

20:30 bloody silly bloody tommy rot she used to go on with yeah so I was very shy of girls I can tell ya.

So you know you were shy of girls and what grabbed you about Joan when you first saw her?

Oh don't know, oh she was just standing on top of two stairs two or three stairs from the back of this house the house was right on Terrigal Lake. Know Terrigal right on the lake backed onto the lake

21:00 and we used to come in the back entrance was two or three steps up into actually what was their laundry actually and the kitchen went and there was this dream oh. If you haven't felt that feeling you can never explain it you can never understand it. You've got to feel it. God strike me talk about being hit by a ton truck or something. Jesus she was beautiful. Black hair brown eyes tanned skin

21:30 figure of like Venus de Milo except that she had two arms yeah. Gees it broke my heart goin' away from there I'll ya and it hurt then hurt when I got lost but I could never get the same feeling for another girl after that never have done. Even the girl I married I never had that same feeling for her. Well that was after the war

22:00 yeah.

So tell me about shipping out leaving for Japan?

That was sad because she said that she'd be able to come down and see me off and she couldn't she her family interrupted or something and she couldn't get down. That hurt a bit.

Did they not approve of you?

Hey?

Did they not approve of you?

I don't know. It was a confused thing

22:30 fairly private as far as they were concerned I s'pose but any rate I can I remember stickin' me head out of the bloody port hole and Darling Harbour we left and the wharf was just up there and I'm sticking me head out and looking through all these people saying good bye to us and a dear old lady came along and she said are you looking for somebody and I said yes (UNCLEAR) I said me girlfriend and I said I can't see her anywhere I said she mightn't have been able to get down there so she said what's she look like. I said so I

23:00 explained to her beautiful brown black hair long black hair she had brown eyes tanned skin beautiful shaped mouth real she had a real cupid's bow shaped mouth oh gee she was beautiful and that dear old

lady walked up and down those bloody wharf lookin' for her yeah so any rate the ship sailed and she and she hadn't turned I was rather upset but I settled down. No good getting upset too much about things thought oh well that's

23:30 the way things go.

Did your mum or dad come to see you?

No.

Why not?

I didn't ask 'em too actually cause I just wanted to say good bye to Joan by myself. I didn't want them interfering so I didn't tell 'em when we when I was sailing. I think I think I don't know but I think I couldn't have I mightn't have told them when I was sailing yeah. They came to they came to the when I when I came back they came alright yeah yeah and we sailed just on

24:00 tea time about five thirty it was and we got outside the heads and the mess call was on about sixish and we went up we went up we went up we went down we went up cause the Manoora's no small ship. She's 10 and a half thousand tonne or something or other. There's a photo where have I got it? Oh in the album photograph over there. We hit the tail end of a Queensland cyclone. Cyclone had gone right down the coast and the seas Jesus they were rough oh Christ that sea was

24:30 rough and we're all queuing down the and we were put into six, 6F right down the bloody bottom about six feet below water level. Water level's up there and we're down in this bloody thing with all this house so any rate we're all queuing up with our dixies. You know what the army dixie looks like with the you don't? They're rectangular one fits inside the other and the handles are

25:00 collapsible see so you collapse the handles you put the two inside the smaller one inside the big one and they only take up a space of about that big see so when you open them up and put the two handles wire handles in your thumbs and you've got one sticking out that way and one sticking out that way and the bloke gets serving and he goes clomp into that one and flop in that one it's just that's how you did it see. So we're queuing up the ship's going up and the ship's going down. Bottles of tomato sauce are on the bloody tables. There's no seats you stood at benches, benches

25:30 about that high tomato sauce bottles and going that way tomato sauce bottles are going that way blokes are poking into their dixies and oh gees sea sick sea sick. Not Keithy no bloody fear I said to myself right if I'm going to be sick I'll have something to spew up see so I charge up to the end of the line. Everybody was happy to see me go you know. Normally in the queue if you got in front of the queue you're in real bloody trouble. Not here they were happy to see you go so

26:00 up the queue. We had mashed potato and frankfurts. You couldn't imagine anything bloody worse mashed potato and frankfurts. Any rate I downed these mashed potatoes and frankfurts with the tables still going this way bottles of sauce goin' everywhere everybody grabbing the bottles of sauce before they hit the bloody deck and smash. So we got out there and when I downed that I thought well I'm not going down there in that smell. Oh you could smell vomit oh it was bloody shockin'. When you think about three or four thousand blokes in a little confined area and 90 percent of 'em are vomiting so I

26:30 went upstairs and stood in what they call the well deck before the back of the fore deck and in front of the fo'castle I stood in there. Water was comin' over and water was comin' over I was getting splashed but I thought I don't give a bugger how wet I get I'm not goin' down in that bloody deck so I stayed there all fliggin' night. I finished up once we got out a fair bit it calmed down we were quite a degrees in. I stayed up there all jolly night and soakin' wet and all the rest of it but no sign of any sea sick

27:00 and then damn me down if we don't get in the Coral Sea and we hit another one yeah but most of us had our bit of a sea legs by then and the sickness wasn't as bad but one of those was either the first one or the second one and the Manoora was an old ship and she actually broke her listing record. It listed over at something like 47 degrees or some bloody thing yeah never gone over as far in its history yeah incredible isn't it. Gees she was rough I can tell ya

27:30 was better than Manly ferry one yeah she and she went down and then she'd go left and she'd go right oh strike me yeah. But from then on Coral Sea and all the way up bloody beautiful. We stopped at Dreger Harbour, little harbour on the on the New Guinea coast just for a day and we unloaded some stores or something on there but the rest of the trip was bloody beautiful was just like a we did nothing had nothing to do we didn't have to do anything

28:00 at all no. Played bingo or cards or whatever and just sat in the sun and talked yeah and one of me mates when it got fairly stifling down below the officers then gave us permission to stay up on one of the decks and I can't remember it was right up in the fo'castle, the fore deck or was on the ground I forget now which deck it was but we used to just take a blanket up and lie on the bare deck didn't have any mattress or anything

28:30 underneath us and we it was good there. We had you know nice and comfortable. We'd talk or something or other and a lot of the fellers we had never met before. That was the first time that we'd met but we directly got together because we were in units and we knew that we were going to the 21 AAOD [Australian Army Ordnance Depot] see. So one of these nights out there this balmy night and

we're all just lying back beautiful stars all of a sudden there's this beautiful baritone voice and he's singin', singing

- 29:00 bit of opera see. Beautiful baritone voice and it's just a whisper. How he controlled his voice at just a whisper I don't know just a whisper beautiful. Turned out to be old Bluey Hawker. Bluey's not in that Bluey Hawker God he had a beautiful voice but you couldn't get him to sing. He wouldn't sing in front no way in the world but he'd just drifted himself off so he sort of felt as though he was alone. Gee he had a magic voice that boy yeah big Bluey Hawker
- 29:30 sprained his knee yeah he sprained his knees one time poor bugger up at Dorr Dogiama [?]. We went skiing and he turned put both his knees out the poor bugger yeah but gees he had a voice. It sounded so wonderful too in this silent ship and out in the bloody ocean and beautiful star a starlight sky. You know that that the two most two most beautiful lines of poetry that's ever been written
- 30:00 was The Man From Snowy River no Clancy of the Overflow beg your pardon Clancy of the Overflow. He sees the when he sees the vision splendid at the sunlit plains extended and at night the wondrous glory of the everlasting stars. I reckon that's the most beautiful piece. Better than daffodils. Did you ever learn daffodils at school? I wandered lonely as a cloud that floats on high o'er vale and hills
- 30:30 when all at once I saw a crowd a host of golden daffodils beside the lake beneath the trees fluttering and dancing in the trees. Ten thousand saw I at a glimpse tossing their heads in spritely dance and often when on my couch I lie in vacant or in pensive mood they flash upon that inward eye that host of golden daffodils. Bloody Wordsworth that is probably Wordsworth but I love those two lines of Paterson's
- 31:00 sees the vision splendid. Can't you see it? Sees the vision splendid of the sunlit plains extended and at night the wondrous glory of the everlasting stars. They are too when you look up at those stars and there's no everything's black around you look up at those stars it's really something yeah. So we had a good trip up we had a good trip after the cyclones was lovely yeah.

Can you tell me about some of the other guys that you became friendly with?

Yeah there's a couple of them over there

- 31:30 in that photograph. Keith Hocking, Joseph Henry Keith Hocking was his full title, Victorian. He and I were good mates we went everywhere together. His bunk was alongside of mine and then the barracks at 21AAOD. Bluey Hawker he was a good mate. There's photographs of him in there big Bluey. Bluey was over six foot. Nothing could nothing ever disturbed him. His, he had hairy legs and people'd come and tear his bloody
- 32:00 hairs out of his legs like this and he'd say don't do that. Never get cranky never ever would he get cranky Bluey. God he was a lovely bloke but we all got together in there in that little group not all that many of us. Bruce Marshall was another one Bruce Marshall was from Coonabarabran. His father was a Minister at Coonabarabran. Bruce was a nice bloke too but Keith and I were the we were
- 32:30 the closest mates we went everywhere Keith and I yeah.

And when you were on the ship for those long days and nights with not much to do what sort of things would you chat about?

Oh goodness knows. Women no I don't I don't know love don't know. I don't know what we'd talk about blown if I do. Watch the flying fish, they'd be hooping along. Do you know those jolly things could fly high enough they'll land on the top of a ship? They'll come in and landed on the deck of the ship yeah.

- 33:00 used to have flying fish yeah. Porpoises we saw a few porpoises flying fish no I don't know what we would have talked about. I know we played bingo a lot. I hate that bloody game God I hate bingo oh dear. We played cards just sat and talkin' about all the things. Probably a lot of our talk'd be speculation what it'd be like in Japan because that was only six months after cessation of hostilities
- 33:30 and we didn't know whether they were going to be hostile or not when you got up there. As far as we were going we were on a raw footing we thought well anything could happen. The war might be over but we know that the Japs were pretty fanatical buggers and they and they might get nasty when we get up there see so I s'pose we s'pose we talked about those sort of things. You know we each told each other about our lives I s'pose where we came from you know as I say Bruce Marshall came from Coonabarabran
- 34:00 I came from Sydney, Keith came from Prahran in Melbourne. Bluey Hawker came from oh somewhere he'd been in Hawthorn or somewhere in Melbourne see so we probably talked about those sort of things. Probably just laid down and slept a lot of the time. If you haven't got anything to do sleep yeah.

Had you been

- 34:30 **briefed about what your job was going to be when you arrived in Japan?**

Only from as much as we learnt at the at the clerical school but actually when we got there we had no idea. Could have been one of a dozen jobs in the control office not need necessarily be a typist because in the control office there's a photograph in there one of the albums of our control office and there

would have been

35:00 there was a the control officer bonzer bloke bonzer bloke thorough bloody gentleman Lieutenant Bill Erley, geez he was a nice bloke and then there was three typists. Us two Bruce Marshall and myself were the two typists there was Miyoko was the, another typist. There was another Japanese girl forget her name that was Sandy Wilson's girlfriend

35:30 she was another typist and there were others just doing clerical work or filing all this sort of thing. Because those particular ones had a fairly sort of English, grasp of the English language. We could speak with we had a little bit of Japanese a little bit of pidgin thrown in but they could copy anything. They could type what they could see there they could type you know. They didn't know what the words were they had no idea what they were writing and they used to laugh at commonwealth. They reckoned commonwealth was the funniest

36:00 word they could they've ever looked at. She said it was all kk kk dt dt dt dt see. You take in your mind to something that you're not speak in English. You look at commonwealth COMMONNNN you know it's a funny lookin' word yeah. It used to trick 'em yeah commonwealth yeah about that but I don't know oh well there could have been 30 of us in that office all up. There's a photograph in there of the office and there's another photograph of us all in the snow when the snowed in 1946 in February 1946

36:30 snowed there but we don't know what we were doin' until we got there. We couldn't have gone into the store room for all we knew we had no idea because being in the Base Ordnance Depot most of the staff were actually in the store room because the store rooms are big and massive. Well you can imagine everything that the army goes through that a Base Ordnance Depot.

When you guys would talk on the ship about Japan what other sort of I guess expectations did you have

37:00 **in your head?**

Yeah well that's it I s'pose mostly I should say about our reception there whether we'd get a hot cold indifferent reception. How the people would treat us how we would have to treat them. That'd be about all we could think of at the at this first stage cause we were completely naïve we had no idea what Japan was like no idea at all.

Did anyone have a kind of a I guess a hostile attitude towards

37:30 **the Japanese?**

Oh some would have. I s'pose some would have yeah yeah cause we were told to. We were instructed not to that we were there to not so much to as an occupational force even though we were called an occupational force we weren't actually occupying it. We were there to try and to help them to regenerate and resettle them actually more than anything. That was our whole purpose up there was to get them rehabilitated yeah.

38:00 **Was there anyone in the force who'd been in action against the Japanese?**

Not in not in those ones that I was with but earlier there were. They're right because a lot of the fellers went from Morotai see they took the first contingent most of them were infantry. We had three infantry battalions up there 64, 65, 66 battalions. They later became the 1 RAR [Royal Australilian Regiment] when Korea came but it's a long way ahead yet. Well they came from Borneo from

38:30 Tarakan all the other islands where the fighting had been all sorts. My good old mate here which I go to the reunions with the poor old bugger's not well either he was an ambulance driver and a truck driver on on the islands and he didn't actually see any action but a lot well a lot of them did of course a lot of the infantry boys did they'd seen action in all the islands there yeah.

Do you think the

39:00 **fact that some of you and your mates hadn't fought the Japanese allowed you to be a bit more tolerant?**

Oh I think so yeah.

Did you see this demonstrated in any way or?

No no no. The Japs were completely beaten they were completely beaten. They were absolutely windless oh no they were glad it was over particularly the females, the women

39:30 the ones that stayed there. They were desperate they were in a desperate hell of a state you've got no idea. They had nothing the poor beggars absolutely nothing. They were starving and oh they were in a hell of a mess. Cause everything went to support the armies. See all the millions of men that they had in under arms. Millions of men under arms you know and everything went to feed them.

40:00 **So you actually felt a lot of sympathy?**

Oh yeah yeah yeah. At that time we hadn't heard very much about the atrocities. We'd heard about Changi because the Changi boys were the first blokes home but they got the best end of the bargain.

You'd hear people say oh the poor buggers in Changi they weren't all that badly off in Changi itself

- 40:30 because they had a concert party. They had a, there were actors there were musicians they made their own musicians they controlled themselves. The Japs weren't controlling. They went out on unloading and loading parties out on the wharves a lot of stuff.

Tape 6

- 00:41 **I was wondering if you could take me through when you landed in Japan on the ship when you arrived. What you know from that morning and what you saw what your impressions were as you sailed**
- 01:00 **in?**
- I've been trying to think and I don't know because what's his name Brad asked me that. I don't really know what me impression was I don't even remember what time of day we landed. I think it was early I think it was early morning cause I think we all got up and saw the daylight out through the Japanese sea to Japan but the view the view from a ship as we entered as we entered
- 01:30 Kure Harbour was just bombed out buildings. Acres and acres of bombed out building because Kure Harbour was one of their major naval depots. Apart from Yokohama, Kure was the one and they had acres and acres of massive great sheds oh they went for miles up the jolly road where they built all their midget subs. They had hundreds of midget subs they'd built that was they were going to win the war
- 02:00 from the midget subs. They had hundreds of 'em and they were stacked on top of each other three and four stockin' all these sheds these sheds were spaced away. Cause one old destroyer in there the, forget now the name of it, it was it had had a reputation of being a hell ship it some people'd been taken on it I forget now what the name of it was. It was all blacked and burnt and all we saw as the jetty and the one and only jetty in the in the place was
- 02:30 right in front of our depot. All we did was get off the gangplank onto the jetty concrete jetty went out about two or three hundred yards I s'pose solid concrete which actually split like a banana skin when we had a earthquake explosion earthquake that bridge that's actually solid concrete just went like that split but we got off there walked off crossed the road we were in our barracks because everything came in from ship and went into our stores then went from our stores out to the units
- 03:00 so all we saw actually were these big sheds. They were very big sheds. The japans marines had had occupied it in the war years as a store depot apparently and these two or three fact there was only a two storey building that side a three storey building this side at the back and there's a couple of I forget now how many massive great sheds probably anything up to two or three hundred
- 03:30 four hundred yards long gee they were big. Never went inside one all the 18 months I was there never went inside one. They were the stores sheds they were they were they were the store blokes we were control see we were control officers they were the stores yeah but that's what we saw but it got a hell of a plastering. Cause we didn't know that either in Australia how many bombs had been dropped in Japan. They plastered Japan, the B24s [actually B29s], America plastered it. They went backward and backward and backwards gave
- 04:00 Kure a hell of a bashing. They gave Hiroshima and Nagasaki a plastering with bombs before they actually dropped the atomic bomb and they burnt out half of Tokyo cause they dropped incendiary bombs on Tokyo and half burnt out that. So we got a surprise at that we didn't expect to see all that damage cause we hadn't been told about it see so that came as a surprise to us yeah. So we just came off our ship onto our wharf walked in
- 04:30 and went up to our three storey third storey high barracks. They were built of solid concrete they were earthquake proof which they proved the point. They racked, rocked and rattled and carried on in the earthquake but nothing happened never got dislodged not a thing got dislodged in them in the barracks and that was it and then the next morning of course we're down taken down to our control office. Right Keith you're a typist Bruce you're a typist. This is oh and they brought the Japs in
- 05:00 later on. Somebody else did this somebody else did that and it was sort of like goin' to a civvy [civilian] job I s'pose more than anything. You walk in and the boss says well that's you're your desk there mate and Keith that's your typewriter there and then we had a special typewriter that we shared with a special typewriter for typing out four and five copies of delivery orders they were yeah but what I actually thought at the time I've got no idea.
- 05:30 Don't think I don't think we ever talked about it which is as I say we saw the saw the sunrise saw how the sea was and it was just all islands. Actually to me it was like going up the Hawkesbury River. If you go on the Hawkesbury River and all the hills go up that's all what Japan's got all hills everywhere, the islands were hills and

What did you think of did you think it was a beautiful country or a?

After we got to know it yeah after we

- 06:00 got to move round it round it was yeah yeah but the cherry blossom time is absolutely beautiful even though cherry blossom is all white see peach blossom is nice at peach blossom pink but cherry blossom's all white and the autumn's beautiful. They have three four distinct seasons. Winter is freezing cold gees we used to feel cold God we were cold. Summer is similar temperature here I s'pose
- 06:30 28 degrees but very, very humid and spring and autumn are beautiful autumn's all autumn leaves the whole of Japan in autumn a bit like Canberra is in autumn yeah yeah then as we got to know it we found the small strange. Everything smells differently of course cause they eat different food. We smelt differently to them because of the food we eat see and even though they're scrupulously clean they
- 07:00 bath properly they shower before they get in the bath. You and I if we're going to have a bath we hop in the bath and we soap ourselves don't we? Oh that's filthy that's dirty you don't do that. You shower first get your body clean then you get in the bath and you soak yeah yeah but they've got they've got what we used to call honey carts running round the place. They use human excreta for their on their gardens and things cause they haven't got very many animals and these honey carts go trot along and they were made
- 07:30 made out of wood. Everything was made in wood. All their buckets and everything else are made like a cask like a beer cask wood and they're bound together. They're beautiful too beautiful tradespeople and this honey cart would have a poor little horse towin' it rubber tyre thing and they'd probably have about 10 or 20 of these honey carts where the bloke'd gone round emptied sewerage tanks or sewerage buckets or whatever there might be and take it out to in the honey carts. Yeah they didn't smell like honey
- 08:00 didn't smell like honey but we got the people were lovely the people were beautiful and they're scrupulously honest. They don't know what a car theft car is. They don't thief cars not like the bastards round here. I've had my car thieved three times from down that car park. Fortunately got 'em back again. They came in only a month or so ago and thieved a tarpaulin I had over me car. Mine's the white Falcon down there. They just come in at night
- 08:30 and take the bloody tarpaulin. Oh they're thieving bastards round here but the Japs leave anything. They were starving for chocolate oh the poor buggers were starving for chocolate and we used to get an issue of chocolate free block of Cadburys [chocolate], Nestles or whatever and we could leave that sitting on the bloody table like that and those girls would never touch it. We had house maids that used to do all the cleaning they'd do our laundry for us and the sheets and do our personal laundry all that. Probably had about 10
- 09:00 or a dozen old Mama sans all elderly they were dear old things they were lovely old things they were dear old things. No way would they touch that till you'd tell 'em they could have a piece yeah. You had to break it off. Scrupulously honest they are yep. Artistic they're a nice people. I'd love to go back to Japan yeah but unfortunately I haven't got the wherewithal to do it. I'm dying for Lotto to win me some money
- 09:30 but I think I'll be dead before I win Lotto but I might not I might not. I'm determined I'm goin' to be the oldest surviving BCOF [British Commonwealth Occupation Force] veteran. I'll be 106 like old Ted Smout, if you ever see him you'll have to kill him first. I gave up smokin' no I didn't do not too bad I'm not too bad. Gave up smokin' at the right time
- 10:00 **Did you smoke while you were in Japan?**
- I learnt to smoke in the army cause we used to get free cigarettes. We'd get a carton of 10, a tin of 10 ah 50s Players that was an issue free issue every week as well as the Australian cigarettes you could buy for threepence a packet old Capstan and Du Maurier and Three Threes and RDAs [?] and that they were only threepence a packet. Smoke our jolly heads off smoke, smoke, smoke your head off all that sort of thing
- 10:30 yeah. That's why they taught me to smoke. That's why they're givin' me a pension for that now they taught me how to smoke so they take responsibility yeah we've got emphysema except I didn't smoke beforehand couldn't afford to smoke beforehand. I had a one puff like all kids do when they're 10 or 12 we used to have a bit of a puff but never smoked couldn't afford it couldn't afford a sixpence for a packet of cigarettes yeah.

Can you describe the control room that you worked in for me? Tell me how it was set up and

- 11:00 **what equipment you used and things?**

Well my part of the control room was just this little desk here with me typewriter. Bruce sat in front of me. Control room was probably oh about the size of me flat here say for argument's sake narrow ways came in the front in the door here we came up steel steps cause we're up on the first floor and soon as I came in the door that was my spot there. Had my typewriter on a just on a small stand and beside that was this other bloody oh

- 11:30 it was a dreadful machine that had to type out these movement orders they were actually called and then Bruce sat in front of me. We used to type the letters and then we'd take it in turns to type these

bloody movement orders and then it just went across and they all had their own typewriters. Haven't got a clue wasn't interested in anybody else. My job was here and that was it. At the back here was Lieutenant Erley, Blue Erley, his office. He controlled everything and there was sergeant's little fellow in the middle of that photo there Sergeant

12:00 Sandy Wilson he was well the NCO in charge of staff actually yeah and he used to sit just in front in front of me yeah. Sandy was a good mate. We became even though he was a Sergeant he became he was good mates. We used to always go round go round together yeah and he had his little tomadatchi but he used to sleep with her yeah yeah. I didn't with mine. I went up a virgin I came back a virgin honest. I was too afraid of getting' too

12:30 afraid of gettin' VD [venereal disease] oh yeah. They showed us a VD film and oh God oh frightin'. They still did it they still took a chance the blokes God they yeah.

What was the VD film like?

Hmm?

What was the VD film like?

The film, oh it was up to disgusting Harvey no I couldn't tell ya. Ha? He's knocking his head there. Well of course they told us everything. Don't go to the brothels

13:00 round out of bounds anyway but that doesn't bloody matter. There's not a soldier that doesn't forget where the out of bounds are and find a brothel see but they showed us the, talked about it all and what VD could do to you what gonorrhoea does and what syphilis does and syphilis can stay in your system for years and years and years and you might be 50 years old and runnin' for a bus and collapse dead and syphilis has done it see all these sort of things. Then they showed us these films. They showed us close up film of a syphilitic penis

13:30 which is the most disgusting thing and a syphilitic vagina right up closer than I'm sittin' well after likening of those you wouldn't go out anywhere in a (UNCLEAR) not on your bloody life mate VD but any rate the little my little Miyoko Totarouki she was too nice. She was a little virgin. She was a lovely little girl yeah.

And what did these girls what was their jobs?

Well two of them were typists. Miyoko used to sit behind me there with her typewriter

14:00 and she used to type. She would as I say they can copy anything. The Japs you know the Japs were always good copiers. Well as long as it was a printed thing they could she could copy it yeah so that was her job she had what oh nine till five or something. I forget now what hours were. We used to work eight thirty till five and I think the girls used to work from nine to five and others were filing clerks or and they might have been and some of them were probably messengers that would take the

14:30 stuff that from us over to the orderly room perhaps or down to the store. They'd have to take their the papers that we printed out for delivery to 95 65 battalion for argument's sake that they wanted x amount of new shirts or whatever it might well they'd have to take those orders down to the down to they used to do those sorts of things sort of stuff yeah.

You called them a specific name before what were they called?

15:00 Oh Tomidatchi? Tomidatchi that's friend Japanese for friend tomidatchi yeah gezhabond tomidatchi number one itchibar. Everything is itchibarn if it's not barker. Barker's bad barker's mad bad barker. Ah barker this it's bad but everything else if everything's nice if everything's good itchibar.

Did many men from the army get have relationships with

15:30 **the Japanese women who you worked?**

Oh yeah yeah was pretty prevalent actually cause a lot of the fellers if you go to a reunion now there's still a lot of the wives are here from Bangkok yeah. They came out oh they had a rough time though. Gees they got it rough in Australia that's why I didn't I didn't even think about bringing Miyoko out oh no too much hate. Oh they had a bad time the poor girls that did come out but a lot of the fellers that that

16:00 actually married the Japanese girls stayed for a couple of terms. I only stayed for the 18 months but some of them stayed for three and four terms yeah. A term was 18 months. You could sign up for a next one then for a next one then and by that time after our first initial 18 months everything eased up a lot. We were allowed to fraternise. We weren't supposed to fraternise might be but it wasn't it wasn't a punishable offence or anything like that and then after the second term you were allowed to

16:30 fraternise and after the third you were allowed to marry the girls.

And what was your relationship with Mayo?

Miyoko MIYOKO Miyoko Totarouki just friendship just friendship yeah. We used to with Sandy and his girl probably the photograph's in there if we showed the photograph but we used to take 'em on picnics.

There were Bruce had a Bruce had a girl. I didn't like

17:00 her girl. She was she wasn't very Japanese she was a big girl oh gee she was a big lump of a girl. Bruce had and I've forgotten her name. Sandy had his girlfriend she was good scout she was a funny girl God I used to laugh with her then there was Miyoko and Sandy Bruce oh Keith Hocking and he had a friend now the 10 of us. We'd just go down to the cookhouse and say look we're going on a picnic tomorrow

17:30 you can put a hamper together so they'd throw in a tin of this and a throw of that and a pound of butter and a loaf of bread and 'zmp zmp zmp zmp zmp' and away we'd go on a picnic. Go down to the transport and one of the trucks hanging around. Are any of you blokes going anywhere would you drive us to so and so we'd all pile into the back of the truck and they'd drive us or else we'd go down and we'd hire a boat and we'd those little old Jap bloke we'd give him a hundred or couple of yen to settle us down to a little island a nice little beach. If you get a chance to see the photos you'll see them

18:00 and we'd have this picnic and that's all it is. We'd go swimming and then see and we'd have a picnic because they were they were desperate for food. Anything with the butter, oh they loved that butter. They slapped it on a bit and their favourite was marmalade and salmon on the same sandwich yeah. They'd smother the butter on the bloody bread oh they hadn't had butter for bloody years then spread it with marmalade

18:30 and then spread it with salmon yeah salmon and marmalade on the on the sandwich yeah.

Did you ever try that sandwich?

No bloody fear didn't look like didn't look that good to me but the fact that it's fish I s'pose because they eat a lot as you know they eat a lot of fish. One thing they have got plenty of is fish they haven't got much else of anything else and we used to do this fairly frequently. We'd probably go over to where that photo was taken that middle photo at the bottom there over to

19:00 Miyajima sacred island. We'd go over there all altogether. We didn't go out too much in places like that because the Japs used to frown on the girls. They girls'd get a bad reputation being out with the Australians the soldiers but oh Miyoko took me home with her a couple of times and gave me a meal and she put she and all the girls got together and put on an honest to good sukiyaki which must have cost 'em heaps. We helped 'em out as much as we could

19:30 because beef was astronomical they don't you know have and the proper sukiyaki is beef and it's cooked on an electric brassiere and it stirs up and oh gee it's lovely it is so we all sitting around eating that but our friends who went on for a long while. We took a long while to get the friendships to develop but then that's all we did. We just went to picnics and things like that and was just nice yeah.

Was it an important friendship to you?

Oh was at the time yeah but it was only friendship

20:00 I was still in love yeah. I couldn't feel that could never feel the same for another person as I did for that one for Joan but she was very, very nice little girl Miyoko.

How did you communicate?

Oh she was pretty good with the English yeah. Oh we had a smattering of Japanese. If I'd had any idea that we were going to be invaded by Japanese tourists I would have made a point of learning Japanese because the classes were there. We were able to learn.

20:30 A couple of our lads did to learn the Japanese but oh it was enough for me they could speak English. I thought bugger it why should I have to learn Japanese? Them buggers speak English yeah.

You mentioned that sometimes the Japanese men or the locals would frown upon the girls hanging out with the Australian guys?

Oh yeah. Much the same as we did with our girls with the Yanks. We weren't happy about the bloody Yanks pinchin' our girls

21:00 did we? We used to say what was the expression I says? The Yanks [Americans] over here over here over sexed or something else about the bloody Yanks yeah. Well they had the same thing they felt the same way I s'pose yeah.

Did it maybe go a bit deeper than that? Was there any resentment towards you from the war years?

21:30 Not from, no there wasn't actually there wasn't. See we're an easy going lot of people. They hated the Yanks oh they loathed the Yanks the Japs did yeah because they were stand over merchants and particularly the blacks they hated the blacks the Negroes, oh hated them but all the Americans as a total they hated 'em but they loved us Aussies.

What do you mean that they were stand over?

Stand over merchants

- 22:00 they'd, we're the victors we beat you. You know the attitude I s'pose we beat you we're the victors you know down. Well like they did in their own country if a Negro had to walk in the gutter if he came in front of a white man see he'd get in the road. Well same with the Japs out of the road you're the vanquished we didn't no we were easy going. Even though we did we see at that
- 22:30 stage we didn't know of all the atrocities. We didn't know of the Burma Road, we didn't know about Sandakan, the death march across Borneo we didn't know about that. We just took the people at face value. The war was over any rate so why take

If you had do you think your attitude might have changed a bit?

Bit hard to say when it's a you know a maybe probably

- 23:00 although we knew enough but the Japs didn't see we tried to we did try to tell them that the Japanese soldier wasn't a good soldier. Japanese soldier was a very nasty soldier he used to do dreadful things. Oh they wouldn't believe it they don't know any they don't know anything about the war Japs don't know anything about the war. They don't want to know about anything they wouldn't know about the fact that we were up in occupation they didn't know that the younger generation they don't know anything about it and the then generation know any did not know
- 23:30 anything about the war what happened in they had no idea that the Changi massacre they had no idea of what they did in Borneo and all the rest of the places how they treated all the natives no idea at all and when we told 'em they said oh no not Japanese boy that's not Japanese boy. I said you know so we thought oh well poor buggers they don't let 'em think what they want to think it's not doing us any harm now it's over but we found they were damn nice people see.
- 24:00 The soldiers they were funny buggers. See they were no worse than the Germ they weren't as bad as the Germans when it's taken all into context. The Germans killed six million bloody Jews for Christ sakes that was only the Jews. They killed it in one hit, 10,000 Poles. They took 'em out into the forest after they walked 'em through Poland. They took 10,000 of them and just
- 24:30 killed 'em there on the spot and dug a big hole and buried them. Japs didn't do that. The Japs just treated our unfortunately treated our prisoners exactly the same way as they expected to be treated themselves. All the slapping business that went on that was part of their training. When they when the Japanese soldier was going through rookie training he was subject to that. If the sergeant didn't like him he'd slap Christ out of his face. Now if an Australian soldier did that
- 25:00 Sergeant did that to an Australian soldier a (UNCLEAR) would have brought him bloody back I tell ya? But that was part of their training and they didn't see it worse we were scum we were only coolies see. It was bloody dreadful what they did to our boys there's no denying that but that's all they expected them to be when they thought that our when we took prisoners which we weren't we very nearly took some we thought they thought that we were treating their prisoners
- 25:30 the same as they were treating ours yeah but that's all their worth if you're a prisoner that's all your bloody well worth yeah.

Were there many Japanese troops around the place? Did you come in contact with?

No was totally disbanded by then totally disbanded by then yeah. Few of the men used to get a bit would look a bit agro but they couldn't do anything.

What sort of agro?

Oh I'd have to show you a photo to explain that actually.

- 26:00 In some of the festivals they're great ones for festivals. Oh they've got shit of festival a Buddha festival another festival for somebody else. Always having festivals and they were beautiful because all the girls particularly oh the little baby girls gees they were beautiful used to get out in their kimonos all these beautiful colours. I only had a black and white camera you didn't have colour camera's in those days see. Black and white camera and all these beautiful colours all these kimonos but the men'd get a bit full on saki and they'd get a bit berserk
- 26:30 and you had to duck out of the road. They'd be waving bloody sticks about. They would have clobbered us if we hadn't got out of the road. Keith Hocking one day he stood right in front of one this bloke coming down. He's got he was supposed to have been a sacred bloke or something or other. He had a bloody mask on and oh I forget now see him in photographs and he was coming down with this bloody great bamboo stick waving it was part of the festival see. Probably waving it to wave evil spirits or something and Keith and I were standing right in front of it and I said
- 27:00 Jesus we've got to get out of here or we're going to get clobbered Keith. Be buggered he said I'm standing here and he's standing this bloke and he was going to but he changed his mind he walked around but no there was never any attempt at antagonism from the Japanese. They got you know obviously well oh well (UNCLEAR) and they were probably glad it was over. Their bloody war started in well in 1936 didn't it? 19 1934 their war started cause then went right through Manchuria and China
- 27:30 see and then they carried on from there. Their war went for 11 years the Japs yeah.

Were there any sort of major I guess strange cultural things which struck you overall differences in the lifestyle?

Well yeah yes I have said I s'pose their religion as much as anything particularly the

- 28:00 shintoists cause every shintoist has his own little alter in the house and they do their bit of prayin'. They're not as bad as the Muslims they don't pray five days five times a day to bloody Allah but they all have their little their own little shrines and they have special services for the dead because as far as we could find out apart from the ones that are cremated most of a lot of them are cremated because there's not a lot of land available
- 28:30 but any that are buried are buried standing up to save land. No land over there, stinking lousy little island. There can't be any more than I think it was 30 something like 32 or 35 miles away from the ocean on Honshu cause it's only 70 miles from one to the other yeah but that was about all I s'pose as far as something different to ours but their whole lifestyle is different. The fact that they
- 29:00 roll out their little bedding on their katami mats and sleep on the floor and then the katami the mat the bedding is rolled up and put in the cupboard in the day time and that's there that can be their lounge room see we ours only had two or three rooms but spotlessly clean that's why you take your shoes off cause they're goin' to sleep there. The Japs could never understand why we left our shoes on to walk through our house then we pick up our baby and put our baby down on the floor
- 29:30 when we've walked through with dirty feet and they say you might have walked through dog dirt dog's poo just down the road there and now you're baby's walking crawling in it dirty people. Bloody old hip's been playing up today.

Do you want to have a stretch of your legs or?

No it's just I'm sitting too straight I can't sit too straight too long. That's artificial hip replacement I had yeah. Nothing bad it just gets sort of crampy at times yeah cause normally I generally lie back in my

- 30:00 in my whatso there yeah but that was that was about all. We sort of I s'pose well as far as I'm concerned I don't s'pose I thought a great deal I thought well that's Japanese. As I've said to you before I'm not one of these that question things. That's the Japanese way that's it.

What about talking about Shinto before what about Buddhism? Was there much evidence of Buddhism?

Oh everywhere you went there's a statue of Buddha oh

- 30:30 crikey yeah he's all over the bloody place yeah Buddha yeah. Big one at

So we were talking about?

Buddha yeah yeah Buddha was everywhere yeah big big Buddha. Was just trying to think where that big Buddha is that you can actually walk in then come out on his arms up

- 31:00 no can't name starts with T can't think of it but Buddha was everywhere yeah. They were the two main religions. Lot of Christians oh most of them most of our girlfriends were Christians. They they'd probably converted some generation before converted to Christianity. Probably after Perry whenever he went over there whatever they did and the missionaries went in after Perry they converted a lot a lot of them to Christianity
- 31:30 and they loved Beethoven they love Beethoven's music yeah. He was their favourite. They Love their classical music but Beethoven was their favourite.

How about did you ever some of that really traditional Japanese stuff? I guess

Oh yes yeah yeah. We used to wander around in the little villages right just around the bay and particularly Keith and I we'd do that often. Cause we only worked five and a half days see Saturday afternoon was free and Sunday.

- 32:00 Sometimes we'd have a sports day on the Saturday afternoon but Sunday was free you could go to church you wanted or whatever and we'd wander round and through the little villages on the side. There's nothin' much that way into Kure cause it was flat and there was bugger all in there except a big brothel. Tell you about big brothel too later on and we used to go round there and we'd go in amongst and just wander through and just say speak to all the people and they were always friendly and occasionally we'd find somebody
- 32:30 a young girl. I can remember this one particular case there and this little girl was sitting just in the doorway of the little house and pluckin' away on her little three string dump dump dump dump dump can't think of the name of it. It's up there it's up there and it was lovely. We sat down and just it's fun in music it's that sing songy music you know and they
- 33:00 we used to do that often we used to do that it was nice and when we went to went to Osaka must have been Osaka another feller and I as escort on the, we took it in rosters we rostered to go when the train with a load of stuff was going to one of the other units we'd go two of used to go as escort not that they ever got

33:30 never got attacked or anything but it was part of the army business but I think it was Osaka and I went to the Takarazuka Opera and first half of that was truly Japanese and then they it was a Japanese version of Mid Summer Night's Dream and then everyone the photo I've got photos there lovely photographs. That was nice I enjoyed that yeah cause all the girls were made up. Gees they were pretty girls too they were lovely they were yeah. I hope you have got time

34:00 to still get some of those photographs. Should have them here and pull them out as we're talking really but you can't with the camera with you but oh however. I thought you would actually. I thought you you'd take photos or hold them up or something like this every now and then but

At the end of the day we will?

At the end of the day right we but that was the sort of thing we would do occasionally yeah but we kept pretty much to ourselves I s'pose. We went to Hiroshima

34:30 quite a few times yeah cause that was a good bus ride or truck a truck would take us down. Truckload of us and that was about 30, I think about 30 kilometres from Kure, Hiroshima.

Can you describe what it looked like?

Oh flat. Seen flat land? Been out west and seeing seen a flat paddock? That was Hiroshima six months flat as a flounder. Not a building, rubble everywhere. Actually there were only a few buildings left solid buildings

35:00 and they were made of concrete and one of them was actually the target that they'd dropped the bomb they exploded the bomb just above it and it was a domed building and all the concrete had been blasted away and the dome steel frame was still left. Photographs of that in there and by the time we got there six months a lot of the rubble had been cleaned away and it was just an empty paddock with roads dividing these empty paddocks and here and there the station was still complete. Hiroshima Railway Station

35:30 it was knocked around a bit but it was still complete because the trains were still running there they still had to run the trains. That's the, that was the major transport way of transport in Japan trains that's why they build these beautiful flyers doing bloody 200 kilometres an hour. The trains were good. Even then they were bloody good trains. It was still complete and then here and there people were building these little shanty's to for shelter and they were building sort of little shops, little bazaars. I got me camera there

36:00 turned out to be a bomb of a bloody thing too but I was able to take a lot of lot of photographs and then we'd go back perhaps every six months or so and see how it was but it didn't take them very long to start building. Like a when you knock down an ant's ant hill it doesn't take those ants long to get the bloody thing built again was the same with the Japs. They, yeah they chewed it up pretty quickly.

What was your reaction the first time that you saw it?

36:30 Christ one bomb did that you know sort of thing we said. Christ one bomb do that see. Cause we heard it was little boy was it's name wasn't it little boy or tiny boy or something wasn't it? Little boy yeah we said Christ one bloody bomb do that yeah because it was even though it knocked down a hell of a lot of concrete there's not much concrete

37:00 in a Japanese city or there wasn't then it was all paper and bamboo. All their houses are bamboo lovely they were. Actually, they were lovely houses because the that wall would be two sliding doors see the whole wall paper and bamboo and you'd slide that and you could go in or you could slide that one if you wanted to go in yeah I'll show you some of those from in a hotel we stayed at.

Well what about the sort of human devastation at Hiroshima?

Which?

The human devastation at Hiroshima?

37:30 We didn't see that we didn't see it that was all cleaned up. That was bad. Dreadful burns they got some dreadful burns apparently radiation burns dreadful burns. Completely incinerated some people just poof they were gone yeah and then they left shadows. They left shadows on the wall apparently I never saw those but apparently the shadow of the person that got annihilated was on the ground it was still there you could see it. We never saw that no

38:00 we didn't see that. We didn't see anything bad cause six months a lot a lot had been cleaned up see from August to March April.

Were people aware of the radiation?

No, no they weren't. It took a long while for the nations all the countries to realise how much radiation there was from that because they made that bomb pretty bloody quick smart. They only

38:30 exploded a few out in the on the desert in Nevada only a couple of them underground or something or

other and they didn't have any idea. Well see they had no idea to Montebello, they had no idea out at where was it over in Central Australia cause they had our blokes standing only a couple of hundred yards away from the those blasts when the Brits [British] blew those blasts at Monte, Maralinga. They were only a matter a couple of hundred yards away from them even though they'd turned their backs and oh a bit more than a hundred

- 39:00 couple of hundred yards and turned their back but even then and that was back in that was way what early 50s or something when they first blasted them? They had no idea of the effect or the quantity of radiation had no idea at all no. That's why we're still that's why we're still arguing that we should be recognised as being affected by radio but the Australian government won't hold it
- 39:30 won't have it. Germans, the Americans do the Americans have recognised but they weren't near Hiroshima. We were right in the middle of Hiroshima. They weren't they were only up in Tokyo they weren't even near Nagasaki that was over the bloody road there over that way but they recognised that any troops who were there that they got special payment for disability payment for radiation yeah but our government won't, our mob is convinced that no we weren't
- 40:00 there long enough we weren't there wasn't still around yeah. Cause we're still fighting all the BCOF we're still fighting for veteran status which we don't have we're not veterans but we reckoned we were still at war until 1952 when the peace was actually signed. We went up there under the agreement, of the Potsdam agreement under the rules the Potsdam agreement and we were still at war with Japan see and we didn't actually sign the peace agreement until 1952
- 40:30 and we're trying to, all the organisations are trying to get the government to agree and it looks like we might this new Minister for the Army Mrs Vale looks as though she's might be finally convinced at least until 1947 when we created a new army. While we were still AIF we were still active but in 1947 they created a new army which they called the Interim Army see and they were they had gone up under a different
- 41:00 stand yeah.

Tape 7

- 00:39 **Now you told us what it looked like in Hiroshima. Now just tell us where you were based again?**

At Kure.

And where was Kure?

On, right on the water at the inland sea, Japanese inland sea right on the water. Was a big naval base, a very big naval base in the war time.

- 01:00 That's why you see all those photographs of the submarines and it turned out those submarines by the hundreds. Impossible to tell you exactly where it is. It's right down almost a long way south of from Tokyo, it's a couple hundred miles from Tokyo. It's on the southern right hand east where would it be? Eastern, yeah eastern seaboard of Honshu but fairly well down to the bottom.

- 01:30 Apparently you were when you come in amongst all the other islands cause it's full of bloody islands. When you come in Kure is about the first place that you come to. Hiroshima is back a little bit a little bit more inland.

How far?

Oh about 30 km I think it was.

And what was the name of the sorry let me start again. So this was called what was this prefix you called?

Hiroshima prefecture

- 02:00 but it covered the whole area. It covered a massive great area. It took in Nagasaki and it took in a lot of the other it's a big probably about the size of the ACT [Australian Capital Territory]. It's like sort of the ACT in NSW well Hiroshima prefecture in Japan was probably about the same sort of set up yeah it was very, very big, very big. It took in Iwakuni where the airport, where the air force was and

- 02:30 I don't know actually it probably took in the whole of the southern part of the island perhaps down as far as probably down as Shimonoseki but I don't know I can't swear by that but it's a big place, big area.

And who out of the occupying forces was looking after this area?

We all were Australia. Australia and New Zealand and Brits yeah and then they had a few Indians had a few Indians there and then the Yanks were up at Tokyo yeah the other part way up there

03:00 Tokyo. We were BCOF British Commonwealth see that's why we were all down there.

Why would why did the Yanks assign this area to the BCOF?

We didn't we chose it ourselves. Lieutenant General Northcott he was the first commander, he didn't stay up there long and he actually chose it and I read I read a book about that situation I can't reason why he could have taken he could have taken a bigger slice

03:30 of the southern part of Honshu but he didn't he thought it was too big an area for Australia or for the BCOF to control cause in that area there'd be millions of Japs. There could be probably two hundred million Japs in the in an area that big see and he thought it was too big for us to control so he reduced it to just that area Lieutenant General Northcott he chose that area for us. The Jap

04:00 the Yanks told us we could go down south you know do you want they won't have Tokyo oh that was that was MacArthur's check McA area, Tokyo but we could have whatever else we wanted and Northcott chose that area there that much.

Why would he choose an area that had the atomic bombs dropped?

Don't know. Well the probably the Yanks told us to take the bottom part of the island take as much as we wanted there I s'pose and as we said earlier radiation wasn't a problem. They didn't

04:30 know about radiation I s'pose I don't I don't know I don't know really know but Northcott was more concerned about how big an area his troops could control three battalions of troops see. He when he chose that he didn't know whether we were going to be going in there with arm with loaded rifles or fixed bayonets or anything did he cause that was all done before he actually land there you know it was virtually probably at the signing probably. I don't know when it was actually done. I have read but it hasn't stayed in there

05:00 yeah.

So radiation was never?

Radiation was never considered it was never thought of as a possibility no. They didn't know about it.

Were there any stories about what had happened?

No nu. All we heard about was the fact that the bomb totally disintegrated people and it the extreme temperature of it and that it left imprints on the on the roadway of people that just swooshed

05:30 but that was all but it was too early they'd only started developing the bomb that that late see. They'd only dropped a couple of other a couple of trials. In fact I think they all they had was one trial underground and then they dropped one over the Nevada Desert and then small boy or tiny boy or little boy whatever it was called that was actually the first bomb. They had no idea what the devastation was going to be. They had no idea because they were frightened of it was a suspicion then that

06:00 once you started at atom exploding it would keep exploding. They didn't know when it was going to stop honestly they had no idea. It was well cross me fingers and hope it doesn't go too far but they could have they thought it could have a chain reaction of all these bloody atoms could have been on and on and on. It could have come right round the world for all they knew they didn't know see it was all new to them totally new.

Did the occupying force guys in the occupying force talk about?

No we didn't bother about it

06:30 no it was there it happened that was it I think. I don't think we ever worried about it. We never talked, we never you know

Were there any theories?

No no no we just let life go let life go on as it was that's all I think as far as we were concerned yeah we had a job to do we bloody well did it yeah.

I know you described it before but when you went to visit Hiroshima

Yeah.

What were some of the things which were going on there?

Well the first

07:00 time we went there we went down there very soon after our landing but we when we landed on the 7th so it must have been about the 21st cause it was a fortnight trip up there so it was probably about the 21st we landed there was a big Commander in Chief's Anzac Day parade on the 25th and there are photographs in the album. That was a big one we didn't get to that because we were too we hadn't had time to rehearse for it but we went down as

07:30 as onlookers. Well probably soon very soon after that we went down to have a look at Hiroshima would

have only been a couple of weeks and there was nothing. There hardly anybody about there was no life no nothing and no as I say only an occasional little building popping up. You wouldn't know what the Carrara markets are, well you know when you go to a market place one of our markets here that everything's a bit ramshackle. They stick up a bloody you know a bazaar a little thing without any shelter well those were the sort of things were

08:00 popping around in there. Their first objective was to get back into business I think cause those were the only things were poppin' up yeah little bazaar type things and you where you could buy souvenirs and knick cameras this little bloke had a camera shop set up down near the railway station. I think that that seemed to be their main priority far sooner than start to build houses. There were no houses being built at that stage. They came along a lot later cause that

08:30 became a I think houses became a national thing they had to start from the foot and I think they changed the whole plan of Hiroshima I don't know but I think they did they changed the whole plan and everything was done differently and they're probably more brick and concrete houses there now than there were in those days more than likely. Would be the same in Japan now I think no they would have got away from little bamboo houses now I think cause they're pretty dangerous as I said but there was very little life

09:00 there in it's not like walking down here to the shops and you see the people wandering around. There didn't seem to be anybody yeah was a desolate just absolute desolate it was.

What was the scene like with these little shops set up in this desolate area?

Yeah nothin' else around here. It was like puttin' up a well there was a little shopfront I've got a photograph of it in there actually was only a little the little shop itself wouldn't have been any bigger than

09:30 this and the door and it came in here and he had a counter here and he had a display of cameras probably only had about 15 or 20 cameras. They were all second hand there was nothing new there all sorts. The very popular one over there was what they called the reflex camera which you looked down into it and you can see quite a few of those and the one that I brought and they were only cheap. I forget now the prices of 'em but mine was a little bellows one wasn't a very good camera but

10:00 it used to let the light in and all sorts of things but I think yeah that seemed to be their objective get shops going get back into business cause they had bugger all they had no money they had nothing the poor mongrels God they had nothing. They'd never seen they hadn't seen sugar for bloody years they hadn't seen butter. Sugar saccharin oh they'd do anything for saccharin. I didn't know what saccharin was never heard of it and of course some of the sharp Aussies did they knew what saccharin was so their parents used to send 'em up

10:30 packets of saccharin, little jar of saccharin you know about how big they are. Little vial of saccharin and you'd get a hundred dollars a hundred yen for that. You could probably get a night's nookies and then a hundred yen as well as a matter of fact if you wanted it yeah. Oh they'd sell their soul sell their body for saccharin yeah oh yeah poor buggers they had nothing and butter we used to get tin but the Pommies, it wasn't ours it was Pommie tin butter oh gees it was horrible bloody stuff oh

11:00 ghastly was a oh the colour of that it was oh dreadful muck. Oh they used to love it they'd pay anything I I didn't dabble in the black market I didn't I didn't I didn't sell anything I didn't dabble in the black market.

How did the black market?

Oh well you just had to walk down the street and they'd come racin' up. You got any saccharin any sugar any butter cigarettes oh desperate they want anything

11:30 yeah being an Australian living in a country like you couldn't imagine how desperate those bloody people were but I they're talking about people over there in Africa now that have need for this, that people in Nigeria those poor buggers up there were the same as they are they had nothing and where they scratched up the money from I don't know but most of it was prostitution. The normal girls would prostitute themselves for 40 dollars, 40 yen yeah or a couple of packets of cigarettes or

12:00 yeah oh they were buggers you know it was tough actually.

What was that like the prostitution?

Pretty rife oh yeah there was plenty of it about. I was going to tell you about the, on Kure hill. When it went as I say we were out here out on the docks and was about seven miles I I'm not sure guessing now about seven miles into Kure. Now all that existed in Kure when we got there was a

12:30 what was originally the marines headquarters which we commandeered and made the BCOF headquarters was a double storey brick building which I'll tell you a bit more about that later on and then here and there were dotted these little little little shops little shops and they were selling trinkets. Little bamboo things where they with a little toreat in it or a little Buddha or

13:00 all anything they could sell and they brought out Japanese flags with surrender of Japan on it was very

surrender of Japan 1945 all this sort of business you know souvenirs and all that sort of jazz. Well there was one or two of those and then the residential part was at the back because the road used to go right along these pens, these submarine pens and the residential part was up on the hill and that actually went up into

13:30 Hiro but up out of the town on the left hand side there was a series of jetties and wharves and our small boats used to tie up there then this road went up the hill and half way up the hill round the corner and intersection this bloody massive three storied timber building which was a brothel. Must have been hundreds of girls in there you know so for a bit of a lark and something to do we'd wander

14:00 into Kure or get a lift in with the trucks we'd never walk it was too bloody far we'd get a lift into Kure and we'd walk up this hill. It didn't matter if it was day afternoon evening or night time it wouldn't matter. Night time was pitch black you hardly saw a thing so most of it happened through the day. Any rate we'd go up and all these girls would toddle oodle up the, cause we're not allowed we weren't allowed to go to there that was out of bounds there were out of bounds. These little girls'd tott tott tott up onto Kure hill and into the section talk to the to the troops and in canvas thing see

14:30 and they'd be chat chat chat away and tellin' how much it was 40 cen ah 40 yen for a one time or 80 cents for all night and all this sort of thing and while they're talking their hand'd come down and they started groping them at the crutch too and that's it (UNCLEAR) and these girls'd be gropin' away getting us all excited to take us down to this bloody brothel yeah yeah. So a lot of the fellers used to go too round the corner and down to the ruddy I never did no bugger that

15:00 but it was a bit of fun though oh dear the things they used to do yeah.

Was the groping a good sales pitch?

Oh God yes yeah once they got you erect that was it mate you were down there down the road yeah down the road and into the cot. Oh was a steady stream. They'd go down and was only short was the little road probably no further than the length of our driveway there

15:30 and there's intersection. Gees it was a big building there must have been a hundred girls in there it was so big. Three stories and made out of timber building gees it was big. Oh was a tender stream up and down the girls'd come, the blokes'd go down and oh yeah.

Did you hear any stories from the blokes?

No never heard any, no never had because all the blokes that I that I associated with were the same as myself. We didn't go to brothels. We were virgins

16:00 we were the virgin soldiers yeah but a lot went on oh by gee it was yeah. At one stage I got an officer came to me and he said Private Arnold or probably Captain Erley, Lieutenant Erley probably said you wanted over at the orderly room? I thought oh Jesus what am I wanted over in the orderly room for so I trotted over there hadn't done anything wrong or anything. Got over there have you ever had any experience serving beer or anything and I said no

16:30 sir I don't drink. I used to get me free bottle of beer and give it to one of me mates see or sell it sell it to some of the drinkers. I said no I wouldn't have a clue I know nothing about drink I said I don't drink. He said he said well our bar steward he said he's just gone to the hospital with the clap and he said we'd like you to do the barman. Why he picked on me I'm buggered if I know. Any rate maybe because I didn't drink so any rate I went up and the barman was there and he said I'm off to hospital

17:00 for a couple of weeks. I said yeah I've heard and I said what's all this about? I said I don't know how to drink. He said all you do is pour a beer from that bottle into that glass and he said you're pouring a whisky you pour a whisky measure like that and you fill it up with dry ginger or whatever. He said that's about all they ever drink here. He said they might have a sherry occasionally he says well there's the bottles of sherry there and the sherry glasses there simple he said they don't drink fancy drinks. I thought oh well alright. Anyhow I got in the way of it. Used to have to go over there at four o'clock in the afternoon I s'pose

17:30 and give they'd have afternoon drinks pre pre dinner drinks and something like that and they'd hang around. Oh it used to be a bastard though some of the buggers'd hang around till 2 am and while there was one officer in there I had to stay there but at least I didn't have to get up in the morning. I could sleep in see and come over the next day to clean up the bar or next morning clean up the bar and everything ready and so on so I did that whatever weeks it was one or two weeks and that wasn't bad then I went back to me typing job and about six months later officer comes up

18:00 he says he's back in hospital with the jack he said do you want to come over and bar yeah I said yeah alright it was too bad I was enjoying it so I did that on on two or three maybe even four occasions it wasn't bad. There had some beautiful offices officers in our in our unit. We had Major Drought was our OC [Officer Commanding]. Captain ding ding ding or something was the dentist. The 2IC [Second In Command] was Captain Arnold. We weren't related

18:30 in any way, Captain he was a nice bloke. He used to just call me young Arnold and then there were a couple of Indian officers and they were bloody nice blokes. There was a Captain Sing because there was an Indian camp just over the hill and cause we had to cater for them as well as our fellers see and

Captain Sing he was a sikh and he wasn't all that difficult and then every now and then they'd have a bit of a party see and there was a transport depot

19:00 just down the road from us and the transport blokes didn't have their own bar. They used to come up to there see and when they had a party of course they invited the nurses from 130 AGH [Australian General Hospital] and all and there were all these nurses used to come in see so I'm on duty there this particular day and there's one officer came up he was a captain came up with transport oh and he was a pig of a man. Gee he was an awful bloody officer and he used to get pissin' drunk and he'd get cranky get nasty see and he'd sort of pick arguments with some of the other officers and our blokes'd just turn

19:30 turn their back on him tell him to bloody piss off but any rate this particular time this big party all these nurses were here and all this bloody place was packed with and I'm flat chat pourin' these bloody drinks and one of these nurses was a pretty girl gee she was a lovely looking girl and she's sittin' up on a stool and this officer chattin' her up you see tryin' to get her off to bed and he went away probably to the toilet and she said he's trying to get me drunk and whiz me off and I said well I thought of guessed that, I said I guessed that. She said do me a favour

20:00 don't put any more whisky in my glass. I said happy to do it so I gave here straight dry ginger and I put her measure of whisky in his glass so he was getting bloody he was getting double whiskies every time cause he was planning for the two of them double whisky. Well after about an hour and a half about midnight he just fell off his chair collapsed. Yeah, yeah I saved the girls' virginity or her honour or something. Yeah but it was great fun but he was nasty oh he was a nasty bugger

20:30 was a nice bit of, I enjoyed doing that to him.

How did the men get along from the different countries like New Zealand Australia and?

Oh they were good they were pretty good blokes yeah. Oh we had we had a good time with the Kiwis [New Zealander]. We didn't have much to do with the Poms they sort of kept to themselves except when we went to those holiday camps we all got in together. In fact there's a photograph in there of me sittin' at the table with another Aussie another bloke from 21AAOD and there

21:00 are two Poms and two Kiwis so no we got on pretty well in those camps yeah. Well we always have done Aussies and Poms and Kiwis yeah we just try to keep you know our own opinion of the Poms. Everyone we've all got that same opinion about Poms and no we all got on bloody well but in our depot itself we were all Australian. They only were the two Indian officers and they we had nothing to do with us cause the Indian troops oh gee they were stinky buggers, shit their barracks stink oh

21:30 gees too putrid they're dreadful. Thank Christ they were over the bloody hill and the wind was blowing away from oh they were dreadful but we were all Aussies there.

And back to the brothel was it only for the soldiers or was it also for the Japanese?

No only for the soldiers they didn't want to have anything to do with the bloody Japs no no. The girls used to say Japanese

22:00 Australian yeah. They reckon the Japs had a little one yeah. Japanese Australian yeah. Oh they were funny buggers they're so lovely they seemed to be so naïve you know that's what I thought. Innocent they seemed to be childish naïve oh no they were beautiful people yeah yeah.

Did they seem naïve even though they were prostitutes?

Oh well

22:30 they were there for the business. They had to live that was their you know you've got to live so and that was the easiest way of living. Cost 'em nothing yeah yeah.

How did the authorities look upon this kind of activity by the soldiers?

Oh they turned their back on it they turned their as I said earlier we were not supposed to fraternise and that brothel that particular brothel was out of bounds. Well all brothels were out of bounds which there were obviously

23:00 were others round and about the place. There would have been stacks up at Tokyo. Tokyo would have been a pretty much alive but we weren't bad we weren't as bad as the don't know whether you've read the history of the First World War and the VD that got that our blokes got from the bloody Arabs over there. We sent a whole battalion over with bloody VD from the First World War from Europe from ah the Middle East and even the Second World War when the 6th Divvy were

23:30 were over there they sent a whole boat load home with the with VD but Japan didn't seem we didn't seem that bad I think probably because the Jap girls were cleaner and the bloody gippos, bloody dirty buggers they are of course but the Jap is a clean person. They probably bathed more often than the gippos did and clean, get themselves cleaner but even though there was VD there I don't think it was desperately bad.

What about safe sex?

24:00 Well it was there they we were told to get the condoms from the, what do you call that bloody thing? Was an off shoot of the hospital where you could get the, you could get condoms and also cream and something. Prophylactic centre that's right the prophylactic centre that was available that was in Kure that was just where the hell was it? I never needed it so I didn't find

24:30 where the bastard was but I think they were somewhere in Kure House I think they had the prophylactic centre.

And would they communicate this kind of message to people about VD and?

Who?

The authorities how the?

Oh the authorities oh yeah well as I told you about that bloody film I I saw yeah yeah. We were always getting that the MO would always be gettin' up sprouting about the VD keep yourself clean and all that sort of business and we'd have short arm inspections every now and then yeah

25:00 oh probably have them about every six months.

Just take us back to how that how was that film structured? What was?

Oh mate it was ghastly no bloody tellin' you it was. That's all I remember about it was the fact that these two dreadful genetic genitalia with all bloody syphilis sores and puss and everything oh Jesus you've got no idea you've just got no idea God

25:30 **And was there someone in the film talking or?**

Oh yeah was made by the Department of Information in Australia and he was explaining what the things as he went along and explained about prophylactic aids and creams and all this sort of business condoms or French letters didn't we didn't know what a condom was in those days it was a French letter and

Why was it called a French letter?

Oh buggered if I know. It was always a French

26:00 letter yeah. Condom's a new word yeah condom's a new word. It was like the blokes said what sort of what sort of letters does a French sailor have round his hat and the other bloke says French letters yeah.

How would you pay for things in Japan?

We had two types of currency. We had Japanese currency and occupation currency yeah. We made our own money BCOF British Commonwealth Occupation

26:30 Force money and they were in pounds pound ten shillings five shillings two and sixpence two bob and a shilling I think. I did have a whole range. I sent a whole bloody stack I had a I I did a scrap book while I was over there it was a ledger. It was about that thick and I had all these things I had Japanese photos and all see. I sent them to War Memorial years ago when they were askin' for exhibits and I packed it up and sent it away oh crikey years ago

27:00 I sent that over to 'em yeah you know my interpretation of the life in Japan and all that sort of thing. It was quite comprehensive spent a lot of time on it and they were asking for exhibitions for the BCOF area so I packed it up sent her off yeah.

What was more what was of greater value or what was considered better currency?

Oh well it didn't matter. We had to use Japanese currency if we were dealing with the Japs

27:30 but the Australian our currency was done at with the canteens and anything else to do with BCOF so we did shop differently see. When we when we went to our own canteen or wet canteen or to our cause we don't have PXs [Postal Exchange - American canteen unit] like the Japs, the Yanks do but we had had shops where we could buy our cigarettes buy tobacco if we wanted or apart from all the free issues that we got well we used the occupation, our own currency for them but if you went to buy

28:00 a camera or whatever it was buy a trinket or a souvenir from the Japs we used Japanese currency and they went from a hundred yen down to down to five yen I think.

What was a PX?

PX? The Yankees got that what they call it a PX their gift shop or thing I don't know what the initial mean PX yeah.

So tell us about your holidays that you would take?

28:30 Oh yeah beautiful holidays. First one is with the Hotel Kawana that was the big flash one. That was on the Izu Peninsula, water all round. Was on the western side of Japan and it was built in 1934 or 6 or something, I'm not too sure of the exact year for a world championship golf and they had two 18 hole golf courses both sides. It's a beautiful building had a beautiful swimming pool and we had

- 29:00 open slather to it. Open slather to the golf course. We had little female caddies to carry the golf clubs and we got some of us had never played golf. I lived right opposite a golf course never played golf in me life. Soon as we got over there with a golf club see and I've got the score cards I think I got about 150 goin' round about nine holes something or other and we had it was beautiful weather. It was a hot summer time and we'd have swimming in the pool and they'd come out and serve beer at four o'clock in the afternoon beside the pool
- 29:30 and it'd be set oh they were fabulous and beautiful meals. I've lost I had a I had a menu but I think I must have sent that off with me other things because I've lost it. I was lookin' for it the other day. All the photos are there. It was a beautiful place it was a beautiful that was a week. We went there for a week and then we had another one which was down in Beppu which was known as the Mikko Rakwin and it was a Japanese style hotel. This other, the Kawana was entirely western. Everything
- 30:00 was western style and we went to Kawana ah to Mikko Rakwin [?] down at Beppu and we inspected the hot geysers down there the mud springs and sulphur springs down in that island of Beppu but it was a Japanese style and everything all the all the doors open up all the walls open up with sliding doors. We still slept in beds and that's where I won a little heart down there and but the letters
- 30:30 that Meka wrote, beautiful bloody lovely it was. It was run by a big German girl. It was funny actually. After we'd been there for oh six months or a bit more I s'pose looking at everything black hair and brown eyes and we went down to this hotel and there's a blonde headed kid Japanese kid Japanese blonde headed slant eyed blue eyes see and I said to me mate it wasn't Keith I went down there with another bloke. I said to him just saw a blue eyed Jap.
- 31:00 Oh don't give us the shits he said blue eyed Jap they don't come in that they don't make 'em. I said yeah I said there's a blue eyed Jap there that little kid goin' over there so we went round. Sure enough it's a little kid Japanese kid with blue eyes. Turned out his mother was the owner of the hotel and she'd married a Jap. She was a big fat Russ ah German girl yeah Irene her name was. God she was a lovely woman photograph of her in there and then this beautiful little oh beautiful
- 31:30 setting beautiful gardens around and everything was Japanese see and it was gardens it was absolutely beautiful it was. Gee that was a lovely holiday and we went it was cold we were winter time when we were down there and we visited the hot springs and that sort of thing. It was a lovely trip yeah that was down there and then we had two other holidays two other weekend holidays. One was on a both of those were for a week and they were six months or so apart and then we
- 32:00 had two other long weekend holidays. One was at an island and I can't remember whether I was I know we got onto a ferry and went choofing up the inland sea for about oh a couple of hours or something or other and this island. It was a bit like going to one of the our coastal islands with cabins all round the place and all we did was swim and sat and lay in the sun and drank beer or I didn't cause I still didn't drink in those days but swam cause I love swimming and the water the water's in me blood and that
- 32:30 was a long weekend. We went up on Friday afternoon and came back on Monday evening something like that and then the other one was a snow trip in the middle of winter and we went up to Dogiama and that was again we went up there Friday night we were there Saturday Sunday and Monday then came back Monday afternoon. That was a nice trip lovely snow it was beautiful. I used to do a bit of ice skating at the Glassiarium in Sydney so I had a fair idea of balance and I wasn't too bad on the skis. I could come down the hill and do a bit of a turn but poor old Bluey oh
- 33:00 the big bloke with the lovely voice sprained both his knees put his both his knees out of joint the first five minutes the poor bugger. He sat the whole weekend inside doin' nothing poor old Bluey. Gee still never got crook never went cranky about it no oh well yeah. That was that was a lovely that was lovely that three days.

Why didn't you drink?

I never drank. I, mainly because me stepmother was anti drink. Oh

- 33:30 Jesus oh you don't drink drink's the devil oh shit all that sort of bloody business. Me poor old Dad loved a beer too he wasn't allowed to wasn't allowed to drink oh no. So I just didn't. I didn't drink until I had a shandy at my wedding me first wedding and I was 25 years of age. Then I only had a shandy.

So when you were in Japan were there a lot of guys drinking?

Oh yes yeah

- 34:00 cause you got a free issue we got two bottles a day ah no two bottles a week free issue. Cost us nothing but most of the blokes used to get on the saki that was bad when they got on the saki yeah. One bloke in particular, oh God he used to make a mess of himself. He was one of the storemen he wasn't one in the office fellers one of the storemen. Oh he used to make a mess of himself oh yeah to show off he used to show off and I remember one time, oh paralytic he was paralytic he said you ever seen
- 34:30 a bloke eat glass? He's got a thick middy glass nearly as thick as those ordinary middy glass and he goes crunch took a bloody great bite out of it. Didn't know what he was doing of course. Some people can actually eat glass without doing themselves well he cut the tripe out of his mouth. Blood spurted bloody everywhere. We had to calm him down and hold him down and take him down to the RAP

[Regimental Aid Post] down to the doctor and finished up in hospital a long while. Oh gee he had dreadful bloody mouth. That didn't cure him.

35:00 He came back as I told you earlier we were up on a three storey building and we had a catwalk between the top of our building across to the top of the store shed. We never ever used it, the doors were shut but somehow the silly bastard got open got hold of this door and walking on a piece of what'd it be? Three be two hand rails, pissed as a newt, absolutely paralytic drunk walking across this, bloody tight rope walker and there was down 30 feet down

35:30 onto solid concrete yeah and he didn't fall off. How the hell he did it I don't know. God they used to make an awful mess of themselves with saki yeah very, very apparently, very powerful drink. It's one that you only sort of sip little drinks. He'd go God he was a real alcoholic probably dead by now, alcoholic poisoning. It would have probably killed him by now.

What about drugs?

Not that noticeable. He was a special case

36:00 see the two bottles you can't get very drunk on two bottles a week. We could buy Japanese beer at our canteen. A lot of the blokes the older fellers that were regular drinkers would probably buy a couple of bottles of Jap beer. Apparently was a very nice beer and drank them at night time after dinner or something or other but well you couldn't you're not allowed to the army won't let ya see. If you're away from camp or something and you get drunk well

36:30 that's your business but in camp you don't no.

OK. Were you receiving any letters from home at the time?

Oh yeah Mum wrote to me. Mum used to write fairly frequently. Dad did. Dad sent me a couple of cards Christmas cards for my birthday and so forth. Mum used to write and I'd write back and tell 'em all that we were doing and a friend of the family Pat her name was Pat Turner

37:00 she finished up a nymphomaniac she did yeah total nymphomaniac poor she was a nice girl gee she was big but God she must have been sexy though. She was a, we grew up we were all kids together. She was a year older than me and her brother was a year younger than me and we all lived in the same street in Cremorne see and we sort of grew up together and she used to write to me because her only, was being one of the family you know they were part of the our families were sort of intermingled in that way and she wrote to me a couple of times

37:30 yeah but Mum was fairly regular she'd write me a letter. Dad wouldn't, Dad'd just send a Christmas card or something birthday card, Christmas card.

How would how would people talk about a nymphomaniac?

Well me stepmother me stepmother told me told me that. We, she married I took her out a couple of times after I came back from Japan and Jesus she nearly raped me a couple of times I don't mind tellin' you

38:00 Jesus Christ it was close. Any rate she finished up marrying a Frenchman of all things and I don't know where they lived or what but any rate their marriage didn't last very long cause everybody who came to the door she had to rape 'em yeah. Nobody could come to a front door didn't matter whether the butcher the baker or candlestick maker she had to whip 'em into bed yeah yeah she couldn't get enough sex apparently, total nymphomaniac I believe yeah and Mum wouldn't mum wouldn't have said that if it hadn't been fact and true cause I couldn't, I got the shock of me life when Mum

38:30 said the word nymphomaniac I thought gees I didn't think Mum'd know the word yeah. She was a, she was a good looking girl big a very big girl dark hair brown eyes but very, very big, very solid girl good looking girl bloody hell she was. She had had polio when she was young but she'd recovered from it had polio you know a type of paralysis but she'd recovered yeah Pat. She wrote me a couple of letters but only because we were you know childhood friends. We'd lived together,

39:00 we lived alongside each other for six or seven years or something yeah.

Tape 8

00:37 **I'll go back to the office room just get more some more information details about your tasks.**

The which?

About your job.

Oh yes.

In Japan we'll get some more details about the tasks you'd undertake. Just take us through your daily work?

Oh it was mundane there was nothin' special every day

- 01:00 it as I said we had a typewriter and we used to have to type letters that the officers control officer Lieutenant Erley he no doubt had to write correspondence between him and the some of the other the other units I don't know don't even know what was in the text. We just typed the jolly things and if Bruce wasn't doin' anything or was typing a letter I'd type one and then throughout the day we'd get kept a constant stream
- 01:30 of orders coming from the, all the battalions the infantry battalions, the ambulance all the various units cause it was a complete army out there was a complete army and all the units and they'd be gettin' these requisitions comin' in. They wanted boots they wanted socks they wanted shirts trousers whatever it might be. Might have wanted a bloody 25 pounder Howitzer [cannon] well you know and they'd send in these orders and then we'd we'd have to type on this rotten bloody machine was an Underwood this rotten bloody machine type out
- 02:00 these oh I don't know what they were called now but if it was private enterprise you'd probably call them a travel order or just an order form I s'pose and they used to come in rolls or in zig zag actually they were in zag zag folder and we'd put them in a tray at the back and feed it into the machine and there were about five copies so there was four layers of carbon paper and they'd feed through there and we'd bash away on this bloody machine have to
- 02:30 hit it hard to go through all these paper cause like the army you don't do singly, everything's got to be in multiple cause one goes to there and one goes to there and one goes back to army headquarters the other one goes down to Parliament House and all this so there was about five or six copies of these things a mongrel of a thing but they were constant cause they were coming through all the time all the time all the time yeah so we'd hop from there if Bruce was doing the letters and I wasn't I'd hop on that bloody machine and belt away on that bugger for
- 03:00 maybe a couple of hours and then stop and then a letter'd come off and I'd hop over and do me and then Bruce'd go up and do that bash out a few yeah so that was it day after day was just like any ordinary office was like an office job. We'd go to it down at half past eight and we knocked off at five or half past five whatever I forget now what times we worked think it was half past eight yeah.

Describe that machine again the Underwood just a little bit?

Oh can't explain the bloody rotten thing. I'll show you a photograph I'll show you a photograph

- 03:30 **Just describe it for us that's alright.**

Forgettin' I'm tied down.

Yeah you're tied up.

How can I describe it? Four legs a stand like that and this thing was on a runner on rollers on wheels. It was just like a typewriter. All it had was the type keyboard on the top see nothing else and there was nothing to rest your hand on like there is on a table or even

- 04:00 a typewriter you had to get your hands up above here type all these keys and the keys instead of hitting a roller we'd go down and hit this bloody machine that was coming up underneath type up fairly close up and then you'd have to roll it down line by line as you type in whatever the bloke they wanted. If they wanted 350 shirts SD or 350 trousers KD [khaki drill] and all this sort of jazz well we did that by moving it down this on these rollers yeah. Oh it was hard to work though
- 04:30 hard to use yeah. It had to hit hard cause it had to go through five copies to start with. I think it was about five or something like that. It was multiple yeah and awkward cause you were sitting up there goin' bash bash bash bash bash cause it wasn't on a slope like a typewriter is see maybe at a nice height it was at an awkward height. It was a mongrel of a thing yeah bash bash used to make an awful clatter too. It was like the lighter typewriters always clackling making a hell of a bloody noise.
- 05:00 **So how much longer would this take to then say a typewriter?**
- Well there was a lot of oh how big were the forms? I'm trying to think how big were the forms? The forms were probably no bigger than any sort of civilian delivery docket see that's actually what they were but the army had a proper name for 'em see. They had a number and all that sort of business. Probably about that big and across the top you'd have to type in the unit ah 65th Battalion headquarters such and such
- 05:30 and such wherever there they were at the station either Iwakuni or Tokyo wherever they were cause they the entry units moved round. They had the base and they used to have to do guard duty up at Tokyo on the on the palace and everywhere else and all this see so you'd type all that out that business out and then you'd move it down and they wanted 50 pair of shirts KD the something like that KD so you'd go 50 'dt dt dt dt dt' 50 just like a delivery docket then you'd move it down and they'd want trousers like KD trousers 50 and you'd put this,
- 06:00 set it up and whatever it might be then that would come slide it forward you'd tear it off perforated and then I think we used to put it in a basket or something like that a wire basket and then it would gradually find all the different copies to go to the various different places and then one of them would

go down to the store and then the store would use that as a delivery docket. Then that'd be all, whatever they wanted that'd be all parcelled up and send to say 65th Battalion and for the battalion such and such wherever they were and they'd go

06:30 outside for the convoy that's all that was just like a delivery docket.

So you would what would you do with the forms? Where would they go exactly?

Well we'd tear 'em off as they came out and we'd put them I think we put 'em in a wire basket.

And who would collect them?

Oh buggered if I know. Somebody had the job to come round and collect them and sort them out because one would have to be filed in our office one would probably have to go to head office.

07:00 One would have to go to army head office see. One would come back to from probably one would come back to Canberra for payment the Department of the Army and all this sort of business I don't know how they do it and then one copy or probably two copies would go down to the store and they'd file one copy down there after made up the order just like a civilian job makin' up an order see and then one copy would probably be adhered to the parcel they made up the box the crate whatever they delivered and away they'd go to 65th

07:30 Battalion whether they were up in Tokyo or Iwakuni or you know whatever. That's right it was just like a delivery docket yeah.

How would you describe the bureaucracy?

I didn't worry wouldn't have a clue wasn't my concern. All I had to do was do the typin' and shove the bloody thing in there away you go let them worry about where they went to but I imagine then that's where it went I wasn't concerned. We probably told us in the clerical course where all those copies went to and at that stage I would have remembered

08:00 but not now not 70 what 60 odd years later I forget where they bloody went. Course they all had colours everything was coloured in the army. If you have five sheets of paper they were five different colours and the white one was always the top one the white one was oh it'd go there the blue one to go there the brown one to go there and the yellow one'd go there. Yeah all had their different places to go to yeah.

What was the rest of the army doing at this time?

Whatever their particular job

08:30 duty was. If they were engineers they were building roads repairing roads. If they were the what do they call them in the small ships, they had a very dangerous job. They had to go all around and the Japs'd dug a tremendous amount of tunnels into the mountains just off the sea and they were full of ammo and those blokes had to fork that out and that had to be all destroyed. As I

09:00 say the infantry they were doing guard work they were guarding various installations. We didn't have any guards. We used to do our own picket around the depot. If they were ambulance drivers well they were attached to the 130 AGH. If they were headquarters company there were in Kure house doing whatever company headquarters company does so whatever the particular unit was they were just doing whatever their duties were same as ours BCOF at 22 AAOD were supplying

09:30 everybody with the gear yeah but we had everybody up there. There were engineers ambulance drivers truck drivers. We didn't have any yeah we probably had artillery up there too. We they were probably they were probably doing some sort of work not that I don't think we took any guns up there. I don't think we took any big guns yeah just the same as though as though we were out on war footing we were up there on war footing

10:00 actually so they each unit whatever's it was had the same job to do. We had 40,000 troops there yeah at any one time.

What, Australian troops?

Yeah Australian troops, yeah.

Did you then feel like you were in action?

Hmm?

Did you feel pretty much like you were in action or just?

No felt like as if a bloody civvy job. Got up in the morning didn't even have to put a hat on

10:30 you know. Get out of our barracks walk downstairs walk up the steps to the office and sit in the office for eight hours or four hours then go down to lunch then go back again for another four hours or whatever in the afternoon. No it was just like a civvy job yeah because we didn't have to didn't cart round rifles didn't go silly with bloody rifles and presenting arms and all that bloody caper.

Did it feel like you were in control of Japan?

- 11:00 I wouldn't have thought that way. I gave a Nip the tip of me bayonet one day. He was scrounging I was on picket duty and shit it was cold it was a freezing cold night. It was winter only did it the one night thank Christ and I was walkin' around with this bloody rifle over me shoulder. We only had it slung over we weren't doing it on slope arms or anything like that. It was only over me bloody shoulder and here's this bloody Nip divin' into a 44 gallon
- 11:30 drum. I don't even know what was in the bloody thing 44 gallon drum just outside our perimeter see so I just stuck the bayonet up end of the into the back only a jab and he got a hell of a gee he didn't hear me comin' up the poor bastard. He was probably probably starvin' the poor bugger lookin' for some bloody food more than likely. Felt sorry for him afterwards but I just told him to that's it psht piss off before I put you in charge yeah. That's the only yeah

12:00 How did, how were the Japanese governing themselves at this stage or were they was there?

Oh they were. With MacArthur's harp, MacArthur was bloody Inchon bloody boss up there of course and they formed a cause they kept old what's his name the Emperor they kept him in there, Hirohito but they

- 12:30 they executed Tojo and actually, and they created interim government parliament of Japanese with assistance from the Yanks and instead of being the original type of Japanese parliament was more the European style western style parliament and that's what they've got now yeah. That was actually what we were there for. We were trying we were there to try and teach them to become more westernised actually. Come out of the out of the dark ages.

13:00 Did you interact much with the Japanese authorities in?

No, no we didn't we didn't have anything like that cause we were entirely different. We weren't in that that sort of situation. We were what 400 something I think it was about 400, 500 kilometres from Kure up to Tokyo something like that. I never went to Tokyo never got there.

So you never had kind of a teaching capacity?

No we no we were just in that little

- 13:30 in our little community where they stuck us five and a half days a week in the control room getting' stores out to the to the bloody units. Had to keep them fed and clothed and warm and all that sort of gist and much the same as you would if you were going to an office in civvy life. It was so much like civvy you wouldn't know you were in the army except that we were wearing khaki that was the only difference we had to put a hat on when we went out in the out in the street yeah yeah to dress up. Apart from that

- 14:00 it was just like civvy job.

How did you feel about this considering you joined up with maybe perhaps expecting action and then?

Oh well it didn't happen so what the heck. No good getting' upset about it oh well thought at least I'll get out of probably thought at least I'll get out of this alive any rate yeah although as I said we didn't know what sort of reception we were goin' to get in Japan. We didn't know if we were going to have to be unloaded with loaded rifles

- 14:30 you know stuff off the ship with loaded rifles or what but we didn't really expect we knew that the Japs were completely beaten. They were they were completely we didn't really antic seriously we didn't anticipate any trouble no. They were beaten.

Did you learn any Japanese?

Oh only greetings and that that sort of thing I didn't take bother. We were always able to communicate with broken English and yeah. Even some of the old Mama sans

- 15:00 that that they couldn't speak English but we were able to communicate. They knew what chocard was, where oh they knew chocolate knew chocolate yeah if we offered them a piece of chocolate.

What kind of words have you learnt that you remember?

Oh the greetings. We learnt how to count. Japanese is very easy to count because it's only one to 10 and then from then on it's 10 plus one up to 20 and that's 20 plus one and

- 15:30 so it goes on. 'Ichi ni san shi Go Roku Shichi Hachi Ku Ju' ten now you go from 11 then it's 10 plus one 'juuichi' and 'juuni juusan juushi juugo juuroku juushichi juuhachi' and so it goes on and three four it's very simple to learn that. Their average language obviously is fairly basic. They don't have difficult language like we have. If we change the tense or something we often change the whole word. They don't.

- 16:00 If I'm talking about you, you're 'anata'. If I'm talking about your see we change it we go from you to your. If I'm talking about your it's anata no and if it's me I'm atachi and if it's mine I'm 'atachi' no

meaning 'mine see'. It's no is the is the possessive of all their words. It doesn't matter whether it's Japanese. Japan calls Australia Gorshu for some reason or other

- 16:30 I don't know and but they're not Japan it's Nippon that is the name of their country. I don't know where we got the bloody Japan from but it's Nippon but if you're Nipponese your Nippon no see and if I'm you I'm iGorshu no. It's a possessive NO.

Did they have any nicknames for?

They did for me. They couldn't say Keith so they can't they don't have a TH they don't have TH together and

- 17:00 they couldn't say the, they don't know what that tone was so and I had a cowlick and they used to call me Cupisan. Cupi doll you know that little cupi doll with that little cowlick yeah I was Cupisan yeah.

What about Australians and westerns in general?

I don't know. No I don't really know whether they had a nickname for us might have done.

- 17:30 **That's alright.**

No I don't think so. In the war they did they called us oh I don't know called us beasts or some bloody thing or other forget now no I forget now but I don't think they I don't think they general had a general nickname for us no I don't think so.

Tell us about the bath house in Kure?

Oh that was somethin' that was somethin' that was in Kure House which is the headquarters and it was in a

- 18:00 at the ground floor of one of the one of the two or three I forget now how big these buildings were two or three storeys and it was the size of a football field at least the size of a football gees it was big and they're all these baths and each bath was the size of this room in a D shape. Flat there cause that was backing onto another one over there and there was back into two more there two more over there
- 18:30 two three more over there and three more over there about six about nine of these bloody things I'm not sure but at least nine would be more than that and they were like our spa baths now. They stood about that far off the floor but they were sunk into the floor and they were about three feet deep and like a spa bath it had a seat half way down and we'd sit on that in the bloody you could actually stand on the side on the on the side of these and do a belly flop and we'd
- 19:00 slop in splash the water see and right round the border of this thing right round the three sides of it were showers. Must have been several hundred of these showers because you shower before you bath right so we got into the shower we soaped we soaped ourselves then we got into these baths to soak. Never at any stage did they have them all fall because you used to take a tremendous amount of heat of steam they were steam heated and the first pair would be there just come after the shower and the first pair would be
- 19:30 there and they'd be just nice and tepid just a lovely and you used to get in that and we used to go in winter freezing cold snow outside in February freezing cold nights and this water was nice and tepid so we sit down and it'd be up to there on us see all the blokes we're all sittin' round in this see and then chattin' away about this that and the other and one bloke was talkin' about the last one he had with the last girl and all whatever the general subjects were and after you felt that that water was getting cold you'd get out and go to the next
- 20:00 one and that was probably 10 or 15 or 12 degrees than this one was see so you'd get into that and you soak in that one till you got red and then till the water felt cold. It didn't get cold it just felt cold because you were getting used to it then you'd go to the next one and by the time you went round three or four of these the last one was scalding hot. If you got from the shower and straight into that it'd be too hot you'd scald it but by going from one to the other step up all the time
- 20:30 and we would come out of there red like lobsters we were but oh gee it was a lovely feeling yeah beautiful it was they were the baths yeah.

Did you get into any other aspects of Japanese culture say like sumo wrestling or?

No no I didn't do anything like that no. No the nearest thing was that takaraza opera. That was the nearest thing to anything Japanese. We didn't have

- 21:00 all that time actually cause we had a job to do we weren't just there as tourists even though we did tour we had a wonderful life it was a wonderful 18 months really but we were there to do a job and that was it yeah.

Did you have much news from home?

Only what was comin' in the letters. We had a we had a paper which used to come out fairly regularly called the Bcon BCON

21:30 British Commonwealth Occupation News it was a good drum it was the BCON and they had a searchlight up there as a logo see BCON and that used to give us I s'pose a little bit of news from home but most of that was about what was happening in Japan or if anything if some of the units you know I used to have a copy of one of those too that was probably I sent that off to the War Memorial. You better go up to the War Memorial and ask them where Keith Arnold whatsaname is because they lost it for a while but then they found it yeah they did I finally got a letter

22:00 that's here somewhere saying how they appreciated it and received it yeah but the news from home at that stage I s'pose was oh was nothing very much happening at home in those days. The troops were getting discharged at a fairly fast rate and the news I s'pose from home would have been whatever Dad was doing and Dad was still with the Department of Munitions and doing the clerical work and that and

22:30 no I don't think there was anything nothing was ever very startling you didn't in the news you know from Australia then.

Did you miss Australia?

Yeah yeah I'm that way I would miss Australia. I could never ever imagine never ever imagine migrating somewhere else and living somewhere else and not live in Australia. No I'm 150 per cent bloody Australian

23:00 yeah but yeah we missed it but adapted to it sort of like going from say Victoria to Queensland. They're different lifestyles. If you went down there you've got adjust to colder winters and cold but you adjust and even though you might be living down there for a couple of years and pining to come back to Queensland and missin' it you're down there for a reason so you sort of adapt. I did any rate.

Where there things you didn't miss?

23:30 That I didn't miss? Didn't miss Mum that's for sure I had peace and quiet yeah didn't miss her cause I always got lectures in her letters. Her letters her letters were full of bloody lectures yeah. No I just I just settled down to the job in hand and thought oh well if I'm here for 18 months that's it what's the good of picking the traces I'm here for 18 months any rate yeah and well there's so much there that was different

24:00 so much there to enjoy I s'pose and I didn't even think of conscientiously comin' back to Australia until me 18 months were up and I could have very easily stayed up. Miyoko could have very nearly twisted me arm and I could have stayed up there but I thought there might have been a chance of seein' Joan so I came back again yeah.

There was an earthquake at some stage. Tell us about that?

Yeah yeah yeah we had an earthquake yeah pretty severe one too. In fact it wiped out the whole village down

24:30 south in southern part of Honshu. It it apparently the epicentre was only about 150 kilometres off the shore. I think it was around about 2 am and we all got woken up by the noise of an earthquake everything banging and everything's noise and there's our concrete building started to sway like this see and we all had aluminium lockers. Instead of being

25:00 old sealed lockers they were aluminium. They were nice too good ones and we also had aluminium trunks about the size of that suitcase there. They gave us one of those to put take our gear up gave us that goin' up to Japan that was on top of our on top of these lockers. Well they the lockers started to sway and looked like these bloody whatsa name, these trunks were going to come off so I jumped out of bed and put me hand on that to stop it fallin' down and hittin' me on the bloody head some of we all started saying what the bloody hell's going

25:30 on and one of the fellers a bit of a bit of a lark sort of bloke he said don't panic remember the Rodney and you people mightn't know what the Rodney is I'll tell you in a minute don't panic remember the Rodney so we didn't we all just stopped. Some blokes started to think about jumpin' out the windows but jump out three storeys up and down on the concrete you've got to think twice about doin' that haven't you, got broken eggs flippin' up and down see so we hung on everything quietened down

26:00 no damage was done everybody was happy we all talked for a while I s'pose went back to bed and there wasn't till the morning that we went out and we saw that there was damage and as I say this pier that we had landed on was solid concrete oh it was bloody wide thing and long and it was right down the centre she just split like that and a bloody great cavity down in this the concrete and there was a town I did read about the name of it at one time and it was hit at by a tsunami and it flooded

26:30 the whole bloody town killed 30,000 bloody people or something in one bloody wave yeah wiped out the whole village shoink and everybody went with it yeah yeah.

What was the Rodney?

The Rodney was a little Sydney ferry. Are you a Sydneyite? You know years ago that we had our normal ferries the Cremorne ferry and the Manly ferries and they're, also tiny little ferries little chut choof choofs, these'd go up the Parramatta

27:00 River right. Well the Rodney was one of those and when the American navy was in just before the war, the American navy we had four or five or six ships, half the fleet was it nearly filled the harbour with the American fleet see. And this Rodney was takin' sightseers down when the fleet was goin' out and it had steps up to the above, to the top deck was only a single deck bloody thing and the hand rails round this top deck

27:30 and people could actually get up on top of that. Well with all the excitement and the little ferry was overloaded they, too many climbed up the top and the bloody thing tipped, rolled over right over killed, drowned hundreds of people [actually nineteen] cause there was hundreds on it. Should have only had about 30 or 40 or 50 or something like that, was only a small thing but they had a couple of hundred people on it to see this bloody navy go out and it just rolled right over top turtle down and they found that young kids were drowned still hanging on to those hand rails when they when they went down

28:00 so it became a saying then don't panic remember the Rodney yeah that was it called the Rodney.

You mentioned also sports days that you would have there?

Yeah yeah.

Can you describe what they were like?

Sports days they were good fun because the officers used to get stuck into it too and they were good mates and we used to, had all these various sports. One of 'em would be board jumping a hundred yards dash a perhaps a high jump

28:30 high jump would only be about that high about the height of a hurdle but if you're doin' this in army boots mind you we didn't have thongs on or something army boots. Tunnel ball leap frog and all this sort of things that something to get give the blokes a bit of exercise and they had them not regularly but we probably in the 18 months we probably had maybe three of them but all the officers used to get stuck in too. Get our their shorts but you

29:00 each one was you had a certain time to do something. You had to leap that high jump at whatever height it was and then you had to go on to the next one and then you had the broad jump a certain distance and if you didn't do it you were out sort of thing see it was a sort of elimination and then we had tunnel ball and it was a team and if the ones that lost were out of the tunnel ball and the hundred yards dash you had to do the hundred yards yeah I think it was 12 seconds

29:30 or 12 and a half seconds or something so you've got to go bloody moving in boots to do 12 and a half seconds in boots I might tell ya yeah so all these sort of things yeah they were good fun yeah. Only to get, we were gettin' stale I s'pose sitting in an office with all the blokes even the officers were but our officers were very good blokes bonzer team they were.

Tell us about your coming home and when you were told that you could go home?

30:00 Yeah that was a bit of a funny time actually. I think I was well no I did want to come home. I didn't know what I was going to do. I wasn't too sure what I was going to do when I got discharged but the temptation was to stay there for another term particularly with me friendship but as I said I was more concerned to come home and maybe hope I'd find Joan see so once I got on a boat I was pretty keen to go come home

30:30 but at that stage I didn't know what I was going to do and we weren't very welcome when we got home either. We didn't get ostracized as much as the poor Vietnam blokes did but we got the shit kicked at us thrown at us because everybody thought that we'd been up there shaggin' all the Jap girls and all getting' loads of crap and all the rest of it and that we weren't much you know top bunch. We had to be discharged pretty quick and got out of the bloody road. We landed one day and we were discharged the next and home

31:00 yeah. No welcome homes no parades not like they have now. They have these marches through the city for these blokes that come back from Timor and all the rest of it none of it like that no. We weren't we weren't given a welcome at all oh it was bad was back from Japan one of them. That stuck for a while that's why it was a bad time bad time to bring any girls home yeah oh they got some rough treatment Jap girls did.

31:30 Because everybody was still cranky about the treatment our boys'd got and they took it out on the Jap girls of course when they came home see and that's why we probably copped it because we were fraternising with what the rest of Australian thought were our were the enemy still see still thought it would have been the enemy yeah.

Why would people think like this?

Why do people think why do people any of them any of them get funny bloody ideas see you don't know. Well that's that was the opinion of 'em that

32:00 we were up there we fraternised don't you know the Japs treated our troops badly don't you know by this time of course everybody knew about Sandakan they knew about the railway you know and all the rest of the and the things. You were up there fraternising don't you know that what they the Japs did to

our boys and you were up there fraternising with 'em. That's what was in the backs of all their minds yeah. No we didn't get any parades. Off the boat into Moore Park sleep overnight and discharged the next day

32:30 bang bang bang swwt out.

What did you think about all this?

I thought it was pretty bloody sordid actually I it was pretty rough bloody treatment. I thought oh well that's the way it is that was the way it is. It was a bloody long while before I admitted I was in BCOF was a long while before I joined a BCOF sub branch too and a bloody long while before I went on an Anzac Day march. Wasn't till I moved up here yeah I was embarrassed. I have to admit I only had

33:00 one medal and people'd say to me what'd you get your medal for? Oh when I was in Japan you know. Oh Japan one of them. Well you know how long its taken the Vietnam boys to get in you know honest recognition. We weren't as bad as that thank Christ but near enough yeah oh we were dirt Japan boys were dirt. Changed a bit when the when with the Korean War because a lot of the Japan fellers then went to Korea of course 65th Battalion and all the army battalions they went to Korea,

33:30 one RAR yeah.

So what did people expect then?

Oh I don't know actually what they expected but that was their attitude. That we were up there fraternising and we're knockin' off all the Jap girls and we're up there fraternising with the people who treated our prisoners of war in a shocking way bad shocking you know yeah

34:00 fraternising with the bloody enemy. As far as the Australians were concerned the people down here Japan was still the enemy cause it was the enemy for a bloody long while. Took a long while before that stigma disappeared.

Did the armed services try to annul this or back you guys up?

No I don't think they did. See we couldn't join the RSL [Returned and Services League] clubs because we weren't firstly we weren't returned

34:30 service servicemen. We hadn't gone over for actions overseas we'd only gone to BCOF we couldn't join the RSL. Many years before we they would let us join the RSL clubs cause and then they had to change the name see not the Returned Services Club the Returned Soldiers Club see that's why they changed the name yeah oh a long while before that stigma wore off.

How long was that stigma around?

Bloody years,

35:00 well I didn't join a I didn't join a sub branch until I got up here in '85. I didn't go to a an Anzac Day march until years after that too. Only been to four or five. One last year about '95, I s'pose 1995 '96 before I went to an Anzac Day march cause I was too embarrassed

35:30 I thought oh Jesus you know I can't go in amongst all those diggers with their bloody six and seven goldens up there. All I did was go up to Japan got one gong for it but when they gave us two more I thought oh well that's a bit better so I went to the Anzac Day marches then got three gongs yeah.

Is there a bit of competition in the armed services amongst the veterans about their service?

36:00 No I don't think so not now we we're too old for it now see we're too old yeah. No there's nothin' like that. In fact one of the reunions that I go to up at Rockhampton is for BCOF Korea Malaya and Burma they haven't got down as far as Vietnam but those different conflicts mainly because the numbers are dwindling where the BCOF fellers

36:30 are the oldest or the eldest out of the whole four because they came years afterwards Korea Malaya and Burma and get on very well together not even we don't even ask each other where were you because we've still got about the same sort of medals. We've only got to look at the medals and say oh yeah that bloke went to Burma and somebody'd look at me and say oh he went he must be a BCOF but no, there's no antagonism no nothin' like that good mates. We all did service see we all did service together

How did you cope with this stigma at the time?

Ignored it. Thought oh that's the way it is that's the way it bloody is yeah. I thought if I can't the RSL doesn't want me to bloody join 'em I don't want to join yeah no I just lived on yeah and I thought well you know I used to go and look at the Anzac Day marches in Canberra and when I first went up to Canberra in 1949 I went there and I was in bicycle peddling distance of

37:30 of the War Memorial. I used to go up there for a number of years I went up to the dawn service there and that was that was that was well worth going to. If you're ever up there go to a dawn service that stirs the bloody feelins' up in ya yeah the whole atmosphere the whole atmosphere gets right inside ya and the sun comes up just at the right bloody time and everything's hush yeah.

Do you feel a part of the Anzac tradition?

Oh Jesus yes now

- 38:00 I am my bloody oath yeah yeah my bloody oath I am now yeah. Well I finally came to the came to the to the wake up it's no good me saying that I'm not as good as the blokes that went to the Middle East or went to whatsaname and got six gongs. They were unfortunate or fortunate enough to have been born 10 years before I was. I didn't ask to be born in 1927 but I was born in 1927 and I joined the army
- 38:30 as soon as I could join the army. I volunteered for the AIF I didn't stay in the choccos. I volunteered and I did whatever I was able capable of doing or the army wanted me to do so then I though yeah bugger it yeah I'm as good as the rest of 'em now. That's how I feel now yeah and bloody I'm proud now of the service I did. I've got me discharge certificate up on my wall in me bedroom there and the certificate of appreciation that we got from the Prime Minister last year or something or other. I've got them up on the wall bloody oath yeah I'm proud of it yeah
- 39:00 but I sometimes look back and I think Jesus I could never have coped if I'd been in the army five years before some of the things those fellers put up with you know and every time I walk up down to the shops I try and go down to those local shops about twice a week I go certainly on Sunday morning to buy me paper and if I only want a few little things I won't drive I'll walk down see and there's a it's a bastard of a hill and I me wind isn't very good and me legs aren't very good now cause I've got too much pain in the
- 39:30 in the hips and I walk up that bloody hill and I'm draggin' meself along and I think to meself poor bastards in Sandakan now how those poor bastards ever walked in Sandakan. I can't walk up this bloody footpath because there's a little bit of a slope. I can't get up to the top without sittin' on the bus seat and I think those poor bastards on that bloody railway. Some of those poor buggers could hardly walk they had ulcers all down their bloody legs they were tired dysentery they were sick as a bloody dogs
- 40:00 yeah. End of tape

Tape 9

- 00:36 **Talking about coming home again can you tell me about the trip home on the ship?**

Was pretty hum drum pretty hum drum had good weather all the way home. We got

- 01:00 back into the same old routine of housie and cards and bingo and crown and anchor lose all your money on the bloody crown and anchor. They were fairly popular on those games.

What's crown and anchor?

Well you had a dice and on the six points of the dice it had a crown and an anchor and a star and various things and it had you had a printed sheet which had the same symbols on it and when you put your money on whatever it was that you were going to turn up

- 01:30 that particular thing so if you put it on the anchor then you throw the dice if the anchor turns up a star well you do your doe but if it turned up the anchor you get your money and the bloke running the game sometimes it was even money and sometimes it was a two to one. It all depends we played pontoon black jack with the cards pontoon with the cards that sort of thing and on the way home we just sailed
- 02:00 along very merrily. We were down on the same deck down on 6F coming home cause we were on the same ship. We came back on the Manoora same and the they'd got a nice ice cream makin' machine the sailors had so we used to they used to make this ice cream bloody shockin' ice cream too but if we had nothin' else to eat we used to eat it. It's lucky that these ice creams feeding all all day long buying these blasted ice creams. They weren't very good ones but better than nothing and then we stopped at
- 02:30 Finschhafen on the way home and Keith and I got off we were allowed to get off was only there for a few hours but anybody who wanted to go off and walk stretch their legs were able to see so we got off Keith and I got off this wharf with our cameras around slung round our neck and as we're off the wharf and it went straight up the up a dirt road and then the dirt road branched left and right and there was a big hill. I've got to stare in a point cause I've got to say where that my
- 03:00 mental pictures' there see and there was a big hill right in front and as we're walking up here this magnificent specimen of a New Guinea native walking down towards us. Young fellow probably in he could have been in his 20s with just a lap lap round him absolutely beautiful specimen. As straight as an arrow beautifully made proportioned body muscle built absolutely beautiful portion and we said stop take your picture. Cigarette?
- 03:30 We had to give the bugger some cigarettes before we could take his photo. It'd be in there somewhere. God he was a beautiful specimen of a boy fuzzy you know the fuzzy fuzzy hair, real fuzzy wuzzie [New Guineans who aided Australian troops on the Kokoda Track]. Absolute beautiful specimen of a boy so we

just did a little bit of a walk back on the ship and then we were back home pretty quick. Fortnight you know it's a two week trip on a ship like that. It only does about travels at about 12 knots or something or other. It was capable of more than that. It was a very fast ship. The Manoora used to be a armed merchant before the

04:00 early in the war and it was on a lot of the landings. On the landing at Balikpapan, was on the landing of Leyte, it helped the Yanks on Guadalcanal and yeah, and then it went the latter stage then just converted to a troop landing ship but nice trip back. Pulled into Darling Harbour was out to Moorebank. That was a disappointment too. We arrived in early in the morning

04:30 and we were all getting pretty excited about this coming down the Queensland coast and watchin' all the flyin' fish and all the rest down through the Coral Sea and we get in and we went past we went past Moreton Bay so we're getting' closer to home and we thought, oh the sight when we get into that harbour and see that Harbour Bridge that was the thing we wanted just to see that Harbour Bridge. That would have been worth anything and everything

05:00 see. Well it's about oh early morning when did we come back? September, October was October so it was fairly long fairly early morning so we're most of us got up pretty early and we comin' down and there's fog every bloody where down past Newcastle there was fog. Everybody's taken a bet Sydney'll be foggy you won't see the bloody Harbour Bridge see but anyhow we thought oh hope anyhow

05:30 went through the heads did the little dip that as the see the Bridge there's fog as thick as a bloody pea soup it was. Couldn't even see the outline of the bloody thing Jesus we were disappointed, oh so disappointed. We wanted to come we hoped we'd come in on a beautiful Sydney sunny morning see and see that beautiful harbour and the beautiful bridge over there cause we all love that. That's the symbol of Australia that Harbour Bridge doesn't matter whether you're Victorian or anybody else

06:00 that Harbour Bridge is the symbol of Australia yeah. It was so foggy you couldn't see the blasted thing yeah. Sneaked up the harbour foghorn blowing and into Darling Harbour out to Moorebank.

Did anyone come and greet you?

Yeah yeah oh we didn't go to Darling Harbour we came into Sydney we came into Circular Quay that's right where the Opera House is now yeah we did too by golly yeah we pulled in there. Yeah Mum and Dad were on the wharf to meet to meet me yeah

06:30 but we couldn't so we just said hello to each other and as we got out we had to form up and march out yeah Mum and Dad came out. Dad made Dad made sure he would come and see me arrive back yeah and then we march, de-bussed then out to Moorebank.

What was it like seeing your mum and dad?

I s'pose a pretty good feeling I don't know must have done I s'pose

07:00 would have to be I s'pose but I can't recall what me feelings must have done. I probably had tears in me eyes yeah probably did yeah dear old Dad harmless poor old chap he was and so as I say out to out to Moorebank. Didn't know what I was going to do. I wanted to be a salesman wanted to be a salesman do or die commercial traveller or a salesman see. Mum had said to me oh you never talk enough no good you being a salesman

07:30 can't get two bloody words out of ya together no good you being a salesman so she got me this job through a friend of hers friend of hers and a relative of the friend on a sheep property sheep only small one two or three thousand acres or something down in Victoria. I enjoyed it. Went down there on end of October I had leave then. Got all me gratuity money and I spent all me gratuity on buying a wind up gramophone

08:00 and records old long playing, the long playings had just come in then about 1946 long players and I brought stacks and stacks of these bloody records. I spent half me gratuity buying these jolly records but they were all records of Beethoven and Chopin and all the rest you know and I had a beautiful record of Enrico Caruso singin' Solo Mia gees that was a beautiful record

08:30 I had Talba, Richard Talba, John Charles Thomas loved his records John Charles Thomas. Don't ever hear of him now. He had a beautiful voice and clear. John Charles Thomas when he sang you could hear every word he spoke his pronunciation was fabulous but he got black balled. He had joined the he was a light skinned black American and he had joined the communist party the same with

09:00 a lot of the a lot of the film stars and they got black balled then this bloody what's his name? Old Watergate? They all got black balled any rate but gee he had a beautiful voice John Charles Thomas yeah and he used to sing got one of his records there but the poor bloody thing's damaged. I brought it second hand yeah so I was home then till

09:30 Christmas.

Was it difficult living back at home after having lived in relative kind of freedom with the with your mates in Japan?

No cause I had freedom then I was a big boy then. Mum couldn't tell me I couldn't go out I couldn't go

where I wanted to I went yeah I went. No, was just that no one part of life had finished and another one took over again I s'pose that's all.

10:00 As I say I'm that sort of bloke you know what's got to be I think oh well that's life that's my theory my policy actually oh that's life yeah.

Did you think about looking up Joan while you were back?

Tried to yeah oh yes yeah the whole objective coming back was to had no idea they'd all moved all disappeared gone into smoke yeah. Even the family had moved from Terrigal. There was nobody up there anymore. Asked Roy and Roy had no idea.

10:30 he said oh I've got no idea where they've moved to now. Actually the relationship was his grandfather Roy's grandfather was their stepfather. He Joan's father, the Maltese they had divorced her mother and he had divorced and old Grandpa Pooley he was a cranky old bastard too. He was a sergeant he was permanent army. He was in the army for about 50 years the old bugger and that's how

11:00 the friendship how we used to go up there we'd go up with old Pooley but he didn't stay there much he didn't get on with anybody old Pooley he used to live on his own yeah and the girls hated him, oh Joanie hated him Jesus she hated that old mongrel yeah. He wasn't a very nice old bloke yeah so any rate the line had gone, the track had disappeared I had no idea. It was sometime afterwards that that I found out she was married got married yeah.

11:30 How did you jumping ahead a little bit but how did you get back in contact with her?

She found me yeah 32 years later or 16, 32 years later yeah she found me yeah. I got this mysterious letter in the post. I thought she didn't sign it as her name. She signed it her sister's name. I thought what the bloody hell is Rita writin' to me for and I thought well if I write to Rita she'll know where

12:00 Joan is see so I wrote to Rita but it was Joan that I was writing too yeah cause I'd always had her in mind. I was not fair to me first wife I've always had her in mind she was always there. I used to think at times oh I wonder where she is wonder what she's doin' now cause it was in there. When it's in there you can't get it out no matter what you do but I done made the best I could for me wife and me family of kids

12:30 me three kids. I worked hard for 'em. They fed well they clothed well they ate well yeah yeah.

What did the mysterious letter that you got say?

I don't know now love I don't know what she what she said. Something she wrote it as though it was Rita and said that that Joan was very unhappy in her marriage and this sort of thing and that she offered things to me and so forth

13:00 etc etc see and I wrote back and said you don't know how often I think of her yeah.

What was your reaction I guess feelings when you realised that she was gone and you couldn't find her once you came home from Japan?

Oh pretty empty feeling very empty feeling. When you're when you're living on hopes that that something might eventuate and then it doesn't and you're powerless to try and

13:30 do something about it. That's the helplessness, powerless, couldn't do anything. I had no idea where to look. Sydney's a bloody big place and when they'd all left Terrigal they could have been anywhere. Actually she lived in I think Lakemba I forget now I forget. Her father gave her a house. She married and her father gave her a house in

14:00 Victoria Street oh isn't that dreadful. I know where the place is actually but that's all it's just gives you a hopeless just a hopeless feeling yeah.

Just in general point of interest, Joan was part Maltese was there a sort of difference in Australia's attitudes towards different people of different ethnicity?

They do yeah, yeah they do. They're very close knit they're a

14:30 tremendous close knit family she and her sisters and brothers and a few of them have died since of course they're cause she was one of the youngest. I got on well with most with all her family of her kith and kin but her children one of her children is very anti she was she was her Daddy's baby, her Daddy's and I think she still is even though she speaks nicely to me she does things. She gave me those two bedspreads as a matter of fact those sort of things for me

15:00 I think at the back of it I think there's a bit of niggly I think she keeps niggling at Joan even though her father is still alive and he's married to a bloody, oh she's disowned him now he lives now at Woy Woy and he's married a flickin' Indonesian. He's 82 and she's 43 or something stupid old bastard he is yeah. Even though that's happened and she's never, I don't trust her, don't trust her. I shouldn't say that

15:30 because it's on film it might stay forever but it did matter if she found it but I doubt it no yeah so I think that there's always been that undercurrent and then as I say we finally married at in 1980. We got

married at the chapel out at Kings Cross, old Pastor it was nice too was a nice little wedding and her eldest daughter and husband put on a

- 16:00 sort of wedding breakfast for us out at Blacktown and we finished up back down on the central coast rented a house in Killarney Vale and we were happy there, we were going well. I had a good job a reasonably good job. I was bringing home fair pay enough money and we also had a good car and a trailer and we used to go to Sydney and buy furniture units big units oh
- 16:30 they were beautiful. They were in the something after this but more in an Italian design. Forget now where we used to get 'em. We used to get them take them up put them in our lounge room and then we'd advertise them for sale. We got them very cheaply we got them at wholesale see. We were making some good money and one day she said to me hope they haven't this daughter was a problem. She only lived round the corner also in Killarney in well near enough Killarney Vale and she used to be down there every day. Mum do you want to go shopping? Mum do you want to go shopping if she didn't come she'd come up every day and come down and see
- 17:00 her every day very possessive and then I think she got to got to Joanie pestered and pestered and pestered and pestered and one day Joanie said to me I want a divorce I want me own pension. She says I want you to buy a caravan and I'll go and live with Evelyn and I'll get a pension. That was a bloody shock I'll tell you so for several months I kept right away. I brought me caravan nice one too.
- 17:30 Put it into a caravan park out at Wyee was nice was a mobile home actually. Gee it was nicely set up nice furniture in it was very comfortable and then they decided to then she got the divorce and she came out to serve the papers all of it. We still well there was a distance between us and then she came out one day she said Evelyn wants to go to Queensland will you come up with me and oh shit after all this time see
- 18:00 she said oh I don't want to go up there on my own so that renewed the friendship again we've been friends ever since. We lived together for three years and got into difficulties 18 months all this backwards and forwards oh always been this bloody daughter I'm sure I'm sure. We actually lived next door at one stage and even though she lived next door she would ring her mother at least once a day as well as comin' in to see her and she's always ringin' up and always in trouble this that and the other and then when I lived
- 18:30 next door Joan was living they the daughter had put a flat on for her father in law, husband's father nice old feller old Harry and old Harry died and they had this granny flat. So Joan moved in there and I moved in next door there. It all happened at the same time. We've been living together for about three and a half years or so but not very happily because that interference is there all the time so that's was a dreadful feeling. Very unhappy time for me it
- 19:00 was and yeah I was there for three and a half years and she comes to me one day cause I used to go over and see her every fortnight and I'd take her shopping and if she ever wanted to go there cause I had the car and she didn't and she said to me one day she says I want to go back to Sydney NSW [New South Wales] will you come with me? I said, "Oh shivers no" I said "I came up here to get away from NSW". Any rate that went on for a while so then I succumbed to her I said "Yes alright I'll go back with you," so we went down.
- 19:30 New Year's Day we left here drove down and oh I was sick I'd had a bronchial attack oh geez I was crook that day and we got down to bloody hell what's the name of the place? There's a big power house there, Liddell Powerhouse just past the Liddell Powerhouse [Liddell Power Station, south of Muswellbrook, NSW] we had a blow out. The back tyre went bang I thought Jesus oh Jesus I was crook and
- 20:00 I had to get out and change this bloody tyre. Well I just couldn't do it I was just bloody sick couldn't have no power no strength in me. We sat there for several hours and I finally waved a bloke down. Was a council truck council bloke or something or other and he changed me tyre for me so we back then went onto The Entrance found ourselves a nice little flat there for this was 1996 yeah early 1996 January 1996 found a nice little flat at The Entrance
- 20:30 only cost \$100 a week rent so I said oh well we'll settle in here. Didn't like it didn't like goin' back there again, registration was too dear everything was just right didn't suit me. I stayed three months then I came back to Queensland. I said Joanie darling I cannot live here I've got to go back. Upset her a fair bit upset me but not by that time one of me daughters me youngest daughter had moved over
- 21:00 with her husband is living down the Gold Coast so I moved into a caravan park down there and each Saturday I'd ring Joan and we'd talk to each other. After a couple of months she said I can't cope here on me own will you come back? Oh I said alright love so I packed the car up again and down I went again. We moved from The Entrance to Gorokan she got a nice we got a nice villa, was a nice villa very, very nice place
- 21:30 so I tried to settle down there. I couldn't. She was alright because she had her sisters and brother and her family around there and I still couldn't settle down and I said no I've got to go back to Queensland so I came back again exactly the same caravan park as Ashmore beautiful caravan park there. Same thing happened. Three months later she says I can't cope I've got to move out of this will you come down and help me move? They'd sold the bloody villa see. Oh alright dear packed up

- 22:00 the old Fairlane, old Falcon again away I went again down again. Moved her over to another place in Gorokan stayed there with her a couple of oh we were there a couple of months I s'pose and every week I had to take her in to see one of her sisters in a a she was deaf and dumb lovely old girl she was and she was in a nursing home. Couldn't care for herself any more so she was in a nursing home. A couple of times a week I'd take her into there
- 22:30 got the same thing. Pining for Queensland so I said I've got to come back came back so I came back again and then she she's going on there by her own. She was quite happy there on her own and she was coping cause she had her sister living just round the corner and her brother just down the bloody road and another sister there she was quite happy there but this one up here the daughter she started ringing up and telling her how sick she was. "I'm so sick Mum I'm so sick Mum" and course Mum got worried and so she
- 23:00 packed up and came back up to Queensland again. I tell ya the moves and the money we've spent moving from place to place is bloody incredible. Yeah she moved into a place over in Waterford course Evelyn was living in Waterford and she got a unit and course Evelyn paid conscious money she paid for the bond on the unit a town house actually and she paid her removal fee of six or seven cost her over a thousand dollars to get her Mum up here but she's had her had her under her thumb again now see.
- 23:30 Very possessive girl and so that went on for a while and then they moved sold out up here and went down to the Gold Coast Joanie went down with her and I was still living down in the caravan park and I moved into a cabin and things sort of went to from one thing to the other and then she got that sick as I told you that sickness affected her and then finally I put in for housing commission up here and I got this little place
- 24:00 so every Thursday I go down and see her and gives her a little bit of relief from Evelyn and that's it.

Pretty amazing.

Pretty amazing alright yeah but I sometimes feel now I'm being she's making use of me or she's making use of me just to take her shopping and take her to the hospital or the doctors. When she's got a doctor's appointment I go down and take her to that. She she's not very well

- 24:30 she had a very severe gastro operation years and years ago about 30 years ago and it comes on her that's a bad time yeah so I took her last Friday, I had to take her for a breast scan. Mammogram. Week before that or a fortnight before that I had to take her to the hospital for a colonoscopy she had to have colonoscopy and then on the 27th
- 25:00 of September I've got to take her somewhere. She and her daughter are going down to Sydney on the 20th so just to for a granddaughter thing and so that's my life.

I guess looking back and thinking about the girl you met when she was 17 and the years that you've devoted to her I guess was it and the sacrifices of another marriage and things like that

- 25:30 **looking back now has it been worth it?**

Don't know I sometimes think that myself has it been worth it? There's been a lot of lot of good lot of good times and but some a lot of heartbreaks in amongst it as well but I s'pose that's something that if you're really in love with somebody that's it happens doesn't it and she must still have a really deep feeling for me because she misses me if I don't go down. She thought I was see I rang her up on

- 26:00 Wednesday or something or other I think Wednesday or Tuesday or something or other I forget now and I said something about the cause she knew about this interview thing and I said that I had a phone call from Orange and that they were coming up and instead of saying Friday I said Thursday. She said oh won't you be down Thursday see so she still looks forward to it so there must be something in there but I think I don't quite seriously I think she's afraid to show me affection cause that bloody sheila is there and I think she now

- 26:30 hounds her I think she has too much to bloody well say but she's not a really nice person money grabs money. They've got a beautiful big home. It's too big for me. I've had a place and it's one of those expensive Gold Coast homes I know \$800,000 or something the bloody thing cost and they've just moved in there recently but I'm sure she gives Mum, her mum, a hard time yeah.

How about your first wife how did you meet her and?

Who?

Yeah

- 27:00 **your first wife?**

Oh met her on a tennis court when I went down to the property in ACT and there was a tennis club down there little was a little it's still there it's known it used to be known as Fyshwick and it's now Pialligo it's right on the boundary of the aero aerodrome and it's all these little seven acre farmlets there was along there row of them probably 10 or 12 of them and they were her father had

- 27:30 one of these and he used to grow peas and beans and things to supplement his income and he tried pigs one time, he had pigs and he used to get the swill from the air force cause he was a boiler attendant and he used to tend the boilers up at the aerodrome and they'd give him the swill from the cookhouse and this sort of thing I went to they had a tennis club so I joined their tennis club met her there yeah. She was a good girl. I gave her a bad time. I treated her as a gentleman I always tried to be a gentleman
- 28:00 but she knew underneath there was an underneath current I think. I think she felt it that there was something.

Did you ever tell her about Joan?

No but I think she had an idea. I think she I might have done I must have done I think because I know one time she had she saw a went to me wallet for something or other and I had a photograph of Joan's eldest son and of course she thought he was my son. She thought Hazel thought that

- 28:30 Jim was my son but Joanie had sent that was after we got she'd contacted me and she sent me this photograph of her son she was so proud of him and he'd just joined the army and so she sent this photograph. Well I had it in my wallet poor old Hazel saw it. Was quite an innocent thing she wanted some money I said well it's in me wallet not even thinking see. It's not as though she sneaked in to have a look at the wallet and of course she opened the wallet and here's this photograph of this soldier boy so naturally she
- 29:00 thought it was he was my son she thought I'd been playing up see so I think she suspected that was very early in the piece and I think she suspected that things weren't very good.

So were you in contact with Joan quite early into your marriage with Hazel?

No oh no 16 years or so after yeah yeah 16 in fact it was 16 years cause Marion was born in 1960 and she was

- 29:30 oh about 12 months or old or so at that time. Joan was havin' a bad time with her marriage and she wanted me to go away with. I said I can't I've got a little baby to look after I've got three children I can't desert them I can't leave them so we hung on then for another 16 years till Marion was a teenager yeah so then I split yeah. Broke Marion's heart oh it broke her heart. She's alright she's up here she's Dad's
- 30:00 girl, she loves Dad very loyal she's very loyal to me yeah.

Did you ever tell talk to Hazel and talk to your kids about your time in Japan and your experiences there?

I think we used to talk about it early in the piece cause I always had that photo album. I've redone that those are new albums. I redid them all some years back you know yeah we used to talk about it not very much though

- 30:30 I had a few little things I brought home little miniature geisha girl geisha dolls about that big I had three of those. Marion's got them now as a matter of fact they're still as good as the day I brought 'em. Marion looks after them yeah she wouldn't part with them and a few other things I brought back from Japan. They were they were up in the house but we didn't talk about it all that much. They weren't all that interested. More interested in their own life I s'pose. They were very
- 31:00 good kids two of them are very good, Kathleen is a Bachelor of Philosophy or some bloody thing or other and went to university. Studied for 15 worked went to school for 15 years without a break and she used to sit like this in our lounge room in a straight backed chair like this do all her homework while the television's going. She'd do all her study writin' like bloody crazy shove everything underneath the chair and she write watchin' the tele [television], did all her study wouldn't go into her room did all her studying in the lounge room
- 31:30 yeah and Frank's an architect yeah but unqualified because he told his instructor that he didn't know what he was talkin' about, he was still livin' back in the old bloody ages. Got cheeky with him and they sacked him. Kicked him out of out of tech so he does all that sort of thing as an interior decorator but he does a lot of work for the government down in Canberra. They're still down in Canberra. Kathy is too, Kathy's the one on the left hand side there at the top
- 32:00 very talented girl. She made that dress herself yeah. She crocheted a full length dressing gown crocheted. She could crocket she could do macramé she could do sewing she'd stand down on the sewing machine and just get the piece and go she was incredible she was yeah.

What what's your strongest memory of your time that you served I guess in Japan? What's

- 32:30 **is there any thoughts that keep coming back to you about that time?**

Yeah Miyoko, I think of her a lot because I just wonder what happened to her. She would have obviously married a Japanese man but she didn't appear to be wanting to cause she would liked to have come back to Australia with me. She would have come back to Australia as quick as that yeah so I think of her a lot and I think I did her a dirty trick because I told her I'd write

- 33:00 to her and I never did I thought it was better to cut it off like that particularly when I found out how the

attitude was in Australia. I wouldn't have subjected her to that in Australia. Oh they were cruel they had a bad time so I didn't even write. I just left things. I said good bye to her and that and the day before we sailed and I left it at that and I sort of feel that if you've got a boil you've got to

33:30 lance it you know get it over and done with don't you and I think it's probably it was probably kindest to do it that way than to give her some hope perhaps by writing to her but I don't know. I feel guilty about it any rate.

Would you ever think about trying to contact her?

No way I could yeah oh yeah there's no way I could. I wouldn't have a clue their silly their addresses are crazy and it wouldn't be the same address anyway

34:00 cause things were entirely she might not be in Japan. She might have met married another Aussie boy somebody that went up after me cause she stayed in the office she was still working in the office so she could be in Australia somewhere for all I know yeah no no way I could. Mainly just to see how she survived, what sort of a life she's had yeah.

You mentioned that it was it was years and years before you ever marched on Anzac Day

34:30 Yeah.

Can you tell me about the first day that you marched?

God that was a feeling up in Brisbane yeah that was the most incredible feeling you've got no idea. Never explain it but when everybody was cheering and everybody was clappin' and they were all smiling oh goes right through ya yeah I thought Jesus I've been missing this for all these

35:00 bloody years. The people some lovely ladies were throwing kisses and things God it was wonderful cause I'm a pretty emotional sort of a feller.

Can you tell me what it's like to be part of the Anzac tradition?

What could I say? I'm very, very proud of it, very proud of being in it I admire those blokes I admire the Anzacs

35:30 I'm my they are my heroes the Anzacs are my heroes the Australian soldier is my hero and I'm a very unworthy part of that bloody army I feel I think because when you read about 'em the bloody thing they took all these things just as a matter of bloody course you know. They thought oh well shit you know goin' to do this yeah

36:00 so I'm proud I'm now very proud of being, I'm proud of the little bit I did which is as much as I could do any rate I couldn't have done any more so I'm proud of that now and I'm very, very proud of being an Anzac. I'm reading in there about the ANZACS. It's the most beautiful word to read 'Anzac' because it means so much. This is about Gallipoli this is the Pommies actually it's the Poms in Gallipoli yeah and he talks about the wonderful

36:30 ANZACS, Kiwis and the Australians, New Zealanders and the Australians, the ANZACS yeah and how valiantly they fought and he explains about the Nek. When you saw the Gallipoli, that last scene of Gallipoli that was the charge at the Nek. They went in three bloody times. We lost about 10,000 men that day. They went in three waves one after the bloody other and they just got mowed down yeah it was a hopeless absolutely

37:00 hopeless thing but they did it.

So I guess when you look back at your contribution would you change anything or are you just?

No I wouldn't change anything now. I'm actually as I say I'm bloody glad I wasn't born earlier cause I don't know whether I could have coped with some of the things those blokes did. I don't think I could have coped at bloody Kokoda I don't think I could have but still

37:30 you don't know what you can do until you do it do you? Until you it's there in front of you but when I think about those boys in Sandakan that bloody dreadful march in Sandakan only six survivors out of God only six survivors out of twelve hundred Australians and fifteen hundred Poms, Sandakan six survivors yeah.

I guess one last question that I have and it's a bit more of a

38:00 **hypothetical question I guess having you know you witnessed Hiroshima**

Yeah.

You know pretty soon after it happened yourself

Yes yes.

Thinking keeping that in mind they won the war. Was that worth it?

Was the bomb worth it? Oh without doubt oh yes without doubt. It killed two what how many millions people did it kill? But it saved millions

38:30 cause if we'd had to land on physically on Japan's soil it would have been a total massacre for everybody yeah because they were so fanatical. The bomb did it there was no way in the world see you've only got to look at some of the battles that that happened at Guadalcanal for argument's sake that was a shocking battle. That was the first actual landing the first time the Yanks made a landing and actually made an effort to go forward at Guadalcanal. That went on

39:00 for months and months and months and months and killed thousands of blokes, both Japs and Yanks and then Iwo Jima everybody's heard about Iwo Jima when that bloody when that flag bloody thing went up. Thousands and thousands Yanks were losing 10,000 men in a landing, 10,000 men so imagine what it would be if we were landing on Japanese soil.

Just got a little bit of time left on tape

39:30 That's alright.

Have you got any final words or reflections on life service?

Life? Life be in it. No I don't I don't no I don't think I'm a philosophical type. Do you think I'm a philosophical type? No don't think I am don't think I am no. I know nothin' easy in life nothing you do is easy

40:00 life is pretty much a struggle one way or another. If we don't have unfortunately we don't have total control of our lives I think that's I'd have to say. The various governments tell us what we can do and what we can't do. We put a mongrel like Keating into bloody Parliament House see and that bastard puts us up to 17 and a half percent interest on our homes on our home loans and bloody Hawke stands up there with all his

40:30 bloody crocodile tears and say no child in the year 2000 will go hungry in Australia and then he acts like a bloody baboon when we won the Australia's the America's Cup with old Bondy sounded like a friggin' idiot. Then we get Whitlam and Whitlam dissolves the white Australia policy so we're inundated with Asians and the worst type of Asians, Indonesians and Filipinos and Vietnamese

41:00 but we we're we've just got to live with it cause we're, we've got no say we've got to go along with it but I hate it Jesus I hate it. I'm not racist as long as they're not black and slant eyed. I must admit I am racist, I am racist. I loved Australia when we were white Australia when we after the war we brought out a displaced persons they were all white people Europeans

41:30 they were they were they were pretty good they were pretty good settlers too they did they did a good job all those Germans and the Dutch and the and the rest of the jolly mob. They were good mob but these mongrels we've got here now. Go down to the shop here and all you see are these big slant eyes and these big bloody black buggers, Maoris and the Islanders and the, I don't like it, don't like Australia any more. I love Australia but I don't like it any more but I can't do anything about it.

INTERVIEW ENDS