

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Bob Bastas

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Veterans Remember Oral History project

Interview # VRK-A-L-2008-071

Bob Bastas, a Korean War veteran with the U.S. Air Force, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Veterans Remember* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: October 13, 2008 Location: Bastas residence, Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Technical Support (cameraman, etc): N/A

Edited by: Cheryl Wycoff and Rozanne Flatt, ALPL Volunteers

Total Pages: 46 Total Time: 2 hr 35 min / 2.58 hrs

Accessioned into the ALPL Archives on November 13, 2008.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Bob Bastas, *Veterans Remember*, VRK-A-L-2008-071

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Bob Bastas was born on October 28, 1931 in Benton, Illinois. His father Tom immigrated from Greece in 1910 when he was a young teen, and eventually settled in Benton where he was the owner and operator of a local restaurant. Tom married Laura Perkins in the early 1920s, and together they ran the restaurant business and raised a family. Bob discusses his life during the depression, and shared his memories of the World War II era as well. In 1949 Bob graduated from high school, and attended Southern Illinois University for a couple of years until he decided to enlist in the Air Force in the spring of 1951. In October of 1952, Bob arrived at Seoul City airport. He was assigned to the 1993rd AACS (Airway and Air Communications Squadron), and stationed at Kimpo Airport, spending considerable time at Osan as well. Bob worked as a clerk-typist in the unit's personnel section, especially with sensitive personnel records of selected unit members. Bob shared his impressions of the Korean people and UN forces, of the officers and NCOs he worked with, and the impact of integration in the U.S. military. On one occasion he collected up several propaganda leaflets the Americans were dropping over enemy lines (see the images for the collection). He returned to the United States in late 1953, following the signing of the armistice.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Benton, Illinois; Greek heritage; processing at Ellis Island; growing up during the depression; life in a small town during World War II; Air Force enlistment; Northwestern State Teacher's College, Maryville, Missouri; Mitchell Field; Camp Stoneman, California; USNS General Nelson M. Walker; Yokohama, Japan; 1993rd Airway and Air Communications Squadron, U.S. Air Force; Seoul City Airport; Kimpo Airport, Korea; electronic homer sites; Russian Yaks; Osan Air Force Base during Korean War; propaganda leaflets during Korean War; Korean soldiers; Korean house boys; integration of military during Korean War; Greek soldiers; Turkish soldiers; President Truman; General MacArthur; President-Elect Eisenhower; Korean leadership; Korean orphans; Tachikawa Air Base; Syngman Rhee; Kim Il-Sung; prisoner exchange in August 1953; Griffiss Air Force Base, Rome, New York; Bataan Death March; Walter Cronkite.

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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