

**Frank R. Zammiello (FRZ)
Albert Circelli (AC)
Veterans**

**Elaine Pervotti(I)
Perry Junior High School
Interviewer**

**Interviewed on March 27, 2009
New Hartford, NY**

I: This is Elaine Pervotti and we are at Perry Junior High. It's 3:00 on March 27, 2009. Let's start out with both of your full names please.

AC: My name is Albert Circelli, Utica. WWII [unclear] and the Korean War. In WWII I was aboard the Battleship New York and the Battleship Missouri, and the Korean War I was on this one [points to photo], the Battleship New Jersey.

AC: That's me. [Points to photo]

FRZ: Frank Zammiello, Navy, aboard the USS Pasadena from the beginning of the war, 1944. till the end of the war in 1946.

I: What was your prewar education?

AC: Oh, not too good. I'm ashamed to mention it. Bypass that, will you? Bypass it. I walked around Proctor and I went to the CC camp. You don't know what a CC camp is, so just pass that one.

FRZ: I quit high school and then I joined the Navy. I wasn't supposed to go because my other three brothers were in. But I hated to stay home so I enlisted at 17 and went in. And the education I got when I came back. I came back and I got a high school diploma.

I: Did you guys have occupations before the war?

AC: Just like any young 16 - 17-year-old kid, never thought of the future, never worried about anything. We had to work all the time. Up until I joined the CC camp, we had to go pick beans, live in the shacks because during the depression, and pick beans, peas. and stay there all summer, live in a shack, sleep on hay with your mother. My father was a foreman in the Oneida knitting mill and they changed his name from Crezenzo Circelli to Frank James, so we were known as the James boys.

FRZ: I worked for the railroad, steamfitter, so when I went in, I was put on the main batteries which they needed. Same things, I would pick beans, try to work in bowling alleys to make a few pennies. You'd laugh but we used to get three cents a game and our full pay at that time was 37 cents an hour six days a week, eight hours a day, twelve to eight at night. That's when I left in '44 and joined the Navy.

I: How did you hear about Pearl Harbor?

AC: Well, my brother was there and it took my mother, to get in touch with my brother, oh about three or four months. I knew about Pearl Harbor the first day. He survived and went on to do a lot in the Battle of Midway because during the Battle of Midway, if the United States didn't win that battle... That was the first battle they won. The Japanese were going to invade Pearl Harbor. From Pearl Harbor they would have taken

Hawaii. So, if we didn't win that battle, the war would have changed the difference. They would have probably held that island and invaded other islands closer to the United States. When the first flight of planes came over, he was waiting for a boat to pick them up. In those days in Hawaii, they had no motors in Pearl Harbor you see, and he had to get from Pearl Harbor to Fort Island, so the Hawaiian natives, they came with rowboats and picked them up and took them. As he was getting in one, the first wave started bombarding. He got across and he got to where the Battleship Arizona was, so he was right there when the Arizona gets the first hit. So, what happens, he and an officer, they got hoses because American sailors on that ship were all aflame, burning up and they pulled them off and hosed them down. And every time, the second wave would come over, the second wave hit the Arizona, they would have to go and duck into places for protection. Then after that one, he had to go to Midway, and if you've seen that movie, The Battle of Midway, and how the sailors were on the beach fighting the planes? Well, what his job was, the Japanese were trying to come in on two-man subs, three-man subs, his job and the other sailors were to knock off those Japanese sailors coming over.

FRZ: So, you realize the whole object of this war [unclear] we had to go to war because you wouldn't have had freedom today. Japan owned all the islands in the Pacific. Hitler's group owned everything in the European theatre. So, if you didn't go to war, you would have been squeezed out economically. They just wouldn't buy it from you, wouldn't do nothing, you'd end up surrendering which I couldn't stand.

AC: I'll get into something like he was saying. If it wasn't for WWI and WWII there wouldn't be a United States if we didn't win. A lot of these kids today don't understand that. We were asked that one thing, "Well, what did you get out of going to fight and taking all your...?" because I was in from '42 to '45 and then I went in for two more years for Korea. And I said, "I was about to get up but we had two buddies [unclear] that fought in the Battle of the Bulge and he got [unclear] three times and plus he got banged in the head in combat." And he told that guy, it was a kid, "Well, you stupid..." I'd hate to use the words he used on him, "You wouldn't be here. This country would be broken up, like say if we lost WWII, half would be for Russia, half for Japan, Germany. We wouldn't be... And half of the soldiers coming back, instead they would have been killed. Not to have them to start more trouble to get their freedom back." Because we would never put up with being under Japanese; they were the most atrocious... In that book I gave you, how they used to slaughter our men, slaughter, and what they did to the Chinese too. They would put their babies up and catch them with bayonets because they were invading China at the time. But people today, the American people made Japan one of the richest countries in the world and when MacArthur – General MacArthur – who was right here with the Japanese and the surrender, he ran Japan and made it into a country as it is. If it wasn't for the American people, the fight, they saved France from WWI and WWII. France surrendered and we went in – the soldiers went in – and took their country back for them. So, it's a lot people just don't know all that stuff.

FRZ: All known to me.

AC: The Japanese slaughtered more Americans – ever heard of the Death March?

I: Yes.

AC: Okay, they slaughtered all the marines, soldiers, sailors all of them they had there. Russia, too. Japan sent a lot of our prisoners to Russia and Russia slaughtered them. Never found them, bodies, about 50,000 of them, that never came back from Russia.

FRZ: Which was unknown to me. My brother Bill was a paratrooper, 11th airborne. They jumped on [unclear]. They bombarded [unclear] and the guy I served with, Otto Krauss, was on the admiral staff. Well anyways, the day after the battle, I get notice. He said, "Wasn't your brother in the 11th airborne?" I said, "Yes." He said, "They jumped during the night when you were bombarding." I said, "I didn't know." Well anyway, I got a letter from home that he was dead. He got killed. So, then another month or so went by – because our mail was shipped on little crafts [unclear]; if they got sunk you had no mail because mail was backed up six months at least. But then I got a notice he was wounded; he wasn't killed. When we invaded Okinawa, my other brother was there without knowing it – Chuck's his name. Barney, the oldest one – we used to call him Barney – he was in the Atlantic. So, he served through the European theatre. But you never know who's there, who isn't there, during these battles that go on. Saipan, we passed that, Saipan, they had 10,000 Japanese women, children jumping off a cliff, a 10-mile cliff, it had to be 5-8,000 feet. They just threw them all off the cliff. The pictures you see of us, it was terrible. We look like we were biting them on the neck, killing them, stabbing them like he said. You couldn't save them if you tried. We had sunk a couple of them during the battle against the Japanese fleet – one of the battles – they wouldn't come aboard. The Captain said, "Shoot them, machine gun them, because the sharks are going to kill them anyways, rather than let them suffer staying in that water." They wouldn't come aboard, they refused to come aboard. To fight them, you had to fight to the last person. Like with Iwo Jima, we shelled that all day long, we were out of shells [unclear]. There's a picture in here, it's unbelievable. This one here is near Iwo Jima [shows photograph]. That's a 500-pound bomb coming down.

AC: Is that the Missouri? [unclear]

FRZ: No. that's the Pasadena. This I all the [unclear]; if this would have hit, that wouldn't have been my daughter there today [points across the room]. Would not have been possible because this would have gone from one magazine to another. The ship was nothing but ammunition. Would just blow. But from different battles we were in... After Iwo Jima, we had Okinawa, the Philippines. We got lucky in the Philippines, going through Luzon Strait, there was a creek of water, 18 miles long, possibly 5 miles, ten miles wide. We were coming through at night. All silence. No radio, no contact with anybody, no ship to tell you what's going on or here, nothing. So, we were coming through there and, lo and behold, we found out the Japs were behind us coming through, and they had the Yomata, the Yokohama, the Yomata, Little Rose, Big Rose, they were all named after flowers, these battleships. They had 18-inch guns, we had 16-inch. So, what we did when we pulled out, we lined up the harbor. We left torpedo planes, torpedoes, the light cruisers, heavy cruisers, battleships, all waiting in that line when they came in broadside ready. In the meantime, the stupid country here, not the country, I'm sorry, the newspaper reports were as if [unclear] didn't swear word but, "Where the hell was he?" We didn't want any silence, we kept it quiet, we knew of five to seven aircraft carriers up beyond the reach that we wanted. This was the decoy. As long as we were battling here, our fleet was here, we couldn't get where you were at and Okinawa was where the planes were. Now each one of those aircraft could have

launched sixty, seventy-five planes which they could have launched to come back down and bombarded every one of our ships. Kamikazes were what they really were diving into you. So, he had to call to tell them where we were, so we lost contact with those aircraft carriers. Luckily, we went around again as far as Japan and we caught them going home, so we [unclear] up there, five out of the seven which changed the Battle of the Philippines. We lost the battle of the Philippines but it cost us more men than when we did. As it was, we lost 5,000 navy men at the Battle of Okinawa. But we'd have lost 10,000 if they'd have gotten through with their kamikazes. But they were constantly coming at you. You couldn't... A bad day like today, you could see them coming, but a day with clouds... They come right through the clouds at you.

AC: [Displays photograph and refers to photograph as he is talking] That's a kamikaze. He had just dropped his... That hit us here by the turret [unclear], then came aboard here, then my mount was just up above here and all the flames came in the mount. I was the first shell man in the thing, and all the flames came in the mount, so I turned the air on and the pilot's body lands right about over here and it's all apart, just parts of him. The wing landed there. Those sailors, they grabbed parts of the bodies. But our Captain, Captain Callahan, a big handsome Irishman, he gave this Japanese guy a military funeral. Put his remains in canvas and stuff and slid them off to sea with the honors. Because he was fighting for what he believed in.

FRZ: It's sad to see when you're wounded or dead after your battles are over with. They put you on a plane, they put you in canvas, two 5-inch shells, put them in with your body, just below the surface of the deck, a 21-gun salute and you're pushed over, so there's no way of coming back. All the navy men you'll ever know – they're all buried at sea.

AC: They are all buried at sea, they are fish meat.

FRZ: Like I said, the different battles you went in the Philippines, [unclear] Luzon, Okinawa, and the two battles we faced against the Japanese Navy – all the way into China; we fought in China. We bombarded China because it was a stronghold at the time, and then the Japanese were on this side of us and we didn't know it and this side. So, we had to divide and fight, so this side got weak and we sent more here, so we were able to stream out without getting caught in between. Like I said, it's all different things, but you kids are lucky, like I said, we saved our freedom, which we wouldn't have had.

AC: Like with me, we were under attack. I never saw what was going on, because I'm in these mounts, you see these mounts over here. See right there [points to photograph] we're in there, we're firing those two guns. The only way we know if we got hit is, you're dead, right. So, a lot of these pictures that I had, like say he's got that one with all the bursts and stuff like that, and my ship was right in the middle there and a bomb dropping in the back, and I said, "When did this happen?" Right there and I didn't even know, because I'm in the mount, none of us knew, the guys are in the mount.

FRZ: I was in the 5-inch guns one night. I belong on the 6-inch guns [unclear]. So, it was probably close to midnight and I kept hearing [taps on table] and I said, "What in hell is that?" I'm sitting in the 5-inch guns. The more I heard it, the more I didn't want to go out. Well, this marine that was with me said. "I'm going out the hatch." I said, "I'm not going out the hatch; I'm going down through." "You're not allowed to go through, x,y,z," he'll tell you. They sealed the doors off, so if this compartment got hit, you couldn't flood out. The ship stayed afloat. I kept hearing it, hearing it, so I went down. Then I heard General Quarters go in. After General Quarters, Air Defense first,

then General Quarters. Down I went through the thing. The next morning, by the time this battle was over during the middle of the night, when I went out, this marine was there, but he was dead. Whatever the bullets were, they were machine gunning us, he got hit. It's a good thing I didn't follow him. I went down through the deck running up into my guns. You don't know what's going on. When you come up topside, like the battle against the Japanese fleet, all you can see is burning, you see these ships like this, everything's burning. Then you realize we were reported three times through Tokyo Rose, sunk. We were hit but the fantail, it killed all the guys in the fantail, the back part of the ship is called the fantail. That's like he says, when that's over with, then you realize – I don't know what you want to call it, your emotion – then you start shaking, I guess.

AC: I'll tell you about a funny thing that happened to me getting off. Iwo Jima, we were anchored in the bay and all day we were bombarded, so at night it gets pitch black. If you've ever been out to sea at night, it's pitch black. So, we had to take this one that was on the Missouri, see this little boat, whaleboater [points to photograph], we had to take it south [unclear] and six guys, three on each side with rifles, and go around the Missouri looking for two-man subs, suicide subs. Me, I couldn't fire a gun right-handed, I'm left-handed and the projectors would come, and well anyway, when we got the okay to come back aboard ship, I had to secure this motor whaleboat, we had a boom and the bay was – everything was going up – so it took me time. But I had to hold a little rope ladder so the guys could get up and get back aboard ship but everybody was seasick. So, they're going up this rope ladder, what they're doing, they're puking and it's coming down on me. Well, I'm holding that rope ladder.

FRZ: This was a typhoon. [Holds newspaper article] This came to the newspaper to Dear Abby. These two Texans are talking, and one sailor, who was probably with one of the ships we were on, told them the waves in the typhoon became 70,80, 90 feet high. That's how vicious that typhoon was. He said, "I've heard some big stories out of these Texans, but this is ridiculous." He said, "If you can prove that story to me, I'll eat a straw hat with either jam or peanut butter on it." Well the United States Navy got a hold of it and sent the pictures to Dear Abby. And she says that there's three things the United States Navy says to her that she was sure of. The Pope is Polish, Elvis Presley's dead and you tell there's a guy that starting to put jam and peanut butter on a sandwich to start eating it. Like his ship weighed 45 tons.

AC: 65,000 tons.

FRZ: Heavier than I thought.

AC: Two battlefields long.

FRZ: When we were on, we had to lash ourselves down to take care of our guns, cables thicker than our thumbs, lashed the whole thing so you wouldn't go overboard. I sat there and I watched his ship come up in the air, I swear, just like that [moves water bottle straight up], right back down again, that's the water picked it right up and dropped them. Same thing was happening to us – up, down. That went on for three days. When the three days were done, they had done more damage, that typhoon, than it did against the Japanese Navy. It destroyed close to 50 ships of ours.

AC: They were top heavy.

FRZ: Top heavy. Now we couldn't go back into battle until we got reinforcements to go into it.

AC: They kinda like busted.

FRZ: All I can say is we're here. I don't know what else to tell you.

AC: See, in these mounts, they have hatches and, in the mount, and the ship's rocking, water comes in. I reached over to close the hatch and the steel is this thick [makes a measurement with fingers to indicate several inches] so as I did the ship rocked, it came around and it smashed this thumb. I have no power in it now. That's how bad the water used to get. We had to secure... Then the bow of one of the heavy cruisers got blown off.

FRZ: Yes, that was supposed to relieve us, the Springfield. On that ship, too, that you see that they show a lot on television, the Indianapolis, now that ship was with us during the battle against the Jap fleet. It was hit with a kamikaze and it was going back. That's the last I had heard of it or anybody dying overboard ship. I never knew they were carrying atom bomb [unclear]. Now they blamed the captain, which was a big mistake to blame the captain. If you go out with a cruiser, anything heavier than that you should have destroyers because they have sonar. They can pick up submarines. And that Japanese sub shelled those people for almost four days before they sunk them. And if they'd had destroyers they wouldn't have got sunk, they would have been all right. They're little, they're not big. They don't go from here to where my daughter is, a submarine that big. One night in Ulithi we got it. You were there.

AC: Oh yes.

FRZ: We were going to see a movie for the first time. So, I was sitting on our deck on top of our 3-inch guns. Sitting on the turret, just breaking dark, and over to the left side I could see a lot of firing going on, night firing, practicing. We sat there and all at once, boom, a ship about from here to that front room of yours, just a ball of fire going down. And I mean big, bigger than this room, the height unbelievable. So right away, something was wrong, but nobody knew what it was, so General [unclear] right away. So, in we went and you could hear another explosion. Come to find out in the morning, one of the captains or lieutenants on our destroyer knew something was wrong so they started dynamite, these big cans, barrels— actual barrels. They were depth charges, explode in the water, to drive up. Well they drove them up, they drove up ten, only two got off torpedoes, the rest couldn't get it because they were depth charging them. So, when we got up in the morning we were still in general quarters, they had brought them up and they brought up a submarine, the biggest submarine we ever saw. It was unbelievable, it was 120 feet. It had a 5-inch gun on it and a plane. Come to find out, a day before that all the little ships come into Ulithi. All the big ships, the flaptops like this [holds up a piece of cardboard flat], come in after. They came right under the [unclear]. They follow with sonar. They came in past the screen, whenever they turned, they turned, whatever they... They got in that night and they waited until night to fire. If they didn't depth charge it, they would have gotten more ships out of it, but they didn't. Even then, they had to shoot. I don't remember taking any on board, do you?

AC: No. Well the Ulithi was used as a rendezvous for the ships to get replenished and stuff like that. That's why sometimes there was a whole part of a task force we had there and they would come in. They weren't watching too much because the sailors, some were on the shore drinking all that free beer, and then while the ship was getting replenished...

FRZ: They wouldn't take it that far. But they were there. Any place you could think of, you had to watch.

AC: While you're in the service, in the Navy, and you're living with guys you get to know them better than your own mother, father, brother because you're, like in WWII we slept on, the sacks, were piled up one, two, three, about four high and you slept head, foot, head, foot and you were together for maybe say you were out to sea for a year, without coming into port, you get to know the guy, you get to know him so good, you always have friends. I still have friends. But only a couple left, the rest are dead. We're the lucky few. I've got the picture of the guys from Utica that were on the Missouri. I'm the only one left. We had a marine sergeant, he looked like an Indian. I'll tell you a story. I go to the reunions of the Missouri and we're down in, I think Norfolk, VA, and we're on a bus. We're going to go on the Franklin D. Roosevelt carrier to visit. So, this buddy of mine, Brownie, from Buffalo, he's dead now too, he was telling this girl that was sitting next to him – he was a woof, he was trying to make the girl, anyway – he was saying how he's written to Indian Affairs, he's traveled all over to Indian councils. He said, "I want my buddy, he's an Indian, a sergeant aboard the Missouri." So, he said, "When we used to go on liberty, he wore the sergeant's uniform and the sergeant, Testa, wore his," so I turned around and I said, "Brownie, you want that wopaho from East Utica." You know, Italians they call them wopahos, and I said. "That's Bill Testa. He looks like a full-blooded Indian." They came down and they met – I fixed it up – they met at the Knights of Columbus. They hugged, they cried, they kissed, but they're both dead now. They were friends up until the last.

FRZ: You might want to make copies of this. This is the end of the war; it's got a Japanese plane on it. This is the whole company. Here's pictures of Mount Fujiyama. This card here, it sounds funny, but they call it the International Date Line, you go over it today and it's Tuesday, you go over there and it's Tuesday again, you come back and instead of it being Thursday, it's Friday because you crossed the International Date Line.

AC: He's the sergeant [points to photograph] I was talking about, they're all dead.

FRZ: It's a shame; they are all dead. Here's post cards I got over there. When they lost the battle. This was Yokohama. They committed hari-kari, they killed themselves, because they lost the battle. These are all pictures of that, home guards.

I: Do you want to talk about what it was like at Iwo Jima, when you got there and...

FRZ: It was murder. The first wave came in and we were shelling. I was on the binoculars talking to the guys relaying what they want. The first wave, they must have killed three quarters of the first wave. How Johnny got through it, I don't know. But most of the men were [unclear] you could just see them getting machine gunned down [unclear]. So, we kept shelling and shelling as I was telling you. The ship, we ran out of ammunition. If we'd have gotten caught by the Japanese, we'd have been done; we couldn't fight. We had nothing to fight with.

AC: See, the Japanese thought they were going to have it easy when they bombarded Pearl Harbor, an easy take of America. But they forgot they woke up a sleeping giant. A Japanese general said that and that's a true saying, and when they found out that Americans were vicious fighters, that put them back. Because if you see some of those pictures of the Americans fighting, like if you take a picture of the Missouri getting hit by a kamikaze, you don't see those guys worried; you don't see those guys scared. You're looking over the side. How that picture was taken – it was one of the best pictures taken in WWII – the photographer aboard ship, our photographer, he said, "Close eyes." He reached over like that. Without even knowing that plane was there, he took the picture.

And this here picture of me is in the history of the U.S. Navy and the photographer that took this, I was standing more here and he asked me if I'd move over. I said, "Yeah," without looking to see who he was so... Well anyway, the table there, I sat there, it's in the museum down in Annapolis, it's in their museum there. So, the address of the history of the U.S. Navy, it's a big, like that [spreads hands out arms-length apart], this is page 146. I called up out to Annapolis and I talked to the Commander-in-Charge. He said, "You know, I've got that book right here. I've got the picture. Which one are you?" I said, "The first guy to the left. I have my hands on my hip." Now that hip I just got replaced, a brand-new hip. He said, "Well, you know if you see that guy with a dark uniform on, he was an Army man, that took that picture, and you'll never find out who it is. That was his assignment." He said, "He went out and took that picture and it made history. And nobody knows who the photographer is." Most of those good pictures – they were taken by guys doing their duty. He took my name and I told him, "If you hear anything let me know."

FRZ: But that day, then they came back and they got caught heavy again, the 22nd of February. So, we were called back in again. We had five cruisers – the Pasadena, the Springfield, the Wilkes-Barre, the Aurora, there were four. It was only five miles long; I think about less than two miles wide. John Wayne always called it, we went around the island like that all night long, firing. First one of the batteries would go three 6-inch guns, one turret, three, two, one. All night long this went on. Like I say, by the time the morning came, there were shells all over the deck; we were out of ammunition running. So, again we were called back out, we left then because their Marine commander, whoever he was, made us go back to the ship. They didn't need any more shelling, so back we went out. By the time we got back out here, the kamikazes were attacking us again, after the aircraft carriers, which you'll see aircraft carriers in there [points to photograph], the flack, the smoke. But the only thing I can explain is, you're afraid when its going on but the minute you pick up your first shell, that's it, you're trained to be, I guess, like a robot. I don't know what else to tell you. The minute you shoved that first shell in, you just kept going, just kept going, constantly, it could have been an hour, two hours. He would relieve me on that one shell, he would take over, another guy would relieve me until you might have been... Do you remember the 200th anniversary of the Statute of Liberty? You remember that barrage?

I: Yes.

FRZ: Well, if you remember that barrage, that's what a battle's like. It's unbelievable. You can't explain it to anybody, but when that's going at night, the vibration is so great. Now I'm deaf in both ears... If it wasn't for these [points to ears] ... But I was on three 6-inch guns, every time they went, the recoil. You could put your fingers in your ears, but it didn't do you any good. But that's about the most I can explain a battle when you're into it. When you're hit, you know you're hit. The ship, there's a call on the battle when you're on fire. But you keep going, you keep fighting until... You know you're going to either die and when we were going to invade Japan, that's what we figured, "Let's go do it," but in two weeks before they dropped the bomb, we were loading up. We had a thousand ships to go in, but it would have been a bloodbath. It would have been... The sea would have looked like that shirt, worse than the red shirt, that you dream of blood, you would have lost a million Navy men. We knew that because the old man said, "We've been in seven major battles, the eighth battle we may not come back. We may be

killed.” Which they knew. So, we loaded everything up. We figured, “Well, either I’m going to die or I’m going home.”

AC: You know, dropping the atomic bomb was the best thing that ever happened. Now the papers and all they come out, all these people that... But every Japanese child/person had a gun. Can you imagine if we invaded? I got pictures of all the planes that were ready to start bombarding because we were the first ship that bombarded. We knocked out a whole factory with these 16-inch guns. They go 25 miles. And if we had to invade that, do you know how many American soldiers, a million would have gotten killed. President Truman – he made the right decision. We were there, we were right there. We had just gone after a Japanese battle wagon. We fired one round. Then we had to turn around again because there was rumors of Japanese planes that were going to attack again. But Hiroshima stopped it. They were going to make sneak attacks, especially they wanted to sink the Missouri. So, when we got back, we had to leave there, because they were going to drop the atomic bomb. We had to pull way out and wait until they dropped it. Then they didn’t surrender, so we had to drop it again. And I never forgot, we all prayed – the prayer is in that thing I gave you. Everybody was happy. I can remember saying, “My God, we won’t go to battle anymore, it will be all automatic.” The atomic bomb, but look at that today, there’s still [unclear].

FRZ: They had, believe it or not, Mount Fujiyama. They had it dug out into the mountain. Trains could go in there. They had 5,000 Japanese kamikazes ready to come. A million people would be all along their island – millions, kids, mothers, fathers – waiting for us to invade. So, that’s what they told the Japs, you’re going to lose maybe two million people and a million Navy men, we don’t know how many Army men or how many Marines are going to die coming in. It would have been red. Like I said, the sea would have been red, and for what?

AC: There were a lot of big battles there, the Battle of [unclear] where all the men, most of the men that got sunk on that were chewed up by fish or by the... And there was one ship in particular, the heavy cruiser that carried the atomic bomb.

FRZ: The Indianapolis.

AC: The Indianapolis. So, as it pulled out, it’s lucky they didn’t get after it until they left the atomic bomb off where they were. They went out to sea and all at once the Japanese subs came and sank it. All those men, they said the sharks and those things made a mess out of those sailors, it’s gruesome. Like my brother was telling me, for Pearl Harbor the guys on fire, skin would come off. Imagine, there were still 120 bodies still in that ship.

FRZ: They left them right in there.

I: What was the emotion like on the Missouri when the peace treaty was signed?

AC: Oh, everybody was happy because Admiral Halsey got out on the thing and he said, “I promised you guys would get home right away.” And we believed him because he was gung ho. He was a five-star admiral and he was in some of the main battles. He had a tattoo and they say the Navy is a very clean place. Anybody that’s got an idea, get in the Navy because you’ve got to be spotless or you get in trouble. Well, he was a dungaree sailor. Dungaree sailor means, we call these dungarees, see. Where some ships, well, we have a word for them, you had to be in undress whites all the time, handling lines, doing this and that.

I: [to FRZ] You were in dress whites all the time?

FRZ: [Nods head.]

AC: But we were dungaree navy and Halsey, he said, “We’re out to sea, we’re going to be in battles. What do you need to be dressed up for?” You see these whites here [points to photograph], these are supposed to be undress whites here.

FRZ: When he said the war ended, a week or two went by. They said, “Get up on topside, everybody in dress whites, you get up on topside.” We didn’t know what was going on. Pretty soon, the Duke of York, King Edward VI, a couple of cruisers – these were all British that were with us. They came though the bay and went all the way through with their ships as we stood at attention, saluting. They played the national anthem, our anthem. They were going around and around, remember that?

AC: Yes.

I: Wow.

AC: I will tell how this Navy was, how this country was after the war. Now see these guys, sailors over here in white? [points to photograph] See it right here? That’s the gangway over here for the Japanese who were coming aboard. Those are side boys. They’re honor guard. [unclear] You have a bulletin pipe and you pipe them aboard and give them honor, you honor them and you’re saluting them. But when they came aboard, they had their Japanese swords. They wouldn’t give them up. The Marines took them away from them and put them on the table that the British were bringing over and it was too small. And the OD said “Circelli, grab a couple of guys and get down to the mess hall and get a mess table,” and we went down and got the table [unclear]. But they honored them. MacArthur didn’t say anything. The only thing he said was, “They are vicious people.” I think it’s in that paper there about what he said in his speech. Everything was forgiven like, everything was calm, we hated them, we hated them but they made them the richest country in the world.

FRZ: But they never tried any of them, either.

AC: No, not one of them.

FRZ: Not one of them. All of the cars you see today, Yomada, Yokohama, Toyota, Yamaguchi [unclear] – these are all admirals. They were never tried. Never.

AC: They took their own lives, some of them.

FRZ: The only one they tried was Hirohito. The only one that...

I: Emperor Hirohito?

FRZ: Not Hirohito. I meant to say Tojo. Tojo was the only one, head of the army, that was executed, but none of the admirals. In fact, today, it’s a joke. They have a big party. In fact, when we went on a trip, I went with my... I know I shouldn’t have, but I lost my temper. We went with Jimmy, when we went to Washington, DC. I was here, Jimmy was in the front of me, my wife in between. I went to turn around. There they are, buck teeth, with their cameras, and I lost it. I told them where to go. But it made me nervous just to see them taking pictures. You warred against us, now you’re here in this country taking pictures of the battle of the... big war monument. It’s funny.

AC: We were roommates. We went on the first trip that they sponsored free.

I: The War Memorial?

AC: For WWII and I'd holler, "Hey people come over here. Look, he's got his original Navy uniform on. Take a picture. \$5.00 a picture."

FRZ: I didn't get no \$5.00.

I: What did you do when you arrived home?

AC: Well I'll tell you. When I got home WWII, Korean War, I had a kid. I had Kenny – he was born and he ran away from me. When I came home, I'll never forget I was going down to sign, you had to sign in, you were still in the Navy reserves so you had to sign in. I was going to catch a bus – I lived in East Utica at Tilden and Mary Streets. Catch a bus – I'm crossing Mary and Tilden Ave; his brother-in-law pulls over with a car. I don't know where he got the car because after the war nobody had cars. So, he said, "Al, where are you going?" His brother-in-law's name was Carmen Frigo. And I said, "I'm going down to sign and get registered down the thing." He said, "Come on, I'll take you." I get in this car and I was going to go back to high school because they told me I was a great athlete, that I should get back in and I should have. But in his brother-in-law's car, that was the end of it, with the drinking, with chasing women and this and that. In Utica, at one time, Genesee Street was the place to be. They had everything down there. No other place to go. Until I met my wife, I met my wife, way down the corner on Genesee and Brinkert for the bus. In those days it was crowded, the place was crowded. The bus was coming over – my wife was sitting at the end. I look at her; she had beautiful blue eyes. I told her, "Get off that thing, come on." She wouldn't get off. I chased that bus all the way to East Utica. But that's what I did I was a downtown commando. Downtown was the place to be. All the joints and everything. Never went work. I collected my – did you collect your 52/20?

FRZ: No.

AC: They gave us \$20 a week for 52, for a year, so we called it a 52/20. Then once in a while I'd get jobs under the table, without claiming it and stuff like that. But I didn't care too much to worry about things so much until I met my wife.

FRZ: Well I got caught, one of these ribbons [points to ribbon chest] is an occupation. So, we were supposed to come home. We were the oldest ship in the fleet out there. And the admiral said, "They've got great morale. Keep them here for occupation." So, I didn't come home right away when the war ended. So, I started home February. February we left the ship to come home. I came home. They couldn't discharge me because I had thirty days leave coming that I'd never used because we were out to sea all that time. In fifteen days, I was supposed to be a civilian. So, they didn't know what to do with me. So anyways, when the thirty days was up, they said, "Stay home." "God," I said, "I don't want to go all the way back on that train all the way to California and back again." So, I talked to my congressman and he said, "Well, we'll discharge you in Long Island." Okay. So, I went to Long Island. I was there April, May, June. Finally, I went back and I said...

Break in Tape

Talking over each other.

AC: So, sometimes you didn't know when you were going to leave these battle stations. We'd stay, sleep on them. But then I was young and I could sleep on steel or anyplace.

And so, you had to stay there, maybe for a day or two and they came up with K-rations, cans you'd open up the cans and you had all that... I ate them because I was hungry.

FRZ: Ham, not ham. What do they call that? Spam.

AC: Spam was good. I liked it. I still like it. Well, anyway I didn't smoke then so everybody in the mount that smoked – and we weren't firing or anything – the mount captain would send them out to have a cigarette. I said, "How about me? I want to get out." He said, "Well, you don't smoke. You don't get out." I said, "Yeah, I started smoking right now, pal. Give me a cigarette." And I started to smoke. And then at night when general quarters went... you had red lights on every [unclear] by your hatches, where a hatch was, so to get out on, say for me to get up to a mount, I had to go through all compartments, you know. But there was a ladder right next to our compartment that went right up to officers' country, so from officers' country, I just had to make one turn and there's my mount. So, we used to run up that ladder and that officer would come out and start hollering. I don't want to say the words we told them. He came out and said, "Who said that?" Everybody in the mount said, "I did." We all did. But the officers aboard ships, some of them, we called them 90-day blunders, college kids, 90 days in the service. They didn't know anything.

FRZ: They didn't know what was happening.

AC: Like me, I came from an old battleship, the Battleship New York, represented in the State of New York. And now, they sunk it. They have another thing named after it, but it's not... The battleships were named after states, heavy cruisers after cities, the carriers after battles and stuff like that. But this ship, when I went aboard it, the sailors had hash marks, the hash mark was four years, every time you see it. No raiding, no nothing. I'm walking down – then we had to sleep in hammocks and live out of our sea bag. I'm going down with my hammock. The hammock's turned around your sea bag where all your clothes are, down the ladder down into my compartment, are rag flies, I'm catching... This young – then we called them coxswain [unclear] but now they call them [unclear]. I said, "What's this?" He said, "Put that sea bag there and start scrubbing the angle irons." "Angle irons," I said, "What are you talking about?" He said, "See the bottom of that bulk head? Scrub it." I said, "I'm putting away. I just came on board. I've got to..." "You can just go, they go in the sea locker, sea bag locker. That's all you've got to do is throw them in. You can take care of them later." Then that ship, an old cow like it was, had guns we were firing I think in Africa, no elevation, it's all like you see in the movies, it was a 5-inch what, 68?

ARZ: [unclear] 38's

AC: No, the 38's were [unclear]. These were 538's

FRZ: Oh, you mean the main jobs?

AC: No, the main battery then down there was 14-inch or 16. Well, they made me shell man. They're showing me what to do. You had to get the projector, throw it in, then you get a rod, like you see, push that projector in. Then the powder men would get the powder, a couple of bays of blasting powder, put it in. Then the beach was there, you had to swim like you did it in the other days, and secure it and then pull a thread and fire. No elevation and any planes came, these guns went [motions straight with both hands], maybe elevated that much from bombardment. But that ship, it was so spotless, I was, they made me, I was a good ball player. Those days, the most ships, if you were a ball player and stuff like that, you had it made. This one guy, he wanted to be a pitcher, so I'd catch for him, and I'll never forget, I remember our chaplain said it was a hot day.

I said, "Oh mamami, what a hot day." He starts laughing. So, then he asked me, "What do you want to be?" I said, "What do you got? What's a good job?" He said, "Side cleaner. A side cleaner. When you report, you go over by the bulletin chair on the side of the ship, scrape and paint. But when you're out to sea, you do nothing. You were in hiding. We used to hide [unclear]; they had below deck on battleships bales and bales of rags because that ship you can eat off the deck and to clean the deck was holy stone. You got a stick, you stuck it in a brick with a little thing in there and you put that stick in there and you grabbed it like this, sixteen strokes. If you ever saw the deck of a ship, the teak wood, sixteen strokes and then it turned it white. If you didn't shower, like I was a mess cook, I had to shower every night. I had to have a health inspection every night. All parts of me. I had to be spotless to be a mess cook.

FRZ: I slept in the mess hall, which was nice because right near the mess hall was the gun turret I had to go in, so when a battle came off, all I had to do was jump off, run to that door and I was right in my position with 6-inch guns. I was lucky. But I slept in a hammock all during the war because there were so many men on that ship, they didn't have any bunks so I slept in a hammock every night.

I: What was the food like?

AC: All depends on what you had at war. When you came into port, we had steak and eggs for breakfast. When you're in port, out to sea, what they had was what you ate.

Conversation off camera.

John Scarfo comes on camera.

I: What experience left the greatest impression on your life?

AC: Freedom is very beautiful, freedom is great but you've got to fight for it and keep it and believe in it, because if you lived the way they lived during the war like Russia and all them, it's sickening compared to the way we live. And you have to be all kept up with you people, you young kids believing in all that and keeping it going. If you go like some of these kids that are going around and shooting and killing everybody, this country will go to heck. Okay, Frankie.

FRZ: I don't know. There are so many experiences, it's hard to say, to put them all down. I've had a great life; I can't say I haven't. I got married, of which I was thankful the woman I married was good. I've got three good children. It's hard to say but all of it adds in together and you forget the bad things, which is nice. What about you John?

JS: The war we were in was a different kind of war than the wars today. We knew what we were fighting for. The kids today don't know what they're fighting for. I'm not saying it's not an easy war, sometimes it's a bad war. We knew we had to fight Japs. They're fighting people, civilians, they're fighting ladies, [unclear]. It's a different war altogether. I'm not saying our war was tougher. I think their war is tougher because they don't even know who they're fighting. That's the way I feel.

AC: And they're all heroes. They called us the biggest, the greatest generation there was, but I believe these kids are just as great that go there. They deserve the respect. This government's telling them go fight these people and do this and they go without complaining, you know, so I think they're just as great as we ever were. Because we didn't complain, we went. They're doing the same.

I: Were there any really funny experiences from the war that you remember?

AC: Yeah, the one I told you. Well, that was a lot of them, you forget. Do you remember anything?

FRZ: No, I forget.

AC: Well, one good one, like he said about the free food he got someplace. We were in San Francisco and you went up, what's that street in San Francisco, where all the sailors hung out? Well, anyway we went into this big, fancy restaurant. It was called the Flytrap – beautiful, big stairways and everything. So, we're about five guys that went in. A guy came up to me and pulled me on the side, and said, "Come here." He said, "See that stairway. Go up to the top and there's a door right to your left. You go in that door." I said, "For what, what are you trying to do?" "Hey, go," he says, "Go." So, I told the guys, "If I don't come back, get this guy." They had in that room a table loaded with food. I said, "[unclear]" "No, no," he said, "You're a paisan," that's Italian, he said, "You eat it." Then I was young, maybe then about seventeen and I ate, did I eat. You said the mafia [looking at John], that's who ran it. Well, my son, I just had a boy, my second son, retire from the Air Force. He's a Lieutenant Colonel and he was stationed there and we went there. I said, "Find out if there's a Flytrap". So, he finds it and the name's in the book. He said, "Well, the original Flytrap was closed for twenty-five years. We've just reopened. We've got the same name." I said, "Nah, it won't be the same thing." All the other guys that were with me, "You wop, you dago, you this..." [Laughs.] But they were all wops and dagos too. Because one minor thing I've got to tell you and I don't know whether you're going to like this or not, but during WWII the majority of one nationality that fought in WWII were Italians. And during WWII there were over 600,000 Italians under house arrest. And on the West Coast, they were all fisherman, they confiscated their boats because they were afraid they'd go out and grab a spy and bring them in, see. After the war, the Japanese were all right, they were under house arrest too. They were put in camps and stuff, but they were treated good. They had food to eat, where the Italians, they didn't get a penny. So, after the war, who gets the money, who gets reimbursed for stuff – the Japanese. And I got this all proved. I got a paper sent it here from ... I brought it down. Remember we went down to the historical society and she didn't believe it. And even that, I call them all kind of names, [unclear] I said, "You don't know nothing, you read it out of a book." So, she looks it up and she finds where that came from. A newspaper is where it was, in North Carolina or somewhere, where the Senator was trying to get us reimbursed. My father had to report. The only time he could leave the house was to go to work down at the Oneida mill. And how they got him, they knew he was Italian, but his name, like I told you before, they changed it to Frank James. But a lot of people don't know this about the Italians. I had a brother went to Sicily, he's a Sicilian and he fought against his own people. That's what I wanted to say. I wanted to push that.

FRZ: They were funny because we had three brothers plus me in the service. Billy was home and was wounded. And my father was born in the old country; not my mother, she was born here. He was an air raid warden; he was proud of that. So, now you got four sons in the service, you're an air raid warden, and the FBI came over and took his radio. [unclear] So, my brother Bill talked to his commander. Then the commander came up and called the Congressman and they gave the FBI holy hell. They said, "What

in the hell did you go take the radio for?" "Well," they said, "He's Italian extraction." He said, "He's a citizen since 1930. He's got his papers." Which is a crazy story, but...

AC: It's true.

FRZ: You wouldn't think they would have done it, why would your father turn you in when he has four sons fighting and plus my mother worked at the [unclear] hospital where all the wounded used to come in. She was an employee there.

JS: We had the hospital, you said [unclear] hospital? They're all prisoners there, a lot of prisoners were there.

FRZ: Yes, a lot of prisoners.

JS: They used to walk the streets on Genesee Street.

AC: They were Italians. The Italian people fed them, they treated them. They loved it here; they loved it here. Because they didn't want to fight against us. WWI, they were on our side. So Mussolini, well he did a lot for Italy but he was a...

JS: You know. What's that green jacket when the golfers win? There's a green jacket, if you're a famous golfer. The Masters, if you win the Masters, you get a green jacket. When I was in New York, we had a reunion. The guys they... When you tell them you're from New York, they think you're from New York City. So, they said, "Let's go have a drink at the bar." There were four of us. The bar was a little crowded. They said, "Have you ever been here before?" I said, "No, it's the first time." I said, "I live 250 miles away from here. New York City. I live in Upstate New York." See, they don't understand. So, they said, "You've never been here?" I said, "No. Just have a drink." So, the bartender asked me what I wanted. I said, "Scotch and water," and he gave me a scotch and water. He didn't even ask the other guys what they wanted yet. He gave me a scotch and water. And then he gave those other guys a drink. He said, "The drinks are on the gentleman on the end of the bar." I didn't know who he was. We were there for a Marine reunion. I had this green jacket on. And then he said, "Hey, yeah, Johnny, you've never been here, huh? But these guys are giving you drinks?" A few minutes later, the bartender gives me another drink from another guy. Why is he giving me drinks? I looked like these other guys. Then I found out. These guys must have been golfers. They thought I was a golfer. There're suddenly free drinks because they thought I was a Masters. They wanted to borrow my jacket. The hell with you. I'm leaving it on.

I: How did you feel to be a part of one of the biggest events in American history?

AC: How could you feel? Great. Like I showed you that picture of me looking down at that Japanese surrender, being there and seeing those people surrender. They got treated great, like I showed you that picture with the sailors with the white uniforms on the side, side boys. They got honored coming aboard [unclear] and he piped them aboard like an admiral would get [unclear] piped or something, I forget, I used to pipe it too, and pipe them aboard and they honored them.

FRZ: [unclear]

AC: And all of us swelled up. I felt at that time, I felt when we went to the memorial and I got to help lay the wreath at the Unknown Soldiers, I felt it there. I even started crying. That's the second time in my life I felt it, putting that wreath and I almost fell going up because, like I said, I just had new hips put on. A guy caught me and when I got up the guy was one of the Marines that was stationed there and walks back and forth. I was crying, and he said, "How do you feel?" I said, "I got all emotional. The only other time I got emotional like this was when I was watching the Japanese surrender." I

said, "That's quite a thing to go down there and help with that wreath. We were four guys and helped put that wreath out there." I said, "That's how I felt."

FRZ: I feel the same way every time I put this uniform on. I can't explain it to you but, you are looking at us, what do you feel when you see the uniform? What does it tell you? I was always proud to wear it. I never had to say that I dishonored it in any way. So, like I say every time I put it on, I feel just as proud as I did when I fought in the war.

JS: I was very proud to go into fight [unclear].

FRZ: But you do, you feel proud of everything. And when they play the anthem, there's no explaining it, you just choke up.

JS: When they play taps, they don't play taps like you people here. At the reunion they play taps in the same room. But then down in the lobby they play the echo. And if you don't cry, you're not human. You know people walk out of the room. When you hear taps, you've got to cry. Four years ago, some lady called me up and said, "John Scarfo?" I said, "Yes." She said, "How would you like to go to Washington, D.C.?" I said, "Good." She's talking and she's talking all expenses paid. I thought it was one of these free things, you know. Then she mentioned my lieutenant, Jack Lummus. I said, "How do you know Jack Lummus?" She said, "We want you to go down to Washington." I thought she was still kidding. I said, "Keep on talking, I'll recognize your voice." I didn't recognize her voice. She said, "Jack Lummus is getting the Congressional Medal of Honor and you were appointed to go down to Washington, all expenses paid because he was your lieutenant and you were with him." Well, I was with him the day he got blown up. He stepped on a mine and they wanted... He was a famous football player for the New York Giants. They gave him the Congressional Medal of Honor and they named a ship after him. So, I had to go down and tell the story. They picked me up with a limousine, brought me to Syracuse. I got off in Syracuse to Washington. There's a guy with a big ten-gallon hat on with my name on it. He put me in another limousine, brought me to the hotel. Another girl met me there. She said, "You've got be ready tomorrow morning. We're going to interview you for the lieutenant." This guy got the Congressional Medal of Honor. It was so nice because a lot of people don't know how high that medal is. So, when I take my wife to the reunion, I used to walk down the hall and I used to see a guy walking. I always saluted him. You know, after a while I saluted him again every time I saw him. My wife thought he was a lieutenant or something. I said, "No, [unclear], he got the Congressional Medal of Honor and when you see that you always salute him and he'll salute you back. That's respect."

FRZ: No matter where you go...

JS: The other night you had a guy on television, he was 99 years old. The President gave him the Congressional Medal of Honor as an old man.

FRZ: Wherever you go, if you've got the uniform on... Now, we have to go to Proctor to the ROTC.

AC: Yes, we are going to Proctor's to give them medals.

FRZ: Believe it or not, the last time me and him went, the admirals were standing up saluting me and him. Not us saluting them because you're from the war. Now yesterday I went to Roma, I had an appointment and three or four of the guys, Korean vets, Vietnam, they grabbed your hand right away. It's just amazing there's some WWII left and they'll shake your hand and thank you. Instead of us thanking them, they're thanking us at the same time.

AC: I feel odd when they do that to me. You know, there is a guy, he went out fighting, he put his life on the line. I mean, like a lot of them call me a hero, call us heroes. How are we heroes? You've got guys out there fighting. They're all heroes when they're fighting for their country and doing what they want, what the government or country wants. A lot of the country doesn't want them but they're still there doing it without crying. The people home were crying.

JS: I went to a reunion three years ago in North Carolina, two of the other guys and myself. I said, "Let's not eat in a hotel tonight." We had been eating... "Let's find another place." So, there was a place down the street and we went in there and ate. We had tags on us. And the girl brought us to our seat, started pouring us the water. This big fat guy, I say fat because he was big, he pulled up a chair, and sat with us. He said, "I'm the manager." He introduced himself. The girl brought us water and gave us the menu. First thing he told the girl, "If it wasn't for these guys, you'd be speaking Japanese." That's how they treated us. He said, "If it wasn't for these guys, you'd be speaking Japanese." That made me feel good, you know.

AC: Well the best I was treated – you've heard of the memorial in Washington, D.C. where they send all WWII vets down. Well, he [nods at FRZ] and I went on the first trip, he [nods at John] went on the second trip. We got treated like we were kings. I never got treated like that.

JS: Can't describe how we got treated.

AC: We got up, we had to go to [unclear] thing, we all had a little bag with change and stuff. They said, "Leave that there." I said, "Why? I've got to bring it." They said, "Leave that there." They got it; put it on the bus. Before we left, we had tomato pie, pizza, [unclear] everything. When we got on the bus, we had an escort out by the troopers. I said, "What's this?" We get midway on the thruway, stop, get off. holy gads, people saluting us. Then, all the food out there. We eat there, right, we get into Washington, D.C. just before we get in, we get to the hotel. They came out, the whole hotel, right, saluting us and we couldn't do anything. They served us, we sat down, got waited on, never got treated like that before. Got back on the bus, go to our hotel room, you get out, you walked out, and there was a little curb, they had volunteers because all us guys are in our eighties, watching us, that we don't fall off, right. "Where's our bags? "Never mind, your bags will be up to your room." The bags are in the room, right, in the room, they got it. We went down, where'd we go? We couldn't go to the Capitol because the Queen was there. There were cops all over the place, you couldn't get anywhere near the place. But we got treated so beautifully it was... If a guy couldn't walk, they had volunteers with wheelchairs. Every trip cost \$82,000 and this brother from [unclear] that started all this, they had to raise all that money and they did. We had a lot of rich people like the Romanos and stuff, millionaires they gave a lot of money and now girls, if there was a possibility, they're making another drive for veterans, the same group they gave us all that good treatment. They want donations. This money's going to go to veterans who haven't got a job and need all the help. So, it was in the paper the other day. And I got a letter.

FRZ: And when they let us off at the busses. This struck me. We came in and we're all lined up. They took all the paramedics and brought them down below. They had us all like this. And I was standing next to him on the wall and down below, it was steep like this and I kept seeing somebody go like this [waves hand]. I looked in the back of us and there was this nice-looking young guy and some of those girls must be waving to him,

you know, whoever he is. Then when we started marching down, those same girls came rushing back up. “Don’t move. Don’t even move.” I said, “Why?” “We’ve got to get your picture. We’ve never seen anything like this.” Well, it’s the uniform. But you couldn’t walk from less than here to that door with less than twenty-five people were taking pictures.

JS: You forgot one thing. If you wanted to call home, don’t use the phone. They had guys with phones, right? If you wanted to call home, they didn’t want you to use phones from the room or the hotel because you had to pay. They walked around with guys. You want to call your wife? There’s a phone. They had a doctor on every bus, on every bus they had a doctor. When we ate, we sat down and ate, after we ate, getting ready to leave, I gave the waitress a ten-dollar bill for tip. She said, what do you think she said, “You want me to get fired?” They couldn’t take a tip.

FRZ: So, you’re asking us what our great moments were – that was one of them.

AC: That was one of our great moments

FRZ: John said, when they plan a trip, there...

AC: Cost a fortune.

JS: Everything was donated. So, I work in a bakery.

AC: He is one of the best bakers.

JS: So, I said, well we used to go as far as Albany, a station wagon would pull up with coffee and cookies. So, I was going to donate some cookies. They said, “Don’t.” I donated them under another name. I had to donate them. They took the cookies, but they’re not from me. They’re from my boss. I had to use my boss’ name, Cafe Canole, because they wouldn’t take them from me as a donation. That’s how they were.

AC: That was a great experience. We made reunions down there but they didn’t have all that stuff.

JS: They gave everybody a camera.

AC: We got a camera. What else did we get?

JS: Then when you got home, you got the video.

AC: The video. Everything free. So, these girls through the school make a drive for this ... Said to send ...

FRZ: Off to the disabled...

AC: You’ve got the address on the envelope.

Talking over each other.

AC: He and I and one of the teachers, his brother or [unclear], Ray, what’s Ray’s last name?

I: Cardinale.

AC: His daughter’s a teacher, isn’t she? What’s her name?

I: Eve Kelly and Marilyn Montasanto, they’re both...?

JS: They’re both teachers here?

I: Yes, and then his son is a dentist.

AC: Well, he was with his son at that last talk. The Bank of America. He and I and Ray and this other guy that was supposed to be here from the Battle of the Bulge and we

talked to about 300 girls and they sent in a lot of money for the thing. 'Cause once we get started, we don't stop, especially this other guy.

FRZ: Most of them are gone anyways. All the guys that I know I grew up with have all passed on by now. A few, Johnnie, him, me, Phil, my cousin Frank, he was here the other day, but he doesn't look that good. I don't think there's a million of us left across the United States. I don't believe it.

I: Probably not.

FRZ: Because you see in the paper sometimes six are dead, then three, then two, then none for a couple of days, then right back [unclear]. All the guys I knew in the Navy, they were going to have a reunion, but I couldn't dig up 30 names out of 1,400. Couldn't turn up 30 names to go to a reunion. And when I volunteered in the one in [unclear], it's here someplace, a patch, honor guards, we had that. But the only thing left, like I told these two, the only time I'll put this [motions to uniform] on again, is if he [points to Al] goes before me, I'll put it on to salute him for the last time. Same with Johnnie. If I go before them.

AC: But always remember, we have no sorrows, no regrets for doing what we did.

FRZ: If we had to do it again, we'd do it again, to be honest.

JS: These other kids don't know what they're fighting for, that's the difference.

FRZ: I feel sorry for them.

AC: And I don't think they have any regrets. They believe in what they're doing.

JS: What's ruining these kids today is the dope, a lot of dope. It was too easy. We never saw it. Have you ever seen it?

AC: No. I never even smelled it.

FRZ: I couldn't even drink when I came to California. I was twenty years old.

AC: We were lovers when we came back.

FRZ: But it's true. We went back to work. We never bragged about it. We never said, "Well, I want this because I had done that". Nothing.

AC: I went to Korea for two years. I came back and I went back to driving a beer truck.

I: We want to thank you very much for your time.