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University of California  
Berkeley, California

Conway Peterson:  
Oakland Army Base Oral History Project

Interviews conducted by  
Lisa Rubens  
in 2007

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Interview #1: April 4, 2007  
[Audio File 1]

01-00:00:06

Rubens: Would you, for the record, state your name?

01-00:00:05

Peterson: Conway Peterson.

01-00:00:13

Rubens: And did you ever have Colonel attached to your name?

01-00:00:17

Peterson: Yes, indeed.

01-00:00:19

Rubens: And in what case would that be used? If you were amongst military people?

01-00:00:22

Peterson: I guess so. Not very frequently otherwise.

01-00:00:26

Rubens: All right. Yeah. And today's April 4, 2007.

01-00:00:029

Peterson: April 4, 2007.

01-00:00:30

Rubens: And we're here to talk about the Oakland Army Base, and your relationship to it, and then hopefully a lot of lateral lines. So, while I do want to get to your background history, I'd like to start with what point did you encounter the Oakland Army Base. Were you in the military?

01-00:00:51

Peterson: Yes. I first encountered it on my way from Fort Lee, Virginia to the Far East during the Korean War. This was in 1952. And, I lived in Oakland at the time, so came home for a 30-day leave before going overseas. And I was going overseas as an individual replacement for the Far East command, at that time included not only Korea but -- which was the big thing at the time -- but Japan and other similar places. So, I was to report to Camp Stoneman, which is up in Pittsburgh, California for processing overseas. Turns out that processing overseas took a few more steps than I thought it would. Came -- went to Camp Stoneman, and then from there they shipped us to Oakland, which was not very far as you know. And, so, I was able to go home each night, then, from Camp Stoneman, Oakland, and then the ship was in Oakland, the troop ship that we were going to go on, and then the troop ship moved from Oakland to San Francisco, so

we're getting farther and farther west all of the time but not very far. So, my first encounter with the Oakland Army Base would have been aboard that ship, troop ship, the USS Mann. MANN. As it prepared to go to the Far East.

01-00:02:41

Rubens:

So let me back you up a little bit. Had you been called up? Had you been drafted to be in the Korean War?

01-00:02:50

Peterson:

I was -- no. I received a ROTC commission at the University of California in 1951, and then was sent, initially, to Fort Lee, Virginia for what they call a Company Officer Course, a basic course for newly commissioned officers.

01-00:03:09

Rubens:

How did you literally travel to Fort Lee?

01-00:03:12

Peterson:

By car. I drove.

01-00:03:15

Rubens:

Drove your own car?

01-00:03:17

Peterson:

Yeah, from here. My home was in Oakland at that time.

01-00:03:20

Rubens:

So why don't we back up --

01-00:03:21

Peterson:

OK, back up.

01-00:03:23

Rubens:

-- and let me hear, where were you born?

01-00:03:25

Peterson:

You want to go back to the very beginning?

01-00:03:27

Rubens:

I guess we'd better go back there.

01-00:03:27

Peterson:

Well, I was born in a very early age in San Francisco and went to school all through high school there, and then went to the University of California right from high school.

01-00:03:44

Rubens:

What year were you born? I'm trying to --

01-00:03:46

Peterson:

Born 1929.

01-00:03:47

Rubens: Oh my, fateful year of the --

01-00:03:49

Peterson: And that was -- my birth caused a lot of things to happen. We'd like to think.

01-00:03:57

Rubens: Big depression.

01-00:03:58

Peterson: Yeah, and I wasn't depressed at all as I remember, but --

01-00:04:02

Rubens: So, in 49, 48 you go to high school?

01-00:04:07

Peterson: I graduated in 46, fall of 46 from Abraham Lincoln High School in San Francisco, and then started the university -- I stayed out for a semester before starting Cal. And I started the university in the fall of 1947.

01-00:04:27

Rubens: Now, you're in your last years of high school as the war is ending. I'm wondering if vis a vis the military coming home, vis a vis the founding of the UN or maybe even vis a vis the dropping of the bomb, if you have particular memories of --

01-00:04:50

Peterson: Well, I remember all of those things very well. We were, you know, we weren't affected as civilians very much by the war as you -- well, you wouldn't remember, but people remember at that time, war not having taken place here. But we did our -- we did things like Victory Gardens and gathering metal and rubber and various things that you're supposed to do and conserve gasoline and tires and we didn't drive much because you didn't have enough gasoline to get there. All of those things were rationed. And, so, it was a mild inconvenience I would say, having the war.

01-00:05:37

Rubens: Some people talk about how vital the city was. There was such a, you know, infusion of --

01-00:05:45

Peterson: We were -- yeah, we were all directed toward winning the war, whatever that took. You know, minds and body. And we saved things and we conserved things and we grew our own things and we did all of those things, but as a child of starting at about 10, 10-14, or 10-15 or so, you know, it doesn't hit you as hard as it would others.

01-00:06:16

Rubens:

Sure, and just one other question about that period. Was your father in the military?

01-00:06:20

Peterson:

My father was in the -- World War I. He was in the National Guard in World War I, but never went anywhere except the Presidio of San Francisco, which was very fortunate, and Fort Winfield-Scott, which is part of the Presidio. And he was a -- as I say, in the National Guard. And then they were activated for some period of time around 1917, 18, but he -- and for whatever reason, I don't know -- never was -- never did anything more than serve here. And he was a Sergeant in the Quartermaster Corp of the Army, which was then -- I then, later, went into the Quartermaster Corp myself.

01-00:07:04

Rubens:

So, 47 you start Berkeley. And, my understanding also is there were -- there was quite an infusion of students at Berkeley.

01-00:07:14

Peterson:

Huge. Huge.

01-00:07:15

Rubens:

Men returning on the GI Bill. How did you find Berkeley?

01-00:07:18

Peterson:

Well, Berkeley was quite different from Abraham Lincoln High School, and you really had to find -- kind of find a niche or niches to which you belonged or to which you could belong in order to take care of the huge numbers of people. They were -- veterans came back -- that particular year, I think was the biggest single year that veterans came back and enrolled under the GI Bill. So we were intermixed with lots and lots and lots of veterans, and they had a different approach to life as you can imagine, but we kind of just rolled in with them and didn't think much about it at the time.

01-00:08:05

Rubens:

Well -- but how would that different approach to life been manifested?

01-00:08:10

Peterson:

They were much more serious. They had seen life in all of its form, I think.

01-00:08:19

Rubens:

I guess they were older, too.

01-00:08:20

Peterson:

That, too. So, yeah. A lot of our competition then was older people. When older -- when you're 20, older is about two or three years. Older, now, is like a couple of decades. So --

01-00:08:38

Rubens: Did you know what you wanted to study?

01-00:08:40

Peterson: I thought I did.

01-00:08:42

Rubens: OK.

01-00:08:43

Peterson: I thought I did, and I enrolled in the program of architecture. I thought that would be really neat to be an architect.

01-00:08:51

Rubens: And the architecture building was over on the north side of the town.

01-00:08:54

Peterson: Right, at Euclid and Hearst. It's still there, I think.

01-00:08:59

Rubens: Well, the building is there. It's the journalism school. Did --

01-00:09:01

Peterson: And that was a venerable, old building. It creaked. And it was a wonderful building, and lots of --

01-00:09:07

Rubens: What made you want to be an architect?

01-00:09:09

Peterson: Well, I liked building things and I liked construction and I liked seeing, you know, the finished product of an architecture project. And so I stayed in it for about a year until descriptive geometry got to me, and so from then on I was in business.

01-00:09:34

Rubens: And had you had any family members that had -- I had forgotten to ask this -- that were affected by the war? Were there uncles or cousins that had gone off to World War II?

01-00:09:44

Peterson: Oh, sure. I think almost everybody did at that time. I had a cousin who was killed, not in combat but just in a commercial airline crash that, a bunch of -- they were all military people aboard, or almost all. And, so, he was killed during the war, not because of war but because of the war, being transported. And then two other cousins, or, no -- four other cousins, I guess, were in the military. They all survived, but had various experiences that, to this day, I like to hear about and so -- yeah. Those were -- immediate family. Yeah. And then, of course, you had friends and everybody.

01-00:10:36

Rubens:

So, I derailed you. So, you go from architecture to business, and then at what point do you enroll in ROTC?

01-00:10:45

Peterson:

Well, one enrolls in ROTC when one came to the university. It was mandatory. And, at that time -- so, you had to do -- you had to spend two years in ROTC at that time.

01-00:10:58

Rubens:

Could you choose whether you did it the first two years or the -- or did most everyone do it --

01-00:11:03

Peterson:

I don't think you could do that. I think you just started in. Yeah. So, the first two years were mandatory and the second two years were not. They were voluntary. And they called that upper division. And I chose to do that because I had received a draft notice, so I would have been drafted had I not gone into that.

01-00:11:30

Rubens:

You received the draft notice when? The outbreak of --

01-00:11:36

Peterson:

49, I think. I think it was 49.

01-00:11:40

Rubens:

But, you're in school and you're in ROTC, so that defers it?

01-00:11:44

Peterson:

Right. So, I was deferred then until I was commissioned, and then, of course, all that gets worked in to your active duty time.

01-00:11:54

Rubens:

So, this is going to happen pretty soon. I'm just wondering, just since we're here at Cal, if there's anything particularly that punctuated your years here. If there were rallies or the ban on the communist party speakers, the Wallace campaign, I don't know if anything --

01-00:12:18

Peterson:

I was not very political. I got involved in a fraternity, in a church group, in athletics. I rowed on the varsity crew.

01-00:12:30

Rubens:

You were varsity?

01-00:12:32

Peterson:

Well, you say varsity crew, anybody who -- anybody who rowed, that wasn't a freshman.

01-00:12:39  
Rubens: OK.

01-00:12:40  
Peterson: So, but I did row in the varsity -- in the junior varsity crew in my last year, which --

01-00:12:46  
Rubens: These were years -- you and I are going to talk about this another time, but these were pretty good years for Cal.

01-00:12:51  
Peterson: Very good years.

01-00:12:53  
Rubens: For crew. Very exciting.

01-00:12:55  
Peterson: I started in the year that the Cal crew came back from having won the gold medal in the Olympics, in London.

01-00:13:02  
Rubens: That was 47?

01-00:13:03  
Peterson: 48.

01-00:13:04  
Rubens: 48.

01-00:13:05  
Peterson: Yeah, so that's the year I started. I didn't start crew my first year.

01-00:13:09  
Rubens: OK, but boy, those were -- and they ended up winning several --

01-00:13:14  
Peterson: Well, they won three gold medals, the 48 one being the last, 28, 32 and 48. But they'd just done typically done well through the years. They're doing extremely well right now.

01-00:13:29  
Rubens: So, that was a center of your life after the first year?

01-00:13:32  
Peterson: Very much so. You get involved in all of these things and it takes up pretty much your time. Then you do have to study.

01-00:13:41  
Rubens: Was there a certain aspect of business that you studied?

01-00:13:44  
Peterson: Well, it was marketing but sort of very general.

01-00:13:49  
Rubens: Where was business? Where were you taking those classes?

01-00:13:51  
Peterson: Well, the business school was headquartered in South Hall, but your classes could be anywhere.

01-00:13:58  
Rubens: OK. And, was there any social life attendant to ROTC particularly?

01-00:14:05  
Peterson: Precious little. Yeah. A little bit but not too much. I think they had a dance or so once or twice but nothing terribly much --

01-00:14:18  
Rubens: And so later on you'll be someone who works at the university for quite a long time.

01-00:14:24  
Peterson: I guess I didn't -- right, I didn't know that at the time.

01-00:14:26  
Rubens: Right. I'm wondering if you -- so, you had your domains that you were in. You weren't particularly paying attention to administration policy or encounters with students or --

01-00:14:36  
Peterson: No, I don't remember a lot of that. There was political activity, obviously. We all more or less read about it, but at the time, it didn't seem to affect me too much.

01-00:14:48  
Rubens: Good. So what is the next step? Do you graduate?

01-00:14:52  
Peterson: Yes.

01-00:14:53  
Rubens: And that's where we picked up the story you had told me before, that you had -- that you were just automatically going to enter --

01-00:15:01  
Peterson: Well, it was pretty much assumed that you would go on active duty in the military from the ROTC program, and so that -- I mean, it was just a kind of given. And I went on active duty in August, after having graduated in June, so I had a month or two, well, it wasn't even -- it wasn't even two months, so less than two months, before I went on active duty.

01-00:15:27  
Rubens: So that's August of 50 --

01-00:15:28

Peterson: 51.

01-00:15:29

Rubens: --1. You're on active duty and what does that literally mean? Where do you report?

01-00:15:34

Peterson: My orders were to report to Fort Lee, Virginia.

01-00:15:36

Rubens: OK.

01-00:15:37

Peterson: And that's what all of the Quartermaster officers did. The engineers went to Fort Belvar or somewhere -- each branch of the Army had its own school and its own headquarters.

01-00:15:55

Rubens: Could you tell me what a Quartermaster is? I'm sorry.

01-00:15:59

Peterson: It's a supply officer. Or, supply -- it's the supply arm of the Army.

01-00:16:04

Rubens: How do you -- do you pick that to specialize in? How do you --

01-00:16:08

Peterson: Well, I did. They don't do that now, apparently -- well, I shouldn't say that. They may do that, now, too. But, we had an opportunity to express a preference, shall we say it that way? You weren't necessarily assured that you would get your preference, but, in this case I did after having to kind of -- I hate to say fight for it, but I could use that word, I guess.

01-00:16:33

Rubens: I was going to say kiss up. I didn't know if --

01-00:16:37

Peterson: Well, diplomacy is that anyways, isn't it? I tried to approach the colonel at that time to say that I would be -- they wanted to put me in the infantry and I felt that I would be better -- a better resource in the Quartermaster Corps because of my education and so on, and then, not the least of which was my father was in the Quartermaster Corps.

01-00:17:04

Rubens: Right. Right. You had said that.

01-00:17:07

Peterson: Right. Anyway, I was accepted in that program.

01-00:17:09  
Rubens: At what point is one specialized?

01-00:17:13  
Peterson: At that time, at that time, you did it as a junior.

01-00:17:15  
Rubens: When you chose?

01-00:17:17  
Peterson: When you started your third year.

01-00:17:18  
Rubens: Yeah, OK. OK. So there is no issue about -- they say Fort Lee and you've got to get there however you can get there?

01-00:17:25  
Peterson: Right.

01-00:17:28  
Rubens: They don't provide for your transportation?

01-00:17:29  
Peterson: They do, but you can still get there however you want to. They paid your mileage. They paid for whatever method you wanted to take. If I remember, they just paid you so much a mile.

01-00:17:41  
Rubens: So you began by telling us this wonderful story of how you first encountered the Port of Oakland because you were coming back from Fort Lee, and then you had to go to Stoneman and then from Stoneman to Oakland and then from Oakland to San Francisco --

01-00:17:55  
Peterson: It was Fort Mason in San Francisco, yeah.

01-00:17:58  
Rubens: The USS Mann is your troop ship, and, by then, had you spent any time at all on the Oakland Army Base? Did you have any opinion about it or was there talk about what it was like compared to --

01-00:18:09  
Peterson: No. No. I didn't -- I knew very little about it.

01-00:18:12  
Rubens: OK, when you dock there on the USS Mann, do you stay on the ship or do you get off?

01-00:18:20  
Peterson: Well, that was the other thing. You see, I could -- each night, I -- we were released until the next morning, so I just went home.

01-00:18:26  
Rubens: And where was home?

01-00:18:29  
Peterson: I lived in Oakland.

01-00:18:30  
Rubens: Where in Oakland?

01-00:18:31  
Peterson: Fruitvale, just off of Fruitvale Avenue and Macarthur.

01-00:18:37  
Rubens: But finally the day comes --

01-00:18:39  
Peterson: Finally, the day comes that the ship doesn't fuss around here anymore. It goes to Tokyo, or Yokohama.

01-00:18:47  
Rubens: Is it kind of exciting sailing under the Golden Gate?

01-00:18:49  
Peterson: Oh yes. Oh my, yes. Oh, that's very exciting.

01-00:18:53  
Rubens: Was it, do you remember, was it a clear day or a foggy day or --

01-00:18:56  
Peterson: Well, yeah, it was a clear -- yeah, I remember a clear day. And I took pictures, as I remember, of going under the bridge.

01-00:19:02  
Rubens: Do you think you have any?

01-00:19:04  
Peterson: I probably do. I don't have them with me, but I could get -- I have them at home.

01-00:19:09  
Rubens: No, so that's one thing -- so, if you don't mind, obviously we want to get back to Oakland, but tell us about your experiences -- the war is ongoing --

01-00:19:22  
Peterson: The war is ongoing. The war is going, yeah.

01-00:19:24  
Rubens: And I meant to ask you, what does it mean individual replacement? I didn't quite understand what that meant.

01-00:19:27  
Peterson: It means that I -- they didn't send a unit, a whole unit of people, a whole company or battalion or whatever. I just went as one person.

01-00:19:35  
Rubens: You're a Quartermaster and you're going to go replace somebody --

01-00:19:38  
Peterson: I'm going to go there and do something that they tell me to do when I get there.

01-00:19:40  
Rubens: OK, and so --

01-00:19:43  
Peterson: And that was to the Far East command and that typically meant going to Korea. And, for some reason, when we docked in Yokohama and they sent everybody to Camp Drake, which is a replacement depot there in Japan for the Far East command. The Far East command included Korea and Japan. And, for whatever reason that I'll never really know, and maybe -- maybe somebody out there knows but I don't -- why I was chosen to stay there.

01-00:20:16  
Rubens: Stay there?

01-00:20:18  
Peterson: Stay in Japan.

01-00:20:19  
Rubens: In Japan at Camp Drake.

01-00:20:21  
Peterson: Camp Drake. No, Camp Drake was just a replacement center. They sent me to the Tokyo Quartermaster Depot, which, by its name, indicates that it's a supply depot. And, I spent the next year-and-a-half or almost a year-and-a-half there.

01-00:20:39  
Rubens: Doing what? What -- what -- how big about is this depot and --?

01-00:20:45  
Peterson: Well, it's a pretty big depot and it supplies all of the Army material for the Korean effort and Japan, as well. So they had big warehouses full of stuff and this material went to the Army to satisfy their needs. So I was in a division of that depot called the Procurement Division, which had to do with procuring those things that were needed for the Army.

01-00:21:18  
Rubens: So the generals, the hospitals, the cooks, they send in a list of what they need?

01-00:21:24  
Peterson: Right. Yeah. This goes through the regular procurement procedure and -- so either they -- it's acquired there in Japan or in US and provided to the troops.

01-00:21:42  
Rubens: And then did you specialize in one aspect of procurement?

01-00:21:43  
Peterson: Yes. Yeah. I did. One aspect of procurement that I was involved in was where a contract is made with a Japanese firm, a local company, to do something for the government using government-furnished property. In other words, we would supply them something and they would turn around and make it into something else. And then that was the division that I -- that was the office that I was in.

01-00:22:17  
Rubens: Could you give me an example? I'm trying to --

01-00:22:19  
Peterson: Yeah. I say yes, quickly. They did a lot of things -- remaking things. For example, they would buy service boots and give the boots and a buckle-top to the vendor and the vendor would sew the buckle-top onto the boot and make a combat boot out of it. So, that's just one example.

01-00:22:53  
Rubens: The -- I'm just trying to get the original -- so, the original, it is an Army -- it is a US product.

01-00:22:58  
Peterson: Right.

01-00:22:59  
Rubens: And then you --

01-00:23:01  
Peterson: In this case, yeah.

01-00:23:02  
Rubens: And you find a vendor who --

01-00:23:03  
Peterson: Put the two together.

01-00:23:04  
Rubens: -- put the two together and you arrange for that.

01-00:23:05  
Peterson: So, it's just a process. The vendor doesn't provide anything except the thread, I guess. But they essentially get two pieces and put them

together. Another one is the -- a lot of things we did were repair. Contracts for repair. We had about -- a contract to repair sleeping bags. Sleeping bags would come back from Korea or wherever, and then they'd clean them and repair them if needed and send them back. So that was another contract that we were involved in.

01-00:23:34

Rubens:

Now, did you learn Japanese while you were there?

01-00:23:35

Peterson:

[laughter] Very little. I had good intentions and I would like to have, and I can, you know, I have a few words that I can recognize -- I can recognize Japanese when it's spoken.

01-00:23:48

Rubens:

So how did you -- so you had interpreters that worked with you?

01-00:23:51

Peterson:

Oh yes. Yes. Yes. That's right. My office had -- it was a very small office that had one chief, which I ended up being after a while. I was the assistant chief for a while. And two enlisted Army clerks and two Japanese civilians who were hired, one as a typist and one as the interpreter. And no, there were two. And then another clerk, so there were about five of us in the office.

01-00:24:25

Rubens:

But, in terms of the whole depot, is there a dining room -- a dining facility? Everything's there?

01-00:24:34

Peterson:

Yeah, everything is there. It's like a city.

01-00:24:36

Rubens:

And you sleep in -- what do you call them?

01-00:24:40

Peterson:

We had rooms. We had rooms in a two-story wooden building. And --

01-00:24:46

Rubens:

That the US built or that they had taken over?

01-00:24:48

Peterson:

No, this had been a Navy -- Japanese Navy Paymaster school, as we were told. So, we just took over the site and the facilities and built a lot of our own, of course, but the basic, you know, the basic facilities were there.

01-00:25:09

Rubens:

Now, are men coming there from Korea? I mean, is there any R&R that's taking place there?

01-00:25:16

Peterson:

Yes. No, well, not for R&R. Many of the people that came back to serve at the depot had been in Korea initially. In fact, that was the normal thing that happened and why it didn't happen to me, I don't know.

01-00:25:30

Rubens:

So they would break up the service? It would be --

01-00:25:32

Peterson:

Well, they would -- they would go and serve in Korea in some capacity, and in our case, mostly Quartermaster officers would serve in field Quartermaster types of units that were close to the troops.

01-00:25:48

Rubens:

Front?

01-00:25:49

Peterson:

Yeah, so they would serve there, and then after they served their required time, whatever it was, they would send them back and, very often, to Japan or somewhere else, to serve the rest of their overseas tour.

01-00:26:03

Rubens:

So, but how many people lived on this base roughly? I mean, can you -

01-00:26:11

Peterson:

Oh boy. A few hundred.

01-00:26:12

Rubens:

OK.

01-00:26:13

Peterson:

A few hundred US troops. And then the Japanese that worked there typically would come in from wherever they lived.

01-00:26:24

Rubens:

And did some live there or were they mainly day --

01-00:26:26

Peterson:

I don't think any Japanese lived there.

01-00:26:30

Rubens:

And I made a presumption. I just wanted to ask, also, were there many women in the -- well, firstly, in the service?

01-00:26:38

Peterson:

In the Army?

01-00:26:39

Rubens:

Yeah.

01-00:26:40  
Peterson: Yes, there were. Yes, in fact, we had a woman, well, no, more than one -- two, maybe three, women, Quartermaster officers who were in our division, in the Procurement Division. And, they were very active in the -- you know, fully Army.

01-00:27:08  
Rubens: Had there been -- I forgot to ask if there were any in your ROTC unit?

01-00:27:09  
Peterson: No.

01-00:27:10  
Rubens: No women. And then we can reverse back in terms of "minorities." I mean, the Army isn't even integrated until after World War II?

01-00:27:20  
Peterson: About '47 I think.

01-00:27:21  
Rubens: Seven, I think.

01-00:27:22  
Peterson: I think Truman did that.

01-00:27:23  
Rubens: Yeah, so in your ROTC unit, were there any people of color?

01-00:27:25  
Peterson: No women. Oh, of color. Oh, sure. Oh yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I couldn't tell you how many but --

01-00:27:33  
Rubens: OK, but noticeable. And then similarly, in the troop, in the depot, in the service?

01-00:27:42  
Peterson: Yes, yes, yeah. Yeah, in fact, several of whom I kept in touch with afterwards. Really good friends. I roomed with one of them and he was a -- he was a First Lieutenant and I was a Second Lieutenant, and at that point, that's a great difference in rank. You wouldn't think so but -- but anyway, he's really neat. Just a neat guy.

01-00:28:06  
Rubens: And was there an array, or were most of the people who were of color, were they African American? Or were their Hispanic or Indian --?

01-00:28:15  
Peterson: Yeah, African American, mostly. I don't remember Latin Americans.

01-00:28:27  
Rubens: It's just your memory. That's all that's --

01-00:28:30

Peterson:

Yeah, but they probably were there. Yeah, there were some, now that I think about it. I didn't think about it. I wasn't thinking about it at the time.

01-00:28:36

Rubens:

OK. And the other question about, I guess just a couple of more questions on the depot. Now, Japan was occupied, I'm sorry [break in audio] a sense of what --

01-00:28:50

Peterson:

While I was there, the occupation ended. That is, the official occupation. But --

01-00:29:01

Rubens:

Were you aware of that? How would you have -- I mean, I know it's an announcement, but did you see troops go or move out or?

01-00:29:06

Peterson:

Oh no. There wasn't much different. There wasn't much that one could see. You just knew it was over. The official occupation was over.

01-00:29:22

Rubens:

Did you get out into the town much?

01-00:29:25

Peterson:

Absolutely. In fact, that's why this job that I had was so wonderful because I was dealing with Japanese companies. We would go to their build -- their office, their factories there, workplaces, and we would meet with them and I, you know, this was the thing I could say about the ROTC program, especially at that time and probably now, too -- and the military in general -- that you get responsibilities that you wouldn't even dream of having in the civilian economy at an early age. I had responsibilities at 23 that were incredible that I, you know, and it was wonderful for the rest of my career.

01-00:30:11

Rubens:

Did you have someone to turn to if you felt that you didn't quite know what was going on or were you making the right decision or --

01-00:30:20

Peterson:

You always have somebody to go to, and -- but, even then, this was a pretty -- what do I want to say? -- kind of, I can't think of the right word, but it's a unit, in such a way that it's all inclusive.

01-00:30:36

Rubens:

It's supported in the --

01-00:30:42

Peterson:

Yeah, the boss of this office that I was head of after a while was a major who was a -- he was the procurement officer for the depot. And

he, again, as a major even at that point was a pretty young guy. But he was my boss, and if I had problems or if problems occurred, I would go to him.

01-00:31:05

Rubens:

Did you -- you know, was there a social life that you could partake of in Japan? Not the -- not the base so much but just, I mean -- were you restricted or were you --?

01-00:31:21

Peterson:

Oh no. You could go out and many did. Many did much more mingling with the populace than I did. I did some, but, not very seriously. Yeah, you could --

01-00:31:37

Rubens:

I was kind of wondering if there was any -- what the attitude was toward the Americans having bombed --

01-00:31:44

Peterson:

That's what surprised me. That's what surprised me a lot.

01-00:31:46

Rubens:

You were in -- your city was --

01-00:31:49

Peterson:

Tokyo.

01-00:31:50

Rubens:

Tokyo, yeah. And Nagasaki and Hiroshima were how far from there?

01-00:31:56

Peterson:

Well, Japan isn't very big, so nothing was very far. I don't know. A few hours by train, maybe, to Hiroshima.

01-00:32:05

Rubens:

Did you go see it, by the way?

01-00:32:06

Peterson:

No, not then. I did later, a number of years later, went back as a civilian, just as a tourist. But, yeah --

01-00:32:16

Rubens:

You said what surprised you was --

01-00:32:18

Peterson:

What surprised me was the attitude of the Japanese civilians or the Japanese at that time. Some had been in the military. Some of the people that I dealt with had been in the Japanese military forces. And it's a very weird feeling. It was for me. It didn't seem to be for them. They were as if nothing happened almost. I mean, they obviously knew that something had happened, but -- and there's one particular

person I remember was a Japanese naval officer in charge of some naval batteries, naval guns, shooting at the American planes as they were coming over bombing Tokyo. It's incredible to me. It was incredible to me at the time. And very surprising. But, very -- they were very friendly, very business-like.

01-00:33:18

Rubens: How would it come up?

01-00:33:19

Peterson: They would -- I forgot how it came up in this case.

01-00:33:23

Rubens: OK. But he's telling you the story --

01-00:33:25

Peterson: Telling me the story, yeah. And the person who worked for me, the Japanese clerk, the young man, he was about 21 or 22 -- about my age. He had been in Nagasaki. His home was in Nagasaki. He told me he saw the bomb coming down in a parachute and then BOOM and he laughed as if that were kind of a funny thing to have happen. It just blew me away. I couldn't believe it.

01-00:33:58

Rubens: So, is there anything more that you should say -- and we can come back to it, too -- about your experience in Tokyo with the Japanese or -  
-

01-00:34:07

Peterson: Well, I could go on forever, as you probably can tell.

01-00:34:09

Rubens: I'm sure. I'm sure.

01-00:34:11

Peterson: But this isn't about that. But I -- it was a fantastic experience.

01-00:34:14

Rubens: What was fantastic about it?

01-00:34:15

Peterson: The whole thing. Being -- having the responsibility. Having the job. Having the -- dealing with these people who were quite different from us.

01-00:34:27

Rubens: They certainly weren't as "Americanized" by then.

01-00:34:30

Peterson: Oh no. I would walk down the street, and of course I'm fairly tall, and the people would look up and they'd say, ooh, and they'd laugh and

they'd point. It was -- it was, you know, we were quite odd at that time. Quite different.

01-00:34:46

Rubens: Did most of the men you deal with, were they dressed in western suits?

01-00:34:36

Peterson: Yes. And very formally at that time.

01-00:34:51

Rubens: And on the -- finally, on the base, while you were there, I know we always ask these question. You know, did conflicts arise? Were there - - I think of it terms of the ongoing conflicts of their military. You know, gays in the military. Racism.

01-00:35:06

Peterson: You mean in Tokyo?

01-00:35:10

Rubens: Yeah, if you saw or heard the experiences. Were those things issues?

01-00:35:13

Peterson: Not that I could see.

01-00:35:15

Rubens: OK, I wanted to say one other thing. It's starting in the 50s, a little later I guess, that Japanese products, toys, dishes, are coming to the US, and at that time they were considered terrible. They were considered very cheap and -- I just wondered if you were aware --

01-00:35:36

Peterson: Well, you -- before the war, especially.

01-00:35:38

Rubens: Oh, is that it? Before the war?

01-00:35:40

Peterson: Yeah.

01-00:35:41

Rubens: OK.

01-00:35:42

Peterson: After the war, I don't remember that so much. Of course, they produce things like crazy and you could go to -- well, we call them flea markets, I suppose, now, in downtown Tokyo or various places, and you could buy all kinds of stuff. Trinkets and cameras. Cameras and things. But, the thing that I'm really amazed about today when I think back, is the automobiles. The automobiles that the Japanese were driving around in at that time were absolutely scary. They were -- and you'd get into a Japanese taxi cab and it was like getting into a large,

tin can. Not a large tin can. A medium-sized tin can. And you'd go bouncing along and rattling along and to think of the Japanese autos now. Well, I have one. They're wonderful. And at that time -- if you had told me at that time that Toyota or Honda or, well, Datsun, at that time, was big -- that they would be leading car makers in the world, I would have really laughed. I probably did laugh. But, it's quite amazing.

01-00:37:00

Rubens:

So, we'll come back to the US. Is there anything else that you want to ask at all about -- are you doing OK? And how much time do we -- where are we now on the tape? So, how does your service there come to an end?

01-00:37:18

Peterson:

Well, it came to an end a little bit sooner than I thought it would because my mother was ill at the time. Or became ill at the time. So I was able to come home about a month or so sooner than I might have otherwise. And -- but it came up because my active duty commitment was about to be up. I was only committed for two years of active duty. So, when that time came up, they processed the orders and away I went. But, as I say, it was a little bit sooner than it might have otherwise been.

002-00:37:54

Rubens:

How are you communicating with your parents? Is it letters?

01-00:38:00

Peterson:

Letters, yes. I think today -- I think today about how people can communicate and it's just -- oh. We wrote a letter and I phoned home from Japan once and that was having to do with my mother's health and so on. And, boy, we talked for about three minutes and it was something like \$15 or \$20 to make that call. So we didn't do it.

01-00:38:27

Rubens:

So, how did you get home. Literally? Ship or plane?

01-00:38:35

Peterson:

I had gone over to Japan by ship, by troop ship, and there were thousands of troops on the ship. And, I came back by air, which was very nice. And, I came back in three 12-hour hops from -- 12 hours from Japan to, I guess it was Wake Island, and then Wake Island to Hawaii and then Hawaii home.

01-00:39:00

Rubens:

Was it a military plane?

01-00:39:01

Peterson:

Yes.

01-00:39:02

Rubens:

And where did it land? In San Francisco or Oakland?

01-00:39:05

Peterson:

Travis. Travis Air Force Base. And it was -- I was able to come home by air because they made me an air courier. An air courier brings back something, some documents from there to here. And so you transport it, carefully, under your coat or something. No, I don't know. So, that's how I got to come back by air.

01-00:39:34

Rubens:

And, how soon do you start -- you know, how do you make this transition from military to civilian life?

01-00:39:42

Peterson:

It came very naturally to me. I didn't have any trouble with that. And, of course, I'd had such a wonderful experience in my military career that I had no problem coming back to reality. So, yeah, no problem at all.

01-00:40:00

Rubens:

So, what did you do?

01-00:40:02

Peterson:

I started working for Firestone Tire and Rubber Company as what they called a management trainee. A management trainee meant that you could work six days a week for the same pay that the rest of them worked for five. But, I worked in their store down here in Berkeley.

01-00:40:19

Rubens:

Where was that?

01-00:40:21

Peterson:

On University Avenue. 1974 University Avenue. It's still there. So, I started working there and worked in various Firestone stores. It didn't last -- it didn't last too long because I wanted to do something else. So --

01-00:40:40

Rubens:

And, did you -- if we could just take you up to the university and then go back?

01-00:40:42

Peterson:

Then I worked for -- I worked for International Harvester in the -- as a buyer, back to the procurement days.

01-00:40:48

Rubens:

Where were they based?

01-00:40:49

Peterson:

In Emeryville.

01-00:40:50  
Rubens: Oh, they were.

01-00:40:51  
Peterson: At that time.

01-00:40:52  
Rubens: Was it -- it wasn't their base, but it was a major --

01-00:40:58  
Peterson: No, but it was a major truck-building facility and they manufactured trucks -- their big highway trucks. You know, the big 18-wheelers. The cabs for them. So I bought materials for that. And then -- then came the university.

01-00:41:16  
Rubens: And, so about when did you start at the university?

01-00:41:17  
Peterson: In 1958.

01-00:41:18  
Rubens: And what was the job?

01-00:41:21  
Peterson: A buyer in the Purchasing Department. My whole career started -- was formed by the Army. It was --

01-00:41:30  
Rubens: And where were you literally --

01-00:41:31  
Peterson: Sproul Hall.

01-00:41:32  
Rubens: Oh, that's in Sproul Hall. What floor?

01-00:41:34  
Peterson: Third floor. Room 318.

01-00:41:40  
Rubens: And did you feel, when you got there, this was a nice place to be?

01-00:41:45  
Peterson: This was home, I think. Yeah, I finally found my home. I didn't even think about working at the university, which was crazy. You think, well, the university has professors and students, but they have lots and lots and lots of other things.

01-00:42:00  
Rubens: And in operation, too.

01-00:42:01  
Peterson: Oh, just amazing.

01-00:42:03  
Rubens: That's something I really want to hear, but --

01-00:42:05  
Peterson: I know. That's another story.

01-00:42:06  
Rubens: That's another story. You're out in -- you just said in 53, right?

01-00:42:11  
Peterson: 53.

01-00:42:12  
Rubens: And so, what is your relationship to the military in those years?

01-00:42:17  
Peterson: Well, soon after I came back, I -- I was asked, I guess, if I wanted to join a reserve unit. And I said, well, that might be fun to try for a while. And, so, 30 years later -- so I joined a reserve unit at that time at the Oakland Army Base.

01-00:42:36  
Rubens: OK. Who asked? How that literally happen?

01-00:42:47  
Peterson: I don't know.

01-00:42:48  
Rubens: OK. Letter? Phone call? Something?

01-00:42:49  
Peterson: Yeah, probably pretty routine things. They probably get lists of people who have been released from active duty and say, well, let's see if they'll join the reserve. So I joined the 458th Quartermaster Company.

01-00:43:05  
Rubens: 458 Quartermaster. OK.

01-00:43:06  
Peterson: QM Company. And --

01-00:43:08  
Rubens: How many are in that?

01-00:43:11  
Peterson: Well, not very many. About, I've kind of forgotten at the time, but 15, 20 people maybe. Total. A company should have a lot more people that that but --

01-00:43:27

Rubens:

The Quartermaster Company, well, there must have been a lot of companies that constituted the Reserve Army.

01-00:43:31

Peterson:

Oh yes. This was a single, what they called a separate unit. Separate company that -- normally a company would report to a battalion, and we didn't have a battalion here, but there was one in Arizona. So, from time to time, we were -- we were really assigned to different units depending on what was going on at the time.

01-00:43:59

Rubens:

Can you remember going to the -- down to the Army base at that time?

01-00:44:02

Peterson:

Oh my goodness. Yes. Sure.

01-00:44:03

Rubens:

Well, tell us about that. What did it look like and where was the building and --

01-00:44:07

Peterson:

Well, I -- it seems to me that this was building, I want to say 590, I could be off on that. I could look it up probably. But these were buildings down there devoted to reserve -- to reserve forces. And, there were a number of units there. There was a medical unit. There was a medical, a general hospital there. There was a transportation brigade, I think. And there were other units of various kinds at the Oakland Army Base. And this was one of them. Just one separate unit as they say. So, I went down there and joined that unit. And I was --

01-00:44:51

Rubens:

That's where you joined? Literally there?

01-00:44:54

Peterson:

That's where I joined.

01-00:44:56

Rubens:

It's a full-time operating, someone is there --

01-00:45:00

Peterson:

Someone is there all of the time.

01-00:45:01

Rubens:

Someone is there. In uniform?

01-00:45:04

Peterson:

No.

01-00:45:05

Rubens:

OK.

01-00:45:06

Peterson:

Not generally. They could be there from time to time, but the people, typically, are -- well, very often they were -- they were technicians. They called them technicians and they were civilians and they were military both. But, on the work days, during the work days, they were civilians. And when the unit is on active duty or has their reserve drills, they'll be in uniform.

01-00:45:34

Rubens:

So, what did it literally mean to join this reserve unit? How often would you meet? What would you do?

01-00:45:43

Peterson:

We met once a week. I -- yeah, once a week. And an evening. It could have been Monday night or Tuesday night. I've forgotten which. And so you'd meet four nights a week -- four nights a month -- and then serve for two weeks typically during the summertime activity duty.

01-00:46:08

Rubens:

Really? Now, you -- would you wear your uniform those four nights?

01-00:46:13

Peterson:

Yes.

01-00:46:14

Rubens:

And what literally took place at the meeting?

01-00:46:19

Peterson:

I was trying to think about that before coming here. She's going to say what did we do, and I'm going to say, I don't remember. I don't remember.

01-00:46:25

Rubens:

We heard lectures.

01-00:46:26

Peterson:

I don't remember.

01-00:46:27

Rubens:

OK.

01-00:46:28

Peterson:

Well, in this Quartermaster Company, there was a lot of equipment involved. We were a laundry company. 458 Quartermaster Company (laundry). So, what we did was laundry. And, so that's what you do in the field is you'd have a laundry unit in the field and providing laundry service for the troops.

01-00:46:54

Rubens:

Literally? Sheets and clothes and underwear?

01-00:46:59

Peterson:

Literally. Clothes mostly. Yeah. And, often that would be an exchange system. Someone would come in and what we did on our active duty times in the summertime was we tried to set up a shower unit along with the laundry so that troops would come in after a hot day on the line or whatever they were doing and they'd take a shower, turn in their clothes and pick up a new set of clothes at the other end.

01-00:47:34

Rubens:

You reserve guys were literally doing laundry.

01-00:47:36

Peterson:

Well, not -- not every night. Not the nights we met. But, during the summer we did. During the two weeks active duty.

01-00:47:45

Rubens:

And where was the two weeks active duty?

01-00:47:47

Peterson:

Well, that could be any place, but typically, for us, it was in Hunter Liggett Military Reservation.

01-00:47:54

Rubens:

I don't know where that is.

01-00:47:55

Peterson:

It's down near King City. Central California. And it's the hottest place in the world in the summertime. And there was Camp Roberts or where else did we go? I think those were the only two places we went at that particular -- during the time I was there. At Fort Ord, also.

01-00:48:15

Rubens:

You would know ahead of time when these weeks were. You'd tell your boss.

01-00:48:19

Peterson:

Right.

01-00:48:22

Rubens:

The boss would have to let you go because it's military.

01-00:48:26

Peterson:

Right, and different -- different civilian companies handle that differently. The university is wonderful for that because they allow active duty that doesn't come off your vacation time which was very nice. But the -- we would go for two weeks in the various places and we'd be ordered there by some higher headquarters and higher headquarters in our case -- we would be typically assigned to a battalion. A Quartermaster Battalion where they would be doing other things, too, in addition to laundry.

01-00:49:07  
Rubens: So, did you say you're 30 years with that -- 30 years with that

01-00:49:15  
Peterson: No. No. Not with that same unit.

01-00:49:18  
Rubens: OK. How many years do you stay with that unit?

01-00:49:23  
Peterson: I think about six or seven years.

01-00:49:24  
Rubens: And the guys you're with -- I assume that was all guys, though, right. Were there women in that?

01-00:49:27  
Peterson: Yeah, there were all guys there.

01-00:49:30  
Rubens: Yeah. And do you -- are you -- do you form a -- you must get pretty close.

01-00:49:33  
Peterson: Oh yeah.

01-00:49:34  
Rubens: You must be good friends.

01-00:49:35  
Peterson: Oh yeah. Yes, indeed. Some of those people I am in touch with today.

01-00:49:44  
Rubens: And are you advancing in rank at all during those six and seven years?

01-00:49:46  
Peterson: Yes. Yes. Yes. I joined as a -- well, it's kind of hard to say because the second -- the lieutenant is different in active duty and reserve. So, I was promoted to a first lieutenant in active duty in Japan. But when I came back here, I was still a second lieutenant in reserve. And so then I got promoted soon after that, soon after joining.

01-00:50:10  
Rubens: To first?

01-00:50:13  
Peterson: To first lieutenant. But I was a platoon leader in this company. See, a company has a number of platoons and each platoon has a lieutenant as a platoon leader.

01-00:50:26  
Rubens: Soon after you're there, you're a platoon leader?

01-00:50:27  
Peterson: Well, as platoon leader -- I joined as a platoon leader.

01-00:50:30  
Rubens: How many are in a platoon?

01-00:50:34  
Peterson: Well, again, reserve and active are two different things.

01-00:50:38  
Rubens: OK. OK.

01-00:50:41  
Peterson: In our situation, there would only be a few people.

01-00:50:42  
Rubens: Right, because you said there's only 15-20.

01-00:50:42  
Peterson: Because there is only 20 or so to begin with.

01-00:50:44  
Rubens: But when the reserve comes -- when the two weeks come --

01-00:50:50  
Peterson: But if you're on active duty and you're -- well, we may still not have any more than that, but we would act -- we would act like -- the company would probably act like a platoon.

01-00:50:55  
Rubens: OK.

01-00:50:56  
Peterson: Because of fewer people.

01-00:51:00  
Rubens: Do you need to change? So, well, why don't we trace out -- so, six years or seven years, you're with the 4 --

01-00:51:07  
Peterson: 458th.

01-00:51:08  
Rubens: 458th. And, once a week, basically going down to -- or how did you literally -- where you were living. Maybe you moved a bit, too. But, would you drive down there?

01-00:51:21  
Peterson: Oh yeah. Yeah. We lived at home. Of course. And we would have classes. You mentioned that earlier. We would also have the equipment on which we could train. Not operationally, but say, well, this is this and this is this and this is this and this is how this works and

we would have people that have been experienced in this kind of equipment that could teach the rest of them. The rest of us, essentially, because I didn't know much about it, either.

01-00:51:48

Rubens: Are you referring to equipment that would be ways of accounting it?

01-00:51:51

Peterson: Laundry equipment.

01-00:51:51

Rubens: Oh, laundry equipment. I see. Specifically.

01-00:51:55

Peterson: Washers. Dryers.

01-00:51:58

Rubens: Got it. Got it. Because I was thinking --

01-00:51:59

Peterson: Big olive drab, army-painted washers and dryers.

01-00:52:02

Rubens: Did the Army have a -- well, what would it be? A monopoly contract with GE or -- I'm trying to think of -- Whirlpool or some -- do you know who made them?

01-00:52:16

Peterson: I don't know.

01-00:52:17

Peterson: I could have told you at the time, though.

01-00:52:19

Rubens: Yeah, I bet.

01-00:52:20

Peterson: Because there are tags on them, usually, about -- as to who made them. But the idea -- these are big, industrial units.

01-00:52:26

Rubens: Yeah, sure.

01-00:52:28

Peterson: These are units you might find in a commercial laundry.

01-00:52:30

Rubens: Sure, because I was trying to think, in those years, in 52 to --

01-00:52:36

Peterson: 60, roughly.

01-00:52:37

Rubens:

-- there must have been huge changes in how the Army was keeping track of procurement. You know, the whatever. All of these adding machines and the beginnings of computers and --

01-00:52:48

Peterson:

Oh sure. Oh sure. Lots of things were done by writing on paper at that time. And, so yeah, big transitions were going on.

01-00:52:55

Rubens:

Now, anything else to say? Your observations about the base and those six or seven years? You'd go there at night. Did it seem --

01-00:52:05

Peterson:

It wasn't much to see or to observe as to what the base was doing. We would go to a building. We might as well go to a building in downtown Oakland.

01-00:53:13

Rubens:

OK.

01-00:53:14

Peterson:

Although they had, some of our units, that unit and others, I was in three different units at the Oakland Army Base.

01-00:53:20

Rubens:

OK. Let's hear where they were.

01-00:53:23

Peterson:

The other one -- the next one was a -- called a mobilization detachment. And that was made up of people who had mobilization assignments. That is to say if -- if we were called to active duty, we would go to this place. And so I was in a unit like that for about two -- two, three years. And I had a mobilization assignment at the Philadelphia Quartermaster Depot. So, in the event of active duty, of an emergency, I would be sent to Philadelphia and do some duty like I -- like a procurement officer would do.

01-00:54:06

Rubens:

How would you -- how did you move from the washing to this one? Is it your choice?

01-00:54:13

Peterson:

Yes. It was my choice. I, in the Quartermaster Company, I was a platoon leader and lieutenant. I advanced in rank to Captain and became the Commanding Officer of that unit. And then after that I said, well, let's do something else, so I went in to one of these mobilization assignments. And then after that I went into a United States Army Reserve School, also at the Oakland Army Base. So, all three of these units were at the Oakland Army Base in various

buildings. Some were in warehouses. Some were in classroom -- classroom situations. And, the school, of course, was in classroom situations, too.

01-00:54:59

Rubens: So, very much to say about the mobilization detailment? Are you still meeting once a week?

01-00:55:05

Peterson: Detachment. Yeah. Yeah. You still meet the same -- the same amount of time.

01-00:55:08

Rubens: You still have the active?

01-00:55:09

Peterson: You still have the active duty. The active duty for that unit, for me at least, was in -- you would go to a Army Depot somewhere. We went to Ogden. Ogden, Utah for two weeks. And got a class, essentially, on operations.

01-00:55:26

Rubens: And was this a bigger unit than a --

01-00:55:33

Peterson: Yes, it was. Well, not in numbers of people, no. Not necessarily. But they were all officers. And typically lots of them -- well, lots of them were high-ranking officers. They were up -- they were as high as colonels. But they all had their own mobilization assignments and they were typically all Quartermaster officers.

01-00:55:52

Rubens: There was a natural progression?

01-00:55:54

Peterson: Yes.

01-00:55:54

Rubens: Now, by then, though, am I calculating right -- by the time you're in the mobilization --

01-00:56:00

Peterson: Detachment.

01-00:56:01

Rubens: Detachment. I wrote the wrong word. Are you at the university?

01-00:56:09

Peterson: Yes.

01-00:56:07

Rubens: I think you are.

01-00:56:08

Peterson: Yes. Yes. I am.

01-00:56:10

Rubens: And so I'm wondering if you had, also, how do I say this -- are there people that you work with that are also at the Army Base? Or is that just more coin -- that's a kind of coincidental?

01-00:56:25

Peterson: That would be coincidental. I can't remember -- I guess not.

01-00:56:30

Rubens: OK. OK.

01-00:56:31

Peterson: It certainly could be, though.

01-00:56:34

Rubens: And then why did you move from mobilization detachment to the school?

01-00:56:38

Peterson: Well, the mobilization assignment doesn't involve any money?

01-00:56:45

Rubens: I've been meaning to ask this for the whole time. OK. OK.

01-00:56:50

Peterson: Whereas these other units, both the Quartermaster Company and the school were called -- had paid positions. And so you could go and you could make money then as well.

01-00:57:03

Rubens: Sort of a supplemental income in a way?

01-00:57:08

Peterson: Yeah, it's your night job.

[Audio File 2]

02-00:00:05

Rubens: OK, and you're there in the business office roughly how long?

02-00:00:15

Peterson: About five years.

02-00:00:18

Rubens: OK. Great. OK.

02-00:00:20

Peterson:

I was an assistant -- what they call an assistant business manager at that time, and my responsibility was for the furnishing the -- all of the new buildings that were being built at that time. Which were many.

02-00:00:34

Rubens:

Well, that's a big talk. That's a big talk we'll have.

02-00:00:36

Peterson:

Yeah, Latimer Hall and the Earth Sciences Building and -- oh, a whole bunch of buildings.

02-00:00:47

Rubens:

I did want to back up just before we go to your work with the Army Reserve School. It seemed to me that you really moved up in rank when you were with the 458. And, that --

02-00:01:09

Peterson:

Well, just -- just -- one rank, I guess. Well, I guess you could say two. From second lieutenant to first lieutenant to captain.

02-00:01:17

Rubens:

OK. And, then you're with high-ranking officers in this mobilization detachment unit. It's new responsibilities. It's new aspects of the Army.

02-00:01:35

Peterson:

Well, it's a little different concept there because none of us is directly related to the other in terms of what they would do in the event of mobilization. But we have a -- we have a mobilization detachment that has a kind of inner organization of its own in the sense that there is a commander of the unit and an assistant and a training officer and whatever. So we all held various jobs not having to do with our mobilization assignment but having to do with that little group of people. And how we managed ourselves and what we did and how we trained and so on.

02-00:02:15

Rubens:

So, my overall question, but I think it ties directly to what you're just saying is -- what is the real motivation for keeping you going in this Army Reserve? These two different -- I know, now, that you're going to teach and that will change things and you'll make some night job. You'll make money again.

02-00:02:35

Peterson:

Why does one stay in the reserve to begin with?

02-00:02:37

Rubens:

Yeah, yeah. What is attractive about it? What's --

02-00:02:43  
Peterson: Yeah, well there's a -- there's a bit of patriotism in there. A good bit, I guess. And there is some -- there is some money. There is some retirement benefits that one can build. There is another activity that one does in one's life. You know, some people go golfing and some people, you know, do all kinds of things. And this was kind of my thing. And --

02-00:03:14  
Rubens: Good camaraderie?

02-00:03:15  
Peterson: Yeah. You meet a lot of really neat people and, you know, it's -- of course, one's spouse and family might say it's a reason to get out of the house, but I don't include that in my reasoning. But --

02-00:03:36  
Rubens: In this period, this is more professional and public institute, but during this period did you get married and start a family?

02-00:03:41  
Peterson: Yes, I was -- I got married in 1954, so I was --

02-00:03:46  
Rubens: As soon as you came --

02-00:03:47  
Peterson: Just a year after I came home. Yeah. And I wanted to be married and I wanted to get married and it was -- the timing was really good.

02-00:03:55  
Rubens: Great. And where did you live?

02-00:03:56  
Peterson: In Kensington. Where I live now. Not in the same house, but on the same street. Yeah.

02-00:04:08  
Rubens: And so --

02-00:04:09  
Peterson: So we had three children, three girls, and one of them lives in our family house, now, with two grandchildren of mine.

02-00:04:20  
Rubens: How nice. How nice.

02-00:04:21  
Peterson: Yeah, it's neat.

02-00:04:22  
Rubens: And when did the first child come?

02-00:04:23

Peterson: In 56.

02-00:04:24

Rubens: OK. So you're --

02-00:04:28

Peterson: Just a year and a half or two years later, really. A little more than two years.

02-00:04:31

Rubens: Well, let's talk about the Army Reserve. They're going to -- to the Army Reserve School. How does that come about and what do you do?

02-00:04:43

Peterson: That was another unit at the Oakland Army Base, and so they were known to us, or known to me. And I, in fact, one of the instructors at that school worked in this building right over here, in the Hearst Mining Building. And he was a paleontologist and paleontology was in that building at that time. They're now over in the -- what they call the Earth Sciences Building. But he was an instructor at this school and I got to know him just from my university connections.

02-00:05:09

Rubens: Do you remember his name?

02-00:05:10

Peterson: Yeah, Joe Peck. PECK. I think he's not with us any longer.

02-00:05:20

Rubens: Sounds familiar.

02-00:05:21

Peterson: But he was a neat guy and he was in this school and he knew I was in the Army Reserve, just because we got to talking about it. So he said, why don't you come over to the school. I said, that sounds like a good thing to do. So, I did. I went over there and interviewed with the commander and he was an old Cal guy, too, so he thought that my university experience would be appropriate for their school.

02-00:05:45

Rubens: What was his name?

02-00:05:47

Peterson: John Fowler.

02-00:05:48

Rubens: Fowler?

02-00:05:49  
Peterson: FOWLER. And he was a colonel and he was coming out of this school. And he -- as I say, he needed an administrative officer at that time and I was a captain so I joined the school as, you know, in their administrative staff.

02-00:06:08  
Rubens: I see. Not to teach, per say.

02-00:06:13  
Peterson: Later.

02-00:06:14  
Rubens: OK. As an administrative officer. And when would your -- when would you exercise your duties as an administrator?

02-00:06:23  
Peterson: Well, we ran a United States Army Reserve School, which means that we had students.

02-00:06:26  
Rubens: Right.

02-00:06:28  
Peterson: So we -- we taught courses all the way from enlisted -- enlisted MOS courses. MOS means Military Occupational Specialty. MOS Courses to enlisted students all the way up through and including the Command and General Staff College Course for kind of senior middle-to-senior officers.

02-00:06:57  
Rubens: I think that's what Gabler did. Taught in that.

02-00:06:58  
Peterson: Gabler did. Exactly. Yes. Yes. Yes.

02-00:07:01  
Rubens: OK. OK.

02-00:07:02  
Peterson: And Earl Wilson, who I don't know if you've seen Earl Wilson or talked to him.

02-00:07:08  
Rubens: No, I have not.

02-00:07:10  
Peterson: He was also in there. So there were Joe Peck and George Gabler and Earl Wilson and Gordon Coleman. Gordon was a little younger than we so he came up later. And --

02-00:07:27  
Rubens: Now, so you're administering this school. How many nights a week are you going there?

02-00:07:30  
Peterson: That's again one night a week.

02-00:07:31  
Rubens: One night a week.

02-00:07:32  
Peterson: At that time. We changed later to meeting on one weekend a month.

02-00:07:39  
Rubens: In addition to the night or skip the night?

02-00:07:40  
Peterson: No. No. Instead of.

02-00:07:41  
Rubens: OK. OK. Well, let's -- let's do the overview of what you're doing there and then we'll come back to talk about the base. So this is 19 --

02-00:07:52  
Peterson: 58 I started there.

02-00:07:54  
Rubens: -- 58. Yes. At the Reserve --

02-00:08:00  
Peterson: School.

02-00:08:01  
Rubens: School. OK. And 58 is when you started BC?

02-00:08:05  
Peterson: Excuse me. No. No. No. No. No.

02-00:08:06  
Rubens: I think -- I think 60 --

02-00:08:07  
Peterson: Sometimes our memory are tricked. No. 58 is when I started at the university.

02-00:08:10  
Rubens: Yeah.

02-00:08:11  
Peterson: 62 is when I started the school.

02-00:08:16  
Rubens: OK. Fine.

02-00:08:17  
Peterson: Sorry.

02-00:08:18  
Rubens: That's all right.

02-00:08:19  
Peterson: You're keeping track of me. That's good.

02-00:08:20  
Rubens: Yeah. That's my job. That's my job. OK, 62, and you stay, as an administrator, until about --

02-00:08:31  
Peterson: Oh, yeah, just a couple of years probably. And then I -- I had various -- I had other administrative jobs in that same school. One was supply officer, typically. And one was assistant training officer. And secretary. And assistant commandant. And then I became the commandant of the school.

02-00:09:00  
Rubens: You did?

02-00:09:01  
Peterson: Yeah.

02-00:09:02  
Rubens: And when was that?

02-00:09:03  
Peterson: 77. So, I was in that school for a long time.

02-00:09:10  
Rubens: Yeah, you were. So supply officer. Assistant training officer. Secretary. Then I would think the assistant commandant is pretty big.

02-00:09:18  
Peterson: Yeah.

02-00:09:19  
Rubens: How long were you that?

02-00:09:24  
Peterson: That was probably a couple of years, too. I could get these dates exactly. But --

02-00:09:26  
Rubens: And, by the way, you know, you're going to see a transcript --

02-00:09:28  
Peterson: Yeah.

02-00:09:29  
Rubens: So anything that we need to correct or add or something.

02-00:09:33  
Peterson: Well, if it's significant, it would be -- it may be worthwhile doing, I'm sure.

02-00:09:37  
Rubens: Well, what I guess -- what I want to get to is maybe just sort of chunking up this period, 62 to the 70s.

02-00:09:49  
Peterson: Oh, I had one more job in there -- in this school, was instructor.

02-00:09:54  
Rubens: Yeah, that's what I thought you were going to say. That's important. When were you an instructor?

02-00:09:55  
Peterson: Just before I became commandant.

02-00:09:59  
Rubens: Between assistant and --

02-00:10:00  
Peterson: Yes.

02-00:10:01  
Rubens: OK, and what did you specifically teach?

02-00:10:04  
Peterson: I taught elements of the Command and General Staff College Course.

02-00:10:05  
Rubens: OK. I see. So --

02-00:10:07  
Peterson: That's headquartered at Fort Levenworth is what -- those pictures I was showing you a little while ago? That's where it all emanates.

02-00:10:14  
Rubens: I guess what I want to get a sense of is maybe just up 'til maybe when you joined the reserve school or early in the reserve school -- would you -- would you ever -- would there be any socializing down at the Army Base? Would you ever take your wife to the officer's club or would she shop -- would there be any benefit to the family to shop?

02-00:10:41  
Peterson: Yes, all of the above.

02-00:10:45  
Rubens: OK

02-00:10:46  
Peterson: But not a lot.

02-00:10:47  
Rubens: OK.

02-00:10:50  
Peterson: There was some socializing but not -- not very frequently, really.

02-00:10:55  
Rubens: Gabler was very clear. It was much more fun at the Presidio he said. It, just -- there wasn't that much happening here he said.

02-00:11:03  
Peterson: Oh, is that so? Well, that may well be so.

02-00:11:04  
Rubens: He's older, too. He was --

02-00:11:08  
Peterson: Yes, he's 10 years older than I am or roughly. And so he had the World War II experience and --

02-00:11:15  
Rubens: Right. So, I guess I'm trying to get a sense of -- if there seemed to be --

02-00:11:22  
Peterson: Is there anything else going on at the Oakland Army Base?

02-00:11:24  
Rubens: Yeah, or what -- what's its interaction with the city or is it just kind of -- it's going along?

02-00:11:25  
Peterson: I really can't address that, because there wasn't that much that I did at the Oakland Army Base besides go there and come home.

02-00:11:40  
Rubens: Sure.

02-00:11:42  
Peterson: I'll add a little bit to that. We had at least one or two or maybe three periods of active duty at the Oakland Army Base.

02-00:11:52  
Rubens: Oh, well let me hear that.

02-00:11:55  
Peterson: With the school.

02-00:11:58  
Rubens: OK.

02-00:11:59  
Peterson: And we would conduct classes there at the Oakland Army Base, in the summertime, for like the two-week period.

02-00:12:04  
Rubens: So, a daily -- a daily regime, when it's scheduled.

02-00:12:10  
Peterson: Right.

02-00:12:11  
Rubens: And would you go to the Mess Hall to have lunch or would you go off base?

02-00:12:13  
Peterson: Yes. Yeah. There's be some kind of a feeding facility there, and we could stay there if we wanted to. Some people did and some people didn't, because we lived so close. But we could stay there, as well.

02-00:12:28  
Rubens: There's also a gas station on the -- because I met a woman who worked there. Could you buy cheap gas -- get gas cheaper on the Army Base?

02-00:12:34  
Peterson: A little cheaper. Yeah.

02-00:12:35  
Rubens: Sure.

02-00:12:36  
Peterson: But it's -- the difference is not great.

02-00:12:44  
Rubens: When I went to school here in the mid-60s, I had a friend whose father had been in the Navy so he had a PX Card and we'd go to Treasure Island and buy stuff. And that was really -- I mean, there were no Costcos or Wal-Mart. There wasn't anything.

02-00:13:00  
Peterson: That's right.

02-00:13:01  
Rubens: That was very --

02-00:13:02  
Peterson: It was a big deal.

02-00:13:03  
Rubens: I don't know if you had that at the Army Base.

02-00:13:04  
Peterson: Yes.

02-00:13:05

Rubens: OK.

02-00:13:05

Peterson: Yes.

02-00:13:06

Rubens: So you said you didn't go a lot but you would do it.

02-00:13:07

Peterson: Once in a while. The thing is, we, as reservists, we were not allowed full commissary, PX, gas station privileges.

02-00:13:16

Rubens: Got it. OK.

02-00:13:20

Peterson: They do now pretty much. And now that we have them pretty much, there's no place to go.

02-00:13:27

Rubens: Except, let me just get this again. You were not just a reservist, you were also a former Army officer.

02-00:13:39

Peterson: Yeah.

02-00:13:40

Rubens: So, but you're saying that the big privileges were for people who are --

02-00:13:44

Peterson: Active duty.

02-00:13:45

Rubens: Active duty. Right. I get it. I get it. I get it. And, I have this sense that once the war in Vietnam starts gearing up, that then the -- the numbers on the base increase and activity --

02-00:14:07

Peterson: Activity, right.

02-00:14:09

Rubens: And also -- and then, politics. So I might just leave that or just ask you about that. I thought of one other thing I wanted to ask. I think, also, during your years, in 1960, the mechanization of the port is really happening full-blown. There's the deal with the long-shoreman's union and, at the same time, the operations of the San Francisco Port are moving to Oakland or are there -- San Francisco is losing to Oakland. And I just wondered if that, in anyway, it impacted the base, but probably not something you would be --

02-00:14:47  
Peterson: Exactly.

02-00:14:48  
Rubens: OK. Yeah, OK.

02-00:14:50  
Peterson: We would be aware of it, but only as civilians. As everybody would be.

02-00:14:56  
Rubens: Yeah. Yeah.

02-00:14:57  
Peterson: We would see more activity there, just when we would go to our meetings, but it had nothing to do with what we were doing.

02-00:15:05  
Rubens: OK. OK. And is there kind of a signpost in your mind of when the gear-up for Vietnam started?

02-00:15:17  
Peterson: No. I wouldn't have a memory of that or --

02-00:15:27  
Rubens: You're -- when you are an instructor, so I assume this is around 75, 74 --

02-00:15:36  
Peterson: Yeah. Right.

02-00:15:37  
Rubens: How do you know what to teach? Where's the curriculum coming from?

02-00:15:43  
Peterson: Fort Leavenworth.

02-00:15:44  
Rubens: They give you a curriculum and say this is what you --

02-00:15:47  
Peterson: Right. And they give you a curriculum and they give you a teaching lesson plan and they -- they give -- and they then come up with the test that's supposed to test that.

02-00:16:01  
Rubens: And are you given a couple of weekends or something of instruction about how to instruct?

02-00:16:07  
Peterson: Yes, there are some instructor training courses that I've taken, yes.

02-00:16:13

Rubens: OK.

02-00:16:14

Peterson: Yeah, the things you do and the things you don't do.

02-00:16:18

Rubens: Mm-hmm. And what works and what -- is there anything that you can say, oh, from the mid-60s to the mid-70s, about 10 years, when you're working at the Reserve School. Did you see any changes in who your students are? You were only in the Center for a brief while, but you're --

02-00:16:43

Peterson: There's a gradual change in that, sure. Yeah. We get -- we begin -- yeah. We're the older guys at that point and some of the older kids are coming in. But what's the difference, though. What do we see a difference?

02-00:17:06

Rubens: Are they less respectful or more challenging?

02-00:17:08

Peterson: No. No. More challenging. I wouldn't say.

02-00:17:18

Rubens: Listen, if it doesn't stick our or it doesn't matter --

02-00:17:20

Peterson: Yeah.

02-00:17:21

Rubens: And then -- and did -- did -- were you around when the protests over the troop train -- the troops trains going into the army base were taking base?

02-00:17:36

Peterson: I don't recall anything about that. No. What was -- what year was that? Do you know?

02-00:17:41

Rubens: Well, I'm not positive. 75. I think 75.

02-00:17:43

Peterson: Yeah.

02-00:17:46

Rubens: Now, these are also the same years --

02-00:17:48

Peterson: Well, that's about the time -- in fact, 76, I guess, was the time that the school moved from the Oakland Army Base to Camp Parks.

02-00:18:00  
Rubens: Oh, let's say this. OK. Suddenly, you're told, hey, the school's --

02-00:18:04  
Peterson: Right, we have to move. And, I couldn't tell you from whence that came.

02-00:18:11  
Rubens: OK. Camp Parks?

02-00:18:13  
Peterson: Camp Parks.

02-00:18:14  
Rubens: Where is that?

02-00:18:15  
Peterson: PARKS. It's in Dublin, out near Pleasantown, Dublin. Out in that area. Off of 580.

02-00:18:23  
Rubens: Now, how long -- that's an Army camp?

02-00:18:25  
Peterson: Yes. It's now a -- they have a different name for it. Reserve Forces Training Center or something like that.

02-00:18:41  
Rubens: And did the school remain there?

02-00:18:42  
Peterson: Yes.

02-00:18:43  
Rubens: Oh, it did.

02-00:18:44  
Peterson: Well, it changed -- it remained there, but it changed its complexion and its name and various things.

02-00:18:49  
Rubens: Well, in 77 you become the commandant of the school.

02-00:18:54  
Peterson: Right.

02-00:18:55  
Rubens: And that's out there?

02-00:18:56  
Peterson: Yes.

02-00:18:57  
Rubens: OK.

02-00:18:59  
Peterson: We moved out there in 76. We moved just before that, right.

02-00:19:03  
Rubens: And to be Commandant meant you ran the whole thing. That's who hired you, the Commandant.

02-00:19:05  
Peterson: Right.

02-00:19:07  
Rubens: Yeah. How many did you have under you at that point?

02-00:19:09  
Peterson: Well, we had 100 -- 100 or more staff and faculty.

02-00:19:13  
Rubens: Did you lose numbers when you moved out?

02-00:19:17  
Peterson: No. No. And then the student population varied all over the lot, several hundred.

02-00:19:29  
Rubens: And, how long were you the Commandant?

02-00:19:30  
Peterson: Three years. That's what they allow you to have. Three-year command tenure.

02-00:19:37  
Rubens: And, in 1980 --

02-00:19:38  
Peterson: 80 -- yeah, 1980 -- I left that.

02-00:19:44  
Rubens: And then --

02-00:19:45  
Peterson: Then I was kind of in -- in limbo for 10 months while -- while my 30 years came up. I tried to extend my command to go for the four years, but they try to get everybody in there they can. So, three years.

02-00:20:03  
Rubens: So, you never went back to the Army base?

02-00:20:08  
Peterson: No. Well --

02-00:20:11  
Rubens: After?

02-00:20:12  
Peterson: Not officially. No.

02-00:20:12  
Rubens: After, 1980?

02-00:20:13  
Peterson: Right. Well, even after 1976 --

02-00:20:15  
Rubens: Or in 77 -- 76, yeah, of course.

02-00:20:18  
Peterson: I mean, I'm sure I went down there for something, but not officially.

02-00:20:24  
Rubens: And when did you actually retire from the university?

02-00:20:27  
Peterson: In 1989.

02-00:20:29  
Rubens: Oh, so you had another -- another full --

02-00:20:31  
Peterson: Yeah. Yeah.

02-00:20:32  
Rubens: Is there --

02-00:20:33  
Peterson: That's from the Lawrence-Berkeley Lab.

02-00:20:36  
Rubens: Yeah, by the -- we haven't gotten to that. Let's just see, kind of in wrapping up, if there is anything else to say about the Oakland Army Base particularly or anything -- did you have any strong feelings about it when the issue of demilitarization of conversion.

02-00:21:00  
Peterson: You mean closing the base?

02-00:21:03  
Rubens: Closing the base. Yeah. I couldn't come up with the word. I'm sorry.

02-00:21:09  
Peterson: I just have a general feeling about base closures in general.

02-00:21:14  
Rubens: OK.

02-00:21:15  
Peterson: And that is -- I'm not sure of the wisdom of doing it. And, there are people who know more than I, God knows, but it just seemed like a precipitous and unwise thing to do. But --

02-00:21:30  
Rubens: Did you do anything about it? I mean, did you write a letter or --

02-00:21:36  
Peterson: No. No.

02-00:21:37  
Rubens: I imagine, if not in a formal way, you still have plenty of Army buddies or reserve buddies that you would see. Or was that formalized? Did you end up having a monthly dinner or something like that?

02-00:21:52  
Peterson: Oh, well, we meet different people from time to time even today.

02-00:21:59  
Rubens: OK.

02-00:22:00  
Peterson: I meet with Gordon for one, Gordon Coleman. And then there are some others whom I haven't mentioned at various associations in the Army. Mostly with the school.

02-00:22:10  
Rubens: Sure.

02-00:22:11  
Peterson: The school has been -- was a big part of my life over many years. And so there are a number of people there. Plus some other people who -- we have lunch at Brennan's sometimes or just three or four or five of us.

02-00:22:23  
Rubens: But surely once you retired from UC then you had --

02-00:22:23  
Peterson: Yeah. Yeah.

02-00:22:23  
Rubens: -- more time.

02-00:22:24  
Peterson: Yeah. Yeah.

02-00:22:26  
Rubens: But so you were generally not for the closure but you didn't go out on a limb --

02-00:22:33

Peterson: Yeah, like a lot of people, not do anything about it.

02-00:22:35

Rubens: All right. And also, looking back, is there anything that you felt were really good innovations in teaching, as you spent the bulk of your time with the Reserve School, is there something you would point to that made a difference? Or conversely, that should have happened and didn't.

02-00:23:00

Peterson: No, probably not. Teaching wasn't the largest part of my participation in the school.

02-00:23:05

Rubens: Right, you were administering.

02-00:23:09

Peterson: It was only a couple of years. And it really -- I really -- I think I probably only taught because, to be selected for commandant of the school, you probably should have taught.

02-00:23:17

Rubens: Yeah. Yeah.

02-00:23:18

Peterson: So that's why I taught. So, it wasn't like it was a long career for me.

02-00:23:23

Rubens: OK.

02-00:23:24

Peterson: I'm more of an administrator, manager kind of person and not a teacher, although, I guess I did OK as a teacher. I mean, I guess I did.

02-00:23:28

Rubens: When you were Commandant, did you have a different hat or --

02-00:23:42

Peterson: A different --

02-00:23:43

Rubens: Did you still wear your uniform?

02-00:23:45

Peterson: A different emblem on the hat.

02-00:23:48

Rubens: Oh, OK. There is -- so, I'd like to see that next time, if we could just show those.

0-00:23:50  
Peterson: Yeah. The colonel has an eagle, so that's why they call them "chicken colonels" sometimes.

02-00:23:58  
Rubens: Oh, I didn't know that.

02-00:24:00  
Peterson: That's not a derogatory but a comedic way of saying it.

02-00:24:04  
Rubens: You know, I meant to ask you one other thing when we were talking about the uniforms. I think, off tape, I asked you this, but let's just see now. You -- all of the time you were in the Reserve, you're responsible for buying your own uniform that you're given an allowance for it.

02-00:24:20  
Peterson: Right, there's an uniform allowance every four years. I think you get \$50 or something.

02-00:24:24  
Rubens: And in the summer you wore the khakis and in the winter you wore the wools?

02-00:24:30  
Peterson: Well, yeah, they changed to the green uniform during that time. I couldn't tell you exactly when. But we, in the Reserve, we had a wear-out period for that old uniform, what we used to call pinks and greens. You don't know that term?

02-00:24:43  
Rubens: No, tell us.

02-00:24:44  
Peterson: Well, pinks were the kind of the color of the trousers, although they weren't pink, God knows. But, they were kind of a mauve color or --

02-00:24:55  
Rubens: I don't remember that. We'll have to see if we can find it. Not what we think of as khaki.

02-00:24:59  
Peterson: Oh no. No. It approaches the khaki color, but not --

02-00:25:05  
Rubens: OK.

02-00:25:05  
Peterson: And there's a dark olive green jacket, and that's called pinks and greens in terms of the -- it's the old Army officer uniform.

02-00:25:15  
Rubens: And you think that -- that obviously changed before --

02-00:25:20  
Peterson: And then it changed to the green uniform, then, somewhere --

02-00:25:24  
Rubens: Before Korea -- before Vietnam.

02-00:25:26  
Peterson: I guess so.

02-00:25:27  
Rubens: Yeah.

02-00:25:28  
Peterson: It had to be late 60s, maybe.

02-00:25:28  
Rubens: That's be fun. I'd like to find that out.

02-00:25:30  
Peterson: I don't know.

02-00:25:31  
Rubens: OK. OK.

02-00:25:32  
Peterson: But anyway, we had a wear-out period that extended longer in reserve than it did on active duty.

02-00:25:39  
Rubens: And then, where, literally, was your uniform laundered and cleaned? I mean, were people responsible for that individually?

02-00:25:44  
Peterson: Oh yeah.

02-00:25:45  
Rubens: OK.

02-00:25:46  
Peterson: Oh yeah, we did our own. I mean, we took it someplace to have it done.

02-00:25:50  
Rubens: Somewhere. Yes. And -- this is so silly, but would you --

02-00:25:52  
Peterson: At the Oakland Army Base, some times.

02-00:25:56  
Rubens: OK.

02-00:25:57

Peterson:

They had facilities there for a uniform cleaning and pressing and laundry.

02-00:26:02

Rubens:

And so you changed -- I'll assume those meetings, the times you went to the classes and meetings, et cetera, at night, would you come home and have dinner first and then go down? Or sometimes would you --

02-00:25:16

Peterson:

Usually, but not always.

02-00:25:17

Rubens:

Yeah.

02-00:25:18

Peterson:

As you get -- as you get more responsibility, it tends to take more time.

02-00:26:21

Rubens:

Right.

02-00:26:22

Peterson:

And so I tried to avoid a lot of travel time. So, if I was working at the university and would go to the Oakland Army Base, I didn't want to go home and then back again.

02-00:26:31

Rubens:

Sure. Sure.

02-00:26:32

Peterson:

So I would very often bring my uniform with me and change, either at work or down there.

02-00:26:40

Rubens:

Right.

02-00:26:42

Peterson:

And eat dinner on the fly and just -- whatever I could.

02-00:26:45

Rubens:

Yeah. Yeah. I did an interview of some people who were associated with the Oakland Pants Company. It was a manufacturing company out in San Pablo. Actually, Martin is familiar with the area because it's undergoing rehab now and it's going to be the downtown theater section or something. But this company manufactured uniforms for Greyhound Bus or Postmen. But, I never asked if they did for the military, so I just don't know -- where did you literally go get fitted for your uniform?

02-00:27:24  
Peterson: Well, there -- most posts and Oakland Army Base was among them, I guess. Yeah, it had to be. They had their own Quartermaster's Clothing Sales Store.

02-00:27:34  
Rubens: OK.

02-00:27:36  
Peterson: And these clothing -- these clothing items were either manufactured at the Philadelphia depot or contracted through the Philadelphia Quartermaster Depot. And, so all the stuff that you got was military made or made for the military.

02-00:27:54  
Rubens: Got it.

02-00:27:55  
Peterson: And you didn't go to civilian places, generally. Maybe I should take that back because some commercial companies did have uniforms. And the reason I say that is that when we got our uniforms at the ROTC here, back in college days, our uniforms were contracted through Roos Brothers. Now, you don't remember Roos Brothers?

02-00:28:22  
Rubens: Of course I do. I do.

02-00:28:23  
Peterson: Oh, you do?

02-00:28:24  
Rubens: He won't know them.

02-00:28:26  
Peterson: Yeah, right.

02-00:28:27  
Rubens: Yeah.

02-00:28:28  
Peterson: And, so I got my --

02-00:28:29  
Rubens: This was a department store in --

02-00:28:30  
Peterson: And so I got my -- I got my uniform from Roos Brothers, over here on Bancroft Way.

02-00:28:33  
Rubens: I mean -- I remember that, also, with brownies and girl scouts. You know, you got them through Sears.

02-00:28:39  
Peterson: Right. OK. Yeah.

02-00:28:43  
Rubens: So maybe this was the same thing?

02-00:28:44  
Peterson: Yeah, there was an outlet for them.

02-00:28:45  
Rubens: OK. But yours -- your khakis, summers and winters, came through the Army Post basically?

02-00:28:52  
Peterson: Yes, Quartermaster Sales Stores.

02-00:28:55  
Rubens: Quartermaster Sales Stores. So that was in your purview at some point when you were studying a part of the Quartermaster --

02-00:29:02  
Peterson: Sure. Yeah. Part of what we learned.

02-00:29:06  
Rubens: Right. Who says -- because this is the most trivial of all -- who says when -- is there a certain date when you have to wear the --

02-00:29:10  
Peterson: Oh yes. Oh absolutely.

02-00:29:13  
Rubens: You know what I'm going to say. OK.

02-00:29:14  
Peterson: And it hasn't anything to do with the weather --

02-00:29:16  
Rubens: OK.

02-00:29:17  
Peterson: -- when it should.

02-00:29:19  
Rubens: OK. It's just --

02-00:29:20  
Peterson: It's just on --

02-00:29:21  
Rubens: -- March 21, June 21 --

02-00:29:22

Peterson: Yeah, I've forgotten what the dates are.

02-00:29:23

Rubens: But you know you put it on --

02-00:29:24

Peterson: But there are specified dates when the uniform changes from summer to winter. However, now, they may not do that. I mean, I haven't been in touch lately because it seems like they wear the same uniform all of the time with fewer outer garments on.

02-00:29:43

Rubens: You had how many girls and how many boys?

02-00:29:45

Peterson: Three girls.

02-00:29:46

Rubens: Three girls and one boy?

02-00:29:47

Peterson: No.

02-00:29:48

Rubens: Just three girls. You said that.

02-00:29:50

Peterson: Just three girls.

02-00:29:51

Rubens: I'm sorry. Three girls. Did any of them ever -- were they ever interested in your military --

02-00:29:59

Peterson: Interested in my military career? I guess so. Yeah, I guess so -- although, I don't think they were interested enough to do anything -- anything for themselves.

02-00:30:03

Rubens: But they didn't -- also didn't --

02-00:30:05

Peterson: They were polite to me, yes.

02-00:30:08

Rubens: I didn't -- I just wondered if they were young -- how young they were during -- well, we can figure that out. You said they were born in 56 is the first one --

02-00:30:10

Peterson: Well, 56 --

02-00:30:18  
Rubens: -- so 76, the oldest is 20. Is she having strong opinions about military and Vietnam and or maybe that wasn't an issue in your household.

02-00:30:28  
Peterson: I don't think so. Yeah. She -- no. I can't -- I must say I can't really pin on anything there. She'll probably say this and say, aha, but how about that. But -- and I might not remember.

02-00:30:48  
Rubens: I -- you and I, we have to have another talk. So you may think of things. Was there anything Martin that you thought should be asked at all? He didn't want you to --

02-00:31:12  
Meeker: So, so just something that you said at the beginning in which you talked of -- you characterized the Oakland Army Base as not necessarily one of the most interesting or important Army Bases that exists in the United States, of course.

02-00:31:26  
Peterson: Well, I might not characterize it by saying important.

02-00:31:30  
Meeker: OK.

02-00:31:31  
Peterson: It was extremely important. But, you know, it's not glitzy.

02-00:31:34  
Meeker: OK, glitzy.

02-00:31:35  
Peterson: It doesn't have maybe the glamour that another post might, another base might, with some important, either feature or geographical or building feature that some other place might have.

02-00:31:48  
Meeker: In the way that the Presidio is big and glamorous.

02-00:31:54  
Peterson: Exactly, with a lot of history. A lot of history. History going back to the 1700s in the case of the Presidio.

02-00:31:58  
Rubens: OK.

02-00:31:59  
Peterson: Whereas the Oakland Army Base -- you know, I don't know.

02-00:32:03  
Meeker: So it's not glitzy but it is important.

02-00:32:05

Peterson: Oh my. Yes.

02-00:32:06

Meeker: Well, what would you attribute that importance to? Sort of an overview perspective, I guess.

02-00:32:14

Peterson: Well, I don't know intimately, but I suspect that there is a huge amount of technology development there in terms of material -- freight handling, material handling, and I think that that's enormous. And I don't know how much of it went on here and how much of it went on in the East Coast and how much of it went on in Seattle or wherever -- but, I have a feeling that the Oakland Army Base and the Oakland terminal as well was very early in the development of this container -- containerization. And that, gosh, that's so enormous. We don't think of any other way of shipping, now. And that was early on, I think, in the development. So that was extremely important, I think. Colossal.

02-00:33:12

Meeker: Yeah. So, were you able to witness this transformation in shipping from your vantage point on this?

02-00:33:16

Peterson: Only from the freeway.

02-00:33:19

Meeker: OK.

02-00:33:20

Peterson: You know, no more than you would have been able to, I think, although we did go down Maritime Street on the Oakland Army Base and saw lots of this activity. We might -- we -- maybe we saw it closer, but we didn't -- at least, I didn't get right into it and observe it firsthand.

02-00:33:40

Meeker: Did you notice at all any sort of changing population of the base as far as the sort of professions that the servicemen and women would have been involved with in relation to maybe some of the changes -- the changing technologies that we're talking about?

02-00:34:00

Peterson: No. I'm sure there was, but I -- I would not have been necessarily aware of it.

02-00:34:05

Meeker: OK.

02-00:34:06

Peterson: Yeah.

02-00:34:07

Meeker:

All right, I just wanted to get that question asked.

02-00:34:13

Rubens:

Yeah. I think we covered it. This has just been fantastic for me.

Interview #2: September 9, 2007  
[Audio File 3]

03-00:04:28

Rubens: Well, Mr. Peterson, we're going to fill in a bit.

03-00:04:47

Peterson: Transition.

03-00:04:48

Rubens: Some of the -- yes, the interview that we did last -- two months ago. It says the dates there. And one has to do with your transition of when the reserved school actually left the Oakland Army base to Dublin.

03-00:05:06

Peterson: Camp Parks.

03-00:05:07

Rubens: Camp Parks, out in Dublin, here in the Bay Area. And that was in the year '75.

03-00:05:12

Peterson: Seventy-six.

03-00:05:13

Rubens: Seventy-six was the year. Were you a part at all of the selection, or how did it come about that the school moved?

03-00:05:23

Peterson: I couldn't really tell you precisely, but my assumption would be that they were just trying to taper down and move some units out of there that had been there. Not all the units went at that time. They obviously did later, but I don't know what the sequence was or what the selection process was or how they selected which units would go.

03-00:05:45

Rubens: Can you remember being told, your next class will meet in Dublin?

03-00:05:52

Peterson: No, I don't really remember that.

03-00:05:56

Rubens: When you go out to Dublin, what is your status in the Army? What are you called?

03-00:06:03

Peterson: We're reserves are the Army.

03-00:06:04

Rubens: You were then teaching.

03-00:06:07

Peterson:

No, not in nineteen-seventy-five or six -- yes, I guess I was. I don't remember the exact seq-- I may have been teaching at that time. But I taught for a relatively short time, based on the total time I was in the school. Because I was in the school for about 18 years, and I only taught for maybe two.

03-00:06:38

Rubens:

Now it's all in that, and I'm -- it just floods from my head. What were you doing those 18 years?

03-00:06:42

Peterson:

I started as an Administrative Officer for the school. And I was a Supply Officer. I was a Secretary. I was the Assistant Commandant. I was an instructor. And then I was a Commandant. I may have even missed one. Oh yeah, I was an Assistant Training Officer, too. So I was a number of things in the unit. The fact that I was in the unit all that time doesn't mean that I did the same thing the whole time.

03-00:07:16

Rubens:

Assistant Training Officer? What did that mean?

03-00:07:22

Peterson:

Well, the school was training. So all the training, the classes, all the arrangements for the classes. The class material, the class equipment, the locations. Everything having to do with conducting the classes was part of the Training Officer's responsibility.

03-00:07:43

Rubens:

With the conducting the classes. And I thought that -- was your focus most of the time on supply?

03-00:07:50

Peterson:

No. Definitely not. Not in the school.

03-00:07:54

Rubens:

OK. Is there one subject? I mean, though you had all these jobs --

03-00:07:58

Peterson:

Well, the fact that I was a Supply Officer had nothing to do with my position in the school. You could be anything. Any branch.

03-00:08:06

Rubens:

What did you like best about it? Did you like this variety, or did you --

03-00:08:11

Peterson:

Yeah. Yeah, indeed. You get to know pretty much how the whole school ran.

- 03-00:08:17  
Rubens: When you finally became Commandant in '77. And that's out of Dublin. By then, I think you said there were about 100 people under you?
- 03-00:08:29  
Peterson: Well, yeah, it varies a lot, and depending on whether you count students or not. The staff and faculty was probably 40 or so, maybe. Quite a few. And then the students would go up and down, and the classes weren't always conducted at the same time over the same period. And classes of different lengths and different scopes and -- everything was different.
- 03-00:08:58  
Rubens: How is it that you became Commandant? What was the selection process? I assume you were an assistant Commandant when you moved out to Dublin.
- 03-00:09:12  
Peterson: I may have been the assistant training officer at that time. Director of Training. That may not even be in there. Director of Training.
- 03-00:09:20  
Rubens: What do you remember about that position?
- 03-00:09:22  
Peterson: Well, that one, again, was being responsible for all of the training that went on and it was mostly the director -- the title, I think was Director of Command and General Staff, which means that it was the director of the highest classes that we taught, which was Command and General Staff Officer course. And that was the course given for, generally speaking, captains and majors and lieutenant colonels as students. And so the director was a colonel at that time. So I had become a colonel, I guess by that time, I must have been.
- 03-00:10:05  
Rubens: And then, when you literally go from being Director of the General Staff to the Commandant of the whole school, is that another increase in step? Is there a name for (inaudible) Colonel?
- 03-00:10:17  
Peterson: No. Colonel was as high as you could go.
- 03-00:10:20  
Rubens: So it was reflected in pay or stars.
- 03-00:10:22  
Peterson: No. Nothing else.
- 03-00:10:26  
Rubens: Oh dear. What about in the name?

03-00:10:27

Peterson: All just the same, yeah.

03-00:20:29

Rubens: Seventy-seven -- '76, '77 -- are the years when, basically, the war in Vietnam is winding down. It's not that horrible Hanoi --

03-00:10:43

Peterson: I don't remember all the years so much.

03-00:10:45

Rubens: What about '75? I'm just wondering if you were just aware that you were now facing a new set of demands to train officers?

03-00:10:57

Peterson: Not dramatically. I wouldn't say dramatically. We were of course aware of the war and a lot of people were coming back to our school from the war, who had participated in it. And we'd hear their experiences and so on. But it wasn't a dramatic change in our activities.

03-00:11:33

Rubens: Off-camera, earlier, when we met today, I was talking to you about having seen a young lieutenant colonel on television, who was talking about the field manual that the Army has just re-written for Iraq (inaudible) in a matter of eight months, which was a little quick turn-out. And just, I mean, you know, now the news is so filled with the parallels between Vietnam and Iraq, and I just wonder if you can take your mind back, just to that period. It may be a bit of a wash. You said you knew people were coming back. Do any of their stories stand out in particular?

03-00:12:14

Peterson: No. I can't think of one.

03-00:12:18

Rubens: Or, if not their stories, discussions about you and your fellow officers at the base -- at the school -- about what's happening to the Army now.

03-00:12:29

Peterson: Well, yes, of course, but again, it's difficult to put your finger on anything specific. There were always some concerns about being called in to active duty from the reserve, which is happening now, but it never really happened in that way at that time.

03-00:12:51

Rubens: In Vietnam.

03-00:12:50

Peterson: For Vietnam, right.

03-00:12:54

Rubens:

Because there was a draft, and there were enough people.

03-00:12:57

Peterson:

Yeah, right, right. It was just a totally different approach to supplying troops for that activity. And there are a lot of parallels being talked about now, but there were also differences, too. There wasn't so much of a -- I didn't have direct experience, by any means, but it seems like there was far less of an insurgent kind of activity. There was some, of course, but --

03-00:13:27

Rubens:

You also said, when I asked you -- there's an Army historian who has said that if you want to reduce the Oakland Army base to one critical function, it was supply. It was Marine engineering of schedules, and mechanics, literally, getting boats and planes from here to there. And you think the school moved because, in fact, the base was going to be transformed?

03-00:14:07

Peterson:

We just assumed it was part of -- from base closure, I suppose, although we had no direct knowledge of it. I don't want to say that with any authority, by any means.

03-00:14:20

Rubens:

When you become Commandant in '77, do you have an agenda, or something you want to accomplish? Or do you want to just get those last three years in? You know, what's wrong with that? You know, it's even 27 years.

03-00:14:41

Peterson:

Sure, sure. I was scheduled to retire from the reserve in '81. So going to '80 was what I did and what was normal at the time. We were going to a far different physical facility at Camp Parks than we had in Oakland. And in many respects, it was advantageous for us, and it gave us a building of our own that we didn't have to share with anyone else. We had our own classrooms, our own offices and so on -- some of which we did not have in Oakland. So it gave us a chance for a little more of a space of our own.

03-00:15:28

Rubens:

What else was out there at Camp --

03-00:15:30

Peterson:

Well, they had firing ranges, and some field exercise situations out there, none of which we used, but other units came out there and are still out there now, using all those. And they've expanded their facilities now. I haven't been there for many years, but from what I understand, it's quite an installation now.

03-00:15:59  
Rubens: Did students at the school drive out there?

03-00:16:07  
Peterson: Yes, generally speaking, yeah.

03-00:16:08  
Rubens: Because they were reserve.

03-00:16:10  
Peterson: They were reserves, yeah.

03-00:16:12  
Rubens: Or -- not retired. You couldn't say retired, because they were in the reserves.

03-00:16:15  
Peterson: No, they were reserve -- reservists.

03-00:16:18  
Rubens: And as Commandant, did you have to be out there every day?

03-00:16:25  
Peterson: No. We were reservists as well, as so our typical duty was a weekend a month. But like any position of responsibility, you find yourself there more frequently than that and doing work at home as well. But the official time was a weekend a month and two weeks in the summer. Again, we did usually more than two weeks in the summer for various reasons. If we were hosting a school activity, we'd have a week of preparation before, and then the two weeks, so we'd typically have three weeks.

03-00:17:05  
Rubens: And there was someone who was in charge of the school, so you didn't have to be out there to close Tuesdays and Thursdays, or whatever --

03-00:17:12  
Peterson: No. Very often, there might be classes conducted where I wouldn't be there at the time. So yeah.

03-00:17:20  
Rubens: When you retired, did you appoint who would take your place?

03-00:17:24  
Peterson: No, no. There's a selection process that's probably changed over the years. You asked me earlier how I was selected, and personally I don't really know, but I was interviewed by several people, and at that time, we were under an Army reserve command that was headquartered in Seattle, Washington. So the General from that unit came down and interviewed me as well as probably others. So, as I say, I don't know

what my competition was, nor do I know what the selection process was, totally.

03-00:18:07

Rubens: Under a headquarter command from Seattle. That must have had to do with some consolation that had taken place?

03-00:18:14

Peterson: No, there was an Army Reserve Command that had a number of units under it. It was just an administrative kind of unit. Our training direction came from the Sixth Army at the Presidio in San Francisco.

03-00:18:30

Rubens: OK. They were always the lead.

03-00:18:32

Peterson: Yeah. So we had two people to report to, really. One for operations, and one for training.

03-00:18:39

Rubens: OK. Operations was the Seattle --

03-00:18:43

Peterson: Seattle.

03-00:18:45

Rubens: Yeah. OK. Do you have any nostalgia for leaving the Port of Oakland or [Steinbeck] -- the Army base, I mean?

03-00:18:55

Peterson: Well, yeah. There were some feelings about it, both positive and negative. There was a negative part, so I had to travel farther to get to Camp Parks. The positive was we were getting more space for our operation, and we could have more of a consolidated kind of effort and have more control over what we could use our space for. So, yeah, there were plusses and minuses.

03-00:19:28

Rubens: So once you fully retired, did they give you a party? A gold watch?

03-00:19:34

Peterson: Ha-ha. Well, yeah, we had a little dinner, as I remember, when I left the school, and yeah, I had a little dinner, and the wives and family people came. A very low-key kind of thing.

03-00:19:58

Rubens: And then I think you were saying at the end of the last interview, then there were a handful of people, maybe more, that you've kept up with.

03-00:20:03

Peterson: Oh, yeah. There are several people I still see.

03-00:20:04  
Rubens: But you were not necessarily involved at all with the actual closure, finally, of Oakland. And the school continued, so --

03-00:20:17  
Peterson: Yeah. School is in a different form now, but I wouldn't even be able to comment on what it is exactly. The last I heard, it became a training brigade under the 104<sup>th</sup> Division; the 104<sup>th</sup> Division, also in the state of Washington. But it may still be that. It may not, I just don't know.

03-00:20:45  
Rubens: So if you don't mind shifting gears, we talked just a little that you worked at the University of California at the Lawrence lab or the Berkeley lab?

03-00:21:00  
Peterson: Lawrence Berkeley Lab.

03-00:21:21  
Rubens: At the Lawrence Berkeley Lab.

03-00:21:03  
Peterson: Right, which is now called the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab.

03-00:21:09  
Rubens: And that's the one in --

03-00:21:11  
Peterson: Here. In Berkeley.

03-00:21:13  
Rubens: Up in the hills.

03-00:21:14  
Peterson: Right.

03-00:21:15  
Rubens: We used to call it "L-B-L."

03-00:21:16  
Peterson: That's right.

03-00:21:17  
Rubens: OK.

03-00:21:17  
Peterson: And before that, it was Lawrence Radiation Laboratory.

03-00:21:18  
Rubens: That's right. That's exactly right.

03-00:21:19  
Peterson: L-R-L.

03-00:21:21  
Rubens: Yes. And --

03-00:21:26  
Peterson: But I started working for the university here on the campus in Sproul Hall.

03-00:21:30  
Rubens: I'm pretty sure we did that.

03-00:21:32  
Peterson: Yeah. So I worked there for about -- in the purchasing department and then in the business manager's office for about five or six. Let's see, six years, maybe. And then went to the Lawrence Berkeley lab.

03-00:21:48  
Rubens: And just to re-cap. So that has to be in around the early sixties --

03-00:21:56  
Peterson: Fifty-eight; 1958 I started on the campus. And in '65 I started at the Lawrence Berkeley Lab.

03-00:22:04  
Rubens: Yep. Because I remember saying, boy, these are the auspicious years that the speech movement had happened and --

03-00:22:09  
Peterson: I was in Sproul Hall in a cat-bird position, I guess you'd say. My office overlooked the front steps of Sproul Hall. I was directly above the front steps. Saw it all happen.

03-00:22:23  
Rubens: Did you leave that night they -- what is the word -- rappelled up the --

03-00:22:30  
Peterson: It wasn't that bad.

03-00:22:28  
Rubens: There are pictures of them going up the columns and into that -- do you remember any --

03-00:22:37  
Peterson: No, I never saw that. And maybe it happened. I don't know.

03-00:22:41  
Rubens: It didn't interfere with your --

03-00:22:43  
Peterson: No. Oh, I wouldn't say it didn't interfere. All that activity interfered. I think there was -- it went on for long, long periods of time.

03-00:22:52  
Rubens: About a good semester.

03-00:22:55  
Peterson: Yeah.

03-00:22:57  
Rubens: What's actually starting in January of '65, that's when -- I don't know if it's January, but '65 you did go up to LBL.

03-00:23:02  
Peterson: Yeah, it was in the middle of the year sometime. June, I think.

03-00:23:05  
Rubens: Starting in April, May, June. That's when also the anti-war -- anti-Vietnam War demonstrations start. They get headier in '68, of course, was People's Park incident. But I've never asked this question of anyone, if there was any kind of assault on -- was it Lawrence Berkeley Lab by then? We can look that up and correct it.

03-00:23:35  
Peterson: I'm not absolutely sure.

03-00:23:37  
Rubens: No, I'm not sure, either. But what were you literally doing up there?

03-00:23:39  
Peterson: I was an administrative person. My title when I first went up there was Business Officer for a research division. The research division at that time was called the Inorganic Materials Research Division. And it changed its name, I think, three or four times while I was there.

03-00:24:02  
Rubens: What were you literally doing?

03-00:24:05  
Peterson: I was responsible for all of the work in the division that was not science. In other words, all the paperwork. All of the personnel, the procurement, the staff, the safety, the space assignments. As I say, anything that wasn't science.

03-00:24:28  
Rubens: So, in fact, were there safety threats to LBL during these years?

03-00:24:35  
Peterson: I didn't know of any.

03-00:24:36  
Rubens: You weren't aware of those.

03-00:24:40

Peterson:

They had a security division there and people that worry about that sort of thing. And they had gates. The laboratory at that time had three gates, two of which were open all day. Or, two of which were open all day, one of which was open all night. So there were security guards at each gate all the time.

03-00:25:03

Rubens:

How big would you say, or what's a language to use to say what constituted LBL then. I mean, now I go up there, and it's something I've never seen. It's like a city on a hill.

03-00:25:11

Peterson:

It was a city on a hill then. And it consists of -- and I'm sure this number varies, but there were about 12 research divisions, and ours was one of those 12. And they had the Physics Division, the Chemistry -- Nuclear Chemistry. Medical Physics. I think Energy and Environment started during that time. Earth Sciences Division. There were just a whole bunch of them. You can look at their --

03-00:25:48

Rubens:

Organization chart of the phone book and see what --

03-00:25:53

Peterson:

Exactly.

03-00:25:54

Rubens:

Yeah. So you're there from '65 to --

03-00:25:59

Peterson:

Eighty-nine.

03-00:26:02

Rubens:

You must have seen some dramatic physical growth.

03-00:26:05

Peterson:

Oh my, yes. Buildings were built. In fact, our own division built two major buildings while I was there, and they built a third more recently. So there was lots and lots and lots of growth. And growth happened in our division as well. The laboratory started as a high-energy physics laboratory. And so, over the years, other divisions were started, including ours. And so growth took place in those divisions as well. So there was lots and lots of activity, yes. And lots of awards to scientists for their good work for all those years. It was tremendous.

03-00:26:59

Rubens:

Who did you report to?

03-00:27:03

Peterson:

I reported to the Division Director.

03-00:27:05  
Rubens: Division of the inorganic?

03-00:27:08  
Peterson: Yeah. The Inorganic Materials Research Division. They called them Division Heads for a time. And then I think more recently they called them Division Directors. But it was merely a title change. And those people were in almost all cases faculty members as well.

03-00:27:28  
Rubens: So you -- gosh, you saw a change in many of the chancellors. Were you ever --

03-00:27:39  
Peterson: We didn't have much to do with them.

03-00:27:40  
Rubens: I was going to say, did you have much to do with --

03-00:27:44  
Peterson: There were even Laboratory Director changes during that time.

03-00:27:46  
Rubens: Sure there were.

03-00:27:49  
Peterson: [Macmillan] -- Ed Macmillan was the director when I first started. And then there were several afterwards.

03-00:28:03  
Rubens: Did you have a favorite? Maybe that sounds sort of silly.

03-00:28:07  
Peterson: Yeah, that's kind of silly. (laughter)

03-00:28:07  
Rubens: OK, yeah. It would be directed to -- you were engaged with them, and something was happening, and --

03-00:28:15  
Peterson: Well, I knew David Shirley the best, because he was our Division Director before he became the Laboratory Director.

03-00:28:22  
Rubens: What year are we talking about?

03-00:28:24  
Peterson: Oh, boy.

03-00:28:30  
Rubens: The '90s?

03-00:28:32

Peterson: No, no, '70s.

03-00:28:36

Rubens: OK. He's the Division Director becomes head of LBL.

03-00:28:37

Peterson: Right. Oh, I'd have to look up those years. I could do that. David Shirley became LBL Director in 1981, until 1989.

03-00:28:43

Rubens: All right, we can fill in. Is there something outstanding to say about him? I mean, just descriptively, or in terms of what he --

03-00:28:50

Peterson: Well, I think he was a good leader. He could get good work out of people. And I worked well with him. I felt I worked well with him. And I don't know what else to say.

03-00:29:10

Rubens: Was there anybody in your world at LBL that was also involved with the Army Reserve School?

03-00:29:17

Peterson: Oh, yeah. There were several. There were a couple of people there, yeah. Martin [Schwager] was one. I can't think of any others specifically right now, but there were a few people there that were also in the school.

03-00:29:37

Rubens: Should I know who Martin Schwager is, or are you just naming names?

03-00:29:41

Peterson: He was an engineer kind of guy, I think, up there.

03-00:29:46

Rubens: Did the University ever have a substantial connection to the school, in terms of providing materials, or demonstrations, or --

03-00:29:57

Peterson: I'm sorry. Would you --

03-00:29:59

Rubens: I may not be posing this well. If the University of California, maybe more specifically the sciences, LBL --

03-00:30:07

Peterson: Oh, there was a great deal of interaction between the University of California and the Laboratory (LBL). Our division --

03-00:30:12  
Rubens: Not the University and the Laboratory, but the Reserve School.

03-0:30:15  
Peterson: Oh, no, no, no, no. I'm sorry. No.

03-00:30:18  
Rubens: No, I didn't pose that well. I wondered if they gave lectures. If you would recruit people to do lectures, or it was --

03-00:30:27  
Peterson: No, they were totally different.

03-00:30:38  
Rubens: There may be personnel overlaps, but --

03-00:30:33  
Peterson: Not activities.

03-00:30:34  
Rubens: Not activities. I'm trying to scan my brain to think if there is something I wanted to ask about that. If I wanted to pose it in any way. So in terms of research or even the ROTC. What about the ROTC here?

03-00:30:57  
Peterson: No, not that even.

03-00:30:58  
Rubens: Yeah. Because that became no longer mandatory.

03-00:31:04  
Peterson: Right, right.

03-00:31:05  
Rubens: ROTC was after -- maybe during the war in Vietnam it was not mandatory, so there was less of a --

03-00:31:10  
Peterson: Yeah. I don't know when that change took place, or how gradual that change was. Because when I was in the ROTC, there were literally hundreds of people in the advanced course, which was the one that led to a commission. And now, we went to a graduation recently, where they graduated two people. So it's entirely different. It's a different program entirely. You can't begin to compare.

03-00:31:41  
Rubens: Mr. Coleman is very agitated about all that and involved with that.

03-00:31:46  
Peterson: Really? He feels that the ROTC is not recognized as it should be.

03-00:31:53

Rubens:

The other -- just trying to mine and probe for connections between the University and the Port, the Army base, and then your specific interest, the Army's school -- let me ask you in this way. You know, the Chronicle always has these investigations about -- they're looking for stories. And this University of California has been under the lens a lot, in terms of how it establishes salaries at the big level. I have a friend, or a colleague, really, who has really been pushing the University, looking for the ways in which it has fed information to the CIA or to the FBI, and so I'm just fishing here with you. I mean, were you ever aware of, or did you -- I mean, Army has its own intelligence. As the Commandant of a school -- is that title? Were you Commandant of the school?

03-00:33:03

Peterson:

Yes. Just the Army Reserve School, right.

03-00:33:03

Rubens:

Of the school. As Commandant of the school. Though that was right at the end of your career. That was just really three years, plus -- but even back to when you had these various jobs at the school. Were you aware of CIA, FBI, Army intelligence. Did that impinge on you at all?

03-00:33:23

Peterson:

No. Not at all. If they did, they were very clever about it, because I didn't know about it.

03-00:33:32

Rubens:

(laughter) Let me look at my notes here, and make sure that -- it's more open-ended, what I want to ask you about that long career up at LBL. This is fishing, too, but are there distinctive parts about the job that you want to mention?

03-00:34:05

Peterson:

Well, I felt really quite honored to have that kind of a job that I had and it put me in touch with some very interesting people who were doing incredible research. And even one, whom I knew -- I felt I knew quite well, who got a Nobel Prize. And I said, this is just incredible, to be able to work with these kind of people. These people, who were doing such fantastic scientific work.

03-00:34:43

Rubens:

So who was that, particularly?

03-00:34:45

Peterson:

Yuan Lee. He got the Nobel Prize in chemistry in 1986.

03-00:34:53

Rubens:

What was he doing?

- 03-00:34:56  
Peterson: Oh, I don't know what he was doing. I mean, I wouldn't be able to put it in terms of --
- 03-00:35:03  
Rubens: The actual science.
- 03-00:35:02  
Peterson: Yeah. I could go look it up. But anyway, and he was quite just a really nice guy, and he even played volleyball with us at noon time up there at the lab. So, anyway, and people -- he wasn't the only one, of course that was doing wonderful work -- and just to be with all those people and to help them -- I felt like I was helping them. The budgeting, and whatever I could do to help, there I was, working with these famous people. And I had an office up there with a view of the Golden Gate. I said, they really pay me to do this work, and they wouldn't have to, probably.
- 03-00:35:47  
Rubens: I bet that office with the view also came with a parking place.
- 03-00:35:48  
Peterson: Parking place as well. Not a specific parking place at that time. But there were places to park.
- 03-00:35:59  
Rubens: You know I'm joking, because down on the campus that was such a big deal.
- 03-00:36:03  
Peterson: Well, Yuan Lee made that particular comment, I think, in one of the times he was speaking, that he was very happy to have the Nobel prize, but really the thing that he liked about it most was that he could get a parking place on campus. And he would have trouble parking at the lab sometimes when he'd come up there. He'd say, oh, I can't find a place to park up here. We'd try to help him out and find a place. But anyway, that was.
- 03-00:36:30  
Rubens: But what a nice thing to hear. You liked going to work.
- 03-00:36:32  
Peterson: Oh yeah, I looked forward to it every day. And looked forward to the challenges that were presenting themselves, and what I could do to get the job done. It was wonderful.
- 03-00:36:46  
Rubens: Is there something you're most proud of in what you were able to do?
- 03-00:36:49  
Peterson: No. I can't think of anything specific.

- 03-00:36:52  
Rubens: And is there something you most frustrated with when you left that you hoped your successor would do?
- 03-00:37:00  
Peterson: No, things changed as I left. The director of the laboratory came -- I think it was the day I left. I mean, it was so close to the same time. As I was leaving, the new director of the whole laboratory was coming in.
- 03-00:37:20  
Rubens: Who was that?
- 03-00:37:22  
Peterson: Charles [Shank]. And then our division was also changing, and either at that time, or very close to that time, it changed from the Materials and Chemical Sciences Division, which was changed from that initially.
- 03-00:37:42  
Rubens: Organic.
- 03-00:37:43  
Peterson: Well, it had a couple of other changes, too, in the mean time.
- 03-00:37:45  
Rubens: From materials and --
- 03-00:37:48  
Peterson: From Materials and Chemical Sciences. And they broke it into two divisions. Material Sciences Division and the Chemical Sciences Division. So then things changed and all the personnel changed, and I don't even know exactly what the changes were. But there were some significant changes.
- 03-00:38:08  
Rubens: Had it become -- well, obviously, it had become significantly bigger by the time you left, that it could have a second name and then you'd have to divide it.
- 03-00:38:21  
Peterson: Yeah, and how much bigger, I don't know.
- 03-00:38:22  
Rubens: OK. But in terms of your memory of being able to play volleyball with people at noon. Had that changed? I mean, was there any intimacy, or --
- 03-00:38:35  
Peterson: No. In fact, I went back a few times and played volleyball at noontime after I retired. That was kind of fun.

03-00:38:42  
Rubens: Did UC have a dinner, or anything, when you left?

03-00:38:45  
Peterson: Yeah, we had a big lunch. In fact, that was another time when I had a video tape going. It was really neat.

03-00:38:53  
Rubens: Oh. Tell me about that. Did you do it, or did someone else do it?

03-00:38:59  
Peterson: Well, someone in the division did it.

03-00:39:00  
Rubens: Oh, I should ask for that.

03-00:39:03  
Peterson: This was in 1989. It was down at --

03-00:39:09  
Rubens: Your division, though, at the LBL.

03-00:39:11  
Peterson: Yeah, they gave me a retirement lunch.

03-00:39:16  
Rubens: So people must have spoke at it. So that would be cool to see if that were around.

03-00:39:24  
Peterson: It's on a videotape. It's, you know, the old tape.

03-00:39:31  
Rubens: Now, did we ever talk about your crew connection?

03-00:39:37  
Peterson: Probably not in this interview kind of thing, but you and I have talked about it.

03-00:39:40  
Rubens: So why don't we -- let's just add that for a moment. Did you -- as a lead-in -- did you have other interests that occupied you, such as the Army reserve, and of course your job, but you liked your job. Were you involved in any other [sport] activities, at Berkeley or Oakland?

03-00:40:08  
Peterson: Not as a student, you mean.

03-00:40:09  
Rubens: No. Well, maybe -- were you a student crew guy?

03-00:40:14  
Peterson: Yeah. I rowed on the crew at Cal the time as an Undergraduate. And that was quite a time-consuming activity, because we did it every day down at the estuary. So we usually caught the bus about 4:00 or so in the afternoon and got back about seven something.

03-00:40:42  
Rubens: Was this a public bus, or a bus that --

03-00:40:44  
Peterson: No, a crew bus.

03-00:40:45  
Rubens: Matt Franish drove.

03-00:40:46  
Peterson: Matt Franish drove the bus, exactly.

03-00:40:49  
Rubens: Let's just situate you in time. I know we have it in the beginning of the interview, but you were a student here.

03-00:40:55  
Peterson: From '47 to '51.

03-00:40:56  
Rubens: OK. And how soon did you join the crew team?

03-00:40:59  
Peterson: In '48.

03-00:41:03  
Rubens: You were a sophomore?

03-00:41:03  
Peterson: A Sophomore.

03-00:41:04  
Rubens: Were you recruited, or did you --

03-00:41:06  
Peterson: Well, I had been recruited when I first came in '47. But I said, no, I don't want to do that, I want to play basketball. So I went out for basketball the first year. And that turned out to be not a wonderful decision.

03-00:41:22  
Rubens: How come?

03-00:41:23  
Peterson: Well, I didn't make the team. I mean, there were lots and lots of people that are much better than I.

03-00:41:28  
Rubens: You're a tall guy, though, right?

03-00:41:30  
Peterson: I wasn't as tall as some. Yeah, at that time, I was tall.

03-00:41:36  
Rubens: I hadn't even thought about it until (inaudible).

03-00:41:38  
Peterson: Yeah, right. But I was recruited by the crew at that time. But I wanted to play basketball. So then the second year, I realized that basketball wasn't going to be for me. I said, well, yeah, crew sounds pretty good.

03-00:41:54  
Rubens: Now, you are going to have to remind me, because in '47, Cal's star was shining quite a bit with crew, right?

03-00:42:04  
Peterson: Right, and in '48, they won the gold medal at the Olympics in the eight-oar crew, in London.

03-00:42:11  
Rubens: Were you one the team?

03-00:42:12  
Peterson: No. I started after they came back.

03-00:42:17  
Rubens: I see. OK. Say the name one more time. The what? Ador?

03-00:42:21  
Peterson: Eight-oar crew.

03-00:42:22  
Rubens: Ador.

03-00:42:23  
Peterson: Eight.

03-00:42:24  
Rubens: Eight. Oar.

03-00:42:25  
Peterson: Yeah, eight people. Eight people rowing, one people riding. One person riding. The coxswain.

03-00:42:33  
Rubens: Yelling -- because, let me see, that was in London. Yes. OK. So you were --

03-00:42:36

Peterson:

So they won in 1948. So I started after they came back. They won in, I think it was June of that year, '48.

03-00:42:46

Rubens:

Tell me a little bit about that. To start meant what, literally? Did they have to whip you into shape?

03-00:42:54

Peterson:

Well, you have to learn how to do it. Very few people came to Cal with any rowing experience at that time. They do now. And so, when you start rowing, you start in a big barge; a big, flat-bottomed barge and start pulling an oar and learning how to do it. How to pull it. How to push your legs out. You know, the whole thing.

03-00:43:18

Rubens:

Who's literally training you?

03-00:43:21

Peterson:

The coach.

03-00:43:22

Rubens:

It's a training coach? How many are being trained about at the same time?

03-00:43:27

Peterson:

Well, we were calling it a [scow]; it was a barge. There were eight on each side. So there were 16 people in this barge. So that's how you first learned how to row. And then you graduate into a shell -- or actually a shell barge first and then a shell. But they don't even do that now. And then you learn how to row eight people in a boat.

03-00:43:57

Rubens:

Do they kind of pick eight men that work well together? Is that how they --

03-00:44:04

Peterson:

Yeah, ideally that's what the coach does in order to pick out a winning crew. And how they do that, I don't know. They just try to pick people that make the boat go faster. And so you do that for a year, essentially.

03-00:44:21

Rubens:

The training and getting ready.

03-00:44:23

Peterson:

You start rowing with the freshmen, even though you're not a freshman, in my case. But you can't compete as a freshman because you're not a freshman. So then you essentially row for a year. And then after that, you row into the Varsity.

- 03-00:44:38  
Rubens: So forty- -- the school year '49 to '50 -- no -- yeah, '49 to '50 was your first competition?
- 03-00:44:46  
Peterson: First opportunity to compete. And I did compete a little bit during that year, yeah. I competed as, effectively, Junior Varsity. And then in my final year, '50 to '51, I competed as Junior Varsity again. And we were able to win the Intercollegiate Rowing Association Regatta in Marietta, Ohio, in 1951. That's a pretty big deal. I mean, it was a big deal for me.
- 03-00:45:23  
Rubens: I bet.
- 03-00:45:27  
Peterson: And we still keep up with all these guys.
- 03-00:45:30  
Rubens: Now -- I'm sorry, let me just do the math, here. That seemed to me -- sophomore year, and then you had the two years. OK. And Franish was the trainer, really, right? I mean, he did everything. He was not --
- 03-00:45:50  
Peterson: He drove the bus. But he did more than that. And he, over the succeeding years, then became the boat rigger and the maintenance guy; the guy who did all the work that needed to be done, really, at the boathouse, with the boats, with the shells, and everything else.
- 03-00:46:15  
Rubens: And so, what was his legacy? Say something about him that your friend wanted to get us to tape record.
- 03-00:46:28  
Peterson: Fred Avilez did the interview with Matt. And that was so fortuitous, because shortly after that interview, he died. He was 92, I think. And we kept up with Matt over the years, and after we left Cal -- well, starting maybe 20 or 30 years ago -- and we'd held to our lunches and -  
-
- 03-00:46:53  
Rubens: Lunches of?
- 03-00:46:54  
Peterson: Of our contemporary crew guys. And so he'd come and we'd swap war stories about the crew, and --
- 03-00:47:07  
Rubens: What was it about him that was so enduring?

03-00:47:11

Peterson:

Well, he was just so unselfish about what he did and how he contributed. And he was always -- how can I say it? He was always telling the crew guys, yeah, you're doing fine, keep up the good work and don't give up and all -- pep talk. He was quite an encouragement. And so, I think that was his legacy, was his ability to be friends with all the guys.

03-00:47:51

Rubens:

Team spirit.

03-00:47:52

Peterson:

Spirit. Keep up their spirits.

03-00:47:54

Rubens:

But he's not the actual coach.

03-00:47:56

Peterson:

Oh, no. No, no, no. Not at all.

03-00:47:58

Rubens:

But he was the backbone.

03-00:48:00

Peterson:

He was there. He was there. You know, kind of a guy that would give some encouragement when it was needed. And he could see somebody maybe that was kind of down, or discouraged or so, and he'd go, come on, come on, keep on.

03-00:48:16

Rubens:

Who was your actual coach?

03-00:48:18

Peterson:

Ky Ebright.

03-00:48:19

Rubens:

OK, so Ky Ebright's the legendary --

03-00:48:20

Peterson:

He's the legendary coach. Yeah.

03-00:48:22

Rubens:

Was he your coach the whole time?

03-00:48:24

Peterson:

Well, not that first year. That first year, I -- but the second two years, yes.

03-00:48:29

Rubens:

But I mean, he was in the position, even when you graduated. He was the head coach.

03-00:48:34

Peterson:

Oh, sure. He was the head coach until -- I think until '59.

03-00:48:36

Rubens:

And then, do you have, again, anything particularly that you want to say about Ebright?

03-00:48:44

Peterson:

Oh, yeah, he was an incredible coach. And we didn't really know why. You know, it was one of those things that you know he's there and you know things are going on, but he had his own ways of doing things.

03-00:49:03

Rubens:

Being on the Junior Varsity, did you work a little less closely with him than the Varsity people would have?

03-00:49:08

Peterson:

No, no, no. The whole Varsity squad rowed together. And so, whether you were first boat, second boat, third boat, fourth boat -- fifth boat sometimes. Didn't matter. And people moved between those boats from day to day sometimes even.

03-00:49:28

Rubens:

Was he -- the kids would say today, "awesome," but I don't mean it in that --

03-00:49:34

Peterson:

He was awesome. But --

03-00:49:37

Rubens:

Was he approachable?

03-00:49:38

Peterson:

Yes. But he was -- I hate to use the word "God" because that's kind of irreverent in a sense, but --

03-00:49:47

Rubens:

But in that sense of awesome, you were --

03-00:49:49

Peterson:

It was that kind of a feeling, yeah.

03-00:49:51

Rubens:

Something very charismatic and powerful. How did he and F work?

03-00:49:57

Peterson:

Well, they worked pretty well together, I think. I think Matt had a fondness for Ky, and Ky for him. I think they both appreciated and recognized what the other did, and how the other one contributed and of course Ky was the leader. He told everybody what to do. But he did it in such a way that people did it willingly.

03-00:50:23  
Rubens: Do you think he listened to Franish? I mean, he respected what he had to say?

03-00:50:25  
Peterson: Oh, I think he did, oh yeah.

03-00:50:30  
Rubens: I mean, because Franish started as a --

03-00:50:33  
Peterson: Just a mechanic. Kind of a -- he had been in the Air Force, as you well know, and did mechanical work there.

03-00:50:41  
Rubens: But then his skills as a rigger, I guess, and --

03-00:50:44  
Peterson: Yeah. And that was the mechanics of -- right. And he could fix things he could put things together. He could design things. There were just an incredible number of things that he could do.

03-00:50:58  
Rubens: So I'm sure Ebright respected that.

03-00:51:03  
Peterson: Oh, much.

03-00:51:02  
Rubens: And depended on it.

03-00:51:03  
Peterson: Both. Yes, yes.

03-00:51:05  
Rubens: Were either of them jokesters or other personalities?

03-00:51:10  
Peterson: I don't think either one of them would be considered a jokester. They had, I think, a dry humor about them. But not a flamboyant kind of jokester.

03-00:51:24  
Rubens: It's business.

03-00:51:25  
Peterson: Yeah, pretty much. Pretty much business.

03-00:51:28  
Rubens: You said Ebright left in '59. When you came to work for the University, did you then become involved in -- I can't think of the word, like support -- a support for the crew team?

03-00:51:43  
Peterson: Well, we always supported the crew team. You know, financially and emotionally through the years.

03-00:51:48  
Rubens: When you say "we," do you mean you and your fellow --

03-00:51:51  
Peterson: Yeah. Fellow oarsmen, and I see them frequently now. We're having a lunch, in fact on the 26<sup>th</sup> of September. We try to get as many of our contemporaries together as we can.

03-00:52:03  
Rubens: Now, was it Gladstone who built that new crew house?

03-00:52:08  
Peterson: It was built during his tenure as coach, yes. Yeah, he's been instrumental, of course, in the success of the crew -- not reviving, so much, but -- well. Some would say that, I guess. I don't know whether I can say that. But he's been a wonderful coach. And had been very successful.

03-00:52:37  
Rubens: I got to go down and see that new --

03-00:52:39  
Peterson: If you haven't seen it, you should.

03-00:52:39  
Rubens: We did, we toured it and --

03-00:52:42  
Peterson: Oh you did see it.

03-00:52:43  
Rubens: Yeah. So, well, let's stay with you for a minute. So, is there anything more you'd like to say about your activities on behalf of crew, or with crew?

03-00:52:51  
Peterson: Well, as I say, we try to keep together even now, with the same people. Well, Fred, Fred Avilez and the people of kind of '51, '52 is what we call the group, but it goes back to '48, and up to maybe '53 or four or five.

03-00:53:11  
Rubens: You know, I think somebody who really understands the rhythms and what the conditions of the boat were should probably interview you guys. We can come to a lunch, and I don't know what questions to ask --

03-00:53:24

Peterson:

Yeah, it's pretty hard to say how it works, because when you're doing it, you're not fully aware of how it works. At least I wasn't. And you pull that oar and you try to keep without rocking one way or the other to tip the boat you try to keep in rhythm. You try to all row together, which makes the boat go faster.

03-00:53:47

Rubens:

But you did it because you were winners in that --

03-00:53:48

Peterson:

Yeah, we did win that --

03-00:53:50

Rubens:

Well, I have to take a quick break.

03-00:53:53

Peterson:

That's a good idea.

03-00:53:54

Rubens:

So let's take a break, and then see --

03-00:53:56

Peterson:

Because I got two calls while we were there, and I want to see who they are.

03-00:54:00

Rubens:

Fine. Let me take that off you. And then I just want to turn this off so the sound doesn't hear it. (inaudible).

[Audio File 4]

04-00:00:00

Rubens:

This is basically tape four of our interview with Conway Peterson. It's tape two of today's interview, which is the second day, the second interview we've had. And today is November -- November. September seventh. September seventh. I think our president said that was D-Day one time.

04-00:00:33

Peterson:

What? No.

04-00:00:35

Rubens:

I think there was a joke about it. But we were talking about the crew. Do you think that anything would replay in your mind, if there was anything else to say about your activities in support of the crew?

04-00:00:49  
Peterson: Well, we had quite an activity to build that new boathouse. Quite a fund-raising support activity. And we all contributed to that. But T. Gary Rogers is the one who put up the big money for that.

04-00:01:07  
Rubens: And I don't know who that is. Should I know who that is?

04-00:01:08  
Peterson: Maybe not. He's the CEO, I think, of Dryer's Ice Cream?

04-00:01:13  
Rubens: Oh.

04-00:01:15  
Peterson: I hope I have the title right. I may not.

04-00:01:20  
Rubens: We know it's Dryer's. T. Gary?

04-00:01:23  
Peterson: T. Gary Rogers.

04-00:01:23  
Rubens: And was he a crew person?

04-00:01:26  
Peterson: Oh yes. He was class of about, oh -- I may get this wrong, but somewhere around 1960. And he put up big money for that boathouse, and so it's called the T. Gary Rogers Rowing Center now, which is certainly appropriate. Because he's been a big supporter, not only financially, but emotionally, too. He's been a big, big help.

04-00:01:57  
Rubens: How is Cal doing these days?

04-00:01:58  
Peterson: Very well.

04-00:02:00  
Rubens: Good. Did Gladstone remain?

04-00:02:05  
Peterson: He remains as the crew coach.

04-00:02:06  
Rubens: As the coach, even when he was --

04-00:02:09  
Peterson: Even when he was Athletic Director, he was the crew coach, too. And when I first heard about that, I asked him. I said, you do two -- those are both full-time jobs, if not more. And I said --

04-00:02:22  
Rubens: He's not that old. I mean, he looks pretty --

04-00:02:26  
Peterson: He's sixty- -- yeah, 65, 66, something like that.

04-00:02:31  
Rubens: He looks very fit. Well, you guys all do.

04-00:02:33  
Peterson: Well, yeah. Most do.

04-00:02:36  
Rubens: Do you remember crew -- what (inaudible) -- did you do rowing now? (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)?

04-00:02:39  
Peterson: Afterwards? No. Not really. Did it a few times, but not with any regularity. Some have done that. Just kept up with it.

04-00:02:48  
Rubens: Gladstone. Was he also a crewer? Was he under Ebright?

04-00:02:54  
Peterson: Oh, no. No, no, no. He rower at -- oh, boy, I don't know, Syracuse, I think.

04-00:03:03  
Rubens: OK. All right. Just in terms your own career and interests, are there any other areas that we think we should cover, vis-à-vis -- particularly with the University, and the Army.

04-00:03:16  
Peterson: Well, the University has been a huge part of my life, as you can tell, and I have a lot to say for that and a lot to be grateful for.

04-00:03:26  
Rubens: Well, I think the University also should document people such as you, who have worked for so long and in so many capacities to bring honor to the University. So I do hope that -- I will be meeting with Gladstone, and I hope we can do some kind of short set of interviews with people that are very specific to their rowing. I mean, someone who knows about the sport. But, you know, [with use] [the Franish] and you -- someone did that wonderful hour or more documentary on crewing at Berkeley. You've seen it; I can't remember what it was. It was shown when the boathouse was opened.

04-00:04:08  
Peterson: Yeah.

04-00:04:11  
Rubens: It's nice.

04-00:04:12  
Peterson: I can't think of the name.

04-00:04:12  
Rubens: I can't think of the name, either.

04-00:04:14  
Peterson: Yeah, that was nicely done.

04-00:04:16  
Rubens: Is there -- let me ask you one other question. Some of my questions are ill-formed and so there's nothing to say about it.

04-00:04:24  
Peterson: And some of my answers and ill-formed.

04-00:04:27  
Rubens: Is there anything in generalization that you find you might be able to make about department -- and I mean culture; I mean bearing -- when you worked up at LBL. Just about what the atmosphere was like. Did you wear a suit and tie to work? Not a suit and tie, but maybe a coat and tie?

04-00:04:50  
Peterson: Yes. That's pretty much outdated now, I think. And even when I was there, I may have been the only one -- or only one of a few, maybe, I should say. I shouldn't say the only one. But there were a few who still did that. And some of the faculty still did that at the time. I don't see that much now.

04-00:05:18  
Rubens: Meaning at least wore a tie with a sports jacket.

04-00:05:23  
Peterson: Yeah. But even sometimes -- I mentioned volleyball before -- even some days, afternoon I would not have tie on. Just didn't get it back on somehow. But --

04-00:05:40  
Rubens: To you, what did that mean?

04-00:05:42  
Peterson: Excuse me?

04-00:05:43  
Rubens: What did that mean to you?

04-00:05:44

Peterson:

That means that I guess I was pulling away, too, from the formality of the coat and tie. But I did pretty much wear a coat and tie in the morning every day. And sometimes in the afternoon. And if I was going to a meeting at the director's office, probably a good idea to put it on. Although, even then, everyone didn't wear them.

04-00:06:10

Rubens:

I asked that question because I wanted to put it next to the culture of the military. I suppose you are taught -- one is taught when they're a recruit, when they really are actually active in the military. There's a standard of dress and how to make your bunk and appearance, which then carries over.

04-00:06:38

Peterson:

Right. And I guess you're kind of working around into a code of -- what is it? I may not even know the right words, either, but a respect for the office. A respect for the organization. As a representative of the organization, you should da-da-da. And I think that's an appropriate thing. I think even in a casual dress, one can look respectable, or look well.

04-00:07:26

Rubens:

Put together.

04-00:07:27

Peterson:

Well put together. And I think that's appropriate for any organization. Military, I think especially. I think -- and I don't know. It's hard to say how it is now, because I haven't been close to it for many years. It's been 25 years since I last was associated with it in a formal way. But I'm proud of what I did in the military. I'm proud of what I did at the University, and I think dressing reasonably is a reflection of that.

04-00:08:05

Rubens:

That's wonderful. And so I think I asked it, but I'm going to ask it again. When you were Commandant, and would go out to Camp Parks, you wore your uniform. And what did that uniform consist of, to the end?

04-00:08:22

Peterson:

Well, it depended on the time of year sometimes. You had the summer uniform in the summertime and the winter uniform in the wintertime. But at the end, it was what we call the "green uniform," the green trousers and green jacket -- or, it's actually a coat jacket that was fingertip length. But even between then and now, things have changed to the point where we will often wear just the green trousers and a shirt. A light green shirt, with a tie, often, or not. And then in the summertime, we wore what we call a khaki uniform -- was this color. Shirt and trousers, with or without a tie. And it went from long-sleeve

to short sleeve. I mean, there have been some changes in this uniform over the years, but --

04-00:09:35

Rubens: But a jacket in the summer?

04-00:09:37

Peterson: No.

04-00:09:38

Rubens: No jacket. OK.

04-00:09:39

Peterson: At that time. I don't know what they're doing now.

04-00:09:43

Rubens: And then your ribbons that showed your rank? Or was there a hat?

04-00:09:47

Peterson: And a cap. Well, I --

04-00:09:50

Rubens: Or by the time you're a Lieutenant Colonel, you're wearing --

04-00:09:53

Peterson: There's a cap, a bill cap with scrambled eggs on it, they call it. That starts at Major in the Army. Starts at Commander in the Navy. And that's a distinction of rank.

04-00:10:08

Rubens: Bill cap. It's still called a cap, even though -- OK.

04-00:10:11

Peterson: Yeah.

04-00:10:12

Rubens: OK. Bill cap starts at Major?

04-00:10:14

Peterson: Well, with the scrambled eggs on it, starts at Major in the Army.

04-00:10:18

Rubens: And at Navy?

04-00:10:19

Peterson: And at Commander in the Navy.

04-00:10:22

Rubens: I've never known how to tell by the --

04-00:10:24

Peterson: Yeah.

04-00:10:25

Rubens:

Do you -- see, that's what I hoping eventually to -- all right. We're going to look at what you brought in just a minute. But does the training about one gets about deportment in the Army, does that carry with you, or is there reinforcements in either classes, or simply by the company you keep, there's a way that people behave?

04-00:10:51

Peterson:

That's a very good question. Because I've wondered on that myself. There isn't much formal training in that subject matter after initial entrance into the service. But it's reinforced subtly, probably, just by example. At least that's what I like to think. If one sees a violation of that code, I suppose one could mention it to the individual. I don't know.

04-00:11:33

Rubens:

Well, some people, actually, suddenly I'm thinking about it. I think [Coleman] - some people's job it was to handle inappropriate behavior. I mean, literally. You mentioned security up at --

04-00:11:46

Peterson:

LBL.

04-00:11:47

Rubens:

LBL, and I think Coleman told me a couple of stories where he had to certain (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

04-00:11:53

Peterson:

Well, I think that happens in civilian as well as Military --

04-00:11:56

Rubens:

Sure. Any institution has its --

04-00:11:58

Peterson:

In any institution. Someone comes to work in shorts and a T-shirt or something like that. It sparks thinking about dress. Shorts and a T-shirt and flip-flops or something. They'd probably get some kind of a notification from somebody; some message would be given in some way.

04-00:12:19

Rubens:

So I'm going to just use that to in conclude -- kind of jump back to your years when you had that variety of jobs, and when we edit your transcript, we'll make sure that we have the sequence of your jobs. We could have a [Vida], you know, of whether it was Assistant Training Officer, and then -- I wrote down the list. You get the exact names. But just to jump back there -- I almost lost the question and how I was going to pose it. I had asked you if you had seen -- I didn't use this

word -- rebellion in the Army. I posed the question wrong. Because you were in the school; the Reserve school. And I was trying to get at what differences you have seen as a result of the Vietnam war, and all of the social protest that was going on. But you were in a sector and an institution that was, I would think not have received direct --

04-00:13:15

Peterson: Pretty much free there.

04-00:13:17

Rubens: Yeah. I mean, maybe some students were more uppity at times.

04-00:13:23

Peterson: Here at the University, yeah.

04-00:13:25

Rubens: Yeah, oh here. But also even in the reserve -- maybe not --

04-00:13:27

Peterson: Well, it was -- the reserve at that time was pretty much voluntary.

04-00:13:34

Rubens: Sure. So it was self-selecting.

04-00:13:36

Peterson: There were some in the reserve during the time I was in who were there because they had a continuing reserve commitment after an active duty time that they had been drafted into. I don't know if I said that real well. But there were still people there that were there because -- they didn't want to be there. But very few. And even with that group, we had no difficulty, and there was no rebellion, or anything of that sort. Very prominent. I remember one person who was there, and clearly he didn't want to be there. And there was maybe -- I don't even want to call it rebellion, because it wasn't rebellion, because he did his job. He was an enlisted man. And he was an attorney in civilian life, and probably making pretty good money, and here he had to spend some of his precious time doing what he didn't really want to do. And I remember talking to him a couple of times, kind of in a light-hearted way, and said -- mentioned his name -- you know, it may possibly be true that you might be able to learn something here. I'm not sure, because you're a bright guy, and you're a lawyer and so on, but I think maybe, even there, there might be a time or two when you might learn something here. And you have to be here -- why not just do the best you can, and roll with it? Then I think he did. He took it well. And I wasn't very -- I didn't come down very hard on him.

04-00:15:42

Rubens: It doesn't sound like it, yeah.

04-00:15:43  
Peterson: You know, what's the point?

04-00:15:45  
Rubens: (To people at the door) Are you guys in here at 11? Hi Dave.  
(inaudible) But I think there's a meeting, yes?

04-00:15:51  
DAVID: Yeah.

04-00:15:52  
Rubens: OK.

04-00:15:53  
DAVID: [EAL] dedication.

04-00:15:53  
Rubens: OK. Let me ask the last thing. That was a story well told. Sorry to have that interrupted.

04-00:16:00  
Peterson: That's OK.

04-00:16:01  
Rubens: We did mention your children.

04-00:16:02  
Peterson: Yeah. I had three girls.

04-00:16:04  
Rubens: Yeah. Did I ask you if they ever, at any point turned on the Army, or were they anti-war people, or were they --

04-00:16:10  
Peterson: Oh, no.

04-00:16:13  
Rubens: That was not an issue in your family.

04-00:16:14  
Peterson: No, no.

04-00:16:15  
Rubens: OK. You know what? We can't dilly-dally here.

04-00:16:17  
Peterson: Can't stay here much longer.

04-00:16:18  
Rubens: No, but let me just see what you brought. And should I Xerox some of this?

04-00:16:22

Peterson: Well, yeah. I'm not sure.

04-00:16:23

Rubens: Should we go to the Xerox -- maybe that's what we'll do.

04-00:16:27

Peterson: We can go to another room, if you want.

04-00:16:28

Rubens: Yeah, we'll do that. OK. (inaudible) Let's stop and let's see how this (inaudible). Don't you worry about that. I'll turn that off. And take this. So I'll need to tell them. Because I don't want to keep you much longer, either.

04-00:16:46

Peterson: Well, shall I take this home?

04-00:16:49

Rubens: Yeah, definitely take that home. Do you folks want to come in and why don't I -- come in, come in, David.

04-00:16:59

David: It's not my meeting, I'm just (inaudible).

04-00:17:00

Rubens: Well, give me some help, are you coming here? (inaudible) Let me --