

Janis Kozlowski: You said that a lot of your planes and equipment came from Africa, and I've heard that before. So, did....

Jim Schroeder: They were covered - they were painted pink. They called 'em Pink Elephants. So they had to redo, [Chuckle] to recover - they had to repaint all of them, you know.

Janis Kozlowski: Did they repaint them before they got to Alaska? Or did they show up here pink?

Jim Schroeder: They showed up pink. And then when they got up in Alaska....

Janis Kozlowski: And where did they paint them, do you know?

Jim Schroeder: I have no idea where they painted them, because I just heard. I saw them in the thing; that they were covered pink like that. But, we never saw them, because they had been flying there, you know, I think about - well, I don't know when they started up the bombing from the Aleutians, but it had to be at around '30, or '43, '44.

Janis Kozlowski: OK.

Jim Schroeder: And it's the same thing with the troops up there. They, all the troops were equipped with African equipment, you know. And it's pretty cold up there - so many of them had frozen feet and things like that before they got any other equipment in.

Janis Kozlowski: So what kind of equipment were you issued?

Jim Schroeder: Well, when I got up there, you know, back in '44, they were - you got regular equipment. And, first of all, they used to have the flying suites without electric heaters in them. But, when I got up there, they finally were getting heaters - because it gets pretty cold up at 20,000', you know.

Janis Kozlowski: Right. Right.

Jim Schroeder: We had boots, and the suits that we put on, which we plugged in, you know - when it starts getting cold up there.

Janis Kozlowski: So, when you went through your training, did they train you for any specific area? Like, did you, did they train you for the desert, or for the north, or...?

Jim Schroeder: We had no idea where we were going. When we shipped out of Seattle, we figured we were going up to Alaska, but otherwise, we had no idea up until that time where we were going.