

National Museum of the Pacific War

Nimitz Education and Research Center

Fredericksburg, Texas

Interview with

Ms. Joedy Adams

Date of Interview: December 5, 2008

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Interview with Mr. Joedy Adams

Interviewer: Michael Franklin

Mr. Franklin: This is Michael Franklin. Today is December 5, 2008, and I am interviewing Joedy Adams, or Joann Adams. This interview is taking place in Fredericksburg, Texas, and this interview is in support of the Center of Pacific War Studies Archives for the National Pacific War Museum, the Texas Historical Commission and for the Preservation of Historical Information related to this site. So, to start out with, where and when were you born?

Ms. Adams: I was born, where, Coronado, California, September 6, 1929.

Mr. Franklin: Who were your parents?

Ms. Adams: My parents were: my father was Joseph Campbell Cronin; my mother was Mary Addison Paige.

Mr. Franklin: What brought your family to Hawaii? You were twelve years old at the time of the attack.

Ms. Adams: My father was in the United States Navy; he was an aviator. He had gotten orders to Kaneohe Naval Air Station to be the operations officer and chief of staff, and because of his orders, that's why we were there.

Mr. Franklin: How long were you there?

Ms. Adams: Not very long. He went out ahead of us, because school had just started and we were waiting for a little break. My mother and I went out a few months later, and we finished unpacking our last trunks, suitcase, whatever, all our goods on December 6.

Mr. Franklin: Oh, wow! Okay.

Ms. Adams: So we were only there a few months, but I was there long enough to attend the local junior high school. I was in seventh grade at a school they called Kailua-Lanikai. Kailua and Lanikai were separate little villages; they're now--Lanikai is a much larger place now, but at that time they were very small and they combined their schools.

Mr. Franklin: Just into one?

Ms. Adams: Into one, and I took a bus from the Navy station, on the Navy bus, and we were bussed to school.

Mr. Franklin: Kind of backtracking a little bit, so you were born in California.

Ms. Adams: Mm-hmm.

Mr. Franklin: Did you spend most of your elementary school years there?

Ms. Adams: Mm-mm.

Mr. Franklin: Just all over the place.

Ms. Adams: Mm-hmm.

Mr. Franklin: And did you have any siblings?

Ms. Adams: I had two brothers. One passed away when he was very young. He was ten years old, eleven years old, when we lived in

Panama. That was in the mid-30s, and then I had another brother, and he did not go with us on this trip to Hawaii, because we moved around so much, he thought it would be fun to go to my father's sister's farm. So he went to the farm to stay, and he wasn't there that day. That's why; he was living with my aunt.

Mr. Franklin: So, you're brand new to Hawaii.

Ms. Adams: This was our first trip to Hawaii.

Mr. Franklin: And you've been there a couple of months, just unpacked the day before the attack. What do you remember of December 7?

Ms. Adams: Oh, everything. I don't know where to start. I will backtrack slightly. We were in quarters, and officers' quarters were up on the hill. The morning of the attack, the planes came over our hill, down to the hangars which were down below at sea level because we had seaplanes. They came right over the roof of our house, and that's when I first discovered them. But what I wanted to backtrack on was, we were assigned a maid; she was a Japanese maid. She would get up very early every morning and said that she was down at the beach looking for the beach balls, those green glass balls that are on fishing nets but would cut loose sometimes from the boats. She said she was looking for them to collect them. That was her excuse for getting up early in the morning and looking and being down at the beach. We found out later, the morning of the attack, she was gone. She

was nowhere on base. She knew the attack was occurring; she turned out to be a spy. Her brother was a spy and her brother and a friend of his were caught trying to poison the water system in Honolulu. The reason I know this is it was a couple of weeks later, my father was called in to identify her, to make sure that this was who she was, and it was. She was an unmarried 32 year-old Japanese maid.

Mr. Franklin: Do you remember what her name was?

Ms. Adams: If my mother were living, I could get it from her. It seems to me it's something like Shizu, but I'm not sure. That kind of rings a bell with me but I'm not positive. But, we had a spy living in our house.

Mr. Franklin: Now this air base, was it--where was it on the island?

Ms. Adams: It's on the west--eastern side of the island. It's the opposite side of the island from Honolulu.

Mr. Franklin: Opposite of Diamond Head?

Ms. Adams: Yeah, well, the mountain range goes down the middle, and Honolulu was here and on the other side of the island, on the other side of the mountain range is Kaneohe. Diamond Head's down at the lower end.

Mr. Franklin: So, on that morning, it's Sunday morning, roughly a quarter to eight--

Ms. Adams: Well, I thought it was probably closer to twenty of eight. Now there are some men that were at Kaneohe say it was even earlier. We were the first base hit. We were hit before Pearl Harbor.

Mr. Franklin: Okay.

Ms. Adams: That's well documented. Most people say quarter of, but I thought it was earlier than that, too. I was getting dressed; it was a Sunday morning. I was already dressed, in fact. I was getting ready to go to chapel on base. I was going to pick up a girlfriend. We were going to walk to the Sunday services. I was already dressed when I heard the roar of the motors, the engines of the airplanes. It was very, very loud; it was like there was an awful lot of them. It wasn't just a plane or two; it was, you could tell, it was an awful lot of them. It was like the drone of bees; it just was heavy. I went out to the front porch to look to see what was going on, and they were flying right over my head. I looked up and one of the pilots just flying over looked down and we made eye contact. We were that close; he was, I would say he was probably about eighteen inches above our roof of our house as they came over, because the whole house just shook. And so I went back inside and ran down the hall to my mother and father who were in bed. My father was just getting up when he heard the noise at the same time, and he says, "It's probably those blank Army playing a surprise attack on us," which a lot of

people thought at first before they saw them. I said, "They had big red balls on the wings," and he says, "Oh, my God, they're the Japs," and he just flew. He just flew. So he got dressed and he was down at the hangars right away.

Mr. Franklin: Was this before they began bombing the hangar?

Ms. Adams: That was their first run of bombing.

Mr. Franklin: That was their first run of bombing.

Ms. Adams: Mm-hmm. They would come down over our house and then drop their incendiary bombs and whatever types they had on the hangars, and then fly off. That was probably because we hadn't heard up to that point any bombs going off. That was probably the first squadron coming over.

Mr. Franklin: So, after your father gets up, and you realize that--about how many planes were there?

Ms. Adams: I was twelve. The sky was full of planes; that's all I remember.

Mr. Franklin: What did you do at that point?

Ms. Adams: Well, my mother got dressed, of course, and by the time she was dressed there was, I think it was a Marine that came to our door and said we were to go across the street to the BOQ, which was the bachelor officers' quarters, and go into the basement for safety. So what they did was, they'd come over and they were kind of in waves. They'd come over and maybe there'd be like three or four or five seconds and then there'd be some more

come around. They just would keep circling and coming around, and sometimes the intervals were a little longer, but as soon as they went over, we ran for the BOQ, to try to make it before the next planes came around, because they strafed anything that moved. If they saw you moving they were just going to open their machine gun. They were firing at anything that moved. So we got into the basement of the BOQ; we were there, I'd say probably less than a half an hour. We could hear the bombs, and of course being in a huge basement of a big building, it just echoed. It was extremely loud when we were in there and then finally another Marine comes back and says, "Get the -- out of here. Get back to your quarters and stay covered. This is probably the worst place you could be because it's the largest building on base." It had already been strafed while we were in there. We came out and there wasn't a window left that we could see. They had strafed it while we were in it; fortunately they didn't drop a bomb on that building. And that building, by the way, is still standing, so they never did drop a bomb on it. We went back to our house and just stayed under cover, and a short while later my father took a break in between from the hangars and came up and he just said it was a sight that was horrific. He had seen one of his pilots get blown, arm and leg here and there, and he said it was just horrible and we needed

to get off the base. He said if they came back with the power that they have struck us with, he said they will walk right on. He said there won't be anybody's life worth anything. He said I want you off the military base. So we--he went back to the hangars again, back down to the airfield, and he knew where we were going. He wanted us to go to friends that we had in the residential area of Honolulu; it's called Kahala. It's on the outskirts of Honolulu, between Diamond Head and Honolulu. So we--he knew that's where we were going to be headed for. My mother took pillow cases; put all the food in one pillow case that she could get. Don't forget, we didn't have frozen foods in those days; everything was canned or something--things that were cooked. She had just cooked a ham, so she grabbed the ham and threw it in. We threw clothes, change of clothes, in another pillow case, got them by the front door, and then waited until a next wave came, and then as soon as there was a lull, she got in the car and started it. It had to warm up a little bit, so we waited again until the next wave, and then I ran out with the food and clothing and IDs and everything, and then we took off. Everything had to be done within seconds, in between these waves.

Mr. Franklin: How many seconds in between the waves?

Ms. Adams: It's so hard to tell. I was twelve. I know it wasn't long.

Mr. Franklin: And you were terrified.

Ms. Adams: No, I wasn't. I wasn't afraid at all. I guess it's because I was twelve, and I didn't know what could happen. When I look back on it, I think, oh my mother must have really--what a great lady she was, because she knew what was going on. I mean, she had a lot of--knew more about what the world was like than I was. And don't forget, a twelve year-old in my days is not the twelve year-old today.

Mr. Franklin: Right.

Ms. Adams: (Laughs). We were much more naïve and much more cloistered into things. We left, and as we entered--as we left the base we passed the sentry and a wave, a couple of Japanese planes had just gone over, and they had strafed the sentry. There was a car there that they had got and it was burning, and the Marines were trying to pull this, it was a Hawaiian, and his car coming on base, and he was just black charred head to foot and he was still smoldering, and the Marine's hands were blistered from trying to save him from his car, but he was dead. That was my first taste of death. The Marine told us, be sure and look out. The planes, after they drop their load, some of the fighter planes are going off, veering off and strafing anything they see. He says, "You see any of them, you head for cover." And he said, "Don't take the Pali." Now the Pali is the road that goes directly over

the mountain that connects Honolulu to Kaneohe area. It's a big, high mountain. He said, "You'll have to go around Diamond Head because of they drop a bomb on Pali, the Pali Road," and it's P-a-l-i, the Pali Road, then he said, "There won't be any way in or out." So we headed for Diamond Head, and on the way towards Diamond Head, before we entered into the Diamond Head area, I saw planes coming down the road. So my mother pulled over into the bushes. There were bushes on the right side and nothing on the left, so we were fortunate there.

Mr. Franklin: The left side was ocean?

Ms. Adams: We were headed toward Honolulu; the left side was to the oceanside and the right side was toward the mountainside. So we jumped out of the car and clawed our way up under the brush so we would be out of range, because we were afraid if the car got hit, it would blow up. Of course, we sat there--sat there, we laid there and prayed that the car didn't get hit, and as the fighter pilot came down the road, he strafed. You could see the bullets; we could see the bullets bouncing off the road (laughs). And they barely missed our car, and we were so lucky that they didn't hit the car. He just strafed it and went on.

Mr. Franklin: Was this just a single plane?

Ms. Adams: There were two planes, but only one fired at that road. I don't know; the other seemed to go off a little to his right. As soon

they passed and the sky was clear, we got in the car and continued around Diamond Head and made it around Diamond Head because that was out in the open. I never saw my mother drive so fast in all her life, but she was good at it. Then when we entered into the residential area, there was a lot of trees and coverage so we didn't have as much to worry about. But we did make one encounter before we got to where we were going. A school bus was headed in our direction, and the man kept coming towards us, and my mother said, "My God, he's not moving; he's not getting on his side of the road. He's coming straight at us." So, she got in the car and jumped the curb and went into a neighbor's yard because the man came right to where we were; came way over on our side. As he passed us, he leaned out the window and was laughing. So apparently he was someone who was sympathetic to the Japanese. So we don't know who it was or what it was, but he was all alone in the school bus and he was just headed to ram us into something. While we were on the lawn, the motor stalled, so my mother said, "Go up to the house and let them know why we're here, so they don't think we're crazy" (laughs).

Mr. Franklin: This is somebody's house--

Ms. Adams: Yeah, somebody we don't know. So I knocked on the door and a lady came in her nightie and bathrobe. It's Sunday morning;

people are sleeping in, and I told her, I said, “We were on the lawn; we got pushed off the road by a bus, and the Japanese were bombing.” And she didn’t even know the Japanese were bombing. This was far enough away, they couldn’t hear it. And she said, “Let me tell my husband immediately.” He was an officer at Pearl; I don’t know whether it was Ford Island, Pearl, or what, but he was a naval officer. She said; she went and told him and he jumped out of bed and I think he was gone about the same time we finally got our car started. He went to the base.

Mr. Franklin: Okay so he was--

Ms. Adams: He was active duty.

Mr. Franklin: He was not--

Ms. Adams: He was not at Pearl but he was an active duty assigned; he was home for the night, you know. So then we went on to a friend’s house, and it was the residential area and we stayed with them. Oh, I don’t know, do you want me to keep talking?

Mr. Franklin: Yes, absolutely. Please.

Ms. Adams: We had a scare that first night we were there. We had blackout and there was a lot of commotion in the street. We went out to look and they found a bomb, somehow escaped from somewhere; it hadn’t been detonated.

Mr. Franklin: A bomb from one of the planes.

Ms. Adams: Planes, apparently dropped off and didn't detonate, and so they had the Navy team was out there, trying to, and they did, they defused it. I don't know whether it was a real one or a dummy or what, but whatever it is, they took care of it. It was kind of a neighborhood scare for us. We were told to fill all our containers with water, not to shower, because there were attempts made to poison the water, and of course later on, we found out we had a little connection there. But we did; every large pan we could find, we filled with water and so we had drinking water. We filled the tub with water so we could use it to wash with.

Mr. Franklin: Okay, so they were afraid that the water was poisoned.

Ms. Adams: They were afraid it might be poisoned, there were attempts made.

Mr. Franklin: So, where were you getting the water from to store?

Ms. Adams: Well, this was in the early stage of it. They figured that this was going to happen, that attempts would be made.

Mr. Franklin: That during the attack, it would happen.

Ms. Adams: And to go back to the Japanese maid, why she wasn't there that night, that morning is, in the Honolulu paper the night before were codes in some of the advertising, warning the loyal Japanese that the attack would be the next morning at 7:55 - 8:00 in the morning on the island of Oahu. There were codes, and for

a while I had a copy of that advertisement but over the years, I've lost it.

Mr. Franklin: Do you remember what that code was?

Ms. Adams: It was something with a dry goods store, but that was not the only one. I mean they would have like seven yards of material for a certain price. Whatever it was, they were able later to decipher that this was a warning to those on the island to not be available on the military bases. They knew it was coming and she did, too. That maid knew, so she wasn't there that morning, before they came.

Mr. Franklin: Do you know how many people that were sympathetic to the Japanese?

Ms. Adams: No, I don't, I have no idea. The house we went to, her husband was on Wake Island.

Mr. Franklin: He was on Wake Island at the time.

Ms. Adams: He was an officer on Wake Island. He was taken a prisoner of war and was a prisoner of war for the duration of the war, but he survived it.

Mr. Franklin: Oh, wow!

Ms. Adams: But the sad part is when he was finally liberated and came home. He was a big man; he was like a 250-pound man, and he weighed under 100 pounds when he came home. He was home about two weeks and he went out in his garage and shot himself

when his wife went to the store. He just--he was so full of dysentery and diseases and all kinds of things, and he hurt. He said his faith and hope kept him alive and he wanted to see his family, and he got back to his family but then that was it; that was too much for him.

Mr. Franklin: Do you remember what his name was?

Ms. Adams: I've forgot his first name; it was Commander Keene, K-e-e-n-e. And so, we were there about ten days; we didn't know if my father was dead or alive. We had not seen him or heard of him because communications were knocked down immediately. My father even told us later they had trouble trying to get right to Pearl right away to tell them what was going on here and they couldn't get through. I don't know what kind of communications they had but there wasn't--they just couldn't do what they wanted to do and of course, one thing Kaneohe has, as far as, we do have a big hero at Kaneohe, and he's here at this convention.

Mr. Franklin: Oh, really?

Ms. Adams: Yeah, and that's John Finn. He's a Medal of Honor recipient. He is 99 years old. He's the oldest living recipient of the Medal of Honor and he's the last one from Pearl Harbor days. He is here at this convention, and he was stationed at Kaneohe. That man fought for the guns and munitions, trying to get stuff out

there, and he was sitting in the middle of the tarmac and he was firing away, and he was shot at and he was full of shrapnel, and he just kept going. He is quite an amazing man; he's here at this convention.

Mr. Franklin: Was he Army Air Force?

Ms. Adams: No, Navy. This was a Navy base.

Mr. Franklin: Navy, okay.

Ms. Adams: Naval Air Station. He was--I think he was about 31 years old; he'd been in the Navy for a while, and I don't remember his rank at the time, but he was an enlisted officer--an enlisted man, rather. He's our hero; he belongs to our chapter in San Diego, so we're very proud of John Finn. Okay now, where do I need to go? I veered off; I hope you cut all this out (laughs).

Mr. Franklin: Right now we're at--

Ms. Adams: Ten days I hadn't heard--

Mr. Franklin: You're at your friend's house.

Ms. Adams: A friend's house, yeah, and my father called one day and he was sending somebody to Pearl. They had to deliver something, and this man was going to come by on the way back with another man, and they would drive our car but we would drive with him and bring us back to Pearl. He was late getting to our house; we were hoping to get home before dark. It turned dark before we got home; all lights had blue coverings over them. It was

blackout, so going around Diamond Head was like pitch black.
There just was no light at all.

Mr. Franklin: You can't use your headlights.

Ms. Adams: It was dark; no, you couldn't use your headlights. I know this is so, because my mother--we wrote all this story down. She clued me in on some things that I had forgotten or what she knew more about. She sat in the front seat and what the man did was, the serviceman, took the front door and tied it open, and those cars had running boards in those days, and so she laid down on the front of the car, hanging over the running board, with her hand over the side because they couldn't see the edge of the road. It was a sheer cliff in those days off Diamond Head, and you didn't want to go over.

Mr. Franklin: A cliff and no guard rail.

Ms. Adams: No guard rail, so she had a very sore, raw hand when we got over, got through Diamond Head, but she held, drug her hand on the side to make sure. Of course we went very slow to get over Diamond Head because it was pitch black; we couldn't see. It was pitch black, so--anyway, we made it back safe and, oh good, I'm getting near the end. We made it back safe and after a week at home, my father came home and said that they're looking for people to help in places where they need to release the sailors for active duty--for more active duty. I mean they were on active

duty--to release them from menial jobs, jobs that we could, and would I go down and help. I said, "Sure." So I went to the dispensary and they had all these shots. In those days, the girls wore dresses; there was such thing as slacks and T-shirts, and I had shots in both arms and they got so swollen that I had to cut the sleeves in both my--my dress in both sleeves so I could wear the dress to go to work, and they assigned me to the commissary, and that's where the food is. So I went to work in the commissary and I worked there all day and they had me sacking potatoes and storing--I want to say storing them but--stocking them, stocking the shelves and carrying groceries and just whatever had to be done. They'd tell me what to do and I'd do it, and so that was an experience for me.

Mr. Franklin: You were in school at the time, right?

Ms. Adams: School was stopped.

Mr. Franklin: School was stopped.

Ms. Adams: Oh, yeah. When Pearl Harbor hit, all the schools, private and public, were closed.

Mr. Franklin: How long did they close down for?

Ms. Adams: I don't know because I hadn't come to that point where I leave, and they hadn't opened up when I left, or they were maybe just opening; I don't know.

Mr. Franklin: Okay.

Ms. Adams:

But no, I didn't go back to school again while I was there. I'd come home; my mother got ill and she had a hard time keeping food down and she was very weak and they really couldn't tell what was wrong with her, and I don't really know, but they wanted to get her back to the states to a hospital. A neighbor would come in and stay with her in the daytime when I went to work. It was a neighbor thing; it was a very close friend, didn't have any children so she'd come in with my mother and try to get soup down her and that kind of stuff. When I came home, I would fix supper (chuckles). It was a new experience for me, and wash and iron, and that was a new experience for me (both laugh). And starch, and I know my father probably went crazy with starched collars but he never complained, and trying to get a military crease in some of his clothes, but I managed (laughs) as a 12 year-old might. Finally, because my mother kept getting ill and kept getting worse and was losing weight, the doctor wanted her back in the states, so she was put on a priority for getting returning, so about January 16th, we got a call. There was a plane leaving for San Francisco and we were to be on it the next day. So we packed up what we could and got ready to go, and then got a call just before we were getting ready to leave the house, and they said the plane's been delayed another day to patch the bullet holes in it. It was a Pan Am Clipper that had he

escaped Wake Island the day of the attack. You, of course, would not remember, but I remember the headlines on it, because it was quite unique. They took out all the seats in the plane and dumped them in the ocean to get more passengers on from Wake Island. They were under attack at the time by the Japanese.

Mr. Franklin: Right.

Ms. Adams: The plane became so loaded with passengers; they were afraid that they weren't going to be able to take off. It was so loaded, and it's a big Pan Am Clipper and it was a seaplane, of course, and they taxied out--

Mr. Franklin: It was a passenger plane, correct?

Ms. Adams: It was at one time.

Mr. Franklin: Until they ripped all the seats out.

Ms. Adams: Until they ripped all the seats out, and they dumped the mail. They dumped all the mail. It did mail runs to China, the Philippines and all of them, those big Pan Am Clippers, and they dumped all the mail and everything they could think of to add people. They taxied out trying to get it up and every so often would get strafed, and that's where they got the bullet holes.

Mr. Franklin: Escaping from Wake Island.

Ms. Adams: Escaping from Wake Island.

Mr. Franklin: That was the same day or the next day?

Ms. Adams: I think it was the same day but it might have been the next day. I don't know how the time zone is, you know, the international line. I don't know how they do it, but it was attacked at the same time, just about. They did manage to get it up off the water and then finally up, which was a big sigh of relief, because they almost didn't. Apparently they almost didn't make it; they were so loaded. But they did make it back into Honolulu.

Mr. Franklin: And so, but this was the plane that you flew to San Francisco?

Ms. Adams: Yeah, and then from there it went to San Francisco and then came back again to Honolulu, and that's when we got on it. It was--apparently some of the patching didn't hold up well. They said they needed to patch some more of the bullet holes. So my mother and I flew back on the Clipper, January the 17th, I think. I remember it being so cold, because it's not like your modern airplanes with the pressure, pressure depart--

Mr. Franklin: Compressure, yeah.

Ms. Adams: Pressurized, yeah. I know we huddled together with the blankets over us, and she had to have oxygen all the way back, because the air was so thin for her. We flew quite high, because we had to get above--we had no escort--we had to get above what the Japanese planes would be in case we encountered any. Then, coming into San Francisco, because of flying so high, using up more fuel (audio goes silent for several seconds).

Mr. Franklin: All right. So you're (unclear, both talking together).

Ms. Adams: (Unclear) more fuel, and so he was afraid he would not be able to lift over the Golden Gate Bridge to come down to where he had to land. So he said we're going under the bridge to the water. No plane that size had ever been under the bridge, and I don't think since. I don't think since there's been a plane that huge.

Mr. Franklin: I don't think typically--

Ms. Adams: He hit the water just at the other side of the bridge, as he came down. It had to be perfect, and he was. He taxied in over to where they went, which was around the bay a little bit, because he figured once he was down, he could taxi, and they could always pull him in when we docked. My mother told me later that she had heard that he was glad that he had done it and was happy that it was safe, that everybody was safe. He would never do it again, but that he was on fumes. That was his explanation.

Mr. Franklin: Yeah, he expended all of his fuel.

Ms. Adams: He did; he said he was on fumes. Now what that meant to him, I don't know, but in other words to me that meant he was too low to worry about where he could do anything else.

Mr. Franklin: Right. He was basically on empty.

Ms. Adams: He was basically on empty, coasting, yeah. So we stayed with friends in San Francisco and I stayed with a lady, a friend of my

folks. My mother was in the hospital for a while and then she got better, and I don't really know what her diagnosis was; kind of like a bad flu, which you'd see today from what I remember, but I don't know what else was wrong with her.

Mr. Franklin: Right. So at this time, though, your father is still in Hawaii?

Ms. Adams: Oh, yeah. He was at Kaneohe until--after San Francisco, we went back to Coronado and lived in our home that we had there. We stayed there until he had orders. His next tour of duty was to Millington, Tennessee, which is just north of Memphis, and he commissioned the naval air station there. There was also a naval hospital and the naval training center. He was there for, ah '43; I think it was early '44 or late forty-; I can't remember. I'd have to look it up. He was assigned to a CVE, a carrier escort, a jeep carrier, and he commanded, commissioned the USS Tulagi, which was one of those carriers put out real quick during World War II, in Astoria, Oregon, and then he took the ship around to the east coast and from there his orders were to the Mediterranean. His ship was on the--in the--the planes from his carrier, in fact, were the first to take off for the invasion of southern France. He had the flagship, the admiral, Admiral Durgin, was on his ship. So he was--that's why the ships had that honor, to have that honor of taking off.

Mr. Franklin: The invasion of southern France (unclear, both talking together).

Ms. Adams: It was called Operation Dragoon.

Mr. Franklin: Probably the least known invasion in the European Theater.

Ms. Adams: They were concentrating on D-Day, yeah, up in Normandy. Then shortly after that, his carrier was sent to the Pacific, and his carrier was only one of two that served in both theaters. Then he went into island hopping at the end, and anti-submarine hunting. Then four months before the war was over; we didn't know it was going to be over in four months, they took him off, he was ordered off the Tulagi; someone else took command. He was put on chief of staff with Nimitz and Halsey and those guys, and he was put in charge of fast battleships, and to be on the planning for the invasion of Japan, which fortunately we didn't have to go through with, because of the atom bomb. It saved many lives. And that in turn, because of that, they put him on the USS Missouri during the surrender.

Mr. Franklin: He was present for the surrender.

Ms. Adams: Yes, sir. When you see the picture of Nimitz signing, he's in the background. He's one of the officers in the background.

Mr. Franklin: Really? You have a photograph?

Ms. Adams: I have (unclear). There's my father.

Mr. Franklin: Oh, wow!

Ms. Adams: There's Nimitz, Sherman, Halsey, and this little man here, looking down, is that him looking down?

Mr. Franklin: Yes.

Ms. Adams: That's Admiral McCain. He is the grandfather of the senator.

Mr. Franklin: Yes!

Ms. Adams: Yes.

Mr. Franklin: And this is your father?

Ms. Adams: In the overseas hat. (Unclear).

Mr. Franklin: Oh, right there, okay. Wow!

Ms. Adams: So when I go into the Nimitz Museum, I see--oh, and I--oh I don't have it with me. I had a plaque put up for my father earlier this year and I saw it the other day. In fact, I saw it on December 3rd, which was his birthday. So there's the plaque there with his name. He was a commodore.

Mr. Franklin: What is your father's name?

Mr. Adams: Joseph C. Cronin, C-r-o-n-i-n.

Mr. Franklin: Let's see where the space is for that.

Ms. Adams: (Unclear).

Mr. Franklin: I'm still trying (unclear). Joseph C. Cronin.

Ms. Adams: Yeah, C. is for Campbell, but he went by Joseph C. Cronin, C-r-o-n-i-n, a good Irish name.

Mr. Franklin: So you have a very incredible connection.

Ms. Adams: He was a commander at Kaneohe, and he was a captain when he went to Memphis, Tennessee, Millington, when he commissioned the naval air station there. Then when he got the

carrier, he was--no, he was made a commodore when he went into fast battleships. Then because he was a commodore, there were so many captains, and it's getting to be too many admirals, he was in a commodore rank and after the war, he became a rear admiral. So when he retired, he was a rear admiral.

Mr. Franklin: So most of the duration of the rest of the war, were you back in Coronado, or were you in Tennessee?

Ms. Adams: I was in Tennessee, and then we went to Coronado. I guess we finished up in Coronado, because I graduated from Coronado High School (unclear).

Mr. Franklin: Okay. So you got to go back to school, you didn't have to stay (unclear, laughing

Ms. Adams: Eventually, oh, no, no, no, no. I didn't have to. But Admiral McCain was a very special man in our family. He was my father's mentor. It was at Annapolis; my father graduated from Annapolis in 1921, and he encouraged my father--I think it's because my father was from Alabama, and Admiral McCain is a southern boy. Maybe that was the little connection there. He encouraged my father; he said, "Aviation is the future of the Navy." He said (unclear). He says, "You get your wings." My father's first assignment was the USS Maryland. It had just been commissioned, and my mother raised the flag.

Mr. Franklin: Really?

Ms. Adams: On the--the Maryland flag on the Maryland when it was commissioned.

Mr. Franklin: So you have quite the connection then.

Ms. Adams: Oh, I don't know about that. My father did get to Annapolis after that. I mean Pensacola, excuse me, and he got his wings in 1926 in Pensacola and became an aviator, and that's--of course, you have to mainly be an aviator to have a carrier, so I don't know what else--anyway, Admiral McCain was always a very special person in our family. I can remember him coming to our house.

Mr. Franklin: So you met him?

Ms. Adams: Oh, definitely, definitely. He was such a sweet man, if you want to call a man sweet. He was very quiet, not a very big man, he was fairly short. His grandson is not too tall, either. He was just a very, very nice person. My mother adored him. He was just a real neat man. It was through him that my father got to where he was, really, by making the right choices.

Mr. Franklin: That's pretty incredible.

Ms. Adams: Yeah, it is. It is.

Mr. Franklin: Did your father; was he pretty good friends with a lot of higher brass?

Ms. Adams: Well, he knew a lot of them but he wasn't close to--he knew Nimitz, he knew Halsey but he wasn't close to them. He knew

more of the admirals that were a little bit younger. I can't think of any right now. He knew Sherman quite well. There's two Shermans, two Admiral Shermans.

Mr. Franklin: In the photograph there are two Shermans?

Ms. Adams: Yeah. This one is F. P. Sherman, and then there's another Sherman and I can't--I think it's the other one that we knew better. I have this picture; the Navy took the photos on the Missouri, a Navy photographer gave a complete set to the officers, and I have the complete set. It has all--the Japanese envoy, all the signings, all the other nations, the Netherlands, Australia, Great Britain, China, all of the allied dignitaries on board. On this photo, Nimitz signed it for him here.

Mr. Franklin: Really?

Ms. Adams: I have that, and I have another photo of Admiral Halsey where he signed it and made a message to my father on it. I'm really proud of all those.

Mr. Franklin: I assume you've probably visited the Missouri and seen where--

Ms. Adams: Yeah, I did at the 65th reunion of the Pearl Harbor Survivors, and I stood in the place where--I stood right here where my father is standing, and had my picture taken.

Mr. Franklin: (Laughs, unclear).

Ms. Adams: And then I got out to Kaneohe, and I went in the quarters I was living in are still there.

Mr. Franklin: Do you remember a lot of those areas?

Ms. Adams: Well, basically yeah, but not--

Mr. Franklin: They've changed a little bit.

Ms. Adams: But I was out there again in 1946, when my father was out there in '46 he let me stay behind and graduate from high school. I stayed with friends, and then I flew out after I graduated, in '47. He was at Ford Island.

Mr. Franklin: Where did you finally graduate from high school then?

Ms. Adams: Coronado.

Mr. Franklin: Okay.

Ms. Adams: Yeah, he let me stay with my friends, and I flew out and he was stationed at Ford Island. That's when I could walk over to the edge of the island and look down and see the Arizona. It hadn't had the memorial put on it yet.

Mr. Franklin: Right.

Ms. Adams: You could see down below and the oil bubbling up. Kind of an eerie feeling, all that.

Mr. Franklin: It's very eerie now, because it's still doing it.

Ms. Adams: Yeah, oh yeah, will for a long, long time.

Mr. Franklin: Unless you have anything else to add--

Ms. Adams: I think I've added too much!

Mr. Franklin: No, actually, the more the better.

Ms. Adams: I think I've said too much!

Mr. Franklin: On behalf of the Nimitz Museum and on behalf of myself, I want to thank you very much for taking the time to do this interview with us. I really appreciate it.

Ms. Adams: You're welcome.

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