

Interviewer: Go ahead and state your name and date of birth.

Fedele: My name is Joseph.

Interviewer: And when were you born?

Fedele: I was born March 22, 1925.

Interviewer: What was your father's occupation?

Fedele: Well he was a he worked at a factory and he was a working with tools he never did speak about what he did at the factory you know. But he was a bench hand working on Mac truck motors you know they were building the Mac truck and that's where he worked.

Interviewer: And that was in New York?

Fedele: No in New Jersey.

Interviewer: In Jersey?

Fedele: In New Jersey yeah we I was born in New Jersey and we were raised in New Jersey and that's all that I can remember what he did and prior to that I don't recall.

Interviewer: Do you remember him ever going periods of time without work?

Fedele: Yeah there was a time there he was out of work when they started the what they call the WPA project the government started that and they hired laborers or whatever to work on the WPA project where they were working on building canals and stuff like that.

Interviewer: So he did that?

Fedele: He did some of that yeah. He worked on some of that and it was tough back in those days because things weren't as expensive as they are today but you had to have the money to do it and money was hard to come by.

Interviewer: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

Fedele: I had two brothers and four sisters.

Interviewer: All older?

Fedele: The eldest Lena she was the eldest in the family she was born in Italy and when she passed away I couldn't remember her age. But she married when I was young as a matter of fact I was a flower boy for her wedding so to speak. And Alice she's still she's in a nursing home right now but she's 92 years old she's the eldest right now. Rose she passed away here a couple of years ago and Frances who was two years older than I am she's still alive and as a matter of fact Mommy and I just came back to visit with her last week last weekend. And my youngest brother he's been passed away he passed away what six years ago.

Interviewer: Donnie

Fedele: Yeah and my eldest brother he passed away years ago he was he lived in Hawaii he was in the service in World War II he discharged he married a Hawaiian girl and he lived there. SO we didn't get to see much of him.

Interviewer: When did he join?

Fedele: He went in in 1942 I believe.

Interviewer: Did you write letters back and forth with him or occasionally yeah we kept it touch but it was hard you know.

Fedele: Yeah

Interviewer: When you were a kid in the 30s do you remember ever hearing about Hitler and the Germans or was there a threat?

Fedele: Not really I don't recall much of that being talked about at the time back in the 30s I don't recall it anyway. But my memory just doesn't I don't recall.

Interviewer: Do you remember if your family generally supported FDR like they thought he was a good president?

Fedele: My father was not talking about politics he just never did discuss it politics and I don't know what his opinion was he never expressed it.

Interviewer: Okay did you guys have a radio?

Fedele: We had a radio.

Interviewer: Radio is that how you got all of the news?

Fedele: I got the news yeah yep listened to the news on the radio all the time.

Interviewer: Did you work at all when you were younger?

Fedele: When I was young yeah I worked at a wholesale produce market as a teenager and then I also used to deliver newspapers.

Interviewer: Do you remember how much you made at the grocery store?

Fedele: Well it wasn't at the grocery story actually at the food market the produce market.

Interviewer: Like a farmers market?

Fedele: Yeah farmers market and I was making \$3.00 a week delivering newspapers and I was getting up early in the morning to deliver them and then late after school. And I quit that job to work in the farmers

market to make 50 cents more an hour no 50 cents more a week. You know it was \$3.50 for the day it was \$3.50 and I thought I could cheat my mother and keep the 50 cents and used to just give her the \$3.00 and she got wise you know.

Interviewer: Did you always give all of the money to your mom?

Fedele: Yes we did yeah.

Interviewer: Do you remember Pearl Harbor?

Fedele: Yes I do.

Interviewer: How did that affect your family did it change anything?

Fedele: Yes it did it brought my eldest brother home who was living on the west coast and I hadn't seen him in many many years and I had my father send for him he sponsored him to come back and visit with us. And he had a family at the time and he stayed and got a job and worked and it lasted maybe a year I guess or whatever and then he decided to go back out west with his family and I went with them. And we drove across country in a 1932 Chevrolet I believe it was four door sedan. And we drove to _____ Washington and lived on a farm there hog farm and I worked in the Seattle Tacoma Shipyard as a scalar.

Interviewer: Is that why your other brother John was at Pearl Harbor?

Fedele: Yeah well he I had left him and went back home and I joined the marine core and my brother and I didn't get along to well and I never did hear from him again until after he was in the service got in the service he started corresponding with me. But other than that I don't' know when he did go in just guessing.

Interviewer: So you enlisted you weren't darter?

Fedele: No I enlisted in yeah.

Interviewer: And what branch did you chose?

Fedele: Marine core.

Interviewer: What was so you went to Paris Island for boot camp then?

Fedele: Yes

Interviewer: Okay tell me a little about your time in Paris Island.

Fedele: Well that was a pretty good deal over there a lot of the guys at Paris Island didn't like it over there but I enjoyed it. It was to me it was fun and but I enjoyed it and it was if I can remember correctly it was 90 guys in our troop in our squad and got along pretty good. And you know the funny thing we just talked about that as we go back in time I had just come back from a shower come in one door of a quanza hut and some guy went out the back door quick and I went looking at my pillow and my wallet was gone. And I went out there to follow them and just saw him bending down throwing something

underneath the quanza hut that we lived in and I nailed him and got the sergeant and proved that he stole my wallet. And it's just one of the incidents that happened at Paris Island but other than that it was very good duty and I enjoyed it.

Interviewer: What was your typical day like? Do you remember about what time you would get up in the morning?

Fedele: It was early in the morning we got up early in the morning and did our physical exercise whatever calisthenics and the training that they put you through then they take you towards the end of your training they take you to the rifle range. And we had the M1 issued to us and they trained us on the M1 and showed us what it was all about taught us how to take it apart and put it back together you could do it blindfolded. And we shot the range and whatever then our time was up and we got shipped out. We all filled in applications to where we wanted to go to what apart of and I had asked if I could get in the air core in the marine core I wanted to get into aviation. And they shipped us all to Camp LeJeune and they interviewed us again questionnaire and whatever take test. And I was one of the few that was picked to take up aviation and I went to school in Jacksonville Florida.

Interviewer: At the naval air station?

Fedele: At Jacksonville Florida and I learned the what they called the AVM aviation machinist mate. And I'm very good at it I was devoted to it and they worked with me and taught me everything that they could and I learned hard and I enjoyed it. When our tour of duty school was over and they shipped us out to a base and then they set us up with a squadron where we formed the squadrons I was put into a squadron to form and was shipped to Cherry Point North Carolina. And that's where I was stationed in Cherry Point and the squadron trained my F67 was used a target to tone the target and it got a few holes in it that we patched up or whatever. But that was just beside you know it's one of the things about it but it was one of the planes they used for target because the guys the captain the pilot he they were good at it and they kept it on a steady course for the shooting you know for the target. But the plane was very dependable and they always used mine for target. And then they just shipped me around they put me in headquarters squadron and I didn't get to go overseas or ship out with my squadron they wanted me to stay there to train other recruits coming out of boot camp to give them basic training of aviation mechanics by doing flight line service work and stuff. How to do maintenance on a plane minor stuff you know so they needed them real bad at the time and we had a tent set up where we had the classes and whatever. That was my experience but I never did get to get over and then the war got around and the war was over and I got discharged and went on home.

Interviewer: What was your impression of your fellow recruits as you went through your training?

Fedele: They were all pretty good guys they were serious about the job you know they knew they were there for a purpose and they wanted to get it over with. You know that war was really something.

Interviewer: Do you think you were trained adequately to do your job?

Fedele: Well they really wanted me to go to school further in aviation we had to practice with the F67 what we used to use. And they wanted me to go to Connecticut to go to the Pratt Whitley School over there to learn more about that engine. And I refused to go I wanted to ship out with my outfit and they said no you would never leave this base. Then that was

Interviewer: That was it.

Fedele: That was it for me.

Interviewer: How was your living conditions at your bases?

Fedele: Living conditions were good you know it was you know you lived day by day you know.

Interviewer: Just basic a bunk and a hot meal.

Fedele: Just in a quanza hut you got your three squares a day and off time when you were off your time was your own you do what you wanted to do.

Interviewer: So was the housing temporary or was it permanent housing?

Fedele: It was all well the school I went into the barracks over at Jacksonville they were permanent barracks and but the quanza huts were temporary stuff over there where we lived together.

Interviewer: Okay did you communicate much back home with your mom?

Fedele: Yeah

Interviewer: Did you still send any part of your pay back home?

Fedele: I used to send my allotment home yeah and I used to send back I think it was \$50 a month I used to send to my mother. And I was a corporal I was making \$66 a month.

Interviewer: What did you do in your free time since you stayed stateside?

Fedele: Well we just rested hang around and spent some time at the PX you know and that was about it. Didn't have the money to do anything. It was tough.

Interviewer: What did you do after the service did you get a GI bill or anything like that?

Fedele: No I did not I never applied for any GI bill benefits I just worked on my own and I'm trying to remember what I did. I just started learning all the trades myself doing plumbing and electrical work working with different people carpenter work.

Interviewer: When you got out you went back to New Jersey?

Fedele: Pardon

Interviewer: You went back to New Jersey after you got out?

Fedele: After I got out I went back to New Jersey back to ___ Field and we lived the best we could. You know you found a job and worked.

Interviewer: When you look back on your time in service what's the first thing you think about?

Fedele: When I think about the time in service?

Interviewer: Like the most memorable moment of your time in service.

Fedele: Well working on those engines the F67 is one of the finest aircrafts they ever made and it was a real good airplane and I enjoyed working on them. And I thought about that quite a bit and maybe I was sorry I didn't go to Pratt to learn about the engines. But you want to stick with the guys.

Interviewer: It just wasn't in the cards for you to stick with them.

Fedele: It wasn't in the cards for me to do it.

Interviewer: Yep

Fedele: Well I appreciate it.

Interviewer: Yep

Tape ended