

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Jonathan Fischer

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

Interview # VR2-A-L-2009-034

Jonathan Fischer, a Navy gunner in both World War II and Korea, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Veterans Remember* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: 1 December 2009      Location: Fischer's home in Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital Audio

Interviewer: Rozanne Flatt, Volunteer, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

Transcription by: Audio Transcription Center, Boston, MA

Edited by: Rozanne Flatt, ALPL Volunteer

Total Pages: 44 pgs      Total Time: 1:53 / 1.88 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on 04/20/2010.

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

© 2009 Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

## Abstract

Jonathan Fischer, *Veterans Remember*, VR2-A-L-2009-034

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Jonathan Fischer was born on June 19th, 1924, and grew up in Quincy, Illinois. Immediately after graduation in 1943 he was drafted and chose Navy duty. He attended Basic Training at Great Lakes Naval Training Station, then gunnery school at Norfolk, VA. From there he was sent to the Armed Guard Center in Brooklyn, NY until being assigned to the Liberty ship *Joseph F. Emery* at Staten Island for duty as a gunner on the ship's armament. After loading equipment in Philadelphia destined for the Soviet Union, he crossed the Atlantic, through the Mediterranean then the Suez Canal, then upriver on the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers where the materiel was offloaded by Russian-allied troops. The return voyage went to Port Sudan, Egypt and Arzew, Africa where bauxite was loaded as ballast. They returned to New York City for maintenance in dry dock. Fischer describes duties and conditions aboard ship, noting that Navy personnel were separated from the merchant mariners who handled all ship's operations.

Fischer was next deployed to Oakland and assigned to the Liberty Ship, SS *James A. Wilder*, where German prisoners loaded supplies. Proceeding directly to Manila in the Philippines, the *Wilder* shuttled between there and New Guinea with both troops and supplies. While in Manila, the war with Japan ended. Back in the U. S., Jon was discharged and joined the active reserve. He married Mary Gallagher in 1948. Recalled during the Korean War, he spent six months taking the USS *Tidewater* in Charleston, SC out of "mothballs", while also playing on service athletic teams. After release from the service, Fischer remained interested in sports, actively participating in many Senior Olympics events while working in Quincy until retirement, when he moved to Springfield. Shortly before this interview he was treated to an Honor Flight and tour of the WWII Memorial and Washington, D.C. with other WWII veterans. He describes the event and talks of the meaning to those who served.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Quincy, IL; Liberty ships SS Joseph F. Emery and SS James A. Wilder; USS *Tidewater*, Atlantic-Mediterranean-Suez; Pacific-Philippines-New Guinea; WWII Honor Flight

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

### **COPYRIGHT**

**The following material can be used for educational and other non-commercial purposes without the written permission of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. "Fair use" criteria of Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976 must be followed. These materials are not to be deposited in other repositories, nor used for resale or commercial purposes without the authorization from the Audio-Visual Curator at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, 112 N. 6th Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701. (217) 785-7955**