

**Naval Historical Center  
Oral Interview Summary Form**

**Interviewers:**

Capt. Michael McDaniel

**Interviewer's Organization:**

Naval Historical Center

**Interviewee:**

Capt Sean O'Brien

**Current Address:**

██████████  
██████████  
(w) OPNAV N512 Warfare Policy

**Date of Interview:**

12 Mar 02

**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; Pentagon Evacuation; Joint Family Assistance Center; CACO; Command Representative; N3/N5; Reconstitution

**Abstract of Interview:**

**Interviewee Information:** Capt O'Brien was born in ██████████, OH on ██████████. His parents had five boys and one girl. His father served in the Navy during World War II as an Electronics Technician First Class on the *USS Bobolink* out of Pearl Harbor. The ship was an MSO and switched to an ocean going tug. He graduated from high school in 1972, having played football and soccer. He got interested in the Navy because his brother was recruited to play football at the Naval Academy, graduating in 1971. His brother currently is the head football coach for Boston College. Capt O'Brien went to the Naval Academy Prep School (NAPS) in Bainbridge, MD and boot camp in Great Lakes. After NAPS he went to the Naval Academy where he played rugby. He selected to go to air and was stashed at the Navy Test Pilot School where he got to fly all kinds of planes. He went to Naval Flight Officer flight training in Pensacola and upon winging went to the P3 community. He went to VP9 at Moffett Field, CA. From there he went to VX 1 and CARGRU ONE doing Westpac deployments on *USS Ranger*. He attended the Naval War College and then went to NAS Barbers Point for a department head tour. He was selected for a job at the White House on Continuity of Government Programs. From there he went to VP-4 as Executive Officer and Commanding Officer. He went to CTF12 Operations in Hawaii and was selected for major command. He went to CTF72 and CTF57 for both Fifth and Seventh Fleets as well as Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing ONE. During this time an EP-3E landed on Hainan Island, China. Capt O'Brien became the Standing Joint Task Force Commander for the repatriation team to bring the crew back. From there he came to the Pentagon. One of the last things that happened to him prior to reporting to the Pentagon was he had major back and neck surgery and was wearing a neck brace. He had gotten his neck brace off on 5 September and taken over N512, Navy Warfare Policy.

## Topics Discussed:

On 11 Sep Capt O'Brien's office was in 3D near the fourth corridor. N512 was collocated with N514 (Nuclear Warfare), N52 (Foreign Policy), N512 (Navy Warfare Policy), the Political Advisor, Adm Walkendorf, and the Secretary for N3/N5. N513 was in the Navy Command having recently moved down there when the new Navy Command Center opened a few days earlier than planned.

He had a branch head meeting and a meeting with the Admiral. He was going over taskings for the day with his people. He heard some people talking about something happening to the World Trade Center. He went to watch the television coverage and saw the second plane fly into the second tower as it happened.

CDR Miller told him "This means war" and he told him he was right. Capt O'Brien told him to make sure the recall bill was updated. About a half hour later they were hit. They shook a bit, and he thinks he remembers the alarms going off. He looked out the window and could see the fireball climbing over the building by the fourth corridor. He thought airplane right away.

They immediately started to evacuate. Adm Walkendorf was not in his office. The three Captains, Capt Will Dossel, Capt Don Hayes and Capt O'Brien all kicked into gear. Capt O'Brien told CDR Miller to get everyone a recall bill. They locked up everything and put away all the Top Secret. They checked the space to see that all had evacuated. Capt O'Brien and CDR Miller went down the passageway. They saw people coming out into the fourth corridor and they were concerned at the looks of terror, people crying and some ladies with no shoes.

They were told to go to the center courtyard, but they didn't think it made sense so they went to evacuate outside. The evacuation process was quite lengthy and he doesn't think it was well organized. They went out to Metro exit and to South Parking. There was no sense of panic even with the ladies who were crying. Capt O'Brien looked into the courtyard and saw some people starting to come out there.

They started to think about reconstitution as well as sending some people home. A police officer ran by and told them they had hijacked another plane and it was inbound. Capt O'Brien got in his car with three other coworkers and started to drive away from the area. It took 2 hours to drive a normal 30-minute drive.

When he got home he got a call from Capt Will Dossel who told him he was at the reconstituted Navy Command Center in the Navy Annex and they needed him to stay by his recall. They passed a list to him of missing and Capt O'Brien went over to CDR Miller's house to coordinate their actions concerning the CACO activities. VADM Keating had decided that he wanted an N3/N5 rep to be with each family when the CACO and Chaplain visited the families. N512 and N514 were picked to be the command representatives. Every person asked to be an N3/N5 rep said he would do it. Capt O'Brien was the representative for Capt Getzfred's family. He had known Capt Getzfred when he was a Commanding Officer.

He was told to wait for the CACO to call him that night and they would go to the Getzfred's house. He never got a call that night and woke up the next morning wondering if Capt Getzfred had been found. He went to the Pentagon to see if he could get in. Things were all roped off and there was a bad smell. He went up to the Navy Annex where people were set up working. He

found out the CACO's had gone to the Getzfred family the night before and notified Mrs. Getzfred of her husband's missing status.

Capt O'Brien decided to go over to the Getzfred house by himself. He got to the Getzfred house and Mrs. Getzfred remembered him from a previous tour. He told her they didn't know what the chances for survival were, as they didn't. They held this line for about a week with her.

They planned to do a memorial service on 13 October where all Capt Getzfred's family would be coming in. There were over 50 people coming in for it. They were planning it and did not have the remains. On the Saturday prior to this his remains were finally identified. They went to tell Mrs. Getzfred that evening.

On the last weekend in September Capt O'Brien went to view the Pentagon with Mrs. Getzfred and their family. They met at the Joint Family Assistance Center and took a bus to the Pentagon with a large group of other victims' family members.

The memorial service was at Fort Meyer. They didn't have a body because the body wasn't released until right before Thanksgiving when they were fairly certain they had all the remains identified. VADM Keating attended the service. As far as Capt O'Brien knows this was the only service VADM Keating was able to attend (abstractor's note: VADM Keating also attended Capt Burlingame's funeral, the pilot of the American Airlines plane that hit the Pentagon).

Right before Thanksgiving they got the notification that the remains could be picked up. They buried him the second week in December in Norton, IL near Peoria, IL. He is buried next to his son who died at six months. Capt O'Brien went to the funeral with VADM Norb Ryan (N1) who was Capt O'Brien's Company Officer his first two years at the Naval Academy. He also was Capt Getzfred's boss at WINGSPAC. Both VADM Ryan and his brother VADM John Ryan (Superintendent of the Naval Academy) attended the funeral. They took a military flight out of Andrews AFB. CDR Hannes from N512 also attended with them. For the burial there was a Reserve Admiral who was supposed to attend. He was at the funeral but the honor guard left him behind on the way to the burial. When it came time to present the flag to Mrs. Getzfred, this admiral who had been designated to present the flag wasn't there. The CACO had the honor guard write out the speech and VADM Norb Ryan presented the speech and the flag to Mrs. Getzfred.

In N3/N5 they were consistently burying people every other week. They also were worrying about Lt Kevin Shaeffer's progress and healing.

N513 was reconstituted by taking bodies from other places. There were some N513 people who survived. Any section could tap any other section at any time for help if they needed it.

Abstracted by:  
CDR Carol O'Hagan  
28 Mar 02

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Capt O'Brien was born in ██████████, OH on ██████████. His parents had five boys and one girl. His father served in the Navy during World War II as an Electronics Technician First Class on the *USS Bobolink* out of Pearl Harbor. The ship was an MSO and switched to an ocean going tug. He graduated from high school in 1972, having played football and soccer. He got interested in the Navy because his brother was recruited to play football at the Naval Academy, graduating in 1971. His brother currently is the head football coach for Boston College. Capt O'Brien went to the Naval Academy Prep School (NAPS) in Bainbridge, MD and boot camp in Great Lakes. After NAPS he went to the Naval Academy where he played rugby. He selected to go to air and was stashed at the Navy Test Pilot School where he got to fly all kinds of planes. He went to Naval Flight Officer flight training in Pensacola and upon winging went to the P3 community. He went to VP-9 at Moffett Field, CA. From there he went to VX-1 and CARGRU ONE doing Westpac deployments on *USS Ranger*. He attended the Naval War College and then went to NAS Barbers Point for a department head tour. He was selected for a job at the White House on Continuity of Government Programs. From there he went to VP-4 as Executive Officer and Commanding Officer. He went to CTF12 Operations in Hawaii and was selected for major command. He went to CTF72 and CTF57 for both Fifth and Seventh Fleets as well as Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing ONE. During this time an EP-3E landed on Hainan Island, China. Capt O'Brien became the Standing Joint Task Force Commander for the repatriation team to bring the crew back. From there he came to the Pentagon. One of the last things that

happened to him prior to reporting to the Pentagon was he had major back and neck surgery and was wearing a neck brace. He had gotten his neck brace off on 5 September and taken over N512, Navy Warfare Policy.

Topics Discussed:

Q. (09:58) Where was your office located? Where were you physically located on September 11<sup>th</sup>?

A. Let's see we were in 3D. I can't remember the number now. But it was 3D. We were going right toward the apex, going towards joining the fourth wing. And the center section of that is exactly where, you know, at the corner of the Pentagon there. So our office butted up toward the fourth quarter. Which is obviously where the plane hit.

Q. (10:29) How many were in your office, were you located with some other groups?

A. Yes, 514 was also there which is the nuke warfare guys, 52 was which are the foreign guys, on foreign policy guys I want to say that, I mean they work with all the other countries and all that. My section was there 512, STEVEN SCHLACHER (phonetic) the political advisor was there. And WALKENDORF'S office was there, as well the secretary of 3 and 35.

Q. (10:55) Where was N513?

A. N513 was in the down in the Navy Command Center. They had just recently moved out of their spaces when the Navy Command Center was open a couple days earlier than expected. They moved down to their new offices then.

Q. (11:10) Was that by design or was it just had room for them temporarily there?

A. You know I don't truthfully know. I think it though was, I think it was by design. I'm not sure.

Q. (11:19) Okay. Okay, so walk us through that day. Just kind of walk me through that day.

A. Sure. Day starts off normal, beautiful day. Of course you get inside the Pentagon and you forget what the days like. Regular branch head meeting, meeting with the admiral. Points of what we're working on, going down, going over the tasking with my officers. This is about twelve, thirteen guys. Different taskings we have for the day were we're going, what we're going to do.

Q. (11:55) Can you remember what some of those key issues were? Taskings were at that time, it was a longtime ago, but, do you remember what some of the hot items that were—?

A. I don't remember anything that was hot that day, it all goes away. It all goes away. I do remember sitting at my desk trying to play catch up as I said I'd just took over the branch. Trying to figure out, because we do do so many things we have so many different items that 512 works works on in Warfare Policy. That just trying to get up to speed much less to figure out what my guys are doing much less what I should do.

Some concerned people coming over and saying, "Hey it looks like something happened to the World Trade Center." I remember going down to the political officer's, MR. SCHLACHER'S (phonetic) office, that was the only TV we had in the room, in that whole big giant office space. I'm looking and watching at the tower. And at the time watching that burn, I actually saw the second plane fly into the tower.

Q. (12:55) As it happened?

A. As it happened.

Q. (12:57) Wow.

A. And I was—.

Q. (12:59) What did you think?

A. Well then I, to me it was—I remember talking to HOZIER (phonetic) MILLER even when the first one was burning and we were just saying this can't, this is not normal. Pilots don't fly into buildings on clear days. There is no fatality we could think of in a aircraft that could make them sit there and fly into that. So we had really already assumed from the first one that it was some type of terrorist attack or some type of act of a deranged individual. When the second plane hit, I, to me thought that it was a terrorist attack. There was some type of concerted attack going on. And then the fear or the knowledge is that this could be going on in different places too, and there could be more attacks. I do remember a key thing from Captain, from COMMANDER KEVIN MILLER, HOZIER (phonetic) MILLER who's my XO basically in Warfare Policy shop. He says, "Boss you know what this means? This means war."

I said, "HOZIER (phonetic) you're right." HOZIER (phonetic) is his call sign. The only thing I remember telling HOZIER, then I said, "We got the recall bill."

He said, "Yes sir we do."

I said, "We got to make sure it's updated because you don't know." About a half hour later we got hit. The plane struck. I was sitting at my desk as were most our other people. We got shook a bit. I think I remember the alarms going off. I remember looking out the window, looking up and you could see the fireball climbing over top of the building. In the area of fourth, of where the

fourth corridor was, which isn't that far from us. You can look right up and see it right there. Realizing a couple of things, damn that was close, fear of peoples dying somewhere. See, we need to evacuate.

Q. (14:41) What would you compare to the shock or the blast or the, just kind of describe that for the tape. Was it an explosion? Was it just a—

A. I was sitting at my desk and I actually looked up right before the explosion. So I must of heard because I—something keyed me “What the hells that?” and I think I had heard the jet. Could hear the jet or at least the engines the whirl or something coming on in and then the boom, the impact, and the shaking of the building. It wasn't that violent. I wasn't thrown from my chair or anything else. I did get rocked a bit and all that stuff but, I've also been in a mild car crash were I banged my head against a thing, the roof it was no where near that. It was enough to shake you though and realize, okay we were hit there was something terribly wrong to have a whole building like this shake. It remind me of not a very strong earthquake but a mildly strong earthquake say out in California where you get move a lot, a little bit and all that stuff.

Q. (15:40) Did you think airplane?

A. I thought airplane right away. I thought airplane right away for the simple fact that I thought I'd heard something too that had caused me to look up. And I think it would have been anything else I wouldn't of. Just with the other stuff going on.

So we immediately started to evacuate. It was interesting because ADMIRAL WALKENDORF wasn't in the spaces at the time, but the three the Captains there CAPTAIN WILL DOSSEL, CAPTAIN DON HAYES and myself were the three sections from the 51 area that were in that



office, all kicked into gear and basically did training. First thing I called HOZIER, "Make sure we got good copy of recall bill. Get one to everybody. Let's start doing that." Since we were not, we didn't see smoke we just, you know fire in our immediate spaces, we locked up everything that we could. We put away all the Top Secret and anything else we could do, secured the space and then we evacuated. We went back cross checked all the pukas I did that with WILL DOSSEL and made sure everybody else was on out. We went ahead and evacuated.

Going down the passageway COMMANDER MILLER had waited for me. We went on down the passageway I can remember people coming out from the fourth corridor and while we were concerned, they had more of a look of terror. There were several ladies that were crying. There were some ladies that didn't have shoes on, which I don't know if that's because they were just sitting at their desk with no shoes on or they just decided to leave or they got knocked out of their shoes, I don't know. But we went down and there were some serious anxiety with some people.

Originally, they were telling us to go to the center courtyard. We decided we weren't going to go there because, why the hell you go to the center courtyard when there's a fire. I mean that didn't make sense. Let's evacuate the building. And we did the evacuation process so that it was quite lengthy and I don't think it was well organized. We ended up going out towards the metro type exit is were we went down and found some door off the side and followed some other people down and went out and then went to South Parking and mustered there.

Q. (17:46) Was there a sense of panic with the people?

A. There was no sense of panic at all. There was no sense of panic whatsoever, even with the ladies that were hysterical or crying to a certain degree and all that stuff. People were supporting

them. Everybody was walking in an orderly manner. I can remember looking into the courtyard though going by and seeing some people starting to come on out, realizing okay there some things there, the idea was lets get out of the building figure out what the hell we can do and work it from there. By the time we did get out of the building into South Parking there was, and it took a while to get out of the building. There was, the fire had been faster spreading or moved, or if the building had been compounded there would have been a lot more casualties, because we were all massed in one place. Most of the, by the time we got outside most of the emergency equipment a lot had already responded. There were things, you know fire trucks coming and going. We were just trying to stay out of the way and at that point realizing, you know I remember walking over toward that side of the building and I thought I could see some of the remains of the plane sitting on the lawn and all. The severe flames and just thinking, "My God, there's people in there dying."

Since I was so new to Pentagon I didn't even know the new Navy Commander Center was there. And so, when I got back and talked to WILL DOSSEL and DON HAYES as we trying to get all our groups together and find our people, realize that there was, their offices were around in that general vicinity. We continued to stay there trying to figure out what the Navy wanted us to do. Where we were going to reconstitute. Knowing that we probably needed to go back in the building. I can remember another, some discussion about okay let's start sending people home. I had a couple my guys from my group, HOZIER (phonetic) MILLER, KEVIN HANNES who works for me and COMMANDER JEFF HUSE (phonetic) Coast Guard and Liaison who works in my office also, all needed rides. I was going to take them, we were getting ready to go. I can remember a police officer running by saying, "They've hijacked a second plane it's inbound." And we just got to our car and drove away from the area and drove home.

Took over two hours to drive what would normally take a twenty-five minute drive, a thirty-minute drive. I had all those guys call their wives. One of the other things I did as soon as we got hit, is I called my wife after I told HOZIER let's go ahead and evacuate. I called my wife and said, "Mary we got hit, I'm okay. I'll see you later."

Q. (20:22) You talked with her live?

A. I talked with her live. However, she did not know, she did not hear me say we got hit. She didn't know if a plane was coming in still, or not, so she didn't understand it. So she still thought I was still there when the plane, or that I could have been possibly been killed when the plane—could have been possibly killed.

Q. (20:40) Was she aware that what was going on in New York at the time, yet?

A. She was aware of New York. She was not aware and in fact, as I think called her earlier in the day asking about New York and all that and seeing if she'd seen it. I just told her that I was okay and we were evacuating the building, but she did not know, she did not either understand or did not know that the plane had already hit. And so to her we were evacuating the building then the plane got hit, so she didn't know my status. I had the other guys all call their wives and I didn't call my wife and I got shit when I got home. (soft laughter) For not calling my wife which I probably should have done or at least said, "Have one of you guys have your wife call my wife so she does know I on the way home driving."

Dropped JEFF off at Metro Station. Dropped KEVIN HANNES, KEVIN MILLER at their homes and came home. Talked to [REDACTED], settled her down. Talked to some family members some of that stuff and then got a call from WILL DOSSEL saying, "Handling the Navy, new

Navy Command Center up on the hill. Starting to put together this thing and I need you to stay by your recall.”

I said, “Okay.” A little bit later that night, the rest of that night is somewhat a blur. Either talking to people or saying it’s okay as far as you know family and friends. However, I do remember my responsibilities that they’re coming up with list. I went over to HOZIER (phonetic) MILLER’S house, who wasn’t that far. We sat there together figured out how we were going to do this whatever we needed to do. Just for the section, found out we were going to be doing CACO stuff and notifying. Got all that information from WILL DOSSEL.

Q. (22:11) How was that decision made?

A. As far as I know the decision was made by N3/5 VICE ADMIRAL KEATING. That okay, the Navy’s setting up CACO’S and they are setting up Chaplains to go out to these families, but he want an N3/5 rep to be with each family. So in doing that since it was our sister section that was hit 513, 512 and 514 were the sections that were picked to send their help.

Q. (22:34) And 514 was DON HAYES?

A. 514 was DON HAYES and far as I knew DON was the only one in 514 that did anything. Almost everybody in 512 had a person except for one guy who got pulled off that day who had somebody else that that family wanted. So he ended up standing watch it was COMMANDER SCOTTY GREER. (phonetic) But he had done a lot of other things for us. And COMMANDER JEFF HUSE (phonetic), I didn’t feel right putting the Coast Guard guy doing a Navy type function so I did not give him any functions at all. All the rest of us were assigned things.

Q. (23:06) I want to come back to how you assigned and how that decision was made.

A. Sure.

Q. (23:10) But first at what point did you learn who was still missing? And how, describe that for us. Was that via the phone?

A. It was via phone from WILL DOSSEL saying, hey this is who is probably lost, this is who we've got tabs on, these are some of the people—. When I at first got to the Pentagon one of the first people I met was a guy named CAPTAIN LARRY GETZFRED, or had seen CAPTAIN LARRY GETZFRED. LARRY GETZFRED was the training officer at WINGSPAC when I was squadron CO, XO out at the P-3's out in HAWAII. He was the training officer for the Wing, so my squadron reported to LARRY for training type things and all that. So LARRY and I have known each other, we have been friendly. I wouldn't say, no where near best friends or anything else, but we were friendly and been nice to each and I respected him. He a guy that knew a lot and he could be a little bit cranky on some things and all that stuff and I just told my guys just do what he asks you to do and make him happy and we'll all be okay. That's how we treated him. Anyway, WILL had called and we started to go down the list of some of the people. I had barely known some of them much less the guys in N3/5, but the names went down then started to hit on the ones that I knew. The BOB DOLAN who was the section head of 513 so a fellow branch head had perished or at least had not been found. Some of the other 512 guys BILLY DONOVAN who was a P-3 guy that he was missing. Three days before that I was giving BILL DONOVAN advice for the upcoming board for command selection. With BILL I had sat down and talked to him about and listened to his record. Said, "Okay I'll send some emails recommending you to some people," found out that he was gone, at the same time found out

LIEUTENANT JOE PANIK, JONAS PANIK (phonetic) who was an N2, who I'd seen a couple of times up here, he was the intelligence officer for VP46. one of my squadrons deployed forward for me in the Gulf when I was the Wing Commander. Had many times with him with the CO and with him and getting briefed by him a great young man and found out that he was gone also, so.

Q. (25:30) Was there initially hope that these might be found injured or was it pretty apparent to you all that they had been hit pretty hard?

A. I think there is always hope for the first couple of days that somehow somebody will find somewhere. But in reality you know the reality is even though you might tell a family that and I can talk about the GETZFRED and the DOLANs you know in your heart they are probably dead. Anyway that night we got the list of who's going to be what for what person. We were asked would you like to do it? Every one of my guys said yes they would do it. That they would be a N3/5 Rep with the CACO'S. We got the names. WILL DOSSEL assigned the names to the person. We just had to carry out and let him know that a CACO would be calling them and they would go up to the houses. KEVIN HANNES was given to █████ DUNN. HOZIER (phonetic) MILLER had BILL DOLE, BOB DOLAN. Different ones were given different things. The DONOVANS were given JEFF STRATTON he was theirs. I was given LARRY GETZFRED, LARRY GETZFRED was a captain, I'm a captain so they tried to make rank with rank. I told WILL that would be fine too. A.) Because I'd known LARRY before and I'd met █████ at least once before. And I thought it would be nice if she at least knew somebody who was sent out, whatever. After we got the names, made all the contacts and all that stuff. Went back and waited

for my CACO to call. Had my uniform all ready to go for a middle of the night call to drive on out and go see him.

Q. (27:13) Had you ever done anything like that before?

A. Have I ever done talking to a straight individual not right afterwards? No. Had I buried people before within a command or something else? Yes. So I had a young sailor that died when I was in VP-9 and a young tech that died, and had to go pack his stuff up and all that stuff at the branch, you know officer and all that. But I mean that's just one of things you do, one of the duties you do and so I never did get called that night. Went in the next morning wondering A) did they find him or anything else? Went in, actually went in to the Pentagon, tried to get back into the office to see if they would let us back in. It was all roped off. Very bad smell and all and stuff. Then turned around and knew that we were up the Annex, walked up the Annex figuring out where the heck we were and then started working. Found out from there that in fact the CACO'S did go and talk to her the night before. And notified her. So, I decided I was going to go over there anyway. So, I drove over a little bit later in the morning.

Q. (28:22) By yourself?

A. By myself , without them.

Q. (28:25) Describe that for us if you can.

A. A.) I had to figure out where the heck I was going so I had to get Map Quest and look at the right address and find the right thing and all that. I did not call ahead because I figured she would be home just with this going on that she wouldn't leave her phone. I was in khakis but I thought

that would probably be more of a comfort to her than going in dress blues. That she would see, you know LARRY went to work in khakis and here's another guy that's just a regular guy who knew LARRY that's coming to talk to me in khakis. Drove up, parked in front of her house. Took a second to recognize [REDACTED], [REDACTED] was outside with her sister [REDACTED], who I've subsequently known. I know fairly well now and walked up to [REDACTED] and said, "Hi I'm Sean O'Brien."

She goes, "Oh Sean, I'm am so glad you are here." She goes, "I knew your name. I knew I knew you from somewhere," and so that started off a good relationship with us. So, basically just told her we didn't know anything else, but the fact is he was still missing.

"What do you think the chances are?"

Maybe wrongly I gave her hope in that we don't know, but we didn't know. We didn't know if somehow they could run somewhere to some basement thing or that he escaped in some manner, shape or form or that he's there in some space that didn't get the intense heat and all that, so. And we held that line for about a week with her. After that then I knew that he was gone even though she continued to hope.

I met LARRY'S brother [REDACTED] he came down. I got to know the girls, [REDACTED] had, they had two little girls [REDACTED] (phonetic) and [REDACTED] (phonetic). [REDACTED]'S (phonetic) the oldest she's twelve, [REDACTED]'S (phonetic) eleven, which is interesting I have two little girls. I have an eleven year old and a nine year old. So, it was kind of beneficial that the girls were about the same age or maybe a little bit older, so. And I could see they were concerned obviously and shocked, but nobody was in any great state of panic or any great state of grief yet.

Continued to help the family I probably went over and saw [REDACTED] every other day for the first two weeks. Spent time with [REDACTED] talking to her finding something out. In that time I'd hooked up



with the CACO and then we started to work together as a team, and also with the Catholic Priest who was, gosh I can't think of his name right now.

Q. (30:52) The Chaplain?

A. Father Paul (phonetic) Yes, Father Paul, I can't think of his name right now. Is there, there a priest for their CACO stuff? But we supported and then as it got closer and actually dragged on a bit it was working. We started to continue and we started trying to do some things, which in this madhouse of trying to help these people. And then your sitting there trying to do other business it was kind of almost surreal or stupid in the way of how you do things, but I mean that's business. Finally about on September, this was September so October 11<sup>TH</sup> they are going to have a ceremony on the Pentagon by the river entrance or whatever.

Q. (31:41) Had they identified his remains?

A. So -

Q. Comment on that?

A. Up until that we had planned to do a memorial service on October 13<sup>th</sup> which would be a Saturday, so the eleventh was a Thursday. All his family was coming in all his brothers and sisters, all his brothers. He has, he had, LARRY GETZFRED had six brothers, six brothers. ■■■'S whole family was coming in. There were over fifty people coming in and they had different rep's now from all over the Navy helping these people get in from the airport and all that. So we were still planning that we still did not have the remains. However, the Saturday before that I got a call saying he was identified by the CACO team. I said, "Okay let's go over."

We went over and told [REDACTED] about six o'clock on that Saturday night. Still would have been the sixth of October, correct me on the October sixth on Saturday. I told her, she had, she had more or less assumed when she saw—she basically knew that if I came with the CACO then it was over, that he was in fact gone, because he and I had never visited together. She had seen us both, but never at the same time. And she was there.

So, we told her she took the news pretty well. Her sister was there I think at the time. So, we went through it and did it.

Other things that I think that kind of have been trying to remember that. The weekend before that, which would have been the last weekend in September my brother's football team was playing the Naval Academy and won. So Boston College beat Navy then which was good. Any time anybody beats Navy is when my brother plays.

Q. (33:26) For the historical record. (chuckling)

A. But I went up through there and I had my mom and dad in and all that stuff. But I left at the third quarter of the game to make sure to get back down because we went over to view the Pentagon with [REDACTED] and a couple of her sisters and with her, with LARRY'S brother to go sit there and look at the Pentagon.

Q. (33:42) Was that her first time. Well describe that?

A. Well got in the hotel lobby met a couple of the other family members and all that. [REDACTED] had talked nicely—.

Q. (33:48) What hotel?

A. I can't remember. It was—.

Q. (33:53) Was it a Family Service site?

A. It was a family service thing. It's the standard one.

Q. (33:55) Okay the Sheraton, Sheraton.

A. The Sheraton went in with the big convoy bus went on over and—.

Q. (34:01) Oh so it was a big group that went over?

A. Oh it was a significant group. I would say there was about eight buses worth of family members that went on over. This was run by the Family Service Center. Went over and saw and that's the first time I think I saw [REDACTED] with tears in her eyes, where she was able to see the actual wreckage that close up. A time before I had taken her and picked up her and her brother and brought her down to pickup LARRY'S van. I had found the van and it took me over an hour to walk through the parking lots trying to find this damn van and I found it. Went out and picked her and her brother up and then brought them back down in a way that they could see the Pentagon. So that was actually her first look at it, probably about a week after it, but this was her first up close look. And it was moving. A couple of the cousins were in to those, good for girls. The girls saw too, that they had their cousins to kind of divert attention and all that, but it was sad. There were tears for everybody.

Q. (35:01) Yes.

A. So, got that done with them. Anyway, knowing that he was identified actually made it better, in that the family is able to move on, are all able to move and get done. I remember that week up into that is trying to get [REDACTED] to get certain things done and then we had to start doing paperwork CACO-wise for you know beneficiary's and all this other type stuff. We actually got down on the Wednesday, I guess it was the Wednesday before the ceremony, where she went in and finally got all the paperwork done and this was the last day they had that Family Service Center open for. She refused to go down until he was identified and then she didn't go down until that Wednesday and so we were a little bit behind in the game but that was fine. I mean we were able to catch up and get everything done. So she got most of that done. A very long tiring day for her. I had driven and back to her house picking up the girls and other things at least three times that day. Getting her down and getting that stuff through. I took her back to the hotel which is across the street, which is where she was going to stay. The next night was another, right next to the Family Service Center there it wraps around out to the Naval Base. An airport shuttle comes and when an airport shuttle comes, another airport shuttle comes in, and all there are is GETZFRED'S and GROSS' (phonetic), I mean it's a whole family all piling off so. They all kind of get there and hugs and tears and GETZFRED'S mom comes off and she's just shaken. She was pretty much very sadden throughout the whole thing. (deep sigh) So, well we got them all settled. That next day was the ceremony. The CACO sat with the family. I just sat with some of my 512 compatriots out in the audience and watched the ceremony. Talked to them afterwards and then went back to work up in the Navy Annex.

Q. (37:04) Can you tell us what you talked about?

A. Not so much, you know a lot of this stuff that we were talking about at that time is calming ■■■ down on how the service is going to be taken care of on Saturday. We had actually gone over and actually on Friday we go over and we looked at the chapel we're going to have the service for LARRY and readings and this and that. And that's what I'd helped the whole week before too, is trying to get that all done. So, basically it was almost like planning a wedding except I was planning a funeral for this family because, it wasn't they were incapable it was just that there were so many things happening for them that it was kind of hard. So, planning readings the Priest that had helped do the, well obviously all that stuff. I was just thinking about, okay who's going to stand where and that, who's going to be the ushers, who's going to do this, when are we give the medal, when are we going to give the awards and do all that, so. Friday was spent getting it ready and having them look at that and shown and taking some people around of her family. And then Saturday was the actually, was the actual service.

Q. (38:09) At Arlington?

A. It was, no what we did it was up at, it was at Fort Meyer was the service. We still didn't have a body yet because they had identified parts of LARRY I don't know how much of LARRY they actually did find, but the body was not released. He would not be released until the last session when they said okay we don't have enough pieces to do anything else with. Well that's, his body did not get released until right before Thanksgiving.

Q. (38:31) How was that handled, from your perspective? The partial remains issue that's kind of a unique issue of this thing.

A. I think [REDACTED] understood. I think it was easier for [REDACTED] than other people, who were notified earlier on that, say two to three days after the thing that their loved one was dead. Because then there's always a hope I guess with most people that the bodies still totally intact and that they can get it right away. With us knowing, as I said we were glad to know that there was a body piece remain, because, A.) it was confirmed death. B.) what it told us is LARRY probably died instantly because he was probably blown to smithereens. You know that he was destroyed in some manner, shape or form and so therefor it was quick. And so [REDACTED] was thankful for that and the fact that she was willing to wait for it then because she realized it was probably an R (phonetic) task. She's a very pragmatic woman understands what could happen. Didn't sit there and worry about that or cry too much and understands it. Okay that could happen we will be thankful to get that. She was thankful to have something to be able to bury.

Anyway, the ceremony goes off fine. It was of interest to me that VICE ADMIRAL KEATING made LARRY'S service. You have to remember at this time obviously were in the Global War of Terrorism we were busy as heck. Every things going on it's a Saturday, and as far as I know that is the only service that VICE ADMIRAL KEATING made, that he was able to make. And he came up to [REDACTED] right afterwards, had very nice words for her, made a significant impression on her. Basically saying, you know the world could be going to hell and all that stuff and we'd going in for the morning brief and there would be LARRY just kind of smiling at us like, we're all going to get through this day we always do so what the hell are we all worried about. And just putting it all in right perspective. LARRY was a crusty old guy. LARRY had been in the Navy thirty-nine years already. He was enlisted, got out did some reserve time type thing and then got back in as an officer so he was able to stay in that long. He had one more year and it would have been forty years. The GETZFRED family themselves had a total, with their brothers and one

spouse that they married, all that stuff would have over two hundred years of service to the United States Navy. If he had made that one extra year.

Q. (40:53) Wow.

A. Anyway, service went out with a hitch and then we had reception actually at the Fort Meyer O Club and there it was like playing best man at a wedding. I made sure [REDACTED] had something to drink, and we presented her some awards from the Navy and from the P-3 community. And there was a lot of P3 community reps here because LARRY was P3's. And which is another good time for me to be with him and all, so. But the reception went well too, and there was a B-52 fly over for somebody else so a lot of the family wanted to go out and see that, so it's somewhat surreal. You've got this grieving type part but you've got other people doing this other stuff, like hey here's a B-52 this ought to be cool. But when that was done we got them all on their bus and sent them back to the hotel. It's the last time, for most part, I saw most of family although at least from LARRY'S or from some of both sides. Kept in touch with [REDACTED] and done other things with her.

Right before Thanksgiving we get the notification okay they're going to release all the bodies and the partial body parts. You need to pick them up. Work with the CACO, work with family. What do you want to do? Oh jeez, I don't remember the exact date, but probably the second week into December we buried LARRY in Norton, Illinois. Norton, Illinois is up by Peoria, but it happens LARRY and [REDACTED]—I had said they had two children in fact they had three. Their first one their oldest NICHOLAS was six months old when he died of a heart problem. And when NICHOLAS died they had to decide where to bury NICHOLAS and so they decided to bury him in [REDACTED]'S hometown in Norton, Illinois, so. LARRY'S from Elgin, Nebraska, but the decision

was already made by the family that when they died, they would be buried by NICHOLAS, so LARRY'S body is buried right by his son.

It was of interest there too, one of the times I went over to visit [REDACTED] at the house I took VICE ADMIRAL NORB RYAN who's the N1 of the Navy and wife [REDACTED] wanted to go over. NORB RYAN, besides being my Company Officer the first years at the Naval Academy was also LARRY'S boss out at WINGSPAC when I was out there. So he wanted to see [REDACTED] because they had known PAT. But both RYAN brothers, both NORB and [REDACTED] attended the funeral. We take a military flight morning out of Andrews, fly four and a half hours to get to a field out there in Peoria. Shoot the first approach there is such intense fog we can't get in. Come back around and we're being flown by Marine pilots, and coming and shooting the second approach, and it's bad enough have them—if you're a pilot they have another pilot behind you, but to have two, three star pilots behind you, you're thinking, well jeez maybe you can do this and do that. So the P - pilots did a good job getting in we were very lucky to break out. And they saw something that the Admirals were both happy that did this. On the ride there to go together to things were the two RYANS as I said the two Vice Admirals. JOHN by the way is Superintendent of the Naval Academy now. COMMANDER KEVIN HANNES from my section who also knew LARRY who was also stationed out at Barber's Point when LARRY was out there, and then the ADMIRAL SAG (phonetic) but four of us, five of us all go to the funeral. Walk in right when the funeral is about to start and there for the funeral, there for the burial.

Interesting thing on the burial too is, a Reserve Admiral was suppose to attend and he did attend the funeral. The Honor Guard was suppose to make sure he got to the burial place and they ditched him. They took off in their car too fast and the Admiral, and I can't remember his name now which probably better anyway, couldn't find the place right away. However, we had got in



with the funeral party and were out there, so when it came to present the flag to [REDACTED] GETZFRED the Admiral who was designated to do that wasn't there. The CACO JULIS BILES LIEUTENANT JULIS BILES (phonetic) said give me your white gloves. Took his white gloves. Found out what the speech was, had one of the Honor Guard write it out. Gave the gloves to NORB RYAN gave him the little speech. RYAN read the speech put on gloves, went over and got the flag on time and sat there and presented like nothing had happened. And [REDACTED] did not know, she thought the other guy was going to do, but she was very grateful that NORB did it because NORB had been, you know their Commanding Officer out there, so to her it was so much more. There is a great picture in the Peoria Times the next day of NORB RYAN handing [REDACTED] GETZFRED the flag, of her hand on his hand.

Q. (45:43) Wow.

A. Unfortunately after that the Admirals had to get back and since I was flying with them there was reception afterwards and I would have liked to have talked to families more. It said a lot some of the sisters were up and some of his brothers were in, and I you know through the tragedy we've grown somewhat close to some of them and all. So it would have been nice to talk, but I didn't get a chance to, but I said my goodbye to [REDACTED] and regrets. And talked to a couple of the sisters on [REDACTED]'S side, hugs and got in the car and went back and flew off. But LARRY was buried and so that was over and done with.

The most recent thing I've done with [REDACTED] is last Wednesday we went over and side her will. Wednesday before we did a worksheet with a lawyer and then went over and got her to update her will and sign her will. And we just got that done last Wednesday.

Q. (46:36) Well.

A. (46:37) That's about it's nine eleven (another)

Q. (46:40) Well so, anything else you want to add about September eleventh events?

A. No I think it, you know it's, it makes you all wonder about life and other things. I think that it just hurt, it's a—for the U.S. Military it's good we're doing what we're doing now. And maybe the time we're doing it now before things could get worse. But as far as the date and anything else I was glad to hear some of my guys did hero things JEFF STRATTON going into the fire and helping people and all. I'm very proud of my entire section for everything they did. As a group probably for first month after that we weren't very good at Warfare Policy, but we, we're damn good at taking care of people and we did that. And we got back on our feet and doing things and right now, this nine eleven I think we're all bonded by that, from all the things we did.

Q. (47:57) From the leadership perspective were there any, was it difficult to get back into the, into the main stream of Warfare Policies?

A. It was difficult for me for the simple fact that I didn't know what the hell I was doing to begin with, so. Once I was able to figure that out which is probably only about month and a half ago, two months ago (some chuckles) I think we've been doing fine. My men have, they're all males have done well in doing that. I guess the other thing going along at the same time all this is going on with helping [REDACTED] is attending JONAS' PANICK funeral, attending BILL DONOVAN'S memorial and then funeral. Attending BOB DOLAN'S funeral, attending PAT DUNN'S funeral. So we were consistently burying somebody almost every other week. And as a group, I guess that you see it different places in firefighters or anything else, we stuck together as a

group. And we went to each different one, JACK PUNCHES. Even people outside of N513 the three, five guys that we knew went and did that. And at the same time worried about KEVIN SCHAEFFER who had severe burns then, worry about getting updates on him and how was KEVIN doing and worries about him having heart attack at one time and almost dying after that. All those other things play into, so.

Q. (49:16) Was there ever a time where you just felt, did you have to do anything from leadership perspective to say okay now it's time to get back to work or did it just kind of happen?

A. I don't think there was a defining point where you sit there and say okay we can't keep doing this we've got to do something else. Because we all knew we had our other responsibilities to do. And when it came, we did them and there are times up there at the Navy Annex where we have to NPRNET Computers (non classified computers) and we're in a SPRNET (classified computer) world of doing things. And somehow or I'd go down find out what it is get the stuff and let's go do it. Going down attending meetings on the UCP, going down attending very big issues that are going on UCP, Homeland Security stuff that we all had to pitch in and start doing and pick up our slack and which we addressed. We have done significant work on this UCP with the CNO and getting his wishes, which the CNO did a wonderful job, because he more or less got everything he wanted. And COMMANDER KEVIN HANNES and LIEUTENANT COMMANDER RAY BENNEDECT (phonetic) helped with that and would oversee that and run that down and sometimes it's just being in the office, just you and the CNO going over sliding. "What the hell does this mean?"

Alright CNO this what their trying to say here and all that stuff.

“Well I don’t want that.”

“Well sir you put it down.” Okay well, you know and doing things it was very at times very formal and other times very informal.

“I don’t want say that, I’m going to say this.”

“Yes sir, okay fine.” And he was very engaged in getting the UCP placed the Navy input his way it wasn’t just some staffing policy. Very much a stamp of this CNO on this UCP. We’re still fighting those issues and still doing some things, but for the most part this UCP is shaped exactly how VERN CLARK wanted it shaped.

Q. (51:06) How were the 513 personnel, how were they reconstituted?

A. 513 was reconstituted by taking bodies from other places. We had some 513 guys that obviously survived and came back and done it. And then for the most part we started finding bodies from other sections and putting them the 513 to do it. What we did do during this entire period is, because then a lot of things did start coming on up that we had to do is— any section could tap anybody almost at anytime for help. The 513 got especially busy which at times they did because they’re writing the strategy and stuff., 512 people I would just give WILL DOSEL two people on loan to do whatever else he needed. He was the first to do it for me for other things, so. But they were reconstituted out of the rest of the Navy of other people on orders from different organizations and so.

Q. (52:06) Is that a good WILL DOSEL question as well?

A. Very good WILL DOSEL question. He would know that.

Q. Anything else you want add on nine eleven?

A. No, I can't think anyway.

Q. Okay thanks.

Transcribed by:  
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