

Janis Kozlowski: So did you ... you decided you wanted to contribute to the war effort and then you ... did you choose Lockheed or did...?

Eleanor Mae Cramer: I chose Lockheed because my Mother and I both liked it and we were ... had a bus, or a friend that drove right over there every day so we had a free ride over to Burbank and back. And it was pleasant, it was a lot of, you know, there were five in a car. We talked about everything and work ... but nothing that shouldn't be told or talked about.

Janis Kozlowski: Um-hmm. And I ... there was rationing at the time probably even for gas, so that ride probably was a big factor?

Eleanor Mae Cramer: Oh, yeah. We were careful because, you know, money was, you know, not the thing to throw away. We were very careful. And everybody pitched in. There were five of us in the car and we each paid our share.

Janis Kozlowski: So, do you remember ... do you remember ... do you have any memories of what it was like to live in Southern California during the war? You know, there was ... I know there were some things that happened there during that time that might have been frightening. Do you remember ... do any memories come to mind?

Eleanor Mae Cramer: Only when my husband – my husband-to-be - was shipped up to the Aleutian Islands and then it was bad because he couldn't even talk to me if we visited or got together about what was going on up in the Aleutian Islands with the Army and everything – nothing. [He couldn't] discuss nothing, wasn't allowed to talk about. We were very patriotic too. We didn't try to break any rules.

Janis Kozlowski: Did you know he was going to Alaska? Or did he know?

Eleanor Mae Cramer: No, no. We didn't know where he was going.

Janis Kozlowski: You just knew he was going.

Eleanor Mae Cramer: We just knew he was going to be gone. We had no idea where he was gonna go or how long or anything. That was kept secret.

Janis Kozlowski: Then, did you exchange letters?

Eleanor Mae Cramer: We wrote back and forth after awhile were able to send letters but they were censored. They could be opened any time and looked at them to see what we were saying and what was coming in the mail.

Janis Kozlowski: So did you see evidence of that when his letters came?

Eleanor Mae Cramer: I think one time I did see something – it said “inspected” or something on it. But normally they didn't talk about it. But they did it. They didn't discuss it.

Janis Kozlowski: I imagine the guys were pretty well versed in what they could and couldn't say so they probably didn't have to do a lot of censoring that way because they knew that they couldn't say certain things.

Eleanor Mae Cramer: Yes. They were very, very, you know, careful of what they said, did or didn't do. No, that was just the thing to do. It was like breaking the rules. You didn't break any rules.

Janis Kozlowski: Right. So how long was your husband up in Alaska? Do you remember?

Eleanor Mae Cramer: I don't know, between three and five years. It seemed a long, long time to me because I was in love. [laughing] He wasn't my husband then.

Janis Kozlowski: And you were young and time goes by pretty slow then.

Eleanor Mae Cramer: Yeah, we couldn't, you know, it seemed like a long time before we'd see each other but he was ... he was very devoted to his work too and he didn't discuss anything. He'd come down and we'd talk but we didn't say anything we shouldn't have. We were very patriotic.

Janis Kozlowski: Um-hmm. He didn't have any breaks from his service in the Aleutians did he? Like, did he come back at all and visit and then have to go back there?

Eleanor Mae Cramer: Oh, no, no, no. He was ... I think he was given a pass or two, once to come down to see me. But they were not too willing to let them wander around. And besides the work he was doing I guess, was quite secretive too because he was a chemical engineer. You know, he'd been in that field, so they were careful.

Janis Kozlowski: Um-hmm.