

JONNIE RANKIN

Jonnie Rankin: At that time my name, was, I was married to Jack Ottowell, and I had three small children and I was about 25 years old, at 1943 when women started going into the yards, my name was Ottowell at that time. And I went in the shipyards because I needed the money. My husband, we were really sort of separating, we had one of those crazy teenage marriages and he didn't make much money, and I guess I needed a job and that's the first type of jobs that anybody saw for ten years was war, we got into the war industries. I went in with the second group of women that were hired in Burrard drydocks.

Sara Diamond: It was obviously a big change for women to be in those kinds of industries. How were they advertised that there were jobs there for women, and how did they do the hiring; was it through the union or how was it?

Jonnie Rankin: Well, we just hired out in the hiring hall, I don't know how. I think they needed our labour power that's all and it wasn't like a women's lib hiring, and so you start working and so they opened up and there was quite a lot of controversy from some of the men to work with women, they had a terrible struggle with some of them. But we were hired anyway and we worked through and there was a woman who was the head of hiring women, did the interviewing and sort of had that department, I can't think of her name. There were 2 of them, but one in particular was quite a nice woman, and we just went in and were interviewed and they put us in different departments where they needed help and I got put in the sheet metal department at first.