



**Center for Pacific War Studies
Oral History Program**

Fredericksburg, Texas

An Interview with

Afton Keeton

United States Navy

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**National Museum of the Pacific War
Fredericksburg, Texas**

**Interview with
Mr. Afton Keeton**

Mr. Metzler: This is Ed Metzler. It is the year 2003. I am interviewing Mr. Afton “Doc” Keeton. This interview is taking place in Fredericksburg, Texas. The interview is in support of the Center for the Pacific War Studies, Archives for the National Museum of the Pacific War, Texas Historical Commission, for the preservation of historical information related to this site.

Let me start off, Doc, by thanking you for spending the time to be with us today, and tell us what your story was in the submarine warfare during World War II. Let me start you off by asking when and where were you born, something about your parents, siblings, and we’ll take it from there.

Mr. Keeton: Thank you very much. I was born in Iowa Park, Texas, which is just outside Wichita Falls, on the 16th of June, 1921. My mom was born down in East Texas around Malakoff, and had Mom been alive on this 10th of April she would have been 112 years old. Daddy was born in Pilot Point, Texas, which is up in Denton County just south of the Red River up there. Had Pa been alive on the 28th of March, he would have been 132 years old. He was 20 years older than Mom, second marriage for both of them. Flu, War World I for Dad and Mom. To that union there were three children born, I being the oldest. My sister Gwen and brother Ed. Ed was the junior, Edward Marshall Keeton, Jr.

We were dirt farmers, my dad loved—that’s what he liked to do, farm, so that’s what we did. In 1928 we moved across the river into Kiowa County, Oklahoma,

and continued farming. We never did make enough money to move back to Texas so we were actually raised up there in Oklahoma. We worked real hard. My parents, one of my older sisters always said “Mom and Dad were very poor managers.” Well, maybe they were, but when you don’t have very much to manage, then the managing becomes kind of simple.

I grew up in this little town, _____ Oklahoma. I was a kind of a part-time scholar, I guess. In the springtime I had to stay out of school and help plow and plant, and in the fall of the year I had to harvest, so my schooling of the nine month school period was usually, if I was lucky, it would be seven months, sometimes six, six and a half. But, anyway, I grew up I guess with a fair amount of intelligence.

So the war came, World War II started, and I got the urge—I’ll have to regress just a minute. In 1938 my two best buddies, George and Doug Harper, their dad said, “Well, you guys can go join the Navy.” So I came home, I said “Hey, Dad, guess what. George and Doug are going in the Navy.” He said, “Well, I know, Mr. Harper told me. But we got plowing to do.” So that was it, you know. You didn’t say “Oh can I,” or “Why not,” and all that. Pa spoke, and that was it.

They went in the Navy in 1938. I didn’t get to go in until early 1942. The Chief in the boot camp was sitting there pecking on a typewriter my third day in boot camp so I stopped, I was on the way to the shower, and I said “Chief, sir, excuse me, do you need some typing done?” “Can you type, boy?” “Yes sir, I’m a good typist.”

So I didn't have to march, I didn't have to roll my sea bag up, all I did was sit in that office and type up rosters and be like a gofer, run here for the Chief, run there.

Mr. Metzler: So this was in boot camp?

Mr. Keeton: In boot camp. In 1942.

Mr. Metzler: Let me ask you one question before we go through the rest of boot camp. Do you remember when you first heard about the attack on Pearl Harbor? Where were you, and what was your family's reaction?

Mr. Keeton: The day, that Sunday, my best buddy, my high school buddy, was LaVerne Webber, a male, LaVerne was a male name. We were on the way to Stillwater, Oklahoma. His sister was a second year home-ec. student up there, and we had the radio on, and we got, I'm not going to say exactly, maybe halfway or whatever, and the thing came over the radio. He had a little radio in there. He said, "Oh, my god, what's that? What's that?" By the time we got to Stillwater and talked to his sister, she said that the news had really come, that the President had already made the announcement. We hung around up there, then we came home that evening. The reaction was, we're gonna go, buddy, we're gonna go. Well, Dad said "We still have something to do, some plowing to do," so I didn't go then and neither did LaVerne, we called him Stuff. He played guard on one side and I played guard on the other side in the football team.

When I did get to join the Navy he went into the Army and that rascal wound up to be a lieutenant general in charge of the Oklahoma National Guard, and I got to be all the way up to senior chief petty officer. I told him just before he passed away, I

said “Hey, Stuff, you know chiefs always run the Navy,” and I said “You don’t run the Army, ‘cause you had a boss.”

Mr. Metzler: So you were back doing the typing at boot camp.

Mr. Keeton: Yes. So I thought, well, I don’t know what I really want to do. I’d talked to a couple of guys and this chief recruiter was a bosun’s mate, and I did not want to be a bosun’s mate. So I kind of had a feeling that maybe I’d be a machinist’s mate, so I put my name down for machinist’s mate. When they did the SAT test I wound up in the top five percentile of the whole United States in administrative techniques, office stuff. The guy said, “Hey, you don’t want to be no machinist’s mate.” So three days later the lists came out and the pharmacist’s mate, the hospital corpsman rates, came out, and I was number three on that list, and I said “Oh, my god! I don’t even know how to give a shot. I don’t know how to do . . . I don’t think I could ever cut that.”

Mr. Metzler: So this was pharmacist’s mate?

Mr. Keeton: We started out as hospital apprentice, and then when we made petty officer, we became petty officer third class, was a pharmacist’s mate third class. Got over there and got into that school and . . .

Mr. Metzler: Where was the school located?

Mr. Keeton: San Diego, California. Balboa Park. That’s where I went to boot camp.

Mr. Metzler: How did you get out there? By train, or . . .

Mr. Keeton: By troop train. Took us four days. We left Oklahoma City, and to tell you the truth I don’t even know where we went. I remember going through I think it was Santa Fe, New Mexico, and a peddler came on there with ham sandwiches for 25 cents, and I had 50 cents, and I was hungry, so I got a sandwich and then another guy

came on and he had a silver ring with that turquoise stone in, and that was 20 cents, so I still had a nickel left of that 50 cents. I bought that ring. I still have that ring.

Then we went on to San Diego. It was quite an experience really, because most of us were Texas, Oklahoma, a few from Louisiana, but they threw us in with a bunch from California and all the northern states. Like I said before, that typing came in so dadgum handy that I just couldn't pass it up. The Chief instructed me how to do. "You work and study." Because I said, "How do you go submarines?" And he said, "Well, in your case, you just have to study hard." But then when that pharmacist's mate deal came out I found I had to be a second class petty officer to go because you were assigned independent of a doctor. You were the doctor.

Mr. Metzler: You were working on your own.

Mr. Keeton: Yes, on my own. At 21 years old, just new in the Navy, but by golly I made second class petty officer in one year. It took a little bit longer to get into the submarine Navy, I had to wait about another six months, eight months.

Mr. Metzler: What made you set your sights on submarines? What was it?

Mr. Keeton: I'm going to tell you just like I told that psychiatrist, old Dr. Burman, big, dark complexioned, sitting there. He had asked me questions about how do you treat pneumonia on a submarine and I said, "Well, you give them sulfa drugs and aspirin for their fever, and if breathing comes impaired you give them oxygen." His exact words were—can I say hell? "Where in the hell are you going to get an oxygen tent on a submarine?" I said, "That's easy, you make one. You take the mattress cover off, there's one of those big bottles of oxygen in each compartment. That's one of the most simple things of all, to make an oxygen tent." So he looked me

right in the eye, and he said “What do you want to go to submarines for?” I said, “More money.” He said, “Get the hell out of here.” So, I passed, and that’s the way I got to go to submarines.

Mr. Metzler: So that meant you were in, when he said “Get the hell out of here.”

Mr. Keeton: Yes, when said “Get the hell out of here,” that meant I had been accepted into the school. I got in the school, and gee, that was kind of rough. There were 28 of us, I believe. But we had a guy from the University of Minnesota that already had his degree in microbiology, and we had two RNs, one was a little Italian guy from New York and the other one, I don’t remember where he was from, but he was an RN, and here we are, learning to become medical personnel independent of the doctor. And durned if I didn’t wind up in—there were segments of it, like diagnostics and lab and so forth—and in the diagnosing part of it I came up first in the class. I was offered the first boat, but I continued to play football at New London, and we were playing Boston College one night, and . . .

Mr. Metzler: So this is where the submarine school was, in New London?

Mr. Keeton: New London, Connecticut, yes. I ramble.

Mr. Metzler: So you’ve been back and forth. You’ve been out to San Diego, and boot camp, and now back to submarine school. Playing football on the team while you were becoming . . .

Mr. Keeton: Yes. Then I got stepped on and I got a cyst back up the tail on my spine, a _____ cyst it’s called. That sucker flared up and I had to be operated on, and it wouldn’t heal right, and I had to be operated on again, so I finally after late ‘43 or early ‘44, I finally got my first submarine. I went from New London back out to Maryland, then California. That’s where I got on my first boat. I was there like

temporary duty actually on two different boats, while the Medical Department people had to go on emergency leave. I spent three or four months there. Then I went to Pearl Harbor.

Mr. Metzler: Which boat were you on?

Mr. Keeton: The first one I was on was Sea Dragon. The next one I was on was, oh, sometimes I can't think of that, I think it was, I guess the Tile Fish would have been the next one. I was in the Tile Fish relief crew, but I served in the Tile Fish for three or four weeks while this guy was on emergency leave. Then we went out to Pearl and I remained, the relief crew went on out there with us, and I stayed right in that relief crew. A couple of boats came in, and . . .

Mr. Metzler: So what does a relief crew do? Are you standby for some . . .

Mr. Keeton: Right. You're just like a, well, there are a number of you, all the different rates that come on board, the different jobs that come on board the submarines. In my case, the medic, they only just had one. But machinist's mates, electricians, torpedo men, gunner's mates, and so forth, they might have three or four. And, even officers. I think the first time I really remember was one of the officers was a PCO, that's a prospective commanding officer, so he had been to school and he was in that relief crew. I don't know if he ever got a boat or not. Then the war ended and they moved us on board the Apollo, a submarine tender.

Well, back up a little bit. I was on the . . . I really don't remember the name of that boat, but I was down there for a couple of weeks while this guy went on, I don't know, he had to go to school or something. So I'm standing down there on this boat one day and this kid came up, he was up on the submarine tender, up on the

sick bay deck, and he yelled down there “ Hey, is there a Doc aboard?” and I had the gangway, the watch up there with a .45 strapped on. I said “Yep,” and man, pretty soon here he came. We were the fourth boat out and he came running across there. He was all excited. He said “I just got out here, that tender’s going back to the States and I don’t want to go back to the States, I just got here. Do you think he’ll trade with me?”

And in those days you didn’t, especially the hospital corpsmen, did not just come aboard a submarine and start being one of the crew. You sat back to see if they accepted you. If they didn’t accept you, then you didn’t last too long. So I really hadn’t been on there long enough—well, I’d been ashore with a couple of the torpedo men, so I was pretty well accepted. But this guy was kind of flakey, and I thought well, I don’t know. I talked to him for a little bit. The Exec we had was a real super, wonderful guy. So I went down and talked to the Exec and took him with me. The Exec looked him over pretty good, and the Exec was an old war horse, he’d been on about eight or nine war patrols, and he said “He’s a doc, I think, peace time, we could probably affect this transfer,” because while I was back there in sub school I got married, I was a young 23-year-old freshly made husband, and I wanted to get home. So I got back and we traded. They let the guy come on there. So I went up on the tender.

Mr. Metzler: About what date was this now?

Mr. Keeton: It was two days after the war was over, so it was August of ‘45. I got acquainted around up on that tender, and one of the hospital corpsmen up there that did the lab work was a guy from Pennsylvania named John Lesko. John had a good in with

the stewards in the warrant officers' mess, and for a little alcohol we could trade and get ham steaks, and little extra goodies like that, because the mess wasn't too good. One night we had ham steaks and I don't know what else it was, but we had a couple of alcohols with them, mixed with grapefruit juice . . .

Mr. Metzler: Good highballs.

Mr. Keeton: Oh yeah, sprinkle a little salt on there and now they call it a Salty Dog. The time it came to hit the bunk, I went to the bunk. About one o'clock in the morning, oh, man, I had a gut ache. We had been underway three days, I guess, and my gut was really hurting, and I said "Something is not right." I was about three decks down, so I got up, climbed the ladder, went up to sick bay, and went in the lab and did a white blood count. That was one of the things, for some reason or another, I just had a feeling that it could have been appendix, so I did a white blood count and it was elevated above the 7,500 normalcy. I waited around up there and I did another one, and it continued to rise. Then I became a little nauseated and I thought, oh, I got it. I went down and woke up old John Lesko, he was a lab tech, and he was also an OR, operating room, tech. He said, "You're nuts." I said, "Well, I might be nuts, but I got appendicitis." So we went up to sick bay and we did another lab test and it had elevated more. And we just happened to have two doctors on there, a Dr. Lester W. Fix was the senior medical officer, and I don't remember the name of the other one, but the other one was a surgeon and Dr. Fix was like a general practitioner. So when John went down to wake them up they run him out of their stateroom. They said "You're nuts. We know you've been drinking alcohol." But we made it, got back up there. John had already prepped—well, I prepped myself,

I shaved and we got the OR set up and the whole nine yards. Finally we got the doctor to come up there and examine me and he said “Yeah.”

So he called the bridge and they woke the Captain and it was kind of choppy, but on a big tender, if you’ll swing around you can level out because it makes it smoother going. In all, this operation took upwards of an hour and a half, probably. They did it successfully. I was laying in the bunk, I had recovered from the anesthesia, so someone came in there and it was the Skipper, Captain Indian Joe Jacobs. He said, “You know, you’re in deep trouble there, Doc.” I said, “Oh my god, what did I do now?” He said, “You know we’re carrying 486 Army reserves on here that have enough points to be discharged out of the Army, and you held them up an hour and 45 minutes to have your damned appendix cut out. You better never get back up on deck again. Don’t go around that Army bunch.”

By the time we got to Panama I got to go up on the deck and walk around, and we were going through the locks, it was just real smooth. Seemed like we spent a couple, three days in Panama. Then we left and went to New Orleans, and pulled in up there, and shoot, I was feeling real good, no problems, and even by that time I had begun to walk up and down the ladders a little.

One day here came the Exec off the USS Pompon, SS 267, that was tied outboard of us. I heard him in there, he said “Doctor, I don’t give a damn what you say, my chief pharmacist’s mate has been an accepted in Duke Medical School, and by god he’s going, and I want one of these pharmacist’s mates up here to come down there

and relieve him.” I just happened to be the only one qualified in submarines. He said “Well, I can’t. This guy’s just 10 days—” I heard him and I went in there and I said, “Hey, Doctor, I can go, I can go.” So I went down there and this guy left to Duke Medical School, and two days later the ship’s cook, we got a message on board the ship that the ship’s cook’s mother passed away, and we only had two ship’s cooks on there in the first place. The Exec said, “We can’t do that, what will we do?” I said, “Let him go, I’ll cook.” So I cooked for a month on there. I really enjoyed that.

Mr. Metzler: Now, where was this?

Mr. Keeton: New Orleans. It was shortly after the war was over, less than a month after the war was over. Then I rode Pompon until we went up to Lake Charles for some reason, and then we got back out of Lake Charles and we went to New London and began preparations for decommissioning and transferring her to the, oh, I forgot what the fleet the called, they had a fleet up there, a group of submarines. With the finishing touches of it we had to go from New London down to Philadelphia to the shipyard. So we had a skeleton crew. Ordinarily they wouldn’t—we had a sick bay there—so they wouldn’t need a pharmacist’s mate. But the Exec was always—a pharmacist’s mate always works hand-in-hand with the Exec. If you get along with the Exec, then you have a happy tour. And I just, everything was so great with W.W. Beherns, Jr., he was a Lt. Commander than, so he said “I can’t leave you on here. You know the jobs are diving torpedo tubes, overhauling those diesel engines. There’s no yeoman work for you to do.” I said, “Well, there’s a little yeoman work but I can dive torpedo tubes just as good as any torpedo man you got, and you know it.”

So what that meant was taking one of those—similar to what a mechanic uses, those little wheels, and they work on car, scoot on a car, a dolly. They had them that they used in the torpedo tubes and you had to go in there with a wire brush, an air powered wire brush, down in the tubes.

Mr. Metzler: And you're a big guy, too.

Mr. Keeton: Oh, I wasn't that big then, I only weighed about 190 then. But it was cozy in there. I still got to draw some pay, which was 50% of your base pay and which added a lot.

Mr. Metzler: So you got a premium of 50% over standard pay?

Mr. Keeton: Right. So I stayed, I got to ride the boat back up to New London. In fact, I had the deck watch the day I signed the deck log, it said "Relieved of duty and transferred to" whatever fleet it was, I forgot, some reserve fleet up there, their mothball fleet. That ended that and I went over to the sub base dispensary. This was in New London, Connecticut. Two or three days later there was a submarine tender come in. There was a chief warrant yeoman on there that was an old friend of mine from way back on one of the different boats, he'd got a commission as a warrant officer. He came over and he said "Hey, Doc, got something good for you." I said, "OK, whatever." So the next day I got a set of orders to that tender, I forgot the name of that tender, because I wasn't on there very long, a couple of weeks, three weeks, and then one day he said "OK, just get your sea bag packed, and tell your wife." I said, "Tell her what?" He said, "You're going to St. Thomas to decommission that submarine base." It wasn't a submarine base, it was a submarine facility in St. Thomas, in the Virgin Islands.

I said "You better not tell that doctor because I won't get to go, because I'm in the medical records office, I'm doing all the medical records." The doctor didn't care too much for me anyway, because I was a little bit outspoken. So he had the orders cut, brought them down there and gave them to the doctor and said "He's leaving in the morning." The doctor said, "Oh no, he isn't." He said, "Oh, by god, he is. The Captain of his ship rates higher than you do." So I got to go to St. Thomas and we were decommissioning that facility down there. That was a nice seven or eight months until we got it finished.

We got back up to New London and, you know, nobody that had been to sea and served on submarines and that had been out there in a war zone wanted to be cooped up in a dispensary. So I started to knocking around and I happened to run into a chief torpedo man that I knew, was a friend of mine, and he said "Hey, doc, got a good tip for you." This guy said "I'm going to be the chief of the boat on the USS CLAMAGORE, SS-343. She's going to go into the yard." This is 1947. He said "That boat is going to be in the yard for at least two years, maybe three, converting from a fleet type. That means taking all the lifelines down on top. It means streamlining the conning tower area. You don't have anything open up there, removing the five-inch gun, the forty-millimeter guns. He said "we're going to add..." I forgot, it was more than triple the number of batteries that we would have so we'd have greater...well, they use the term "guppy" to a guppy-type with the snorkel. It meant "greater underwater power propulsion." We all got down there. Man, that was heaven. The Exec that we had down there was a guy that didn't like me and I didn't like him. I knew of him. His name was Herman Orren

Procter and I mean to tell you, you talk about a sneaky guy. He'd be at papers like this...always bent over glaring at something. Then we got our new skipper. He was Commander Walter Lowry Small, Jr. and I'll tell you, everything changed. I just couldn't put up with that Exec. So I went to him. I never was much to mess around. I didn't like to be pushed around. So I went to the skipper and it just so happened the day I got to talk to the skipper, the day before, well to digress a little bit, my wife delivered our son in 1948 in Key West, Florida at the Naval Hospital and Captain Small's wife delivered a baby girl within two or three days. So one day, we're in Philadelphia now, so one day here comes Mrs. Small with a baby buggy and my wife had her baby buggy and I got to meet her. So we hung around Philadelphia until we completed that conversion to the snorkel fin valve. So we went out on dry-runs and did quite well. _____?_____ squadron was in Key West, Florida so we went on down to Key West and I remember it quite well. It was September of '48 that a hurricane came down there. So we had to pull out and go to sea over in the Caribbean to get out of the way of the hurricane. I was so worried about my wife and my baby. I had never been seasick at all. That night I had to go up on the bridge. We had to dive. It was really rough and I didn't have a shirt on. It was pelting rain, almost like hail. I didn't feel it because I was kind of numb. I came out of the battery compartment and as I went by the radio shack, I heard this "The radio tower is out." I knew that those radio towers would withstand two hundred mile an hour winds _____?_____. Key West would be no more. So that's when I got sick, when I went up there. _____?_____ made all the phone calls to _____?_____. Anyway we got back in. She came wheeling up. _____?_____

She said “What’s the matter with you? You been sick?” I said “I’ve been worried about you.” She said “Oh, we even went outside. When the eye came over, we went out on the front porch and sat out there and watched it. Then we went back in.” Then the next morning, we went walking. In Key West, I don’t remember the street name now, but at that point in time, the only place in the United States that they butchered those big sea turtles was _____? _____ and here they had the _____? _____ that they hold them in down in the water. So here we’re walking down the street, she says “Look at that! What is that?” Here _____? _____ turtle walking right down the middle of the street _____? _____ _____? _____. It was kind of interesting. I’d never seen a turtle that big. She had never seen anything like it.

Mr. Metzler: Tell me what it’s like being in the confines of a submarine.

Mr. Keeton: Well, Mr. Metzler, it’s like this. First off, I did not have a _____? _____ claustrophobia _____? _____ I had no intention of _____? _____ because of some condition that you could overcome with just a little bit of self-discipline. So it never bothered me. I have to digress a little bit more. Back when I was in submarine school _____ a hundred foot tall diving tower _____? _____. Part of our training was in the tower. _____? _____ escape. They started you out at 25 feet. They had a piece of line that had knots in it and you’d go so far up and then you’d stop. _____? _____ had made the free escape and I said “That’s for me.” So I went down there and the Chief says “I didn’t think you could do it.” I said “I know I could do it.” So I made that 100-foot _____ escape with no problems. The guys at the tower _____? _____”. I never _____

but every free minute I was down there diving. _____? _____
_____ a bunch of stuff like that all my life.
_____? _____ It felt great to be able to do this. (Next
several minutes unintelligible)

Mr. Keeton: I didn't appreciate what I ran into over there. There are people in this world that take great pride in what they do. Then there are others that are very lackadaisical. They do just enough to stay ahead of the game, they think, and I didn't like that because my battalion was quite run down. So the first thing I did, I went to the Sergeant Major and said "I don't like what's going on over there." He said "You're the Chief." So I got rid of a couple of troublemakers out of that. Some hospital corpsmen don't like to go to the Marines in the first place because of the discipline that you have. Well I wasn't there two months until here until here came the Sergeant Major down there one day and gave me a swagger stick. The Sergeant Major, the First Sergeant, and of course the Colonel and a Marine gunner and Chief Keeton and one other one, there were six or seven swagger sticks in the First Battalion, Third Marines, and I had one of them. Boy, like we had field day. Field day in the Marine Corps is like a competition—hand grenade throwing, not explosive but dummy, and races and a whole bunch of stuff. It's an all day thing, a fun thing but the purpose of it is to correlate between like a PFC and a Master Sergeant. The egg throwing contest was one of them, raw eggs, how that Master Sergeant would treat that PFC when he threw that egg to him and vice versa. There wasn't a whole bunch of stuff, but fun. We had a lot of fun. Then the next day we'd have a personnel inspection, pass and review to the Colonel. I was so proud, man, I was so proud. By that time I had whipped that medical unit into a pretty

good condition and we were selected by the Colonel, our eighteen medical people, well, they were. I was with the Sergeant Major. I stood up at the head of the inspection group with the Sergeant Major and he turned to me and said "Chief, would you have your medical company pass in review." Man I tell you, tears came in my eyes, I was so happy. Here old Mike Nelson, he was lead first class, he brought those hospital corpsmen around there and they stopped right in front of the Colonel and he gave them a 'right face.' He gave them a hand salute. The Colonel come out and says, "You know, Sergeant Major, I don't think there's a damn Marine in this outfit that does more work than those hospital corpsmen do and look how sharp they look." The old Sergeant Major says "Chief Keeton."

Mr. Metzler: I'll bet that made you feel good.

Mr. Keeton: Man, I'll tell you. I got a nice commendation and I got higher, at that point in time was about the time the higher enlisted grades came out. We always had seven enlisted grades so they instituted E8 and E9 enlisted and they were going to phase out a lot of the warrant officers and use senior enlisted. Oh man, I'm telling you, the write-up I got for Master Chief Hospital Corpsman, you'd think almost I could walk on water. I didn't get it but I got Senior out of it. I got Senior Chief out of it.

Mr. Metzler: So when did you retire from the military?

Mr. Keeton: February 1st, 1972.

Mr. Metzler: So you were there thirty years.

Mr. Keeton: Thirty years.

Mr. Metzler: That must have been a great chapter in your life. When you look back on the whole thing, what do you feel like your military experience did for you as a person, for your subsequent career?

Mr. Keeton: I don't believe that a human being ever walked on this earth that was born loved my country, but I loved my God. And in that term of duty in the Navy, I became a Roman Catholic, and I really found what I'd been seeking a long time. That was in September, 1958, on the island of Okinawa. Since then I've continued to work hard to be a Christian and in 1960 I joined the Knights of Columbus, which is a Catholic fraternal organization. I've been pretty high up in the Knights of Columbus in the state of Texas. I've been Grand Knight of my Council, and I've held all the office chairs, in the Council, and I was selected each district, which includes right here in the Diocese of Austin, each district has a Master, there are seven districts. I was the number two Knight and I was the Marshal for the Master of the Sixth District of Texas for four years.

Mr. Metzler: That was a real honor.

Mr. Keeton: A real honor. Now I'm a lecturer at mass at St. Louis Catholic Church in Austin. I'm a Eucharistic minister, I'm doubly proud of what just happened to me lately. We have the largest church in Austin, we have over 7,000 families, and we have six members of that parish on the Parish Council, and I got elected to that. Just last Tuesday we had our meeting when we had the two new members come in, I was, not for this year, but next year I will be the President of the Parish Council.

Mr. Metzler: That's a real honor, too.

PROOF TAPE 840

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