RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH ARTHUR L. SNYDER

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

WORLD WAR II * KOREAN WAR * VIETNAM WAR * COLD WAR

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

DOMINGO DUARTE

Nicholas Molnar: This begins an interview with Arthur Snyder on February 24, 2005, in New Brunswick, New Jersey, with Nicholas Molnar and …

Shaun Illingworth: Shaun Illingworth.

NM: How are you doing, Mr. Snyder?

Arthur Snyder: I'm fine, thank you.

NM: Thank you for consenting to this interview today. To start off, can you tell us a little bit about your family history on your father's side?

AS: My father side? My father, we don't know a lot about his family. He was orphaned at two years old. We think that his parents drowned on the SS *Slocum* in 1902 and he was put up for adoption in the Catholic Agency and the Snyder family adopted him. By trade, he was a carpenter. He lived to be seventy-nine years old. Anything else you want to know about him? Editor's Note: SS *General Slocum* sank in the East River off of New York City in 1904.

SI: What do you know about the Snyder family?

AS: The Snyder family, well, at that point, they were childless when they adopted him. They subsequently had three children, who, academically, turned out to be very smart. My father did not go to college, didn't even go to high school. The oldest son of the Snyders', August, got a scholarship to Columbia. He was number one in his class at Columbia University. His sister, Mary, went to college, became a teacher and a music instructor and his brother, John, who is still alive, but senile, graduated from Rutgers and, during the war, because of his IQ, they put him in a special program at Yale University. Only John is still alive.

SI: What did your father tell you about his early life? He probably did not remember about the orphanage.

AS: I don't remember the orphanage, no, but the Snyders came to adopt an infant. They saw this blond-haired, blue-eyed, two-year old boy and they fell in love with him and they adopted him, even though their intentions, of course, were to have an infant. He didn't have any real formal education. He went to work to help support the family. They were very, very poor and he was a carpenter.

SI: Did he ever talk about the period of World War I? He would have been in his late teens then.

AS: In World War I, I still have some of his woodworking tools, he built wooden airplane wings and they had specialized tools to make the wooden wings that were used for airplanes in World War I.

SI: Did he work in a factory or a craft shop?

AS: I don't know where. I really don't know where. He built the curved portions of the wings that were wooden in those days. He was a carpenter at Hercules. He never made any money to speak of. As a matter-of-fact, I didn't know this, my mother said that his goal was to make five thousand dollars a year. He never succeeded. The most he had ever made was four thousand, four hundred dollars and, a lot of times, he was out of work. So, he was very, very poor.

SI: What do you know about your mother's side of the family?

AS: My mother's family came from Denmark. … Her parents came to the United States when they were in their teens. My mother was one of four children; she was the youngest. Her mother died when she was two years old. Her father was an itinerant boat captain who was never home and the four children knocked around from home to home to home; he never remarried. He was never around very much and they were raised in extreme poverty. It was a Danish neighborhood in Sayreville and various Danish families took in the four children. None of them had any schooling. My mother became a domestic at eleven years old. My mother worked in factories as a seamstress. My mother did whatever she had to do to try to make a living later in life. … She had a little wallpapering business that she did. She did that until she was seventy-eight years old. She fell off a ladder and broke her back and she couldn't wallpaper anymore. Interesting thing about my mother, she was very, very active in her church. … Both my mother and father were active in the First Presbyterian Church in Sayreville, [which was] being torn down and a new one was put up, and they pledged to raise what money they could for the new church. My mother baked a hundred loaves of bread every Friday. People would come to the house and pay a dollar, I think it got to be a dollar-and-a-half, to buy the bread and my mother would give that money to the church every week. Later on, a New Brunswick newspaper started writing articles about all the things my mother had done in her life and she became pretty popular in the paper. The *New York Times* read the articles and they thought it was interesting and they started interviewing my mother and writing articles about all the things she had done to try to make a living and her charitable contributions. Then, the Associated Press started interviewing my mother and writing articles that went all over the country about her lifestyle. She, during her life, got hundreds and hundreds of letters from all over the country about her lifestyle. She, during her life, got hundreds and hundreds of letters from all over the country from people who read articles about her. She died at ninety-three years old. About ten years ago, a minister in Tennessee gave a sermon about the things my mother had done to raise money and the dinners that she would provide for veterans' organizations and gave a sermon on her and he concluded that, "with all the nice things she had done in her life, she's probably dead now." The minister in her church found out about it and called the minister in Tennessee, says, "She's very much alive and she's still running dinners for the veterans in the church." So, she became very, very popular later in life.

SI: Did she ever explain to you what made her so service-oriented?

AS: Well, she was very religious, for one thing. She belonged to the same church for ninety-three years. So, a lot of her activities were confined around the church, but, also, the Veterans' Administration, that she would cook dinners for. She was an excellent cook. She also cooked dinners for the Lions Club, the Rotary Clubs in town, voluntary. They would head them up and they all looked forward to having dinners that my mother made.

SI: Do you know how your parents met?

AS: No. I really don't know. I'm sorry. I still have articles about them being married. It was evidently a pretty festive occasion at that time, but, no, I don't remember how.

NM: Your father was working for Hercules in Sayreville at that time.

AS: Yes, yes.

NM: For the record, could you tell us when and where you were born?

AS: I was born in Sayreville in 1929. I'm seventy-six years old.

SI: Do you have any brothers and sisters?

AS: I have a sister. She lives in Dover, Delaware. She is five years younger than I am. She's a graduate of the University of Delaware. Her husband, Paul Janocha, is a graduate of Rutgers University, in the same class as I was in. Paul was an extremely meticulous person. He would polish his shovels when he got finished with them. He would simonize his riding lawnmowers. He was a mechanical engineer, graduated from Rutgers, and, out of character, and I still can't give an answer, two years ago, he fell off a ladder and hit his head and he's basically incompetent now. He had brain damage. They found him, they helicoptered him to a hospital. He has a lot of injuries. He's got memory problems; he has vision problems. His weight is down to 128 pounds and my sister said that he's had three million dollars worth of hospital expenses since he hit his head and he's never going to get any better and he's a real problem for my sister, because it's very, very confining, taking care of him, and it's a problem, obviously, but he's got a lot of problems.

NM: What was it like to grow up in Sayreville in the 1930s and 1940s?

AS: Our problem was always money. We had no money. We didn't have any problems as far as food was concerned, because it was very, very rural where we lived, and there were about four houses on the street, Snyders Lane. Snyders Lane is still there, but, instead of four houses, there's probably four hundred houses. We grew a lot of vegetables. My mother canned a lot of them. I would get a thousand chickens the first day of the new year, January 1st or 2nd. I raised chickens, sold eggs, sold chickens. I sold vegetables that I raised for money. It was so rural that I had two beagles and I'd come home from school, my mother would let the beagles out, I'd quick change my clothes, grab a shotgun and go rabbit hunting. We had a pond about two hundred yards through the woods behind our house. Now, the pond is filled in. There's houses on it. There's houses on every inch, but, when we lived there, it was extremely rural and extremely poor. As a matter-of-fact, I graduated from college without a telephone in the house. We didn't even have a telephone. I went to Sayreville High School. It was three years old. I was the third graduating class. The first one was 1944; I was 1947. I did pretty well academically. I was the first boy to make the National Honor Society from the school, then, on to Rutgers.

SI: Did your parents push you to excel academically?

AS: I'm not sure I'd use that strong a term, but they wanted me to do well. The, insisted that my sister and I go to college. I'm not sure they actually pushed, but they certainly …

SI: They encouraged.

AS: Yes, they did, yes. My father realized that my mother or he did not have any education and it was a tough life that they had and they wanted us to do better, yes.

SI: Your mother's deep devotion to the church must have had an effect on your life as a child, going to the church.

AS: Yes, yes, we did. A large part of our life revolved around the church. The area where we lived was originally, primarily, Danish and we belonged to Danish clubs and Christmas clubs. A lot of our activities revolved around Danish culture. The Danish people dispersed and it became almost a one hundred percent Polish area and, interesting, as time went by, the area is now primarily Portuguese.

SI: Through your mother, did you keep up any Danish traditions in your household?

AS: No, no, unfortunately, I did not, no. My father's parents were German and he spoke German. My mother could speak Danish, but I can't really speak; well, I speak a little German, that's it.

SI: During the Depression, in the 1940s, what did your parents and you think of Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal?

AS: My father did not like it. He disapproved of Social Security even though he had no money. He did not like the Roosevelt "give-away" programs, those socialization programs that they liked. He had always said that he would refuse to accept Social Security when he retired. He felt so strongly against it.

SI: In high school, what were some of your favorite subjects? At that time, were you thinking of what you would do later in life?

AS: No, I probably should have thought more about what I was going to do later in life than I did at that time. I knew I was going to go to college, but what I was going to do after that, no, I really didn't. Of course, I took an academic course in high school.

SI: Do you remember where you were when Pearl Harbor was bombed?

AS: Yes. I know exactly where I was. We had a relative that lived in New Gretna, down in southern Jersey. My mother, father, my sister, and I were driving down there to visit our relatives when we heard it on the radio in the car.

SI: You were about twelve at the time.

AS: Yes, about that age, yes. So, my sister is probably six, but we listened on the car radio and we had disbelief. We weren't sure if this was a spoof or this was really happening, but, yes, I remember it very vividly.

SI: Was it difficult for a twelve year old to fathom what that meant or did you have a pretty good idea that this was war?

AS: I think I had a pretty good idea. I think I thought, even at that time, going through my mind was how we could be so ill-prepared for something of that magnitude.

SI: Before Pearl Harbor, what did you know about what was happening in Europe or the Far East?

AS: Probably nothing. I don't think I knew anything. I think I was totally unaware of the problems that we were having.

SI: Had your mother maintained any contact with any other relatives in Denmark?

AS: No, never did, no.

SI: There was no connection to Denmark when it was invaded.

AS: No.

SI: After Pearl Harbor, how did the war begin to have an impact on your life on the home front?

AS: During the war?

SI: Yes, rationing, blackouts.

AS: Well, we didn't have any blackouts where we were, but rationing, yes, meat, gas rationing, but we were lucky; because we had so many chickens, we had eggs. Our next-door neighbor had a cow, so that we had more milk than we could possibly ever use, and he raised four pigs a year and slaughtered them and we got meat from them. We made our own bacon. So, we didn't actually have any food shortages, because we're kind of self-sufficient. One interesting thing, I don't know what year this was, I had a couple of hundred chickens that I hadn't sold and, all of a sudden, we couldn't get any food for the chickens and we were faced with a couple of hundred chickens starving to death. There was no way we could get corn or food or anything else for them. We ended up killing a couple hundred chickens. What we couldn't sell, my mother canned in two-quart jars, in a gelatin. So, we had to kill the chickens, pluck them, clean them. My mother canned them. I don't know how she did it, because, to this day, I've never seen chickens done that way, but we ate it for years. She put them in two-quart jar containers and it was excellent and, to this day, I've never seen any chicken done that way, but we had chicken for years.

SI: You were selling chickens all during the war.

AS: I sold chickens, I sold eggs, yes, I sold what vegetables I could grow. Interesting, I sold string beans. They were pretty easy to grow and, one thing I think about now, lima beans, no matter how many I grew, I could sell. There was a tremendous demand for lima beans. Now, I don't like lima beans and I don't know of anyone that eats them anymore, but, then, they were the most popular vegetable I could grow.

SI: Did you have any other part-time jobs?

AS: Oh, yes. I worked all my life. I started, when I was fourteen years old, working at Johnson & Johnson in the summer. I told them I was sixteen years old. Johnson & Johnson knew I was not sixteen and they kept pressing me that, "You're going to have to get a birth certificate to prove your age," but they never went so far as to make me get it, because they were paying me forty-two-and-a-half cents an hour, and so, I worked there probably two summers at Johnson & Johnson, and then, I started working at (Sayre and Fischer?) Brick Company in Sayreville and I worked there part-time for three or four years. It was piece-work, so, we could get a crew together, four or five high school boys, and load bricks on trucks or do various jobs there. It was all paid by how much work you did and we worked there Saturdays, we worked there Sundays, we used to work some nights during high school and, even, I think, the first year or two in college, I worked there. They eventually went bankrupt, but I worked there for a long time, very dangerous, a lot of injuries. There were no safety precautions of any type where they compressed the bricks, mud into bricks, before they baked them. They had big presses coming down. Almost everyone that worked there had their fingers cut off from the presses. There was no safety devices of any type and all the career, older people that worked there had had personal injuries.

SI: When you worked at Johnson & Johnson, what were you doing?

AS: Johnson & Johnson, at that time, was making compacts for women and lipstick containers. Maybe they're making lipstick there, too, but I worked at either compacts or making lipstick containers, yes.

SI: They were still producing them during the war.

AS: Yes, I think so.

SI: Just to examine how World War II impacted your life, was it something that you followed in the news every day?

AS: I followed it primarily on a radio. Obviously, we didn't have television and we never got a newspaper where we lived, but we did have radio and, yes, we followed it pretty closely by radio.

SI: Did you notice a lot of people in your area going off into the service?

AS: Oh, yes. The center on our football team, John Shide, he was two years ahead of me in high school, volunteered in his senior year for the Marine Corps, had three months of training, went to, I think it was Iwo Jima, one of the islands, got killed on the landing. My second cousin, Ollie Olsen, who was three years ahead of me, joined the Navy, big, good-looking Scandinavian, went in the Submarine Corps, after three months or four months of training, went out on a mission, never came back. So, he was killed. I had quite a few people a few years older, that I knew, they were killed.

SI: For the men that you knew through the school, would they have memorial services at the school or any kind of commemoration?

AS: Not that I know of, I don't remember any, no.

SI: Do you remember things like bond drives and scrap drives, those kinds of community efforts?

AS: Yes, we did. They had bond drives and we all bought, oh, there were twenty-five dollar bonds in those days. I think they cost eighteen dollars and, when they matured, you'd get twenty-five dollars, small amount, because we didn't have any money, but, yes, there were lots of bond drives and there were scrap metal drives and trucks would come by picking up any scrap metal that you would have, yes.

SI: I imagine that your mother must have been very busy, with all the soldiers around.

AS: During the war? My mother was "Rosie the Riveter." She worked in Hercules; she worked the midnight to eight AM shift. They made black powder for the war, Hercules, and I never saw it, but, evidently, it was made in big vats and she tended the vats that they made the black powder in and she worked the midnight until eight shift.

SI: Was your father able to remain employed throughout the war?

AS: Yes, he was a carpenter at Hercules during the war, too, yes. Interesting, because it was black powder and, of course, you didn't want an explosion, now, all the carpenter's tools were either brass or bronze, instead of metal iron, so that there wouldn't be any sparks when they drove the nails. The nails were all brass, the hammers were brass, but, with all the black powder there, they couldn't afford to have iron hammers or nails.

SI: Hercules has had some accidents over the years.

AS: Oh, yes, but I don't think they did in Sayreville.

SI: Was it Parlin?

AS: No. Parlin and Sayreville are the same. Parlin is part of Sayreville. They had them in Kenilworth, not Kenilworth, no, no, no, Kenville, forgive me, Kenville. The Hercules plant in

Kenville had numerous explosions. As a matter-of-fact, my father was lent to Kenville as a carpenter to rebuild part of the plant when they had an explosion there.

SI: Did you ever think that you might be involved in World War II?

AS: I was too young for World War II, no. I was fourteen or fifteen years old when it ended, so no, I didn't think I would be involved with World War II.

SI: Do you remember any of the celebrations at the end of the war, like V-J Day?

AS: Not specifically, no. Sorry, I don't.

NM: Did you play any sports in high school?

AS: I played football, yes. I was not that great. Baseball, that, today, everyone has Little Leagues and they start baseball at a very young age, hard to believe, I probably never saw a baseball or baseball bat until I was in high school. There were no fields, no place to play. We probably didn't have the time anyplace. It didn't exist. The first time I really saw a baseball was high school, so, no, I didn't play baseball. I was a guard on the football team, the only sport I played.

SI: Were activities at your school, like dances or athletic schedules, cut back because of the war?

AS: Yes, absolutely were. One of the reasons was, we didn't have gas to get there. I mean, we just plain didn't have gasoline for the cars. So, our activity was very, very curtailed.

SI: Getting into college, can you tell us about your senior year and what preparations were you making to go to college? How did you find out about college?

AS: I told you that I was the first boy in the school to make the National Honors Society, so, I had advisers that were anxious for me to go to college and I actually spent my freshman year at Syracuse University, not at Rutgers. I ended up transferring to Rutgers because my family couldn't afford me to be there. So, I commuted from home at Rutgers. You know, it was an economic necessity, if I was going to go to school, that I live at home. So, I spent my freshman year at Syracuse and I transferred to Rutgers. I didn't know much about colleges at the time, but my senior adviser said, "I think you should go to … Syracuse." So, I applied to Syracuse and that's where I went, no more than that.

SI: What was Syracuse like in that period? What was it like for you to enter as a freshman?

AS: Not pleasant at all. This was 1947. I was in a building that was converted from a private house on East Adams Street, which was two, three blocks from the heart of the college, and I was the only non-veteran in the entire building. I would imagine the average age of the freshmen in my building was twenty-one and I was seventeen. My roommate was a veteran of World War II. He was a Webster, from *Webster Dictionary*. He had lost an eye. He had been divorced. He

never went to school, that I could see. … He majored in literature. He would stay out all night. He would take anything that was mine and use it. One time, I even found him using my toothbrush. One time, I went to a party and I walked by him and I saw what appeared to be my suit. He was wearing my suit. [laughter] As far as I was concerned, he was a complete bum, but the fact that I was the only person in the building who was not a World War II veteran made it kind of unpleasant. I didn't fit in so well with them. In the classes, I think the professors favored people that had been World War II veterans over someone like me, you know. It wasn't the nicest time to be going to school.

SI: In 1947, overall, at Syracuse, do you think there was a relatively low percentage of guys like yourself, who had just come out of high school?

AS: I think it's lower than that. I can remember very, very few people that I met at Syracuse that wasn't a veteran of World War II. There were some females going that were not in the service, but very, very few males that hadn't been in the war.

SI: At that time, did you know that you wanted to study economics?

AS: Yes, yes. I wanted to major in economics, yes.

SI: Other than having all the veterans around, was it difficult to go from high school to college, academically?

AS: No. I don't think so. Honestly, I think Syracuse is a pretty easy school, as far as grades are concerned. I know that after transferring to Rutgers, the classes and the grades were a lot more difficult to get at Rutgers than at Syracuse. I believe I was on the … dean's list at Syracuse and I certainly was not on the dean's list at Rutgers.

SI: Let us talk about your coming to Rutgers. You entered right at the beginning of your sophomore year.

AS: Yes, yes, I did. I applied during the summer and came to Rutgers, yes.

SI: Was it difficult being a commuter student?

AS: Yes, yes, it was very difficult being a commuter student. One, as I said, we didn't have a telephone at home; two, I never had a car, so, I commuted by bus and I had to take three busses to get to Rutgers every day and it was very time consuming in both directions. Yes, it was not pleasant.

SI: What do you remember about your classes? Who were your favorite professors? What was your favorite class?

AS: I don't have too many memories. I always liked Dr. Aman, who was a German. He was kind of a character. He was a real, real German. I still remember, he said his wife; you've got to remember, times were different then. His wife wanted to drive his car, so, when he was going

away on a trip to Germany, he let the air out of his tires, so that his wife couldn't drive the car. He didn't think women should drive cars, you know, but we went to the Schwabischer and sang German songs and we had a German club and he did a nice job to make the class very interesting. I also enjoyed, and I don't remember his name, the history instructors we had. I don't have a lot of memories of school.

SI: Did you find the same kind of atmosphere between the veterans and the non-veterans at Rutgers?

AS: Not as much, because, at Syracuse, I lived in the building with about thirty people; twenty-nine of them were veterans. Here, I commuted and, outside of class, I didn't have a lot of contact with anyone at the school and the couple friends I did have were not veterans, but I didn't have many friends because of commuting. I didn't live there.

SI: Did you also have to participate in ROTC?

AS: Yes and no. My ROTC experience was rather unique. In my senior year, I was classified 1-A in the service and I was deferred until I graduated from college. I was not in the ROTC program, but I knew I was going to be drafted as a private in the Army. On graduation, Rutgers had a commitment to graduate X number of ROTC graduates. Two of them failed the physical and they opened these two spots up to people who were not in ROTC and we took competitive exams and I think there was almost a hundred people who applied for them and me and one other person got accepted. So, I graduated with the ROTC class, but I did not take ROTC, and then, I was sworn in and went in the service as a second lieutenant right away, when I graduated. I couldn't march a step or anything else, but I graduated with the ROTC class.

SI: Were you commissioned as an Army officer or an Air Force officer?

AS: Air Force.

SI: Can you tell us about when the Korean War broke out? What were you thinking at that time, that you would be involved?

AS: Yes, graduated in '51, immediately went into the service. I was base salvage officer, Montgomery Air Force Base, Alabama, brand-new shiny second lieutenant. The Air War College was there and I think, to go to Air War College, you had to be a colonel and, basically, all the officers there were World War II veterans and high ranking. I was a phenomenon, a shiny, new second lieutenant with my gold bars. They looked at me like I was something unusual, but I'm not justifying what I did. Times change, but here I am, as a second lieutenant, base salvage officer and I said, "This is safer than being a housewife. I mean, no base salvage officer ever got hurt," and I said, "How am I going to get into Korea? I want to go to combat." That's how stupid I was and they said, in the Air Force, the only way I could get into combat was to go to flight training. So, I volunteered for flight training, so that I could get to Korea and fly in combat. I don't necessarily have those feelings now, but I did then.

SI: How long a period of time are we talking about between being assigned to Maxwell and leaving for flight training?

AS: Two months or three months, short period of time. I applied shortly after I got there and I said, "We just got to get out of here and get into combat," and I think it might have been three months before I started flight training, not long.

SI: Could you tell us a little bit about the process of getting into the Air Force, leaving your home, the induction process?

AS: Leaving home, quite different. When I knew, I was told to report to Maxwell Air Force Base, I got on a train. We didn't have the ability to fly there or anything else. I got on and found connections on the train and took myself to Montgomery Air Force Base, public transportation, and reported there. I had some problems, because I was probably the only officer there that had never marched a step, because the ROTC had marched and they knew how to present arms and things like that and I didn't have any of those abilities, because I had sworn directly in, you know. So, when we had parades, it was difficult for me.

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SI: Did they give you any sort of training in what a base salvage officer does?

AS: Yes, they did. They had a course there and I, for a while, reported to the person who I eventually replaced and I worked under him for a while, yes, and I had an old sergeant who was a career enlisted man and knew the job a lot better than I did. So, I didn't really have too much trouble with the job.

SI: What kind of things would you do as base salvage officer?

AS: Everything in the service that can be saved is saved, wrecked; at least then it was. For instance, we, in our car today, change the oil every so often and the oil gets thrown away. In the Air Force, they periodically change the oil in the planes, but it would come to the base salvage office and we'd have it cleaned and reconditioned, so that they could use it again. Any food scraps then that was left over from the food places was saved and we sold it to farmers for their chickens and pigs. So, that was a daily thing; they'd come and get all the scraps. Any metal, we'd separate the metals, the various types of metals, and put them out for bids. I mean, we would salvage anything we could that we could get money for, for the service.

SI: Where did you go for flight school?

AS: Goodfellow in western Texas. I forget the town it was in. … We were there for the beginning, and then, we went to Randolph Air Force Base for advanced.

SI: Were you put through a process to determine whether you would be a pilot or a navigator? What was that like?

AS: Well, it was a physical test and coordination. They had all kinds of depth perception eye tests, coordination tests, color-blindness, depth perception, peripheral vision, yes. I mean, it was pretty extensive, yes.

SI: In the end, you were going to become a pilot.

AS: Yes. We started off in T-6s, which was only used by the Air Force for a short period of time. … There were a lot of accidents. They found out the T-6 was too much plane for a guy to start off in. Before that and after that, they had much simpler type planes to start with and, after basic, we went to B-25s, twin-engines. I never had a choice. I would have rather … flown fighters, but that wasn't an option. Almost from the beginning, we knew, as soon as we were trained, we were going to Korea and they needed people to fly B-26s in Korea and all of our training was to get us ready to go to Korea in 26s. So, [I] flew B-25s in advanced, graduated and we went to Langley Air Force Base for transition into the 26 and gunnery and bombing practice. We had a gunnery range, we had a bombing range, we had a ship that was sunk in the ocean, partially above water. We would make bombing runs on it. We had a range where we learned to fire our .50-calibers at targets. I can tell you a funny story; it wasn't so funny at the time. Did you read recently about, down in Egg Harbor, where the F-16 pilot inadvertently fired some shells into a school?

SI: Yes.

AS: You read that? I did that. The B-26 was a lot of plane to fly. The Air Force, in its infinite wisdom, said that you have one pilot in the 26 and, in the B-25, which is an easy plane to fly, you had two pilots. I wasn't familiar with the plane and it was a lot of plane and I was on a gunnery run. I was at about eight thousand feet and I was going to descend to about five hundred feet and fire my .50s at a target, left hand on the wheel. The armament switches for the B-26, to arm the .50s, was back on the ceiling behind me. I was turning; I was diving. I wasn't too familiar with the plane. I hit the armament switches and I inadvertently had my thumb on the trigger and I fired a round of .50s through Smithville, Virginia, Smithville hams. I didn't hit anybody or hurt anything, but the Air Force got all kinds of letters, saying that the cows weren't giving milk and the pigs weren't gaining weight and the chickens weren't laying eggs. [laughter] Nothing ever happened, no one ever got hurt, but it was kind of the same as the guy that fired near down Egg Harbor.

SI: Were you chewed out when you got back?

AS: Yes, but they didn't take it as seriously as they would today, no.

SI: Going back to your basic training, can you tell us about how you adapted to flying? What was it like when you first soloed?

AS: Frightening, frightening. As a matter-of-fact, you had to have twenty hours before you could solo and, if you didn't solo by thirty hours, they flunked you out. I had nineteen-and-a-half hours and the instructor said to me, "You have an error in your log." He said, "You have twenty-and-a-quarter hours, not nineteen-and-a-half." I said, "No, I don't." He said, "Yes, you

do." I said, "No, I have nineteen-and-a-half." He said, "No, you've got twenty-and-a-quarter hours." He said, "I want you to correct your log." Being the instructor, one thing you have to remember, well, you probably don't know, all instructors went through as cadets and they resented anyone who went through as an officer, because we got better living conditions, better food, better income and they were extremely rough on officers, compared to cadets. So, he said, "Correct your log." So, I started making a change. While I'm doing it, he says, "Okay, now, take it around." He had climbed out the plane and I was alone. I said, "What?" He said, "I want you to solo." I said, "I'm not ready to solo." He said, "Solo." I took off, frightened, and I went on my crosswind and my downwind leg. I was saying, "Oh, this plane flies terrible. Could it make a difference, not having the instructor with it, that the plane is flying so rotten? Nothing is going right." I'm on my downwind leg. I said, "Oops, if you put your landing gear up, it might fly a little better." [laughter] I don't know what else to tell you. There were a lot of people who loved flying. I was not one of them. I did it because I felt an obligation to fly in Korea and I wanted to, you know. I was a pretty loyal American and I thought I wanted to do my job. There are people that have spent their entire life flying and they just love every minute of it, you know, but not me. It was a job that I felt I wanted to do.

SI: Before going into the pilot's track, had you considered volunteering to be a gunner or something else to get into combat?

AS: No, I didn't.

SI: About a year ago, I interviewed a bombardier/navigator on a B-26 in Korea and he talked about the relationship you had to have between the pilot and the bombardier/navigator. Is this something they started teaching you right away in training?

AS: To start with, the B-26B is the hard-nose. It has eight guns in the nose and three in each wing, fourteen forward firing .50s, and it did not have a bombardier. I really never flew the B-26C, which was the soft-nose with the Norden bombsight in it. So, I never had a bombardier, but, you know, you had a navigator who flew the right seat and he was kind of the co-pilot and the navigator, yes. We had a three-man crew, with an enlisted man, and, yes, we had a lot of training together. We went through combat crew training at Langley as a team. We went to Stead Air Force Base in Reno, Nevada, survival school, as a team. Then, we went to California and practiced some more bombing in the Sacramento Valley. We went to Travis Air Force Base outside of San Francisco. Flying B-26s to Korea was an extremely difficult job. We had to get the planes flying very efficiently, from a fuel point of view. So, we had to keep flying them until we got them fairly lean on fuel usage. We had to have at least, not a headwind, but preferably a tailwind, and, if you can visualize this, the primary wind direction is from west to east in the United States, but we needed an east to west wind to make Hickam in Hawaii and we needed good visibility, because the B-26 has no navigation equipment on it and a C-54 would be our lead ship. We were going to have twelve B-26s fly to Korea. The longest leg was the first one, from Travis to Hickam. We needed good weather, good wind, the plane in good shape and to follow the mother ship with the navigation equipment. We knew we were going to be in the seat for twelve hours without being able to get out, go to the bathroom or anything else, and one other thing, the B-26 is nose heavy. You cannot ditch a B-26. It has never stayed afloat longer than thirty seconds. It hits the water, dives. So, we knew that if we had to bail out, if we're going to

go down, we had to bail out; we couldn't ditch. So, we finally got, after a long period of time, everything right and we flew to Hickam, and then, to Johnson and Guam and Wake, Okinawa, and, eventually, to K-9 in Korea. It was a tough flight.

SI: Did you stop to rest at any of those islands?

AS: Yes, yes, because we only flew in the daytime. No, there was no night flying, because it was visual and we had to follow the lead ship.

SI: It must have been physically exhausting to hold on to the controls for that period of time.

AS: Oh, it was brutal. Twelve hours, the fact that you couldn't move, you know, there's no way to get up, there's no way to go to the bathroom, there was nothing, no. You were in your seat for twelve hours. Yes, it was tough.

SI: Were the 26s pressurized?

AS: No. They were not pressurized and they were not heated. In Korea, they were bitter cold. There were times that we flew fifteen, twenty below zero centigrade in the cockpit. It was very, very cold planes and you could wear electric-heated suits, but, wherever you bent, like your knees or your elbows, the wires would burn you. So, you'd come back with these burn marks. So, we chose not to use the electric-heated suits. So, we just bundled up. We had so much clothes on sometimes, you [were] almost immobile. …

SI: Once you got to K-9, what did you find out? Where were you assigned there?

AS: That was Pusan and that's where we flew our missions out of, K-9. Our missions were at night.

SI: Had you flown over as part of the 581st?

AS: No, no, no.

SI: You joined them at K-9.

AS: No, I didn't. No, I didn't join them at all at K-9, you know, at all. 581st was something that I hadn't ever heard of and probably would have been the last thing that I ever thought I'd end up in, frankly. I can't tell you why I did, even today.

SI: What unit were you with when you arrived in K-9?

AS: 17th Bomb Wing, 95th Bomb Squadron, called the "Kicking Mules," the blue planes, blue squadron.

SI: How soon after arriving were you put into combat?

AS: Two days.

SI: There was no getting acquainted.

AS: No, no, "Get in the plane and fly," no.

SI: What was your first mission like?

AS: I don't remember a lot of details of it. A typical mission, we flew alone at night, low level. Anything that moved in Korea moved at night. Nothing moves in the daytime; whether convoys, whether they were trains, troops, anything that went on went on at night. So, our job was to fly for four hours in an expanded square search pattern and look for any activity that there was. If they were trying to build a Bailey bridge, we'd try to go in and blow it up with the bombs. If they were trains, we'd try to blow up the tracks in front of the train, stop the train, and then, come in and bomb, napalm, .50s, stop the train. Troop convoys, we'd use napalm and .50s, but we'd reconnoiter an area; typically cold, dark, normally bad visibility, dangerous flying, because there was not much flat terrain in Korea. As in the rest of the world, in Korea, the mountains all run north and south, as they do in the United States, and, you know, … [as well as most other places]. So, going east and west was very, very difficult. North and south, you're through the valleys. Frequently, you were below the mountaintops and the guns and the antiaircraft were normally on top of the mountains. So, sometimes, it was very unusual. They'd be firing down at you, you know. They had a lot of tricks, like they would put headlights, as if there were;, when you had a convoy, the lead truck had the lights on and all the others would be following the cat's eyes, which they could see in the dark. So, only the lead ship would have the light on. So, you look for the lead ship, trying to blow up a convoy. Well, one time, they had headlights from a truck mounted in the side of a mountain and on springs that would jump and looking like they were running, trying to get the B-26s to clobber into the mountains, trying to blow them up, you know, things like that. They were tough missions.

SI: How many missions did you fly?

AS: Thirty-seven. That was my problem; the tour was fifty. I wouldn't have ended up in the 581st if I had finished fifty. I thought I was going back to the States anyway, but I ended up in a godforsaken place down in the Philippines, Clark Air Force Base, the 581st. I didn't know anything about the 581st and I think only two of us that I know of from Korea ended up with the 581st, Ed Schaefer and I. All the rest had gone back to the States. Ed and I ended up in the Philippines at Clark, with our heavy blue winter suits and a hundred degree weather. We had no summer clothing with us of any type. You want to talk about the 581st?

SI: Could you tell us about some of the closest calls that you remember in the B-26?

AS: Yes, I lost an engine. There was a train and I wanted to stop the train. I missed the tracks on the first two passes, got him on the third pass. The train stopped. Behind the engine was a gun car; I didn't know about it. The sides dropped and they had all kinds of guns, machine guns, antiaircraft guns and everything, which I didn't know they had on the train, and they shot us up pretty bad. We lost an engine and limped back. The B-26 is a wonderful plane. It's the only

plane, the only conventional-engine plane, that's overpowered. If you could take off, if you could control it, you could have taken off with one engine, it had so much power. So, you could fly a B-26 all day on one engine. So, we had to limp back on one engine. I told you the visibility was bad all the time, I mean fog. The rockets hung on pods underneath the wings. They had two brackets on each wing. We felt a thud one time. We couldn't see anything. We felt a tremendous thud and, when we came back, we found out that the wingtip had been bent up pretty badly. We surmised that we hit the pod from another B-26 that we never saw in the dark, the only thing that could have happened, and there was a B-26 that had the bent pod, too. There was no visibility.

NM: How many B-26s would be out there with you?

AS: Normally just one, if two, maybe the most, but there weren't a lot.

SI: Were all of these missions interdiction raids?

AS: 26s, yes.

SI: There were not any direct ground support missions.

AS: No. Some did, but not us. I mean, there were others [that did]. For instance, at Pork Chop Hill, the ground troops were going to come in at 0600 and the job of the B-26 was to go there at 0500 and napalm, rocket, .50s, scorch the mountain, so that there would be nothing alive when the ground troops arrive, but I didn't do those type; others did. I flew at night.

SI: Approximately how often would you be shot at? On how many of these missions would you be shot at? Was it the majority of them?

AS: Yes, most of the time. … Yes, I mean, … most of it was obviously inaccurate. We didn't have any lights on. … We flew in the darkness … and we tried to keep the fuel mixture lean, didn't help the plane flying, but, when you had a rich mixture, the flames coming out of the cowling was a dark blue that was very, very visible from a far distance and, if you kept a lean mixture, it's tough to fly the plane, but it was a kind of a yellowish orange mixture that … you couldn't have seen too far, you know. So, we tried to avoid, you know, obviously, being shot at or being hit, you know. If the fire is too heavy, unless you saw some real target that you wanted to hit that was important, you would kind of avoid the area.

NM: How much did you learn from the other pilots or was it mostly all your own experience from flying? Did you get any tips from the other pilots?

AS: Oh, yes. There were things. They told you, "Watch for headlights bouncing on sides of mountains." There were actually some tight valleys where they would have a cable strung across that you could hit that you tried to avoid. … You know, they warn you about how some of the trains would have gun ships on them. Yes, they certainly were helpful, yes.

SI: How long were those thirty-seven missions in Korea?

AS: I think four months; I think, I'm not sure of that, about that, though, yes. We lived in tents. It was cold. We didn't have very good heat.

SI: What was the base like?

AS: Muddy, dirty, slushy snow, cold. We ate reasonably well, compared to the Army, the ground troops. Our food was substantially better than theirs and I guess, overall, even though our conditions were pretty tough, they were better than the ground troops. It was … kind of a godforsaken country, you know, extreme heat in the summertime, extreme cold in the wintertime. … Korea has got a tough climate.

SI: Were you ever able to go out in the countryside and interact with the native Korean population?

AS: Very little, very little, not really. We basically stayed on the base. If you remember that the troops were driven back at one time; before the Chinese arrived, they thought that they were going to drive everyone north of the Yalu. The Chinese came in, the only place left was Pusan Peninsula; that was before the Inchon landing with MacArthur. So, when we were there, basically, the only base that we could fly out of was K-9, Pusan. No, we didn't go into town very often. There really wasn't a town.

SI: Were you able to see how the Koreans lived?

AS: Yes. They [were] extremely poor, I mean, subsistence living, little rice patches, things like that, no, very, very tough. By our standards, they had a really tough life.

SI: On the bases, did they have facilities like officers' clubs?

AS: Yes, they had a tent. They didn't have permanent buildings, but, yes, we had an officer's club and reasonably good food.

SI: Was there a need, after missions, to have places for people to unwind and have a little R&R?

AS: There was no R&R. That's not a true statement. I had an R&R in Japan for a week. They had given me a pass. I flew to Tokyo and I had these orders. I didn't know anything about it, but the orders said, "Travel by military transportation authorized." So, I landed at the Air Force base in Tokyo and presented the orders and I said, "I want to go to a resort for two days," and they read the orders I think that was the only time they had ever seen them. They gave me a Japanese driver and a car and probably wasn't meant to be that way, but they did give me a driver and I went to a very nice Japanese resort for four days, five days. I did have an R&R in Japan, yes, but I was alone. I was the only American at the resort

SI: Did you see any instances where people that could not handle the stress of going into combat?

AS: Oh, sure. These were more with World War II retreads, people that were in the Reserves. A lot of people were in the Inactive Reserves, didn't even know they were in the Reserves. Two examples, Ted Williams, Red Sox, Jerry Coleman, second baseman for the Yankees. They had been World War II pilots and they didn't even know that they were in the Inactive Reserves. "Oops," they got called up for the Korean War and most of these people now were married and had families and didn't want to be there and would go out of their way not to take any chances. The younger crews, I think, took more chances.

SI: You were saying that the guys that were married and older did not want to take chances.

AS: In general, that's true, yes. They had children, they were married and they didn't want to be back in the service. They had felt they had done their job and, by and large, one pilot told me he'd take his "hairy" strafing passes at five thousand feet. He said, "I have three children and a wife and myself and I tack a thousand feet on for each child." Yes, not every one did his job conscientiously.

SI: Was that a frequent topic around the officers' club?

AS: I don't think it was a subject that they liked to talk about, frankly, but, yes, there was a different quality in different teams.

SI: Did you keep the same two guys with you through Korea?

AS: Yes.

SI: Where were they from?

AS: One guy was from Minnesota, I think, and the gunner was Italian and he lived in a very Italian section of St. Louis, two blocks from where Yogi Berra was born and raised, and, when I picked him up one time, when we were driving to California, I picked him up at his house and [he] drove to California with me. He knew Yogi Berra's family from when they lived in the St. Louis area.

SI: Was this after the war or during the war?

AS: No, before we went to Korea. On the way to Travis Air Force Base

SI: One thing I was not quite clear on, did you join the 95th Squadron when you got to Korea or was the unit formed in the United States to go over?

AS: It was there. I forget what it was called before it was the 17th Bomb Wing. Originally, it was the Air Reserves, 26s from the Reserve outfit in California. They activated the wing from California, gave them some training, because they were all World War II people and they were the first B-26 crews in Korea and, later, it was called the 17th Bomb Wing. By that time, all the people from California had been rotated back.

SI: What was the casualty rate for that unit while you were there?

AS: This would be an extreme guess on my part, ten percent.

SI: Was it something that happened frequently or infrequently?

AS: Well, a lot of crash landings, a lot of people making it back after being pretty well shot up, but the B-26 was a wonderful plane. Unless you were hit, you could, in most cases, make it back. … The B-57 Canberra that replaced it, I swear, you could throw a stone at it and bring it down. The Canberra replaced the B-26. They tried it in Vietnam and it came down so easily. It was just not a good plane to have, but the B-26, you know, was a very rugged, wonderful plane. The casualty rate wasn't too high.

SI: We have heard people say that they did not think too highly of the rotation system, because the experienced people were leaving just as they got the experience they needed. What were your opinions on the rotation system?

AS: Oh, it was pretty simple, fifty flights and you leave. A tour is fifty missions; the faster you got them in, the faster you could leave. I, unfortunately, didn't get fifty missions in. It was really pretty cut and dry.

SI: You do not think it hurt the unit at all.

AS: No, … morale was pretty high, because, I mean, you wanted to fly your missions as fast as possible and get them in and get out. So, I mean, you look forward to flying missions, because you knew you were going to be rotated. You didn't want to be there. Without rotation there would be no incentive to fly

SI: Was the threat posed by the enemy mostly antiaircraft or was there anything else, like fighters?

AS: No, no fighters. They didn't have a night fighter. There were no night fighters for North Korea or China. They did not have that ability. No, it was radar-controlled searchlights that would come on you, antiaircraft and machine guns that were mounted on top of mountains. So, that was it.

SI: Okay, let us move on to the 581st.

AS: 581st. [I] ended up at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines. We had twelve B-29s, we had C-119s, we had some C-47s and we had some SA-16s, which were amphibians, that they could land on the Yalu and things at night, things like that. 581st and most of the people there, except for some replacements, like me, were formed in Mountain Home, Idaho, and that's where they all went through their training and, in their stupidity, the Air Force, you wonder what they could be thinking about, they originally thought that they were going to have B-29s flying low-level missions in Korea. Now, a B-29 has no climbing ability and the thought that you could fly low-level missions in a B-29 was totally insane, but they flew low-level missions in Mountain

Home, Idaho, training. I don't know much about the other types of planes. All I really know about is the B-29s, went over, eventually, to Clark. They were trying to teach us to fly B-29s, low-level, in Korea. We went down to Australia, which is flat as a pancake, and we practiced low-level missions in Australia, trying to fly. I mean, we flew; props could almost hit the ground, we flew so low, practicing, but there is no ability. You didn't have any mountains or anything to climb, but the pilots knew that you were never going to be able to fly B-29s low-level. They eventually abandoned that idea. They never did fly them, but that was what they originally thought they were going to do. So, we trained, we trained. We really only knew our own job, I mean no one, even Colonel Arnold didn't know anything much about the squadron. He was the wing commander. We kind of knew that we were a CIA outfit. We knew that we were going to eventually fly …

----------END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO----------

NM: This continues tape two of an interview with Arthur Snyder on February 24, 2005, in New Brunswick. Please, continue.

AS: Thank you. We knew that we were a CIA outfit. We knew that we were going to eventually fly psychological warfare missions in Korea when we were trained. We knew that we were told that psychological warfare missions were considered unethical warfare by the Geneva Convention, that we would be considered war criminals if we were captured. We carried Geneva Convention cards, but we knew that we weren't covered by the Geneva Convention. We were told that, if we were shot down, that the United States government would probably deny that we were in the service and we would be on our own. We trained. Eventually, four planes went from Clark Air Force Base to Yokota, Japan. We were going to fly with four planes, one plane a night, every night, on psychological warfare missions, alone, unarmed. Our planes did not have USAF, did not have any markings identifiable as American planes. They were painted black, flew kind of a loose formation to Yokota. On the way up, one of the radio operators in one of the planes picked up a version of a Tokyo Rose and they knew more about the 581st than we do and it said that, roughly what it said; they got on the horn and told us all to get it on our radio and the headset, to listen to the program. They said, "The 581st Re-Supply and Communication Wing is on the way from Clark to Yokota, Japan, to fly psychological warfare missions. It's unethical warfare. It's a violation of the Geneva Convention. Colonel Arnold, the wing commander, will fly the first mission tomorrow night, January the 11th, and we are going to shoot him down." Maybe it was the 12th. We got to Yokota, Japan. Colonel Arnold, the next night, flew the first mission. We had all of the top officers in the plane for the first mission and they shot him down over Pyongyang, on the first mission. We didn't know if anybody survived. We never heard anything about what happened to them. I don't think the Air Force or the service knew if they survived or if they were shot down at that point, if they lived at that point. I do know that I flew the next night and I was pretty frightened. We flew the second night and I think we had maybe nine or ten targets that night. We flipped missions, psychological warfare, leaflet missions, and outside of radar controlled searchlights and some antiaircraft, you know, it was kind of … uneventful. We didn't have any problems.

SI: Were you flying with a ten-person crew?

AS: Eleven, yes. Colonel Arnold's, I think, had fourteen, but they only had fourteen because Colonel Arnold was sandbagging and they had one or two, as it turns out, CIA agents that were sandbagging on the mission, also. We normally flew with eleven.

SI: What is sandbagging?

AS: … Sandbagging is someone that didn't have a specific duty to do on the plane. They were just going along to see how things went, you know, as Colonel Arnold did. I mean, he didn't actually fly the plane, even though he was a pilot. Incidentally, Gene Veedi was the pilot. He was the commander. Pretty interesting, Gene Veedi flew two missions in two wars. He was shot down on his first mission over Ploesti in World War II and spent the war as a prisoner of war. He was shot down on his first mission over Korea and spent two-and-a-half years in prison. Funny story, Gene Veedi, last year at our convention, told this story. He was forbidden to ever fly combat again. The Air Force said, "You can never fly another combat mission," and Gene was kind of a hell bent type guy. He did a lot of bad things and kind of took a lot of chances. He ended up in the Vietnam War, back at Clark Air Force Base, and they sent him to Vietnam as an adviser. His wife was at Clark and she had heard rumors that he was flying combat missions in Vietnam. So, she went to the general in charge of Clark Air Force Base and said, "I think my husband is flying combat missions again," and he said, "Well, he can't do that." He sent a plane over from Clark and they arrested him coming back from his seventeenth mission. Gene said they didn't know anything, except the air police threw him in jail. He said, "What did I do?" They don't know. They said, "All we know is that we have orders to fly you back to Clark Air Force Base." So, he spent a couple of days in the brig, and then, they flew him back. He was a bird colonel at this point and marched him into the General's office. The General said, "You're flying combat?" He said, "Yes." "We understand you've flown seventeen missions." "Yup." The General said, "One more combat mission in your life and you're court-martialed. You're out of the service." That's the story Gene told us last year.

SI: What kind of a morale effect did it have to lose your CO on the first mission?

AS: Demoralizing, demoralizing. We didn't know how many times they were going to do this. We were very, very vulnerable, because we were unarmed, B-29s where they had the guns and everything taken out of them. We didn't have any way to protect ourselves. We would spend a lot of time in North Korea. They weren't missions that we were in and out in a short period of time. We had some pretty rough missions where we would have to parachute friendlies into North Korea to set up radio stations and things like that and try to get out downed pilots, you know, subversive activities. We were extremely vulnerable. We were frightened, yes. They threw up quite a bit of antiaircraft at us and thank God that they always seemed to have one thing wrong. For instance, if we were twenty thousand feet, maybe the antiaircraft would be set to go off at nineteen thousand feet. They might have the right course and the right speed and they would be a thousand feet below us, going, "Puff, puff, puff," as we were going along. Sometimes, they would have the right altitude, maybe twenty thousand feet, and they would be two hundred yards to the right, [it would go], "Bang, bang, bang." The powder that explodes is called cordite. It's burnt powder that you can smell. When you're at twenty thousand feet in a B-29 that's pressurized and you could smell the cordite from exploding these shells, it gets you nervous. It gets your attention

SI: Were you ever hit by flak?

AS: No.

SI: No, never?

AS: Never actually hit by flak, never. We never actually got hit.

SI: Not even any peppering?

AS: Nope, not at all, no. A lot of frightening times; … they always had one element wrong. They either had the wrong course, the wrong height. We used to joke; there were like people that were officers that would take a flight with us sometime. If you had one combat mission in a month, you paid no income tax. So, we'd get people who would "sandbag" with us to get their credit, see what it was like, supposedly, but to not pay any income tax and we used to joke that the antiaircraft people were there, too. They must have had some arrangement where they didn't have to pay any income tax if they came down and fired the gun, because they always seemed to have one element wrong, thank God for us. We had some tough missions, if you're interested in them. This one wasn't a tough one, but it was an interesting one. One of the missions we had, in the air-to-air combat, there was F-86s, ours, and the MIG-15. The MIG-15 had some advantages over the F-86. One of the advantages, it had a service ceiling that was three thousand feet higher than the F-86. So, it could climb three thousand feet above an 86 and an 86 couldn't get to it, couldn't fly that high. So, they could sit up above the F-86s and try to pick their time to come down to try to shoot the F-86 down, big advantage. The other thing they could do, they could make a tighter turn. They had a tighter turn radius than the F-86. So, the Air Force wanted some MIGs, so that they could look at them, capture some and see why they had these advantages. So, they advertised, on leaflets, they'd pay a hundred thousand dollars for anyone that would defect with a MIG-15. The instructions were that if you flew a MIG-15 down, waived your wing over the airport and come in, they wouldn't shoot you down. They would give you one hundred thousand dollars and give you refuge in the United States. I dropped the leaflets for the MIG-15s. We got two of them. The first one was a Chinese, flew a MIG-15 down, landed on one of our bases. He was given one hundred thousand dollars, came to the United States, got a PhD in chemistry and was a professor at the University of Chicago and had a pretty successful career. The second one, they gave him fifty thousand dollars. I really don't remember … what happened to him, but it didn't turn out to be very helpful, because the advantage the MIG-15 had, it was a lot lighter than the F-86 and the reason it was a lot lighter is because the Russians did not put a premium on human life, that we did. So, we would have a primary, secondary and a tertiary way to get the landing gear down. If the primary way was shot up, you would have a secondary way to get them down and, if that was out of order, you could pump them down manually, but, in all probability, you were going to get the landing gear down, but they had added a lot of extra equipment and weight to the plane. One of the biggest things was, the back of the seat of the pilot's seat had a half-inch of armor-piercing steel on the back, that if they got shot from the back, it probably would not go through the steel and protect the pilot. It adds a substantial amount of weight to the plane, but those things were put on to protect the pilots. So, it didn't turn out to be very useful. The only thing they did find out is that they took a lot better

care of the skin of their plane. We would have mechanics with hobnailed boots and scratches in the aluminum and everything else that, I guess, created some drag. They were very, very cautious of the skin of the plane, but we really didn't accomplish much by that, but that was one of the more interesting missions, I guess.

SI: Would they keep you abreast of things these developments? Would they keep you updated on the results of your missions?

AS: Yes, oh, yes. Oh, no, we knew. … You don't get a MIG-15 without knowing about it. Another hairy mission, the navigation in North Korea was impossible. Back in those days, you know, we didn't have Loran. Obviously, there was no GPS. We had rudimentary radar, Q-13 radar, but, over a mountainous terrain, it was basically useless and there was one night that we had, I think, nine leaflet drops and we were hopelessly lost. We were really lost. We kept looking and looking and trying to get a location where we were, but we didn't. We dropped our leaflets, but we certainly didn't hit any targets that night and we probably over flew each mission, trying to get a location where we were. … On the way home, … east to west, on the way home, in North Korea, everything was blacked out. There were no lights of any type. It was black. The only time you ever saw a light was where a radar-controlled searchlight was looking for you. So, we're coming out and we were at twenty thousand feet. At twelve thousand feet, there was a cloud coverage and it appears that it's a lot of light hitting the cloud coverage. We're looking at it and we comment, say, "My God, that's a lot of radar-controlled searchlights there." I said, "Hey, that can't be radar-controlled searchlights. That's a city, all lit up." At that time, our radar operator starts screaming. We're coming out of the mountains. He gets a land-water contrast and he gets a fix on where we are. We were coming out thirty miles north of Vladivostok, Russia. We had over flown, looking for it, trying to find where we were and, unbeknown to us, we were into a jet stream, which probably had a 150-mile-an-hour wind, and it blew us far, far off course and we had gone through North Korea, Manchuria, China and into Russia. We got jumped by two MIGs coming out and they tucked, basically, under our wings. They dropped their landing gear, they put their boards out. Now, don't forget, we had an unarmed plane. We always carried a .45 sidearm; everyone carried a .45 sidearm. We debated, stupidly, for a minute if we're going to fire our .45s. [laughter] We got over that in a hurry. I said, "No, no, I don't think we want to do that," and we put the 29 into a dive and lucky the wings didn't come off, but we dived down into the cloud coverage and got away from the MIGs without being shot down. In retrospect, what probably saved us was that the planes were unarmed, unmarked. They had no "USAF" on them, they had no star on them, they had no numbers and the Russians had built a copy of the B-29 and we think that they thought they may have been Russian B-29s. Otherwise, they could have shot us down very easily, but that was, I guess, a fairly interesting mission. Just one other, I guess, if you want; one other mission, the weather in Japan was horrible all the time, cumulus nimbus clouds, thunder storms, rain, just miserable weather. Coming back from a mission, we were coming into Yokota, going to land, thunderstorm, no visibility, lightning, thunder. I don't know if you know what St. Elmo static electricity is, it lights up the leading edges of the plane with static electricity. The propellers would have big balls of static electricity lit up. If you touch the Plexiglas, you'd shoot a stream of static electricity two feet out in front of the plane, but we're in this mess and we can't contact Yokota Air Force Base to land. We can't get them. We attributed it to the storm and the electricity and everything. So, we're circling, make one move, one circle, 360 degrees to the

right, another to the left, frantically trying to get Yokota in the soup. The navigator starts screaming, "Climb, climb, climb." He had made a navigation error; we were at eight thousand feet with ten thousand foot mountain peaks around us. We climbed, obviously didn't hit a mountain, and, of course, when we got to the base, we had no trouble picking up Yokota to come for a GCA landing. The navigator came in and ripped off his wings and said, "I'm finished. I'll never fly again," but, anyway, that's a couple I thought, maybe, some were interesting.

SI: Thank you for sharing them. You mentioned earlier that one type of mission you had was to retrieve downed pilots.

AS: No, we didn't. We didn't actually retrieve them. The SA-16s that could land on the Yalu did. … We had a lot of friendlies in North Korea and, every month, there was a different signal for downed pilots. If a pilot was shot down, he was supposed to stay in a spot and, maybe, one month, the signal would be that if North Koreans were walking with the left hand in the pocket and swinging the right hand back and forth, he would be a friendly that they could go up to, or, another time, it might be, for a month, that if you saw someone scratching the back of his head, walking around, it would be a friendly, but, every month, there was a different signal to try to get downed pilots. We dropped the friendlies, parachuted out to do those things, but I didn't actually ever pick any up. In a B-29, you couldn't pick them up. The SA-16s did that.

SI: How many of these missions were leaflet-dropping missions and how many were dropping people?

AS: I think we dropped people three times. The others were leaflets.

SI: Were there any other types of missions?

AS: Yes, they would be dropping equipment for Shoran, short range radar that they were trying to set up, Shoran set, north of the Yalu, North Korea, radio stations in North Korea, equipment, things like that. That's basically what we did.

SI: All of your missions were in North Korea. Did you ever go to China?

AS: No, not then.

SI: Your entire unit was focused on North Korea?

AS: It was the Korean War. The Korean War ended in July of '53 at Panmunjun. We eventually finished our missions and went back to Clark Air Force Base and, of the four planes, only one had been shot down and the other three survived, went back to Clark Air Force Base, and they had the exchange with Panmunjun and all the prisoners of war. Interesting, I mentioned something, prisoner of war; John McCain, who is a senator, was shot down in the Vietnam War, spent five-and-a-half years as a prisoner of war at the Hanoi Hilton, gave a talk when they dedicated the war memorial to the prisoners of war in Atlanta, Georgia. Remember, the Korean War, it was called the "Forgotten war," everyone forgot it. John McCain was a keynote speaker when they dedicated the memorial. He dedicated it to the prisoner of war from World War I, II,

Vietnam and Desert Storm. He forgot Korea. Korea had more, percentage-wise, prisoners of war than any war the United States ever fought, except the Civil War. Percentage-wise, more than World War I, II, Vietnam, they had no prisoners of war; basically, the only ones were pilots and they had two in Desert Storm, but he actually forgot Korea when he dedicated it, … forgotten. [laughter] So, anyway, they had the exchange in August, July of '53, nothing about our troops. We still didn't know if they were alive or dead or anything like that. We assumed they were dead and we certainly didn't hear of any efforts. There were other pilots that were shot down that were not repatriated and you could read articles about them. I think there was one called (Fischer?) that they're trying to get released, but we never heard a word. In September of '54, a year and a month or two after the exchange, we found out that either ten or eleven or more of them were still alive and prisoners. The United States didn't have much of a defense trying to get them, because we did violate the Geneva War Convention. They were released, finally, in August or September of '55, two years after the Panmunjun exchange. They had been treated horribly, broken arms and legs and beat up constantly. They were separated. They were never put together. They were in China. They were not in North Korea. They were kept in China, isolation. For some reason, we had two radar operators onboard, I don't know why, but it was known that they bailed out alive, but they were never repatriated. I have no idea. I don't think anyone knows why the two radar operators were never repatriated, but everyone else was repatriated. The guy in the tail of the plane was killed, so, he didn't get out, but everyone else bailed out successfully. The two radar operators never came back. Basically, that's the history of the 581st.

SI: During the Korean War, were prisoners of war used for propaganda purposes the way they were in the Vietnam War?

AS: Not to my knowledge. I don't think so. I don't know about it if they were, no. They had propaganda programs, where they were trying to demoralize the troops and tell us about the dangers and everything else, but I don't remember them ever using prisoners of war. I mean, they tried to do all kinds of things to Colonel Arnold once, but they never were able to break our group. Interesting, I think, I mean, because we were in the CIA and I don't know why, but, if you had been in the 581st, it was a complete dead end for any career military officer. Nobody ever really advanced if they had been in the 581st, like, Colonel Arnold was a West Point graduate, 1938, a pilot, considered extremely intelligent, spent two-and-a-half years in prison. He was never given another command assignment until he got out of the service. Nobody in the 581st was ever given another important assignment. It was a kiss of death for a career officer, something to do with the fact that it was CIA, but we don't know why.

SI: In doing other research, I found that it seems as though the career military administration did not like the CIA and clandestine operations.

AS: I think that's true. One of the reasons, I guess, was the fact that, how would you like to be a commander of a wing, like Colonel Arnold was, and have no idea what was going on? I mean, he really never had any authority and he knew that we were riddled with CIA agents, but he never knew who they were and what they were reporting back to the headquarters of the CIA about what he was doing. Yes, it was not a good assignment to be with a CIA wing like we had.

Of course, it wasn't so good from what you're doing, psychological warfare, when it's not considered ethical by the Geneva Convention.

SI: Did you have to volunteer for this?

AS: No. Unfortunately, no, I don't think anyone would volunteer for the 581st.

SI: When they showed you all this material that said your existence would be denied and you are not protected under the Geneva Convention, you could not just say, "No, I do not want to do this."

AS: No. It's not a choice we had. There wouldn't be a 581st if [we had a choice]. [laughter]

SI: You were based out of Japan. What was that place like?

AS: Yokota?

SI: Yokota.

AS: Better than Korea, better food, better accommodations, better living. A typical mission was brutally long, start to finish. Start to finish of a mission was probably about thirty-four hours, continuous. Briefing, planning the missions, planning where we were going, the navigation, the targets, the altitude, what kind of bombs we're going to have. We physically loaded the plane, which took three hours. Preflight the plane, twelve-hour mission, come back, debrief. Interesting, when we would debrief, they would have medicinal whiskey. I think it was like 160 or 170 proof and we were kind of tense and they would encourage us to have a couple of shots of the whiskey while we were debriefing and our flight lunches would have orange juice, grapefruit juice, tomato juice, different types of juices in them. We all saved our juices to mix with the whiskey in the debriefing. I mean, it was a pretty tough whiskey to drink. [laughter] So, we'd have a couple of drinks while we're being debriefed. They did that on purpose, to get us relaxed, and then, frequently, we would even have a massage, and then, we'd be free, but it would be typically thirty-four hours without sleep. So, you're pretty tired, long missions.

SI: How often would you go out?

AS: Every fourth day.

SI: They never put you on back to back missions.

AS: No. Back to Clark Air Force Base, eventually; I won't say too much about this, but the B-26s that were used in Korea came to Clark Air Force Base. They had USAF markings on them, of course. They went in the hangars. They came back out of the hangars with French markings, French planes, and up to Dien Bien Phu, Vietnam, spring of 1954, American pilots. To this day the United States … has never acknowledged that the American pilots flew in Vietnam in 1954 when the French collapsed. If you had been in Vietnam when they officially considered them having a war, you would get the Vietnam medals, but no one that flew, because the United States

never admitted that they flew in 1954 or that we were even there, you're not entitled to any of the medals or any benefits or anything. You know, the Air Force has never, or the United States never wanted to admit that they were already in Vietnam in 1954. Enough on that subject.

SI: Did you find it difficult to make the transition from B-26s to B-29s?

AS: Yes, oh, yes, having an eleven-man crew. Well, one, it's a difficult plane. It's so big, it's cumbersome, it doesn't have any climb, you know. It doesn't have the power to climb very well. It was not a fun plane and one of the biggest problems was its eleven-man crew. Maybe I shouldn't talk a little off color here, but one of the problems is, if you have someone who had a venereal disease, you would have to ground him and they always kid that only enlisted people got venereal disease and that's true, only enlisted men got venereal disease, but the reason was, if an enlisted man got venereal disease, it was part of his permanent record. If an officer got it, it was not put on his record. A little unfair, but that was the way it was at the time, but the truth is that every enlisted man on our crew, at one time or another, did have venereal disease and none of the officers did have venereal disease. We had an old crew chief, a very good man, old, probably thirty or thirty-five, old, ancient, and he was like a mother hen and he would lecture the scanners and the young guys on the plane about how to avoid venereal disease and not have any problems. I listened to him one day. I didn't think his instructions were so good. When an enlisted man got venereal disease, we had to take away their pass, because we didn't want him going in town and infecting other people or anything like that. So, whenever they got venereal disease, their pass was taken away and they were grounded, also. They couldn't fly. One day, the crew chief comes in sheepishly and hands me his liberty pass, poor guy, but we always had crew problems, because, with eleven people, there are always people that were not physically able to fly, you know, which was a pain in the neck. I don't know if that's an appropriate subject for you.

NM: Did you have the same kind of cohesion with a bigger crew? Did you get to know everyone as well as with a smaller crew?

AS: No, no, you didn't. Basically, your activities, outside of getting ready to fly or anything, were with the officers. The enlisted men were with the enlisted men and the officers were with the officers. No, it's not as cohesive a unit, no.

SI: Is there anything we skipped over about the Korean War?

AS: No, I don't think so, can't think of anything.

SI: Can you tell us about how you came back to the States and got out of the military? Did you consider staying in the Reserves or staying career?

AS: No, not after what I saw in Korea with the Inactive Reserves being called back, never knew they were in the Reserves. Ted Williams, who I met there, very unfriendly guy, not a nice guy, personally, I met him twice and maybe he disliked me personally, I don't know, but, years later, maybe 1960 or '61, I took a flight, … commercial flight, to San Diego. Ted Williams was from San Diego. His parents were Red Cross workers in San Diego and he didn't have much to do

with his parents, but they were dedicating a park or something to Ted Williams and he was going back there for the ceremony. I happen to sit next to him on the plane on the way from New York to San Diego. I said, "Ted, you and I met in Korea." "Yes." He never said another word to me. [laughter] I mean, he was tough, but I saw guys like (Ian Kome?) and others called back into the service and there was one thing that I was never going to do, is be in the Reserves. I was a second lieutenant in the Reserves. I refused a promotion. They tried everything in the world to get me to accept the promotion in the Reserves. They sent me a letter saying, "Sign this and you'll be first lieutenant." I sent it back, I said, "I'm not going to sign this." Got another letter, "Sign this, you'll be a first lieutenant." I said, "I'm not going to sign it." The last correspondence I got said, "If you don't sign this, we will consider it the acceptance of a promotion." [laughter] So, I had to sign it and send it back, but what I knew was that a promotion was six more years in the Reserves. There's a six-year extension if you … took a promotion and that wasn't going to happen with me. I wanted out. So, no, I never was going to stay in the Reserves.

SI: At any point when you were in Korea, did you ever see any USO shows or anything of that kind of thing, Red Cross?

AS: Yes, one, actually.

----------END OF TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE----------

AS: And I was a B-57 Canberra instructor. What we do is, take conventional pilots, transition them into T-33s, and then, into the B-57 Canberra. The Canberra was brand-new in the Air Force. We flew up to Glen L. Martin from Randolph Air Force Base in Baltimore and we picked up the first four B-57s in the Air Force and we set up a training course to teach them how to fly. We had to learn how to fly it, because we didn't really know much about the plane. We had stalling speed, landing speed, take off, what the service ceiling was. I mean, it was trial and error, because they were brand-new and there were a lot of problems with the plane. We lost two of them. One of them, we were flying out in West Texas at a very low level and the pilot; there's a trim tab on the stick, trim tab to trim the plane, to fly straight and level. Unbeknown to him, the fuel was coming out of one wing tank and not the other wing tank. So, the one wing kept getting heavier and heavier and heavier and, instinctively, he was hitting the trim tab to straighten the plane up. It was just an instinctive thing, without even knowing. He kept running in trim tab. He hit it, he was out of trim tab, all the trim tab. The plane flipped over, low level, he ejected into the ground. So, we lost one plane there and another plane we lost, it had a liquid oxygen system. I think it might have been the only plane that had that, I'm not sure, but he had a liquid which is highly inflammable and they were on a night mission, high level. The plane exploded, probably a spark, and we lost the crew. So, there were a lot of problems learning how to fly the plane and a lot of problems with the plane, but we set up a transition school, taught people how to fly them and that's what I did until I got out of the service, got out August of '55.

SI: You mentioned that when you were going through training, you knew that you were being trained to go to Korea. Were you training the new pilots, then, to go to any specific assignment or was it general training?

AS: No, no, they weren't being trained to go anywhere. The B-57 was what they thought was going to be the replacement for the B-26. It didn't turn out to be a very good plane. The A-10, the Warthog, that they have now, turned out to be, you know, a far superior plane, could take a lot of punishment, do a lot of things. The B-57, the Canberra, was a British plane that the United States adopted and it was really never a successful plane at all. I didn't like it.

SI: Did you enjoy being an instructor?

AS: Yes. We normally had two flights a day. They were fifty minutes a flight. So, we'd take off on the first flight about six AM, be back on the ground a little before seven and we'd take the second flight a little around seven or seven-ten, be back on the ground at eight o'clock and, more often than not, we'd be free for the day, I mean, unless we had a ground class of some type, but, when we were flying, we really didn't normally have a ground class. When we had ground class, we weren't flying, but, I mean, we were frequently finished for the day at eight o'clock or eight-fifteen. It wasn't a bad assignment.

SI: What did you do once you got out of the service?

AS: Back in those days, jobs were a lot easier to come by than they are today for graduates. I had a lot of options. I went to work for the Bell System. I worked there fourteen years. I guess it could be considered a relatively successful career. I was in a training program and I made district plant manager, which is third level, faster than anyone in New Jersey Bell had ever done it and I got to be division level, then, vice-president. I worked between New Jersey Bell and AT&T, the parent company, was on loan to them. I was in line, they thought, for a career that I could have eventually ended up as the president of an operating company; that was before they split up. I had a fire in a garage that burned up twenty-four trucks and they said, you know, "Why did that happen? Why weren't you there?" I had garages all over the state. I decided, "I'm not going to spend my life working for a corporation." It just got to me, confining, even though, by standards, I was doing very, very well. I submitted my resignation after fourteen years and I went into the brokerage business, spent the rest of my life in a brokerage business. I developed a specialty that very few people have. I became a specialist in bank investments, what banks invest money in. A little story, I started out as a retail stockbroker, like all other stockbrokers, but I was kind of interested in doing something else. So, one day, I called on the president of a small bank and I sold him a million dollars worth of bonds and he bought the million dollars from me, and then, he wanted to talk forever to me about one hundred shares of a four-dollar stock that he personally owned. I had just done a million dollar transaction with him and we spent a half-hour talking about four hundred dollars. I said, "This is not what I want to do, individuals." So, I gave away all my retail accounts. I hired Pete Marivick, the accounting firm, to teach me all the rules and regulations of the banking business and the investments and I decided to concentrate a hundred percent on investments for banks and that's what I did the rest of my life, my working career. My son still does that; my oldest son still does that. I don't know how to say this, financially, I was very successful. … I had a very high income. My whole life, I handled investments for small banks. The authority, the bank, would call me and say, "We will have five million dollars this month. Will you look around, try to come up with what you think the best thing is for us to buy?" I had up to fifty-five small banks. Now, Chase Manhattan doesn't need me, they'll have their own in-house people doing that, and Wachovia doesn't need

me, but the smaller banks needed my expertise on where they should invest their money that they didn't put out locally and all banks have a lot of money that they don't put out in local mortgages and things. So, that was my specialty. One of the services that we always did for the banks, was we priced their portfolio. Every bank needs their portfolio priced every month and they would always pass out, they do always pass out, at their monthly board meetings, their portfolio, what they have and what the profits are and everything else. It was an expensive service for me, but I always gave it away. My son still does that. We price the portfolios. It's expensive. We do it for nothing, but one of the reasons is that if we're going to price a portfolio, we have to know what they have and, if they bought it from someone other than us, they have to tell us what they bought. Otherwise, we can't price the portfolio. So they end up, more often than not, buying it from us, rather than going through [someone else], and so, that's why we have this expensive service that we give away, but that was my entire career. I was a banking specialist on investments. We ended up with some individual accounts, which we never wanted, but, if you're doing ten million dollars worth of business a month with the president of a bank and he wants you to handle his portfolio, you're going to do it, or the chairman of the board wants you to handle his account, you do it, but it is a giveaway service. We're not going to charge him any commissions for it and they're aware of that, but we're not about to charge the president of the bank for doing personal business with us. We'd rather he didn't do it. We don't want the business, but we handle investments. There's not many people that do that. My son and one or maybe two other people in the State of New Jersey do that. If there's three people, that's all there are in the State of New Jersey that does that. So, it's not …

SI: A very tight field.

AS: Yes, but that's our business.

SI: Has it gotten more difficult with the larger banks eating up all the smaller banks?

AS: Yes, very much. It's not a growth business at all. In 1966, there were 365 small savings banks and savings and loans in the State of New Jersey, 365. There's forty today, consolidation, and, ten years from now, there may be ten. … Yes, there's no room for small banks anymore. No, it's a declining business. My oldest son started working there with us in 1983 when he got out of college and that's what he does now. He makes a very good living, but it's not the business that he's going to make more in, in the future. It's declining. I mean, I don't know if he's going to make another fifteen years doing this, you know, say he retires at sixty. I don't know if he'll be able to do it another fifteen years with the consolidation. When I started, the typical order was a million. I don't think in my whole career I had five orders that were less than a million. I mean, they were always a million or five million, but, when I started, the typical order I'd get from a bank would be a million. Now, I imagine his typical order is ten million and he does a lot fewer trades, transactions, but they're a lot bigger. He's got a very nice business. I retired in 1992. Now, I'm not going to justify this and it's stupid, I retired in '92 and I continued to go to work to 2002. I went to work ten years after I retired. I continued working ten years after I retired. I enjoyed it. I liked taking the bankers out to dinners and lunches and going out with them to go into their conventions. I like working with my son. So in 2002, I said, "I'm … seventy-three years old. Maybe it's time I stopped going in." So, these days, I'll go in for a Christmas party or if they want me to go to a convention some place. Occasionally, I'll go, but I

go once a month to a banking dinner, but I'm basically inactive. I am seventy-six years old, time to get out. I went ten years after I retired, I continued to go to work, which is stupid.

SI: You were very dedicated. Do you have other children?

AS: Yes. From my oldest son, who runs the business that I did and he's doing very well, I have a daughter who is a lawyer. She has two small children and she is personal injuries and product liability law. My youngest son is a gastroenterologist and his wife is a nephrologist. He's got a massive practice. He averages forty colonoscopies a week, plus, a lot of other procedures, upper GIs and cauterization and remove gall stones, things like that. He's got an unbelievable business. That's my three.

SI: Is there a story how you met your wife?

AS: No, not really. She went to the same high school I did, but she was two years behind me and, because I spent time in the Air Force, she was a schoolteacher in Highland Park. She taught right here in Highland Park. Well, about two months before I got out of the service, we got married, two months before I got out of the service. We spent the last two months on our honeymoon, actually; I didn't do a hell of a lot, left in the service. I didn't want to fly anymore. I didn't do too much. She's a local; her father owned a drugstore in town. He's a druggist. Her grandfather owned the first drugstore in New Brunswick, right down on Fulton Street. Interesting, remember Joyce Kilmer, "poems are made by fools like me, only God can make a tree?" His father owned the drugstore before her grandfather bought it. So, it was Joyce Kilmer's father's drugstore that her grandfather bought, right down on Albany Street, and he lived in a big house in Highland Park at the time, local, yes.

SI: Did you find it difficult to go from being in the military to going into the business world, particularly after being out of school for so long?

AS: No. I wanted to get out of the service. I had been there long enough and it was really time to move on. I had done everything I wanted to do. I mean, I felt that I had an obligation to fly combat. I think I did more than my share. No, I didn't have any problems. The problem that they don't have today, I had ten offers from big companies for jobs. Poor guy who graduates today doesn't have that. My choice was which job I wanted. Times were different. It was a lot easier.

SI: Did you have any trouble adjusting to civilian life?

AS: No, not at all, still active with the 581st and we have our conventions. They're dying down. I don't know how much longer we're going to continue, because we lose people all the time. I have a dinner tonight for the Air Force Association. I'm the only Korean War veteran there. Everyone else is World War II, so, how much longer? The president, Amos, is eighty-eight, remarkable shape for his age, but, still, he's old. So, that outfit is not going to last very long, either. I'm going to Utah tomorrow to go skiing, there in Park City. I'll be out there for a week, skiing.

SI: Do you ski a lot?

AS: Yes, I ski a lot. I ski a lot for my age, let's put it that way. There aren't many people my age that can ski, like, all the people I've skied with over the years, I'm the last one still skiing, you know. All of them have some knee problems or back problems or something else that they can't really ski anymore, but all my kids ski and we do a lot.

SI: I am just curious; did you ever go skiing when you were in Japan?

AS: No. The only place I skied in the service was when I was stationed in Sacramento, Mather Air Force Base. I skied the Lake Tahoe area, two times. That's the only time in the service.

SI: I think we are out of questions.

AS: You wrung me out pretty good, I think. [laughter]

SI: Is there anything you would like to add for the record?

AS: Not really, nothing I can think of.

SI: Thank you very much. We certainly appreciate this. It's been an education. This concludes our interview with Mr. Arthur Snyder on February 24, 2005, in New Brunswick, New Jersey. Thank you.

----------END OF INTERVIEW----------

Reviewed by Nicholas Molnar 3/25/5
Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 3/31/05
Reviewed by Arthur Snyder 6/11/05