**Janet:** Its June 2nd 1995 and I’m here in the Ellis Island Oral History Studio with Robert Munschauer who was [inaudible 00:01:12] here with the coast guards in-- he was a member of the United States Naval Reserve was here for one month in 1944. And at that time he was receiving training in Staten Island and we’ll talk more about exactly why Mr. Munschauer was here and his recollections of being posted here at Ellis Island. I want to welcome you and thank you so much for coming it’s a pleasure.

**Robert:** Very nice being here.

**Janet:** And you are a first. You are the first who is not a coast guard who actually spent time and lived and ate food here at Ellis Island during the Second World War. So why don’t we start at the beginning if you would say your birth date.

**Robert:** September 21st 1922.

**Janet:** Okay. And where were you born?

**Robert:** Born in Buffalo New York.

**Janet:** And did you live in Buffalo up until the time you volunteered for the--?

**Robert:** No, I moved from Buffalo in the depths of the depression. My dad was out of work for a couple of years I guess and he ended up with a teaching job in Baltimore. In a vocation school system and I think I was about 10 years old at the time. And so it was quite a move because in those days people didn’t move from their own hometown so it was quite a shock especially to my mother. So-- but we moved down to Baltimore in the Chesapeake Bay.

**Janet:** And then you stayed in Baltimore up until that time?

**Robert:** Stayed in Baltimore till I joined the Navy yes.

**Janet:** Do you do you remember why you joined the navy?

**Robert:** Well, I joined the navy of course everybody was all hyped with the war and I wanted to be a pilot, took the preliminary test and passed it and of course I was underage. I needed my father’s signature. I went to get his signature and he wouldn’t sign.

**Janet:** And why didn’t he sign it?

**Robert:** He thought it was too dangerous to be a Navy Flyer. So he said that I’ll let you join the navy as an ordinary seaman and you can work your way up but you’re not going to fly.

**Janet:** And how old were you at that time?

**Robert:** Well I must have been about 19.

**Janet:** So you decided to--

**Robert:** Enlist.

**Janet:** Take what he would offer you that you could do.

**Robert:** Right.

**Janet:** And so you enlisted at age 19--

**Robert:** At 19 now just one other thing, my dad was in the Navy too, World War One and he served in Europe in France. And so my mother wasn’t too tickled about me enlisting. She thought I ought to wait until the draft but I just I wanted to get it out of the way so I could go on to school.

**Janet:** So you had completed high school at that time.

**Robert:** Right.

**Janet:** And had you had you continued on in anyway?

**Robert:** I had taken one year of night school in accounting in what was then the Baltimore College of Commerce which later became the University of Baltimore. And I was interested to become a CPA, that’s why I went.

**Janet:** So what happened, you volunteered for the navy and the Naval Reserve?

**Robert:** The Naval Reserve yes, right.

**Janet:** And--

**Robert:** In other words you enlisted for the duration that’s what it meant, for the duration of the war.

**Janet:** I see.

**Robert:** Whereas if you went in the regular Navy, you enlisted for four year terms so I went whatever it was.

**Janet:** Was there a lot of high feeling about enlisting at that point?

**Robert:** By that time it was yes. In the late 30s, President Roosevelt had a heck of time getting people lined up for this war. He knew it was coming, but by the time I finished high school and [inaudible00:04:24]into the various factories watching the new ships being built people got all round up about it and knew that we had to go over to Europe again because we were over there in World War One

**Janet** Now, what was the date that you actually enlisted do you remember?

**Robert:** I believe I enlisted October the 9th 1942 I believe.

**Janet:** Okay so then what was your course of Naval Service?

**Robert:** Well, the-- I was sent out to Great Lakes Naval Training Station which is just north of north west of Chicago and went to boot camp for I believe eight weeks and it was just basic training. The first four weeks no liberty, no going home, nothing, just constant training, getting up early in the morning, getting out in the field, getting used to navy food which was a big thing-- that was a big problem for a lot of people.

**Janet:** Because it was not good?

**Robert:** It was just I thought it was terrific. But it wasn’t something they were used to. Maybe, it would have been maybe an Irish fellow used to certain kind of food at home and here was a big change so and in that boot camp I met some wonderful team mates-- crew mates. Even if you were not on the boat you said crew. And wherever you were, you were part of the ship’s company, whether you were part of ship or on the station, you were ship’s company.

**Janet:** Now Can you recall your thoughts or feelings during those first four weeks when you were first away from home and with a contingent of young men who were going to serve the country?

**Robert:** Well, you just have to get used to this regimented life. Up at a certain time in the morning. A fellow would come, the lights would go on suddenly in the morning and the fellow in charge of the floor of your protected barracks, would come would and hit a stick against each post go all around telling people get up, get up, get up in and get in and get cleaned because breakfast and then of course then you go out in the field and march for at least a half an hour to an hour in the dark in the cold because this was October, Chicago is very cold and windy.

So it was getting used to that, getting used to the clothes, plain dungarees during the day, navy blues at night, you had to do your own laundry that was quite a challenge my mother always did my laundry. And of course you-- each Saturday we cleaned the barracks, cleaned the latrines and once the latrines were cleaned or been cleaned they were roped out, you couldn’t use them. So all these things you had to get tuned into this time schedule, but in the midst of it all of course you met good friends and we had good base entertainment movie stars what not came to the base. One was *Captain Eddy Pevi* the World Champion banjo player and on a Sunday evening he’d go from one barracks to the other. He’d come in through a blast of snow and sit down, prop his knee up and play that banjo then move on to the next barracks and that’s where it was. And of course we --the bands used to come to that base, *Jack Bennie* used to come to the base *Bing Crosby,* *Frank Sinatra* all entertaining you and--.

**Janet:** Was the basic training very rigorous?

**Robert:** Yes, it was beside the morning marches, we had the exercises. We had the climbing ropes and getting everybody in shape and getting people used to each other. This was a big thing to come into a barracks at night and somebody else would be a little sloppy, somebody else would be [inaudible: 00:08:39] and you had to fit into this whole thing. That was one of the purposes of boot camp besides getting physically was to get you into a mental frame of mind so you get along with people. And that was a big thing with boot camp so that’s why it was over an eight week period. After the first four weeks, you had one weekend of liberty in Chicago or Milwaukee. And Milwaukee was the best town in the world.

**Janet:** Why so?

**Robert:** Families used to meet you right at the train station and take you home for dinner if you wanted to do it, take you to church, mix you with the family and the next time you went on liberty, same thing you could go with the same family or get another family this way you met girls of course which was a big thing so Milwaukee especially was a very warm town. And sometimes we’d go down the Chicago the Aragon the ballroom, Trianon ballroom and wonderful ballrooms with beautiful skies painted with the stars and everything and of course the*USO* girls and so it was it was a tremendous effort and so many things fit in to it

**Janet:** Was that big bands, were there big bands in those places?

**Robert:** Big bands yes. *Glandola Band, Tommy Dorsey Band* and one band after *Dick Jaeger’s* another big man he was more or less out of Chicago. I had a date with *Lawrence Welk’s* niece and I dated her quite a bit and went out to lunch with *Lawrence Welk* and the niece one day.

**Janet:** This was in Chicago?

**Robert:** Now at the time, *Lawrence Welk* was strictly and in between the big bands filling at the—and I think it was in Chicago but not—it wasn’t Milwaukee it was in Chicago now the big bands couldn’t make it that night, he fit in with a small combo this is before his famous now.

**Janet:** So when the eight weeks were up, where did you go from there?

**Robert:** After the eight weeks were up, we pretty much as a unit were shipped to Camp Bradford and also Little Creek. They were bases next to each other in northern Virginia. So we all went there as a team. The base when we got there was practically nothing. It was just a few a couple LS-- new LSTs, a few small landing craft and in other words this new amphibious and this was just getting started and this was to be the biggest base on the east coast it would be a similar base on the west coast for the pacific war.

**Janet:** So was this bas established primarily to do this amphibious training?

**Robert:** Strictly amphibious training right.

**Janet:** So what kind of training did you get there?

**Robert:** Well now I did—I was a trainer we became part of ship’s company in other words they had to staff this base with competent people in the personnel office, in the supply office and in the dispersing office so we were dispersed and became part of ship’s company I was there over a two year period. And we got a-- it was like coming to a job every day. I was in the payroll department called dispersing and I was a store keeper at that time third class, in [inaudible 00:12:31] dispersing so I was-- now we were constantly changing the payroll. People would come in training and they would be shipped out in three weeks so we had these payrolls constantly coming through so were going six weeks for sure

**Janet:** And how many would come in in at a time?

**Robert:** There was 35,000 people coming for training at a time, Army, navy and marines. Now we just handled the navy part. Interestingly also had a secret group called the Beach Battalions. They were fenced off by themselves, no liberty ever. They were working on the *Dormandy Invasion*. Now they were working on maps, they were creating these rubber wraps and maps that were all had the terrain built into the maps, the houses the roads everything that’s what they were working on in this Beach Battalion unit

**Janet:** And they stayed I assume longer than three weeks they were there for a long period of time.

**Robert:** Constantly till they had the job done and I don’t know commander of that unit but part of that unit was Douglas Fairbanks Junior. He was a Naval Officer and his particular l job I understand later on, was to be the first crew up on the beach before they start gunning. They’d go in through the night and establish radio contacts with the ships out at sea.

So they were these Beach Battalions that went up ahead of time. And he used to come in our office in the morning with his big, looked like a bag of Rolls Royce and he would come in and sit down and have a cup of coffee with the supply officer there and it was a regular thing. And he had his own little special uniform that he had designed, strictly navy hat, regular navy white hat officer’s with the braid and everything but he had a solid black one piece looked like an overall made of Milton clothe. No officer’s signatures on it or anything like that. So he was rather a unique looking character walking around.

**Janet:** How was it decided then that you would leave dispersing at Bradford?

**Robert:** At Camp Bradford.

**Janet:** Camp Bradford yes.

**Robert:** Yes our training at Camp Bradford had been going along strong for a couple of years. So in time they start to weed out people who had not seen any fighting. Who had never been to sea? Things like that so they saw me, unmarried, very young so I was moved out with a couple of other fellows moved over into those Quonset huts I told you about. And I was there about a month and then suddenly I was transferred from there I understood I was going to end up on the USS Daedalus which was not built yet. It was being built some place in the Mississippi we was to meet at some time at Mobil Alabama in the harbor there the bay, and meanwhile this crew was being gotten together and we would be sent to various schools.

So I ended up over in in the Brooklyn Navy yard I think for just a week and then bounced over to Ellis Island and stayed here about a month and went training at a supply course school on Staten Island. So every day a navy pick up boat, “Guess who was navy”? Used to come of pick me up, take me to the school, all day school dealt with handling material, storage material, accounting material, ordering material and things like that. Because the ship that were going to be like a head of [inaudible 00:16:38] so we would be doing all the clerical work on this one ship for the benefit of this [inaudible 00:16:45] So it was all do work for me. Excuse me. And then so at Ellis Island and I was here a month--

**Janet:** Do you recall what month?

**Robert:** It had to be in the spring.

**Janet:** Spring of 44.

**Robert:** Of 44 yes, I can’t tell you the month no. It wasn’t listed on my papers as such. It just says USS Daedalus written all the different training locations they didn’t go into.

**Janet:** You were [inaudible 00:17:22] so that meant that you were housed in the coast guard facilities and fed in the coast guard dining room, can you say anything about that?

**Robert:** The only thing I do remember of course coming in the ferry in this slip and coming near the end, and that was the regular ferry from New York, it was a regular ferry.

**Janet:** Well who was coming on the ferry? Who was using that ferry?

**Robert:** I have no idea but it was a regular ferry and it made regular runs over here and if were in New York for the day, I could come pick it up at 11 o’clock at night or 10 o’clock and come--. There was one last ferry each day you going to make that but no. As I remember the little building at the end of the harbor, had a little tower on it, still there. As I remember we used that building, the coast guard used that building as I recall.

**Janet:** For sleeping?

**Robert:** No not for sleeping I think we slept in separate buildings in other buildings. I’m talking about the coast guard officers. But I think we slept someplace else and ate someplace else but as I remember I almost remember going in and check in that I was in the base or that I was leaving the base as I remember. I slept either in that hospital, in a bunk and could look out the window as I had my head down and see the Statue of Liberty of course it would be silhouetted against the sky and-- especially with the moon out, was not lit on the war as most things weren’t lit and so that’s the comings and goings was and everything night I had liberty. So I would come home and then pick a boat from Staten Island eat, change into my whites because it’s spring time and head up to New York City on the regular ferry. I would take subway up and go to the USO and whatever they had free tickets, that’s what I picked up. So I got free tickets to Broadway shows I had free tickets to live radio shows in other words shows like the *Shadow Knows* and just and these were shows where the sound effects were created big table with if it was with thunder, they would have a big sheet of metal and go like that. So it was all that type of thing and my favorite show was the *Perry Como Show* think it was called *The Chesterfield Hour* and he would give about a half hour show before his show, gave a very nice show was very congenial mixing with the people, so that was my favorite I remember going to a ball game and sitting behind *Babe Ruth. Babe Ruth was* and he wasn’t a player, he was a spectator too but I was about two isles behind him I remember that well. So every night for a month, I was going to different places.

**Janet:** Was Babe Ruth wasn’t-- he was a player at the time he just wasn’t a player in that game?

**Robert:** I don’t think he was a player at the time. I think he had stopped playing, retired.

**Janet:** I see.

**Robert:** As I remember but I do remember him sitting in front of me.

**Janet:** Now these ferries did they run frequently to and from?

**Robert:** Yes. I often wondered was it the ferry that was [inaudible00:21:23] here for so long.

**Janet:** It could have been I don’t know how many of them they running at that time. But it would have been like that one if it wasn’t specifically that one. So you always went to New York you did go to New Jersey for any reason?

**Robert:** No, no.

**Janet:** And were there other people in the hospital buildings?

**Robert:** Oh yes, oh yes

**Janet:** I mean were there hospitalized people?

**Robert:** Of course I wasn’t here that long. And I really didn’t establish any friendships because the minute I was here I was going up town, there was no one else in the ship assigned with me in this training I was the only one. So I don’t-- I have no remembrance really of people I remember checking in with the somebody and signing in signing out that type of thing.

**Janet:** Well who would have been in the hospital do you know? I mean who would have been a patient there? Would it have been a coast guard?

**Robert:** Now when I say it could have been a unit behind the hospital. So whatever it was, I knew I could see the Statue of Liberty.

**Janet:** Well you would have to be on Island 2 or probably 3.

**Robert:** Yes.

**Janet:** In order to see that.

**Robert:** Right I didn’t have to move my head around I mean I could just see it very vividly.

**Janet:** And you were in like a dormitory with numbers box?

**Robert:** Yes

**Janet:** And you mentioned something about the food, the coast guard food.

**Robert:** The best food I had in the navy first of all served it family style all set at the table, these platters of meat platters of potatoes, vegetable pasta and they were delicious. And everybody enjoyed it. And the cook would come out and chat with the people. There wasn’t -- there were not that many of us around really you talked before about other people, there weren’t a whole lot of people around. Now this was a coast guard training base also I believe. I don’t remember seeing—which to me means like a boot camp for coast guards I don’t know. But I don’t remember that part but the people I was around. There were not too many people.

**Janet:** Well of course you would have only been there in the evening.

**Robert:** That’s it.

**Janet:** And how about weekends?

**Robert:** I think I worked Saturday, Sunday I had off. In other words all this time I was there I was in command of myself. I didn’t have to report to anybody I knew my crew was up in Little Beach, Long Island with the captain going to gunnery school I knew they were there were but I was in charge of myself. Sunday came along over to New York I would go. Go up to Central Park walk, through there safe and sound no problem when I compare to today and I’m a walker and a hiker and I’ve always been a walker and a hiker I so I just enjoyed New York plus the dances, meeting girls, dating them, taking them home.

**Janet:** And you were the only naval person stationed here and there wasn’t army or air force submarine or any other branch of the service other than the coast guard that you know of.

**Robert:** Right that I know of.

**Janet:** But there were enemy aliens being housed here at right

**Robert:** That’s right.

**Janet:** Or kept here at that time. What do you remember about that?

**Robert:** Well, when we came in with the ferry boat, came into the harbor here as we did we swung around where that park is in the front where the grass is where the walls of honor are and that was as I remember all fenced off.

And these people would be standing detainees, prisoners whatever you want to call them would be walking reading throwing balls things like that just occupying their time and of course this was at the height of the war and we knew they were German and Italians prisoners and we knew mainly the German and America bund some of the suspicious people in there, were housed there. So when we would come of course we would have appropriate gestures and appropriate words and I won’t go into that right now and they totally ignored us which got us even madder.

**Janet:** So they-- how many just roughly?

**Robert:** Quite a few, quite a few walking around. I would say at a glance at any one time you would see I’d say 35 50 something like that.

**Janet:** And so you really never had one to one contact with them not seeing them from a distance?

**Robert:** Not at all, not at all. No. We never went into the main Ellis Island building never.

**Janet:** Okay. Now did you have well you wouldn’t have had a supervisor well you probably had a supervisor at that time did you or you--?

**Robert:** Not here.

**Janet:** Not here.

**Robert:** I was strictly on my own. I was assigned to this training school at Staten Island and I knew that I would be there for a month or whatever the period of time was. And then I would have to join my crew up at Lido Beach.

**Janet:** I see. I see, so when you left Ellis Island you went to Lido Beach.

**Robert:** Lido Beach right.

**Janet:** On Long Island

**Robert:** Right and we stayed at the Lido Beach Hotel which had been converted into a navy training base and barracks and what not and I-- our whole crew wasn’t there but a lot of the crew was there specially the gunnery people and our captain was there

**Janet:** Now they have received training there.

**Robert:** They were undergoing training when I arrived and I was a storekeeper I would not be a gunner so I didn’t have to undergo that training. So I acted as a yeoman or the secretary to my Captain, Captain Carlson and he’d have letters to be done in the morning and when I was finished with that yeoman worked for the day. “Where would I go”? New York City.

**Janet:** How would you get there?

**Robert:** I train along on a rear road and so I made that a trip almost daily, once I took care of my work meanwhile the crew trained and so I was there. And Sundays, “What did I do Sundays?” I went to the Lido beach. The beach is there.

**Janet:** The beach

**Robert:** And of course that was crowded a lot of girls around and I knew my crew members and so forth that’s where we’d go. So--

**Janet:** Okay, okay let’s pause here so we can turn the tape over and then we can continue. So we were talking about when you were stationed at Lido beach.

**Robert:** Yes.

**Janet:** Then did you rejoin some of the people that you had trained with earlier or--?

**Robert:** From Lido Beach, as I remember we took a train down to Mobil Alabama as a as a as that part of the ship crew. And we were stationed at a small naval station on at Mobil Alabama and it was called the Pea Patch was out in the middle of nowhere with a fence around it from that moment on we were really, all those evenings of liberty that was strictly for because it was all work from that point on down there.

Further training, ship wasn’t there yet so maybe another month went by and finally the ship came in. And it was an LST converted, was an LST just built, converted reengineered into a machine shop. So if you can visualize an LST with the big doors that opened up at the foot [inaudible 00:30:11] it would bring a wrecked landing craft in and work on them at the machine shop right there. And out they would go and so forth it was a quite a laze all over draw [inaudible 00:30:28] and so forth so we had these crew that were experts in machine shop work, plus the ship’s company, plus the gunnery, plus the radio man, plus the storekeepers and the yeomen so it was quite a large ship I guess we had about 200 people on it. And--

**Janet:** And where was the ship dispatched to?

**Robert:** We-- when it was commissioned, we-- as I remember we went right out into the Gulf of Mexico and spent several weeks out there on a shakedown cruise. Getting the thing in own shape, getting everybody used to it, all the operations, all the gunnery and they had civilians aboard, engineers that were working with the navy people to familiarize them with the instrumentation and all that kind of stuff. So it was quite a shakedown I guess it took about a mother and we operated on Galveston Texas for that shake down.

**Janet:** It’s called a shakedown?

**Robert:** Shakedown. In other words you shake down or getting everyone trained used to the ship and familiar with the ship’s equipment and so forth

**Janet:** Now the civilians they were there strictly for training purposes and then they got off the ship?

**Robert:** They were the train the naval personnel in other words they were the civilian engineers working for shipyards and so forth and--

**Janet:** What was the feeling aboard the ship while you were doing the shakedown?

**Robert:** Well the big feeling was sea sickness. That was the big thing. I had never been sea sick before my own experience I was up in these up in the bow with a couple of fellows I guy then all of a sudden, a seagull did his business on my hand. Came down from the sky. And the minute I saw it turned my stomach like that and so the rest of my time at sea, I was sea sick constant so I got to the point where I could not go to down below to sleep at night I used to sleep up on the—amongst the equipment deck, in amongst the compass covers, I’d get right in there and that would be my bed.

**Janet:** So how—

**Robert:** The only time when I had to go do my work and I wanted that fresh air because the bunks were one on top of the other with pipes clinging all over you and all this kind of stuff in the air. We didn’t have air conditioning or anything like that and it was hot, Gulf of Mexico, Galveston Texas. The decks were hot so I just like the fresh air so that’s where I lived and but worked down in that little curvy oven office about this size and taking care of all the records and the payroll things like that.

**Janet:** So how long were you aboard the ship?

**Robert:** I was-- we were about I guess about three months, we heading after the shakedown, we were headed for the Panama Canal and we stopped in the middle of the night to load our ammunition some place in Mexico. We spent the whole night the total crew passing this ammunition down the halls down the tools and so forth all night long, headed for the Panama Canal. Just almost got there and we got word that Japan was going to surrender. And you can imagine the joy that we had and we had. And we were turned around and sent back to North Virginia for the ship to be decommissioned can you imagined it. Built, had the crew trained all that done and here it was going to be disbanded but the war was over.

So I was a store keeper first class, never had been in action. So I was what you call frozen that means that I could not get out while the other people we getting out. That I would have to stay for a fixed number of months based on my service. So that other people who had been in action could be discharged so that’s what they meant by frozen.

So I was moved up to Boston Navy Yard there for about a week, every night liberty. Used to go and listen Marilyn Munroe orchestra in the theatres and ended up on a Coast Guard Cutter going to-- no, excuse me no it was a Coast Guard Cutter going to Newfoundland. And I was going to be stationed up there I think six to eight months. In ship’s company, that was a tremendous space up there. Cold, windy only one small town [inaudible 00:35:37] was the only place and there was about 20 houses. Closest city was St. Johns and that was a little bit too far so a result, they entertained us on the base pretty much with entertainment units from New York. USO groups, *Sinatra* coming up again, *Bobe Hope* and other groups coming up and providing entertainment. And we had a civilian help on the base, Newfoundlanders male and female. So we would have dances and of course these Newfoundland girls were anxious to get out of Newfoundland and these navy men there so them naturally-- so we had a good time so I was there for about eight months

**Janet:** So why was your unit sent to Newfoundland?

**Robert:** Just me, just myself.

**Janet:** Just you.

**Robert:** Yes, in other words they were releasing people from the office there, to be discharged because they had been on active duty I mean active duty, fighting duty and I hadn’t so I had to go up and take their place and of course that was being wound too. That station it was a tremendous station though, I mean warehouses all over the place, airport, gun in placements that were down in elevators down in the mountains.

You know that was the last stop on in our place for Lindberg when he flew to Paris, Newfoundland it went right over the base that we would have come to later on And the Atlantic Charter meeting with Churchill and Roosevelt was [inaudible 00:37:28] off our base. Of course that was earlier than when we there but that’s where the Atlantic Charter at [inaudible 00:37:35] Newfoundland.

**Janet:** So then do you recall when you got word that you were actually coming home?

**Robert;** I got word that I was coming home and that I would be flown home and when I say flow home, because my trip up there in the Cutter, it was the most horrible experience I was so sick, couldn’t even get out of bed. Everybody else was sick. Vomit was all over the place. In the men’s room and everything. It was horrible the smell and everything you can imagine when I got up to Newfoundland, I got down, kissed that land. But anyway to hear that I was going to be flown home was wonderful. So I was flown to New York.

A base that’s not even [inaudible 00:38:24] I think a field that was there at the time and passed down to got down to bring Bainbridge on the Susquehanna River in Maryland. And I was there two three days and discharged and bust into Baltimore down to town some place and my parents met me there and that’s-- that was the end of the navy.

**Janet:** When you think back on it now, your whole navy carrier and also being here at Ellis Island are there-- do you have any kind I don’t know feelings or thoughts about having served at that time?

**Robert:** I was very pleased to have served, I was very fortunate that I wasn’t injured in anyway. I didn’t have to go to action although I would have gone it’s just the way it happened. But to come out in one piece, met a lot of wonderful men, met a lot of lovely girls and families. And my memories of these and to see this restored, I just couldn’t give my $100 quick enough for my for my own great grandfather John Peter Munschauer who didn’t come through here but is on the wall of honor and we are anxious with my family to go out and see his name in the garden today.

**Janet:** Wonderful.

**Robert:** But I have nothing but good memories of the war. I know some of the fellows that came out of Vietnam most of the fellows did not come out with good feelings and total bitterness. I had none of that I did have the touch of war had no touch of it at all but--.

**Janet:** Was your great grandfather coming from Germany?

**Robert:** He was coming from [inaudible 00:40:28]came in the probably around 1830. This was before Germany existed. Germany did not exist to 1871 as a Nation. Now there was made up of different states and provinces [inaudible 00:40:28]and kingdoms gets close to 45 various states with not federated to one government that didn’t happen until 1871 so he came over in 1830 and economics was the big reason for the coming over couldn’t own property--.

**Janet:** Were you were you very conscious of that at the time that you were stationed here?

**Robert:** Oh yes because my father and my aunt put together out family genealogy. So and I was always part of it I was always working with my dad especially when I got with Continental Can in our machine shop we had German immigrants machinists who could read German letters and my dad would give me all these German letters and I’d give them to the machinists and they would write them in English for me.

**Janet:** Now where were these letters from, that your father gave you?

**Robert:** From Germany in other words all letters from way back found in the attic by my aunty and my father over a period of time They started this back in the depression and worked on it together and when my dad died he just passed it all on to me so I enjoy doing that now and that’s another good feeling I have about Ellis Island not that they my-- came through here but it was all part of the process.

**Janet:** Yes, well why don’t you tell us briefly for the tape when you got out of the service, how did you meet your wife?

**Robert:** Yes, when I got out of the service I went back to the company that I had worked for before. It was an old Baltimore Banking Institution called Safe Deposit and Trust Company. When I got back I worked in about four or five desks from this young girl, redhead that worked under a grandfather’s clock in the office and I had my eye on her was just a little bit too bashful to talk to her and even introduce myself and I was talking to another girl in the [inaudible 00:43:03]unit and I said, “Who is that girl under the clock?” She says, “Well, that’s Dorothy Kratz”. Yes and I said, “She’s a nice looking girl, I’d like to meet her”. “You want to meet her?” We’re going to have a company picnic I will see that you meet her on that picnic and that’s how we met and that’s when it all started

**Janet:** And how do you spell your wife’s maiden name?

**Robert:** K R A T Z. Another German extraction and I’m working on her family now.

**Janet:** On her genealogy. So did you marry right away?

**Robert:** Yes we married I guess it was a couple of years and we had three lovely daughters. The oldest Debra went to the [inaudible00:43:54] School of Fashion Design in New York, and then my middle daughter went to the [inaudible 00:43:58] College of Art in Philadelphia and she’s a commercial artist now and my youngest daughter Robin, she became-- she went school at the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale. And so all the girls are artistically inclined either with clothes, home decoration or art.

**Janet:** And what are your daughters’ names?

**Robert:** The oldest is Debra.

**Janet:** And maybe their last names.

**Robert:** Debra Schneider and she has three-- two granddaughters, two of my granddaughters. And Joan is not married Joan Munschauer McCray. She’s divorced and then Robin, she has two sons.

**Janet:** So then at then your carrier at the same company?

**Robert:** No I just wasn’t making enough money to get married. So I decided to put out a lot of resumes and I put plenty of them because at that time everybody was trying to get a job. Everybody was trying to find an apartment. It was really quiet a rush. All these fellows coming out service and everything.

So I ended up with Continental Can and in the plant in Baltimore, in East Baltimore and was there for I become the controller of the plant and I continued night school. Till I had a total of about seven years of night school and passed CPA test and became a CPA but remained with continental in other words I didn’t go into private practice. About 198- excuse me 1964 I was transferred to the plant in Patterson New Jersey as a controller.

Then I was transferred over after about four years later. I was transferred to cooperate in New York Corporate Continental Can. And then the whole company moved to Stanford and I had to go up to Stanford every day which was about 65 miles in both directions over the [inaudible 00:46:22] bridge terrible traffic all the time so at 61, I decided to retire and which was in 1983.

**Janet:** And how is this phase of your life your retirement phase?

**Robert:** Wonderful. I enjoy every moment of it. I’ve been very busy hiking. And I’m a bird carver a decoy carver and I belong to a very active group of 400 retired men called the Hobius in Ridgewood, New Jersey. We’re broken down into 25 interest groups everything anything you can imagine bowling, golf, tennis, checkers, chess, hiking whatever you want to talk about that it’s all broken down investments things like that. So it’s a very active group and I have been very active in it, plus my grandchildren. It’s been very fortunate I have one set of grandchildren with their parent   
Bethel, Connecticut and the other pair in Goshen New York

**Janet:** Well looking back what would say you feel very proud about feel very satisfied?

**Robert:** Well I’m very proud that I married Dot. And that we have our children and that I’m proud of being part of the family that I came from the background and the fact that immigrants came over here and every time I think about it, I fill up.

**Janet:** Well I think maybe this is a good note to end on I want to thank you very much for most interesting interview.

**Robert:** Thank you very much and thank you for being over at [inaudible00:48:18] that wonderful talk that you gave.

**Janet:** Oh thank you. Okay, well this is Janet Levine for the National Park service I’ve been with Robert Lloyd Munschauer who was stationed here at Ellis Island for one month in the spring of 1944. And we are always interested in having that aspect of the use that Ellis Island has had in the past as well as receiving immigrants also the military installation here this June 2nd 1995 and this is Janet Levine signing off for National Park Service.