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Eleanor Parker

Rosie the Riveter
WWII American Home Front Oral History Project

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Interview conducted by
Shanna Farrell
in 2015

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Eleanor Parker, 2015

Table of Contents — Eleanor Parker

Interview 1: December 18, 2015

Born in San Francisco, California in 1926—Family background—Early memories of father Joseph—Early memories of mother Albina—Early education—High school at Oakland Tech when WWII started—Roosevelt’s “Day of Infamy” speech in school auditorium—Father as a neighborhood air warden—Feeling of fear—High school activities—Older siblings Edward and Lois—Edward as Army doctor—Meeting husband, a sailor, at USO dance—Going to work at the Latham Square Building for Kaiser—Working as secretary to female chief accountant at Kaiser in Downtown Oakland—Transferring to the engineering room—Working for the CFO—Leaving Kaiser to work at Continental Can Company for Henry Clay in the 1960s—Female colleagues at Kaiser—Seeing a ship launch with sister in the Kaiser Richmond shipyards—Husband as a sailor—Changes WWII brought to the East Bay—Patriotism—Memories of V-J Day—Perception of women after WWII—Joining the League of Women Voters

Interview 1: December 18, 2015

01-00:00:00

Farrell: This is Shanna Farrell with Eleanor Parker on Friday, December 18, 2015. This is an interview for the Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front Project. Eleanor, can you start by telling me where and when you were born and a little bit about your early life?

01-00:00:21

Parker: Yes, I was born in San Francisco on August 13, 1926. It was actually a Friday. As my brother always said, it was my mother's bad luck day—Friday the thirteenth! [laughter] And my family consisted, at that time, of a brother who was born in 1922, Edward, and my sister, who was born in 1924, Lois, and my mother and my father. My father came from Prague, Czechoslovakia, in 1910 with his brother and came through Chicago and then kept on coming and came all the way to San Francisco where he met my mother, probably through a Czechoslovakian what—the Sokol Hall, S-O-K-O-L [spells] they called it. It was a place of social gathering and gymnastics. My mother was a gymnast. That's where they met, and then they married in about 1917.

She was the first in her family to get a college education and she had a teaching credential. She taught at—her first teaching job was in the Dixie School District. There's still her one-room schoolhouse over in Marin County, in Petaluma. That was the time before they had bridges in the Bay Area, so she went by ferry to Petaluma each weekend and then would stay the week at the—at whoever the farmer was who was elected on the school board, and stayed with the family there on the farm and would walk to the schoolhouse and have—I just think that's a little touch of history I love telling about that. But then—do you want me—how—do you want me to go into the schools I went to?

01-00:02:35

Farrell: Well, can you tell me, first, each of your parents' names and I guess maybe some of your earliest memories of them?

01-00:02:40

Parker: I'm sorry, of the—

01-00:02:42

Farrell: Each of your parents' names and some of your early memories about them when you were born.

01-00:02:46

Parker: Yes, my father was Joseph Anton Tomsovic and he had a lovely smile. He became a U.S. citizen in 1914 and served in the Army in 1917. Recently I've been—I love to write and read, and I had written an article about him for our Senior Scribes and I called it, "The Man with the Winning Smile," because he was good at charming you when you met him, because he had a lovely smile. But he still had his Viennese accent although he spoke good English. He

mixed up his “v”s and his “w”s. But he loved the outdoors and I think he started all of us on loving the outdoors, because we would go on Sunday down to Niles Creek Canyon or we would go to Lake Merritt, just so we could be outside. Because during the week he worked for Roos Bros in San Francisco, so he never got a chance really to be in the fresh air. My mother stopped teaching when we kids came along, and we were lucky enough to have her at home during the first years, and actually into middle school and probably the first year of high school. So it was wonderful to have—going home you always had a mother there. Not so when my father had a heart attack and was off for about six months. So my mother, probably seeing that this was a difficult time, went back to teaching, and that was difficult for us as children. By that time my two siblings, my brother and sister, were in college and I was in my second year of high school.

01-00:04:44

Farrell: And what was your mother’s name?

01-00:04:47

Parker: Oh, I’m sorry!

01-00:04:48

Farrell: That’s okay.

01-00:04:48

Parker: My mother’s name was Albina Marguerite Machara. Her father was the son of—I think he was the chief ranger for the Austrian court, so they lived very well beforehand, before he came to America. He met and married an American woman who was Albina Blasek, and so my grandfather and grandmother set up their home in San Francisco, and my mother and my aunts and uncle were also born in San Francisco. As a matter of fact, my mother’s birth certificate was burned in the San Francisco earthquake and fire. When it came time for her to apply for her retirement, her teachers’ retirement, she had to use my birth certificate from 1926, because it was the only official document that had her age on it. And so that established it. [laughing]

Oh, I think you might find it interesting that my uncle Ed gave an oral interview for the San Francisco Library, all about the earthquake and fire, because he was old enough to remember it.

01-00:06:12

Farrell: Yeah, I’m sure that was quite interesting. Can you tell me a little bit about your education? So you went to Edison Elementary in Oakland, and then to Westlake Junior High, also in Oakland, for seventh, eighth, and ninth grade. Can you tell me a little bit about your time in either elementary or junior high, and maybe some significant events that happened?

01-00:06:41

Parker: Oh yes, when I was in elementary school, in Edison, I loved art and I was pretty good in art, so that each Thursday morning I was pulled from class and

had the whole morning devoted to art. There were a group of us who had nothing but art. It was wonderful. We learned to play with clay and design and paint, and it was absolutely fabulous. I kept that love probably through junior high school.

In terms of—since I had an older brother and sister, and my mother was pursuing, really pushing them toward college—they were very, very bright kids—it was very hard for me. I had to follow these bright students who were scholars, and one was going into education—my sister, and my brother into medicine. So she guided me into clerical work, which was probably good, because I got a job within a month after graduation from high school. But I kind of struggled then, wishing all my life that I had been able to go on in education. And I had been coached by my counselor in my junior high school—why don't you go on to college? But I went on into clerical. So as I graduated from high school I started night school. My first year was at UC Berkeley, California. I was an industrial relations major. And then I ran away and got married and began my family. So the rest of my education I had to, again, do it mostly—at night school. I finished my master's degree in public administration in, probably 1980. So off and on I've been going to school most of my life. [laughing]

01-00:08:42

Farrell:

And when you went to Oakland Tech High School, that was during the war period. Can you tell me a little bit about—

01-00:08:52

Parker:

Yes, I was, since I went to a true junior high school—it was a seventh, eighth, and ninth grades—my first year of high school was the tenth grade at Oakland Tech. I remember distinctly on December 8, 1941, we had a special assembly in the morning. We left class and came into the auditorium, at which time we all heard President Franklin Delano Roosevelt give his speech that is now the famous “Day of Infamy” speech. So we left pretty sober-minded when we left that particular assembly.

01-00:09:40

Farrell:

Can you tell me a little bit more about what your impressions of that speech were, if you remember?

01-00:09:47

Parker:

It's hard to say, because I was pretty naïve then, as a youngster. But I remember—if I could give you a little of the fear that pervaded in the West Coast families at that time, because we thought there might be further bombings on the West Coast. As a consequence, we were immediately having blackouts and my father became an air raid warden. And imagine, working a full day and then in the evening he was out making sure that everyone kept their shades down if they had the lights on or otherwise put their lights out. So I remember that distinctly. I also remember the years following that, because my mother had to deal with the lack of fat for soap and meat. Meat was

rationed. We had a ration book that I gave to Sara Day at the Rosie the Riveter Park. But that was a little scary time.

01-00:11:02

Farrell: Do you remember also what the reaction of your classmates was during that period?

01-00:11:08

Parker: You know, we were just dumb, little old kids, and we were trying very hard to get our education. But still the teachers, I think, did a super job, because they kept us not only active with the scholastic program, but also I was heavy into girls' athletics and did that all through my high school career. So it was hard to say that we felt the war although we had topics that dealt with it—I had an assignment in my English class. We had to give a speech and I gave one on the recruitment for the services at that time. [laughing] And wouldn't you know, I got it mixed up! Instead of saying, "If you can see lightning and hear thunder, you're in the service." Instead I mixed it up! [laughter] It wasn't until I sat down among all the laughter and thought—well, I said that right—that they told me that I had said, "If you can see thunder and hear lighting." [laughing] So that's the name of the game for me.

01-00:12:32

Farrell: And you had mentioned that—so you were pretty involved in high school with different activities, and one of the things you mentioned off camera was that your senior review, *Senior Memories*, wasn't thick—they couldn't print much because a lot of the resources went to war.

01-00:12:50

Parker: Yes, I have a picture of it here and it's very, very thin. Very thin. At that time we didn't have the ability to have printing done, so we were lucky to be able to print up a *Senior Memories*—look at how thin that is! I bet you've never seen one quite that thin before. And then besides that we didn't have the metal for such things as our gold and silver Ts that came as awards for so many points in athletics.

01-00:13:35

Farrell: Do you remember what the teachers told you about the—were they aboveboard or transparent about why your senior review was thin? Or they didn't have the—

01-00:13:41

Parker: We had a wonderful teacher in history, Anga Bjornson, who talked a lot about government, and she was instrumental, I think, in pushing some of us towards running for an office later on—though I can't remember who made it. That was close to what I had to say in terms of the commencement speech, because I was assigned public opinion and public office.

01-00:14:18

Farrell: Do you remember a little bit—can you tell me a little bit more about that, what the commencement included?

01-00:14:28

Parker: [pause] It's hard to say that Anga did anything special in her class for that time—no, it was mainly on government, yeah.

01-00:14:43

Farrell: Okay, and while you were—so your siblings, both Edward and Lois, were a little older than you, so they were in college during the early part of the war. Can you tell me a little bit about your brother's involvement, what he did during that period of time?

01-00:14:59

Parker: Oh yes, when he was going through medical school he was fortunate enough—at that time the army recruited him and they paid for a great deal of his medical training. As a consequence he went, at the conclusion of getting his degree, he went into the service and he served for at least twenty years, going to a number of different locales, ended up actually at Letterman Hospital in San Francisco's Presidio, where he was chief of the medical staff and retired from there as a full colonel. So it was a big impact for Ed. For my sister, she got her teaching credential, but then it was at the end of the war, but she went and signed up with the War Department. I'm not sure what her position was, but they sent her to Okinawa and she was there for two years, so it did impact our family.

01-00:16:16

Farrell: What were—was that influential on you in wanting to assist with the war effort after you graduated from high school?

01-00:16:25

Parker: [pause] Education has always been—I've felt like I've been on a dead run most of my life for education. My brother and sister were lucky enough to be sent to that when they were young, but it gets a little more difficult, as you get older, to do this. As I mentioned to you, it took me until 1980 to get my Master's degree, but it was always by the nail's edge, running for it. It's hard to say what other impact it had. During the wartime, since the drinking age was twenty-one, I couldn't go to the USOs that we had in town, but I could go to our junior USO at the YWCA, and loved dancing. We had dances there just about every Saturday night. And the servicemen—they were as young as we were, underage. So I did end up marrying a sailor.

01-00:17:47

Farrell: How did you meet?

01-00:17:49

Parker: I'm sorry?

01-00:17:49

Farrell: Did you meet at one of those USO dances?

01-00:17:51

Parker: Yes, we did.

01-00:17:53

Farrell: You did, okay. And how old were you when you met? How old were you when you met him?

01-00:17:59

Parker: Oh—probably about twenty, I guess, yeah.

01-00:18:08

Farrell: Okay. Backing up a little bit, a month after—can you tell me about after you graduated from Oakland Tech? Can you tell me about—you were taking night classes at UC Berkeley, but a month after you graduated you ended up getting a job with Kaiser. Can you tell me about how that came about?

01-00:18:32

Parker: Yes, and I don't recall that I actually saw an ad, I just went for an interview, that's all I can remember, at the Latham Square Building downtown. At that time the Personnel Director was Georgia Nelson, who was instrumental in later setting up the blood drive that I mentioned to you before we started taping. She was instrumental in hiring me. I had terrific skills! I was sixty-five words a minute in typing and 120 in shorthand—in fact, I used shorthand most of my life because of getting that early training. So I had opportunities for good jobs, and I stayed there for seven years with Kaiser. But they were all in the downtown offices, and it was only when we went to the ship launching that I went to the Richmond Kaiser Yards.

01-00:19:34

Farrell: And your first position was in a tax accounting office. Can you tell me about what your roles and responsibilities were?

01-00:19:44

Parker: Yes, I was the Secretary to the Chief Accountant, who was a woman, Sybil Hendrickson (her husband was at Los Alamos), and it involved a tremendous amount of statistical typing. Lots and lots of figures, as you might know, because for every quarter, when you're reporting your tax to the government, you're listing all of your employees, their social security numbers, their earnings for that period. It was where I learned to be very accurate, because I recall distinctly the supervisor pulling me aside and saying, "Eleanor, don't give me any mistakes." So it was great training for later on when I got in the master's program and you had to proof everything. [laughing]

01-00:20:34

Farrell: What was it like working for a woman who was a chief accountant at that period of time?

01-00:20:40

Parker:

She was very sharp and was a good role model for me, I think, because she was good at what she did. I don't know anything about her background, because I'm not sure that I was there more than a year or so before I went to work in their engineering room.

01-00:21:04

Farrell:

Can you tell me about that transition, moving to the engineering room?

01-00:21:06

Parker:

Yes, we went—I was transferred to Fred W. Crocker, who was the Chief Structural Engineer. And the fascinating thing about Mr. Crocker was that he designed the anchorages for the Golden Gate Bridge and he was very, very sharp. But he was, at this time in his life he was probably middle age and was short and kind of rotund, but he was excellent also in terms of demanding what he wanted when he wanted it type of thing. And the only time I got a laugh out of him is one time when I had to take one of the prints and get it run off for him, and he complimented me and I said, "Oh, onion sauce," like that. And that's when he smiled. [laughter]

01-00:22:10

Farrell:

What was the training for that job like?

01-00:22:14

Parker:

In terms of—there's nothing specialized given to me, because primarily the duties I had were secretarial. But the interesting part is that where I ended up spending most of my time after I went from tax accounting and the chief structural engineer, I worked for the Chief Design Engineer. Then I ended up with the chief financial officer, and when I left Kaiser after seven years I was secretary, at that time, to the Chief Accountant.

01-00:22:55

Farrell:

Okay. When you were working in the drafting room do you remember some of the plans that they were making?

01-00:22:59

Parker:

Oh, not at all. [laughing] The only thing I do remember is that Kaiser, at that time, built his Fontana steel plant, and those of us who were employees were lucky enough to get a little pig on an ingot out of the first furnace pulling that they had, which I gave to the curator of the Rosie the Riveter National Park, and it came from the Fontana blast furnace. So that had to be the forties. [laughter]

01-00:23:46

Farrell:

Okay, and then—so what was it like moving up through the ranks and then eventually working for the Chief Financial Officer?

01-00:23:58

Parker:

Probably it was better when I took other positions. I went to work for, when I left Kaiser I went to work for the plant accountant at Continental Can

Company, which was very interesting because General Henry Lucius Clay was instrumental in the solutions to helping people in East Germany when it came time to, bringing them help, airborne help. But anyway, he was our—what was he—CEO for the Continental Can. Well, I was there with them for seven years, another seven years, in the payroll and personnel. And then I had my—I can't think which child that was at that point—oh, '61, '61—that would have been Andy, the gentleman that you met. And at that time—then I left Continental and I was home nursing him for the first year, so in 1962 I saw an ad for part-time personnel director at a small school district in South Hayward, La Vista School District. So I applied for that and I was accepted, and so it was my entry into working in the education field. I ended up working twenty-four years for them and spent the last twenty years at least as the Administrative Director of Classified Personnel—the longest title in the world. [laughter]

01-00:25:49

Farrell:

Back at Kaiser, did you have, aside from the Chief Accountant when you first started, did you have many other women colleagues or female colleagues?

01-00:26:02

Parker:

That's interesting, because most of the women were secretaries. They were good, but I think other than Sybil, that's the only one I ran into. And Georgia Nelson, right. But when I went to work for Continental, that was interesting because when my supervisor there passed away, another man was appointed from our accounting area there, and so I called the vice president of the company and said to Mr. Pace, "Why is it I wasn't considered for that position? I would think that I would be a natural." His actual words to me were, "Because you wear a girdle." He'd never get away with it now. But I used that in all the time that I worked in education, whenever I went out to speak to the high school kids, as I would do about interviewing, and they wanted to know how to go for a job, and that was usually what I would go and give them some education on. I've always told them that story, and when I said to them, "And what do you think I did?" Of course the first thing they said was, "Get out of the girdle!" By then, "That's right," I said, "What else did you think I did?" That's when they shut up. So I said, "Okay, I looked around and found there was only one other woman in a management position, so I went back to school and got my degree and went on."

01-00:27:53

Farrell:

Did you ever see or experience any of that type of behavior at Kaiser? Or was everybody treated pretty equally?

01-00:27:59

Parker:

No, at Kaiser I was always in a secretarial position and I was just a helper, and they were men that I was usually taking dictation from. But that was pretty much the way it was.

01-00:28:18

Farrell: But everybody was treated the same way, and fairly?

01-00:28:20

Parker: Right. As a matter of fact, there was only one woman draftsman. I became good friends with her. She was a very, very smart lady.

01-00:28:34

Farrell: How did you see Kaiser change over seven years? You were there when the war was going on, and then when the war ended how did you see the company change during that period of time?

01-00:28:51

Parker: That's hard to say. I don't think that I can give you an evaluation of that. I'll have to think about that.

01-00:29:00

Farrell: Sure. Can you tell me a little bit—so you went to Richmond for a ship launch. Can you tell me about that experience?

01-00:29:05

Parker: Yes, it was delightful. Since they—all of the materials that I had I gave to Sara Day, Curator of the Rosie the Riveter National Park. [Added by narrator during editing process: I received a bulletin announcing a contest. The person getting the most blood donors got to launch a ship. I secured enough donors to be in the launch party.] One of the things that they gave us was an invitation, and it was set for May 30, and that I could bring a guest. I took my sister. I didn't have a boyfriend or anything—I was only eighteen. We went out in a bus and we went first of all, I guess, to what would be their cafeteria. They had a U-shaped table that was set up because they were going to have entertainment. My sister and I were lucky enough—we were right at the end of one of the tables there, sitting across from one another. [laughing] The fun part was that as we were sitting there, the only thing that was on the table besides our silverware and our dishes was a roll and our water. So I thought oh, I'm hungry—I took the roll and I started to break it apart. Well, in doing so I hit my water glass and the water went all the way down the table. Well, I was very embarrassed, but people just you know—so what! Anyway, so they had the music and then they had a singer. The singer came over and he came over to these young chicks right here, my sister and me, and put his hands down at the end of the table and he sang right to us! It was wonderful. But the only thing was when he moved his hands up he hit my sister's water glass and knocked the water down, so we had a huge lake now! Everybody just—we were screaming in laughter by this time! He didn't know what happened. But that was that. [laughter] All of this before launching the Iraq Victory.

01-00:31:04

Farrell: You said that your husband was a sailor. Can you tell me about what his role was during the war, or if he, when you met, if he had to go overseas again?

01-00:31:18

Parker: Yes, he—maybe not really. He went overseas—I can't recall, because I don't know that I ever really knew where he went. I knew his home base was Hawaii, Honolulu, but it was after Pearl Harbor, so fortunately—

01-00:31:50

Farrell: How long was he in the navy for total?

01-00:32:01

Parker: [laughing] Now, that's a—he was maybe—he went up to Stockton for a while—how long would that have been? I guess during the time I was at Continental.

01-00:32:23

Farrell: Okay, so he was in until after the war.

01-00:32:27

Parker: It's hard for me, yeah.

01-00:32:29

Farrell: Okay. Can you tell me a little bit—so you had grown up in the East Bay and the Bay Area. Can you tell me about some of the changes that you saw happen during the war years?

01-00:32:47

Parker: Well, I was a great walker, and I used to walk to Kaiser and home. The streets were always very busy during '44 and '45 with convoys. Also, many times with ambulances that went—oh, by the way, that was one of the things that I did for the homefront, is I donated blood. I had a regular card that I went as frequently as I could on that type of thing. But in terms of change, probably more—it seemed more crowded, and that was probably true because we had so many people who came for jobs in the shipyard and any other war effort. The West Coast was rife with the shipbuilding and airplane building, Boeing up in the Seattle area, that type.

01-00:34:00

Farrell: Were you living in Oakland while you were working at Kaiser?

01-00:34:04

Parker: Yes. Not all the time. My husband and I bought a home in Hayward, and at that time there were no freeways, so it was really tough. I had a child, my first, and I would drive in and usually have breakfast with my mother, because she was still in the family home. At that time my father was gone. My sister was overseas. I would have breakfast with her and then I'd walk across the street where I would leave my son with the nursery, and then I would walk to work type of thing. So I just remember it was a long haul, and really just—no freeway at that time.

01-00:34:53

Farrell: Do you remember the community that you lived in, if there was a sense of patriotism or a strong sense of community?

01-00:35:02

Parker: Oh definitely, definitely—and especially right after Pearl Harbor. People wanted to help, and that's why my father, I'm sure, became the air raid warden, because everybody wanted to contribute what they could.

01-00:35:22

Farrell: Can you tell me about your memories of the end of the war?

01-00:35:29

Parker: Yes, as a matter of fact, definitely in August of 1945, that day I was donating blood, and that's when they declared the end of the—the Japanese signed off on the peace treaty, and so they had the big celebration in San Francisco. I'm sure every city did have a big celebration, but I was busy giving blood that day. Well, the next day I was accused of having been in the melee over in San Francisco because my arm was black and blue! [laughing] That's all right.

01-00:36:14

Farrell: And were you—you just said, "I was giving blood."

01-00:36:14

Parker: Oh yeah, I started to tell him, "Hey, I gave blood! I wasn't over there celebrating." And they didn't believe me. [laughing]

01-00:36:23

Farrell: How did you see things change after the war ended? Did it become less crowded?

01-00:36:27

Parker: No, not really, because so many people seemed to settle in. I think they liked the Bay Area. It's a beautiful area. Housing was still very difficult then. Families were doubled up. But no, I didn't really see any tremendous influx away. I'm sure there must have been some, but a lot of people stayed, yeah.

01-00:37:05

Farrell: After the war ended did you see a difference in the way that people perceived women, because they had been working? Did you see anything change?

01-00:37:16

Parker: It took a long time, let me tell you. When I was in education and a superintendent would come down the hall and I'd say, "Hi Al!" He'd say, "Hi," and then he'd always say, "Oh, your hair looks so nice." That's the only thing, basically, he ever said to me. He didn't know how to deal with women type of thing. But I thought in education there was more opportunity for women. They were predominantly teachers, and they were female teachers, for the most part—although those few coaches that they had moved very rapidly up in the administration. But there were more opportunities for

teachers to become principals and to become supervisors, so I did see that come along.

01-00:38:09

Farrell:

After the war did you—the people in your community or friends of yours that were women, did you see them—their role in the workforce change at all? Maybe were they staying at work or returning to the home?

01-00:38:27

Parker:

Well, I can tell you from the vantage point of the League of Women Voters, because when my son was small and you're dealing with nothing but diapers to do, I went and joined the League of Women Voters. I'm now a fifty-year member, an honorary life member. But our meetings then, at that time, were in homes. For the most part they were evening, women brought their children. But that changed, because as more and more women went into the workforce we didn't have to provide childcare, because for the most part we couldn't get into homes to have our study groups. So we started ending up in a church social room or a high school gym or someplace where we could meet, but there were no provisions for the children at that time, and most of the time it was daytime. We'd do lunch meetings, where people—you knew they could get away from work for maybe an hour. So yes, we saw the change in that regard, that women were working then.

01-00:39:54

Farrell:

During your early years or throughout the span of your involvement with the League of Women Voters, did you see anything from World War II get addressed by the League of Women Voters? Any of the issues that grew out of that period of time where people experienced?

01-00:40:21

Parker:

I remember one of the early things we had was of course civil rights, and we were dealing then with the racism, which is pretty much systemic and I don't know that that's changed, but it has diminished somewhat. So we were trying to deal, then, for the League of Women Voters, with topical things, not necessarily with what went before. I can't think of things that came from the war, although they were—they meaning the league, was pretty adamant about not so much money going into defense but more into education and other social issues.

01-00:41:12

Farrell:

Do you remember what the justification or the reasoning for that was?

01-00:41:19

Parker:

I think it was mainly the league's trying to deal with the now as opposed to the former.

01-00:41:30

Farrell:

But why, I guess what—the reason for valuing education over defense, allocating your budget that way.

01-00:41:37

Parker:

Oh yes, they felt that there was more—more monies going into defense and what could be potentially for war, as opposed to education, which we felt was the better place for our monies. At least that's my interpretation of the way the league functioned at that point. But they have always pursued less in defense, or pretty much always.

01-00:42:07

Farrell:

Okay, makes sense. Can you tell me what some of the things that you took, from your experience during the war and working at Kaiser, into your life after that period of time? What were some of the things that you learned?

01-00:42:24

Parker:

Well, definitely one of the things would be walking, because as I mentioned to you, I walked to work, because usually the family home was two miles, three miles away from 1924 Broadway, so I could do that. But walking has always been a big part, even when I was in high school I would walk the three miles to Tech from where we were down by Lake Merritt in Oakland, up to Fiftieth and Broadway where the high school is. I carried that out throughout my life. When I—once I was able to, in retirement and my kids were grown and I was finished with education, I went into leading walks in the East Bay Regional Park, and I did that for eight years, so I got my Parks Foundation jacket. I loved walking in the Golden Gate over the bridge—gee, that was a great—by the warming hut. It was so cold you jumped in there and got hot cocoa as soon as you could. [laughing] But no, I've known most of the East Bay Regional Parks and the national ones too. We're lucky that where we live now we're like a mile and a half away from the entry to Mt. Diablo, which is nice.

01-00:44:03

Farrell:

And can you tell me about—

01-00:44:06

Parker:

Oh, by the way this is my [getting book from shelf], this is my book of walks—

01-00:44:16

Farrell:

Oh!

01-00:44:16

Parker:

There's my book of walks and here's our mantra—"Keep Moving, Stay Fit, Have Fun."

01-00:44:31

Farrell:

Can you tell me about some of the things that you hope that future generations learn or can learn from your generation and World War II, that period of time?

01-00:44:47

Parker:

How do you mean—just in general?

01-00:44:49

Farrell:

I mean I guess if there's some things, like work ethic or community or patriotism even, if there's anything that you hope that future generations can learn from that period of time.

01-00:45:08

Parker:

I wish I could say that I was passing all of that along, and I'm not so sure I am, although when I see my sons and their children they pretty much have encouraged them in education, encouraged them in sports, which is fabulous. I still—I do push the parks as much as I can, and I love the fact that Andy, whom you met, is a walker and a biker. He goes up Mt. Diablo and takes the dogs for a walk. So that harkens back to my father's day, when he took us down to Niles Canyon as kids and Lake Merritt. But in terms of what I'm passing along—let me think about that. [Added by narrator during editing process: Whenever I went into classrooms to talk about interviewing, I always stressed that girls should gain a skill and get at least a year of work before staying home with children.]

01-00:46:05

Farrell:

Sure, yeah. And I guess what do you hope that people remember about World War II moving forward?

01-00:46:16

Parker:

That it was a nasty, nasty business. As a consequence, I never go to war movies. I saw so much of that, lost so many along the way. I just—it has been difficult to consider that and it disturbs me that America has had a ten-years' war and that we're continuing an unapproved war in places around the world now.

01-00:46:52

Farrell:

Is there anything else that you want to add?

01-00:46:58

Parker:

Let me think about that too!

01-00:46:59

Farrell:

Sure, no problem.

01-00:47:00

Parker:

I'd love to put a whole bunch of PS's on it.

01-00:47:03

Farrell:

You can absolutely do that.

01-00:47:03

Parker:

You've made me think a little bit. [laughter]

01-00:47:05

Farrell:

That's good. Well, thank you so much.

01-00:47:08

Parker: Thank you! This has been fun.

[End of Interview]