

NARRATOR: Hubbard, Sarah
INTERVIEWER: Troy Reeves
DATE: April 23, 2004
LOCATION: New Meadows, Idaho
PROJECT: Women in WWII/Veterans History Project

No. of Minutes	Page No.	Summary
---------------------------	---------------------	----------------

START OF RECORDING

00:00	1	Introduction.
00:45	1	Hubbard began by spelling her first and last name and by stating her last name, Toettcher, at the time of World War II. Hubbard was born on July 24 th in Illinois. Her father served as a minister and the family moved to various locations until they landed in Tulare, California, when Hubbard was 12. She moved to San Diego in late 1939/early 1940. She was married to Albert Toettcher and had one child when they moved to San Diego. They moved because he was going to join the Navy. During the War she had another child, so during the 1940s she had two boys, Bill and Dick.
5:00	3	Hubbard explained what she was doing on December 7, 1941. Her husband, Albert, wanted her to take training to work at the Consolidated Vultee Aircraft Corporation. The training took place in the Balboa Park area of San Diego (part of town with the Zoo). Hubbard said that she was one of the first dozen or so women to work at Consolidated. Her husband joined the Navy about the same time as Hubbard started working at the factory. Hubbard's husband watched their children while she trained for factory work. With prompting from the interviewer, Hubbard discussed the various aspects of her training. Discussing the training reminded Hubbard of a story. She liked looking at the blueprints, and during the job she could not figure out where one part fit. Her boss told her there could only be one way. She read the blueprint and put the part in backwards. Her boss never told her there was only one way to put a part in.
09:15	5	While working at the plant, the women learned to put their names on their tools, because the men would try to usurp them. She recalled beginning work at Consolidated before Christmas 1941 and getting to the training site via bus and streetcar. The school ran for a half day for six weeks. She began work for Consolidated in early 1942. She gave the complete name of the company (see above), and

No. of Minutes	Page No.	Summary
16:15	9	<p>Hubbard showed the interviewer a check and check stub for 41 cents from Consolidated. Hubbard felt scared on her first few days of work; she said the men did not want women to work there. Because of her sheltered life, Hubbard could not understand what the men teased her and the other women about. She would ask her husband to explain what the men meant, and he would get mad at her. She stopped asking her husband; she would find out what the men meant by asking her boss. She continued to discuss her boss. She felt he was an ugly man on the outside, but he was a great person on the inside and to work for. He and his wife treated the women that worked under him quite well.</p> <p>Hubbard told another story about another supervisor (not a direct boss of Hubbard). He was a stout man who would try to rub up against the women. Hubbard put a pin in her uniform that poked out the back of it. She leaned into the man when he leaned in. That was the last time he tried that maneuver. With prompting from the interviewer, Hubbard talked about the first group of women that worked for Consolidated, including where they worked and what type of uniform they wore. Hubbard continued to talk about buying heavy boots with metal toes and safety glasses and about not wearing makeup. During the first few days or weeks on the job, Hubbard, who was the only woman who bought and wore the safety equipment, was hit with a piece of flying metal. Since she wore her glasses, she was not hurt. After that incident all of the other women bought the boots and glasses. This story led Hubbard to tell another story about working with a man on a stamping machine. The man lost his arm, and Hubbard was there to try to help him and to try to save his arm. (His arm could not be saved.) The man got compensation, which Hubbard thought was just and good, because it was not his fault and because he was also a professional piano player.</p>
21:45	11	<p>Hubbard talked about the security on the plant, including how her lunch bag was checked coming into and going out of the plant. She wore a name badge that was checked each time she entered or left. Working at the plant led her to try her first cup of coffee. She bought a cup because she was working outside during a cold, wet San Diego night. Hubbard and the women ate lunch wherever they wanted, including outside. She recalled watching a Red Skeleton show during one lunch period outside. Hubbard worked the night shift, which allowed her to manage her children and house better. She recalled the blackout conditions and the Tuesdays that she and her crew would ice skate after their shift. These stories led Hubbard to talk about how her husband did not return to her and her kids once</p>

No. of Minutes	Page No.	Summary
		he joined the Navy. He sent \$100 for the boys; that letter and money was the last that Hubbard heard from him.
26:30	14	Hubbard discussed her home in San Diego, her mother helping her with the children, and the Red Cross setting up a procedure where a woman who went to San Diego to be with her husband before he shipped out could stay in a home. Hubbard had many boarders that way, and the women would help Hubbard watch her kids while she worked. Only one boarder had a child of her own, which Hubbard's two children loved. She continued to discuss the protocols that the Red Cross or the city of San Diego would enforce to help the women who came to San Diego to be near their Navy husbands. [At 29:30 the analog cassette copy shifts to tape one side two.] Hubbard talked about how the women who worked in the plant, after they would finish the night shift, would follow the Navy seamen, who were getting ready to ship off. The seaman would give them letters to mail.
31:30	15	Since Hubbard would work the night shift, she rode the streetcar and bus and walked the remaining mile home in the dark. She walked in the middle of the road and did not hesitate to run home if she felt that someone might jump out to scare her, which did happen. She told a story about one night in the fog a horse followed her home after she got off the bus. The horse stayed on her lawn all night; the next day she called the police. They found out whom the horse belonged to. With prompting from the interviewer, Hubbard described her home in San Diego during the War and also the living arrangement when the couples would stay with her. She reiterated how she and other women would take the seamen's letters to mail them to their friends, family, and sweethearts. She said, "It was just the thing to do." This thought led her to tell a story about getting in an argument because she sat beside an African American on a bus ride home. She told a story about how her son while in the Marines got in trouble for eating with an African American.
37:00	19	Hubbard did not have a specialty at work; she just put things together. After a year or two on the line, she was transferred to the "crib," which was the parts department. There were many "cribs" in the plant. She told a story about how her boss asked her to get things like "elbow grease" or a "left-handed pork chop." Men always liked to tease her. While working in one of the "cribs," they came across a man who would spit his tobacco into the plates that held the parts. They fixed him by injecting castor oil into his peach. He never spat his tobacco in their "crib" again. While at the plant, the bosses would hire Marines who had returned from the War, and they would

No. of Minutes	Page No.	Summary
43:45	21	<p>work with Hubbard and others. These men suffered from stress and/or shell shock, and this job helped them to return to society. During her off day, Hubbard would volunteer at a hospital where the injured would receive plastic surgery and/or rehabilitation from their injuries. She told several stories about her volunteer time there, including meeting a man that she visited in that hospital two years before. His plastic surgery had made him look normal, but it took two years in the hospital to accomplish it.</p>
48:00	23	<p>Hubbard said she enjoyed most aspects of her job, including when she climbed into the wing to help the welder on the outside of the wing. This story led her to note that she received a medal for efficiency; she said that she always tried to look at a job to determine how to do it efficiently. She liked her boss in the “crib”; he was a different boss than the line boss mentioned earlier. At Consolidated they built the B-24 bomber and PBV Catalina flying boats. She offered an anecdote about some of women, including Hubbard, building a rescue boat and putting their names inside the boat. They received a letter from one of the soldiers that used the rescue boat because his plane had been shot down. They also put their names in one of the planes; they never told the boss about putting their names in either the rescue boat or the plane.</p>
53:00	26	<p>Hubbard was locked inside a B-24 bomber during one shift. She explained how she got trapped inside and how the plane was moved to another location before someone found her inside. She was interrogated by the FBI (or military police) and needed her boss to come and vouch for her statement. Her boss drove her home, and she cried all the way. Hubbard lost track of all the women that she worked with. She was the only one with children or a house, and when the group would do a social function, they mainly met at her house. She said that couples did not pair up; they did things as a big group. She noted that she had good blackout curtains, which blocked the light and allowed them to have parties without being stopped by the block captains. Hubbard belonged to a union, but she did not recall the name. The interviewer returned to her paycheck to see what things were taken out.</p>
53:00	26	<p>What Hubbard felt about World War II was different than what she felt about the present day war. She did not keep track of WWII, but she did the Vietnam Conflict, because her son served in that conflict. She did not feel that WWII changed her habits; she still attended sporting events, picnicked with her boys, and walked through Navy vessels during open houses. This thought led Hubbard to talk about how she lost one of her sons on an aircraft carrier for several hours</p>

No. of Minutes	Page No.	Summary
		and how the same son fell off a submarine during another open house, and how one of her sons got stuck in a portal during an open house on a Spanish sailing ship. These events embarrassed Hubbard at the time. Her son, Dick, who was lost on the aircraft carrier landed on that aircraft carrier during his military pilot career.
58:30	28	As far as rationing during the War, Hubbard traded her gas rations for meat rations. She saved the butter stamps for her children, because she wanted to keep them healthy, particularly one of her sons that suffered from spinal meningitis. [At 59:20 the analog cassette copy moves to tape two side one.] Some of these events happened to Hubbard and her family after the War. She did not participate in scrap drives or other salvage activities. From this idea Hubbard told a story about how one of her sons kept breaking the water meters in her house until she wrap the meter with barbwire. As far as hoarding or black market activities, her neighbor worked at a grocery store, and his wife hoarded jello. She would not sell jello to Hubbard, but her church sold her jello. And a friend sold her duck eggs to help her son with spinal meningitis.
62:30	30	Hubbard did not keep track of war news very much. She rarely listened to the radio, read the newspaper, or watched the newsreels and/or movies. Her recreation would be either Tuesday night ice skating or some weekend ice skating or picnics. With prompting from the interviewer, Hubbard offered her memories of V-J Day. She recalled a crowded square and a broken electrical wire near her house. She waited for the cops and electrical workers to come to move the wire before she could go home. She still worked at Consolidated, because she and others needed to box up the parts and send them back to the companies that built them. She lost her naiveté during the War, and she tried to teach her daughters to be more worldly before they left high school. She concluded by saying that she enjoyed the experience; she went there to work. [Note: the recording ended just before the interview. The interviewer's thank you did not make it on the recording.]
67:30	32	END OF RECORDING

NAMES AND PLACES INDEX

American Red Cross
Consolidated Vultee Aircraft Corporation (San Diego)
Red Skelton
San Diego, California
World War II