

BlaggRichard1

Video/Tape 1

Sat, 4/16 5:11PM • 17:14

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Shipyard, moved, job, machinist, grew, working, test, bus, life, people, holes, crawl, wanted, play, louis arch, big, missouri, hear, baseball team, richmond heights

Interview Particulars

Date:	January 19, 2022, Wednesday
Time:	1:01 PM – 1:41 PM
Location:	IC Norcom High School TV Production Set
Interviewee:	Richard Blagg
Interviewer:	Shawn Childers
Camera:	Darian King
Instructor:	Jasmine Painter

Interviewer 00:00

All right. Good morning. Thank you for participating in our history project. I'm Sean. So it isn't to be I'll be interviewing you a bunch of life, your life story from childhood to adulthood and shape your career and lastly, life after retirement. Key please tell us a little bit about your, about where you're originally from and what was life like in Richmond heights, and

00:30

Actually, I was born in Richmond heights, but I didn't stay there. So Richmond heights is actually a suburb of St. Louis. And we lived in St. Louis until I turned six years old. So I grew up while they were actually building the St. Louis Arch, believe it or not, you can see them building it outside of our townhouse window, because we had a three story townhouse there 12 blocks from St. Louis Arch. So then we moved out of St. Louis, and moved down into the rural area of Missouri. We were down in the boonies. little place called Poplar Bluff was the nearest big town. It had a population about now no 12,000 people, but we were 20 miles from that. So it was it was the middle of nowhere. Growing up, it was all about family. It was all about family.

Interviewer 01:14

Could you tell us about a memorial, memorable moment in elementary or middle school? And what was Haskell like?

01:24

Oh, elementary or middle school? Well, I'll say elementary school. I was, I was a runt. But I was also I like to run and play like everybody else. And a good buddy of mine. We used to run all over the playground said, Hey, we're the monkeys. And okay, so we were the monkeys, we've climbed on the monkey bars and anywhere else we could climb around on. That's what we did. So that was probably most memorable from elementary school, and high school. I was a member of clubs, the beta club, I played in the band, I played alto saxophone and any other woodwind instrument that they had. I was I was Mr. Mr. Woodwind. I love the saxophone. It was it was an instrument that I always wanted to play when I was young. I heard it in jazz music growing up, and it just, it hit me in the soul. And that's I did think about that doing it after high school. But to be quite honest, I had other ambitions that beyond just playing music, I did like to sing. I did have aspirations to sing someday. But I moved away from that. And I actually wanted to be a school teacher. Believe it or not,

Interviewer 02:40

When you went to college, what was the original plan for the future?

02:44

Well, I think I just told you, I wanted to be a school teacher, I wanted to teach English. I was an English major. I loved the way that English language actually worked, how difficult it was for a lot of people to learn and the punctuation and everything. And to me, it was very simple. It just flowed very naturally for me. So I wanted to be an English teacher. And I also joined the theatre department because I wanted to teach people public speaking. I was very nervous. I shook like a leaf every time I got in front of people and to talk. But later in high school, in my 11th grade year, I had a teacher that was very good about making us relax, teaching us to breathe a little bit. And I wanted to teach students that teach them that it's not all about being nervous, you can be nervous, but you can still enjoy it.

Interviewer 03:37

So how'd you meet your wife?

03:41

My wife was actually on the welcoming committee when I went to college. And she was she was a couple of years older than me. So she was already there. And she was on the welcoming committee for the new freshmen coming in. And she hooked me when she kept saying, What's my name? What's my name? I couldn't remember her name. Her name was

Lucinda. And I could not remember that name for the life of me. I am terrible with names still to this day. But that name stuck eventually. And she hooked me.

Interviewer 04:10

When did you first decide to move to Hampton Roads?

04:15

Actually, it was in 1982. I was actually working making Florsheim shoes in Missouri. And I can see that the factory that I was working in was actually in its last legs. It wasn't going to be there much longer so I was looking for a place to go and Lucinda's Uncle Joe Griffith was a supervisor in the Shipyard. I didn't know how high up he was in the Shipyard at the time, but I knew that he was in the Shipyard and he sent me the paperwork for the Apprenticeship. So I signed up for the Apprenticeship and I managed to get in and been thankful ever since. How did you feel terrified? I'll tell you right now I was terrified. Okay. It was it was a scary move for me because I was like I said, I grew up in rural America. I was I was a little little country boy, you know, and all of a sudden I'm in the middle of what seemed to me, a big city. It didn't have the tall buildings, but it was very close feeling to me. And then, when I moved into the apartment complex that I moved into the first week I was there, somebody was murdered on the other end of the complex. So yeah, I was I was a little bit nervous. I was a little bit nervous.

Interviewer 05:33

What part of town did you move to?

05:36

It was Craddock. It was actually just outside of Craddock on George Washington highway. It's I think it's apartments now are called White Marsh Landing. At that time, it was Lee Hall apartments. So I actually moved into there and then we moved from there about two years later into Craddock itself. And so it was it was, it was a small community, but it actually felt very nice back there.

Interviewer 06:01

Scared, right. Can you remember attending any local postman events

06:11

for some local events? Let me see. Well, we did little league baseball all the time. So we did we did that my both of my boys grew up playing Little League and Olive Branch. So we did a lot of baseball there and Olive Branch. We went to concerts when they opened up the little Pavilion downtown on the waterfront.

Interviewer 06:34

Did you have a favorite baseball team.

06:36

Do I have it? No, no. I never grew up with sports. Sports was not big at my school. We were very small school. So we had a basketball team. And we had a baseball team. But that was it. And my dad was anti sports. So I did not get to play sports. So I didn't get to watch sports. So I didn't get I don't have a favorite team.

Interviewer 06:58

Before moving here, what have you heard about the Shipyard?

07:02

Before moving here? I heard that it was a great place to work. And I'll be quite honestly, my wife's Uncle Joe said it was a great place. And when we talked to some other relatives they talked about how nice Portsmouth was, and how good a work environment actually working at Norfolk Naval Shipyard would be compared to where I had been before.

Interviewer 07:23

How was Uncle Joe Griffith such a huge inspiration for starting from start working at Shipyard

07:32

Because he had moved up, you know, not quickly, but his perseverance and work ethic said got him a good place in life. And that's what I wanted for myself. And for my family. I wanted to be able to provide for them very well. And the same like Portsmouth. We're moving to Portsmouth, and working in Norfolk Naval Shipyard would give me that opportunity. So that's why I moved here.

Interviewer 07:54

How'd you get accepted into the program?

07:58

It's good questions. The process? Oh, the process for me was very tedious because living in Missouri, okay. I didn't have a lot of money. So it was riding a bus to come out here. So I actually got on a Continental Trailways bus and rode 32 hours on that bus from Missouri to here.

Interviewer 08:21

How was that, how was that riding for 32 hours?

08:22

Miserable. You sat on the back of the bus and you sat on bus stations, okay, because you would ride for two or three hours, they'd drop you off at the bus station, you'd ride the bus for another two or three hours, they'd dropped you off in another bus station. So it was it was 32 hours of not much sleep, grabbing something to eat at the little, you know, snack bar out of the out of the snack machine and get back on the bus and ride some more. So I actually came out to take the test as we were talking about a little bit earlier, I took the test at Willet Hall. And that was another big stress effort for me because it was 1000 people in Willet Hall all taking a test, the government entrance exam, and you had to make a 100 on all three parts of the test even be considered as an Apprentice. Because there were so many job applicants, I think they they were had something like, oh, very much so very much so because here I am. I'm trying to find a job with everything I can. And now I know that I've got to make 100 on all three parts of this test. And I've only got eight hours to do it. And everything's timed. So everything is very stressful, you know, as far as having to take this test. And then you get done with the test. And as far as I'm concerned, I got off the bus and Norfolk got picked up by Joe Griffith's wife, who I'd never met before. She picked me up, dropped me off at Willet Hall and at the end of the test, she picked me back up and took me back to Norfolk and put him back on a Trailways bus and I went back home. So I had 32 hours on the bus coming out eight hours Nick just jump back on the bus 32 hours going back home. So

Interviewer 10:05

So what was a day in the life at the Shipyard like?

10:09

Which year? There were, it changed throughout my career. Okay so as I

Interviewer 10:18

I want to say like your middle of your career. Just a regular day in the Shipyard. What was it like?

10:24

A day in the Shipyard, ummm.

Interviewer 10:27

Like getting used to danger. Getting comfortable?

10:31

Well, I was I was, I was a machinist. But okay, so my job as a machinist was to come in and make ships. And okay, cut metal, take something and make make something out of nothing. Okay, take a piece of a bar, raw material round bar, and just make something out of it. And so

to me, it was actually like doing artwork. For me. Okay. I actually loved being a machinist, because you can take something, just a raw piece of material. And all of a sudden, it's got a life of its own. You know, if you turn it into something that's usable, then it's going out there to be on one of our warships to make sure that it continues working and doing its job. So it was actually it was very fulfilling for me.

Interviewer 11:21

Was that your most memorable project?

11:24

Oh, I had a lot of memorable projects. But the actually the most memorable project for me, I was a mechanic, and I was an inside machinist. But we also worked with outside machinists who were actually doing the repair work on boats. And I was loaned out to shop 38 to do some repair work,

Interviewer 11:44

Shop 38?

11:46

Shop 38 was the outside machinist doing repairs of equipment on the boat. And I was a small guy, I only weighed maybe about 140 pounds. And they had a job between the hulls of an aircraft carrier. So I actually had to crawl down in between the hulls. It's only about this much room, crawl in there on my back and replace some packing in a valve between the hulls in this aircraft carrier and and

Interviewer 12:16

Can you walk me through that experience? Were you scared?

12:20

I was terrified. Okay, the I'm claustrophobic. I don't like tight spaces to begin with. Okay, but I was an asbestos abatement supervisor. So I was the person that was qualified to go in there and do all the things, make the observations make all the sign offs necessary to make sure that this job was done. So electronic devices wouldn't work because you're between two metal hulls. And in between those hulls, there's also baffles. So there's little holes, you know, in there to keep water from sloshing around inside. So I have to go in there. And I have a rope tied around my ankle. Because you have a dead man. And then okay, so every every five minutes, they would give that rope three pulls, and I had to pull back twice. So they knew that I was still alive. So I crawled down in there.

Interviewer 13:10

What was that like/

13:12

It was terrifying. And I crawl down there to do this job. And like I said, you're I'm on my back, you can't roll over. So I'm working over my over my shoulder doing the repair work. And you hear these little scurrying things happening. You hear little claws on metal. And what it is, is it's rats between the hulls. So I'm down there with a flashlight shining around trying to keep the rats away from me while I'm doing this work. So yes, it was very terrifying for me. So that's my most memorable job working in the Shipyard.

Interviewer 13:44

Do you remember any difficulties at the Shipyard and how did you overcome them?

13:50

There were a lot of difficulties in the Shipyard. Okay. As most most young guys are, okay, I'm, I have an authority problem. Okay, I knew it all and they didn't know anything. So I'm sure that hasn't changed today knowing my two sons, okay. They have they have the same problem. So yeah, I had I had authority issue problems. And there were issues because of that. I learned to overcome that. Okay, I learned to grow up a little bit. Okay. Umm. And I learned how to say Yes, sir. Instead of just now you're wrong. Okay. Yes, sir. We'll make it happen. Okay, so I learned to keep my nose to the grindstone, do things the way that it needed to be done. And listen to people that had more experience than me. To be quite honest.

Interviewer 14:40

Any other Shipyard memories or stories you wish to share?

14:43

Oh, there are so many that I would love to share but there we don't have enough time for that. I remember getting stuck under a foundation once. Okay out there on the on the boat. There's a lot of large equipment that has to sit on steel foundations. And we had this one job that I was working on. And I was having to do some lock wiring. And I was very proficient at lock wiring. And I was actually having to do this using two mirrors, I had a mirror on a magnet on the on the bulkhead and another one that was stuck on the just above where I was working so that I wasn't working just in a reverse, I could actually do what I needed to do just by twisting. And the only way to get under there, like I told you before, I was a small guy. And so I had to crawl under this piece of equipment to do it. And I got under there and I'm doing my lock wiring, and then all of a sudden it's lunchtime. And I said, Alright, you guys, I'll be out in just a minute. You know, I'll be up to lunch. As soon as I'm done here. I got done doing the job. And it's halfway

through lunchtime, and all of a sudden, I can't get out. I can't get out of where I'm under this foundation. There's no way for me to get any hand purchase to pull myself out.

Interviewer 16:00

How did you feel?

16:02

Panic, okay. And then it was like, Okay, well then I'll be back after lunch. Guess what, they didn't come back after lunch. So I'm sitting down, they're getting more and more frustrated because now it's almost one o'clock lunch was over 12 o'clock. Nobody has come down there and I've tried every way that I can to get out of here and I can't get out. Okay, so about two o'clock, somebody finally came to look for me. And I'm like I'm in a full panic mode. I'm swelled up about double size because you swell up when you're in a panic mode, red in the face, screaming and hollering. And, and this big dude just comes down and he says put your hands out and I put my hands out and he yanked me out. And I said thank you very much. I'm going home see you so yes, that was another very memorable experience in the Navy Yard.

Interviewer 16:54

Do you remember the guy's name who saved you?

16:56

I do not remember his name. I do not but I he was in my class okay later on in his career, okay. I never I never forgotten him, but I can't remember his name. Now. There's been too many years ago because I only worked with him for a few years.

BlaggRichard2

Video/Tape 2

Sun, 4/17 10:06AM • 5:55

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Shipyard, pickleball, retire, portsmouth, working, worms, stressful, co workers, talk, nice, downtown area, city, old crotchety, commute, blab, older, job, old farts, people, widow

Interviewer 00:00

Did you get together with him after

00:02

I had I had many times with him after that, that we got together. Yes. There was a very good guy.

Interviewer 00:08

Did you have a talk like your, with your co workers about

00:12

it? Well, let's put it this way. My general foreman, okay had a talk with all my co workers with me there. And he's the one that told me to go ahead and go home. Okay, because of how much I was losing it towards my co workers that day for abandoning me, that's alright, they abandoned me down. There's the way I felt about it.

Interviewer 00:33

What made you decide what made you decide to retire from the Shipyard?

00:35

Ah, it had been my wish all along to retire at 55 because health conditions in my family are a big concern, and mostly heart. And the Shipyard can get very stressful. And my last job I took it was a very weighty decision, I had a nice comfortable desk job that I had been working for four or five years. And the management position came available that I knew that I could qualify for. And I did some math in my head to be quite honest. And I could work the job that I was working for seven years. Or I could take the promotion for three years and retire making the same money. So I decided to go ahead and take the more stressful job working for three years, and then retire at 55. So that's what I did.

Interviewer 01:39

What do you miss about working there?

01:44

I miss the people. I do miss a lot of the people there. I had, I had some very close friends there that once we once I left a lot of them were still working. So we lost ties. We there are some that I still managed to get together with during the lunch and so they have with retirees. So I still do see some of them. Other than that, I don't see them except for funerals. So I do miss some of the people that I dealt with. The work I don't miss. Okay, a lot. It was very stressful. Like I said, being a small guy I got a lot of the little tight jobs that really stressed me out. So but the people were fantastic. I do you miss the people?

Interviewer 02:26

What have you been doing since your retirement?

02:29

Well, if you asked my wife, she would tell you that I'm I play pickleball. That's, that's my main endeavor in life. Now I played pickleball five days a week. And then I played seven days a week if they had it. That's I'm a she's a pickleball widow. And so I do that and we do gardening, ok, so we do maintain our gardens. So that's always fun. And we have a place out of Lake Gaston where I love to go out there and what I call drown worms because I like to fish but I don't cat. I don't keep the fish. You know, so I drown worms. I go out there and throw the hook in the water. And if anything bites, great if it doesn't, I'm still having a good time. And so

Interviewer 03:07

What are your hopes and dreams for the future of the Shipyard?

03:11

I hope they stay open. I do hope they stay open. I hope that I hope that the younger people coming in learn like I did to actually listen to some of the older people. They're just not just old crotchety old farts that, you know, or just, you know, blab flapping their lips. They actually do have some good information to learn. And so I do have great expectations for for the new people that are coming in. I've seen I've seen it in them the ones that I saw before I retired. And the ones that I talked to you now. They have they have good, good thoughts about the Shipyard but they just need to listen to some of the older people too.

Interviewer 03:59

In your opinion, how has Portsmouth evolved over the years?

04:04

In my opinion, how has it evolved? Well, let's see. When we got here, it was a small town feel but it was very divided. Okay. In my opinion, it was there was there was a lot of bad things going on in the downtown area. Okay. And I've seen that cleaned up. I've seen other areas that have gotten really cleaned up. So I think there's been fantastic improvement in the city of Portsmouth in the last 40 years that I've been here. So I think it's actually come a long way.

Interviewer 04:40

Lastly, where do you see Portsmouth and the Shipyard at 20 years from now?

04:47

Portsmouth and the Shipyard hopefully still getting along. Okay. I think they're doing great to be quite honest. Okay. I think the Shipyard has grown and then reduced when we had the reduction in force. But I still see that it's, it's very good how they coexist. Okay, in this in the same location, it's very nice. I know when I moved to Virginia, I wanted to be close to the

Shipyards. That's why I lived in Portsmouth for the easy commute. Okay. I heard things about the other cities around. But once I actually got here, I love Portsmouth. Okay. It's my P'town. All right. I don't care what anybody else says about it. It's my P'town. I love this city.

Interviewer 05:39

Anything else you'd like to share?

05:43

Not that I can think of at the moment. It's been it's been a good experience.

BlaggRichard3

Video/Tape 3

Sun, 4/17 10:08AM • 14:28

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Shipyards, machine shop, working, apprentice, park, opportunity, portsmouth, bicycles, running, alcoholic beverages, carpool, submarines, walked, lathes, played, machinist, equipment, instructor, cruise, ship

Interviewer 00:00

Talk about raising children in Portsmouth

00:00

Raising children in Portsmouth. It had its challenges, mostly because my boys were kin to me. They, they knew it all. And they were, in my opinion, sometimes smarter than their teachers. They've not they thought they were anyway. And so we had, we had some some teachers that we had issues with growing up with my my kids, but that was just because of my kids. But other than that, bringing my kids up in Portsmouth was very positive, okay. They had a good time, I tried to keep them involved, and me and my wife both did, with sports, to keep them active, not just running the streets, but actually doing something constructive with their time outside, being at home. So they played little league baseball, they played basketball, they played volleyball, they were on the swim team, whatever we could do to keep them active, keep them doing what they wanted to do. Focused, you know, not just getting stupid doing things they shouldn't be into. I mean, they still had their free time. Don't get me wrong, okay. And they'll tell you that they did a lot of things that mom and dad didn't know about. But

actually we knew a lot more about what was going on than they thought we did. We let them have freedom, okay to run around the neighborhood get into things that kids are going to get into anyway. Okay. Like I said, I grew up way out in the boonies. So I had plenty of play area. They were limited as to how far they could go by just being in the community. But raising kids in Portsmouth was to me was great, they had plenty of opportunities to do anything they wanted to do.

Interviewer 01:44

While we're on the topic of your boys, how did they experience Family Day at the Shipyard? Could you explain that a little bit?

01:52

Well, having two parents in the Shipyard they had a lot of ground to cover. Okay, so I was in the machine shop, which was actually right next door to the electrical shop. So they did get to come in on Family Day, they got to see all the large equipment that I used in the machine shop, because there were lathes and mills and things that I had never seen before I actually became a machinist. I had no idea what a machinist was when I took my job. And so they got the opportunity to see all those things and see the opportunities. They got to see the electrical area where my wife was. But we walked them to death when they came into the Shipyard. We took them anywhere and everywhere that we could. They loved it. They loved coming in and seeing all the all the ships, you know, they would occasionally have something open where you could actually walk up on one. They thought that was very exciting. So they had a good time and so we we walked like I said we walked their legs off and they seem to enjoy it. Now I will tell you that one time they did have another opportunity that I took my oldest son on. They had Dependents' Day cruise where they actually took one of the the America, the carrier the America, they took that out to see with people that worked in the Shipyard and their children, okay, that were over the age of 10. Well, my son Ben was only six years old but he looked like he was 10 he was he was very big for his age. So I managed to squeeze him onto the Dependents' Day cruise and so we got to go out on the America while they were taking planes on and off the off the the hangar bay and launching them off the flight deck. So they got to see a lot of that and since I worked on a lot of the equipment down in the lower belly of that beast we actually got got to go on a tour with one of the one of the enlisted personnel took us down below decks and actually down in to the see the all the equipment that I did that I worked on an operation so he had a great time with that one too.

Interviewer 04:00

While we are on Family Day, how was Christmas. I heard Christmas was really cool army Shipyard. What was that like.

04:06

I don't know if that's something needs to be talked about here.

Interviewer 04:10

Your wife touched on it a little bit.

04:12

It was... it was a lot more open than it is now. I'll just put it that away. Christmas Christmas time in the Shipyard back in back in the 80s it was a party day. Okay, there was it was one of those times where you came in and you did work for three or four hours. It was usually cleaning up the shop, sweeping floors and doing things like that for a little while and then we had just a huge get together. Everybody in the in the groups would bring in food. Okay, so we just would have a great big lunch, you know, potluck, everybody bring in something and just a massive feast, and then we'd sit down and play cards, and then we would also drink adult beverages. So there was it was, like I said. That was back in the back in the 80s. It's all changed now. They don't do that as far as alcoholic beverages are concerned anymore. That's, that went by the wayside many years ago. But when I was slightly older than you guys, okay, I was in there having a very good time. It was wonderful for us kids, okay, the younger group, okay. It gave us an opportunity to actually sit down in a very friendly and relaxed atmosphere with our, our co-workers, our older co-workers, our bosses, they were all more relaxed that day. So it was just a good time for communication with each other. So we got to know each other a lot better on Christmas Eve, you know, that last day before Christmas shutdown. And then of course, there was always the parties outside of the Shipyard too, but those were another whole story.

Interviewer 06:05

I'm not sure if you answered this already. On the topic of parties outside of the Shipyard, wherever you guys were, the hangout spot the back there. And how old were you? I don't think you found out how old you were when you started.

06:16

Well, when I was 20 years old when I actually started in the Shipyard. So actually, no, was I? Yeah, 20. I was 20. I was only 19 when I actually applied for this Apprenticeship. But when I started I was 20 years old. I didn't really party with anybody here because I didn't grow up in Portsmouth. So I didn't know anyone in Portsmouth. Now. I did go to City Park. City Park changed a whole lot. When I first moved here, we did actually go out on Friday night and Saturday nights. City Park was a loop. There was a loop and there was you went out and you parked your car on the side of the loop. And I mean, it was just streams of cars constantly cruising City Park with people sitting on the sides of the roads and you know, having a good time. There were a few alcoholic beverages there that were kind of hidden in the background.

It was it was just a good place to go hang out and meet people. I mean, I walked up and down and talked to all kinds of people that I I don't think I would have ever talked to growing up. Okay. It was a very nice mixed crowd and everybody getting along. Okay, we had a very good time. Okay, so as far as Portsmouth was concerned for me, City Park was the place to go just to go hang out and watch things go on.

Interviewer 07:44

That's kind of like a pretty cool place to go. Okay, and to two final questions. Back on the Shipyard. What was it like? We didn't ask your wife this one. But this just came to me. What was it like for you guys to be working? You know, married couple of you working on a Shipyard together. Like, did you guys ever work in the same shop? Or what was it? Or do you run into each other?

08:07

Well, I actually started a year before she did. Okay, I came out and she had she didn't even think about taking the Apprenticeship test the same time that I did. Okay, I was There was there was you know, one of those moments you know, you didn't think about it. So I started the Shipyard and she started a year later as an Apprentice. Like said her her shop was right next door, her building that she worked in was right next door. So there wasn't unusual for us to get together and eat lunch. Being being that close together. Now later on a year, a year later, I went all the way to the other end of the Shipyard. So the only time I got to see her then is when she was actually working on a submarine. Because that's where the submarines on one end and all the surface craft or on the other end of the Shipyard. So I was on the end next world submarines were. So if she was working submarines, she would come over to my building, we would actually eat lunch together. So other than that, I never saw her during the day. There were times we still rode to work together. So there were I'm, I'm sure she talked about the carpool that we had.

Interviewer 09:16

No she didn't.

09:17

She did not talk about the carpool that we had.? Oh, we had a carpool. Back in the 80s and 90s, the only way you could get an inside Shipyard parking permit was to have a carpool, which required you to have at least four riders in your carpool. So there was me and her. My brother my oldest brother was actually working in the Shipyard too. He was also in the machine shop. So that made three. And then we had another gentleman Richard Edmondson that worked lived in Cradock. So we got the four of us together to get a carpool. And we could park in just one certain location. You got an assigned parking space. So we got the got our assigned parking space. And usually, it was was waiting for Lucinda to get back. Because she

was usually working down on submarines at the other end of the Shipyard, like I said, so she was usually the last one come struggling in you know straggling in to get in the car on the way home. So we're all sitting in the car waiting for her. So we gave her a hard time. Okay, a lot of times waiting for her to come back so we can go home.

Interviewer 10:21

So just for clarification, you said she was on the opposite side, what was the distance?

10:26

It's about a mile to a mile and a quarter long, I think from where she was working back to where our car was actually parked. So it was it was a good long distance. You know, it's it's not a not a five minute walk. It was a 10-15 minute walk anyway. But my brother and I both had bicycles. We, we might have worked on that end, but we had bicycles that we'd ride down and actually parked next to where the car was parked at.. So we'd be at car and five minutes where she didn't have a bicycle.

Interviewer 10:54

So you never thought to give her a bicycle?

10:57

She wouldn't write it. I won't go into all that.

Interviewer 11:01

It seemed like you had an unfair advantage and then you gave her a hard time because she was walking.

11:05

Yes, we did. That was part of the fun of being married. I could give her a hard time. But we all did. So sometimes she did feel ganged up on.

Interviewer 11:14

I am sure she gave you some colorful language a few times.

11:17

More than once. It was just about a daily basis. She learned how to cuss on the Shipyard. I'll put it that way.

Interviewer 11:23

Okay, and then the last question was based back to your college career. I mean, you mentioned you were considered being a teacher. Did you ever kind of become a teacher's in in a different way while you were on the Shipyard?

11:36

Oh, yes. Actually, while I was still in the machine shop, I became a work leader. And the last three years that I was in the machine shop, I was spending six months teaching Apprentices and then six months actually working on carriers, on projects. So the Apprenticeship had kind of gone away, okay, the riff and kind of mess things up. And they were not really doing Apprenticeships the same way. TCC was doing all the instructing. So we didn't have a formal Apprentice program inside the Shipyard. And there were certain groups that needed to learn about running the machinery, ok, running lathes, and mills and drill presses. And since I was a worship leader in the nuclear program, they said, Hey, you guys have an enclosed space, we can control where the Apprentices are, we're going to put them up there with you. And so, I got to be an Apprentice instructor. I was having to do impromptu classes, because you get people in there that had never read a blueprint before that you're trying to teach them how to read a blueprint. You're trying to teach them how to do advanced math. You had to do trigonometry in a machine shop. Okay. And a lot of the people that that came to me had had never been more than taking some basic math. You know, they were not they were not, you know, advanced students in high school. So they had done, you know, some some algebra, but not not very much algebra, and I was having to teach them how to do trigonometry. I was having to teach them how to, to read blueprints, I was having to teach them all kinds of things. So yes, I got to do that. Okay. And I really loved it. Okay, that was actually the highlight to me. Those three years when I was teaching apprentices was to be the highlight, okay, of my machinist career. Yes, making things was awesome. It was good work to me. But getting to watch somebody to learn and grasp what was going on, was very rewarding, too. And then I went from there. An opportunity came up there, the training department was looking for people. And I had already put in my paperwork to be an instructor. I was passed over for for that job. But then, a few months later, I got called over to the training department and offered a job doing something else. And so yeah, I did become an instructor and taught nuclear classes for nine years and I really enjoyed that too. I found that very rewarding.

Interviewer 14:21

Well, thank you, Richard. I appreciate it. Thank you for sharing your story.