

McAlister, Keith

KYLE BEAGLEY'S FAMILY STORIES

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English 2nd pd.

McAllister, Keith. 21 July 1932. Oakley, Utah. Personal Interview. Ferron, Utah, 9 April 1995.

I chose to interview my grandpa McAllister, (my mothers dad.) He is sixty-seven years old, he was born in Garfield, Utah and now has a summer cabin in the Oakley Mountains, and a winter home in Washington, (four miles north of St. George.) My grandfather served a variety of positions in World War 2, but they were all in the Navy. If you read the stories they will tell you all of the ranks that he reached and what he had to do.

We were on a large ship, we were in the harbor and a hurricane came across and we were on a landing craft and were running them in and out all night long, to keep them from breaking apart. The LCT's, (Landing craft tanks), the front would come down and a tank could be put in it. VP's, (Landing craft vehicle personnel), were smaller. They had one tied up to the ship, and told us to take it out, when they began to undo it, it began to sink. I was on the landing craft, and it was sinking, so I took my knife, and cut the other rope away from the large ship so it would regain its float. We rode it all night long in the storm until the pump quit working. They told us to run it onto the shore, there was a C.B. camp on the island.

We had had these navy blue life jackets on all night, and the dye off of the jackets turned all of our cloths and our skin blue. When we reached the island, all of the men made fun of us.

When the sun came up the next morning we went to the island to check on the landing craft. All of the crafts had been throne around by the waves and most of them were busted up cause they were made out of wood. I had been on the landing craft six to eight months.

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I interviewed my grandpa McAllister, (my mothers, father) he is 67 years old, and lives in Oakley, Utah most of the time. My grandpa is a veteran of World War 2, and that is what I interviewed him about.

When I was in the war, they had me guard prisoners in San Diego. They would dock these huge ships, by setting them into different keel blocks to fit the different shapes of all the ships. After they brought in the ships, we would take the prisoners down and they would have to scrape all of the barnacles off of the bottoms of the ships. The barnacles would build up onto the bottoms of the ships and slow them down. The prisoners would also have to paint the bottom of the ships with a plastic type of sealant. We would take the prisoners (they were American men who had done something wrong). There were eight to ten guards, and we each guarded about six prisoners. We would stand above them and make them work. Some men were lazy and didn't work very hard. I remember one day that we rounded up the prisoners and headed back to the prison, and when we got there we found that we were missing two men. Later when they caught these two men, the men told my grandpa that they were just sleeping and when they woke up there was knowone around, so they decided to clime the fence and cross the hill. So these men went A.W.O.L. (absent without leave).

One man that I had to guard showed me how to tie a lot of different kind of knots.

I had to guard the prisoners for about a year.

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Interview. Ferron, Utah, 9 April 1995.

I interviewed my grandpa McAllister (my moms dad). He's a really awesome guy, my parents named me after him. His name is Keith and that is my middle name. The interview is on World War 2, he served for the U.S. in the Navy.

When I had been overseas for about a year, they had to bring me back to the United States. I had got a bad burn before I was in the Navy and it had gotten a fungus infection in the burn. They brought me to the hospital, and they took skin from my upper leg, and grafted it on to my burn which was in my shin and calf area. They used sodium-pentothal to put me to sleep, it was a funny medicine, it would make all of the men act funny when they were coming out of it, it was kind of like they were drunk or high off of something. I was in the hospital for around six months.

When I was released out of the hospital, they sent me to Oceanside, California. When I got their they needed some switch board operators, so I volunteered to learn how to switch board. They took quite a few of us because it was a twenty-four hour job. We got out of inspections, and some other responsibilities that were less desirable. It was a good job. I did this for about a year.

When I got a long leave of absence I would hitch hike home from Sunnyside, California to Salt Lake City, Utah. I did this three times. I could even beat the bus home, cause in those days it wasn't a very scary thing to hitch hike.

The memories of this time are quite fond and good memories. I believe that going into the Navy, even though I was seventeen years old, taught me a lot about life and helped me grow and mature.