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Berkeley, California

**Harriette Stewart**

**Rosie the Riveter World War II American Homefront Oral History Project**

A Collaborative Project of the Regional Oral History Office,  
The National Park Service, and the City of Richmond, California

Interviews conducted by  
Kathryn Stine  
in 2002

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Interview with Harriette Stewart  
Interviewed by: Kathryn Stine  
Transcriber: Audrey Yu  
[Interview #1: December, 16, 2002]  
[Begin Audio File Stewart1 12-16-02]

1-00:00:03

**Stine:**

I'm here today with Harriet Stewart, and it's the 16<sup>th</sup> of December 2002. We are going to be talking a little bit about her time in Richmond, her time working at the shipyard, and what she does now. Just to get started, I'd like to talk about your background a little bit. Can we first get your full name and where you were born?

1-00:00:23

**Stewart:**

Yes! Harriette Dendinger Stewart was my maiden name. And I was born in Harington, Nebraska, 7, 23, 1919. The third of five children of Will and Martha Dendinger. We grew up on the farm, 8 grades, then my folks sent my three sisters and me to live at Mount Marty Academy in Yankton, South Dakota, a Benedictine convent. We spent all our high school days there. We walked across the Missouri River on Monday morning and up through town, past Lawrence Welk's house and up to the school and spent the week there. Then on Friday night, we walk back home across the river and a hired man was there with the car to take us home for the weekend. We had a wonderful life. Our folks didn't give us a lot of money, but they gave us rich things like trips. In 1926, two families of us drove to Long Beach, California and spent the winter. There were five children in our family and four in theirs. Every weekend in Long Beach, we went sight seeing.

1-00:02:03

**Stine:**

How old were you then?

1-00:02:04

**Stewart:**

I was in the first grade.

1-00:02:07

**Stine:**

Oh, Wow!

1-00:02:06

**Stewart:**

Scared to death, because our country school was altogether different than 35 children in one room, in a city school. But it was quite an experience and we talk about today even how wonderful that trip was. But our folks also took us on trips to Yellowstone, the Black Hills, and Lake of [Calebogie], and all over South Dakota and Nebraska. So we had a wonderful background for growing up wholesome. We had wonderful parents. Oh, my goodness! Just such wonderful parents and that meant a lot to us.

1-00:02:56

**Stine:**

What did they do?

1-00:02:58

**Stewart:**

We lived on the farm, but my Dad didn't like to farm so we always had a hired man. But he dealt in cattle—buying and selling cattle, and he made his living in cattle. My mother was a teacher before she was married and then became a mother right away. So that took her time for five children. They retired in 1946, I think it was, and came to San Francisco, and lived for 30 years, and enjoyed the wonders of the city. Of course, age caught up with them, and they are both dead now. But we were a close family and that was good. We always enjoyed going to see Mom and Dad, and the kids did too—their grandchild, so that was great.

1-00:03:59

**Stine:**

That first trip that you had to California, do you remember your first impressions of going to California? What kind of things your family would talk about, remembering what was like?

1-00:04:10

**Stewart:**

We camped. The two weeks or so that it took us to drive that far, and there were hardly any maps, no paved roads, mostly gravel or dirt roads. Once in a while, the two cars would stop and wonder if we were on the wrong road—somebody said “You turned the wrong road” and “No, I didn't.” [laughter] They had to decide who was right, but we camped all the way. We took everything with us, our tents, our sleeping things—course you didn't have sleeping bags then. We put something tarp on the ground and our blankets were the pillow and that was it. [laughter] So, you had a hard bed.

1-00:05:01

When we landed in Long Beach, both families landed in a motel right on the beach until they can find a house to live in. That only took a week and we found a house, two houses in the same block. So we lived there and the kids all went to the same school, and that was great. But we went to all kinds of places, the Busch Gardens down there, and out on the bay on the boat to see what boat life was—they were displaying, everything! There was a big fun village in Long Beach at that time, something like Disneyland only not that great, but that was an eye opener too, you know. We grew up as kids thinking we were grownup, you know [laughter], seeing all that from the farm, it's quite a change. One thing we were blessed with, we were never sick, never sick. We never went to the doctor not unless there was a broken bone. Home remedies took care of everything. That was it. The two families of us when we came back, we always had parties and dinners together. We would pop a dishpan of popcorn for nine kids and two batches of fudge and play cards. [clearing throat] Of course, the folks went to the living room, [laughter], and listened. That was great growing up with that other family. It was a nice treat.

1-00:07:05

**Stine:**

Did they ever make their way out to California also?

1-00:07:07

**Stewart:**

Oh yes, they came up to see us. I just finished a Christmas letter to the one that lives in Illinois and one more to write in Nebraska. So they are two of them left and two of us left. We compare.

1-00:07:24

**Stine:**

That's great that you are still in touch.

1-00:07:28

**Stewart:**

Yeah, oh yes! That's marvelous. I think family friends of that duration, say 70 years, it's a good token to enjoy. So then I came out here. I went to Creighton in Omaha, and took nurses training there and graduated in 1941.

1-00:07:57

**Stine:**

Before that, could you just talk a little bit about your decision to go into nursing and how you mentioned that in your family none of children never were sick and your parents weren't sick.

1-00:08:10

**Stewart:**

No, they never were. Well, my grandmother had cancer and was in bed at home dying. They had a nurse come take care of her. It was Fern [Renner] who was Mrs. Lawrence Welk eventually. She made such an impression on the family, what a lady she was—impressed us kids, we just looked at her and stared at her, because she was such a wonderful person all around. I thought well, that would be pretty good, because that would be different than being a teacher. My mother was a teacher and I thought, "Well, let's try this."

1-00:08:53

So I went into nurses training and was scared to death. I was on limited income—I didn't have any money, and another thing I had grown to be 5 foot 10 tall, so I was a freak. I didn't have a lot of clothes and I couldn't borrow anything, so I didn't date anybody because I didn't have the money to go out nor the clothes. When you are that tall, you can't borrow nor can I go across the street to have a hamburger. But I was so used to growing up that way that it was okay.

1-00:09:39

**Stine:**

So you've always been tall?

1-00:09:41

**Stewart:**

Oh yeah! I was used to people, "What happened to you?" or something. But that happened quite often and you just got so you shrug your shoulders, you know. Fortunately, you grow up and you don't let things like that bother you too much. It's pity if you do. I came out here with four other nurses that we all graduated together. Two of us went to L.A., and two up here because their husbands were in the navy, doctors and they were going to be shipped out, so they came up to San Francisco. While they were waiting for the husbands to call them to go overseas to live with them, they started to work at the shipyard. They called us right a way and said, "If you want a good job, come up here for pay." So I worked at Good Samaritan in L.A for three months and

quit there and came up on the train. When I left Omaha, I had a hundred dollars in my purse. My Dad asked me, “Do you have enough money,” and I said “I have hundred dollars and my ticket. That was all right, I didn’t get anymore, but that was all right. Of course you are on the train, you seat up for two days, two nights, [laughter], and that’s way life was. But I came up here and I went down to Pill Hill and applied with Millie Cutting.

1-00:11:27

**Stine:**

In Pill Hill, Oakland?

1-00:11:28

**Stewart:**

In Oakland, and that’s where the office was for the Kaiser people. Millie Cutting read my application, and said, “Can you go to work this afternoon at Yard One?” I said, “Well, yes.” I was pleased, I think, oh my goodness! My friend had taken me, my nurse friend, so she took me to Yard One. As we went down Cutting Blvd., it was two lanes wide and on 14<sup>th</sup> and Cutting, they were just pouring the cement for the foundation of the first Kaiser Hospital.

1-00:12:12

So I went to work in yard one and let me tell you, that was an eye opener, because I never seen so many people. Had to get my picture taken first and given a badge so I have that, and was taken down to the first aid little clinic area that we had. We had a doctor, three RNs and two first aid men and a van for the medical care. We worked six days a week quite often. All of the shipyard men worked six days a week. I lived in San Francisco for a month when I first came up here. Then those girls got called to go with their husbands so they left their apartment in Berkeley on Spruce and Hearst, so I slept over there right away for shortening the commute thing and lived there for over four years. So, that worked out great.

1-00:13:15

**Stine:**

Had you considered moving to Richmond?

1-00:13:17

**Stewart:**

No, no. It was so nice living in Berkeley, because it was very safe then—you can walk anywhere and not worry. Even though it was late at night, people walked. I was lucky there were a man across the street that drove out to the shipyard eventually, so I rode with him quite a bit to work. Of course, it was ride to and from, so that worked out great. Then they saw the nurse that was with me and got her call to go into the navy nurse corp.

1-00:14:01

At that time, I have met my husband-to-be and we were married January, 16<sup>th</sup>, 1944. He lived on Woolsey and Berkeley and he moved over to my place, because we had a better apartment. We lived there until I got pregnant with twins and then we had had a place to live with two children. I had taken care of a lady whose husband was head of the Richmond Housing authority. She said, “You go out and see him, he’ll get you an apartment.” Because finding a place to live was impossible.

1-00:14:47

**Stine:**

This is in 1940—?

1-00:14:49

**Stewart:**

'46. It was really just—. If anybody moved, there were somebody in there the next day, they knew. We had a deposit on a place in Walnut Creek in case nothing turned up, just in case we had a place to go. But we went out to see this man and he gave us an apartment on South 13<sup>th</sup>. I thought that's only three blocks from the hospital, that's good. So we lived there for four years and saved every nickel and bought a lot on 14<sup>th</sup> and Virginia and built a duplex, and I helped. Then, we bought a lot across the street and built another duplex, and we kept buying lots on the south side and building houses on them and renting them. We did that for twenty-seven years. My husband was ten years older than I was and it was getting risky to go down at night to collect rent, if we had to go back, so we sold them. We said that's time enough. So we sold them. We had bought this place, because another daughter was coming here so we had three children needed a bigger house. I've been here since 1956, so this is the last move I'll make, I hope. My husband died thirteen years ago and I lived fine. I took care of being four and half years giving daily care for his health, and couldn't go anywhere but that's okay, I'd did what a wife would do. We worked together all the time we were married—forty-six years, and we pulled together and that was good. Whatever we did, we did it together, and that's the way it worked. Didn't know any different, really. We also built a house up in Placerville for the summer home. We went up there every week or two weeks and enjoyed that. That was a great deal.

1-00:17:33

**Stine:**

I want to jump back now we kinda got a sense of where you've been living and what you did from the war on. I'm gonna jump back and kind of figure out what life was like for you being a young nurse in the shipyards and kind of start there going in.

1-00:17:50

**Stewart:**

You know, in the shipyard, we were the only women allowed in the shipyard at first before Rosie the Riveter came. We wore uniforms and we're so well respected. The men treated us with courtesy beyond. We were very busy, we didn't sit at all, we were busy the eight hours at every shift.

1-00:18:23

**Stine:**

So the pace was really—

1-00:18:25

**Stewart:**

Yes, we had a clerk that would register the men and they sit out in the front room until we could take them in the treatment room. There was really all kinds of little injuries, bruises and broken bones and cuts and flash burns for the welders and foreign bodies in their eyes. Believe or not, I learned to take X-rays from the first aid man, and took all X-rays for the arms and legs of people had been hurt.



1-00:19:02

**Stine:**

And that wasn't something that your nursing school you ever expected—

1-00:19:05

**Stewart:**

[laughter] No, no. We developed our own film and everything.

1-00:19:10

**Stine:**

Oh, wow! All right there?

1-00:19:14

**Stewart:**

Yeah, all right there! Had an X-ray table and a little dark room that was just a closet and we had plenty of films. It's just learn it once, you know what to do, you know—how to expose the machine to get the right picture. When I think of those foreign bodies in eyes, us nurses took care of all that—dug those foreign bodies out. Didn't even think about calling an optical man, we just did it all by ourselves.

1-00:19:48

We didn't have a sterilizer for instruments, but we washed our instrument very good and put them in trays of antiseptic and that was it. We never had any infection. Never! If a nurse will wash her hands and follow a lot of good old-fashioned rules, you're all right. Gee, we had a lot of burns—people got burned from the machines that they had.

1-00:20:24

**Stine:**

So not just from the welding but also—

1-00:20:27

**Stewart:**

Any other things that was hot. A lot of sprained ankles and shoulders, and sprained fingers and hands, and ankles. The people were treated and sent back to work—they didn't go home for a week, no days off.

1-00:20:49

**Stine:**

Wow, just immediately in most cases—

1-00:20:53

**Stewart:**

Unless you are on a crutch then that was different. The first aid man would put you in the van and take you to the gate. Of course, we call his family and have them at the gate. The first aid man would take him to the gate and then he has to see and go to Richmond Hospital for any further-up care until he can come back.

1-00:21:13

**Stine:**

How did people get to and from Kaiser Hospital from the van that you had there or was there an ambulance?

1-00:21:22

**Stewart:**

No. If the family wasn't there, then the little van would take them to the hospital. But we'd always call and get the family to be there at the gate—be there and take them. Of course they were their husbands or their sons or something, you know, so they wouldn't fail to come. If they had a broken leg and it was a hospital case, it would go to Richmond Hospital on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. Then Kaiser brought that old Fabiola in Oakland and expanded right out way. So if anything had to go to or be hospitalized, then they would take them to Kaiser Oakland. They take them to that back door—used to be a back door on Broadway, so that was the medic and surgery care that they had. Kaiser could be proud of the care they gave them too without this so-called city ambulance coming that they have today for people. Kaiser gave good care all along.

1-00:22:49

The medical doctors were very good. We had in Yard One several old retired doctors that had come back, because of the war effort. So the one that we had Robert Jones in Yard One for a long time was a pediatrician in Ventura. When the wartime came, the doctors had to go in the service—navy or army or Coast Guard. So the old people came back, and that was the same picture with the nurses, the RNs. I was the youngest one in Yard One, because all of the rest were older because their husband or children or cousins or something had gone into the service and women then wanted to help with the war effort and they did.

1-00:23:52

**Stine:**

So all the other nurses had come out of retirement or—?

1-00:23:56

**Stewart:**

Yes. They had kids in high school some of them, so that's what happened. The staff was older and reliable—good old nurses. That was good.

1-00:24:15

**Stine:**

Had they all had experience with kind of the first aid?

1-00:24:18

**Stewart:**

No. No. They all been in hospital work, and that was about it. No, they didn't have any experience of outside work then. It wasn't available, only work that nurse could get would be in a hospital then, or doctor's office, and that be if you were really old and walking crippled or something, you know, something where you couldn't run on the floors like in the boards.

1-00:24:53

I would say we gave good respectable care. If a man got a bandage on his hand, he could come back the next day and get a clean bandage until it was fixed, so it was a lot of follow up care. But we expected that. The people who had a lot of flash burns were people who didn't know how to cover their eyes for welding and they get exposed to that burn, that flash burn and then they'd be in trouble. Then the welding people got a hold and clamped down on that happening a lot. But you can't avoid too much foreign bodies in the eyes from that flying stuff.

1-00:25:51

**Stine:**

How much back and forth was there between people working in the first aid and people managing workers out in the shipyard? How did they try to prevent future hazards or future—?

1-00:26:04

**Stewart:**

Well, that was the safety office where my husband was. The safety office had men around the clock who were out in the yard and if there was an accident, they were right there to see what happened, who was hurt, how they can prevent it, and don't let it happen again in any way. The safety office was very productive and sought to it for the safety of the men. That was good, because oh my land, a lot of those people didn't have any experience about a boat—all they knew was climbing up fifty stairs and getting a job up there. No, the people didn't know anything about the job when they first came. They had, I don't know how many men they had hired, but from this picture here, you'll see how many thousands of men came. Some of them came because they had sons in the service and they were seventy years old. It was all ages of men.

1-00:27:27

**Stine:**

Did you have people that were 4F that had not been able to—?

1-00:27:31

**Stewart:**

Yes! Yes! That was a lot of 4F.

1-00:27:33

**Stine:**

I'm curious. Did you ever treat people that have pre-existing conditions?

1-00:27:38

**Stewart:**

No. That we didn't do. People were very good about that, and didn't take advantage of the care there.

1-00:27:55

**Stine:**

I know that Kaiser didn't have any limitations at that time. So did people where they've been kind sent to Fabiola or to—?

1-00:28:05

**Stewart:**

Referred to their own private doctor whoever they want to go to in the downtown Richmond.

1-00:28:11

**Stine:**

Okay. Were there many doctors still around at that point?

1-00:28:15

**Stewart:**

Not too many. We had a fair amount of bottles of aspirin and I forget what else but very little narcotics—maybe one dose. And I think all we had in that narcotic cupboard was morphine and some codeine tablets, nothing else. It was in a cabinet on the wall back of the doctor's desk and I don't think the key was in the door. That was the care we had then. Of course, you wouldn't last if you pull anything shady, because everybody would know it right there,[laughter] you're called on the carpet and out! Until some of the doctors went into the service, they were young, and they were filling in maybe a month or two of time before they had to leave. We had a fair amount of young doctors. In fact, several of them stayed because they did become 4F and went to Kaiser Oakland and worked. So, that was way life was, but it wasn't fancy—no trim, but basic good and no corners were cut for the care of the people. But the whole staff was happy too. It was good. We were kind of like a family. Doctor Jones lived in Albany and he had us to his home two or three times, you know, a year. So, it was like a little social thing on the outside that we knew everyone very well, and you got along that way. Even Doctor Jones' wife worked as a clerk there in a little, to register patients.

1-00:30:44

**Stine:**

So everybody's working there?

1-00:30:46

**Stewart:**

Yes, everybody did. Everybody did.

1-00:30:53

**Stine:**

I wonder if you could maybe kinda reconstruct a typical day for you in those first couple of years at the shipyard? How you got to work? What the pace of your day was like when you got to work? Where you ate lunch?

1-00:31:06

**Stewart:**

Well, we did wear uniforms. I had a nurse's cape from graduating from school, but I didn't wear it to and from work but I had to wear a coat or sweater for warmth when you needed it. It was nothing to walk down University Avenue to San Pablo in Berkeley and get on a bus so it take you to the shipyard.

1-00:31:36

**Stine:**

So you walked from Hearst and Spruce all way down to San Pablo?

1-00:31:40

**Stewart:**

Yes. Get on a bus and it would take you to right to the shipyard—to Yard One. There would be another bus along to take people to Yard Two or Yard Three. When we came out the shipyard at three-thirty, right in front of the—on Cutting Boulevard were the gates that you came out and there was a bus to take you back to San Pablo and University.

1-00:32:13

We had nurse that worked in with us from Canada, Lily Vickerson was her name and she got her foot caught in the railroad tracks right where the buses picked us up outside of 10<sup>th</sup> and Cutting. She couldn't get her foot out of the rut and the train came and ran over her. We got the van to pick her up and take her Kaiser Oakland right away. Doctor Cutting had been on duty all day, and when he found out it was one of the nurses, he stayed until midnight taking care that nurse—fixing her leg. We, from the shipyard, her co-workers, we all went down in different shifts and specialized her for two or three days so she would have a familiar face. When she get better, Doctor Cutting released her in due time, and they provided her a leg—they had to amputate below the knee. She got a false leg, and Doctor Cutting told her, “As long as you live, you can have a job at Kaiser.” So, she managed the blood bank instead of doing floor work so it was less walking for her. She did that for years, and she did it very well. Of course, she retired and went back to Canada. When I was married, she gave me a cookbook, *Joy of Cooking*, with her note in it and I treasure it. [laughter] They hired wonderful people—the nurses were very good. We weren't society's highest level, but we were good people and we worked well and we did our work well. That was what Kaiser wanted.

1-00:34:33

**Stine:**

So do you think there is something about—especially those early years in the shipyards to coming down from Kaiser, the kinds of how they managed the plant, how they trained people that were going out to the work force, how do that have a role in creating this kind [inaudible]?

1-00:34:52

**Stewart:**

We never saw the work that the people were trained to do, because that was out in the field. Usually up on a boat where they were going to be working, like the welding or the outfitting, the carpenter work, our little place—our little clinic was maybe just across the street from the ways where they did the launching. We were right down on the ways.

1-00:35:22

**Stine:**

Right in the middle.

1-00:35:24

**Stewart:**

Oh, yes! If the men did get hurt, they didn't have far to go to the little clinic there. The clinic was open twenty-four hours. There was a doctor around the clock. Henry Kaiser would come quite often and he'd be on the flat bed of a truck sing his heart out and he'd bring in the Andrew Sisters or anybody—

1-00:36:03

**Stine:**

That he himself would be singing?

1-00:36:05

**Stewart:**

Oh! He'd sing [singing] “I'm a looking over a four-leaf clover.” He just belt out and wave his arms and he got the whole crowd join in, you know. The war bonds were a hundred dollars apiece, he sold a quite bit of that. That's what he was trying to drum up too. Course, he was a

guest and they treated him and the Andrews Sisters or anybody like a guest. They couldn't roam the shipyard or roam all over the place, but they came in and did what they were supposed to do. The same way with the launching, the people who launch the boats were guests. They had them brought in cars and they walked up on the pad for the launching to swing the champagne, and a little speech and that was it. Then the boat would swish down in the water right under our noses. Very interesting life.

1-00:37:14

**Stine:**

There must been so much excitement going around, just amongst everybody working there.

1-00:37:19

**Stewart:**

Yes! And of course the war news wasn't all roses all the time either. Yard Three and little Yard Four and Yard Two and Yard One, we got along very well. That was good. If you worked in Yard One, you didn't have to go to Yard Three and work, because they had their own staff there so you didn't into a new territory, or have to look for where the bandages were and all of those things. That was well managed—they had full staffs in each yard. The people came in and got their treatment and did their work. At four o'clock or when the shift was over, everybody headed for the gates to go home. But everybody had to bring their own lunch and when the sun was out and it was hot, they'd sit on the ground just below our windows in that little clinic and to be in the shade. And at first, that was before Rosie the Riveter or anybody feminine were allowed in the shipyards. So, at first, they were complaining about the government taking their income tax out their check.

1-00:38:50

**Stine:**

When did that start?

1-00:38:52

**Stewart:**

I can't remember for sure, must been '45 maybe or part of '44. But they didn't want anybody meddling with their check before they got it—they were very upset about that. But it was a law made and that was it. But then when they brought in the women, oh my land, the men laughed at them terribly at first. "Look at her! Look at her walk! Look at her! She doesn't even know how to hold a hammer. I wonder what she'd do with that saw?" They were very verbal about it. Their eyes got opened about how the women could do the work, and did the work and learned the craft, carpenter or welder. So, then the talk died down, you didn't hear any more after they got, settle a bit.[laughter] But it was interesting.

1-00:39:55

**Stine:**

About how long do you think it took for—, in your opinion?

1-00:39:59

**Stewart:**

Six weeks, two months.

1-00:40:03

**Stine:**

Time really prove themselves?

1-00:40:05

**Stewart:**

Yes. I would have to say the nurses were treated royally. I mean people backed out their way for us walking down the way to the clinic from the gates, and that was quite a long walk, more than a block—a long block down to we were. There were men coming and going, you know.

1-00:40:32

**Stine:**

This is consistent all the way through the war? People treated you with the same—?

1-00:40:37

**Stewart:**

Oh, yes they did! That was a godsend, because I guess you'd say we weren't holy but we were good people that acted right. So, that was the way to if you want to get, you want to give. So, that was the way it was.

1-00:41:02

**Stine:**

Oh, such a tremendous job! I can't even imagine that there are just a handful of you and so many workers.

1-00:41:05

**Stewart:**

Oh, yes! That was it, but we were busy. We didn't sit down, we took our own lunches and we in this little clinic. There was a big eye room, an X-ray room, and the big treatment room, and a room for them to register. That wasn't half of the building. The back half had a bathroom and room with a bed in it, in case somebody had to lay down 'til their wife could come or we could reach someone. Then we had a room with a table with chairs around the corner. Course, that was before microwave, so there was no heat, no fire cooking. You had cold lunches, but that's all right. You know, you didn't know any different then. So, that was the extended the little building—

1-00:42:03

**Stine:**

How big would you say the building was?

1-00:42:06

**Stewart:**

There was a place for the ambulance to back to our door. I would say it was forty or fifty feet wide and seventy feet long, one story, and it was right down on the way, in with the buildings of mechanics and the machine shop and all. So, it was quite an experience, an eye opener too. See where you ready go everyday. [laughter] Yard Two people were open before we were, so it was automatic, that's the way it was, you know. We chipped in and caught on out, and the Yard Three got medical staff. They did fine too.

1-00:43:10

**Stine:**

I know you didn't work at the other yards, but did you have communication with the other yards, the other teams, to kind of compare notes and see how—?

1-00:43:19

**Stewart:**

We didn't communicate too much, no. The women that were older at the end of the shift had to get home for some reason, you know. They did cook and wash and clean the house besides coming to work. There were two or three of us that were married, I think, and we all lived in Berkeley. We didn't ride together, but if we—. Remember that Brennan's Café down on, near Spenger?

1-00:43:57

**Stine:**

Oh, that's still there, yeah!

1-00:44:00

**Stewart:**

Once a while, we meet in there and have hot something to eat and walk home. Very little of that, but that was what we enjoyed. And of course, Doctor Jones had us to his house. We all took potluck, so that was a nice way to see each other too, off the job. That worked out well. The man that I rode with across the street was a perfect gentlemen—I forgot what craft he was doing, to weld or something, I don't know, but anyway, he have drove his car, pick me up at the door when I started riding with him. Left me off at the gate on 10<sup>th</sup> and Cutting, and I was there when he came out to come home, and that was it. So, that worked out good. But it was quite an experience riding the bus from Berkeley out to the shipyard, because it was all new territory for me. I hoped I was going to land at the right place, you know, because I didn't know where we were going for sure. [laughter] But it was all very good.

1-00:45:22

**Stine:**

Can you remember what the ride through Richmond was like—the kind of impressions that you had? When you were riding on the bus, did you go pass new housing that has just gone up?

1-00:45:30

**Stewart:**

Yes. There are some houses over here on Carlson that are there yet that you recognize where you were, you know, you knew you were on the right road. This man across the street also picked up another person and so he detoured a little bit over into Albany to a corner where they were waiting. Sometimes, there'd be two people there want a ride. That was what everybody did—everybody shared rides then, because if you had a car, you couldn't buy another one, you couldn't buy tires, gas was limited. If you were a shipyard worker, you got a coupon for some gas that get you out to work all the time. That was a little more than just a family car. I don't know how much it was, but they needed it. That was the way it was. Everybody was kinder in those days. If you needed a ride or a hand, it was no problem, people would do that. Not only that, I think of when if we would left Brennan's to walk home, we thought nothing of in the dark.



1-00:47:04

**Stine:**

Again, that's a really long way. And I think about it now to walk in the dark.

1-00:47:10

**Stewart:**

Of course, University wasn't that busy then. It was an eye opener and my folks wanted to be sure I was safe and everything from Nebraska. That was about two years later that they retired and came out, so that was good.

1-00:47:38

**Stine:**

I'm curious about what some of the big differences coming from Nebraska—coming out here? What some of the big changes were for you? Of course, you'd come to California, when you were young, you had this idea of what it was like.

1-00:47:55

**Stewart:**

Well, living in Omaha, like I said, I had little allowance but I had all my books and my white hose and anything out of that. And five of us could go downtown in Omaha and ride in a cab for a nickel apiece—twenty-five cents, see? [laughter] I was used to spending money at all and I thought a hundred dollars—that was good, did private duty for a while there. I knew how it was to save before I ever got here. It was a totally new world, because everything was moving faster. I wasn't used to streetcars and all of that or going to work. When I got out of nurses training, I did private duty there and you rode the bus to the house where you are gonna work and that was it. There was somebody else in the class that came to California, because her husband-to-be was going to be shipped out of San Francisco. And wrote back and told us the rate of pay in Omaha was thirty-five or sixty-five a month, I forget, and one hot meal and out here, it was probably seventy five, so that looked like more money. So, you came out here—

1-00:49:37

**Stine:**

Did that play into your decision to come out here?

1-00:49:39

**Stewart:**

Yes. I knew I could do better than in Omaha, because if I stayed there, I'll be that position the rest of my life, and why not try something else. So I did and it was the best thing I did, you know. But when I went to work for Kaiser then, I got a hundred and thirty-five a month and one-fifty after three months or so. That was a godsend. Since I knew how to save money, I did really very well. I think our rent was, two of us in an apartment, was forty-five a month, so that was the way life was then. Of course, there was food rationing and I didn't have a car, and it was public transportation, so that was all right. I don't remember the streetcars were in Berkeley then, but they weren't very much, so that was good.

1-00:50:54

**Stine:**

Do you remember maybe with your first paycheck ever splurging on something big for yourself now that you—?

1-00:51:02

**Stewart:**

I remember looking at that paycheck and rubbing it, and rubbing it, and folding it, and putting it away, and taking it out and looking at it again. [laughter] And what was I gonna do with it? Didn't want to lose it and to think "oh my" that was so wonderful. I was blessed with good health, so I never missed a day's work. I got that check every two weeks from Kaiser and that was so much better than what I ever had in Omaha. So, that was a godsend. I've just written and mailed a letter to that George Helverson, the new CE for Kaiser, and explain to him that when I see what this tenant group is doing, it scares me. I hope that Kaiser is well aware of it, and us retired people are— what they promise us is safe. It was a threatening letter, but it was a nice letter said that I know what Kaiser is enjoying today was started by us in 1940, 50 and 60 and 70, and let's keep it that way. So, we'll see. Those days with the respect that we were shown, all the time, women were more respected. Of course, in the shipyard, it was wonderful how the people backed out of their way for us. They were very courteous, that was great. I've always try to live up to that too, you know, I would command respect. I met my husband—

Begin Audiofile 2

2-00:00:10

**Stine:**

You were talking about how you've met your husband.

2-00:00:14

**Stewart:**

I met him at the shipyard, he was in the safety office. I think he about was thirty-two or -four years old, and I was twenty-four or so—ten years younger. Anyway, he got a skin on his leg and spot and came in for treatment—get a patch on it and that was how I met him—the first time I met him. Since he was from the safety office, we intermingled—the safety office and the nursing office occasionally, because they came to see if someone was hurt—the extent of the injuries and things so they were in and out.

2-00:01:01

**Stine:**

So they would do some follow up after the initial going to the accident's sight?

2-00:01:04

**Stewart:**

So then, luckily he had a '39 Ford. [laughter] So, that worked out good, because, oh having a car then was quite a treat. He worked swing shift though, I didn't ride to work with him, but anything after, you know, social—going anywhere, that car was such a godsend. I was a Catholic, he was not a Catholic. He says, "I can become one." So we went over to Saint Augustine's Church in Berkeley, that was his parish, and introduced ourselves to the priest and my husband took instructions and became a Catholic. Before he was baptized as a Catholic, the priest liked him and said, "Why don't you forget the girl and join the priesthood?" [laughter] But he didn't.

2-00:02:10

**Stine:**

Good for you.

2-00:02:13

**Stewart:**

Yes. So we were married January, 16<sup>th</sup>, 1946 and he was a blessing for me, and I hope I was a blessing for him, because we were very happy and very well suited. My parents liked him, so that was good. The day we were married at St. Augustine's in Berkeley, everyone that worked at the shipyard came that could. So that was good. It was nice. We went to Santa Cruz for one night or two, I forget which, for our honeymoon and came back, because that's all the gas you could get, you know. That was it, but that was all right.

2-00:03:04

**Stine:**

Did you saved up? Had you saved up knowing that need your coupons?

2-00:03:10

**Stewart:**

[laughter] We did, yes. That was the way you did then—you manage whatever it was, whether it's coupons for meat, gas or what. You know that was part of life. We lived on Spruce Street until I got pregnant with the twins and we had had a home for the children, so that was how we happened to land in Richmond. I had only rode down Cutting Boulevard. to work before; I didn't know anything about Richmond or the town or anything. I knew some of the staff at Kaiser Richmond, in case I needed something, you always had the children checked, you know. I was only three blocks from the hospital and I had a baby buggy, so I could go myself. You know, when you went the grocery store there, you could park your buggy in the front by the windows and go get your grocery and come back and put them in with the kids and go home. You never thought about the danger of leaving a child alone in a — and here I was with two in a buggy, one here and one there. [laughter] But that's the way everybody did then. There were lot of women there when buggies or wagons in the front and they get their groceries—

2-00:04:51

**Stine:**

There just be a row of children waiting?

2-00:04:55

**Stewart:**

Yeah, and that was common. The children were never sick, and that was when we started to save and get a place to live in that duplex. So, we did that and then Martha arrived in 1952, so we lived there until Martha was about ready for school and then we moved up, bought this house. That's why I've been in Richmond, but yes, I've seen many changes. Cutting Boulevard, got widened to four lanes that way, downtown Richmond was, oh my, it was something else—it was so flooded with people, you couldn't walk two abreast down to Macdonald—it was that crowded on the street.

2-00:06:00

**Stine:**

Just in the middle of the day or—?

2-00:06:02

**Stewart:**

In the middle of the day.

2-00:06:04

**Stine:**

This is during the war also?

2-00:06:06

**Stewart:**

Oh, yes! The government had gone to Oklahoma, and told people that can come out here and get a job war effort, you know. A lot of them got transportation from the government, they came and they came to Richmond because that's where the shipyards were. But they didn't have a place to stay and a lot of them slept in the theater or where they could. The war housing was erected right away, it really went up, just oh, on any vacant lot, that south side was just covered with housing. You know where that marina bay is now, that was all housing. So, it was housing, housing, housing, people galore.

2-00:07:06

**Stine:**

Was that one of the reasons why you chose or you had decide to move to Berkeley from the city is that there just wasn't housing?

2-00:07:13

**Stewart:**

There wasn't any housing in Berkeley and I was lucky to know that manager of the housing authority that would let us move into an apartment—a housing apartment. It was impossible. Now we had that deposit in a place in Walnut Creek, but I wasn't near hospital at all in case of children got sick or anything.

2-00:07:39

**Stine:**

Kaiser didn't have one there?

2-00:07:42

**Stewart:**

No, Oakland was the nearest one. And when you are out there alone and no car and a sick child, you could be in trouble. So, this is why Richmond looked like a better place all around. Everybody in the building, they were doctors and all kinds of medical people that were in the same boat, there were navy people or navy doctors or whatever, the building was full of those people then.

2-00:08:14

**Stine:**

This is your building in Berkeley?

2-00:08:17

**Stewart:**

No, down here in Richmond. I think there were twelve apartments in most of the buildings, some of them has sixteen, so you know that was a lot of people and a lot of kids. It was good, safe place while we were there, but it was time to move out. So, that's why we saved and bought that lot on 14<sup>th</sup> and Virginia and got a contractor to build the house and we took over a lot of it ourselves. That's where I learned pound a nail, use the paint brush and the saw and the building is still there and occupied, both buildings, all the houses are still occupied. So, that's good.

2-00:09:19

**Stine:**

I just want to jump back real quick to talk a little bit about all the people they were in Richmond even in '46 when you moved in. And something related to that that I forgot to ask you about earlier is I'd heard about people coming in on trains from around the country with pneumonia and how that was a big problem early on. There was a lot pneumonia coming in and people that were malnourished and malnutrition.

2-00:09:49

**Stewart:**

Malnourished was everything. If a husband had his wife and she was a heart patient, but he could have a job, they came. So, there were a lot of health problems with the people that came. No place to live right off the bat, right at first, and of course Kaiser didn't take care of their health problems and it was an old personal thing that they had tend to. Some of them got medical care, of course the county didn't have medical care like they do now for those people. But they ran up bills at the hospital on 23<sup>rd</sup> Richmond Hospital, it was called, and they had surgery and everything there. It was full all the time. But eventually the housing was developed and it took in thousands of people to give them a home.

2-00:11:03

Really, a lot of the hospital staff lived in the housing too after they arrived here. A lot of the nurses lived in housing until they got their feet on the ground a bit and maybe bought a house up in the hills or in Richmond some place. There was just every type of person and we had one bedroom with the two children and there was one washroom down stairs with the laundry tray and clotheslines in the back. The day the twins were born, he went to Sears & Roebuck to the washing machine department and said, "If you think our world's in a chaos, I'm in a chaos, I had twins born this morning and I need a washer machine." [laughter] The next day, Sears sent out a washer machine, so I was the only one with a wash machine in that building with all those people. So, it was a godsend for me, because people respected that was your property, they didn't use it or unbeknown to me. I covered it and put it in the corner when I, you know, couldn't take it upstairs, it was in the washroom—a public room unlocked. My gosh, I took a day off when the twins were three months old, next day, I had seventy-two diapers on the clothesline for two days and two nights.

2-00:12:53

You had to make your own formula. There was no refrigerator in the unit—it was an icebox and iceman came with twenty-five pounds of ice with a pan underneath to catch the water [laughter] as the ice melted. But everybody had the idea that they were so lucky to have a roof over their head, nobody complained. There was no complaint about a tenant being too noisy or the kids non-manageable or bothered anyone, everybody got along and that was marvelous.

2-00:13:40

**Stine:**

Did it happen that the kids were just running around because both their parents both had to be working?

2-00:13:47

**Stewart:**

Both parents didn't work, there was always a parent with the kid. See, I didn't work for twelve years. No, there wasn't any women at four-thirty when the kids got home at two, people didn't do that then really at first in the shipyard days. They stayed home, but they take in neighbors' kids, no kids were left alone at any time. That was one remarkable thing about the days then.

2-00:14:31

**Stine:**

I know Kaiser had childcare centers that they were running.

2-00:14:37

**Stewart:**

Yes. Little Kaiser Hospital was a godsend then for the people—very busy, had to have a full staff of medical doctors, and RNs, and first aid men, X-ray men on duty, office help, and housekeeping help. Kaiser Hospital developed appropriately to the crowd and they were given good care.

2-00:15:27

**Stine:**

I'm gonna jump backward really quick if that's okay?

2-00:15:27

**Stewart:**

Sure.

2-00:15:29

**Stine:**

I'm curious when you first met your husband in the shipyard and before you got married, I know it must've been hard since you know food and money was kind of tight and coupons and rationing, but what did you ever end up doing for dating? Did you get to catch a movie?

2-00:15:46

**Stewart:**

Well, no. A movie, uh huh. Out to dinner on his day off then and a movie. Yeah, there was a movie right downtown in Berkeley, not the one been there for the last few year, but it was on Shattuck way down a bit. Could go there, and it was kind of nice for me to eat in a restaurant because I didn't do that very, you know. So was a treat for me. Or then we could go down to the Pier in Richmond down where that University goes clear down to the water down to Skates, the restaurant—that wasn't there then. Down there on the waterfront towards Emeryville, you could get down on the beach, so that was great. We could go to Tilden Park. Before the boys were born, we had to build a crib for them so we took some of the lumber out there in Tilden Park—many times we took with us, and put that crib together. My husband chiseled his initials in the trunk of a big tree out there; I'd like to find that tree. [laughter] But that's the way you did it a lot of things back then. Picnics or going to a park or something.

2-00:17:33

**Stine:**

And you brought the building material out there just because it was just a big open space?

2-00:17:37

**Stewart:**

Oh yeah! Hardly anybody around in those days not crowded like it's now. People picnicked a lot then too, that was a source of entertainment that didn't cost anything—just take your food and go. It was good. Then my folks were in the city, so we went over to see them a lot before we were married. My husband liked them and they liked him, so that worked out good. And of course, there was a lot to see in San Francisco then. Oh yes! Shopping was so much fun and delight then. Go down to Aquatic Park, my folks lived just a block or so from there so that was like home to go out Aquatic Park for all of us. Then, it was just a little short trip, a block from Fort Mason, and that was a nice place to go.

2-00:18:49

**Stine:**

What was happening there?

2-00:18:51

**Stewart:**

We always went there for midnight mass. Anything at Fort Mason was all classified, you didn't mix in, but the scenery was nice there, and you could sit anywhere and have lunch—eat it on the grounds or anywhere then, and nothing was open to the public then. No. You just couldn't drive too far because of the gas rationing. You were limited to developing what you did close to home. I didn't have to have a lot of entertainment to keep me happy, always found a job to do—housekeeping or something, you know. I felt that was part of a woman's work then and did it. When the kids were born out here, we would drive up University, up to the campus there and take a lunch and sit down on that big entrance that curves around, sit that mound and take their picture. People were always amazed, "Two of them?" [laughter] So they always attracted attention, but they were good—they didn't act like they were special, they were just normal.

2-00:20:39

**Stine:**

Are they identical?

2-00:20:40

**Stewart:**

No. One was like the husband, one like me. And then out of the blue, one that was him would turn more like me and other—they switch at night. They got along great, so that was good. When we moved here, it was a godsend, because they could walk to school.

2-00:21:06

**Stine:**

Did they go to public school?

2-00:21:07

**Stewart:**

No. They went to Saint Cornelius Catholic School, and Martha did too, all eight years. Then they went to Salesian. When Martha was ready for high school, we wanted her to go to a nice high school, so we had her enrolled in San Domenico over in San Anselmo—it's the high school that open for the Dominican College. It was the first year they opened, and all the students had to board so she came home once a month then for three years. Then they kinda got loosened, they could come home on the weekend. But that was quite an experience because she was exposed to

the hoi polloi, the senators daughters, and all that. She got along fine with the whole picture, you know, so she stayed there four years and she got a wonderful education just like the Dominican College would give to the college of the student—high school students got it there too great. To this day, she said she's grateful for that high school education she got because the basic was so good. But the boys finished Salesian. In a year or so, they got out on their own trying a job, if it didn't suit, they got another job, that was it. They grew up kinda like they'd like to. They weren't here, they were in Los Angeles on jobs and so that was the way life was, you know. When they left home, that was the way to do it, I guess and that was good. Of course, we lost Patrick in that accident but Michael and Martha have grown up to be honorable people in their position. They're worth a lot of money, but they've handled themselves and that's the way they were taught and we're proud of them. Martha was here last week on her way back from Alaska to where she lives in Washington D.C.

2-00:23:54

**Stine:**

She went to Kaiser Nursing School, is that right?

2-00:23:57

**Stewart:**

She did. She went to Kaiser Nursing and worked there a year in the ICU then she went up to Alaska to see her classmates that wanted to get as far away from home as possible. In that visit, it was to a town above the Arctic Circle that had a hospital that took care of the needy people and it was job there. So, she quit her job in Oakland and went up to Alaska and worked as a nurse for fourteen years. She had the health care of fourteen villages and the end of her career there. Then she wanted to do something else, so she started a newspaper on her own and did it all according to all the state rules and everything. *Arctic Sounder*, she called it, and that was every two weeks it was published, it's still published today. Two men bought it after she had it for two years—they bought it, they want to live up there. I don't know they're still owners, but that newspaper is still going. She's done very well, she works for the senator for that area for a while—six years I think. Then the governor wanted her work for him and she did that for few years and the Department of Education wanted her to go work for him, so that's what she's doing now. And she likes this, because she could spend more time in Alaska, and that's what she likes. So she was here on the way home from Alaska and she'll go back up in February for another week on business. So, that makes her happy.

2-00:25:51

**Stine:**

Is any of her work in Washington does she deal with health care at all?

2-00:25:55

**Stewart:**

Not any health cares, no, she's what you call kind of a lobbyist for the state education department in Alaska. Whenever the state needs federal help with anything, then it has to be presented to the Congress or the White House, they give to Martha to go and present it and petition for what they want. So, that's why she's in Washington. She has her condo there, she bought a duplex up above the Arctic Circle, so she's got that going for her too. [laughter]



2-00:26:35

**Stine:**

Way up there.

2-00:26:35

**Stewart:**

Imagine.

2-00:26:40

**Stine:**

When you started your family, you and your husband—had you wanted to have a large family or small family or something that you talked about?

2-00:26:49

**Stewart:**

Didn't know what was going to happen. The twins were three years old when I lost one, and three years later Martha came along, and I was much older then and I decided—so that was it. But I didn't get pregnant again and I was grateful for that, because when Martha was ready for school, I went to back to work. When she was in school, I went back to Kaiser down in here, and went to work one day a week for a while.

2-00:27:30

**Stine:**

What year was that?

2-00:27:32

**Stewart:**

Probably sixty something, very—right in there. I worked one day a week and then gradually school took more the kids' time, I worked two days a week or some three. When Martha was in high school, I went full time, and then I worked the ward until they had vacancy in emergency and I went over there worked in emergency for twenty years.

2-00:28:08

**Stine:**

In Richmond or—?

2-00:28:10

**Stewart:**

Kaiser Richmond.

2-00:28:12

**Stine:**

Before emergency, what had you been doing?

2-00:28:15

**Stewart:**

Well, just on the ward work. That was when emergency did not even have a doctor in the department. So, whatever came in, I had to call and get a doctor that was on call for that department that day—medical or—. We had an awful a lot of children that ingested pills then, awful a lot, at least two a week. Mothers bringing in kids that had gotten into bottle of pills or insecticides or whatever—we got an awful lot that. It was very interesting, because every case

was different—you never got the same thing twice or two in a row. I got along so well with the doctors, I'm still friends with them. So, it worked out very well.

2-00:29:18

**Stine:**

Working in emergency, do you feel like your experiences working in the shipyard were good preparation?

2-00:29:24

**Stewart:**

Good preparation, because I knew what it was to have foreign body in an eye and you know what do for it, and sprained ankle what do for until the doctor got there. Yeah, I was prepared very well.

2-00:29:47

**Stine:**

Is that part of why you decided to work in emergency or just—?

2-00:29:51

**Stewart:**

No. The nurse that was there retired and so I applied for it and was accepted and I was grateful for it. So, that was the way it was, I was the only nurse. I worked alone all those twenty years, I never had anyone work with me, we got busier, busier and busier. I know I went to work at 7:15 or 8:15 and I didn't get to eat 'til 2:00 or 2:30, because when you are all alone, you can't leave. So that was the way the crowd came in you—took care the patients first. But we had such a nice relationship with everybody, it was a family. We all knew the doctors' wives and we went to their houses occasionally. They knew our husbands and our kids and we knew their kids. So, it was always a family thing and if anybody was sick and couldn't come, that was understood—they were sick they didn't take advantage of anything. It was good place to work. I'm very grateful; I was lucky to be there. Those were the days when you retired, they had a big to do for you, big party—retirement party. For me, they had it down at where that Strings is over to the left another restaurant over there, I think it's still there, but I can't remember the name of it. Oh my gosh, there were hundred people there, all the doctors came and had a big dinner. Lot of the doctor got up and talked in there, and they gave the most wonderful string of pearls—beautiful string of pearls. Memories like that were held for everybody. So, that was a good, warm feeling about everybody. That was the way it was. I don't think they have the dinners anymore; I think they just have a coffee klatch when somebody retires now down at the hospital, but those were the days and that's what they did.

2-00:32:49

**Stine:**

When you decided to go back to work once your children were in school, was there ever a question that you wouldn't go back to work for Kaiser had you had such good experience already?

2-00:32:59

**Stewart:**

No. I wouldn't go any place but there. There was a new hospital in San Pablo, Doctor's Hospital, and they were hiring nurses. No, Kaiser had the appeal for me, because I knew so many of them, that was a place for me to go. It was right.

2-00:33:36

**Stine:**

In terms of being an employer, how do you feel that they took care of you as a worker?

2-00:33:43

**Stewart:**

Very good. We had a young man came in as a nurse. I caught the fact that we were short of narcotic and I went to nursing office right away with it and told them what I had seen, would they come up check the chart? He had taken that and he had charted it out of the book where you sign for and he gave it to the patient he said and sign for on the chart, but he also told me we didn't have to do anything for him, didn't give him anything, send him home. So and then I asked the doctor, "Did he get a shot? No."

So that's why I went down to the nursing office and the nursing office stood behind me and believing—they didn't doubt my word at all, and that was his last day. That was the way Kaiser—they stood behind you. Because that could've been a shady thing, you know, him denying it or something, but he couldn't deny, he couldn't say he gave a narcotic under a doctor's order when it wasn't order, you know. But that happens occasionally a nurse will become shady with the narcotic, I caught another one doing that too and they terminated him right away. But that's your vow about promising, about the way you do things—you don't mess with narcotics. Amen! And so that was it.

2-00:35:44

Kaiser was very good. The people like Kaiser, because in those days, Kaiser had twenty bottles of cough syrup and twenty bottles of this stomach settler, all kinds of things. When people came in with those complaints, they were given a bottle besides, you know, their treatment to take home free. That's the way they did then.

2-00:36:17

**Stine:**

Kind of above and beyond what you would expect.

2-00:36:20

**Stewart:**

Yes. That made a good bond, you know, they did.

2-00:36:26

**Stine:**

I've also just been reading about Kaiser and learning about Kaiser and having been a Kaiser member know that they are very big on preventative care and was that something that started early even back in the shipyards or—?

2-00:36:41

**Stewart:**

We didn't see that then. No, to be truthful, you didn't see preventative care then not until the fifties when it became apparent that was good medicine. Before that, it was the care given for the case that came in that needed it and give the good care and the follow up care. But no, doctors didn't do that at first.

2-00:37:18

**Stine:**

But then later on the twenty years you were—

2-00:37:22

**Stewart:**

Yeah, they did. They bloomed.

2-00:37:27

**Stine:**

Another big thing about Kaiser is having integrated care, I wonder what your experience with that was especially being in Richmond with so many different people coming in?

2-00:37:36

**Stewart:**

Racism and things. We never had any trouble. We laugh together, we work together. We pulled joke on one another; we didn't ever have any hard feelings. There really was not apparent.

2-00:38:01

**Stine:**

You mean among the integrated staff?

2-00:38:02

**Stewart:**

Even if they were black or if they were Indian or what. No, there was none of that. It wouldn't have been allowed, but it wasn't ever a case brought up—an incident that happened.

2-00:38:17

**Stine:**

So you worked with doctors and nurses from a wide variety, is that right?

2-00:38:22

**Stewart:**

Yes. Indian doctors from India, the black ones. You respected them for their knowledge and their classification—they were doctor, medical doctor and that was it. The doctors never pulled anything shady on another race. If that ever took place would be reported.

2-00:38:53

**Stine:**

Yeah, I imagine that wouldn't have been tolerated at all. And then in the shipyard, were there nurses and doctors—?

2-00:39:02

**Stewart:**

We didn't have any other race other than white then, because the foreign doctors hadn't come to the states yet. Everybody was white, the first aid people, the doctors and all the nurses. Now there were all kinds of people out in the shipyard population—men worked there. If it was a black man that needed something, he got it.

2-00:39:36

**Stine:**

Amongst your patients or amongst the workers, did you ever feel any kind of tension?

2-00:39:41

**Stewart:**

No. That was a blessing. We never had any back talking, backbiting or any tension. No, we just didn't do that; nobody did it. Nobody around where I was, we never had that at that little hospital down here on Cutting; I never saw it in Oakland. That was just the way you accepted things, you know. Some of it was all in fun and some of it was—the fun we had was really fun wasn't anything put down at all.

2-00:40:35

This would entertain you. We had a nurse in emergency that had an acid tongue and she was old so that she knew better than anybody, but that's all right—you'd laugh with her. When she died and she was ninety-two, she died two weeks ago. At her funeral, [laughter], in her casket, she like to play golf so she had a shirt on that she wear playing golf and a golf hat and a tennis racket and six balls in her casket, and across her cap she had on her head, "Welcome to the zoo". [laughter] So, we got another laugh and said, "Well, Molly went out with a laugh." That was just typical. All the doctors laughed when we told them about what we saw at the funeral, you know, we all had a such a good laugh about Molly's leaving this earth with us laughing about it. So that was the way—

2-00:41:40

**Stine:**

That's great.

2-00:41:45

**Stewart:**

That's what happened.

2-00:41:48

**Stine:**

Was joking around pretty common in—?

2-00:41:51

**Stewart:**

Quite common, yes. It wasn't carried to the point where it was done in front patients, you know, it was in the backroom when we were eating or something, but we had priorities where that took place. There were no snide remarks, nothing like that, no put-downs. "What you do that for? Let's see what you did?" that would be the way you'd be handle, but that was very admirable and comfortable no matter who it was. We had a couple black porters that were as dear to us as

anything, you know. They eat our fried chicken and we'd eat theirs, it was that way. So, it was very good.

2-00:43:03

**Stine:**

Having been at Kaiser in the very, very beginning, and then taking a little time off in going back, what were some things that you felt held over from the beginning?

2-00:43:15

**Stewart:**

The care that we gave, I sent that letter to him, was what we started in the forties, and fifties, and sixties, good care. That was what we expected to do, what we did and what we expect to see happening now and it is. I had a total knee replacement last January, and had very good care. I have very good care for my glasses, my eyes and I didn't go to a doctor for twenty years so my chart didn't maybe like, now it has maybe that much. [laughter] But I don't go back, because if I needed something, I'd go down, but I'm healthy, I'm doing my work and going to school, I couldn't ask for anything—I don't take any pain pills or sleeping pills. But if I did, I would expect to be treated with the best care, and I think and hope I would get, but I think I would, I don't have any qualms. I just hope I don't have to end up in a nursing home, that would be the last straw, [laughter] but who knows.

2-00:44:55

**Stine:**

What are some big differences that you sense working early on and then going back after twelve years?

2-00:45:05

**Stewart:**

See, I didn't work for twelve years. You lose your talents, your ability, but going through nurses training the way we did then, it was [inaudible]. When we took the state board, there was no problem, we passed beautifully. When I came out here, I just take a California state board pass beautifully, didn't have any trouble, because of the way we were trained. So, that sticks with you and it makes an all around better person of you in many ways what's gonna be here because that's right, then you developed those right ways in other things that you do. You can't drive through down the road, and take the middle and get out of my way, you know. So, you become that kind of a person where you want do right by everything, everybody. Really, the Kaiser care I think I can't complain at all about it. I haven't used it much, but if I needed, I would feel like I got excellent care.

2-00:46:34

**Stine:**

But then from the working side of it, is there anything that you had piece together or kind of deal with on the spot and the shipyard just never would be done in the hospital or in emergency.

2-00:46:46

**Stewart:**

No, I didn't. I guessed you'd say well rounded. A nurse is a nurse, and what they are taught from the very beginning, the school part of it last all your life. So, that was the way it was. I didn't have any trouble with anything when I went back just one day a week, because I work on

Sunday—every other Sunday at first, and I didn't have a lot of exposure with the doctors and it was what was ordered through the week. Then I worked on Saturday and Sunday, I worked Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, so I guess I'd say I got back into the swing slowly, but I didn't have any trouble or did worry about not knowing what was going on. So, that was good.

2-00:48:03

**Stine:**

Just in terms of kind of routine procedures of how to deal with—?

2-00:48:07

**Stewart:**

Routines that you learned years ago are still done today. When you cauterize someone it was what you were taught years ago, and that's what it be today. So, that's what a lot of it is, your basic nurses training.

2-00:48:29

**Stine:**

It's probably the only big differences is sterilization, which you didn't have, you didn't even have access to, so—

2-00:48:36

**Stewart:**

Yeah. We didn't sterilize then. I think the only time the doctor wore rubber gloves when he puts some stitches in someone and that was it. We had one sink in that big treatment room, imagine, for patients and us. [laughter] One hot plate. It was a sink about this long, so that two could be at the sink at once. But you know you didn't think anything about it. We didn't have any trouble with infections or nothing, so we must've been doing something right. Now, oh my gosh, everything has to be in a sterilizer and the sterilizer checked, and checked and checked working, sterilizing right degree and everything. No. We had to blow our needles and our hypodermic syringes. We had morphine that came in tablets, half grained and that was never ordered for anybody, quarter-grain was for a great big man, you know. So you had to draw it, boil your needle and syringe, draw up a cc and half of water and dissolve the morphine in it, and then shoot out half of it, so you'd only have a quarter or whatever was ordered, you know. But that was the way did, and everybody did that then, it wasn't only in the shipyard. What we learned in nurses training was practice, and after we got out and things did finally developed into sterilization and those kind of things, but that was life.

2-00:50:42

**Stine:**

I just can't imagine having some kind of injury and then patching it up and going right back out to work.

2-00:50:48

**Stewart:**

Yeah, that was it. Come in tomorrow if you want a clean bandage, come back tomorrow, but that was it. No. People just didn't go home or didn't come in for maybe a half days work that wasn't allowed. If they did that, you had to go out a gate and check out, the gate would question it and call the boss, you know and he'd be sent back.

2-00:51:19

**Stine:**

So, everyone would know.

2-00:51:21

**Stewart:**

Yeah. So, people didn't slip out. [laughter] At the gated Yard One, there were about dozen stalls that you walk through, and there were somebody in each stall so that could handle the crowd of men coming in. You had to show that badge and they look at you, you know, and see your badge and then you were allowed in. It took that many gates across the front there right on 10<sup>th</sup> and Cutting.

2-00:51:54

**Stine:**

Like with a turnstile?

2-00:51:56

**Stewart:**

No. They didn't have that, they had the like a little gate that you walk through and the people that check you in were like in a cover, a little closet—they were inside out of the rain, but you were checked in. If you didn't borrow badges, you'd be in trouble.



Interview with Harriette Stewart.  
 Interviewed by: Kathryn Stine.  
 Transcriber: Audrey Yu  
 [Interview #2: January 21, 2003]  
 [Begin Audio File Stewart2 1-21-03]

1-00:00:07

**Stine:**

Today's January, 21<sup>st</sup> and I'm here with Harriette Stewart. This is our second interview and I'm gonna just back in and talk a little bit more ask about your job at the first aid station. One of the things that I was curious about that we hadn't talked about is were there any disabled people working in the shipyard that you remember.

1-00:00:33

**Stewart:**

I don't remember anybody really disabled, there might had been some maybe one arm or something from a previous accident, that they had all their life or something, because anybody that applied was given work at the shipyard. The men were a little older then; they weren't twenty-one, because those boys were in the service. Most of them are grown men or in their forties or were 4F for some reason. But the mob of men that were there when I started, July of 1942, you see that's six months after Pearl Harbor, and the shipyard was going full blast. In Richmond, there was Yard Two, One, Three, and Four, so there were all full of people. That takes in a lot of people, workers. I imagine everybody in Richmond, every man was working there. Then they started taking in the women. The women at first were in the office, but offices were outside the shipyard; they were not allowed in the shipyard, just men and us nurses. That was it. Then things changed as the war progressed, but they kept wanting to get those ships built and outta there into use, and they did. My goodness, those droves of men that came. Everyone was dropped off at the shipyard entrance. You didn't drive in the shipyard, at Yard One where I worked, you were dropped off at 10<sup>th</sup> and Cutting and that's where the gates were for everybody to go through, to get in to their work. But no cars allowed in there unless you were top notch and you didn't see that very often.

1-00:03:16

**Stine:**

When you first got to the shipyards, the work force was like you said already kinda in full force. Were there people that had started to work there before the women got there that were either disabled or elderly or—?

1-00:03:31

**Stewart:**

They were more the fifty-sixty age brackets—forty, fifty, sixty, a tremendous share was fifty and sixty years old. I don't think anybody worked part-time, it was either full time or no. There was no physical for the job, it was you went down there and signed in and wanted a job, and they gave you a badge and that was it, you were in. If you look good, I suppose if you look like a cripple or something, they might have questioned that. That was in an office apart where they interviewed the people about signing up for work. We saw the people after they were on the job, but the people wanted to work. The fever that they had was win this war and this was their way of helping. They were too old for the draft, for the service part. It was a whole new phase of life;

everything was so different. Of course, it wasn't long. The town's changed too because the crowds of people that came.

1-00:05:17

**Stine:**

Do you remember any people working there just people in Richmond that had come from the Midwest or come from the South?

1-00:05:23

**Stewart:**

I didn't know anybody that came from the Midwest, no. But a lot of people came from Oklahoma, they went down there recruited people right and left. You told them you can have a job, there's housing for you, and a job. Before that, a lot of people were relief rolls in the Midwest, county aid of some sort. This was an opportunity to make some money, so they jumped at that and out they came. If the wife didn't come with him, she was there before long. Because when they got out here, they could see that the whole family could live here, and that'd be the way to live. I think Richmond went from 15,000 to 70,000. The first bang was 70,000 or so, and on up to 120 I think. San Francisco swelled, Berkeley swelled, Oakland, every place swelled, the schools, everything. Housing wasn't really that ready for them—the first impact, and they stayed with relatives, or slept on the street or in the movie theaters until the housing was put up. Richmond housing authority put up houses on every vacant lot, around the shipyard, the whole south side was housing. If you owned an empty lot, it wasn't yours anymore. A unit was put up on it, depending on the size of the lot whether it was a six apartment or twelve or what. There were two stories, and there were one bedroom, maybe two bedrooms for two or three units in a big, big building, but the rest were mostly one unit. But people lived in whether they had two or three kids, they lived in one bedroom place. There were clothesline in the back, and one washroom where there were laundry trays, and that was it, where people could go down on scrub board and wash their clothes and take them—

1-00:08:07

**Stine:**

In the public housing, you mean?

1-00:08:09

**Stewart:**

Yes. But people were so used to it that was fine.

1-00:08:19

**Stine:**

I'm wondering with all these people coming in if you ever saw the effects of people coming in, say maybe from the South or from the Midwest that had the effects of malnutrition or maybe came with health problems or was that anything that you saw?

1-00:08:35

**Stewart:**

Oh, they came with everything that just to get here, they came. Of course, people were ready to criticize anybody or laugh at anybody with a different pronunciation of words. Anyway, that's the way it was. They're an Okie, but the Okies proved that they were good people, and they worked, and they wanted to work. It wasn't that they came out and you feed me, they wanted to

work. Everybody came with the idea of working then, helping out somehow. With all the restrictions that were on people—like you had to have blue chip stamp book for food, had to go to the board to get an extra tire, gasoline for your car, all those things that people cope with and nobody complained even shoes you had—. I know I had go for another pair of shoes, and then you didn't hear anything about that—that was just a short time or so. But that's the way it was.

1-00:10:01

**Stine:**

Can you explain the process of going for shoes?

1-00:10:03

**Stewart:**

In Berkeley, it was down near the post office building that they opened for more people to apply for blue chip stamp books and that, and it was all government stuff. I need a slip for a pair of shoes that was all it was. You had to give an address if you wanted a blue chip stamp book, I think, a name and an address. You had to prove that you had a car if you wanted a tire and for gas and you were limited to so many gallons a week of gas. That it was like the blue chip stamp book, the gas thing.

1-00:10:49

**Stine:**

If you work for Kaiser, were you able to get more gasoline or were you able to—?

1-00:10:55

**Stewart:**

No. If you lived in Berkeley and you drove your car to the shipyard and you had riders, you were entitled to extra gas to go and pick the people up and take them there. But that was it, you had to prove that —. Nobody complained even at the meat counters and in the food places; people just accepted the government's rule, and they were so glad that there wasn't shooting right here under our noses like a lot of places had in foreign countries. The war stories were scary then. Oh, terrible! So many people killed, so many husbands that were overseas in the war, and the families got worried they were shot, it affected everybody here. It was kind of serious living, and you abided by the rules; that was it. I don't think that would go over so good now because people want more than they are entitled to or complain easy. That was the way it was. There were no new cars.

1-00:12:42

**Stine:**

I was gonna ask you had mentioned earlier that your husband had a car, do you remember what kind of car it was?

1-00:12:49

**Stewart:**

He had a car. '39 Ford, four-door Ford. He did have a car. He was pronounced 4F right away, so they said you could go get a job in a war industry, so that was how he came from Union Pacific job, the train company, to the area here for getting a job. At first, he was single and they gave him board and room in some place, I can't remember where it was. A slip for that to come out to Yard One and get a job, which worked out, that's the way it was done then. Then he got his own place in Berkeley on Woolsey, so that was where he lived. No, it was a godsend. If you didn't

have a car, you were grounded or public service. The train service even to the San Francisco was beautiful then, it was good, much easier than it is today. There was a train that stop down at the top of Solano came down to University and picked up everybody there and Shattuck and you rode on that, and you rode over the Golden Gate Bridge or the Bay Bridge on that train and got off on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street over there and you could walk up to Market in two blocks, but you couldn't believe it how good it was. People use it and that was it. That's the way it was. When you went to the city though, you didn't go for an hour, you went for the whole rest of the day. But you were safe at night coming home, a single person was safe. We didn't even think about getting robbed or any trouble. There was just wasn't any either.

1-00:14:59

**Stine:**

Did you feel that safety in Richmond?

1-00:15:02

**Stewart:**

At first, yes. Down in the shipyard waiting for the bus to come to pick you or any, yeah. It was just automatic; it was that way. No matter who you were, if you were alone or if you were eighty years old or what. When people then, if they need grocery, keep on finish your shift, you got your groceries and you went home. The theaters played all night.

1-00:15:45

**Stine:**

You get your groceries in Richmond at the end of your shift and you take them home?

1-00:15:51

**Stewart:**

Yes. When I lived in Berkeley then on Spruce Street right down near the campus, I got off on University and there was a Safeway store ahead Macdonald years ago on the left hand side the last block that was it—two blocks from home.

1-00:16:15

**Stine:**

Were there any stores that were in proximity to the shipyard that were frequented a lot?

1-00:16:19

**Stewart:**

No. No. Nothing around the shipyard. It was all bare land or the housing went up. As I said before, in '42 in July, Cutting Boulevard was only two lanes wide. They didn't have the need for all that traffic at first, but things did change.

1-00:16:51

**Stine:**

I was curious so I just want to back up a little bit, because both you and your husband lived in Berkeley and commuted to Richmond, and I was wondering I know that you kind of fortuitously got this apartment in Berkeley—you had friends that had been living there, they left and you got the apartment, but I was wondering if you ever thought to move to Richmond or if your husband had ever thought to move to Richmond?

1-00:17:13

**Stewart:**

No. No. We were very happy there in Berkeley.

1-00:17:22

**Stine:**

Initially when you first came, did you think that might be better to be closer to work?

1-00:17:28

**Stewart:**

No. You were so lucky to have an unit to live in that you didn't even think about moving; you stayed right where you were until the surroundings in your life change then you would change. But no, you didn't change. We came to Richmond because the twins were born, and we had to find a place right away. Housing was so rare, oh, my word. You couldn't find a place.

1-00:18:08

**Stine:**

This was 1946?

1-00:18:11

**Stewart:**

'46. I had taken care of a lady in Kaiser Oakland in the delivery who had a baby and her husband worked for the housing authority. She told me, "You go see my husband, he's head of the housing authority and he'll get you a place to live in Richmond." So, we did and ended up on South 13<sup>th</sup> right where the 580 goes now, [inaudible] in that area. But I thought was perfect, because I was so close to Kaiser Hospital with the twin for medical care. We could see that we were lucky to have a roof over our head and we were savers and managers; we didn't throw our money around at all. No way. We saved money and we bought a lot on 14<sup>th</sup> and Virginia and cleared it and put a duplex on it, and that was 1950 that we were in housing four years.

1-00:19:26

**Stine:**

Do you remember what that housing look like in the first, had been public housing?

1-00:19:32

**Stewart:**

Yes.

1-00:19:35

**Stine:**

Can just describe what it was like?

1-00:19:39

**Stewart:**

Let me bring a book in here. I saw the other day, and show you something about housing. I wondered if my son wanted the pictures. The housing was very plain, there were sixteen apartments in one building, there would be a little porch here and a little porch there, and a little porch there. In each porch, there's a stairway to going up to the upstairs apartments and the two front doors to the two bottom ones, and that was it. There was no doorbell, there was no porch light. It was just a porch, probably two or four feet wide and that was it and steps down to the next. The lawn was just what was there, it wasn't improved on, it was what was there.

1-00:21:11

We paid thirty-five a month, and that included everything, I mean electricity, no water bill, you paid your own phone bill. There were no refrigerators; it was icebox, so there was an iceman that came around with ice. There was a little stove, a little four-burner stove, and an oven below. One bath that had a built in tile tub; it wasn't a bath tub, it was a tile built-in tub with little tiles this big all sides and the bottom and that was it. I suppose they couldn't get the plumping pieces that they want. In the little kitchen, it was a counter with a sink in the middle with just two faucets and the place for your food things there were no doors on it—it was just shelves. In the living room was a wall table that pull down out of the wall with a leg on it, and there were shelves back of that table. There was one davenport that opened up to sleep for two people so that was it. There was one bedroom, one window in it, one little closet probably two feet wide and that was it. I tell you, everybody was so glad to get the shelter, that was accepted. I don't remember being feeling bad about living there.

1-00:23:11

We were able to save up enough money to buy that lot and put up a duplex on it and right away we bought that lot across the street and put a duplex on it. I was staying home then because of the kids' age. I tell you, I pounded the dickens out of nails and painted everything right along with my husband. We got a contractor to start it, but we had the agreement that we could build everything, so many things ourselves. I know I it was a flattop and I had beautiful pine board ceilings in it, and I got up on top of that thing and pounded nails that long into the beam. The people across the street saw told my husband, "Just let her alone, she can build." I never done that before—carpenter work, so it was fascinating to me. Had a nice garden and we even had few chickens. We're very well taken care of and we lived there four years.

1-00:24:33

**Stine:**

You said that had been an empty lot, had there been war housing on it that had been razed?

1-00:24:40

**Stewart:**

No. It was a garage on it. We had to take down the garage and clear the ground for the duplex. And it was a two bedroom duplex on either side, so it was a big building in a way with two garages in the middle. It took up fair amount material, yard work. But then we kept saving and saving, that was our way of life—managing very well. Then we bought another lot up on South 3<sup>rd</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> and put a three-bedroom house on it. We bought another lot down near the hospital on South 14<sup>th</sup> in the same block ours was in and put a house on that.

1-00:25:29

**Stine:**

Did you continue to do the work yourselves?

1-00:25:31

**Stewart:**

Oh, yes. Then we bought two lots on South 7<sup>th</sup> Street and put a house on each of those—three bedroom homes. We also bought a house, 22<sup>nd</sup> and Ohio, a lot and cleared it and put another house on that, and we rented them for twenty-seven years.

1-00:25:53

**Stine:**

So had any of these lots had pre-existing—?

1-00:25:56

**Stewart:**

No, they couldn't build on a twenty-five foot lot. See? They couldn't put housing on—they were too narrow.

1-00:26:04

**Stine:**

And it wasn't until after the war that you were given clearance?

1-00:26:08

**Stewart:**

Yes. That was what we look for—a twenty-five foot lot and put a longer house on it with a garage. There are still standing there living in them today.

1-00:26:24

**Stine:**

That must be neat for you.

1-00:26:26

**Stewart:**

Yes, once a while I drive by, you know just to look at it. There's a Mexican family in the house we built and lived in first, and he has a big family so he has his whole family in both units. I think he's got a garage door between the garage walls so there's good communication between them all, you know. His mother-in-law, then everybody, the other families living in there. Now he's walled up the yard, I don't know how he got by with that—big high fencing around the lot. I don't think you are suppose to have lot on the street more than four foot. Maybe nobody's complained down there. But he was a nice man, I've stopped and talked to him and told him my husband and I had built that, was he happy with it. Yeah, so that was good.

1-00:27:24

**Stine:**

I'm kinda curious when you first move to Richmond had that first house and you saw that other lot if that was a plan that you had had with your husband all along or did it just kind of came up. How did that come up?

1-00:27:36

**Stewart:**

No. It was his idea of something to get ahead that he could learn anything; he wasn't a one-character person that just could do only one thing. But he was very good at plumbing, electricity, so when there are maintenance of those places, he could take care of anything. We had people stayed us fifteen, seventeen years, you know, because we were good to them and that worked out good. But he could do any plumbing problems or carpenter work.

1-00:28:19

**Stine:**

So this was all stuff that he picked up and—?

1-00:28:26

**Stewart:**

It was a very good investment, but that was his ingenuity. He was looking for a way to make some money on his own or on our own and do well with it, and we did. So that was it.

1-00:28:41

**Stine:**

Right after the war, what had he been doing for employment up until—?

1-00:28:46

**Stewart:**

Oh. He worked Albert's Mill a long time down in Oakland. It was on 7<sup>th</sup> Street where at one time you could down the foot of 7<sup>th</sup> Street and take the ferry from Oakland over to the city, so it was on a main thoroughfare that went through there down Albert's Mill. It was an old establishment there, corn mill, you know, and he worked there a long time. Then when we got going with houses and things, he would just take maybe a year's job or something, because we had enough to do with keeping the places. But he was a sharp individual about handling everything whatever it was—money, property, never threw away a thing, so he always had everything. [laughter] That was good, because I admired him for his ingenuity. He also had an eye for everything. Coming home from 7<sup>th</sup> Street from work, you came through the old Oakland Army Base where the people lived, the housing was on both sides, when he noticed they had a lot of stone work all piled up and it was beautiful granite, chunks. So he stopped and asked, "What you gonna do with that?" They were gonna re-style the yards in the front—they wanted to get rid of that stone stuff, so they said, "Take them home if you want to, take it." So every night, he stopped and he had a station wagon, he put fifteen of those chunks granite in and bring it home. And that's the granite around our front and the back yards. Yeah, and it all came from Maine as a ballast on a boat, and they used that for trim and the housing there and they were gonna throw it away. They had no idea what they had—hand-hewn granite.

1-00:31:21

**Stine:**

It sounds like he had a real eye for—

1-00:31:23

**Stewart:**

Yes, he did. We could live on a lot less than a lot of people, because the way we both lived. When you don't throw anything away and you can use what you make what you need. I sewed like everything, even when the boys when to school, I made ten shirts right off the bat for them. They had to have white shirts, ten shirts for them right away.

1-00:31:54

**Stine:**

Button up shirts?

1-00:31:56

**Stewart:**

Collars, sleeves to here and a pocket, more buttons down the front. Everybody did that; a lot of people did especially my family that was the way we grew up.



1-00:32:12

**Stine:**

During the war, did you ever sew your own clothes or sew—?

1-00:32:16

**Stewart:**

Yes, I did make dresses and quilts. I've got a quilt on the bed now that I made and another in the dresser drawer. That was good home entertainment—quilting and crocheting, and you name it, women did it. You didn't go out to play cards or bridge club like they do now. You made your time pay for something and that was good because as it is now, I don't have to have entertainment or be running here or running there, it was the way of life that I've continued and continue now. My family and my generation really—that was our style. You need something, okay, You can make it, do that, but if not, you buy it. Never charge a thing, everything was cash on the line. I still don't have a credit card; I wouldn't have one for anything. You can go without, it doesn't hurt you. People don't do that today, but I do. [laughter]

1-00:33:49

**Stine:**

I'm curious about the transition then, just to jump back a little bit, the transition at the end of the war. Maybe we'll start kind of specifically when you heard, you know that Japan had surrendered and what you remember about that day? Maybe talk a little bit about the transition working.

1-00:34:10

**Stewart:**

Course, it was mostly, I don't think there's TV then, no, there wasn't when Japan surrendered, everybody listened to the radio and the newspapers had picture of the people signing, surrendering on the boat. Oh, my, it was a change of atmosphere and attitudes—what am I gonna do now? But a lot of the people that came for the war effort, they had established themselves as citizens here, a lot of them did, they didn't return to Oklahoma or the Midwest and their families' are still here. But that was a big, "oh my, what was going happen to us," a lot of suspension, a lot of, "Was everything gonna be alright or what were we gonna be faced with?" Roosevelt, he was on his third or fourth term there, and it was wobbly and who ever heard of a president, four terms you know, and then he dies. But Truman came in, and Truman was a godsend, because he was a no nonsense person and he stuck by his ways. He gave people confidence, because he wasn't a silly thing would try this or that. It worked because he had it all thought out. At the end, when the shipyards were closing, people showed a lot of tension and apprehension and "What's gonna happen to us?" That was a lot of the conversation if you met them on the street or where, it was that same feeling—"What's gonna happen now? What's around the corner for us?"

1-00:36:32

**Stine:**

How about the health plan?

1-00:36:35

**Stewart:**

They were just started the health plan then and you could enroll—50 cents a week I think. That was a godsend to the medical care for people. You didn't have to work in the shipyards; you could enroll and be covered medically. That hospital on, Kaiser had it on South 14<sup>th</sup> and Cutting,

it grew and swelled, and business right and left. It was a busy, busy place and they added more to the building by quite a bit. I remember seeing an iron lung in the hallway, they never used it, but they had it in case patient came in and needed it. They had deliveries there, delivery rooms for babies to be born there. And a little bit of surgery, not much, but little surgery. But the medical department grew big.

1-00:37:56

**Stine:**

But was there maybe a little bit of a dip in between the end of the war and—?

1-00:38:01

**Stewart:**

Oh yes! Kaiser had a good theme about —gung-ho and we're gonna be able to swing a good deal here. Because the population was here for membership and the doctors weren't going to war now, so they could hire reliable staff. Now, in the wartime, a lot of those doctors especially in the shipyards—retired doctors that came back. The one we had in Yard One was seventy-five or so then, but came back for the war effort. So Kaiser hired about a dozen young doctors that had come back and were just finishing school and had have a place to put them to work. So, they spent their first week in the shipyards until they got Kaiser Oakland going. You see they bought Kaiser Oakland, that old Fabiola, but it was just an end building and right a way they expanded and gave those doctors offices. I remember the ear, nose and throat doctor was a young Jewish doctor, very good, maybe thirty-five, but right a way, he got his department in Oakland and he stayed with that for years and expanded. So, that was the way the general population of medical help went.

1-00:39:49

**Stine:**

Where did they put these doctors in the shipyards for the interim?

1-00:39:54

**Stewart:**

There was just one medical unit in each yard.

1-00:39:58

**Stine:**

Right, but the dozen of young doctors.

1-00:40:00

**Stewart:**

They just stay in there; they were there two weeks or three weeks until they could get stationed in Oakland. They didn't stay long. Most of them were out of medical school, young, and they were eager to get going—make a living. That's what they trained for, let's go get a job, go. They weren't old enough to start medical practice on their own and they didn't have the money then so they would get hired on something or in a group like Kaiser. A lot of them, I think at Providence, that was a school of nursing starting and it's Summit now but it used to be something else. It used to be; it had another name.

1-00:41:06

**Stine:**

It sounds interesting though, because it sounds like there's a dynamic of these much older kind of veteran doctors and then these batch of very, very young, is that the same with the nurses. So then you have this mentoring relationship going assuming—

1-00:41:20

**Stewart:**

Well, the old doctors quit right away when the young ones came. They sure did.

1-00:41:26

**Stine:**

So there wasn't really a chance to overlap and kind of show them—

1-00:41:32

**Stewart:**

As long as Kaiser Oakland started growing, oh, big departments. They had to get a school of nursing, director of nurses. When I was there, there wasn't any director of nurses; we kept our own time card and all that. So it just like that, it was amazing all the things that —. Had to get an ambulance, for patients. It was amazing what you saw grow all right. It all worked. Doctor Cutting was a marvelous planner, and his wife Millie Cutting worked right with him and she was a sensible—. Any place needed anything you call Millie and she would get it for you, material wise, you know that you needed, maybe microscopes or something, slides or get a better delivery of bandages or anything that you needed. There was no problem; you get call Millie and it was there.

1-00:42:59

**Stine:**

She was also in charge of hiring, is that correct?

1-00:43:02

**Stewart:**

Well, she looked over my resume and said, "Can you go to work this afternoon." There was somebody there, but if she was there, and you walked in and this was it, she would talk to you and tell you and that was it. But it grew very fast even the office part before Kaiser Oakland really got to function. It was up at the top of that hill, no; Alta Bates was in Berkeley. But anyway, Millie Cutting and Doctor Cutting, he's still alive, he looks just like he did when you came in the shipyard, very knowledgeable man—he was smart as a whip. He and Doctor Garfield put the place in good order and there was no shady talk about anything. They were always recommended and got praised for their work.

1-00:44:26

**Stine:**

Did they ever come to the first aid stations or didn't?

1-00:44:29

**Stewart:**

Oh, yes. They came to see how things were going and what did we find was a problem or need or something. If it was logical, it was taken care of.

1-00:44:42

**Stine:**

How often do you think they came?

1-00:44:43

**Stewart:**

Maybe once a month or then unexpected or maybe in two weeks they'd be there, then you wouldn't see them for a month. Garfield, we didn't see quite as much as we did Mrs. Cutting and Dr. Cutting. Garfield was a little over Cutting in the stature of rank and it wasn't long there were more hospitals started Kaiser and he was very much in charge to see that was started right, and did very well with that. No, those two men were very, very good planners and deserve a lot of credit for what Kaiser is today.

1-00:45:39

**Stine:**

I just want to make sure that we have this record exactly how the kind of chain of referral happened, because I know you had mention when somebody had an injury at the first aid station if it was something that was much larger a problem than you could deal with there, you would then refer them at first to the is it the Richmond Field Hospital?

1-00:45:58

**Stewart:**

No, before Richmond Hospital was functioning, we sent them to Richmond Hospital on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, that was a hospital that was functioning surgery and medical. And I think there was pediatrics ward there.

1-00:46:16

**Stine:**

But would you say it was kind of, not bare bones but just the essentials?

1-00:46:19

**Stewart:**

Yes, it was nice little hospital, but it didn't have to be great, I mean we didn't have to be big, because the population didn't ask for big hospital then. And it didn't grow, the building is still the same size that it was when it started; they did a lot of work there. Then when Kaiser Oakland got so they could take care of the patients, the ambulance took them when they were broken legs and things like that, crushed in any way, the extremities, they were taken to Kaiser Oakland. They were taken to that entrances on Broadway, that's kind of a discharge place now, that was a big entrance in there.

1-00:47:19

**Stine:**

[laughter] Opposite now. This just make me think real quick of a question—I was wondering if any of the injuries, did you ever see any maybe stress related job injuries or maybe people were so tired from double shifts or do you think that was—?

1-00:47:41

**Stewart:**

People didn't complain then. They came to work, Amen! You didn't see anybody shirking on the job. Man or woman, when the women came, you just didn't see that. Now, we had a room for

just eye work, I think four or five gurneys in a row for the people who got flash burns, the welders who got foreign bodies in their eyes. If they were sent home because of a very bad flash burn to bandage both eyes, we had to call a wife to come to the front of the ambulance, the van would take them to the gate. Then we want to see them the next day, they could come back and get checked and that's was about as much follow up work as we did. When people had to stay home for a reason, a broken arm or something, then they were to see either Kaiser Oakland follow up or that was it.

1-00:48:48

**Stine:**

I guess I didn't mean so much necessarily complaining about stress, but in your opinion did you ever seen people maybe talked about had injuries because they weren't as familiar with the job they were doing. But did you think people were ever maybe over worked or over—?

1-00:49:06

**Stewart:**

No. You never heard a complaint about had to come to work today or something like that. That was never uttered. People felt so grateful for a job and they could help the war effort especially if they had maybe two sons in the service and then for the dad to complain? No, that wouldn't go over. So they felt like they were pretty lucky that they weren't called. No, you didn't hear that or see that among men or women. People initially had more pride and everything. If they got a job, they were happy, they wanted to keep it. Lots of it, the reason was because they could afford a home if they had a job. Living conditions before the war were pretty tough, a lot of people didn't have any money and they moved in with families and you know. They didn't have fancy stores or fancy food, you were lucky to have a roof over your head, Amen and don't complain or you get—. [laughter] It's different today; people want everything on a platter handed to them. It's maybe an extreme from years ago, but that's human nature. There's always gonna be a digger and there's always gonna be a lazy person I don't care where you are now—an ambitious person or a lazy. You see it in schools now, you see it in families, you see it in the kids. It's not a healthy thing, there are a lot of things aren't as healthy as we grew up with. Everybody expected to earn their way in this life, and that was typical of 1942.

1-00:52:05

**Stine:**

At the same time that people were saving all these money and earning more money than they had hoped before the war, did people have an opportunity to go out maybe get something special?

1-00:52:20

**Stewart:**

The theme then was save for a house.

1-00:52:24

**Stine:**

Is that something that you would overhear like at lunch or over here—

1-00:52:28

**Stewart:**

No, you didn't go out for lunch or to a movie in the afternoon. [laughter]

1-00:52:32

**Stine:**

Right, right, right. I just meant, you know, at the shipyards when people are just out and about. [laughter]

1-00:52:40

**Stewart:**

There was more of a regulated life in a way, yeah. If you did that, like a drunk always shows up somewhere you know. But people had no time for that. If they were drunk, get out of my way. Obnoxious. Me coming from Berkeley to the shipyard, I was so grateful I had a ride with the man across from the street eventually. If you think I complained about anything, no way. Even I had to wait for ten minutes or half an hour for him to get off the job but I was there waiting for him, that was the way the day went. No, people didn't complain as readily as they do now.

1-00:53:40

**Stine:**

Maybe if I could just ask a couple more questions about what your husband did and the shipyards, he was a safety inspector.

1-00:53:48

**Stewart:**

Safety inspector in Yard One. It was round the clock, twenty-four hours they had a day shift, a swing shift and a graveyard. At first, he was on swing shift, then he edged up to the three star, he was a boss on ship.

1-00:54:14

**Stine:**

He was a boss?

1-00:54:16

**Stewart:**

Yeah, on the swing shift. He was a dependable person that's why he got ahead. Because he was not a big mouth, or I'll show you or anything like that. When he learn something, he learned to improve himself too or grow with whatever was around him. The accidents in the shipyard happened right and left, injury accidents. The safety office was like an insurance firm that analyzed every accident, how could they have prevented it and what will we do to prevent it again from happening, safety features of all sorts. It's like the welders, they had to have helmets and outfits to wear, and those glasses or goggle things for welding and that was absolute. People didn't take a chance and try to do something foolishly; they didn't. But every accident had to be analyzed on paper and handed in. That was a way for the office function was the head boss, there was a man on day shift, and a man below him. My husband on the swing shift, the man below him and a man on graveyard. They went right to the scene of the accident to see how it happened themselves, and what happened, and if any help needed to be called in any shape or form, that was their job to see that it was taking care of. Anything broken out of the business, I mean the machines or anything see that it wasn't used until it was okay, all that kind of stuff. First time, he never done anything like that. But after all, he was 4F and he had to get a job in the shipyard, so that was why he was there. But he was also a person that had his eyes open to everything and learned as he went along and applied to his benefit, you know, to grow. He wanted his family to

have the best of everything, have trips and all of that. So that was good. He was a very good provider and lived to be seventy-eight, I think, so that was good. Yeah.

1-00:57:21

**Stine:**

I'm just gonna switch the tapes really quick. [interview interruption]

Begin Audiofile2

2-00:00:13

**Stewart:**

You learned to do it and you did it without complaining.

2-00:00:20

**Stine:**

Are there any places you remember in Richmond where you used to shop or were you used to go out.

2-00:00:27

**Stewart:**

No. Downtown Richmond on 10<sup>th</sup> Street, that was the center of town. There was a Macy's store, I think 8<sup>th</sup> Street was a [J.C.] Penny store—a nice one. There was a Mechanics Bank that functioned there. Oh, it's beautiful inside if you ever—marble floors and marble desks or tables in there, gorgeous marble things, beautiful inside. That was good. There was a hardware store, there was a few dress clothing for women, very few beauty shops then, there were some saving and loan places.

2-00:01:18

**Stine:**

Wonder why that the beauty shops—?

2-00:01:20

**Stewart:**

People didn't go to the shops then so much as they do now. No, people didn't patronize, you got a permanent that—a lot of was done on your own, your own permanent. Of course, there weren't any women barbers then, and if you went to a barber, you'd be a man in a men store, a men shop. It wasn't anything that would attract women, but everything was a business and that was it. They function and it was a big [Travelini] furniture store up a few blocks and it just function like a small town should.

2-00:02:26

**Stine:**

Do you have any idea if any of those stores are still here today?

2-00:02:29

**Stewart:**

Macy's gone, Penny's is gone, the bank's closed, the [Travelini] is closed. No, everything's closed that was there then—closed or something else in it. You weren't afraid to go downtown by yourself even—. Of course, I didn't go down alone, because I had kids with me. When they outgrew the buggy, it was this long. I got a coaster wagon and put one in one end. But that was

when you said, “No”, that was “No” and they behaved. You can pull the wagon behind you; they behaved in there. They didn’t fall out and get hurt or anything; they expected. Cars did not have seat belts and if you were the driver, you sat a child in the other seat in the front, you didn’t worry about him falling out, because he knew he had to sit there. The same in church, kids didn’t carrying on or run in church, no. Behavior was all together different. Then I got acquainted with the nuns, and the nuns were cloistered and they could not go out for anything other than a medical appointment. So, I did the grocery shopping for many years for them. Call up Thursday night and get their grocery list and go and get it and take it to them. That was fine. Then I got to know the priest and so I did the church laundry for long—twenty years I did that. Then they started to program at the church for people who wanted to learn about the faith and become a Catholic, so I did that for ten years every Wednesday night. When I got crippled in my left knee, I had to give it all up. Of course the nuns disappeared; they had lay teachers so there wasn’t the grocery need for them.

2-00:05:02

**Stine:**

I’m sure the church miss you.

2-00:05:06

**Stewart:**

[laughter] The priest and I— [tape cuts out] Christmas time now, the neighbors up there, we all keep track of one another. So, that’s nice. But I have been very fortunate in my life that I was able to help others in a way that I could. And be a good person and appreciate life. I don’t know when my time is coming to be leaving this earth, but I can say I’ve been very lucky.

2-00:05:52

**Stine:**

Lucky and you’ve done so much and touch so many people.

2-00:05:55

**Stewart:**

Yeah. I never ask for anything if I could do it myself, and I still don’t. So that’s just the way—. I’m going have to have some help now before long with housekeeping or something like that and I never had that so it’s gotta to find someone that’s reliable and honest. It’s a job; but I’ll have to do that eventually. I can’t get down to my knees anymore, walk out of the road or anything.

[laughter]

2-00:06:35

**Stine:**

No one expects me to.

2-00:06:38

**Stewart:**

I can mow the backyard.

2-00:06:41

**Stine:**

Harriet, this has been delightful interview.



2-00:06:43

**Stewart:**

Has it been?

2-00:06:44

**Stine:**

Yeah, it really has.

2-00:06:46

**Stewart:**

Well, that's good.

2-00:06:48

**Stine:**

I think that you've really given so much of the whole process, I just wonder if there's anything you feel like I've neglected or there's anything that you would want to add about anything throughout the spectrum of your life that specifically more about your war time experience or about your time in Richmond.

2-00:07:12

**Stewart:**

I had no idea that my life would turn out like it has and the turn of events that happened, you know like the war, I would never have come to California if it hadn't been the war—December, 7th. I was doing private duty nursing there, and that paid twice as much as a hospital nurse, but I never would have been even to save your money there at that time, you couldn't make and save a lot like you could out here. So, I've been very grateful that I was able to come and do that in a good way and keep my health and able to do it, then I was fortunate to have such a wonderful husband and my children. Three children—they were just marvelous. The kids were very good kids and to this day, I'm proud of them so I have lots of rewards. And I don't think everybody can say that. I'm very, very well taken care of by their concern and everything and that's good. Even though, they are miles away. Thank you for coming here—even being interested in this sort of life.

2-00:09:00

**Stine:**

We are all interested.

2-00:09:03

**Stewart:**

If you see or talk to that Steve, tell him to call me if there's —[tape cuts out] Too bad they don't have that today.

2-00:09:18

**Stine:**

At the end of the war, I asked you a little bit about, you know, how things change and transition. How did things change for you personally when you knew the shipyards were closing? Did Kaiser offer you a job outside the shipyard?

2-00:09:37

**Stewart:**

I was married then, and it was gonna be the end of the days I'm going to work in the shipyard. For my husband too, because the yard closing. He worked few months longer than I did, because the first aid unit was closed in Yard One.

2-00:10:04

**Stine:**

Was it the first one to close or—?

2-00:10:07

**Stewart:**

No. They all closed about the same time except one, Yard Three, because that shipyard was gonna function longer. But Yard Two and us and Yard Four and the Prefab area, that all closed down all together. So, you knew ahead of time that was gonna be your last days on the job, because the men weren't coming either, in mobs to go to work. It was just close the shipyard. They kept the safety people on for a while though kinda watch things about preventing any accidents or anything like that. We knew there be the end of it. Kaiser didn't offer any of us nurses any jobs in Oakland, but if I wanted to work, I could have. But gee, I'm married now, I was just gonna enjoy a little bit. I lived right there on the campus and I went up to work at that UC hospital on the campus that they had the students in, and I was up there three months and Ms. Waylon called me and asked me to come to work. So, I took that job.

2-00:11:35

**Stine:**

So, clearly she had heard of your job?

2-00:11:38

**Stewart:**

Yeah, they took some names of people. That happened to maybe a handful of nurses that I knew or was acquainted with. But there were more than that, because they could get nurses for—we didn't know the nurses in Yard Two or Yard Three, because you just went to work in your yard, amen. So when she called me, I said, "Well, yeah. It might be interesting," so I went to work in the delivery room. That was on the top floor of that big unit on the corner of Broadway and MacArthur. We had six women and six babies [laughter]. We had one LVN—she wasn't even a LVN, just an aide took care of the babies and took them down to the mothers and that—. There was only like the boss and me, because you didn't have—the patients weren't there at first, but that grew like that because of the enrollment in the Kaiser plan. It was closed in the shipyard, but people wanted that medical coverage so they paid their Kaiser dues if the company didn't pay for it. That means going to work at Macy's. Macy didn't pay Kaiser health care, so you had to pay your own. But the coverage—the number of people grew. Oh, it just grew. That's why Kaiser Oakland expanded. Oh, just no end to what was gonna be next. Yeah, I enjoyed the time when we first went there, we didn't even have a doctor in charge of OB. But they hired one, Robert King, and he was a dandy person. I mean knowledgeable but such a nice person, and he was there with Kaiser for twenty or twenty-five years, but we were up there and we call an intern if we had a delivery come in. An intern that was on call. [Tape cuts out] What should I do about my heart? It was only because of an injury on the job just then, no matter what the injury was if they can walk and they came in there, fine. If they had an injury that you'd have to send an ambulance for, we had that van and a first aid man that drive out to it and pick them up. The care

was really very good, the medical care for what happened there, the injuries. In each yard, we had a x-ray machine, and I learned to take x-rays and develop the film and all, didn't know beans about it but I learned from the first aid man. Imagine taking foreign bodies out of eyes, now it's a doctor's job.

2-00:15:17

**Stine:**

Straight out of nurses training. [laughter]

2-00:15:21

**Stewart:**

That what you did. The one doctor had a busy job, but he wasn't over worked to the point where he was over worked. It was a working job all right. We had very little slack time; we always did sit down for lunch. Because the whole shipyard sat down; all men quit work for half an hour.

2-00:15:51

**Stine:**

All the same time? Was there some kind of a bell or some kind of—?

2-00:15:58

**Stewart:**

Oh, a big whistle. Whistle for the shipyard to tell them it was twelve o'clock and then another whistle half past if that was the time that get on the job again. That was big whistle that sounded, couldn't miss it that big. That was when if there was any entertainment brought to the shipyard, like Henry Kaiser did. That was always during the noon hour. Amen! They didn't come at ten o'clock or two thirty and distract anybody.

2-00:16:33

**Stine:**

It was an act of business.

2-00:16:35

**Stewart:**

Yeah. It was when you were eating your lunch. There were no lunchrooms. If you were out on a job, and you had time to eat, you sat down on the floor.

2-00:16:46

**Stine:**

Just where you were?

2-00:16:48

**Stewart:**

Wherever you were, yeah. Ate your lunch, waited for the whistle to blown get back. That was the way with everything. It was a no nonsense day. You didn't last if you were a fooler or a —, you get fired. Very few people ask to be fired or carry gun like that, because either they had a relative in the service or son or daughter or husband so they couldn't pull that stuff. It was what I expected, I never do anything except you give all of yourself and your job, you don't go there and sit down or sit in the back room. That just didn't work. I think somebody came in and swept the place at night, but that was it as far as cleaning the place. You cleaned up after yourself, everything. When the tables were used for the eye work, you changed the paper on whole thing,

and that was it. You did it yourself, you didn't ask for a maid to come. Even if you spill blood or something on the floor, you cleaned it up yourself. There was no maid service or janitor. Course, outside in the shipyard, there was no nonsense. I mean if you did something, drop the board and left it there that was a no-no for sure. Because if anybody got hurt or car hit the board or something, that'd be the end of you. No, you cleaned up after yourself and in every way. [Tape cuts out] Gosh, we had an oxygen tank on wheels. I gave oxygen to the mothers until we got an anesthesiologist up there if that's what we needed. We didn't have anything like that. [laughter] The amount of deliveries just grew, really fantastic. It was thirty a month, in nothing flat. Then it just kept growing—the number deliveries a month.

2-00:19:53

**Stine:**

How long had you been working there when it really started to pick up?

2-00:19:56

**Stewart:**

Oh, the next week or so. It started expanding. I think when I left there in nine months, it was about thirty—that'll be one a day. So, we were busy delivering babies and putting everything together for the next delivery to begin sterilize so we have it all handy for the any mother that came in any time. It was nice, because we grew in a nice easy way. We are not demanding or we deserve this or anything like that. It was we wanted to do the best we could, and we did. No matter who you were, whether it was the boss or another nurse or what, you just didn't get by with shady work then. Everybody was well equipped to do the job and it was amazing. Because I know that when the boys were born, that was in '46. Every mother stayed a week in the hospital after delivery automatic. They had to expand the department so pediatric was right below up, but they moved pediatric down to the second floor and gave us the third floor for the mothers. It was big job, I mean a full time job. You didn't go up there and sit neither did you sit anywhere though, because the pediatrics was busy, and medical was busy, and everything was very efficient. Ms. Waylon did a wonderful job; she was very good. She had good help; she worked days but the evening shift was in graveyard was run just as well as day shift. The doctors were good. The young doctors that they hired had maybe graduated from graduate school, didn't know anything about OB or so. They got trained and I guess you call it. [laughter] If they were interested in OB, that was great for them. Because if you can learn right with your nose right in the business, it's better than reading it out of a book what to do. Kaiser really functioned very well in so many ways no wonder it went over so great.

2-00:23:00

**Stine:**

How about your husband—how did he make that transition you said he got to work a couple of months longer?

2-00:23:06

**Stewart:**

He's fine. He got a job at Albert's Mill in Oakland.

2-00:23:11

**Stine:**

Was that right away or —?

2-00:23:13

**Stewart:**

Yeah. It was a day shift, full time job. He was bossing up and flat. He was there eight years, I think, and he decided we wanted to do that building. So, we did that. He would take a job just anywhere in Oakland, anywhere that needed a man for six or eight months or something. So, he did that and he worked in many little places in Berkeley and that for a year or so. That was just with the knowledge that he'd be there as long as the job would last. Because building, as much as we did in the structure of each place, took a lot of time. Not only getting the roof down and the electric place done right. It took time and a lot of work to get—[tape cuts out] Have been such friends, I mean such good friends and clean and nothing shady. Nothing. I'm like with them even today, "When I see a red onion, I think of you," that's kind of an atmosphere we have with one another. Just nicest feeling that I have such good friends as priest. I have one priest that came and was so kind to my husband when he couldn't go to church, and he come and play cards with him, and playing with us and have dinner here, and he comes to dinner here every Monday night to this day for seventeen years I've known him. He has a young friend that brings him and the two of them sit here we play cards and poke fun of one another. What you got for dessert? Then they leave about eight o'clock and go take him back. He's retired, so he lives in Oakland at a retired priest home. But he calls me everyday to see if I'm all right. That's just nice. But the priests I've known have been nothing like you read about in some of men getting into trouble today. No. I've been very grateful for that because I never hear a dirty story or a dirty word or a hint about something shady that isn't the way they—. So, I've been very fortunate with the priests and the nuns their familiarity. I was in high school in the convent, so I knew about nuns and about their social life is not outside. So, I was well acquainted. I'm happy to do their grocery shopping for them. And that was good. They paid me; I wasn't providing them. It was case of they needed outside help and if I could do it, I did. And I didn't expect anything in return and that was it. So that worked out fine.

2-00:26:43

**Stine:**

It sounds like you are really very active. It seems according to this.

2-00:26:47

**Stewart:**

Yeah. When I don't go to school, I go to mass every morning up there at eight o'clock. There's a few of us old timers that show up every morning, so we greet one another. I'm glad to see one another still able to do it. So that's nice. Christian religion has been a great help to me; it's taught me many things about being honorable and respect other people that I see a lot of people don't have. I have faults too, I'm human, but I know when you grow up you don't steal and those kind of things, you know, makes a better person of you. But I have very good parents, excellent parents, kind of like pioneers in a way, but they were good parents. They didn't give us money, my parents had money, but you didn't get handout every week. If you needed something, you got it that was no problem. But they took us on trips rather than —

2-00:28:22

**Stine:**

That sounds like what you and your husband provided for your children, too.

2-00:28:27

**Stewart:**

We did. We went on a lot of trips. In 1968, my husband and Martha, our daughter and I, we went around the world and that was a marvelous trip.

2-00:28:40

**Stine:**

That sounds amazing.

2-00:28:42

**Stewart:**

Yeah. Then we came back, and the next year we bought four acres up there and put a house on it. So, that was a nice thing to do and I enjoyed for thirty-two years, it was. I just sold it two or three years ago and I miss it terribly.

2-00:29:02

**Stine:**

Oh, I'm sure.

2-00:29:05

**Stewart:**

But it comes to time when you have to do things like that. It was too much work for me and I'm not able to do all that work anymore.