

Janis Kozlowski: I'm guessing that ... your squadron, if they, they canvassed the guys out in the Aleutians, if they, asked them ... about ... who was their favorite squadron, I bet you guys would have come up on the, on the top of their list.

Paul Polink: I think we would have too. Because ... I, the most of those guys were; understanding, that these guys were putting in some tough times. And like I said, we had Anchorage to go to, and restaurants and all the modern facilities. But, they, they had nothing, really.

Janis Kozlowski: Yeah, I wish we would have known more about your squadron before we put the 2009 calendar together. 'Cause, we didn't really talk about the role that you played. And now I, I recognize a little bit more about it.

Paul Polink: Yes, we ... we were a very proud squadron.

Janis Kozlowski: And you were the "Eager Beavers," right?

Paul Polink: That's exactly right. We were well named.

Janis Kozlowski: Yeah, yeah, it sounds like it, really. [Chuckle]

Well, is there anything else ... that I haven't asked you about that you'd like to tell me about?

Paul Polink: Well, I just ... when I entered the service - whenever our wishes, and I'm talking about my age group, and we were the top five percent of our class in high school. We had all these dreams about being pilots, and commissioned officers, and so on and ended up with lesser positions on the airplane. But we were still glad to be on the airplane. But, it wasn't as fascinating as we thought about. But, I got over that because my job really was critical to an airplane being in flight, and staying in flight.

Janis Kozlowski: Yeah, and, and did ... Lt. Commander Grossmith help, help you young guys understanding that your role was important?

Paul Polink: Oh yes. He ... he even treated ... like I said, our cooks and bakers and people in the mess halls ... I don't know if you know what a mess hall is, but that's where we ate ...

Janis Kozlowski: [Um-Hum]

Paul Polink: ... and talked. Anyway, he treated everybody with respect. And that's why he was so popular with the men.

Janis Kozlowski: Yeah, I think we tend to glamorize pilots, and they do have an important role in airplanes, but everybody is required to make that airplane fly and to keep it flying. So....

Paul Polink: Absolutely.

Janis Kozlowski: Yeah, you guys were very important.

Paul Polink: I really was surprised at the trust. And ... you know, I was 19 years old, and I go up there and they handed the plane over to me, and... of course they, I knew about the inspections that had to - full inspections at 25 hours, 50 hours, and 100 hours. And I did that religiously. And... But I trusted the pilots, the pilots trusted me, and it was a trust all the way down.