

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

Nimitz Education and Research Center
Fredericksburg, Texas

An Interview With

Lois M. Godard Dishong

Ingram, Texas

October 26, 2017

Women's Army Corps

(WAC)

Mr. Misenhimer:

My name is Richard Misenhimer, today is October 26, 2017. I am interviewing Lois Mae Godard Dishong by telephone. Her phone number is 503-315-7126. Her address is 506 Native Oak Street, Ingram, Texas, 78025. 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.

Her alternative contact is her daughter Delores Dishong. Her cell phone number is 503-871-3384, they live at the same address.

Lois, 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.

Mrs. Dishong:

Yes, I was there at World War II, yes, uh-huh.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now the first thing I need to do is read to you this agreement with the museum to make sure this is okay with you.

"Agreement Read"

Is that okay with you?

Mrs. Dishong:

I guess so (*laughter*). I guess so, I don't understand everything.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What is your birthdate?

Mrs. Dishong:

May 19, 1920.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And where were you born?

Mrs. Dishong:

In Long Beach, California.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have brothers and sisters?

Mrs. Dishong:

Yes, I had a younger sister.

Mr. Misenhimer:

No brothers?

Mrs. Dishong:

No, uh-uh.

Mr. Misenhimer:

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

Mrs. Dishong:

Oh, my father was Owen Godard and my mother was Florence Godard.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now you grew up during the depression, how did the depression affect you and your family?

Mrs. Dishong:

We grew up alright, they were both working. My folks were both working all the time.

Mr. Misenhimer:

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

Mrs. Dishong:

I suppose I did at that time, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How did you hear?

Mrs. Dishong:

Oh I don't know, it was just be news I guess, I don't know anything.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How did you think that would affect you?

Mrs. Dishong:

Well I don't know, but when we went to war the men were all going to war so I thought maybe I could go with them.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then where did you go to high school?

Mrs. Dishong:

High school, yes. I went to high school and I graduated in 1938.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you do when you finished high school?

Mrs. Dishong:

I went to Bible School for two years.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then when did you go into the service?

Mrs. Dishong:

Well that was 1943.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And you went into the WACs?

Mrs. Dishong:

Yes, uh-huh, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How did you choose the WACs to go into?

Mrs. Dishong:

Well I was just getting the..., the men were all going to war so I just thought I would too.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you go for your basic training?

Mrs. Dishong:

I'm not sure where I went for basic training, but I landed up in North Carolina at Camp Davis.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What all did you do there?

Mrs. Dishong:

I worked in the finance office and for about a year I just worked in the finance office there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now what was your uniform like, what kind of uniform did you have?

Mrs. Dishong:

I didn't know what it was supposed to look like (*laughter*), I don't know; just a regular Army uniform.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have pants or a skirt?

Mrs. Dishong:

I had a skirt, yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now in your basic training did you do any marching or that sort of thing?

Mrs. Dishong:

I don't think we did anything special, no. We might have marched in one place or something, but I don't think we did much special.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now what did you say your job was, what did you do?

Mrs. Dishong:

What do you mean, when I first went in you mean?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yes.

Mrs. Dishong:

Well I first went in I worked at the office, at the finance office in the camp.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And that was where?

Mrs. Dishong:

North Carolina, Camp Davis.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What all happened there?

Mrs. Dishong:

Well I just stayed there at that office there for about a year. And then I went to a dental school.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And where was that school?

Mrs. Dishong:

It was at Camp Atterbury, Indiana.

Ms. Dishong:

Atterbury, Indiana.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And what all did you do in that school?

Mrs. Dishong:

Well I just learned to make dentures and to work in dental labs.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And then what happened?

Mrs. Dishong:

Well then I went down to Camp Blanding, Florida where I worked at an Army camp. I worked in a laboratory, dental laboratory in an Army camp.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And what all did you do in that laboratory?

Mrs. Dishong:

Oh I just had to take care of ..., well the dentist would take the people and then we would make dentures and work with the teeth.

Ms. Dishong:

So in other words the dentist would take impressions and then you would go to the lab and make the false teeth? Is that what you did?

Mrs. Dishong:

Yeah, uh-hum.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Okay, then what happened?

Mrs. Dishong:

I went down to Florida to an Army camp and then I worked in a dental lab.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And how did you travel down there?

Mrs. Dishong:

I don't know, I don't know how did I travel. I don't know, I traveled by train a lot of times, but I don't know how I traveled down there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now what was your pay when you first went in?

Mrs. Dishong:

Oh I couldn't tell you that, I couldn't tell you that, I wouldn't remember that.

Ms. Dishong:

It was about \$200 when she got out.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I think \$21 a month was what most of them went in at.

Mrs. Dishong:

Maybe, maybe.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what's the next thing that happened?

Mrs. Dishong:

Well I got the German measles and so they put me in the hospital for a week. And then one of the men wanted to come to see me but he was afraid to come by himself so he brought another man with him.

Ms. Dishong:

And then? And then what happened with the other man?

Mrs. Dishong:

Yeah, so I thought I would marry that other man.

Ms. Dishong:

So she ended up marrying the other man, Donald Dishong.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you live in down there?

Mrs. Dishong:

Oh we were just in the Army base whatever they had there.

Ms. Dishong:

The barracks?

Mrs. Dishong:

Yeah, the barracks I guess.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What's some other things that happened?

Mrs. Dishong:

Well like I say we married in 1945 and then the war was about over so we went down to California and to Camp Beale, California. That was in December of 1945.

Mr. Misenhimer:

December '45 you went to California?

Mrs. Dishong:

Yes, at Camp Beale. Camp B-e-a-l-e, Camp Beale, California.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I thought most of the WACs got out about the time the war ended, but you stayed in after that, right?

Mrs. Dishong:

I don't know for sure, when was it over? I think it was over maybe when we went down there.

Ms. Dishong:

She was discharged in December of 1945. And some of these other jobs that she did, like the finance job that she did, that was discontinued, so that's why they put her into the dental. So that was her last thing that she did when she was in the service.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Which one of your jobs did you like the best?

Mrs. Dishong:

Oh I don't know, they weren't bad, they were all okay.

Ms. Dishong:

What did you do in finance? What were some of the jobs you did in finance?

Mrs. Dishong:

Oh I was just in the office there and taking care of the business.

Ms. Dishong:

Did you do payroll or did you do, you did accounting or what all did you do?

Mrs. Dishong:

Accounting I guess. Keeping charts of everything.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Which one of your places did you like the best where you were stationed?

Mrs. Dishong:

Well I really can't tell you. They were all interesting and got along okay.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then when you got out did you have any trouble adjusting to civilian life?

Mrs. Dishong:

Oh no, uh-uh. We were married and so we went to live with my folks for awhile down in Long Beach, California. So then, well my husband was working and so we decided to start a family.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now April 12th of 1945 President Roosevelt died, did you all hear about that?

Mrs. Dishong:

I probably did, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And what reaction did people have when they heard that?

Mrs. Dishong:

I don't know, I don't know much about it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then May the 8th of 1945 Germany surrendered, did you have any kind of a celebration then?

Mrs. Dishong:

I can't remember that, no I can't remember that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then on August the 6th of '45 they dropped the first atomic bomb, did you all hear about that?

Mrs. Dishong:

I can't remember that now, I can't remember those things right now.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then on August the 15th of '45 when Japan surrendered have any kind of a celebration then?

Mrs. Dishong:

I can't tell you anything about that, I just don't remember?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now did you get home from World War II with any souvenirs?

Mrs. Dishong:

Yes, uh-huh yeah. I got some medals in the war.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What kind of medals did you get?

Mrs. Dishong:

Well one was a Victory Medal and another was American Campaign Medal and a Good Conduct Medal and Women's Auxiliary Corps Service Medal. That's about it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you see any USO shows anywhere?

Mrs. Dishong:

I don't remember anything like that, no.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have any experience with the Red Cross?

Mrs. Dishong:

No, I don't think so, no.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then when you got out did you have any trouble adjusting to civilian life?

Mrs. Dishong:

Oh no, no we didn't, uh-uh. We lived with my parents for a short while and then my husband was working and we were living by ourselves, I mean you know someplace.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now what outfit were you in in the Army?

Ms. Dishong:

She was in the, I don't know you how say this, 1448th TSU Medical. That's what she was in. And she worked up to a Corporal.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And she was in a little over two years is that right?

Ms. Dishong:

She was in that two years and four months.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Have you had any reunions of your outfit?

Mrs. Dishong:

No, no I haven't.

Ms. Dishong:

But she did keep up with some of them that she was in the service with. I guess they just died. She has sent out Christmas cards all these years to people.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now did she get a G.I. Bill?

Ms. Dishong:

No, no she never did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Has she been on the Honor Flight to Washington, D.C.?

Ms. Dishong:

No she hasn't.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Are you familiar with the Honor Flight?

Ms. Dishong:

I am, I don't know if she is or not. But I'm familiar with it. Mom, it's where they take people, veterans, back to Washington, D.C. and show them things back there, they have some things for the war.

Mrs. Dishong:

Oh. No, I don't know anything about it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was the morale in your outfit?

Ms. Dishong:

What was the morale in your outfit?

Mrs. Dishong:

Morale? Oh, I don't know.

Ms. Dishong:

Did they have good times or did you have you know?

Mrs. Dishong:

No, we got along alright yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Delores, is there anything else you can think of she needs to tell me?

Mrs. Dishong:

No, I don't think there is. Of course when I went into the Army, when I left home shall I say, I got a preacher's license so that I could use if I needed to.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now what was your civilian career?

Mrs. Dishong:

Well, I worked in a church office for maybe a year or two, I worked in a church office until the war came on. And the preacher was wanting me to go to work at the bank close by, so I guess he was getting tired of me (*laughing*).

Ms. Dishong:

So then when she got out of the service she was a housewife until 1956. And then she and my dad, or Donald, went into the ministry and they moved to Washington. And in Washington for three years and then they've been in Oregon for the rest of their lives. And he was a pastor of a church and she worked right along beside him, visiting with him and did all kinds of things. She played the piano and did all kinds of things in the church.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was her maiden name?

Mrs. Dishong:

Godard.

Ms. Dishong:

Can you spell that mom?

Mrs. Dishong:

Godard, G-o-d-a-r-d.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Is Mr. Godard still living?

Ms. Dishong:

No, no he was in World War I, her dad was.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How about her husband.

Ms. Dishong:

No her husband died in 2010. He served over in Europe, he was on..., he wasn't in Normandy, what was he on?

Mrs. Dishong:

I don't know.

Ms. Dishong:

But he served in Europe.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was he in the Army, Navy, or what?

Mrs. Dishong:

In Italy.

Ms. Dishong:

During the war. And then when he came home he was stationed in Camp Davis in Florida along where she was. He was from Pennsylvania. So of course they wouldn't have a chance to meet except a time like this.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What branch of service was he in?

Ms. Dishong:

He was in the Army. He was a rifle infantry man.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What else do you know about your time in the service?

Ms. Dishong:

What else do you know, were there things that you did together with some of the ladies or things that you did?

Mrs. Dishong:

No, I don't know what we did, we weren't together too much then. You know when we got married of course, well we just looked to, by ourselves.

Ms. Dishong:

But what about when you were in the service, what about did you and the women in the service do things together or what did you do on your time that you were off?

Mrs. Dishong:

I don't know, I don't know of anything special.

Ms. Dishong:

She's just not remembering all of that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Okay, well she's up there in years.

Ms. Dishong:

Yes she's ninety-seven.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Ninety-seven, well she's doing pretty good for ninety-seven.

Ms. Dishong:

Yes, for somethings she's just not remembering, other things you know kind of when we would talk it would bring to her mind. But she doesn't remember a whole lot I guess of that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now over the years has she told you any stories you remember?

Mrs. Dishong:

No I really haven't had any contact that I know of, no because we were busy with ministering in the churches and so I don't know.

Ms. Dishong:

But do you have any stories from the service, of things, anything that happened funny or anything during your time?

Mrs. Dishong:

No, I don't think I remember anything.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Well Lois, that's all the questions I have unless you've thought of anything else.

Mrs. Dishong:

Well I didn't know why you wanted all the information, wanted all this information.

Mr. Misenhimer:

We're doing oral histories of World War II veterans, you're number 995.

Ms. Dishong:

They are just trying to get as much history on people as they can, to record it because there's not very many more living anymore.

Mrs. Dishong:

Yeah I know, um-huh, yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

She's number 995 of these interviews I've done.

Ms. Dishong:

Oh, you're number 995 of interviews that he's done.

Mrs. Dishong:

Oh, oh!

Ms. Dishong:

That's quite a few.

Mr. Misenhimer:

We're just trying to preserve the history of World War II, what happened to people.

Mrs. Dishong:

Um-huh yeah, well that was a long time ago (*laughing*).

Mr. Misenhimer:

That's right, that's right.

So your brother-in-law was in the Army Air Force during World War II and flew B-25s?

Ms. Dishong:

He was in the Air Force, it wasn't during the war, I mean he would have been like maybe Vietnam or the Korean, you know. He's about eighty-three, but he had a career as a B-25 flyer and he loved it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

But he wasn't in World War II then?

Ms. Dishong:

No it wasn't War World II, no.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Well that's all I have unless y'all thought of anything else.

Ms. Dishong:

Okay, so we'll look forward to hearing from you with your letter.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Well we'll be checking back with you when I get this transcribed typed up, that may take a couple of months because we're all volunteers. But when we do we'll check back with you and make a final copy.

Mrs. Dishong:

Okay.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Well thank you both for your time today and Lois, thank you.

Ms. Dishong:

Okay you're welcome, thank you for your call.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Lois, thank you for your service to our country.

Mrs. Dishong:

What?

Ms. Dishong:

He said thank you for your service to the country.

Mrs. Dishong:

Yes, well I was glad to do it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Alright, we'll talk to you later then.

Ms. Dishong:

Okay, thank you, bye.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Bye.

(They pronounce the last name with a short "i", Dishong.)

(End of interview.)

Transcribed by:

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