

Oral Memoirs
of
Martha “Connie” Reuter

An Interview Conducted by

Leanne Wiggins

March 6, 2014

Community Veterans History Project

Lone Sailor Memorial Project

University of Central Florida RICHES of Central Florida

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Interview Histories

Interviewer(s): Leanne Wiggins

Transcriber(s): Leanne Wiggins

The recordings and transcripts of the interview were processed in the offices of the RICHES of Central Florida Department, University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida.

Project Detail

The Community Veterans History Project, a RICHES of Central Florida Project at the University of Central Florida, includes interviews with Central Florida veterans from all branches of the United States military. Beginning in 2010, the UCF Community Veterans History Project is collecting, preserving, and making accessible to the public the experiences of Central Florida's veterans so that future generations will better understand the realities of conflict. It is a collaborative endeavor supported by multiple departments and offices at UCF. The histories, which are collected by students and faculty, are archived and made digitally available through the UCF library. The UCF Community Veterans History Project will also contribute selected veterans' histories to the Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress.

Legal Status

Scholarly use of the recording and transcript of the interview with Martha "Connie" Reuter is unrestricted. The interview agreement was signed on March 6, 2014.

Abstract

Oral history interview of Martha "Connie" Reuter, who enlisted in the U.S. Navy and U.S. Naval Reserve. Reuter was born in Abingdon, Virginia, on March 20, 1964. She enlisted on May 7, 1984, and completed her service on April 1, 1988. Reuter re-enlisted just 6 months later and was discharged on October 31, 2005. Reuter attended Naval Training Center (NTC) Orlando. She later served at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi in Corpus Christi, Texas, and Naval Air Station Ingleside in Ingleside, Texas.

This oral history interview was conducted by Leanne Wiggins on March 6, 2014. Interview topics include Reuter's background, enlistment, naval training, attending boot camp at NTC Orlando, serving as a woman in the Navy, graduation from boot camp, Liberty Call, the USS *Blue Jacket*, the *Grinder*, serving as a photographer's mater, the Naval Reserve, and the Lone Sailor Memorial Project.

Martha “Connie” Reuter

Oral History Memoir
Interview Number 1

Interviewed by Leanne Wiggins
March 6, 2014
Orlando, Florida

0:00:00

Introduction

Wiggins Today’s date is Thursday, March 6th, 2014. I am interviewing Martha “Connie” Reuter, who served in the United States Navy. She served on active duty between May 1984 and April 1988, and as a [Naval] Reserve between October 1988 and October 2005. My name is Leanne Wiggins. I am interviewing Ms. Reuter as part of the UCF Community Veterans History Project and as research for the creation of the Lone Sailor Memorial Project. We are recording this interview at the University of Central Florida in Orlando, Florida.

0:00:35

Background

Wiggins Ms. Reuter, will you please start us off by telling us when and where you were born?

Reuter I was born in Abingdon, Virginia. March 20th, 1964.

Wiggins And what did your parents do for a living?

Reuter Um, my mom was a stay-at-home mom, and, um, my dad was a, um, pastor – Lutheran minister.

Wiggins And do you have any brothers or sisters?

Reuter And, uh, one older brother.

Wiggins Growing up, where did you go to school?

Reuter Um, we moved, uh, a couple of times during my childhood. Um, started out, uh, around Shenandoah, Virginia. Moved to Martinsville, Virginia. I spent most of my, uh, ah, years in, uh, Martinsville, and then, um, moved to, uh, Newton, North Carolina, for, uh, my junior and senior year of high school.

Wiggins And what did you do before entering the Navy?

Reuter Uh, I was, uh, uh, trying to figure out what I was going to do with my life [laughs]. So I was working, um, at a Hardee’s. I had gone to school for retail

merchandising. Um, decided, uh, not to go that route. Was trying to figure out what to do.

0:02:12

Enlistment

Reuter And, uh, one of my friends came through and said “Connie, let’s join the Navy.” And we were going to go in on the [Navy] Buddy [Enlistment] Program. And, uh, I went to a recruiter about three times. The fourth time I said, uh, “If I’m going to go, I’m going to go now.” and, uh, I signed on the Delayed Entry Program in February, and I left for boot camp in May. My friend did not go [laughs]. So it was just me.

Wiggins So why did you choose the Navy, as opposed to other branches of the military?

Reuter As, uh – basically, I had no clue. I just, uh – like I said, when she came through and said, “I got a[sic] idea. Let’s join the Navy,” – ‘cause her boyfriend had joined, and, um – uh, was like, “Great.”

I have, uh – some of my relatives, um, are – have also been in the military. My cousin, who was in the Air Force, my uncle, uh, in the Army, and then my grandfather was in the Army. But it wasn’t, uh – I didn’t live near any big military bases, so I really didn’t – didn’t know. So I said – when she decided – when she said, “Let’s join the Navy,” I – Alright.” [laughs].

Wiggins How did, uh, your family members feel about you joining the Navy?

Reuter Uh, I think they were – they were definitely, uh, proud. Um, shocked, because I did all that and, uh, going to the recruiter and everything, um, without telling them [laughs]. So, um, after I had already join[sic], came home and told them.

0:04:12

Boot camp at Naval Training Center Orlando

Wiggins So where did you attend boot camp?

Reuter Uh, eh, Orlando, Florida.

Wiggins And were you trained to do – what were you trained to do for your career in the Navy?

Reuter Uh, while I was [inaudible] – I came in non-designated, so I didn’t decide ahead of time what career I wanted to do in the Navy. So I, uh – after, uh, boot camp, I went to Airman Apprenticeship Training School. And, um, from there got my, um, first duty station, talked to the Navy career counselor, and decided from there.

Wiggins When did you begin your training at NTC [Naval Training Center] Orlando?

Reuter Um, May 7th, 1984.

Wiggins Before coming to NTC Orlando, what did you know about the region, militarily or otherwise?

Reuter Nothing, uh, military-wise. And, of course, for Orlando, all you basically hear about is, uh, Walt Disney World. I had, a, uh – a [sic] uncle and cousins, who lived here. And so we had come down, um, once to visit them, and we went to Walt Disney World when I was a kid. And, um, so that's all I knew. I had no idea about the military.

Wiggins How long were you at NTC Orlando?

Reuter Uh, I did the, uh, eight weeks of boot camp. And then, I believe Airman Apprenticeship Training was an additional four weeks. And, um, so then I left, all total, 'round September.

Wiggins When you first arrived, what was your first impression of the base or the area?

Reuter Uh, well, when I first arrived, it was at night. Um, I was 20 years old, and that was my, uh, first time being on a commercial airplane. So, um, the MEPs [Military Entrance Processing] station was in Charlotte, North Carolina. So I flew from Charlotte to Orlando, as my first time on a commercial airplane. And, uh, it was at night. Uh, don't remember much [*laughs*], okay?

Uh, I know we had a bus, came right to the base, um, uh, everybody – when I came into the barracks, most of everybody was in their bunks already going to sleep. Um, I remember getting in my bunk, and then, uh, realizing I had to go to the bathroom. Scared to ask if I could get up and go to the bathroom, But I did, [*laughs*] and, uh – um, so then, I went back to sleep and woke up the next morning and that's when it all began.

Wiggins So what were your first days of service like?

Reuter Pretty, um, uh, regimented – routine. Start dinner routine, start, uh, issuing, um, uniforms. uh, even though I had, uh, cut my hair short before I came to Orlando for boot camp, um, because I thought that, uh, you know, *If I'm going to have my hair short, I want to be able to kind of, you know – well, do it myself.* [*laughs*] Well, it didn't matter. You still went to the barbershop. They still cut some more off, even though it was already short. So I had, uh, um, short hair for the first time in my life [*laughs*]. And, um, uh, like I said, everything was pretty much, uh, just routine. You did as you were told. You stood where they told you to stand, listen to instructions, and everything. And if you listened well, you got along great.

0:08:49 **Training as a woman in the Navy**

Wiggins So what was it like to be a woman at NTC Orlando?

Reuter Uh, it – it really didn't, uh, bother me at all being a woman at NTC Orlando. Um, I didn't have any problems at boot camp. Um, I know some of my bunkmates,

uh, uh, did. Um, and it wasn't necessarily—I don't think—because of a woman. It's just a—a different—it's an adjustment.

Um, but, uh, uh, we—the boys were still around. Uh, we had—went to classes with them. Um, saw them in the—at chow halls. All that. But we didn't march with them, didn't have them in the barracks, uh, and on—or anything. But, um, I remember we called them “trees.” and you were not allowed to look at the “trees” or anything.

But, um, one of the best pieces of advice that I got before I left for boot camp, was my friend's boyfriend, who was in the Navy already. He said “When they first ask you to raise your hand—to be on either the color guard, drill team, flag guard—raise your hand.” So I was like, “Okay.” So as soon as my company commanders, you know, asked that question, I raised my hand and they picked me and it was the best advice I had ever gotten. Uh, I had a really good time being on the drill team. Uh, you were on the drill team with the boys, so therefore you could talk to them [*laughs*] and meet them. Um, uh, I got out of a lot of other inspections, a lot of the PT [physical training], um, all that, because we had to go to drill practice. And so again, that was the best advice I could have ever gotten.

0:11:15

Responsibilities and social interactions at boot camp

Wiggins So besides your responsibilities with the drill team, what were—did you have any other primary responsibilities?

Reuter No. That was it in boot camp. just, uh, keep everything in shipshape, um, make up your bunk correctly, have your clothes folded correctly, um, clean the barracks some, uh, go to classes, and, uh, that was about it.

Wiggins So what was your overall impression of the recruits and their training during your time at the base?

Reuter I felt it was very good. Um, uh, as—I felt comfortable. Um, I felt like I could trust them. Um, I said I didn't have any problems. Um, when they yelled—you know, the company commanders yelled or—or whatever, but, you know, it didn't bother me. I just let it roll—roll off my back. You know, do what they say. That's it. Um, it, uh, definitely taught me a lot. Um, for, uh—everybody should go through it [*laughs*].

Wiggins So who did you interact with on a daily basis?

Reuter It was mainly my, um—the bunkmates that were closest to me. So, um, I was in the lower bunk, so, uh, my shipmate, who was in the top bunk, uh, we became very good friends. And the shipmate pretty much right next to me, we became really good friends. And, um, uh, other than that there was, uh, one of—one of my, um, boot camp, uh, ladies that were[sic]—that was in my company, she got stationed at the same place I did for the first duty station. So, uh, when I went to

my first duty station, I already knew one person. So that was great. Um, and then a couple years later, while I was there, uh, one of, um – another girl that I was in, uh – I was in boot camp with, got stationed there, and so we became really good friends after that.

Wiggins Who were your instructors, and what were they like?

Reuter We had, uh, the company commanders, um, was[sic] Hines[sp] and Merritt[sp] – um, Petty Officer Hines and Petty Officer Merritt. Um, of course, I do not know their first name, [laughs], because you don't have first names in boot camp. Uh, everything is by your last name. But, um, again, like I said, when they – they would, you know, yell if they had to.

Um, I remember one time, you know, they asked you about what a gig line is, and I had no idea. And, um, you know, they would go around and ask everybody, and none of us knew, but we learned awfully quick[sic] what a gig line was. And [laughs] that's something you'll never forget.

Wiggins What was a gig line?

Reuter That is the line on your shirt that overlaps, it lines up with your belt buckle all the way down. That's the gig line.

0:15:09 **Training**

Wiggins What was the hardest thing that you remember doing at NTC?

Reuter [sigh] Oh, gosh. Um, I don't know about the hardest. There was, uh, a couple – uh, we did go in the gas chamber, and, uh, so it was kind of scary. Um, and, uh, you know, you all go in as a group. They tell you to take your mask off. You start feeling the, uh, um, burn. And, uh, uh, [laughs] I remember one of our girls in the company, way in the back, was like "Help!" And she had such a high pitched voice and everybody started laughing. And, um, so then, um, they – by that time, they finally – they opened the door and you all came out. But, um, you experience that.

You experienced, um, putting out a fire and, uh, putting out a fire on a ship with a big hose and working together as a team. Um, you experienced, uh, swimming, and how to survive in swimming and using your clothes as floatation devices.

Um, that's the first time I'd ever shot a gun, uh, I think it was a, uh, .45 [caliber handgun]. And, um – so that was an experience. Um, so I can't really say anything was really hard. I was already fairly physically fit before I went in. um, and I could – I listened well and took instructions well.

0:17:19 **Proudest and memorable moments**

Wiggins What was a moment that you felt the most proud?

Reuter Oh, gosh. Um, graduation [laughs].

Wiggins What was graduation like?

Reuter Um, uh, my parents had come down, and, um, my uncle had come over. And, uh, uh, it was a good time. And we went also went on a Liberty Call. And, um, I went with my parents, and – and, uh, couple of my, um, uh, friends from boot camp. I went to SeaWorld [Orlando], and, uh – yeah.

Wiggins Can you tell me a story of a time at NTC Orlando that you'll never forget?

Reuter [laughs] Oh, let's see. There's several. Um, oh [laughs], I'll never forget – um, after boot camp, I was at a – I went to, uh, Airman Apprenticeship Training School, which was, uh, another additional four weeks. And during that time, we could have, uh, Liberty Call at around 16:00 to 16:30 – somewhere around there. Never failed. Orlando, during that time frame, would, uh – there would always be a huge thunderstorm downpour, uh, right at Liberty Call. So right when you were getting ready to go out on the [laughs] town or whatever, um, and have a little bit of your own time, they would have to cancel Liberty Call. And it would only last about an hour, and then Liberty was open. So it [laughs] – never failed. And still to this day [laughs] [sniffs].

0:19:54 **USS *Blue Jacket* and the Grinder**

Wiggins How would you describe the USS *Blue Jacket* and its function?

Reuter Um, I think, uh, back then, it was, uh, a very good replica of a Navy ship. And, uh, I said that is where we went to learn how to, uh, fight a fire on a ship, to work as a team. um, and, uh, even though, during my Navy career [laughs], uh, I never went out to sea – I was on the land on shore – but, uh, I'm sure, uh, it was – it was a good replica for the real thing.

Wiggins What was the official purpose of the Grinder, and what was its significance to you and the recruits?

Reuter The Grinder was, uh, where you marched and you marched [laughs]. And, uh, you also did the PT out there. Uh, the Grinder was a large, um – uh, what was it? Concrete or asphalt area. Um, big rectangle that you just marched up and down. And, uh, so you learned how to march in a straight line, you learned how to, uh, take the corners while you're marching, and, um, you spend a lot of time out on the Grinder [laughs].

Wiggins What other trainings went on at the base?

Reuter Um, well, again, as I said, I went to Airman Apprenticeship Training School, and, um – but there were also, um, Nuclear Power School out there, and – um, which of course, while you're in boot camp, you don't know that anything else is going on around you, except for your little area. But, um, uh, during Airman

Apprenticeship Training School, you could, uh, get to know a little bit more of the base. And, uh, you could go to the, uh – also during boot camp and afterwards, go to the chapel on Sundays, and – and, uh, so you get to learn a little bit more.

Wiggins Were there any other areas on base that were of particular importance to you?

Reuter Um, besides the chapel? It was, uh, the chapel [*laughs*]. And, um, another thing I will also never forget is: when you march up, getting ready to go into the chow hall, there is, um, uh, a recruit up there who has this big spiel about, uh, “You have 20 minutes, and 20 minutes only to eat your fine Navy chow.” and, uh, I know that there’s more, but, uh, [*laughs*] that’s the line that I remember. And, uh, you just went into the chow hall, got your food, ate. There were always huge, um, bottles of peanut butter on the tables, because peanut butter, uh, was more sustaining, and to – to help you keep full, if you needed to or whatever. But, uh, uh, you would always put peanut butter on, on the, uh, uh, chocolate bars, the ice cream, or make peanut butter sandwiches, or something, but there was always a huge jar of peanut butter.

0:24:12 **Graduation and Navy memorabilia**

Wiggins [*sniffs*] So what did it feel like to graduate and finally put that hat on?

Reuter [*laughs*] This was, uh, um, my cover that I got from, uh, boot camp. This was issued to me during boot camp. Uh, one of the, uh, things that I realize now is that, uh, we, back then, wrote our full Social Security [Insurance] number in, uh – in our, some of our gear. Uh, so I still have [*laughs*] my full Social Security number, uh, written in here. But, uh, it definitely has all of the stains from, uh, many years of – of wear.

Um, I was also issued, uh, “birth control glasses.”¹ So I still have my “birth control glasses,” that, uh – and you could not wear contacts. You had to wear these “birth control glasses” during boot camp, and after, um, boot camp, during Apprenticeship Training School, then I could, uh, wear my contacts. But, uh, these were lovely [*laughs*], But hey. Everybody that needed glasses had them. Uh, we all, for the most part, looked the same.

This is, uh, still my, uh, uh, tie that was issued in boot camp. I still have, uh, my initials, um, engraved – or, uh, inked on there. That was another one of the things that as soon as you were issued your gear, you all, uh, went in a line and, uh, with the stencil, and then, uh, stenciled all your gear. So, uh, this was the first time that I was issued.

And, um, this was, uh, the picture of my mom and dad at, uh, graduation. And this was just a picture that they took of me in, uh, front of the sign. And then this was just my, uh, first, uh, photograph.

¹ G.I. glasses.

Wiggins Did you want to share anything else of the memor – memorabilia you brought?

0:26:56 **Serving as a photographer's mate**

Reuter Um, well, later on, uh, when, I got to my first duty station, and finally decided what I wanted to be in the Navy, that is when I decided to, uh, uh, be a Photographer's Mate. And, uh – so I went and, um, during that time, the Photographer's Mate rating was open, meaning that they needed people to be photographers in the Navy, so I was like, "I can take pictures." So I decided to [laughs] – to go that route.

And, um, this is my, um, rating badge. Uh, that is, uh, no longer, uh, used in the Navy. This, uh, was, uh, the Photographer's Mate rating badge, it's an IFKA[?]. And the wings represent, uh, that we were – that it was the air-dealt rating. So um, now the Navy has combined three ratings into one. So, uh. Now there are no more Photographer's Mates. They have a new rating.²

Wiggins So tell me a bit more about your experience as a Photographer's Mate.

Reuter Again, that was, uh, very, um, thrilling, and, a lot of fun. You were up front, uh, of everything, because you had to get the picture. And, um, you also got to tell, uh, some of the officers, uh, what to do, where to stand, and, uh, you know, what to do. So that was always fun [laughs]. And, uh, um, there was always some, some – some, uh, great opportunities.

I, uh, had to take pictures of, um, a wheels-up landing. I was stationed in, uh, Corpus Christi, Texas. And, um, a [Beechcraft] T-34 [Mentor] was coming in for a landing, and the wheels would not come down. The landing gear would not come down. So, um, we – me and another Photographer Mate went out to shoot, um, pictures of this wheels-up landing to document it. And I was shooting the stills, and he was shooting the video. But, uh, at first, I was nervous and – camera was shaking while I was trying to take the pictures [laughs] but, uh, you know, we had the fire trucks there, and they just came right in on the belly of the plane – skid right in – and, uh, they were fine. Thank goodness.

But, um, uh, I also went to take pictures of, uh, Naval Station Ingleside[, Texas], which is no longer there already [laughs]. The Navy's already sold it back to Corpus Christi. But, uh, uh, we took the groundpreak[sic] – groundbreaking pictures of, um, Naval Station Ingleside.

And, uh, so it's just, um – it was always cool to be a part of history – document history. Um, uh, document, uh, happy occasions, lots of, uh, changes of command ceremonies, lots of promotion ceremonies, retirement ceremonies.

Um, and uh, document some not-so-good things. You also were on duty, um, and when it was your duty day, and you got called, I had, um, three different

² Mass Communications Specialist.

suicide attempts. So you had to go and document, um, the scene and what had happened. And, uh, one guy had tried to slit his wrist, so you're documenting all the blood and all that. And, uh, um, another person had jumped out a second story window. Um, so you have to go, you know, just document. And, uh, so, you never knew what was going to happen. What you were going to be called to do. So it was – it was exciting.

0:32:04

Naval Reserve

Wiggins Do you recall the day that your active service ended?

Reuter Um, well, I was on active duty for four years. And, um, as I said, I was stationed in Corpus Christi, Texas, and that was my first duty station. And from there, uh, I had met my future husband, so I decided – we got engaged, and I decided to, um, get out of the Navy, uh, so we could get married.

And, uh, from there, I stayed in the Reserves. So, um, the remaining of my time, I, uh, did the, you know, uh, weekend-a-month, two weeks a year Reserve drill. Uh, still as a Photographer's Mate. And, uh, that worked out well, because I was able to do my Reserve duty anywhere that, uh, he was stationed, because he was still active duty Navy.

Wiggins So when you were not doing your Reserve duties, what were you doing otherwise?

Reuter Well, I was very lucky to be able to, uh – once we had our first child, to stay at home. And, uh, so, uh, the majority of my time was as a stay-at-home mother. Uh, we ended up, uh, with three children, so *[laughs]*, uh – and fairly close together, so that...

[vacuum cleaner turns on]

Reuter Kept me busy. But, um, uh, we, uh – I also would do, uh, other different things, uh, besides my Reserve time, to, uh, just stay active as far as, uh, either within their school, being a substitute teacher, going and helping out and volunteering. Um, uh, doing, uh – did the realtor for a couple of years, did pampered chef for a couple of years. So anything that I did, I made sure that my schedule, I could still be home.

0:34:44

Values learned from the Navy

Wiggins What values or characteristics of the Navy do you believe made an impression on your life?

Reuter Hm, um, [sighs] I think I had, um, a lot of good values, um, already instilled in me from my parents, uh, that the Navy and the military, um, uh, you know, uh, possesses, and that's, uh, good character, uh, teamwork. There's the honor, courage, and commitment. Um, uh, I always felt that, uh—I said, "If they were your shipmate, uh, and you were in trouble, they would be there to help." um, so just—just a little bit more of, of continuing of what my parents had already told me.

Wiggins What was the most valuable lesson that you learned, um, in your time in the Navy?

Reuter Hm, um, as I said, just be a—be a team player. It's—it's not about you. It's getting the job done, keeping everybody safe, um, keeping the country safe, um, being a team player.

[vacuum cleaner turns off]

0:36:59 Lone Sailor Memorial Project

Wiggins How has NTC Orlando base or the Central Florida region changed since the time you originally spent here?

Reuter Oh, goodness. A lot. Uh, when we—my family and my husband—me and my husband and—our three kids—um, moved back to Orlando, because, uh, he was being stationed here at NAWCTSD [Naval Air Warfare Center Training System Division], um, I was like, you know, [laughs] "Let's go see where, uh, NTC Orlando was." Where was I? Where did I go to boot camp? Uh, I knew that the base had been closed, but—I don't know. I guess I was expecting to see something, um, and there was really nothing. Nothing there to show that the Navy had been here, as far as a, um, boot camp. And like, you know—like we've talked about, with the, um—the Grinder, the—the big replica of the, you know, the *Blue Jacket* ship, uh, um, there was nothing. Uh, the chapel [laughs]—and nothing and so I was very surprised.

And, uh, I said, I was, um, very pleased to, uh, find a group who was trying to do something about that. And, um, so since that time, I have, uh—me and my husband have volunteered to be on the, uh, committee, to get, uh, something to show where NTC/RTC [Recruit Training Center] was. um, so that people can not only come to take their kids to Disney World or SeaWorld or, um, Universal Studios [Orlando], uh, but if they went to boot camp, they can bring them to an area, uh, that they can show their kids where they were during that time frame. I, um—when I retired, the Lone Sailor [Memorial Project] statue was the, um, one thing that I wanted as a retirement gift, and so I'm very proud.

Wiggins So when they come back to visit the memorial, what do you think Naval personnel would like to see?

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Reuter Um, I think they would like to see, uh, um, pictures of, uh, the way – to – to show the way it used to be – what was really there. Because, you know, now it's a Baldwin Park community. um, so it's just really, I feel, interesting to see, um, old pictures of – of when we were there, Um, maybe a little write up of the history, um, and, um, of course, not only a – a male Lone Sailor, but a, hopefully, one day, we get a female Sailor statue there also, to represent, um, the men and women who went to boot camp there.

Wiggins What do you think is the lasting legacy of the NTC Orlando or the Navy to the Central Florida region?

Reuter Uh, just that it – it, uh – it's a lot of good people. It, uh, helped a lot of people grow up, and become, uh, great, um, adults – giving adults – back to their communities and country, um, sacrificing what you have to have sacrifice for the good of all.

0:41:49 **Closing remarks**

Wiggins Is there anything else that you would like to share about your Navy experience?

Reuter Um, it was definitely, uh, a good, good experience. Lots of, uh, memories. Lots of opportunities. Lots of opportunities to travel to different places, um, meet different people, uh, lots of – build lots of lasting friendships, um, see and do many different things.

Uh, during one of my two weeks of active duty, I was in New York City for Fleet Week, and during that time was when they, um, brought out the last beam for, uh, the World Trade Center. and I was manning the rails as they brought out the last beam, and I was all the way down – the bottom of World Trade Center – and, uh, at Ground Zero. And, uh, to just be down there and look up – amazing.

Wiggins Well, I want to thank you very much for your time and for giving this interview, and for all of the wonderful experiences that you have shared with me.

Reuter Thank you.

End of Interview