

Janis Kozlowski: OK. And then, what kind of a setup did you have at Chernofski?

Charles Donovan: Well, just that one Yakutat hut. And that was our, our radio station, our sleeping quarters, our eating quarters, and everything else – it was just that one place that we lived.

Janis Kozlowski: So did you guys rotate in and out if it?

Charles Donovan: No, no, just the three of us were there. There was myself, and there was William Borkenhagen - B-O-R-K-E-N-H-A-G-EN – Borkenhagen. And then there was William Whelan, W-H-E-L-A-N, and then, myself - we were the three there at Umnak - or at Chernofski. And then there was three others at Umnak – Otter point. And of course, again, we were the first naval personnel there – the six of us.

Janis Kozlowski: [Hum]. So, you stayed ... when you went to Chernofski, you stayed there for quite a while?



William Borkenhagen, Chernofski Bay, 42-44. Photo courtesy Charles Donovan.

Charles Donovan: Stayed there for maybe, oh, the better part of a year and then went over to Umnak.

Janis Kozlowski: Did you like one station better than the other?

Charles Donovan: I liked Chernofski better, because [Chuckle] we were alone. [Laugh]

Janis Kozlowski: Nobody was ordering you around, huh?

Charles Donovan: Right, right – there was just the three of us.

Janis Kozlowski: But, then, if there was just three of you, you had to do all of your own cooking and all of that kind of stuff too, right?

Charles Donovan: Yeah. But that was fun.

Janis Kozlowski: Oh, you liked that?

Charles Donovan: [Chuckle] Oh, yeah.

Janis Kozlowski: OK. And then, how did they, how did you get over there, and how did they supply you there?

Charles Donovan: Just on boats.

Janis Kozlowski: Ok.

Charles Donovan: This, [was] a small, actually it was a small tug-like [boat].

Janis Kozlowski: So, when they got supplies at Otter Point, did ... then they took the tug around and resupplied you as well?

Charles Donovan: Right, exactly.

Janis Kozlowski: So, was that pretty frequent?

Charles Donovan: Well, as needed.

Janis Kozlowski: OK.

Charles Donovan: Yeah, frequent enough.

Janis Kozlowski: OK. Do you have any, any memorable experiences from Chernofski?

Charles Donovan: Well, just that one – not memorable in the sense, I think, that you're referring to, but just that one about picking up those things and making a coffee pot.

Janis Kozlowski: Yeah, well, that's the kind of memories that I think are good – things that you remember that happened out there.

Charles Donovan: Right.

Charles Donovan: I'm impressed that you, a bunch of young guys like that, had that figured out and were so industrious. [Chuckle]

Charles Donovan: Well, we were pretty savvy. [Laugh]

Janis Kozlowski: Yes, yes you were. [Chuckle]

Charles Donovan: [Chuckle] No, we had, we had fun doing that, too. I can remember that fool thing, and we made the best coffee that you ever tasted.

Janis Kozlowski: Now, did you guys, being there for so long, did that generate friction between you 'cause you were kind of just stuck there by yourselves, or did you get along pretty well?

Charles Donovan: We got along great – the three of us.

Janis Kozlowski: Were you all about the same...?

Charles Donovan: Yes. I cannot remember once that we really had any arguments, or anything.

Janis Kozlowski: Well, that's pretty amazing.

Charles Donovan: Yeah. Well, we were up there to do a job and we did it. And we enjoyed doing it.

Janis Kozlowski: [Um-hum] So, what happened after you ... when did you....