

**Naval Historical Center
Oral Interview Summary Form**

Interviewers:

CAPT Michael McDaniels
CDR Richard Fahy

Interviewer's Organization:

Naval Historical Center
Naval Historical Center

Interviewee:

SN Sarah Cole

Current Address:

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Date of Interview:

December 6

Place of Interview:

Pentagon

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:

Interviewee Information:

SN Cole is from Kansas City, Missouri. She has two younger brothers who are in high school. Growing up, she lived primarily with her father who is a preacher for the Christian Methodist Episcopal church. In high school, she was on the student council, editor of the school newspaper, students against drunk driving, fellowship for Christian athletes, and ROTC. She is a 20 year old single mother of an 8 month old girl (Rachel). She entered the Navy in September 1999. She began working for the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) in the CNO intelligence plot (CNO-IP) in July 2000, and has been in the graphics section since October 2000.

Topics Discussed:

CNO-IP was a new facility; they moved in about three weeks prior. It was located in the D ring (1C479). You had to walk through the Navy Command Center to the space. There was one door to get into the office. To gain access, you had to swipe your card and enter a PIN number.

Working in the plot: IS2 Willier was the acting LPO. LT Dido was the SWO. CDR Tolbert was the AOIC. CDR Shanauer was the OIC. Angela Howtz was the Senior Naval Analyst. SN Cole worked directly for the briefer who briefed the CNO, SecNav, etc. LT Pannick was the briefer and LT Pontell was being trained as the briefer. Brady Howell was the intern.

On September 11th, she arrived to work at 7:10 am. She had been on leave the week prior. Normally she would be sitting in on the brief that started at 8 or 8:30. Afterwards, there would be a "hotwash" to cover subjects to be briefed the following day.

SN Cole was in the CNO Intelligence Plot in the Pentagon at the time of the 11 Sep attack on the Pentagon. Once the planes hit the WTC, LCDR Tolbert told SN Cole to inform CDR Roddy that they had no leads on who initiated the attack. SN Cole was thinking at the time that the Pentagon could also be hit.

When she returned to the IP, she went to the graphics shop. Soon afterwards, the lights started to flicker on and off. Then the ceiling started to cave in. Then the lights went off. Everything was shifting and moving. Then, suddenly, she was outside of the Pentagon – the wall had blown open a “garage door” size opening and the pressure had pushed her out. Her head was hit by something, and she had a cut on her shoulder. She looked back towards her office. Then she saw IS3 Polasek near her feet. He was okay. Then, IS2 Gully walked out of the opening from the office space.

The wall between the graphics shop and intel plot collapsed. There was a lot of smoke but no fire right away. She doesn’t recall any sounds at all. There was a loudspeaker saying “please evacuate the building. There has been a disturbance in the building. She doesn’t remember feeling anything – no heat and no wind. She was confused and panicked. Her uniform was torn a little bit and she had “wall all over me.” She looked for a fire extinguisher but couldn’t find one. She remembers seeing soldiers on the second deck trying to crash through the window. They eventually made a small hole in the window and jumped out from the second floor.

A muster was held, and most of the survivors from the IP plot stayed in a group for the rest of the day. They helped put up tents and give out food. She remembers seeing the tail of the plane with “AA” (American Airlines) hanging out of the building, but she hasn’t seen any pictures of this since so it must have burned in the fire. She phoned her relatives to make sure they knew she was okay. She couldn’t get her keys, wallet, etc so she couldn’t use her car or get in to her apartment. She recalls looking at the fire coming from the Pentagon and “remembering” it through dreams or previous experiences. She’s relived and dreamed the experience several times since then – some of them very unpleasant. In her dreams, she “hears” the plane hitting the building, and there was fire, but the lights were still on in the building.

Her life has not changed that much since the event. She takes life a little slower. She was given the option of leaving ONI, but she wanted to continue. Throughout the workday, she occasionally gets tense and envisions bad things happening. She remembers reading a brief not too long ago from June 2001 about a possible threat to the US with ties to Osama bin Laden. There was a prediction that it might be done by suicide bombers in a vehicle. It was suppose to be done in June, but was postponed until September.

She did talk to the SPRINT team and found it helpful. Interestingly, she had an appointment for her allergies on September 11th, but she forgot about it. If she had remembered, she would not have gone to work that day.

For the weeks following September 11th, the Intel watch was set up at ONI. The graphics team was later split up to the Navy Annex. The watch floor remained at ONI. It was “miserable” for the graphics team since there was lack of room and quality computers. Graphics and slides from other commands like J2 were used. They were also gone a lot because of the memorials and funerals. The watch seems more like a family now and appreciate each other more. The office has been working a lot harder.

SN Cole leaves in May, and three others from the graphics shop are leaving in February, so it's going to be brand new people soon. She is going to VAQ-143 in Whidbey Island in May 2002. She's putting together a scrap book of everything that has happened. She doesn't think that the event has really hit her yet.

Abstract prepared by:
CDR Richard Fahy
10 Dec 2001

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Transcript of Interview:

Interviewee Information:

SN Cole is from Kansas City, Missouri. She has two younger brothers who are in high school. Growing up, she lived primarily with her father, who is a preacher for the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. In high school, she was on the student council, editor of the school newspaper, students against drunk driving, fellowship of Christian athletes, and ROTC. She is a 20-year-old single mother of an 8-month old girl (Rachel). She entered the Navy in September 1999. She began working for the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) in the CNO Intelligence Plot (CNO IP) in July 2000, and has been in the graphics section since October 2000.

Topics Discussed:

Q. (073) Can you kind of give us a verbal description of the space? Kind of walk us through there, for the tape's purposes.

A. Okay. It was brand new. We had just moved in, maybe three weeks prior.

Q. (076) Where was it located?

A. It was in the D-Ring and the room number was 1C479, I think. You had to walk through the Navy Command Center to get to our space because we were in the SCIF. We had one door to get into our office. You swiped your building card and put in a PIN number and then just pulled the door open. I remember it was really heavy. Then you'd walk in and there was a hallway and to the left were file cabinets and closets and things for a while down the hallway. Then to the right there was the Graphic Shop and then the next room was the Watch Floor. The next room was the VTC room, where they actually did the brief and then straight down the hall from the door was the VTC room where all the operating equipment was. Then to the left of that was a room with three offices: there was LCDR TOLBERT'S office on the left, the Briefer space with the SWO and the Naval Analyst in the middle, and then CDR SHANOWER'S office was on the right.

Q. (090) How large a room was it?

A. The whole office, all together? It wasn't very big. I'm not really sure.

Q. (092) Can you tell us who did you actually report to and who worked with you?

A. Okay, CHIEF IVORY hadn't gotten there yet. It was actually supposed to be her very first day and our LPO had just went on maternity leave. IS2 LHUILLIER was sort of our acting LPO and then, other than that, there was LT ZITO who was our SWO then but now he's our AOIC. CDR TOLBERT was then our AOIC and I talked to him a lot because he understood when I had problems and he didn't come down real hard on me. He was just easy to talk to if there was a problem. He was okay about it because he'd always said if you have a problem with talking to the people in your chain of command, direct chain of command, then you could always come to him. So I had to a lot. CDR SHANOWER, I remember, he was all about the Navy so he didn't

really handle admin issues but he was our OIC, and he was a good officer. ANGELA HOUTZ was our Senior Naval Analyst and she -- these are the people that were always in the office no matter what day it was. She was really sweet and nice and you could ask her any question and she'd be happy to help you. She didn't make you feel like you should have already known, just glad to help. There were Briefers that rotate. They'd come in at night and leave sometime in the morning. Then there was an afternoon person that turned over at nighttime. I think there were three Briefers then all together. I work directly for the Briefer, creating his slides for the briefs that he gives the CNO and the DNI, Secretary of the Navy, and things like that.

Q. (117) How did that feel being the one that helped prepare the slides to go to those folks?

A. For a long time, I didn't really, really realize how important it was until one day they came back and said they really do, they pay more attention to those slides than they do the brief. So it felt kind of good. You know, somebody appreciates the work we do.

Q. (120) Tell us about the day of 11 September. Kind of walk us through your whole day.

A. Okay.

Q. (121) From the morning, getting up whatever. Just kind of take us through.

A. I remember the whole thing. I woke up and I turned the TV on because my apartment was big and quiet and I just had to have something going on.

Q. (124) Is your apartment in the Washington area? Where do you actually live?

A. Then I was living just right off of Branch Ave. There was a show that I watched in the morning, as I was getting ready. I just kind of listened to it, called Shepherd's Chapel Ministry. That day they were reading the Psalms and explaining each one as you went along and that day they were doing Psalm 78, which is something that I've been reading, since I was probably 14, that particular one. That stuck out in my mind because I was thinking, God's trying to say something to me today. So I was just got ready and went to work.

Q. (131) You were thinking that that morning?

A. Yes.

Q. (131) What is Psalm 78?

A. It's about the people of Israel leaving Egypt and how they were ungrateful. They were spoiled. God gave them everything and they never appreciated it. They just asked for more and no matter what He did, they were always doing the wrong thing.

I got into work ten minutes late, like I always do and --

Q. (138) Which was what time?

A. 7:10 and I sat down at my computer. I did turnover with the guy that was leaving, who worked the 11-7 shift. I had been on leave the week prior, so that morning I was just trying to catch up with the projects that I had left behind. Nothing really important, just little projects I work on to keep myself busy. It seemed like there was a lot going on that morning. I was looking for Pentagon pictures for people that had just left our office because I had remembered that we brought some from our old spaces before we moved, but I couldn't remember where they are, so

I was looking for those. I was making new office labels for all of the rooms in our new office because if you had just walked into our office, you wouldn't know where anything is. So, we were just putting signs on all the doors and laminating them and everything.

Q. (150) So you, literally, just moved in the space like how long before?

A. It may have been three weeks, yeah. Usually, I was supposed to be sitting in on the brief, which happened at 8 o'clock. Then I think it was Tuesdays and Thursdays it would happen at 8:30 because we didn't break for DNI on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I usually sit in on the brief and then afterwards they did the hot wash, which was the meeting where they discussed Intel products for tomorrow's brief, but Monday and Tuesday I just didn't go because I was preoccupied with all the other things I was doing and lost track of time. We're not allowed to interrupt the brief and come in the room while they're doing the VTC. So I just kept doing my work and then at one point -- actually before the brief even went down, CDR TOLBERT came into talk to me and said, "I haven't seen you in a while." He said, "How's everything?" I said, "Fine," because I always say fine. He was like, "You'd tell me that no matter what was going on!" He was teasing me and I told him some things that were going on that were good and he was like, "Well that is good news!" Then he left and he did his thing. Then, it was after the brief, he brought in some slides that he wanted put in a binder and taken to the fourth deck.

Q. (167) LCDR TOLBERT?

A. Yes. He wanted me to take them to CDR RADI who works for the Vice Chief of Naval Operations. So I got those ready to go. He told me to show them to him before I took them upstairs, so I did. At that time, the first Trade Tower had already been hit and they were

watching that on TV. As he was talking to me, the second tower was hit. I remember LT PANIK was our Briefer. LT PONTELL was being trained as the Briefer, and they were in there watching the TV. They were all in there watching the TV. CDR TOLBERT told me to tell CDR RADI that, we had no leads on who was responsible for the attack. So I went upstairs to CDR RADI'S office and on the way up there, I was thinking, if this could happen in New York, this is the Pentagon, it could happen here just as easily and I just had this thought in the back of my head like no, it's not going to happen, but I kept telling myself that it could. So I delivered the notebook to CDR RADI and I remember everybody in his office, everybody in all the offices had CNN on, and CDR RADI was looking out his window like he was looking to see if anything was going on out in our part of the world. I gave him the binder and I told him what CDR TOLBERT said about we didn't know who it was yet and he just told me to tell him to keep an eye on it. So, I went back down to the office and they were all in the back room in CDR SHANOWER'S office, where they were doing the VTC. Usually they're in the briefing room, where they actually brief to ONI and everyone, but MS. LONG, the Deputy DNI and her staff, were in there for a longer period of time so they just went ahead and did the hot wash in CDR SHANOWER'S office even after she left. I walked back into that part of the office and saw CDR TOLBERT and the Intern, BRADY HOWELL. They were sitting in the doorway so; I imagine they had a semi-circle around CDR SHANOWER at his desk. I saw that they were busy and I knew that they were doing the hot wash, so I just turned around and went back to the Graphic Shop. I saw that Petty Officer POLASEK had turned the news on because we had been listening to music. We started talking about it a little bit and I sat down at the computer in the corner on the right hand side of the Graphic Shop as you walk in. I told him we should probably download the slides from the unclassified machine for tomorrow's brief, because that was my job at the time was briefer

assisting. I was just trying to anticipate their needs and what they were going to work on for the next brief. POLASEK told me that they probably weren't on yet because it just happened and so I waited a few minutes, not very long at all, obviously. Then I went on to the unclassified machine and went to CNN's homepage, and it was taking a long time to pull up. So I tried all the different pages that CNN has and finally saw a couple of pictures of the Trade Towers. I was kind of surprised myself, that they were already posted. So, I was trying to save them to a floppy disk and then I was going to take them and download them on to my computer and put them in the Hold Folder for the next day's brief. It was taking so long for everything to get done. I was trying to find better pictures and I was just sitting at the unclassified machine, which is about three computers down from where I normally sit. As that was happening, Petty Officer GULLY had just come in the room and he came from Smoothie King and came in and was talking to us. We were telling him what was going on because he hadn't really heard because it had just happened. He wasn't in the office for probably 20 minutes or so. About three minutes went by when, after he came in the office, when everything started to happen.

First, I remember the lights flickered, all the way off and all the way on. Like the scene from Titanic, when the ship is sinking and they're up to their waist in water, it was just like that. Then, I was going to make some smart comment to the guys in the room with me, like "Oh great, what's going on now? The lights don't even work," because it was a new space so I thought it was just -- the week before I went on leave, we had a problem with our Cannon copier because there wasn't enough voltage in the electrical outlet for our printer so we had to get more juice for that. So I thought maybe it was related to that. I got all those thoughts through my mind, but before I could have anything come out of my mouth, I mean instantly, the ceiling started to cave

in. I remember seeing that happen. I was facing a wall at my computer but when I was talking to them, I had turned to my right. That's how I saw the ceiling start to fall behind me, right behind Petty Officer GULLY. Then, next thing I know the lights are off. Then everything just started shifting and moving and the force from the plane was pushing everything forward.

Q. (239) So it was coming from which direction as you were sitting?

A. It was coming from behind me.

Q. (240) Okay.

A. So, my eyes were open the whole time. The force -- I can't remember if it pushed me out of my chair, but I was either standing or I was either on my knees. I can't really remember that. I was outside because the wall had blown open, almost immediately, because I remember seeing daylight about right away. I remember seeing pieces of the ceiling tiles falling at my feet. I didn't realize it at the time, but something hit me in my head because it was sore. Then I had a scratch on my shoulder. I got a cut. I vaguely remember something coming down on my shoulder, but there was so much going on that I wasn't really thinking about that. At first, I thought it was only happening to me. I thought that something fell down and everything's just normal everywhere around me. I thought that the other guys were going to make fun of me because stuff fell on me, when I was just sitting at the desk. Then it stopped and I was still standing, I think, and I had my left hand kind of covering my face a little bit from all the debris and everything. I stood up all the way. I stood up straight and I looked behind me and saw my office just dark and trashed. I couldn't see much because I think so much stuff had fallen. It had piled up so high that I couldn't really see anything. I looked back and my very first thought -- well, as it was happening, my first

thought was I can't die now. What about [REDACTED]? That's my little girl, obviously. That was my very, very first thought. She was five months old at the time. When it all stopped, I looked behind me and I was thinking, is POLASEK dead under all that rubble, because he was sitting just two computers down from me? Then he called my name and I turned to where his voice was coming from. He was right in front of me and he was curled up in the debris, right in front of my feet. I didn't see him at first because he was just dusty, just like everything else that had fallen. Then he grabbed me and put his arm around me and he told me to stay down and we just stayed down for a few seconds until we thought it was going to stay quiet for a while and nothing else was going to happen. Then he said to me, "Where's GULLY?" and I said, "I don't know!" Then he yelled in there. He said, "GULLY?" and then there was no answer. I stood up and I yelled in there for him and there was no answer. I yelled again and he said, "I'm alright," like nothing had happened. Then he eventually came out. It seemed like forever.

Q. (279) Did you, literally, walked through that hole?

A. Yes.

Q. (279) Just walked right through it like there was --

A. Yes. So I think what happened -- the way it sounds like to me, I'm not 100% sure, but GULLY was standing up against the photo copier, the Cannon 5000, and there were file cabinets behind him, and I think he got pinned down to the copier by the file cabinet, which is why he didn't respond right away. He's a pretty big guy so; he could probably just push it off of him. CDR TOLBERT, CDR SCHANAUER, ANGIE HOUTZ, LT PONTELL, LT PANIK, GERRY MORAN, and BRADY HOWELL; they were all in the back offices at the time. Next to us on the

Watch Floor, LT HUMBERT, IS2 LHUILLIER and CDR CAPETS, who is not a part of IP, but he was down there because there's always people coming in and out of our office. They got out of the Watch Floor because from what I understand, the wall between the Graphic Shop and the Watch Floor crumbled. CDR CAPETS saw daylight and led them out of the building and that's how they got out. Almost immediately, I remember, our office was in smoke. I didn't see any fire right away, but there was a lot of smoke and there were no lights on. It was just really, really dark and we kept yelling in to see if anybody could hear us, if there was anybody in there. I guess I understand that the plane pretty much came -- it didn't make a straight line, of course, but pieces of it flew straight through our office, the nose and parts of the landing gear and things like that. We stayed in A- and E-Drive, that's the outside part --

Q. (306) Did you know it was a plane at the time?

A. I didn't. I kept looking at the building and thinking we've been attacked but, I didn't really know what had happened. I mean, I was just watching it on TV, but you don't want to think something like that just happened.

Q. (310) What did you think it was?

A. I didn't really know. I kept asking people, like they would know any better than me. I'd say, "What happened? What happened? What's going on?" Nobody really knew.

Q. (313) What did it sound like? Describe what you heard. What was the sound like?

A. I don't remember hearing any sounds, at all. That surprises people, that I didn't even hear the plane hit the building, come through our office. I don't remember feeling anything. The other

guys said they felt a gush of wind force them, but I don't remember that. I don't remember the wall blowing out, but I remember seeing, almost immediately, that it was blown out.

Q. (320) Did you feel any heat?

A. No, I didn't feel any heat.

Q. (321) What was your demeanor 10 seconds after? A minute? Five minutes?

A. I was confused. That was the main thing. I think I was confused.

Q. (325) To the extent that you were panicked or was it --

A. Yeah, I was panicking and I was just in tears because I knew that there were people still stuck in my office and there was so much smoke and fire. I didn't know if we'd be able to go back there and get them or if they could get out. I was trying to think so hard of where there was a fire extinguisher in our office.

Q. (330) What about around you? How were the other people responding?

A. We were all trying to help other people because the people next door to us in NCC were -- there were a few of them coming out. I understand they lost 35 of their staff. I remember seeing soldiers from the second deck banging on the windows trying to get out. The windows didn't blast out. The glass didn't break. They just pushed out a little bit. They were throwing computers and chairs trying to break the glass and they couldn't get out. Two windows broke and I'm not sure how many, but people were having to -- they got it propped open just enough to where they could slide out of the window and jump down. So there were a few people out of two separate

windows doing that. We were trying to make their landing as painless as possible. I remember one -- I think it was probably a Lieutenant, came out of NCC covered with burns (Editors Note: LT Kevin Schaffer). His uniform had been burned and all you could see was his t-shirt. The skin was hanging off of his fingers. They told me to go down a little bit to where they have those motor carts that they've got in the Pentagon, and get that and bring it to him. So I ran down there and I drove it through all the rubble, so they could put him on there so they didn't have to touch him and hurt him or anything. He was probably in so much shock; he wouldn't have felt it anyway.

Q. (352) Was he one of the ones that jumped?

A. No. He was on the first deck.

Q. (353) He just walked out?

A. Yes.

Q. (354) Did everybody walk out of the hole? Was that the main exit?

A. For our office it was.

Q. (355) Were there other holes like that or anything?

A. I don't really remember. I think there were a couple of small ones. POLASEK and I were both, kind of, forced out of the hole by the force of the plane. So we were automatically outside. It was about the size of a garage door; where we came out of. The other two on either side of us were about the size of a regular door, I think. I read in the newspaper that the walls of the

Pentagon, the outside walls of the Pentagon are 24” thick and of limestone and brick and, I think, cement so the brick didn’t really give much at all, or the wall actually so, it was just the doors. The hole that we came out of was just a filled in hole. It wasn’t even a real wall. That’s why we got out. Otherwise, we wouldn’t have had a way out.

Q. (371) So after you’re out and you’re helping people jump from the building, what did you do after that?

A. I was kind of just running around back and forth trying to figure out how I could help and what I could do at that point, because there were so many people under the windows that we couldn’t all fit under there. They were catching people so I backed away after a little while and I was just kind of standing there. I didn’t want to leave the group I was with because I wanted to see if more people were going to come out of my office and I didn’t want to be wandering around the Pentagon by myself. After a while IS2 LHUILLIER told me to get out and go to ground zero. I just stood there kind of looking funny because I told him, “I’m not going anywhere,” because I knew something had just happened where I was and I didn’t want to go into another part of the building if something else was going to happen. So I just kind of stood there for a little while, because I wanted to wait for them. There were several people that just kept asking me if I was okay and I kept saying, “I’m fine, I’m fine. There’s still people in my office though!” We had to run off their names about a dozen times.

Q. (391) Who asked you for the names?

A. The Commander that was in our office at the time, CDR CAPETS, and I don’t remember who else, but there were several people, probably three or four people, that asked for their names. I

don't know where other people were coming from in the A- and E-Drive, but I remember seeing an Admiral in there that asked me if I was okay and then told me to leave the building and I was just kind of standing there with the whole world spinning around me. Then he had a Chief take me out. The Chief was talking to me and telling me that he was new so he was kind of lost, too. So, I was just following him because I don't know where I would have ended up anyway.

While we were going through the Pentagon I remember seeing the lights flashing and hearing a voice saying, "Please evacuate immediately! There's been a disturbance in the building!" We got out and ended up in ground zero. I looked across and saw a big cloud of smoke coming from where I just was. It was just perfect blue sky and a cloud of smoke. I remember then thinking I can't forget to thank God that I came out of this alive. So, when we got to ground zero, we met up with a medic who was coming in the building. She took me out to the lawn of North Parking, where everybody was gathering. The Chief went back in, I guess, to help people be saved.

People were coming up to me because; I obviously, looked like I was in -- I had wall all over me and my uniform was torn a little bit. They said I looked like a ghost! I just turned white from shock or fear or something. So people were just trying to talk to me, I guess take my mind off of it. I don't really know. I mean, just trying to keep me calm, I guess. I was mostly confused, more than anything else.

I sat down in the lawn for a little while. POLASEK was the first person I saw after they left the Pentagon. I asked him if they'd gotten the fire under control, if anybody else had come out. He said it was just getting worse; nobody else had come out. So all over again I was just devastated. Then I saw CDR RADI walking by and I ran up to him and told him what was going on, because CDR RADI was our OIC before CDR SHANOWER. So I went and told him what happened, and we were all in there and who was still in the building, and he just put his arm around me and

shook his head like he couldn't believe it. After that, I saw all the rest of the people that had come out of my office with me and we just stayed together for the rest of the day.

We were by the bridge, across the street from North Parking. We found LT WYPYSKI, who worked for CNOIP for a while and worked for the NIMJIC. He's back at ONI now. He just left to go to ONI. He kind of took over as the boss, as our leader and he stayed --

Q. (449) Who was that again?

A. LT WYPYSKI. He just took the names of everybody that was at work that day, everybody that was accounted for, everybody that was unaccounted for, and the people that were off. We stood around and we were going to help with the triage and everything, guard it so people didn't look when they pulled out dead bodies. This was right after it happened so they didn't know that it wasn't going to happen again. At first we were going to walk to someone's house, to make our phone calls, and let everybody know that we were okay, but we decided to stay and help. We were in North Parking and ran all the way around the building back to the blast sight. It was almost all the way around the Pentagon. We were going to help with whatever they needed help with. We put up tents and helped bring out the food. They were handing out rubber gloves so that we could help actually bring the bodies out of the building, which would have been hard because I didn't want -- that's when I started getting a little sick because I didn't want to see anybody I knew. That would have been hard. I mean, it just happened so I couldn't go through that. But they, of course, they ended up not because for one reason or another. The fire -- they couldn't put it out, of course.

So, we stood there all day looking at the blast sight. I remember, nobody else that I was with remembered, seeing the tail of the plane hanging out of the building because I remember making a comment saying, "It was American Airlines. I see the AA on the tail." I haven't seen any pictures or anything so it must have been in flames almost right away. We spent the better part of the day looking at the fire and the smoke.

We finally got to make phone calls about 12:30, because it was hard to get a line out and it was hard to find a cell phone. All of our phones, bankcards, everything was in our drawers in our office so we didn't have anything. So I called and couldn't get a hold of anybody. I left a message on my mom's machine at work and let her know I was okay.

So after -- it may have been 4 or 5 in the evening, we went up the street to the Navy Annex, where ADMIRAL PORTERFIELD had set up an office for himself, and we went up there. LT HUMBERT and I went up there to make phone calls, just help ADMIRAL PORTERFIELD, MS. LONG and CAPTAIN MOORE; answer their questions of who was in there, where were they sitting, those kinds of things.

Q. (502) Where was MS. LONG during, during the impact?

A. I think she had been back to her office by then.

Q. (504) Back in Suitland, or where?

A. No, she worked on the 5th deck of the Pentagon on the opposite side, well, maybe not the opposite, but she wasn't near the impact.

When we got to the Annex, I finally got to talk to people. I called my aunt because there's always people at her house and so I figured somebody would answer the phone and she did. She

was home and she called my dad at work because I didn't know his work number. And the three of us were talking on the phone and then I called my mom. My mom -- she told me that she heard about it on TV and she said, "The Pentagon's a big building! What are the odds?" So she said she wasn't worried about me. My dad said he knew I was okay. He just had a feeling I was okay, but he didn't know how okay I was, if I was hurt, or I wasn't even in that part, but he said he knew I was alive.

Q. (528) What about your daughter? Where was your daughter?

A. At the time she was at a different babysitter than she's at now. It was in Waldorf. A lady that I know that works at ONI, the lady across the street from her was her baby sitter at the time. All my phone numbers were either on my cell phone or on my computer, so I didn't know her phone number by heart. I figured that she knew what was going on. She would know that I was probably going to be late coming home. So [REDACTED] was over at the baby sitter. Then when DOLLY VALENZUELA [phonetic], that's my friend that works at ONI, when she got off work, she went and picked her up and kept her at her house and gave her a bath and fed her and everything. Finally, I got done. I called. I don't remember how I got the number. Oh, I was at the Annex and I called 411 and I was trying to find phone numbers of anybody in the area I knew that could call, so I could talk to DOLLY. Because I was going to ask DOLLY to go pick her up for me but they had already, of course, taken care of that. I was just trying to worry about everything in the world. I talked to the babysitter. She went across the street and gave the phone to DOLLY and I talked to her for a while. She asked me, "Is LT ZITO okay?" And I was like, "Yeah, he wasn't in the building. He was across the street." She was like, "And ANGIE?" I was like, "I don't think so," because she was real good friends with both of them.

So, I was probably at the Annex until about 7 or 8 that evening. The duty van came from ONI came to pick me up me and LT HUMBERT. They took LT HUMBERT to her house, which isn't far from the Pentagon, and then they took me to Waldorf because my keys were gone. I couldn't get my car. I couldn't get in my apartment, so I stayed at DOLLY'S house for the night.

Q. (573) Do you relive some of the scenes? Do you dream about them?

A. All the time. When I was walking through ground zero and saw the smoke, I remember thinking to myself, I've seen this in a dream before. It was more like I remembered it happening more than it was the first time I had ever seen it. I had a lot of dreams of afterwards. In fact, that Sunday I had a dream that ANGIE HOUTZ, the analyst, she was standing at a bus stop and I walked up to her and I was like, "ANGIE, what's going on? You haven't called anybody. We're all worried about you." She turned around and looked at me and she kind of laughed, like, "What are you talking about," and she said, "No, I'm alright!" That was it.

Q. (591) This was the Sunday before?

A. The Sunday after.

Q. (591) This is Sunday after?

A. Yes. But I've had some really terrible dreams that were just disturbing like the offices with people still in them. I remember, it wasn't -- I knew it was about the Pentagon even though it didn't take place there or anything like that. There was a crowd of people and they were all dressed up in like formal wear and something happened. In fact, in my dreams I can hear the plane hitting the building. I can't consciously recall that sound but I know I heard it because in

my dreams I hear it clearly. But in that, people were on the floor and they couldn't get up. After I woke up, I was thinking that's probably the people that were in the Pentagon that were trapped under things and just suffocated or burned; things like that, dreams like that. So, I had to sleep with my TV on for a long time just because it was just uncomfortable to -- my brain would think about too many things if it was just too quiet. So, I tried to distract myself.

Q. (615) How's your life changed?

A. I don't know. I take my time more when I do things. I just try to be more careful. There's nothing you can really do to prepare for something like that so it's just kind of -- I just try to be aware of the things that are going on around me more, the good things, just so I can appreciate them more. Since it's happened, they asked me if I wanted to stay at ONI. They could find me a job there if I didn't feel comfortable coming back to the Pentagon, but I told them, "No." I want to come back. I want to be a part of CNO IP. So, I came back, but we could still smell the smoke. I'm always getting really tense and think something's going to hit the building and I keep thinking that something's going to come towards me like fire or something and there's nothing I can do. I can't run. I can't go anywhere else and it's just going to take everybody out; just scary things like that.

That same Sunday that I had that dream, I asked God to show me something in the Bible that relates to this whole thing that's happened, just to -- as comfort. It was Psalm 64, which is talking about -- I can't remember anything exactly, but it's saying things like 'we'll do these evil deeds and they will not -- saying they won't even know we're coming and we're going to get them.' So it was just -- I knew that was exactly what He wanted me to read because it was just too appropriate for the way everything happened. I was reading a brief not too long ago. It was

from June of this year, one of our briefs that we gave, and I was just reading one of the slides and it said that there was possible threat to the United States, possible ties to Osama Bin Laden, and another bullet said that it may be done by suicide bomber in a vehicle. I remember hearing that the September 11th attack -- and they were saying that this was supposed to be done in June -- and I remember hearing that the attack had been postponed to September. So I wondered if that was the same thing they were talking about.

Q. (648) The SPRINT Team, did you have a chance to talk with the SPRINT Team? Do you know who the SPRINT Team is?

A. I don't think so. I don't know.

Q. (649) Did you ever get together with a group?

A. Oh, yes we did.

Q. (650) Was that helpful?

A. I don't remember what day that was, but it was helpful because it was nice to see all of us again. Because so much had gone on and I had a couple of days off and I was just calling in and mustering with whoever was on watch. It was nice to see it, all of us together in a group, talking about where we were at the time, that we saw it on TV, or what time it happened.

Q. (656) So that was probably, I know you don't remember the day, but probably Friday or something like that?

A. I think it was Friday because I was at the doctor all day Thursday.

Q. (657) Doctor related to the September 11th?

A. Yes.

Q. (658) What was the nature of your injuries?

A. I had bruises and I had a scrape on my elbow. I had a cut on my shoulder, which is a scar now. They told me that if I had come in the day before, had gotten medical attention on the 11th; they would have given me stitches. My head had been hit, but they really only -- they x-rayed my shoulder so many times because it was sore. I told them it's just a cut. A 600-pound safe hit me on the shoulder. Of course, it's sore. They didn't look at my head at all. They just gave me some ointment for my arm and it healed up after a while. I did that on Andrews Air Force Base and was there at Malcolm Grow. I had an appointment for my allergies on the 11th that I completely forgot about. That was supposed to be at 9:30. I wouldn't have even gone to work that day, if I had remembered my appointment.

Q. (669) Unbelievable!

A. Yeah. Then I drove up to the Family Practice Clinic because I was still disoriented. I hadn't even been home and, of course, they were closed. It was just a clinic. So I went to the emergency room; I wonder if this is an emergency! I just wasn't thinking about anything. I just had this small little window of where thoughts were passing through, because I was just so confused. When we were sitting out in North Parking, I remember they were asking me questions like, "What do you want to do? Do you want to go home? What do you want to do next?" And I had no answers at all. No thoughts would come to my mind. I was completely blank. I couldn't think.

It was tough getting on Andrews. I remember that day. I did have my ID card because it was in my pocket. So, it didn't get lost. Then they asked me when they were checking ID's, they asked me if I had an appointment or something and I said, "Uuuuh." I was like, "No, I was in the thing yesterday." That was exactly what I said to her and she was like, "Oh, okay." So they let me on the base. I went in to the emergency room, still in my uniform looking like a mess! There was a long wait, but they let me in, almost right away. I heard there were people there that had been waiting for hours and I was like --

Q. (687) At Andrews?

A. Yes.

Q. (687) Were they from the Pentagon?

A. No.

Q. (688) Just from wherever?

A. Yes. I was trying to get formula because I ran out. I had enough to get me through for a little while. I didn't go Monday and I was like, "I'll just do it tomorrow," and tomorrow was a mess, so, that was Tuesday so I didn't get it on Tuesday and the emergency room they wanted to give me medicine for the pain. I said it's not that bad, because they were telling me I couldn't drive. I was like, I had too much I needed to do, to not be able to drive. I argued with them at the hospital for a long time and I was like, "I have to go get formula. I have to go all over the place." So, they finally just gave me Tylenol or something and let me drive home.

All the stores were closed. I went to the commissary on Bolling because I usually do all my -- I handle all my business on Andrews because it's convenient for me, but it was all shut down.

Q. (701) Take me through the timeline from the week afterwards until now. What the changes have been at work.

A. We were split up. Well, first we all went to ONI and we set up watch at ONI. Then we were split up after a while because it was too hard for the Briefer to get back over here to the Pentagon.

Q. (705) After a while, a couple of weeks?

A. It was just a few days -- the traffic to get the brief so they kept the Watch Floor and the Watch Officers, SWO, and everybody at ONI, and the Graphic's Shop and the Briefers went to the Navy Annex. We were sitting in a conference room kind of like this one and that was basically our office. It was the conference room for the Marines, so we were getting kicked out all the time and had a little bitty closet that we had to share with two other people and burn bags. So it was miserable. We didn't have enough computers. The Graphics people were just sitting around because we couldn't get on the computer and there was nothing for us to do. The Briefer was using mostly slides from other briefs from like the J2 or other different commands and they were just briefing other people's slides, so we didn't really have anything to build. It was terrible. We were gone a lot, also because of all the funeral services, memorials. DNI said that anybody from CNO IP that wants to go to the services is excused from watch because we're a twenty-four hour watch so he let us if we wanted to. We were, kind of, sharing a space with ADMIRAL

PORTERFIELD, who was just right across the hall in the same office he was in on the 11th when he set up his new office across the street.

Q. (723) Did you go to the memorial services?

A. Yes. I missed the first two because I didn't know about them in time. I was gone when they called me to tell me, but I went to all the rest of them. I went to five of them.

Q. (726) It must have been hard.

A. It was.

Q. (727) Did you get a chance to talk to the family, like LT TOLBERT'S family?

A. The only family members that I talked to were from ANGIE. I talked to her dad and her step-mom. Because, I guess, her step-mom knew me and she knew [REDACTED] name and I had never met her or anything but she -- I guess ANGIE had told her a lot about us. I have her address and I planned on sending her, like, a Christmas card and pictures and things like that.

Q. (732) Yeah, because your description of her was really, you know, I think you called her sweet and a couple of other things. I think they'd really enjoy hearing something like that.

A. Yeah.

Q. (734) Because I mean -- she sounds having -- it's funny because after this I want to go and see the pictures out there. You gave me a really good feeling for ANGIE and for LCDR TOLBERT. He sounds like a really nice, nice guy.

A. Yeah. Those who were -- of course, I miss them all and I liked them all, but those were the two that was hardest to realize for me because, I mean, for being an officer and equivalent to an officer, they were my friends, as much as they could be, you know, for the difference in rank. They were always really good to me. I could talk to them about anything.

Q. (741) How has worked changed now? How is work different? Obviously, different people, different workspace, but how is it different?

A. We don't even know who's working in our office. We see all these name and we're like, I don't know who this is, but it does seem more like a family now. We get better turnouts at our gatherings like our luncheons and things. We answer the phone when we're not on duty. Usually, we just ignore it and wait for the machine and check caller ID, but now we answer the phone. I think everybody is nicer to each other. We appreciate each other more.

Q. (750) Are you working harder or less hard?

A. Overall, the office has been working a lot harder. Personally, I haven't been working as hard as before, because my responsibilities are just changed. So much has happened, you just need different requirements. Right now I'm just in the process of training all the new people that are coming into the Graphic Shop, because I leave in May. The other three guys leave in February so, it's going to be all brand new people.

Q. (757) Where are you going?

A. To VAQ 143 in Whidbey Island.

Q. (758) Are you looking forward to that?

A. Yes. There are some days I say, "I just can't wait to get out of this area."

Q. (760) Seems like you're comfortable going into the Pentagon. I know some people still have a very, very hard time. Not just walking around, like you do, to some extent, but even entering it.

A. Yeah, it is scary. The thing I think about is it's like my home. It's my first duty station. So I want to be here. I want to be with my shipmates that I've been with since before the attack and since. I want to be with people that understand what happened instead of being at ONI with people that know what happened but didn't work daily with these people that this happened to. I've, since it happened, been collecting newspaper articles and pictures and putting together a scrapbook of everything I can find: from slide shows from the day, from the days surrounding, speeches that the President made, pictures of the President, pictures of the hijackers and the political cartoons of Bin Laden, making fun of him. I have pictures of the people that we lost and their service programs and just thoughts that I remember about them, a couple of newspaper articles from back home about me and the statement that I wrote for the DNI's purposes. I've just been collecting everything I can find that is related so that someday, somebody, can maybe, understand what happened, understand how horrible it was, that it wasn't just a piece of history, that it was a terrible, terrible event that affected real people.

Q. (784) Was there ever a time when it all of a sudden occurred to you what had happened?

Obviously the first couple of minutes you were probably a little bit confused, but was there a time maybe a week later or three months later when you just --

A. I don't think it still has really, really impacted me yet. I mean, that we lost these people and that an airplane flew into my office. Because I -- about a week ago, I finally realized that the way I feel about the people being lost is more like -- it seems more like they just transferred to, like, another command or something. Because, of course, their caskets were closed at their funeral so you didn't really get a sense of closure there. So it just kind of feels like they transferred and not like they're gone forever.

Q. (795) Is there anything else you want to add for the historical record?

A. I can't think of anything.

Q. (796) For [REDACTED] to hear one day, or, [REDACTED] children?

A. Uuum...

Q. (798) I have kind of a perspective I'd like to get your take on, with your spiritual background.

Have you had a sense of why God spared you? Have you thought about that?

A. I've been trying to understand, but I just keep thinking that He wants me to tell people what happened and that it was so easy for me to have just died right along with the people in my office, but I didn't, and just to tell people that nothing is impossible. Anything can happen, good or bad.

Q. (805) Does it give you a new sense of purpose?

A. Yeah. I can just teach people from my experiences. I keep thinking, nobody can possibly understand the way I feel. I mean, the whole nation, of course, feels the pain of what's happened,

but unless you were actually right there, not even in the Pentagon, but just right there in that wedge, I don't think you could really understand everything, just grasp it all, the feelings and the fear of the whole situation.

Q. (815) Well, thank you for taking the time with us.

A. Thank you.

Q. (815) It's an incredible story!

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