

C USS *Schley* Oral History Project, Records, 1997-1998  
4068 0.1 linear feet, 7 audio cassettes, 1 CD, 1 computer disc

This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri](http://The State Historical Society of Missouri). If you would like more information, please contact us at [research@shsmo.org](mailto:research@shsmo.org).

#### INTRODUCTION

The records of USS *Schley* Oral History Project contain the audio files and transcripts of interviews with four veterans of the USS *Schley*. The crew of the USS *Schley* consisted largely of Missourians. Also included is related documentation on the USS *Schley*.

#### DONOR INFORMATION

The records were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Alex T. and Cathy Primm on 16 June 2011 (Accession No. 6260).

#### PROJECT SKETCH

The USS *Schley* Oral History Project was conducted by Alex T. Primm at the suggestion of Joe Kenton. It was partially funded through a Richard S. Brownlee Grant provided by the State Historical Society of Missouri. The transcripts were compiled by Cathy Primm.

#### HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

The USS *Schley* (DD-103) was a Wickes-class destroyer launched in March, 1918. It served in the Mediterranean during World War I before being decommissioned. In October 1940 it was recommissioned and sent to Pearl Harbor. The *Schley* was reclassified in February 1943 as a fast transport (APD-14) and would transport and land troops in the South Pacific. The *Schley* was re-designated DD-103 in May 1945.

Ray Bohnenkamp was born June 25, 1917 in north St. Louis, and served as the carpenter's mate on the *Schley* until 1944. After that, he served as a warrant officer on the East Coast. Bohnenkamp's time on the *Schley* was spent mostly based at Guadalcanal or participating in landings in New Guinea. He was on board before the war when the *Schley*, then a destroyer, was based in Pearl Harbor and later during the first Philippines landings.

Elmer Bowman was born on March 29, 1914 in St. Louis, and served for a year on the USS *Schley* where he was a seaman second class. Just before the attack on Pearl Harbor, he was sent to gunnery school. Since the *Schley* was converted from a destroyer to a transport ship, Bowman did not return and was stationed in Pearl Harbor. Later Bowman was transferred to the USS *St. Paul* (CA-73), a heavy cruiser, from which he attended the surrender ceremony.

Joe Kenton was born on September 11, 1921 in Kansas City, and served as the gunnery officer on the USS *Schley*. After he graduated from Washington University in St. Louis, he went through the Navy's V-7 Officer Training Program. His first post was the *Schley*, arriving in June 1942, where he served for two years. Afterwards, he commanded LSM 335 until the end of the war.

Martin Unger was born on October 29, 1915 in north St. Louis, and served on the USS *Schley*'s boiler room for three years. In October 1943 he was transferred to the carrier USS *Solomon*, which patrolled the South Atlantic, before ending the war on the USS *Gearing*. After the war he attended St. Louis University and worked at Proctor and Gamble.

#### SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The USS *Schley* Oral History Project Records consist of oral interviews on audio cassettes and transcripts. The cassettes and transcripts are arranged chronologically. An audio compact disc containing all of the interviews except the first is also available.

The folder containing the second Joe Kenton interview also contains the following material: photocopy of a undated *St. Louis Star-Times* article entitled "Naval Men From This Area Leaving for Pearl Harbor;" USS *Schley* journal-log by Dick Herb, Chief Quartermaster and five-year veteran of the *Schley*; maps of the USS *Schley*'s landings; and internet printouts about the *Schley*. All of these were discussed within the interview.

#### AUDIO LIST, TRANSCRIPTS, AND AUDIO LOGS

- a.c. 1 Ray Bohnenkamp and Martin Unger, 17 June 1997, in Florissant
- a.c. 2 Joe Kenton, 22 September 1997, in Columbia
- a.c. 3-4 Joe Kenton, 10 October 1997, in Columbia
- a.c. 5 Martin Unger, 19 November 1997, in Florissant
- a.c. 6 Ray Bohnenkamp, 28 February 1998, in St. Charles
- a.c. 7 Elmer Bowman, 5 April 1998, in Creve Coeur
- CD 1 Audio from all interviews except a.c. 1
- c.d. 1 Transcripts for all interviews except a.c. 1; miscellaneous documents [**Backed up on NAS. Note: Word documents have been converted to PDFs. Original files have also been retained**]

#### INDEX TERMS

Subject	Other
Bohenkamp, Ray (1917- )	a.c. 1, 6
Bowman, Elmer (1914- )	a.c. 7
Initiation rites--Neptune ceremonies	a.c. 3-4
Kenton, Joseph (1921- )	a.c. 2-4
Landing craft	a.c. 6
LSM 335 (Ship)	a.c. 2-4
Missouri, St. Louis, Baden neighborhood	a.c. 5
Myers, Mike (Captain)	a.c. 2-7
Oral history	a.c. 1-7, CD 1, c.d. 1
U.S.S. Schley	a.c. 1-7
U.S.S. St. Paul	a.c. 7

Subject	Other
Unger, Martin (1915- )	a.c. 1, 5
World War, 1939-1945--Attitudes toward	a.c. 2-7
World War, 1939-1945--Command of troops	a.c. 3-4
World War, 1939-1945--Destroyers	a.c. 1-7
World War, 1939-1945--Marshall Islands, Eniwetok	a.c. 2
World War, 1939-1945--Marshall Islands, Kwajalein Atoll	a.c. 2
World War, 1939-1945--New Guinea	a.c. 2, 6
World War, 1939-1945--Philippine Islands	a.c. 5
World War, 1939-1945--Postwar Life	a.c. 2, 5
World War, 1939-1945--Solomon Islands	a.c. 2
World War, 1939-1945--Solomon Islands, Guadalcanal	a.c. 2, 6
World War, 1939-1945--U.S. Naval Reserve	a.c. 7
World War, 1939-1945--U.S. Naval Reserve Officers' Training Corps	a.c. 2