

**Transcriber Notes:** Because of the number of interviewees determining who the speakers was for each conversational turn was challenging. When I was not absolute on who was speaking, I designated the speaker of the turn using "Unknown"

**Wiley:** I live in California and outside of New York City and New Jersey. This is a group of fellas from the USS LST 950. It served primarily in the Pacific. I guess its greatest claim to fame was at Okinawa. I always point out to people there were thousands of battles in WWII; the LST 950 only fought in a single battle and after the one battle that we fought; the enemy surrendered. Those happen to be the facts.

**Unknown:** They knew we were coming but the reason they gave up was because August the 15<sup>th</sup> was my birthday and they just said, "To hell with it!"

**WILEY:** You want any other basic information. That we are at a reunion in Evansville or...

**Q:** Yea that's great. Today is September 25, 2008 and we will just go around the room and everybody if you would just say your name and spell it. Then we will get started.

**SHANE:** Okay. My name is Robert Shane. I reside at 1694 Sugar Pine Dr. in Jasper, IN. I've lived there for almost 10 years and before that I lived in Petersburg, IN which is 20 miles west of Jasper. Before that I lived south of Indianapolis. I was employed with a power company, and I retired after 33 years of service.

**ULRICH:** John Ulrich. I live in Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin.

**LAWRENCE:** I'm Robert Lawrence. I live in Mattoon, Illinois, 61928. I was employed by an equipment company that built road equipment, blacktop machines. I worked there for 35 years and retired. It's been 17 years now.

**Q:** Okay. What we are doing is collecting oral histories. Primarily the group I'm working with is collecting from WWII and also from Korea. When this is over I'm going to ask you to sign a release that says we can use what you say for educational purposes, and then that transcript is going in our library so that future students can use your information to help them better understand your experience of WWII and, well, everyone's experience of WWII, but yours in particular. So, to get us started maybe each of you could tell me how you got connected to the war. Did you sign up? Were you drafted? In terms of that process of getting into the military.

**WILEY:** John, you should tell them your occupation.

**ULRICH:** I'm a tool and die maker. I'm still working full time, and I'm 82-years old.

**Q:** Okay.

**WILEY:** He's actually about 90-years old, but he won't admit it.

**WILEY:** Doc [referring to Sigurd Daehnke] she's recording, and she wants you to give your name, spell it, and then tell her where you live and tell her what you do for a living.

**DAEHNKE:** I have to pronounce my name for you first because I tell people my name, "You have to go to that door at 2 O'clock in the morning and the key doesn't work it's that dang key." That's me okay. First name, Sigurd. We live in Kansas, about 40 miles from Wichita. I'm a physician, and Frieda here is a nurse incidentally.

**WILEY:** What else do you want to know?

**Q:** Well, I just sort of threw out the first question of how people got connected to the military. Drafted or enlisted?

**DAEHNKE:** No, I enlisted. As a matter of fact, I kind of ran away from home when I was 16. They had to come over and find out that my parents wouldn't sign my papers to let me get into the service when I was 16. So, I had to wait to graduate which was few months, and then I was 17. I joined the service because I had three brothers who were in the navy. One of them was a quarter master on a PT boat, and I wanted to be a quarter master on a PT boat. That's the fastest boat and the highest rating of all. I went to be a radar man on an LST which is the slowest one (laughter) and had kind of a low rating.

**WILEY:** I beg your pardon.

**Q:** It didn't quite work out the way you thought it would.

**DAEHNKE:** You should explain that you ran away from home to join the navy. Not because you were mad at your parents.

**Q:** How about the rest of you?

**Unknown:** Well I got in the navy. I worked in Chicago for Pullman Car Manufactory. We built LSM's, and that's where I learned how to weld. I went to school and learned how to weld, and they built sections of them and they shipped them over to Candubon Auto to put them together. While I was working there, I worked four or five months and I decided I would enlist in the navy. I was 17, and I just listed in the navy, and they gave me a month's pay and away I went. I was in the Great Lakes for boot camp. Then I picked up an LST in New York City. Some guy jumped ship, and I took his place.

**Q:** Alright. How about you, sir?

**ULRICH:** Oh, when WWII started, I was about 16-years old. A lot of my friends got their parents to forge their birth certificate so they could get in the navy. But my mom and dad wouldn't let me forge mine because they didn't want me to go. They said, "You're going to go soon enough." When I did turn 17, I joined the navy. I didn't get in the navy reserve because I wanted to sign up... I was so gung-ho I'd sign up for 20 years if they would've let me. They said, "Oh you can't do that. The only thing you can do is you can sign up to the day before you turn 21." So, I was in the regular navy; I wasn't in the navy reserve. When everybody else got out after the war, I didn't get out because I was in the regular navy. But that's what I wanted to do.

**Unknown:** Well, I was afraid I was going to be drafted. I didn't feel like I wanted to spend my time in service for my country in a mud hole. And I wanted three meals a day. I liked to eat so I decided... and I liked the water. So, I decided I would join the navy. I joined the navy actually around the first week of April. I was 18 on the 25<sup>th</sup> so they gave me the right to stay in high school and graduate until I was 18. I graduated from high school on May the 26<sup>th</sup> and on June the 1<sup>st</sup>, I was in Chicago in boot camp. Very happy. I had a good life in the navy, and I even considered it as a career, but I didn't. But I did join... signed over for four years after in the reserves. Consequently, my end of that four years was 1950... Korean War. I suffered through that, wasn't called. After that I signed up for another four year. I

thought, "Well this is good enough. I might get called in the future." So, I took a discharge from the inactive reserve. I have had some second thoughts on the navy as a career. I really enjoyed most of it. Consequently, I haven't regretted it... I was proud to be a part of the navy and what I could do for my country. That's about it.

**WILEY:** Norm, come up forward. Give your name, spell it, occupation, and what you did to get into the navy. The story like he just told.

**DIEDRICK:** Oh, it's not near as fascinating. Everybody is telling their story... life story. I can't remember dates.

**WILEY:** Oh, just approximate.

**Q:** No, no. I'm not too concerned about the dates. Just general impressions.

**DIEDRICK:** I went in the navy in December of '45, and I went out over in Pearl Harbor for a while. Shortly after that, I got on the LST 950 and I sailed with them until they decommissioned it. Then I got on an aircraft carrier and I sailed on that until they decommissioned it. Then, I was on a sea plane down in Panama. In '48 I got out, so I spent about 3 and ½ years in the navy.

**Q:** So, did you enlist or were you drafted?

**DIEDRICK:** I enlisted when I was 17. Dad didn't want to let me go, and the guy I was working for since I was 15-years old wanted me to defer... get a deferment for him. I went in regardless.

**Q:** Yea. You're commenting on that; you're all saying the same thing. But, you're the first group of people that I've interviewed or that my students have interviewed that have talked about their parents not wanting them to go. I've interviewed about 150 different people so that's kind of different.

**DAEHNKE:** Were they all that young, though? Were they all 17-years old?

**Q:** Not all of them, but a number of them were very young, yea.

**DAEHNKE:** I'd have to say also after I had been out in the south Pacific for about a year, my mother got a letter from the draft board wondering why I didn't come down and register. (laughter)

**Q:** That sounds like typical government.

**WILEY:** Do you want me to talk?

**Q:** Yes, I do.

**WILEY:** On December the 8<sup>th</sup> 1941, I went to the foot of Manhattan, New York City, and I got in line about 4 am to join the US Marines. I got to the front of the line around... sometime in the afternoon. There were that many guys ahead of me at 4 O'clock in the morning. That many were ahead of me, blocks of them. When I got there the old marine sergeant asked me for a birth certificate, and I told him I was 17. He said that was fine and to give him my birth certificate. I didn't have one, so he said, "Well, you go home and get it, and we'll take you in." Of course, I didn't have one. Because I was in show business, I went to the USO and I worked for the first year of the war as a USO entertainer. I went from one end of the country to the other. I probably touched 30 states for the first year. So, I basically

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watched the United States mobilize. I just went from base to base to base, from New York to St. Louis down to South through Texas and California. You name it, and I was there. Then I went back, I did one more show in New York, and then I enlisted in the US Navy. Because of my show business background, they assigned me to naval intelligence in Washington to make propaganda movies. Every Monday I would go to the personnel department and volunteer for sea duty because I was damned if I was going to tell my grandchildren that I spent WWII in Washington D.C. So, they got tired of looking at me after a couple months, and they said, "Alright. Where do you want to go?" I said, "I want to go to the Pacific where the navy war is." They said, "Fine." So, they sent me to Norfolk, and I got on the AK-37 an assault cargo ship and left Norfolk, went out the canal, out the Pearl, and then out to the Pacific. Then they were ordered to go back, but they had to let some seamen go. I was one of the seamen that was left at Saipan, and these guys were having a lot of problems getting that LST working right. So, somebody figured as long as I was available, they would send me out to the LST 950 and help them get the damn ship together and get it working right. And that's how come I joined the LST 950. (laughter)

**Q:** I'm sure that's the gospel truth.

**DAEHNKE:** I got my white shoes on, too.

**Q:** This is a question that is actually open to anybody. What do you remember about the events leading up to the war?

**Unknown:** The first thing I remember, I was walking down the street in (incoherent) Illinois. That's a town of about 1,100 people. There was a WWI veteran, and he says that... I remember that. He said, "The Japs bombed Pearl Harbor." I was about 15 then.

**Q:** Anybody else?

**WILEY:** I was at the polo grounds in New York watching the New York Giants play the Brooklyn Dodgers. When I tell people that they say, "Are you kidding? Baseball season was over by December." I was watching the old Brooklyn Dodgers national football team which existed for a short time. I remember at half-time they announced, "Would the following please call their office immediately." And they gave a list of admirals and generals and political figures and journalists and the list just went on and on. But that's all they said. I turned to the guy I was with, and I said, "Boy something big is happening somewhere." The game went on, and at the last play of the game in the polo grounds as everybody started to head to the exits the announcer came on and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I have to report that the United States has been attacked." That our base in Hawaii had been attacked and that the United States is at war." Then they played the Star-Spangled Banner, and everybody stood up and went to the exit. So, that was it.

**Q:** Anybody else? (pause) Now you all came from different places and how you got into the war differs. Were you all at the same boot camp? Or training?

**WILEY:** No, no.

**Q:** Okay, then let's talk a little bit about your training, your preparation, boot camp.

**Unknown:** Well, I was in Great Lakes, Illinois, and I was there about 15 weeks, I think it was. In the third week we were supposed to... marching. (incoherent) There was flag, and if you were carrying around that flag you had won something.

**Q:** Okay. Somebody else. Bootcamp? Training?

**WILEY:** I was at Sampson, New York which is upstate New York, and it's one of the coldest places in the whole world. I got pneumonia and got carried to a hospital. The training, I guess, was interrupted because of the pneumonia, but I think we got 8 weeks. We were taught how to do all kinds of stuff. They sent you into a room with tear gas. We had a gas mask on, but [they] had you take it off while you were in there. They had us jump off of a height and learn how to dive out with your feet first so that you could go into oil water and spread the water and not break... basically what you were supposed to do is put one hand over your family jewels and the other one hold your nose. Then take one step and then the other and go straight down, feet down. Of course, it was kind of fun watching the guys that panicked and dropped their protection and landed with their legs apart. A lot of them are still screaming, those poor guys. Anyhow that was Sampson. Now, you were at Great Lakes.

**WILEY:** John, you were at Great Lakes, too?

**Q:** So, did you two know each other?

**Unknown:** No, I was done in July in '44.

**WILEY:** John, you were at Great Lakes.

**ULRICH:** When I was at Great Lakes, I didn't even know how to swim. I'm going in the navy, and I don't even know how swim. So, what I remember when I was down at Great Lakes, we were only there for six weeks, and they found out I didn't know how to swim so I had to go take swimming lessons. Well they put you on a big platform and say, "Jump in and don't worry about not knowing how to swim because we got these guys with big poles and if you start kicking you can grab one of these poles." So, I jumped off, and I start paddling to one of these poles and the guy pulls it away. So, I start going for the other pole, and he pulled that pole away, and that's how I learned how to swim. (laughter)

**WILEY:** Where were you trained?

**Unknown:** Great Lakes. I went, in I think, about in November. Six or eight weeks I don't remember. But I know when you dive off of that board, they talk about how to take off your dungarees, tie a knot in them, and put them in a certain way and use them as a float... life jacket or whatever.

**Unknown:** Or your pants?

**Unknown:** That's what we did.

**WILEY:** I guess the toughest thing you did in training was they put you in front of like an oven. I mean it was a structure that was made of metal and they would be able to put high heat and flame in there. Then, they would send you to put out a fire. The only thing between you and that fire was a hose. That was as close to panicking as I ever got because I was a front guy with that hose. When you were facing that kind of a fire, that kind of a heat it takes all you've got to do to not drop that hose and run. I guess they did that at every base right?

**Unknown:** Yea, we did that too.

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**WILEY:** Where did you...

**Unknown:** Great Lakes.

**WILEY:** Great Lakes also. So how about you?

**DAEHNKE:** Yea, I was Great Lakes here. I have to tell you a kind of a funny story, and I'm sure this is pretty true of the guys that were 17-years old. You know, the first day we had inspection they'd go through and they went by me, then they came back, and he said, "Did you shave this morning?" I'd never shaved in my life. (laughter) So I had to start shaving.

**WILEY:** And they made you shave prematurely which meant that you could've gone another year or two without shaving if they didn't make you shave because once you shaved, then you had to keep shaving and it was the same thing with me. I wasn't shaving before I went in the Navy, and they said, "Nope, you got to shave." Then after that I had to shave for the rest of my life, thank you.

**Unknown:** What I remember about boot camp is how to get perfect folds in your pants down in the boots. You pulled them down... you laced them up sort of tight all the way. Then you put them down in there and you get the perfect fold to where they are really sharp up the back. Then you pull them down to about to here. Then, you walk like a duck until you get to the parade routes. Then you pull them up and stand straight and boy they are so tight they look like a bow string. The guy behind you will tell you whether you're right or not before the captain comes around and tells you himself.

**Unknown:** I remember that!

**DAEHNKE:** I remember, too, in the barracks that you were in with a hundred and some guys in this one barrack, and the first night or so someone just snored like mad. So, no one could sleep because we weren't used to that type of thing. Someone went over and smacked him on the foot, and he stopped snoring and so everyone clapped and everything else. So, this happened for a couple of nights, and then he didn't snore anymore.

**Unknown:** You found the cure for snoring! (Inaudible)

**FEDORUK:** Attention!

**Q:** Which was the next question. Are there any officers here?

**FEDORUK:** I'm going to have you guys deported. Oh, I wanted to introduce you. Some of you have met my son, Bobby. If you haven't this is him.

**WILEY:** Okay, he doesn't know. Bob let me tell you what we are doing and you're up. This lady is a professor at the university who is involved in an oral history project of veterans. So, you are up at bat now. Say your name, spell it, where you're from, what you did for a livelihood, how you got in the navy. He is going to be the only one with a little different story.

**FEDORUK:** Well we all have different stories.

**WILEY:** Well, yours is a lot different because you're a lot different, Bob, you are a different person.

**FEDORUK:** Well, when they released me from the home, it was difficult to assimilate into the community.

**WILEY:** He and I visited each other as soon as we got out. He was in Detroit, and he ruined that city all by himself.

**FEDORUK:** Yea I made it the city it is.

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**WILEY:** Then he came out to visit me in New York and tried to ruin New York, and we just kicked him the hell out of the city. Tell... just tell... she's recording all of this.

**FEDORUK:** Robert J. Fedoruk. Hard to spell but easy to deal with.

**Q:** I have already written it down because that looks like a last name. See?

**WILEY:** For the recording though put it down,

**FEDORUK:** Okay, I am originally from Detroit, Michigan. I went to high school there, graduated from high school in 1942, and the draft was on then. I thought, "Well, if I get drafted, I go in the army." They don't draft you in the navy. But, at the last minute I got an opportunity to go to college. I wasn't planning to go to college, but somebody recommended me, and I went to a small school called Hillsdale College in a town called Hillsdale, Michigan about 100 miles west of Detroit. I played basketball primarily in high school, and I didn't get a scholarship; they didn't give scholarships out then. But I went out for the basketball team and I was 18-years old. I made the varsity team. In fact, I made their first five. I played there for a year, and I had a great education. Hillsdale is a very well-known college; it is a high academic school. Then I decided they were going to get me in the army, and the army never really appealed to me. So, I went and enlisted in the navy. I went to boot camp at Great Lakes as an apprentice seaman, and then because I had a year of college, believe it or not, they called me in and said, "We want you to go to officers training." Just like that. Hey, I do as I'm told, so I went. I went into what they call a V-12 program. They sent me to Western Michigan; at that time, it was a college, it's a university today in Kalamazoo, Michigan, and I spent a year there in the preschool program and loaded with mathematics, physics, and all kind of high-powered classes that I never took in high school. When I completed that, I got assigned to Northwestern University shipman school. In 90 days, I became a ninety-day wonder. That was what we were called. I became an officer in 90 days, take it or leave it. They asked me what kind of duty I wanted to have when I graduated, and I said, "Well, I want to go where the action is. Better get me on a battleship, or a heavy cruiser, or a destroyer. I know those ships are always where there is action." They said, "Wonderful." So, they sent me to San Francisco to await assignment, I got my order there. I didn't know where I was going. They don't tell you when you leave, and finally after you're at sea three days you can go up to the desk and say, "Where are we going?" They said, "We are going to Pearl Harbor." That's all they tell you. When you get to Pearl Harbor, they tell you where to go to wait for assignment for a ship. It was only about two days, and I got on a small boat to find my ship. You know what it was? LCT-912... 125 feet long, 35 feet wide. I said, "I asked for a destroyer or battleship." I said, "This is not what I want." Didn't matter what I wanted; that was what I was going to get. Then, I served on that for over a year. Then I got transferred because of changes in command. Well, I was a second officer about the LST. They made my skipper group commander, and they put him ashore. They gave me the LCT, and I was very nervous because I was only 20-years old. Command of this landing craft, and I was a little nervous about that. But I had a couple close calls with things but, I got through it okay. Then they sent me to find the LST-950. I don't know where I found you guys, I really don't. Does anybody know where we were when I came aboard?

**Unknown:** You ought to know!

**WILEY:** I don't. I know where you were when I got you.

**FEDORUK:** That was in late 19...

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**WILEY:** You came in after we were in Japan, right?

**FEDORUK:** Right.

**WILEY:** When were we in Japan? November? I mean the first time was September, and then the second time... no, it was October, I guess. And you came in some time in November.

**Q:** Okay, so the LST-950 was not your first assignment?

**WILEY:** No.

**Q:** Was it your first assignment?

**DAEHNKE:** Yes.

**Q:** It was. Okay, not yours.

**Unknown:** Wasn't mine. My first station was waiting in Pearl for a ship. I wanted to go but they kept me on the base picking up cigarette butts and painting rocks, cleaning out the latrines.

**WILEY:** Well listen, that all helped with the war. (laughter)

**Unknown:** I think you and I were the plank owners of 950. We were the only two that christened the thing, and you stayed on the full time.

Bob, was that your first assignment? The 950? Was 950 your first ship?

**FEDORUK:** Yes. John and I were plank owners of that ship.

**Unknown:** He was there when they christened it, and he was there when they decommissioned it.

**ULRICH:** By me being in the regular navy and the rest of the guys being in the navy reserves when I got out of the LST-950, I got like a plank, you know. And I was the only guy... all the rest of the guys got discharged right when the war was over. Well, McCapperty and I were the only guys that were on that ship from the start to the end.

**Q:** Okay, I'm not understanding something you are saying. What's this plank owner? What are you talking about when you say plank?

**ULRICH:** The original crew. From the building of it.

**Q:** Okay that's what it would've been called.

**ULRICH:** Then McCapperty and I were the only ones left.

**WILEY:** McCapperty was an officer.

**ULRICH:** Yea and McCapperty got the flag. I wish did.

**Unknown:** I wanted to ask a question. Was the 950 decommissioned in New York?

**WILEY:** No.

**ULRICH:** Yup, New York. It got decommissioned in New York.

**Unknown:** Really? You say no; he says yes.

**WILEY:** Well, he was on it. I thought it was Massachusetts.

**ULRICH:** No, we were up there, then we came down to New York, then when I got discharged. I mean not discharged, but off the ship. Now I'm going to go on another ship, and I said, "I'd like to go on a nice small ship like an LST." They put me on an aircraft carrier over 35,000 tons and 2,500 people.



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**FEDORUK:** He wanted a small ship, and I wanted a big ship, and we got the opposite.

**Unknown:** John, I, and Sheldon, and McCapperty went on it because when the reserves got out in Rhode Island the three of us were all that were left.

**ULRICH:** Yea you and I and Sheldon.

**Unknown:** When that shifted over into regular navy John and I were...

**WILEY:** John, why did they send the LST-950 to Massachusetts? Why did they send it back? That's where it started right?

**ULRICH:** I don't know why we went up there. Then, we went from Massachusetts, and we went to Fall Rivers.

**Unknown:** Fall Rivers and Newport, Rhode Island. We were tied up there for quite a while.

**ULRICH:** It got decommissioned, and we took that ship from Boston, and we took it to New York. He and I and Sheldon and some part time... well not part time but a skeleton crew... to run the engine and stuff. But we ran out of fuel, and nobody knew how to take the fuel... what do they call it? The auxiliary engines or something or auxiliary fuel because it had switched over to that. We had to get towed to New York, and they sent a destroyer. We were supposed to put a cable on that. Well, we didn't have any power, and those guys couldn't put that cable on, so they sent three navy tugs. One on each side, and one on the bow and that LST never went as fast when it had its own engines. (laughter) That's for sure.

**Q:** Now, I've been on the LST over here in the river. What was it like? Describe some of your experiences there. I've been on it when it's sitting still. I've been up and down, and I've seen where the little bunks are.

**WILEY:** When you start to go this way, and sway from side to side if you stand right in the middle. You have a door on either side open. If you look out to the left, you'll see nothing but water, and if you look to the right, you'll see nothing but air and sky. Then, the ship goes this way, and it goes the other way around. That is how much it lists from one side to the other, that you see nothing but water and then you see nothing but sky. It'll go like that for quite a while.

**FEDORUK:** We would sit down and have a meal, and I remember what he's talking about. We were in a seize one day and it was going like this and here is your plate and you better hold onto it because it's going to be over here. If you want to wait a little bit, it comes back to you; then you eat a little bit more then it goes over there. That's true. That is true.

Woman's voice: Can I just interrupt? We were just talking about eating, we have a reservation.

**WILEY:** 6:30?

**Unknown:** Between 6:30 and 7. But, it will take us about half an hour to get there.

**Unknown:** Well, we can get done in about 15 minutes.

**WILEY:** Yea, we will have to wrap up in about 15 minutes.

**Q:** Okay.

**WILEY:** But I guess if you want the history of LST, one thing we went through... I think, somebody correct me if I am wrong. We went through the two worst typhoons on record. We went through the one during the war, and we went through the one right after the war which is the one that would've

disrupted the American invasion had we actually invaded instead of going up to occupy. Am I right? I think they were the two worst recorded typhoons ever. The one when we went out to sea out of Okinawa and one of the other LST's caught on fire, I remember. We saw it.

**DAEHNKE:** Yea, we went around to the other side of the island. Okay because we were a hospital evacuation ship.

**WILEY:** It was as bad as you can get and that old LST with all the problems it had went through two typhoons. At one point in the game... Bob may know this. Does anybody know what our flag speed was at the end when we were coming back across?

**SHANE:** Eight knots

**WILEY:** Eight?

**SHANE:** That's what I always heard. I don't know if it's right or not.

**WILEY:** Now that is actually when we were coming home? Coming back?

**SHANE:** Well, I don't know. I didn't come back with you.

**WILEY:** I think it was down lower than that. Well John, how fast was it going at the end? Do you remember?

**ULRICH:** Well, I don't know. Eleven knots, I always thought was the top speed.

**WILEY:** Well, that was the top, but when we came home, we went able to go at 11 knots. We were going across the Pacific at about 7, 6 or something like that.

**ULRICH:** Did we go by ourselves or were we in a convoy?

**WILEY:** Oh no, no. You were an officer. For crying out loud. Don't you know anything? Good God. They give you 90 days... 90 days and you can't come here and answer a simple question. 90 days wasn't enough for you!

**FEDORUK:** McCapperty who became our skipper when Fritzheim took off somewhere, to the funny farm or somewhere. That's where they should've put him. Anyway, I can't hurt his feelings because if he was alive, he would be 100-years old, and I don't think he's around. When McCapperty became the skipper, he was more of a gentle person, more understanding, more compassionate. So, one day he called me up to the bridge... or I went up to the bridge just for whatever... and he says, "You want to try to plot our position?" Like I could do it. I said, "The only time I worked on that was in shipman school."

**Unknown:** The question was how fast were you going.

**FEDORUK:** Oh, I don't know how fast I was going. (laughter)

**WILEY:** Let him finish that story.

**FEDORUK:** But I knew how to use a sexton. That's what you had to use to get your position. You'd take a reading on a known star, and it had to be a star you know, not just any star. You have to know exactly the name of that star or the moon or the sun. That's the only way you can zoom in. I did that, and then you got a lot of books called HO Tables, big books, and you put information in. It takes about 15 minutes if you know what you're doing. I got it, and I had a big chart there, and I told McCapperty, "This is where we are right now." And he says, "You're right." He had done it already. He wanted to see if I could do it. I think mainly because... let's say he got sick or something. He is the captain. Who else knows how to navigate? He wanted to know if I could navigate. That made me feel good because I had all my training in a classroom. I never had any actual training aboard ship. How do I know if I can

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Robert Shane, John Ulrich, Robert Lawrence and Sigurd Daehnke  
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navigate? Well, you got to do it when you are aboard ship. You got to find those heavenly bodies, and you have to have a watch and you have to get it right on. When you bring that thing down, you got to know exactly what time that was. It's very sensitive.

**WILEY:** By the way I think probably the most memorable event on the LST-950 was one night around midnight when there was huge explosion under the ship. We found later that Louis S. Pizito was on watch, and got bored, took a hand grenade, pulled the pin, and threw it into the tide. It came back under the ship and exploded.

**DAEHNKE:** This Hines he is talking about... you have to give this guy lots and lots of credit because he had only an 8<sup>th</sup> grade education, and everything he knew he learned himself. I had talked to him a number of times, and I lots of respect for him.

**Unknown:** We talking about McCapperty?

**DAEHNKE:** No Hines.

**Unknown:** Listen you guys...

**Unknown:** Oh Fritz? An eight-grade education.

**DAEHNKE:** Yes, yes.

**WILEY:** Our skipper was a Mustang. He had been an enlisted guy for how long? 20 years or something? They gave him command of a ship, gave him a spot-on commission as an officer, and gave him command of a ship.

**Unknown:** Who was that? Fritz?

**WILEY:** Yea, yea.

**Unknown:** Hey you guys?

**Unknown:** Returning to the states we told the LST-949 that... (Howard trips over something)

**Q:** No, I'm fine thank you.

**DAEHNKE:** I didn't push it. (Incoherent concerns)

**Q:** No, you didn't. Nope I'm fine! I'm fine.

**Unknown:** You say you're going to write this up in a newspaper?

**Q:** No, I'm collecting stories to put in our archives on campus and I know... I want to give you my card so at least you know who you talked to and I also need to get a release signed so we can use this data.

**Unknown:** Will there be a way that we can all access this at some point?

**Q:** It will be once we get it transcribed in the library here at the university, and I'm going to send Charlie a copy of the tape as soon as I can get a copy. Again, I need the contact information in order to do that.

**Unknown:** Charlie you are going to get a copy of the tape?

**WILEY:** Hopefully and if I get a copy of the tape...

**Q:** I need signatures of everyone, and we can just do it all on the same sheet.