



*Oral
History
Program*



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Richard Quimby

Interviewed by Alyssa Kammerman
5 April 2019

Oral History Program
Weber State University
Stewart Library
Ogden, Utah

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Mission Statement

The Oral History Program of the Stewart Library was created to preserve the institutional history of Weber State University and the Davis, Ogden and Weber County communities. By conducting carefully researched, recorded, and transcribed interviews, the Oral History Program creates archival oral histories intended for the widest possible use.

Interviews are conducted with the goal of eliciting from each participant a full and accurate account of events. The interviews are transcribed, edited for accuracy and clarity, and reviewed by the interviewees (as available), who are encouraged to augment or correct their spoken words. The reviewed and corrected transcripts are indexed, printed, and bound with photographs and illustrative materials as available. The working files, original recording, and archival copies are housed in the University Archives.

Project Description

Hill Aerospace Heritage Foundation oral history project is a series of oral histories documenting the life stories and experiences of the board members of the Hill Aerospace Heritage Foundation. Board members recall their time in military service, as well as their memories of starting the foundation in 1983 and opening the Hill Aerospace Museum in 1987. Each interview begins with a brief life sketch of the individual board member, then moves onto their memories of the early days of the Hill Aerospace Museum. They discuss ongoing efforts to make the museum the premier location for preserving Utah's Aviation and Air Force history and name important figures on the Board of Directors, base command, and museum staff who helped to make the museum an important influence in the community.

Oral history is a method of collecting historical information through recorded interviews between a narrator with firsthand knowledge of historically significant events and a well-informed interviewer, with the goal of preserving substantive additions to the historical record. Because it is primary material, oral history is not intended to present the final, verified, or complete narrative of events. It is a spoken account. It reflects personal opinion offered by the interviewee in response to questioning, and as such it is partisan, deeply involved, and irreplaceable.

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Abstract: The following is an oral history interview with Richard Quimby, conducted on April 5, 2019, in his home in Layton, Utah, by Alyssa Kammerman. Richard discusses his life, his memories of serving in the United States Air Force, and his experiences serving on the Hill Aerospace Heritage Foundation Board. Sarah Tooker, the video technician, is also present during this interview.

AK: Today is April 5, 2019. We are in Layton in the home of Mr. Richard Quimby. Do you like Dick Quimby or Richard Quimby?

DQ: Dick is fine.

AK: Ok. We are speaking with him about his life and his time on the museum board. My name is Alyssa Kammerman and I'll be conducting the interview, and Sarah Tooker is here with me on the camera. So first I'm going to start out with when and where were you born?

DQ: That's a long time ago. Lowell, Massachusetts on May Day, 1934.

AK: What do you remember of childhood in Lowell, Massachusetts?

DQ: Well, I didn't spend much time in Lowell. I was born there because my father's parents lived there but we soon moved up to the mountains of New Hampshire. And I really grew up in New Hampshire from about, oh, 1936 or so. And then in 1939 we moved out of the mountains and out to Southern New Hampshire, to Derry. Small village, about twenty-five miles north of Boston, and it was a wonderful time and place to grow up. I lived in the woods a lot, camping, skiing, played a lot of baseball and sports but not like they do today. It was free-for-all stuff, you know, we didn't have all the coaches and all of the organizations that

we have now. We just played. It was a lot of fun, it was a great, great time and a great place.

AK: That's cool. What did your father do for work?

DQ: Well, my father went to Proctor Academy up in New Hampshire. He was an art student and then he stayed and taught for a little while. He ended up doing a lot of things. He studied cut glass in Boston, so he put together stained glass windows. And he was a salesman for a while, off and on. Sold stockings and socks and that kind of thing. But mainly he was a sign painter. He had his own sign business and he was also an excellent photographer. So he did a lot of that kind of thing, but mainly during the time that I grew up in high school and junior high he was a sign painter and he taught me how to paint signs. He fixed up my desk with a raised board on it so that I could paint and taught me how to draw. He was also an avid reader, which is something I picked up. I read, now that I'm retired, endlessly. I go over to D.I. and pick up six or seven books and ten days later I go and get some more [laughs].

AK: What were your parent's names?

DQ: Well I'm a "Junior" so his name's Richard and my mother's name was Julia Cameron McKenzie. She was very proud of her Scottish heritage. Her father came to Lowell from Scotland when he was a boy. He was a machinist, so I inherited that part, along with the Irish and the Dutch and the English [laughs].

AK: Did he work around the Lowell Mills?

DQ: Are you familiar with those?

AK: I am, yeah.

DQ: Oh! I've visited! My brother and I went back about four or five years ago and visited. That's all new, that museum-type thing that they have. No, my grandfather's the one that explained that to me. He was an electrician for City Service Gas and he used to take me with him and I'd watch him fix pumps and so forth and he explained the boot mills when particularly the Irish came over, and some French, to Lowell. They spent a lot of time working in those mills which were pretty grim. I'm sure you've studied what young people, kids even, had to do in those mills. And they were all along the Merrimack River, which runs right through Lowell. Yeah an interesting place. But they've made a nice museum and they've cleaned up the city of Lowell and Lawrence. Those Merrimack Valley cities were pretty nasty back in the 1930s and 1940s.

AK: That's fascinating. How many siblings did you have?

DQ: I have two brothers: Donald, who is about eighteen months younger than me and Jack, who was about five years younger. Jack recently died, about last year.

AK: I'm sorry. What memories do you have of World War Two?

DQ: World War Two. Wow. How many people do you interview who can remember World War Two? All of us on the Board, I guess [laughs]. I remember I was lying on the floor of our living room and my father was seated beside a Philco radio--a big, massive radio on a Sunday morning when President Roosevelt interrupted the program. It was the Sunday morning program, and we heard those famous words that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor on "a day that will live in infamy." I can still remember that and I was, well lets see, that was in 1941, so I was six or seven years old.

AK: Do you remember how it affected your childhood?

DQ: Oh yeah. I went to a two-room schoolhouse in a village with grades one, two, and three in one room. And then when you graduated you'd go across the hall into the other room and complete grades four, five, and six. And during the war, at recess and at other times they would send us out into the fields around there to pick kapok from milkweed, and that went into making life jackets for Airmen. And then of course we brought all of our aluminum pots and pans. There was a huge pile out behind the school, and we threw them in there and I can still remember that thing being taller than me and that went into, of course, making airplanes. So that's my beginning with my relationship with aviation, I guess [laughs]. Just throwing aluminum pots and pans. In fact, I can remember a big fire truck from the fire department coming by with effigies of Tojo and Hitler and we threw our pots and pans at up at the truck [laughs].

I remember in Lowell, my grandfather taking me along the street and I asked him what the lines were. The lines were people waiting to get butter and nylon stockings. My father for a while worked in Lowell at a tire company called Firestone, and as you'll probably learn as we go on, he did about everything. And that was when we used to recap and retread tires all the time and they were very difficult to get because, as you may know, they stopped producing rubber. That's when nylon tires were invented, was during the war. Rubber was gone to war, along with a lot of other things. Anyway, a lot of those lines.

We had stamps. In fact, in school we saved ten cent saving stamps in books and we'd bring our ten cents and we would get our stamp. When you filled

a book, I think it was about thirty-seven dollars and fifty cents--that's what a full book was worth and that gets you a war bond. And that's what started college for me; my grandmother helped me fill war bond books, or savings books, whatever they were called and got me my freshman year in college. I remember going to the bank with her and of course it didn't cost what it costs now to go to college in those days [laughs]. So I started the University of New Hampshire in 1952 when I graduated from high school and high school was in what we called "The Village." Derry itself had all of probably 3,000 people in those days, in the 1950s, and I lived about two miles from there in what was called Derry Village. There couldn't have been more than a couple hundred people and I have since drawn a map of the town with its probably four or five streets and I could name everybody that lived in every house. That's the kind of place I grew up in. And it's totally different from today. Although I guess there are probably some places like that now if you can find them.

AK: So you went to University of New Hampshire in 1952: What were you studying while you were there?

DQ: Because my father had taught me photography and how to draw and how to paint and so forth, I was an art student. I went in as an art student and I studied a little advertising but mainly fine arts. And of course as soon as I got there I found out that there was an Air Force ROTC organization, which we didn't have in high school in those days. My high school was actually Pinkerton Academy. It was a semi-private school and it was right up the street from where I lived in The Village. And we had a headmaster, they still have a headmaster, and the reason

it was semi-private was there was no high school in The Village, so the town had to pay for each student to go to Pinkerton Academy. And it was not at all like today's schools. We stood up, I wore a necktie for four years, the boys went in one side of the school, called Devil's Den, and the girls went in the other side, which was called Angels' Abode, and only the seniors could go up the front steps. There was a brass plaque with Major John Pinkerton's face. I have no idea who he was. I probably learned it a long time ago. But when you were going to take a test you'd rub John Pinkerton's nose for good luck [shrugs and laughs]. It was right up the street, about 300 yards, from my house. In fact, I was well noted to be the closest one living to Pinkerton and the last one to get there in the morning [laughs].

I went there until college, and then I went to the University of New Hampshire. When I was at the University of New Hampshire which was about forty miles from my home, I used to hitchhike back and forth and didn't have much money. I worked in a sweet shop making shakes and hot dogs and things and I would usually come home every couple of weeks and my mother would give me five dollars and a two-pound loaf of cheese and some Campbell's Soup, and I would get a ride back with somebody that lived in the town, and that's what I lived on, pretty much [laughs]. I was in a dormitory there, World War Two buildings as a matter of fact, since long gone.

I took ROTC my sophomore year at the University. A good friend of mine, his uncle was the commander of the 133rd Fighter Interceptor Squadron at Grenier Air Force Base, or "Air Base," as it was called in those days, which was

in Manchester, maybe ten miles from Derry. And Major Smith took me up in, I think it was a C-47. It was the first time I'd ever been in an airplane and he let us handle the controls and of course that did it. And of course I was running out of money when I was doing my sophomore year and getting tired of school. I wasn't doing what I really wanted to do. I was a psychology minor and that's what I ended up pursuing is psychology, which I ended up getting into much later. Anyway I was offered the opportunity to go to pilot training. So my buddy Frank Johnson and I--he was the nephew of Major Smith--went to a place in New York near the lakes in New York and we took five days of testing to get into the aviation cadet program. There were about thirty or thirty-five of us that took it. And thanks to the education I got at Pinkerton Academy standing up in front of the class to conjugate verbs and learning twenty vocabulary words every other day--it was quite an education. Consequently, I think there were four of us that passed the test and so I ended up going to San Antonio--my first time in San Antonio--in 1954.

I was in pilot training for fifteen months. The first three months are pre-flight. It's just tough. You've seen it: it's like West Point or any of the others. You're an aviation cadet, you never can look around, you have to stand at attention most of the time, and when you graduate from there, you go to either single-engine or multi-engine training. I went to fighter pilot school in Marianna, Florida--up in the panhandle, not too far from Eglin Air Force Base. Graham Air Base was a civilian-run base, contracted, and I flew piper cubs first, then T-6s, and graduated from there after about seven or eight months. Then I went to

Bryan, Texas, and I went through T-28 training and learned to fly that airplane. Then we went out in jets, which were the old T-33--T-birds, we called them. I had a run-in with a major who was the squadron commander one morning and he gave me a flight test and flunked me on my test. And that was on a Friday, so he wanted to fly with me on Monday. He flew with me Monday and that was the end of my pilot training career. He sent me home.

I went back to school, finished two more years, so I ended up graduating from the University of New Hampshire in 1959 with a degree in art. I really wanted to be a psychology major but I had already had two languages, and to graduate with a psychology degree in those days you had to take German because all the books were written in German. So I made a quick switch and graduated as an art student.

So, I got back in September of 1955, got married in 1956 to Katherine Sheila Cassidy, who went by her middle name of Sheila. Then I went back to school on the GI bill and finally graduated. I worked my way through that next two and a half years or so and graduated in 1959. And then a brand new program had started and a fellow I knew that was at UNH knew that I had been in the Air Force and had flown, or tried to. And he said, "Why don't you try a brand new program called OTS?" 'Officer Training School,' as opposed to 'Officer Candidate School.' And this was brand new and of course this time I was just thinking of that horrendous fifteen months I had spent as an aviation cadet and I really didn't want to stand at attention any more [laughs]. But I looked into it. I went and talked to the recruiter and I did want to go back into the Air Force because I still

wanted to fly. When I was discharged I was recommended for further flight training, so sure enough I went to OTS with my wife. We rented a Uhaul and took what little furniture we had down to Texas and I went through Officer Training School for three months. And in 1960 became a second lieutenant. From there I went to Harlingen, Texas down in the southern tip of Texas which is now having its own problems, border problems, down that way on the mexican border. And I spent almost a year there going through Navigator training. I was the s--(camera cuts off).

AK: (On iPhone voice recording) And we're recording again.

DQ: Ok, I graduated from Navigator training and I graduated high enough to be able to select my own base. I went back to the East Coast at Dover, Delaware and I was a student navigator, because when you went into an actual Air Force organization, you go in as a student. If you're a flyer, whether it's pilot or navigator or whatever. Anyway, I did very well. It was a good choice. I had a wonderful life.

I went to C-133 Cargo Master and it was similar to what you can see out on the runway up here, a 130, except it was about twice the size. It was one of the largest, maybe the largest, airplane--it was definitely the largest American airplane. I think the Russians may have had one that was larger, but the C-133 had four big eighteen-foot props. I was there for ten years, from 1961 to 1971. I went from Student Navigator to Line Navigator, Instructor Navigator, Flight Examiner Navigator. And then I became the Chief of Standardization Navigation, so I was in charge of all the training and upgrade programs for Navigators. Ten

years is a long time to stay in one squadron but we've had numerous reunions over the years and I'm still in contact with lots of those guys. It was a lifetime experience, it really was.

And so we closed down the 133 program in 1971. There were only fifty airplanes made that were used: two squadrons at Dover where I was, the 1st and the 39th, and one out of Travis in California, but I stayed right there at Dover. I flew all over the world, literally. I have a map that's got many, many pins in it. All the islands of the Pacific and the northern tip of Greenland, South America, Africa, all over.

In 1971, when we ended the program, a lot of us went to Vietnam. A lot of the guys went to Vietnam directly. I was selected to go to Air Command and Staff College, so I went down to Alabama and spent a year down there at Air Command and Staff College. While I was there I had a psychology minor and Troy State University, right on the base, had a program for counseling and guidance and I looked at it and I looked at the courses and I said, "Wow I've had a lot of this." So I took my Master's program for a year while I was going to Air Command and Staff College. So from 7:30 in the morning until about 4:30 or 3:30, I had Command and Staff. And then I would go to Troy State in a different building, until 10:00 at night. And then I'd go home and try to stay awake to study and almost always fell asleep at dinner time or whatever. It was a long, tough year but I ended up graduating from both schools in a year. I could never do it again [laughs].

So of course as soon as I graduated from Command and Staff College I got my assignment to Southeast Asia. I went to Tan Son Nhut Air Force Base to MACV, "Military Airlift Command Vietnam," which was the headquarters that ran the war. That was outside of Saigon, about ten or fifteen miles. I spent six months there and that was until about 1972. About--oh wow, that's a long time ago--about February of 1973, the war was ending and we gave it up in Saigon, so we moved MACV and it became USSAG. That's "United States Support Activities Group." But we continued to do pretty much what we were doing, which was running a war. So I was in what we call "Blue Chip," which was the command section and that was an incredible experience because I worked for generals. I got to meet General John Vogt and General Carlos Talbot and all of the people that were actually directing the war. In fact, I did a lot of writing. I wrote the end-of-tour reports for several and worked on the history of the war. I came up with a system of reporting to those generals and it was a big jump in the career from flying airplanes to being mid-level management. It was a little frightening at times. It kinda overwhelmed this boy from New Hampshire, I'll tell you.

But when we pulled out of Vietnam in early 1973, we went up and set up USAAG in Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Base, NKP. We were in Northern Thailand, and the change was incredible because Saigon during the war was just outlandish. There was constant movement and vehicles and airplanes. At one time Tan Son Nhut Air Base was the busiest airport in the world--even busier than O'Hare. Then I went up to "Sleepy Hollow Air Patch," as we called it, in

Northern Thailand, right on the Mekong River. You could look down and it was just quiet and almost out of the war. And instead of working seven days a week we got Sundays off! Which was pretty nice.

Anyway, we did that for the last six months, so in 1973 when I was between the two bases, between Vietnam and Thailand, I met my wife in Hawaii for our 17th Anniversary. That was my R&R for a week and we spent the week in Hawaii. Coming back from R&R, we went through Camp Alpha which was a little Army processing center on Tan Son Nhut, which we had all pretty much left. So I went through there and spent a night in my old BOQ--"Bachelor Officer's Quarters." And I had gotten to know the chief maid, who was named Ngyun, which was a very common Vietnamese name like "Smith" in English. A very common Vietnamese name and she insisted on being called Ngyun. And since she couldn't pronounce Quimby, or Roscowitz, or any of the others of us, we went by our room numbers and I unfortunately had room number 10, and you know what number 10 means: you're the worst. And so she always would apologize to me, "Oh you number one, number ten," [laughs].

But anyway when I came back through Camp Alpha from R&R with my wife, I looked in there and there were guys going in all directions, some coming out and some coming in. But this was just for one night and I found out that it was the next afternoon before my flight would go up to NKP in Thailand, so I looked at where we were going to stay which was an open bay, with 20 or 30 guys in cots, and I said, you know, I did this in North Africa a couple of times and I did it when I was a cadet and I'm not going to do it again. So I took my B-4 bag and I tromped

across from Camp Alpha to my old BOQ and the change was incredible. There used to be trucks and cars and people everywhere, both downtown Saigon-- which was a nightmare--and on base. But now it was very, very quiet.

So I'm walking up the stairs to room number 10 and looking down on me there is Ngyun. And she said "Oh you come back number 10!" [laughs] So I went upstairs and I said, "Only for one night Ngyun." And she goes, "Oh!" By this time I'm looking in my old room and there were two maids with wrenches and screwdrivers. They're taking all the furniture apart, cuz they're not gonna be there when the North comes. I knew that Ngyun's sister was married to a Vietnamese Major so she wasn't gonna be stopped in that car going out the gate because we had Vietnamese guards. So [laughs] I knew where that furniture was going. But she was really upset about that, but she found me another room with a decent bed in it and I spent the night there and the next day I went up to NKP in Thailand and that was very nice. Nakon Phanon, by the way, is where Ho Chi Min was born. There's a little stone statue there, a little bronze thing, whatever it is, but that was just a little tiny town. But it was quite interesting.

I wanted to go back into the flying business when I got out of there and I had an assignment as the Operations Officer to the navigator training school at Mather Air force Base in California. However, when I was in Hawaii, I came back to the hotel on the beach, Waikiki, and the girl that was at the desk called me over and said "You have a message here." So I read it and I'll never forget it. On the way back, my wife had stopped with a friend of ours at Mather Air Force Base, in California and she had looked at a house with some friends and so we

were all set to go back to California. And I had kids in college by then and California was a great place to start college because they pay for it. I won't even get into California; that's our socialist state. But anyway, I would have been responsible for the entire Air Force Navigator training program out there, which I had been doing anyway at the squadron level. Anyway, I got a message that said "Disregard all previous orders. You are assigned to Loring Air Force Base, Maine, Strategic Air Command, as Information Officer" Well I was really upset. I didn't want to go to SAC, I didn't want to go to Northern Maine, and I had no idea what an Information Officer was. I told people that. "Oh Maine, that's right next to New Hampshire. You'll be home, practically." Well I was closer to my home in New Hampshire when I was stationed in Delaware. Nobody knows unless they look, or they're from there, that the state of Maine is a long way out [laughs].

But anyway, I fought it as best I could but we didn't have all of the communication equipment that we have now and I ended up taking that assignment after all. Of course I get up to Loring Air Force Base as a chief of information--and it's now called Public Affairs. The day I retired from the Air Force on October 1, 1979, is when they changed the name [laughs]. I don't think it had much to do with me, but could be. I think most of the services had public affairs officers and we'd still call it the Information Office and so of course we'd get phone calls, "Do you know what time the bus leaves for so and so," you know. We were information, right? Well, didn't work.

Anyway, it turned out to be a wonderful experience. Northern Maine is cold. A lot of snow on the flat lands, it's overcast a lot of the time and of course

the winters are very, very cold. But the people are really great and I learned a lot. I got a lot of help and I have since written about the three years I spent up there.

In the second year I was there, President Nixon, who was having a little problem of his own about then--and that would have been about 1974, or something in there. Watergate was being uncovered but he had just gone to Russia and to the Middle East and he came back and they landed at Loring Air Force Base, Maine. Now, ostensibly he was there to give a national speech. Well, what he really did was land there, refuel, give the speech which was wonderful to me because I was in charge of putting it all together. I worked with the White House Press Corps. I got to be quite knowledgeable about public relations, public affairs. We invited the whole public there and most of Northern Maine, I think, was there to hear the president's address. Then of course he overflew Washington DC to go down with his buddy in Florida for a while but he never escaped us. We well know, that's history. But because of that success, I guess, of entertaining the president, Strategic Air Command was tickled silly. I got promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and I got a call from a place called Hill Air Force Base, Utah. And the two star general who had been at SAC had heard about me and he wanted me out here so here I am. I came out here at the two star level and spent three years here running the public affairs office until I retired on October 1, 1979.

I had my own business for a while, Quimby Communications and Training. My son went into the Navy. He was helping me, but he left for the Navy. I tried odds and ends of jobs but just looking around mainly and finally I got called to a

management training corporation at Clearfield Job Corps Center. I had a couple of interviews and the Department of Labor was interested in starting a military training program similar to high school level ROTC. The Army particularly was having trouble recruiting in those days, as they are now, so I took an interview with, I think, the Deputy Director or someone. The last one was at MTC which at that time was "Management Training Corporation" up at the airport. They have since moved a couple of places into Ogden and they have a huge building down in Farmington now. They run twenty-four centers. Clearfield Job Corps Center is the second or third largest in the country. At that time we had 1700 students.

Anyway, I went to Washington DC and we met with the Department of Labor and so forth. I came back and boy it was quite a job, I was all on my own pretty much. They let me do it my way, which was great because the program didn't exist. This was going to be the model for the National Job Corps. So I started a military training program at the Clearfield Job Corps Center, and originally I had applied for a job as their Public Relations Director. Well I didn't get that; some TV announcer from Salt Lake got it. And he was there, so he took that job and within a month or so after that I got hired to create this military training program.

We redid two dormitories as military dorms. I got the maintenance people to outfit them, rebuilt them. We hired a guy who was a former lieutenant colonel, retired, that was a former assistant base commander at Hill, so he was my curriculum guy. So we started writing the curriculum. I hired residential advisers to take care of the kids in the dorms 24 hours a day. We ended up with a

Reserve Captain that we taught the classes in the high school program there, and we put 250, almost 300 people, kids, into the service. I had got connected with the people who do the recruiting for the military in Salt Lake and it was quite an experience. And about three years into it, I got a call into the chief's office and he said, "Dick, remember that job that you applied for as a public affairs officer for us?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Well I'm gonna give it to ya." I said "Rex, I'm not done yet. We've got a long way to go with this military training program." I said, "I've got to meet with some other people at different centers around the country." And he said, "Oh this will be in addition to that." And I said, "Ah yes I remember that: Do something well and you get to do more." And I said "Well, and the pay increase is how much?" And he just laughed at me, like, "yeah right." He said, "Well I'm gonna give you an assistant." And I said, "Ok." So I went from there and ended up staying at Job Corps for about eight years doing all kinds of things, all kinds of management jobs and I finally retired.

Thirty-three days later, I got a call from Denver, Colorado. A guy that was retired Air Force, who had visited us, he was the Safety Officer for the region for the Department of Labor and he had done inspections and when he came here I had gotten to know him and we had gone to lunch at the base and so forth. So he called me and said, "Hey, your Safety Officer is retiring from Clearfield this year. Weren't you a safety officer in the Air Force?" And I said, "No, I was standardization full time. I did a lot of work with flying safety people." He says, "Well that's close enough." He said, "How would you like to come back to Clearfield as a Safety Officer?" So I thought about it and I thought, well why not?

So of course I stayed out more than thirty days so I lost my whatever it was, so I went back at the same price because I was retired Air Force by then. So I spent another--lets see I was there for seventeen years, so another nine years or something, No I think I was there ten years as a Safety Officer--another great job. It was like being a flight examiner all over again--a flight examiner in the air force; Mine particularly as a navigator for example. I had my own flight orders, I could get on any Air Force airplane, and I was mainly supposed to give check rides to navigators; no-notice check rides, so you weren't too popular. You get on the airplane, the guy says, "Oh man I'm going to get a check ride," he's going to get a test. Well Safety Officer's pretty much like that. I walk in, after I went through lots and lots of training. That was a wonderful thing. They sent me to Fire Suppression training, and OSHA training, and all kinds of training. I must have gone through ten or twelve or fourteen different schools, you know, for weeks or days. Some of them were at Weber.

So anyway I get out of the safety meeting, I walk into an office or a shop and we had like I think twenty different trades that were taught at Clearfield: Automotive, the UAW Advanced Automotive Training Program, Carpentry, Electrical, all kinds of trades like that. And I would walk into one of these classrooms and I would see frayed extension cords, for example and you know the instructors would say "Oh boy, I know where this is going." And I'd see a guy on a ladder without a tie-off. So I went into a whole new business and learned an awful lot. So, I was a Safety Officer there until I finally retired for the final time [laughing] in 1997. And I've been retired ever since [laughs].

Oh! Yeah we're doing this for the museum, that's right. While I was at Clearfield, I was called--way back when the museum did not exist--I got a call one day. Some retired folks had a meeting at Hill Air Force Base. We had lunch together over there and they said, "You know, we better start putting together the history of Hill Air Force Base and Aviation in Utah, because someday it's all gonna be gone." So I joined the little group. Anyway they hired--it was in the plans and programs at the headquarters building upstairs. In fact, his name was Jim Edgehill. He was in charge of it, probably a GS-12 or 13, um a secretary: GS-5 or 6, and two volunteers--one was Dick Quimby. And we started writing letters and gathering information about the base and we started collecting a lot of stuff. And it was in building, I think it was called 1919, which is an old building over near where you go into the entrance-way to get to the museum, straight ahead. We have a lot of stuff in there now, but that was the original museum and then someplace we started meeting regularly. And then we put together what later became the Board of Directors that I'm still on. But, before that road went in we had a flatbed down at the entrance way just inside that gate, the Roy gate. And we had, I don't know, probably Senator Hatch and Murray Moller and some other folks from the Standard Examiner and we started talking about having a museum, an actual museum. And I guess I could say the rest is history because I've been with it ever since and that was a long time ago, probably almost 40 years ago.

AK: Well tell me about some of the things you've been involved in with the museum.

DQ: Ok, well lets see. One of the things we did: Jack Price was very influential, by the way, as an aside. Utah is well known in the Air Force Association, out of Washington, DC. Jack Price, former Air Force, but a civilian when I met him here--probably a GS-16. He was first in charge of the maintenance as a civilian, and then one of the other directors who became a good friend was Nate Mazer, retired Air Force, World War Two. We met many times to do some planning on these things.

Anyway, we had Jack, Nate, General Pat Condon, who was the commander out there, and a couple of others; They were all National Directors of the Air Force Association, which is a huge organization, but that's from here, that's pretty good to have three or four National Directors from one area. And we still have National people from Ogden that are on that board. Jack and I, for example, went over to Wendover, which was where they did the training for World War Two; flying B-25s off aircraft carriers. We went over there to look at the old dormitories. Well I lived in old dormitories and those were World War dormitories when I was in pilot training. And we went over there and I took some pictures, looked at the lay-out, and then I have a lot of pictures of my own from when I was in that open-bay barracks. We came back and that building that's next to the chapel out there, I worked on that while I was working at Job Corps. And some of the students that I had came over and we re-insulated that building, had the base re-do the fire control system, and that was gonna be a barracks as part of the museum--A World War Two barracks with all of the radio stations in there and everything. But that has kinda gone by the wayside because, well, the

roads have all changed there. In fact, one of the other things we were gonna have was a memory grove where we actually did sell bricks and we had that program going, but that kinda came to an ending because the Air Force put that new road and gate in there. So, uh, those two projects that I was responsible for kinda came to an end.

The other project was in 1987. I was sitting at the Board of Directors Heritage Foundation. General Rex Hadley who was the director then, said. "I just got notified that the Air Force has been running a fundraising golf tournament. They just started it this year. But somebody out there said the Air Force cannot raise money for a private enterprise and that's what the museum is. So we're gonna have to pick it up. Does anybody volunteer?" And of course, you know [laughs]. Right. And then somebody on the board there said, "Well didn't we have somebody who used to be a public affairs officer?" [laughs] And of course Jack Price said, "Yeah, Dick Quimby." So I says, "Ok, let me go see." So I went over to the base and over to the Plans and Programs department, and I remember Bill Allen was working on it and he said, "Yeah we're not gonna be able to do this." So he gave me the paperwork and that's how I inherited that program in 1987 and I've been with it ever since.

Fortunately, working at Job Corps, they have a bakery program over there so I used to go to the BX and get all of the breakfast stuff and we'd put out the table and we'd have breakfast and we'd have volunteers and they would donate all of the breakfast doughnuts and pastries of all kinds and out there. And they would send a couple of people with me so we ran it that way for quite a while.

Fortunately, that's now been taken over by Robb, but we don't do breakfast any more. We started a new golf tournament fundraiser, but I've been on that committee ever since then, since 1987. And in 1991, the name changed. It used to be the Heritage Foundation Fundraiser, or something like that, and now it's called Commander's Cup. And we've gone from raising about \$1200, to raising about \$30,000 plus, as of last year. So that fundraiser has come a long way. So now that we got Robb, I'm out of business pretty much [laughs]. I go to the meetings because it's come such a long way. I walk into that, look at those eighty airplanes that we have and all of the other things, and what they've done is just so outstanding that it's hard to go back and to imagine and to think that we actually started that.

One of the big tie-ins that we had with Rex Hadley was with the local mayors and particularly with the State Legislature, and Robb has picked up on that beautifully. Now we're with Parks and Recreation and they donate money to us, and the state donates money, and as you said earlier Robb is super active and he knows what he's doing. So I think Dick Quimby is pretty much out of work [laughs].

AK: What do you feel that the Hill Aerospace Museum has meant to the community?

DQ: Wow, well I think we're the number one tourist draw, and if you've ever looked at the map, I'm not just talking about Davis county or Weber county, I mean world wide. We get busloads of people, particularly Chinese people coming in from California by the bus load out there. I think they've got the statistics out there showing you where the different countries that people come from that visit. It's

amazing, and the amount of money that we've made from various enterprises has gone up and it's a going concern. And there's no doubt about it, it's one of the best Air Force museums in the country, it really is. And it's constant work and the guys that are working out there now are just superb. We had as many as about 100 volunteers and they're--well we depend on them a lot, but the four or five paid people are just top of the line. Couldn't be better. I hope everybody locally appreciates it. I think they do. I think it's become so well-known that there are very few people that don't say, when you say you're on the Board of Directors for the museum, they say "Oh yeah I've been there," pretty much. So I've been very, very fortunate and very proud to be part of this for a long, long time.

AK: Do you feel that the museum has been able to fulfil its mission to preserve the history of aviation in Utah?

DQ: Absolutely. Absolutely. One of the items that we are continually working on: we are a field museum and we come under the Air Force Museum out in Dayton. If you've ever been there it's, of course, incredible. Like the Navy Museum in Corpus Christi, they are federally subsidized totally. We are not at all. But the way that we have to do business, since our inspections come from the Air Force museum, is when we have a display it has to have something to do with Hill Air Force Base. We can't just take anything that represents the Air Force. Sometimes those connections are pretty thin, but when you consider what Hill Air Force Base does for the Air Force, on the other hand it's not too difficult. For example: the landing gear and all of the Department of Defense wheels all come from Hill Air Force Base, it's all handled here; All the optics for reconnaissance

are handled at Hill Air Force Base; All of the repair work for F-16s and F-4s and 130s--the 130 has recently changed, but--anything to do with any of those aircraft or parts or endeavors. We can have 124s, for example. So we've got plenty to do.

I don't know if you're aware of the plans--if you've talked to Robb you probably are. We're going to move the chapel and the building that I was making into a barracks to, I think, the north or the north east, below the base. And we have that west area aerospace building and there's going to be a hotel there, there's going to be office buildings. That whole area where our parking lot is, I think, is gonna eventually be filled, but you can get all that from the guys that are actually working out there. So I don't know where we're headed but it's gonna be interesting.

AK: That's excellent. Well, I just have two final questions for you.

DQ: Sure!

AK: First is, what accomplishments in your life do you feel like you are the most proud of?

DQ: Wow!

AK: You've accomplished a lot, so...

DQ: Well, I would say going back in the Air Force and getting my wings. I was very proud of doing that. And [laughs] it's almost trite because I hear it so much around here: my family, of course. My wife was an Air Force wife that was [chokes up]--oh I'm going to have trouble now. Any way my son went to Weber, was selected for Air Force training, aeronautical training. And I was sitting in my

office at Job Corps years ago and he was a sophomore, about to become a junior, and I get a call from a flight surgeon who had given him his physical. He was getting his physical to go into advanced ROTC, and this guy was an Air Force captain at the base and he said, "Colonel Quimby, this is Doctor so and so. I have your son Keith here and I'd like to talk to you. I said, "What's the problem?" He said, "Well why don't you come on over?" And I knew it was bad news so I went over and he said, "Well your son has melanoma on his back and it's stage three." I said, "What does that mean?" Well, there are five stages and he said, "Three is, it's in the possible process of going into his body and so we're gonna operate." And I said, "Well what are the odds?" He said, "Well you've got a fifty percent chance of total healing." And of course I immediately said, "That means 50% chance you won't." He says, "Well we don't look at it that way." And I said ok. So anyway, he had the surgery and the Air Force of course dropped him from events instantly and said to reapply in two years. Well he had graduated. He did reapply but they did not accept him. So he went into the Navy for six years, he became a seabee, learned to be an electrician, was stationed in numerous places: Japan and Central America and so forth. It was a good experience and he learned a good trade and now he is a Senior Master Sergeant in the Reserve out here. He runs a business called Don's Vacuum Villa and he has three different stores and he's keeping busy until about 9 o'clock at night. Anyway, yeah I'm very proud of him. I'm proud of my kids. They've done very well.

Going back to my wife, Sheila: she took to the Air Force beautifully. She learned how to play bridge and how to play mah-jong and she taught those

things and was president of the wives club several times. A good friend of ours, when we were talking in a little group one time, said, "Well Sheila Quimby is the epitome of what an Air Force wife should be." So we had a good one. But she's been long gone. Anyway, what was your other question?

AK: My other question was, of all the things that you were able to accomplish with the museum, what do you feel you're most proud of there?

DQ: Well I'd say the golf tournament. The others kinda flamed out on me, but with the golf tournament, I went through, what? Two or three generals that were chairmen out there? And I remember telling Marc Reynolds, I said, "Boss, you know, I made \$1100, \$1200 this year and I worked my tail off. I had to write all the letters, send out the mail, meet with people, sign them up, get the food, I did it all--alone--for a long time." I said, "It would be easier for me to write a check." [laughs] He said, "Dick, don't quit. Hang in there, hang in there." Well I think I did that twice to him and wow, now look at it! \$30,000 dollars and Thank God Rob is there and we've got so many volunteers, it's just neat. So, Commanders' Cup has become so popular that we have to turn people away now. Tony, the pro out there, he'd like to keep it at 28, but we always end up with 30 and it's very, very busy. But with our tie-ins with the Air Force Association, we've got a lot of people and aerospace industries around here and there's no problem at all and with what that has become, I'm real proud that I hung around. I didn't volunteer to take that job and I took it originally in 1987, or something like that. And wow, it's a money maker for us now, it really is. In fact, I remember I think I'd made \$5,000 or \$8,000 or something like that once--whatever it was. General Hadley looked at

me and he said, "Wow, Dick, can you do one of these every month?" [Laughs] I said, "Oh no, I can do it once a year." But uh, yeah that's definitely a success story.

I would like to see that barracks get finished. I have pictures of the ones that I was in and you know where they--I don't know if you're familiar with them-- where you shine your shoes, they were all lined up, and you've got a foot locker here and everything in your footlocker is exactly in place. And we could demonstrate that very well in that old building. And we had reinsulated it, as I said, and redid the ceiling. It was ready to go, but now we're gonna move it. I'm more concerned actually about what happens to that beautiful chapel. Have you been in that chapel?

AK: I haven't

DQ: Oh! The LDS church donated the seats for us, the old wooden seats that are in there. Nate Mazer, who I talked about from World War Two, boy he could get things done that you wouldn't believe! For example: We have a huge chunk of the white cliffs of Dover that he flew over. I've flown over them, too, many times. And now it's set in glass with little ships underneath it. The chapel is now named The Mazer Memorial Chapel, after Nate. Good friend. He lived to be into his nineties. There's a stained glass window behind the altar, probably ten, twelve feet high. It's a replica of one in England. He had to go visit the Church of England to get permission to have that put up, and it has a bomber, you know, airplanes. Bombing. And they didn't okay-it the first time because it has war capability demonstrated in a church. Well, that didn't stop Nate at all. He came

back with a run-down on various stained-glass windows in churches in England, which included King St. George on a horse with a, you know, warfare was very common, being put in the history of Christianity. So, yeah, I've had some outstanding friends and a lot of it had to do with that with that museum. Good, good people. I've known them for a long time. And a lot of them are gone.

AK: Well thank you so much for allowing us to come interview you today! That was fantastic.

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW AGREEMENT

This Interview Agreement is made and entered into this 5 day(s) of April 2014, by and between the Weber State University, Stewart Library, Oral History Program (WSUSLOHP), Hill Aerospace Museum, and Richard Quimby, hereinafter called "Interviewee."

Interviewee agrees to participate in a recorded interview, commencing on or about 10:30 am time _____ date, with Alyssa Kammerman.

This Interview Agreement relates to any and all materials originating from the interview, namely the recording of the interview and any written materials, including but not limited to the transcript or other finding aids prepared from the recording.

In consideration of the mutual covenants, conditions, and terms set forth below, the parties hereby agree as follows:

1. Interviewee irrevocably assigns to the WSUSLOHP and Hill Aerospace Museum all his or her copyright, title and interest in and to the interview.
2. WSUSLOHP and Hill Aerospace Museum will have the right to use and disseminate the interview for research, educational, and other purposes, including print, present and future technologies, and digitization to provide internet access.
3. Interviewee acknowledges that he/she will receive no remuneration or compensation for either his/her participation in the interview or for the rights assigned hereunder.
4. WSUSLOHP and Hill Aerospace Museum agrees to honor any and all reasonable interviewee restrictions on the use of the interview, if any, for the time specified below, as follows:

_____.

Interviewer and Interviewee have executed this Interview Agreement on the date first written above.

INTERVIEWEE	INTERVIEWER
<u>Richard Quimby</u>	_____
(Signature)	(Signature)
<u>RICHARD F. QUIMBY</u>	_____
(Printed Name)	(Printed Name)
_____	_____
(Address)	(Address)

