

National Museum of the Pacific War

Nimitz Education and Research Center

Fredericksburg, Texas

Telephone Interview with

Mr. Ralph Mauller

Date of Interview: May 15, 2007

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Telephone Interview in progress.

Mike Zambrano: This is Mike Zambrano; today is May the 15th, 2007 and I'm interviewing Mr. Ralph Mauller who lives in Nooksville (sp?), Virginia. I'm doing this interview via the telephone. This interview is in support of the Center for Pacific War Studies, archives for the National Museum in the Pacific War, Texas Parks and Wildlife, for the preservation of historical information related to this site. And...Mr. Mauller, how are you doing today?

Mr. Mauller: Oh, doing very well.

Mike Zambrano: Well, as I spoke to you last time, I just wanted to start out with where and when you were born.

Mr. Mauller: Born in St. Louis, Missouri; August the 10th, 1923, and this year I'll be 84.

Mike Zambrano: Wow! Well, you sound pretty good for 84 I just want you to know.

Mr. Mauller: I feel pretty good, too, really (chuckles).

Mike Zambrano: (Chuckles), oh, so...can you tell me a little bit about what life was like for you growing up as a child and growing up especially through the Depression?

Mr. Mauller: It was very difficult to grow up through the Depression. My dad had a good bit of money but lost it all. We were down to, you know, we'd...be hard to get three cents to get a popsicle in those days, and I used to collect all the rags and take them to a place where you could convert them to money, and my

mother...she had...there were three boys and a girl and she used to make most of our clothes. And we...we were always sort of...well, never...I never ever felt like...I didn't have anything; there...there were things that I would like to have had, but we used to...sort of be very appreciative of the things that we were able to get. And we went to a Methodist church and I'd get about...well, I was...I was nine or ten years old and my wife started going there and I've known her ever since!

Mike Zambrano: Gosh, you've known her since you were about nine or ten years old?!

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, and we...had...we'd date on and off for all the years and...finally, when we came back from...well, I went to college then, too, and was in college for...three years. One of the years was in a V-12 program. I don't know if you're familiar with that or not, but the Navy would sign up people and then you'd go to college for a year and then go to Midshipman's School and after that, of course, you'd (cough) get your commission and...go on into the Navy. But we had...that's the process we went through and after we came out then, of course, we...got credit for how many years we were in...and...but they paid your college tuition for you, and I think they gave you something like...a hundred and twenty dollars a month extra. And you had so many years to finish up. And I...I went back to the same college I'd been at, and then went to the V-12 unit (unintelligible) finished, and I taught there...in math and physics for a year then went to the University of Missouri; got my...(unintelligible) went to the Southern Methodist University and I went to

the University of Missouri and got my Master's degree and then proceeded to go to the Indiana University and work on my PhD in math and physics.

Mike Zambrano: Uh hum.

Mr. Mauller: And about that time I had run out of money and they were trying to convince people that to be in the Navy you'd go back and they were running those ships up and down in the Korean operation...

Mike Zambrano: Uh huh.

Mr. Mauller: ...and they...said, you know, "You...you should go and get your physical...this and that," and I thought that I'd done enough and, of course, we had a son at that time, and I wasn't interested in going back, so...they came around recruiting for some mathematicians to work for the National Security Agency. They got some big computers there, and they needed help from mathematicians so on so I decided that since I was in a critical area I'd just...go up to Washington where the National Security Agency was and work there which I did. And it...my wife was working in the Weather Bureau, Weather (unintelligible) in Washington at the time, and we got married and went down to Dallas, Texas on our honeymoon and I get...I got married just after I got out because it...1945.

Mike Zambrano: Okay, well let me go back a little bit here before you continue. For example, what...what were your parents' names?

Mr. Mauller: Uh, my dad's name was Gustav A. Mauller, and my mother's name was Stella Ann (sp?) Mauller.

Mike Zambrano: Now did you say Gustav?

Mr. Mauller: Gustav, yes.

Mike Zambrano: How do you spell that?

Mr. Mauller: G-u-s-t-a-v.

Mike Zambrano: So what kind of a...?

Mr. Mauller: He was...he was...his father was an (unintelligible) marine; he had been an...

Mike Zambrano: Oh!

Mr. Mauller: officer in Napo...Napoleon's army.

Mike Zambrano: Really?!

Mr. Mauller: And came over to this country afterwards, and I think my dad was born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa then they went down to Arkansas and they...went from there...he did...to St. Louis and met my mother and (unintelligible) there.

Mike Zambrano: Wow! Well, that's interesting! You said you had...your parents had three boys and one girl?

Mr. Mauller: Yes. Well, actually my dad had two boys before he married my mother, so we basically had five boys and one girl.

Mike Zambrano: Is that including yourself?

Mr. Mauller: Yes.

Mike Zambrano: Where were...where were you; were you in the middle...at the top...at the bottom?

Mr. Mauller: Well, of the three boys that I...they had with my...well, his last wife, I was the oldest one of those.

Mike Zambrano: Okay.

Mr. Mauller: My brother actually volunteered for the submarine before I got into the Navy there; he was a submariner (unintelligible).

Mike Zambrano: Your brother?

Mr. Mauller: Yes.

Mike Zambrano: What was his name?

Mr. Mauller: Harold.

Mike Zambrano: Wow, submariner!

Mr. Mauller: Yeah (chuckle).

Mike Zambrano: What about your oth...your other siblings; what were their names?

Mr. Mauller: The youngest boy was William, and my sister...she was Darlene. There was, I don't know, three, four or five years difference in all of them.

Mike Zambrano: Okay, well, you...is there anything else that you'd like to tell me about your Depression years of growing up...like high school? And do you remember the name of your high school when you...from what you graduated?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, I graduated from high school in 19... '41, I guess, or either...I think maybe I started in '41 and went through for four years....no, I...I graduated from high school in '41 and then after...well, I went to the...to college and...I went to Central High School in St. Louis which was a...oldest one west of the Mississippi River.

Mike Zambrano: Oh okay.

Mr. Mauller: And I was valedictorian of the class; we had about two thousand, I think, in it.

Mike Zambrano: That's...pretty big class!

Mr. Mauller: We had big class, and I was also...they had an honor society of boys...a committee of twenty and the boys (unintelligible words) school, and I was President (unintelligible).

Mike Zambrano: Well, it sounds to me like you liked school.

Mr. Mauller: I liked school, and I always was...sort of the opinion that, you know, if the..., "Son, this is what we're going to learn, "I learned it; they didn't have to tell me why or anything. I thought those people that were teaching...should know what it was or had...I had been a teacher since then, but...you know, you have to explain it to them and then put it with cartoons and things which I detest; I like to, you know, with mathematics get down to the straight hard mathematics part of it. And I always liked that and with physics I personally think that is the best combination of courses that you could ever, you know, select....for you...you could do anything, and I have done any...all kinds of things in the course of my experience. But I worked...I graduated from high school with hon...I mean from college with honors, and...went (unintelligible) and Missouri I got a Masters in Math and then was working on my PhD with math and physics at (unintelligible) University at Bloomington.

Mike Zambrano: You finished...you finished that?

Mr. Mauller: I never did, no. They, you know, it broke the...the chain when I was at school and I just had...basically my thesis to write...to finish it, but I came up to Washington and start making more money and we had another...two children and...it just got impossible to...to do that and so I never did. But...but it's not far from being a...having a PhD in math and physics, but I didn't get it ever.

Mike Zambrano: Okay, let's see...do you recall what you were doing; what kind of day it was when you had heard that Pearl Harbor had been bombed?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, I was in...college at the time; I was in my room and hear a (knocking); it was a Sunday I believe...Saturday or Sunday...one of the two, and I just...sitting on my bunk...bed and heard it come over the air and...sounded pretty threatening to say the least that...so (unintelligible), my brother signed up right away and I was going to finish college first. And then they came around recruiting; they had Army, Navy, and Marines, Air Force recruiting people, you know, to...to get into the services at the college, and I signed up with the Navy and fortunately the...the Navy had...the V-12 unit right at the college I was at. So after I got finished that year of school, the next semester I went up and joined the V-12 unit and was a year there and finished up...that time I had three years of college...and went to Midshipman's School in...in (unintelligible), New York.

Mike Zambrano: Just out of curiosity what was the general feeling, I mean, with other people? You left your room at one point; you went outside; other people that had heard about the...the Japanese bombing Pearl Harbor...was there, I guess, like a lot of talk of patriotism and signing up or was there just astonishment or were there people saying that they figured something was going to happen sooner or later; what was just the general feeling, do you recall?

Mr. Mauller: I think, as I recall, what happened...I don't believe anybody (unintelligible) that anything like that could or would happen, so it was sort of a shock to have something like that happen. I would...couldn't believe a thing like...when

you're in college you don't follow the...the daily news. You know, in fact, I don't believe it was on as much as it is now (interference noise) things that happened and are going to happen, and they...they didn't (unintelligible). When these recruiters came around, most of the fellows signed up for something, and some of the fellows they yanked out of college; the Army guys they pulled them out almost within a couple of months. They let us finish the year out and then came back for another year. Actually, they had that big flood around Missouri now and I was one of the (unintelligible due to noise on the line) Missouri at the time, and I was invited over to Columbia to run an estate tournament. And I stayed at the college after school let out for that. Then we had this horrendous flood that came along and to get from Central Methodist College to the University of Missouri you had to go across the Missouri River, and there just wasn't any way to get across it, so I never did run into that thing, but I was...pretty good miler at the time...for...the...the college; I'd lettered in...in college in track. And...but as far as that...I don't know it just was something that was kind of, at least in...in my (unintelligible words) foreign to...to what we were thinking would happen; well it did; that was it.

Mike Zambrano: Okay, now you've mentioned the V-12 program a couple of times. Can you tell me just a little bit more about that?

Mr. Mauller: The V-12 program was...(interference noise)...that the Navy had to recruit officers; they required...that I think you had three years of college to be able to go to Midshipman's School and then they commissioned you as officers.

And, of course, in those days the different services were going around trying to...to get...a lot of the college students, and since I was a sophomore...all I had to do was finish a year which they...they gave you; they paid for and they (unintelligible) I mean, you were in uniform; you...you went to the regular classes and we used to have to (unintelligible) and oh, things like that but you wore sailor's uniforms. Then after you finished there, you went up...we went up to Plattsburgh, New York; went up there in February, and it was a bad, bad snow year. It was so cold and they had to do patrol duty around the outside of that place. I got to keep people from coming in and (unintelligible) or who knows what, and it was so cold but we...we made it. We had to pass a swimming test before we were commissioned and we were commissioned in about the middle of June. Now we went swimming in the lake Champlain; there was still cakes of ice floating down the thing!

Mike Zambrano: That sounds like fun.

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, it was...you...it didn't take you long to...to swim the (unintelligible words)...like that. It was nice up there; they used to have ice boating on Lake Champlain; go skiing over in Vermont...well, we had the weekends off, and go up to Mount Gereau (sp?) and (unintelligible) the race track in New York and they used to have all different programs for it.

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: We had a...a girl's college there in...uh, Plattsburgh that they used to have...have the girls come out and visit on weekends and things and...but that

was...the V-12 program was basically to recruit college people to be officers in Navy.

Mike Zambrano: Okay.

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, we did. And I went from there to pick up...the ship, the [USS] Ozark which was being built up at Willamette Iron Steel up in Portland, Oregon and we worked there and...I guess it took...I guess four or five months as I recall till the thing was finished. Then we took it on her shakedown run and went on out to...to Pearl Harbor and out beyond there.

Mike Zambrano: Uh, before you go on...now I'm not...I...I'm wondering...why did you chose the Navy?

Mr. Mauller: Why?

Mike Zambrano: Uh huh.

Mr. Mauller: Well, first of all my brother...he signed up for the Navy in the submarines and I just thought, in my opinion, he would go off in the Navy than being one of these ground troops...walking on...over the terrain...he had a...a place to stay every night and I just thought it was a better opportunity as far as living conditions and fighting conditions and everything else.

Mike Zambrano: Uhm, where was it again that you actually enlisted?

Mr. Mauller: I enlisted at...Central College...it was college at that time; it's since been a university in Fayette, Missouri.

Mike Zambrano: Say that again.

Mr. Mauller: It was Central College in Fayette...F-a-y-e-t-t-e, Missouri.

Mike Zambrano: Okay, and...just wanted to jot that down really quick.

Mr. Mauller: Yeah.

Mike Zambrano: You mentioned before that after V-12 you'd gone to the Midshipman's School.

Mr. Mauller: Yes.

Mike Zambrano: I guess, well...V-12 and that are...are the training you...you received before actually going onto the Ozark, right?

Mr. Mauller: Yes, the...(unintelligible)...in the V-12 unit itself, you just took a regular year of college because they wanted you to be, you know, had three years to be an officer at that time, and then when you finished the V-12 unit in one year...one semester...one year actually it was, then you went up to the Midshipman's School and everything there had to do with Navy things. You know you learn signaling and you learn rules of the road; you learned how to...you...identify aircraft and things of that nature, and that was what we did up in Midshipman's School.

Mike Zambrano: Okay.

Mr. Mauller: That...we got out of that; we got a...we were commissioned Deck Officers; those...those were the stars on their...sleeve.

Mike Zambrano: Now what exactly...is a Deck Officer?

Mr. Mauller: A Deck Officer is one that...you know, they're in control of the...not the Engineering; there was an Engineering Deck Officer, but the...Naval Deck Officers are ones that take care of, you know, (unintelligible) Captains or the boats, the ships; operation...when you go to land or something, you...you run

the...you're the one that they had in charge of , well a group of boats and horses going into the beach.

Mike Zambrano: Okay, let's see, how did you get actually transported over to the...to the Ozark? Was it...I...I'm assuming it must have been train.

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, they had trains going everywhere in those days. You could get an airplane, but the Navy always gave you a...a pad (?) to get on a train with, and we went on up there. I liked it up there in ...in Oregon; it was...real nice and we'd...used to go down on a shakedown to Astoria at the (unintelligible); fishing village right at the mouth of the Willamette River there.

Mike Zambrano: Uh huh.

Mr. Mauller: And it...I enjoyed about everything I've done in my life including the Navy, and it...when I was aboard ship I was the Education Officer; first of all I had the aft deck crew which was...manned the guns on the after deck of the...of the ship. I also was one of the...they had, well...Flight Boat Officers that would be, you know, over in that (unintelligible words) they had to have a boat officer in charge of...about a half dozen of these boats and other vehicles, and so I was the Deck Officer of...while I was on ship...I was a Boat Officer. When we would go on a landing and I was the Education Officer; I had a...a course, Use (unintelligible words), United States Armed Forces Institute, where I taught...teach math where the fellow got credit for it. When I was there I was Education Officer and they used to keep a map on the bulletin board and...with tag up there as to what units were doing what in different parts of the world. And also...they didn't have a Chaplain aboard, and when I

started out in college, I was going to be a minister and then when the war came along I decided I'd...not follow that path as it was...be a mathematician. So they didn't have a Chaplain aboard the Ozark, so I served as Chaplain and used to have Sunday morning services. The two fellows that were barbers had accordions and we used to play music and set up a church service in the...the crews quarters. And when...these...they'd have these landings...used to have the service...and they used to have *all* the personnel that were...ready to go into the landings...would show up for it. You know, you'd have a couple hundred of them there; other than that...normally we didn't have that many. And then also when they had people that would pass away after some of the operations...got killed, I had the burial service for them.

Mike Zambrano: Really?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah. Well, when we were down in...we escorted the...couple of ships out in the Med to New Caledonia one time, and the...they had...a convent down there and I went in and talked to them and they gave me a case of wine to use for communion. But I couldn't...serve communion because I wasn't ordained.

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: But once in awhile these Army fellows would come aboard and they'd have a Chaplain and...they'd have communion and some of these fellows in the ward room...I kept the liquor all locked up in my safe and they'd get up there at night, "Well, come on, let's...let's just get a bottle out!" (Unintelligible words). But it was...so I well...(unintelligible) to be done...

Mike Zambrano: Well, sounds...sounds like it. Let's see, okay...you mentioned a little bit earlier that the...the Ozark, the USS Ozark...

Mr. Mauller: Yes.

Mike Zambrano: By...by the way, I...I've read a little bit about it and it seems to have had different designations; was it an LSV when you first boarded it?

Mr. Mauller: LSV-2.

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: The LSV-1 was the Catskill, sister ship, but they were both, I mean they were different than these little...L...LCVPs or LSTs or something; those things were not really (unintelligible) worthy. This was a converted cruiser.

Mike Zambrano: Uh hum.

Mr. Mauller: And we used to...I guess they get up to...up to about twenty, twenty-one knots with it, and we had a ship's complement of about, I think as I recall, about six hundred people, and it had...vehicle deck which used to be a place...they'd heat mines and roll the mines out the back; it had a big ramp back there.

Mike Zambrano: Okay.

Mr. Mauller: That's where they put these LVTs or...LS...ducks...duck...few of them had LVTs...the Marines had.

Mike Zambrano: Oh, sort of like those...those floating, driving-type vehicles?

Mr. Mauller: (Cough), those ducks that they had...I think they used them in some of...some of these harbors now to take people on cruises (unintelligible). You know, the...the propeller worked the back and they had big tires and...they could just

sort of...go up a ramp or go up a beach and...go float through the water and they don't get very much speed out of them.

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: But...and the LVTs...just operated with their treads in the water. There were tank treads on them, and most difficult thing with them was to get it launched because if they went off that ramp too fast, they'd go straight down to the bottom!

Mike Zambrano: Really?!

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, oh, they were awfully heavy, and we just had to east them in very gradually, and of course, when you get ready to (interference noise)...beachhead...(unintelligible words) waiting these things to...(unintelligible words) or something; I don't know.

Mike Zambrano: (Chuckles).

Mr. Mauller: But...it was...Missouri; exciting and then we had these...we had...let's...let's see, oh, I guess sixteen boats – the LCVPs, Landing Craft Vehicle Personnel, that they could carry a...a (unintelligible) with them, but most...mostly they were...they had a...a big ramp on the front of them. You go in to hit the beach, and drop the ramp and they drive out or run out...whatever they did. And they had a couple of....machine gun turrets on the back of them.

Mike Zambrano: Uhm, okay.

Mr. Mauller: We had, I think, as I recall, there were...let's see, four, eight...I think sixteen of those. We had (unintelligible) to carry to a lot of people and around, and

we used to take the...the troops in...the Marines, and then go ahead and carry the supplies in...in to them.

Mike Zambrano: Now, just before...before we go to what...what actions that you saw, can you describe to me a little bit of what life was like on the ship...was...and by that I mean, how was the food; was it a pretty close-knit crew; what was daily life like when...when you weren't actually part of an operation?

Mr. Mauller: Well, of course, I'm telling you what it's like from the basis of the officers...

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: ...operation. The officer's quarters and their facilities were...as much as day and night between what the crew had. The crew used to have these...pieces of pipe that were sort of bent around like a...a bunk and they'd throw a little pad on top; they had canvas stretcher, too. They...they'd throw about a two-inch pad on them, and in the day they'd hoist those things up in air and had room to...to wander around in. And they had, you know, it was typical...uh, chow line that they'd go through, and they'd throw stuff on a tray with it. Now that's what the crews put up with, but that was in reserve. And the officer's part, they had...we had the tables; we had linen table clothes on them; they had napkins with napkin rings and they had...we had these black...colored boys that served. Some of them were Negros and some of them were...Filipinos and, you know, they'd...the...the...all (unintelligible) table depends on what your rank was. And when we left the Midshipman's School, I was...ranked up...pretty near the top of the class; I shot at the head of this table and used to (unintelligible) there, and they...used to have, you know, you served from the

left and you take away from the right. I mean just...this was...in the battle area even they do that. And once in awhile I'd just tell...a colored guy, name of Jackson, and they'd bring out the fruit cocktail, and those boys in the kitchen back there would take all the cherries out of them, and I'd say, "Jackson, where are these cherries?!" "Well, nobody eating cherries; they're not (unintelligible words)...make cherries." And I said, "Jackson, go back and get those cherries and put them back in this fruit cocktail!" You know, they had good food in there! Well, it was good, but...sometimes like when you'd be out in the South Pacific, you'd...I'd...gotten tired of eating lamb which they got from down in Australia that I never had eaten lamb since then. But...it was good, except that when they'd fill up the...the (unintelligible) on the ship, they would have, you know, they'd stack (unintelligible) came in...if you...you got a load of lamb, you'd put that in there; if you had a load of goat, you'd put that in; if you got a...mostly wild...a load of beef or something...and when the cooks would get it, they'd take it out as it came up, so you'd have lamb, lamb, lamb. It wasn't wrong with it except that it was just a...thing that got a little tiring sometimes as compared to what the powers of the beach got...when they invaded got K-rations or...should have been glad they had lamb, but or...whatever. But the only thing was once in a great while you'd get milk, and it was normally sent out to go to hospital ships or things like that, I think, and once in awhile our Supply Officer used to...to get a bag of milk and it would go in the ward room (unintelligible). The ward room is where they...the officer's quarters were. It...I was...sort of...a little

bit...(unintelligible words)...like they...the officers would go down in the crews quarters and they (unintelligible words) and they'd have gambling; they'd break up the gambling games and things and (interference noise) and then the orderlies would come around (interference noise) for you to go on watch...they'd come up to the ward room and they were (interference noise)...gambling paraphernalia. I thought it was a little bit unreasonable, but...that's the way it was. And then we also had the...they censored the mail. Every letter that went out...had some officer's signature on the outside of it that he'd read it and made sure that there wasn't any...designation...where we were going or what we were doing and anything like that. But it was, you know, it...it'd get monotonous. You...when you got out there, you're not making normal speed across; it was about eighteen knots or something, and it'd just...goes on and on. I used to get seasick every time I went out.

Mike Zambrano: Really?!

Mr. Mauller: Those big rolling waves, you know, you'd go up and you're down and up and then down and I used to...since I was the...one of the Boat Officers and I had my familiarity with engines and things, I used to go down and get in there where they were working on the boats and get down underneath where the engines were and...the Captain would come around and...he'd say, "You get out of there; you're not supposed to do that! You...supposed to...you know, just oversee to doing that, but you don't do any of it!" Well I used to find that it was very interesting and beneficial for me anyway to get in there and help do it. But officers, lowly gentlemen, they don't do things like that.

Mike Zambrano: Right. Well, let me...let me back up a little bit.

Mr. Mauller: Okay.

Mike Zambrano: Now you...you leave Oregon; you said you headed out to Pearl?

Mr. Mauller: Yes.

Mike Zambrano: And...

Mr. Mauller: Well, let's see...no...let's see. Somewhere in there we went down to, I guess maybe before we went to Oregon, we went down to San Diego and...we had assembled the crew already, and I think that was before we picked up the ship, and we practiced landings. We'd get out there on Del Coronado beach and...day after day...just land and hit the surf and get in and get out, and once in awhile we'd...go too...hit a big wave and get too far. And they had these things they called jehamies (sp?), and we were...would go over the...(unintelligible) LCVPs and lift them up and put them out in the water again, and we got pretty suntanned out there. And then...we had weekends; used to have dinner at the Del Coronado Hotel out there. You...well, if you're from California you know where that is.

Mike Zambrano: Yeah.

Mr. Mauller: That was very beautiful. One of the problems we had...we'd take our swimming suits along and swim in the Del Coronado pool there because we were...passing right near it, and some of the sailors decided...they didn't have their suits so they just rolled up their pants and jumped into the pool; they took a very dim view to that. But...in the boat operations, we...we had, you know, I don't know...a full complement of boats out there, and I was the

Salvage Officer...but we used to...but they'd get in and...not get stuck completely but they couldn't get back off; we'd come...close to them and heave them a line or heave them a big line and then...back out...boat off which was in deeper water and pull them lose. And we'd practice, you know, retrieving boats and...landing and dropping the ramps and...pulling them back up again and...

Mike Zambrano: So was this...just pretty much getting ready to...to go out to the Pacific?

Mr. Mauller: Again?

Mike Zambrano: Just pretty much getting ready; having some familiarity with the boat?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, we...we were landing operations...

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: ...which we were going to do. So, I can't remember whether we did that before we picked up the ship or...whether we picked up the ship and had it in...but I guess we stayed at officer's quarters there, so apparently the ship wasn't with us; we weren't with the ship yet.

Mike Zambrano: Uh hum, so after San Diego, where did the Ozark go?

Mr. Mauller: After we left San Diego...well, I think we went from San Diego up to Portland to pick up the ship and then had it...a run down on the ship, uh, shakedown on it, and then we went from there out to...Pearl Harbor, I believe.

Mike Zambrano: And do you remember how long you stayed in Pearl Harbor?

Mr. Mauller: We weren't there very long; we just...basic, yeah, we got orders and, you know, invasion plans and things...like maybe a week or two; something like that...little more than that because I remember...I went to one of the officer's

club dances out there; had my whites with me and...I just...telling my son about it a little bit ago, they had one of these big command cars...those great big things, but I wanted a jeep because I'd go pick up some girl and take her over...and she came out in a formal; I had my whites on; you climb up in this big command car; you look like you're driving a mack truck or something like that.

Mike Zambrano: (Chuckles).

Mr. Mauller: So we must have been there, I guess, maybe two, three weeks...like that.

Mike Zambrano: So at that point you're already married?

Mr. Mauller: No, I wasn't married at that time.

Mike Zambrano: Oh okay.

Mr. Mauller: Didn't get married until after...in 1945 after I got out of the Navy. This was some other girl (chuckles)...I (unintelligible) out there in Hawaii.

Mike Zambrano: Okay. So after...after Pearl Harbor, well actually, let me ask you this first. Do you recall...what...unit it was that you were attached to; was there like a battle group or an amphibious group that you were...that you...were a part of?

Mr. Mauller: I don't think it...we may or may not have been at that point; I don't think so. It seems to me we went on out further to the islands when we were assigned to pick up troops and equipment and things like that...that, you know, I don't know whether it was Guam or sometimes we'd go to Ulithi lagoon and pick up...particularly you'd pick up ammunition...Ulithi lagoon, and I mean it was about twenty miles long and held the ammunition ships at one end; we'd dock at the other (beep sound)...and...it was...I don't know...well, you know, I

just...we just basically would cru...sort of cruise around in Pearl Harbor. They used to have a real nice place to eat out there, but Mauna Loa Hotel, the (unintelligible) Hotel at the end of the street down there...

Mike Zambrano: Uh hum.

Mr. Mauller: ...I was...I've never been a drinker or smoker either one, and most of the ship's company, you know, the officers and enlisted men both used to like to drink an awful lot and so I didn't...accompany them. I used to just...they had the (unintelligible) University out there...

Mike Zambrano: Uh huh.

Mr. Mauller: ...I used to go there and get some books and things and...just see what...go to some parts of the island and officers...reside (beep noise); it was...a...sort of a pretty experience, I thought, out there. Except that that beach, the beach at...in Hawaii was covered...they...they (unintelligible) and covered over it because it has horrible...what is that stuff that cuts your feet...they're weapons.

Mike Zambrano: Oh, the coral?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, coral, yeah, and you'd go in there...and you didn't realize it until, you know, you were out there and got out of the water and your feet were just all shredded...from that coral. But in beach time, they'd (unintelligible) enough sand to cover that stuff, but during the war they didn't.

Mike Zambrano: Hmm, uhm, let's see...you mentioned at Ulithi, and I've heard that one mentioned by a number of veterans (beep noise), what was your impression of Ulithi other than the size of it? Were there a lot of ships there when you first got there?

Mr. Mauller: Uh, they had, as I say, that's where you picked up the ammunition and it was a...a twenty-mile run to the far end of that (unintelligible), and (recording interference)...had a bunch of little islands around and it had...between those islands they were at (recording interference) keep people from (unintelligible) or submarines from getting into it. (Recording interference)...a long trip up and once to pick up the mail up there and the ammunition, and in those days...they wanted you to save your shells, casings, for them...for us and for us it was hard to get. When you get up there at the end of this trip, you had a boatload of these (beep noise) (unintelligible words) up there and you'd have, you know, a whole load of these...and they say, "Well, you know, we can't take them; we're full of empty casings now; you have to take them back to the ship and come back later." Well, the heck with that! You...first of all, there wasn't any place on the ship to put them, and so we'd...take them and dump them overboard. And I remember going out there with those salvage...shell casings were the devil to try to get shaken. You'd have to take a...put a boat hook into them and shake them down till they were full of water and you...you had to just go around and do that with all of them till you got rid of them and then you'd go back and get your ammunition. But it was...yeah, there wasn't anything there...at Ulithi (beep noise)...an anchorage up at one end and then these ammunition ships at the other. But one time we were going up and some fellows...sailors are fishing and they went too close to one of these...uh, island...stations between them...

Mike Zambrano: Uh huh.

Mr. Mauller: ...and (unintelligible)...

End of tape 1, side A)

Mike Zambrano: Okay, we're back...we're back on.

Mr. Mauller: Okay.

Mike Zambrano: And we were talking about Ulithi and...and the expanse of that and...how one ship had hit a mine going...

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, just one of those boat...boats that they had. You know most of the ships in there had these smalls...'cause normally you'd have to anchor out and go from the ship in to the port with...and you had some kind of a boat. We had sixteen of these things that would carry about twenty, thirty people, but al...almost every ship had a...some kind of little boat and they used to use them for fishing and recreation and things.

Mike Zambrano: Hmm, okay. Okay, after Ulithi...after you'd gotten supplies and all...well, I want to say...what was...what was the next island that you went to or better yet, what was the...what was the first invasion operation that you and the Ozark were part of?

Mr. Mauller: Well, this is the thing...I talk to my son about it. You know, we went into Leyte and Luzon and...Okinawa, I think, was the third one...I mean...Iwo Jima was the third one and the fourth one was up at...up north there where that...what is that one that one they just...threw us out of the air base up there?

Mike Zambrano: Uhm, just...well, there was Okinawa, Iwo Jima, uhm...gosh I'm not sure.

Mr. Mauller: I guess it was Okinawa. Isn't that that...country up there...that...further north...that island?

Mike Zambrano: Yeah, it sure is.

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, well, that...that's...that was the last one we went in to, and we...we'd go in to...I'm not sure whether...Leyte was first and Luzon was second or vice versa, but...it was the one that McArthur went ashore in...that...

Mike Zambrano: I think...I think that that was Leyte.

Mr. Mauller: Was that Luzon?

Mike Zambrano: I...I think that that might have been Leyte.

Mr. Mauller: Leyte, yeah, well...that was the second one then and...and Luzon may have been the first one...and then Leyte and then Iwo Jima and then up north there.

Mike Zambrano: Well, let's see. Let me pick one of these. For example, I know we'll probably be a little bit out of order, but Iwo Jima...pretty big operation; what...what specifics do you remember about that or do you recall what...?

Mr. Mauller: It was *bad!*

Mike Zambrano: Bad, huh?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, (chuckles). I mean they...they were dug in there; I...little island I don't think was more than about five miles long and maybe a mile and a half wide, but it had that mountain on it, Mount Suribachi, and they had...entrances to caves and apparently inside they had...elevators. You know, they'd shoot out of one of those caves and take the gun back in and move it up and shoot out another one. And about the time they zeroed with the guns on one of them, why, they'd be shooting out of another one. And then in addition to that, they had the...the shoreline all lined with these huge concrete pillboxes, and they had guns and troops were in those things. And, as I mentioned once before,

they...Navy started...now they got big battleships down there at Iwo Jima, I mean the...you know, like sixteen inch guns on the Missouri and Iowa; I'm not sure exactly which ones were in there, but...and they had a couple of the older ships; the New York was there I think at Iwo Jima, and you know, they took these armored-piercing shells; they thought they'd be able to blast those pillboxes...well, those armored-piercing shells (unintelligible) glance off and fly up in another direction. But...so finally they got...high-compression shells in the...the...these big guns that they shot at, and...and they...they come steaming out of there in a hurry! When they got those things, apparently this would almost knock them cold inside. But the...the beast was a horrendous thing; they...they'd sit there and try to pick you off at the beach all the time. I had a...helmet with a...a gold bar on the front of it with...an Ensign bar, and the (unintelligible)...I was also in the CIC, Combat in Commissions center aboard ship, and they had these black markers that they used to keep track of...oh, the flights and planes and things under the radar boards, and they used to black that thing out; they said those fellows on the beach in their...see that yellow bar and they started shooting there first, and they didn't want to...let me get lost in the operation. But we used to go in...and all day and all night and at Iwo particularly, they had...the Japanese had some of these...big things that they'd fire along; it was some type of rocket that was...looked about the size of a garbage can when you'd see them...these big round garbage cans.

Mike Zambrano: Uh huh.

Mr. Mauller: And they'd go *whoo, whoo, whoo* and we had no idea where it was aiming at, but they used to aim them at the ship sometimes and they'd aim them at the ground forces, and it was...it was very bad up there. I don't know, we must have lost ten thousand troops in a matter of...of a couple of days going into that thing. Well, you know, they keep saying, "Well, you know, now we've lost a thousand and three in three years up there in Iraq." Heck, we used to use...lose that many in a...the first hour of the landing!

Mike Zambrano: No, you're right; you're right. It was actually a lot worse than ten thousand, but no, I...I understand what you're saying.

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, I mean...actually had a...a since we had this big vehicle deck that you could park thirty-two of those big tanks on, they'd bring the...uh, tables down from the crew's quarters...and set up...for operating rooms on there. These fellows getting all shot up in there; they'd bring them back and bring them in on the...the ramp at the back and take them in to the vehicle deck and, you know, they had doctors working...night and day in there. As I mentioned once before, they could...I had...they used to...want...just people to help them with, you know, to hand me this and do this and...I used to go down and help them out when I had any spare time which wasn't too often but some. And though we had to take one or two of the medical detachments into the beach and got shootin' up so bad...because Iwo was, I guess, the toughest one that I remember that we had, and I guess it was one of the toughest ones out there.

Mike Zambrano: Now how close to the beach...would the Ozark get during...during Iwo Jima?

Mr. Mauller: Well, what we would do...is...for the landing, we'd sort of...I mean we had these...these five –inch turrets that we used to be able to shoot up with and we'd sort of come in and...I guess...maybe...five hundred yards, something like this as I recall; I don't remember exactly what it was and we'd sort of come in and swing...around and with the...the ramp aiming towards the beach...now we'd let these LVTs out and...have a...always had one of the boats to...to guide them in 'cause they were...little bit faster and could...identify things better, and we'd sort of lead them in with...the LV...Ps...LCVPs...and they would...then...we'd peel off and go on back and the LVPs would go in and hit the beach. And then the night they drove the smoke screen around...sometimes you had to...to go take in some more ammunition or supplies for them...and I remember one night we were going and it was just quiet; didn't have a smoke screen or anything up and we were...had this boatload of stuff and I was with them and all of a sudden somebody fired one of those dang star shells up in the air, and they lit up the whole area; you were a sitting duck out there, the only one, and just kind of creeping along; you couldn't run the engine too fast and it...it was a...little bit leery that night. But...we used to sort of go back and forth...and taking supplies in, and...but, you know, at a time like that, you're glad you're on a ship!

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: Not sure why...which one...you want to be the Marines or the Army; it...it just...we...we had some fellows that would...you had to drop the ramp on the

boat until they got all their stuff out; sometimes you had to send a fellow in on the beach with a...a line to keep the boat from...sashaying sideways with it or something. And I remember some of these fellows that were from New York...they had their fingernails...and...in training out there in San Diego, you know, “you...you can’t hurt my fingernails, and...,” they...when they got on that beach at Iwo Jima, it was a...sort of a sandy...volcanic type of stuff, and, man, they were holding the ropes; didn’t take them but a few minutes to get their fingernails broken off and...dig a hole in that stuff, and get underneath...instead of being an exposed target up there!

Mike Zambrano: Fingernails didn’t matter too much then, I suppose.

Mr. Mauller: Not at all; they just...you didn’t even have to tell them to do it. They...figured out that was the place to do it!

Mike Zambrano: Now I...I’m curious, the times that the Ozark would go in, would you ever receive any enemy fire...to the ship?

Mr. Mauller: Uh, not really because we would...when we’d go in closer it was, you know, before the...the whole operation got started...much. And the biggest problem we had was if they had some of these kamikaze planes that...then we...we’d go on off...out of range of the guns to go out and anchor out there and stay out of the way. And...but...I...we had one time, I think, that they had a mine that was attached to the propeller and blew a hunk off of it, but...I mean, not so bad; we got back to Pearl to get it fixed, but it was...we...never did really get hit. We had a kamikaze plane...flew over us one time when we were going down into Noumea, New Caledonia, and he dove in the water, and fortunately went right

over the...the Fo'c'sle and went into the water and didn't hit anything.
We...we didn't even get a chance to shoot at him 'cause it...it was just in a quiet area and, I don't know where he came from or anything, but...we didn't...the sister ship...when we were anchored in one of those places, I don't remember which one it was, had a kamikaze plane fly into the ward room at lunchtime; killed a bunch of the officers on that ship.

Mike Zambrano: You said the sister ship?

Mr. Mauller: The sister ship, the Catskill.

Mike Zambrano: Really?! Did was...was she sunk or was it just...?

Mr. Mauller: No, it just...hit the...the ward room was up topside, and it just hit that; caught it on fire and things, but it...it didn't sink it any. Fact, I don't know...time I was out there....that I saw any of the ships that were actually hit...sunk.

Mike Zambrano: Hmm, okay. Alright, I'm looking at a picture of the Ozark; it looks like it has only the...well, the biggest guns, it looks like it only has two...five-inch guns?

Mr. Mauller: Well, there was...let's see...there was one five-inch turret aft and I think two of them...in the fore part of it.

Mike Zambrano: Okay, that's what I'm looking at.

Mr. Mauller: And...right at the very tail end of it...where that lamp stuck up in the air...they had, on either side of that, they had...two round...things there that had forty millimeter, twin mounts in them. And then alongside of the...the five-inch gun at the back, they had...I think there were two twenty millimeters on one side and two on the other. That was the area that I was...primarily responsible for general quarters; general quarters, of course, is when you'd go into a battle

operation. You...had everybody get on their guns and...the officers put some of these...you had to strap your pistol on; I said, you know, “What are we supposed to do with this?” “Well, you have to have it on to keep order.”

Well, I don’t know what...that meant, but we put them on anyway.

Mike Zambrano: When we spoke the first, I asked you about...something that happened at Iwo Jima, and you’ve had...maybe a little time to think about it, so I want...just ask you again and get it on tape. The...the book that James Bradley wrote and the movie, “Flags [of our Fathers],” Iwo Jima has a scene in it where...when the first flag goes up, all the ships right off shore start to sound their claxons...once they see that flag. Do you recall that happening at all?

Mr. Mauller: I remember when we were watching them...when they put it up, and all we did aboard our ship was just..., “Hoorah!” I don’t know, you know, some of those ships had horns they could honk and things like that. I don’t remember, you know. A claxon is probably the thing that they used to sound when you had general quarters...*Ah-eeh, ah-eeh, ah-eeh...*

Mike Zambrano: Uhm, okay.

Mr. Mauller: ...thing, and...I don’t believe our ship sounded our Claxton; the crew all cheered when they saw it because they were all watching them climb up there.

Mike Zambrano: Right. Well, let’s see, a claxton’s probably the wrong term for me to use. It...whatever it was...it was some type of...like a...*whoop, whoop, whoop*, kind of a noise.

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, well those are the things that they used to...sound off when they would go into general quarters...to round the...to get the crew to their stations.

Mike Zambrano: Uh hum.

Mr. Mauller: It was...I don't know...is...is a real noisy thing go *Ah-eeh, ah-eeh, ah-eeh*.

Mike Zambrano: Hmm, okay,

Mr. Mauller: And that could have been what they were sounding; I don't know.

Mike Zambrano: Okay. Let's see, Leyte Gulf...it...it...that was where MacArthur actually...

Mr. Mauller: Majure (sp?) yeah.

Mike Zambrano: Yeah, where he actually returns, and so I...I'm assuming that you must have been part of...of the MacArthur invasion fleet.

Mr. Mauller: Maybe if...I know that he went ashore there when we were there, and I remember there...we had a long...went in through a bay there to...to land and they had these battleships out there with these sixteen-inch guns and they'd be shooting right over our heads. As we'd go in you here these things *ruhr, ruhr, ruhr*...spinning...go in there; they just cleaned that beach off and...weren't anything...pieces laying around as big as a match stick hardly when they had that thing cleared off. And they forced them back in there pretty well, and...and it was easy to land the troops there and pretty easy when MacArthur went in. But...they...sort of backed off and then come on back at you again. That's the place that...I said that...I'm almost sure that's the place that they had...they had all these big battleships and carriers and things there, and they got word that the Japanese super battleship was going to come down and, you know, blast away at them when...during that operation.

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: And they...sent out a...a battle formation of the battleships and the carriers and destroyers...and destroyers along with them and the cruisers and, you know, the whole back of them got in a battle formation of which I don't imagine they had many of those...any place during the war except right there. And they...it...it was the most...appalling sight to see them. The battleships they had...full steam up and normally don't put any smoke out when you're at sea because they can see...like the submarines are a long ways off, but man, they had smoke coming out of the stacks; they'd level their turrets on the right side and wave the guns up and down. They'd swing them to the left side and wave them up and down and...I mean, they were really ready for a fight. Unfortunately, what happened was...that the carriers got up within range and launched their airplanes and shot that battleship down before the big guns of the Navy got into it. They...I think they were disappointed to say the least 'cause they wanted to really let them have it with those big guns but it was all over in short order

Mike Zambrano: No, you're...you're right; I interviewed a gentleman who was on the...on the [USS] Iowa, and he said they just came so close and they were looking so forward to getting into battleship fight and it...it...they just got there a little bit too late.

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, because they...you know, it...it would have been exciting I'm sure, but certainly that...I believe that that Japanese battleship had...slightly longer range guns than the U.S. battleships did, and you know, you could be at a disadvantage...distinctly with something like that. But they had so many of

ours there. I think they had the Iowa and the [USS] Missouri; I believe the [USS] Wisconsin was there, and they had the old [USS] New York. It used to kind of tag along with them, and you know, cruisers and everything else. But they just launched those airplanes and, you know, they'd go...three, five hundred miles an hour or whatever it was...and these other ships go along there at about...they'd probably go twenty-five knots or something but not much more than that.

Mike Zambrano: Right. Uhm, do you remember anything else specific about...Leyte?

Mr. Mauller: Uh, as far as what we encountered when we were there...except that...fellows on...on our little boats decided that it was getting too warm; they took their hard hats off and they...somebody'd lowered you a cargo net down...a big box bounced out of it and almost hit one of the guys, and they put their helmets on after that. But I don't know, I didn't think...Leyte was all that difficult of an operation really. When we were there...now when you got on the beach, you know, you got an entirely different situation.

Mike Zambrano: Right, hmm.

Mr. Mauller: So I was glad I never had to go on the beach.

Mike Zambrano: Let's see, Guadalcanal was...was before you even got out?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah that...those were some of the bigger ships.

Mike Zambrano: Right. What about Saipan?

Mr. Mauller: Well, we weren't in that.

Mike Zambrano: Okay, Tarawa?

Mr. Mauller: No. We used to have the...what they did to those things...I think those (unintelligible) would...they sort of neutralized them. You know they didn't necessarily (cough) have complete control of them, but enough so that they...could send airplanes out from them and things. And (cough) when we would go by, we always would swing well clear of them just in case they had a couple of airplanes that they could launch.

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: Then...the, you know, the whole flotilla. That was another thing...when they would form up these...operations with, you know, maybe they'd have as many as thirty or forty ships or something like that and all their supply things; it was...always a problem to see who was going to be the Commodore, and when they'd get these ships assembling out in the middle of the ocean, they always had these (unintelligible) officers in in their numbers, the Captains, and they'd see, you know, who...who was the ranking one here and the ranking one there and...right when you're getting ready to go into battle they were still trying to figure out who was going to be the...the Commodore. And our...Captain, K. P. Williams, apparently as more senior than most of them around and he used to get to be Commodore.

Mike Zambrano: Really?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah. I...I used to...kind of be the orderly for him sometimes when I'd go and he'd say, you know, "That ship over there is not getting that stuff in there right!" So I'd go up and I'd say, "The Commodore said...," you know, and stuff and man, they'd say, "Yes sir, yes sir, yes sir!"

Mike Zambrano: So what kind...

Mr. Mauller: I was just an Ensign.

Mike Zambrano: What kind of Captain was he; was he...well respected by his crew...what...?

Mr. Mauller: The Captain, yeah...very much so (chuckles). In fact I had a very interesting experience with him. Uh, I was out, oh I don't know, some place and I wanted my wife a ring, engagement ring, and I wanted to, you know, in those days we didn't carry any money; it was all in the ship's bank, so I went to get some money out to send back to our minister's wife who was going to buy a ring for her. And the Executive Officer said, "Well, what'd you want it for?" I said, "It's none of your business; I want my money." "Well, I'm not going to give it to you." So I went to see Captain Williams. I said, "Captain, the Exec won't give me my money." He said, "What?!" Said, "You've got money...haven't you in there?" I said, "I sure do!" He pressed his button and he...ordered (unintelligible) he said, "Get the Exec up here!" So the Exec came in and the Captain said, "Mr. Mauller said you wouldn't give him any money." He said, "Well, he won't tell me what he wants it for." He says, "None of your god damned business! Now you go down there and sign your approval for him to get his money out!" I mean he was a...a little fiery Irishman and he was a real, real nice guy I thought. But...it...I think most of the crew liked...in fact, I think all the crew liked him. He came up to Washington and got to be a...oh, a Rear Admiral I believe it was before he retired.

Mike Zambrano: Now was he in command of the Ozark the entire time?

Mr. Mauller: Yes, he was. He went up to Portland; we picked it up there; he was in charge of it there. They came back, I mean we came back...we picked up prisoners in...Tokyo and I remember Pappy Boyington was one of them that...that we picked up.

Mike Zambrano: Really?! Did you...

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, in fact, this Executive Officer (unintelligible words) we were discharging in Hawaii to go down...so they could have some...I mean, a couple of days vacation in Hawaii, and you know, they all marked their name out. And he came up there and the Exec was there and everybody knew Pappy Boyington...and the Exec said, "What's your name?!" He looked at him like, you know, "Are you crazy?" So he told his name and he let him go by...I mean, that's the kind of guy the Exec was; they didn't like him much.

Mike Zambrano: Did you get an opportunity to...speak to him or say anything to him?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, yeah. He was...well (beep noise) everybody liked to talk with him; he used to get into real bull sessions aboard ship because he was onboard...well, he got in...we picked him up in Tokyo (beep noise) and we stopped at...I think...may have stopped in Guam on the way and then at Hawaii. And then we went under the...first went back with prisoners...Gold...under the Golden Gate bridge, so it...probably took a week, I guess, to get back and all those guys wanted to do was eat; they hadn't seen such food in...some of them two or three years, I guess.

Mike Zambrano: Were they pretty thin; were they in bad shape; how would...how would you describe them?

Mr. Mauller: Oh, they...were not fit, I guess you'd say. They seemed to...I mean they...they had enough to survive on apparently, but not much more than that. And they were...on the lean side I'd say. But...it...they...seemed to...well, we had to send...send some of our SPs, shore patrol people, in the chow line because some of them would go through and eat and come right back in the end of the line. And you...you know, you can get yourself into bad physical problem with eating too much after you hadn't eaten for so long.

Mike Zambrano: Right, yeah you're right.

Mr. Mauller: And so we had to...restrict them to that and they always felt like we were being cruel to these poor guys and all that food was there and they couldn't get at it. But...after about a week they kind of laid off of it a little bit.

Mike Zambrano: Right. Just really quick, Pappy Boyington...your impressions of him? I mean I know you probably didn't have...long conversations but...

Mr. Mauller: Oh, he was a...a...like most of those pilots, he was a kind of a cocky guy but real nice. In fact, I think when you get out into those battle areas, most of the people that you encounter are...pretty nice fellows, and he'd talk and...tell you about...about some of these mean Japanese (unintelligible) around, but I...I liked Boyington pretty well. And...we used to...have...officers quarters that had to be vacated for some of these fellows and we had visiting officers quarters. As I say, there...there was a lot of difference between the officer's facilities and the enlisted men's.

Mike Zambrano: Right. Uhm, let me ask you about another operation. Guam...do you recall...?

Mr. Mauller: Well, we used to go into Guam to get supplies and people.

Mike Zambrano: Uh hum. Uh, would you...like...ever transport wounded or...or both...well, why don't you tell me...what...what...what specifically would you do at Guam?

Mr. Mauller: Uh, let's see...I guess...when we came out of Iwo Jima I think we took the wounded there...all the way back to Pearl Harbor. In...in Guam we used to just get, you know, food stuff and ammunition and things like...it was a...pretty much of a permanent base when we were there.

Mike Zambrano: Okay.

Mr. Mauller: But...it was a...not anything different than most of those...but there was some of those islands out there that...we used to carry cases of beer and so forth and they'd...give...the...the (unintelligible) main brace or something like that...they'd say it...fully; lower all the boats with the sailors and they'd go ahead and give these...a couple of beers apiece and they'd drink it and come on back to the ship because they couldn't drink any aboard ship supposedly.

Mike Zambrano: Right. Oh, well...

Mr. Mauller: Probably mentioned...that when we were down and loading some of the medical supplies in Borneo, the ship next to us had a bunch of women, WAVEs or WACs or whatever they were on and so all the...everybody on the beach in there was...looking at them, and they unloaded our ship's supplies...and I heard, well, I was...my stateroom was right near one of the hatches they had and the thing would come up and I'd hear...the thing would stop there and I'd hear some ruffling or something...then they'd go on up and take it over. Apparently what it was...that...these sailors found out that...some

of those medical boxes with the right markings had...whiskey or something in them, and they'd...hiked (?) a few of those and...the thing was...the Supply Officer on the beach had signed having received all of this stuff and he didn't count it all. They were out there checking out these women, and when...when we got into Noumea, New Caledonia after that...they had these...this Naval Intelligence...crew came aboard. They said, "Well, we hear you...hiked at some of the liquor from that..." Captain said, "Well, here's a receipt they...they signed for it all." Said, "Yeah, they know they signed for it all, but...they weren't really paying attention to business like they should have," so they said, "We're going to look at the ship." So what these guys did was they took that stuff and took it in the bilges, and the bilges on a ship were just unbelievable. That stuff is so thick it's like tar down in there and they buried it and they knew where it was and they could get it out when they wanted to. And once in awhile you'd get a...a Boatswain or something up there on the...watch at night...he'd be kind of (chuckles)...little bit out of it having gotten a bottle of that stuff out.

Mike Zambrano: (Chuckles).

Mr. Mauller: But that...that was something that happened. Yeah we...yeah, I liked the ship; we...we went to...to...we were...you know, we had the turrets that we could protect things; we had...facilities that we could sweep for mines; we had depth charges. Some on the...aft deck...you had to...we could use in case we hit submarines. It had submarine detection equipment so we used to...sort of...(unintelligible) around. The biggest problem was...if you ever had a...if

you signaled that you...submarine was in the area and you ran up the tenant for it...instead of the...you know you have maybe twenty merchant ships out there. They were supposed to go into a zig-zag pattern. They'd go zig zag...it looked like an explosion...it...all go out from the middle and...then you'd have to spend two or three days rounding them up again to...to take them on to the next place.

Mike Zambrano: Right. Well, let me ask you this...you were on the ship for...I think you said...about three years, right?

Mr. Mauller: I don't know; I was in the Navy for about three and a half years.

Mike Zambrano: Okay.

Mr. Mauller: I remember...I got out in...'45.

Mike Zambrano: Oh, so...you enlisted in...June of '42, right?

Mr. Mauller: Something like that, yeah.

Mike Zambrano: Okay.

Mr. Mauller: It counted for the year that we went...the V-12 unit was just going to college.

Mike Zambrano: Really?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, that all counted as Navy time; we were in Navy suits and everything and...but fortunately we got a year's college credit and they paid for everything.

Mike Zambrano: Uhm, in your time aboard the Ozark, do you recall any real close friends that you made or...do you recall any subordinates that were under you; any interesting stories or happenings?

Mr. Mauller: Oh, we had this...we had a reun...they have a reunion every year; I haven't gone to any of them. I'm not...one...as I say when...we would go into these towns or things most of those guys would...liked to go to the bars and things and I didn't do any of that at all so I just...got to meet them aboard ship and in the ward room and talk to them during the watch and things. But this...this one little fellow...I think he was a Filipino, was the Coxswain that I had; I mean he was good! And he calls me every time they have one of these reunions; he says, "You going to come out to the reunion this time," and I mean they had them out in Colorado; they had them out in...this one's in New Orleans...and it just is...a little more than I liked to...to get involved with. And I didn't have any close friends there; I had a close from the V-12, Louie Grau (sp?), lives down in Florida now. In fact, they just sent out a list from the college of all the V-12 people that were there.

Mike Zambrano: Really?!

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, and...(chuckles) he called me; he said...I was one of the few that remembered from college there. He was about a six foot four fellow and he'd been to the same college with me and he used to play end on the football team and I would be the half back and I'd say, "Louie, you got to get out there and...get this guy out of the backfield." "Yeah, yeah, okay." He..he weighed about, I think, two hundred and fifty pounds or...he was a big, strong guy. He lives down there now and...on the gulf side of Florida some place. In fact, I just talked to him the other day. And...there was another fellow that was my roommate at V-12; I remember them more, and he called me; he was a...he's a

retired orthopedic surgeon up in Oregon now, and he was my roommate in V-12. So I...there was some of them...the other ones that I talk with every once in awhile...whenever I see them...I mean, see their name some place and...Bill Suttle (sp?) lives up in, I think, Wisconsin or something...he was a fairly good friend of ours and...(unintelligible) used to live over here in Alexandria and I don't know where he is now, but...and Stevens (sp?)...the...he used to be...Sad Sack from Kansas, and...but I...I never really have communicated with any of them; I don't communicate with anybody...hardly. We've got a...a son who's up here now...planting a garden...we've got a farm out here at...Nooksville.

Mike Zambrano: Really?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, it's about ninety acres and we've had it for fifty years now. And I came back in...uh, one of the...wanted to get my wife a...a...mink stole and, of course, being in the Navy and then also working for NSA (unintelligible) having much money, so...I had heard about the teaching...at the University of Virginia...has a community college system, so I...got in touch with them down in Charlottesville and they said, "Oh yeah! That's Thomas Jefferson's idea...have community colleges everywhere!" I said, "Yeah, well...here we are up in northern Virginia, where is it here?" They tell me the same story that...that was Thomas Jefferson's idea, but they never did implement it, so I started a...a program up here to teach the...math, physics in...in the basement of...one of the high schools here. And...we got that started and then we got...into another program where we expanded. At that time, it was a...a branch of the University of Virginia, and then we got a fire house they gave to

us and we had more classes and finally...they got...we...we wanted to build a...a facility. Well, this was *the* University of Virginia in Charlottesville...used to tell me all the time, and these other things are just little piddling things around here. But...so anyway, they finally said, “Well you just...get about a hundred and fifty acres in northern Virginia there and we’ll see about it.” So we talked to one of the Childs family who was interested in committing some land and money and we got it started. And...and I was...the head of the math department when it opened and assistant director. And...now it’s...I think they must have about thirty thousand students in northern Virginia here, and it is now, not only George Mason College, it’s George Mason University.

Mike Zambrano: Really?!

Mr. Mauller: Yeah. And...it was one of those things where you...you have a young (beep noise) trying to establish something that the Board of Curators don’t want; the people that were there...they thought they should only have one school and the University of Virginia is it. And they had problems with...down at...the one that I...you heard about these...the (unintelligible) went wild shooting people down there...

Mike Zambrano: Yeah, I sure did.

Mr. Mauller: ...the attack? I mean, they had a devil of a time trying to keep that thing going, so they...established this one up here and had four buildings and then they were ready to open it up, and they said, “Well, we can’t do that because we don’t have...somebody to set up the management program for it or the...uh,

part that would have to do with financing and computer contact. I said, “Look, I’m a ma...(beep sound), I worked at NSA with all those computers; I know how to do it, so...I quit my job and took off and...set it up for them in there. And they were building the building and said, “You know, we can’t figure this out,” you know, “do we put restrooms on each of those three floors or do we put them in the basement only?” I said, “Look, put it...a bunch of outhouses out in the back and let’s get it going!”

Mike Zambrano: (Chuckles).

Mr. Mauller: I mean that’s how difficult it was to get the thing started.

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: But once it started now...it’s a...a big operation, and they won the championship last year in basketball, remember, George Mason University?

Mike Zambrano: Yeah, actually, yeah, I do, now that you mention it.

Mr. Mauller: I don’t think they won it; I think they lost in the last game, but they...they really went on up! And so I don’t know, I had an enjoyable...we...we live in Virginia here. (Beep noise) We’ve got a...bunch of horses; the kids all been riding; now they’re all grown up and...our daughter is a...Ranger for the Park Service; I have one daughter’s a teacher, and our son’s got a building business, and so we...we have...now he’s got a tractor running out here now. I guess he’s looking for Rita...come out and help him. I’m eighty-four, you know, and it...they don’t realize that...it’s different than it was fifty years ago when you started this farm.

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: But I enjoy it; my wife enjoys it. She's over...they had...Goodhill...was a place right...near us over here; it's an Army place that...they closed down and she goes over there for swimming and she's eighty-three, and you know, it...just...just is nice; we enjoy it.

Mike Zambrano: It sounds like it's *very* nice. Hmm, let me see...

Mr. Mauller: Fox hunting!

Mike Zambrano: Pardon?

Mr. Mauller: You ever been fox hunting?

Mike Zambrano: No, I can't say that I have.

Mr. Mauller: Man, you haven't lived...till you do that!

Mike Zambrano: (Chuckles), are they hard to catch?

Mr. Mauller: Well, you...you ride horses. Well they have about thirty horses and you get a pack of hounds; twenty-five, thirty hounds and chase across country; over fences and...through rivers and all kinds of things, so I enjoy it. I...I can...definitely say...that in all my time with the Navy...I've been teaching...I've taught at the University of Virginia for a number of years, that...I have never, ever done anything that I haven't really enjoyed doing. After I retired...there's a Foxcroft school up here at Middleburg...is one of the (beep noise) elite...prep schools in the country and they wanted somebody to fill in for some (unintelligible) that has got...diabetes or about to die, so I went up and taught with them for seven years. And man, you haven't lived till you...it's a girls school and they have the...the...

(end of tape1, side B)

Mike Zambrano: Okay, we're back on. Uhm...

Mr. Mauller: (Unintelligible).

Mike Zambrano: Oh, we're back on the air here, so...

Mr. Mauller: (Unintelligible).

Mike Zambrano: ...question for you. Uh, okay, you're on the Ozark; you're in the Pacific, World War II. How often did you receive mail or get a chance to send letters back home?

Mr. Mauller: We used to...get mail...pretty regularly actually, I thought, you know, considering you're way over there...in the south Pacific, but they used to...to do a pretty good job of getting it there I thought.

Mike Zambrano: Really?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah. Fact, I used to...they used to have a...a time to get any of the officers...had to have an officer go pick it up all the time, and I used to like to because I'd get a letter from my wif...(chuckle), she wasn't my wife then yet, but...but (unintelligible) got a big picture...(unintelligible) about Guam...went down there to pick up at Guam; had those eight by ten picture of her and...it...I thought it was very good. When I came up to Washington, you know, at that time you had to have...certain many points to get out?

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: And...I didn't have enough, but...then we have a place out here in Washington, the WAVES barracks, and I was assigned there to get it closed down and...I set up a course to teach math out there even.

Mike Zambrano: You must really love math!

Mr. Mauller: (Unintelligible) before the most enlightening and beneficial thing that you can ever do really, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. We got a little granddaughter now that...says, "Grandpa, I need some help with geometry." (chuckles)

Mike Zambrano: (Chuckles).

Mr. Mauller: (Unintelligible) fun!

Mike Zambrano: Sounds like she came to the right person!

Mr. Mauller: Yeah.

Mike Zambrano: Oh, uhm, gosh...now I remember what I was going to ask you. Uhm, during some of these operations in the Pacific...I've heard of stories about typhoons and the descriptions of the weather. Do you remember any typhoons that...do you remember what the weather might have been like, you know, generally? Can you just...

Mr. Mauller: We didn't hit any real, real rough weather; we used to get some that, you know, the bow was about fifty feet out of the water or more and it used to come over the bow or something like that because you always head into them, but we never did have any...real, real rough weather. At the end of the war, I, in order to finish my time up to get out, I was assigned to the [USS] William P. Biddle. It was one of the ships that they used to...ease the problem having to do with transportation. We'd sort of start up in San Diego; go into L.A.; into Portland; into Seattle. It was people that were being charged.

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: And then we'd get up there and we'd take the crew...on down the other way, so I was with them for awhile. And the biggest problem we used to have was

going in and out of...the...river going up to Portland. There was a...a sort of a shoal through there that...man, you used to really had to hit that rider; you'd just about dump the ship over, but it...it was interesting and I think I learned a lot. I think I helped a lot of the people in the process.

Mike Zambrano: Hmm. Uhm, gosh...okay, were there any difficult periods for you while you were out at sea; did...?

Mr. Mauller: Any what?

Mike Zambrano: ...well, did you have any difficult periods out at sea; did you...did you really miss home or...anything that, I don't know, that you found difficult about...being out?

Mr. Mauller: Not really.

Mike Zambrano: Hmm.

Mr. Mauller: Uh, I suppose...just a minute (talking with some else); do you want a check? Okay, they just drove me some propane gas here.

Mike Zambrano: Oh okay.

Mr. Mauller: But, yo...I just had to take care of it. He's a good big boy; he's about six foot, two and weighs a little over two hundred pounds...just the kind you need to do hard work on the farm!

Mike Zambrano: (Chuckles), well how many children did...did you end up having?

Mr. Mauller: Well, we have three children; our son's the oldest and we have two daughters. And the one of them, as I said, is a U.S. Marshall down in Tupelo, Mississippi.

Mike Zambrano: Really?!

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, and she enjoys it. We had lunch yesterday with our daughter that's a teacher over...outside of Annapolis, Maryland, and we had...she was there and our son and his wife, granddaughter. We have two granddaughters; that's all.

Mike Zambrano: Hmm. Just getting back to the war period...

Mr. Mauller: Yeah.

Mike Zambrano: ...do you recall what you were doing...when you had heard that the atomic bomb was dropped?

Mr. Mauller: I do! That was...we were...I think...somewhere around Guam or in Guam actually...maybe and we were getting ready to pick up the...the troops and the supplies and things...to go on an invasion of Japan. Now that was one thing we didn't particularly look forward to, and I was up in the...combat information center there where they had this radio...picks up everything...and it said that this...bomb was dropped up there. And, you know, we looked at each other..., "What do you need a bomb that size?!" And it said it just fried everybody on the ground, and so well, I guess, if that's what it is...that's what it is. And we were...then we heard more particulars of it, and it sounded like that's just what we needed...to have somebody go up there and...bomb those people in there. And then the next day, I guess it was or day or two later, we heard that they had another one and we thought, "Boy, this is great!" And when...we went in then to Japan with the...we had General Clements and a thousand clerk typists and office personnel they were going to set up shop in...Tokyo with these people, and we got out about...I don't know...four or five days out of Tokyo and they decided that they just...they...what they had to

do...they put white sheets over all the guns...going up from Sagami One (sp?) on the bay down there up to Tokyo, and they saw all those white sheets...they decided they'd better...send in some Marines instead of these office people.

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: Well, here were out in the middle of the ocean...and...Marines, you know, they didn't have any combat Marines in...in big numbers. They had...some of them were on the destroyers; some of them were on carriers; some of them were on cruisers; some of them were on battleships...and we had to pick up...first of all, we had to get rid of a thousand of these Army guys, and pick up a thousand Marines...from just, you know, ten, fifteen...maybe...some of them two and three from...some of those destroyers and it was just...out in the ocean and it...it was relatively quiet, but they have these ropes, you know, you put across then you'd put a little...seat on it...

Mike Zambrano: The breeches buoy?

Mr. Mauller: ...breeches buoy, and you set them in and you have a thousand over this way...thousand off, a thousand back, and...with all their equipment, personal equipment! And we had, sometimes, four, you know, four destroyers; two on either side and...the thing is that when the...they had the...the rope that they rode this breeches buoy was...on a...a cap stand, and the fellow that, if he was pretty good and careful, he could keep the thing just at the right level. It was, you know, the cap that goes around...the big thing goes around, and you'd take about four turns on the rope around there, and if you just sort of keep it...right, you know, keep the tension up to...it's almost straight across most of

the time. Well, they didn't like General Clements at all and when General Clements went over, they couldn't figure out how to keep that rope tight! And he'd go down in the drink (chuckles), and then the...the ship then bobbed the other way, and out he'd come...and man, he was some kind of ticked! But anyway, we got a thousand Marines. And then we went into Sagami One that's a big bay down south of Tokyo, and all during the war you couldn't go outside at night with any kind of light; cigarette or anything. And here we got into Sagami One and they said, you know, "Have the fantail screen put up at...show movies on the fantail." Well, you know, with all these...you look up the...the sides of this bay going up towards to Japan and all these white things, and here you're going to have a...a bunch of guys sitting out there with the lights on? It was kind of eerie then, but we went in and I was...one of the first ones that set foot ashore. And we went into Yokosuka Naval Base...by...Tokyo up there where they had a big seaplane ramp that went down...concrete, and we landed on there and all these sailors got up, and me too, we all got a...a samurai sword. They had a big bunch of boxes on the side of this airplane hangar just full of those things. Well, darned Marines made us put them all back!

Mike Zambrano: Really?!

Mr. Mauller: So then we just...had to sit there and wait until they got set up to...and we were right alongside the Missouri when they signed the surrender agreement; yeah. It was...it was very, very exciting. And I'm glad that, you know, we didn't have any...real disastrous encounters along the way.

Mike Zambrano: Well, uhm...you were, I guess, somewhat nervous going onshore, weren't you?

Mr. Mauller: About what?

Mike Zambrano: You were somewhat nervous going onshore, weren't you?

Mr. Mauller: In Tokyo?

Mike Zambrano: Uhm, well, you...you said you first stepped foot...at Yo... Yokosuka Naval Air...Naval Base?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, Yokosuka Naval Base. Well, all I...all we did was we took this contingent of Marines...I think there were about thirty of them...and they had combat gear on. I mean they...they had guns and what have you, but we just went in there. I went up to the...into this big airplane hangar that they had because they're seaplanes and that's all that I got on shore in Tokyo or in Japan.

Mike Zambrano: Now did you see any enemy troops or...when...when you went ashore?

Mr. Mauller: No, in fact, this fellow that I was telling you about, Louie Grau, that was a...a buddy of mine from the V-12...he was...talked the other day and he said that...he's big; he's about six foot, four and a real big fellow and he was an officer, and he said they went and got him and about two dozen other fellows from different ships; he was on a carrier, and they went and paraded them around in Tokyo to let the...the people out there understand how big these Americans were!

Mike Zambrano: (Laughter).

Mr. Mauller: (Laughter), he said that was the strangest thing (unintelligible); he had a gun on his side, but he said these are the biggest guys he'd ever seen in the Navy; all accumulated there together just to kind of walk around the streets in Tokyo.

Mike Zambrano: Makes quite an impression I can imagine!

Mr. Mauller: I'm sure it did! Well, you know, you don't know what's going to happen; they...they were stinking bums who started Pearl Harbor anyway!

Mike Zambrano: (Laughter).

Mr. Mauller: And, you know, you don't know whether they're going to cut loose on you or...or not because we had...the Missouri was in there and I think they had one of the carriers in there with them as I recall, and you know, our ship was there. They...they had lots of ships in there because they had to...to bring some people in...to sort of...grant the situation.

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: And when Dug-out Doug was there, they always have a lot of protection around him.

Mike Zambrano: Well now, let me...let me ask you since you make that comment; now why...why do you call him Dug-out Doug?

Mr. Mauller: That's what everybody called him during the war.

Mike Zambrano: Really?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah.

Mike Zambrano: Uh, now I...I mean...I've read some things about it, but just...you know, do you want to add anything else to that?

Mr. Mauller: Oh, I think he was...probably the best fellow that they could have had in that situation at that time. I mean he added the...

Other Person: (Unintelligible).

Mr. Mauller: Ten o'clock. My wife is back from swimming...(unintelligible); she said it must have been two hours.

Mike Zambrano: (Laughter).

Mr. Mauller: I didn't realize I was talking so long.

Mike Zambrano: Oh no, that's okay! Don't worry about it.

Mr. Mauller: But...he...you know, had the posture and the prestige and the...granted he...he was a big pupusus (sp?), obviously, but he was a good General I think. And...he was in Washington up there when they had some of the marches on Washington after...World War I and he got them straightened out. Think they put him in charge of that to...stop those...veterans marching across the bridge.

Mike Zambrano: Oh okay, I...I remember some...something of that.

Mr. Mauller: You know, and he did it! And he...he would have cut down all of them, I think. Well, sometimes you wonder why they don't do more of that when they're fighting now. I get sort of...irritated with them now; they, you know, these guys in here...they...they just are too hard on these prisoners. They...they had a dog bark at them and...Baloney! Oh, can I...I mention something...awhile back here when we were talking about those Marines in their (unintelligible). She said, "Don't say anything like that for tape."

Mike Zambrano: (Chuckles).

Mr. Mauller: So I had to...be quiet.

Mike Zambrano: Well, don't worry; you...you get a copy of this to edit yourself.

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, but you know, she said that during the...that battle...those battles out there...people thought differently than they do now; they're so kind hearted now and you can't do that and fight a war. (Unintelligible sentence).

Mike Zambrano: (Chuckles). Let me see...uhm...

Mr. Mauller: We've been married...sixty-two years now.

Mike Zambrano: Really?! Wow! That's a long time!

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, and thoroughly enjoy her but she's a rugged one; very pretty but very rugged.

Mike Zambrano: Well, you know, being on a farm...you bought it together; I...I'm sure that...I'm sure...

Mr. Mauller: ...and we grew up in St. Louis in the middle of the city up there, and...how ever we got out here on the farm was...another long story, but we did it. And she used to put the horses in the trailer and take the kids to horse shows and then she'd get her big, long gown on to go to the Hunt Ball...that they had. My wife says it'd...it'd take too much of your time for this.

Mike Zambrano: Oh, don't worry. Uhm, let's see...oh, Tokyo Bay...when the...the surrender was being signed...can you tell me a little bit about that day?

Mr. Mauller: Oh, it was a beautiful day and we were...aboard ship, I guess, a couple of hundred yards from the Missouri and we saw them all parading up into there. And they didn't have any noise or anything as I recall; it was just a...rather somber ceremony that they went through and...got rid of those guys.

Mike Zambrano: There was no loud speaker or anything where you could actually hear?

Mr. Mauller: No, not from where we were; we couldn't hear anything that was going on up there except we could see the people moving around but that was all.

Mike Zambrano: Were you looking through binoculars?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah.

Mike Zambrano: Could you the...General MacArthur and some of the other...people?

Mr. Mauller: No, they were more toward the center of the ship, and of course, the Missouri is way up in the air; I mean...the bow is way up in the air.

Mike Zambrano: Uhm.

Mr. Mauller: And...they had...the...the deck was lined and lined with all the...Americans and Japanese and the rest of them.

Mike Zambrano: Uhm, gosh.

Mr. Mauller: We could see that they were doing something up there and we assumed they were signing the right papers.

Mike Zambrano: (Laughter).

Mr. Mauller: And glad of it!

Mike Zambrano: We hope.

Mr. Mauller: Yeah.

Mike Zambrano: So...so from there...from Tokyo Bay...uhm, what...what did you do; what did the ship do?

Mr. Mauller: Well we picked up these repatriate prisoners, the U.S. prisoners, and we stopped, I think, at Guam first, and then they stopped in Hawaii and then we...got into San Francisco. I think we were the first ship back with prisoners of the Far East, and they had these water cannons shooting up in the air and...I

got in and called my wife (laughter). She was my girlfriend then, and...and my wife and I (unintelligible); she said was going to call her mother and tell her. Said, "Tell her what?" "That we're getting married!" So we did. We got out of it and I don't remember...wasn't too long...

Mrs. Mauller: (Unintelligible).

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, and we...we were married...Memorial Day on 1945, November the 11th.

Mike Zambrano: Really?!

Mr. Mauller: Yeah. I mean, it didn't take long after I got back...11th of November, 1945.

Mrs. Mauller: Not Memorial Day.

Mr. Mauller: Not Memorial Day; that's Veteran's Day I guess, isn't it?

Mike Zambrano: Uhm, yes.

Mr. Mauller: They used to call it Armistice Day, I think, or something.

Mike Zambrano: Oh yeah, that was...that was it. You know, I didn't ask you...I asked you the atomic bomb question; do you recall what you were doing when you heard that the Japanese had surrendered?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, we were, I don't know...it...it didn't seem like it took but a couple of days for that to come...we...we just assumed that that would happen the way they...had that bomb and they hit...particularly when they hit the second one, we just assumed that it...was all over then or at least we were wishfully thinking it would be. But...it was...it was a real, real experience for that to happen at that time; I'm sure glad they tried it or used it.

Mike Zambrano: Yeah, I heard there were have been a lot of casualties if they had...tried an invasion.

Mr. Mauller: Oh, my, well, you...you just have no idea. When we went up...that day to Tokyo and you saw all these white sheets; jiminy Christmas! You know, it would have been absolute murder to try to go through there. It...a lot more would have gotten murdered I'm sure...to...to (unintelligible). It...it's was a...it's a narrow strait that goes up there, and you know, you've got these guns on the right and guns on the left. They never did see any of the guns, but they certainly had enough...white flags over them.

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: I don't know whether they did that...like...we did when we sent those big guys in to walk around Tokyo; I imagine they just...put out their sheets there to...to impress the U.S. or something, I don't know.

Mike Zambrano: Did you at any time meet any Japanese?

Mr. Mauller: No, never did.

Mike Zambrano: Uhm, okay. Okay, so...

Mr. Mauller: Still don't...like them.

Mike Zambrano: Really?

Mr. Mauller: Really. You know, Japanese cars...

Mike Zambrano: Uh huh.

Mr. Mauller: ...I just...when they say, you know, "We've got Tokyo plants here and Tokyo plants there,"...it gives so much employment...it's just...Toyota, yeah, Toyota. You know, they're building plants here and plants there and they make it sound like this is the greatest thing that's ever happened; I don't like it; I..I

just have never, ever gotten...to the place that...I thought it was...worthwhile to...to deal with those Japanese.

Mike Zambrano: Uhm, okay; well, that's interesting. I mean it's been quite a few years since the war was over.

Mr. Mauller: Yep, sixty years ago!

Mike Zambrano: Yeah, about sixty (laughter).

Mr. Mauller: Yeah. I mean...we got married just when it was over; that was sixty-two years ago, I guess.

Mike Zambrano: So, you repatriated troops and then you...you came back to the States...oh, I'm sorry, you were on the Biddle for a little bit and...

Mr. Mauller: I came back to the U.S. and...they decided that they didn't need such a combat crew on the Ozark anymore, so most of us got off of it and they had a...sort of a skeletal crew on the Ozark as I recall. And I came up...and my wife was in weather bureau central over in Washington, so I gave that as my address till they...sent me up there, and to...next assignment...and...

Mrs. Mauller: (Unintelligible sentence.)

Mr. Mauller: Oh, yeah, I guess...I went to St. Louis to my home address and we got married and went down to Texas for...honeymoon and...then they assigned me to the William P. Biddle; it was an ATA-8, I think it was. And we went up and down the coast; it was a...sort of a ferry-type of operation for all these guys to get...get through. I was the Troop Transport Officer; had the...keep track of all these guys and the Captain used to say that he was...he was kind of a...a weird duck we had on that one, but...not anything like the first Captain we had

on the Ozark, and he'd say, you know, "Get these troops; we're going to have a debarkation drill," you know, just like in a battle...then you climbed down the...go...line them up and they marched down the gang plank and we...you know, these were Army guys and Navy guys and Marines; all different types of...and...so, you know, you say, "(Unintelligible) me now; now get this set up." So I draw up a plan and we'd have a practice; have them line up there and the next day you'd come into port and we still had the cargo nets on the thing and we'd pull up along the dock (chuckles)...he'd...tied...cut the strings on the cargo net and climbed down and hauled free. Captain'd say, "Order, order, order!"...you know, it...these guys were long gone!

Mike Zambrano: (Laughter).

Mr. Mauller: And...this is what happened and he'd say, you know, "Well, we have to keep these fellows busy." You know, they'd be off for a day or two at most and he said, you know, "Have them chip...chip paint on the deck and paint it." And I said, "Well, they're not going to do that." "They will! They will! Make them do that!" So anyway, we...get the...little chipping hammers out; they'd throw them all overboard and so the Captain said, "Alright, make them chip in the hull where they can't throw them overboard!" So...yeah...

Mike Zambrano: Right.

Mr. Mauller: ...chicken type of stuff.

Mike Zambrano: So, so at what point did you get out? What...what year, what month?

Mr. Mauller: I got out in...let's see, I guess, I was out there on the Biddle for...I guess...about a year almost or something like that. And then I still didn't have

enough points to get out, so I went up to...Washington; gave that as my home address, so I got there and was assigned to the WAVES barracks over in Massachusetts in (unintelligible) avenue, and that was a real deal. I was the First Lieutenant Security Officer out there, and these guys in here...they...they had thirty-two barracks, two-story barracks. They built sixteen; it was out near...uh, the...the Naval Observatory out there, and American University is right across the street, and they first built sixteen of these barracks, WAVES barracks, during the war to take care of the WAVES. And then they needed some more, so they built sixteen more in between each of other ones, so I had thirty-two barracks. And then they were getting rid of the WAVES first and they had these...sailors were coming in. Well, these sailors that they got in out there had been in hotels downtown 'cause they didn't have any room for them any place, so they would come in and they...take and get rid of the older barracks (unintelligible). So you had a barracks of WAVES and a barracks of sailors and a barracks of WAVES (chuckle). I was living over at Arlington; I didn't stay out there at the barracks at the time. They called in the middle of the night, "Hey," you know, "some sailor's peeking in our window!" So it...it got to be a bit of a...and then they had these Boatswain's Mates that come in and...I...I put a Boatswain's Mate in charge of each of these barracks. You know, I don't know if you know them or...I mean, they're big tough guys and they'd get in there and I'd say, "Alright, now clean up the barracks!" Boatswain's Mates would get out and sort of...walk a couple of them and...then the guys would try to get out by jumping over the fence around the

place and I'd take some...station wagon and Boatswain's Mate; we'd round them up. The only place we had to retain them was in a big walk-in safe they had out there.

Mike Zambrano: (Chuckles).

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, "We'll smother in here!" "Well, too bad," so...

Mike Zambrano: (Laughter).

Mr. Mauller: ...but we...we finally...I got out of that and...went on home from the WAVES barracks in Washington D.C. It was in 1946, August.

Mike Zambrano: So...

Mr. Mauller: Just in time to go back and finish up another year of college.

Mike Zambrano: Now did you get married right after college or while you...

Mr. Mauller: I got married in...in 1945.

Mike Zambrano: Ah, '45, okay.

Mr. Mauller: November...just after the war was over. As soon as I got out and...drove up...or took the train up to Washington...I went home and got married.

Mike Zambrano: And...

Mr. Mauller: I'd waited long enough.

Mike Zambrano: Did you utilize the G.I. Bill?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, sure because I had a...a year college to finish up...just the regular college and then I had two years of...graduate work at the University of Missouri to get a Master's degree and then I used one year for working at Indiana on my PhD in Math and Physics.

Mike Zambrano: Uhm, and...

Mr. Mauller: That was very, very helpful. And then, in addition to having, you know, paying for tuition and things, at Central College they had a thing they called Eagle Village. The president at the college...got some...barracks that had been from one of the...Fort (unintelligible) some place down in Missouri and had them cut in half and...made a thing they called Eagle Village. And the retired servicemen could come back there and I think the rent was like a hundred dollars a month, and...

Mike Zambrano: Really? Uhm, what kind...what was one of the first jobs you got after you had finished college?

Mr. Mauller: After I finished college?

Mike Zambrano: Uh huh.

Mr. Mauller: Well, first I...I taught at the University of Central Methodist, and then after I got out of there, they came around recruiting for the...let's see, what did I do after...? Yeah, after the first year of teaching, I went and got my Master's degree and...I guess after that I went to...Melpar (sp?)

Mike Zambrano: Melpar?

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, it's a division of Westinghouse Air Brake (sp?); a big electronics firm.

Mike Zambrano: Oh okay.

Mr. Mauller: And...(pause)...the...

Mrs. Mauller: (Unintelligible).

Mr. Mauller: oh, I guess I...I went to NSA...first.

Mike Zambrano: Now...

Mr. Mauller: (Unintelligible) talk to...you'd think...make that...but I went to NSA first because they were looking for mathematicians with these big computer programs they had. And I went there...and worked there for about five years. And then a neighbor of ours was with Melpar and...he hired me and we went down...I went down there and I was ahead of one of their sections in...in Melpar. But we used to...we were...we did some fantastic things there, but she wants me to stop talking. In fact, we...discovered...the...situation with respect nose-cone coupling when we were at Melpar...

Mike Zambrano: Uh huh.

Mr. Mauller: ...and they used to put an O'jive (sp?) on the front of these nose cones to...sort of stabilize it. Well, when these things got into rear atmosphere, there wasn't no stabilizing at all with them. They used to tumble and they couldn't keep track of these things.

Mike Zambrano: (Chuckle).

Mr. Mauller: So, they finally decided at that time to put those conical shields with heat plates in there that...when they'd come in, they'd get hot and would just melt and the stuff would flow off. And they had...uh, the...the things were controlled with...I mean, got stability of them with just...rockets, little rockets that they had on the backs of these nose cones to stabilize them, yeah. And we...we did that. And I mean we...did a...I don't remember, you probably didn't remember...it's before your time...they had big problems with airplanes and the sonic barrier...when they'd go through it...

Mike Zambrano: Uh huh.

Mr. Mauller: ...and they claimed that, you know, people would say they...break the windows and break the plaster around, and so we did a...a study when I was just...accident...(unintelligible) went to (unintelligible) Services after that...out at Oklahoma City. We set up a big test program and we found out that...it wasn't only the speed of the thing...it...what they were able to do...they...the only thing they could get to go fast enough...break the sound barrier were these little light fighter airplanes. And, you know, they would go through and crack up everything, and particularly if they made a curve. You know, you just...the...it turned out that after we did a study out there and we got the B-58 which would break the sound barrier...it was a heavy plane, and we found out it was the *weight* of the airplane, in addition to the speed, that was a problem. And we did that study and...President Johnson was in then, and we...worked with him and his crew to decide that the United States was not going to have a supersonic airplane because one of those things carries with it a path that's about fifty miles wide and if they were going supersonic, it'd just wreck anything underneath it, and so they decided not to have the SSP Program. So, I got into all kinds of interesting things. When you're a mathematician and a physicist, you could do anything, and I did.

Mike Zambrano: Well, it certainly sounds like it. Uhm...

Mr. Mauller: Now I'm too old to do anything hardly; I have a hard time getting out of the chair to go eat (chuckles).

Mike Zambrano: (Chuckles), uh, where did you retire from when you did?

Mr. Mauller: Uh, I guess, retired when, oh, I went...some other consulting jobs that are...actually, one I had was...a consulting job with the...my wife says, "I'm sitting out." I had a...a contract...I'd started up a company of my own, and we got a contract to review the operation of...Vietnam as to what they needed to do to get better control of the logistics there and worked for Mel Laird and David Packard who was Assistant [s/b Deputy] Secretary of Defense and...looked over the situations that they had over there. They used to have scads and scads of that material that they'd order, and then they'd move and they, you know, they either had to send troops to protect it or they'd just blow it up and things and we helped set up a...a control system for them that would, you know, we...we called it Inventory in Motion. What you do is you know how much you're going to use in a theatre and you order that but you send it out and you maintain control over it as it's going out, so you...if they needed...in North Korea they'd go there...whatever, and it was...a bit of problems because that was when David Packard was there and he had, you know, Hewlett-Packard, he was the one that ran that thing and built it up, and he had the most efficient operation you ever heard of. I ran into him when we were at Melpar and they used to make audio-oscillators for us, and David Packard would say, you know, "Do it!" And you know, these guys would go out and *do it!* Uh, he got into there and...with the Navy and the Army and the Air Force and the Marines and he said to me one time, he says, "You know, I can't stand it; you tell them to do it and then the Navy says, 'Well, yeah, but we got a little difference here,' and the Army says, 'We got a difference

here,” and you know, you’re wanting to call...so they had things during Vietnam over there where they had generators for airplanes; the A-6 I think it was, and the Army would have them at one end of the field and the Navy would...at the other, but the numbers were so mixed up they couldn’t figure out that they had them available. And he was trying to...trying to get those straightened out. And they always said, “We’re going to call it this.” “Well, yeah, but we want to put this discriminator on it, too,” because of this and that baloney and he finally just quit; so did I.

Mike Zambrano: Gosh.

Mr. Mauller: And then one last thing, I worked up at Foxcroft School at Middleburg; they...they were looking for somebody to be a math teacher up there, so I took seven years after I’d really retired and taught up there and it was very, very pleasurable. But anyway, my wife says I’ve got to stop.

Mike Zambrano: No, no that’s okay; that’s okay. I mean I like to try to get information about, you know, what you did with your life afterwards and it seems like...like you said...you’ve done a lot and you’ve enjoyed all of it.

Mr. Mauller: Well, I’ve been an...a politician, too.

Mike Zambrano: Oh, really?!

Mr. Mauller: Yeah. I ran...Nixon’s campaign in this area when he ran...

Mike Zambrano: Uh huh.

Mr. Mauller: ...for this region; ran Bill Scott, who was a Sen...a U.S. Senator from this area; I was his Campaign Manager and I was elected...myself to the Board of County Supervisors here, and it’s, you know, there’s so many things that you

need to do and...my wife is real smart and that's what you need. When we'd have something on the Board of Supervisors and they'd want to do this and the County Exec would say, "Well, have your wife look at this opinion I've got and see if it's alright," and she said...he said, "You just wait until I bring it before the Board and then you said your wife said this and that, and she's always right," so...

Mike Zambrano: (Laughter).

Mr. Mauller: ...she is. It's...essential to have a...a good wife, and I've got one!

Mike Zambrano: Well, I think you're right.

Mr. Mauller: (Unintelligible) Mother's Day.

Mike Zambrano: (Chuckle), so let me just ask you one last question.

Mr. Mauller: What question?

Mike Zambrano: Is there anything that I haven't covered with you about the war that you'd like to share; any stories and experiences?

Mr. Mauller: No, not really. I mean, they're...when you're in it for...a number of years like that, there are all kinds of things that...I think I've told you the salient parts of it.

Mike Zambrano: Okay, well, you know I...I think that pretty much covers...pretty much covers everything.

Mr. Mauller: I would think so.

Mike Zambrano: (Laughter).

Mr. Mauller: I hope so. If, you know, if there's any point that you need clarified, I'd be glad to do it.

Mike Zambrano: Well, thanks, and you know, I appreciate you...you taking this...this time to sit down with me and...and recording this. I'm sure the Museum will appreciate it greatly.

Mr. Mauller: Yeah, okay, I hope so. The...just this one other thing I will tell you.

Mike Zambrano: Sure.

Mr. Mauller: With this farm out here, we, you know, tried to...it had an orchard; we tried to grow apples and with the horses... we raised horses and sold them and...and the IRS said (beep sound), "You can't do that," and my wife, "Sure we can," so...we had...you know, we...we'd go...you...you go on up the...the lines with the local people and then you go to the district and the region and we ended up in the Tax Court of the United States on this case, and it's...it's a landmark case we had, and she was my lawyer.

Mike Zambrano: Really?!

Mr. Mauller: Yeah! (Chuckles), *and we beat them!* They had at one time, I think, about ten government lawyers in there trying to figure out what was going on, yeah. My son was here...he was at the time, too; we bamboozled theme. Yeah, we got...got the decision! But that's all; I'd better quit.

Mike Zambrano: Oh no, that's...that's okay. Well...well, good; I'm glad you won!

Mr. Mauller: We did, and people call even yet once in awhile and remind us that that (beep sound) was a...a case that they used...as an example.

Mike Zambrano: Wow! Oh, since you mention your wife so much, what's her name?

Mr. Mauller: Her name is Marjorie deJong.

Mike Zambrano: Mar...Marguerite?

Mr. Mauller: Marjorie.

Mike Zambrano: Marjorie, okay.

Mr. Mauller: Marjorie...i-e.

Mike Zambrano: Okay.

Mr. Mauller: d-e...small d-e...capital J-o-n-g...deJong; she's...yeah, it's the same thing...it's the...fellow you talked to is her brother.

Mike Zambrano: Oh, okay, good; then it clarifies that.

Mr. Mauller: Yeah.

Mike Zambrano: Alright, well, I bet...I better let you go; I've had you on the line for quite awhile now.

Mr. Mauller: It's been nice talking with you, and if there's anything else I can do let me know. There probably isn't anything different.

Mike Zambrano: Alright, well if there's any questions I have I'll just give you a call?

Mr. Mauller: Please. Thank you.

Mike Zambrano: Well, thank you; you have a good day (beep sound).

Mr. Mauller: Yes, bye.

Mike Zambrano: Bye, bye. Okay, that was a good interview.

(end of interview)

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