

Janis Kozlowski: How many people were aboard the ship?

Vic Krygowski: Oh, I don't know exactly but we had about oh, maybe, 30 officers, I know. And I have a roster of the officers that were on board but I don't have a roster of the crew.

Janis Kozlowski: Would you ... how many would you guess were on there?

Vic Krygowski: Oh, I would say a couple hundred, maybe.

Janis Kozlowski: And, let me back up just one second. How long did you spend in Scotland?

Vic Krygowski: Well, I was there ... the Beaver was there just short of a year.

Janis Kozlowski: And then, how long were you in transit going from Scotland over to the Aleutians?

Vic Krygowski: Well, then we came back. We crossed the Atlantic. We were not in a convoy at that point.

Janis Kozlowski: You just came as a single ship?

Vic Krygowski: As a single ship, running at high speed and we did some zig-zagging so as not to form a target for German U-boats. We got to Brooklyn Navy Yard, they did some repair work on it and then we went around to the Pacific side through the Canal and wound up at Mare Island before we went to Alaska.

Janis Kozlowski: Do you have any ... do you remember how long that was from when you left Scotland until you got to Alaska, how much time had passed?

Vic Krygowski: Oh, it had to be months. Because the Beaver was not a fast ship to begin with and when you zig-zag you slow yourself down even more because you don't steer a straight course.

Janis Kozlowski: Yeah, right.

Vic Krygowski: So, it took several months. I don't know exactly how long. But, it was a good long time.

Janis Kozlowski: Yeah, that's a lot of water to get all away across to the other side of the world.

Vic Krygowski: Once we got to Attu and the Captain permitted the crew to go on liberty I happened to be officer on the deck when these guys were coming back from liberty. And here they were coming back with rifles, mortars, grenades, all live ammunition stuff and so I had to stop them. And I called for some help from the Army that was there at the time and we set up the quarterdeck at the end of the pier, not on board the ship, and we collected all of this ordnance from these guys as they were bringing their souvenirs on board.

Janis Kozlowski: Where had they gone on liberty? Just on the island?

Vic Krygowski: Just on the island, yeah. At the time they even had dead Japs laying around they hadn't dealt with.

Janis Kozlowski: Oh, oh.

Vic Krygowski: Yeah, no, they were there and every now and then you would see a sign over a mound of dirt that says, "Here lies 30 dead Japs." That was their head stone.

Janis Kozlowski: Hmm. So that's where they got all the guns and ammunition.

Vic Krygowski: Oh, yeah. Well, they took them from the corpses, sure. And unbeknownst to them, some of them were booby-trapped so that they were so arranged so that if you tried to take that from a corpse, it blew up. None of our guys got caught with that but they ... but they did have quite a . They could have had their own war with what they collected. That was quite a trying experience.

Janis Kozlowski: I guess, yeah. I imagine they probably weren't too excited to go on liberty on Attu Island. There wasn't much to do there so that was probably one of the few things they could find to spend time doing.

Vic Krygowski: That's right, we had no facilities set up for recreation whatsoever at that point. So all they could do was to go hiking around the island and as I said, there was still corpses just laying around. They hadn't been cleaned up yet.