Transcript:

Ray Sandvig

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Interviewer:	Well, let's talk a little about where did you grow up, a little bit about your family.
Ray Sandvig:	Well, grew up—well, I was born right just out of Sioux Falls, on a farm. I was premature, by the way. And I was such a miserable little looking little cuss that my grandfather looked at me and he said, "Boy, there's the runt of the litter." My mother looked at me and says, "Oh, I hope it dies."
Interviewer:	Oh, my God.
Ray Sandvig:	No. She was so mad when my aunt told me that because she said, "There's no—you shouldn't…"
Interviewer:	Nobody should have told you that.
Ray Sandvig:	Yeah, that's right. But I said, "Well, I didn't have any…" I was just like a little monkey, I suppose—premature. They put me behind the wood stove and didn't—I don't think they expected me to live for a week. But then my aunt kind of took over. Yes. I started off behind the eight-ball, kinda, but really I've grown up and the tallest in the group.
Interviewer:	You got a little taller.
Ray Sandvig:	I had three brothers. One younger, he was in the Marines, World War II and he's retired professor from Augustana College at Sioux Falls. Then the brother a year and a half older than I am, he stayed in the service. He was in the Air Force and retired after 28 years as a Lieutenant Colonel. The oldest brother, Spencer, he's four years older than I am. He was with the Chicago Tribune for thirty years or just a long time. He's the one that's in the home now. Well, he tried to get into the Army, the Navy, and the Marines and they wouldn't take him because his eyes were so bad. Then they drafted him. Put him in the Medical Corps. He ended up with a battlefield commission and a Silver Star. He was recalled in the Korean deal. But he was the brain. Really a sharp individual I think.

I went to Augustana College in Sioux Falls. I had 3½ years in—well, in fact, in July of 1942, I signed up for the cadet training for the Air Corps. They just didn't have the equipment and the time or the space, I guess. I went back to school for half-a-year and then they called me in the mid-season to go into active duty.

Interviewer: And this was what date and year, do you remember?

Ray Sandvig: Must have been January/February of '43.

Interviewer: '43?

Ray Sandvig: [Yes]. I went to Jefferson barracks in St. Louis for my basic. Then the Milwaukee Teacher's College, which is now I think part of the Wisconsin school system, for some additional pre-flight. Then I was in Santa Ana, California for some more basic and then to Oxnard, California for primary where we flew Stearmans. In fact, we got to go to Oxnard, the country club of the Air Corps, as far as the Western training command because we we marched so great that once they call—we can't do that—it's goose-stepping. Too much like the German. Managed not to get washed out and went to Lemoore for basic and flew the BT-13 and then the San Joaquin Bullfighter twin-engine. With my height, I was not a good prospect for fighters. So then we went to La Junta, Colorado for B-25 training and that's where I got my commission in May 23rd, '44. And I stayed for a short time and taught Chinese cadets in flying. Then I went to Columbia, South Carolina where transition—where you pick up the crew—and I was very fortunate, I had an excellent crew. But…

Interviewer: One second, I'm sorry, Mr. Sandvig. Let's back up just one second and go back.

Ray Sandvig: About the time of transition going into Columbia, South Carolina?

Interviewer: Yeah, talk to me about that.

Ray Sandvig: Okay. Alright. And went through transition in good stead but we had a navigator that couldn't find himself out of a wet paper bag. We had three enlisted men and they called him "Big Sandy." They say, "Hey, Big Sandy! That guy he's going to lose us. We'll never make it, wherever we go." And I said, "Don't worry," I said, "I don't think he'll ever stay with us." Because he knew that he couldn't either. Anytime we'd go cross-country, I would do navigating along with my piloting and, sure enough, when the time came, he said, "No, I'm grounding myself."

Interviewer: Tell me again what you were flying?

Ray Sandvig: B-25s.

Interviewer: And help me understand what that is.

Ray Sandvig: That's a Mitchell, the one that Dolittle flew in Tokyo in April of '42. That's a B-25. It's a Mitchell twin-engine.

Interviewer: It's a twin-engine?

Ray Sandvig: Yeah. A crew of six. Well, what it ended up to—we got two first pilots and a navigator/bombardier, an engineer-gunner, armament-gunner and an engineering-gunner.

Interviewer: What kind of education do you need to pilot that? What kind of training is involved?

Ray Sandvig: Well, really, I don't know. Now, I suppose 200 hours or so in various stages to see if…

Interviewer: So you're trained in Oxnard to do that?

Ray Sandvig: Well, that was the first – oh, it's…

Interviewer: Don't they call it it "AIS"?

Ray Sandvig: What is it? It's a paper wings—not paper but…

Interviewer: A canvas?

Ray Sandvig: Yeah. It's a canvass—fuselage and wings and so forth. And that's the first one that you train as far as flying. And then the others are just trainers. In fact, in La Junta, I think they call them the A-24 or something like that but it was just a stripped-down B-25. Then we trained in Columbia and…

Interviewer: So this was still, what, 1944 now?

Ray Sandvig: Yeah, '43 and '44.

Interviewer: '43 and '44.

Ray Sandvig: Uh-huh. '44 actually in advanced, yes.

Interviewer: Okay. Had you heard at this point whether you're going to be overseas or were you actively training to go overseas?

Ray Sandvig: We were training to go overseas.

Interviewer: Okay. So you knew at this time you were going over?

Ray Sandvig: Yes. Uh-huh.

Interviewer: Okay. Did you have any idea where you're going to be headed?

Ray Sandvig: No. In fact, I was playing basketball that year at Columbia, South Carolina, 3rd Air Force. The commanding officer, when the crew was broken up, he said, "Well, Lieutenant, I'll give you three choices. If you want to go on another crew, why, you can join them as a second pilot or you can keep your three enlisted men and get a navigator and another pilot or you could just stay and play basketball the rest of the season." And he said, "You'll get overseas soon enough." But the three enlisted men, we had a pretty good working deal and they said, "OK, whatever you do, you go ahead and do it." But we all made an agreement if you stay and the…

Interviewer: Excuse me, one second, plane going over. We can't blame Charlie on this one.

Ray Sandvig: Oh.

Interviewer: One second. It just picks up every single sound.

Ray Sandvig: They said that if I decided to break up the crew, well then, they're going to ground themselves. They weren't going to go overseas with anyone else because we had a pretty good relationship. So I decided, "Well, we'll just go ahead and get another navigator and another pilot or copilot, whatever." We lucked out. We got two captains. Now, I was a second lieutenant. It turns out that the other guy, the other pilot was an instructor that I had in La Junta, Colorado. He's a marvelous guy and very good. So we formed as a crew with two first pilots and a navigator is a captain who was so good that when we hit China, he became a group navigator. But anyway we went overseas – must have been January of '45, I guess it was – and picked up a new airplane in Columbia, South Carolina, Hunter Field, and flew down to West Palm Beach, Florida. We got our orders to a certain compass reading. In two hours, open your orders to see where you're going. It was scary when you look back and see the United States going. Really, I didn't expect to come back really because of the big losses, especially, in Europe that were really quite tremendous. But we hit [Brinkman (sp) 0:12:39.0] Field in…

Interviewer: It's okay?

Interviewer 2: Yes, I think so.

Ray Sandvig: Now would you want the itinerary as far as going over like…?

Interviewer: Well, tell me a little bit about what you were feeling when you were going over? You said you didn't expect to come back. What were some of the things you were thinking about? Had you said goodbye to your parents? Had you been in communication with your brothers?

Ray Sandvig: No, not really. They were, in fact, my mother's…

Interviewer: One is already there, right?

Ray Sandvig: My mother's hair turned white. The four of us went into service within six months.

Interviewer: That's amazing.

Ray Sandvig: Well, actually…

Interviewer: I understood that they didn't do that. Is that true? They really did.

Ray Sandvig: Oh, yeah. In fact, I was married.

Interviewer: You were? To Barbara?

Ray Sandvig: No.

Interviewer: Not Barbara, okay. That's okay.

Ray Sandvig: No. But—actually, she was a marvelous girl and we were married. We've been married a couple—about two years or three years, something like that. And when I flew over, you know, I hate to leave but wherever they tell you to go that's where you go. So we hit Puerto Rico and then South America and hit the Ascension Islands out in the South Atlantic, hoping that you had a good navigator so that you'd hit that little spot out there. And then up through [unintelligible 0:14:19.9] West Africa and then across Central Africa, maneuvered to Khartoum and southern Arabia or to Karachi, India. Actually, we didn't know where we were going. We got orders to go to Agra. Then we didn't know if we were going to go to Europe or the South Pacific or China or the Tenth in India. So we got our orders to go to Karachi. Then we still didn't know if we were going to the South Pacific, China or Tenth Air Force or the Fifth. Then we finally got our orders that we were going to Kunming, China, in the foothills of the Himalayas. Actually, probably the hairiest part of the whole experience, of my war experience, was the first trip across the Himalayas. We got into a thunderhead. I tell you, we were both fighting those controls to keep it from—we'd go along and there'd be a wind 100 miles an hour going straight down and you started up like that and you'd still be [mimes a plane spiraling down] and

then all of a sudden, just opposite. That's what tears those airplanes apart sometimes when they get in those thunderheads—and lightning, hale. When we landed in Kunming we had popped rivets where it just bent the thing. We really didn't expect—in fact, I think there were about 600 planes and most of them are the ones that we flew after the war when we were flying the Chinese, the C-46s, twin-engine. I think they figured that there's 500 to 600 of those in the mountains of the Himalayas there. In fact, we called that the "aluminum trail." It was so many of them that when the sun was shining over there they shine when you go through them. But that made a Christian out of me. Then we were assigned to the 22nd Bomb Squadron, 341st Group.

Interviewer: This is about when? Do you remember? Was this 1944 still?

Ray Sandvig: No. That would be '45 that—probably February/March.

Interviewer: By this time, the Americans were liberating various concentration camps?

Ray Sandvig: No.

Interviewer: 1945?

Ray Sandvig: No. Not yet.

Interviewer: Oh, what were you talking about? Because in April…

Ray Sandvig: Actually, the war in Europe was over when? In May of '45, wasn't it?

Interviewer: Right, but April was the invasion of Dachau, liberation of Dachau. I was just curious. The reason I'm asking—I'm getting to something so you understand what I was doing—I was wondering since the military had gotten into Dachau in, say, April of 1945. I know the months are kind of difficult to recall. Basically, what I'm wondering is since the military was so active, already going into the camps, had you understood anything that was going on outside of Hitler and the Nazi regime? Had you understood what was happening to the Jews in the concentration camps?

Ray Sandvig: I didn't know what was happening in the 14th Air Force in China really.

Interviewer: Okay. I see what you mean.

Ray Sandvig: They just—there wasn't any information you saw—yes.

Interviewer: You were isolated in what your duties were. Right. Okay.

Ray Sandvig: I think they figured the less you knew the better off you were. But, like I say, I didn't…

Interviewer: Tell me about the events leading up to the war crime trials. Tell me as you started to become aware of what was actually happening and what had happened.

Ray Sandvig: Well, of course, as soon as we moved in to Nuremberg, why you knew what was happening, especially, with the military government.

Interviewer: Well, tell me about that when you started to find out. Do you remember somebody telling you what was happening? Do you remember being briefed at all or anybody giving you information about what had happened?

Ray Sandvig: We had a little briefing in Munich.

Interviewer: This was in 1945.

Ray Sandvig: Hmm-hmm. No, no, no, '46 in Munich.

Interviewer: '46? Okay.

Ray Sandvig: Let's see, of course, we went to school in Carlisle Barracks in Pennsylvania. And I had—in fact, I've got a lot of the paper right there that we're - what to watch for and how to approach as a military government officer. When I was assigned to Nuremberg, why, I think at first – I was administrative officer for a while and then they said, "Well, we need public safety for a while." So I was public safety. Then they needed denazification officer. So I became that. They said, "We need a liaison officer between military government and the war crime tribunal." So I got that. That was about the—probably it must have been about the ending of the big trial.

Interviewer: So you do the—but you were an LNO during the war crime? That was actually your duty?

Ray Sandvig: Yes. Uh-huh. And I attended a couple, I think, before—in fact, I have got a list of the families of the top Nazis. They're autographed where they're checking in to visit with the war crime—Göring and Frick and Ley, all of them – when the families came to visit. I think they had about fifteen visits, the families, to those who were being tried at the big trial. And, of course, Ley committed suicide early and then Göring committed suicide just before they were hung. And I think the visiting—when I got was in late September I think. As I recall, October 1st, I think, was about the time that the verdict came out. That's when the three were acquitted, those who were to be hung were told and those who got life and…

Interviewer: What were some of your duties as an LNO? What were some of the things that you were actually doing?

Ray Sandvig: What, at the trial?

Interviewer: Right.

Ray Sandvig: At the big trial, not too much, because that was pretty well cut-and-dried by that time as far as…

Interviewer: Hold on one second. Here we go. I'm sorry. Go back a little bit. What were some of your duties at the trial?

Ray Sandvig: Not too much with the main trial of the top Nazis because there were no spectators. There were strictly those who were required to be part of the prosecution and the lawyers and that sort of thing.

Interviewer: Do you recall any of the—I know…

Ray Sandvig: But there weren't too many witnesses called in that trial. Actually, the Berlin Document Center was so efficient and we got them before they could be destroyed.

Interviewer: It's been said that their bookkeeping was actually what hung them because their documents were so good that—excuse me, one second. So you found that to be true?

Ray Sandvig: Well, one example I can think of right now. One day, I guess it was in the denazification center, this young lady came in and said, "You know, I think so-and-so who is in your denazification section, is a former SS man." I said, "Really? What made you think that?" She said, "Well, I went to the movies with him last night and a guy came up, slapped him on the back and said, 'Geez, I thought you'd be hung by this time.' And he hushed him up and left." Of course, he denied it, of course. He was just an excellent individual to attend - what we hired him to do was to attend the political party meetings in and around Furst and Nuremburg to make sure that the Nazi ideology didn't creep back into the political picture. And he was excellent. I can't think of anyone who had done a better job for us. But, I asked him to take his shirt off, he had a – under his arm where the SS have their mark. Well, he says he was in the Wehrmacht and he was shot. I said, "No. Not likely." The guy was married. The guy has a wife in there and she was so mad that he was stepping out on her. She says, "Yeah, you, son of a bitch. He was an SS man." He gave us his true identity and we sent that to Berlin Document Center and sure enough. He was a top sergeant in the concentration camp of Oranienburg out of Berlin. He was wanted by the

Russians individually for war crimes. That was a case of so many of the—not even top Nazis, just those that had quite a bit of authority. They had duplicate IDs and that's where you got so many of them. I think they got into South America and escaped really because they had these dual IDs. That's what he had had. He had assumed this new identity and he thought he was free. But that was the thing I—that wasn't the only case. It seemed like there were so many of the German civilians who were so willing to denounce other Germans.

Interviewer: Why do you think that was?

Ray Sandvig: I don't know. It almost seemed like there was—we were the authority now and they followed the leader. It's just a German tendency, I think, if you had the authority, why, they want to be in the good graces.

Interviewer: You're a liaison officer?

Ray Sandvig: Yes, uh-huh.

Interviewer: At this time. You're seeing documents. You're hearing the trial.

Ray Sandvig: But actually, I didn't attend the trials until the doctor trials from the concentration camps. That's the one that I was concerned with and really associated with. Where I set up the plan whereby German civilians could attend the trials as spectators.

Interviewer: Tell me about that.

Ray Sandvig: Well…

Interviewer: Well, let me back you up really quick. Leading up to that, you would by this time have a complete understanding of what's happened?

Ray Sandvig: Oh, yeah.

Interviewer: You're completely aware that somewhere in the neighborhood of ten million people have been slaughtered, six million of them being Jews because they were Jewish, starved to death. These unheard of, unspeakable acts of crime, you are this boy from South Dakota. Are you in shock? How are you absorbing what you're hearing? Are you kind of plowing through when doing your job and trying not to think too much about it? How are you coping with what you're hearing?

Ray Sandvig: I'd heard also what happened in Russia. Well, you even take the Balkan countries—Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. The Nazis went in just wholesale. If

you were a Jew, well, they just take you out and shoot you. Well, in fact, that little Landkreis of Feuchtwagen, 40,000 German people. I asked, "How many Jews live in this area?" This guy said, "One. He's a hermit, kind of. He has a little farm and he's the only Jew who's left in this area." That was, like I say, like Davison County. It was a rural community. We had 250 villages and 50 Bürgermeisters in this little area and only one Jew was left in that whole area. But you take the Eastern countries—Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary—actually, I think they lost probably more Jewish people than—in fact, I'm not sure but it just seemed to me that I had read or heard that there were, prior to the Nazi regime, there were only about 600,000 Jewish people in Germany?

Interviewer: That's right.

Ray Sandvig: And what? In the end or the middle of 1944, I think, there were, what, 20,000 left or something like that.

Interviewer: It was 27.

Ray Sandvig: And that was in the middle of '44 and there was a lot of them put to death after that.

Interviewer: 97% of the Lithuanian population of Jews were completely wiped out.

Ray Sandvig: Was it 97? I've known that it…

Interviewer: 3% were left.

Ray Sandvig: They were so brutal about it. They would just—it certainly made it so you didn't sympathize with them. It's a wonder they didn't get rid of all of them. I can't imagine the inhumanity. How could it possibly happen? Here, Germany is supposed to be a religious background. Southern Germany was Catholic, the northern was Protestant. He said, "Well, we had to follow the rules." And it got to the point where they can't say anything to their kids because the kid would report them because that's their duty. No, you just can't imagine. But then, actually, also, well, the Japanese weren't that great to ends either, that's how. But…

Interviewer: So tell me about your job when you were working with the German civilians, for the doctors.

Ray Sandvig: My only job was I try to work up a plan with Telford Taylor, General Telford Taylor so that these German civilians could actually attend the trials to make sure that the people knew that it wasn't a set up a deal, that we weren't just trying to get revenge. One day, one of the doctors called us in and said, "I think I

saw the assistant commandant out there in the gallery." "Is that right?" So we checked him out. Sure enough, he was an assistant commandant. I don't remember now what concentration camp but they were so many of them that—well, anyway, we picked him up because his doctor denounced him. He says, "I don't know why I should be sitting in here – they're probably going to hang me – and why he should be scot-free."

Interviewer: So you think maybe the motive was kind of: "I'm here, You might as well be."

Ray Sandvig: Well, that's right. Yeah. Just watch out. I couldn't see where it helped him in anyway as far because of, like I say, I left and went into the Landkreis before the trial was completely over. But I think they only hung four of the doctors. I think five got life and a few got lesser sentences. And there's a couple, three of them, I think, that were exonerated.

Interviewer: Do you know how? Was it a lack of evidence or…?

Ray Sandvig: Well, I think they were concentrating more on the doctors like…

Interviewer: Mandela?

Ray Sandvig: Yeah, uh-huh, and Rudolf Hess.

Interviewer: Out of these doctors you mentioned, some got life, some got hanged, some were acquitted, do you recall what their—sorry. My first question is always offering a bottle of water but then when I'm here in your home I feel like that sounds weird.

Ray Sandvig: I haven't talked too much, so much for 40 years.

Interviewer: Oh, god, are you kidding? I'm the biggest chatterbox in town and I have never so talked so much in one day. I want to understand what they were tried for. Now, you mentioned—I just want to take you back—you mentioned some were acquitted, hanged and sentenced to life. Do you recall…?

Ray Sandvig: Well…

Interviewer: Were these for medical experiments?

Ray Sandvig: Yeah, medical experiments and—what was that guy with the twins?

Interviewer: Mandela?

Female: It's Mengele.

Ray Sandvig: Mengele, yeah. Let's see, just offhand, I really don't remember but those—where they actually stood at the ramp and said, "You…"

Interviewer: Right, "You go this way." Right.

Ray Sandvig: That's it. "This way. This way." And they would take children from them and…

Interviewer: These were doctors. Were some of them for medical experiments but some of them were actually doctors performing physicals and determining the health of inmates?

Ray Sandvig: Yeah. What was that concentration camp with the women?

Female: Ravensbrück.

Ray Sandvig: Ravensbrück? Yeah. And also they had so many experiments like freeze somebody and bring him back. Take out parts of their body and just—I've just forgotten so much of it because it just makes you sick when you think of it. They were so brutal and…

Interviewer: So some were medical experiments and some were actually…

Ray Sandvig: Yeah, and I think the medical experiments and the—that was their job. I think…

Interviewer: Some were in-charge of selection and some were in-charge of medical experiments?

Ray Sandvig: Yeah.

Interviewer: Is that right? Is that what you're thinking?

Ray Sandvig: Yeah. But the—well, it's not coming right now. Not so many years…

Interviewer: That's okay. It might later and that's okay.

Ray Sandvig: Yeah, okay.

Interviewer: I was just trying to understand the ones that were hanged versus the ones that were acquitted.

Ray Sandvig: Well, some of those who were acquitted, I know, they had taken up practice again. In fact, one went down to Africa and really did some good deeds down there but assumed a new ID and there were several of them that just changed location in Germany. In fact, this villa that we took in Feuchtwangen, he was a doctor. In fact, I've got his SA membership deal, 1933.

Interviewer: Are there any of the testimonial evidence or accounts that you recall?

Ray Sandvig: What do you mean?

Interviewer: From the doctors, anything that you recall? Did any of them deny what they've done? Did any of them seemed proud and willing to die for Germany? Do you recall any of those things?

Ray Sandvig: Are you familiar with Lifton's book?

Interviewer: Robert Lifton?

Ray Sandvig: Yeah? He has a quite extensive—I read that some years back where he interviewed these doctors. And it was surprising how many of them sat down and they were interviewed knowing that Lifton was Jewish.

Female: [Unintelligible], is this the Jewish author?

Interviewer: But they also knew that nothing would happen to them. There was no authority…

Ray Sandvig: Oh, yeah. That was right. There was no—nothing to be gained by going ahead and admitting it as far as the doctors were concerned.

Interviewer: They couldn't be prosecuted.

Ray Sandvig: They couldn't be prosecuted. Yeah.

Interviewer: Do you think that during the trials, and understanding what's happening and you being a witness to the trials, do you think that affected you in ways that you really don't understand?

Ray Sandvig: I'm sure it did. Yeah. Well, in fact, the war really weren't that much fun to—when we were in—in fact, well, not too long ago that I discovered that one mission, went out at night in a B-25—low-level strafing. We landed in an advanced field and gassed up. We had no bombs, just .50-calibers firing forward and, let's see, we had two, four, six, seven, eight, nine, ten—about 12 .50-calibers firing forward. And we got to the point where—that was in May, the end of May, I think, of '45. We hit Hanoi about at 10,000 feet and then went hit the deck and, by moonlight, followed the track. There was one train track going down the coast in Indochina, in Vietnam. We just followed the track. You could see the grass parting by moonlight. When the ribbon stopped, why then, it was either one of the Sugarloaf mountains in a tunnel or a train and then you had to pull up, make sure that you didn't scrape your bottom and come around and

then strafe the train to knock out the engine. I think we got as far south as—well, I can't remember that now—but we used up half our fuel and then we came back by way of Tonkin Gulf and landed back home the next morning. We had seven—about seven-and-a-half hours. We had a tank—instead of bombs, we had bomb bay full of gas because you couldn't go that far with just our regular fuel. I remember I volunteered next day to go down to identify where we were and where we hit the train. They said, "No, you had enough last night." I want to get some more time in because, in China, everything had to be flown over the Himalayas—fuel and everything else. We ate off the Chinese and I was ready to go home anytime. So I didn't go. They knocked that plane out—the one that went down to check it, to see what damage we'd done. They had moved in an aircraft and blasted them out. One fellow that I knew, Oliver, after the war, they were so close to the end of the war, they found all the details. The Japanese said that he had drowned. Another one, I think two or three of them, they just killed. One of them beheaded. The Nazis weren't alone in that category. But our field in China was over 6,000 feet. We had, well, a fellow getting off sometime had to use the ramp to get enough speed because it was a small short field, couldn't see from one end to the other and you had to get up and then put your flaps down and pull your wheels up at the end of the runway and hope that—and that's why we only had six planes to go on this last mission of World War II. We only had six out of the nine left because the other three went mushed, mushed in again. They didn't have the lift to get it out. Well, we got off in the wrong foot there. Wait a minute, no, where'd we get off here?

Interviewer: I was listening. It's wonderful. Back to the trials. I had a couple of questions about that. You said you were in charge or one of your duties was bringing the German civilians in to watch the trial?

Ray Sandvig: Yes.

Interviewer: Do you recall—I know we have a language barrier—but do you recall there being any conversations any reactions that you really remember with the Germans…?

Ray Sandvig: The people?

Interviewer: Right, with the German civilians?

Ray Sandvig: Not really. Of course, I worked very closely with Nuremburg police who were—well, in fact, I think, the Bürgermeister, I think he was Jewish. I believe, he invited me to his Christmas party, I think. He had a very efficient police department. They are the ones that really— I was responsible that some SS guy didn't come in and blow the place up. Of course, we still found one of the

buggers up there but I didn't have much to do personally. Just setting up the program where it would be safe for the court to have these German civilians attend and who were curious enough to find out what was really going on.

Interviewer: Did you find that there was an overwhelming wish to be a part of it? Do you feel the Germans were really stepping forward and wanting to come in?

Ray Sandvig: Yes. It was very much—we had very good selection as far as who wanted to be there. I was—just as an aside thing, I was a little bit surprised at how Switzerland was—it didn't seem like they were too anxious for these trials to go on. But, I think, may be part of that was that there was some outlet gold and those assets where the Nazis had acquired the Jewish property and then how do you prove who that belonged to, I suppose. That's just my own opinion.

Interviewer: How long after the trials were you returning back home, back to the States?

Ray Sandvig: Actually, the doctor trial wasn't over yet when I went to Feuchtwangen to be the military governor down there. And when I was down there, that's when I made the application to go home. I wanted to get my education completed.

Interviewer: What did you take with you when you think about that time at the trials?

Ray Sandvig: Like one of my older brothers says, "People are no good." There's a lot of them that aren't.

Interviewer: Do you think you grew up a whole lot faster during that time?

Ray Sandvig: Oh, yeah, definitely.

Interviewer: What do you remember most when you think about those trials?

Ray Sandvig: I just can't imagine the inhumanity of man. I don't care how tough you can get but, of course, with the Nazis they were—boy, [unintelligible 0:47:09.3] just—and Hitler, of course, he was getting the use to the point where, like I say, whatever going to be good Nazis. Of course, Hitler, you wanted [unintelligible 0:47:27.3] through him, living space. I swear that it was probably [maybe] carry over the old German philosophy at the time. Leader, yes, it seemed like you get ahead of the government and no matter what, you do what you're told. Another little deal, I had a real nice young man in Feuchtwangen that I made refugee commissioner and gave him the authority. He turned out to be a bastard, if you excuse the expression. He got the authority. In fact, I heard the German employees that I had, they said, "Yeah, you're too easy on this people." Those Germans telling me that about the—I got the authority, by God, I should use it. I tried to teach a little democracy. Even like I had seven, oh, what do you call

these guys, game wardens. I'd have them in once a month. If I told them to jump out of the window I think they would. They'd sit at their—in front of their chair and no matter what I said, "[German]." They just followed instructions. Of course, that's what so many others have said. All what they do is following instructions.

Interviewer: When did you get back to Tennessee or what brought you over to Tennessee rather?

Ray Sandvig: Oh, I want to make a living. Well, there was one little—this doesn't have to be, well aside if anything. When I was in China flying combat, my wife sent me a "Dear John" letter.

Interviewer: Really?

Ray Sandvig: Yeah. But when I came home, I could recognize it was tough on those at home too. When I went to Europe, she came to Europe. It just wasn't there. So I want to get home and get a divorce and go so I finish my schooling and get on with my life. That was a little traumatic. And Barb and I have been married 55 years, going on 56 years, and that she knew my first wife. We're on high school together really. I think she turned into an alcoholic because she had a reputation where Barb said that she'd come home from Chicago to Sioux Falls and they just couldn't understand it because she was so flagrant and a party girl. Well, wait a—how…

Interviewer: You escaped that one.

Ray Sandvig: Yeah. It's kind of tough but you don't realize your blessings. That was the best thing that happened because Barb and I have been so compatible. We've had the most marvelous marriage and if it hadn't been for that, I would probably have missed it. Here we got—going on 56 years, that's not bad.

Male: We can take about marrying [unintelligible].

Ray Sandvig: Oh, yeah. She died.

Female: You spent 56 years here, I mean, your whole married life?

Interviewer: Where did you meet Barbara?

Ray Sandvig: Oh, well…

Interviewer: You said you knew her in high school, where did you become reacquainted is what I meant?

Ray Sandvig: Well, I came back home and I hadn't had time to get civilian clothes or anything and there was another couple that knew that the marriage was breaking up and I was getting a divorce and so forth.

Interviewer: Telephoned Barbara.

Ray Sandvig: No. I didn't. They got on the phone with Barb. They said, "Hey, we got a blind date for you." Barb said, "I don't go on blind dates." She had a nice job in Chicago and she was just at home to see her folks. So they said, "No, you really like this guy. You know him." "Well, he has to be 6-foot-2 because I want to wear my heels." "Yeah, he's 6'2"." Okay. So she said, "All right." And then one guy, he was in the Chamber of Commerce and he had to go out of town. So he was out. The other couple had gotten in a fight so they were out. I said, "Well, I'll just call her then." So I called her, "Do you still want to go out?" So we did and we went out and drank all night and danced and had a good time and really—see, I knew her from '38/'39 when we were in high school. But she was the brain and I was a jock. So we didn't connect too much there. But I'll show you the—in fact, this blouse I've got, this military blouse, it's 60 years old now. But that's what I was wearing when I came to the door and…

Interviewer: Oh, so that's what did it.

Ray Sandvig: I wanted to keep that as a--

Interviewer: It's hard. Whenever you guys get into an argument, you can put it back on. You love the uniform.

Ray Sandvig: Yeah. Now, I got you sidetracked again. But where were we?

Interviewer: No. I got you sidetracked. What brought you to Tennessee? You met Barbara in…?

Ray Sandvig: Right in Sioux Falls, yeah.

Interviewer: In Sioux Falls?

Ray Sandvig: Yeah. She apparently wasn't too bad a deal. I was going to become a teacher and a coach. I had about three months school left. She goes back to Chicago, quits her job and comes back to Sioux Falls. She worked as a home service director for Northern State Power, isn't it? No, Sioux Falls Gas and Electric, yeah. Here she's having a cooking school in downtown coliseum—2,000 women, at this cooking school. Here's a big picture of Barbara [unintelligible 0:54:13.7] who's in charge of this cooking school. She was a Home Ec graduate from Iowa

State. And she thought, "Well, he'll see that and get in contact with me." Well, I was busy going to school and—well, she called me didn't she, Jep?

Male: I don't remember.

Ray Sandvig: Oh, you weren't there. Anyway, we got together and it was a funny thing because she said, "Well, I knew after that first date, I think this is it." We weren't—we were youngsters by that time. I said, "Well," after that first date, I decided, "Well, it looks like that's about it too." So I kept fooling around though I'm—finally, I went to—after I graduated, it had been a year, I went to Watertown, South Dakota to become a teacher and a coach. And I'd come down on weekends. I think my contract there was $2,800 a year. I said, "I don't think this is what I want." So then I quit teaching and, of course, my legs weren't—I've got a 10% disability with my legs and I couldn't take it with all that physical exercise and so forth. So I got a job with International Harvester. Well, then they transferred me to Great Falls, Montana.

When I quit teaching, it was in spring, we decided to get married but I said, "I'm not going to teach and coach." She said, "That's all right. You'll get something." I did. I went with International Harvester from that time on. Barb went to her dad who was a dentist there in Sioux Falls. She said, "Well, Dad," she said, "I'm going to marry this guy, Ray Sandvig." "What does this dude do?" She says, "Well, he's unemployed right now." [Unintelligible 0:56:37.8]. But I had a good reputation so…