

Video Recording Log Veteran Bob Spitze

1. Name and address of collector of interviewer.

Name of Donor/Interviewer: Jesse Phillippe
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Partner organization affiliation (if any): WILL AM-FM-TV

2. Name and birth date of the veteran or civilian being interviewed at is appears on the Biographical Data Form:

Name of Veteran/Civilian: Bob Spitze
Birth Date: 10/12/1922

3. Recording format

VIDEO type: Mini DVD

4. Estimated length of recording (in minutes): 69 minutes **Date of recording:** 10/09/2007

5. Location of recording: WILL AM-FM-TV, 300 N. Goodwin Ave, Urbana, IL 61801

6. Please log the topics discussed in the interview in sequence.

00:00 Introduction
00:25 Aware of war—father in WWI—reading newspaper
01:18 Community apprehensive and pessimistic about war—America withdrawn from world since WWI
02:20 Pearl Harbor—friends in National Guard—personal conscience conflict
03:13 Joined Navy because father had bad experience in Army—ROTC in college—entered service after junior year of college, 1943
03:55 Leaving family, fiancé—anticipation of broadening experiences
05:28 Correspondence—every day
05:45 Civilian to military life—took ROTC as matter of course for 2 years
07:05 Training—ROTC—training to be officer in Naval Reserve—University of Arkansas—Arkansas A&M—Columbia University in New York, NY for 4 months—commissioned Enson at Cathedral Saint John the Divine, NYC
08:50 Furlough, married
09:20 Training—discipline—mathematics, social sciences, political science, war history—drills
10:25 Leadership—command of vessels—90-day-wonders

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- 11:27 Pacific—amphibious vessels—served on LST U.S.S. 730 training ship on Chesapeake
- 12:35 New crews forming to take ships to West Pacific—crew formed at Camp Bradford, VA
- 12:50 Transported to Seneca, IL—Chicago Iron and Steel Co.—building LSTs on assembly line on Chicago River
- 13:20 LST 642—launching into Illinois River—down Mississippi River to New Orleans, LA to be outfitted
- 13:55 Through Panama Canal up West Coast to Hawaii—training, mock invasions on islands
- 14:10 Marshall Islands, Mariana Islands secured—used as staging areas
- 14:22 First engagement—Iwo Jima
- 14:45 Onboard LST—livable, comfortable—Officer’s Stateroom on main deck
- 15:33 Daily life—challenging—felt responsible—camaraderie—more reflection when closer to engagement
- 15:53 Last night in Hawaii—communication officer—key radio man wanted to go out to see Honolulu—let him go even though he shouldn’t have—radio man got back in time and worked all night to make up for it
- 17:08 Mission at Iwo Jima was to deliver Marines to beach, get equipment on beach—sent back to staging area to get more supplies
- 17:50 Tragedy of Iwo Jima—saw flag going up
- 18:00 Marines on ship—Lieutenant Harvey on morning of invasion asked him to write to his wife if he died—Harvey died the second day, wrote a letter to his wife—slaughter on Iwo Jima
- 19:04 Okinawa next big engagement—longer, more protracted—duty to take in troops, supplies—fiercely fought, last stand—suicide bombers
- 19:55 Philippines—staging area to go into Japan—pontoons on sides of ship—training for invasion of Japan
- 20:24 News of end of war
- 20:30 Always in formation—flotilla—subs and destroyers only protection—Captain told helmsman to turn towards U.S. after news of Japan’s surrender—forced to get back into formation
- 21:50 Dangers—health problems—one officer had to be put ashore for chronic seasickness—subject to enemy submarines, later suicide bombers
- 23:30 Weather, storms—typhoon between Saipan and Okinawa—could only wait it out
- 24:42 Iwo Jima, Okinawa—preparation for invasion of Japan
- 25:15 Never wounded—ship never under direct fire
- 25:45 Maturing—tremendous changes between ages 21-23—wiser, more worldly, informed
- 26:15 Global community—war not only answer—beginnings of United Nations—during Iwo Jima, plans were made for first international conference in San Francisco, CA—hope
- 28:15 Sadness, sorrow, disillusionment last 20 years—got off course—U.S. involvement in another international engagement is unthinkable yet happening today
- 29:00 Invasion—bombs—lands destroyed
- 30:05 Ferrying troops and supplies into Japan—Yokohama Harbor—tremendous urban community completely devastated—imperial palace not destroyed

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- 31:04 Returned to Japan years later—seen what humans can destroy, what can construct
- 32:05 Worst moments—leaving family, Iwo Jima, typhoon—not human tragedy of Army
- 32:20 One crewman on Mississippi River jumped ship and drowned
- 34:25 Chaos of surroundings—brought order into it
- 35:08 Endless hours alone thinking about what to do with life—walking alone at night—challenging period—year or two after War before figured it out
- 36:10 Professional lives—joy—worthwhile—sense of accomplishment for both his career and his wife’s career
- 36:30 Leading up to WWII—economic system can be useful or destructive—Capitalism had gone amuck in Germany, Japan, Italy—people who use power of market system to achieve control—dictators—tremendously lethal
- 38:00 Economics, democracy—disagrees with conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan
- 39:40 Ideas of world changed—spent 10 weeks with wife in study tour of Europe talking to student groups from other countries
- 41:07 Back to Europe since—change in 50-60 years—humans can bring about change if so inclined
- 41:32 Student groups—all students had similar aspirations—beginnings of European Union—human race working together
- 43:50 Working with young people—encouraging and nourishing world view—problems to face in future generations
- 45:30 Correspondence
- 47:15 Movies: *The Flags of Our Fathers*, *Iwo Jima*
- 48:45 Opinions of books and movies about WWII—some good if show human side, some terrible if show pride and machismo
- 50:15 Ken Burns’ *The War*
- 51:30 Correspondence—personal, reminiscing, personal interactions
- 53:25 Wife committed to things—teaching, marriage
- 54:20 Graduate school together—raising young children
- 54:50 Moved to Champaign-Urbana in 1960 with their PhDs—he was professor—University of Illinois position on nepotism prevented her from becoming tenured professor—she was granted an exception in 1962
- 56:50 Took matter of nepotism to Senate, got it changed
- 57:10 Wife coped with War—strong person—spent summers typing at Pentagon to help with War effort between teaching years
- 57:48 Looked forward to getting back to education after war
- 58:55 [Tape 2 introduction]
- 59:20 Talking about War later with family and friends—some veterans couldn’t talk about it
- 01:00:15 Did not participate in veterans’ groups or reunions—social interaction more effective on issues, social progress—military camaraderie perpetuates itself
- 01:01:57 Experiences—interactions with veterans
- 01:03:15 Loss, tragedy of deaths
- 01:03:40 Doesn’t dwell on War, but conflict—conflict resolution

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- 01:04:30 What war is—what can and can't be accomplished—how it affects those that are involved—need to understand it like everyone needs to understand the banking system
- 01:05:15 Police officers—engaged in war over lifetime
- 01:05:40 Should never cease to try to understand others—engage and give something—humans could live more peacefully
- 01:06:25 Students over years—most memories good
- 01:07:00 Humans different from other animals by chance—part of natural universe—evolution
- 01:08:00 [Wrap-up]