

**THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR**

**The Nimitz Education and Research Center**

**Fredericksburg, Texas**

**An Interview With  
Joseph D. Jura  
Las Vegas, NV  
August 3, 2017  
U.S. Navy**

My name is Richard Misenhimer: Today is August 3, 2017. I am interviewing Mr. Joseph D. Jura by telephone. His telephone number is 559-351-0725. His address is 916 Alan Shepard Street, Las Vegas, NV 89145. This interview is in support of the National Museum of the Pacific War, the Nimitz Education and Research Center for the preservation of historical information related to World War II.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Joe, I want to thank you for taking time to do this interview today and I want to thank you for your service to our country during World War II.

Mr. Jura:

Thank you very much.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, the first thing I need to do is read to you this agreement with the museum to make sure this is OK with you. (agreement read) Is that OK with you?

Mr. Jura:

OK. But I'm not going to be bothered by a lot of phone calls, am I?

Mr. Misenhimer:

No, sir. You're not. We do not pass your name on to anybody. We don't sell it.

Mr. Jura:

All right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now the next thing I need to do is to get an alternative contact. We find out that sometimes several years down the road try to get back in contact with a veteran and he's moved or

something. So do you have a son or daughter or someone that we could contact if we needed to to find you?

Mr. Jura:

Well, you know, I live with my daughter and I can give you her name.

Mr. Misenhimer:

OK, what is her name?

Mr. Jura:

Her name is Deborah Jura. She's still unmarried.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you have a phone number for her?

Mr. Jura:

Her phone number is 702-521-7207.

Mr. Misenhimer:

She has the same address as yours?

Mr. Jura:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Hopefully we'll never need that but you never know. OK, now. What is your birth date?

Mr. Jura:

I was born May 29, 1926.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where were you born?

Mr. Jura:

In Fresno, California.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have brothers and sisters?

Mr. Jura:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How many of each?

Mr. Jura:

I have one sister and three brothers.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were any of your brothers in World War II?

Mr. Jura:

No. I was the only one that was in.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Are you oldest of the group?

Mr. Jura:

No, my sister is the oldest. She's 94. I have an older brother, 93 and I'm 91.

Mr. Misenhimer:

OK, but he was not in World War II, your older brother?

Mr. Jura:

No.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What were your mother's and father's first names?

Mr. Jura:

My mother's name was Rose and my father's name was Mike.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, you grew up during the Depression. How did the Depression affect you and your family?

Mr. Jura:

You know, we were kids then but we didn't notice anything weird. We were on a ranch. So way out in the boonies, really. When you look at it in those days, the house all sub-divided. I didn't notice anything different. No going without food. First way with us and my mother worked on the ranch, you know, did different chores on the ranch. And us kids did too.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where was your ranch? What state was that in?

Mr. Jura:

That was in California, Fresno County, California.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did your father have a job besides the ranch?

Mr. Jura:

Well, when he first started out, he ended up going with a crew of other men who were friends. See my father was an immigrant and they had a lot of friends that had come over from Europe and he was Italian and certain groups seemed to stay in a given area, in the farming areas, and crews would go out and prune vines and do different things like that with his crew and get paid that way.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What year did he come over from Italy?

Mr. Jura:

You know I don't really know but it was before, it was before World War I. I guess in 1911 or 1912.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How old was he when he came over? Do you know?

Mr. Jura:

He was a pretty young man because he ended up joining the Army and going back to Europe and fighting against the Axis.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Your father was in World War I then?

Mr. Jura:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

He came home from that OK?

Mr. Jura:

He came home from that OK. I think he had...he was gassed a little bit with mustard gas. That's all. It didn't bother him too much.

Mr. Misenhimer:

That happened to a lot of people.

Mr. Jura:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, on December 7, 1941 Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. Do you recall hearing about that?

Mr. Jura:

Yes. I figured I was young enough that they would never get me. I was in high school.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How did you hear about it?

Mr. Jura:

Over the radio.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you heard that, what reaction did you have?

Mr. Jura:

I didn't really have a reaction of any sort because I was a lot younger, freshman in 9<sup>th</sup> grade of high school.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You were 15 years old at that time.

Mr. Jura:

I was about 15 years old then.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Right, right. Where did you go to high school?

Mr. Jura:

I went to high school at the high school out in the country, Central Union High School.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What year did you graduate there?

Mr. Jura:

I graduate there in 1944.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you do when you finished high school?

Mr. Jura:

Well, I was working on the ranch. All the neighbors, their sons were in the service already and my dad had sent everybody but me out when I got 18. I was 18 now on May 29 of course. So he came in one day and talked to us boys, my older brother and I, and he said, "Hard to say this but one of us had to go into the service." I told him I would volunteer to go into the service because my older brother was married and his wife was expecting and he was running the ranch anyhow. He was getting ready to take over from my dad and learn more about the ranch. That's how it happened.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So you volunteered then? Is that correct?

Mr. Jura:

Well, I was drafted but my dad knew everybody really. He was a real PR person. He knew all the politicians and he knew everybody in any position of power in the city, like the draft board and all of that. So he could keep all us boys out but the neighbors were all complaining and because their sons were in and we had nobody in and blah, blah. You know how people can be. So I was drafted in San Francisco, California.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What date did you go in?



Mr. Jura:

I went into the United States Navy on December 19, 1944.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How did you choose the Navy?

Mr. Jura:

Well, my dad told me. He says be sure I didn't get in the Army because if you got into the Navy you at least have a bed until it might have been sunk out from under you. My health was in good shape. Young man, skinny as a rail and tough as nails and so when the Marines tried to recruit me, I told them no, I was going into the Navy and I did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you go for your boot camp?

Mr. Jura:

San Diego, California.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that boot camp?

Mr. Jura:

It was a real good old established Navy town. It was to me, not as hard as we had to work on the ranch as young men, it was a vacation.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were your drill instructors pretty tough on you?

Mr. Jura:

No, they weren't tough on us. They were good people.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What are some things you did in boot camp?

Mr. Jura:

Well, they taught you how to march, they taught you how to shoot your gun. You went to different classes for identification of enemy warships and airplanes and just...it was only about three months in boot camp.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have swimming?

Mr. Jura:

No, you know I didn't know how to swim and they would only allow one person in the pool at a time because there was a problem. It was some kind of a fever going around and they didn't know what was causing it. So I never learned how to swim.

Mr. Misenhimer:

OK. Did you have knot tying?

Mr. Jura:

Oh, yeah. We learned how to do all that. And then you had to learn how to tie your seabag on your bunk and learned a square knot and all those things like that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

After boot camp, what happened then?

Mr. Jura:

Well, when we got out of boot camp then we went to a recruit transfer unit that was at Camp Elliott in California, up in San Diego. The funny thing is my dad had been in the Camp Elliott there in the Army in World War I. So we got transferred there and I was very lucky because I

took typing in high school in my senior year. They needed typists in offices because supposedly they could tell the war was winding down a little. So I was put in there in the office until they transferred me to where they needed me.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now what office were you in?

Mr. Jura:

I was in one of the offices there that took care of the records and transfer of different category of personnel to different new duties.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then where did you go from there?

Mr. Jura:

From there I went to Yerba Buena Island, Treasure Island, just off Treasure Island. Treasure Island you know was a man-made island and the Navy took it over. Yerba Buena Island you know a little about San Francisco is the island that the Bay Bridge goes through, there in the bay. So I jokingly tell everybody, they'd say, "Where were you during the war?" I would tell them I was on an island in the Pacific. They said, "Really?" and I said, "My island was in fact in the middle of San Francisco Bay." I got to tell you an interesting story. When I was in recruit transfer unit at Camp Elliott, we worked in the chow hall. You know had to work in the chow hall and the guys that were in the officers' swimming pool, they would come up and wanted us to make sandwiches. We told them, "Hey, there's a whole bunch of us here that never learned how to swim. Can you teach us how to swim?" But they said, "Well, we have the officers' swimming pool there but nobody can tell if you're an officer when you got your trunks on. So why don't you come down and we'll teach you a few basics so that you're at least are a little

more confident in the water.” And that’s what they did. We provided them sandwiches for their officers and we went down there and they taught us how to swim.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So then you could swim after that.

Mr. Jura:

Yes. Well, I wasn’t a real swimmer but they taught me that the body would naturally float if you were relaxed and didn’t get excited and any time I’d get to that dog paddle of course. We all could. They taught us how to flip over on your back and all you had to do was kick your feet a little and you could float. I learned how to float real good and of course you know they taught us how to in boot camp. In boot camp they taught us how you took your dungaree pants, tied a knot in them and when they were wet they were almost airtight and you’d flip them over your head, fill those pantlegs up with air and you could use them as a life jacket.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Jura:

Well, I was put in an office and I was an Apprentice Seaman and I was making \$21.00 a month, big amount of money, and I stayed in that office. I was pretty good with numbers and I became a, I was not a Yeoman. I wasn’t rated yet. Of course you go in as a Seaman 2<sup>nd</sup> Class, then Seaman 1<sup>st</sup> Class, and then I became, I had a friend, a guy that came through because we were handling a lot of people that were returning to the United States and had to get transferred out for discharge from the military. So we had all the records and I became a Ration Yeoman for a UBI. We could billet about 4,000 men and you know when I grew up, I had to be tough. I grew up as kids, we had to work with a bunch of men and you know, being the boss’s sons, you couldn’t shirk your

responsibility. You had to work harder than them and one day I caught the guys that were giving me the information they were giving me as to how many billets they had available for people coming in to stay overnight or whatever their time was going to be there. Then the chow hall, all our chow would come over from Treasure Island. We could serve it but we didn't cook it on our base. These guys were dummies their records and I told them one day, I said, "You know, don't dummy your records. Someday a big draft is going to come in from Treasure Island and you say you got 250 slots. When they issue 250 people to your barracks for you to put them up." And they didn't do it. And one day lo and behold the big draft came in from Treasure Island and as I started allocating everybody for people they said they had room for, the phone come off the hook and you know they didn't call me, they called the Lieutenant Commander Woosley who was regular Navy and tough as nails. He called Seaman Jura and said, "Jura, what's going on?" I said, "Sir, I warned them what was going to happen. I knew they were dummies the records. I told them don't do it. Give me actual counts and they didn't do it" and he says, "Jura, what should we do?" I says, "Tough, sir, they created the problem, let them solve it. If they got to move out of their bunks, they got to move out of their bunks. Not my problem. They created it." He said, "You told them that, didn't you?" "Yes, sir." He called them and he backed me up. He says, "My ration Yeoman tells me he warned you this was going to happen and you let it happen by dummies the records." You know you never forget those things.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So what did they do with those people then that came in?

Mr. Jura:

I have no idea what they did with them. Their problem.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I see, OK.

Mr. Jura:

Being that the Commander was regular Navy and he was tough. I guess he kind of liked that a Seaman 1<sup>st</sup> Class being tough on these guys in warning them and they didn't listen to him. He had no authority. That was one of things that we had there. We could be in ship's company means we could go off the base anytime we didn't have duty. Course Yerba Buena Island had the key system trains that were going across the bridge to San Francisco and east side of the bay and we could climb about two or three hundred steps and get up to the train station and I forget what it cost. I don't think it cost us much money to go to San Francisco and so anytime we didn't have duty we could go to any city we wanted or anything.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What were your work hours there?

Mr. Jura:

Our work hours were, you know I don't remember if it was six days a week or not. But we'd go to work about eight o'clock and go home at five. But for our barracks we had ... Being as I was a Yeoman we'd go around...the whole island of Yerba Buena Island was all military. Had beautiful homes up there. The officers lived up there. They had prisons up there, too, and I'll never forget. They had Italian prisoners of war who were living in San Francisco. I mean, I got a kick out of it. If you were late coming back to the base and you didn't know anybody, they would put you in the brig. Then you were treated like a prisoner but the prisoners, they would march them in when we're all standing in line, going to the chow hall, and they'd march all the prisoners up and I'll be damned if they wouldn't go to the front of the line and get ahead of us.

We'd been standing in line there for maybe five or ten minutes to get in. Hey, those prisoners had it made. An Italian being in San Francisco, North Beach. He didn't want to go home but things like that happened and I was always trying to figure out how I could make some extra money because that twenty-one dollars wouldn't go anyplace. One day we got the crazy idea that we were going to go into San Francisco. I ended up with a car on the base so we could drive into San Francisco and we were paying fourteen cents a gallon for gasoline. We brought it on the base and we went into San Francisco and we would...the chow hall was the guys that were coming in from Treasure Island on draft. They didn't realize that the chow halls on Treasure Island were open 24 hours a day. We had breakfast there from our island to theirs. They were connected together. But that breakfast would run to that island and there'd be twenty men on shift and the bus would go down to the main island, Treasure Island, and they could get food free after our chow halls were closed and we had a cafeteria that would close at a certain time and here these guys come in on a draft and they're hungry and want to eat and there's no place to eat. So a couple of us figured, man, we'll go into San Francisco, buy about 40 or 50 hamburgers and come back and double our money. Everything was going great until Lieutenant Levine called me in one day and wanted to talk to me. He wasn't running the show but he was one of the officers there in the office and he says, "Jura, I understand somebody's in competition with the cafeteria and that's against Navy regulations. Will you make sure that that they find out and that's against the rules and they stop it?" I says, "I sure will, sir." Well, he knew who was doing it. He was pretty sharp the way he handled it. Our business went down the tubes. Had it for about a week or two maybe.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What's some other things that happened?

Mr. Jura:

We practically lived under the bridge, you know, and the key system trains would go across it and if a train missed a schedule, you know it would wake you up because it wasn't going by. You were used to hearing it subconsciously and then when...see I was there only about...it was real funny the way I got transferred from San Diego where I was working in the office and there was this young WAVE there. She was 1<sup>st</sup> Class Yeoman. I ended up being a Gunners Mate 3<sup>rd</sup> Class because a Gunners Mate came through there and he was working in the office and he says, "You know they used to call the Yeomen Feather Merchants because if...were you in the Navy?"

Mr. Misenhimer:

No, I was in the Army.

Mr. Jura:

OK, well a Feather Merchant was clerical help in the office and he says, "You don't want to be a Feather Merchant." I said, "What should, I'd be..." This one gal, her name was similar to what mine was because my name Jura is an Italian name. It's Giuria. There's no "J" in the Italian language and when dad came across Ellis Island and they asked him what his name was, they put Jura and that was it and it's been that ever since. But her name was similar to that and I guess she took a liking to a young man like me although she had her own boyfriend who was in the Feather Merchant department too and one day she came to me. She said, "I just scratched you on a draft." She said, "They wanted to send you out to sea and drive one of those LSTs, you know, one of those little landing craft." She says, "You're up there in plain sight." She says, "You don't deserve to go out there and die like that." So she said, "I scratched you from the draft." I said, "That's great." And one day she came in and she says, "Question, isn't San Francisco closer to Fresno than San Diego?" I says, "It sure is." She said you just caught a draft to Treasure Island."



And that's how I got transferred to Treasure Island and then being as they learned I knew how to type and made me the typist, even though I became a Gunners Mate Third Class and got real good in working in the office. It was a simple job. To me, my whole tour of duty and you know when you're 18 years old, there's no way they're going to kill you. Don't think anything of dying. Then when we worked there we had to answer phones all the time and they taught me how to make a teletype I guess it was, machine that you type like a typewriter and it was like a jello sheet and it would like \_\_\_\_\_ so that you could send a graph and make copies of different things that they needed. So that was interesting and then keeping records. IBMs were just starting in when they had punch cards.

The last time \_\_\_\_\_ because when the war in the Pacific was going in our favor, a lot of people were coming back. So they needed the officers and they had the computer cards. IBM was just starting its infancy. They had punch cards and we had to keep everybody's file. We had to know everybody who was there and everything but that wasn't too hard. It was simple, really. It was like I said, the work we had to learn doing on the ranch was hard work. And during the service time was a honeymoon although we learned didn't make anything and then I got discharged on July 9, 1946. So I put in a little over 18 months. I got discharged at Shoemaker, California. That's just out over from Oakland, by Livermore.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was the highest rank you got to?

Mr. Jura:

Gunners Mate Third Class.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How did you get to be a Gunners Mate?

Mr. Jura:

Took the written test. Well, the fellow came through the office and he says, "Hey, we got to get you a right arm rating because the right arm ratings were the ones that run the show during the wartime, during an attack." Feather Merchants weren't in the command position of the ship or something. I took the test. Probably a funny thing happened, the Lieutenant Commander was named L. E. Moss and my parents, my dad was in the farming business. He worked fig trees, lot of orchards and so Commander Moss owned a ranch in Clovis, California which was only about ten miles out of Fresno and so he recognized the name and I feel, well he got me the paperwork and I got it and I filled out everything and learned everything I could about GM3C and a little bit I kind of practiced you know, not too much. I said the military hurt my hearing, the rifle training and all that stuff because we didn't use anything to stop the noise and now I'm paying for it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were there on Yerba Buena, were you in a particular outfit there?

Mr. Jura:

We were permanently stationed on Y.B.I. and considered ships company.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was it called? What you were in?

Mr. Jura:

Well, at Yerba Buena we worked at the barracks office.

Mr. Misenhimer:

OK, barracks office, OK. What's some other things that happened?

Mr. Jura:

Not too much happened. When we go on inspections of the buildings and everything and sometimes they had a jail up there for guys that didn't come back on time and everything, from their leave or three or four days off. We had to write up reports for the officers to look at and repairs that had to be done and lot of times, sometimes you'd go and take it personal but you couldn't let it destroy you because you'd keep writing the same broken problems week after week after week. It never was repaired. The Commander couldn't understand that but we survived.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were there at Yerba Buena you could go to San Francisco anytime you wanted to, is that right?

Mr. Jura:

Right. If we didn't have to be on duty.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were off duty. Now, on April 12, 1945 President Roosevelt died. Did you all hear about that?

Mr. Jura:

Oh, yeah, I heard that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What reaction did people have when they heard it?

Mr. Jura:

There was no reaction.

Mr. Misenhimer:

They weren't concerned about it?

Mr. Jura:

No. I wasn't.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now on May 8, 1945 Germany surrendered. Did you all have any kind of celebration then?

Mr. Jura:

Well, see, because I was not in the line of fire so they didn't bother me one bit.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then on August 15, Japan surrendered. Did you have a celebration then?

Mr. Jura:

Yeah, there was a celebration. Everybody went to San Francisco. Are you familiar with San Francisco?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Somewhat, yes.

Mr. Jura:

Market Street is a big wide street that goes through downtown.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Right, right.

Mr. Jura:

They had paddy wagons. The Shore Patrol had wagons. They were running wagons six abreast down Market Street because the thing was getting almost riotous. We all went to San Francisco and hey, I was 19 years old. So everybody bought a bottle of whiskey. They were going to celebrate. I'll never forget. We had a big Texan, old Johnny McTee. He worked in the office

with us and he wouldn't hurt a flea, but he got to drinking and I didn't drink. I didn't touch my bottle. Johnny got to drinking and he would go up to the big bay windows in the stores and pound on them because he was so happy and he broke one and he cut his hand. So naturally he's bleeding and I figured something would happen. So I brought three extra handkerchiefs with me. I wrapped one around his hand and Johnny would go up to all these ladies and throw his arms around them and give them a kiss and the man with the bloody fist, you know, and they finally hauled him in. They would get to you if you were drinking too much and were too rowdy, they'd put you in jail, local cooler, and then they'd let you go back to your base the next morning. But a few of the guys who didn't do very much drinking, hardly any, we figured, "Hey, this is getting too wild. We'd probably get killed here in the city streets instead of overseas." So we went by a couple of cars that the windows were down. Threw all sorts of bottles of whiskey in the car and went back to the base. Well, after we got back to the base, we were not rated. We were just Seaman First Class so they came into the base and they wanted everybody with a rating to go on Shore Patrol duty. So we didn't have to go because we weren't qualified so we just sat around a lot and let the whole town cool down and they sent everybody back to their bases and cool it off also and everybody was very happy, knowing the Japanese war ended.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you got out, did you have any trouble adjusting to civilian life?

Mr. Jura:

No, because I went to work. I went to work back on the ranch. I would say, to be honest with you, my 18 months that I put in the military was some of the best years of my life you might say. When you're young, at that age, and in good shape and I think I lost my position that I was working for on the ranch. It was a pretty big ranch and I could have been superintendent but my

older brother was running it all and so I kept working under him and I just went back to work and then one day he says, "Well, if you're going to go to college, you better go get signed in, go register." So then I started college and they had the 52-20 club. You know what that was, didn't you?

Mr. Misenhimer:

52-20.

Mr. Jura:

For 52 weeks they'd give us twenty dollars a week. The federal government would send us a check. We'd get all our books bought for school and all the registration but hey, for getting into Fresno State College, it was called in those days, cost you \$12 a year, was the registration fees and you got a pass, a student body card, that got you into everything for free. We were in tall grass and short brass, you know what I mean.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you use your G.I. Bill to go to college? (The reference above to the "52-20 Club" was part of this.)

Mr. Jura:

I did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you use it for anything else?

Mr. Jura:

No, I didn't use it for anything else. In fact I never got my G.I. Bill to buy a house or anything because the ranch was doing pretty good and we were doing good and the ranch would supply a house for me and I didn't marry until I was 35 anyhow. So I didn't need a house. I lived at home

with my mother. My dad passed away about in the early 50's and then my brother that was running the ranch quit and moved out himself. He was living in a ranch house with the rest of his family. Then he ended up moving to Clovis and ended up...we were known as "land poor." You know what that means?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yeah, right. I know what it means.

Mr. Jura:

We had a lot of land and no money.

Mr. Misenhimer:

No money, right.

Mr. Jura:

So we were land poor so we horse-traded him for a third of his because when my dad died, I and my younger brother, one younger brother, and my older brother ended up with all the ranch and my mother had fifty percent of the ranch. When my brother moved out and we had no money to pay him but we gave him land. So he could start his own business in the Clovis area where he moved and he did real good because the building game wasn't started yet but he did real good. Then I and my brother had to take over a pretty big ranch. I wasn't even 21 yet and my younger brother was two years younger than me and everybody, all of them, thought we would fail and we had a couple of old Mexicans that worked for us. They were local guys and they were good men and they knew their jobs real good. We could do everything they could do and these two old-timers told all these younger workers, they'd say, "You don't understand what those young boys can do. They can do your job better than you. So you better take advantage of it and work with them because we're going to go some place." But that's the way it was.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Have you had any reunions of anybody you were in the service with?

Mr. Jura:

No, just in 1953 I went to Detroit and picked up a car and at that time I toured, most of my guys that I was in the service with in the barracks office were on the East Coast. I think Quadro was from Michigan and Jacob Buck was from Pennsylvania and \_\_\_\_\_ Lee was from eastern Pennsylvania and Donnie \_\_\_\_\_ was from Texas and Joe Lombardo was from New York, Long Island and Anthony Peretti was, I still remember them all. Very fortunate that my mind is pretty sharp yet.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yeah, sounds like you're doing good, right.

Mr. Jura:

I couldn't get used to having to study. It was hard to transition from the military to where you were going to school with a bunch of snot-nosed kids and they didn't appreciate it. It was hard. It was easier to do nothing than to study. Of course my brother was running the ranch at that time and my younger brother and I...I graduated high school in 1944. My younger brother graduated in 1945. I was held back one year in the first grade so I didn't graduate. He graduated high school in 1945 when he was 16. It's hard to visualize myself studying. All you had to do was go to class and put two hours in the library for every hour in class. I never could really do it. I rolled out. In two years I was 19 grade points down. You know those grade point dates in college? I stayed on the ranch and then my brother who was running it said, "You know if you're going to go back to college and get your credential, you better get your butt over there and you got to get with the show." So I went back on an off semester which was tougher on me then because you



had to take prerequisites. You had to take the 101 class before you could go to the 102. Well, I came in on an off semester and I had to take the main class first before taking the prerequisite but I made it. I got an education there about people. People were very, you know we used, remember everybody used to be very trustworthy. Well, it was the start of the situation where people thought just because you had something, and you worked hard for it, that they could come in and help you do things and sell you life insurance and all that and you didn't need it any more. You already had it. But I'll never forget, I had an accounting class. A friend needed help on his final problem that he had to do for the final. I went over and helped him and the professor looked at his work and looked at mine and he accused me of copying his paper and the guy sat there and, just sat there just dumb and happy and didn't say "no". I had to take that class over. Same thing happened in Physics 10A. I was sitting between two guys, the one on my left was an officer and fighter pilot and we were in a Psych 10A class. He was getting a straight A. I was sitting next to him and on my right was Folsom. He was getting a straight B and Dr. Brown was the professor. One day as we were getting ready for finals, he called me in and said, "I want to talk to you after class." So he says, "I don't understand. You're sitting between a guy that's getting a straight A and a guy that's getting a straight B and you're flunking." I said, "Doctor, what they know as I go through life is not going to help me. You're getting what I know on my paper. I will not cheat. I wasn't brought up that way." You know, he gave me a C in that class and passed me.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Good, good. What was your major in college?

Mr. Jura:

Of course we were in agriculture and I didn't have a class in vidi-culture. I was an animal husbandry major. I got a B.S. in animal husbandry.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So you graduated from college.

Mr. Jura:

In 1954. It might not have been in 1954. I don't know why 54 came out. But it was...I started college in 1946. I got out of service in July 9, 1946. It was probably 52 or 53 that I graduated.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you work in animal husbandry in your civilian career?

Mr. Jura:

No, I didn't. We ended up trying to go into the cattle business because that was what I was learning about and we just couldn't be competitive because we didn't have the rangeland in the mountains. You had to have a cheap reasonable grass rangeland where you could run cows and not have to put them on irrigated pasture. So it didn't work out.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you all own the ranch?

Mr. Jura:

Yes. They sold the ranch, most of it. But we would lease ground, too and do anything we thought we could make money at. We had custom operations that would help other farmers who didn't have the amount of equipment necessary to do the job right. We did, so we could help them for a certain fee. We survived that way and did real good. Hard work.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How many acres did you all own?

Mr. Jura:

At our hey-day we owned about 1500 acres and when we ended up leasing stuff, we had farmed

as high as 4,000 plus acres a year in different crops, row crops, cotton, tomatoes, wheat, barley. We planted vines, vineyards. We had vineyards and we had fig orchards. My brothers and I learned how to line up our orchards so we could plant it and get it all square with the boundary lines and line them all up and mark it so you'd get ready to plant a new orchard and we were going to college and we had classes that were doing us primarily the same thing and we'd tell the instructor...they'd tell you how to line it up so that you were square and plumb. We'd tell them you can't do it that way. You got to do it a different way so that you don't have to come back and do it again. So we got an education before we got to school really.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Are you retired or you still work on the farm?

Mr. Jura:

No, I'm retired. We finally ended up losing the whole ranch. Turned it over to a young nephew who was on a big ego trip and we didn't pay attention because we shouldn't have to...you know family can be your worst enemy. He was. Everyone admits what he did to us. It cost I and my family and even his father and mother and sisters, a lot of money. We were about the ranch, lost the ranch and we were long on acres again and short on money. Lost the ranch for a couple million dollars. We borrowed and you know in a year the property values went up from 30 to 40 thousand a year an acre to a hundred thousand an acre so we had about 400 acres like that, that we lost. Probably \$60,000 an acre so we lost a lot of money on that. You know the way I look at it, I haven't missed many meals and I say it as positive as I can, I live here with my daughter, youngest daughter, and her mother, my wife, passed away about six years ago, coming up seven, and my health is pretty good, except my back and my hearing.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I'm sorry to hear those things. Now, have you been on the Honor Flight to Washington, D.C.?

Mr. Jura:

No, I haven't been on the Honor Flight to Washington, D.C.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You've heard of it, have you?

Mr. Jura:

Yes. My daughter was supposed to send the paperwork in and I don't think she ever did. We have to save up the money for her to go as my guardian.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Well, anything else you recall from your time in the service?

Mr. Jura:

No. Just we enjoyed it. It was work and we had to be there and I was used to regimentation anyhow by my dad and my brothers on the ranch, on our jobs. My brothers and I when I got out of the service in 1946 and started college. My brother had put one semester in and quit and then he started raising a family and he used to tell us once you get your schedule all set, give me a copy of it and I'll tell you what your workload is going to be on the ranch. We used to work 40 hours a week on the ranch and go to school to boot. People say you can't do it. I said you don't tell a farm boy you can't do something because they end up doing it. I did a lot of things on the ranch that they said we couldn't do and we did them and they couldn't believe it. They didn't understand the ingenuity of a free-thinking, hard working people.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now there at Yerba Buena, how was the morale of your outfit there?

Mr. Jura:

Our morale was really good. Of course when we first got transferred up to Treasure Island, we all wanted to go to sea because one of the officers that we knew went out and got on an aircraft carrier so we thought there would be nothing to it. We could all go try to get on the aircraft carrier and I loved airplanes anyhow but my dad was afraid of airplanes and he never would sign to get me into flight school or anything like that. But we couldn't get transferred off of Treasure Island. It was more important to have staff in the office than it was to have guys out on the fighting.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were in the service, did you ever see any U.S.O. shows anywhere?

Mr. Jura:

No U.S.O. shows. We could go into San Francisco and we would go to the RKO and they'd have a stage show there and we would get in for almost nothing. I went to a lot of stage shows at the RKO and then we had a lot of movies, new release movies. We used to see three movies a week. It got to the point that the theatres in San Francisco filled two pages in the Chronicle. We couldn't go to San Francisco to go to a movie. Heck, we had seen them all.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were in the service did you have any experience with the Red Cross?

Mr. Jura:

I was never involved with the Red Cross.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get home from World War II with any souvenirs?

Mr. Jura:

No. Didn't get any souvenirs. There was no souvenirs available unless you stole some from the government.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Joe, that's all the questions I have unless you've thought of something else.

Mr. Jura:

No. Will you write a letter up on this or something or...

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yes, you will get a copy of this. Thanks again for your time again today and for your service to our country.

Mr. Jura:

Thank you and thank you for your service to our country, too.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You're welcome.

*End of Interview*

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