

Gray County Veterans Memorial & Archive

ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION

Walter F. Habiger

August 22, 2014



INTERVIEW
YEAR

Walter F. Habiger
2014

GRAY COUNTY ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

NAME: **Walter F. Habiger**
DATE: **August 22, 2014**
PLACE: **Cimarron, KS**

INTERVIEWER: **Kathleen Holt** TECHNOLOGY: **George Martinez**

PROJECT SERIES: **Korean Era Oral History Project for Gray County**

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

Walter Habiger was born in Red Wing, Kansas on March 08, 1930. He enlisted in the service and left Hutchinson, Kansas on the 14th of December, 1950, traveling to Kansas City by train. After induction in Kansas City, he traveled to San Diego, California, where he attended boot camp which consisted of training on a small destroyer escort that had been in moth balls. Mr. Habiger's service was on the USS Naifeh. His highest rank was Gunners Mate II and his service dates were December 14, 1950 to October 27, 1954.

SUBJECTS DISCUSSED: **Life on a destroyer; gunners; Navy life**

COMMENTS ON INTERVIEW: **Walter provided copies of documents and photographs documenting some of the stories and descriptions in his interview. See attachments.**

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ORAL HISTORY
Walter F. Habiger
Interview Date: August 22, 2014

Interviewer: Kathleen Holt (KMH)
Interviewee: Walter F. Habiger (WFH)

KMH - OK, this recording is interviewer Kathleen Holt and I'm here with Walter F. Habiger -- of Cimarron, Kansas. This is August 22, 19 . . . oops! 19? Oh my gosh, I'm already into the history part! This is August 22, 2014. We are at the Cimarron City Library and -- again, I'm talking with Walter F. Habiger - - about his experience in the Navy. Walt, why don't you set the scene and tell us -- uh - your terms of service; when you were in; where you were posted; what branch of the service -- - and then after that when we kind of get the details, we'll go ahead and talk about some of the stories.

WFH -- Okay. I -- my name is Walter Habiger and I entered the service -- I left Hutchinson, Kansas, on the 14th of December, 1950, and I went to Kansas City on the rail. When we got to Kansas City, we did some more tests. After the tests, they put us on the rail and we headed for San Diego, California. After six weeks of training -- boot camp -- they called it boot camp, they -- uh -- took some of us out of there and put us on a little destroyer escort, which was in moth balls, and we put it into service.

It took us probably two and a half months to put it in service, and then, after we got it into service, we took it out and tested it, and made sure everything was working right. And then after that, we headed for overseas. And within nineteen fifty one I believe, is when we got over to Japan, which our base over there would've been in Sasebo [*Naval Base*] or Yokosuka [*city*], Japan. I can't remember which one but, but either one we'd come in for our port. And then when we'd get there, then we would take on provisions, and then we headed for the east and the west coast, either one of them, of Korea. And - - most of my time was spent in - - Wonsan Harbor -- which we were looking for mines, looking for subs. We was -- uh -- shelling the shore and anything that moved. We were supposed to, you know, try to stop or take out.

KMHH -Could you spell Wonsan harbor?

WFH - W-o-n-s-a-n, I believe, Wonsan harbor, it's a harbor up there. And that's where we was doing most of our patrolling. And we were looking for mines and subs and even some uh junks, I don't know if you know what a junk is, but it's like a those Korean people have little boats that they sort of live on well a lot of them would be out there laying mines.

KMH --Oh.

WFH - So you had to you know intercept them, 'er stop them and see what was going on, see if they was laying any mines and we boarded, I never did personally board one, but the executive officer and the chief gunners mate, they went aboard one and I was right there where I could look down in it, they that's where they lived, right in that junk.

They called them junks, but they some of them had pretty high powered motors in them, they could really move pretty fast. So uh but uh we never did find nothing on them but the funny thing was like whenever you was trying to stop one they would run up different flags, because they didn't know who was stopping them. They'd have a British flag, American flag, or who's ever flag, they'd run it up the pole. So that was about the size of it, we spent our time over there, just messed around in that harbor, washing things and trying to find some subs or mines, and which we did, we did explode some of the mines, there was a few of them that we found, and uh we had a fifty caliber machine gun on the back of the ship that we would use to explode them. You'd uh see them out there floating, a lot of the times they were below the water but most of the times they sat a top of the water, so.

KMH -So, tell me a little, oh first, one thing I want to kind of back up, what was your, you were in the Navy, what was your rank or title?

WFH - Uh, gunners mate, second class.

KMH -OK.

WFH - Second class, gunners mate.

KMH -So what basically was the job description for that?

WFH - Well, the job description was to like, my duty station was a gun mount and that was my battle station too. The thing you did was like after you used, after you did some firing with it, you went and cleaned it out. It had a big, just like you take clean out your rifle with a, barrel cleaner.

KMH -Uh huh.

WFH - Which is about a six inch, see it was about a five inch gun mount.

KMH -OK.

WFH - So it's probably about a five inch brush that you'd run through there, clean it out. And you would oil up all the mechanism that was in the gun mount, make sure that everything was working so the next time you went on general quarters, everything was ready to go.

KMH -How many of those would there have been on your ship?

WFH - Oh two, one in the, one in the front of the ship and one in the back of the ship.

KMH -OK.

WFH - And then we had uh, a quad forty millimeter gun and we had I think eight twin twenty millimeters, and we had two racks of depth charges like on both sides of the ship

and we had let's see, I think they call them some hedgehogs, which was right behind this forward five inch that would get shooters, like twenty of them in this, this rack.

KMH -Uh hum.

WFH - Where they'd shoot like you know one or two at a time.

KMH – Oh.

WFH - And what they would do is go out into the water, go down, if there was anything down there, and when they struck, they would explode.

KMH - Wow, OK. So, OK, let's kind of walk back to . . . Yu said you put your ship into service. What was the name of your ship? You said it was in mothballs. Tell me what was involved in getting that ship ready to – uh -- re-put, be put into service.

WFH - OK when they, when they put them in mothballs, they go and put, I think they call it Cosmoline or something, you know something to keep the salt water from eating on it.

KMH – Oh.

WFH - Like all the guns had this probably half inch or inch of Cosmoline all over them.

KMH – Oh.

WFH - So you had clean all them, get all the things, take them all apart, and clean them all up, and then the ship itself, which, like the, we call them the deck hands, which they was, the people who took care of the paint and the everything on there. They had to do a lot of scraping and painting -- you know, paint the ship and get it all cleaned up, 'cuz you know after sitting out there – see, what they did when they put them in mothballs, they tied 'em up out there, four abreast, four of them little destroyers abreast, anchor them down in the bay, and they just sat out there for, since World War II.

KMH – Wow.

WFH - Which that wasn't that long you see, because of forty five, forty six, they probably put them in mothballs, OK, in fifty and fifty one they started taking them out.

KMH – Wow.

WFH - So they wasn't really in mothballs that very long.

KMH – Right.

WFH - And that's what it was, they was, actually they just took everything off, not everything, all the guns and everything was still on there, but the engines had to be, revamped and everything well, get it working.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - Making sure and, everything on there had to be re-did, so that's why the crew that put, the crew that went overseas was on the crew that took, got this thing, plus we had a lot of uh shore workers that'd come on, the guys that were working on the ship yard, they'd come on the ship and help clean it all up.

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - And get it all ready

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - So yeah it took a while, I mean, but you worked, you worked day and night, they was, they was going day and night, I think twenty four hours a day.

KMH - Wow.

WFH - There was never any, I mean you heard racket, and you could still sleep even though they had racket on that ship, after you got tired, you'd still go in there and sleep.

KMH - So where did you sleep?

WFH - In the, well, that's another thing, when we went to one of my reunions, I kept telling the kids that we had these bunks that was like three high, and I said I slept on the top bunk and they didn't believe it. And then another thing, like using your bathroom, your thing.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - I said, well in that bathroom, all we had in that bathroom, there wasn't no stools like you've got now, it's just a trough.

KMH - Oh.

WFH - A trough on each side, and you had seats on them trough, and they, and they said you're lying. So my wife, she took a picture of it, which I don't have with me but we have a picture at home, and she took a picture of that bath, that commode, and showed that, and those kids, and they finally believe it.

KMH - Oh my gosh.

WFH - Yeah, you just a ye, I mean you just sat in just about this far from each other, sat across from them, four on one side and three on the other side.

KMH - Oh my gosh.

WFH - And then the bunks, we slept in a bunk in a, in a compartment down there, like the gunners all slept in one place, and the deck hands in a another place, and the cooks in a another place, engineers in another place, but there was, the bunks was three high and two a breast, in some places, like in the middle, but on the side, by your wall,

there'd only three of them, three of them, and your lockers was underneath there, that's where you kept all your stuff, you had three lockers, three bunks.

KMH – Wow.

WFH - Your, your locker was down there and your bunk was there.

KMH - Was the, was the inside of a bunk like a box or was it like a hammock?

WFH - It was a . . .

KMH - Box with a mattress?

WFH - No, it was like a hammock.

KMH – Yeah.

WFH - It was just a, a steel wall on the outside with a canvas laced up and you had a, mattress was about this thick.

KMH – Wow.

WFH - And you had a two wool blankets, and oh sometimes over there in Korea it got pretty cold but use, but most of the time you didn't need no two blankets.

KMH – Yeah.

But ah, yeah it was, it was something, it was an experience.

KMH - Yeah, I guess so, I guess so, and the name of your ship was what?

WFH - Ah, U, Naifeh, N-a-i-f-e-h, destroyer escort 352.

KMH - I bet you get a lot of questions about that.

WFH - Well sure you do, yeah they say yeah we know you was in the Navy, but what's the name of your ship? 'Cuz it sounds about the same.

KMH - So Naife.

WFH - Naife, Naife.

KMH - N-a-l.

WFH - And, in fact, the guy that the ship was named after, was from Oklahoma, the state of Oklahoma.

KMH – Oh.

WFH - And in fact, there's some artifacts from the ship that is in the museum in Oklahoma City.

KMH - Oh

WFH - 'Cuz see that family, he sacrificed his life in world war two for something, and that's why they named that ship after him.

KMH - Oh.

WFH - So that's why it's after, Naife.

KMH - When you were in the service, did you ever run into anybody that you knew from back home?

WFH - Yeah when I was when we was in boot camp, I was a server on the chow line, and there was a guy came through from Healy, his name was Sharp, which he, he's part of that Sharp's Seed company, he was from there, and he just had come in and see we was about to ship out, and we were serving the chow and they was just new ones coming in, so that's eh, and then I met, well there was a few of them from Kansas that was in my company, but see then they all kind of split up, when we got out of the boot camp, they put 'em in different, different ships and different places.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - So there's only one guy that went with me on my ship, and he was from Manhattan, uh Hedren, Carl Hedren went, he stayed on that ship and we both got on the ship at the same time and we both got off the ship at the same time.

KMH - Uh hum, good.

KMH - **So** . . . Goodness, tell me a little bit about getting -- I'm not really familiar with that time but the draft and what were you doing when you got drafted and did you want to go. Were you planning on going or --? About how you got into the service then?

WFH - Well, yeah but you see 'cuz I was, I was twenty years old, and see they was drafting and I was already eligible for the draft of the army. Well I didn't think I wanted to be in the army so I decided, in fact, I joined the Navy with making a career out of it, I thought well I'll just stay in there for twenty years and retire and then.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - Still do something else, but then after, after we went overseas and the Korean conflict was over with, see there wasn't nothing, there really wasn't nothing going on, and then we was doing a lot I call it Mickey Mouse stuff, wasn't really doing anything, so I decided, well it's not for me to be in here just kind of loafing around and just kind of doing stuff that wasn't even, wasn't really doing nothing.

KMH – Hum.

WFH - So that's when I decided to get out, but when I went in, I decided to stay in for twenty years and retire out of it, but I didn't.

KMH - Wow, wow, yeah.

WFH - I, I, served my four, well not quite four years. There years, ten months, and twenty three days.

KMH – Wow.

WFH - Was what I was in there.

KMH - Wow, did your folks, were they happy you went in?

WFH - Well no, mom wasn't , wasn't, see dad, dad was in world war one, so he knew that, in in fact, see I had, I had uncles in world war two, and then I had a brother, 'cuz he was in the Korean deal, he came in, in fifty two, and you see he was over, he was in the army, he was on the, on the land while I was out there on the ship, and he it, it was, he told me it was kind of cold and everything so. So that's why I, I really didn't, well, and I knew some guys that was in the Navy and they told me about it, and I thought, well that'd be pretty nice to be in there, at least you have a, maybe have a bunk, unless ya', shot out from under you, you'd have a bunk overnight.

KMH – Yeah.

WFH - Out there in the army, you don't know where you're going to be sleeping.

KMH – Yeah.

WFH - See, so that's why I joined, I. . .

KMH - Was your brother older or younger?

WFH - Younger, he's younger.

KMH - OK

WFH - He was young, he's eighteen months younger than I was.

KMH - Wow. Okay, so you joined up in Hutch, left from Hutch.

WFH – Yes.

KMH - Went to San Diego, was that kind of the first time you'd been out of the state or you'd traveled before?

WFH - No, that was the first time I ever was to Kansas City, I mean when I went and left Hutch. I was in Hutchinson 'cuz we used to go down there to the fair.

KMH – Oh.

WFH - But anyway, I, see I left on train, my brother, my oldest brother took me down there to catch a train. It was early in the morning, so I left, but that's the first time I was in Kansas City, first time in my life, and then when I made it to California. Oh my God, I mean this here is a whole lot different.

KMH – Yeah.

WFH - I mean it looked different -- palm trees, it looked real nice, as long as I was there, but I wasn't there very long.

WFH - Kind a liked it.

WFH - I didn't stay there very long.

KMH - So you went from Kansas City by train to San Diego?

WFH - By train, out to, San Diego, yes.

KMH - Yeah, OK, What was that like?

WFH - Ah, it was, to me, it was a long trip. It seemed like that train was awful slow. I don't know. They put us on the slowest train they had or what! It wasn't that Chief, and that's for sure.

KMH - Oh, oh, yeah

WFH - So, but it took us, I don't know how many days it took us to get out there, but there was some guys on there, and then those porters that was on there. Well they, they're pretty, they're pretty slick. See they thought, "Well these old Kansas hicks are coming in there -- Don't know how to play poker and stuff like that." Well they wanted to play some little poker.

KMH - Oh, oh.

WFH - Well see I, I've been, I've been around a little bit, I knew a little bit about it, so anyway we, we played a little bit, oh some guys lost some money, but I never lost any money see, and that one porter, he got plum mad, he got up and left. He thought that he should be winning and we should be losing! So, but anyways, it was an experience I -- I yeah, that was the first time I was out of the state, really.

KMH - Wow, wow, so San Diego must've been something. How about the ocean?

WFH - Oh well, well -- yeah, but see then after I got out of the ocean, I lived out there for all them years. You had that around you. In fact, one time we was out there in a

storm, I mean it was really bad, in fact it was like five, six, in our convoy, that was heading over there, and sometimes you couldn't see nothing but the top of that mast on another ship, that's how big the swirls there were.

KMH – Oh, gosh.

WFH - I mean you was going up, going down, and that ship was a slappin' the water, and anyway the old Captain, he'd come on the ship. He'd kind of keep the moral up. He'd say, . . . One thing about it, I mean you couldn't see the land or - - one thing about it -- but you know there's land a mile straight down. See, a mile straight down.

KMH - Won't grow wheat but.

WFH - Yeah, right.

KMH - I can't imagine, I, just think of us land locked people, then being out there on an ocean, to be your life for four years.

WFH - Well, but you know what, sometimes like in the morning, you'd get up when the sun was just coming up, real calm, oh it was beautiful, but then boy when you got into a storm, that wasn't very nice, I mean in fact, ship, in the center of the ship, see that ship was like 310' long and 30' wide, so it was not, not too big. But yeah we were jumpin' around, but in the center of that ship, they have expansion, expansion bands, like for the ship when it gives. Well, during that one storm, I was standing on the chow line, which going down in the mess hall -- Well there's, that old expansion deal was just like, this here, -- well, you could see it moving.

KMH - Oh my.

WFH - Yeah, I mean, see it's got to move, or that body, it'll break in two, see?

KMH - Yeah, sure, sure, and you were, you were on the chow line in the storm? Did you get seasick?

WFH - Well I, that's one thing I was lucky, I never did. Now I used to smoke cigarettes. Cigarettes never tasted good when, when we was out there sometimes in the, the storm, but I never did get seasick but there was a lot of guys did. And it's like you said, on that chow line, there wasn't very many on it because they couldn't eat, and then another thing, when down in the mess hall, if you didn't latch, latch everything down, everything would fly around and the garbage cans and everything was flying all over, so it wasn't a very good site.

KMH – Yeah.

WFH - But you still had to eat, so every once in a while.

KMH – Yeah.

WFH - You had to keep your ears up.

KMH - Yeah, yeah, what was the food like? Making that shift?

WFH - Well I thought it was, it was pretty good, I mean at times, a lot of guys wouldn't eat, like on uh cert . . I think every Friday they used to have uh cold cuts, which is lunch meat, cheese, and stuff like that, and a lot of them guys wouldn't eat that. Ah, we don't like that stuff, and then sometimes they'd have like in the morning, you'd have like scrambled eggs and uh a lot of the guys wouldn't eat that. They thought that was bad, but I thought, that wasn't too bad you know, or you'd have some fried potatoes or stuff like that.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - And then on some holidays, we'd have turkey and we'd have steaks and stuff like that.

KMH - Uh huh.

WFH - So uh.. .

KMH - Wow.

WFH - But, but when we got over there to Korea, off the coast of Korea, like when we never got back into shore, for say uh fifteen or twenty days.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - Well our provisions were running pretty low.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - So we didn't have anything fresh or we didn't have no fresh milk.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - They had uh powdered milk,

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - But I didn't really care for that, in fact when I first, when I got back to Hawaii, first time, when we stopped at Hawaii, first thing I got me was a big plate of salad and a, a carton of milk.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - 'Cuz we never had no fresh milk over there.

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - It was all powdered milk.

KMH - Yeah, so did you well before we go to the ship, let me ask you this, describe the ship, like you said the mess hall was down below, how many layers or stories were there and what was each one.

WFH - OK, well that ship was, there was only, clear down to the bottom, was your fire, engine room, that's where the engines was, and all, everything down there that run the ship, and then the next deck would've been your chow, your mess hall and your bunk, your bunk beds, and your ammunition, where you kept your ammunition stuff.

KMH - OK.

WFH - And then the next deck would've been the top deck, see that, we only had, that ship wasn't, it wasn't that, it didn't have four, five decks.

KMH -OK.

WFH - We only had two decks, engine compartment, and the other compartment was your living compartment, your mess hall, and then where you kept your ammunition stuff, see below these, like these five inch gun mounts, below those, there was a hydraulic a, it was like a, I guess uh what do you call them, lazy susans that take food up and down.

KMH - Uh hum, oh, yeah.

WFH - That's what, we had those where you'd put your shell in there.

KMH - Oh.

WFH - And your powder case. We would put them in there, and it would hydraulically bring them up to the gun mount, and then the guy would take 'em out of there and put 'em into the gun.

KMH - Oh.

WFH - See, so that's a, there was usually two guys down below, in this, this area below the gun, and up in the, in the gun mount there was, one, two, three, four, five, six, six of us up there. There was a gun captain, a pointer and a trainer, oh, the ammuni . . . the guy who loaded the shell and the powder case, it was a brass. It was a brass case about two and half foot long by five foot. He'd put that in. Then we had the hot shell man, with asbestos gloves, when that hot shell would come out, he'd have to catch it and then throw it outside, see.

KMH - Oh, wow.

WFH - And if he didn't catch it, it'd fly around in, inside of there.

KMH - Uh oh, did anybody ever get hurt?

WFH - No, no, never got hurt.

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - The only, the only time we had a mishap, was, we had a misfire and the hot shell guy, when they ejected the shell and everything, he took that thing and somehow it slipped out of his hands, and it went down below into the, where the other, where the other powdered kegs were.

KMH - Oh.

WFH - So anyway I hollered down there, I said, throw it into the, see there's a, there was a head over there, we call 'em a head, bathroom.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - The head was over there, see and they had them troughs.

KMH - Yes.

WFH - I said throw it in there, so that way if it was hot, it wouldn't cook off.

KMH - Oh yeah.

WFH - So they threw it in there.

KMH - Wow.

WFH - That's the only time we ever had. . .

KMH - Wow.

WFH - And I don't know how it got down there, it should've went outside.

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - But it was somehow, it went down there.

KMH - So when you say outside, did they throw it over board or it went in a container?

WFH - No, see there was a hole in the bottom of this gun mount.

KMH - OK, yeah.

WFH - You would just throw it out on the deck and it just rolled off to the side or whatever, out there.

KMH - Huh, and what specifically was your job there?

WFH - Well, first when I started there, I was, now I couldn't tell you if I was a pointer or a trainer, boots, Boutilier, we called him boots, he was on one side and I was on the other side. See most of the time, this thing was automatic.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - They would take a, they would lock onto a target, and then, the guy up on the bridge, he was directing that gun, but, if we ever lost power, then I had to, either I was raising the barrel or moving it this way, and boots was doing it the other way.

KMH - Oh .

WFH - And then we had the pointer and the trainer, and we had the, oh the shell guy that put the bullet in, that five inch bullet, and then we had the, the powder man that put the powder in, he'd put the powder in first, and the bullet guy would put the bullet in the next in the front there, and the hot shell guy, he'd just wait till it'd come out, and then the gun captain, was up there, he had the headphones on, taking the instructions, when to get ready and then he would say, tell us to, stand by, load, and then fire. So there was like a one, two, three, four, six of us in that mount.

KMH - Wow, yeah.

WFH - Yeah.

KMH - Well, it sounds like it was close quarters.

WFH - It was.

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - In fact, I don't know how, in that pointer trainer deal, which . . . we were smaller at the time. You could, jump in there, but if something would ever happen, you never got out of there, 'cuz you was sitting clear down in front there. But you could, one thing about it, when you was there, you could look through the sites and you could see the target and stuff that they were shooting at, at the time, you know, so that was pretty cool that way.

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - Yeah, and, and then gun captain, he had a hatch up there, on top, that he get out, he could open it up and look, and he had a periscope that he could watch and see what we was hitting, what we was doing, so he could go right or left or whatever.

KMH - No, no computers in those day.

WFH - Oh no, no, no computers or nothing, but the thing about it was, when we went out to general quarters, y'all went in there, and see you don't, you didn't, you wasn't ready to do any action yet, you just sat there and waited. A lot of the times we just sat in there for two or three hours, just, sitting in there, and some guys would be, sitting there trying to take a nap or whatever, I mean usually cramped up.

KMH – Yeah.

WFH - If I had to do it today, I would never be able to get out of there.

KMH - You'd have to have a hoist?

WFH – Yeah.

KMH - Well, how many men were on the ship?

WFH - Well, at times, there was a hundred and most of the time like a hundred fifty two I believe, but sometimes we'd have a few extra on there. We'd go up, maybe close to two hundred.

KMH – Wow.

WFH - But that, most of the time it was like a hundred, from a hundred and thirty to a hundred and fifty guys on there.

KMH - Huh, ever any woman?

WFH - Oh no, no, there wasn't ever, the only time there was a woman was when we stopped in, I think it was Hong Kong, China, and she came. I don't know why she came over there but she came up there, and see on the ship, when you crawled up on the ship, you got a ladder, a rope ladder.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - That you crawled up.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - Now, when you, when we tied up in San Diego, they had a, kind of like a ramp that went out there.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - You could just walk out on that ramp, but when we tied up in a, a harbor somewhere, we didn't have no ramp. We had a rope ladder. Well I noticed this one, this Chinese lady. I don't what she's coming over there for, but she came over there, and she's come, a' crawling up that rope ladder. Well see them Chinese, I don't know if they still wear it that way, or they did, but they had a split skirt. Their skirts were split.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - And when she crawled up there, there, her legs were coming right out there.

KMH - Oh, oh, wow.

WFH - And I don't know why she came up there, I have no idea why she came over there, come on that ship and then she left.

KMH - Huh, that'd be interesting to know. Okay, tell me about -- you mentioned Hong Kong and a couple of other places. Did you, when you, went back to, to shore, so to speak . . . You were out about how many days, and then about . . . Did you go back to the same harbor? Did you go to a different port? And what kinds of places did you go during your time?

WFH - Well, we'd, we'd usually go out and stay for at least twenty or twenty five days, and like when we was all on patrol, and then we'd go back to either Sasebo, Japan, or Yokosuka, Japan. Which them was, they was harbors for different ships, and we would tie up there, and we might stay up there and get provisions, and stuff like that, and then you could go ashore, just during the day. You couldn't go -- they had a curfew. You had to be back at the ship at a certain time.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - 'Cuz you couldn't go, but you'd go over there and, and a, you could look at them shops and stuff, and in fact I bought my, my two sisters, my three, two sisters I think, my three sisters, one sister in law and two sisters, I bought them a set of China, when I was over there, and then shipped it back.

KMH - Oh.

WFH - And it was, it was, nice China I guess, so I don't know if they still got it or whatever happened to it. But a, but you could go over there, we'd go over there and look around, and a, they had bars, you could go in there and stuff like that, but, their beer, they had some kind of a beer that kind of tasted funny, didn't really taste like beer, so but other than that, you couldn't stay out there at night.

KMH - Wow.

WFH - You had to, you had to come back, you had to be back at your ship at a certain time.

KMH - Yeah, did you ever miss your curfew?

WFH - Uh, no, I never did miss my curfew, but the one time, what the heck, something happened, there was old Trelch, myself, and Boutilier, we got back to the ship a little late, then we got restricted from the ship, in fact when we went to Hong Kong, we couldn't go to shore on Hong Kong 'cuz we was restricted to the ship.

KMH – Oh.

WFH - For being late, fifteen minutes I think.

KMH - Oh, I see.

WFH - We didn't quite make it back by the time, and there wasn't no tolerance there.

KMH – Yeah.

WFH - If you was late, they didn't say, oh that's alright.

KMH – Yeah.

WFH - They'd put you on report, you'd go ahead of the captain, and the old captain, he would just restrict you, and next time you got to port, you couldn't go to shore.

KMH – Oh.

WFH - You had to stay on the ship.

KMH - Did you ever get to go to Kong, Hong Kong then?

WFH - No, never did.

KMH - You never did?

WFH - Been there only one time.

KMH – Oh.

WFH - Went in there to Hong Kong, I don't know why we was in Hong Kong, we stopped in that harbor, and I was restricted to the ship so I couldn't go over to Hong Kong, I could see, I'd seen all the thing, but, I, the thing I remember about China, Hong Kong, is they had that smell, that was like a, incense or, some kind of a different smell, it, to me it was a, a bad smell, I thought it smelled, and I don't know what it was, it could've been, but a lot of think it might've been, like over in Japan, they had open sewage, sewers, like in the streets, everything was open, there wasn't no nothing closed.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - So it might've been that sewage that you could smell.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - In fact, they take that sewage, and take it up on the hills, and fertilize their stuff with it.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - So maybe that was the smell, and then they had a lot of open fish markets.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - That you'd go around, you could, you could smell that fish too, and, I don't know how, and the flies where all over it, how do the people, they eat that stuff and never got sick, with all them flies all over it, I just don't understand, didn't understand that.

KMH - Did you have warnings and things when you went on shore, did they tell you about eating?

WFH - Yeah, they told us not to eat any vegetables, or apples and stuff like that, but I, I seen one of them apples and they looked so good and I went and got me one of them, and I never got sick.

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - But I ate one of them apples.

KMH - Hope you washed it.

WFH - I don't remember but I really, you know, it was so long since I had an apple, and they looked so good, they said not to drink their water, not to eat their vegetables, and anything like that, anything raw, you weren't supposed to eat it, but that apple looked so good, so I went and bought me one and ate it.

KMH - Ah, did you, you mentioned Hawaii, was that on your way back, back home?

WFH - Well, when we were over, we stopped at Hawaii.

KMH - Oh, OK.

WFH - For a little redoing on the ship, you had to something on the ship.

KMH - Oh, OK.

WFH - So we was there for probably a week, and then when we come on the back, we stopped there too, in Hawaii, yeah well I got to, go in on Hawaii, on Waihe'e beach, went down, we went swimming, little Waihe'e beach and stuff like that.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - And it's probably different now, I haven't been, that, that was what, how many years ago, sixty years?

KMH - Yeah, probably, yeah, yeah, yeah.

WFH - Sixty years, see, since I was there, so it's probably changed a bunch.

KMH - I bet it has.

WFH - But at that time, yeah, the Waihe'e beach was there, and well, there was a lot of people out there, and a lot of, there's still a lot of tourists there, but we did see, that the Arizona.

KMH - Yes.

WFH - When we went there, out, when we went out, you could see the Arizona, you could still see the old stacks, down under the water, they never had nothing on top of it then.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - It was just, just like, when it went down .

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - And you could see, see that.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - And now they got it all fixed up.

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - So uh.

KMH - Go visit it.

WFH - Yeah, right.

KMH - Have you ever wanted to go back to any of these places?

WFH - Well, yeah, well I asked my wife if she'd like to go to Hawaii, but then we thought, well, yeah it'd be nice to go see it, but then we'd just always keep putting it off, and keep putting it off.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - Well I wouldn't, you mean go over to Japan and stuff like that?

KMH - Any of those? Yeah.

WFH - Ah, probably not, I wouldn't, I wouldn't think so.

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - Hawaii I might go.

KMH – Yeah.

WFH - But, but it's so much tourist going on now and stuff like that .

KMH - Yeah, yeah, let me ask you this -- on the ship -- you mentioned that your ship had two battle stars, is that what you say?

WFH - Uh hum.

KMH - And tell me about those, that would im- imply conflict, right? Or combat? Was anybody injured, what was that, what was your combat experience like?

WFH - Ah, nobody was injured that I know of, the only, like I say, what that means is that you was in, you was fired upon or you was, which we was, we fired on the shore a lot, we fired on the, you know, all the time, anything, any time you'd seen anything move, you were supposed to take it out, so what the, what the stars means is that either somebody shot at us and like I said, the only experience I had was that one time, heading to my battle station, I'd seen something hitting the, water out there, so it had to be, bullets or something, hitting that water, but I didn't stick around long enough to find out, I hurried up and got in my gun mount, got in that five inch gun mount.

KMH – OK.

WFH - You see.

KMH - So you were down there, OK, um, what about, the contact with home? Did you write letters, how did you, communicate with home, were you home sick?

WFH - I, well, I probably missed, probably yeah, I missed a lot of that like I said, growing up on that dirt, being out there on the dirt a lot, then, being on iron and water all the time, that's a lot of different, but I probably missed the, missed the ground, and the, and the state of Kansas, you know, so and my family and everyone you know, but as, in writing, I wrote letters home, not probably as many as I should've, and a lot them were censored too, like mom would get a letter, and it was censored, because, you wasn't supposed to tell them where you was at, right, and then, a lot of times, when we was over there in Korea, you would, send a letter, well it might not get over here for, a long time, 'cuz see they'd have to move back, to Japan, then from Japan, go to the United States or to another ship, or to a plane and comeback here to the United States, so a lot of the times, them letters wouldn't get over here till, I might be someplace else.

KMH - Oh, yeah.

WFH - You know, but I, I wrote a few of them, but I probably didn't write as many as I should.

KMH – Yeah.

WFH - I should've wrote more, but I didn't.

KMH - Yeah, what kind of things did, did you get a package, from home?

WFH - Oh yeah, my mom would send us a Christmas package, and then the thing, funny thing was, you might get that package, like if it was for Christmas, it was probably already new year's sometime.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - And then if you got it, she might have some cookies in there, well then, when you got ready to open it, whenever was mail call, you know, everybody said mail call, everybody goes up there, Habiger, well here comes a package, well, you know what, all these guys, here they come over here, and then when you open it up, if there's cookies and stuff in there, yeah, they were, hey! hey!, but the thing was the cookies was all broke up, you know.

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - From being knocked around.

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - But they was still good.

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - Yeah.

KMH - Cookie crumbs.

WFH - Yeah.

KMH - Yeah, um, so you, you hadn't met your wife then?

WFH - No.

KMH - OK, that was after you got back. What about other holidays, going to church, did you do any of that?

WFH - Well, going to church, like, when we was at camp, you could go to a, well it wasn't a denomina-, non-denominational church, where all religions could go, and you'd go into an auditorium and you could have a service, but as far as being out there on the ship, we never had a chaplain out here or nothing, so we didn't really go into any, any services, the only thing you could do was maybe say a prayer, to yourself, or something like that.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - But, no. No services.

KMH - Kind of walk me through a, an average day on the ship, um, like from getting up, and, and going to bed.

WFH - OK, well, normally you'd, they got, Reveille, which is, oh guy gets on a bull horn, and see they got, they got mics all over that ship, and then there's, there's one place where, they, the guy, whoever's up there, telling, giving the information, well, then he blows his little old whistle in there, chow call you know, probably at six a clock, so then you go, you get up and you go up to the bathroom, wash and get ready, and then you go, make your bunk, make , that's the first thing, you get up, you, don't let your bunk undid, you do that bunk, and you go up to the bathroom, get ready, and then you go down to chow, have your chow, then when you get done with your chow, you go, if you take, if you have a duty station, which mine was a five inch gun mount, you go up there and see what needs to be done, if anything needs to be taken apart, worked on, you go ahead and do it, and, and then oh bout ten a clock, see we had a, we had a gunnery, locker, where we kept all the small arms stuff in, well see we had, we had us a coffee pot in there.

KMH - Hum.

WFH - So we could go in there and make us some coffee, all the guys in the gunnery, about ten a clock, just like they do now, take a break, go down there and have a coffee, sit there and talk a little bit, and -- but the thing about it was, nobody wanted to clean the bucket out, where our cups was at.

KMH - Oh.

WFH - Where you put your cups, you just put the cups in that bucket.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - Well the first thing you know, that bucket got to looking like coffee . . It, it wasn't clean water no more, see.

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - Nobody, nobody, the other guy had to clean it out, and then after that, when you'd go back to your duty stations and do some more work, or, and then, noon time, chow time, afternoon was same thing, you'd go back to your duty station, go do that, or, if they might have a drill, we might have a drill, or, when you was over there in the war zone, there might be general quarters, then you go to general quarters and you just wait, for others, to start doing whatever we had to do, so.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - And then, after that, after we was, secure from general quarters, then you could go down there and eat your supper, or eat your lunch, whatever you want to call it at

night, and then at night, sometimes, after, if you wasn't, doing anything, if you wasn't on watch, see another thing, you took your turn, taking a watch, everybody took his turn of doing, four hour watch, you either went on a look out, or you went up to steering, or you went to sonar, or some place, but every four hours, they, they changed the watcher on that ship, so there was somebody awake at all time, and then, then, when you wasn't on duty, you could take your nap, if, you know, it was the night time, or something like that, or, a lot of times they had movies, you could go down and have a movie, and, the only time you could have a movie, if, if we would come in contact with another ship, then the old, captain, he would call over there, wanting to know if they had any different movies, so what they would do, they had a line, that we could fire between each ship.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - And they would put these movies on this line and, bring them over to our ship and we'd send some over to their ship.

KMH - Oh.

WFH - That's how we got new movies, you see.

KMH - Oh, I see, traded them around.

WFH - Yeah, yeah.

KMH - Wow . . . You'd trade back and forth?

WFH - Uh huh. And then, and then some times, we'd go, like we was out there, for like twenty days or twenty five, we would even re-fuel at sea, that means that we went along side of a tanker, and they would send over a big hose, a six inch hose, and we would fill our tanks with diesel, to keep our ships, full running, and then we'd just go side by side, just like this,

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - In the water, taking on that fuel, all fun.

KMH - Uh hum, wow.

WFH - Yeah.

KMH - Wow.

WFH - Yeah, when you stayed out there, and that, and that's, we got some of our chow that way too, if we was out there long enough.

KMH - Oh yeah.

WFH - Run out of stuff.

KMH – Yeah.

WFH - We'd get a hold of a tanker or something, hey, got this, got that, yeah, so we'd go a long side and they'd send it over.

KMH – Wow.

WFH - And we even sent a, oh some guy had, he got sick or something, even put him in a bosun. "Bosun," they call it. Well it's like a, you've probably seen it. The Coast Guard has got those big ol' cradles that they put these guys in.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - That's what we had, we send one guy from our ship over to him, 'cuz he was sick, we couldn't take care of him, so they put him in another ship.

KMH – Wow.

WFH - Across that water, if they had dropped him, he would've been in the water.

KMH - Yeah, I'm glad you didn't.

WFH – Yeah.

KMH - What was the, was there a scariest time, time you were really uneasy, time you felt, threatened, dangerous, or just kind of?

WFH - Well, probably the most, yeah, most of the time that you went to general quarters, and, and if, when you was firing your guns, well you know that something, something was going on, or somebody could be firing back too.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - See, so I mean yeah, it was, it was, I wouldn't say that it was, it was bad enough to make you really get scared, but I mean you was kind of concerned.

KMH – Yeah.

WFH - And stuff like that, 'cuz.

KMH – Yeah.

WFH – 'Cuz you know, I, 'cuz one of our ships that was in our, in our convoy, he got hit with a mine, something in the back, but anyway, it tore off the back of the ship, part of the back of the ship, see.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - So, you know, I mean, something like that, if would happen in the middle of the ship, well, yeah.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - You might be going down.

KMH - Uh hum, uh hum.

WFH - So yeah, you think of that.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - But you don't really dwell on it,

KMH - Uh hum, yeah.

WFH - 'Cuz whatcha gonna do about it, you're out there, you gotta do the best you can.

KMH - Yeah, it doesn't sound there were air strikes.

WFH - No, that's one thing. Not there. Koreans never had, any, air force, to speak of.

KMH - OK.

WFH - And nobody was a helping, now we had, we had a lot of planes that was flying over, but we didn't have any, any airplanes to continue.

KMH - Oops. Oops . . . *[technology problems]*

WFH - I had the*[break]*

KMH - Uh huh.

KMH - OK we're good Are we good?

GM - Uh hum *[technology assistant]*

KMH - Okay. All right. One of the things I forgot to ask you about was -- how about laundry and what did you wear every day? You didn't wear dress uniform.

WFH - We had jeans, regular jeans, not like these jeans now, they are, they're just regular old cotton jeans, and a blue shirt, you had a blue shirt, or you had a t-shirt, and then you had a, a, like a white hat, you could turn the hat, like if was, the sun was shining, you could turn the hat inside out, put it over.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - And just regular shoes, just, you know, lace up shoes.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - Small shoes, and, that's about it.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - When you went on liberty, which, when you went on shore, then you put on your dress blues.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - You know, you dressed up. You, looked half way decent.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - But out there on the ship, you just wore blue jeans and a t-shirt or a blue shirt.

KMH - And who did the laundry?

WFH - OK, we had one guy, Tony Bruno, was a guy, he was from Massachusetts, he was a little Italian. He was the laundry man, and what you did, you took your, every day or whatever, you took your laundry, you'd throw it in a, a big basket, and then he would come and get that laundry and take it back. The laundry was in the back of the ship, clear in the back of the ship, in the, second deck, and he would put it in a big ole washing machine or whatever it was, and I mean it'd come out clean, but he would, then, when it got done, he would put 'em in that same basket, bring 'em out there and just dump them out on the, locker or some place, and then you had to go and find your own clothes, and see we had stencils.

KMH - Oh, oh yeah?

WFH - That you stenciled your own clothes.

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - But the thing of it is, if you didn't get there early, some guys would take the good stuff, and leave the ones that had holes in it, so you made sure you got there, got your clothes, 'cuz you might, wind up with no clothes, yeah, I mean, socks and stuff like that.

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - Or shorts.

KMH - Yeah.

WFH - And, and you know we had boxer shorts, you didn't have briefs.

KMH - Oh.

WFH - You had boxer shorts, so some of them guys, I mean they'd pick out, they didn't look for their name, they picked out the best ones and left the ratty ones there.

[Laughter.]

KMH - OK, then what happened, how did your, how did your service end? When did you know you were coming home?

WFH - OK, well the last time we went overseas and we was heading back to the states, which was probably in, after the Armistice in 1953, so we was headed back to the states, and we got back to the states, and then we just, you know, did regular maintenance on the ship. We'd go out and have, dry runs, doing stuff, just kind of keeping in shape, 'cuz you didn't know what was going to happen, but then I knew that, when October came -- well see, first I was supposed to get out in December, but then they went and took off two months, so I got out in October.

KMH - Oh.

WFH - They let you out early, if you know, if you was in, so long, you got out two months early. So I was looking -- so then, the last two months of my, duty, they took me off the ship, and put me into, on the base, and what they did on the base, and every day -- you'd get up, and you'd go get your breakfast, and you'd have coffee and stuff like that, and then, they would put you in a commissary, where you know these, people would live on base. The woman would come in there and they'd buy their supplies, their like grocery store, and what we did, was, sack those groceries for these ladies, and that's what we did for the last two months that I was there. Clean up around the base, and work at a commissary, sack groceries and carry them out to the car -- do that till we got ready to get discharged, and then when the time came to get discharged, we . . . they went through a process, that you go, in, and what they do, they sat you down, and they try to talk you back in to re-upping.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - You know, in fact the chief come to me, and sat down and talked, he said, "Well," he said, "your horizons is a lot wider now, you've seen a lot more country, and when you go back there in Kansas, it's going to be -- it's not going to be the same, so you need to think about re-upping, which that was another six years. See you re-sign up for another, which says it's going to give you a bonus, to do it, and it sounded tempting, but I thought, well, I've had enough of this, so I, I think I'll . . . I'm . . . I'm not going to. So then I, I decided to get out, and I came home, and I can't remember how I, if I came home on a train or a plane or what, but I came home and, and when I got home, then, you know, your regular life set in. Well then I took some odd jobs, here and there. I worked for the oil companies, and then in 1957 -- I met my wife probably in '56, so then in '57 we got married. We, got married and we moved to Hutchinson, and I worked for an oil company down there, and then she worked for some oil promoter, some offices right there in town, and we lived there for about a year, and then my dad, he got, kind of sick, and he was needing some help, so then I decided -- well I thought I'd come back and try my hand at farming. So then I came back out here to Kalvesta, and I

stayed there, farmed for the rest of my life there, and now I live in Cimarron so I guess that's where I'm gonna, I'm gonna be.

KMH - Pretty good path?

WFH - Uh hum.

KMH - What, did, how did . . .when you look at it, and over the scope of your whole life, what, what part did that Navy experience play in it? What lessons did you learn, how do you feel that changed your life?

WFH - Well, it probably made you grow up and realize that, there's a lot of things in this, you know, you take a lot of things for granted, but then when you get there and you're, and you're, you, when you get there, you're not going to leave, you're going to have to stay there for them four years, that you decided that you're, you know you just can't say, well, I'm going there, OK, tomorrow I'm going to leave, I'm going home to go home, you can't do that, see.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - So it, it, it kind of, makes you, stick, whenever you start something, you stick with it,

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - And that's what I did, I stuck with it, and I've had some good experience, and, I don't know if I would want to do it all over, which I, couldn't do it over now, but, it was a good experience at the time.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - I've seen a lot of countries, I met a lot of guys, from different states, and stuff like that, so I guess you gotta, kind of give it credit for that.

KMH - Uh hum, do you keep in touch with any of those guys?

WFH - Uh, we used to have a, reunion, that we went to, every year, they had a reunion at a different place in the United States, like it was, East coast, West coast, down in Oklahoma city or down south, and we kept in contact, with them, but then, after the years, there was a few of them of them would pass away.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - And then, the ones that, like, the ones that I was oh, kind of friends with, more than the rest of 'em.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - Most of them was all passed away already.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - See, so now we don't have that reunion anymore.

KMH – Right.

WFH - And most of them are all gone.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH – So. . .

KMH – Yeah.

WFH - So, it's kind of come to the end.

KMH - Yeah, well I'm glad we are capturing your story.

WFH – Well.

KMH - Um, well, that was our question, anything you'd like to a, say, sum up and what you would like for your, kids, grandkids, to know about this . . .

WFH - Well, I don't really have anything, they can probably listen to it, some time, listen to it, and then, see what they can come out of it, see what they make out of it.

KMH - Uh hum.

WFH - But I had a good experience and, had a good life, and a, a good family and good wife, so, you can't ask for anything more.

KMH - Yup, well thank you, thank you very much, again, this is Kathleen Holt, with Walter F. Habiger, it's August 22 . . . 22, 2014, and we are at the Cimarron City Library. I guess I didn't say our interview started at 9:00, but, there we go, 9:00 AM, so . . . Thank you Walt.

WFH - Well thank you.

KMH - Thank you much.

Habiger – Bunks on USS Slater (9-18-98)



Habiger – USS Slater (9-18-98)



Habiger – “Head” on USS Slater (9-18-98)



Habiger - USS Slater - Destroyer gun turrets similar to USS Naifeh, (9-18-98)



Habiger - USS Slater - Destroyer gun turrets Habiger in position, (9-18-98)



Habiger - USS Slater - Destroyer gun turrets similar to USS Naifeh 02 (9-18-98)



FORD COUNTY, KANSAS

This is a Certified Copy

Jessie Schoof
Register of Deeds

TAKE NOTE: This instrument was filed in this office on the 10th day of October, A.D. 1954 at 1:00 P.M. and duly recorded in Book # 574 at Page 574.
Jessie Schoof
Register of Deeds



from the Armed Forces of the United States of America

That I hereby certify that

WALTER FRANCIS HABIGER, OWNER'S RATE THIRD GRADE, USN-1

was honorably discharged from the

United States Army

on the 7th day of October 1954

and his certificate is recorded in the personnel file of the United States Army

W. K. FROST
Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy
By Direction of Commanding Officer

Walter F. Habiger

1E

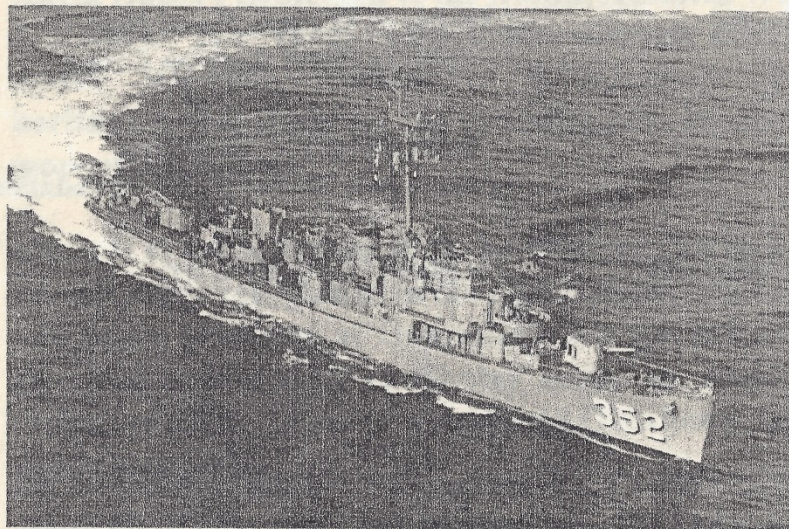
CHARACTER OF SEPARATION HONORABLE		REPORT OF SEPARATION FROM THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES		DEPARTMENT U.S. NAVY	
1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE NAME HABIGER WALTER FRANCIS		2. SERVICE NUMBER 345 4425		3. GRADE - RATE - RANK AND DATE OF APPOINTMENT CAJ 4-16-52	
4. QUALIFICATIONS SPECIALTY NUMBER OR SYMBOL GA-3832-30		5. RELATED CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND D.O.T. NUMBER ASSEMBLER 111 8-93.770		6. EFFECTIVE DATE OF SEPARATION 7 OCT 54	
7. TYPE OF SEPARATION DISCHARGE		8. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION RPI 1910.5B		9. PLACE OF SEPARATION U.S. NAVERCSTA, SAN DIEGO, CALIF.	
10. DATE OF BIRTH DAY MONTH YEAR 8 MAR 30		11. PLACE OF BIRTH (City and State) RED WING KANSAS		12. DESCRIPTION SEX RACE COLOR HAIR COLOR EYES HEIGHT WEIGHT MALE OLD BROWN HAZELL 89 158	
13. REGISTERED YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> SELECTIVE SERVICE NUMBER NOT AVAILABLE		14. SELECTIVE SERVICE LOCAL BOARD NUMBER (City, County, State) GREAT BEND KANSAS		15. INDUCTED DAY MONTH YEAR	
16. ENLISTED IN OR TRANSFERRED TO A RESERVE COMPONENT YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMPONENT AND BRANCH OR CLASS		17. MEANS OF ENTRY OTHER THAN BY INDUCTION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENLISTED <input type="checkbox"/> REENLISTED <input type="checkbox"/> COMMISSIONED <input type="checkbox"/> CALLED FROM INACTIVE DUTY			
18. DATE AND PLACE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE DAY MONTH YEAR PLACE (City and State) 16 DEC 50 KANSAS CITY KANSAS		19. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE (St. R.F.D., City, County and State) REDWING KANSAS		20. GRADE - RATE OR RANK AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE SR	
21. STATEMENT OF SERVICE FOR PAY PURPOSES		A. YEARS B. MONTHS C. DAYS		25. ENLISTMENT ALLOWANCE PAID ON EXTENSION OF ENLISTMENT, IF ANY	
22. NET (NAVAL) SERVICE COMPLETED FOR PAY PURPOSES EXCLUDING THIS PERIOD		00 00 00		DAY MONTH YEAR AMOUNT	
23. NET SERVICE COMPLETED FOR PAY PURPOSES THIS PERIOD		03 09 22			
24. OTHER SERVICE (Act of 16 June 1942 as amended) COMPLETED FOR PAY PURPOSES		00 00 00		26. FOREIGN AND/OR SEA SERVICE	
24. TOTAL NET SERVICE COMPLETED FOR PAY PURPOSES		03 09 22		YEARS MONTHS DAYS 03 07 03	
27. DECORATIONS, MEDALS, BADGES, COMMENDATIONS, CITATIONS AND CAMPAIGN RIBBONS AWARDED OR AUTHORIZED					
NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE RIBBON UNITED NATIONS SERVICE RIBBON					
KOREAN SERVICE MEDAL (ONE STAR) GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL					
KOREAN PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION					
28. MOST SIGNIFICANT DUTY ASSIGNMENT					
U.S.S. MAITHE (DE-352)					
29. WOUNDS RECEIVED AS A RESULT OF ACTION WITH ENEMY FORCES (Place and date, if known)					
-					
30. SERVICE SCHOOLS OR COLLEGES, COLLEGE TRAINING COURSES AND/OR POST-GRAD. COURSES SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED		DATES (From-To)		31. SERVICE TRAINING COURSES SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED	
-		-		CH2	
GOVERNMENT INSURANCE INFORMATION. (A) Permanent plan premium must continue to be paid when due, or within 31 days thereafter, or insurance will lapse. (B) Term insurance not under waiver same as (A) above. (C) Term insurance under waiver - premium payment must be resumed within 120 days after separation. Forward premiums on NSLI to Veterans Administration District Office having jurisdiction over the area shown in Item 47. Forward premiums on USGLI to Veterans Administration, Washington 25, D. C. (See VA Pamphlet 9-3) When paying premiums give full name, address, Service Number, Policy Number(s), Branch of Service, date of separation. Contact nearest VA office for information concerning Government Life Insurance.					
32A. KIND & AMT OF INSURANCE & MTHLY. PREMIUM		32B. ACTIVE SERVICE PRIOR TO 26 APRIL 1951 YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN <input type="checkbox"/>		33. MONTH ALLOTMENT DISCONTINUED	
35. TOTAL PAYMENT UPON SEPARATION 205.18		36. TRAVEL OR MILEAGE ALLOWANCE INCLUDED IN TOTAL PAYMENT 112.68		37. DISBURSING OFFICER'S NAME AND SYMBOL NUMBER G. L. OWEN B-531290	
38. REMARKS (Continue on reverse) ENTITLED TO \$300 MOP PAID \$100 MOP ON 10-7-54 BUYER 2887 RECOMMENDED FOR REENLISTING <i>J. A. Hill, CHIEF, USN</i>		39. SIGNATURE OF OFFICER AUTHORIZED TO SIGN <i>G. L. Medcalf</i> G. L. MEDCALF, CHIEF, USN ASST PERSONNEL OFFICER BY DIRECTION OF THE CO			
40. V. A. BENEFITS PREVIOUSLY APPLIED FOR (Specify type) COMPENSATION, PENSION, INSURANCE BENEFITS ETC. CLAIM NUMBER					
41. DATES OF LAST CIVILIAN EMPLOYMENT FROM TO 6-46 12-50		42. MAIN CIVILIAN OCCUPATION FARM HAND		43. NAME AND ADDRESS OF LAST CIVILIAN EMPLOYER FATHER GREAT BEND, KANSAS	
44. UNITED STATES CITIZEN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		45. MARITAL STATUS SINGLE		46. NON-SERVICE EDUCATION (Years successfully completed) GRAM MAR HIGH SCHOOL COLLEGE DEGREE(S) 8 2 - -	
47. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES AFTER SEPARATION (St. R.F.D., City, County and State) NORTH STAR ROUTE DODGE CITY, KANSAS (FORD)		48. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED <i>Walter Francis Habiger</i>			

**USS NAIFEH
DE 352**

Exhibit Dedication

**William J. Crowe Naval Gallery
Kirkpatrick Science and Air Space Museum
at
Omniplex**

**Friday, 18 September 1998
2:30 PM**



USS NAIFEH DE 352

Exhibit Dedication

WelcomeStuart Howard, Curator
Air Space Museum at Omniplex

Invocation.....Reverend Margot Lord Nesbitt

Introductions.....Robert N. Naifeh, Jr.

RemarksWilliam Wrase, President
USS NAIFEH Reunion Group

Sam Saylor, Chairman
Destroyer Escort Sailor Foundation

Adjournment.....Robert N. Naifeh, Jr.

A brief reception honoring the Naifeh family and the
USS NAIFEH crew will be held after the dedication

The Air Space Museum at Omniplex was founded in 1978 by Clarence E. Page and John E. Kirkpatrick as a showcase for Oklahoma's aerospace heritage and as a memorial to the frontier spirit of the state's aviation and space pioneers.

In 1984, Admiral John E. Kirkpatrick opened the Naval Gallery dedicated to his friend, Admiral William J. Crowe. The Naval Gallery, like the rest of the Air Space Museum, emphasizes Oklahoma's unique heritage by highlighting the contributions its men and women have made.

Thus, it is quite fitting that the USS NAIFEH will be permanently recognized in the Kirkpatrick Science and Air Space Museum at Omniplex. We are honored to have the opportunity to display such an important section of United States, Naval, and Oklahoma history in our museum.