

Basic Detail Report



Kay Atkinson Oral History

Date

January 18, 2018

Primary Maker

Kay Atkinson

Medium

MTS, PDF

Description

Kay Atkinson was the wife of Gene Atkinson, who served on board the aircraft carrier USS Intrepid (CVS-11) from

1966 to 1967 as a pilot in Attack Squadron 15 (VA-15). The Intrepid Museum recorded her oral history interview on January 18, 2018. See transcript for complete interview. Below is a summary: Kay Atkinson began her interview describing her childhood in Durham, North Carolina. She and Gene met through church and began dating in high school. She described some of the early challenges of their married life, like a hurricane and strained finances while living on base in Pensacola. She recalled the support that squadron wives gave one another, as well as their shared apprehension about their husbands' safety. Atkinson then recalled being pregnant during her husband's second deployment. She said that communication was difficult and that she once incurred a \$200 phone bill talking to him. She shared how she felt after hearing about lost pilots on the news or through squadron communications. She thought that both pilots and their wives used alcohol to deal with stress. Throughout her interview, Atkinson emphasized the pride she felt for her husband and his career while still acknowledging the burden that fell on her and her family, which she suggested is still true for military families today. She also reflected on the emotional toll that work took on the pilots themselves. Extent: 1 video file, 5 page transcript

Dimensions

16 minutes