

Basic Detail Report



Diosdado B. Gelle Oral History

Date

July 29, 2022

Primary Maker

Diosdado B. Gelle

Medium

MTS, PDF

Description

Diosdado B. "Addie" Gelle served as a stewardsman (TN) and dental technician striker on the aircraft carrier USS

Intrepid (CVS-11) from 1961 to 1963. The Intrepid Museum recorded this oral history July 29, 2022. See transcript for complete interview. Below is a summary: Diosdado "Addie" Gelle began his interview with a broad overview of his service before returning to his childhood in Cavite province in the Philippines. He described his first impression of the U.S. Navy after moving to Cavite City, home of Sangley Point Naval Station. Gelle summarized the history of Navy recruitment of Filipino citizens. Next, Gelle summarized his enlistment in the Navy in 1960, assignment to USS Intrepid, switch to the dental department, experience during the Cuban Missile Crisis, training in San Diego, and post-Intrepid career. Then, he began to discuss his work on USS Sanctuary during the Vietnam War. He recounted how his dental equipment was creatively adapted to help a wounded service member. Then he recapped meeting his wife, the end of his naval career, and the impact of service on his family. The interview returned to Gelle's decision to join the Navy. He discussed the application and exam process for Filipinos and his experience in boot camp. Next, he shared his early impressions of Intrepid, his first duty station. He recalled the different locations he visited on liberty and his typical activities. Then, he detailed his training and work as a steward in the S-5 Division, including the food in the wardroom, the general mess, and his relationships with the officers. He mentioned other perks of working in the dental department. He recalled his early encounters with race and segregation in the United States. This included experiences in segregated public spaces, as well as the segregated nature of the steward rating. He recalled primarily spending time with other Filipinos, who often spoke together in Tagalog. Gelle discussed opportunity for study and advancement on Intrepid and later in his career. Next, Gelle explained his transition into the dental department by answering a request on the Plan of the Day. He spoke about his introduction to dentistry on the ship, common dental procedures and why he chose to switch ratings. He detoured to recall his time becoming a shellback on Sanctuary and the changes that came during the Zumwalt years, including changes to grooming standards. He also talked about what he learned in A School studying to become a dental technician. Gelle recalled limited opportunities to visit home until his service during the Vietnam War, when he served on Sanctuary and later at Subic Bay. He spoke about the impact his service had on his family, as well as his decision to become an American citizen. Towards the end of the interview, the discussion hopped around:

promotion delays, veteran's groups (Filipino American Veterans Association, FAVA), memories of World War II, cleaning officer staterooms, rude behavior from junior officers, haircuts on Intrepid, the crew's tooth health, and music on the ship. Extent: 16 video files, 38 page transcript

Dimensions

153 minutes