

Department of History and American Studies
University of Mary Washington
Fredericksburg, Virginia

Katie Jones
Rosie the Riveter and the World War II American Home Front Oral History Project

Interviews conducted by
Jared Smith
in 2012

This interview was conducted by a student in an oral history seminar in the Department of History and American Studies at the University of Mary Washington. Oral History is a method of collecting historical information through recorded interviews between a narrator with firsthand knowledge of historically significant events and a well-informed interviewer, with the goal of preserving substantive additions to the historical record. The recording is transcribed, lightly edited for continuity and clarity, and reviewed by the interviewee. Because it is primary material, oral history is not intended to present the final, verified, or complete narrative of events. It is a spoken account, offered by the interviewee in response to questioning, and as such it is reflective, partisan, deeply involved, and irreplaceable.

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Interview with Katie Jones
Interviewed by: Jared Smith
Transcriber: Jared Smith
[Interview: October 20, 2012]

1-00-00-00

Jared Smith: Coalwood, you were saying had a limited amount of people. And people were either working or sleeping? So it was continuous working?

1-00-00-29

Katie Jones: The mines were continuous. They worked 24 hours with the changing of the shifts of the men. They would go down the shaft, down in the ground, 600 feet straight down before it branches out underground in halls or whatever they called it. There was a Coalwood club house, it stands empty now. At that time, and during the

war, it played a big part in housing, people that came in, and especially miners. They'd transit people that worked in these mines and maybe they'd go somewhere else and work for another mine. And they'd work in the club house. A really nice spacious place.

1-00-00-49

Jared Smith: So the coal miners would live there. It offered itself as a hotel to incoming visitors?

1-00-01-56

Katie Jones: If the operators operating this coal mine, say owners and dignitaries of this special coal mining, then they had a special suite in this club house they stayed in. Of course, the club house stayed open all the time to take in miners that were passing through and those that were hunting a job in the coal mine.

1-00-02-30

Jared Smith: would you say that the coal mining the main resource of money that kept the town going?

1-00-02-45

Katie Jones: It's what is known as a coal building of a nation. McDowell County, no more. Just about all the mines have closed down and those that haven't use a lot of machinery now, less men personnel. They're using mechanical means of getting the coal.

1-00-03-14

Jared Smith: So it's gone from a lot of men and a lot of money to less money and more machinery?

1-00-03-34

Katie Jones: I guess you could say that.

1-00-03-36

Jared Smith: So, the community where you were, did you live in a neighborhood in Coalwood? Like, were there people... house, house, house? Do you know what I'm trying to say?

1-00-03-52

Katie Jones: Coalwood during the time of World War II and was a segregated place. And they had... black people lived in one holler, and white people lived in another holler on the main street, and then they had the third segregated place, the foreigners, they had a place for them too. So it was three people and they were all segregated. That happened during my lifetime. Cause' when this happened, when the real segregation happened, Mr. Carter instigated it, and we had white friends and black children all played together. I might have been 6 then, I doubt it, but these were our friends, these were people we knew and he said you can't play together anymore. You all have to move in this holler,

you got to live there and you have to live there. It was more or less a dictatorship. So we cried, it didn't do any good. And that's the way we lived. And segregation, even though it was there it wasn't a problem like it was during the real segregation, we just accepted it as the way of life and we accepted it.

1-00-05-28

Jared Smith: What was a holler? Is that like an area? Like you said they were separated into three different hollers. Was that like 3 different housing groups or?

1-00-05-40

Katie Jones: It's, as I said, a little town nestle in the mountains and the mountains would do the dividing. Great big mountains here, and run over here. And the place with the levellest place would be about an acre or more where top people lived and the coal company. They've since tordned down the company store and then straight up on the highway is where the white people lived. And that's a holler. You know what a Holler is?

1-00-06-25

Jared Smith: I feel like I'm getting the sense more.

1-00-06-29

Katie Jones: It's a, it's just a mound of mountains that would separate this place and another mound of mountains would separate another place and another mound of mountains separated another place.

1-00-06-46

Jared Smith: So they were very segregated. So you guys couldn't even inter...

1-00-06-51

Katie Jones: I'm telling you, you got to see that film cause you have to figure all this out. It'll make sense. Don't want to be sued or anything. Ok.

1-00-07-02

Jared Smith: So in your area, it was mainly...

1-00-07-08

Katie Jones: We lived in the area they called Snakeroot. S-N-A-K-E-R-O-O-T. Snakeroot. Where most of the black people are segregated too.

1-00-07-24

Jared Smith: So in each area would there be a place to work? So in your mound of snakeroot would there be work? And the shops you were talking about, would they all be in that area? Or would they be between the...

1-00-07-46

Katie Jones: The machine shop that he had there was, and all the other offices I was talking about was in the area around the company store the club house and the place where I wrote the gossip news. And it was a school there til they built another school til they built another up farther. But this school was there And...I guess that's about it. Dentist office had a name though of that machine shop. Now if you ever go to Coalwood, and I hope you do, every one of the window lights at the machine shop have been broken out. Vandalism. And the club house closed down, not the club house but... I do remember that Coalwood has a really rich history because all of the beautiful houses they had, and Mr. Carter was very proud of it, and he came down and brought in men from Italy to build a rock wall around the club house making it very prestigious and the houses that the officers, top men of the coal mine lived in was very nice.

1-00-09-33

Jared Smith: And you said Mr. Carter was the head of the union?

1-00-09-35

Katie Jones: Do you have to do... If I could get Herman to give you some of this. See when I was in.. when I got moved to rehab, he moved me here, moved all my things here. Been bed ridden for 2, no more than 3 months. I don't know where nothing is. That file would tell you a lot about the coal mine. A lot of personal things about the coal mine, it won't tell you about the operation and how some men lost their life trying to keep their jobs. Golly, it is rich in history, rich. The courthouse there where were some famous men was killed. Making the men to work, it's not during this WWII thing, it's just before that, I guess you could say WWI.

1-00-10-57

Jared Smith: That's okay. So were you saying there was one school, or would there be one school per area? Would there be one school in Coalwood that you would go to for most of your schooling?

1-00-11-08

Katie Jones: In Coalwood there would be one school for the blacks, a worn out old building. And then they finally built a small two room place. This was for the black children. The whites were, you didn't want Herman in here. He, younger people remember riding the school buses passed the nice white school going to a black school 10 or 12 miles away. We had all the things that went with segregation. But as I said it was a way of life, people didn't look at it like the beginning. Show it's ugly head.

1-00-11-59

Jared Smith: I've read in some textbooks that maybe a fourth of the money would go to segregated schools.

1-00-12-12

Katie Jones: When you say the money, what do you mean?

1-00-12-14

Jared Smith: Like they wouldn't put as much money as say in the school you went to than the really nice one. Did you guys have textbooks that were..

1-00-12-24

Katie Jones: All we had was a building and a potbelly stove. And then they brought in this teacher from Texas, she must have been applying for the job but she was great. She taught us like nobody's business. She was real good. Then her husband came in to this two room school and then at one time her daughter taught school. So they had two rooms with two teachers for a long time. Now Herman graduated, that's my son, he graduated from this little school and went on Excelsior's high school and now that was about 10 miles away. Snow and ice and everything, there goes our kids.

1-00-13-22

Jared Smith: So you would say that the two room school taught grades 1 through 8? Or kindergarten to 8?

1-00-13-28

Katie Jones: No Kindergarten.

1-00-13-29

Jared Smith: So it'd be first grade to 8th grade?

1-00-13-30

Katie Jones: 1st grade to 6th Grade. Three grades in this room, three grades in this room over here. 2 rooms.

1-00-13-43

Jared Smith: So you went from 1st to 6th in that building?

1-00-13-49

Katie Jones: I did and then they had a bus to pick the kids up and carry them past the beautiful white school with all the necessary equipment in it to get to the black school.

1-00-14-13

Jared Smith: Was that Excelsior?

1-00-14-14

Katie Jones: Excelsior.

1-00-14-15

Jared Smith: You went there from 6 to 12? How did it work?

1-00-14-20

Katie Jones: Excelsior went from 6 to 12 I think. By the time my children had graduated, they integrated the school and sent the black children to the white school of Big Creek and used the Excelsior black school for small classes like 1 through 6 grades.

1-00-15-50

Jared Smith: You said you worked as a writer or a journalist?

1-00-15-53

Katie Jones: Yeah, the journal for the coal company.

1-00-16-02

Jared Smith: So you were employed under Carter?

1-00-16-06

Katie Jones: I reported news from the black community, remember that. I didn't go out and get it from the white lady. And they made a little paragraph like that to whatever I was writing about. I guess about an inch, no more than 2 inches. He brought in a lady from New York too to organize that stuff.

1-00-16-38

Jared Smith: To be an editor?

1-00-16-40

Katie Jones: Yeah.

1-00-16-42

Jared Smith: so you only wrote for your section of Coalwood?

1-00-16-46

Katie Jones: Right.

1-00-16-50

Jared Smith: What kind of thing would you write about?

1-00-16-52

Katie Jones: It wasn't very much helping in the black community; it was so small. I would write about little things, maybe the Sunday school was having a program. During the war years I could always write that people were called to serve their country, the black people called to serve this country and that's about it. You didn't do a lot of writing, you always had a lady looking over your shoulder. There wasn't much to write about. The black people had a community of their own and the white people had a community of their own. The foreigners were at the lower end of the totem pole cause there wasn't too many of them there.

1-00-18-02

Jared Smith: How many writers would you say were there? Were there multiple writers writing about what you were writing about? How many people had your job? How many

people were also journalists. You said a lady was watching over your shoulder? Was she watching everybody write?

1-00-18-22

Katie Jones: She was making sure what I wrote could go into the paper. And that's it. He'd even have fashion shows and have models hired locally. He'd be hiring them locally to model the latest fashion. We had it made, no doubt about it.

1-00-18-53

Jared Smith: Would the models be for your section or for the whole town of Coalwood?

1-00-19-06

Katie Jones: I think that the models were just for the black people. The black people had their fashion show and the white people had their fashion show.

1-00-19-23

Jared Smith: Did you have any siblings (Brother or Sisters) or were you an only child?

1-00-19-30

Katie Jones: What do you mean by siblings?

1-00-19-34

Jared Smith: Did you have any brothers or sisters?

1-00-19-37

Katie Jones: In my family there were six. I'm the only one left. And then there's Herman and my 3 children.

1-00-20-48

Jared Smith: How many brothers and how many sisters?

1-00-20-52

Katie Jones: I had 2 brothers and 3 sisters.

1-00-21-11

Jared Smith: Were you the youngest?

1-00-21-18

Katie Jones: No, next to the youngest. John, my brother that died in Buffalo was the youngest.

1-00-21-31

Jared Smith: What kind of jobs did your brothers and sisters have?

1-00-21-38

Katie Jones: My brother worked in coal mining. That was all the work for black people. Segregation was a vicious thing. If there was a job opening at the filling station if him and a white person who flunked out of high school, the white boy gets the job. This boy with a college education, he's black and he doesn't get it. This is just a way of life. I'm not trying to build on it or anything, that's just the way life was. We didn't look forward to anything but I was lucky enough to get work as a domestic house keeper of the super intendant of the job. That's why I was knowledgeable of things that went on.

1-00-22-42

Jared Smith: Do you remember when you got the house keeping job?

1-00-23-01

Katie Jones: It was a house cleaning job. They worked you about 2 or 3 days a week and when the mine struck, you were out of a job just like the miners. They didn't lose their wages but they stopped you from having an income. The miners go back to work, they were very strong in their determination. You'd never seen anything any stronger.

1-00-23-46

Jared Smith: So you were a writer from what age to what age?

1-00-24-07

Katie Jones: When Carter took over the union, all support was cut off. The club houses standing now are empty. Of course, Mr. Carter is dead and his son took it over and sold the works. Now you talk about the writing, when I figured out I could write was when one of our workers working with the headstart children. All these people came from all over the United States save us because the flood had almost wiped coalwood off the map. So students came down to help us and that's when I began to write. A lady asked me to welcome a group of 200 kids that came to help so I sat down and begin to write and it was just like something was telling me what to write. It just came out and was exactly what I wanted to say. The reason I know it was good is because the professor from the college out here, the Methodist College, came down twice a year every year. He didn't want me to change a thing, and I told him about the nights under the big top and I think I did a pretty good job. I know I did.

1-00-26-28

Jared Smith: Did you get paid for writing?

1-00-26-30

Katie Jones: No. Every time he'd bring a class down, they'd come out to Coalwood and want to see Homer Hickam's birthplace. They would tour around and see what Coalwood life was like. One important thing was...what's the man's name that was shot in Texas? I was looking to get a job with the headstart program and we would bring visitors down from the mountains whenever they'd have a speaker or something and this man was running for president. Mr. Kennedy came and saw the poverty and met with people there and ate the food that they had to make last for a month. He went to Washington and made an order for under privileged people to have food stamps. That

was the beginning of the food stamp program in MacDowell County. We were known for poverty. He went to Washington and got this passed and all the big dignitaries came to MacDowell County to witness the historical event of the beginning of Food Stamps. We had another program in MacDowell County that you might be interested in. It's the domestic program. The domestic living of men beating up their wives. Oh golly that was bad. Leave it to me; we got 6 people interested and a lawyer. We got together and the hospital was closing down and I was looking for a volunteer place to work. And I did we only had a telephone and we took money out of our pocket to pay for the telephone bill. One of these women was coming in sometimes and these men were beating and killing these women, you couldn't believe and we stopped it. Pat on the back for that. Virtually, because we found a lady so dedicated in this work. She was a lawyer secretary then and they gave us a school. Now with these 6 people starting out this program, do you know it is now the biggest thing going in MacDowell County? A \$2 million job and the only thing that hires constantly. Men beating up their wives, we had to carry women out to Beckley. Golly, I ran from men many a time that wanted to hunt them down and shoot them. Beat them up mostly but sometimes they killed them. One of my friends killed her husband in a domestic fight. He had beaten that woman from one side of the place to the other and she happen to get the best of him that night and she killed him. She loved the man so much but they gave her life time imprisonment. Everyone began to make a fuss about this situation. They let this lady out of jail; she was given life but was freed because she was trying to protect herself.

1-00-33-00

Jared Smith: What year did you make that organization? Was it after the assassination of Kennedy's brother?

1-00-35-19

Katie Jones: It was 2 or 3 years after that. Somebody gave us a room in an old bank building and the men would paint it and put up curtains. The woman would call in scared to death and we would take money out of our pocket and either carry them to Beckley that was 72 miles away and bring them to the shelter. We give them money to go back to their home. Most of them, that's all they wanted. "Let me go home and away from that man." And that was a document I out to remember and I don't know what became of it but that was the most satisfying when you felt you've really done something. Now let's get back to the Coalwood.

1-00-36-22

Jared Smith: So your first official job was in house cleaning? Do you remember when you started that job?

1-00-36-50

Katie Jones: I was cleaning houses when Herman was a baby and I'd put him in a basket and carry him to work.

1-00-37 02

Jared Smith: When did you have Herman? When was Herman born?

1-00-37-10

Katie Jones: Melvin was a little baby. The prettiest baby you'd ever seen and I carried him when he was a little baby to work with me. I put them a corner where they'd stay nice and warm.

1-00-37-20

Jared Smith: How old is Herman now?

1-00-37-35

Katie Jones: About 67 or 68. And you know how much I made in a day? Oh golly, I was lucky if I made a dollar. These girls making all this money now sometimes I envy them. How hard we worked for that dollar. We could buy a lot of stuff with that dollar. Cigarettes were rationed. Sugar was rationed. It was hard to get stuff that really mattered. Everyone had started smoking because they were so hard to get a hold of.

1-00-38-54

Jared Smith: So you said you made a dollar a day. How long would you work there? You said you worked there til the coal miners went on strike? When did the coal miners go on strike?

1-00-39-21

Katie Jones: I can't remember but I can remember the hardships that it caused. We didn't have nothing but the union would give us a slip to go get groceries. I think it might be like the Mitt idea, He gives you a voucher to get medicare and stuff. They would give us the slip and we would go to the designated store and get a whole lot of beans and potatoes, stuff that would last a long time. One strike lasted way over a month and a lot of them living in the times before that living in the coal mines would just live by their wits, you didn't have much to live on then. The war broke out and Mr. Johnson started the headstart program and that's where I got my first real job. Someone started a sewing factory like they're trying to get this thing cranked up now to strain it. It started like that with the sewing factory and they would hire so many people but that was the main thing to get us work. That's the first time I had a real job. All the other times I was just cleaning, cleaning.

1-00-41-17

Jared Smith: So your cleaning job was when the war was winding down, you started sewing afterward and then you started your second job after the war had ended?

1-00-41-30

Katie Jones: After the war I got a job at the headstart program. I was very lucky.

1-00-42-53

Jared Smith: Were you aware that there was a war in Europe in 1939/1940, before Pearl Harbor?

1-00-43-00

Katie Jones: We thought we were living very well even though brown beans and cornbread were the main cuisine. But things were going very well.

1-00-43-14

Jared Smith: do you remember isolationism, the plan to only focus on the U.S. and not on Europe or any international affairs.

1-00-43-28

Katie Jones: No, I don't remember that. I do remember Huey Long from Louisiana was proposing to send all the black people to Libya or some place over there. My parent said to me: "You won't get to go because you're too bright. They wouldn't have you over there." That made me sad, that was the saddest I've ever been in my life cause' I thought my people were going to go and leave me over here for the wolves.

1-00-44-05

Jared Smith: Do you want to expand on that? So a congressman from Louisiana said he was trying to get all of the black people to Libya?

1-00-44-15

Katie Jones: He was proposing that. Segregation wasn't hitting a rock, it was wide out in the open. Every time they could do something to hurt the black people like we were animals or something they did it. See how they did that killing of a boy? They say in his casket you wouldn't have known him. Those were the things that they were getting away with but there was very little punishment for them. Oh golly you don't remember any of that, do you? I don't like to remember it because I accept it as past history.

1-00-45-09

Jared Smith: We can veer away from that if you'd like. When was the first time you heard about Adolf Hitler?

1-00-45-22

Katie Jones: At Pearl Harbor. We were isolated in those camps and we only knew what they taught us in school. We didn't know much about the teacher except that he had a little dog. Pearl Harbor, Sunday night, they came and told us the United States had gone to war. I felt like going in a hole or that we were just as good as dead. The first time I even heard about war and what it was all about. People were gathering in little crowds and said all of us were going to be killed. You couldn't light your cigarette after dark. I often wonder how we have light now. You'd put things over your window so they light wouldn't shine out.

1-00-46-21

Jared Smith: You said you couldn't be allowed out after dark?

1-00-46-26

Katie Jones: No, you couldn't light your cigarette after dark and stuff like that. If you wanted to light your cigarette you'd have to come inside where they had things over the windows so if a plane was snooping around they wouldn't know.

1-00-46-43

Jared Smith: So for heat sensors and possible enemies or something like that?

1-00-46-49

Katie Jones: If the enemy was anywhere around. I think that rule was for cities mostly but we followed along too.

1-00-47-05

Jared Smith: When Japan attacked Pearl Harbor did you know about the Axis of Power: Italy, Germany and Japan?

1-00-47-23

Katie Jones: When the war started, remember that the war excluded black people from the war. That was fine. I know that was fine with the black people but that didn't last very long. I remember the first time a Navy black guy was killed. I forget what his name was but he made history.

1-00-48-02

Jared Smith: Did you know people who were drafted? Were you friends with people who were drafted? Did you know them on a personal level?

1-00-48-21

Katie Jones: Yeah, because the community was so small you knew everyone in there. I knew this one Charlton boy that lived two houses down from us. We had all the houses lined up and his father, they had a bunch of children, went into the army to help support the family.

1-00-49-04

Jared Smith: So you said you had a scared feeling about the war?

1-00-49-22

Katie Jones: Scared, because we always scare of the white man. You'd respect him but they wouldn't respect you. That's just the way it was. You respected his authority.

1-00-49-50

Jared Smith: If you felt that way, I imagine your whole community felt that way.

1-00-49-53

Katie Jones: Yeah.

1-00-50-00

Jared Smith: What fears were there? Could you expand on the fear of the white man a little bit?

1-00-50-17

Katie Jones: That in everything, he came first. In the drug store the black people would go in and get there stuff and leave but the white folks could sit down and have a coke and everything where everything was segregated. I don't think there's anything that wasn't segregated. The black people knew where their places were so we abided by them. Segregation is a strange thing. I'm so glad it happened like it did when like when Martin Luther King Jr. knelt on that bridge and prayed instead of confronting the guys that were after him. He want like the guys that were with him that wanted to confront them and have a war right there. He knelt and prayed and turned them around because they couldn't win. I think that was a turning point in segregation. Not only that, but the lady who sat at the back of the bus. Incidentally, I sat at the back of the bus the other day and I had to laugh at myself because I swore I'd never sit at the back of the bus. We went out to a pumpkin farm and they had to put my wheel chair down in the back of the bus and I got home and said "they'll never let me live this down if I told them I sat at the back of the bus." That was a way of life. It wasn't easy. It wasn't bad living if you 'yes sir' and 'no sir' in the right time and place. You got along pretty good and they liked Katie Jones very well. I knew how to stay in my place, that's what you'd call them.

1-00-52-22

Jared Smith: Were you scared that you would be attacked at any given moment after the war had started?

1-00-52-54

Katie Jones: The war started and instilled the feeling of real fear but you finally know you got a job that you never expected. It's like anything else in life; you just make the most of it. If you hear they're selling cigarettes at the store, you bounce down there and get a package. I didn't ever smoke but my husband did.

1-00-53-48

Jared Smith: The news of Pearl Harbor, how did you hear of the attack? Was it over radio?

1-00-53-52

Katie Jones: There was a man there standing with a microphone talking and giving a brief... I don't know what you would call that because he said him and the captain had shook hands to heal but I don't think you ever heal from something like that. It was sad but Japanese were sad too. It was such a huge loss of life. They were endangering the United States undoubtedly. They thought by attacking that they would open up another front. How did they get those pictures in there to shoot at them like that? This ship was trying to sneak out and then the Japanese saw them and they sunk it.

1-00-55-12

Jared Smith: So it was a public announcement. Was it the “This day will live in infamy” speech? Was the speech by Roosevelt or was it just a guy talking? Do you know who was making the speech?

1-00-55-45

Katie Jones: I can’t recall his name but I wasn’t interested in it. I never thought I’d be interviewed about it. He was very forceful in his speech.

1-00-56-05

Jared Smith: I remember you saying everyone had a sad feeling.

1-00-56-11

Katie Jones: A whole lot of people were in tears and I was one of them because my boys had just came from Edmond Long. Herman was still in the army. He was surrounded in Denang. That was a place, this was the Vietnamese War, where the Vietnamese surrounded this place and Herman brought a group of men in. They unloaded the plane. They unloaded and he was the last one to get off because he was captain of the ship. As soon as he got off the ship blew up and for all my life I’ve been grateful for whoever that guy was that gave the order not to blow the ship up until my boy cleared it. That’s the kind of war they were fighting.

1-00-57-18

Jared Smith: In Vietnam? Or are you relating that to World War 2?

1-00-57-25

Katie Jones: This was the Korean War. They were cut off in Denang. Nobody was going in, nobody was coming out. He was taking this company of men in, the man unloaded and they blew the plane up. They had the men; they didn’t have to blow the plane up. They could have blown the plane up with the men in it but they didn’t. They could have blown Herman up when they got off the plane because he was the last one off. To tell you the truth, I was so wrapped up in getting my child out of there. The news would come on and you wouldn’t want to look at it but you don’t want to not look at it because that might be your boy that they’re shooting at. War is hell and these people going around advocating war, I don’t know what to think about them.

1-00-58-28

Jared Smith: How did the war directly impact your life? How did World War 2 effect you job, wise, life wise, or any aspect?

1-00-58-53

Katie Jones: I don’t know if the war affected me, we were already living in poverty as deep as you could get. I don’t know how it would affect me much anyway.

1-00-59-10

Jared Smith: Did you once say that once the war started there was a job to go to? Is that what you said earlier?

1-00-59-20

Katie Jones: We didn't always have clothes or enough to eat always. That's about the way of life.

1-00-59-30

Jared Smith: So even after Pearl Harbor it was still the same?

1-00-59-38

Katie Jones: And then I go to go to; well that's another story. We went out west, Herman went out to Texas. Where they men get trained. Where the man killed all those soldiers. Fort Hood. We went to see him when he got inaugurated to take command. I was never so proud of him. He looked nonchalant but I'm telling you he's had a rough life. He's been in 2 wars. The Vietnamese War, that was rough. They didn't have any order; they could just torture you or anything. Well he came back alive and that's important. Now he's taking care of me and all the others. I have 2 other boys in Atlanta and one in Buffalo, New York. They are not as dutiful as Herman.

1-01-01-33

Jared Smith: Was there ever a sense of the American Spirit in Coalwood once the Japanese did attack?

1-01-01-42

Katie Jones: It brought the people together but segregation didn't go away.

1-01-01-47

Jared Smith: Segregation didn't go away. So in your community, your segregated community, was there a "lets help our country" feeling or was it "I don't want to help I just want to stay low key?" Was it more fear than "let's go fight?"

1-01-02-15

Katie Jones: I think it was more fear. What would happen if they lost that war? And then what would happen to the boys that were leaving for war? That wasn't easy for them to do.

1-01-02-45

Jared Smith: Was there ever a chance for you to hear about the atomic bomb droppings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

1-01-02-50

Katie Jones: Yeah, we got that first handed. Did we have TV back then? I don't think so but anyways, we got the news of it.

1-01-03-00

Jared Smith: Was it another voiceover the radio? Was it like the announcement of the one given at Pearl Harbor?

1-01-03-12

Katie Jones: Oh no, we were at home when we heard about it and we were on vacation when we went to Hawaii. We were touring. It was weird, we were kind of glad that the Japanese were getting some back but people were so divided and feared this was the wrong thing and the other half thought it should have been done.

1-01-03-49

Jared Smith: You specifically, what side were you on? Were you for or against the atomic bomb being used?

1-01-04-06

Katie Jones: Do you know that I still have never made a decision on that? Don't believe me, I know, but I have never made a decision on that. The thing I make about war is why do people have to go to war? You raise your kids like I raised mine to be so nice and with manners and respect other people. The army takes them and makes warriors and killers out of them. To kill people that never did anything to them. Just opposite of what I've been teaching. That's what I could never understand and I still don't know to this day why people have to go to war.

1-01-04-49

Jared Smith: After the victory over Europe and Japan do you remember the sense or how you and your community felt during the two victories in which America had won the war? Was there a sense of pride or did anything change?

1-01-05-17

Katie Jones: I don't remember. I remember some dignitaries and actors came through Bluefield and they were singing "Bonds today, Bonds are what we're selling in the USA. Here comes the freedom man, pick up the most you can. Buy yourself a freedom today." That was one of the songs they were singing. We bought bonds. We didn't have much money but you bought what you could.

1-01-06-00

Jared Smith: So that was one of the changes, people bought war bonds to help the effort?

1-01-06-10

Katie Jones: Yup, to help the effort.

1-01-06-25

Jared Smith: After the war, was segregation still the same as it was?

1-01-01-34

Katie Jones: Yeah! The white man, he would be over there and we would be over here.

1-01-06-40

Jared Smith: Even after the war ended?

1-01-06-45

Katie Jones: No, the war ended the knitting business. We didn't have to knit anymore sweaters and bandages.

1-01-06-57

Jared Smith: That's right! You said knitting is what you said you did during the war, right? And you said you got a dollar a day from that. Did the war push you to get the knitting job?

1-01-07-16

Katie Jones: I didn't do much knitting because I was trying to feed my family.

1-01-07-22

Jared Smith: Did you have a husband?

1-01-07-24

Katie Jones: Yeah, but they didn't work most of the time because they were striking all the time.

1-01-07-45

Jared Smith: Do you have anything else you'd like to say about your experience during that time frame?

1-01-07-50

Katie Jones: I wouldn't take anything through the experiences. I would like to forget them. That's all I can think about. I hope we don't have another one and having to see their children, their nice young men coming back in boxes. That's awful! They ain't done nothing to nobody. Well, that's life for you. I use to not like to read the *Old Testament* in the Bible. They had so many wars and things but I guess that's just the way of life. Man always wants to dominate somebody.

1-01-08-50

Jared Smith: Was your fear of your attack in Pearl Harbor relate to anyway on 9/11? Did you feel the same way?

1-01-09-05

Katie Jones: It didn't relate to us. To tell you the truth I don't think we were afraid of being attacked. Everyone was glad they lived in the mountains then. If the war kept going it might have took us all the way in but not likely. I don't know, there are plenty of us. The men that worked in the coal mines, there was no segregation in coal. My husband was a brakeman, or a motorman. If the motorman was off work, the white guy, the put a dummy, now let me get this straight. If the motorman was off from work, my husband was a brakeman. If the motorman was off from work, sick or something, they put a dummy up to run the motor; no help no experience, instead of putting a black man up there. That's how strong segregation was until Mr. Malt came. Then when Mr. Malt came, James Carter said so of it. Mr. Malt came by a company that set him, another coal company set him and he started changing things.

1-01-10-55

Jared Smith: Do you remember people in your community that were drafted and then came back?

1-01-11-05

Katie Jones: I remember a few of them.

1-01-11-10

Jared Smith: Were they treated like war heroes?

1-01-11-15

Katie Jones: Very appreciated. Oh golly, everybody was so happy to see them. One of them came back with one leg and one arm.

1-01-11-27

Jared Smith: So in your community there was a proud sense of serving for your country?

1-01-11-35

Katie Jones: Yeah.

1-01-11-40

Jared Smith: Was there anything you wanted to add?

1-01-11-52

Katie Jones: No. I might think of something but I don't know of nothing else. I need to straighten it out to give you a look at it. When are you trying to wrap this up?

1-01-12-10

Jared Smith: It's going to be late November.

1-01-12-16

Katie Jones: Oh golly, that's right on there. I got some boxes in storage, history wasn't in there. I wonder if you'd get a lot of the history about how people lived in the coal field then. Oh well. Let's thank God for what we got.

