



U.S. Coast Guard Oral History Program

SUGGESTED ORAL HISTORY QUESTIONS

FOR WORLD WAR II COAST GUARD VETERANS

Where were you born? Tell us about where you are from, something about your family and your education?

What did you do before you joined the service?

Did you enlist or were you drafted? If you enlisted, tell us why you chose the Coast Guard.

What was your rating? Why did you pick that particular rating or did you have a choice?

Where did you go through recruit training?

Tell me about that training. Was it thorough? In other words, were you sufficiently prepared when you reported aboard your first duty station to carry out your assigned tasks?

What cutters, ships or stations did you serve on?

What was a typical day for you like? Watch-standing, drills, free time, etc.

Did you see combat – what actions and landings did you and your cutter or ship participate in?

Tell me about your most memorable experience.

Tell me about the food.

Tell me about any liberty you took, especially overseas. What about leave?

How was the pay?

What was the relationship like between the enlisted force and the petty officers?
The chiefs?

What were your officers like? Any noticeable difference between reserve officers versus active-duty (Coast Guard Academy) officers? Did you trust those in command over you?

Did you have any interaction with crewmen of races other than your own? If so, what was that interaction like?

How were the "relations" between Coast Guardsmen and the other armed services? Were their rivalries, animosities, or did you get along well with them?

Please relate any experience you had of working with the British, Canadians, Free French and other allies, if any. Was there a good working relationship with our allies?

How did you feel about the people you were fighting: Germans, Italians, Vichy French, Japanese, etc.? Animosity, hatred, respect?

Do you recall the day you left service?

What was your career after the war? Did your wartime career contribute to it?

What comments, impressions, or thoughts would you like to share; areas that I have missed and that you think are important for future generations to know.

What do you think about today's Coast Guard?

