

Janis Kozlowski: You said you sometimes served as a medical ship. Do you remember ... what kind of the injuries, or illnesses that people had that you had to evacuate them?

Paul Polink: Yes, they ... we would have a medical team aboard - we had no responsibility for them. So, they would have a nurse, or two, and then medical technicians who were usually ... somewhat pretty husky. We had a lot of people who broke down in the islands – some of them had been there two or three years. And it was really cruel, because ... a lot, some of the islands [Chuckle] never saw much sunlight. And ... they... we had some mental patients aboard. But, otherwise, they were just complications from ... from operations that were performed in the islands that they thought needed to get to the mainland. And once they got to the mainland, they could get out of there rather easily to hospitals in the United States.

Janis Kozlowski: So, they didn't keep them at Elmendorf? They sent them to a medical facility somewhere outside of Alaska?

Paul Polink: That's, that's true.

Janis Kozlowski: Well, was there a hospital at Elmendorf at the time?

Paul Polink: Yes, and it was pretty modern, I guess. And some of the patients ... did not go beyond there - their problems were resolved, and whatever. But, most of them went on to the states to special hospitals for special treatment.

Janis Kozlowski: OK. So, did you hear ... being stationed at Elmendorf, did you hear some stories about life in the Aleutians?

Paul Polink: Oh yeah. I heard a lot of.... We would ... I really felt sorry for those people. Because they ... there was really a lot of adverse reactions to.... And what surprised me was the longevity that some of these people had on these islands – like, a couple of years, or whatever. And they sort of forgot people. And it was kind of tough, mentally to be there.

Janis Kozlowski: [Um-Hum]

Paul Polink: I enjoyed my, you know, flying in, and ... listening to the stories. But, I could realize that ... being on one of those islands for long period of time, would be rather depressing.

Janis Kozlowski: So you probably stuck close to your plane after it landed, to make sure they didn't forget about you?

Paul Polink: [Laugh] Yeah, that's, that's for sure.