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**The Vietnam Archive
Oral History Project
Interview with Don Showen
Conducted by Ron Frankum
March 6, 2001
Transcribed by Cecily Darwin**

1 Ron Frankum: This is Ron Frankum of the Vietnam Archive speaking with Don
2 Showen on March the sixth. Mr. Showen served on the LST-1096 (landing ship, tank).

3 Don Showen: I've been trying to contact you here in the past week to see if he
4 would want to participate. I haven't been able to contact him. I would rather talk to him
5 before—

6 RF: Oh, no, absolutely.

7 DS: Then if he's agreeable I have your email and I'll send you an email.

8 RF: That would be great. If he's willing to be a participant I'd love to be able to
9 talk to him.

10 DS: He's the only one I can recall that was still on the ship at that time that I've
11 had any contact with enough to have his phone number.

12 RF: Oh, okay.

13 DS: Not too many that I've been in contact with.

14 RF: Well, let me—

15 DS: So I'll give you any information I can, Ron, and I really appreciate this
16 opportunity. I think that thinking back it's a story that probably needs to be told.

17 RF: I absolutely agree and I was sort of amazed as I was looking through the
18 literature of history to see that really it hasn't been. There's been a couple of articles here
19 or there in some of the Navy journals, but for the most part the whole story hasn't been
20 told. So that was my goal, my motive behind the whole thing.

21 DS: Okay. Well, I'm ready whenever you are.

1 RF: Well, great, let's go ahead and begin. The first question I have is of a more
2 general nature and it really involves my interest in knowing a little bit about how you got
3 yourself into the U.S. Navy and then aboard the LST-1096.

4 DS: Okay. In 1950 some of my friends, a little older than I, were on the list to be
5 drafted. Their decision was to join the Navy to avoid the draft. So I went along with that.
6 So we were draft dodgers, you know (chuckle). We joined the Navy in January of 1951
7 with the hopes of being together. My two friends were twin brothers. As it turned out,
8 they were standing on the street corner waving at me as I left on the Greyhound bus, but
9 they followed a couple of days later. We only saw each other two or three times during
10 our four years in the Navy. That was the way I came to be in the Navy. After boot camp I
11 went to a radioman school in San Diego. After that I was assigned to the 1096.

12 RF: And you served, then, during your tenure in the Navy on the 1096?

13 DS: Yes, for the rest of the time in the Navy I was on the 1096.

14 RF: What rank did you hold on the ship during the operation?

15 DS: Radioman, second class. Radioman.

16 RF: Okay. I mean, I imagine your primary duties were probably similar to the
17 title, but if you wouldn't mind just giving me a little bit of an idea of the different types
18 of responsibilities you had.

19 DS: Well, my sole responsibility was in communications and operations of the
20 radio gear aboard the ship. At that time I was the leading petty officer in the radio gang.
21 We had about six radioman that were all under my supervision. Our main duties were to
22 maintain contact with the flagship and to maintain communications with any shore
23 installations that we were able to.

24 RF: As you came by them?

25 DS: Yes. As a matter of fact, when we first went to Vietnam our first port of call
26 there was Haiphong Harbor which was the border at that time between North and South
27 Vietnam. Later it was moved south of Haiphong, I understand. We tried for a couple of
28 days to make contact with the advanced medical team that was in the area that we were
29 supplying, which we were unable to do. They were less military and more medical. They
30 didn't maintain communications or at least radio communication. That was Dr. Tom
31 Dooley's—

1 RF: That's right, yeah, on the *Montague*.

2 DS: Pardon?

3 RF: He was on the *Montague* at the time.

4 DS: At the time we got there I think he had already established some kind of a
5 center of operations either very near or in Haiphong.

6 RF: Okay. Yeah, that's right, he was on shore. I guess, yeah, he arrived on the
7 *Montague* and he was the ship's doctor for them, but did a lot of work on shore at the
8 time.

9 DS: Right.

10 RF: Where was your ship deployed when you heard about the Operation Passage
11 to Freedom?

12 DS: We were on maneuvers with the Marines in Okinawa. Prematurely we broke
13 from off from that and were reported back to Yokosuka, Japan.

14 RF: Oh, okay.

15 DS: The crew at that time really didn't know what was in mind for us, but we
16 went back to Japan and loaded supplies and as I recall it was either Army medical
17 supplies, mobile hospital type supplies, and then proceeded back to Haiphong.

18 RF: Okay. Were you very aware of the situation that was occurring in Vietnam
19 when you found out you were going to be part of this operation?

20 DS: No, in fact, before—it was announced to the crew just what we were
21 supposed to do or going to do. Our main source of information then were the officer ward
22 room stewards. As I recall, the steward gave us the complete rundown of just where we
23 were going and why. It turned out that it was correct.

24 RF: Okay.

25 DS: But once we got there, of course, we knew what our duties were going to be.
26 Dr. Dooley, of course, came aboard and gave us the whole political situation and
27 rundown.

28 RF: So you did have contact with Dr. Dooley then?

29 DS: Yes, yes. That seemed to make things a lot easier to accept at the time of that
30 type of duty, which is pretty isolated.

1 RF: Sure. Tell me really what were the primary responsibilities of the LST, the
2 1096 specifically.

3 DS: When we first arrived there we acted as a station ship at Haiphong. They had
4 moved a Marine helicopter aboard for transportation of Dr. Dooley's people and the VIPs
5 that were in and out of there.

6 RF: From your craft to the shoreline?

7 DS: Yes, yeah. The helicopter was actually stationed on our craft with a pilot and
8 the crew. The rank was right in—it was more like a river than it was a harbor, as I recall.

9 RF: Yeah. Did that remain the primary responsibility?

10 DS: After we had served as a station ship for a while we did transport some
11 equipment out. Then on another trip we transported some of the French troops with their
12 Vietnamese dependents, whether they were wives, girlfriends or—there were a lot of
13 children involved. The French troops were, which was really an interesting point for us at
14 the time, all the French troops that we embarked were French Foreign Legionnaires and
15 they were from equatorial Africa, complete with their tribal scars on their face.

16 RF: I've been told that they were pretty intimidating. That's a pretty fair
17 assessment?

18 DS: Uh, yes. They were intimidating to look at, but it turned out that they were
19 no problem.

20 RF: Oh, sure. Yeah.

21 DS: I think they were thankful that they had a ride out of town.

22 RF: Now did you or the LST itself have any special type of preparation to assume
23 the role of a transport ship for refugees?

24 DS: Not as a planned type of preparation, but our previous duties the year or so
25 before had been transporting prisoners of war from Korea to the prison camps and then
26 once the armistice was underway transporting those prisoners back to Korea for
27 repatriation. So that was really the only preparation we had of handling humans like
28 cargo. I hate to use that characterization, but—

29 RF: But essentially that's what you were doing.

30 DS: Uh, yes, yeah.

31 RF: Were you ever to go ashore in North Vietnam?

1 DS: As I recall, a liberty party which I was in, we did make a visit into Haiphong
2 one time.

3 RF: Oh, you did?

4 DS: It was a very brief thing and I don't think we were allowed to visit any of the
5 inns or cabarets or—we were cautioned about eating the food.

6 RF: Right. Well, you're actually the first person I've talked to that was able to go
7 ashore.

8 DS: As I said, it was a very brief thing. It was just more or less a daytime
9 sightseeing thing. We walked the streets and back. But then, of course, in Saigon we did
10 have liberty, which it was really a beautiful city at that time.

11 RF: Well, if you wouldn't mind, what do you remember about Haiphong itself as
12 a city at that time?

13 DS: Well, that's just it. I don't recall that much about it. I do recall that there
14 were a number of huge merchant ships at the docks, which seemed to have a very modern
15 docking facility. That's really about all I remember about it.

16 RF: Okay. Did you—let's see—do you remember anything about, I mean,
17 actually about the conditions at all of the way the, oh, maybe the people were or the
18 buildings?

19 DS: The buildings as I could see in Haiphong they were then nothing had been
20 destroyed. It was a lot more rundown than, say, Saigon was.

21 RF: Okay, yeah.

22 DS: I do recall that.

23 RF: Now, when you—you said you loaded equipment and then later on some of
24 the French Foreign Legion and then refugees, how were each of those groups taken
25 aboard the LST?

26 DS: We were able to beach there at Haiphong and they were loaded in through
27 the bow doors. Are you familiar with an LST?

28 RF: I've seen some pictures, but I mean, you can be as descriptive as you'd like,
29 that would be great.

30 DS: Yeah. Well, they were constructed with a shallow draft so they could run the
31 bow right into the beach. It had bow doors that would swing open left and right and then

1 a ramp that would lower down to facilitate the loading of the equipment or personnel and
2 so forth. As I recall that's the way that we loaded. I do recall watching the teams that
3 were on the beach disinfecting the civilian refugees with DDT.

4 RF: Right, they had to spray DDT on them.

5 DS: This sticks in my mind because the dress of the Vietnamese was a long
6 smock type thing that maybe went to the knees and spilt the side and then like a pair of
7 trousers or pajama bottoms that just tied on each side. The medical team, of course,
8 would spray their hair with the DDT then put the nozzle inside their pajama bottoms and
9 spray them. Once they got over that initial fear it allowed that to happen and then the
10 squeals of delight when they'd get sprayed.

11 RF: Oh, really? I guess, yeah, I imagine it was probably the first time they had a
12 cleaning like that, too.

13 DS: Yeah, in fact, they were reluctant and fearful really of having that done until
14 some of the team, Dr. Dooley's team, allowed themselves to be sprayed showing them
15 that it was not harmful.

16 RF: That makes sense. Actually, that kind of leads into my next question about
17 the general condition of the refugees and really what I was interested in and you've
18 explained a bit already about their appearance and their health and their wealth in a sense
19 of what they had with them and their emotions. I wonder if you wouldn't mind just
20 elaborating a little bit on that.

21 DS: Well, the ones that we had aboard, of course, as I said, at least I presume that
22 they were dependents of the French troops. They were probably in a lot better condition
23 than most of the refugees that were evacuated at that time. I recall seeing some of them
24 that were coming down the river from the north. They looked like a pretty wretched
25 group of people. But that's not the type of refugees that we had aboard our ship. I really
26 can't comment on that much more than that. I just don't recall.

27 RF: Okay, but it certainly was a different type of refugee.

28 DS: Uh, yes.

29 RF: You said before Dr. Dooley showed them what to do. There was a certain
30 amount of fear in going through.

1 DS: Yes. Yes. Of course, they just didn't know what to expect. They were a very
2 backward people.

3 RF: Did you get a sense or others that perhaps there was a little bit of, how
4 should we say, prompting by the Viet Minh, the Vietnamese communists, in spreading
5 some propaganda to these people that might've encouraged them to be a little more
6 fearful?

7 DS: Well, this was one of the things that when Dr. Dooley came aboard our ship
8 he gave us the talk that he said that this is what you're going, expect to see this, that
9 there's been a lot of propaganda about what's going to happen to them so you're going to
10 see a lot of fear in these people because they've been indoctrinated to expect it. After his
11 spiel we had a lot better sense of just what was going on.

12 RF: What was his countermeasure to that? How were you to deal with the
13 potential fear or anxiety of the refugees? Do you remember?

14 DS: No, I don't. I think it was just a matter of what seemed like we just had to
15 gain their trust first and this was done before they came aboard.

16 RF: Okay. Now, when the refugees came aboard did you have much interaction
17 with them?

18 DS: No.

19 RF: Okay, other than probably just watching them come aboard and things of that
20 nature?

21 DS: Yes.

22 RF: So you didn't ever have any instances where you had to communicate a
23 certain thing to the group?

24 DS: Well, not in my responsibility it didn't. I recall that the shore team had one
25 Marine, I believe, that spoke French and that was about the only way they communicated
26 with a lot of the people that came aboard our ship.

27 RF: Did your ship have a chaplain?

28 DS: No.

29 RF: Okay. One of the things I've learned is a lot of the ship's chaplains spoke
30 Latin to the priests who spoke Latin. That was the common language of communication,

1 which I thought was rather interesting. Now, I guess the next question would be once you
2 had all the refugees aboard or the Foreign Legion troops aboard what was the next step?

3 DS: We took them, I think both trips we went south to a port called Tourane,
4 which I now believe is Da Nang.

5 RF: That's correct, right.

6 DS: Is that—?

7 RF: Yes, sir.

8 DS: I think I had researched that at one time or another. When the situation
9 changed in Vietnam, I kept hearing these names and I went back and saw that Tourane
10 was now Da Nang.

11 RF: That's right. It's now Da Nang. That's correct.

12 DS: Then we proceeded on south to Saigon, but I just don't recall what the
13 purpose of the trip to Saigon was, but we were able to go ashore there and have liberty.

14 RF: So the refugees themselves, they were disembarked at Tourane?

15 DS: Tourane, the ones that we—

16 RF: The ones that you had.

17 DS: Yes.

18 RF: Okay. Well, see, now, I hadn't realized that the refugee population, part of
19 them were dropped off there.

20 DS: Well, since they were part of the French troops that they embarked perhaps
21 that's why.

22 RF: It makes a lot of sense. Were you able to go ashore there or was it just simply
23 drop off and then head down to Saigon?

24 DS: It was just in and out of Tourane.

25 RF: How long did that trip take?

26 DS: That I don't recall.

27 RF: Okay.

28 DS: I have no idea of the distances involved.

29 RF: I know the attack transports usually took about two to three days, but I might
30 be mistaken. I think they probably have a little more power than the LST.

31 DS: The LSTs were very slow.

1 RF: Yeah.

2 DS: Ten knots was about the limit.

3 RF: After you dropped off that first group you went down to Saigon?

4 DS: Yes.

5 RF: What were you able to do down there?

6 DS: I don't know what the purpose of the ship's trip, having the ship go down
7 there was, but while we were there we were able to have liberty and go into the city of
8 Saigon and sightsee and eat at cafes and restaurants and so on.

9 RF: What did you think of Saigon at the time?

10 DS: It surprised me how modern the city was in that part of the world, the
11 cathedrals and some of the large department stores and the wide streets and so forth. But
12 my impression was that it was really a modern, booming city at the time.

13 RF: You were a pretty young man at the time, I would think.

14 DS: Yes, I was twenty-three, twenty-two.

15 RF: Did you come in contact with many of the Vietnamese in Saigon?

16 DS: No.

17 RF: Okay. How about the French Foreign Legion troops?

18 DS: No.

19 RF: Okay. I know that some—

20 DS: Personally, you know, we just more or less kept to ourselves.

21 RF: Yeah. What else—I'm curious. I've been to Saigon in 1999, but I really am
22 kind of interested to know what it was like in 1954 because it really was a completely
23 different city, even a completely different country at that point. What other types of
24 things do you remember about the city itself?

25 DS: Things that stood out in my mind was the French influence, I suppose. I
26 knew nothing of the French, but you could tell that there was a French influence there
27 with the sidewalk cafés and things of that nature. In a very short distance we were able to
28 walk around the city and a very short distance from the down area it seemed like you
29 stepped across the line into a very rural type setting.

30 RF: Yeah. Well, now after you had your liberty you went back up to Haiphong or
31 did you make another trip down?

1 DS: As I recall we made only two trips.

2 RF: Only two trips.

3 DS: Yeah. That was from August, the middle of August, to some time in
4 November. For the most time the 1096 spent as a station ship there at Haiphong.

5 RF: What was that second trip like in terms of the population? Was it the same
6 population of refugees?

7 DS: I think the second trip was equipment only.

8 RF: Only equipment?

9 DS: Yes.

10 RF: Was that the old Marshall aid equipment?

11 DS: Well, it was some of the—it was the French military equipment.

12 RF: Oh, okay.

13 DS: Which was really probably the Marshall aid type of equipment, it was all
14 United States government previously type equipment, jeeps and trucks and so forth.

15 RF: Any tanks?

16 DS: I don't recall any tanks, no.

17 RF: Okay. Because I know, yeah, they did transport a lot of the two-and-a- half-
18 ton trucks that we had supplied.

19 DS: That's what I recall for the most part, it was that type of equipment.

20 RF: Do you recall the condition of it because actually I've talked to another
21 gentleman who remembers the equipment that was on his craft at that time, his LST?

22 DS: As I recall, it didn't seem like to me at the time that there was much to
23 salvage, it was in pretty bad condition.

24 RF: Oh, really? Okay. That's interesting. Yeah, he actually, the stuff they had
25 was brand new on his.

26 DS: Oh, what we saw it had been used extensively.

27 RF: I guess maybe we could, going back to being the station ship, I'm curious
28 because I hadn't heard about that and I'm wondering if there's anything that you can add
29 a little bit about its responsibilities. I know the *Estes* was a flagship in the beginning, but
30 I hadn't heard about this particular responsibility.

1 DS: Perhaps they didn't call it a station ship. This might be more or less my
2 characterization of what we were, but since we had that helicopter aboard and we were
3 available to Dr. Dooley's team, I just more or less characterized it in my own mind as
4 being a station ship.

5 RF: There's a certain amount of logic to that and I would agree. What other types
6 of personnel were you able to ferry in and out? I'm thinking more along the lines—I
7 don't know if Admiral Sabin ever went ashore or any of the Task Force 90 people.

8 DS: I don't recall anyone actually coming aboard other than Dr. Dooley. The
9 Marine helicopter would be stationed on our ship and then would depart to make runs
10 between other ships who were ashore and other ships and so forth, but not necessarily
11 through us.

12 RF: No VIPs of that nature really?

13 DS: No.

14 RF: I'm wondering, Dr. Dooley, he wrote a book on this operation and certainly
15 was, I think, a pretty vocal spokesman for what the U.S. Navy was doing at the time.
16 What were your impressions of him as a doctor and an officer of the U.S. Navy?

17 DS: Well, he was more or less a hero as far as I was concerned. I thought that at
18 the time, after learning some of his background, I never knew if it was completely true or
19 not. He was from a wealthy family. I don't know that as a fact, but that was my
20 understanding. The wonderment in my mind was what would motivate someone to
21 sacrifice as much as he did. Of course, I read his books and there's three books, in fact.

22 RF: That's right.

23 DS: I think he was just a very, a humanitarian. That's the only thing I can say.

24 RF: Yeah, it's interesting, I mean, I agree with you a hundred percent. A new
25 book came out on him which I don't agree with, but they argue that he was more of an
26 egomaniac and from the people I've talked to I haven't got that sense at all.

27 DS: I sure didn't get that from our contact with him which was really limited at
28 the time. It wasn't his desire to grandize his own actions, or didn't seem to. He would
29 come aboard our ship to maybe take a shower and get a good meal and a change of
30 clothes and he was grateful for that.

31 RF: Then just go back into the field.

1 DS: Right back to the mud.

2 RF: Yeah, it really doesn't fit that kind of person that some of these guys have
3 made him out to be. Were there any other individuals who stood out in your mind?

4 DS: No, that was—I don't recall anything else that really stood out. I know when
5 we first, just as a side, they had planned for some type of action against the ships when
6 they first got there. In fact, when we were anchored right off the coast at Haiphong they
7 had ordered small boat patrols to patrol around the anchored ships as an exercise to check
8 the security, our Navy frog men had actually come aboard one of the LSTs and took the
9 skipper hostage.

10 RF: Really? Our frog men as an exercise?

11 DS: As an exercise and, of course, that made security paramount from then on
12 and all the ships.

13 RF: Was there a real threat of the Viet Minh threatening the anchored ships or
14 even those that were—?

15 DS: Maybe it was just routine security. I really don't know if there was any
16 actual threat or not and I never heard of any actual action in any of the ships.

17 RF: Was there a worry about maybe some of those refugees getting aboard the
18 might've been agents for the other side?

19 DS: If there was it was at least not in my mind. It was never brought forth as that.

20 RF: Probably something that was taken care of before they actually boarded.

21 DS: Of course, they were confined to one area of our ship and we had posted
22 security to keep them in that area.

23 RF: Did you ever stand watch?

24 DS: Not one of the security watches, no.

25 RF: No? Okay. Do you think that your participation in this operation and seeing
26 the people heightened your awareness of Vietnam in the 1950s after the operation was
27 done?

28 DS: Oh, definitely. It did and it gave me an understanding of just what (technical
29 interference).

30 RF: What sort of feelings and emotions did you take away after the LST left
31 Indochina?

1 DS: I don't recall any specific ones, but at the time when we left there in
2 November we visited Hong Kong. I was so close to being separated from the service then
3 that I left the ship in Hong Kong. So I guess that probably occupied my emotions at that
4 time.

5 RF: Oh, sure, yeah, that makes sense. Well, looking back on it now, I mean,
6 what—even today when I found you on the internet what came to your mind when I
7 mentioned the project?

8 DS: I was excited about it. Where I heard about you was on that website of the
9 LST association.

10 RF: That's right. That's right.

11 DS: I stay in touch with things on there and it's a good diversion from daily life
12 just to peruse that.

13 RF: Oh, absolutely.

14 DS: I really enjoyed the adventure that was involved in that type of operation or
15 that operation because it was different than most people that were in the Navy at that time
16 were involved in. Most of it was in the Pacific and in Japan, Okinawa.

17 RF: It definitely was a different type of operation.

18 DS: Yeah, and it gave us the—it broadened our lives just a little bit to see what
19 was going on there and see the French influence in Vietnam and made us more aware, I
20 think, of, or at least me, of the colonization of places like Vietnam.

21 RF: Yeah. Well, if you were to turn back the clock and you had a chance to do it
22 all over again would you do it again?

23 DS: Yes, I believe I would. I believe I would.

24 RF: Which probably it's safe to say that you would characterize the operation as
25 a success or would you see it as in a sense a long term failure?

26 DS: The operation itself, of course, was, the whole Vietnamese once it got so
27 political then it was a lost cause.

28 RF: But in terms of just the operation.

29 DS: Yes, I think it was. The only thing that I have thoughts on, negative thoughts,
30 was that perhaps with more ships involved there could've been more people moved into
31 the South. Of course, you can expand on that with the comment that you brought up

1 about the Northern agents being among those refugees, it could've had a negative effect.
2 The more we got out of there the more agents we got. That's hindsight.

3 RF: That's right. You'd never know. Well, let me ask you if there's any other
4 sort of memories or stories or history that you would like to have included to make sure
5 that the 1096 is represented well that I simply haven't addressed.

6 DS: I can't think of anything that I could add to that other than just our
7 participation. I was telling my son about it, "What are you going to do?" and I said, "I
8 really don't remember a lot of things." He said, "Well, make something up."

9 RF: Oh, please don't do that.

10 DS: Of course he was kidding.

11 RF: He was joking, yeah.

12 DS: Yeah, trying to be facetious.

13 RF: Well, one of things I'm going to—

14 DS: That's what I'm afraid of with a lot of history that I read, Ron, that maybe
15 that has happened.

16 RF: Well, it does and one of the things that I'm going to be able to do is when I
17 go out to Washington, D.C., I'll be able to visit the National Archives and the Navy Yard
18 and get the deck logs and some of the other written documentations and I'll be able to use
19 that with the stories and the memories of those that I'm able to interview. I'll be able to
20 intertwine them and confirm things when they need to be confirmed. After forty-seven
21 years memories change. They have to. So I'll be able, when there is a problem I'll be able
22 to go back through and then maybe even re-interview people on specific things that
23 maybe they just didn't get right. I really haven't found that to be a problem. I've found
24 most things have been very consistent from the people I've talked to, which is very nice
25 even after this number of years. What I'd like to do is after I go through and if I'm able to
26 get the deck logs for the 1096, and I'm hoping that they'll be in the National Archives, if
27 there's anything that I find that I have a question about, can I give you a call back?

28 DS: Sure.

29 RF: Then maybe if you might be able to shed some light or maybe I'll be able to
30 trigger a memory that you just had forgotten for a while.

31 DS: That would be fine. I'd be happy to—

1 RF: Certainly in like terms, if after we're done if you remember something you
2 wish you had told me just send me an email and we can arrange a time to talk again or
3 you can relay the story via email, as well.

4 DS: I'll contact this other shipmate of mine and see if he'd be willing to give his
5 views and if so I'll drop you an email.

6 RF: That would be great. I really do appreciate that.

7 DS: I was talking to one other shipmate we met on the discussion page and he
8 had left the ship before we went into that operation.

9 RF: Oh, okay.

10 DS: I really didn't remember him, but we got to hashing over some of the things
11 that did happen during both of our period when both were on the ship. Some things that I
12 remembered that he didn't and some things he remembered that I didn't.

13 RF: Well, that's one of the neat things.

14 DS: These little things can jog your memory sometimes.

15 RF: I've discovered, and I'll be able to go to a couple reunions of some of the
16 different transport ships, is I've been able to generate actually quite a bit of discussion on
17 this topic and all of a sudden the whole story emerges after a couple of guys get together
18 because they all have pieces to the overall picture. That's kind of neat. It's been very
19 interesting to me, very eye opening. So I've enjoyed it.

20 DS: Now you're at Texas Tech?

21 RF: That's correct. Yeah, I run the Vietnam Archive here at Texas Tech.

22 DS: I visited your website.

23 RF: Oh, okay. Then I'm also—

24 DS: Quite involved.

25 RF: Well, yeah and—

26 DS: Where are you and what city in Texas?

27 RF: We're in Lubbock, Texas.

28 DS: Lubbock.

29 RF: Right. Then I teach in our Honors College. I teach a course on the Vietnam
30 War.

31 DS: The shipmate that I was mentioning to you is from Austin, Texas.

1 RF: Oh, okay, so not too far, not too far at all. Well, hopefully he'll—
2 DS: I'll continue to try to contact him.
3 RF: Yeah, hopefully if you're able to get a hold of him he'll be interested. You
4 know the thing I've told everyone when they say "I don't remember much," a little bit is
5 better than nothing as far, as I'm concerned. If I can get a whole bunch of little bits then
6 I'll be able to—I think I have a much better history when it's all done.
7 DS: Well, I appreciate what you're doing, Ron, and I appreciate you giving me
8 the opportunity to participate.
9 RF: Well, good and I appreciate you taking the time this afternoon to talk to me.
10 DS: You're entirely welcome.
11 RF: Again, as I go on if I find something new I'll jot you an email and if I find
12 anyone else on the 1096 I'll let you know about them, too.
13 DS: Okay.
14 RF: You never know who I can find.
15 DS: Right.
16 RF: Well, good. You have a great afternoon.
17 DS: Well, thank you, you, too.
18 RF: Bye-bye. That concludes the interview with Mr. Don Showen, S-H-O-W-E-
19 N, served in the LST-1096. Today is the sixth of March 2001 and it is—