

# **Oral History: A Guide for Conducting Naval Historical Interviews**

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## **Related Resources: Creating a Personal Memoir of Your Naval Service**

### **Preface**

The purpose of this guide is to standardize some of the practices developed at the Naval Historical Center (NHC) by historians of the Contemporary History (CH) Branch, members of Naval Reserve Combat Documentation Detachment 206 (Det. 206), and Naval Reserve Naval Historical Center Volunteer Training Unit 0615R (NHC VTU 0615R) plus the Naval Historical Foundation's (NHF) Oral Historian. This guide is also designed to provide some direction to volunteers who conduct oral histories on behalf of the NHC or the NHF. Consequently, for some there are passages in this guide that may not be germane, depending on the type of interview.

This guide should not be considered the final word on how to conduct oral history. There are several fine references and organizations that can also help an inexperienced oral historian. Some of these are listed in the bibliography at the end of this guide. Any questions, comments, or suggestions on how to improve this guide, or need

additional assistance should be directed to the Naval Historical Foundation the Oral Historian at (202) 678-4333, or send an e-mail to [nhfwny@navyhistory.org](mailto:nhfwny@navyhistory.org).

### **Why Oral History Is Important**

Do not underestimate the value of the work that is involved. Starting with the Second World War, the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century has been a momentous time for the U.S. Navy. After defeating German U-boats and the Imperial Japanese Fleet, the U.S. Navy responded to more than 250 crises during the following five decades, including the major conflicts in Korea, Southeast Asia, and the Persian Gulf. The Navy responded to challenges involving China, Lebanon, India, Libya, Grenada, Liberia, Cuba, Haiti, Bosnia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Of course, the Soviet Navy was a concern throughout most of this period.

The past fifty years mark incredible developments in naval architecture and technology. Nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, submarines, and surface combatants; submarine-launched ballistic missiles; ship-launched surface-to-air and cruise missiles; plus information collection and dissemination mark just some of the revolutionary advances of recent times.

While future historians may note the significance of technological strides made by the Navy during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, they will also recognize the social changes within the organization. A shift away from an Annapolis-dominated officer corps, racial integration, the switch to an all-volunteer force, and finally, the movement of women into most Navy billets are subjects that will be covered in many research and writing projects.

The irony of this information age is that it may be even more difficult for future historians to reconstruct the events of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century than it was to cover the 19<sup>th</sup>. People are less likely to keep diaries, draft correspondence, or send memoranda as in the past. Major decisions are made using e-mail, telephones, and facsimile. Although files are supposed to be maintained electronically, in fifty years floppy disks may have gone the way of vinyl record albums. In some cases, verbal recollections may constitute the only documentation as to why a certain decision was made. Furthermore, many individuals who fought during World War II, Korea, and Vietnam and served and contributed to the Navy during this modern era may not be with us in the near future. At present, over 500,000 World War II veterans are passing on each year and this number will climb. Thus, there is an urgent need to capture the memories of our veterans.

To be candid, oral history takes a good bit of work. However, the end result will more than compensate for the hours spent conducting research and reviewing transcripts. The interviewer will have benefited, have taken onboard the experiences of those individuals interviewed. Also the interviewee will be blessed with a touch of immortality will be for the individual as his or her recollections may be made available for the ages.

## **Folklore versus History**

There are both Folklore and Historical approaches to conducting oral history. While the objectives of the respective approaches are often compatible, it is important to understand the nuances.

With the folklorists, often it is not what is said, but how it is said, that is important. Often the interview focuses on individual characteristics. Folklorists consider the audio recording as a primary source document. They argue that a transcription cannot capture the accents, voice inflections, tone, and emotions that are lost in transcription. Folklorists especially love video-recording interviews to capture the individual's demeanor and facial expressions.

Historians are interesting in oral history for the information yielded. The interview focuses on the events and people that the interviewee was involved with. Historians also love oral history as interviewees often provide lively, insightful quotes suitable for insertion into a text. Historians understand that oral history is not a perfect means to capture history due to the foibles of the human mind. Consequently, interviewees are strongly encouraged to review transcripts or interview summaries to check dates, names, places, and other information for historical accuracy. Once the transcription or interview summary is edited and corrected, it becomes the primary source document.

While respecting the aims of the folklorist, this guide aims to take the historical approach in capturing naval history.

## **Types of Interviews**

The Navy Oral History Program collection includes four types of interviews: After-action, Topical, End of Tour, and Biographical (or Career).

After-action interviews consist of interviews conducted in the wake of significant naval operations and events. Recent examples of this genre include the interviews by Det. 206 members recalled to document Fifth Fleet operations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and NHC CH Branch and Det. 206 interviews with Pentagon 9/11 survivors and responders. .

Topical interviews focus on a specific subject and target individuals associated with that subject. One NHC CH historian has conducted extensive interviews to provide material for his study on the integration of African-Americans at the U.S. Naval Academy. There is one NHF volunteer who focuses on U.S. Merchant Marine Academy graduate service in World War II while another focuses on riverine operation during Vietnam.

End of Tour interviews are usually conducted by historians assigned to naval commands or members of NHC VTU 0615R with commanding officers about to depart a

major command. Recent examples include interviews by Jan Herman of the Bureau of Medicine with departing Chiefs of Naval Medicine.

While the first three types of interviews can usually be conducted during one recording session, biographical interviews usually involve several sessions. Paul Stillwell at the U.S. Naval Institute has been carrying on a biographical oral history program for over two decades. A listing of USNI interviews can be found at the [www.usni.org](http://www.usni.org) web site. The Naval Historical Foundation also has conducted numerous biographical interviews through its corps of volunteers.

### **Who to Interview**

While everyone has a story to tell, not all stories are worth recording. Oral history projects can consume many hours in preparation, recording, transcribing, editing, and accessioning. The project managers should set out with some objectives. Some thought should be given to how an individual's story might fill a void in understanding naval history. Also the health and mental capacity of the potential interviewee and other extenuating circumstances may affect the final product. Referrals should be sought out. When calling an office, a ship, or an organization, the interviewers should ask "Who would be the best person to talk to on this issue?"

Correspondence, a naval message, or E-mail serving as letters of introduction will help to open doors. In the communication, the project's objective needs to be conveyed and how interviewing this individual will help meet those objectives. Also the proposed length of the interview and how the information will be used should be stated. A follow up call should be made to confirm that the individual received the communication.

### **Preparation**

How you prepare for an interview depends on the type of interview you are conducting. One common denominator in all interviews is recording equipment. While a recording studio equipped with high grade recording equipment is the ideal set up, reality dictates that you go to the interviewee to "get the story." Thus, portable audio recorders are often the tools of the trade.

The Naval Historical Center provides digital recorders and laptop computers for use by its historians and members of Det. 206 and NHC VTU 0615R. An advantage of the laptops is that it can be used for recording storage. Indeed, with the proper programming and accessories, the laptop can be used as the recorder. Because of the costs associated with digital recording and the challenges of finding compatible digital recording transcription machines, the NHF will continue to rely on cassette recorders. A good recorder can be purchased for under \$50 and most brands share common features. One useless feature that seems common to both types of recorders is the AVR (automatic voice recorder) or VCVA (Variable Control Voice Actuator) switch. In the ON position, this feature turns the recorder on with the sound of a voice and then shuts it off if there is

a pause. It is not difficult to imagine the quality of the recording should this switch be engaged. If the switch is present it should be taped over. Another feature found on some cassette recorders is a fast playback switch. Be sure this switch is not engaged during recording.

Frequently check the volume dial to ensure it is set at the right level. Fresh batteries should be inserted before a session and spares should be handy. A wall plug feature is usually a fail-safe method to assure there is enough electricity. If recording with cassette tapes, the tapes used can also make a difference. High-density, 60 or 90 minute tapes are preferable.

A test recording will verify that all necessary adjustments have been made. On cassette recorders, the "Play" and "Rec" buttons should both be depressed. There is a one-button recording feature on the digital models.

Prior to the interview it is good to break the ice by finding out aspects of the interviewee's background that may have a commonality with the interviewer. If the interview is conducted in the subject's home or office, a glance at the walls and desktop for interesting mementos, photos, and certificates that may yield interesting stories.

The recording should be started with the interviewer stating his/her name, the interviewee's name, rank and title if appropriate, the date, and the location. If a second tape or digital file is used repeat the above and state "This is the second tape/digital file." Although the recording machine is supposedly picking up the interview, the interviewer should have a notepad handy and take notes. With two interviewers, one individual should be the note taker and the other should focus on asking the questions. Questions asked depend on the type of interview.

Since after-action interviews deal with a recent event, questions should focus on establishing a narrative of "what happened" as well as when, where, why, and how. The interviewers should review message traffic and situation reports prior to the interview. The NHC CH Branch currently has a historian assigned to the Navy Command Center in the Pentagon who can provide assistance. As for whom to interview, identify individuals holding responsible billets and individuals who may have executed significant actions.

Topical interviews can require a bit more research. For example, if the topic is the integration of women into combatant ships, review articles written for the *Navy Times*, Naval Institute *Proceedings* and other journals. The Chief of Naval Information can provide public statements on the subject. Do not ignore the Navy Department Library or other resources within the NHC. For those who live outside the Washington Beltway, the NHC has an excellent webpage that can be reached at [www.history.navy.mil](http://www.history.navy.mil). To target interviewees, identify the individuals involved in the policy-making loop. Usually these individuals are named in articles and press releases. A call to that individual's office should also yield who the "action-officer" was. Finally, the interviewers may consider interviewing individuals at the deckplate level to see what effect a policy action had.

End-of-Tour interviews also require some preparation. The interviewer contact the targeted interviewee's executive assistant to obtain background information about the command, the interviewee, and issues of importance. The NHC Operational Archives may have command histories from that organization. Some commands even have their own homepages. Obtain the interviewee's biography and command mission statement to include with the completed transcript. A list of standard questions for an End-of-Tour interview is included as an appendix.

Biographical interviews usually take the greatest preparation. Has anyone written about this individual or the events that this person participated in? Has this individual written or spoken on any issues? Although the approach in an interview depends on the individual, a chronological approach is best. Because of the amount of time it takes to conduct a biographical interview, a "get to know you" icebreaking session should be planned early on to record childhood memories and discuss follow-on interviews. A review of the individual's personal papers, cruise books, or photograph collections will help with preparations. It's good to inquire if the individual has ever recorded or written his/her recollections. The interviewer should develop a general outline and share this outline with the interviewee prior to the recording session and ask for comments. Knowing the ground to be covered allows the interviewee an opportunity to reflect and prepare.

## **The Interview**

Conduct the interview at a location where the interviewee feels at ease. This can be at the interviewee's home, office, or stateroom. Keep the ambient noise in mind. Conducting an interview on board a ship can be especially challenging. If there is a noise interruption during the interview, the interviewee should be given a time out signal.

Do not place the recorder on a hard surface such as a tabletop because interior sounds, especially on a ship, will transmit right into the recorder. A padded surface, such as a mouse pad or pillow is recommended. External microphones can also alleviate this problem. Ideally the recorder should be within five to six feet of the interviewee. As you proceed with the interview, take notes. This is not an easy endeavor as there is a need to focus on what the individual is saying so that appropriate follow on questions can be asked. Still, having good notes can be helpful and thus a second interviewer/notetaker is invaluable. .

Before the recorder is turned on, go over some ground rules. For participants in the NHF program, they will have read "Preparing for Your Oral History Interview" (see appendix) and will have an understanding of how the interview will be used. Otherwise the purpose of the interview and the eventual disposition of the recording and/or transcript should be detailed. If the interviewee is not a current member of the Department of Defense, he or she will be asked to sign a release form. (Active duty personnel giving interviews about their official duties and responsibilities during their

official working hours are not required to sign a release form.) The interviewee should understand that the interviewer may interject at times to ask for or include the spelling of the names of people, places, and things or the meaning of an acronym for the benefit of the transcriber. The interviewee should know that slanderous remarks about another individual, if transcribed, could subject the interviewee (and the Department of the Navy) to a libel lawsuit.

The interviewee may want to impose some restrictions. While active duty personnel cannot place access restrictions on their interview, non-DoD interviewees have more latitude. If the interviewee asks, it can be suggested that he/she can restrict access to the interview for a time period. Access restriction of more than five years should be avoided. Incidentally, courts have ruled that “closed” transcripts held within government repositories are *not* exempt from Freedom of Information Act requests.

As a rule, avoid discussing classified material. (Interviews conducted under the aegis of the Naval Historical Foundation Oral History Program will NEVER discuss classified information.) If there is classified material that is vital to the story, then ask the interviewee to state, during the interview, that he or she identify the classified information and explain *why* it is classified. Refer to the appropriate security instructions on current marking instruction. If classified material is discussed, be sure to conduct the interview in a secure space and have provisions for secure storage and shipment of your completed recordings.

How the recording session goes depends on the interviewee. Some individuals will talk at great length, covering all of the areas to be covered without the interviewer having to interject to ask questions. In other sessions, the interviewer may feel like a dentist trying to extract teeth. The key is general questions that cannot be answered with a yes or a no. “Explain” or “Discuss” are the types of words that should be prevalent in the question list. Interviewers should focus on events and avoid the hypothetical “in what direction should the Navy go” question unless the interviewee is an incoming CNO or Navy Secretary. If an answer involves a theoretical discussion, ask for examples to illustrate. When the interviewee finishes a statement, the interviewer should not be so quick to ask the next question. Pause. The interviewee may often add additional insights. In addition, the interviewer should be prepared to ask amplifying questions not considered during the outline-preparation process. Always remember that this is an interview and not a conversation. Should the interviewer want to share a personal sea story based on what is said, it should be held until after the recording session is over.

After have running through the list of prepared questions, a good closing question might be, “Is there anything else I should ask?” or “Is there anything that you would like to add on this subject?” The interviewer may also want to ask for referrals to other individuals who are familiar with the subject.

## **E-Mail Interviews**

The Naval Historical Foundation has conducted several successful E-Mail biographical interviews. These interviews sometimes take months to complete, however, they have the advantage of needing little editing or transcription. While there is a lack of spontaneity, the text tends to be more historically accurate. E-Mail surveys are also a valid collection methodology and serve as a filter to identify individuals for follow-on interviews.

### **Follow-on Activities**

When an interview is completed with a cassette recorder, the interviewer should immediately break the tabs on the cassette tape and write in the date, interviewer and interviewee names, and classification (if needed) on the cassette and the casing. Similar steps need to be completed on digital recordings to create folders containing identification data.

How to further proceed depends on what treatment the recording warrants. In the case of most After-Action interviews and some Topical interviews, an interview summarization is all that is warranted. In contrast, many End of Tour interviews, some Topical interviews, and most Biographical interviews should be transcribed.

### **TRANSCRIPTION VS INTERVIEW SUMMARIES**

To produce an accurate transcript, it takes approximately 9-10 hours of work for every recorded hour. In contrast, a good interview summary can take 2-4 hours to produce for the same period. Given a choice, historians prefer to work with a transcript over an interview summary. This bias is unfortunate as a good interview summary can actually be superior to a transcript. However, the historians' preference for transcripts is understandable, given their desire to use primary source material. Historians often look at interview summaries as the historical equivalent of "hearsay."

### **Summarizing an Interview**

So how can good interview summaries be superior to transcripts?

Sometimes the interviewee goes off into tangents that are not germane to the focus of the interview. Also interviewees can be repetitious. A good summary cuts out some of the needless chatter and summarizes key points.

Basically, the interview summary should read like a book report. Some summaries have gone on for three and four pages. The interviewer should draft the interview summary shortly after the interview: it allows the advantage of writing while the interview is still fresh and may provide the opportunity to submit the draft of the summary to the interviewee for review. Some interview summaries conducted by Det. 206 have tended to overuse bullets and were formatted in the style of fitness reports. Avoid this. After typing your summary into a word processing computer, if possible, e-mail, fax, or drop off the summary draft to the interviewee for review. Often the interviewee can correct misspellings and resolve misinterpretations.



Eventually, a disk with the summary, a printout, and recording will be sent to the NHC's Operational Archives. If these are done correctly, a researcher should feel no need to listen to the recording. A paragraph format is easier to electronically transfer to the Trim finding aid system. Typically it will take three to four hours of work per hour of tape to produce a time sheet and interview summary.

### **Transcribing an Interview**

Ideally, all tapes should be transcribed. Researchers much prefer to scan a transcript than listen to a tape. Transcripts are wonderful for those who write history for they gain the interviewee's direct insights about an event and may be able to extract great quotes to liven up their narratives. However, it does take about ten-plus hours of work per hour of tape should you decide to make a transcription.

For a relatively short interview that warrants transcription, the interviewer should consider doing it him/herself. First of all, he/she will comprehend what has been said more easily because he/she had just sat through the interview and have an appreciation for the interviewee's verbal nuances. Second, he/she can be assured of a relatively quick turnaround time. How long it takes to transcribe an hour of tape depends on how fast one types, the pace of the interview, and the clarity of the recording. The average hour of tape takes between four and six hours to transcribe.

The Oral History Program tries to obtain a near verbatim transcript, although ahs and dahs and other false starts are edited out. For something that is unintelligible, [unclear] should be typed. The draft transcript is double-spaced, left-justified, 12 pt pitch, Times New Roman. Page numbers are placed at the bottom of the page and centered. Type out the interviewer's and interviewee's names in capital letters, as follows:

**JONES: Admiral, please explain the reasoning behind the decision to build the new aircraft carrier out of balsa wood?**

**SMITH:** Balsa wood has incredible stealth qualities. Our scientists at Naval Research Laboratories conducted extensive tests to verify this.

Note there is no indentation. Commercial transcribers who charge by the page love to indent because it leaves fewer words per page!

### **Editing a Transcript**

In most cases someone else will transcribe the interview. When the draft transcript is returned, a light proofread will catch silly stuff. If there are passages of the interview where the individual is unclear, it should be marked on the margin "please clarify." After the initial review, forward the transcript to the interviewee for review. Check with the interviewee to see if he or she would prefer a hard copy of the transcript to mark up or a disk copy so they can perform their own editing. .

Most individuals will prefer to review a hard copy and return the draft to you marked up. Occasionally, you will get a transcript back with few changes. However, do not be surprised if you get back a transcript full of heavy edits. While the folklore oral historians may scream “foul,” changes that enhance the historical accuracy are welcome. It demonstrates that that interviewee has a sincere interest in getting the story correct. The history of the United States Navy is quite complex and many issues need to be carefully explained. After these edits, the transcript becomes a far more useful resource for historians. When there is heavy editing, however, this should be noted in the preface to the interview.

The final step in editing the transcript is to create in a separate file, a “Subjects Covered” listing as a good finding aid to point researchers in the right direction. The format used follows:

### **Subjects Covered**

Father’s Navy career in submarines - Growing up in Smithville - Role models  
Decision to go to the Naval Academy - Observations on Naval Academy life  
Graduation in 1960 - Marriage to Thelma Lou - The triplets

Attending flight school at Pensacola - My first plane crash - Earning my wings  
Assignment to VA-25 - Observations on Commander Skip Rock  
Escorting Admiral Salty in Japan - The sushi incident - and so on.....

On the same file as “Subjects Covered,” a short preface to introduce the interview would be appropriate. The preface should allude to the interviewee’s distinguished career and why this career may be of significance to historians. The preface also provides an opportunity for the interviewer to thank the interviewee for his or her cooperation and anyone else who worked on the project.

### **Packaging the Transcript**

Once all of this is written, a second set of eyes to proofread the Preface, Subjects Covered, the Biography Sheet the interviewee provided, and the transcript to catch additional errors would be ideal. By this time, a decision should have already been made to either deposit your transcript in the NHC’s Operational Archives or to send it on to the Naval Historical Foundation’s Oral Historian for additional refinement and publication. If not done so already, a signed release form should be signed by the interviewee transferring the copyright on the transcript. To transfer the transcript package to Operational Archives, send the original release form, preface, biography sheet, subjects covered page, transcript, disk, and tapes to:

Operational Archives  
Naval Historical Center

Washington Navy Yard  
805 Kidder Breese St. SE  
Washington Navy Yard, DC 20374-5055.

If a decision has been made to publish the transcript for distribution to other Navy libraries, forward the materials to the Naval Historical Foundation (attn: Oral Historian) at:

1306 Dahlgren Ave. SE  
Washington Navy Yard, DC 20374-5055

Once received the package, the oral historian will do some additional formatting (single-spacing, bolding names and questions, etc.) and add a cover page and cover. Transcripts will be printed for distribution to the Naval Academy Library, the Naval War College, the Naval Postgraduate School, the Navy Library, the Naval Institute and the Library of Congress. Upon completion of production, the originals are transferred to Operational Archives for long-term preservation.

## References

There are quite a few resources you can draw on besides the guidance provided here. There is the national Oral History Association with several regional branches. If you have internet access all you need to do is type in "Oral History" in one of your search engines and you are on your way.

Allen, Barbara and Montell, Lynwood. *From Memory to History: Using oral Sources for Historical Research*. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1981.

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Dunaway, David K., and Baum, Willa K. ed. *Oral History: An Interdisciplinary Anthology*. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1984.

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Richie, Donald. *Doing Oral History*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995.

Thompson, Paul. *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978.

## **Appendices**

### **1. Oral Interview Worksheet**

### **2. Naval Historical Center Oral Interview Information Form**

### **3. Oral History Donation Form**

### **5. Oral History Transcription Specifications**

#### **End-of-Tour Interview Core Questions**

The Naval Historical Center's End-of-Tour (EOT) Interview Program captures and preserves the experiences of senior U. S. Navy personnel in various key leadership positions throughout the fleet. Such interviews will serve to pass on experience to incoming commanders and hold on to the institutional memory of major events occurring during a particular leader's tenure. Particularly given the situation at home and abroad since the terrorist attacks of September 2001, maintaining an accurate record of who, what, where, when, why, and how takes on even greater significance. Other services have been doing this for years and have been very successful at preserving history for the benefit of their service and leadership.

When possible, the senior member of the Command Debriefing Team will call on you early on to brief the interview process, typical questions, and preparation techniques. The interview should take between 1 to 3 hours total and can be conducted in more than one session if necessary. You will, of course, receive a copy of the full interview transcript or a summary of the interview for your review.

For consistency, the following core questions will be incorporated into the interview.

1. When you assumed your duties, what guidance did you receive from your superiors? Were you charged with accomplishing specific objectives? If so what were they? Did you have the opportunity to discuss your duties with your predecessor? How was the transition handled? How could the transition be improved?
2. Looking back at your career, which assignment best prepared you for this position?
3. What area/responsibilities consumed most of your time?
4. Please describe your style of management? What were your techniques for handling the vast spectrum of information and ideas that you needed to understand in order to carry out your duties? What criteria did you use for making tough decisions?
5. What were your major initiatives during this assignment? What were the major problems you faced in getting these initiatives accepted?
6. What was your greatest challenge?
7. What were your most significant accomplishments?
8. Did you make any major organizational changes? If so, why? Do you see a need to change the organization, staffing, budget, or responsibilities of your office?
9. As you leave for your next position (or retire), what areas still cause you concern and what things did time not allow you to complete? How has your own perception of your duties changed since assuming this position?
10. What major issues will your successor face?
11. What advice would you like to pass on to your successor?
12. What do you see as the course of the Navy in the future? What will be the major challenges in fifteen years, thirty years? Are the Navy's long range plans appropriately focused to meet future needs?

Of course, the interviewers will perform preparation work to develop command-specific questions.

### Preparing for Your Oral History Interview

We were overwhelmed by the response to our recent surveys with the quantity and diversity of Foundation members who offered to volunteer their time to talk about their naval service. From former fleet commanders to World War II deck seamen, we have the potential to collect much useful material for future historians desiring personal insights about the U.S. Navy in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In addition, by participating in this program, you will be creating a document that you will be proud to pass down to future generations within your family.

The typical document that we will create opens with a preface, either written by the interviewer or the Foundation's historian, placing your story in context of naval history. The preface is then followed by a

one to three page biographic overview of your life. Because the interview will focus on your naval service, the biography will contain information about your life before, during, and after naval service. Finally, before the transcript, there will be an index that will highlight key aspects of your transcript.

You will be expected to edit the transcript. The objective in editing is not to put your words into the King's English but to capture historical errors, misspelled place and people names, and catch other obvious transcription mistakes. Timeliness is appreciated. It is our intent, upon your donation of the edited transcript, to post the preface, biography, and index on our web page to alert historians that your transcript exists and is available for research.

The interviewer may have a security clearance but it is not in conjunction with his or her capacity as an oral historian for the Naval Historical Foundation. Therefore our interviews must be conducted at the unclassified level. Should there be important aspects of naval history that need to be discussed at the classified level, arrangements could be made with the Naval Historical Center for a classified interview. In addition, you must be cautioned that derogatory comments about living individuals could subject you (and the Naval Historical Foundation) to charges of slander.

Although we discourage it, we can put restrictions on the public release of transcripts. Such arrangements can be made with the approval of the Executive Director of the Naval Historical Foundation.

As for the interviews, we usually take a chronological approach. On occasion, a topical approach has been more effective. If you think this may be a better approach, discuss it with your interviewer.

Upon completion of the project, we will ask you to donate the final product to the Foundation and the Foundation will then donate the final product, along with the tapes, to the Naval Historical Center Operational Archives. Copies of the transcripts will be offered to the Naval War College, Naval Postgraduate School, and Naval Academy libraries.

The final product is dependent on the cooperative efforts of you and the interviewer. The better prepared the two of you are for the interview, the better the final product. Please fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return. You may want to make a copy for yourself to serve as a memory jogger.

Interview Preliminaries:

(Please write on the back or on additional sheets as necessary)

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ phone # \_\_\_\_\_

address: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ \*\*\*

\*\*\* If you would desire to conduct an "e-mail" interview, please check here. E-mail interviews would be conducted by Dr. Winkler from the Naval Historical Foundation.

1. Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Others in family who served in the Navy? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Entry year into service: \_\_\_\_\_ Year left service: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Listing of Duty Stations (Attach on a separate sheet...A biographic sheet listing assignments is welcome).

5. Conflicts you participated in: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. People you met who left lasting impressions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Issues/Topics you desire to specifically address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Books/Articles that you may have written: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Friend/Colleague recommendation for consultation on interviewing:

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone# \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your response. The survey will assist the interviewer in crafting appropriate questions.

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY -- NAVAL HISTORICAL CENTER  
805 KIDDER BREESE SE -- WASHINGTON NAVY YARD  
WASHINGTON DC 20374-5060

## Oral History Donation Form

Subject to the terms, conditions and restrictions set forth in this agreement,

I/We \_\_\_\_\_ located at

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_,

do hereby give, donate, and convey to the Naval Historical Foundation a nonexclusive, paid-up license throughout the world in the information provided in the enclosed oral history (hereafter referred to as "the donated materials") conducted in

(year) \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

at \_\_\_\_\_.

It is understood that Naval Historical Foundation will then donate "the donated materials" to the Naval Historical Center. This donation includes all copyright interests in the materials, which I may now possess or which I may in the future obtain and includes the right to reproduce the work in copies, to distribute copies to the public, to perform or display the work publicly, and to prepare derivative works thereof. Specifically, the Naval Historical Center may publish copies of the oral history for limited distribution to Navy libraries and relevant Navy commands. With my permission, the Naval Historical Foundation may retain a copy of the oral history for purchase by the public at a cost to cover reproduction and shipping.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby donate "the donated materials" to the Naval Historical Foundation with the understanding that it will be donated to the Naval Historical Center and that historians of the Naval Historical Center will have free access to the oral history for use as source material for histories being written and published under the auspices of the Dept. of the Navy. I understand that copies of the oral history may be reproduced and distributed to Navy libraries and relevant Navy commands and thus may be accessible to independent researchers.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby allow the Naval Historical Foundation to retain a copy of the oral history for purchase by the public at a cost to cover reproduction and shipping.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby allow the Naval Historical Center the option to post the oral history on the Center's Internet web site for widespread dissemination to researchers.

\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donor's signature



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Date

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From: Executive Director, Naval Historical Foundation  
To: Director, Naval Historical Center  
Subj: Donation of Oral History "Donated Material"

The Naval Historical Foundation donates the attached "donated materials" under the terms prescribed above. It is understood that the Naval Historical Center staff may dispose of the donated materials, as they see fit, at any time.

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C. T. Creekman, Jr.

I accept the license and materials donated above on behalf of the Dept. of the Navy, subject to the terms, conditions, and restrictions set forth above.

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