

Betty Hearn

Interviewer: Okay can you state your name for the camera?

Mrs. Hearn: Betty Hearn

Interviewer: And your birth date?

Mrs. Hearn: April 25, 1921.

Interviewer: And where were you born?

Mrs. Hearn: In Lake City, Iowa.

Interviewer: And for the record for the camera if I accidentally say Gran Gran or Pappy this is my great grandmother so just saying. How many brothers and sisters did you have?

Mrs. Hearn: I had two brothers and two sisters one deceased when she was 24 months old.

Interviewer: From what?

Mrs. Hearn: At that time there was not thing of like crib disease she just smothered in her crib.

Interviewer: What they call SIDs now?

Mrs. Hearn: Yeh something like that.

Interviewer: And your brothers were older?

Mrs. Hearn: I had one brother older and one younger and my sister was younger.

Interviewer: What did your family do?

Mrs. Hearn: My father worked at a at that time it was called a Golden Rubber plant where they make tires and anything out of rubber. My mother was a homemaker.

Interviewer: And how did your family manage during the great depression if you remember?

Mrs. Hearn: My dad did whatever he could do mostly he and another fellow raked a car together from an ole car and they put a plow on the front of it and they plowed gardens. Mother took in washings mostly I'd say men that she did their shirts and that was about it.

Interviewer: And when were little did you notice that it was

Mrs. Hearn: No because everybody else was in the same boat everybody was struggling the same so it wasn't no it wasn't any different.

Interviewer: Now did you live in Iowa the whole time?

Mrs. Hearn: No we lived in Pontiac, Michigan.

Interviewer: When did you move there?

Mrs. Hearn: We moved there when I was small when I was in elementary school I remember going to elementary grades starting there.

Interviewer: How come you were there?

Mrs. Hearn: For work for my dad to find work.

Interviewer: How do you remember how aware were you of the war that was going on in Europe around when it first started before we ever got into it?

Mrs. Hearn: What

Interviewer: Do you remember hearing about the war in Europe before?

Mrs. Hearn: No not it didn't we knew about it until they started mentioning starting to draft men and of course they didn't draft women I don't think. They volunteered the way in the army and waves in the navy but it really didn't quite sink in until my brother got his thing in the mail they started but he was turned down because of his hearing and he had one bad foot. But my other brother he went to the South Pacific.

Interviewer: Do you remember Pearl Harbor?

Mrs. Hearn: I remember hearing of Pearl Harbor yes.

Interviewer: How did you hear about it?

Mrs. Hearn: It was I think probably over the radio of course then we didn't have TV. It was over the radio that I heard it. I can't remember where we were at the time but I can remember hearing it then.

Interviewer: Do you remember Roosevelt's speech?

Mrs. Hearn: Parts of it I remember him talking and then that we were at war but like everybody else it was the same it was just kind of stunned really. And it didn't sink in until some in our family just actually got I had a brother-in-law he was drafted early and he was sent to Europe. And then another brother-in-law that was sent to the South Pacific but of course Andy was in the Navy and he was mostly in the South Pacific.

Interviewer: When were you married?

Mrs. Hearn: When?

Interviewer: Yeh

Mrs. Hearn: In March 25, 1940 just about two years or a year and a half before the war really got into it.

Interviewer: Where did you two meet?

Mrs. Hearn: Where did we meet?

Interviewer: Yeh

Mrs. Hearn: A bunch of us would get together on Saturday nights there was a bunch of parks around there we would just get together and we would build a bon fire and just sit around and talk. And his of course we didn't go to taverns and we didn't go to bars and there was no we would just get together and have a good time a talking. And he and another fellow turned up there and aggravated me the whole night it made the boy I was with so jealous. But then come to find out he lived just down the street around the corner and he and my brother met. From then on he got my brother to get a date he said if you can get me a date with your sister I'll get you a date with mine Dorothy that was his sister.

Interviewer: When was your brother drafted?

Mrs. Hearn: When

Interviewer: Yeh how old was he?

Mrs. Hearn: Let's see Chuck was drafted in 1940 I'd say 42 or 43.

Interviewer: Into which branch?

Mrs. Hearn: Army well at that time they were drafted and then they were I don't know where they went but anyway they had a choice then of going into the Army or the Marines or the Navy. And but they didn't get past the physical so he didn't have to make he had no choice to make.

Interviewer: So what did he do instead?

Mrs. Hearn: He worked there in the plant he and his wife both worked there in the Golden Rubber then I think they converted over to making some kind of war stuff for the war tires and things for the tanks they were not tanks their jeeps.

Interviewer: What did your other brother what branch was he in?

Mrs. Hearn: He was in the Army. And he stayed in even after his term expired he re-enlisted and then he well he made a career of it is what he did he was in Vietnam twice and he was in the Korean War at least twice he would to he was sent over and then he would volunteer.

Interviewer: Which one was that which brother was that?

Mrs. Hearn: It was Earl.

Interviewer: Earl

Mrs. Hearn: My other brother was Charles Chuck.

Interviewer: That's Aunt Lillie's husband?

Mrs. Hearn: Yeh

Interviewer: Do you know why they picked chose the Army?

Mrs. Hearn: I have no idea have no idea.

Interviewer: How did your mother deal with them going over was it just.

Mrs. Hearn: Well she was like all other mothers she it was something that just you know something that you just have to live with and but and of course in our family Earl and she had a brother that went to the European War too. But it was just Earl and Aaron that was in the service so and Caroline stayed with them while he was gone. But like I said she was just like all others you just took the days as they came.

Interviewer: Was Chuck happy that he didn't have to or

Mrs. Hearn: No I don't think he really was cause he was going to volunteer and then when this come out that they were going to start drafting he said well they' call him anyway because he had had no children and sure enough they did. But no he felt bad that couldn't go but of course with the he felt all along they would turn him down because of his ears. Cause he had he couldn't hear too good and then he had what they call now rumatory arthritis and so he just he worked there in the factory all the time.

Interviewer: How old was Pappy when he went. Well first of call can you say Pappy's name for the record? And when he was born.

Mrs. Hearn: He was born November 3, 1917 and he was born in Kentucky.

Interviewer: And his name is William Andrew Hearn for the record. So how old was he when he went?

Mrs. Hearn: He was about 24.

Interviewer: What were you doing at the time or what was he doing at the time?

Mrs. Hearn: He was working at Burner Lumber Company.

Interviewer: And did you have any children then?

Mrs., Hearn: Yes we had one daughter. What was that? Oh blasting

Interviewer: And when was she born?

Mrs. Hearn: She was born in 1941 March 10<sup>th</sup>.

Interviewer: Well that's good so she was born before he

Mrs. Hearn: Oh yeh he was she was about I'd say 2 or 3 years old like I said.

Interviewer: Where were ya'll living at the time?

Mrs. Hearn: Where we living in Royal Oak, Michigan.

Interviewer: What did he do at Magnavox?

Mrs. Hearn: It wasn't Magnavox it was Golden Rubber Tire Company. I really don't know he they had they made like I said tires and floor mats and a lot of anything made of hard rubber. Back then the washing machines had ringer washer and ringer pliers. And things like that but what he did I don't remember I knew he worked there my dad worked there and my brother worked there and my sister-in-law worked there. So it was other than the other big plants the General Motors and the Pontiac plants there was a lot of car factories there.

Interviewer: And when did he go into the service?

Mrs. Hearn: Who Andy?

Interviewer: Yes

Mrs. Hearn: I'm trying to think Carole was about 3 years old so it was about 1944 or 45.

Interviewer: Why did he choose the Navy?

Mrs. Hearn: I don't know that was when he got his letter to appear when he left I said if you get a choice do not go in the Navy. I hated I was afraid of water and I just couldn't think of him being out there what if something happened you know. And he come home and he said well guess what branch I'm in and I said not the Navy and he said yep.

Interviewer: Why did it take him so long I'm assuming he got drafted right?

Mrs. Hearn: Yeh

Interviewer: Why did it take him so long cause?

Mrs. Hearn: I have no idea I have no idea.

Interviewer: Did he start to think well maybe I won't go?

Mrs. Hearn: No no we always figured he would get his call but he wasn't seemed like there was so many like my brother-in-law I mean right away he got his notice to appear. But why I don't know.

Interviewer: What did he do in the Navy?

Mrs. Hearn: I think mostly he chose to work in the laundry he was over the laundry because you more or less had control of your own time and he did a lot he saw to it well what his area of the laundry was seen to it that the Admirals and the Captains clothes were up to shape. He had them washed and then he would inspect them to make sure they were okay. And then of course they have you know what time they worked he had a lot of time off.

Interviewer: What did he do in his time off do you know?

Mrs. Hearn: On board I think he slept mostly but they had of course movies and he did read but mostly of course there's nothing you could see. But of course it was such a big I think the ship he was on was the Samarra and I think he said it was about three football fields long.

Interviewer: Do you know where he went?

Mrs. Hearn: I know that he went down to the Panama Canal in that area across the equator down in that area that's where they were.

Interviewer: How much did you know at the time where he was?

Mrs. Hearn: I didn't know.

Interviewer: You didn't know?

Mrs. Hearn: I didn't know.

Interviewer: Were you happy he was doing laundry?

Mrs. Hearn: No well I just wasn't happy that he was on the boat out in the open water as far as that goes.

Interviewer: Did you worry less knowing that's what he was doing instead of

Mrs. Hearn: Well there wasn't much other I think because it was an aircraft carrier and he didn't have anything to do with the planes in things there coming and going and the maintenance of them. That was on another area of the ship.

Interviewer: Did he write a lot?

Mrs. Hearn: Yeh I got sometimes I wouldn't hear from him for weeks and then I would get a stack I would get several letters. Carole got quite a few letters she kept one of hers why I didn't I don't know I guess we moved around so much that I just you know just pitched them I don't know why.

Interviewer: When did he get all of his tattoos?

Mrs. Hearn: I don't know that either.

Interviewer: What was his

Mrs. Hearn: Or why he did that I still don't know I think maybe I don't know I think it was someplace in San Diego that they had it done.

Interviewer: And what was his reasoning?

Mrs. Hearn: Everybody else was doing it. All the other guys was doing it just like when they passed the when they'd go across the equator now this is what I was told that if you didn't have your ears pierced they'd catch you in your sleep and pierce your ears. So he and a fellow that he got acquainted with and

kind of buddied around with they had their ears pierced and then they just one ear. Because I noticed he sent a picture of him and his buddy home and that was the first thing I noticed in that picture was that earring in his ear. And of course when he come home with all those tattoos his mother and I just had a fit.

Interviewer: What was that conversation like when you saw the tattoos?

Mrs. Hearn: It really wasn't much of a conversation cause they were already done and he just knew I was disappointed. I think he was too in time because it was stupid what he had on him was stupid. I could see maybe on eon his arm but

Interviewer: Where did he he went somewhere in San Diego and got them?

Mrs. Hearn: Yeh of course there were tattoo places close to the coast you know all up and down places lots of

Interviewer: He's lucky I interviewed one gentleman and I asked him about it and he said he didn't do it because he saw these other people and they got infected and they were just nasty. So he got lucky that didn't happen.

Mrs. Hearn: Well Andy didn't either I mean he had no problems.

Interviewer: While he was gone what did you do did you

Mrs. Hearn: Well I of course Carole and I we had a place there in Lone Oak or in Royal Oak and my dad and mother lived in Pontiac which was about 15, 20 miles away. And everyday every evening just about they'd come over to see if we were okay. And finally they came over and my dad says pack you clothes he says I'm taking your coming home with us. He said I've lost enough sleep worrying about you and Carole over here by yourselves he says your going to come home and stay with us so I did. And of course my grandmother was there at the time and my mother said why don't you find try and find something to do no need of all three of us being here said we can take care of Carole and of course my sister was at home at the same time.

Interviewer: How old was she?

Mrs. Hearn: I'm trying to think I think she was out of high school.

Interviewer: Was she married yet?

Mrs. Hearn: No she wasn't married at the time. She didn't get married until Bob got out of the service which Carole was about 6 so it was so I got a job as a nurse's aid in the hospital. And I worked there until mother had to have surgery so I quit that job and to be home with Carole and Grandma. And then then when she got back on her feet then I was I got a job as a telephone operator at Bell Telephone Company. I worked there until Andy got out of the service.

Interviewer: How did you get the nurse's aid job?

Mrs. Hearn: Just applied for it and of course then they were screaming for help and so that's

Interviewer: What did you do?

Mrs. Hearn: Well I could do everything that a nurse did except I couldn't give shots or administer medicine.

Interviewer: How did you like that?

Mrs. Hearn: I loved it.

Interviewer: Really

Mrs. Hearn: I loved it.

Interviewer: How many hours would you work?

Mrs. Hearn: Regular hours I worked afternoon shift which seemed to be better then cause I had more time with Carole in the morning and I could help mother kind of get things of course my dad worked at Golden Rubber and he went to work at 3 o'clock. So I took the 3 o'clock shift where we both would be you know where it wasn't just make it be harder have to worry about fixing a meal for him before he left and me before I left. And then that way I had the whole morning with Carole and was

Interviewer: What did what did Aunt Barb do?

Mrs. Hearn: She was working in a shoe store in one of the nice it was called Noval's Shoe Store it was one of the one of the nicer shoe stores there in downtown Pontiac. And she also was at that time I think she was telephone operator and that's where she worked for several years until she had her first child.

Interviewer: And what did you do at the telephone company?

Mrs. Hearn: I was long distance operator.

Interviewer: With the switchboard?

Mrs. Hearn: With the switchboard where you pushed in a plug and then they get a call and pushed in another plug and set a timer and

Interviewer: Was that dull compared to being a nurse's aid?

Mrs. Hearn: Very dull because you got some people on there would want a number would be very sarcastic and some would demand that you put them through right away. Because a lot of time during still during the war a lot of times you couldn't get the circuits would be closed or full and a lot of times I'd poke it in the wrong hole. But yeh it was more boring cause you sat there and I liked nursing because it was active and I especially liked the children's ward. It broke my heart to see how sick some of those kids were but I still felt like I could what I was doing there was helping them more than it was than in the other ward some of the patients were so demanding.



Interviewer: How aware were you of did you keep up with what was going on in the war?

Mrs. Hearn: Oh yeh

Interviewer: By radio

Mrs. Hearn: Just radio and paper.

Interviewer: Let's see how was there a lot of people in your neighborhood that lost people or

Mrs. Hearn: They was a lot of friends that lost you know and a lot there was several that Andy worked with at the plant were killed. My immediate family of all of my cousins and all that was in the service we only lost one.

Interviewer: Who was that?

Mrs. Hearn: And that was a cousin of mine Donald McCauley he lived in Iowa and he was my aunts' oldest boy. And he went all through the war and he was when they landed on D-Day that's when he was killed.

Interviewer: In your town how were there were there a lot of factories and things for the that they had just specifically set up for doing things for the war

Mrs. Hearn: Oh yeh the like I said Golden Rubbers they converted over to probably what they made before was tires and things for the services and I don't know what of course General Motors built jeeps, tanks and things like that. So most of the car industries did a lot like that.

Interviewer: Do you recall how was rationing?

Mrs. Hearn: Oh rationing was terrible. Well it wasn't terrible of course the biggest thing that we noticed was the shoes and at that time of course Carole had one foot that needed special shoes so they had to be ordered so it would take my shoe stamps I don't know how many we got and Andy's shoe stamps to get her special shoes. Of course we just wore you could buy you know just regular shoes which was fine but and the same way with groceries. Now I think your grandmother's got a rationing book that we had during the war where some was for meat and some was for grocery and some was for sugar, butter and I mean there was no unless you had a big family it might have been a problem but it wasn't to us because we had more rations than we could use. So we would give them to families with several children like meat and stuff.

Interviewer: Was it just because your family was small at the time or

Mrs. Hearn: No everybody was given the same like I said a book for can goods and a book for meat and at that time I believe gas I can't remember if gas was rationed or not I believe it was. When I worked I road the bus and of course I had the car and I that was the reason why and I was trying to think why didn't I drive to work but it might have been I kept the gas just in case of emergencies and like that. But

Interviewer: Was there anything that that you didn't have that you kind of missed because of rationing was there anything that

Mrs. Hearn: I can't think of a thing other than like I said you know we I don't believe gas was rationed its something why I think it might have been earlier.

Interviewer: Yeh it's listed here as one of the things.

Mrs. Hearn: That it might have been earlier because when he would come home on leave we would make trips to Kentucky where his parents lived so but I do know tired were and shoes I think shoes was our biggest concern cause we had to get

Interviewer: How often did he come home?

Mrs. Hearn: Oh gosh it would be months it all depended on how long the ship was out and how close to or how much time he had off. A lot of times he only had just maybe two or three or four days it wouldn't pay to come home.

Interviewer: Yeh how would he get home?

Mrs. Hearn: He came home on the bus usually the bus most of the time.

Interviewer: I would have worried all the time did you?

Mrs. Hearn: Oh yeh because like I said I didn't know where he was at and of course my interest as to what was going on in the South Pacific in that area. But even then I still wasn't until I'd get a letter from him of course he couldn't tell me and then when he come home I found out. You know really it was good and it was bad because if I'd have known exactly where he was it would have been awful you know but I knew he was in a vicinity I kept thinking maybe he's not in that area maybe he's you know which most of the time he was. Cause those air and whenever there was tale about you know aircraft carriers with so many planes and such they never gave the name of the aircraft carrier. But I knew it was when the planes took off that the bombing and so that they had to be pretty close to where

Interviewer: Did he ever talk about anything when he came back?

Mrs. Hearn: No

Interviewer: Did you ever ask or did you just

Mrs. Hearn: No I just cause he and his brother-in-law of course by the time he and Clarence of course they was in two different wars Clarence was in Europe and his job was so much different and I think really his brother Buford was in the really the most danger our areas. Cause he had all of his like since then had had problems with malaria so he spent a lot in there

Interviewer: Was he in the Navy?

Mrs. Hearn: No he was in the Army. And he was a cook in the Army so they were on the ground a lot but

Interviewer: Where did Aunt Dorothy live did they live in Kentucky?

Mrs. Hearn: Yes she came back to Kentucky and lived with her parents.

Interviewer: Did you do any participate in any scrap drives for iron, aluminum things like that?

Mrs. Hearn: Oh yeh we mostly cans you know vegetable what did they come in we'd have to take the tops and bottoms out and them mash them down flat.

Interviewer: Kind of like did it work kind of like recycling?

Mrs. Hearn: Yeh kind of like recycling today.

Interviewer: What about war bonds did you buy any?

Mrs. Hearn: Oh yeh yeh we got war bonds when we could afford them.

Interviewer: Something else I was going to ask. You said something about blue star and gold stars.

Mrs. Hearn: Those were like little like banners they were it was white and then around the borders was red and blue and if you had someone in the service you had a blue star someone that was killed in the service was a gold star. And you saw them hanging in just about every window like I said in Pontiac at that time. You never went by a house that didn't have a least one star or then there was we had a friend and she had five sons and had all five of her sons in the service.

Interviewer: When that would happen say to a neighbor or something what would you do?

Mrs. Hearn: You mean if they lost? I don't know that's something I don't know.

Interviewer: I mean what would you do as a say somebody lost a friend?

Mrs. Hearn: Oh I would go and offer what help I could. There's not much you can do just be there for them to talk to and if you're a Christian pray with them and I just don't know you know offer whatever if they had children or if anything cause it is upsetting so many of them just was left with their children. Of course I never knew any but other than Dorothy of course Dorothy wasn't left with children she had Lee but then she had her parents down in Kentucky. Then she also had twins while Clarence was gone and they were two years old before he ever saw them.

Interviewer: Were you glad you had your parents there?

Mrs. Hearn: Oh yeh yeh yeh oh my goodness yeh.

Interviewer: What did your father did he still work at the

Mrs. Hearn: Golden Rubber yeh and I don't think Andy went back there when he got out of the service I think that's when we decided to move to Kentucky which was the best move we ever made.

Interviewer: When did he get back?

Mrs. Hearn: I don't know whether it was in the spring or in the fall

Interviewer: Well how long was he

Mrs. Hearn: It was I think it was in the spring when he got out cause I can remember Carole buying her a little sailor coat and a little sailor hat for Easter. So it must have been in the spring for her to wear an Easter she was only about four three or four years old.

Interviewer: Do you remember what you did when he got back?

Mrs. Hearn: Like I said we just made plans to move back to Kentucky and a lot of place there and of course we lived with his folks until we could get into a place but that was. And he went to work just well he couldn't until Magnavox built a factory and then he was there until he retired.

Interviewer: When did he retire?

Mrs. Hearn: When?

Interviewer: Yeh

Mrs. Hearn: In 1985.

Interviewer: And did you when did you start working again?

Mrs. Hearn: Oh I didn't start working until it was after we moved to East Tennessee I'd say I'm trying to think how old Julie and Ben were I think Ben was just a baby when I started before that. And I worked there until he was transferred to Morris Town and then I worked in a shop there I was part-time worked there cause I didn't want to work fulltime cause he had already retired.

Interviewer: When the war was over were you glad to

Mrs. Hearn: Oh yeh I can remember when the war was over. It was my day off at the telephone company and of course on my day off I spent it with Carole. We'd go down town and usually go to a movie and just shop around and we went to and I can remember standing going up the street when all at once horns were honking people were yelling and I can remember that. Everybody was so thrilled that the war was over but that's where we were we were downtown Pontiac.

Interviewer: Were you glad to finish with working or when did you quit?

Mrs. Hearn: Well I quit when Andy come home cause he didn't want me to work he never did want to work. He said if you want to work okay you go to work I'll stay home. He said of course he worked in a factory there in Paducah and he said if you want to work fine but if we can't get by on what I make and we did barely but he wanted me there and I'm glad. Cause what I would have made wouldn't have been all that much cause they didn't pay a whole lot then. But I was happy to stay at home.

Interviewer: Well anything else I think we got it covered.

Mrs. Hearn: Well I can't think of anything else other than I have two more little grand children and four precious great grand children.

Yes they are

Interviewer: They are very precious and I can't think of anything else.