

MORRIS PLUMMER, NAVY

Amy Huffman:

Do you have a favorite port along all those stops that you really liked?

Morris Plummer:

Barcelona, Spain, was good. That was a nice port.

Amy Huffman:

Why did you like it?

Morris Plummer:

It was just a nice city. There is a lot to see and a lot to do there. Hong Kong. But that was the old Hong Kong. You don't see Hong Kong today like it was in 1952. It was pretty much with the old Chinese people, the way they were. Japan was all under Marshal Law back then. And all the time we were there, it was under Marshal Law. When we got back to the United States, then we spent from April, and probably May or June, I think it was, of '52 until April of '53 in and out of Newport, Rhode Island, on different short cruises. And then we went back to Korea again. And this time we went the other way. We started from Newport, went down to Norfolk, and then we went through the Panama Canal, Pearl Harbor.

Amy Huffman:

When you came to Pearl Harbor, had it been rebuilt or anything?

Morris Plummer:

No, not really. There was a lot of -- they were building a lot. But the original super-structure, they were still picking it up. No. It was still pretty bad. Then we went on to Midway and then to Japan, and then we were sent to Korea. We stayed in Korea quite a long time.

Amy Huffman:

Off the coast again?

Morris Plummer:

Uh-huh. A quarter of a mile out off the coast of Korea.

Amy Huffman:

What's it like to have a daily life on a ship when you are so close to what's going on?

Morris Plummer:

You don't have time to think about it. You spend a lot of time on watch; I spent my whole time on the bridge. And we had to be very alert and active. And we kept all the ship's logs. We done all the signaling between the ships. And we knew where we were all the time. And so consequently we did set up there with big, powerful binoculars and watched the shoreline. We knew what was going on, which is what I liked about being a signalman.

Amy Huffman:

Okay. What kind of messages were you sending out back and forth?

Morris Plummer:

Oh, the ship's position and the mainland. You didn't send a whole lot through light or semaphores that wasn't coded. Most everything was coded for fear that because we were so close to the shore.

Amy Huffman:

Right.

Morris Plummer:

So we didn't want people to read our messages back and forth if they wanted to. So it was all, you know, a pretty tight setup, but it wasn't really -- we didn't send anything that was really secretive. It was just Navy policy to send it in code. We took a lot of Marines in to the beach way up in the north of Korea to run (..) type of things.

Amy Huffman:

What was that like?

Morris Plummer:

That was scary. I was on a boat twice that took the Marines in. And I had to go in and get them afterwards. And sometimes they would get home, and sometimes they wouldn't. There would be some guys missing. I did land on Korea once, just to step my feet on it, but that's all. I didn't want to stay.