

Museum of History and Holocaust Education Legacy Series

Edith Bond Interview

Conducted by James Newberry

June 6, 2019

Transcribed by Isabel Mann

Born in southwest Georgia in 1921, Edith Bond worked at St. Johns River Shipbuilding Company in Jacksonville during World War II. In 1944 she enlisted in the Navy as an officer in the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Service). She had postings in Washington, D.C., as well as the Pensacola Naval Air Station. After the war she enjoyed a long career in social work. She recorded her oral history interview for Kennesaw State University in June 2019.

Full Transcript

Interviewer: This is James Newberry and I'm here with Edith Bond on Thursday, June 6th, 2019 in Alpharetta, Georgia. I want to thank you for sitting down with me and ask do you agree to this interview?

Bond: Yes.

Interviewer: Wonderful. So can you tell me your full name?

Bond: Edith Jones Bond. My middle name was Edith Moreland Jones Bond.

Interviewer: And when were you born? What's your birthday?

Bond: July the 10th, 1921

Interviewer: And where were you born?

Bond: In a little village called Yeomans, Georgia in South Georgia near Dawson, Georgia in Terrell County.

Interviewer: What were your parents' names?

Bond: John Samuel Jones and Alice Elizabeth Moreland Jones.

Interviewer: And can you tell me what they did for a living?

Bond: Most of the time, well, all of the time it was farming but also my father was a tax collector for twelve years with the county.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about your family?

Bond: Well there were twelve of us and I was the youngest. There were three wives, my father had three wives. The first wife had four children and she died in childbirth. The second mother had six children and she died from, they said from Tuberculosis. And then my mother died from unknown causes before he died and there were two of us, two with my mother.

Interviewer: And your father was born before the Civil War?

Bond: Yes, his father was— died during the Civil War. He did not die from battle but he had pneumonia and died in a camp in Virginia.

Interviewer: Can you describe your parents' personalities?

Bond: Well, my father was a very strict man. He was much older than I was. He was in his sixties when I was born, and he was a very strict man but I was very close to him. We had a real special relationship. He was, although he hadn't had much education, he was a smart man. He had educated himself and he was a smart man and he was a super farmer. Everybody looked around to see what he was going to do so they could do what he would do because he was such a good farmer. My mother was just a sweet, sweet lady who always just did everything for everybody. They would call on her to come in when somebody was sick. She wasn't a nurse but they would call her and she would be willing to go but she was always a sweet lady liked to or did a lot—I don't know how much she liked it—but she had a lot of homework to do, housework to do. But she also sewed, she had beautiful, she was a really good seamstress.

Interviewer: Can you describe the house you grew up in?

Bond: Yes, it was a rambling wooden house with a porch around three sides of it and there were three bedrooms, a living room, and a long hall, and a dining room, and a kitchen. And during the Depression things went down hill and actually, our roof was really, got bad and it finally was leaking and we had to put pots and pans around to catch the water until we could finally afford a tin roof which we finally got.

Interviewer: So, you mentioned the Depression, can you talk a little bit about the impact of the Depression on your family? Maybe some of your brothers who traveled for work?

Bond: Listen, they, two of my brothers were, I guess people would call them tramps. They went from, they got on the trains, and they would catch a train and they were not riding in a regular seat. [laughs] They were riding probably in the boxcar and went all over the country. One of them went to California. I remember when he was saying he went and picked fruit out in California but they would go and then they would come home for a while and then they'd go off again and just try to find work, whatever work they could get to make a living.

Interviewer: Talk to me about your mother's death. How did that affect you?

Bond: Well, of course, it affected me very much because I was just fifteen years old and we weren't expecting it. It was just something that we—we didn't think she was that sick. We knew she was sick. We had called the doctor and he came and at that time he didn't know what to give her. He did the best he could, but he gave her something that didn't help. I don't know whether it hurt or not, but it didn't help. And she didn't, she lived I think it was about ten days and just she was gone and I was devastated. I mean I just, I thought 'what in the world, what is the world

coming to' but I had those wonderful sisters that really gathered around and really gave me a lot of support.

Interviewer: So, there were seven sisters all together?

Bond: Well, six and me. [gestures toward her chest] Seven girls. [laughs]

Interviewer: And pretty much all of them either attended or graduated from Georgia State College for Women?

Bond: That's right [nodding head], except me. I went but I didn't graduate. I went to the University of Georgia.

Interviewer: So why did you leave that college after one semester?

Bond: I went to stay home with my Daddy who did not have anybody, who needed someone to take care of him. He was in his late seventies; well I guess he was in his eighties then. Yeah, he was in his eighties, mid-eighties, and he, somebody had to be with him. His health was real bad. He had to have his leg, one leg, amputated and so I went home to stay with him.

Interviewer: What did you do for him?

Bond: Well we had some help, but I guess just being a companion, being there and loving him and taking care of him and seeing that he got feed and that he was taken care of like he needed to be taken care of. I was just a kid myself. I was just, I was eighteen, but I was a kid. I hadn't really [laughs] gotten very mature at that point.

Interviewer: And so then you decided on the University of Georgia—

Bond: Yes, and that —

Interviewer: Why?

Bond: Well, I don't know. I just, I really was interested in it and I was shocked that my father agreed for me to go because he thought that was the end of the world but I think because I had stayed with him a couple of years he felt like [laughs] he was giving me a boost there by letting me go. And he did agree to it and actually, the, it's amazing. My mother had left a thousand dollars in insurance after everything was paid. I went through all of University of Georgia and got out and had a hundred dollars left. So, you can imagine how different it is now from what is was then.

Interviewer: What did you study?

Bond: I started off with journalism because I wanted to be an author but when I got to [laughs] starting with journalism all they wanted you to do was go out and interview people and I did not like that so I changed over to social work. Well actually, it was sociology because they didn't have social work then but at that

time Roosevelt had started all of his social programs and sounded really interesting to me. I had a real wonderful professor who was in charge of that and he tal—he didn't talk me into it but just the way he talked made me feel I wanted to do it so I majored in sociology and minored in psychology.

Interviewer: Can you talk to me about your father's death, while you were at Georgia?

Bond: I hadn't, it was the first summer I was there. First summer school, I was going to summer school and my niece, my older brother's daughter was there in college too. She was getting, she had already graduated from college but she was getting brushed up on something—I don't know what, but anyways, she, they called her when he died instead of calling me and that really almost broke my heart. She came over at the dormitory and told me that he had died. Well that was really rough, but we got on the bus and drove to Atlanta and her father met, my older brother, her father, met us and took us down to Dawson, to Yeomans to the funeral.

Interviewer: What happened to the family home after he died?

Bond: Well, originally, the four older children's grandfather had given that property to his daughter and my father when they married. So, it was agreed that they would get, those four children, there were a hundred acres and they had taken four acres and made a school—four acres for a school. So, there were ninety-six acres left and they were naturally going to go to those four children when they left. Of course, by that time, there was Depression and it wasn't worth very much but the house and the ninety-six acres went to them and we moved, we left and I—and Bell who was one of the middle sisters offered us a home and I went there and I used her address in Bradenton, Florida all during my Navy time.

Interviewer: So, you were back at the University of Georgia and I want to talk about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the entrance of the United States into the war. Tell me about your memories of that time.

Bond: Well, Pearl Harbor, the main—I was trying to think about D-Day and I remember that but I don't re- there was no TV, of course, and all you got was radio. So I don't—I was trying to remember where I was when I got that news but I remember hearing it, I remember when it happened but I don't remember where I was but what it— when Pearl Harbor was bombed, I was in college. It was Sunday afternoon and we were studying for final exams and one girl came running down the halls saying, "the President has—Pearl Harbor's been bombed and the President has declared war." And we, of course, we didn't know what Pearl Harbor was but we knew that it was something that belonged to the United States and that it was something very crucial since the President declared war and we were all just in a tizzy about it. We didn't know—we just didn't know what was going to happen. Well there were a lot, we had an ROTC at school, and there were a lot of our friends who were in ROTC and we were already picturing them

having to go. So, it was a really tense time and a scary time and one good thing about it is that the nice professors that were having the final exams the next day said they would not have final exams. That was the best thing about the whole thing. [laughs] They said they would take our average for the year, for the semester and use that.

Interviewer: A little perk. [laughs]

Bond: Yeah, well it needed a perk at that time.

Interviewer: So, do you remember about how long you remained at the University before you made a transition?

Bond: I graduated in 1943 and it was in March—we were going year-round, we weren't taking off for the summer, we were going year-round, and I graduated in March of '43. So that was about a year and—a little ov—not quite a year and a half after the Pearl Harbor I guess but—I can't, I, I, what—ask that question again please.

Interviewer: So, you remained at University until about March—and then you—.

Bond: Yeah, oh and then my roommate and I, we had someone who came to recruit for Saint John's Shipyard in Jacksonville, Florida. He had been a former University of Georgia student and he came and we decided that's what we're going to do because we hadn't—we didn't know—we knew we had to have a job and we didn't know what we were going to do so we, my roommate and I, decided that's what we'd do and we applied and we got it and they put us on the midnight shift and you had, it was at the shipyard and we weren't close to the shipyard and we had to ride one bus and change buses in the middle of town and everything was blacked out. There was not a sight of light anywhere and we would have to stop at the downtown, get off and change buses and go to the shipyard where we worked all night and then the—we were still young so we went to the beach a lot on the day and we didn't sleep much and then we were tired the next night. [laughs] But it was a, it was a difficult time because they were talking about having submarines off from the coast and Jacksonville is right on the coast and everything, everything was blacked out at night. We had—we were staying in a place that was right on the river and it was a beautiful place and a beautiful river but everything was blacked out at night. There was not a light anywhere.

Interviewer: Now what job did you do at Saint John's?

Bond: Well it was, it was a—I guess a lower-level computer job. It was—we ran the machines that kept the time for all the employees which there were a lot of employees and then we wrote the checks at the end of the week. We computed and oh well I didn't do no computing in my head, I did it all on the machine [laughs] and then wrote the checks at the end of the week.

Interviewer: Do you recall how much money you were paid?

Bond: I really cannot remember. I was trying to think but it was minimal and I—a hundred or something dollars probably.

Interviewer: Did you have to have some sort of special identification to go in and out?

Bond: We had a nametag and I think that's about all we had.

Interviewer: What kind of clothes or uniform did you wear?

Bond: We didn't—we didn't wear any uniforms.

Interviewer: Did you have any interaction with the workers who were out in the shipyard?

Bond: No, well, once a week they would have a big dance in there and we tried it once or twice, but it was so wild, we just decided that wasn't for us so we didn't really have any interaction with them. We had interaction with other people who were running the keyboards and doing things like that, but we didn't have it with the shipyard workers.

Interviewer: Did you go on any dates at that time?

Bond: A few, a few but nothing serious. Just a few people I met.

Interviewer: Ok, so let's go back to the bus. I know you were working the midnight shift, taking the bus through these blackouts. At a certain point, your friend left.

Bond: Well she was, she was planning to leave. She left—when she left, I left. We both left at the same time cause she was going to leave and I knew I was not going downtown by myself. I just knew I wasn't [laughs] so I just said, you know, I'm leaving too and I did and I applied for a job at Fort My—well, I applied for a job at Florida State Welfare Department and they sent me to Fort Myers.

Interviewer: But before we go onto Fort Myers, can you tell me about your sister, Mary-Alice, coming to live with you in Jacksonville?

Bond: My sister's husband was in the Navy, entered into the Navy and he had been sent—we didn't know where he had been sent until that, until this crucial night—but he had been sent to Italy. And my sister didn't have any place—special place to go so she came and lived in the same house we lived in and she—I remember one night, it was after midnight and it was pitch black outside, not a light anywhere and the doorbell rang and the lady of the house went and answered it and then called her and she went and they told her that her husband had been injured and wounded in action. They didn't tell her anything else but that he had been wounded in action, so she had no idea of what was going on. Well, of course, the whole house was upset all night long and she started the next day working with Red Cross and finally, I think it took two or three days to find out that he had had a leg wound and that he was being sent to Saint Albans New York Hosp—the Naval Hospital there.

Interviewer: Did she leave right away?

Bond: She left right away and went back so she was gone.

Interviewer: Ok, so let's get back on track. You decided to take another job and talk to me about that process of moving.

Bond: Well, you know, I— it was interesting, I had— I really enjoyed that job in a way. It was, a lot of the streets were paved and I, I did social work on a bicycle. It wasn't my bicycle, my boss let me use her bicycle. Well you get in sandy place and try to ride a bicycle. [laughs] I had to get off and push it but I, I felt like I did some good. I had, we mostly worked with seniors, very old, people like me now [laughs] who needed help and who—and financially got a small check every month but I had to go and see them and see how they were getting along and decide how much they were going to get and that sort of thing and—.

Interviewer: And that was out of Fort Myers?

Bond: Yes.

Interviewer: So, was it a fairly large geographic area around—.

Bond: Well, it—well some of it I had to go out and she let, my boss let me use her car and one of my friends had to go off on the islands to get, to see people but I didn't ever have an island assignment.

Interviewer: What kind of meetings did you have with these people? I mean, what were you asking them or what were you giving them?

Bond: You know, I guess mainly just seeing what they needed and giving them, I hope some moral support as well as just financial support because its financial support was small but everything was cheap back then and it was, they got—I remember one poor man who didn't have a stove and we were able to get him a stove and he was the happiest then you ever saw. [laughs] He lived by himself and he had—he was so glad to get that stove.

Interviewer: Where did you live in Fort Myers?

Bond: I lived in—with three other girls in one big room in a boarding house and we had our meals at another house and, except breakfast, we had our evening meal at this house but I would go to the drugstore and get me, I think it was toast and coffee about every morning. That was my special thing, but I remember going and sitting there at the drugstore every morning before I went to work.

Interviewer: You were having to ration at that point?

Bond: Oh yes, oh yes. I remember having, trying to buy shoes and I could—you had, you were limited in what, in how much you could spend for anything leather and shoes, that what shoes, all of them, were back then and—but if I were, since I was

eating out I didn't have to worry about the things that you have to buy like coffee and sugar and that sort of thing so that was eating out. I wasn't trying to cook.

Interviewer: Ok. So, you were at that position about how long? Do you remember?

Bond: Probably about six months.

Interviewer: Ok and any memory of the money you made?

Bond: Oh no, I don't but it was not much.

Interviewer: So, after this—

Bond: I think it was a little bit over a hundred dollars, I think that's what it was. A little over a hundred dollars a month.

Interviewer: So not much different than in Jacksonville?

Bond: Mm-hmm. [Nods head in response]

Interviewer: Ok so how did you find out about the women's branches of the military?

Bond: Well I was very—I was patriotic. People were patriotic back then. People loved their country and they were patriotic and were really afraid that we were going to lose it because we had, we were fighting two wars. [laughs] Well we were, yeah, we were fighting two wars then. No, yeah, we were fighting two wars then. And one in the Pacific, one in Europe and people really cared about what happened and I did. I had a real strong feeling that I was not doing enough. I just—I felt like something I need to do and I couldn't decide what it was and we had a lot of—in Fort Myers you'd see a lot of service people around and I tried to decide what do I want to do and I decided—I thought about the Navy and the Marines and the Coast Guard. I didn't get to the Army, I just, I wasn't thinking about that but I was thinking about one of those and my sister, Mary-Alice, did her persuasion that she thought I should go in the Navy; not only because her husband was in it because she thought since I had a degree that I could go in as an officer and officer's training at least and if I went in the Marines I couldn't. In the Coast Guard, I could have but anyway, I did decide on the Navy and I was interviewed by all three. They had someone come by and talk with me. I don't even remember how I got in touch with them but then I—when I applied for the Navy, in a few weeks I had a letter asking them, for me to come to Miami for tests and interview and I got on the bus, Tamiami Trail¹, and went through the Everglades and one interesting thing, I saw some Seminole women sitting on the backs of the canal washing their clothes. I would not have known it unless the bus driver had said it, said that's what they were doing cause we were going by. But then we got to Miami and they gave us a physical exam and a written exam and also just an interview and sent me home again. Then about two weeks later, I had noticed that

¹ The Tamiami Trail, a roadway that goes through the Everglades, connecting the two cities, Tampa and Miami.

I had been accepted. I had to send in my picture and all this stuff but I had been accepted and they told me when to return back to Miami and I was sworn in—went back and I was sworn in and they gave me a ticket to North Hampton, Massachusetts cause that's where they were training WAVE officers.

Interviewer: Was there any friend or family member discouraging you from joining the military?

Bond: [shakes head] I don't remember. There may have been but I don't remember it. If they were, I blocked them out. [laughs]

Interviewer: And you were at all sort of conscious of the fact that this was the first time women could even join the military?

Bond: Well, yeah. I think—I don't think that had anything to do with me joining it but I was aware of it.

Interviewer: So you had to make a trip up to Massachusetts—.

Bond: Yeah—.

Interviewer: How did you make that trip?

Bond: Oh a rattily old train. Actually, I went from—to Washington and got off there and went to visit my sister who had—her husband was in Solomon's, Maryland then, in training to go back to the Pacific and I went on a Pullman train. First, I'd been on a train a number of times but I had never been on a Pullman and I never had it at night and it was the rattliest old train you ever saw and I got—they put me in the top berth and the, the fla—the curtain kept flapping and I just knew somebody was trying to get in and I don't—I know it must have been the train was rattling but at that point I wasn't sure at all. [laughs] But I finally made it to, I made it to Washington and my sweet sister met me and the next day she took me on a tour of everything in Washington in a taxi. She didn't have a car. So we went to all, we just stopped at all these places and it's a good thing cause I went back to Washington and I didn't see a thing but— well, I saw a few things but not much—but then after my two or three day visit with her, I went on, got back on the train and went to New York and got to Grand Central station and that was almost the end of my life. That was the worst experience I ever had. I got—the place was mobbed with service people, with other people. There was not a seat anywhere to sit. I sat on my suitcase most of the time when I was there and I wanted—I didn't know what train I had to catch to go to North Hampton and my order said I had to be there that day and there was only one train going to North Hampton, Massachusetts. [laughs] So I went—saw this information booth and I went to the—went up and this— there was a long line—and when it came my time, I asked her and this lady said something I don't know what she said until now. She had some kind of accent and I don't know if it was Brooklyn or what but she had some kind of accent that I didn't know what she said but she told me

to move on. I asked her again and she said, “move on.” Well, I got out and I thought “what am I going to do?” This is the only information booth and so I decided I’d get back in line again. Well I got back in line again and she said “you’ve had your chance, you go on.” [laughs] She said— recognized my clothes, I guess but anyway, then I said—I thought “what in the world?” I was scared to death, I really was scared to death and I saw a WAVE officer with a number of recruits. These were not normal WAVE officers. These were people recruiting for regular service. I saw her and I thought “she’ll know, hopefully she’ll know which train I’m supposed to catch.” So, I ran and got her, called her in the middle of all these, she’s got all these trainees coming in and I called her and I asked her if she knew the track that I had to get on. Well, she told me. Well, you could go right down to the tracks right then. I mean, the way it was done, you—I went right down to the tracks and it was an hour before that train left and it was the funniest thing just, one of the railroad people came by and said “don’t you want to wait in the waiting room?” And I said “no, no” [shakes head, laughs], “I’m going to wait right here cause I’m not going to miss that train.” I was the second person on the train and I’d never been so glad to get anywhere in my life.

Interviewer: So, you arrived at North Hampton and this was at Smith College?

Bond: Well, actually, no. We lived in a North Hall Hampton Inn. It had been converted. We did all of our training at Smith College but we, we lived at the Inn and had wonderful food. They had, I think they had regular people working there because we had wonderful food. The rooms were small. I had a real nice roommate from South Carolina. Well, there were four of us but one bunkmate I guess I’ll say and she said she’d choose the upper bunk and I was so glad because I didn’t want to get on that upper bunk. [laughs] But anyway, they started in and they really, they—we had to be out in formation at 6:30 in the morning, fully dressed. They’d already told us what we had to wear that day, exactly what our uniform had to be and we were—had to stand in line and I think I was number 21. I still remember that. [laughs] You were the 21st in line. But anyway, after that if they called for roll and done whatever they did, they sent us—we had breakfast. And then we had—well, before we went even down to go to muster, we had to have our room in perfect order and they actually came by with a quarter and bounced it on our—they didn’t do it every day but they did at times, just to see if we had done it right. But anyway, they—we marched and it was hot, it was July, and we marched to Smith College which was a good space, piece. I don’t know how far it was. It felt like miles but I’m sure it wasn’t. But anyway, and of course, there was nothing air conditioned then and there was no such thing. [laughs] In that part of the world anyway and we marched up to classes every day and they—one of the interesting—well, there are several interesting things. One was they gave us physical examinations and they made us strip, strip, strip to nothing and sit and wait for them to examine us which was really rough for somebody like me. And then, another thing was, I got bronchitis and I was really sick and they sent me to the

infirmary and I must not have been a very good patient because they discharged me too early and I was still sick and I knew I was still sick and I got on the elevator and the commanding officer of the WAVES said “you don’t look like you feel very well” and I said “well, I don’t” and she said “come to my office” and she took my temperature and it was 103. So, she sent my right back to the infirmary which made them unhappy and I had to stay for about three or four more days. So, I missed some of the training but—oh, one thing I didn’t say. The second day we were there, we got measured for uniforms and Filene’s in Boston made our uniforms and they had, by the end of the week, they had uniforms and shoes, everything perfect. We had our full uniforms by the end of the week. So that, they were really good. [nods head]

Interviewer: What kind of uniform was it?

Bond: Well we—at that point, we had a navy, a regular navy one and then we had a—I called it a seersucker, it was real like a seersucker. It navy str—navy, little navy and white stripes. I’d forgotten what they called it but they didn’t call it seersucker but that’s what it was. But, later on, I got a white—I bought my white one but they did not give us that.

Interviewer: What was the training other than marching? What else did you do?

Bond: Oh, well, Navy history, Navy terms, Navy—what was going on in the world. I mean as much as they would tell us. I don’t remember everything other than that but a lot of it was just what was going—what the Navy—what the Navy meant.

Interviewer: And how, you know, long did you have to complete the training? Was it a certain amount of time?

Bond: Six weeks. [nods head]

Interviewer: Six weeks. And this was an officers—.

Bond: Officers’ training, yeah. And it was interesting. One of the WAVE officers who had already gone through it all said, “Washington is the worst place to get sent and I hate to tell you but most of you are going to get sent there.” So, I got sent there. [laughs] But it— and it was. It was not a good place to be sent.

Interviewer: So how did you get the news that you were going to Washington?

Bond: Oh, well, they gave us our orders and I don’t remember how the orders came. I guess, I think they were written orders, but I don’t remember seeing them.

Interviewer: So how did you get there?

Bond: Well, a train back to New York and then there was—one of my WAVE officer friends had lived in New York so she asked some of us to go come and spend the night with her on the way so we did and she took us down to Radio City and I remember I saw my first TV. It was on the street and I thought it was a joke. I

didn't think it was real. I thought it was a trick because I said you just can't do that. I mean it's just not possible but that's about the only thing I remember about New York except a lot of traffic. But then we, after that day, I got on the train and my friend, my roommate that I—from South Carolina—was going home. She could go home but I knew I couldn't go to Florida and back in two or three days but she went home and I was by myself in Washington for a couple of days in a hotel and that was pretty scary cause I was scared to get out of the hotel. I didn't know, I didn't know a thing about Washington and I am not very brave so I didn't, I didn't like those few days and then we tried to find a place to live. The Navy helped some and they—we first stayed overnight, two—I think two nights, in somebody's home. And then, they found us a place in what is called Meridian Hill Hotel and it was a hotel for women. It was a new hotel and it was really a nice hotel except it was not air conditioned. The rooms were nice. They didn't have much in them, but they had the basics, but the windows were blacked out and you couldn't open them and it was as hot as blazes and there were no fans. [laughs] So you—it was summertime too, it was July. So anyway, it was very hot, and the lobby was just loaded with people who spoke foreign languages. I don't know where they were from, but you hardly ever heard English spoken down in the lobby. The lob—and it was full. They were packed up; I mean sitting on top of—it was so full. They were sitting everywhere. And you'd go into the lobby and it was certainly not a place where you could find anybody, anybody to talk to. So, I spent a lot of time in my room which was real bad. I like to read but I got tired of—I mean—I didn't have enough to read and—But when I went to work, I was assigned to the Navy Department Bureau of Ships, Expediting Department, and what we did was call different companies and try to get materials for shipyards that were building ships for the Navy. They would let us know that they needed something in order to complete the job and we would call and for the first part, it worked out real well. They were very cooperative and then they started telling me that they couldn't do it anymore because the Manhattan Project had top priority and I remember asking somebody from G.E., “what in the world is a Manhattan Project?” He said, “nobody knows.” And we later found out it was an atomic bomb but I guess that was a good thing that they did that [laughs] But anyway, I stayed in that department— there were two male, one a lieutenant and one a lieutenant [inaudible] who worked there and they were nice but they were—they had their families and friends and I really didn't have any social contact with them. I—there was some civilian people that I met that were very nice that I enjoyed having lunch with occasionally, when we could get together at the same time. But I was, I was really—Washington just really about finished me up. I mean, I really was very—I don't know whether it was homesick or just feeling—there was—it was really hard being there when you didn't ever see anybody except all these people that you don't know and you rush from work to—you had to get an express bus to go down to work and then you get an express bus home. They did have a cafeteria there at the hotel which is where we ate but there was

no social contact at all and I was miserable and I really—my friends talked me into it cause I didn't think there was any chance of me getting a transfer but they talked me into it. They said, "you need to do that" and I did apply but two or three things happened in Washington and I—that I really am glad I was there when it happened. One was when Roosevelt won his fourth term, he came—they let us out. It was kind of a rainy day. It wasn't really rainy but it was sprinkling a little bit and it was col—it was in November so it was cold and we went, we had to walk I think about a block to get to in front of the White House and he came riding up in this open car. I didn't see a single social—I mean, civil—[sound of frustration]—what am I? I didn't see a single person guarding him. He was in an open car. He had somebody in with him, a man that they were laughing and talking. And then in the front of that was one man sitting, looking straight ahead and then the chauffeur. That was the only people there and nobody was do-trying—it amazes me now with all the security they have to have that they don't—at that time, there was none. And then, four months later we were, I was there when they brought his body back from Warm Springs in the cason [possibly means casket] and we watched them take his body up to the White House and that was very impressive I'm telling ya. And then, the night before I left, we had—we—I was in my room and I heard all this screaming and I went down to see what it was and everyone was saying "Germany has surrendered, Germany has surrendered." It was pitch black outside but we went out in the pitch black and the newspaper had been printed and we didn't know what we were grabbing but we were handing money and getting a paper and I did get a paper and I paid for it but it was really exciting. The only thing was that Germany had not actually signed a surrender. They didn't sign it for two or three days later, but they had somehow it had gotten to the news that they had surrendered. So those three things were very interesting to me and another thing, I did see someone, and I don't know who it was, I don't know if it was Truman or who, place the wreath at the unknown soldier's tomb. But those things I'm glad I saw but I did not enjoy my time in Washington. But when I got my orders, when I when—they told me I, they told me I was to see this captain again, I talked to this captain when I asked, bless his heart. He must have seen how desperate I was because he did approve or get approved for me being transferred and I got called in and said, "which would you prefer: Naval Air Station Pensacola or Naval Air Station Corpus Christi?" And I took Pensacola and so they wrote the orders and I got transferred to Pensacola and—I went afterward, when the time—I don't know how many days it was but then I went to—stopped in Atlanta to see my sister and while I was there, that's when they said that Germany had actually surrendered. And then, I went by Columbus to see two other sisters and then I went on back, went to Pensacola. I got off the train and the thing is the train didn't get there until after dark and the train went to New Orleans, it didn't go to Pensacola. You had to get off the train and walk across a field which was not lighted at night. You had to go to another train to go to Pensacola [laughs] So I went, got on the train to Pensacola and I

don't even remember how I got to the Naval Air Station, but it was a different world altogether. The WAVE officers had their own building and it did have a fan. It didn't have air conditioning, but it had a fan and it—the people were friendly and it was, it was just a different world altogether. And, well, when I got there, they didn't know what to do with me. My orders had not come from Washington. I had my orders, but their orders hadn't come so they didn't know what they were going to do with me. So anyway, they—the first day I was there, I bet I was interviewed by five people and I kept wondering “what in the world?” I mean, I'm going from one person to another. Are they going to send me back to Washington? What are they going to do? And I don't know and finally they decided that they would accept me as aide to the commanding officer. The girl who had been aide to the commanding officer had applied and been accepted to go to Honolulu. That was the first time they had accepted any WAVES outside of the continental United States and she had applied and gotten it so they had a vacancy. So here I was green as could be and they accepted me and I, I, at least I made it. I don't know whether I passed muster or not but I made it. But I had the nicest boss. The captain who was the commanding officer of the air station was just the nicest person and easy to work for. He meant business. He ran a good ship but he didn't, and he didn't accept a lot of foolishness but he was kind and patient and didn't, wasn't demanding. But and I really, I thought that was—I was very blessed to have that job.

Interviewer: What was his name?

Bond: Captain James McKay and he was, he was just a fine, fine person. I think the worst, the hardest thing for us, all of us were—and I know it was for him cause he had to handle it with the parents—is we were, there were, there was this naval training station where these young people were learning to fly and we had a number of accidents and deaths and he had to handle that and sometimes the parents would come in, sometimes they wouldn't but it was not, that was not an easy time. But we did have some good times there and we had—we—on weekends, during the summer, we would get the mess hall to make us up a picnic lunch. The Navy had a little boat that would take us over to the island which happened to be Santa Rosa Island now that is populated but then it was nothing but a big piece of sand and we would spend the day over there. There were two, there was a restroom for the boys and men and women. And we loved to get out—we'd get sunburned, of course, but we had that activity and we had—we ate in the officer's mess and it was good food and overall, that experience was good.

Interviewer: So, the war was still going on—

Bond: Yes—

Interviewer: In the Pacific?

Bond: Yes, yes

Interviewer: So, they were training soldiers for that?

Bond: Yes, yeah [nods head]

Interviewer: Can you remember any of the other women or men who were working in that office or near you?

Bond: You know what, I've tried my best to remember the girl who was the secretary there, who was a typist and I cannot remember her name. I thought about it last night and I thought I cannot remember her name and I don't know why. I remember one of the WAVE—the only name I remember down there besides the commanding officer is one of the—a girl from Boston which she said 'Bawstin.' But she, her na- Natalie Pa- I thought, she said, she called herself 'Natalie Pock' and I thought it was Pock, P-O-C-K. It was P-A-R-K. I finally found out it was P-A-R-K at the end because I never saw it written down. I just thought Natalie Pock but that was what she called her—but anyway, she and I were friends and we really hated to separate but we, we really didn't keep in touch much afterwards. But, when the war was over, it was a, it was exciting, and it was a letdown. It was that "we're not needed anymore." We'd been needed and we'd been, you know, we'd been doing all these things. Now we're not needed anymore. What are we going to do? And they gave, I think it, there were about two weeks before we were discharged but we had—I had applied for Tulane. I knew I wanted to get a Master's degree in social work. So, I had applied at Tulane and they accepted me but I couldn't go until the fall cause they didn't start until the fall. But I was able to get a summertime job in Atlanta where my sister was living then at the Child Welfare Association for the summer. And I worked there and then I went to Tulane for a year and then I went back to Atlanta and worked for the same agency.

Interviewer: Why did you leave Tulane?

Bond: Cause I didn't—I'd given all my mon—I spent all my money [laughs] They had the G.I. Bill but you had to have some money on the side to, you know to, for different things and I had, I had spent, I had—the money I had saved in the Navy, I—in a year I spent it and I didn't have that much left and I had enough to last through, until I got to Atlanta and I could get another check but that—.

Interviewer: You returned to Atlanta and where did you go to work?

Bond: Child Welfare Association.

Interviewer: So, can you talk a little bit about your long-term career in social work?

Bond: Well, I worked—my first assignment was, well I don't know whether if it was that summer but the first assignment after I graduated was at Hillside Cottages which was a place for dependent children. And we had four dormitories, two boys and two girls' dormitories and I guess, at that time, they was probably as good as

most of them were. I mean, right now you probably wouldn't meet standard but at that time they were pretty good and I was an intake worker. I talked with the parents and then I'd do any social work that needed to be done between the parents and the children. And, it was, it was—I enjoyed that. And then—.

Interviewer: Tell me about meeting your husband?

Bond: Well, that's the next story. [laughs] He came down from Massachusetts. He had—he was transferred to Georgia and he had two children who at that time were seven and nine and they were a girl and a boy. Girl, seven. Boy, nine. And they—he had full custody of them, and he had to find a place for them to stay. Somebody that he had met on the road, when he was traveling, had told him about Hillside Cottages where I was working. Of course, they didn't tell him I was working there but that's where I was working. But anyway, they—he came to apply. Well, he came through the major, major agency that handled it, Hillside, first and she had—some lady, one of the ladies did an interview with him and she was impressed with him. And she said, "he is really nice, you've just got to meet him." Well, I was a social worker and of course, I met him and it didn't take long for us to know that we were the right—[laughs]—we belonged to each other. So, I think, I met him in December and we married in June and I quit work and took care of his kids while they—until now—well, one of them has died but the other one still, I talked to last night. But they have been my children too.

Interviewer: And what was his name?

Bond: Howard Whitfield Bond.

Interviewer: Now, why did you eventually go back to work?

Bond: Finances [laughs], finances. You know, when you have a sales job it's not, everything is not always going as well as you'd like for it too and financially, I had to go back to work. I didn't want to. I really—I mean nobody persuaded me, I decided I'd do it but I really, in my heart, would rather have not done it but I knew that it had to be done.

Interviewer: And how did you balance work and family at that time?

Bond: Well, probably pretty poorly. I tried really hard and I hope I did it fairly well, but I don't know. It was—sometimes I worked part-time, sometimes I had people keeping children, children during the day. It was just different things that had to work, had to get worked out.

Interviewer: And I know you moved to several different states with your husband's job.

Bond: Yeah, yeah and they were—we moved from Atlanta to Indiana to Knoxville, Tennessee to Fort Worth, Texas and back to Atlanta. [laughs]

Interviewer: And where did you settle in Atlanta?

Bond: When we came back?

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Bond: Well, we went to Peachtree Gardens which was where we lived when we married but then, as soon as we could, we bought a house out on, in Dunwoody.

Interviewer: And can you talk to me about completing your Master's later in life?

Bond: Well, I had been, at that point, I was doing adoption work. I had done adoption work for nine years for the agency. That was really rewarding work. It was hard but it was rewarding and one of the ladies who—Georgia Retardation Center was just opening and at that point it was, that was, that was alright to call it that because that's what they called them. Right now, they've changed names because they did not like to use that term. But anyway, one of the ladies that I was working with had been chosen to go as one of the supervisors out there and she started talking with me and said that the state would pay for me to go, to go back to college and get my degree, finish my degree and then I would get a job. I would be guaranteed a job there, at Georgia Retardation Center. And so I did and I commuted to Athens every day for a year—well, not every day for a year because sometimes, some days we didn't have to go in but most days. But anyway, it was not an easy thing and it was, it was a bad, it was not a good transition. But anyway, it worked out fine and I was very grateful for being there and I started off as a social work supervisor but then I was made a unit director and a unit director for several years. I'm not even sure how long and I retired there as a unit director.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about your family today?

Bond: Well, my immediate family is Judy who lives right here, and she's married and has two children and three grandchildren and I have a daughter Bonnie who lives in Nashville, Tennessee or Hermitage, Tennessee. She two daughters and one of them has one son and the other one has two sons and a daughter. The daughter and the son are twins. And then, my stepdaughter in Fort Worth, well, Paradise, Texas right outside of Fort Worth and she is, her health is not real good. Our son died about fifteen years ago. He had cancer and he died. [garbled]

Interviewer: So, with all of this in mind. We've sort of been through some of your memories, specifically related to World War II. Can you talk to me a little bit about how you feel about your military service today?

Bond: I am very grateful that I did it. I am very grateful I did it. I don't regret it one minute. I think it was the thing to do at that point. I think—I don't know that I did anything to make the war any better, but it made me feel good that I was contributing and I really, I wish that people were more patriotic now. Wish that they really loved their country like we used to love our country. I really do and I don't think they do.

Interviewer: Can you tell me what it meant for you as a young woman to go into the military at that time?

Bond: I don't know. I was scared to death is all I can say. [laughs] No, I don't know. I don't really know what, I don't know how to answer that one.

Interviewer: Ok. Do you have anything else you'd like to add?

Bond: I can't think of anything. I can't think of anything. I think you covered the right questions pretty well.

Interviewer: Well, thank you very much Edith Bond and we'll conclude there.