

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//20291123~~**OHNR: OH-2001-27****DOI: 19 Jun 2001****TRSID:** **DTR: 10 Feb 2003****QCSID:****Text Review:****INAME: BUDENBACH, Mary H. (Polly) Text w/Tape:****IPLACE: Hilton Head Island, SC; Budenbach Residence****VIEWER: FRAHM, Jill E.****[Tape 1, Side 1]**

Frahm: Today is June 19, 2001. We are in Mrs. Mary H. Budenbach's home in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, where I am interviewing her. The interviewer is Jill Frahm. This is Oral History number 2001-27. Mrs. Budenbach, can you say a few words about your life before you entered the cryptologic business?

Budenbach: Okay. Incidentally, a lot of people only know me as "Polly." My real name is "Mary."

Frahm: So may I call you "Polly"?

Budenbach: Certainly. Please do. I hate the name "Mary" as a matter of fact. But I'm stuck with it, and anything official has to have that on it.

Frahm: Well, everybody at work who was way below you always called you "Polly B."

Budenbach: "Polly." Yeah. Okay. Well, let's see how I got in. This was, of course, back when World War II broke out. I took a volunteer job in New York. Which I loved. The only trouble with that one was you could say what you did but not where your office was. That one had its complications too. [Laughs.] But at any rate, I was married and my husband was draft eligible. Very. Because he was not in a defense-related job and we had no children. And when I realized that he was going to get picked up... He would be a draftee and I would be getting fifty dollars a month. I didn't think even in those days I could live on it. So I decided to get a paying job. That's when I got involved with - at that time - was with the Navy.

Frahm: You told me once about the world's shortest Navy career. Can you tell me about it again?

Budenbach: Well I got a job as a civilian with the Navy OP-20-G. It was the communications outfit. Intelligence outfit. I went down there. Almost everyone in the Navy outfit was in uniform. There were about five people that weren't. One was a hunchback. One was totally blind. It had to be something seriously wrong: So they immediately wanted me to go in the Navy. I didn't particularly want to, but they pressured me. And it was arranged that I would go up to North Hampton where they had the Officers Training School for the

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WAVES. It was a three-month course, but it was arranged in advance that I would go, and after a month be graduated and come back. So I went down in Washington to take the physical. I was very near-sighted. I didn't have very good vision at all. But the doctor who was examining my eyes was aware of all of this. And he knew if he flunked me he'd have to just write out a waiver and I'd be... It was all set in advance. So he puts up this chart to read (2G) eye. And he said, "Now start walking towards it. You can read it." And he said, "Stop. You can read it from there." I said, "No, I can't." I couldn't. And he said, "Yeah. Yes you can. What is it? The first letter?" And I said, "A." He said, "No." "B?" "No." [Laughter heard.] Finally, I said, "Q?" "No." I said, "O!" "Of course!" He said, "You can read it." So I officially had 20/20 vision. I went up to North Hampton. Gave all my clothes away. Shoes particularly. Went up there and took another physical and flunked that. I had a tumor.

Frahm: Oh? [Surprised.]

Budenbach: Yeah. I didn't know I had. So I was discharged in three days. I came back down to New York and had an operation and it turned out all right but... Then when I wanted to go back to Washington to work and they tried to get me to go back in the Navy and do this again. I said "No way. I tried once and I don't want to do it." So I remained a civilian. And that's how come. In the Army outfit, in those days, there were a lot of civilians. I mean I think Juanita (Moody) was a... You know... I mean all of the people there, they were left alone. They could be civilians. But the Navy didn't like it.

Frahm: Well, what were you working on?

Budenbach: Cryptanalysis.

Frahm: What was your problem?

Budenbach: Well, it was all Japanese naval systems.

Frahm: Any one in particular?

Budenbach: Oh yes. And the naval attaché system too. I worked on practically all of them.

Frahm: Any particular successes you remember from that time?

Budenbach: Well I remember one. Most of those things... I mean they were big systems and it wasn't a question of one person solving them. It was a team together. The thing I remember was not a success. We were working on the Japanese naval attaché system. The JADE it was called. There were about ten of us. We had a juicy buzz message in a crib. About ten of us were trying to place it and get started on breaking the thing. There was one guy - I'm trying to think of his name. He was a Naval Officer. And he was a... His father was a big wheel in communications. His father was the President of AT&T or something like that. He beat the rest of us in getting the thing cracked. [Laughs.]

Frahm: Well, that's quite challenging when you have to do that. I've tried to do that.

Budenbach: I know. Well, you know, it was a question... Of course those things... You always have a few garbles to contend with.

Frahm: Yes.

Budenbach: [She laughs.] So it's not, you know... If everything were perfect, it would have been very easy.

Frahm: Yes.

Budenbach: But they never are. [She laughs.]

Frahm: That's the thing about those class exercises. There's never any garbles.

Budenbach: No. [Laughs.] So, that I remember. But as I say, I stayed a civilian.

Frahm: Where did you live?

Budenbach: Hmm?

Frahm: Where did you live?

Budenbach: Well, that was difficult during the War. It was very hard to have a place to live in Washington. I stayed in a crummy hotel for the first couple of months. Looking for a place. And then I... A good friend of mine from college lived out in Bethesda. She introduced me to her next door neighbor who had a house in Bethesda and her husband was in the Navy and gone. She wanted some company. So I moved in with her and stayed there for a year. But then, her husband came back and I had to find another place. There was a young girl who worked in the same section I did. Gosh, I can't think of her name right now. (She) had an aunt who lived on N Street in one of those old brownstones. Who was doing over the one next to her place and was going to rent it out and make them (B% four) apartments.

Frahm: Oh.

Budenbach: So she took me down and introduced me to the woman who owned it. I looked at the apartment and I (1G) "I'll take it," because it wasn't even finished yet. She didn't want to rent it to me. She said "There's no bathtub." Well, there was a small bathroom with just a shower – which I always take anyway. So I said that didn't bother me a bit. So I finally got it. It was on... 1909 N Street. I remember that. I lived there until after the end of the War. Yeah. I was lucky.

Frahm: Yes. How did you get back and forth from Bethesda?

Budenbach: Oh, well, I had a car.

Frahm: Oh. That makes it easy.

Budenbach: Well, we car pooled because there was gas rationing.

Frahm: I was about to ask how did you make out with the gas?

Budenbach: I know. You got enough to drive back – drive to work. Particularly if you didn't have to do it every day.

Frahm: What shift did you work?

Budenbach: Well, during the War, I worked all shifts. I mean it depended on... It changed from time to time. But I used to work the mid-watch and everything. Because they had to keep going around the clock. I mean later on, of course, that was all over after the War was over. But during the War, they had almost as many people on the mid-watch as they did on the day.

Frahm: Oh I bet, I bet. Did you... ? We know more about the Army stuff than we do about the Navy. Did it work similarly that you'd just kind of hand your problem off to somebody? You'd overlap and you'd brief them?

Budenbach: Yeah. Well, a lot of the work depended on what you were doing. If you had to pull the daily keys or added a (1G) changed or whatever, you just passed it onto the next person.

Frahm: Was there much cooperation between the Army and the Navy on different problems?

Budenbach: No, no. I guess at the higher up levels, there might have been some. There wasn't any at the level that I was. And I was not very senior in those days. I didn't know anybody in the Army until after the War. When we started to cooperate.

Frahm: What was your position? Were you an analyst or were you some sort of a leader of a team or something?

Budenbach: Hmm?

Frahm: What was your position? Were you an analyst or a leader of a team or something?

Budenbach: No, I was an analyst. And it depended on what system we were working on. Sometimes I'd be one of the team or I might have somebody junior to me. A new person helping me. But I wasn't an administrator.

Frahm: When the War ended, for example, Ann Caracristi left and then came back. Did you stay on or did you leave the firm?

Budenbach: I stayed on. Well, when the War ended, my husband was in the Army and he was shipped to Japan. Overseas. The last day they could legally send him unless he had agreed to stay on in the Army. Which he definitely had not and wouldn't. So I couldn't quit when the War ended. It was almost a year later that he got back. I think he was in Japan for about nine months.

Frahm: What did you do when the War ended? What did they work on?

Budenbach: Well, for a while, there was not very much to do. You sort of twiddled your thumbs. We started to look at a little bit of traffic which we had never paid any attention to really before.

Frahm: Anybody in particular? Any target in particular?

Budenbach: Of course, the other thing was Russian. During the War, there was a very secret embedded small group looking at some of the Russian traffic. But that was very compartmented and I don't think I even knew it was there in those days. But after the War was over, we started working on it. And that

was the first time really we started, that I recall, having any cooperation with the Army people. Because we were working on the ALBATROS and so were they. You know about that?

Frahm: I think so.

Budenbach: The Soviet machine.

Frahm: Oh, okay.

Budenbach: It was into (2G). They made the first break into it. I think it was (B% Jim) Masterson. I'm not sure. I think so. But it was somebody in the Army side. But that was the first time we really got together and worked on anything... Had any contact at the technical level. I don't mean the high up administrators.

Frahm: Right, right. Did you have to do anything in particular to stay, or did you just not leave?

Budenbach: Well, as I say, part of what we were doing was sort of "makework". For the first few months until, you know... Then we got serious about some of these other things. Very. But at first, it was such a change. Of course, there wasn't any Japanese traffic to work on. So as I say... It was a... But I thought... And then when my husband came home from Japan finally I... Before the War, he'd been with the department store Altman's in New York. He was a... Been a furniture buyer. Of course, he could have had that job back. But he didn't want to. He wanted to go back into Wall Street where he worked earlier. He went up to New York the day after he got home. I was in Washington, and of course, we didn't have any place to live up there. He got himself a job with a firm that nobody had ever heard of. I didn't know whether he'd do any good or whether the firm would last. So I thought I'd better wait a couple of weeks before I quit because I had a fairly good job by then. He didn't have anything. I didn't know. So I thought, "Well, I'll wait a month or so and see how this turned out." Well, that was it. I never did get out. I was hoping that he would get a job in Washington, but he didn't.

Frahm: Just to back up quickly. What sort of training did you get when you started? Did you have any training up to this point?

Budenbach: The only training I had was before I came to Washington. The Navy had a correspondence course they'd sent you. You did that. But I didn't have any person-to-person, face-to-face training at all. Just a correspondence course.

Frahm: So, when you started, they just kind of handed you a problem and... ?

Budenbach: Yeah, yeah. I had (B% gotten) over ten or twelve problems. You did one and send it in and they'd send you the next. But they didn't spend much money on training. There wasn't much. They couldn't. There wasn't much in print.

Frahm: Yeah. Do you have any idea... ? Did a lot of people stay when the War ended? Or did a lot of people leave?

Budenbach: A fair amount of people did, yes. I think there were... Some of the Navy

people got out of uniform and took a civilian job if they could get it. Yeah. But whatever you had been doing before the War, if you had had a job, you were pretty rusty.

Frahm: Yeah, yeah. So your husband came home and got a job in New York?

Budenbach: In New York. Yeah.

Frahm: And then what happened?

Budenbach: Well, we considered splitting the difference and living in Wilmington, Delaware [laughs]. And decided that wouldn't work. So I started to become a crazy commuter.

Frahm: Where did you live during the week?

Budenbach: Well, various places around Washington. I gave up the apartment fairly early on because I couldn't afford it (B% and all of) that, too. I lived a couple of places. Some of them crummy. Then for several years, I lived with a couple who worked for... And this was after NSA was there. They had come from the Army side. Martha and Larry (B% Shin). They took a house. They had lived in the city and they rented a house in Virginia. A beautiful location. A crummy house, but it was a gorgeous location. Then they bought one up closer in, in Arlington. And I lived with them during the week for quite a number of years. And then, after that I went back to the hotel. And I ended up... The last place I lived was the Watergate of all things.

Frahm: Can I interrupt one second and stop. [TR NOTE: Interviewer stops recording for unknown period of time.] Okay, now you said... Jumping back... You were working on the Russian problem right after the war.

Budenbach: Yeah.

Frahm: Were you still working as an analyst in that?

Budenbach: Oh yes. Yeah. Oh yes. That's all I ever did until much later on.

Frahm: What happened when AFSA and NSA were created? How did that change what you were doing? How did that affect you?

Budenbach: Well, I was in my... [TR NOTE: Speaker takes approximately 30 seconds to answer.] Technical (2G) staff group (2G) – and the first time I ever worked alongside of people from the Army. There were about an even number of Army and Navy people. It was very good, because we got to know one another.

Frahm: Who else was in that organization?

Budenbach: Well, Frank Raven was the chief of it most of the time. Well, I think... I don't know whether both Larry and Martha Shin maybe... Art Levenson, I think. (B% John) Masterson and... At first I don't know. I can't remember all of the people.

Frahm: What did the technical consultants branch do?

Budenbach: They went and helped the line outfit that was having trouble with a problem. Help them out.

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Frahm: So you pretty much worked everything?

Budenbach: Yeah, pretty much. Yeah. You never knew. Never knew what country the target was going to be or... Kept moving around. But it was interesting.

Frahm: What sort of cryptosystems? What sort of problems? Do you remember anything in particular?

Budenbach: Well, there was still ALBATROS of course, but there were all kinds of... There were a lot of [redacted] problems. All kinds of things. As specific systems. You know, titled at this point. [She laughs.]

Frahm: Somebody once told me that for the CA branch, that was the glamour organization. He said that's the one thing at the Agency – is they disbanded the branch before he got there. But he started in the 50's. And that was the place he really wanted to work. Although you did a lot of things for him. He worked the [redacted] problem.

Budenbach: Yeah, yeah. The other thing about that outfit was we used to have a... By that time, they were hiring some young people. And when they got a good hiree, a good (1-2G), they would give each of us in the technical branch – one to sort of shepherd around and help them get started. That was fun. That was enjoyable having somebody like that. They were all bright kids. The ones I remember best under my wing was Bill [Phil] and Alice (B% Dibben). And they'd become great friends of mine later on.

Frahm: Now, you eventually became chief for this branch?

Budenbach: No I was never the... I was the deputy chief. Later. Yeah.

Frahm: Okay. Under Frank Raven? Or different people?

Budenbach: No. Under Bob Shaw. And then... Huh?

Frahm: Ray?

Budenbach: Huh?

Frahm: Ray?

Budenbach: Bill Ray, yeah. [Laughs.] Names I had to dredge up. Takes me a minute sometimes.

Frahm: That's okay.

Budenbach: No, I never was the deputy. I was Frank Raven's deputy later, when he was the Chief of G Group.

Frahm: Okay.

Budenbach: But never his deputy when he was running the technical staff.

Frahm: So you stayed with this organization through AFSA and into NSA?

Budenbach: Hmm. [Affirmative response.]

Frahm: What was a typical day like? What did you... ? Did you go in... ? What did you do during a typical day? Or was there no such thing?

Budenbach: [Laughs.] I don't think there was. The thing I remember about being Frank

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Raven's deputy is he is one of those people who likes to... I guess they call them "type A" that are good early in the day, and I am type "B." Oh, this was years later but he still lived in Virginia. In Arlington. He would get to work way before anybody. He'd get there. And I would take another snooze and come in around 8:30. Then he would leave about quarter to four. He wanted to get home and have his dinner at five o'clock, which I couldn't possibly stand. I'd stay until six, six-thirty. So it worked well. There was always somebody there in the office.

Frahm: Yes, yes. G Group was, well, the technical branch and then into G group. you probably worked on...

Budenbach: G group was all the non-Soviet, non-Chinese. Yeah.

Frahm: Yes. You must have worked all the major crises through the 50's and the 60's - as long as you were there.

Budenbach: Yeah. Well, G Group wasn't formed until - I'm trying to think when. I was the head when G Group was first on. I was the head of... There was one division that was the technical division and I ran that for a while. Yeah.

Frahm: So, do you remember any of those particular crises or anything like that?

Budenbach: Oh yeah. That was about the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis and Juanita (Moody) was running the Cuban problem among others.

Frahm: Yes, yes. She's quite well known for that. Even now.

Budenbach: Yeah, yeah. She was, G1 or 2 and I was G4 maybe and (1M) division.

Frahm: So, she worked for you?

Budenbach: No, no. She didn't work for me. We were office chiefs together.

Frahm: Ah. Okay. What targets were under you then?

Budenbach: Hmm?

Frahm: What targets were under you then?

Budenbach: Well, I don't know. There were so many.

Frahm: Was it European? Was it Asian? Was it North Africa?

Budenbach: Well, see, I was the G4. I was involved with anything that was... all machine ciphers and anything that wasn't Russian or Chinese. That would be A Group or B Group.

Frahm: Right, right.

Budenbach: But we had all the rest. Yeah.

Frahm: That's a lot.

Budenbach: It was a lot. But I mean individually they weren't as important as those two.

Frahm: Beyond ALBATROS, do you remember any other projects you were involved with?

Budenbach: Well, I remember a lot of them but it depends on... When I was G4, we had

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all of the [redacted] problems. I guess practically every darn country in the world. The [redacted] was one of the thorny ones because that was pretty important.

Frahm: Yeah. The famous "naked-eyes" decrypt must have passed through your organization.

Budenbach: Hmm?

Frahm: The famous "naked-eyes" decrypt must have passed through your organization.

Budenbach: Yeah, yeah. [Laughs.]

Frahm: Which job did you like the best? What did you do that you are proudest of over those years?

Budenbach: Well I don't know. I think... That's hard to answer without getting compartmented. Would you like a little touch of coffee?

Frahm: No, I'm fine, thanks.

Budenbach: You're not a coffee drinker?

Frahm: I'm not a coffee drinker. I'm fine. No.

Budenbach: I don't think there was ever any one thing that stood out in my mind. I mean, it depended on what year you're talking about. If I could remember what happened that year. [Laughs.] [TRNOTE: Tape appears to cut out conversation for about 20 seconds and picks up in mid-sentence:]... And that was why there is... It was B4 before it was G. I can't keep remembering it was G all the way through. It was B at first. When I was talking about (B% that).

Frahm: How did SIGINT... How did the problems change over your... ?

Budenbach: They got harder. Well, part of it of course was... like Martin and Mitchell... a few things like...

Frahm: Oh, yeah.

Budenbach: Other things like that. I'm trying to think of a... And this was back shortly after the end of the War. Long before I got into B Group or G Group. There was a Soviet machine cipher that I worked on. Which we were doing very well and that was blown. We never saw it again.

Frahm: Hmm. I'm not surprised.

Budenbach: Yeah. I don't know, and I don't know anything about this most recent case except what I've read in the newspapers. But I'll tell you, those people can really... But it is so difficult to prosecute them because you're liable to give away more in court than... I'm trying to think of a guy. I can't think of his name. It was shortly after the end of the War.

Frahm: Was it Weisband?

Budenbach: I don't think that was his name. I can see a picture of him in my mind's eye.

Frahm: William Weisband?

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Budenbach: What?

Frahm: William Weisband?

Budenbach: No, no. No. This guy, he was a cryptanalyst. He was working on one of the [redacted] problems and he was passing the results to the Dutch.

Frahm: Hmm.

Budenbach: And I think he was a little off up here. But he thought that was all right because they were our allies. Well, believe me, it wasn't. They finally caught him. They decided to prosecute him. He had a lawyer who was... I guess he was a good lawyer but he was also a good friend of NSA's. He advised the guy to plead guilty. Which of course was all to the Agency's benefit because they wouldn't have to bring all his stuff out in open court. The lawyer told him that if he pled... put in a guilty plea, he would get a very light sentence. So he did. Well, it was funny. There were several NSA employees called to go as witnesses. But other than those who had been subpoenaed, the Director said that... rule that he didn't want any NSA employees going to the trial. But he wanted one person there as a witness to report back to him what had happened. And somehow, I got named. So I went to the thing, and there was very little to observe with a guilty plea. They went out and came back with the verdict. They brought him back in court, and I think he expected a little slap on the wrist. Well, he got twenty years, and the look on his face was something.

Frahm: Now which Director was this that you were observing this for?

Budenbach: Hmm?

Frahm: Which Director was this?

Budenbach: [Long pause.] I'm trying to think of it. (XG) Canine. I don't know. It was way early on. I don't remember who was...

Frahm: So, you don't know how you were picked for this?

Budenbach: I don't know why I was picked. Except that I knew the problems that (B% the guy) had been working on. I suspect that was part of it. Because I had... I didn't know him well, but he was in the same group that I was in. I would've been able to comment (1-2G) about whatever he said about the problems. I suppose that was it. I suppose somebody said "Well, she knows all about the systems he was working on." And they wanted somebody who would understand.

Frahm: Right, right.

Budenbach: I don't know why I was picked other than that. Because I wasn't terribly senior either. I mean, I was in the middle some place.

Frahm: [TR NOTE: Taping stops]

[End of Tape 1, Side 1?]

[Tape 1, Side 2?]

Frahm: Go on?

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Budenbach: Yes. Would you like a Coke or something? A glass of water?

Frahm: No I'm fine. I'm fine. I finally had breakfast just before I came.

Budenbach: I won't offer you a martini. I think it's a little early.

Frahm: It's a little early. [Both laugh.] [Then long pause.] Did you ever feel that you were treated any different because you were a woman? Or did you move up just...? Was it more difficult?

Budenbach: Yes, I do feel a lot of circumstances when... It was different. In the later years, the Agency had a promotion board system for the grades 13 and up. I think I was appointed to far more than my share of those boards. I was practically always on one or the other because there weren't enough... They wanted a minority. Which always amused me. A minority as a woman. On each of the boards, you know. So you had to do... I'm sure Juanita and Ann met the same problem. I don't think we ever served on a board together. They couldn't waste two of us on one board. I think the thing that bothered me the most was when I first made super grade. Up to the end of the War and for a couple years afterwards, the highest grade was a GS 15. Then, they came out with the super grades and the Agency made, I don't know, four or five. I don't remember exactly how many. And about the second or third go around, I made it. Of course, I was the first woman. Ann and Juanita made it the time after me. I was the first. Of course, I was thrilled to get it, but I was also a little bit dubious. I didn't know whether I was getting it because it was in the days when they were first starting to promote people right. Whether I was getting it because they wanted to say "Oh yes, we've got a woman" or whether I really deserved it. And I didn't know. After a while I thought, "Forget it. Just assume you did deserve it because you'll be miserable otherwise." So, I still don't know.

Frahm: Did you feel that way before you got that super grade? Friedman kept a list of who rated. You know, the promotion level. It has been interesting to look at now. And you and Doctor Ward: for many years, you were the highest paid women in the Agency.

Budenbach: That's right. And I don't think Doctor Ward... She died... I don't know whether she ever made it or not.

Frahm: I don't think so. I don't know.

Budenbach: I don't think so. I know the next go around, that Juanita and Ann made it – because I remember taking them out to lunch.

Frahm: I have been looking at the top five women. I mean, you and Miss Caracristi and Juanita Moody are still alive. And I can actually go and talk to you. Doctor Ward and Martha Shin... Now, I don't know if Martha Shin is...

Budenbach: No. Martha Shin died a long time ago.

Frahm: But they sort of disappeared. Doctor Ward has been surprisingly easy to trace because they left quite a paper trail of what she did. But what did Martha Shin do?

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Budenbach: How about... ? Martha Shin was a cryptanalyst and a good one. And Larry was, too. But he was also... He ran the Russian shop for a while. He was also... And I don't think Martha ever had an administrative job. She was a straight cryptanalyst.

Frahm: Did you kind of have to... ? You had to go into administrative to move up?

Budenbach: Well, it was easier if you did. Yeah. I tell you the other woman that I think you ought to consider. How about Jane... ?

Frahm: Brewer?

Budenbach: Huh?

Frahm: Brewer?

Budenbach: Brewer. Yeah, thank you.

Frahm: Well that's who I... That's also what I was interested in. Is... ?

Budenbach: I don't know whether she's still alive or anything. I don't know. Last I knew, she was living in Annapolis someplace.

Frahm: Phoenix Society is amazing for having... how to get in touch with people.

Budenbach: Yeah. But Jane was really quite a gal. She had very difficult personal circumstances. Her father was an Army General. And she'd been married and had one child.

Frahm: Oh, that's too bad.

Budenbach: [REDACTED] [TR NOTE: Taping abruptly stops]

[End of Tape 1, Side 1?]

[Tape 1, Side 2?]

Frahm: We are back.

Budenbach: But I don't know. You might be interested in contacting her. As I say, I'm not sure she's even alive. I don't know.

Frahm: Yeah. Helen (B% O'Roarke) just died.

Budenbach: Pardon?

Frahm: Helen O'Roarke just died.

Budenbach: Yeah, yeah.

Frahm: But... Did you work with... ? I mean, did you work with all these people? You lived with Martha Shin. You must have worked...

Budenbach: Well, I worked with Jane Brewer, yeah.

Frahm: Did you work with Dr. Ward? Or... ?

Budenbach: Well, not in the same (1G), because I had... She was (2-3G) liaison with CIA.

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Frahm: Okay.

Budenbach: And I was, too. And so, I knew her. I didn't work in the same outfit with her. But I worked with her, you know?

Frahm: Yes.

Budenbach: And I knew something about her. And Jane, after a while, went to Training. She ran Training for a while.

Frahm: Ah! [TR NOTE: She pauses.] Did you have any role models? Any people that helped you along? Or did you... ? That... ?

Budenbach: Well, there weren't any women seniors, really.

Frahm: Any men? Any men that helped you get... ?

Budenbach: I'm sure you've heard of Agnes Driscoll?

Frahm: Oh, yes.

Budenbach: Well, of course, she was, you know, way above me during the war. I never met her. Never was introduced. But she obviously knew who I was, because one day, I remember, in Arlington Hall, I was walking down the corridor. And she was coming toward me in the other direction. And I just kept this straight face. You know, I knew who she was, but I wasn't going to... And as she got opposite me, she just hissed. [TR NOTE: Ms. Budenbach hisses. Then, laughter is heard.] Not a word was spoken. [TR NOTE: More laughter.] That was as close as I ever got to her.

Frahm: I bet you were taken aback by that!

Budenbach: I was! [TR NOTE: She laughs.]

Frahm: That's funny!

Budenbach: Well, then, it was funny because... This was during the War. And we were working... I was working under Frank Raven. And he was trying to solve the Japanese naval attaché system: the JADE system. And Agnes Driscoll had collected all the traffic and wouldn't let him have it, you know? [TR NOTE: Laughter.] And I don't know... Somehow, he found some ploy. And somebody went in at night and swiped some of the (B% buzz) messages and solved this thing. And then, they got the traffic out of her. But... So I'm sure she knew I worked for him.

Frahm: Ah! Okay. [TR NOTE: More laughter.]

Budenbach: That was really funny. But... As I (1G), Frank Raven was probably... I worked for him, not all the time, but quite a lot of the time, in different capacities. And I guess, he's the one that I remember most. Yeah, did the most for me.

Frahm: Yes. When he moved up, did you have an edge getting to be his deputy, because you worked with him before?

Budenbach: I don't know. I suppose so. Well, I mean, it was up to him, you know?

Frahm: Right.

Budenbach: I guess so. I don't know.

Frahm: Somebody told me... People are very interested in this project. And one man who talked to me about it was a guy named [redacted] who worked for Juanita Moody. And was down at the White House for a while...

Budenbach: Yes.

Frahm: After [redacted] And he was... He told me that he thought that Raven sort of ran the business end and you handled the technical part.

Budenbach: Oh, no. That's...

Frahm: Is there any truth in that?

Budenbach: That's not so. No. Raven was a great technician.

Frahm: That's what I...

Budenbach: No, I wouldn't say that at all. I'd say that... You know, I mean, he was the Group chief and I was his deputy. Obviously, he did most of the administrative decisions, you know?

Frahm: Yes.

Budenbach: He might have asked me what I thought sometimes.

Frahm: Right.

Budenbach: But I mean, basically, that was... It was his final choice that went. But no, he was a great technician.

Frahm: Were you ever discouraged from a job because you are a woman?

Budenbach: Was I ever what?

Frahm: Discouraged. Did they ever not want you to take a job because you are a woman?

Budenbach: No, I don't think so. As I said, the time when I really had the doubts I told you before was when I first made super grade.

Frahm: Right. Do you think NSA is good to its female employees in general?

Budenbach: Other than that I... As I said, the climate changed after Equal Opportunity became a password. And I have no objection. Never did. If I'm, say, sitting on a promotion board and I've got one slot and two candidates. And I really can't tell them apart. I mean they are equally good. I would have no qualms about selecting the woman or the Black or the American Indian or whatever. It's better than flipping a coin. But it would have to be that kind of a situation. I have grave objections to picking the quote unquote "minority" when they are not as qualified. And I think, in general, you are doing harm to the cause of the minorities because they get a job they're not qualified for. They fall on their face. Everybody says "Yeah, I told you."

Frahm: So NSA, in general, has been good to women, you think?

Budenbach: I think it has. Yes.

Frahm: Have there always been women supervisors or such as you have seen?

Budenbach: During the War, you see, I was working for the Navy. As I told you before, the Navy took a dim view of civilian employees. You had to be an officer to get any kind of a job. So that tilted...

Frahm: Yes, definitely.

Budenbach: But it wasn't... It was more because they favored officers over civilians. And there were so few civilians than there was a deliberate slap against women.

Frahm: You were involved... I've seen the... This kind of happened backwards. I found the 1973 report about possible discrimination in G Group and your signature was on it. How did you come to be involved in that?

Budenbach: I don't know. I remember doing it. Forgotten who persuaded me to do it.

Frahm: Because you seemed to be the rank... I mean as the Deputy Chief to G, you were obviously the ranking individual on it.

Budenbach: I don't really... I remember vaguely there was such a report and being involved in it. Yeah.

Frahm: The study basically came out and reported that things were even. Except when it came to TDYs or PCSes.

Budenbach: Well, that's it. Yeah. And it's funny, because I never did get a PCS. At one point, I thought maybe I could do it because my husband was working then for another brokerage firm. They had an office in London. I thought if I could get to go to England, he might be able to arrange to work out of their London office and that sounded divine.

Frahm: Yes.

Budenbach: But then, he couldn't arrange it, so I couldn't do it. I mean I'm not going to go for a year or two to England.

Frahm: Right, right.

Budenbach: That's, I think, one of the reasons why PCS was not very common for women. Although the one I remember over there was (B% Kerry Berry). She was the second of command. She was in Cheltenham. She was the deputy over there. And I don't know whether she's still alive or not.

Frahm: That I don't know.

Budenbach: Because I'm pretty ancient and I think Kerry is about five or ten years older than I am.

Frahm: Did the study make any difference at all?

Budenbach: I'll tell you one thing about TDYs if you want a good story about women on TDY. This was, I don't know, in the – shortly after the end of the War. It must have been around the 50's. I was working for Bob Shaw. He was the head of the... I was his deputy, I think. He and I and two junior gals in the staff – the technical staff he was running – were sent over to Cheltenham on TDY. And in those days, the good old days, you flew military aircraft. Not civilian. We took the flight from Washington. Went to Orly. To Paris. And then, you spent the night there and took a smaller plane back to England. We get in

Paris and the U.S. Air Force had a very nice, small hotel there. Where we were billeted. The four of us go in and check in. They look at my orders. I don't know what I was, maybe a 14. Something like that. I wasn't a super grade, but I was up there. They were very impressed. They didn't have women with that of high of rank come. So I get the deluxe suite on the premier etage [stage] with a private bath and a balcony. Then they look at Bob's orders. And the mimeograph machine hadn't done well. He was a 16, but the 1 didn't come through and they thought he was a GS 6. So they assumed he'd been sent along to carry my baggage. [They both laugh.] So they give him a room up at the top. One floor above where the elevator stops running. [Laughs.] So he goes up there and he asks them... He wants to take a shower... Where the shower is. "Oh, that's on the floor below. It doesn't go with this room." That was hilarious. He had a great sense of humor. So then he calls down and he wants to order a staff car to take us to the airport. [And they respond,] "You?" [Laughs.] That was hilarious. But then the worst thing – when we came home – we would go to Orly. They board military aircraft in order of rank. We're standing there and this young Air Force lieutenant is calling out names. And he starts with General So-and-so and Admiral So-and-so and General So-and-so. Bob ranked with a Brigadier, I think. He goes down around seven names and finally he says... Bob is kind of, you know, being this... He's getting itchy. He also had a big sense of his rights. The young lieutenant says "Mrs. Budenbach." Well, Bob's about to explode and he (B% dashes out). He gets to the one side of the (1G) and there's a man in civilian clothes on the other side. And the man gets his mouth opened first and he said to the lieutenant, "I beg your pardon. I think you have overlooked me." The lieutenant looks at him and says "Yeah, Bud? What's your name?" And he says, "My name is (B% Tedder), Air Chief Marshall." [Both laugh.] They had him listed as a civilian. So Bob says, "Get on the plane. Go get on the plane. Get us a pretty good seat." And I don't know where Tedder finally sat, though it was something. But those were the days when you rode military. It was so much better. And then, when the jets came out they... At first, you could ride the propeller plane first class or in the jet steerage. Then, of course, there was no choice.

Frahm: Right, right.

Budenbach: But the military planes, they were just as good as the civilian's and as comfortable. The only difference was they didn't serve drinks. No alcohol. They wouldn't throw you off if you had a little bottle in your purse.

Frahm: Yeah. You've given me the name of Jane Brewer. A woman named Jennifer Wilcox and I are working on an exhibit at the museum on significant women at the Agency. Obviously you and Ann Caracristi and Juanita Moody and others will be up there. You gave the name of Jane Brewer. Is there anybody else we should be sure to look at and include?

Budenbach: I can't... Well, you mentioned Doctor Ward, yeah?

Frahm: Yes.

Budenbach: I mentioned Kerry Berry and I don't think she... She was good, but not that great. I think Jane Brewer is about the one I would recommend putting in there. Of course, now, there are all kinds.

Frahm: Yes, yes. I appreciate the fact that the last few years you haven't been in the loop. Is there anything else you want to bring up or talk about while you have your chance to put in your two cents?

Budenbach: Well, I don't really... As I say, it's so long that I've been out of there, you know, that it takes a little thinking back to remember.

Frahm: Yeah. Well I really appreciate...

Budenbach: Of course, I'm not near there. I did go u... go back just once. They had a thing on women. Oh, this must be ten years ago or more. That I went up. I'm trying to think if it was after I moved down here or not. But I did go up. And I went once to that dinner the Cryptomath Institute had.

Frahm: Have you ever been to the Museum?

Budenbach: Hmm?

Frahm: You've been to the Museum?

Budenbach: No, no. I haven't.

Frahm: You kept talking about JADE. There is a JADE on display.

Budenbach: Oh, is there? Yeah. [TR NOTE: She laughs.]

Frahm: I didn't know if you've ever seen what you were working on or not.

Budenbach: No. Not when I was working on it, you know?

Frahm: Yes. Well, thank you very much for giving me... [TR NOTE: Tape cuts out at this point.]

[End of Interview]