Oral History Interview

Sgt. Donald J. Brydon

58th Fighter Control Squadron
11th Air Force
World War II
Aleutian Islands, Alaska

November 29, 2013
Fairfax, VA

Aleutian World War II National Historic Area
Oral History Project

Photo Credits: All photos courtesy of Donald J. Brydon

Contents

Transcript of November 29, 2013 Interview

CD:
1) Transcript of November 29, 2013 Interview
2) Audio of November 29, 2013 Interview
3) Photos provided by Donald Brydon with a list of inscriptions from the backs of the photos.

Interview with Donald J. Brydon

Aleutian World War II National Historic Area
Oral History Program

November 29, 2014, Fairfax, Virginia

Interviewed by Joshua Bell, Volunteer Oral Historian and Researcher, National Park Service

This interview is part of the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area Oral History Project. The interview with Donald Brydon was recorded with his permission on a digital recorder. Copies of the audio file are preserved in mp3, wav and wma formats and are on file at the offices of the National Park Service in Anchorage, Alaska.

The transcript has been lightly edited.

Joshua Bell: I guess for the record I'll have you say your name, please.

Donald Brydon: Donald Brydon.

Joshua Bell: And when and where were you born?

Donald Brydon: I was born August 22nd, 1923 in Westbrook, Maine.

Joshua Bell: And what were your parents' names?

Donald Brydon: My father was Charles and my mother was Alice.

Joshua Bell: And what did they do?

Donald Brydon: My father was a farmer and my mother was a housewife.

Joshua Bell: Housewife? Do you have any siblings?

Donald Brydon: No, I'm an only child.

Joshua Bell: Only child, okay. What's your family's ancestry?

Donald Brydon: My father came to the United States from Nova Scotia and my mother's parents both came from Ireland.

Joshua Bell: Both from Ireland, wow.

Donald Brydon: Yeah.

Joshua Bell: Okay. What was it like growing up in Westbrook?

Donald Brydon: I had a good life. We lived on a farm so there were a lot of animals. And I had plenty of room to run and play and do everything I wanted. And I had a very good friend who lived right across the street from me. He was a couple of years older than me and we've been friends all these years and he just passed away about a year ago.

Joshua Bell: I'm sorry to hear that.

Donald Brydon: Yeah, he just passed away, yep.

Joshua Bell: Where did you go to high school?

Donald Brydon: I went to Westbrook High School.

Joshua Bell: And when did you graduate?

Donald Brydon: I graduated in 1941 and I was President of my class. There were 113 in our graduating class.

Joshua Bell: After graduating what did you do?

Donald Brydon: I went to Northeastern Business College in Portland and studied accounting. And I did that until December 1st, 1942 when I enlisted in the Army Air Force.

Joshua Bell: Why did you choose the Army Air Force?

Donald Brydon: Because I don't like the water and I was afraid if I let them draft me, I might end up in the Navy. And the thought terrified me so I opted to enlist and get my choice of the branch I went into.

Joshua Bell: Oh, I forgot to ask, what do you remember about the day Pearl Harbor was attacked?

Donald Brydon: All I just remember hearing about it. Let's see, I really don't remember much about it. Just it was terrible news and everyone was concerned about it, but that's really the only memory I have of it.
Joshua Bell: What did your parents think about you enlisting?

Donald Brydon: Well, they didn't like it but they understood my reasons for doing it and agreed with them.

Joshua Bell: Did you join with any of your friends?

Donald Brydon: There were, let me see, there were four of us enlisted the same day. One of them went in the Navy. One of them went in the Army and one of them went in the Air Force with me.

Joshua Bell: Where did you sign your papers? Where was the recruiting station?

Donald Brydon: In Portland.

Joshua Bell: In Portland. Do you remember where in Portland?

Donald Brydon: No, I don't.

Joshua Bell: That's okay. Where did you go to basic training?

Donald Brydon: Well, I went from Portland, we got on the train and went to Ft. Devens, Massachusetts. We stayed there for a week and then we were shipped to Miami Beach, Florida. We got there on December 9th, 1942. And had basic training until January 3rd, 1943. Then they shipped us to Shepherd Field, Texas for some more basic training and we left Shepherd Field, Texas on January 16th, 1943.

And I went to Cameron State Agricultural College in Lawton, Oklahoma on January 16th and was in the school for Army clerical workers and stayed there until March 14th, 1943 when I was shipped back to Orlando Air Base in Florida. Orlando was a far cry then from what it is today. [laughter] Believe me. The downtown was just a small village and the only recreation there was a movie theater, a couple of stands that sold orange juice, and the bars. [laughter] That was it.

It was at Orlando Air Force base in Orlando that the 58th fighter control squadron was formed. So up until that time, I had never been in a unit of the Air Force, but I was from that point on. They enacted the 58th fighter control squadron. We left Orlando on June 11th, 1943 and went to Fort Lawton in Seattle, Washington. Got there on June 17th and just a minute. We were in Seattle until July 6th when we got on board the USS Saint Mihiel. And we left Seattle on July 7th at 7:30 in the mornin'. We arrived at Dutch Harbor, Alaska on July 12th and I was sick the whole trip. [laughter] I can't go on the water at all without getting seasick. I sure

was then. We left Dutch Harbor on July 13th and went to Adak in the Aleutians. We got there on July 15th, stayed there until July 24th.

And then we got on another ship and we went from there to the Island of Adak. We got there on July 27th. We arrived at Massacre Bay on Attu on July 29th. And on July 30th, went to Alexi Point on Attu. On July 30th, we boarded another ship and went to Shemya, which was a small island near Attu, about two miles wide and four miles long and just as flat as the top of a table. There was no sign of a hill or a tree or anything but tundra. While we were on Shemya, the island of Kiska was invaded by the Japanese on August 15th. Now Kiska was between where we were and Alaska. On October 13th, eight Jap bombers bombed Attu at 8:42 p.m. I stayed on Shemya, let's see, I don't have the date. Oh yes, on March 23rd, 1944 I flew in an Army transport plane, a C-41, from Shemya back to Attu. And I spent from March 23rd of '44 until October 19th, 1945, I stayed on Attu.

On October 18th, we boarded the SS Lou Wallace and left Attu on October 19th. We arrived back in Seattle, Washington at noontime on October 29th, 1945. We left Seattle, Washington on November 1st, 7:00 p.m. and arrived at Ft. Devens, Massachusetts on November 6th, 1945 at 1:00 in the afternoon. I was discharged from the Army at Ft. Devens, Massachusetts at 6:00 at night on November 9th, 1945.

And a buddy of mine who lived in South Paris, Maine and I, caught a train and went from Boston to Portland where we got a hotel room for the night and then the next mornin' he got a bus and went to South Paris, Maine and I took a bus out as far as it would go to the end of the line and I still had oh maybe a mile and a half to walk from there to where I lived. And I was carrying a big suitcase and a rucksack, with everything that I had gathered up over the years and all my clothes and everything.

I just got off from the bus and started walkin' and a mailman came along. [laughter] He said where are you goin'? And I told him where I was goin'. He said that's right on my route. But I can't give you a ride in the mail truck. But I can take your bags and I'll leave 'em right by the mailbox of that house. I said that would be a big help. So I gave him my bags and he drove off with 'em and I walked up the mile, mile and a half. When I was up there, I went to the mailbox and there were my two bags. And I picked 'em up and I went in the house and I was home. That's my whole Army experience.

Joshua Bell: [laughter] It seems like a lot of traveling to me.

Donald Brydon: It was a lot of travelin' and it was all by day coach on the railroad, of course, except the time we were on ships when I was sick 100% of the time. [laughter]

Joshua Bell: Oh, man. I want to go back to Ft. Devens in '42 for a minute. What was it like there?

Donald Brydon: The only thing I can remember is when we got there, we got a physical, we got a vaccination and about four shots and we ate and given a place to sleep. We just had a blanket to put over us. We didn't have any pillows. I took my sweater off and rolled it up to use for a pillow. And was there for about a week and the only thing we did there really was get our uniforms. And after I got mine, they put me to work in the line where they were passin' out uniforms. And while I was there, I saw two fellas that I knew from Westbrook, came through and I issued them their new uniforms. [laughter] That's about the extent of what happened at Ft. Devens.

Joshua Bell: And what was the train ride from Ft. Devens to Miami like?

Donald Brydon: It was long. [laughter] We were sitting up in the day coach for the whole trip. It was a long, long ride under those conditions.

Joshua Bell: How did you pass the time?

Donald Brydon: Just sit there and look out the window, passing countryside. That's all we had to do.

Joshua Bell: Did you know what to expect when you arrived in Miami?

Donald Brydon: Absolutely no idea. But I can tell you that we arrived there about 9:00 at night and keep in mind now, we had just left Camp Devens in Massachusetts December 7th. A few days later we arrived in Miami Beach at 9:00 at night with winter underwear, winter clothes, and an overcoat. And we had to walk about two miles from the train station to the hotel where we were to be livin'. That was a tough walk with the way we were dressed. But we finally got there and we went in and they assigned us to various rooms. And the only thing is they hadn't expected us to come in that soon and the water had not been turned on in the hotel. So we couldn't get a drink of water that night. I remember that very well. Going from temperatures probably of 20 above to temperatures of 85 and not being able to get a drink of water. That was what I remembered about that trip.

Joshua Bell: Did anyone in the group sneak off to maybe get a drink of somethin' else?

Donald Brydon: I really have no idea. I had all I could do to keep track of myself. [laughter]

Joshua Bell: Now you said they put you up in a hotel?

Donald Brydon: Yeah, we lived in a hotel all the time we were there. Gettin' our basic training, we stayed in that hotel.

Joshua Bell: What was the, how close were you to where you did basic training?

Donald Brydon: We were right at the site.

Joshua Bell: What was your basic training like?

Donald Brydon: Well, I can remember them just making work for us a lot of times. I can remember one day they took us down to a big pile of lumber that was stacked up in a certain place. They said today we want you to take this lumber and take it over here which was just a little ways away and stack it up over there. So that's what we did. When we got it all done, said what do we do now? He said take it all back. Put it right where you started from. That's a lot of what we did there, just make work to keep us busy. We did do some learnin' to march and learnin' to drill, some of that. We got more of that in Texas when we got to Shepherd Field.

Joshua Bell: How as the food?

Donald Brydon: As I remember it, the food was alright. It was alright. I had no complaints.

Joshua Bell: It looks like you would have spent Christmas in Miami.

Donald Brydon: I did. Keep in mind, this was the first time I had ever been away from home more than overnight. And I can remember listenin' to Bing Crosby on the radio singin' "White Christmas" and being so homesick I could hardly stand it. But, somehow I got through it. I guess one other thing I should tell you is that I was in, I think it just lacked nine days of three years that I was in the service. I never got a leave in that time. I don't think I ever got an overnight pass. In that three years. And one other thing that no one today can believe, in the house where I lived, we did not have a telephone. So for those three years, I never spoke to anyone in my family. The only connection we had was through the mail or letters I'd write to them and what they'd write back to me. That's the only communication we had for three years.

Joshua Bell: Did you write often?

Donald Brydon: Oh, yes. I did so I'd get a letter back. [laughter] Yeah. I didn't write so often once we got on Attu and Shemya because there wasn't anything to say because every letter was censored. If you said anything that amounted to anything, they'd cut it out of the letter so we just, we couldn't even say what the weather was. So the letters then got pretty scarce.

Joshua Bell: I can imagine. So from Miami you went to Shepherd Field in Texas?

Donald Brydon: Right.

Joshua Bell: So you're getting all the climate changes.

Donald Brydon: Well, that's right. I remember Shepherd Field, Texas, one thing I remember about that was when we'd fall out for roll call in the mornin' at 6:00, it was so cold you could hardly stand it. It was really cold. By 11:00 and before noon, we'd be out on the parade ground drillin' and they'd have three or four ambulances lined up to take off the people that passed out from the heat. So we went from too cold at 6:00 in the mornin' to too hot at noontime. But the only thing is the evenings were very pleasant. Now keep in mind we trained at Miami Beach, Shepherd Field, Texas and then back to Orlando, Florida. And we went from there to the Aleutian Islands. We trained all the time in hot weather and we went to some of the coldest weather that anybody in the war had.

Joshua Bell: Did they equip you properly?

Donald Brydon: Not too much originally. Eventually we got good equipment. But the first of it, it wasn't too good. And when we got there on Attu, for the first winter way into the next summer, we lived in tents.

Joshua Bell: Oh wow.

Donald Brydon: That's all. There was nothin' there. It was just wild. So we lived in tents, slept on cots, had an airtight stove that you could start a fire in, start a fire and then put coal on it 'cause there was no wood there. They used to ship the coal in and we'd go down to the beach and they'd bring it in on a barge and we'd load it onto trailers.

You had Caterpillar tractors to haul the trailers. And the trailers were on Caterpillar treads too because the tundra was so soft that any wheeled vehicle would just sink right out of sight. So it had to be a Caterpillar tread to move at all anywhere there. So the first year, we spent the winter in tents. By the time the second winter came along, they had built some Quonset huts and we were livin' in those. And that was just like livin' on Park Avenue for us.

Joshua Bell: [laughter] I can't imagine. You said that you went to a state agriculture college for your specialist training.

Donald Brydon: Right.

Joshua Bell: How did that feel compared to being out at Shepherd Field? How different was it?

Donald Brydon: It was entirely different because there the whole emphasis was on our schoolwork. We didn't do much soldierin'. We were just going to class all day long. And kept our meals and that was it. There was no drillin', no trainin' at all, just the classwork.

Joshua Bell: Did you go to school with anybody who you would be paired up with later on in the 58th?

Donald Brydon: No. Once I left there, I never saw any of those people again.

Joshua Bell: What sorts of things did they teach you about?

Donald Brydon: The way the Army kept records, daily reports, and all kinds of inventories, typin', all kinds of whatever the clerical jobs were in the Army, they taught us.

Joshua Bell: Were you happy to have that assignment?

Donald Brydon: Yes, I was because I had been studying accountin' so that was more or less up my alley.

Joshua Bell: When you joined up, did you hope that you would get to stay in the U.S. or did you hope to be sent to one of the theaters?

Donald Brydon: I was pretty sure I'd get to one of the theaters because it was early enough in the war that everyone was going somewhere overseas and I was pretty sure I would.

Joshua Bell: Did you have a preference?

Donald Brydon: No.

Joshua Bell: No?

Donald Brydon: Well, I guess in retrospect, I would have taken where I went before I had gone to the South Pacific because the cold weather didn't bother me

as much as I think the hot weather would have. So I think I kind of lucked out, if you'd call it that.

Joshua Bell: Probably as lucky as you could get given the circumstances.

Donald Brydon: That's about it, right.

Joshua Bell: Then you went from that school you went to Orlando and you spent a little bit of time there it seems like.

Donald Brydon: Yeah, not much but a little. That's where the organization was formed and we got some more trainin' goin' on the rifle range and goin' on long hikes. We got quite a lot of that in Orlando.

Joshua Bell: What was the job of the 58th?

Donald Brydon: It was plotting fighter planes, our fighter planes in the sky and plotting enemy planes coming into our area and then they had another division of an outfit that had ran homer stations which were used to direct all kinds of planes, fighter, bombers, everything back to their base, in case they didn't know where they were. We'd have three homer stations around on different islands. And by getting their direct bearin' on where the plane was from each one, they could tell exactly where it was and what bearin' to fly to get to their base. That was the main thing we did.

Joshua Bell: What planes were generally directed by the 58th? What type of planes?

Donald Brydon: Mostly fighter planes.

Joshua Bell: Did you have a lot of P-38's?

Donald Brydon: A lot of P-38's. A lot of P-40's. Some bombers but I'm not so familiar with them.

Joshua Bell: What was your favorite plane?

Donald Brydon: I think a P-38.

Joshua Bell: That's one of my favorites, too. [laughter]

Donald Brydon: That was a good plane.

Joshua Bell: Had you ever ridden in an airplane before joining the Air Force?

Donald Brydon: My first plane ride was from Shemya to Attu on an Army transport.

Joshua Bell: Was it comfortable?

Donald Brydon: Well it was a cargo plane with two benches, run the whole length of it. One on each side and you just sat on that bench. So it was a long ways from the way you fly today.

Joshua Bell: Were you nervous?

Donald Brydon: No.

Joshua Bell: Were you excited?

Donald Brydon: Yes. I was just glad I wasn't goin' by boat. I would have taken anything in preference to going by boat.

Joshua Bell: In your downtime during training and being at school, what did you and the fellas talk about?

Donald Brydon: Oh, mostly gripe about various things. [laughter] That and some of the escapades that some of the people got into when they went to town and got drunk and got in a fight and sometimes ended up in jail. The officers would have to go down and bail 'em out. That was about the only excitement we had.

Joshua Bell: When was it that you found out you were going to the Aleutians?

Donald Brydon: Didn't know we were goin' there until we got there. [laughter] We left Seattle. We knew we were goin' somewhere but we had no idea where we were goin'. Only when we got to Anchorage, Alaska that we had an idea of where we were headed.

Joshua Bell: What did you think of that?

Donald Brydon: Oh, just kind of took it in stride, I guess.

Joshua Bell: What was your first impression of the islands?

Donald Brydon: Desolation. Not a tree on any of the islands I was on. No trees. The only thing growin' was tundra. The only thing livin' there that I know of was salmon in some of the streams and blue fox. That was the extent of the wildlife.

Joshua Bell: Were you concerned about the threat of the Japanese at this point?

Donald Brydon: Oh yes, yes because they had bombed Attu and they had occupied Kiska, which was closer to Alaska than we were and we were waitin' for the big invasion of Kiska. Finally, the day arrived for the invasion 'cause we didn't know ahead of time but we found out afterwards. When our forces landed on Kiska to take it from the Japanese, there wasn't a Jap left on the island. They had all sneaked away under the cover of darkness and got 'em on a ship and got 'em out of there. So there was no battle on Kiska. There had been a terrible battle on Attu. But it was over by the time we got there. But not Kiska. They were still there.

Joshua Bell: That must have been a relief and at the same time very unnerving.

Donald Brydon: That's right. It was both, it was.

Joshua Bell: And I'm just glancing over at my grandfather's discharge paper here and it says that he departed, looks like he left on July 3rd of '43 and arrived to the Aleutians about the same time you did. You might have been on—

Donald Brydon: Probably was on the same trip.

Joshua Bell: Same transport, yeah.

Donald Brydon: When was he discharged?

Joshua Bell: He was officially discharged, and this was, I believe at Ft. Devens, let's see, it says he arrived 8 November of '45. No, that's not it. Yeah, I'm gonna go with 8 November of '45.

Donald Brydon: Well, just hold on a minute. Okay, we arrived at Ft. Devens on November 6th. He got out on the 8th, I got out on the 9th, yep.

Joshua Bell: His name was a little bit ahead of you in the alphabet. That's probably what it was.

Donald Brydon: That's right. Probably that's what got him out a day earlier.

Joshua Bell: Let me see. I just noticed that. So that's good. So I know that the squadron, when it formed in Miami--

Donald Brydon: Orlando. It formed in Orlando.

Joshua Bell: In Orlando. Do you know if the squadron had its full compliment in Orlando or if it picked other people up in Seattle?

Donald Brydon: We had the full compliment when we left Orlando.

Joshua Bell: Excellent, excellent. So that fills in a gap for me. I know Gramp was in Orlando for a little while then.

Donald Brydon: Right.

Joshua Bell: Excellent. Who did you bunk with on the Aleutians?

Donald Brydon: I don't remember who was in the tent with us that first winter. I can't remember that. But I do remember some of the people that were in the hut with me. There was a fellow that I was a best friend with, from Leavenworth, Kansas, Bill Smith, Floyd Lunsford, Steve Marsh, Otto Lund, Joe Bowe, and fifteen or sixteen more that I can't name.

Joshua Bell: What was daily life like? What was a typical day for you on the islands?

Donald Brydon: Typical day was getting' up and going to chow in the mornin'. Then goin' to work, workin' all day until probably 5:00 at night. Then goin' to chow again and after that, there was nothin' to do but go to bed. Although we used to, in the summertime we used to play baseball some. And I guess they had some basketball courts. I didn't go for that but I did the baseball. We used to do that in the summertime.

In the wintertime, there was absolutely nothin' to do, nothin'. After we'd been there a year or two, they did build a theater and you could go there and see movies. But that was the extent of it. We did have one troop of stars came to entertain us on Attu. And I remember it was Errol Flynn and Martha O'Driscoll, came and entertained us and that was a pretty big deal, I'll tell ya.
Joshua Bell: Must have been nice.

Donald Brydon: It was great.

Joshua Bell: How did it make you feel while you were there seein' the show?

Donald Brydon: Oh, right on top of the world.

Joshua Bell: I want to ask about the threat of the Japanese once the islands were cleared off. Was there any threat after we had liberated the islands?

Donald Brydon: Once in a while there'd be a stray plane that they maybe couldn't identify. And I don't know whether it was Japanese or not, but we really never had any problem after that.

Joshua Bell: What do you know about the aircraft operations up on the islands as far as going out on patrols and certainly the weather was an issue?

Donald Brydon: Oh, the weather was a big issue because I know where we were, where the fighter planes took off at Alexi Point, they had a runway there, a point right out in the water. And I know that sometimes when the plane would start to take off, the weather would be clear. By the time they got to the other end of the runway, it'd be closed in. The weather would change that drastically that quickly. So the weather was the biggest problem they had with aircraft in that area. They had it in Alaska, too and all the way down the chain. In Kiska or Attu, Shemya, the whole way. That was the biggest problem.

Joshua Bell: Did the patrols ever spot anything of interest?

Donald Brydon: I really don't know. I don't know.

Joshua Bell: Did they ever come back with a big success?

Donald Brydon: No, not that I can remember. Just getting' back safely and being able to land was quite a success story. But other than that, no. I really wasn't in a position to know anyway.

Joshua Bell: Where were you working in relation to the plotting, the big board, I guess?

Donald Brydon: They had that in one area. I was off in another area. I worked in technical supply. And one of my main jobs was scheduling crews to go out at these remote locations, pickin' the men that would go 'cause they went to all kinds of places on these islands right around there. Probably there were half a dozen spots on Attu itself.

But these crews that would go out and set up their radio stations. The only way to get there was by barge. They'd go from the base where we were out to these outposts by barge. And they'd be there for maybe three months and then come back and go somewhere else. And that was one of my main jobs was scheduling all of the people for each location and so on.

Joshua Bell: That sounds like a lonely assignment.

Donald Brydon: Well, it was but there were two, three other people that worked in the same building with me on various other things so it was, you know, we had some little company there. That was about the extent of it.

Joshua Bell: You said you went back and forth across the islands quite a bit. Was that just you or was that the whole 58th?

Donald Brydon: Well, the only thing is we were on Attu first and then just part of the outfit went to Shemya. Maybe a third of the outfit went to Shemya. And then when I came back, there were only two or three of us that came back at that point. They needed us more on Attu more than they did on Shemya. So they shipped us back to Attu. But that was only a few of us, maybe a half a dozen.

Joshua Bell: Was there an airstrip on Shemya?

Donald Brydon: Oh yes, yes, yeah.

Joshua Bell: And they also flew out P-38's and P-40's?

Donald Brydon: Right.

Joshua Bell: Okay.

Donald Brydon: The base there was not as big as the one on Attu.

Joshua Bell: How long did the trip take?

Donald Brydon: I really can't remember but it probably took an hour.

Joshua Bell: Just want to make sure I've got all the questions here. What was the highest rank that you achieved?

Donald Brydon: Sergeant. That's what I was, a Buck Sergeant.

Joshua Bell: What do you remember about the war ending in Europe?

Donald Brydon: Just that we were elated. The best news that we could possibly get. That was great news.

Joshua Bell: Was there any celebration?

Donald Brydon: No, not that I recall, no. There wasn't much we could do to celebrate.

Joshua Bell: [laughter] That's true.

Donald Brydon: There wasn't much available to celebrate with.

Joshua Bell: How about V-J Day?

Donald Brydon: That was even better. [laughter] That was even better because by that time, we were all adding up the points we had to get discharged. And everybody in our outfit had plenty of points to get discharged at that point, the service we had and service out of the country and so on, length of service. So that was great news.

Joshua Bell: Absolutely. Did you write home?

Donald Brydon: Yes, at that time I did. By then, they weren't censoring our mail anymore and I could write anything there. I did get word to my folks where I was when the censorship was still on. One of the fellas in our outfit, Floyd Lunsford, he lived in California, he got an emergency leave to go home for some sickness in his family. And he went home and when he left, I gave him my mother's name and address and I asked him to write to her and tell her where I was. And when he got to California, he did that. And I have that letter today.

Joshua Bell: Wow.

Donald Brydon: That he wrote to my mother.

Joshua Bell: That's fantastic. Oh, I forgot to ask. You were the 58th fighter control squadron, which fighter squadrons did you control?

Donald Brydon: I can't answer that because I wasn't involved in the actual control operation. I was kind of on the sidelines, you know, support. So I really don't know what the name of the squadrons were. Most people involved in plotting them knew them but I didn't know.

Joshua Bell: No worries. What did your friends do for jobs?

Donald Brydon: My closest friend was in supply. He was in supply all the time he was there.

Joshua Bell: What is your favorite memory of being on the island?

Donald Brydon: When I was on the island? Gettin' the news that the war was over. That was the best thing. The best part of all was the train ride from Devens to Portland.

Joshua Bell: What was your least favorite memory?

Donald Brydon: Being on a ship. [laughter]

Joshua Bell: What's the funniest thing that happened during your service?

Donald Brydon: You got me on that one. I can't tell you. [laughter]

Joshua Bell: That's alright. Is there anything that I didn't ask you about that you had wanted to talk about, that you wanted to share with me?

Donald Brydon: I don't think so. I think we covered pretty much everything.

Joshua Bell: Excellent.