

Walter Andersen: I'll never forget that. I was a kid from the Midwest, I went down to the dock there in Seattle, it was the biggest ship I ever saw. [laughing] It was a World War II ... or World War I destroyer, the USS Fox.¹ We got out in a storm, I'll never forget that, and that ship got smaller and smaller [both laughing].

Janis Kozlowski: I bet, out on the high seas!

Walter Andersen: Yes, and that was the first and only time I was ever seasick.

Janis Kozlowski: Were you seasick the whole trip?

Walter Andersen: Oh, definitely, everybody was.

Janis Kozlowski: Do you remember how long it took to get from Seattle to Kodiak?

Walter Andersen: It wasn't very long, I think it was, maybe, four days, something like that.

Janis Kozlowski: Well, that might have seemed like a long time if you were sick though.

Walter Andersen: Yes. It sure did. That ship was so old and creaky. It smelled of oil, it was terrible.

Janis Kozlowski: What did you think when they told you that you were going to go to Alaska?

Walter Andersen: I was quite thrilled about it. I thought that'd be great. I was only 18 or 19 ... I guess I was 19 then, I don't know, about 18 or 19 at the time. So it was an adventure.

When we got to Kodiak and ... weather central was at Kodiak for the Aleutians. So then they wanted a fellow to go to Pt. Barrow – you know where that is?

Janis Kozlowski: Right.

Walter Andersen: And a fella for Attu. There was two of us, so, this other kid and I, we cut cards and he went to Pt. Barrow and I never heard from him. [both laughing] Then I went to Attu.

¹ Built at Camden, New Jersey, she was placed in commission in May 1920. Soon after the United States entered World War II in December 1941 she began escorting shipping between Alaska to Southern California and, from May 1943 into March 1944 was stationed in Alaskan waters. *Fox* then began training, transport, and escort service out of San Diego. USS *Fox* was decommissioned at Norfolk, Virginia, in November 1945 and was sold for scrapping a year later.



Photo 2: Massacre Bay, Attu Island, Alaska, 1944.

Janis Kozlowski: Which one did you want? Or did you know?

Walter Andersen: I didn't know what the difference was. But Point Barrow was pretty cold [laughing].

Janis Kozlowski: Oh, yeah! Maybe you got the better of the two but it's hard to say.

Walter Andersen: I think I did, I think I did, really.

Then we ... I flew out to Cold Bay and then I went to Adak and then – these are just stops on the way out to Attu. And then I got out to Attu and got hooked up with the weather station there -- a great bunch of guys.