

U.S. NAVY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

ORAL HISTORY WITH CDR (ret) WILLIAM JASPER, DC, USN

CONDUCTED BY  
JAN K. HERMAN, HISTORIAN, BUMED

22 SEPTEMBER 1994  
TELEPHONIC INTERVIEW

OFFICE OF MEDICAL HISTORY  
BUREAU OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY  
WASHINGTON, DC

**Interview with William Jasper, retired Navy dentist. Dr. Jasper participated in the Navy's World War II V-12 program.**

**Talk a little bit about your background, where you're from.**

I was born in a small town adjacent to Pittsburgh, PA, called Wilkinsburg, May 7, 1925. The reason I was born there is because that was the nearest hospital to my home, which was in Pittsburgh at that time. I attended both public and private schools in Pittsburgh. This brings us up to the early forties, the beginning of the war, when it became apparent that all the males of draft age would have to go into one of the armed services.

Due to the draft, the military realized there weren't going to be any men going to college; they'd all be in the armed services. So they set up training programs at colleges and universities around the country.

I recall when the announcements [of these programs] were made and the exams were given. I went to a local high school where the exam was given and saw "Army/Navy" on the top of the first page. There was no Air Force at that time. You checked either 'Army' or 'Navy' or 'No Choice.' I decided "I'm going Navy, not Army."

So, luckily, I qualified. I passed the various physicals and other exams given for the Navy V-12 program.

**What year was this?**

1943. I graduated from Peabody High School in Pittsburgh and reported to Navy V-12 Unit at Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA. You were assigned to one of the V-12 programs in the naval district in which you lived. There were many schools in Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey (the Fourth Naval District), and so I was ordered to the V-12 unit on July 1, 1943. I didn't know what naval officer specialty to select, and so I choose pre-med initially. But after the first semester, I knew that I preferred dentistry. So I later transferred to pre-dental.

**Earlier, before you even got involved with Navy and V-12, had you ever thought about becoming a dentist or getting into medicine?**

No. When you're only 17 years old very few people are so highly motivated and have their thoughts and hopes for future vocation geared that closely that they know what they want to do. Plus, it was wartime.

**So you were just 17.**

Yes. I was 18 years old when I graduated high school. My

birthday happened to fall in May. At Bucknell I began my college studies with about 600 Navy and Marine Corps trainees. The majority were people who, like myself, had just graduated from high school or had had some college education and were ordered to report to one of the V-12 units throughout the state.

**What were some of the other choices that one had besides medical?**

First and foremost was line, the unrestricted line. You also had a choice of becoming a Supply Corps officer. Another choice was as a flying officer. I recall that that was the V-5 program. But we all had the same courses. In other words, we were regular students, albeit Navy students, at the University. There were not special courses for us within the regular curriculum.

**So in many ways it was like a minor ROTC program.**

Exactly. The Navy insisted that they not have special courses or special programs for us, but that we were augmented into the regular curriculum. Of course, the Navy laid out what that curriculum was going to be, whether it was English 101, or social sciences, or French, or history, mathematics, or the sciences. We were enrolled as regular students.

**And this was a compressed program?**

Compressed in the sense that there was no break, that's all. In the summertime we went to school.

**So you would have finished a 4-year undergraduate program in what, 3 years?**

Yes. I guess the educators agreed that in the cases of pre-medical, five semesters was adequate to prepare these candidates to go on into either medicine or dentistry, medical school/dental school. So I was able to complete those five basic semesters in 20 months, and then go on into dental school.

**Do you recall the particular curriculum you had at that time?**

Yes, fairly well. First of all, there was a very heavy emphasis on physical training. I think it was Gene Tunney (former heavyweight boxing champion) who set up this physical education program. Again, if you refer to James Schneider's book about V-12, he elaborates and enlarges on that subject and the costs.<sup>1</sup> It cost a dollar a day for

---

<sup>1</sup> J.G. Schneider. *The Navy V-12 Program: Leadership for a Lifetime*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1987.

the physical education training for students. That's all. I studied chemistry and physics, English, algebra, trigonometry, biology, and embryology.

The V-12 students numbered half the total number enrolled in those courses. They were exceptions, however. In physics, there were a vast majority of V-12 students because it was a requirement for all Navy and Marine Corps students. On the other hand, in foreign languages--not a requirement for all V-12 students--we were numbered 40-50 percent or less. Nonetheless, the course requirements for all students, including V-12, were identical.

We wore Navy enlisted uniforms; the Marine Corps trainees wore equivalent Marine Corps uniforms. Naval personnel wore whites in the summer and blues in the winter. It's interesting to note that we had members who came from the fleet. Some ranked as high as E-7. In V-12, all of us were E-1. Some units had both Navy Marine Corps students. I don't think there were any units that were strictly Marines. At our unit, we had about 600 trainees, of whom 50 percent were Navy and 50 percent Marine Corps.

**When were the V-12 students issued uniforms?**

As soon as they reported to the unit.

**You reported to your unit first?**

Yes, because I was a Navy student, that's what I had to do. It was really somewhat dramatic, as you look back on it. It's tough enough to go to college right from high school and make that transition. In addition to that, throw in going on active duty in the Navy the same day. It was quite an obstacle, quite a mental process that one had to accommodate to.

**There was going to be a tremendous amount of discipline imposed in order to get through this program.**

Yes. Jim Schneider has the exact numbers, but I believe about 70,000 of us reported, maybe a little bit less. We all reported aboard the same day, same time, but to all these 131 schools. The medical, dental, and theology schools were counted separately. I'm pretty sure that practically every accredited medical and dental school was involved in this program. I have no facts to back it up, but that's what I presume.

**What did they look at? I assume they had your high school transcripts.**

They had the high school transcripts. Additionally, we had to take an examination, a nationwide examination, which was one of the

important aspects of the whole V-12 program; students were admitted not on the basis of their financial or social status, not on the basis of political influence. It was strictly on the basis of merit. This was a unique concept, and it became the prototype for the famous G.I. Bill program that enabled qualified veterans to go to college.

**And where were the exams administered?**

In my area they were administered at a public high school. I recall taking my exam in spring of 1943 at Schenley High School in Pittsburgh. At that time I was attending another public high school (Peabody). The examination was not given at my school. I don't know about the private schools where those students took their exams.

**How did you become aware of the program, through a high school counselor?**

No. Only my final year of high school was at Peabody. Previously, I had attended a private school. I don't recall how I first learned about the Navy College Training Program.

**You were looking for the best deal.**

That's right. I'd even thought of joining a meteorology program sponsored by the Army Air Corps at Kenyon College in Ohio. I was exploring that, but it never worked out. I was too late for a Marine Corps specialized program of some sort, but when the Navy program came up, I knew that this was the program. I said, "This is the way I want to go."

**So you were accepted for the program and reported to Bucknell.**

Yes. On July 1, 1943.

**Were you immediately issued a uniform since you were part of V-12 at Bucknell?**

Many of the schools had a terrible time initially because the uniforms hadn't arrived. In many cases, they hadn't finished building the dormitories where the poor fellows were supposed to sleep. But, at Bucknell, they had it fairly well under control. I was one of the first ones to report to active duty, and I had to work with the Navy and the Marine Corps in transferring supplies from one building to another.

I'll tell you one very funny incident that happened at that time. We were ordered to move these rather bulky boxes from one building to another. I noted in the corner, as we went to pick up these boxes, there was one small box in the corner by itself. I said, "Well, this will be easier to lift up instead of these great big bulky things".

I made a mistake. Those small boxes were solid metal. They were loaded with the little bronze Marine Corps emblems. I could barely lift it up off the deck.

**You were issued your uniform and then you got your schedule. Were you preregistered?**

Yes. Could I also interject here who these supervisory Navy and Marine Corps personnel were? The commanding officer was a naval reserve lieutenant commander. It was an odd coincidence that his first name was the same as my last name. That similarity added a little bit of confusion. There were a few other officers, including a disbursing officer. The rest of the jobs were taken by noncommissioned petty officers.

In the Marine Corps side of the house, they had a captain and a chief warrant officer. The rest were sergeants. They were mainly concerned with teaching military leadership, discipline, and related orientation.

The Navy chief petty officers, the ones we worked with, were all former athletes at colleges; football, basketball, baseball. They wore a unique insignia, the letter "A" in a diamond, which meant athletics/physical training. I believe this was a special wartime rating. They were not commissioned officers. Their specific function was to supervise our physical training as well as teach us basic military drill and marching. They were, by and large, delightful people to work with.

**So even though you had classes with people who were not in the V-12 program, I assume that most of them were.**

Well, Bucknell is a coed school and so there were female as well as some civilian male students.

**So there were a lot of--**

We had a lot of women. In fact, the school obviously attempted to fill enrollment with female students. There was no female shortage. In fact, I was even asked to join a fraternity. Some of the men who were ordered to Bucknell Navy V-12 unit were upperclassmen, and so they already belonged to fraternities or other organizations on campus.

**The accommodations?**

It was a regular dormitory, two to a room. We had inspections every week, which were white-glove inspections. We had to make sure that those rooms were in A-1 shape. We also stood guard duty. One room would be set aside, as a guard duty room, so that during evening

hours, weekends, and holidays, there had to be someone in those dormitories. It was really a military barracks.

**So the dormitory, in effect, had been converted to a barracks-- Exactly.**

**Although it wasn't open bay. You had two to a room rather than an open bay barracks that you would have had in a boot camp.**

Right. In peacetime, there would have been one person per room, but we had two people in the room. Our civilian clothes, I think we sent away. Of course, nobody had a car. Because we were all apprentice seamen, everything was according to military regulations. We had classes. We had special classes on naval orientation, naval indoctrination, things of that nature. I remember those went right along with our other classes.

**Who did the inspections?**

Usually one of the officers. Sometimes it would be a chief. But most time it would be one of the officers, Navy or Marine Corps.

**A naval officer?**

Either the commanding officer or the executive officer usually went around. As time progressed, first the numbers of Marine trainees decreased precipitously because the Marine Corps must have felt either that they had enough officers or that they did not perceive the need for them as much as the Navy with those thousands of ships rolling off the lines. That was the purpose of the program. We didn't know how long the war was going to last, and the Navy needed a lot of officers to man all those new ships, as well as replacements.

**Well, the Marines certainly needed a lot of men to fill the ranks which were being depleted.**

They did. But apparently they had enough.

**What happened to those Marine Corps students who were in the program?**

Those who successfully completed their V-12 college training went to platoon leaders school. If they qualified, they received their commissions as second lieutenants, USMCR.

The numbers of both Marine Corps V-12 units and Marine V-12 trainees decreased rapidly after the end of the first semester (October 1943). By the end of 1944, most of the Marine Corps V-12 units were terminated, although a few continued until spring 1946 when the entire V-12 program ended.

**What happened to, let's say, a Navy student who was not keeping up academically?**

He was sent to the fleet.

**As a seaman?**

Yes. However I imagine that those who originally came from the fleet had their ratings restored.

**What merited a wash-out?**

Well, you had to make certain grades--at least a C. My heart went out to those from the fleet who had not been to college, had been away from school for a long time, and suddenly were thrust back into a rather high-pressured, intense study program. I'm sure it was very difficult for some of them. I remember the case of one--who did not come from the fleet. When he returned from holiday leave, his name did not appear on the list of those who passed, so he was transferred out of V-12 to the fleet. To me, he was a good student, but it was one of those things. I never did find out what happened to him, but I'm sure it was a great disappointment.

**What would have been a typical day in college?**

We were up at 6 am. First, it was calisthenics, then we mustered and marched to chow, regardless of the weather. Because we lived up on top of the hill we marched down--600 of us--to the mess hall (a fraternity house converted to a cafeteria) for breakfast. We didn't march back up the hill. We just returned to our rooms, picked up our books, and went to class. Class started at eight o'clock; no ifs, ands, or buts. We attended classes all morning and then broke for lunch. Everyone was scheduled for physical education--some in the morning and some in the afternoon.

**Where did they find the time?**

It's amazing, and still keep up with your studies.

**So then you broke for lunch and you would have had the military courses interspersed within that day, let's say?**

Yes. Every Saturday there was a personnel inspection. Because I played in my high school band, I brought my saxophone to Bucknell and joined the marching band. We practiced during the scheduled period, assembling in a music room located in the basement of one of the recitation buildings, and practiced the musical numbers and marches. We also practiced marching with our instruments on an athletic field.

**So Saturday was dedicated to that purpose. You didn't have classes?**

No. I don't think we had classes on Saturday morning, but almost always underwent a personnel inspection--outdoors in fair weather, indoors in foul weather. The military members of the band were inspected, too.

**On Saturday?**

Yes. The inspection usually ended just before noon. Then weekend liberty commenced. There would be no more classes until Monday morning. Unless one was assigned guard duty in his dormitory, trainees were allowed to leave the campus and not required to return until Sunday evening for another muster when all trainees were required to assemble in military formation. But, at night time, on weekends, over holidays, and between semesters, there was always a sailor or marine on duty in the dormitories.

**The military training as you say, included military etiquette, what you would get today if you went to Newport and to the orientation program, that type of thing?**

Yes, very similar.

**Did you have any kind of weapons training?**

No. I never handled a weapon until 1949 at Marine Corps School in Quantico, VA. That was a special assignment after I was commissioned when I was stationed the Naval Dental School, Bethesda, during my dental internship. Nor did we learn seamanship on boats.

Speaking of water, the Navy would bus us to a nearby community where we had learned to swim and were taught survival techniques in a "Y." The little town was called Milton, PA. Nearly every week we would be transported for this training. Neither Bucknell nor Lewisburg had a swimming pool.

I hesitate when I speak about one of my classmates. He was a chief petty officer in the fleet when he was assigned to the V-12 unit. He demonstrated a tremendous amount of leadership talent. As a newly commissioned Ensign, his first assignment was to the USS *Indianapolis*. That ship was lost with a great loss of life, including this officer.

**Yes, by a submarine.**

Just before the end of the war by a submarine. Unfortunately, he was one of the ones who didn't come back. What a loss, what a waste.

**You graduated in--**

I did not graduate from Bucknell.

**You didn't graduate?**

No, because of the war. Following the successful completion of the aforementioned five semesters, most dental and medical V-12 trainees did not go directly to professional schools. Reason? The medical and dental schools had schedules slightly different from college schedules. If your last semester at pre-medical/ pre-dental didn't coincide with the beginning dates of the next freshman class, the trainees were assigned to Navy medical/dental facilities until the next freshman class began at the professional school to which the trainee had been accepted and ordered.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> (Added by Dr. Jasper) One area which was not discussed during the oral interview was the V-12 selection process for admission to either medical or dental schools.

1. On entering the V-12 program, pre-medical and pre-dental students indicated their preference - either pre-med or pre-dental.

2. After two or three semesters, applications for medical and dental school were processed by the Navy and presumably submitted to the decision-making bodies of the respective medical and dental schools. At the same time the candidates were asked to submit their choice of schools - usually in the same naval district.

3. Annually, the V-12 Unit would assemble all pre-medical and pre-dental students to announce the selection results.

a) If a trainee received an `A', `B', or `C' rating he was assured acceptance into whichever program he had chosen. `A' rating students had the best opportunity to attend his school of choice.

b) If a candidate received a `D' rating he was no longer a medical or dental school candidate and was transferred to the deck officer program.

4. Candidates receiving approved ratings were permitted to complete five semesters of pre-medical or pre-dental requirements.

5. This selection process did not require a personal interview. Such decisions were based solely on scholastic records and possibly any recommendations which may have accompanied the application. Such recommendations, if any, presumably were from faculty and unit's senior officer. The DAT (Dental Aptitude Test) was not available until the following year and hence had no bearing in the dental selection process.

**So you finished your fifth semester, your last semester. What year was that?**

Winter of 1944-1945. Both wars in Europe and the Pacific were raging. I went to Bainbridge Naval Training Center, located between Baltimore and Philadelphia. I was stationed there from March 1945, through both V-E and V-J Days, until I left at the end of August and ordered to report to the dental V-12 Unit at the University of Pittsburgh.

**How long was it between the time you left Bucknell and went to Bainbridge and time you started dental school?**

Approximately 6 months.

**And that period was required by the fact that the dental school hadn't begun yet?**

Yes. It was vague as to what the Navy was supposed to do with us. I was attached to the Training Center's large dental facility. In reality, it was a wonderful experience. I guess much depended upon where you were sent, your attitude, and the duties you were expected to perform. I was assigned to the large dental laboratory. You can imagine that with thousands of recruits, there was a lot of dentistry being performed. In fact, the major cause for rejection prior to World War II was dental problems. So there were an awful of extractions and a lot of dentures to be made.

I worked in the laboratory's gold room. I shared responsibility and accountability for gold and other precious metals issued to the technicians for partial denture frameworks and for crowns and bridgework. It had to be the right amount because gold alloys and other precious metals were expensive and could not be wasted or lost.

There was a school for dental equipment repair, but not, as I recall, a dental laboratory technician school. Navy dentists in certain clinics would send in work to be completed--fabrications for partial dentures, crowns, bridges, and other prosthetics. This work was all done in the laboratory. It was a good education for me. Occasionally I would work in the clinics. I would be sent there to work as a dental assistant so I could see exactly what they were doing and how they were doing it. It was an interesting experience and very helpful to me when I started dental school.

**Did you become a prosthodontist at some point?**

No. As a matter of fact, I went in the other direction. My main interest was in preventive dentistry and education.

**You had already been accepted?**

I had been accepted.

**In what school?**

As I said, we were pretty much restricted to our naval district, and in my particular naval district, the Fourth, there are three dental schools: University of Pennsylvania, Temple University, and University of Pittsburgh. I chose Pittsburgh for an obvious reason; it was my home. I had a very sick father, and my mother was by herself; my sister had to give up her job in New York and come back home. So this is where I wanted to go, and fortunately, that's where I was selected to go.

**And you began in '45?**

Yes.

**The war was over at this point?**

Yes. The war was over. When I reported to Pitt, there was no undergraduate V-12, only graduate--dental and medical. Interestingly, the dental and medical V-12 office was located in the Cyclotron Building. I remember when that thing was built. I believe it was one of the first U.S. cyclotrons. It was right across the street from the dental school's clinical facility.

**How did your military obligation change when you went to dental school? How did the V-12 program run at that point?**

We were treated the same as every other student. The fall semester in 1945 marked the end of the dental V-12 program across the country.

**No more uniforms?**

No. All Navy students were required to wear Navy midshipman uniforms.

**You still wore uniforms?**

Yes. We were issued midshipman uniforms, an officer-type cap and the dark blue two-piece regular uniform. Since it was fall and the program was scheduled to close at the end of the current semester, I was not issued a summer uniform.

**For pay purposes, you were still apprentice seamen?**

Yes, I was still an apprentice seaman.

**Curiously, what was the pay at the beginning of the program when**

**you were at Bucknell?**

Fifty dollars a month. Even when I began my dental studies at Pitt, basic pay remained fifty dollars. However, while a dental V-12 student, we must have received something extra because weren't living in dormitories and were required to provide our own food and lodging.

**Did you get some kind of an allowance?**

Yes. I believe we did.

**I should have asked you this earlier, it just occurred to me. When you were on active duty in the V-12 program at Bucknell and at Pitt, where were you treated if you took ill? Did you go to a naval hospital?**

There were hospital corpsmen/pharmacist's mates at Bucknell. Minor illnesses not requiring a physician's attention would be handled by a pharmacist's mate. The V-12 unit had pharmacist's mates throughout the entire five semesters that I was there. At Pitt, as neither I nor my V-12 classmates fell ill during our first semester, I do not know what local medical treatment facility we would have been directed to use, probably Pitt's student health clinic.

**So there was a dispensary there (Bucknell) of some type?**

A small dispensary. At one time, however, I recall that I required a professional consult. It was a dermatology problem (psoriasis), which I still suffer from. The dispensary referred me to a local civilian physician. I don't think he was a specialist. I think he was a general practitioner in Lewisburg, PA. Obviously, if hospitalization was required, the trainees would be sent to the naval hospital at Philadelphia which was the nearest naval medical facility of any size.

**When you reported to Pitt, obviously it was an advanced graduate type of program in dentistry. How did the schedule change? Did you still go to courses in military science?**

No. There was no military educational program in conjunction with our regular dental courses. I was a full-time student. I was neither encouraged nor expected to do any other type work. I remember one of my colleagues worked at the Women's Hospital as an orderly, for which he received his room and board. That was a big savings to him while he was going to school. But remember, that was my home, so for the most part, I lived at home.

**So really the only way anyone knew that you were connected with V-12 at that stage was the fact you wore a uniform to class?**

That's all. I didn't have to wear it in the evening or on weekends.

**You were still drawing your \$50 a month?**

Right, until the end of January. That was the end of my semester, and the end of Pitt's dental V-12 program.

Then you were transferred to inactive duty in the naval reserve. The following spring I was given the option of applying for a commission as Ensign, United States Naval Reserve. I could have declined, but I chose to accept this offer.

Several of my colleagues chose not to join. There was no obligation of service upon graduation. Nevertheless, I felt the Navy had given me this education, and frankly I felt proud as well as patriotic to accept this commission.

**So you could have taken the gamble, gotten through the whole program and then said, "Hey, thank you very much. Goodbye."**

Yes.

**So you chose to go on reserve status.**

I just chose to stay on the inactive reserve. There was no obligated time or work that I had to fulfill. But this is what I chose to do.

I'd like to jump now to my senior year--1948. I became aware of a new Navy dental program, the first of the Navy senior dental programs. The Navy was very short of dental officers, even though there was no war or threat of war. The main reason was that so many dentists had left active duty.

Additionally, in the Navy Dental Corps, the rank structure was inverted. We had lots of captains, many commanders, but practically no junior officers. The Navy realized that in order to reverse the picture, it would be required to attract young dentists and senior dental students to fill these lower ranks. This, the Navy felt, was one way to accomplish that.

The program had two parts. A senior dental student could request active duty and, if accepted, would, as a senior dental student, receive pay and allowances of an ensign. On graduation, the dentist would then receive orders to active duty as a lieutenant j.g., and serve 2 years. Or, the student could apply for a naval dental internship. Acceptance into the internship program would then obligate the senior an extra year making total obligated time 3 years. The proposed 1-year naval dental internship program consisted of 6 months under instruction at an outlying naval hospital and six months at the Naval Dental School located at National Naval

Medical Center in Bethesda, MD. I opted for the internship program and was accepted. Accordingly, I began to receive pay and allowances as an ensign, USNR from 20 December 1948 until graduation. Following graduation in June 1949, I accepted a commission as Lieutenant, j.g., Dental Corps, USN.

Today, all new dental officers receive their first commission as lieutenants. In my day, they came in as "jaygees" and they stayed as "jaygees" for 3 or 4 years.

**Wow! That's a long time between promotions. So you reported for duty then?**

Yes. My first duty station was here at the Naval Gun Factory, now called the Washington Navy Yard. I'll never forget reporting in. I vividly recall that evening because there was a reserve meeting. The speaker was brilliant and very well-known dental materials researcher, Commodore George C. Paffenbarger, DC, USNR. And I was a young "jaygee," fresh out of school.

I was stationed there for 2 months and then transferred to Bethesda to begin the 6 months phase of my year long internship. For the remaining six months I chose the Naval Hospital Philadelphia. Following completion of the dental internship, I received orders to Great Lakes Naval Training Center, and then to an aircraft carrier headed for the Far East and Carrier Task Force 77 (Korean War).

**Was your internship essentially general dentistry?**

Yes. All aspects of general dentistry were taught and available except pediatric dentistry. (At that time children's dentistry wasn't generally practiced in the Navy). Because there wasn't a VA hospital in Philadelphia, one was under construction, the Naval Hospital provided VA-eligible patients with needed care and services.

The naval dental internship also offered: (a) an excellent preview of basic dental sciences (this review later helped me pass the National Dental Boards examination), and (b) ample opportunity to provide clinical services under overall excellent supervision.

Once incident during my internship stands out in my memory. I recall treating President Truman's valet. Valley Forge, PA, was the venue for 1950 National Boy Scout Jamboree. Apparently, Truman accepted an invitation to attend. His valet had a toothache. I relieved him of his toothache (and his tooth) at about 2 o'clock in the morning.

**A nice abscess, right?**

Yes. But then the Korean War broke out. At that time, I was

stationed at Great Lakes, and, sure enough, by May of 1951, I had received my orders to an aircraft carrier preparing for duty in the Western Pacific.

**Which carrier was that?**

The USS *Antietam*, now scrapped. It was a tremendous experience. The ships' company included three dental officers who remained through the 6-month deployment from fall of 1951 to spring of 1952. I think we performed commendably.

Toward the end of the cruise, I, as a representative of the Jewish faith, plus our Catholic chaplain and a Protestant line officer, selected the Shriners Crippled Children's Hospitals as an appropriate ship's charity. We solicited voluntary contributions from the crew. Contributions totaled nearly \$16,000. It was a very exciting day in April 1952 sailing under the Golden Gate Bridge with the personnel of both the ship's company and air group assembled on the flight deck forming the figure, \$16,000.

We accomplished our mission, not just the dental mission, but the mission of the ship.

**What of other ex-V-12ers who choose not to accept reserve commissions?**

At the beginning of the Korean War all services, especially the Army and Air Force, were woefully short of trained medical people. So they borrowed medical and, I believe, dental, personnel, former V-12 students who had received at least some of their active professional education while serving on active duty in the Navy. Some continued to wear Navy uniforms while others wore uniforms of other services. Thus, they were called to active duty to serve not only in the Navy, but also in the other services, too.

**That's legendary in the Navy Medical Department. We know about the fact that we got their bacon out of the fire, having to provide medical people to them.**

I stayed in. I made the decision right from the beginning that I wanted to be USN. I felt that if as a career member of the Navy, I keenly desired a certain billet, or if a decision had to be made between two candidates, a career officer or a reserve officer, the career officer would probably do a little bit better.

Although diagnosed with diabetes mellitus in 1957, and controlled at the time by diet and exercise, I appealed to the Secretary of the Navy to remain on active duty. My request was approved, and I remained on active duty for an additional 7 years. However, in 1964 I was diagnosed as insulin dependent and thereby

became ineligible to continue on active duty past 20 years. I retired in 1966.

**And then went into private practice after that?**

No. I wanted to enter dental public health, which meant I had to go back to school. I was accepted at the University of North Carolina School of Public Health and commenced my public health studies in Chapel Hill in the fall of 1966 aided by a U.S. Public Health Service Training grant.

**So that's why you ended up in North Carolina?**

Yes. I earned my Master's degree in 1 year. Today, the Master's of Public Health Degree usually requires a minimum of 2 years.

**Compressing things.**

No question.

**This was something that really put you in good stead.**

Dental public health is what I wanted to do. It provided me with as great a sense of fulfillment and accomplishment as does a successful private practice for physicians and dentists. In public health the community is the patient. I derived a great deal of both pride and pleasure in having personally convinced a number of smaller North Carolina communities to fluoridate their public water systems.

**So you ended up putting all your restorative dentists out of business.**

No, not really. In reality, fluoridation has several goals. First and foremost, it reduces the risk of caries, both in deciduous and permanent teeth. With longer retention of teeth it is inevitable that other dental problems will occur, periodontal disease, traumatic injuries to teeth, dental pulp disease, malocclusions, malignancies, and other oral pathology. All these conditions and diseases require the professional expertise of a dentist. So rather than devoting the majority of his/her time to caries removal and lost tooth structure replacement, today's dentist can concentrate his skills towards, (a) prevention, and (b) treatment of dental conditions other than dental caries. In addition, think of all the pain and suffering avoided, and the immense monetary savings realized thanks to fluoridation.

**Now that you are retired from active practice, what occupies**

**your time?**

I'm still very active in the Navy and the Navy recruiting. I'm on RDAC, which means the Recruit District Advisory Council, for the state of North Carolina, and also with many veterans groups and, of course, very busy, very active with the Veterans Hospital. We have one of the larger Veterans Hospitals across the street from Duke University Medical Center, and I'm president of the executive committee for the voluntary service called the VAVS program. So I do keep sort of busy in Navy and the veterans activities, veterans affairs.