

**Naval Historical Center
Oral Interview Summary Form**

Interviewers:

CAPT Mike McDaniel
CDR Carol O'Hagan

Interviewer's Organization:

Navy Combat Documentation Det 206
Navy Combat Documentation Det 206

Interviewee:

Ms. Amy Elizabeth Fowler

Current Address:

████████████████████
████████████████████

Date of Interview:

8 Jan 2001

Place of Interview:

Navy Annex Arlington VA

Number of Cassettes:

One

Security Classification:

Unclassified

Name of Project: Pentagon Terrorist Attack Incident

Subject Terms/Key Words: Pentagon; Terrorist Attack; 11 September 2001; triage; evacuation; lessons learned; Defense Protective Service; FBI; carnage; Navy Command Center; renovation

Abstract of Interview:

1. She was born in ██████████ IN at home. She is the third of four children. She moved around quite a bit growing up; lived in St. Louis MO through grade school. Also lived in upstate New York in Webster. They could walk to the lake. Moved again to Pennsylvania; that is where she went to high school. Went to college in Pennsylvania as a French major. Took the PACE exam to be a government employee. She was offered an interview and a job with the Navy in the Aviation Supply office in Philadelphia. Started out as a GS-5, twenty years ago. In naval aviation since that time.
2. The office had moved from an older space into a temporary wedge, wedge 2. In a holding pattern waiting for the new wedge to be built when she arrived. She was there two years when they moved into their new spaces in wedge 1 in June/July 2001. She was to be in cubicle A, but wanted to be in another one. Worked with the CAPT overseeing the move and she ended up in the corner cubicle.
3. On September 11th, the commute was normal. She takes the metro in on the blue line. She had a 0900 meeting. She is the flying hour analyst. Put together a budget exhibit for fuel and spare parts for all the navy aircraft. She looks forward, now looking at FY04-09. Gets involved in what the fleet executed last year, as well as what they are spending money on now and how it will impact future budgets. Heard about the World Trade Center. She sat down at her computer, keying in codes, when the building started to violently shake.
4. She does not recall a noise. Thinks it was a constant roar. She did not hear an explosion. She was in 5D453. The aircraft came in underneath them. Her monitor died and the lights went out and the ceiling came down. The ceiling kept coming down, and she realized that she might be buried there. Told herself to grab her purse, and she didn't. She started to run. She could see down the spaces and saw something coming in from

the ceiling. She thinks it was smoke. She was told there were fireballs coming up on either side of the D ring, but she was not aware of that. She went toward the C ring of their entrance. She walked out into the corridor toward the A ring, the way to the center courtyard. Met up with LCOL George Hayne. Got on the escalator, and noticed her head hurt. She was bleeding. By this point the cut had blood coming down the side of her face. People looking at her and moving out of the way. Thought this is not good. Two civilians in the courtyard helped her. They followed someone in a white coat. Got into the 8th corridor and the medics were coming out of the infirmary. Proceeded toward the POAC when a large group of people started to rush back into the building. Found out later they were going back in to help people. Medics set up outside; George handed her off and the medics wrapped her head.

5. Saw others from her office. Bobby Greenburg (also from her office) sitting with her, also with a head injury from the ceiling tiles coming down on him. Heard that another plane was coming in and that was extremely unsettling. They moved away from the building. They crossed 110 until things settled down. She knew she was okay, but saw others come out who needed immediate attention. She was taken in a van to Arlington Urgent Care in Crystal City. Waiting there she saw the TV and started to wonder where it hit the building. Had no idea that it had hit directly underneath her. She got nine stitches. While at Arlington Urgent Care she was impressed with their efficiency and kindness. They kept asking her if there was someone she wanted to call. Her family was in PA and in MD and she did not want to make a long distance call. She eventually gave them her mother's phone number and asked them to call her.
6. Her older sister got hysterical, but kept thinking it is a big building. Her mother normally would have been home alone, but her sister and brother and their spouses were all at her mom's house to get ready for a family reunion. Her mother was not alone, which was a blessing. Her parents are divorced, and her father was alone in the house. He went over to her mother's and they were all together waiting to hear news. She got home at about 4 p.m. and was able to talk with everyone then. She heard that everyone in their office had gotten out, and only two of them had been hurt. Her younger sister was in Atlanta trying to get home, but of course there were no flights going out. She rented a Land Rover with some others, and she arrived in Poolsville MD that day.
7. She worked from home that weekend, and was able to e-mail all of her work contacts. Their office relocated in Crystal City about a week later. They ended up in NC2 on the tenth floor. The admiral had encouraging words for all of them. To prepare for battle he took care of everything he could control; put his affairs in order. An interesting way to approach life. Everyday reporting in to work is almost like combat; you can be killed on the beltway. They received mandatory counseling that she did not want to participate in at first. Groups of twenty were assembled to meet with the SPRINT team. They were put together by code. You knew people in the room, and that was good because people were comfortable with each other. Most people seemed unfazed, but as the session went on she realized through their comments that they were more affected than they let on. The Navy and the Marines seemed to take care of their people. She was approached by the Red Cross; they met her at the clinic, heard the story, and tried to do what they could. She noticed the SPRINT team fliers around the building.
8. The Red Cross wanted to know what she had lost. She could not think of much except for her wallet and her palm pilot. They wrote up a form and the Red Cross attempted to reimburse her. The mail started getting funky due to the anthrax scare, and she got her wallet back.

9. She were called on a Friday afternoon at 5:00. They were told they could go in on Saturday or Sunday and take only personal items. They showed up at 8:15 and a group had just gone in. They were not told that group was the only one going in from the 5th floor, and that the next group would be from the 4th floor, then the 3rd, etc. They worked with the folks running things and arranged to go back later that afternoon about 1500. They met early, about 1400. That was the first day she had seen the crash site. The morgue was well marked outside. She stood outside for about twenty minutes and they started handing out hard hats, rubber gloves and bags to put things in. They were told there was a lot of mold in the building. Each individual going in was assigned an escort, from a reserve unit in Puerto Rico. They entered to the left of the hole and there was someone at a desk, taking names and room numbers. From there they walked upstairs to the 5th floor. The smell was horrible, unrecognizable and there was not much light. It was hot in the building. Their office took up half of the wedge between the corridors. They walked through half of the D ring that was completely pitch black. The escorts had flashlights. They got to the door to the office space. The stairwell next to her desk was completely charged. Thinks a fireball came up the stairwell which is why they could not get out that door, and blew the ceiling out. When she got in the space and saw her desk she lost it. The ceiling framework was at waist level, with cinderblocks on her chair. That made it real. The escorts were talking on their walkie-talkies in Spanish when two men came crashing through the door looking for her. They thought she was going to pass out. She found her purse in the rubble on the floor. Everyone was hesitant to move things for fear of the instability.
10. The cubicle next to her was undamaged. Her friend Bobby was unable to come back, and she went into his cubicle to retrieve some of his personal things. His desk was much worse than hers; the light fixture was hanging. She picked up his family photos and his medical records and left. The other desks/cubicles in the spaces were untouched except for mold. They congregated outside the door, did a head count, and it dawned on her why they each had escorts. Walking out there were puddles everywhere. Went through decontamination and left through the second corridor, which looked like nothing had ever happened. The Army went through and boxed up what they thought was personal, and stored them at Fort Myer. The computers did not fare well due to smoke damage. She does not mind going back in to the Pentagon, but is saddened by the messages from children about the people who died there.

Abstracted by:
CDR Loftus
15 Jan 2002

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Transcript of Interview:

Interviewee Information:

Ms. Fowler was born in ██████████ IN at home. She is the third of four children. She moved around quite a bit growing up; lived in St. Louis MO through grade school. Also lived in upstate New York in Webster. They could walk to the lake. Moved again to Pennsylvania; that is where she went to high school. Went to college in Pennsylvania as a French major. Took the PACE exam to be a government employee. She was offered an interview and a job with the Navy in the Aviation Supply office in Philadelphia. Started out as a GS-5, twenty years ago. She has worked in Naval aviation since that time.

Topics Discussed:

TAPE ONE—Side One

Q. (076) Help us through that day. Kind of help us through your whole day commute and everything. Everything you can remember about the day, just kind of walk through.

A. The commute I would have to say was normal because I really don't remember anything about it.

Q. (077) How do you commute in?

A. I take the metro. Typical drive to the metro station, hop on the blue line, come up to the Pentagon, go into the office. I had a 9:00 o'clock meeting with a couple of folks, someone from the Navy Comptroller's Office and someone from another part of N78 Air Warfare.

Q. (080) Tell us just briefly what you do in your capacity.

A. Oh, right now I am the Flying Air Program Analyst for Air Warfare. So, basically put together a budget exhibit for the fuel and the spare parts needed for all the Navy aircraft. So it's been very interesting since September 11th with the increased flying and everything and so. Typically I'm in a resource sponsor billet. So, typically I look forward--for example, right now I'm looking at fiscal year '04 through '09. So it's a very forward thinking job although I do get involved in what the fleet executed in the last year. That's part of my budget build process and then I'm, obviously, involved in what they're doing now, as it will impact the future budget. So I'm basically a program analyst in a financial type billet.

Q. (090) So you had a meeting that day?

A. So I had a meeting that morning at 9:00 o'clock and I had my lovely visitor chairs all set up. I had a couple of people sitting at my desk talking about the Flying Air Program. Until about 9:20, let's just say in approximate time. I don't really know what time it was that they left. I started talking to someone who was new to our office who was sitting in the cubical that I originally was supposed to sit in and he was working on the computer. He was trying to get logged into e-mail and he was trying to get connected and was having problems. I said, well, let me go and see what

my mail server is and you know and some of the codes that he might need to get in. At which point, one of our contractors came and said, “Did you hear about the World Trade Center?” And I said, “No. What’s up?” He said, “Well a plane just hit the World Trade Center.” And I of course said, “You’re kidding. You’re trying to get a reaction out of me.” They tease me a lot. I’m one of the few females in the office and so I get a bit more abuse. And I said, “You’re just kidding. It’s not true.” You could appreciate that. He said, “No, go check the TV. This is real.” I guess I didn’t want to accept that. I just really—well, I have to go help this guy. And so I went and sat down at my computer and I was keying in to get these codes for HANS when the building started to shake and violently started to shake and, of course, I’m going, “Uh...hmmm.” You know you don’t really think anything at the time it all just happened so fast.

Q. (109) Was there a noise?

A. So many people asked me that and I do not remember a noise. I know there was one. There had to be one, but I think what happened was it might have been just a constant roar, just a level that was different. I didn’t register it. Other people have told me they heard explosions and I did not register that, so no.

Q. (113) Your office was located where?

A. The 5D453, which is on the 5th floor. I’ve come to realize later that the aircraft came in at an angle and probably came in below, like started at one end of the wedge and then came underneath us. Of course, I had no idea what was going on. I just did not make any connection.

Q. (118) You felt the building shake?

A. Where I was sitting just started to do, you know, this [visual demonstration].

Q. (119) Violently?

A. Violently, and almost immediately the power went out. I was staring at my monitor and the power went out. I'm still processing this and then I know the lights went out when the monitor died, but there was a flash above me. So I looked up, like what was that, when I saw the ceiling coming down. So I ducked and I'm kind of down like that and the ceiling kept coming down and I thought this is going to stop any minute. This is a brand new wedge, what's going on here, the ceiling's falling in. And then I realize that I might be buried. This is what went through my mind. I might be buried here. Grab your purse--as you can appreciate. No, you don't have time because while I'm going through this experience, a couple of the guys, all military, were trying to get out the emergency exit that was right on my wall right behind my cubical and I could hear them saying, "It's locked! It's locked. We can't go this way. Everybody move it, move it." Like good military Marines and Navy men, move it. I'm like, oh! And so I just started running. Forget the purse, forget everything. And the thing that was strange, I stood up and I could see down the area where our office cubicals were and it looked like something, I thought it was smoke, was coming in from the ceiling where the ceiling met the windows. There was something coming down, very gently. I've seen those tapes about fire and everything and I went okay, that's not good and so I went away from that.

Q. (139) Was it dark?

A. The emergency lighting was on. I don't remember it being dark just different. I'd say eerie, but that's too strong a word. It was certainly well lit enough. The windows, they tell me that

there were fire balls coming up either side of the D ring. I saw none of that. I was so focused on going away from the smoke which was closer to the E ring side of our wedge and so I headed to the C ring side of our ring and then went toward our normal entrance and there were maybe three or four people standing there at the time and I said, "Well okay this is good. There are other people." And I was the only one, if you can imagine this paper is all the cubicals in the middle of the wedge. And this is the end and, of course, this is my desk right by the wall and there was another cubical here, and then the E ring on this side and I know you can't see this on the tape, the C ring on this side, but as I ran down this set of--well the aisle way, next to the cubicals, there was no one there. I thought that was very strange. I figured they were all out ahead of me because I'm in the back corner and I'm a little slow at figuring what's going on here and the military knew right away what was going on. Anyway, I met up with let's say half a dozen people at our entrance and walked out into the corridor and we all very calmly walked toward the A ring. There were escalators as part of the new renovation, and there were elevators down there. But that was the way to the center courtyard and so we all just started walking, with purpose, toward the escalators. And I remember meeting up with a former co-worker LTCOL GEORGE HAYNE who had been sitting a couple cubical--well two cubicles down at the time, and so I met up with him at the escalator and I thought why am I getting on the escalator. Something bad is happening in this building, but everybody was on the escalator and nobody was pushing or shoving. Very little was being said that I can remember. We got on the escalator and I locked eyes with at least one person that I knew from a different floor and thought, okay, they're okay, they're out. And as I started to go down from the 4th floor to the 3rd floor I thought my head hurts a little bit, that's you know, just kind of hurts a little bit. I put my hand up to see, gee, hurt a little bit back here and I came down and it was red! It was just, all red and I went, "Uh-oh!" You

know, I'm sure I didn't say it like that. I just kind of went oh and GEORGE looked over and he saw it and immediately grabbed my head. Well, apparently, by this point, I didn't know it at the time, but the cut that I sustained had the blood coming down the side of my face so as we got to the 2nd floor we were going out into the courtyard, GEORGE is yelling for a medic. And people are looking at me and moving out of the way like in a movie, you know. I kept thinking, well this isn't good. Whatever is happening, this isn't good, because people are looking at me and their eyes are kind of getting big and they are moving away. About half way through the courtyard there was someone--two civilians, men in nice suits, one of them had a roll of paper towels, which GEORGE grabbed a bunch of those to put on my head and another civilian who just took my other arm and helped move forward. We were trying to find the medic. We ended up following somebody, I think in a white coat. I don't really remember that too much, because I was being led. But we ended up going the wrong way. We went, instead of into the 8th corridor, where the medic is, we went in the driveway section and that was a deadend and we all had to come back out. So there's a little bit of a scramble there, like who's leading this group of people. We finally got into the 8th corridor and the medics were coming out of the infirmary and they said, no, no, no you can't go in there. They were all going out so we proceeded through the exit toward the POAC, when a large group started rushing the building to come back in and that was very unsettling because I thought I'm leaving the building trying to get help and they're running away from something. I don't want to go that way. So I kind of was very hesitant but moved forward and I came to find out much, much later that they were trying to go back in to help people come out. But I didn't know that at the time, so it was a little nerve wracking. But as we went over the bridge between the Pentagon and the POAC there were medics set up in the grassy area to the left of the POAC and GEORGE just handed me off and they immediately took me, sat

me down, wrapped my head. At that point I saw some other people from my office. So that's a great relief, when you can turn around and see somebody that, one, that you know, and then you know they're okay. As it turns out the Commander who sat across from me in the cubical that was in the corner of the room also had the ceiling fall down on him and he was hit in three places.

Q. (200) BOBBY GREENBERG?

A. BOBBY GREENBERG whom I believe you've already spoken to. So he was across from me and certainly in more dire shape. So he was laid out on the ground. We were just hanging out basically. There was an awful lot of activity going on. I really didn't pay much attention to what else was going on. My field of vision was pretty small, I guess. But there was some confusion about another plane coming in and so everybody who could move, who could walk, had to leave that area and get as far away from the building as we could.

Q. (208) What did you think when you heard that?

A. Oh, that was extraordinarily unsettling. You're just in a state of disbelief.

Q. (209) Did you know it had been a plane at that point?

A. No. Well, maybe by then. Maybe by the time I was outside enough people were saying a plane hit that I guess I did know it on a certain level. It's still truly, even today, difficult to comprehend that this happened. You know that a plane actually came into the--I mean it's just a difficult thing. I'm fascinated by how that could happen, physically. You know, how did he fly

it? Because I'm interested in aviation, and I have actually flown a plane, very briefly, I'm just interested in how did that pilot and the terrorist get the plane to do that and come in at that level. So, anyway, we all moved away from the building and I had to leave BOBBY with the medics because he was flat out. He was conscious, but his eyes were not open and he was just being attended to.

Q. (223) Did you know him well? Had you worked with him awhile?

A. Well it's interesting, when I first got the job, he was the Flying Air Analyst for the Reserves down in New Orleans. So I knew him from phone conversations. And then he had taken another duty station and eventually found his way back to Air Warfare. So I knew him well by name, but had not spent a lot of time with him until we all moved together into the new wedge. So I knew him, but not real well I would say. So we were separated, but several guys from my office helped me get across the street. It was really kind of funny because I was not that badly hurt. I looked a lot worse then it was. But they were trying to do a you know, grab my arm and everything and, well, I'm over 6 feet tall and most of them are not. I just kept saying "Look, I'll just hold your arm, I'll be fine." It was wonderful. But I got across the road--I don't know what that's called. 110 I guess. I'm not sure what road that is by the river--and basically just hung around for awhile until things settled down. I knew I was okay and I saw some of the people coming out who definitely were not okay. I was spared from anything too terribly gruesome, which I thank God for every day, but I did see people who were badly burned and smoke inhalation and that sort of thing and I knew they needed some immediate attention. So I just sort of hung by the river and we were joking that if something else happened we would jump in the river. I was contemplating that when one of the medical folks came down and started taking those of us who

could walk, back up to the road so that we could get in a van and be transported off to—I went to Arlington Urgent Care in Crystal City. That was the first time I actually saw the television and could see what was happening and the whole time I was sitting there waiting, I kept thinking where did it hit? Where did it hit the building? Because I have so many friends that are in the building and I'm starting to think, okay who do I have to worry about? Who do I have to call first? Where did it hit the building? And I had no idea that it hit my side.

Q. (253) Were they showing any pictures or coverage so that you could try to figure that out?

A. Yes, they were. And what I had to do was, I don't really know the outside of the building that well. I know the inside of the building very well. But I could see that they were focusing near the helipad and so I thought okay. Now I drew a picture of the Pentagon and figured out, okay, I know where that is and I know where south parking is and I know where the metro is and I kind of had to figure out--well I didn't have time to do that while I was at Arlington Urgent Care.

So, I actually got stitched up and was able to have someone call home and that's a whole story in itself, just trying to reach your family was extraordinary. I learned a lot that day about reaching your family. But it wasn't until later that night when I was at home, watching the news, it was 8:00 or 9:00 at night when I finally figured out where it hit. So that was a whole another revelation that was pretty difficult to understand that that was my side of the building. But when I was at Arlington Urgent Care they were incredible. They were just incredible. Very efficient. Very kind, which they--you know, they're under so much stress. The doctor who helped me came from Springfield, which is I'm going to say maybe 15 miles away, maybe 20. It's just outside the Beltway. It took her over 2 hours to drive in once 9:34 or whatever time it was, happened. So she was frustrated in not being able to get in, but through all that they all worked

extremely well. But they kept asking me was there someone that they could call, did I want to make a call. Well, my family is in Pennsylvania. I have a sister in Maryland, but I kept saying, “Oh no, no, no that’s okay. It’s all long distance.” I didn’t want them to call long distance. But I discovered that the phone company had come to Arlington Urgent Care to make all these calls. Someone came with cases of water. It was just incredible how people rallied and just knew what they could do to help. So eventually I gave them my mother’s phone number and said, if you could just call her and let her know that I’m okay I think that would be very kind of you.

Q. (286) Do they all know where you worked in the building?

A. No, they had no idea.

Q. (287) They knew you were in the building though?

A. Yes. What’s difficult now is knowing what they went through as being outside the state. My younger sister was on travel. She was in Atlanta, Georgia when she got the news. So this is where I’ll get upset because it’s my family. My older sister was at work and she heard about the World Trade Center and she was like no, no, no. She couldn’t believe. And then she heard about the Pentagon and of course got hysterical, as I would have done. But she kept saying, it’s a big building. It’s a big building. She’s one person in this huge building of thousands of people. It can’t be her. It can’t be her. So I’m really glad that it wasn’t because I was able to get someone to call and let them all know, I’m sorry. [interviewee becomes emotional]

Q.(300) No, it’s okay. No apologies.

A.I was afraid, it’s just going over it again and again.

Q. (301) It's a real part of the story.

A. So, what is amazing about this whole thing is my mother--my parents are divorced, and my mother normally would have been home by herself in her condo, but she was planning a family reunion in Reading, Pennsylvania. So her sister and brother and their spouses, my aunts and uncles had all come together at my mother's house to go to York near Reading, to go to York, Pennsylvania. When my sister-in-law called at 10:00, or whatever time it was, to say, did you see the news? Did you hear about the Pentagon? And, of course, my mother said, "No," and they turn on the T.V. and, of course, cancelled their trip, but my mother was not by herself. She had her family with her. Well my father, is about 20 minutes away.

Q. (312) In Pennsylvania?

A. In Pennsylvania. And he called and very gently said, "Have you seen the T.V.? Have you seen the news on T.V.?" And my mother said, "Well yes, as a matter of fact, I have." And he said, "Have you heard anything?" And she, of course, said, "No." And he said, "Okay." And they hung up. And my mother thought, he was by himself. He has remarried, but his wife works. So he's there at his townhouse all by himself so she called him back and said, "Do you want to come over?" And he said, "Yes" and immediately came over. So now my parents are together, for the first time in 10 years or however long it's been, with my aunts and uncles. So they had their own little family reunion as they waited from, I don't know, 10:00 o'clock until, it might have been 1:00 before I finally realized that I should let them know that I'm okay. I just wasn't thinking that way. But they did get the call. Unfortunately, all they were told was AMY'S here at

the clinic. She's okay. So they were like oh, great! Okay, what does that mean? But I finally got home about 4:00 o'clock or so and called them and so was able to talk with everybody then.

Q. (328) Tell us about the phone call.

A. When I called? Actually I was very calm, surprisingly, because by then I was all stitched up and I had this--oh I should mention, I had an exciting ride on the metro. When I was at the clinic, I didn't know how--my keys were in the Pentagon, everything, my purse okay, was in the Pentagon. How was I going to get home? I have a dog. How was I going to get home to take care of the dog? This is really what I was concentrating on at the time. I have a group of friends or really good support group, but many of them work in the Pentagon. So I started thinking about, well, who's home? Who can I call? And I finally, thought about someone who's already retired and I gave her a call and she said, "Oh, well our other friend who works at the Pentagon is home already." The one who has my keys and they were going to go over and take care of my dog and so that was great, one less thing to worry about. But I knew they couldn't drive in to pick me up. I mean it would just take hours and it would be awful for them to do that. I said, the Pentagon City Metro is only two blocks, a block and a half or so away from the clinic, "I'll just walk to the Pentagon metro if you could meet me at Springfield that would be great." So that's what I did. But riding on the metro was funny because I have the essence of a turban on my head. You know I've got a white bandage just covering my whole head, which got interesting stares, but it got me a seat. Someone from the Justice Department actually said, "Would you like to sit down?" And for once I said, "Yes, I really would like to sit down." You know, so I had a fun metro ride home.

Q. (353) How many stitches?

A. Nine all together, two inside and seven outside. This is my experience with stitches other than my eyes believe it or not. I had stitches in my eyes. But it's very interesting getting stitches and I kept saying, just get through the next--it really wasn't bad is the whole crux of it. It was not a difficult thing to do. I'm not going to say it didn't hurt or anything, but it was not nearly as bad as I thought it was going to be. I just sort of buried my head and said go ahead and do it trying to joke with the doctor about having to get a new hairdo or something because they were shaving my hair, but I didn't have to do that so it all worked out quite well. I was able to meet my friends at the metro. I saw another co-worker from the office at the metro station, so that was again seeing somebody and say okay, they're okay and getting sort of status from him that everybody got out and only two of us had been hurt. So, like wow! It doesn't get much better than that, you know. And my friends were able to get my car for me and get my medicine. And it was really nice to know that there were people there that would help out and do everything they could and more. Meanwhile my younger sister is in Atlanta trying to get home and there are no flights. All the airports were shut down. So she works for Hewlett Packard. And the meeting that they were attending was not going terribly well because people were having a hard time being focused on the subject matter at hand. So the leader of the group said if we can just get through this one thing then we'll all go. Let's just try and get through this one thing, which they did, even though they all knew that [REDACTED] had a sister in the Pentagon. But they had decided to rent a car and so they rented a Land Rover. There were people everywhere, from my sister in Maryland, to some folks in Boston, to somebody in Canada and they just started out. She had her cell phone and since I wasn't supposed to sleep for any more than two hours at a time she would, she'd just call me every couple of hours to say, "Well, we're in North Carolina. We're in Richmond. We'll be there soon." So she was able to get home in a pretty timely manner.

Q. (388) Home being?

A. Home being ██████████, Maryland, which is just north of Leesburg. It's about an hour away, but she was going to stop on the way up and just stay at my house, but her car was at Dulles and she has two small children and her husband and my brother-in-law was kind of up in arms. So I said, you go home first and get squared away and she actually came down and spent the next day with me. My parents came down then the following day and we started the building back up of replacing everything that was in my purse. Well, I was on the phone for three days solid. Just as soon as I hung up, the phone would ring again and so it was very tiring. It really was. To get in touch with everybody and let everybody know what had happened. You really don't get much rest, I found out for quite a while. I think it, like I said, three days until it calmed down and I could get some sleep. I told my parents that they could go ahead and head back to Pennsylvania because I really wanted some quiet. I just love everybody to death, but I just needed some time to kind of think about all this and get some energy back. So by the weekend things calmed down and then actually I worked from home, I have a laptop that has connection to the database that I use for the Flying Air Program and email and everything. So I was able to email to the people I work with out of Norfolk and San Diego and Hawaii and just say, "Hey. Made it through. Exciting day. Don't wish it on anybody but we'll go from here." We'll just move forward and see what we can do.

Q. (418) When did you finally go back to work? You were actually relocated where?

A. Crystal City. It took, if I remember correctly, it took a week to get re-set up. There was some discussion about where we would set up, temporarily. I was not overly concerned about it

because I was working from home so it didn't matter to me and at one point I said I'll just telecommute. I don't need to go back. I was very happy where I was sitting at my kitchen table and working. I think it was a week later when the ADMIRAL called an all hands meeting at the Washington Liaison Office in the north end of Crystal City. I think that was changed once or twice. In the end, when I came back we met in our new space here in NC2 on the 10th floor I believe. Isn't that funny now? I can remember being there, but I remember very little else. I don't remember now. Maybe we met in the WLO. I really do not remember. That's funny. I didn't realize that I'd forgotten that until just now. But he got everybody together and it was wonderful just to see everybody. The ADMIRAL really said some phenomenal things about what he had been through. He was a fighter pilot and his experience and what we needed to do to move forward and the plans for the group, that we would be in Crystal City for a short period of time and you know we probably would be back in the building and that sort of thing. I don't remember exactly what he said. I remember more of a tone. The encouragement and the fact that he really said some great things is more what I remember.

Q. (450) Do you remember what he said?

A. I'll tell you the one thing that sticks in my mind that he said. Being someone who had gone into combat before, he said there's some things you can control and some things you can't control, so what he did to prepare for battle was to take care of all the things he could control. And I remember him saying putting his affairs in order before he would leave and then he would know that things were as complete, you know, he did as much as he could before he left. That's what I remember from his discussion. And I thought that was an interesting way to approach life, not just going into combat. I mean every day we come to work it's sort of home combat, you

know, fighting for parking space and fighting for a seat on the metro and you know, fighting for that last bagel or whatever. I mean, it's just, you're always sort of in a state of—you don't know what's going to happen next and it doesn't take a terrorist to wipe you out. You can be on the beltway. You can have a heart attack. You can do whatever. I thought that was great advice just for living everyday. That if you were always as prepared as you could be for your family, which is obviously what means most to us, that you've done everything you can do and there should be a sense of calm with that. Which I thought was great that he would say that.

Q. (474) Was there any counseling?

A. Yes.

Q. (475) Tell us about that.

A. Mandatory, actually, which I didn't really want to participate in. But they set up groups of us and there were probably, let's say, 20 people that would meet at different time slots. And they had professional counselors that were from the Navy and I don't remember what—

Q. (481) SPRINT Team?

A. Yes, thank you. That's what it was. So we had a time to all meet in the conference room in our space.

Q. (483) Small groups?

A. Small groups, yes.

Q. (484) How were they broken up? Were they just randomly pulled together?

A. Mostly by code I think. So that the people that I sat with were from my immediate working area. N78 Air Warfare is very large. Hundreds of people and so you knew people that were in the room and I think that was good because people would open up. Feel comfortable to share their experience, share their concerns, what they were dealing with. But most of the people I work with are pilots. So I think they have a certain approach to life that may not be typical certainly of civilians, but you know the masses. I think they have a different perspective on things. Most of them seemed more un-phased than I was expecting to see. But then as the session wore on, they'd come up with a comment here or there. Several of them lost people that they knew well, neighbors, people that they had served with in earlier tours, and things. So that was difficult to hear. I didn't lose anyone that I knew personally, but to hear co-workers say, yeah, they lost a good neighbor who's left you know a mother, her two children and she was expecting. Things like that are very difficult to hear. But they were getting a lot of support. We all offered to help in whatever way we could, watch the kids or meals or whatever. But the Navy and the Marines seem to take care of their own folks. There's a lot of support there. So, yes, we did have SPRINT. There also were fliers up saying if you need to talk to anybody, you know, we're on this floor, come see us or whatever. I was also approached by the Red Cross. I don't know how they got everybody's name, but they apparently had a list of names of people that were hurt and they met me at the clinic and heard the story, not in this detail, but heard the story and tried to do what they could and they've been very helpful. I've talked with many different people with the Red Cross. So there's been a lot of follow up as well.

Q. (525) What kind of things did the Red Cross do? What kind of help did they provide?

A. Well, they wrote up a case study and originally offered to give me the money that was in my wallet, that was in the purse that I couldn't get out of the Pentagon. That was the only thing that I could really quantify. They wanted to know what I had lost. And I was trying to think of what things were damaged and really couldn't think of much other than my wallet and I had a personal digital assistant like a palm pilot that was on my desk. I didn't know how badly it had been damaged, but I was pretty sure it wasn't going to come out working and so I mentioned those few things and they wrote up, basically a form, that the Red Cross then attempted to reimburse me the \$80.00 or whatever I thought was in my wallet. Well, I don't know where they sent it. I never got it. I got a phone call saying this was returned to us. The mail started to get funky shortly after with the Anthrax thing. So, mail was not being delivered very well. But they got it back and I said just keep it because, I've gotten my purse out of the Pentagon. Which was extremely thrilling, to get my purse back. So I said I have my wallet. Don't worry about it. You just keep that and so that's how we left it.

Q. (553) When you able to go back into the Pentagon? Tell us about that experience.

A. That wasn't very good.

Q. (555) Let me turn this over.

TAPE ONE/SIDE TWO

A. I don't remember, exactly, when I was able to go back. There was a lot of confusion. E-mails almost daily about when we thought we might get back in. We knew the building was unstable.

We were on the top floor. We knew that it was a crime scene and the FBI had control over it. I mean there were just all kind of things. What it meant to me was I wasn't going to get my purse. I kept obsessing about this. So on a Friday afternoon at 5:00 o'clock, we got an e-mail that said, "You can go into the Pentagon tomorrow or Sunday between 8:00 and 4:00. Show up and they'll put you in groups and they'll send you in." I was like, this is great! So we started calling everybody who had left before 5:00 o'clock to say they are going to let us in tomorrow or Sunday just show up and we'll have an opportunity to get our stuff. Only personal effects. You could take nothing work related. No laptops or anything like that. Just your personal things that's all they would let you take. So a few of us said well, you know what, we're going to, we're going to meet and we'll be there at 8:00 o'clock the next morning. Well, one thing led to another, and we showed up at the Pentagon at about 8:15, let's say, and a group had already gone in. Well what we didn't know was, that was the only group that was going in for the 5th floor and the next group to go in was going to be on the 4th floor and then followed by the 3rd floor. So here we are, having arrived at this crash scene, and unable to even get in. So we finally worked with the folks- whoever was running the show did a great job, but they were very strict. This is what's going to happen and this is what is going to happen and there are no exceptions. And, of course, we said okay, fine. When can we come back? And they worked out a deal that we could come back later that afternoon. I'm thinking it was about 3:00 o'clock. So the secretary and I went off and went shopping or something I forgot. We might have gone home. I don't remember. What I remember is we met early. I said let's get there early because I don't want to show up five minutes late again and have missed this group. So, we got there closer to 2:00.

Q. (581) Was that day the first day you had seen the crash scene?

A. Oh, yeah.

Q. (582) What was that like?

A. That wasn't very good. I was very nervous about going back. I'm glad I did it, but it was not good.

Q. (585) Describe that for us if you can.

A. They had us meet by south parking and there was fence up everywhere. And like I said, they had guys in serious uniforms protecting that entrance. We formed groups. We're the 5th floor group to get in. When they got us together, and I think at that time in the afternoon, there were only about six of us—six or seven of us. And they said, "Okay we got the 5th floor group. We're going in." We walked toward tents that were set up outside the Pentagon, near the helopad. There was a green tent and a white tent and they weren't real well marked, but what was really well marked was the morgue because there was a big sign up. So we stood around there I swear, 20 minutes or more. I don't know how long we stood and we waited and we waited and they finally started handing out hard hats and rubber gloves like dish water gloves and bags I think to put stuff in. I had brought a couple backpacks. I didn't know how I was going to carry all this stuff out. So I had brought some bags that I didn't want anymore. Because they told us that the room had been infested with mold and over run with mold and things were pretty awful up there. We got little--not face masks, but like you would wear if you were painting at home. So we got suited up so to speak and they took us with an escort. We each had an escort, military.

Q. (604) Each individual?

A. Each individual had someone from the reserves from Puerto Rico, which was interesting because of the language thing. They didn't all speak English real well. I didn't know why this was until much later I discovered why they did this, but at the time I had no idea. I thought well that's okay, you know whatever.

Q. (608) Were you in tybec suits?

A. No, I didn't go in with that. Some of the guys did that, got all suited up that was before we went in and so we just had the hard hats, the nose mask and gloves. So they took us to the entrance, which, was just left of the hole. There was a door. And we went in there and there was someone sitting inside at a little make-shift desk taking down everyone's name. I don't know if they took a code or not, but they definitely took our names and the room number. I thought that was interesting. So now they know who's going into the building. And from there we walked up the stairs to the fifth floor which the secretary that I was with, was very concerned about. She said, "I'm not going to be able to walk all that way, I'm not going to be able to walk up." I said, "Don't worry, you know where ever you stop, I'll stop, and however long it takes we'll get there. Don't worry about it." We stopped once on the way up. The smell was horrible. Not much light because the only thing they had there were strings of light bulbs.

Q. (620) What did you smell, what was the smell like?

A. Well--

Q. (621) Was it like jet fuel or like burning?

A. Nothing that I could determine, just terribly unpleasant. So I was grateful for the--although it was very hot, which is interesting, now that I think about it. I don't remember that it was hot outside, but it was hot going up. So you didn't want to wear the mask because it was fogging up your glasses, but you wanted to wear it because it didn't smell very good. But we got up to the 5th floor and we had to walk down the hallway then to the entrance. Our office took up half of the wedge, between the corridors, we took up half. So we came up on the opposite end. We had to walk through half of the D ring that was completely pitch black. I mean there were no lights in there at all. The escorts had flash lights and so--well there might have been the overhead. I can't remember now but, it was very, very difficult to see. They ended up turning on their flash lights, so that we could see where we were walking. We got up to the door, to our office space and one of the Admirals was with us and he turned around and he said, "Do you know where we are?" And I said, "Yes, I think my desk is right around the corner." So we took a look at the stairwell that was right in the middle, which was next to my desk, and it was completely charred. So the Admiral said, "You know I think a fire ball came up. There was an explosion that came up this stairwell, which is why we couldn't get the door open, but why the ceiling blew out." I said, okay, well that makes sense. But we opened the door, and I'm not proud to say, that when we turned the corner and I saw my desk, I lost it. I just couldn't believe I was sitting there. The ceiling, the framework was down to waist level. There were cinder blocks on my chair, I just—my EA-6B model, which was on top of my bookshelf, was doing a nosedive. It was still up there but it was doing a nosedive. It was broken in half and I just looked at this destruction and I said, I can't believe this happened, because that made it real. You know up until then, the stitches didn't make it real. That could have been anything, you know, but when I went and I saw it, I was like, this really happened. Well, unfortunately, the escorts started talking on their walkie-talkies in

Spanish and I had no idea what they were saying. They were just going on and on and on. And I'm just lamenting over the loss of my desk. When two guys come crashing through the door, the entrance. Like, "Where is she?" I said, "Where is who?" Well they were looking for me. They thought I was going to pass out or something. I said, "No, no, no, I'm fine. I'm fine. Really, I'm fine." "Oh, sit down here sit down." I said I was sitting here when it happened. I was trying to explain to them that I had been there that that was my chair. I was able to get my purse after digging through the rubble that was on the floor, which the guys did for me. I was just kind of was like what do I do now? I just didn't have a clue. So they started digging things out. They were concerned to move anything. Nothing had been touched since that day, so they didn't know if they move something would other things fall. So we got the drawer open, I got my purse and I was able to get a personal file and some other things, chocolates that someone had brought back from Belgium. I spared the chocolates, packed them up in my backpack. I tried to take the model. I could save my model. This is the EA-6B aircraft that was up on top of the shelf. I kept saying my model. Well, they went and took it off the shelf and they handed it to me and it was just broke. It's big. It's a large-scale aircraft and I knew I couldn't carry it out. So I just said well. I took it and put it in the next cubical. The very next cubical had absolutely no damage to it what so ever, other than dust and mold and that sort of thing. But it was amazing how the building withstood this and the only thing that blew out was that first, that one little section in the ceiling affecting two cubicals. So I put the airplane model next door and figured someone will get it. I just can't deal with that right now. When the guys came in the next day on Sunday to take care of their stuff, they saw the model sitting there on the desk and they brought it out. So it's now being fixed, as we speak. They are going to put it back together for me. So that was a good thing that happened. As I said, going back in was very difficult. BOBBY, who had been in the far corner,

was unable to come back. He was there at 8:15 Saturday morning, but couldn't come back because of family commitments. And he said could you pick up a few things. My medical records, my pictures of the family, things like that. I was like sure, no problem because at the time you have no idea when you go back in. So I left my desk and went around cubicals and went down by the wall to BOBBYS desk to get his stuff and his desk was so much worse than mine. I mean the whole light fixture was hanging and blocking the wardrobe piece of furniture. I mean it was just incredible. Walking on who knows what. I got his pictures of the kids and I got his medical records and then I said I have to leave. I really didn't see the rest of the room. Where the guys had gone through and said it was like nothing happened, you know. But they said you won't like what you see when you go to your desk. Other than the mold and that, it was just like everybody just got up and left kind of thing. It was very, very strange.

Q. (693) Were you walking on rubble?

A. Oh, yeah. At my desk and at BOBBY'S desk. I had wanted to look out because I had been watching the news, and I could see where the hole was, and I thought I knew where our office was. You could see through it and you could see where the office was, but when I left BOBBY'S desk, I didn't look at anything. I acknowledged that one of the windows was broken, which happened after the fact, not while anyone was in the room. I just walked out. So we all congregated right outside that door where we had entered and did a head count. And that's when it dawned on me why we had an individual military escort and why they took our names before we went in because they wanted to make sure that everybody got out that went in. So just very thorough in how they approached the process.

Q. (705) Why the Spanish speaking guys?

A. Because they were reservists who were called up. I don't know why.

Q. (707) From Puerto Rico?

A. Yeah, that's what they said. They were wonderful, just wonderful, but I thought it was funny that they--if I had known that's why they were talking, I would have said don't worry about it.

But in the end we had some extra folks to help carry the stuff out which was also very helpful.

We had to congregate again outside the room and then we walked down to the first floor. We had to go toward the A ring when we left. We had to go to the center courtyard for decontamination.

So everything that we took out of the building had to be inspected and vacuumed and what not.

Just walking out, I mean there puddles everywhere. I mean it looked like a war zone. I said this is as close to a war zone that I'm ever going to get, I'm sure. But that's what it looked and felt like.

Just the destruction and the smells and no light, per say and what not, and then we opened up into the courtyard and went through decontamination. We had to go out through the second corridor which looked like nothing had happened to it. It was cleaner than I had ever seen it.

Because all the while we were waiting to be able to go back the building is being cleaned, like super cleaned. So when we went out the normal exit, it was like nothing had ever happened. It

was a completely different world going from one side to the other. A little kind of--very strange.

So that was going back and getting the stuff. Then there were opportunities later for a few of the

guys to go over and pack up the work files. The Army went through, at one point, boxed up

anything that they perceived was personal and if they could they would put a code on it. We all

had our names and codes newly up against the cubical. So I ended up having a box that the Army

had packed being stored at Ft. Myer, which some folks went over and retrieved. So I got all that

back. So actually they retrieved just about everything. Computers didn't fare very well. Smoke damage. The one girl who was dealing with the computers, taking all the CPU's downloading all the files onto CD's for us said that she'd start one up and then just puff of smoke would come out the back. So there was that. And they pretty much had all been trashed. So that was probably the biggest loss that I'm aware of from our office.

Q. (740) And you're still based out of NC2?

A. Yes, until the end of this month.

Q. (742) Then back to the Pentagon?

A. Right.

Q. (742) What's that going to be like? Is it going to be hard to go back and work in that building?

A. I've been back a couple of times since and actually it's not a problem at all. The only thing that gets me in the Pentagon is walking by the walls where the kids have written all their wishes and the heroes, the people that were lost. That's tough. But I think it'll be good to be back in the building.

Q. (747) Is there a general consensus amongst your peers of the same? Do they feel the same way?

A. Most of them, I think want to get back. It's more convenient, for many reasons, to be in the building, and just because you are no longer in a temporary space. Even though we're going back to the old wedge and you know the renovation's going to continue, so there'll be movement, it's

not like you have to be out here in Crystal City because your office blew up. So I think that people will settle in. There are boxes that haven't been unpacked. We don't have voicemail here. You don't have real computers. We have laptops with docking stations. There are some inconveniences to being down here. So it'll be nice to be back I think.

Q. (758) Is there anything else you want to add?

A. Well as you predicted, I said more than I thought I would say. I think this is part of the healing process. It's easier for me just to try and ignore the whole thing, but I don't think that's the best thing in the long run. I think it is better to go ahead and tell the story and be reminded and deal with it.

Q. (765) Who else should we talk with? You mentioned GEORGE. What's GEORGE'S last name?

A. HAYN, H-A-Y-N. He works with Marine Corps Headquarters ASL. I don't have a phone number for him right now. We've all moved around quite a bit, but if you want to call me later I'm happy to give him a call. But he was in the room when it happened and not part of Air Warfare any longer. He has moved on to his next assignment.

Q. (769) But he was Air Warfare at the time?

A. But he was sitting there working on some old files at the time. So I would talk to him.

Q. (771) Who else?

A. Have you gotten the names of some of the other folks like from NAVCOMP, FMB, who are downstairs on the 4th floor?

Q. (775) Yes we have.

A. I'm not really sure.

Q. (776) Well, you have my number then if you do come up with some thoughts on that.

A. I mean there are so many people that I don't know who you may have already touched base with. But I can certainly maybe put a list together of people that I know that were involved.

Q. (779) That would be great.

A. Okay, alright.

Q. (780) Well thanks so much for taking the time to deal with this.

A. Thank you.

Transcribed by:
Kim Lacik for Tim Ayoub
4 March 2002