



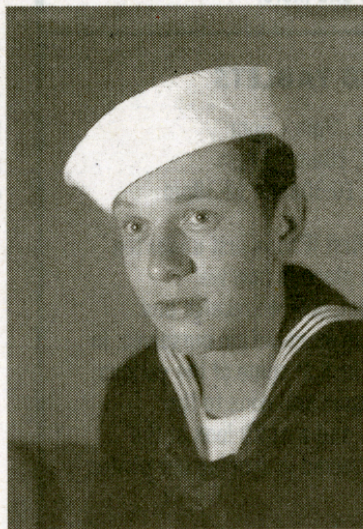
HISTORY NOOK

Don Fox, 1947-48

By: EILEEN LORENZ

My Dad, Don Fox, joined the Coast Guard with his best friend the summer after they graduated from high school in 1947. He went to boot camp in Jacksonville, Florida and from boot camp to machinist school in Groton, CT. He was then assigned to the Thirteenth Coast Guard district in Seattle and stationed at the lighthouse on Patos Island. I think he was there for about a year. He had to take an early discharge from the Coast Guard because he was needed at home to help support his family.

Dad told us many stories about his time at the lighthouse. One of our favorites growing up was about his first try at cooking. Because they were on the island they needed to prepare their own meals, so dad decided to step up and give it a try. He made biscuits! They did not turn out very well and none of the other guys would eat them. After dinner he tried to feed one of the biscuits to the dog at the light house. The dog wouldn't eat them either! So Dad took them out and threw them over a nearby cliff so the seagulls could eat them. He went back a few days later, and the biscuits were still there! Even the seagulls wouldn't eat



them!! The good news is Dad did eventually become a very good cook.

Dad also told us a story about one time when there was a really bad storm, and since they had to take a boat to the mainland for groceries, they were running out of food. So they improvised and tried taking dog food and spreading it on crackers! He said it really didn't taste too bad. I suspect he would tell us this story when we wouldn't eat our dinner!

Dad often talked about his time on Patos Island and his trips into Seattle. He loved the Northwest and he treasured the time he spent there. While he told us a lot of funny stories, mostly he talked about the people he met, the picnics they had with the light keeper's family, and just hanging out or playing cards with his buddies. My siblings and I always thought he was there a lot longer than he actually was because he talked about his time there so often.

Thanks again for including Dad in your exhibit. He died in 2009. One of the things we found in his important papers was a book he had ordered about the lighthouse on Patos Island!

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