

Museum of History and Industry
Historical Society of Seattle and King County

Transcript

Inez Sauer - taped interview, February 26, 1985
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Side A

This is an interview with Inez Sauer on February 26, 1985.
The interviewer is Lorraine McConaghy for the Museum of
History and Industry.

Q. What were the circumstances of your return to Seattle?

Inez Sauer At the beginning of the war, they were... My
husband's business had to do with used tires - they made
these huge landing mats for the Navy and for the various
ships they had.

Q. Oh, aircraft carriers?

Inez Sauer Yes. And they also, in huge fields overseas,
were building landing mats. Well, with the restriction on
using rubber in any form, he was going to have to look for
another job, and he never looked for a job in his life since
he'd left the U. He knew he was going to have to get into a
different line of endeavor.

 It was decided that I would come back to
Seattle, because eventually he would sell our home in Norwalk
[Ohio], and he would ship the furniture and things. It took
him lots longer [than we'd expected] to close up the business
and do everything else. He was going to take a temporary job
with Dupont, which he did, and he didn't like. He thought,
rather than stay there, where Dupont had a lot of business
going on in Ohio, that he'd just sell the house and bring the
furniture, and we'd set up housekeeping in Seattle.

 However, from March until May, my children
could think of nothing but the Boeing bomber, the B-17, and
we saw that as we came through on the train coming back.

 When we got aboard the train from Chicago, I
had two bedrooms - one bedroom for my boys and one for my
daughter and me.

Q. How old were your children?

Inez Sauer The two boys at that time were ten, and nine -
there's thirteen months difference. Any my daughter was six
at that time.

 When we got aboard the train, I to said the
porter who was taking in our luggage, "I've got a two bedroom
roomette."

 He said, "Sorry, madam. This train has been
taken over by the government."

 I said, "What about my seats?"

 He said, "You'll have to go forward." I can't
tell you how we sat! My boys sat in the window seat, and my
daughter and I sat on the other side, and then we would

change because it was backwards.

But we had no bedroom, no anything! And the children had never travelled that way before, but they learned. And they were thrilled with the idea of so many soldiers, so many Air Force men, and so many in the Navy - the place was just absolutely swamped.

I kept raving to this porter that I had to have a bedroom for my daughter to sleep, and for myself. "My boys can stretch out here in these seats, but we can't do this for three days and three nights going to Seattle."

So one of the Navy wives heard me complaining, and she came up, and said, "We're going to sit up all night and drink and play cards, so we've decided that you and your daughter can have our berth."

So we thanked her, and we used that berth for the next two or three nights, and the boys slept as best they could.

We changed our clothes as best we could in the crowded conditions of the rooms, in the ladies' and men's rooms.

The Chicago-Milwaukee came in through Black Diamond and the valley, and when we approached Boeing Field, the car was completely blacked-out the morning we were arriving in Seattle.

I said to the porter, "My boys would really love to see those airplanes."

He said, "Well, there are war restrictions, but I don't think President Roosevelt's going to get mad if your boys look at the planes."

So he went over and raised one of the window covers. They were all black so if we traveled at night, there would be no indication of a train moving because it was completely blacked-out at night as we traveled to the west. In the daytime, you could see the badlands and all the rest of the country.

Anyway, they got to see them. And they said, "Oh, the B-17's! Isn't it wonderful!"

We got to Seattle, and my husband and I telephoned each other. And he explained - I didn't understand it - that due to the change in banking, selling houses and buying houses had been curtailed, and that it was going to take him some time to sell our home. We had a huge home.

We bought the home that was the original home of the Fishers, of the Fisher body plant in Ohio. They were the ones that devised the shell of the Chevrolet - the Fisher boys.

Everything in our home was absolutely fantastic. We had French phones, with a gold standard and marble bases, that they had got at the Paris Exposition. The thresholds of the doors that went from different rooms and outside were all cast in the Fisher Foundry.

Q. It sounds elegant.

Inez Sauer Oh, it was. Our reception hall, as you went in, was 20' by 20', and then we had a rosewood staircase that went up, and it was about 7' or 8' wide, and it was all

carpeted in Karastan carpeting.

There were crystal chandeliers, and the colored girl who did my cleaning loved to polish the prisms on the chandelier over our dining room table.

It was a huge place.

Q. But your living situation was somewhat different here in Seattle?

Inez Sauer Oh, completely changed! In Seattle, we went to my mother's, and she had two bedrooms.

I came to my mother's home, and she had a two bedroom house, and a bedroom built in the basement for my brother. It was tiny. My father was a contractor, and my boys kept saying, "When is grandfather going to get his briefcase out and go to work?"

I'd say, "Your grandfather doesn't carry a briefcase. He has his own truck, and when he goes to see what the various people are doing who are building houses for him, he goes in his work clothes." That was hard for them to understand - they never were around anybody that worked since their dad always went to the office every morning and came home every night.

Q. Was the doubling-up difficult for you?

Inez Sauer It was small, and my mother said that we would have to look for a different place.

In the meantime, there was so much wartalk in the Seattle Times, and they had huge ads for workers needed, so I said to my mother, "I think I'll go down and apply for a job at Boeing's while I'm waiting for my husband to come with the things."

"Oh, no you won't!," said my father, "that's a factory!" (laughing)

But the children were all for it, "Oh, mother, go there so you can tell us about the airplanes!"

So I went. I went to one of the places where they were advertising for you to come in and fill out applications, and this one woman who interviewed me said, "You have no factory experience - you have no experience whatsoever. If we ever get desperate, you may expect a call from us."

I said, "All right." It didn't matter that much to me.

Q. Were you trying to ease the crowdedness of the home by going out to work? What were your motives?

Inez Sauer My motives were simply to help the war effort. I had belonged to the DAR, and my mother was a Virginian. My family, from Revolutionary days, have been guarding their country, and super-patriotic if you want to put it that way. "Your country first, no matter what," and they still believe that way.

I definitely wanted to do something, and since I didn't have a car, I had to be someplace where I could take a bus. I couldn't use my brother's car, because he was

working. They were all laughing at me - they said, "You're never going to find anything that satisfies you."

One day, there was a big splash in the paper. Boeing would be interviewing for women workers, no experience necessary. I said to my mother, "I'm going to go down to where Boeing's interviewing." I did and he said, "You're going to have to have a physical, and have your marriage certificate, your birth certificate, and proof that your mother and father were natural citizens of the United States, and all your relatives, and everyone in Seattle I was in touch with, and [your] husband in Ohio." It took about two days after the first interview. I went back the next day. In all, I went to work at the end of the week, and I think our wage scale was \$.42 an hour.

Q. What were you applying in? Did it matter?

Inez Sauer Oh, it didn't matter! They had pegboards, and you tried out all these different things; they had wiring boards, and I didn't have any particular skill for that. In fact, I didn't have any particular skill at all.

This man that interviewed me said, "You'd be a good clerk."

I said, "Yes." I was thinking of a clerk in a department store; I didn't know what that had to do with Boeing.

He said, "You can hand out tools."

It sounded simple - I didn't know how heavy the tools were!

Anyway, that where I started. As a toolroom clerk at \$.42 an hour.

Q. Was it a union position?

Inez Sauer No, the Machinists Union hadn't realized that the influx raised the possibility of enlarging their coffers, at that time. It didn't take them long to realize that thousands and thousands at a dollar head even - and I think it cost two or three dollars to join!

I was not about to join a union because I didn't think I would be there long enough to do anything.

Q. Did you join one later?

Inez Sauer Yes.

When they first put me in the toolroom, I was surrounded with these huge pieces of mechanism that were grinding, and steel, and dirty. It was oily, mostly. There was lots of oil when they cut things, on lathes. And the tools were dirty. I was trying to wear gloves, but the gloves weren't really and truly a convenience because they'd get in the way of various things you would be handling. And so I learned to ignore that (the dirtiness of the job).

I said to my supervisor, "If I'm going to stay here, I'm going to have to have some kind of books."

Well, that was unheard of. He said, "What do you want books for?"

I said that I wanted to see how they used the

tools that I'm going to be in charge of - just what the method is. So finally, after me urging him, he got some classified books. Heavens, there were documents this big! (Mrs. Sauer sketches books about 2' on a side with her hands) And they gave me permission to take them home for a certain length of time - perhaps a week or so. Then they'd check them in and check them over, that they were all there.

Anyway, I learned a lot about the tool and die part of Boeing, which was part of the bomber.

Q. What was your reception like from others?

Inez Sauer Oh! The head superintendent of the toolroom at Boeing, at that time, - and he was there for many years - said that he'd never heard of such a thing as putting women in factories, and it was certainly not going to work. Women couldn't do anything; they could only stay home and take care of children.

I said, "Well, I'd always thought that, too," though I'd never had to stay home and take care of children, I did take care of my home.

And he said, "Well, the happiest day of my life will be when Boeing decides they can't use these, and I can be there personally to kick them out the door."

So that was the way we started out. I avoided him as much as I could, but I had to go [to him] because I was one of the first women in the toolroom. They had men who lifted heavy things. At that time their (tool) cribs were not set up so that they were at all convenient for anything. Some things you couldn't move across the counter. You couldn't lift them up, or get them out, and they'd have to come in and move these things. They finally recognized that after a year or two.

Then the union came in, and said if we were truly patriotic, we'd join the union so we could help the boys, asking for more money. If we asked for more money, we could do more things with it. I don't know what we were going to do with the money.

I had been there two months, and Boeing gave me either five or ten cents an hour more, and, by their advice, I was not to discuss my wages with anyone. If they wanted to give me this amount, that was their affair. Since I was interested in learning, which most of the girls weren't who didn't want to do anything, just to stand and let the men do the work. If they brought something up, they'd say, "Well, you put it away." Well, I would engage them in conversation, and before I left there, Anna Truesdon who was the Women's... Oh, what would you call it?!

Q. Leadwoman? Superintendent?

Inez Sauer No, she was like a coordinator, in charge of any problems. She was a very well known woman, an analyst... I'm looking for a word. She was in charge of all the women who worked there...

Q. The Women's Counselor?

Inez Sauer Yes, counselor. If you had any personal problems, you could take them to Anna. She and I became very good friends, and she helped me so much. She told me when I finally married my second husband, or third, or whichever one it was, "Boeing does not want to lose you. They have plans for you. Do you realize you're the highest grade woman here at Boeing? You earn more money than most women will ever realize."

I was always on a higher payscale, and even though I was in the union, they didn't always know that.

Q. How could you describe the other women that came to work at Boeing during the war? Is it possible to generalize about them or were they all very unique?

Inez Sauer You would say they came from all walks of life. My two closest friends - I had only wanted to associate at that time with two women I had met there, both in my department - one was an expeditor and one was in the toolroom office. The woman, Cora Deveen, had been a teacher in South Dakota, and she had come west because one of her brothers was in the Navy, and the other brother was going into the ministry and decided he would postpone it and come out here and work until the war was over. So they moved out from South Dakota, and I met her.

My other friend was fleeing from her ex-husband. She had been Mrs. English - I was trying to think what her status was - she had been married to a man, and she said that when they'd go travelling, they would go up to Canada and he would order her a dozen pairs of gloves, handmade, and a dozen pair of shoes ordered in Canada from the French. She came from a very wealthy background. I liked her immediately. She was a beautiful woman with red hair. And Cora Deveen was also unusually beautiful. She had coal-black hair and was about my age at the time, about thirty-two - she was twenty-eight or thirty.

Boeing put on a big call to work, and they got girls that were reputed to be prostitutes, pure and simple.

Q. From Seattle, or from out of state?

Inez Sauer From anyplace, because they didn't hesitate to tell you that they made more money working at night than they did working at Boeing in the daytime.

Q. Did you know these women personally, or was this just word of mouth?

Inez Sauer No, no, these were women that told me their tales.

They kept moving me around so that I was in the balcony toolrooms and in very classified areas. And then they finally put me over at Boeing Field. That was a very much prized place.

On your button, you had various colors, and I had a button that would allow me to go anyplace in any part of the plant at any time. I was completely free to go anyplace, and I got to know lots of people. I wasn't always

so busy that I had to work. Even in an eight hour day, when the people would draw their tools out, there was not too much. I had six or eight girls working for me, though they weren't working for me, they were working for Boeing and I was sort of their supervisor.

Then the union called a strike. We were going to strike for more money so the boys could have a better life overseas! (laughing)

That day, we went on a walk in downtown Seattle, and my mother was standing in the doorway of the First National Bank, and I looked across. There were about five thousand workers. We had Boeing's blessing. I said, "Hi, mother!"

Q. You had Boeing's blessing in going on strike?

Inez Sauer Yes, on this walkout. They were on a cost-plus basis so if they paid the workers more, the government paid them more.

Q. When was this?

Inez Sauer Well, it was probably in the spring of 1943, someplace in the middle of '43, and they won what they wanted. But I disagreed with their policies. I couldn't see how a Machinists group should had jurisdiction over the women workers at Boeing. There were more women workers at Boeing who had nothing at all to do with machine work - some were expeditors and some were blueprint girls. You couldn't even start to categorize anything that had anything to do with machine shop. The fact that the men were machinists and tool and die makers - that was one thing. Anyway, we got it (the raise).

Q. You had come from a gentle background - a gently-raised background. Were there any conflicts? Did you experience any conflict at Boeing? You were injected into a blue-collar situation quite abruptly? Was it difficult in any way?

Inez Sauer No, it wasn't difficult. It was really and truly beyond my comprehension. My father kept telling me, "Factory workers and women who raise their families at home are never in contact," and we never were. People that worked for a living - the people that worked in Akron - people that worked in factories were people that my husband hired. That's the way we looked at it.

You never had association with Negroes. I became very interested in some of the really well-educated Negroes I was privileged to know there. I would certainly never have known them otherwise. One was a writer, and one was a man from Radio City in New York that had lots to do with the field of advertising. I had the name of being known what they called a "nigger lover." Some of these really coarse people would come and say, "She's got her nigger friends at the counter - she'll never wait on you."

I objected to my supervisor, and he said, "That's one of the reasons I don't care to have women working for me. You want privileges."

I said, "I don't want any privileges. I take everybody as they come along and I never show any favoritism. I want everyone to be treated the same."

I learned that just because women did work, is no sign that they had a right to a life. I'd never been with them - there was no reason for me to know that.

My mother was opposed to - well, what wasn't she opposed to? She was opposed to everything. I never learned...

When I had my first child, the doctor came in the night it was going to be born, and he said, "The nurse tells me you're worried. What are you worried about?"

I said, "I don't like thinking about that scar that's going to be on my stomach."

And he said, "What scar?"

And I said, "The long scar where the baby's going to come out."

He said, "Young lady, after you've had this baby, I'll come up tomorrow morning and I will show you that that baby is going to get out the same way it got in."

I thought, "Oh!! What a terrible thing to tell me!"

I didn't believe him, of course. I thought he was just trying to quiet me. Then he asked me the next day, after the delivery, "Did your mother ever tell you anything about anything?"

And I said, "No, and I really and truly don't want to know. If this is the way babies come into this world, I'll never have another one."

So you see, my mother - well, that was the way she was brought up. When you're from Virginia, you're brought up with a gentle side.

Q. Those coarse people that you mentioned at Boeing - did they tend to be what are usually called "Okies" or were they local people?

Inez Sauer I would say there were more out-of-state people that I became acquainted with than hometowners. See, the women that worked here in Seattle were already established. They were working at Frederick's, or they were working at the Bon, or they were at candy counters - as salespeople. But none of them would ever think of driving a truck, or working in the shipyards using whatever it is they used being riveters. No one knew what a riveter was. I didn't either, but I found out. People came here from everywhere. You can't possibly imagine the overcrowding.

There was much wartime building. High Point was what was called a housing project. High Point in West Seattle was put up to house these people from out of state. They were put up all over, at Holly Park, and all these places where there were crowded conditions. They had these pre-fabricated things they would put up. And on the University of Washington disposal site, they put a lot of places out there.

The women - and there weren't all that many - were there when Admiral Halsey went through on a tour of Boeing. He tipped his hat to me, and said, "I can see you

women have got the war under control." Opposite our huge toolroom was this woman with a great big giant lathe, and you set these lathes, and they go for so long until you need to reset them. She was sound asleep, her head was back, she had a newspaper in front of her and the lathe was going around.

I thought I'd die! (laughing)

There were lots of them who came through on tours. Jimmy Doolittle came down and gave a pep talk. We had the B-17's out. There were lots and lots of wonderful things that went on.

Q. Absenteeism and loafing on the job became an issue throughout the war - almost from the very beginning because war production had begun before Pearl Harbor was attacked. Did you see any signs of that besides the one you just mentioned? You've mentioned cost-plus...

Inez Sauer Well, yes. I had one supervisor. I said to him one day, "I haven't anything to do."

He said, "You haven't? Well, I don't have you locked in here, do I?"

This great big place had counters on four different sides, and all covered with wire. There were lots of things that they definitely wanted kept under lock and key - gauges and such.

He said, "I don't have a key to this. Reach over the counter and unlock it."

I said, "What'll I do?"

He said, "Take a trip at Boeing." In other words, get lost.

And there were many days where there were hours on end, and I think that's when I learned so much about what was going on. There were lots of people stealing. There were lots of people that were saboteurs.

They put in a special place for me in the middle of instruments. In these gauge instruments, everything has to be down to the millimeter - they were so extreme. They put me in there, and of course, time was slow after the instruments were loaned out to the individuals and they used them for as long as they wanted. The only time I had any activity was when they'd return them.

This one man was handicapped. He used a crutch, and he had lots of time on his hands, and I became interested. He said to me one day, "What do you do for fun?"

Side B

...I said, "Well, I've never been to Canada, and I'm certainly not about to go with you. I understand there's a law."

He said, "You can forget the law in wartime. I have access to come and go in Canada as I will."

I said, "What sort of pass do you have to get into Canada in wartime?"

He said, "It's too complicated. If you don't want to go with me, I won't tell you."

I started to put two and two together. I realized that on weekends, this particular individual on this

crutch was borrowing tools and somehow getting them out of the company. And later, I said something like that to him, and he said, "Yes, there's lots of things that Germany can use."

So I went to my supervisor, and he said, "Don't tell me - I'll send you up to the FBI. You don't need to make an issue of this with anyone you're connected with."

So I went to see the FBI, and I told them all about it, and they picked him up.

Another time, during the Korean War, when I was divorced - I got my divorce from the children's dad in 1944 because he didn't see things my way. He didn't want me to work, for one thing, and I wanted to. I had grown. I found out for the first time in my life that I could earn money. I didn't have to ask him for anything. I could write my own ticket.

Q. I was curious about that. Had he stayed on in Ohio?

Inez Sauer He stayed in Ohio, and came west in 1943, and in 1944, I divorced him.

Q. Was it primarily your working at Boeing that was the issue, or was it a longstanding...? Would you say that the war brought this problem to a head?

Inez Sauer Probably. I had grown tired - well, I hadn't really grown tired... I married him when I was nineteen and he was ten years older, and he was a businessman that always took care of everything. He did the taxes. He doled me out. If I wanted a dollar for a box of powder, he would give me a dollar. If I wanted something personal, he would say, "How much is it?"

At that time, I smoked cigarettes, and I would say, "I'm out of cigarettes," and he would say, "Why I only bought you a package last week!"

This was the way we lived. We played golf and we swam, and we always kept maids to take care of our children. I was not obliged to do anything. When I got out here, after my mother decided that she and dad would sell the house and I would put money into it, and we would buy a big home, which we did. When he came west, when he finally got everything settled, and I had applied for a divorce, he tried to talk me out of it. I said that I'd never go back to being married again - that I thought I'd never get married again. I wanted to live and see what there was in life.

And he said, "Well, it won't last long. As soon as Boeing closes the women out, you won't have any place to go to because you don't know anything that's going to amount to anything."

It didn't say much for my brains, did it?

Q. You, then, were hoping for a real career at Boeing?

Inez Sauer Yes, because I was so involved in everything that was going on. And building airplanes was a fascinating subject. If you could see the metal that goes in there that when it finally goes out is a huge plane!

Once, I was walking through the plant, and I went into this place that said, "Restricted Personnel Only." I was free to go in there, and so I opened the door and went in, and there was the biggest airplane I'd ever seen in my life. I couldn't even start to tell you how large it was. I stood there and just gasped. I looked around, and no one said anything to me, so I just looked at everything I wanted to see, and then I went back to my toolroom.

I said to my supervisor, "I've just seen the biggest plane I've ever seen in my life."

He said, "You did? Where was it?"

"It's up there near final assembly." When the planes were finished, they would roll them out that way.

He said, "You didn't see that."

And I said, "But I did! Fritz, you just have to come and look. You'll have to get a button so you can go in there and see it."

He said, "I don't want a button, and as far as you're concerned, you never saw that."

And I got the message. It was absolutely secret. And that was the first B-29.

I went over to Plant 1, and worked on a huge cargo plane. They would roll - what do you call these things? Bombers on wheels, so to speak.

Q. Do you mean mounted guns?

Inez Sauer Tanks.

They were putting all those on there to make their first flight, and I got to see them put the heavy cargo in.

I became acquainted with a number of people in the Air Force. (during the war, this would be the Army Air Corps) At Boeing Field, when I was there, we kept the Norden bomb sight, and every morning I had to check it in. If any of the Navy or Air personnel came in for it, they had to have a certain message to give me before I would release it to them.

Q. This is a question that harks back to the man with the crutch. It seems to me that he took an extraordinary chance - why do you think he confided in you in that way?

Inez Sauer He thought I was a possible recruit because I let him talk and talk and talk about his activities, and always evinced an interest in what he was doing, how he was making all this money. [He said] it was an easy way to make money, and so on.

Another man approached me, as I started to say, in the Korean outbreak. We were in what they called Bomarc, when they first started to build missiles. It was so secretive that hardly anyone could get in there.

He said that he'd like to take me out, so I went out with him a few times. And once he said he'd like to take me down to Portland to meet his family, and I said, "Well, I'd love to go!" I liked him. He was very nice and clean cut; he was an engineer.

So after I'd been down and met his sister and her family, and a lot of their friends there - why, she (his sister) had said, "George has been looking for someone for a long time."

And I said, "I certainly think the world of George."

We came home, and I told my mother all about what a nice family he had. So then he said to me one day, "I'd like you to come out and take a look at my apartment."

I said, "George, are you trying to get close to me?" (chuckling)

He said, "No, I think you might fit right in."

And I said, "Well, certainly not into your apartment. I have a lovely home of my own."

He said, "Well, would you go out with me? I'd come and pick you up early, and I want to take you over and show you my home. I've got the greatest landlady."

And I said, "Well, I'd be interested." I wanted to see what he'd done. He had told me that he had done so much of the things himself.

I went out. And he brought the landlady down. He had the whole basement of this house, and he had made it into a beautiful place. He said, "Now I'm going to take you into our special room." This is his landlady and him.

I said, "What's so special?"

He said, "I'll show you."

So then he said, "Now you have to be quiet. We're going to close all the blinds, and I'm going to show you some movies."

I said, "This has got to be good."

And he was asking this woman, "What do you think?"

And she said, "She's absolutely right."

Well, I thought they were talking about him marrying me. I sat there, and pretty soon he started to show me picture of Russian warfare, and Russian things. He showed me the big May Day parade in Red Square, and he said that there was a lot of money to be made now that the big war was over - we were in the Korean War. He said, "We're doing a lot of interesting things here and we think you had the kind of intelligence that would fit in."

I said, "George, maybe you didn't know. I'm a DAR. My great great grandfather fought in the Revolution. My father's father fought in the Revolution. And we're Virginians. We are not interested in anything that has anything to do with Russia."

He said, "I made a mistake."

I said, "You certainly did." So we went out to dinner.

He said, "Forget this, will you? Don't mention it to anybody."

I said, "No, I'd be ashamed to."

So I was there in the Bomarc area, and he said, "I want to show you a little toy I have." He took this little thing out and it was about two inches square. I said, "What's that, George?"

He said, "That's a camera."

And I said, "You'd better put that back in

your trouser pocket, because the superintendent of this department come over here to see me every day.

He said, "While you're busy here, I'm inside where they're building the missiles. I'm in charge of Electrical, and taking picture of it all."

Q. His indiscretion amazes me!

Inez Sauer I don't know whether I exude confidence, or whether they think I'm so stupid that I don't know what they're saying.

Anyway, he left. I guess work had started for the day. I thought for about five minutes, and then I went over because I was very close friends with two of the superintendents. I said, "Louis, what would you say if I told you that a man in here is taking picture inside the bombshell?"

He said, "I'd be all ears."

I said, "Well, there is a man. I'll tell you who it is, but I don't know how you're going to handle it. I don't want to become involved."

He said, "Inez, don't worry about it." And he had known me ever since I had started in Boeing. He said, "First of all, we'll get the FBI and I want you to go in and tell them, and follow whatever they tell you to the letter. I'll fix it up with your superintendent."

So I went up inside the office, inside the plant, and told him. He said, "You're in a very delicate situation. We're going out this afternoon, and we're going to take that man out. Don't ever discuss this with anyone. Don't ever mention that you know what's going on to anyone. Maybe much later we might tell you the disposition."

Well, it was much later when they told me. They took him out. So he (the FBI agent) came back the next day and said, "I want you to know that you and your family will be under the guard of the FBI because the man said he knew you were the one. We gave no indication of it, and you were not brought in. But he kept insisting that he knew that you had turned him in."

"I tell you," he said, "he's going to be put away for at least fifteen years and maybe longer. But you will be guarded."

There were two or three different people that I turned in during the war, borrowing things that they never should have borrowed, and telling me, "Now don't say anything to anybody but I'm going to take this home."

Once a man came in. He was taking some kind of specialized wire, and I said, "How are you going to get that out?"

He said, "I'm going to go in the men's restroom, and wrap it around me."

I said, "What are you going to do if one of the men comes in?"

He said, "They'll think I've lost my mind."

So he went in and he wound all this wire. It wasn't platinum, but it was something very out of this world. So, you know me, I went out to the guard gate, and I said, "Somebody's coming through here, and look at him real closely

when he shows you his lunch box, because wrapped around him under his sweater is something you might be interested in."

And they picked him up!

They even picked up the superintendent down there and it was in the paper! He was having work done on weekends on his sailboat, but he made the big mistake of bringing his sailboat into the parking area where they had the bomb things.

Q. I was wondering if you noticed any bad dreams or fear in your children because of the war. You said that they were excited about the bombers in a positive way...

Inez Sauer No, they were very patriotic. I can remember them singing at the top of their voices, "Remember Pearl Harbor," and "When the Saints Go Marching In," and all those songs. No, my children were as patriotic as could be, and still are to this day. My one son was a Marine; the other, when he finished the University, was in the Air Force for a while as part of his ROTC.

Q. Were you working days?

Inez Sauer Yes, I worked days most of the time.

Q. So they (the children) were with your folks?

Inez Sauer My mother, yes. Nothing was ever different (for them).

Q. At Boeing, you've mentioned individuals who were not supportive of women - institutionally, did Boeing do anything that made it easier for women to work?

Inez Sauer They did. Anna Truesdon, the Women's Counselor that I mentioned, asked me if I would be interested in drawing up a bowling group, and I said, "Anna, I've never bowled in my life. That's something somebody else does, isn't it?"

She said, "There are lots of girls here who have evinced interest in bowling."

I said, "Well, I'll see what I can. I'll go around, and you tell me how many girls you want, and how you want it started."

She said, "We'll furnish the buses to take them, and there won't be any charge. It will be recreation."

Another thing I did was to sponsor a group to visit incoming soldiers, or any of the armed forces, coming in hospitalized before going on to their various homes. So we'd go and see them and if they were ambulant and not in wheelchairs, we would take them to our homes and have them have dinner with the families. We did that for a long time.

And we wrote letters for the boys that didn't have use of their hands.

It was a very busy time. Busy, busy, busy.

Q. What was Seattle like during the war? How had it changed from your earlier experiences?

Inez Sauer Frederick and Nelson's, where I always shopped - I was in there one night. We had to wear pants at work, but I never wore pants in public - ever. I was in there getting a new suit, and - oh, I know! I think the opera was on and I was in there getting some long opera gloves. I was standing at the counter, and said to the girl, "I was in here a couple days ago and you had some beautiful long opera gloves."

She said, "But this is Monday night. We put all of our good things away." (laughing) They just didn't bring out anything!

Q. Why?

Inez Sauer "Because," she said, "they usually had grubby hands and if they touched white gloves or lace underclothes, and they didn't want to have to sell at a discount."

These two girls were standing beside me, and finally she went and got some gloves for me to try on. While she was helping me up the arm with them, these two girls were standing there and they were really something. One said, "I'm gonna buy a pair of those!"

And the other said, "What for?"

"I've always wanted a pair - I've seen them in the movies. I'm gonna have a pair just like that. You just see!"

And the girl said, "You know, they're expensive. They cost \$15.00 or \$20.00."

"So what!"

"You'll never wear them."

"I'm gonna have them anyway!"

When I left, she was trying on long gloves. She was going to have a pair of long gloves.

And the same way in the suit department. The clerk said to me, "You don't very often come in here in the evening." I was in a rush and I wanted to get this fitting over with.

She said, "You know, our trained alteration women aren't here. I think we only have one, but I'll get her."

I said, "In the daytime, you have four or five."

She said, "I know, but this is Monday night, and we get all these Boeing people in here and they want us to do this and do that, and we just tell them there's only one alteration woman and they'll have to come back some other day. And they never do."

The second man I married was a war hero, and he'd come back from the Battle of the Coral Sea, and he was going to B-29 school. I finally succumbed and we were married, and when his stint in the Air Force was over, he came back to Seattle. He was going to learn the contracting business - my father took out bonds and coverage insurance for him, and he was going to teach him. My father at that time was about seventy five years old and he was only doing it to please me. So Bob went to work at Frederick's in the men's department. It was a Monday night, and the head floor

man told him, "Put all those good white shirts away in the back room."

And Bob said, "But this is Monday night. This is a a big selling night, isn't it?"

"It's all those Boeing workers that come up here, and we don't want to show them our good things. We don't want to sell any white shirts to the Boeing workers" - white shirts, at that time, were hard to get - "We'll save them for the people that can afford them."

He, an ex-airman, walked off. He said, "If you're going to show preference for people like that... I thought anybody that had money could buy anything they wanted."

Q. Discrimination in selling is amazing.

Inez Sauer Oh, no. Frederick's used to be a beautiful store. You could get the most beautiful service in there, and anything you wanted. They bent over backwards. As a child, I can remember my mother being waited on for gloves or other personal things, and she always so particular about having it fitted correctly.

And hats. You never put a hat on yourself. The woman in hats always arranged the hat on your head. (laughing) It was a different world, and my son has one word for it - "It's the war, Mother. The war changed everything. It has ruined the family."

Q. In what way?

Inez Sauer Well, because families gave their children money to spend that they had never had before. Consequently, the children got to be drifters. David (her son) blames the runaway children that they have today on the effects of the training that they had from their own home. Their mothers or fathers were runaways from something they didn't like - and they'd just go.

Q. Did you perceive a rise in juvenile problems during the war?

Inez Sauer I don't think so, but I do know that people who couldn't find or afford babysitters would turn on the radio, or later, let their children watch television. That became a borderline thing.

There were all these fast food places that you didn't have before. You could go out to a drive-in place and get hamburgers.

There was a complete breakdown in family life. And I'm glad that at least my children were brought up the way they should because this is the way it still is in their individual families. And in my grandchildren's families. If you start laughing or cutting up in front of the television, off goes the television. If you want to go to someplace, you have to have a chaperone - it's not a free for all.

During the war, it wasn't that way.

Q. You mentioned the opera. What was the entertainment

scene like in Seattle?

Inez Sauer Well, it did quite well, because we had people coming here to give concerts. San Francisco came here and played opera almost every year that I can remember. Mrs. Schultz used to have the concert series that came to the Moore. The Metropolitan always had the leading matinees, Shakespearean plays, pianists, violinists - oh, I've heard them all from the time I was little!

Q. Do you remember Sir Thomas Beecham?

Inez Sauer Oh, yes, at the Symphony. He was quite outspoken. He was - how would you put it? - he was mis-placed. Seattle was not his cup of tea - it was too frontier, it was raw. There was not so much society here as they would like to believe. (laughing)

Q. An enormous number of people moved to Seattle during the forties, and it got much larger. Did it change fundamentally, in the downtown area? Were there changes in the restaurants? Changes in traffic?

Inez Sauer We had never had one-way streets before the war, and after the war, we had so much traffic we had to have them. And then the bus system - we had always had streetcars or electric buses. It was a big mistake to take them away because we have so many hills. Buses can go up hills if they're electrified, and sometimes they don't when they're not. And in the snow, buses when they're electrified can go through the snow, but the big diesel buses were a joke, and so contaminating with smoke and fumes.

People had made much money during the war and they went in for yachts and for luxuries that they had always wanted and never had.

Q. Did Seattle become more of a wide-open town with many young men in uniform?

Inez Sauer No, they were pretty well restricted. And the men never liked this as a place - as my second husband said, "Seattle never did anything for the returning armed forces." They were looked down on.

That was my one objection to meeting this man who was an engineer on a bomber in the Coral Sea. He came here to go to the B-29 school, and that's how I met him, though a friend of mine. I was more or less engaged to another person at Boeing when she asked me if I wouldn't make a foursome one night. I told her, "Well, Bill and I are engaged."

She said, "Well, you don't have to be engaged to go out with this man. Just do it as a favor to me. I need another girl because this man is a friend of the man I'm going with."

So he was a New Yorker, and he really put on a beautiful show. But he also said that in New York, the returning soldier was given carte blanche, and anything they wanted. They never were charged for anything.

But in Seattle, going out with a man in a service uniform - that was unheard of! As far as I was concerned, and as far as our family - it was not heard of.

Lots of girls thought it was great to go out with people in uniform, but people that thought much of their well-being, didn't. They were considered to be rowdy, and, you know how a sailor has a girl in every port?

Q. Yes. There's implications about the woman that's with a guy in uniform.

Inez Sauer So, in that way, Seattle has grown in the last twenty-five years.

I'm almost seventy five and I remember it from the time I was going to high school and taking the ferry across from downtown Seattle to West Seattle, and if the little Toonerville Trolley wasn't there, we would walk to the other end where our home was up high on the hill. When my brother went to the University, he would take three different streetcars to get there, and it took at least two hours. That was a long trek.

Q. You first came back to Seattle in March, 1942. Over the next couple of months, the Japanese-Americans who were living here in Seattle were gathered and removed. Did you have any personal perspective on that or was that just something in the newspapers?

Inez Sauer My mother said, even before the war, "Something's coming from the Japanese element that lives here, that bring their friends over from Japan. Everywhere you go they are taking pictures of our most vital things. All the shipping, the parks, entrances to anything. There isn't anyplace you can go in Seattle now that you don't run into a group of Japanese."

I said, "Oh, mother, you just imagine it."

She said, "No, I don't imagine it."

One of our friends used to entertain the vice-consul of Japan, and she said, "One day we'll be sorry that we sold the things we have sold to Japan, because you can read between the lines. They are planning something."

And that was years before. That was probably 1930 that she spoke of that. And even today, she says, "They'll do it again. That's what they're building up for."

So we can believe as we want.

My brother's art teacher at the university was Jimmy Wehn, and he's quite well known. He did the governor's seal and the seal for the city of Seattle. He taught art at the University, and he lived just above the International District, way down there. They had a beautiful home. His father owned a foundry...

