

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson Sr.

PERSON

Thompson, Robert Edward, 1923-

Alternative Names: Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson Sr.;

Life Dates: February 20, 1923-

Place of Birth: Uniontown, Pennsylvania, USA

Residence: Washington, District of Columbia

Occupations: Sonar Technician

Biographical Note

Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson, Sr., was born on February 20, 1923 in Uniontown, Pennsylvania to Annie Thompson-Angel and Matthew Thompson. He graduated from Cardozo High School in Washington, D.C. in 1942.

After graduating from high school, Thompson enlisted in the United States Coast Guard in Baltimore, Maryland and completed his boot camp training at the U.S. Coast Guard training station in Manhattan Beach, Brooklyn, New York. After serving on shore patrol in Brooklyn and Boston, Thompson received sonar technician training at the Naval Submarine Base in New London, Connecticut and the U.S. Navy Sonar Training Facility in Key West, Florida. Thompson then was stationed aboard the USCG Sea Cloud, a former private yacht repurposed to patrol a one-hundred square mile area between Boston and Maine to generate weather reports for the First Naval District. With the addition of his crew, which included HistoryMaker Jacob Lawrence, and under the command of Lieutenant Carlton Skinner, the USCG Sea Cloud became the U.S. military's first racially integrated warship since the Civil War. After his time on the USCG Sea Cloud, Thompson served ashore in Boston, New York and California. In 1945, Thompson was honorably discharged from the United States Coast Guard and began working for the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and General Services Administration. In civilian life, he also worked for the Department of State and the Washington Metropolitan Police Department in Washington D.C.

Thompson joined the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary in 2000 and is a member of Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 24-09.

Thompson lives in Washington, D.C. He has three sons, Robert Thompson II, Eric Thompson, and Gerald Thompson.

Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson, Sr., was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on May 10, 2022.

Related Entries

Cardozo Senior High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

St. Augustine Catholic School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

United States Coast Guard [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1942 to 1945]

Sonarman

United States Veterans Administration [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1945 to ?]

Washington Metropolitan Police Department [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

United States Department of State [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

United States General Services Administration [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

United States Coast Guard Auxiliary [MEMBEROF]
[from 2000 to ?]

Member

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