

Paul Polink Transcript Summary

[0:00:00] Year of arrival in Alaska, joining Air Force reserves, desire to become a pilot, aptitude and selection as an aircraft mechanic

[0:03:30] Five men from family serving in WWII

[0:05:31] Ford Bomber School, Michigan, military training in various schools

[0:07:03] Troop carrier school, assignment to the 54th Troop Carrier Squadron, landing at Elmendorf Field in 1944

[0:09:49] Flying missions out of Elmendorf Field, flying C-47s

[0:11:15] Flying missions to the Aleutians, remembering when the Japanese surrendered

[0:13:45] Colonel Grossmith, flying well known people to the Aleutians

[0:16:30] The C-47 as a medical ship, handling wounded, the effect of Aleutian duty on men's psyche

[0:19:15] Impressions of the Aleutians, frightening landing on Attu, weather

[0:20:51] Flying materials and men into weather stations, what it meant to serve as a C-47 mechanic in Alaska, working part time for commercial carriers, mechanics pay

[0:28:38] Profession as school principle after the war

[0:33:15] Life on Elmendorf Air Force Base, winter darkness in Alaska, interest of a 19 year old in seeing Alaska

[0:36:45] Recreation during time off from military duty, playing baseball, love of baseball, playing baseball for the 54th Troop Carrier team and later for the St Vincent College, Ft Richardson field, midnight sun baseball in Fairbanks, playing sports as a kid, coaching for a high school team, military baseball league

[0:40:46] Making friends in the service, popularity of the 54th among the men, giving men a ride to "see the sun"

[0:41:44] Keeping in touch with family, news from other theatres of war, worries about brothers safety, where four brothers were stationed during the war, desire to write a book about all 5 brothers war experiences

[0:46:59] Photos from an emergency evacuation of a ship aground, Aleutian volcanoes

[0:50:16] Recognizing veterans for their service, pride in service under the 54th, plaque for 54th at Air Force Academy

[0:53:26] Colonel Grossmith, Grossmith and the Berlin Airlift

[0:56:35] Popularity of the 54th among the service men, dreams vs reality in military service, importance of aircraft mechanics to air crew

[0:59:14] Confidence in pilots in the C-47, mechanic training, brothers experience as a B-24 pilot in the 15th Air Force

[1:00:00] Availability of aircraft parts, learning from more experienced mechanics