

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM J. PHILLIPS

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

WORLD WAR II * KOREAN WAR * VIETNAM WAR * COLD WAR

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

SANDRA STEWART HOLYOAK

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

AUGUST 27, 2007

TRANSCRIPT BY

DOMINGO DUARTE

Sandra Stewart Holyoak: This begins an interview with Mr. William J. Phillips on August 27, 2007, in Arlington, Virginia, with Sandra Stewart Holyoak and Mrs. Rae Phillips. I would like to thank you both for having me here today to conduct this oral history. To begin, Mr. Phillips, would you tell me where and when you were born?

William J. Phillips: I was born in Akron, Ohio, February 25, 1923.

SH: And Mrs. Phillips?

Rae Phillips: Akron, Ohio, September 15, 1923.

SH: Let us start with you, Mr. Phillips. Please tell me a little bit about your family background, starting with your father, if you would.

WP: Well, my dad was raised as a farmer, in southern Ohio, and my mother was raised on a farm in southern Ohio. She went to normal school and taught school, ... one-room country schools-type thing. Daddy, Dad, ... he worked the farm, then, he went into the military, at a young age, World War I, as an enlisted man, ... was a private and was released from active duty. At that time, then, they got together and decided to, I guess, get married and moved to Akron.

SH: Was he out of the country in World War I?

WP: Yes. He was in Europe.

SH: He was in Europe

WP: Right in the middle of the war, yes.

RP: Italy, mostly.

WP: Yes.

SH: In Italy?

RP: But, his father died when Pappy was young and he had to take over the running of the farm himself, when he was about fourteen.

WP: Yes, he was very young.

SH: Really?

RP: Yes, and then, after, that's when he joined the service.

SH: Did he have a large family, your dad?

WP: Two sisters.

RP: And a brother, Stan.

WP: And a sister, yes; Aunt (Carrie?).

SH: Was he the oldest in the family?

WP: Yes. He was the oldest.

SH: Did the rest of the younger siblings run the farm once he left for the military?

WP: His mother remarried and they had another family with them, but, among them, they kept the farm.

SH: Okay.

WP: So, as a matter-of-fact, here's a picture of it back here. [Editor's Note: Mr. Phillips motions toward the photograph.]

SH: Really?

WP: Yes.

SH: Then, when they moved to Akron, what was his profession? Had he learned something in the military that he could put to use in Akron?

WP: Not really. He went to work in a rubber factory, Goodrich Company, and it was on a regular production line, but he was a smart man and very adaptive ... with his hands, and so forth, and they put him into research, testing, mostly testing products ... and helped develop products with the rubber industry.

SH: Really?

WP: And so, that was what he did. ... It was a factory-type job.

SH: Did he stay home or did this research take him away from Akron?

WP: No, he stayed here.

SH: What about your mother? Was she teaching at the time?

WP: Not in Akron. She finished normal school and she taught in the one-room schoolhouse in, I think it was Meigs County, Ohio. ... When he came here, she came with him, and so, she was a mother then.

SH: How many siblings did your father have?

WP: The three.

SH: Then, this other family stayed on the farm with his mother.

WP: Yes.

RP: Yes, Gerald.

WP: Laura and Gerald did, and Marie. ... That was the second family.

SH: Do you have brothers and sisters as well?

WP: I have two sisters.

SH: Younger, older?

WP: One each.

SH: [laughter] You are right in the middle.

WP: [laughter] I'm the middle man.

SH: Would you like to talk a little bit about growing up in Akron, what you remember that you enjoyed doing as a young boy?

WP: Well, I enjoyed a lot of things. We were in a county where there were a lot of lakes and a lot of water, and that ended up being my career for awhile, at a time, and I swam on the swimming team. That was the Firestone Club Swimming Team, at Firestone Rubber Company. I went to school, didn't like school very well and they didn't like me very well. It took us awhile to get that all straightened out, but, while I was swimming, that was when I was able to meet her, [Mr. Phillips is referring to his wife], because one of the girls who was her girlfriend swam on the same team. So, she brought her down and introduced us. ...

SH: Mrs. Phillips is not a swimmer.

WP: Oh, yes, oh, yes.

SH: She is as well.

WP: Yes.

RP: Yes. ... I didn't go to that pool.

WP: ... We were both active in Boy Scouts. I ended up teaching boating, swimming, canoeing, at a Boy Scout camp for two summers, on the staff of the camp, after I was a Boy Scout, and so forth. ... So, I don't know how, chronologically, you want to go. ...

RP: You delivered newspapers.

WP: I delivered newspapers, yes, and it was during the Great Depression and we did not have money.

SH: Can you talk a little bit about how that affected your family, other than just not having a lot of money? Did it affect your father's work at the rubber company?

WP: There were times when he only worked two days a week, and that was the income, and we adjusted accordingly, but it was not easy at all. It was difficult, but we tightened our belts. We did have a car, and so, ... we were within walking distance to work, so, he didn't have to take transportation.

SH: Did your mother do any sort of jobs? You said she did not teach anymore, but was there anything that she did in the house?

WP: She did work.

RP: She went to work at Goodyear.

WP: Oh, that's right, Goodyear.

RP: In the kitchen, in the cafeteria, because she's quite a cook and a nice baker, too. But, things weren't run well, and she just couldn't stand that, so, she only worked about three months, because she was a stickler for everything being done right. [laughter]

WP: As I recall, she did sewing for other people and earned some money that way, and she was good at that, very domestic, very, very smart woman.

SH: Was there interaction with cousins and family?

WP: Yes.

SH: How did they come out?

WP: Very good.

SH: Were they doing all right with the Depression? I have heard stories of family members being sent to go live with other family members. Did you have any cousins that needed to do that?

WP: Well, they were all pretty imaginative and they did well. Uncle Bill had a farm, outside of Akron, and it was a successful farm and I don't know that there was anything else.

RP: But, we didn't realize we were poor, because everybody was in the same boat. I only knew one girl whose family had some money, and her father was a lawyer, but, other than that, the rest of us all thought we were okay. It's the way life was. [laughter]

SH: Would you like to talk a little bit about your family, your mother and father's backgrounds?

RP: Yes, sure. My father is from Boston and my mother is from New York, and my dad's mother died when he was twelve and that kind of upset the whole family. ... His dad worked, Granddad worked the railroad, didn't he? on the railroad, and then, he took the kids to New Orleans, from Boston, from Dixmont, Maine, and Boston, and put the children in an orphanage, because he couldn't take care of them, but he was there, there in the same city.

SH: He took them to New Orleans.

RP: Yes. So, my dad spent his later years in an orphanage, but it turned out fine, and then, he worked at Goodrich, ... made his way up to Akron. I don't know who was in Akron first, whether Granddad was or my dad's family or what.

WP: I think your granddad was there, as a stationary engineer, at that time.

RP: Oh, that's right, in the hotels in Akron.

WP: In the hotel.

RP: Yes, that's right.

SH: Was he ever able to get the family back together?

RP: Yes. They were all teenagers then and able to go out and have jobs, so, they all came to the Akron area then; that was my Uncle George, Uncle Harry and my dad and, gosh, I guess Dad went to work at Goodrich almost right away and was in the union for quite awhile, and then, got on to management, as we got older. I had one brother.

WP: But, he took a course in working in stationary engineering, too.

RP: Stationary engineering, yes.

WP: Yes, and he took a course there and finished it, of course, and he also became a stationary engineer at Goodrich.

RP: Yes. When he retired, he was the chief engineer of the BF Goodrich Company. So, that was good, and Mom was a homemaker for a long time. Then, when the war came on, '41, [after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941], she went to work at American Anode

Company, making gas masks for pilots, and then, he [Mr. Phillips] became a pilot, and she always felt she made his gas mask. [laughter]

SH: She was sure of it, right? [laughter]

RP: Yes.

SH: You said that your father's grandfather is the one who passed away early in life.

RP: ... My dad's mother.

SH: Mother passed away.

WP: Passed away. She was thirty-six. ...

RP: It was my grandmother. She had an attack of appendicitis and died of it. You know, today, you wouldn't [die], but, in those days, she did.

SH: It was your grandfather who took the three boys to New Orleans.

RP: To New Orleans, right.

SH: Okay. Then, finally, everybody wound up in Akron.

RP: In the Akron area.

WP: There was no mother then. He [Rae's Grandfather] did get remarried later.

RP: Yes. ...

SH: Did they talk about how your parents met?

RP: Let's see; oh, they met in New York City. My dad's ship came in, when he was in the Navy, and he and his buddy, (Willy O'Hare?), [laughter] got together all the time and met these gals and one was my mother, and they got married. Then, they lived in New York for quite awhile. In fact, my brother was born in New York, and then, they made their way to Ohio, and then, I was born.

SH: He had been in Ohio prior to going into the military, and then, went back.

RP: I think I got that wrong. I don't think he was in Akron first. I think Granddad was.

WP: Yes.

RP: And then, my dad was in the Navy, and then, got married, and then, came back to Akron.

WP: Because that's where his dad was.

SH: We can straighten this all out when we do the editing. [laughter] Growing up, you started school in Akron.

RP: Yes, went all through school in Akron, went to Akron U, went to a year of day school, a half a year at night school; that was all. Then, I got a job. The war came on while I was in college.

SH: When did you graduate from high school, Mrs. Phillips?

RP: '41, June of '41.

SH: When did you, Mr. Phillips, graduate from high school?

WP: June of '40.

SH: Okay, but you had met a few years before.

WP: Before that.

RP: Yes, yes. ...

SH: Were you dating all through high school?

WP: Well, kind of. ...

RP: Well, I was just a junior and you were a senior.

WP: Off and on.

RP: And we dated, and then, we broke up, for quite awhile. In fact, we weren't going together when he joined the ... Navy Air Corps.

WP: When I went on active duty, we were both engaged to someone else. [laughter]

SH: This is going to be a good story for the kids. [laughter] You graduated in 1940; what were your plans when you graduated from high school?

WP: None, none.

RP: He had no plans for college or anything.

WP: I had no plans. I went to work at Goodrich and worked in the laboratory, as a lab assistant.

...

SH: Were you working with your father?

WP: No, just working in the laboratory and, really, just goofing around, thinking about going to school. I really did think about it, but I didn't think very seriously about it.

SH: Was the draft something that you thought would eventually get to you?

WP: There was no question in my mind.

RP: Was there a draft in those days?

WP: Oh, yes, oh, yes.

SH: In 1940, just about the time you graduated.

WP: Yes, yes, and, as a matter-of-fact, when I joined, I had to get Dad's signature to join. I was too young to join on my own, and I wanted to go to ... the Navy Air Corps, because I liked flying. I fiddled around at the ... airport and all that sort of thing and enjoyed flying.

SH: Tell me about being interested in aircraft.

WP: Yes. Well, ... I used to just enjoy it. It was something imaginative, you know, and I always wanted to do it, and so, when I tried to join the Navy Air Corps, I had to go to Columbus to do it. Dad had to sign and I said, well, he wouldn't sign. He said, "I don't want you to do what I had to do," and I said, "Well, if you want me to slosh around in trenches, like you did, then, don't sign." So, he signed for me, [laughter] and so, that was the reason I joined the Navy Air Corps.

SH: You were quickly able to change his mind.

WP: Oh, yes, oh, yes.

SH: When did you enlist? When did you join? Do you remember?

WP: It would have been '42.

RP: March of '42, was it?

WP: March of '42, yes.

SH: It says 1942 on your pre-interview survey. You had talked about going to college. Had you, Mrs. Phillips, started to go to college before the war, before December 1941?

WP: Yes.

RP: Yes, yes. I started in college in September of '41 and in December was when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor.

SH: What do you remember about that, and the reactions of people around you?

RP: Oh, lots. It was so sad, and the young men in the ROTC, [Reserve Officers Training Corps], at college, almost every one dropped out of college and joined the military and left. ... One of my friends, Billy Finnegan, was killed almost immediately, and it was just pretty bad. ...

SH: Do you remember where you were when you first heard the news of the attack?

RP: Yes, we were coming out of a theater in Akron.

SH: You and Mr. Phillips.

WP: Yes.

RP: Yes. We were going together at that point, and coming out of a theater, ... on Main Street, and there were little boys with extra papers, yelling, "Extra, extra, read all about it, Japs bombed Pearl Harbor," and we had, I guess it was my friend that was there, at Pearl Harbor, so, that worried us, but he was okay, and so, that's how we found out, coming out onto Main Street and seeing all the little kids selling papers.

SH: Did either of you have family members already in the military?

RP: I had already.

WP: Her brother.

RP: My brother was in the Navy, and where was he at that time? He was on a ship, but he was in the Atlantic, wasn't he?

WP: Norfolk, I think; I don't know.

RP: Yes, out of Norfolk

WP: Because you went down and visited him.

RP: Yes, that's right.

SH: I did not ask you, Mrs. Phillips, about your family, how many siblings you had.

RP: Just the one brother. He's two years older than I am.

SH: Do you have any other recollections of that day, besides coming out of the theater?

WP: Of course, I knew immediately that I was going to be tapped, because, physically, I was okay. Mentally, I thought I was okay. [laughter] ...

SH: I think they must have attested to that. [laughter]

RP: That's always been a question. [laughter]

SH: You guys are bad. [laughter]

WP: Yes, so, you know, I was projecting toward the military.

RP: He was prime.

WP: And went down to Columbus to join, and that's where I had to go to join the Navy Air Corps, and so, they gave me a physical and said I was okay.

SH: You knew immediately, or did you talk to a recruiter? How did you know that it was the Navy Air Corps that you wanted to be in?

WP: Well, I liked flying and I liked the Navy. ...

SH: How hard was it to designate the service, as well as the vocation within that service? Was it difficult? Were you tested to make sure that you could do it? Can you talk about that at all?

WP: No, there was no alternative, you know. ...

SH: You knew you had to serve.

WP: Yes, and I didn't want to go in the Army, and the Army had the Army Air Corps, but I didn't want to do that either, and I just wanted to go in the Navy, as my choice.

RP: ... There was a lot of testing, of his skills and so on.

WP: And the guy recruiting me was in Akron; yes, a lot of tests.

SH: I was just about to say I know that was true. You had to have done pretty well on these tests, right?

WP: Yes, physically and mentally.

RP: Yes, he did.

WP: Yes, they did. They came out all right and, you know, there were a lot of people joining at that time, so, there was a big screening process, starting with that first test, and I only had a high school education, you know, at that time.

SH: You must have resolved the problems. You said you did not like school and they did not like you, but you must have absorbed quite a bit.

WP: Well, I did all right. I passed. Yes, as I told you, my mother was a schoolteacher.

SH: That was the resolution. [laughter]

WP: It was a great help to have her there. [laughter] Well, at some point, I think I realized that I had to buckle down and my grades got better, as I got older.

SH: Did the two of you discuss your choice of service? Were you engaged at that point, or just good friends?

WP: No, just good friends.

RP: Still good friends, yes.

SH: Were there other young men, that you were friends with, that were making the same decisions as you, or did you do this all on your own?

WP: All on my own.

SH: Did anyone else choose the Navy Air Corps?

WP: None that I know of.

RP: No, but his best friend chose the Marines. [laughter]

WP: Yes, that's right, he did. ...

SH: Did you ever ask him why?

WP: No, I knew he was a little odd, too. [laughter]

SH: You joined the Navy in 1942. Do you remember the month of that year that you went down to Columbus?

RP: ... I thought it was March.

WP: Yes, it was early. I think it was March.

RP: That's about two or three months after Pearl Harbor.

WP: Yes, it wasn't long that I went down there and I left; when did I go ... on active duty? When did they call me?

SH: After you went down to Columbus, then, did they send you back to Akron?

WP: Oh, yes. I went back to the job. I had the same job.

SH: Did you know, when you came back, that you would, in fact, get into the Navy, or was that something that was still unknown?

WP: No, they notified you, gave you a letter.

SH: Okay. How long was it before the acceptance letter came?

WP: It was a few months.

RP: I don't know. ... Oh, didn't you go in October?

WP: Yes, it was a few months. It wasn't right away, because they had a big screening process. At that point, they were being inundated with a lot of recruits, yes. ...

SH: That is what I was wondering, what the timeframe was.

RP: I'm pretty sure it was October of '42 that you left.

WP: That would be about right, yes.

SH: From December of 1941 until October of 1942, when you go, what do you remember about how the community was mobilizing?

RP: Yes. A lot of Civil Defense units came up. My dad was a leader of our Civil Defense unit, in our area of Akron, and everybody was so *gung ho*, you know, behind the war. ... If someone was killed, they had a yellow, or a gold, little banner in their windows and, if you just had somebody in the service, you had a little red, white and blue one, and everybody was behind the war.

WP: A lot of my friends had already gone in and gone.

SH: Really?

WP: Yes.

SH: Had they perhaps gone in right after graduation, as part of the draft?

WP: Some of them, yes.

SH: Leading up to December of 1941, in your community, as juniors and seniors in high school, what did you know of what was going on in Europe? Were you keeping abreast of events in

1939, when Hitler went into Poland? [Editor's Note: William graduated from high school in June 1940 and Rae graduated in June 1941.]

WP: Oh, yes.

RP: Yes.

SH: What were the headlines? What was being discussed around your dinner tables?

WP: The war, yes.

RP: How rotten the Nazis were and Hitler. I mean, everybody just wanted to get rid of Hitler immediately, if they could, yes. ...

WP: Of course, that was before Pearl Harbor, so, yes, you're right.

SH: Almost two years, yes.

RP: I think that's when my brother went in, was in '38.

WP: Yes.

RP: When the war in Europe was getting pretty hot, he joined the Navy.

WP: We had, of course, all the ... rubber companies, and all the companies were gearing up to a wartime situation, because they, before we got into it, were supplying the British, and so forth.

SH: Okay. That is what I wanted to know. I thought perhaps that was already becoming a hotbed for you.

WP: Yes.

SH: Was there any talk of sabotage or anything like that?

WP: Always, yes, oh, yes.

SH: Because there were people who were very pro-German?

WP: Yes. We had sabotage in the companies.

RP: Yes, you were concerned about that.

SH: Before you left?

WP: The rubber companies, oh, yes.

SH: Can you talk about that?

WP: Well, I don't know about specifics, but the concerns were always there.

SH: There were guidelines set up.

WP: Yes, and we had guards that, you know, upgraded their attention.

SH: When you came back after enlisting, how did you keep abreast of what was going on with the war and what America's role was going to be? How did it become defined? You were involved in an industry that was helping the Allies before they were the Allies, so-to-speak. You were providing material for the British to fend off the Germans. Were you aware of that?

WP: Yes. Well, you know, we were manufacturing bulletproof gas tanks for airplanes, and a part of my job in the laboratory was testing. They would go out to a place and shoot bullets through tanks. [laughter]

SH: Really?

WP: Yes, through gas tanks, to see if they would seal properly. ... It was made out of a rubber material that, when fuel hit it, would swell and close the hole, and that was their answer for that, at that time, and we built those for bombers and fighters.

SH: You were doing this before you actually became a Navy pilot.

WP: Before I was in the military, yes.

SH: This was specifically for the ...

WP: Airplanes that we were manufacturing.

SH: To send to ...

WP: To send to Europe and to train our own people, because we had cranked up our training program as well, of course.

RP: I got a job in a lab then, too, after my first year of college, and I promised my mom and dad I'd go back to college after working this summer, but I didn't. [laughter] You know, making twenty dollars every week was really a wonderful amount of money then. [laughter] My job in the lab was, oh, a lab assistant, but, when they would try to find a substitute for rubber; ... they were working on synthetic rubbers. They were making jar rings, for canning, and then, they'd put the jar rings ... and the lid on and fill it with water and turn it upside down, so [that] the water would get against the jar ring, and then, after two or three days or so, we had to test it by tasting it and to see if it left a taste. You marked down which ones gave a flavor, if it was bad, and so on.

SH: You physically had to put ...

RP: Yes, you had to put that in your mouths. Then, they also were doing synthetic gum, because, you know, gum used to be made of rubber, a rubber base. So, we had to chew that gum, to see what it tasted like, and some of them were pretty bad.

WP: Artificial rubber had not been invented at that time.

RP: Synthetic rubber, yes.

WP: It was being invented right at that time. So, we were all involved in that. We were both in laboratories where they're working on that.

SH: To go back to the supply of rubber, before the synthetic rubber was invented, why was the availability of rubber being compromised?

WP: Oh, yes. Most of our rubber, at that time, was coming from Africa and South America and both of those, particularly Africa, you know, we had to get it across the ocean and they had U-boats. That was a part of the problem, yes, very much so, and I don't think we got it from any[where else]. Maybe some of the Pacific Islands supplied rubber. I don't think so.

RP: I don't remember.

SH: How quickly were they able to develop the synthetic rubber?

RP: It was probably that year.

WP: I remember, their first efforts were not very successful, [laughter] ... but they used some of it and I guess it was ...

RP: It was probably by '42 or '43, or so.

WP: A couple of years, yes.

RP: Pretty early in the war. ... [Editor's Note: Synthetic rubber, also known as Government Rubber Styrene (GR-S), was developed through a joint venture between the US Government and the four major rubber corporations: Firestone Tire & Rubber Company, B.F. Goodrich Company, The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company and United States Rubber Company. Its primary purpose was to provide America with a sustainable substitute for natural rubber, which came, primarily, from Southeast Asia, where increased tensions, and, later, war, with Japan threatened the supply. Akron, Ohio, as a major rubber production center, was a hub for this effort.]

SH: Were there other stories? I cannot imagine tasting something in a lab now, with all sorts of technology that will do that for you, like chewing the gum.

WP: ... Of course, we were shooting bullets through rubber, to make sure that that does good, and they used those.

SH: Really?

WP: Yes, they used those.

SH: Was there a test site? How professional was this test site, or was it just a bunch of guys from the factory going out?

RP: They went out, way out, in the distance, somewhere out.

WP: No, it was up north of town

RP: Toward ...

WP: ... Toward Cleveland.

RP: Not (Cordich?).

WP: Yes, it's out that way, but they had a thing all setup, with a range and, you know, everything, the whole works.

SH: Were there other things in the laboratory that were being developed, that you remember, before you left for the war?

WP: No.

RP: I don't remember.

SH: That wound up being war related.

WP: But, they were there, yes.

SH: Did you see other technology coming along as you continued to work there, and not go back to school?

RP: I can't remember that I did.

SH: How critical was the shortage of men in the workforce?

RP: It was quite critical. We had a lot of young chemists come down that were, what was the grade that they had? Not 4-F, but they gave them ...

WP: Yes, it was ...

SH: Because they were in a critical industry?

WP: Yes, yes.

RP: Yes, that they couldn't be drafted. God, I can't think of it.

WP: I forget what they called it then.

SH: They were exempt.

WP: Yes. ...

RP: ... From the draft, that was it, and they were young college guys that had just got out of college, or maybe even had one year to go, and they came and worked.

WP: ... Why, her mother got a job, because women came and filled in a lot of those jobs.

RP: Yes, "Rosie the Riveter." [Editor's Note: Rosie the Riveter was a figure used to represent women in the war effort.]

SH: Talk about, first of all, how you were treated, as a woman; as the shortage got more critical, were you given more opportunities?

RP: I just stayed at my job. I liked it and I just did it and I worked with a lot of men. All the chemists were men and they were all very nice.

WP: And they had more money.

RP: I didn't feel mistreated.

WP: And she was single. [laughter]

SH: What about the young men who were obviously of draft age and physically and mentally fit? Was there anyone in the community who looked askance at them because they were not in the military?

RP: There probably were, but I don't recall. ...

WP: It was kind of an individual situation.

RP: But, most everybody, even though you weren't drafted yet, you were knowing you were going to get drafted and you really were looking forward to it. Most of the people, most of the young men, they wanted to get that thing over with.

SH: Did the number of hours that were required of you to work in the plant change at all?

RP: No. ...

SH: Were there fewer vacations or was it a six-day work week?

RP: No, five days, normal hours. I think, it was like eight to five, something like that, but I had to go in on a few Saturdays, to; what was that thing called? an autoclave. I don't remember what I had to do to the autoclave, but I had to go in on Saturday, I know, and change it around and set it again, and so on, then, go. I was only in, like, two hours on Saturday.

WP: But, we were not in production. The production was seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day.

RP: Yes.

SH: Okay, the lab is different then.

WP: Yes, but ... my dad was working overtime, and I think her dad did, too, but that was a different part of the production system. That was the part that was doing the production that went over to wartime.

SH: Going from, as you said, not knowing that you were poor to suddenly having these opportunities, did you notice any changes in the standard of living?

RP: Yes, I think we could relax a little more, do little extra things.

WP: Yes.

RP: I remember, one time, asking my dad, while I was in college, for a little extra money to buy another skirt or something that I needed, and he reached in his pocket and he took change out and he said, "Honey, that's all I've got until next pay," and it was thirty-four cents. I still remember seeing thirty-four cents, [laughter] and so, I didn't ask for any more, but, yes, it was ... tough at first, but, then, as I say, ... when I got my own job and got twenty dollars a week, that was good.

WP: Well, the wartime economy was better.

RP: That'd probably be, like, two hundred a week, right now.

SH: When did your mother start working?

RP: Right after the war started, probably in '42.

SH: Did she?

RP: Yes, and she worked on the evening shift. She'd go off about four o'clock in the afternoon and work, I think, from six to midnight?

WP: I was going to say six to midnight. ...

RP: Yes, and she walked, way from home.

WP: The shifts were six to twelve, twelve to six, six to twelve.

RP: Yes. She had to walk to the bus, which was blocks, and she'd get off the bus down at Kenmore Boulevard and walk home at midnight, never think anything of it; you know, today's world.

WP: That was close to a mile. ...

SH: What about rationing? How soon did you notice the impact of that? What did your family do to compensate?

RP: ... We still have a ration book here, somewhere. I remember one thing my mom and dad did. They loved coffee and my granddad and his second wife baked and all of them liked sugar, so, those were both rationed, so, they would switch coupons. Mom and Dad would give them the sugar coupons and they'd give Mom and Dad the coffee ones. So, that worked out.
[laughter]

WP: Well, gasoline was the main problem, ... because they had to use that on the airplanes that we're using, and we had A, B and C and D levels, and A was "God and everybody," and B [was for] if you had to take it to a job that was oriented toward the war, and then, it went from there, you know. So, we always had to watch out for that.

SH: What about people selling things on the pseudo-black market or the black market? Did you see any of that?

WP: Probably.

RP: I can't remember that we did.

WP: I think they traded. I don't know if they sold gas stamps, but they switched them around, from one family to the other.

SH: I would not consider that too illegal. [laughter]

WP: No.

SH: Shows you how slippery I am. [laughter]

WP: It was illegal, but I don't recall that there was a lot of that.

RP: When we were in the service, we lived up at Cape Cod for several months. He was stationed at Otis Field up there and the people we lived with had an old, beat-up station wagon, one of those with the wooden sides. ... Mr. MacDonald was his name, and he would loan that to us anytime we wanted it, because we could get him gas, [laughter] and, otherwise, he was a real estate man and he'd run that car until he didn't have any gas, or any coupons, or anything. Then, he'd loan it to us. [laughter]

SH: What year would that have been?

RP: '45.

SH: Okay. In October 1942, which station were you sent to?

WP: I was just looking at this. This was the first place I went.

SH: Okay, we are looking at his pilot flight rating.

WP: Civilian Pilot Training.

SH: You joined that first.

WP: No, they sent me there. I was on active duty then, but that was a part of their screening process. They sent us out there for preliminary flight training, to weed out the people that couldn't fly and that weren't mentally up to it and all that sort of thing, and so, they sent me to Bend, Oregon, for preliminary flight training.

SH: This is when you first started.

WP: And that was in 1943, March of '43.

SH: Okay. You actually started in the Civilian Pilot Training Program.

WP: Yes, sponsored by the Navy.

SH: In March of 1943.

WP: '43.

SH: Okay, and they sent you to Oregon.

WP: Yes.

SH: Can you tell me about what you did in Oregon? You are flipping through the book. It looks pretty filled.

WP: Well, these are all flights, and it was all part of the training.

SH: What were you flying, then, when you were in Oregon?

WP: We were flying a Taylor craft, which is a light plane, just a small, light plane, with a small Lycoming engine in it, and we would fly so many hours a day, and then, we also had ground training, which is navigation and theory of flight and mechanical, why planes fly, and all that sort of thing.

SH: Were there people that went with you out there who were unable to complete this course?

WP: Oh, yes.

SH: What was the attrition rate, about, would you think?

WP: At that time, it was probably close to fifty percent.

SH: Really?

WP: Yes. A lot of them should never have been taken in in the first place, but that's the way it was.

SH: Who was training you? Were these civilian instructors?

WP: They were civilian instructors ... that were given this assignment in lieu of active duty, and they were local people that taught flying as a job, you know. It was their regular job.

SH: Where did they house you, Mr. Phillips, when you were there in Oregon? Which town was it in Oregon?

WP: Yes, Bend, Oregon.

SH: Bend, B-E ...

WP: ... N-D. It was right at the bend of a couple of rivers. ... They took over a small hotel. It was called the Deschutes Hotel, the Deschutes. ... It's in the Deschutes Valley Mountains, and so, they would transport us, by bus, school bus, from there to the flight place. ... We had classrooms there, at the airport that we used.

SH: Were you fed and everything there in the hotel?

WP: Yes.

SH: How military was it? Was it spit-and-polish?

WP: No.

SH: Were you in civilian clothes?

WP: We had a uniform.

SH: Did you?

WP: Yes.

SH: I see a smile on your face.

WP: What was the old government agency that was promoted during the Depression, that built roads? ...

SH: The WPA? [Editor's Note: WPA stands for Works Progress Administration, renamed the Work Projects Administration in 1939, active from 1935 to 1943.]

WP: WPA. They had a uniform and that was our uniform. We used the WPA uniform. It was a green ...

SH: Like a jumpsuit kind of thing?

WP: No, just green ...

SH: Dungarees?

WP: Yes, yes, yes. CPT [Civilian Pilot Training], ... we used their uniform. We used that all during the CPT.

SH: What rate did you have? Were you a seaman?

WP: Cadet.

SH: Just considered a cadet.

WP: Just a cadet, yes. We were cadets.

SH: Who was in charge of the cadets? Was there a military person there, teaching you how to march?

WP: We didn't have much military there. No, it was all flight training. It was all, really, screening the cadets.

RP: Who was training you?

WP: Well, ... they had a guy in charge of the school, but it was the same one that ran the school. He was a civilian; he wasn't military.

SH: Who was in charge? How many hours did you have to study? Were you allowed to leave the hotel and go out on the town every night, if you wanted to? Were there any rules?

WP: ... It was controlled. They had supervision there, but they were civilians, and we had a lot of leeway. For one thing, when they screened us, they screened out the ones who would not have been, you know, relatively able to fit into the community, [laughter] and the communities liked us.

SH: Did they?

WP: For one thing, we brought economy in.

SH: Were they welcoming to the cadets?

WP: Yes.

SH: Did they have, what shall we call them, different activities?

WP: They had activities, and the community brought in entertainment, had parties for us and, you know, welcoming things, and dances and all that sort of thing.

SH: Did you attend church?

WP: We had church, yes. ... We didn't have transportation, but, yes, ... we went to church.

SH: Your hotel was in the downtown section.

WP: Of Bend, Oregon.

SH: Then, you would just take a bus out to the airport.

WP: Yes.

SH: You flew every day. What about the weather in Oregon?

WP: We had weekends off. In bad weather, of course, we had ground school. We'd work on ground school. Now, that same situation applied to the next location, which was at Walla Walla, Washington, except we flew an open cockpit biplane then. So, the reason I'm tying the two together is, basically, they were the same kind of thing and, at Walla Walla, we were at Whitman College and used the dormitories there, at Whitman College, ... but, other than that, it was the same type of thing.

SH: It was still civilians teaching you and it was still very lax, as far as military protocol.

WP: Yes. See, this calls it the Martin School of Flying. It was a civilian company that was contracted by the Navy to do this training.

SH: You had to basically pass this part of the course, in Bend, Oregon, to continue on to this.

WP: This was more advanced, because, in this, they included aerobatics, you know. It got more complicated, and the ground school was harder, too.

SH: Are there any incidents or memories, from either Bend, Oregon, or Walla Walla, that you recall that you would like to share, or any friends that you made?

WP: Well, we made good friends. Some of them, we stuck with for a long time. One of them lives out; ... I guess he's still alive, Pat.

RP: Smith.

WP: Pat Smith. You can look up his name. His name is Patrick Henry Smith. [laughter]

SH: I took his street to come here. [laughter]

WP: Yes, right, but, yes, and some of them got killed. We had some accidents.

SH: Did you?

WP: Yes.

SH: I wondered if you did that early in the training.

WP: Well, it's training, yes.

SH: When you were flying in the biplane like that, is the instructor flying right behind you or are you flying behind him?

WP: Well, it was both, dual and solo, but, if it was dual, they were sitting in one side and we were in the other. If it was solo, then, we flew from the back seat, because that's where they were, usually in the front seat, yes.

SH: You did your first solo, though, in Bend, Oregon.

WP: Oh, yes.

SH: That was the first time you had ever soloed.

WP: Yes, yes.

SH: What was it like? Do you remember?

WP: It was exciting. Here's this young kid, a twenty-year-old kid up there, thought he was ... taking over the whole world.

SH: You were the "top gun" that day, right?

WP: That's right, that's right. We enjoyed it. I think all of us did. Some of them were scared and some of them quit, because they just couldn't take the pressure of flying.

SH: Was the attrition rate, then, in Walla Walla, as great as it had been in Bend, or were those people who made that first cut more apt to stay with it?

WP: Most of them stayed, a few of them didn't. A few of them washed out. They just couldn't handle acrobatics.

SH: Can you talk about those acrobatics a little bit?

WP: Well, you know, with us, it was just a lot of fun. You get on a roller coaster, ... but it was just a lot of fun. I enjoyed it, but some of the people just couldn't adapt to it and they stalled out and, you know, they got scared and they would quit.

RP: Do we want to jump to, about a year later, when Lou Prisky died?

WP: Yes. ... That was in the Navy, then. We went from Walla Walla to preflight, which was all ground school and physical training, completely.

SH: Really?

WP: Yes, and it was at St. Mary's College, California, is the one I went to. They were all over the country, but it was all physical training, making sure that our coordination was right and that we were strong enough to do it and all that sort of thing. Then, following St. Mary's College, they sent us to what they called primary training, which, really, ... some of it was duplicating this, but not much, but it was Navy, and I was at the naval air station in Norman, Oklahoma. ... That was open cockpit biplanes. It was an old N2S Stearman, with the helmet, the whole routine, you know, [laughter] even the old scarves they used, yes, the whole routine. ...

SH: What were those scarves for, other than to look good in the photographs? [laughter]

WP: Well, it was wintertime. ... You take them, wrap them around your neck all the time. ...

SH: Okay, they really were for warmth. I just thought maybe they were kind of the style. [laughter]

WP: Yes, you let it stream, if you wanted to look ...

SH: Cool.

WP: ... Cool, right. But, that was also more advanced and more tactical type training.

SH: Was it a shock to go from having civilian pilots training you, at Bend, and then, Walla Walla, to suddenly learning to fly the Navy way?

WP: Yes. Well, of course, the preliminary training was geared toward ... what they knew we were going to get into anyway. ... That part of it wasn't that much of a shock, except it was military and our instructors were commissioned officers. They were pilots.

RP: Were you wearing Navy uniforms by then?

WP: At that time, we were wearing Navy uniforms. Well, it was a cadet's uniform, but it was a Navy uniform, and it was a Navy uniform that, you know, once you got commissioned, you used the same uniform, but you got stripes put on the sleeves and ...

SH: The important stuff.

WP: ... All the other stuff, yes.

SH: These pilots that were doing the training were naval officers. Had they been in the military?

WP: Yes.

SH: Were they commissioned to specifically train pilots?

WP: ... No, they were graduated. I think ... some of them were recruited as trainees, but they were brought into the military and they were actually military officers, yes.

SH: None of them were coming back as old as World War I.

WP: No, no, no, but what Rae was referring to was a guy that was my best pal there, ... had been a halfback ... at Dayton University and very good. ...

SH: Had you known him before?

WP: No, we got to know each other there.

SH: This is in Norman, Oklahoma.

WP: It's in Norman, Oklahoma. He was a very good friend. We buddied around together and he went up on this flight, which was Pylon Eights. You know, in Pylon Eights, you go around pylons here and pylons here, and it's fairly slow.

SH: Make a figure eight.

WP: ... Yes. It's coordination as to do that, and he spun in and got killed. So, since I was his best friend, I was given the duties, as a twenty-year-old kid that didn't know any better, of escorting his body home to Dayton, right in the middle of training. ... So, I arrived at Dayton with the body and his family was a big Catholic family and they all came out there and draped themselves over the casket and cried, and it was really tough.

SH: I bet, to try to maintain your naval decorum.

WP: Yes, that's right, yes. So, that's what she was referring to.

RP: The first time that he had done anything like that.

WP: Yes, that's right, but, anyway, that was ...

SH: Probably one of your toughest assignments in the military.

WP: ... Yes. It was right in the middle of training. So, then, I had to go back, get caught up with the class.

SH: Did you have a chance to get back to Akron and say hello to your family?

WP: I did. It was at Dayton, and I don't think I; did I see you then?

RP: No.

WP: I don't think I did. I had another girlfriend then. So, I said hello to her, ... but I was only there for a day, because I wasn't supposed to be away from the training, and, in those days, you didn't have airplanes, you had trains, you know. The airplanes were what you flew on in training and there were a few transports, but, basically, the main mode of transportation, even when I went to Bend, Oregon, was on a train, all the way out to Bend, Oregon.

SH: What do you remember about it? Had you traveled anywhere, other than Akron, as a young man?

WP: We used to travel all the way to Pittsburgh. [laughter]

SH: Why did you go to Pittsburgh? [laughter]

WP: I don't know.

RP: Big city.

WP: Big city. [laughter]

SH: Really?

WP: Yes. Well, Cleveland and Pittsburgh, but, no, we didn't do it often. We went to Niagara Falls one time for a trip, and, yes, we took a couple of trips, but not much, usually by car.

SH: Was it exciting to take this trip to Bend, Oregon?

WP: Oh, yes, yes.

SH: What did you do for entertainment?

WP: Well, we entertained ourselves, I guess. We played a lot of cards.

SH: Did you?

WP: Yes. ... Some of the guys gambled. I didn't gamble. I don't go for that stuff. ...

SH: One thing I did not ask you, as a young man, were you involved with the church at all, growing up in Akron?

WP: Yes. I was raised as an active Methodist and, yes, I was very much involved in the church.

SH: Involved in Sunday school and all that kind of stuff.

WP: Yes.

SH: You talked about being in the Boy Scouts and actually training other Boy Scouts. What rank did you attain in the Scouts before you left for the military?

WP: Life. I never quite made Eagle, but Life, yes.

SH: Did any of the skills that you learned in Scouts or in athletics at your high school help you as someone who is now training to fly a plane? Do you think that helped you at all?

WP: Yes, ... during preflight, and, you know, you had to stand watches, always had to stand watches, and they found out that I used to teach swimming, and every cadet had to learn to swim and a lot of them couldn't, so, they recruited me to teach swimming, at four o'clock, two or three days a week, and I didn't have to stand watches, [laughter] midnight to eight in the morning or whatever, see. So, yes, that helped me, in regard to that, because I did teach a lot of kids to swim, cadets.

SH: At four in the morning or four in the afternoon?

WP: Four in the afternoon. ...

SH: Was this at Bend or at Walla Walla?

WP: No, that would have been at preflight, at St. Mary's College. ...

SH: In California then. What memories do you take away from Bend and Walla Walla and St. Mary's, before we get back to Norman, Oklahoma? Were there any incidents with the population or in your training or with the men that you were meeting and training with?

WP: No, it was very good. We used to hike through the orange groves in the Napa Valley, in preflight, and they used to have dances for us at Oakland, California, which is on this side of San Francisco, and they were really nice dances and they'd transport us to them and, of course, the girls liked to have the boys there, because the boys that were there were gone somewhere else. [laughter] So, they always liked to have us there.

SH: A good situation.

WP: Yes, it worked out, yes, and I met some girls that I liked when I was in the various locations.

SH: The uniform was okay, too, then.

WP: Oh, yes, that's right.

RP: Yes.

WP: I wore them well, and, of course, we were physically fit, too, not like this. [laughter]

SH: When you returned from escorting your friend's body back to Dayton, what did you have to do to catch up then in Norman?

WP: They helped me out.

SH: Did they?

WP: Yes. They had somebody, I think it was another cadet, ... that helped bring me up-to-date, because it was mostly flying. I didn't have any problem with the flying, but, mostly, it was the ground portion of the flying. So, they would bring me up to speed on that, navigation and aerology and, you know, all that sort of thing, was just a part of it.

SH: You were able to stay with the same class.

WP: I stayed with the same class, and that concerned me, originally, because I thought I was going to drop back, but, no, I stayed with the same class.

SH: What kind of competition was it? Was it friendly competition? Was it cutthroat? Was it supportive?

WP: Well, it's probably a little of all of those, because, when you're with people, there are people that, by their very actions, you either like them or you don't like them. ... I don't recall that we prayed that somebody was going to wash out, or anything like that, but there were people that we were glad when they left, because some of them were not safe pilots, you know, and that was the reason they washed out. Some of them got through that we didn't feel were safe pilots, but they did, they got through. It was all competition, because, you know, your goal is to get those wings. [laughter]

SH: Was it in Norman that you got your wings?

WP: No. I went from there to Corpus Christi. Primary training was Norman, then, advanced training was Corpus Christi, Texas. In each case, you have more instrument training, more navigation, more of everything, and more complicated, and a higher operational type aircraft. So, it was a faster airplane. ... We were flying the SNJ Texan in Corpus Christi. So, we were commissioned out of Corpus Christi. As a matter-of-fact, where we were training, our advanced training, was at Kingsville, Texas, right on the ranch, just off the ranch, the King Ranch, yes, and we had a chance to go hunting there, for rattlesnakes, of course. Well, you know, we were kids, "Boom," great, guns. [laughter] Well, of course, at that point, then, ... they had mounted guns on our airplanes and we had air-to-air gunnery, to shoot at moving targets, which were banners, and all that sort of thing.

SH: Who was the person flying that plane that pulled that banner? [laughter]

WP: Brave. No, we had to take turns.

SH: Did you really?

WP: Oh, yes, yes.

SH: Was the plane armored or have anything to protect it?

WP: No, no. It was I don't know how far behind now. ...

SH: It would not have been far enough for me. [laughter]

WP: But, your runs, ... in the Navy, were all ninety degrees. Sometimes, they would suck in behind a little bit and we'd get a little unhappy, but, mostly, it was ninety degrees. So, we had to lead it a certain amount to hit those and, if you got sucked in behind, once in awhile, it would show up on the sleeve, because it'd show the bullet, they were painted, ... going through at an angle that was a little bit too shallow of an angle. So, then, they would have a discussion with the guy that made those runs, but I don't think any tow plane ever got shot down.

SH: That is good to hear.

WP: I don't believe so. [laughter]

SH: Was that the first time that you actually practiced firing?

WP: Yes, and bombing.

SH: You would bomb as well.

WP: Yes. I keep telling these people; you know, they talk about Padre Island, which is off the coast of Corpus Christi. Well, that was one of the places where we dropped bombs, and I said, "I can't understand why it's still floating, because it's full of bombs," but, now, they've got apartments there. ... At that time, we had an outlying field at Padre Island and we'd go out there for a day. We'd go out there and go have flights in the mornings, and then, we would refuel, they had refueling tanks out there at the field, and reload our aircraft and put a new banner on the tow plane and go out and try it again, and we'd do that all day long.

SH: Really?

WP: Yes, out there on Padre Island, which, at that time, was just a piece of barren sand.

SH: Really?

WP: Yes, that's all it was. It had a runway, a small runway, because they were "prop jobs" then. You didn't need a big runway.

SH: What are some of the other incidents that you remember? You have gone from Norman to Kingsville.

WP: Yes. It's part of Corpus Christi.

SH: Is Corpus Christi separate from Kingsville?

WP: Kingsville is a part of the naval installation of Corpus Christi, the training. ... The main side of Corpus Christi was on the main base and we had Beeville then, which was mostly instruments, instrument training. We went to Beeville for, I don't know, a month, I think, and then, Kingsville was the advanced training for fighters, single-engine, and they had another one that was for bombers. ... They trained them in multi-engine and, you know, it was that kind of thing. It was separated by function, more than anything else.

SH: When was the decision made as to which aircraft you were going to fly and learn to fly?

WP: Well, you made a choice.

SH: You got to make the choice.

WP: You got to make a choice. You didn't always get what the choice was, [laughter] and, fortunately, I was lucky, but, I think, some of the guys that were a little more conservative than some of the others took the multi-engine route, because it was not radical training and not runs

on airplanes and, you know, all that kind of stuff. It was more straight-line bombing or dive-bombing or something like that.

SH: That decision was made at ...

WP: Corpus Christi, yes.

SH: You identified yourself as less conservative.

WP: Well, yes, I was. [laughter] I was a little bit adventuresome. That was part of the reason I didn't get through school as well as I did. [laughter]

SH: Was this anything you discussed with your family, about what decision to make, or was this just something that you, Bill Phillips, decided as you went along?

WP: I don't think they would have understood anyway, what the decisions were, because ... it was a different world at that point, and I'd been away from home, then, forever.

SH: Almost two years, right? [laughter]

WP: Yes, pretty close to it, yes.

SH: Do you remember making the decision? Was it a hard decision to make?

WP: No, it wasn't. I knew what I wanted to do.

SH: That was what you wanted to do.

WP: Yes.

SH: Would you have been okay if you had wound up in a multi-engine bomber?

WP: I would have done it, yes. I would have done it, yes.

SH: Where were the ground crews being trained, at the same time you are learning to be a fighter pilot? Are they moving along with you, so-to-speak, in these same bases? Are they being trained somewhere else?

WP: A little bit of each. ... A lot of the basic training was at Great Lakes, and other ground training facilities around the country, mostly in mechanics and engineering, and, of course, each of those people had to be specific in the kind of aircraft that they were going to go into, because the systems were all different.

SH: The people who were working on your planes, as you were training, you were quite confident that they were far enough along with the system that they were good.

WP: Yes. Part of them went from these basic locations to these other locations to get on-the-job-type training. So, they would be the ones that were working with the ones that were experts on it.

SH: At any point in your training, were you ever concerned about the quality of the mechanic or the ground crew that was working on your craft?

WP: I don't think so. I think they were pretty well-trained. ...

SH: Was there anyone who mentored you or who set an example that helped you make that decision to take on the fighters?

WP: I don't think so.

SH: Am I wrong, but are the fighter pilots not the cream of the crop?

WP: They like to think they are.

SH: Did you think you were?

WP: Of course. [laughter] I would say that, you know, mechanically, the ability to fly the airplane is more challenging to the fighter pilot than some of the others, but they have skills that would be quite different than ones that we had, you know, but, no, I don't think so.

SH: Would you be able to pick a fighter pilot out of a lineup, so-to-speak, after you talked to him for a few minutes?

WP: Probably; if we asked the right questions, yes.

SH: Would you be able to pick them out from their personality?

WP: Yes. Well, you see, when we were in, and this is moving ahead to Brazil, our flights were with patrol squadrons, ... Navy patrol pilots, and so, we would go up and fly with them. Then, we'd come back and analyze the films ... of the camera guns that we'd had on the plane and review with them what we thought they did right and what we thought they did wrong, and then, we'd go back up with the same crew again, a second time, to help correct those errors. ...

SH: You were in a training position at this point.

WP: I'm in a training position. ... The point of the story is, we worked with patrol pilots, at that time, and we got along real well. We lived with them in the BOQs, [bachelor officers' quarters], and, you know, all that. ...

SH: Were there other incidents at Corpus Christi and Padre Island that you would like to share?

WP: Not particularly, no. It's a long time ago. [laughter]

SH: How aware were you of what was going on with the war, both in the European Theater and in the Pacific?

WP: We were well briefed.

SH: Were you?

WP: Yes, we were.

SH: Was it officially done once a day, once a week? How did the Navy keep you abreast of what was going on?

WP: Well, always, at morning muster, they would give us an update, but, then, there were times when we'd have special meetings, if there was a change which we should know about.

SH: Did you know about D-Day before it happened, in June of 1944?

WP: Oh, yes, yes. Well, as a matter-of-fact, we were together in June of '44.

RP: Oh, yes.

WP: Atlantic City.

RP: We were stationed at Atlantic City, Pomona Air Base.

SH: Okay. After Corpus Christi, where were you sent?

WP: I was commissioned, of course, and I finally got leave. I finally got to go home, and then, I went to Sanford, Florida, to what they called operational training, and that was in an operational-type aircraft, one like they used in combat, and that was in ...

RP: When you got commissioned and came home, that was October of '44, and that's when we got engaged, and then, we got married, in December.

WP: We split up and got engaged. [laughter]

RP: Then, we got married in December of '44.

SH: Okay, October of 1944. D-Day took place in ...

RP: ... May of ...

SH: June of 1944. It had actually taken place before you were engaged.

RP: Is that right? I thought I remembered that.

WP: No.

SH: You may have remembered V-E Day.

RP: Yes, that's right!

SH: When you came home on leave from Corpus Christi, before you went to Florida, that was when the two of you decided that you were the duo and not the other.

RP: Yes.

WP: Yes, we got back together, right.

RP: He came to our house that morning, I was getting ready to go to work, and there stood this handsome, tan, young ensign in a white uniform. There wasn't anything more beautiful.

WP: Either before or since. [laughter]

RP: I hadn't seen him in, what was it, seventeen months or so?

WP: Yes.

RP: He had been gone, and he was still engaged to this other girl, but he came out to our house to see me, and so, right then and there, we just knew. We looked at each other and just knew.

WP: Well, I called her, the other one, but that's right.

SH: Was your intended in the military?

RP: Yes, he was on a ship out in the Pacific, and even when I got engaged to him, I knew I didn't want to marry him, but I just couldn't say no. You know, I don't know why, I just said, "Oh, yes," you know, [laughter] but he was a nice guy, real nice fellow.

SH: Was he from Akron?

RP: No, he was from Troy, Ohio.

WP: Close to Dayton.

RP: Yes. He was my brother's friend, in the Navy, ... but I wasn't that enthused. [laughter] Anyway, I had to write him a "Dear John" letter, [a letter informing him their relationship is over]. So, it was sad, sent his ring back.

SH: Where did you go to get the ring, if this was that quick? Did you propose during that leave?

WP: I must have. [laughter]

RP: Yes.

WP: I don't think I gave her a ring, then. I think I had to get that later, didn't I?

RP: No, we got a ring. We went downtown to ...

WP: Oh, we went downtown, Akron, and got it.

RP: Some jeweler, the big Akron jeweler, whoever that was, I forget his name now, and we picked out a ring and got engaged, right then and there.

SH: Both families were happy?

RP: My family was happy. They always liked him a lot.

WP: Yes, so was mine.

SH: Did you have two weeks or a week?

WP: Two weeks.

RP: What, home, on leave?

WP: Yes.

SH: Did you set a date or did you just say, "When you are back next?"

RP: Yes. We thought we would try to set it all up with my brother and his wife, who was stationed in the Navy in Philadelphia, and he [Mr. Phillips] was going to be stationed in Atlantic City for six months.

WP: That was after Florida.

RP: Yes. So, we thought he can come up to Philadelphia and I can go down to Philadelphia, and my brother and his wife will be best man and matron of honor, and so, we worked it out that way. ... Two weeks before December 2nd, he got word that he was going to be sent to Brazil and we had already had our physicals and did all the paperwork and had everything lined up, and then, we said, "Let's do it." So, we went down there and got married. We were together four days and he left on the fifth day for Brazil, and I went back to Akron.

SH: You went down to Florida.

RP: No, I didn't go down to Florida.

SH: You went to Atlantic City.

RP: ... I went to Philadelphia to get married.

SH: You did do it in Philadelphia.

RP: Yes.

SH: Okay, I thought you did not get to Philly.

WP: Yes, but there's a missing part of the link here. ... When I was in Florida, we were flying combat-type aircraft there, and this was before all this happened, before, and, at the end of that training down there, where we were doing some of the same things, except with a bigger airplane, they sent us up to Michigan, and it was the first time we'd flown off of a carrier.

SH: You flew off a carrier in Lake Michigan.

RP: Yes. Can you believe it?

WP: [laughter] Well, you see, again, they were using the ships that were able to be in combat in combat, and they had to have some place where they could have us train to land on [a carrier]. So, they took some old lake steamers ... and put decks on them and they were called the (*Sagima?*) [USS *Wolverine* (IX-64)] and the [USS] *Sable* [(IX-81)], were the names of them. ... Then, we all would go out there, and we'd already done field carrier practice, and they ... flew us out from Detroit, Naval Air Station Grosse Ile, Michigan, Grosse Ile, Michigan, out to the ship, and we had to make six landings and six catapult shots, and that was ... before I got home. I got home from there, [laughter] but that was in the middle of all that. So, it was after that, then, that we [got married]. ...

SH: Was this the standard place where the Navy trained their pilots?

WP: It was the only place they had. Of course, the land-based and the bombers went somewhere else.

SH: I mean to do carrier landings.

WP: Yes. They had two places, three places. At San Diego, they had a ship out there that we could have gone on, and Corpus Christi, and then, the ones on Lake Michigan.

SH: We spoke about your training at Corpus Christi. What were you doing in Florida? What was your training like there? What did that entail?

WP: ... Same type of thing, except more advanced, ... and more field carrier, of course. We pulled our banners off the coast, at the east coast of Florida, and we had areas that were lined up for air-to-air gunnery. We could shoot at them.

SH: Was there anything really different, as far as the way you, as a Navy person, were welcomed or not, between Texas and Florida?

WP: No. They were really very good and, in Florida, we had, you know, dances, and so forth, for all the cadets and all the girls, and I got to know a couple down there that were liked pretty well. [laughter]

SH: When you were in Florida, were there still people who were washing out at this point?

WP: ... Very, very few, very few. ... One guy that I recall had chronic air sickness, and he got that far and he kept thinking he was going to get better and he didn't, ... but the aircraft were, in those days, ... pretty advanced, at least in our minds, but we had to hand crank the landing gear up and down. ... They didn't have any hydraulic system, the old F4F Wildcat, and, you know, you say, "A Wildcat, boy, it's really good," but we had to hand crank the landing gear up and down. [laughter]

SH: How many were onboard that plane?

WP: Single-seat fighter.

SH: Single-seat, that is what I thought, but I wanted to be sure.

WP: What you do, when you're in it, the first time you're in it by yourself, they'd take us out, and we could go through all the flight characteristics and movies and all that sort of thing, and discussing, they always discussed what the problems are. ... Then, they take you out to the airplane. You have a cockpit checkout, where you sit in the cockpit and you say, "Oh, that's the stick. That's the throttle. [laughter] This is where you crank the landing gear up and down." No, it wasn't that bad, [laughter] but they go through all the systems, where the instruments are and all that sort of thing, but, when you're in it, you're in it.

SH: How long was the training in Florida?

WP: Three months, I think. It's in the logbook. I can find it. It's about three months, I think it was.

SH: Then, you were sent up to Detroit, and then, over to the base in ...

WP: Then, we go to Atlantic City, Pomona. ... It's outside of Atlantic City. ... Now, I think, the Atlantic City Airport is there. At that time, it wasn't.

SH: Okay, because I know there is Lakehurst.

WP: No, ... at that time, Lakehurst was, we called them "poopy bags," blimps. [laughter]

SH: I have never heard that expression for a dirigible. [laughter]

WP: Well, us fighter pilots called them "poopy bags," [laughter] but that's what was there at that time, lighter-than-air craft, lighter-than-air.

SH: From Florida, you do your landings on the carrier in Lake Michigan, and then, from there, you were sent to Pomona.

WP: Yes.

SH: Is it in Pomona that you were to be married?

WP: That was when we got married.

RP: That's where he got leave.

WP: ... Yes, that was when we got to Akron.

SH: Were you married in Ohio or were you married in Philadelphia?

WP: Philadelphia.

SH: You came there.

RP: Yes, I took a train down there.

WP: And I went over there and we got our license.

RP: My brother and his wife had everything lined up for us, and we got married at St. Catherine's Church. ...

SH: In Philadelphia?

RP: In Philadelphia.

WP: Yes.

RP: And we should have known something was wrong, because ... half the church burned down before we got married and we had to get married at this nuns' convent. [laughter]

SH: In a chapel there. [laughter]

RP: Yes, a little place, and all the nuns came in and there was just my brother and his wife, and Bill's sister came down from New York, and then, the two of us and the priest, and so, we didn't get to get married in the church, as such, but the marriage certificate says, "In St. Catherine's."

SH: Was there a problem, with you being a Methodist? Did you have to join the church?

WP: ... You know, they have you go through training if you marry a Catholic, but they forgave us that.

RP: Because it was a war time.

WP: They have a waiting period; because it was wartime.

RP: Yes, and it was Advent even, so, we got married in Advent, and you're not supposed to get married in Advent.

WP: But, they forgave that, too.

RP: And then, we were supposed to get married at the side altar, not the main altar, and that's what burned, was the side altar. [laughter] ...

SH: You were forgiven a lot there, right? [laughter]

RP: Yes, right. [laughter]

WP: ... The Pomona base, the Naval Air Station Pomona, at that time, ... there was nobody that was permanently stationed there. It was kind of a place where they reassigned people to other positions, other squadrons and that sort of thing, and that was a holding place, where you could get flight time and, you know, other types of things, while you were waiting, and so, that was basically what we were doing in Atlantic City. I knew it was a temporary place when we went there.

SH: Where were you housed, before you were married, or was it the same place?

WP: No, you mean at Atlantic City? Oh, we got a place in ...

RP: Were you in that hotel in Atlantic City on the beach? Were you staying there?

WP: ... I was in a hotel on the beach.

RP: Yes.

WP: And they took us out there every day, but, ... after we were married, then, ... we got an upstairs room in ...

RP: Mrs. Hickman's house.

WP: Mrs. Hickman's house, yes, in New Jersey.

RP: And then, I got pregnant, about a month after that or two months after that.

WP: We think it's Mrs. Hickman's fault. [laughter]

RP: And I was so sick. [laughter]

WP: Yes, she was sick, yes. [laughter]

RP: I wanted to go home.

WP: ... Yes, but that was after I came back from Brazil.

RP: Yes, that's when you got stationed up there.

WP: ... After we were married, we went from there ...

SH: You said you had five days, from the time you were married, before you went to Brazil.

WP: Yes.

RP: Yes, five days, before he took off for Brazil and I went back home.

SH: Okay. You were married.

RP: December 2nd, in '44.

SH: Then, you go back to Akron and you fly down to Brazil. What were your orders in Brazil?

WP: ... Get that top sheet off of that.

RP: Off of here?

WP: Yes. Those are my orders to Brazil. I just thought you'd be interested in looking at them, and it says, "Duties;" his word is very vague.

SH: [laughter] I can see that. You were to, "Report to the officer in charge, Headquarters Squadron, First Air Wing 16, detachments as indicated below, for temporary duty in connection with fighter affiliation instruction." Did you know what that meant at that point?

WP: Yes, at that time. By then, I did, [laughter] but not really, because we were replacing another group of four pilots, and they gave us orientation on what we were doing, but, see, there are four of us here.

SH: Okay, I see three names here. Is this one also included in this?

WP: ... Yes, Uley Morgan.

SH: Morgan, Phillips, Rae and Lumper.

WP: Lumper; that's misspelled.

SH: Oh, poor guy.

RP: Yes, it's L-U-M-P-E-R.

SH: Are these the ones that you are replacing?

WP: No, these are enlisted personnel that were [with us], their orders. They were already down there, but ... their orders had to give them a transfer from where they were to us, but those are our mechanics.

SH: These are the mechanics, okay.

WP: Yes. See, these are metalsmith and gunnery, and so forth.

SH: You were to report to Natal.

WP: Recife.

SH: You were going to Recife.

WP: Well, see, we report to Recife, but our duties included Amapa, Belem, Natal, Fortaleza. Those are the various places that we trained people.

SH: Okay.

WP: Out of Recife. We were based at Recife.

SH: Okay.

WP: And we were the only American fighters in Brazil.

SH: Okay. How defined was this before you actually left the States, as to what you were going to be doing?

WP: We knew we were going to be making runs on airplanes.

RP: On airplanes?

WP: Yes, on other airplanes, bombers and patrol squadrons.

SH: When you say runs on, what do you mean?

WP: Gunnery runs, with cameras. I guess we have to back up a little bit.

SH: Please.

WP: The North Atlantic, where we were ... supplying [the] European area, ... it got to the point where it's dangerous to ship them across the North Atlantic, ... because of submarines. So, at that point, they made the decision that they would ship them down along the Atlantic coast, where they could fly top cover for the convoys, down through the northeast coast of Brazil, where they could supply coverage for the convoys, and go from Recife, which is the easternmost part of Brazil, across to Ascension Island. In Ascension Island, they had squadrons that could meet the convoys halfway and cover them on the African end of it, and then, they would ... stay with them until they went up to either the north coast of Africa or south of the European Theater, and supply them that way. When they switched that, then, the Germans opened submarine pens in Argentina, and then, they were able to supply their subs, refuel them in Argentina, and they could move their operation further south, to pick up those convoys, and that was when we moved our squadrons in, down to Brazil, to cover the ships on that eastern part of it. When there weren't convoys, they had a training program, and a part of that training program was how to deal with fighters, ... how you fire on fighter aircraft, how do you evade them, how do you turn into them, to throw them off, and that sort of thing, and that was why we were sent there. [laughter] I had to go back, to put it together.

SH: Thank you.

WP: So, that's why we were there.

SH: Okay.

WP: And so, we were there to give them training on fighter evasion tactics, is what it was, is what they called us.

SH: These were other Air Corps groups.

WP: Navy, Navy flight squadrons.

SH: Okay.

WP: They even had a couple blimps, but we didn't work with them, of course.

SH: "Poopy bags." [laughter]

WP: "Poopy bags." [laughter] ...

SH: You were not working with the Army at all.

WP: No.

SH: This was just strictly Navy cover for Navy convoys.

WP: Yes, that's right. Now, the only Army aircraft they had there were Brazilian. They were United States planes, but they were ... Army Air Corps fighters that we gave to Brazil.

SH: Were you training them at all?

WP: No, no. ...

SH: Did you interact at all with them?

WP: Not notably, not by choice. [laughter] They were the worst pilots in the whole world. They were awful, but, interestingly enough, ... Brazil, originally, was friendly to the Nazis, and we even had a hangar at Belem, that we flew out of when we're in Belem, ... that still had a *swastika* painted on the hangar, painted right on the side of the hangar, yes. ...

SH: I knew that they really waffled in their support, for or against the Allies.

WP: Yes, and, of course, Argentina never changed. They stayed with the Nazis and that's how they supplied them. [Editor's Note: While pro-Nazi and Fascist sentiment permeated the Argentinean government and military throughout the war period, Argentina remained officially neutral until the very end of the War in Europe, when the government declared war on the Axis Powers.]

SH: There was a lot of pressure put upon the President of Brazil to change his mind, and he did not really change his mind until you got there.

WP: Well, yes, there were people that were here before us, but the bombers, the patrol squadrons, had been there for awhile. ... [Editor's Note: Brazilian President Getulio Dornelles Vargas sympathized with the Axis Powers, but Allied control of the seas and diplomatic pressure forced Brazil into the Allied camp. American airbases were established in early 1942 and Brazil declared war on Germany and Italy in August of 1942.]

SH: How successful was the US Navy in looking for the submarines?

WP: They got some subs. I don't know how many, but they got some, yes.

SH: Were the Brazilians ever effective against the German submarines?

WP: I don't think so. No, I don't think so.

SH: What kind of facilities did you have there? How long were you there?

WP: I was there for, what?

SH: You were there in December of 1944, mid-December.

WP: Yes, about nine months. Were we there that long?

RP: You came back in May.

WP: In the middle of this tour, they decided they needed our fighters for the Pacific. ...

SH: The Pacific; interestingly enough, December 1944, this is when the Battle of the Bulge takes place and a lot of material and men were sent to Europe.

WP: Yes, that's right. That's probably when they called our planes back. So, we had to fly them back to Norfolk, these single-seat fighters, and pick up SBD Dauntless-es, which is an old, surplus dive-bomber, and fly it back ... to Brazil to finish our tour. We finished our tour in SBD Dauntless-es, God, but, anyway. ... [laughter]

SH: How often did you have to land with the Dauntless?

WP: With the fighters, we landed everywhere. We hit every island all the way up.

RP: It took twenty-seven flying hours.

SH: Because the range is not that far. That is what I read.

WP: No, no, we landed everywhere. [laughter] We even landed on Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and we couldn't get to Florida from Guantanamo Bay, because it was on the southeast coast of Cuba. So, we had to land at Camaguey, which is up to the middle of ... Cuba, but we had arrangements to refuel there. So, we had to land there, so that we could make it up to ...

SH: Miami?

WP: Well, Key West, which is closer, [laughter] but ... that's just the way it was, you know. That's the way it was.

SH: Did you ever encounter any enemy airplanes or aircraft?

WP: No, no, I didn't, very calm.

SH: Did you ever fire on any enemy targets, whether it was a submarine, a base or a ship?

WP: No.

SH: It was strictly training that you were doing.

WP: Yes.

SH: You talked about having to return your aircraft. When you came back, was it the same men? How often did it change?

WP: ... You mean these guys here? These guys, when we came back, they came back by military air transport, to Norfolk, and, when we were back in Norfolk, we were there for about a week or so.

RP: I think so.

WP: You came down. We were getting checked out in the aircraft, because it was a different aircraft, and they were going to ground school.

SH: The mechanics.

WP: On the mechanic part of it, the same guys. So, when we came back, ... back down to Brazil, we were in a bomber, dive-bomber, which has room for a passenger. So, we flew them back. They flew back with us, in the back of the SBDs.

SH: They deserve recognition as well. [laughter]

WP: Yes. Well, they trusted us. ...

SH: You had to trust them, too. [laughter] They had to learn how to work on the Dauntless. Obviously, it is a different craft.

WP: It's different systems.

SH: The people that you were training, were they training still in the fighters or were they training in the Dauntless?

WP: The people that we were making runs on?

SH: Yes.

WP: Well, they were in patrol squadrons, big four-engine or two-engine bombers, patrol planes.

SH: Okay.

WP: Their job was to fly over the convoy and, using whatever electronics we had available at that time, try to spot submarines that were approaching the convoy, and so, they were bombers. They were long-range-type things.

SH: Okay.

WP: They could go out there and stay all day, you know. These would be old PBM and PBY, PBMs, patrol, and the PBY was a twin-engine patrol squadron. [Editor's Note: The PBM Mariners, produced by the Glenn L. Martin Company, and the PBY Catalinas, produced by Consolidated Aircraft, were "flying boat" bombers that could take-off and land on water.]

SH: That was also a communication plane as well, right?

WP: Yes, it was, and PVs was a patrol squadron [aircraft]. It was land-based. [Editor's Note: Mr. Phillips could be referring to the PV-1 Ventura and/or the PV-2 Harpoon, both land-based bombers manufactured by Lockheed.] ...

SH: Were you all stationed at the same base in Brazil?

WP: No. These locations were where we had other squadrons, different types of squadrons.

SH: Okay.

WP: So, we were the ones that went up and down, met with [them]. We would go to, for instance, Fortaleza, and we'd be with them for about a couple of weeks, and train each crew twice. We would go up with them, [with the] gun cameras, and analyze them, tell them what they did wrong, go back up with them and try it again, and we'd do each crew twice. ... Then, when we finished all the crews, then, we'd go to the next base and all their crews, and each of them had, I don't know how many airplanes, ten planes or whatever many crews they had.

SH: What kind of facilities were at these bases, for you and for them?

WP: They were pretty good.

SH: Really?

WP: Yes. Some of them, the Nazis had built. [laughter] Yes, some of them; ... in Fortaleza, the runways were very small and some of them were hard to land. Some of them only had one runway. So, if the wind was blowing the wrong way, you had trouble landing that little, old, bitty airplane. The landing gear on that airplane was only about that wide.

SH: We are looking at, like, four feet.

WP: Yes, not that.

SH: Three?

WP: Yes. So, a crosswind, it would pick up one wing, you know, on some of those fields. The plane was not all that great.

SH: What did you do when you were not flying? What did you do for entertainment?

WP: We had a terrible time.

SH: I can tell by the look on your face. [laughter]

WP: Terrible time. They had the most beautiful beaches in Brazil, [of] anywhere in the world, and we knew how to utilize them. What we would do, we had a command car available to us at each base and we would get everything done and, if there was work to be done on the airplanes, we would get it done, these guys would do it. ... Then, we'd load them all in the big (Packard?), which is similar to your Hummer that you see now, except it's just a big old [car], and go to the beach. ... We had a lot of good beach time.

RP: And they'd fill a big oil barrel with ice and beer and throw that in the command car, [laughter] ... and the guys would take their mattress covers, yes, mattress bags, they were, actually. ...

WP: Air mattresses.

RP: Air mattresses, fill them with air and float around in the water and drink beer.

WP: But, the other part, that was really, really difficult, was that ... one of the air wing doctors, they had to get flight training, the flight surgeons, was up on one of these flights. When we came back, he came over to us, he said, "Now, how many times a flight do you guys black out?" Well, we were making one run after the other and, you know, each time, you black out a little bit. It's just a momentary thing. You get used to it. ... It's the same as if you come off a roller coaster on the bottom. But, it bothered him that this was happening, so, he put out an order that we could only fly one of those flights every day. So, we got ...

SH: Got more beach time. [laughter]

WP: More beach time. We resisted terribly, but ...

SH: He won out.

WP: He won out. [laughter]

SH: What kind of medical facilities were available to you at these bases? They were fully staffed.

WP: ... Yes, yes. We had our own doctors and everything. They were military bases.

SH: The Navy is well-known for being very hierarchal, where the enlisted men are not allowed to mix with the officers, but it sounds as though this was a little bit more relaxed.

WP: Well, we got to know them. We got to know them pretty well. You get to know them because they're working on your airplanes and they're the only ones that are working on those airplanes. So, they know us and we know them. They don't know many of the other guys, ... you know, that are based here, that are working on the other airplanes. ...

SH: This was not something that was frowned upon by the brass.

WP: No. It was a pretty loose operation.

SH: Was it?

WP: Well, it had to be. ... It had to be flexible, because, you know, we had to be flexible.

SH: Did you ever transport anyone or run into anyone that made the news, was infamous or famous?

WP: I don't think so. ...

RP: Charles Lindbergh.

WP: When we were at Norman, Oklahoma, we were all out there on the flight line one day, waiting to go up in our cockpits, double-cockpit biplane, and this Corsair comes booming down the field, fast, barreling, peeled off, came back and landed, and then, we were all waiting to see who it was. ... This guy came walking down the path and it was Charles Lindbergh. He came down and shook hands with all of us. [laughter]

SH: Really?

WP: Yes, greeted us all. ... You know, he was anti-war for awhile.

SH: Or pro ...

WP: Pro ...

RP: Pro-Nazi.

WP: He was testing the Corsair as one of their test pilots at that time, ... and he was, of course, very good. ... At that time, he was taking a new model of the Corsair to the South Pacific, to test it under tropical conditions. It was after the Marines ... let the Navy buy some of them. The Navy took it over from the Marines, because it was, at one time, not very good for carrier landings. They didn't think it was, and so, they were taking it to test it under tropical conditions, to make sure it was okay, before they accepted it, and that was Charles Lindbergh.

SH: Wow.

WP: Yes.

SH: As a young kid, had you looked up to Lindbergh?

WP: Oh, sure, yes.

SH: What do you remember about him?

WP: He was one of my heroes.

SH: Was he?

WP: Sure.

SH: We hear that a lot, that kids followed *The Spirit of St. Louis*, like our kids did with NASA.

WP: ... Yes, that's right, yes.

SH: How much interaction did you have with the Brazilian people and population there?

WP: Not a lot. We never learned to speak their language. We learned how to ask for a beer in Portuguese, but we worked with them on the base. ... They were running the bases that we were on, but we had part of it. We pretty much stayed by ourselves. We had our own quarters.

SH: You actually had quarters at some of these different bases.

WP: Every base, we had quarters.

SH: Were they vacated or would they stay open, waiting for you to come?

WP: It was officers' quarters, you know, just itinerant quarters.

SH: Did you have an officers' club?

WP: Oh, yes.

SH: Was there an enlisted men's club as well?

WP: They had a little more trouble finding one, but they had them, yes. If we had a base, we had officers' clubs there.

SH: Really, on the base, it was officers in one place and enlisted in another.

WP: Enlisted somewhere else, yes.

SH: How good was the communication, as far as the mail and things like that? Did you hear often from home?

WP: It was good, yes. It was all electronic, and electronic, in those days, wasn't email, you know. It was letters or ...

SH: Telegrams, is that what you used?

WP: Telegrams, yes.

SH: When you were sent to Brazil, was there ever any disappointment that you were not sent to the European Theater?

WP: Sure, oh, sure.

SH: Can you explain that?

WP: Well, we accepted everything else, but, yes, I think we wanted to get into combat. We were at that age, but that's the way the orders read. So, we went and did the orders. You know, we could picture serving even the North Atlantic, flying off of a carrier in the North Atlantic, but we never got there.

SH: You were training people who would then in fact do that.

WP: Yes.

SH: Did you ever keep up a correspondence with anyone that you trained or trained with?

WP: No, I don't think so.

SH: Did you know how long you would be in Brazil? Were your orders cut, or did it say indefinite?

WP: ... No, we didn't know.

SH: When did you know that you would be changing stations?

WP: Well, when we got down there with the Dauntless, at that point, the Pacific Theater had cranked down, to the point where there was nothing out there, and so, we knew, then, that they were going to send us home, and they did, almost right away.

SH: Did they really?

WP: Yes.

SH: Almost as soon as you had to give up your aircraft to go to the Pacific.

WP: Well, we took these SBDs back down. At that point, they said, "Well, ... you know, it's all over down here." There's no European Theater.

SH: Do you know what time in 1945 that was, when you took the Dauntless down? Do you remember?

WP: I can get it for you.

SH: May I just state for the recording that there are four books of logs here.

RP: Yes. [laughter]

WP: We brought the SBDs back in March of '45, and we were there in April, May.

SH: When you say there, are you in Brazil?

WP: Brazil. ... The next flight that we had was, we came back on the 31st of March in '45.

SH: Okay. You had new orders then.

WP: Yes. We had orders back, then.

SH: When were you sent?

WP: Wait a minute; April of '45.

SH: What was the reaction when you heard the war was over in Europe, [by May 8, 1945]? Were you in Brazil, April 1945, or were you stateside?

WP: I was back.

SH: You were probably stateside, right?

WP: Stateside, but that was right after I came back. We came back to Atlantic City, too, the same place.

SH: When you came back to Atlantic City, your tour in Brazil was over.

WP: It was over.

SH: Were you expecting to be sent to the Pacific at that time?

WP: I was expecting to be sent somewhere else, yes. As a matter-of-fact, they ended up sending us to Cape Cod, to fly Corsairs, to go aboard an aircraft carrier at some point. ...

SH: Preparing for the invasion of Japan?

WP: Yes, whatever, yes.

SH: You came back to Atlantic City, to Pomona.

WP: For reassignment.

SH: How long before you were sent to Cape Cod? Was it quite soon?

WP: Yes, very soon.

SH: Were you able to take Mrs. Phillips with you?

WP: Yes.

SH: Was there housing provided for you or did you have to find your own?

WP: That's when we stayed at ...

RP: We found our own home. We stayed at MacDonald's, ... and it had his station wagon.

WP: ... Oh, yes, at Cape Cod.

RP: Cape Cod.

WP: Yes, but Atlantic City, was that when we stayed with Mrs. ...

SH: Mrs. Hart?

RP: Mrs. Hickman.

WP: Mrs. Hickman.

SH: Oh, Mrs. Hickman.

WP: I think that's when we ...

RP: ... We came home from Norfolk, in the long run. Oh, gosh, I don't know.

WP: We were ... back and forth, up and down that coast, quite a bit.

RP: Yes. When you came home, we took a train to Cape Cod.

WP: Yes. That was when we stayed with MacDonald.

RP: Yes. I cannot remember whether we were in New Jersey first.

WP: And that's where we were flying Corsairs.

SH: Where did you train on the Corsair?

WP: There.

SH: You did your training there.

RP: Otis Field.

WP: Otis Field.

SH: Were you being trained to then train other pilots, or were you going to be operational?

WP: No. I was going to be operational then.

SH: What was the celebration that you remember, in Akron? I assume that is where you are.

RP: Now, what month was it?

SH: April or May of 1945.

RP: May of '45, and that was the European end. ... I think, we were in New Jersey then. ... Everybody in town went into this little town of Pleasantville, that's where we had our little [home], and we just did the things that everybody did, yelling, screaming, happy, crying, hugging, waving flags.

SH: When the war ended, you were then at Otis, up in Cape Cod.

RP: Yes. That was August, wasn't it?

SH: How was the reaction there, any different or just the same?

RP: No, it was about the same. Everybody was thrilled to death, to get out of there and get everything over and get back home.

SH: Had your brother's wife stayed in the Philadelphia area?

RP: Where did Bobbie go? Let's see, she went back to Akron.

WP: She went home, yes.

RP: ... Yes, she went back to Akron when he got on his ship, the [USS] *Antietam* [(CV-36)], and he went out to the Pacific.

SH: Did he?

RP: Yes, and she went back to Akron.

SH: Were you keeping up correspondence with your brother? Did you have family serving in the military as well? Were your sisters married as well?

WP: Yes. They were Navy. Laurine was married,

RP: Yes, and Bud was in the Navy.

WP: Bud was in the Navy.

RP: And Ginny was married and Chuck was in the Navy.

WP: Chuck was in the Navy. They were both in the Navy.

SH: An all-Navy family. [laughter]

RP: Yes, that's right.

SH: Were your sisters at home?

WP: Yes. They stayed mostly with ... our mother.

SH: Really?

RP: Yes.

WP: Yes. As a matter-of-fact, ... even after the war, we came back here and nobody had any place to stay.

RP: Nobody had any place to stay.

SH: Housing was so tight at the end of the war.

WP: We found housing and we had to go down to apply, and my sister went down with us to apply, and so, ... one of the criteria was, "How crowded are you where you are?" ... So, I was there first and I said, "Well, my sister and her husband live upstairs in the attic and they have to go through our room." ... No, they talked to them first, didn't they?

RP: Yes.

WP: And they said that they lived in the attic and they have to go through a room to get up there every night, in the same house. They came to us and I said, "Well, ours is the room that they have to go through to go upstairs." [laughter] So, that's the way it was. [laughter]

RP: We both got housing.

WP: Yes, we both got housing. It was a metropolitan housing-type thing, you know.

RP: Thirty dollars a month for rent, two bedrooms and a nice living room, kitchen, bath, of course, small yard.

SH: Were you already beginning to make plans for when the war was over? Had you started to make plans or were you only planning as far as your military service at that point? Were you thinking that you would stay in?

RP: I think, at that time ...

WP: We talked about it.

RP: ... We were discussing staying in.

WP: We talked about it.

SH: Did you?

WP: Yes.

RP: Then, they sent us to Norfolk.

SH: From Otis?

RP: Yes, and that's where we retired from the Navy.

WP: I had requested, at that time, training in multi-engine, thinking in terms of an airline position, as a pilot, and so, they sent me down there to assign me to a patrol squadron.

SH: In Norfolk?

WP: PBYS, yes, to give me twin-engine time before I was released, and so, that was the reason we went to Norfolk, to get twin-engine time. So, that was before we left.

SH: That was with the idea that you would become a civilian pilot.

WP: That was part of it, yes.

SH: Had you thought of staying in the Navy actively?

WP: Yes, I thought of it, but, again, at that time, there were a million pilots that wanted out and my chance of getting promoted, or getting anywhere in the Navy, was becoming less and less, because I was a junior officer, ensign, still an ensign.

SH: Were you?

WP: Yes.

SH: Okay.

WP: And so, there was no future for me in the Navy, to stay in, because there was nothing there.

SH: The next thought was to be an airline pilot.

WP: Yes.

SH: That course was dimmed because so many pilots were ...

WP: Getting out, that already had twin-engine time, a lot more than I had, yes.

SH: I know you stayed in the Navy Reserve.

WP: Yes.

SH: When did you make that final decision, that this is not a career path? Did the Navy help you make that or was it just something where you could see the handwriting on the wall?

WP: I think it was the Navy that helped.

RP: Yes, I think we discussed it so much ... and, at that time, that's when I had first gotten pregnant and I was so sick.

WP: Yes, she was pregnant. I think that was a big factor.

RP: If I hadn't been sick, I think we would have tried to stay a bit and just enjoy the Navy life, but I was desperately ill, don't know why.

WP: Yes. I think that was the main reason. ...

RP: Kept losing weight and losing weight and getting sicker by the minute. ... We didn't know what was wrong.

WP: It was logical to leave. ...

SH: Did you have any idea what you would go back to doing? Was the GI Bill a possibility? What were your plans then?

WP: Oh, the GI Bill was in my thoughts at that point, very much so, and I had time with Goodrich, so, ... they would have to hire me back at what I was before I left, see, you know, roughly, some type job like that. So, I knew I would have a job of some sort, and so, we were going to go to the Akron U and work part-time ... at Goodrich, which we did, and so, I worked part-time, four to midnight, and went to Akron U.

SH: What were you majoring in?

WP: At that time, I was majoring in engineering.

RP: Mechanical engineering.

WP: Mechanical engineering, yes, and I stayed with that for quite awhile, and time gets to be a problem. ... So, I was working four to midnight and going to school, and, you know, in the meantime, it was getting to be quite a burden. We kept this up for quite awhile.

RP: Four years.

WP: Four years.

SH: You have got a little baby, obviously.

WP: Yes, that's right.

RP: Yes, and another one.

WP: Yes.

RP: One was born in '46 and one was born in '48, while he's still in school.

WP: ... So, we just went through all that and, in the meantime, I was volunteering to teach swimming and canoeing, lifesaving, and so forth, and it got to the point where the guy that ran that program for the Red Cross in Akron liked what I did and tried to find a job for me and found one in Philadelphia. ... So, I went down there as Director of First Aid, Water Safety and Accident Prevention, and she was teaching, also. Were you teaching at that time or not?

RP: Yes, I taught some in Philadelphia.

WP: ... But, that was what started me on the aquatic career with the Red Cross.

RP: My girlfriend and I were taking a Red Cross instructor's course for swimming. ...

WP: That was in Akron.

RP: Her husband's brother worked on the Pennsylvania Railroad and got killed in a train wreck. So, she dropped out of the course and I didn't want to go by myself. So, I talked him into going with me, and so, that's ...

WP: So, it got me started.

RP: ... What started the whole thing. The instructor, Mr. Miller, saw that he was quite a swimmer and instructor, and what have you. ...

SH: This is after the war then.

WP: It's after the war.

RP: Yes.

SH: Then, you became an employee of the Red Cross.

WP: Yes.

SH: You ceased with the degree in engineering.

WP: ... What I did, I got, I don't know how many hours at Akron U, but almost enough, but they were mixed up. I'd changed courses, because I didn't have time to do the engineering, the lab work, and the family and all that. So, when I switched courses, then, I had to start, kind of, over again. So, then, when I went to Philadelphia, I continued working there and went to Temple University, and so, I spent enough time there. I have enough credits for all kinds of things, but I don't have anything.

RP: Yes. I've said to him, several times over the years, "Why don't we gather all that together and go somewhere with it?"

WP: Yes, it seemed logical, but ...

RP: "See if you don't get some sort of a degree or some sort of a certificate, or something." ...

SH: What did you switch your major to then?

WP: It was ...

RP: Business.

WP: Business administration, yes. We thought ... it would fit together with some of the engineering.

SH: Then, you lived in Philadelphia for how long?

WP: Three years?

RP: About three years.

WP: Three years, and then, another promotion came up in Richmond, and so, we took that, and, all this time, I'm in the Reserve, you know.

SH: Okay. We will talk about that.

WP: ... In Philadelphia, I was at ... Willow Grove, and then, in Richmond, it was Norfolk, went down there on weekends, and so forth.

SH: How close were you to being called back when Korea erupted in 1950? Was that something that you thought you would be back in for?

WP: I thought we might, but, no, they didn't get me on that one, but I thought that they would.

SH: Were you ever called back to active duty?

WP: Yes. When?

RP: '68?

WP: Yes. It was during the time; you remember the *Pueblo* incident? [The USS *Pueblo* (AGER-2) was captured by North Korean forces on January 23, 1968.] Well, I was called to active duty at the time of the *Pueblo* incident and sent to Jacksonville, Florida, active duty, and left her and the kids here at home. ...

RP: To train to go aboard the USS *Shangri-La*, [(CV-38)].

WP: *Shangri-La*, aircraft carrier. We were flying F6F Hellcats at the time.

SH: How did you manage to keep up your flight training? You stayed in the Reserves and the last aircraft that you flew in the regular Navy were Corsairs. How did that progress? When you were in Akron, were you flying there as well?

WP: We flew Corsairs out of; well, originally, it was Columbus, but, then, they opened an air station at Akron and it was Corsairs, because the F4U Corsair, one of them, a model of it, was made in Akron, called the FG, built by Goodyear. ... So, we were flying right out of where they made them in Akron, after Columbus. ... I was still at Akron at that time, but we'd go down to Columbus to train one weekend a month. Well, at the beginning, it was every other weekend, but, then, they changed it to one weekend a month.

SH: Did they?

RP: Yes, that was awful.

WP: Yes, but, then, we were staying at Akron, and then, we were transferred to Philadelphia, went over to Willow Grove, ... and then, from there, we went to Norfolk, to Richmond, and I went down to Norfolk to fly, and was that where I was recalled from?

RP: No, you were recalled from here.

WP: No, from here. Then, from there, we came here. I went to Andrews, [Andrews Air Force Base, Washington, DC]. The Navy had a facility at Andrews.

SH: Did they?

WP: Yes, at that time.

SH: When you came here, you were working for the Red Cross, doing the same type of training.

WP: ... Yes. When I went from Philadelphia to Richmond, I had first aid, water safety, accident prevention, and disaster. They added disaster. Then, I went to Boston, ... I flew out of South Weymouth. In Boston, I was flying out of Weymouth and I was just Director of Disaster up there. They eliminated the other two things, because, then, I decided I had enough experience. So, I went on a lot of disasters.

SH: Did you? I was going to ask, if you are training, are you also going to many disasters?

WP: ... Oh, yes.

SH: Can you talk about some of those disasters?

WP: Well, I started out going to floods in Pennsylvania. ...

SH: The Johnstown floods?

WP: This is that area, but they have them every once and awhile over there. ... So, I've been on two of them over there, and I've been down to West Virginia, in floods down there. ... The biggest one I was on was the one on the Gulf Coast; can't think of the name of it. I should. It was the largest one they'd ever had, [Hurricane Camille in 1969], up to this recent one, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and I was assistant director of that one, Camille.

SH: What would be your job then?

WP: To coordinate disaster relief for families. I worked with the local chapters and coordinated them, and then, we'd send them money. ... I was working in representing national at that time. I was working at national headquarters, at that time.

SH: When the Bay of Pigs happened, April 1961, you did not get called up for that.

WP: Bay of Pigs, yes, they sent me down to Norfolk.

SH: I meant with the Navy Reserve.

WP: ... No, this was Red Cross.

SH: Oh, the Red Cross.

WP: Yes, they sent me down there to help intercept the families that were sent out of Guantanamo Bay when the invasion took place. They all came to Norfolk and we housed them down there, at; it wasn't Norfolk. It was south of Norfolk. It was a Navy base there. Not NAS

Oceana, it's south of Oceana, but, anyway, I went down there ... to work with the chapter and with the national staff on coordinating the wives and children that were coming back from Guantanamo, but, no, I wasn't recalled at that time and I was working with the Red Cross in disaster at that time.

SH: What were you called to do as far as the *Pueblo* incident?

WP: ... We went down there to train. As she said, we were going to go onboard the *Shangri-la*, because they thought they were going to have to expand the people involved. I was down there for nine months.

SH: Were you?

WP: Yes; Rae?

RP: Yes?

WP: What was the disaster that I was on outside of Alabama and New Orleans?

RP: Camille.

WP: Camille, Hurricane Camille. ... When we were recalled, we were just down there training to go aboard a ship, in case ... we were needed, and then, they decided they didn't need us. So, they sent us back home. Then, I had to go back to another job, because they had filled my job, see. ... At that time, I was at national headquarters; no, I was in the eastern area, and I was in management, Red Cross. ... My territory was New England, but I operated out of Alexandria, Virginia, and so, that job was filled, because they had to have somebody to do it, and, when I came back, they needed something that was comparable, so, I ended up at national headquarters, as Assistant Director of Fundraising, which I dearly love.

SH: I can tell that is not true. [laughter]

WP: And I was in that for a short time, and then, I went over to disaster, at national, as Assistant National Director of Disaster Service, and coordinated a lot of disasters out of there, both foreign and domestic. So, it was just, you know, a conglomerate group of disasters, with a lot of experience.

SH: At any given point in time, you were called away from home ...

WP: For a period of time. ...

SH: Were you teaching at that point?

RP: No.

WP: Yes, she's teaching kids; her own. [laughter]

RP: We had ... five sons by then. ... I was just home with the kids. I did small jobs, always in the school system, either helping in the cafeteria or driving a nursery school bus or something like that, ... so that I could be home when the kids were home. They would all leave for the school, then, I'd leave, and then, I'd be back before they were, so, that worked out great.

SH: You sound like a typical Navy wife.

RP: Yes. [laughter]

WP: A good gal.

RP: Then, I got a job at the school for the special ed children, in 1970, and I worked there until 1982, and, in the meantime, we had my mother come live with us, and a pretty busy family.

SH: Did your family remain in Akron after the war? Everybody was moving, it seems.

RP: Our parents stayed ... and his older sister stayed, with her husband and family, but, we moved and Chuck and Ginny [Rae's younger sister] moved.

WP: Yes, they went to Chicago.

SH: Do you look on with interest at the development of the Department of Homeland Security, after having coordinated what you did? Were you ever called upon to offer any opinions?

WP: Yes. Well, you didn't finish my Red Cross career yet. [laughter]

SH: I am sorry.

WP: No, because it leads into that, and then, after I became National Director of Disaster, they needed somebody to do some coordinating with government agencies, and they thought that I would be the one that might be able to do that, and so, I got ... a new position as government relations for the Red Cross, at national, working with agencies. So, I worked very closely with what was then DCPA [Defense Civil Preparedness Agency], and then, later on, combined with another one, became FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency], which is now the agency, and so, I worked very closely with them. ... In the later stages, whenever ... FEMA opened an emergency place, I went there as a coordinator with them, on Red Cross agency participation with them, in the process of getting people back to where they should be. So, that was what I ended up being when I retired.

SH: When did you retire?

WP: 1983, ... early in '84, officially.

SH: When did you retire from the Navy?

WP: '60.

SH: 1960.

WP: Right after we got off of active duty. [laughter]

RP: But, not from the Reserves.

WP: No, but, interestingly enough, in this job that I had with the Red Cross, in disaster service, we were approached by Ross Perot to deliver packaged goods to prisoners of war. You remember when he took a trip on that? ... He wanted some Red Cross people to go with him. So, I was one of them that was elected to go with him on that round-the-world trip to deliver packages, which we never delivered.

SH: Really?

WP: No. ... We had to repackage them in Alaska, on the way back from the Far East, and so, the Red Cross did that in a hangar in Alaska, because they wanted them in smaller packages, and it never got delivered, because they decided that they couldn't do it anyway. So, we went from Alaska over to Denmark and that was when they decided, Copenhagen, ... that they couldn't deliver them. So, Perot came home, ... along with his stuff, and us with him.

SH: Really?

WP: But, it was a trip around the world, which was interesting. So, that's the reason I thought I'd bring it up.

SH: Where did you go? What kept you from being able to deliver them, in your opinion?

WP: Because the people didn't ...

RP: Khmer Rouge.

WP: Yes, they didn't want them.

SH: The Cambodian Khmer Rouge.

WP: The Cambodians, yes, yes, didn't want them, and they were anti-, very much anti-, anything America did. So, we went to Thailand, and what's north of Thailand?

SH: Laos.

WP: Laos, we were in Laos for a few days. We went to Laos because they had a group there that could negotiate with the Khmer Rouge. ... So, that's where you met up there, but, then, we ended up coming back to Bangkok, and then, we came back over through Tokyo.

SH: How much of a problem was it to get this approved by the State Department?

WP: ... I don't know. That was Ross Perot's responsibility.

SH: There were no sanctions.

WP: No. He had agreed to abide by certain things, and that's why we didn't do some of the things that Ross Perot would have done had he been able to. He was kind of a go-getter, you know.

SH: Did you get to talk with him personally?

WP: Oh, yes, he was on the plane with us all the time. Yes, he coordinated everything we did.

SH: Did he? You think that his intentions were good.

WP: Yes. I think so. He was a little radical, but he adhered to what the State Department said he could do.

SH: Did he?

WP: Yes.

SH: At any point in this time, did you think maybe ...

WP: Oh, sure.

SH: Can you talk about that a little bit?

WP: Well, you know, ... in the beginning, we ended up in California, waiting for a flight, ... for his flight to there, and there were some concerns expressed and, you know, we're always saying, "Well, you know, are we sure we really want to do this thing?" and, of course, we were strongly maintaining that we were a neutral organization and the reason we were going was because we were working with and through the International Committee of the Red Cross, out of Geneva, so, of course, we were also coordinating with them. So, yes, there were times when we weren't always on the exact same route. ...

SH: Was this totally supported by the International Red Cross?

WP: The idea was, oh, yes, very much so, yes.

SH: Did you ever attend meetings internationally for the Red Cross?

WP: No, only when we were in Laos. They had an international representative there, directly out of Switzerland. He was with them, he was assigned there, and we met with him frequently, just to coordinate with him. ...

SH: You could leave none of these supplies with him or with anybody.

WP: Oh, no, we're talking about two planeloads of stuff.

SH: Were you?

WP: Yes, and ... the Red Cross in Laos and in Bangkok aren't large enough to be able to handle this kind of a thing.

SH: I do remember the news reports about this, so, I am thrilled to talk to someone who was involved, because I have always wondered what had happened and why it did not go through.

WP: Well, when we got to Denmark, which was our last contact with them, we were told that it didn't look like it was going to be successful, and so, we milled around there for, I think we were there a couple of days, maybe, maybe not that long, and it became apparent that it was not going to be successful. At that point, then, they went their way and we came back, and he ended up giving those supplies to agencies across the country that used them for aid.

SH: You literally were flying in the plane with the material that you were getting ready to disburse.

WP: Yes. We had two airplanes, but we were in one and the supplies were in another one, and it kind of stayed at one spot, in case we needed it, but we stayed in the one that was doing the negotiating and had some of the supplies.

SH: How many were onboard the plane? How big was this party of people?

WP: Well, Red Cross, there was six, and ... Ross Perot had some of his staff. He had a staff, I think, of four and I think that was about it. ...

SH: Was there any press that traveled with you?

WP: Oh, yes, oh, yes, I forgot about the press. ... Oh, sure, oh, yes, we had a lot of press that was with him, you know, the whole trip, and we got to know some of them pretty well.

SH: Really?

WP: Yes, but they were mostly from Dallas, the local press, because that's where he was from, yes.

SH: In your opinion, how has the press treated the Red Cross in its coverage?

WP: I think, generally, pretty well, yes.

SH: Because there are pros and cons and good and bad.

WP: There are always misunderstandings, and, you know, the Red Cross is not without fault, too, there. If you have people doing something, somebody is going to do something that doesn't agree with what should be done.

SH: When you were a military man in World War II, did you ever have any interaction with the Red Cross?

WP: No, never did. I came into them strictly because I like to swim and teach swimming.
[laughter]

SH: Did you do any volunteering with the Red Cross yourself?

RP: Oh, yes, did a lot. I drove in the Motor Service, Motor Corps, it was called, had my new uniform. ... Oh, let's see, when we were in Richmond, I drove to the Red Cross, got the car, you know, the Red Cross car, drove down to Fort Lee and visited the servicemen at the hospital there and got their list of things they wanted from stores, pharmacies, anywhere, and then, I went back to the Richmond area and shopped for all that and went back to Fort Lee and took it all down there. ... I did that, once a week, for, gosh, I don't know, a long time, maybe a year, dragged my little two-year-old with me, at the time. [laughter]

SH: Did your kids stay involved as volunteers in the Red Cross?

WP: ... Yes, Rick does.

RP: I think just two of them, maybe. Maybe others, but I can't remember anything they did.

SH: With five children, did you stay involved with the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts?

WP: ... They were all Boy Scouts.

SH: It is five boys we are talking about.

RP: Yes, they were all Life Scouts.

WP: We have a grandson that's an Eagle Scout.

SH: Does your family live in this area?

RP: Some. Larry does, and it's his son who's the Eagle Scout, oh, and Rick's son ... is an Eagle Scout. We've got two of them.

WP: Yes, two of them, that's right, forgot about it.

RP: And, let's see, Larry's family is around here. They're in Falls Church, and Mike, the oldest son, is in Rockville, and the rest of the boys, two live in Maine with their families and two live

down in Virginia, one in Roanoke and one in Amherst, with their families. So, that's close, but we're going to Maine in September to see the ones up there.

SH: Before we end the interview, you have had an amazing career when you think of a young man growing up in Ohio in the Depression to where you are now.

WP: ... What a variety.

SH: What are you most proud of? You are a very humble man, so, I know this is a tough question.

WP: Well, this.

SH: He is pointing to Mrs. Phillips.

RP: [laughter] Whatever you think.

WP: ... I think I was fortunate to have a variety of experiences. ... Of course, one of them leads to something else and all of them help broaden your background and make you a better person, better education. ...

RP: I think I'm always proud that you were a Navy fighter pilot.

SH: You still remember that uniform.

RP: Yes, and then, the fact that we've got a good marriage and a bunch of nice kids. They're all really good and ...

WP: And we're still married.

RP: Sixty-three years.

SH: Congratulations.

WP: I have a T-shirt upstairs that says, "My next wife will be normal," and the first time I wore that, she went out and bought one that says, "Good luck." [laughter]

RP: So, we walk down the beach together. [laughter] ...

SH: Thank you both so much for talking with me today. It has been a delight and a pleasure.

WP: Thank you.

RP: You're delightful, too, believe me.

SH: On that happy note, thank you so much.

WP: Okay.

-----END OF INTERVIEW-----

Reviewed by Patrick Lee 10/10/08

Reviewed by Daniel Ruggiero 10/10/08

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 11/11/08

Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 11/12/08

Reviewed by William & Rae Phillips 12/1/08