

Janis Kozlowski: You put the bureau number in your log book, is that how you logged them?

Robert Buchanan: I put the bureau number in my log book, that's right.

Janis Kozlowski: And it was painted on the...?

Robert Buchanan: That's how ... because they got no idea what the number on the outside of those planes would have been. Matt asked me about that, you know, and I told him the number 62 did ring a bell but I was not sure about that. That was something I... Then when he got a hold of this one pilot, his last name was Skidmore, he had not only the serial numbers listed, he had the number on the outside of the plane – the regular number on the plane. And he had flown in this 48426 and he had listed 48426 that the number on the side was 62. So that's how Matt got ... come up with the ... we know what the outside number was.

Janis Kozlowski: So, when you went on a mission they would say, take number 62 or whatever?

Robert Buchanan: That's right. The serial number, I would get the serial number... I think when we filled out the yellow sheet I think I had to put the serial number on the yellow sheet. That's where we checked the plane before we took off and then when we came back we'd get the yellow sheet back and mark on there if there was any problems with the plane and then the ground crews would – we didn't have to take care of our own planes. All we had to do was do the flying.

Janis Kozlowski: Who took care of them?

Robert Buchanan: They had a regular ground crew to take care of them. The ground crews didn't fly.

Janis Kozlowski: Oh, I see.

Robert Buchanan: They would give the ground crews what they called flight skins. They'd pay them flight pay as long as they got four work hours a month in the air. Well, all of us guys, what we'd do is, our flight ... they'd take care of our planes and you'd get to know certain guys and you'd ... when you'd come back you'd sneak their name in on the yellow sheet and turn it in and they'd get their four hours in on this one flight and they'd get paid flight skins. So we kind of cheated the government out of some money.

Janis Kozlowski: We won't report you now!

Robert Buchanan: [laughing] Ok. I'm glad of that.

Janis Kozlowski: Now, did the guys on the ground want to fly or did, were they happy...?

Robert Buchanan: No, not necessarily, they'd rather not. They'd like to get paid the flight pay but they didn't want to fly.

Janis Kozlowski: Yeah, they looked at that fog and said, “I’d rather stay down here on the ground.”

Robert Buchanan: Yeah, of course, them guys, you know, they’d work on those planes all day and do all the tests and checks on them. We’d have 30, 60 and 120 hour checks.

Janis Kozlowski: Where did they work on them, just out in the open?

Robert Buchanan: They had a big hangar down there. They’d pull them into that hangar I think, when they’d do ... I don’t know how much work they did outside to be honest with you, I never went down and checked. I don’t remember ever going down. The only place I’d see those guys is when we’d go ... they had ... you know what a revetment is where they kept the planes?

Janis Kozlowski: Yup. Dug back in the hillside.

Robert Buchanan: Well, it wasn’t ... it wasn’t necessarily back in the hillside. What they would do is they’d pile ... the bulldozers would push dirt up and make a big high bank and just enough opening in it that the planes would go through. They used to keep, I think, around three planes in a revetment.

Janis Kozlowski: Ok. So they were pretty big.

Robert Buchanan: I know what you’re talking about. I seen pictures of that. I never seen a revetment built back into the side of a hill like that. Our revetments on Attu were all man-made.

Janis Kozlowski: I see.

Robert Buchanan: At Amchitka they were man-made. Amchitka is pretty flat to start with.

Janis Kozlowski: Um-hmm, yeah. I think only maybe on Kodiak and Dutch Harbor they had them built in the hillside.

Robert Buchanan: What’s that?

Janis Kozlowski: I think maybe Kodiak and Dutch Harbor were the only places they had them actually....

Robert Buchanan: That might have been. And I never was stationed on Kodiak or Dutch and, like I say, we landed there going up and that was the only time I was ever at Kodiak or Dutch Harbor. How they, what they called revetments there I didn’t really know. But, you brought that up, I’ve seen a picture someplace in a book that showed what they called a revetment and it was built back into a hillside. I never seen one that way.