

Josephine Bogdanich

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Interviewed by Leah Cohen

Transcribed by Maria Planansky with YouTube captioning

Edited by Leah Cohen

Web biography by Maria Planansky

Produced by Brad Guidera & Angel Melendez

Cohen: Good afternoon. Today is September 15, 2020. My name is Leah Cohen and on behalf of the Pritzker Military Museum and Library, I'm excited to interview Sergeant Josephine Bogdanich who served in the WACS in the Women Army Corps during World War II. We're looking forward to your story, so we thought we would begin at the beginning: where and when were you born?

Bogdanich: I was born in Chicago, October 15, 1916 on 1955 West 69th Street by the straight streetcar barns, where my grandmother lived. I was born in her house. [laughs]

Cohen: Wow

Bogdanich: I remember we were at the end.

Cohen: The exact location. What was it like growing up in Chicago in that neighborhood at the time?

Bogdanich: I don't understand.

Cohen: I'm sorry

Other: She said, "What was it like growing up in that neighborhood at the time?"

Bogdanich: It was pretty good. I lived in, um, let's see, about 54th near Halsted if you have any recollection of that. But it was good, it was good. Occasionally, we had a little disturbance, but not much. **[[Again the sign]]** We moved from there and moved out south, further in, about 68th and Racine, which is further, further south and stayed there for quite a while. Then my sister and I joined the [US] Army.

Cohen: Wow. So, before you joined the Army, I was just wondering how many sisters and brothers do you have?

Bogdanich: I had two brothers and two sisters. And the two brothers, the one brother was just a few months older-younger than me, the other's sister she was six years,

the other was eight years difference, and the youngest one she was sixteen years younger than me.

Cohen: The baby.

Bogdanich: The baby

Cohen: What were your parents' occupations, like what did your father do?

Bogdanich: My dad drove the streetcar. He was a motorman, and my mom was a mother and a housewife. She didn't work even before I was born. So she came from a [unclear] she stayed here and with her sisters and-uh, just, wait. Now, I think if I remember right, she did some housework over, that would be east, for the wealthy to-do people and then she got married and that was it.

Cohen: She raised the family. She raised a large family. Yeah, um, excuse me, was your family affected by the Depression?

Bogdanich: Yes and so was I.

Cohen: How?

Bogdanich: For a few years until my dad got work again. Yeah, it was rough, but we managed.

Cohen: Yeah. Which high school did you attend?

Bogdanich: Visitation, 55th and Green. One of those streets in there. I can't remember.

Cohen: Which subjects interested you?

Bogdanich: I really don't-

Other: In school, what subjects could you like the most?

Bogdanich: I like reading. Subjects for reading.

Cohen: I was reading that Visitation High School was a Catholic school.

Bogdanich: Yes.

Cohen: Did you have nuns as teachers?

Bogdanich: Yes.

Cohen: And was your family practicing Catholics?

Bogdanich: Yes.

Cohen: I also was reading that you graduated high school and I was wondering: was it unusual for a girl to graduate from high school at that time?

Bogdanich: Not really. Not from the classes, the class that I was in. It was okay.

Cohen: Okay, wow. What type of activities did you do in your spare time?

Bogdanich: I would say, tried to sew. I couldn't do that much. [Laughter] Activity, you want to call an activity...I didn't do any other in my mind, just no, no.

Cohen: It's okay. I'm sorry. I don't mean to belabor it either and, um, and I realize that if somebody asked me questions what I did in my childhood, I don't think I could answer half of them either. It's all good. So what did you do after high school?

Bogdanich: I went to work for the Illinois Bell Telephone.

Cohen: And could you talk about your job there as a switchboard operator?

Bogdanich: Yes. It was not just one switchboard; it was the whole length of a wall, all the way. There was many of us all together, but that's what I did until I went to the service.

Cohen: So what-sorry, go on.

Bogdanich: Yeah, I just, that's alright, go ahead.

Cohen: I'm sorry. One thing I found remarkable was that all of the siblings who are of military age enlisted in the Army. So could you tell me a little bit about this, like did you and your family talk about the war, the rise of Nazi Germany, or the rise of Japanese aggression? Like was your family talking about the potential for war before it happened?

Bogdanich: No.

Cohen: Do you remember where you were when you heard about Pearl Harbor?

Bogdanich: I was working that Sunday at 6:30 at the office at the switchboard and one-I'm at one end, a friend of mine's on the other end-and all of a sudden, it was just like Christmas trees. All the lights lit up. Instead of when you'd plug in and you would say, "Number please," they said, "Where's Pearl Harbor?" Instead of giving us a number that they want. So we didn't do anything about it. We just sat there for, I don't know how many minutes, until the supervisor came along and she says, "You're gonna have a date of all this everything, instead of giving you a phone number that they want, you're gonna, they're gonna tell you or ask you where Pearl Harbor is and all that." Well, we looked almost around and none of us really knew where Pearl Harbor was. Sounds terrible, but that was true. They didn't know and then finally somebody came up and said, "Don't worry about it, don't worry about it." That was the answer we got, "Don't worry about it." That was it, alright. After that, my brothers enlisted and then not until '44 that my

sister and I decided to go into service. Well, she was [US] Navy and I was going to go in the army, because I was in the Air Force actually, because my younger brother was a tail gunner and we were-I was going to go and she says, well, she says, "I'll go with you." So she didn't go in the Navy she went with me. So we had our- go ahead, I'm sorry.

Cohen: No, no. Go ahead. That's fine, that's good.

Bogdanich: We had-we went to Fort Des Moines, Iowa for thirteen weeks for basic and when we finished basic, instead of keeping us together, she went to Fort Sumter, New Mexico. I went to Michigan. The name of the place, I can't think. We were there only, I was there only a short time, then they sent me to Sheppard Field, Texas. And we were there for a while, and then we went from there to Langley Field, Virginia. And that's when I went into the field of the mail, being in the Mail Department. Take care of that and then Camp Field, I got discharged Camp Field, California. Got discharged there in '46. That was it.

Cohen: Can you tell me a little bit about basic training? What did you have to do?

Bogdanich: Oh, we had, um, four months. We got up in the morning, got ourselves ready and our breakfast, went out, did calisthenics, got through with that, then we ended up with, um, how many was it? It might have been three year, er, three hours of schooling. In a sense, we had a little notebook, and they were telling us, they were describing the equipment for the war, and all that was gonna go on. I have the book at home, yet, but it's in pencil. It's kind of, [laughs] but that's what we had to do. And we got through with that and then we had our lunch time we had, in between that we had lunch and then after that we did that, and after that we had more or leisure time for a little bit, and get to know everybody. You know everyone, and then after that it was dinner-supper as we call it-and then after that, if there was any duties, like going to the captains and see if everything is okay with her, or her quarters. In other words, that they were clean and all that. We had to do that. It wasn't but, it was thirteen weeks in Fort Des Moines and there was another thing. I know it's important [laughs], but we had what they call potbelly stoves. If you remember them, like this.

Cohen: Yeah--

Bogdanich: With the doors in front. Well and we had turns. It was five o'clock in the morning to get up and put more wood on that stove, so you get it going. That's what we had to do and so it was a little rough, but it was nothing afterwards. I'm trying to think--

Cohen: Did you have to learn how to shoot a gun?

Bogdanich: Oh, no, we didn't. But the last week of our training they informed me that the next group of girls coming in, the women coming in, were going to be shown how to use the gun. We weren't. Always, this is kind of silly, but I don't know if I even, what we were given was a pad of paper, a pencil, a whistle, and a flashlight, and two of us, towards the evening, we'd have to go around the field to see if there was anything that wasn't right there. And you'd write it down, and you'd blow the whistle to let them know that you wrote something down. [laughs] So, silly but that's what it was, you know, so we did that. And when we got the basic, that was the end of that, thirteen weeks.

Cohen: Did you think that the men were happy to have women in the Army?

Bogdanich: I don't think they were. From my own thinking, I don't think they were. But they eventually accepted us, you know, and that was it.

Cohen: You know we had an exhibit at the museum last year on D-Day and they had some documents from a woman who served in the WAVES, in the Navy, and I remember seeing that they were quite strict about personal grooming. Like, she had to report to get her, you know, to make sure her hair wasn't too long. It had to be cut, but she had to report. So I guess my question is, how did you find the regulations about grooming or anything else?

Bogdanich: How will I word it? It was something necessary that we had to make sure that we did. And the hair, finally-I used to wear it long-finally, that had to be cut, so it was cut to about here, but then it got all right. Everything worked out fine.

Cohen: What were your impressions about your uniforms? Did you like them?

Bogdanich: I didn't mind them at all. [laughter]

Bogdanich: I mean, to me, they-I don't know if I should even repeat them, but I wasn't enough-it was an opportunity when I was... um, I forgot. Know what field I was on, but anyways, in the captain's board, aboard the [cat's up?], anybody that wanted to fly to Chicago over the weekend? And I said, "Of course I did" and also I signed up for it, and there was about four of us, four other girls. We signed up, but she said there's one thing you have to do: you can't you can't wear your skirts, you got to wear a slack, your slacks that you have. We had to have the slacks on to go there. Well then, my dad had picked me up Friday night or he'd meet me at the airport, Midway, Friday night to take me home and then Sunday he'd bring me back, and I'd go back. "Did you wear them?" "Yes, we did." I mean it's kind of, um, I don't know how to say it, but there's a little different things that, you know, that went on it. It was good.

Cohen: Yeah, yeah. Just for the record, could you tell us, please, like, which unit or which regiment of the WACS you were in? Like was it-and if not, that's okay, no, no worries. If you remember the unit number or the regiment number-

Bogdanich: I remember my number.

Cohen: [Laughs] Go ahead, go ahead.

Bogdanich: My serial number was 209 603. I never forgot that one.

Cohen: No, it's hard to forget that one. So when were you assigned to the Selfridge National air Base in Michigan, when you went to Michigan, the air base in Michigan?

Bogdanich: In Michigan, I'm trying to think about. I don't know if that's [Mt.] Clemens [i.e. Selfridge Air National Guard base in Michigan] I can't remember that.

Cohen: Oh, that's okay. That's okay. Um, I think in the article it said you only had a short stint there, um, but then, so would you like to talk about either your service at the Sheppard Air Force Base in Kansas or the Langley Air Force Base in Virginia? Would you like to talk about one or the other or both experiences?

Bogdanich: Well, there isn't too much to say about them, really, except: go along every day and just do the ordinary things they're supposed to do and that was it. So I didn't-

Cohen: Did you have any training, like, I believe, like with teletype? Like how to use a teletype machine or anything of this sort?

Bogdanich: I was at teletype school, and I don't know exactly if I-I don't think I did too good in it. Not that as good as I should have been but wasn't and that was-I can't think where that was. Ask me an hour later and I'll tell you. [laughs]

Cohen: Oh, okay. I think in the article it says that the teletype training was at the Sheppard Air Force Base in Wichita, Kansas. Does that sound right? Um, well, anyhow. What was your, what was your main role or your main responsibilities when you were at the Langley Air Force Base in Virginia?

Bogdanich: Was the, uh, Post Office. It was mostly the post office was just ordinary things of ---I was just saying it, just, I can't remember, what you say?

OTHER: Sorting the mail?

Bogdanich: Sorting the mail. Yes, we sorted the mail packages, everything like that. And there were times when the fellow soldiers they didn't get any mail and we decided to write a little note. They had slots, not just for their for their names, but for other names are in that same slot but they were again with an FC or

whatever their MC and all that you-know-what. I was talking about, I'd write him a little note as mail, and that made him feel a little bit better.

Cohen: Yeah. Somebody, somebody is thinking about them. It's very nice. Um, would you give the mail to the serviceman personally? Would you give the letter to the servicemen personally or would they come to pick it up?

Bogdanich: They'd pick it up out of the box.

Cohen: Okay, okay.

Bogdanich: See the other men get their personal. One that didn't get any, they'd find this little note.

Cohen: Were you, were you involved in any-

Bogdanich: So long ago, everything gets...I'm not much good at talking.

Cohen: No, I think you're, I think you're doing very well and, and a lot of very vivid recollections, so you know, whatever. It's all good. So, out of curiosity, did you ever find a serviceman who received a letter from a girlfriend wanting to break up with him?

Bogdanich: We have on occasion. It's the truth. This young man was married, and he and his wife had a baby. A little one, maybe about eight months old or something. Well, it happened that our C.O., I remember her name Captain Clifford[?] she told some of the other captains and that she told the rest of us, truthfully, about this, what happened to him. His wife took off and left the baby on the field with him. They had little sections where they could live together and when the captain, the C.O., found that and the major, they said, "Well what are we gonna do?" Well, the girls, the women, the captains or the lieutenants, to begin with, they said, "We'll fix something up for the baby." So what they did in our section because our beds were lined up all the way, and there was a spot for this Lieutenant Clifford? was her name, she was a real little soldier and she says, "We'll get everything ready for the baby." Well, somehow or another, they went, and they got all the material was needed and to make a long story short, they ended up keeping the baby and this was Clifford. I got a picture of her at home. She made a uniform for the baby out of h----He kept the baby for quite a while, until all his orders were set in where he could be discharged. And then he took the baby home to his parents. So, I don't know whatever happened after that, you know. That's a true story.

Cohen: One could really say that this baby was born into, one could say that this baby was really born into the military. It's not important. It's not important

Bogdanich: All I know is that it came to us that word that. That's what happened and we don't know anything about it, you know, but that was, it was something nice. We, like I said, and we enjoyed the baby.

Cohen: [laughs] Did you take turns taking care of the baby?

Bogdanich: No, not really. The lieutenants did that, they did it. All the women lieutenants. Sot, that's it.

Cohen: So, Josephine, one thing I noticed from interviewing veterans is that, for many, it was the first time that they met people from different environments. For example, I once interviewed a woman from New York City who had never left the city, and when she was in the service, it was the first time she met people from farms. Did you have that experience of meeting people that you were not meeting in Chicago itself?

Bogdanich: Yes, I have a, had a, friend that was in service with me, but she was from Chicago.

Cohen: Was there a good spirit, like was there good camaraderie between the young women?

Bogdanich: Yes, there was. Yes, there was. Going down to the PX at night. [Chuckles] That's another thing. These are all little things that are in my mind that I don't forget.

Cohen: So what would happen when you and your friends would go to the PX at night?

Bogdanich: Well we'd get us a snack or something, you know, that we'd want. Maybe ice cream or maybe sometimes a sandwich, if we have set up, and sweets of all kinds. And we'd sit there for a while and talk. It was nice.

Cohen: Were there any dances or social events between the men and the women on the Langley Base?

Bogdanich: No, no. We were more or less from what I, in my section, we were by ourselves, so I don't know. It depends. If they, if somebody, a soldier likes you or something, they ask you out or something, but that's it.

Cohen: Where on the base were you living? Were you and the other young women living? Where were you living, were you in a barracks, somewhere else?

Bogdanich: We had our own barracks...That was it. Just had our own section and they were over on the other side.

Cohen: How often were you able to go back and visit Chicago? Like were you able, were you given permission to go back home from time to time?

Bogdanich: Actually, the only time that we did go home, I let me other than these plowing back on the weekends. The one was when my father, let's see, my two brothers, my sister, and myself. We were able to get home the weekend, all four of us,

Cohen: Oh my.

Bogdanich: and my dad had a photographer there and he took he took our picture, the four of us. And this is, I don't know, but my sister, she was the youngest one. She was only about eight at the time. She was upset because she couldn't be in the picture. She didn't-and my dad says, "You don't have a uniform on," he said to her, "That's the only thing you think of." Well, we didn't pay any attention, but on the end table her picture was in there, so she's in it. I can't, I could show it to you. I haven't, I have a little one of the.

Cohen: That's wonderful. [laughter].

Bogdanich: And she's eighty-nine now-and she says, "Can't I come and live with you?" I said, "You aren't in service. Can't-you can't come." She'd love to be here with me. My two brothers and my other sister that was in service that passed away a few years ago, so it's just she and I together.

Cohen: How did your parents feel about having four out of five children in the service?

Bogdanich: I don't understand.

Other: How parents feel about having all of you in the service?

Bogdanich: They didn't have any objection. They didn't say anything about not being able to go.

Cohen: Wow.

Bogdanich: The only thing is that my brother, and this brother, when he went overseas is when he was in a tail gunner for eleven missions. That's what they really was concerned about and hoped that we'd be all right, you know. That was about it. Didn't say anything.

Cohen: So, Josephine had you wanted to serve overseas or were you happy to serve in state?

Bogdanich: Just the States. I would have gone wherever they sent me, but they said no. At the end, just before we were ready to-well, how long ago was it? Our captain, he called us, all of us, in a group, to get together and get up front. He said she has something to ask us and she says or not ask us. She told us, she says, "I need five of you women to go to China" and we looked at her and looked at us. They talked about China, she goes six months of the WACS and six months as a

civilian. And I didn't give her any answer, but a mother and daughter happened to be together in that outfit. They went. They went, they said, they're willing to go. Well, my brother, when I mentioned it to him, the one that was tail gunner, I says, "They want us to go overseas, to see if we want to go overseas." He says, he says, "Where?" I says, "China". He says, "You don't go overseas anywhere, especially China. You just stay right where you're at." So the mother and daughter went and one other girl, woman went. The others and I stayed back. We didn't go. So, I took his word for it, and I guess that's the way it's supposed to have been, you know?

Cohen: Yes, yes, that's true.

Bogdanich: Something, to ask for us to go there. You know, we can never get it through our heads, why she asked for something like that, but she had from source higher up, you know. ...Of all the places! I don't know what else to think about.

Cohen: You know, I'll ask you a question and it's okay if you don't remember. Either way is fine. I'm wondering if you remember hearing about Victory in Europe Day, VE Day, or the end of the war Victory over Japan. Do you remember where you were on those days?

Bogdanich: I think I was working at the phone company. Wait, no, let's see. Yeah, I think I was a-no, I wasn't doing it. Was I or not? See I get mixed up on that, I know.

Cohen: Oh it's okay, that's okay. So, where were you discharged from the-

Bogdanich: When I was in service when Japan, when Japan surrenders-am I right now? The surrender--

Cohen: Would have been around September 2nd, 1945, the surrender.

Bogdanich: Well, I was in service.

Cohen: Do you want to talk about, um, you're discharged from Santa Monica and what happened afterward?

Bogdanich: Yes, I went to work at the telephone company. After I got out of service, you mean?

Cohen: I think the article mentioned that you and your sister had the chance to travel in California. To travel?

Bogdanich: Oh, yes. That was a travel. We decided, well after, uh, we got out of service, my younger brother's bombardier's family were in Santa Monica, California, and they invited my sister and I to stay for a week and they took us all around, and then after that, instead of taking a flight home, we decided to take the

Greyhound bus. I don't know if I'm telling all this, but we took the Greyhound bus and it took us three days, I think it was three nights, to get home. And we ended up in downtown at the Greyhound lane after we traveled, but we did stop in San Francisco and we went shopping there a little bit and walked around. Then we decided to go on get on the bus again and go on, so that's what we did.

Cohen: Sounds like fun.

Bogdanich: It was. We were-when we got home, it was my mother, "What'd you do that for? Why didn't you take the plane home?" Oh, it was more fun that way. All they did on those buses was pick up milk, pails of milk, and they'd take newspapers and any mail, anything that was to go to somebody else or some other town. That's what they did, so we had that on the bus. It's so long ago that, well, so it's all good.

Cohen: When you were, when you were serving, did you also write letters to your parents or your siblings?

Bogdanich: Yes. A lot of them I wrote to my brother, Francis, my oldest brother. He was in Camp Crowder, Missouri, see I remember things like that. I used to write to him. He wrote to me, but my brother, younger brother, where he was and he couldn't write that off, and my sister we talked. Didn't want to do much writing. Yeah, of course we wrote to my mother at home, you know. But I don't know what else to say, I don't think-

Cohen: Josephine, had you been involved in the censoring of letters at all and censorship of letters, like did the Army ask you to censor letters coming in?

Bogdanich: They didn't say anything that I like. The other girls got it, I didn't get that part of it. I don't know.

Cohen: Maybe somebody else did, yeah. So, I have a question. It's not a memory question, it's an opinion. I was reading that General Macarthur called the women his best soldiers since he thought that the women were more disciplined, worked harder, and complained less than the men. Would you agree to that or not so much?

Bogdanich: I don't, probably, I don't know. I think-could you repeat that? I couldn't quite-

Cohen: Do you, um, do you think like General Macarthur that women were better soldiers in the sense that they were more disciplined and worked harder?

Bogdanich: I really don't know. I don't know the answer.

Cohen: Yeah, that's honest. What was it like returning home after having been in the Army?

Bogdanich: It was a good experience. I wouldn't have-I wouldn't have missed it. [unclear] glad that I did go.

Cohen: What makes you feel proud about it, like why are you proud about your service?

Bogdanich: I can't-

OTHER: She said, "Why are you proud about being in the service? What makes you proud?"

Bogdanich: Because I think I'm helping. Well there's not war time really. Well, there is in a sense, the time that I was in it, they were relieving it for them to go to war, maybe we're doing some of that now or some way of helping them. I don't know.

Cohen: You know you're contributing to the country when at war. Yeah, um, so did you consider using the GI Bill and going back to school when you returned home?

Bogdanich: No, I didn't, because I went right back to the phone company, where I had left them before, and I didn't take it. My friend went back. She went, but I didn't go.

Cohen: Um, did you find that people in general appreciated your service when you returned home? Like, did they thank you or did they want to honor you for having contributed?

Bogdanich: I don't know how to answer that. I can't-you think-if they appreciated me having been in service?

OTHER: Yeah, when you came home were people appreciative towards you for going?

Bogdanich: Some people, some were. Some didn't think a woman belonged in service. That was it.

Cohen: Yeah, then there was both. So, what did you do after you returned to the Illinois Bell? Did you continue with that company or did you seek a job elsewhere?

Bogdanich: No, I stayed there. I didn't like it, but I-my aunt got me on the railroad in the stockyards of the Chicago River and Indiana Railroad and I worked there. Did office work, until I got married.

Cohen: Okay, nice, nice. How did you meet your husband?

Bogdanich: In the neighborhood. We went to-a whole crowd, a group of, a group of us, all friends in the neighborhood -we went to the Sox game and when we came back and he said he was-- we stopped at a little place, there's something to eat or drink and he asked me if- he looked at me and he says, "Hello," and said, "Hi," and then I don't know if this... Well, [I was] walking the dog down to the corner

of the neighborhood, down the block and he came along in the car and he said, "Hi," to me and I said, "Oh, hi". Then we talked and then he said, "Would you like to go for ice cream?" I said, "Yes, but I'd better let my mother know." I was living with her and he said, he says, "Well, sure," he says, "I want you to do that." I did. My mom said, "Okay but did you meet him before?" Turns out I married him.

Cohen: Nice, that's very nice. Would you like to talk about the Honor Flight to Washington that you were on, I think, in 2019? Like, what was it like?

Bogdanich: Wonderful, I want to go back again.

Cohen: Wonderful. Um, so another question is, again it's just one of opinion, and it's not, um, like there's no right or wrong. How did the army contribute to your life as a civilian? Like did you feel that you developed your personality or skills in the Army that helped you when you returned to your civilian life?

Bogdanich: I think they helped in some way, yes.

Cohen: Yeah, Josephine is there something that you would like to talk about that we did not touch upon?

Bogdanich: Not that I can think of right now. I just hope that I was all right in this interview.

Cohen: I think you were very good. I'm sure everybody here would agree with me and because, you know, maybe to you some of the experience seemed trivial, but for those of us who have not served, let alone during wartime, it gives us more of a snapshot or a flavor of what it was like and that's why I think it was really good. Um, I'll ask if anybody everybody here-Ginny, Allison, Sharon-is there a story that Josephine has shared in the past that you think would be worth talking about right now?

Narsete: I have a question. I've been curious. This is Ginny. Josephine, we've talked many times. How are you?

Bogdanich: I'm fine, thank you. How are you?

Narsete: Thank you for your service. Here's my question. I've been curious ever since I found out about this when you wrote the letters to the people that did not receive anything, what did you write in this last one? You remember?

Bogdanich: Sort of. They were, I would say, "I hope in some way that this little note would somehow make you feel better, and if you want to talk, talk to us," and say it's about all like some other things, like I mean that's one of the things I can remember saying, because I'm. But you couldn't say too much. You just didn't want them to feel worse. Sometimes you'd say that you'd hope that the next

time there's mail call, that you would be lucky enough to receive a letter or a card or something, you know.

Narsete: Did any come and talk to you or thank you or did they know it was coming from you?

Bogdanich: Well, they just come up and say they weren't-you know, majority of the men-I'd say all of them, they'd stay with the women. It's not like, how will I say it? They just, like for instance here, I can just say, "Hi." It's like this to them and they'll wave to me or they'll talk. There are several of them that do talk to me, and sometimes, it would be like that, in service. There might be one or two that would come up and talk, but sometimes they just, they just can't talk, they just walk away, you know. So hard for me to explain, just so much.

Narsete: It was a nice thing you did. That was really nice. Thank you for doing that for our men and women.

Bogdanich: You know one Schwinn bicycle, the one whose grandfather was Schwinn bicycle, he owned them, or invented them or whatever. He was stationed on one of the fields with us. And he thought he was Mister Whatchyoucallem, [laughs] but a couple of the girls saying, "Just stay away from him. He thinks he knows about everything; he knows everything." But he was. He just thought that he was everybody, you know. Sometimes, just some of the men had, they, like I say, there might been a few, if I can recall that will talk to you, and they ask you where you're from. I met one who was from Australia. And we talked and I told him from Chicago. He said, "Oh, I know about Chicago" and then just a few more words and that was the end of the other one

Other: But none of the men that you wrote little notes to, none of them found out that that note was from you?

Bogdanich: No, we didn't put our name on it. We never put our names on it, we just put it in the box for them, and they got the notes. It sounded like we should have but we didn't.

Narsete: Well, that was a nice thing you did.

Bogdanich: Same here. It's so hard for me to talk. I get all I get all nervous and-

Narsete: You're doing great, yeah, you are.

Cohen: Yeah, you are. It's true, like, the building up the morale is so important. I interviewed a World War II bombardier and he said after a debriefing following a mission he so appreciated the fact that there were Red Cross volunteers talking and serving donuts and offering friendly conversation, and the notes that you and the others wrote reminds me of that that way of keeping spirits up.

Bogdanich: It was. But also Red Cross and I don't agree. We stopped, one station in Tennessee, one of our trips in the field. On one side of the road was the Red Cross. If you want a donut and coffee, you paid for it. You go the other side of the field, Salvation Army - free! I never forgot that. I told my brother that. He said that's exactly what happened. And I met several men someplace in here, somewhere, I can't place where they are, if I see their faces I'd remember. They told me the same thing happened: Salvation Army there was no charge. But maybe the Red Cross does do good, but it's not—That's stayed with me and I just couldn't. I wish I could find that man that told me that because he agreed with me.

[Laughter]

Bogdanich: So, I mean there's little stories and things that maybe don't mean anything but that's it. I don't think this interview went like I should.

Person: You did great!

Narsete: Josephine, you did wonderful!

Cohen: I think so, too. I think you did great and you'll have a chance to listen to the recording and review it, as well, so you know you'll have the final say. Is there anything that you would like to you or anybody else would like to add?

Bogdanich: I didn't understand her.

Person: Is there any else that you would like to add?

Bogdanich: Not right now. I probably felt happy.

[Laughter]

Cohen: Okay, well, on behalf of the Pritzker Military Museum and Library, we would like to express our appreciation for giving the interview today and more importantly for your service during World War II and we will mail you a challenge coin as a token of our thanks.

Bogdanich: Thank you, thank you. I don't feel like I deserve-

Person: Oh, you do! You do.

Cohen: You do, you do.

Bogdanich: I never I feel like I did as much as I should do in service or I could have done. But I did what I was told, but I didn't-I feel now that still I could have done more, but I didn't.

Person: Everything you did was amazing, Josephine!

Narsete: Well, thank you for paving the way for the rest of us. I went in the Air Force in 1973, so you made my life a lot easier. You were good. You are the trailblazers and our heroes.

Cohen: I'm glad you mentioned that, too, because that is something that strikes me, too, that that really with the World War II, with the Women's Army Corps and the WAVES, it sort of led the way to that integration of women into the forces and so on. So it was a pioneering effort.

Bogdanich: You know as well as-I can't think anything of to say.

Cohen: Okay, well thank you, thank you, thank you.

PERSON: Thank you!

Cohen: It was a pleasure meeting you, Josephine and meeting the rest of you and we will be in touch with the follow-up.

Narsete: I'll see you on the flight

Bogdanich: Next year you'll see me on the flight?

Narsete: Yeah, the women, the all-women's flight.

Bogdanich: If I'm alive to and I was selected I'll be very happy.

Narsete: You were selected and you're going to be alive, because I told you, you have to be.

Bogdanich: Oh that would be one wonderful thing, great thing that happened, that happens, for me

Cohen: Sounds good. Okay, bye everybody!

Narsete: Thank you. Keep in touch, call me anytime!

Bogdnadich: Okay, thank you.

Narsete: Big IDVA [Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs], I appreciate it - IDVA Mateno!