

*Oral
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Terry Bean

Interviewed by Alyssa Kammerman
4 & 22 February 2022

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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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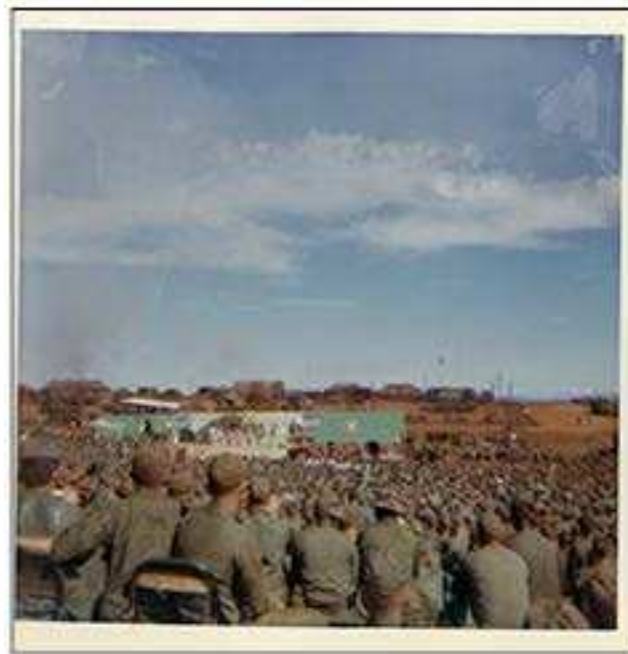
Terry Bean Circa 1965



Aircraft maintenance in Vietnam Circa 1966



Terry Bean at USO show circa 1966



USO show featuring Bob Hope circa 1966



Terry Bean on wing of A-10 circa 1967



Terry bean flies an F-16 at
Hill Air Force Base 1984



Working at Thiokol
Circa 1990



Solid rocket booster team at Thiokol circa 1990



Terry Bean on board the Discovery, circa 2000

Abstract: This is an Oral History Interview with Terry Bean, conducted February 4 and 22, 2022. Terry shares his memories of growing up in the Salt Lake area, being drafted into the Air Force during the Vietnam War and his time in Vietnam. He describes his work with the Air Force and later with Thiokol before becoming a volunteer firefighter in North Ogden and surrounding cities in Utah. Terry Shares his time as a museum volunteer at the Hill Air Force Base Museum and his thoughts on the importance of the museum to Northern Utah.

AK: Today is February 4th, 2022. I am here speaking with Terry Bean for the Hill Aerospace Heritage Foundation project. My name's Alyssa Kammerman, and I'll be conducting the interview. So, Terry, let's just start at the very beginning. When and where were you born?

TB: I was born in 1944, 28 August. I was actually born in Salt Lake City on my grandmother's bed [laughs]. And just down the road from us - it was just off of State Street and 24th South in Salt Lake - there was a hospital [laughs].

AK: But your mom didn't make it in time?

TB: I guess not. [both laugh]

AK: Did she tell you that story often? When you were being naughty?

TB: I knew this story from years ago. So yeah. [both laugh]

AK: So what was it like growing up in Salt Lake? What are some of your memories?

TB: Well, we lived there for a while. We lived down in Sugar House area, and my dad was in the car business and he was a manager for several different places. Then we moved up to Granger. And I don't know about Granger, but Granger at that

time was all Farm country. And we lived by, let's see, it was on 3500, and, I can't even think of the mall now.

AK: Is it Valley Fair?

TB: Valley Fair Mall. We lived right across the street off of 3500 and Valley Fair Mall, and that's just off of I-215 now. We had that whole corner. And then we had a couple of horses, all kinds of animals, and It was all farm country at that time. Belonged to the Hills. We'll skip a little time there because we're, of course, going to school down there in that area. From there we went, um... I'll tell you a story: I was probably about 10 years old - and this is what got me interested in going into the Air Force. My dad used to fly, too. He was flying little airplanes at the time, and that. And one time, a C-47 hit our antenna on our roof. Crash landed, went over and hit a corner of the barn across the road, landed two fields down, and crashed. And I guess it lost an engine at the time, and I thought, "Hey, that's pretty cool." This was close to the Fourth of July when that happened. And I thought, "That's pretty cool. I got to get involved in something like this." [laughs] So I can remember me and Kurt Hill - he lived across the street there at the farm - we went out and snuck in the airplane one day.

AK: That's really cool.

TB: [laughs] But I thought, I got to do something to do with this. So that's kind of a history of how things got started. But we lived there for several years and then they started changing things around down in that area, and then my dad had a house built just up the road, and it's still in Granger. And then we lived there for, what? Three years, while I was going through school. And then he had another

house built just up the road off of 4100 South. And he lived up there and now we live next to Norm Bangerter's house. He was a neighbor across from us. And so that was really cool. [inaudible] with Norm. But then I went to Granger High School, graduated from Granger High School. I was there for three years. And after that, I got out of Granger, I started up at the University of Utah. I graduated in 1962 and then started up the University of Utah, just taking the pre-schooling start. And Vietnam was going on, so I kind of, "I think I'm just going to go," and a friend of mine decided, "Hey, we're just going to go into the Air Force." So I went down and sat on my dad's desk, I told him, "Hey, I'm going to be leaving in three days. And I signed up for the Air Force." So anyway, that's how it all got started that way. But we had a good life down in that area. Now, like I say, it's Valley Fair Mall. Everything's completely changed, the way that we used to be.

AK: Yeah, I was going to ask you: So, Valley Fair Mall wasn't down there when you were a child?

TB: No. The area where Valley Fair Mall is, belonged to the Hills. It was all where the airplane crashed and everything.

AK: Oh, that's interesting. So you said "the Hills." Is that the name of a family who lived out there?

TB: Yeah. There was three families that owned that property. One lived on this side of us [points to his right] and then one lived across the street. That's where the barn was, and all [gestures across]. And they'd have the hay and all this different stuff. A big farm area.

AK: So did you live on the Hills' land or did you have your own plot of land out there?

TB: Well, we had our own corner. We had a little over a half acre, right where 215 is. We owned that whole corner right there off of 3500, and [inaudible] corner. And there was no houses behind us or anything at that time. Nothing.

AK: OK, so you said that it was farmland. Did you guys farm on your land or did you just kind of have horses and such?

TB: We had horses on our property and stuff like that, and we had a chicken coop and stuff like that growing up.

AK: So, you said your dad owned a car business. Did he --

TB: He didn't own it. He was the manager for several car companies.

AK: That's right. OK.

TB: One of them was Fred A. Carlson Company. And then he was with Ford for, well, a long time. He retired in 1987, I think it was.

AK: OK. So it was mainly Ford, and then you said it was something Carlson?

TB: Fred A. Carlson Company. It was Pontiac and Cadillac.

AK: Oh, OK.

TB: I even worked there when I was sixteen. Used to work on the cars.

AK: What did you do exactly?

TB: People'd bring their cars in and we trim them out, clean them all up, and make them look like new again.

AK: That is very cool. Was that your first job?

TB: Yeah. Well, that's not my first job. I actually worked in the service station that's just down the road from us just a little bit.

AK: OK. Did you help with filling up the gas and such there?

TB: Oh yeah. That's when people used to go out and put gas into cars for people and like that.

AK: So you were born in 1944. Did your dad join up during World War Two? Was he in the military?

TB: No, he was not in the military, but I know he did some work with the military and used to go out to Wendover at one time and he would take people out to the Wendover when they were getting ready for the bombing.

AK: OK. And they worked on the atomic bomb out there, right?

TB: Mm hm. That's when they would. He'd take people out there and that.

AK: So was he a civilian contractor then?

TB: Yeah, he was.

AK: Ok, very cool. Do you know if there's a specific company he worked with at that time?

TB: No I don't. He and four other guys had an airplane of their own too.

AK: Do you know why he learned how to fly or where he learned? [Terry shrugs. Both laugh]

TB: Yeah. My dad was quite a character. We had a big boat and the whole bit growing up, and then I actually worked with my dad and we built a boat. So, yeah.

AK: Oh wow. That's impressive.

TB: Yeah, it was fun.

AK: So what were your parents' names?

TB: His name was Paul Bean, and my mom was Audrey Bean. My dad passed away when he was 94 years old and my mom passed away when she was, I think, about 83 or 84.

AK: So I want to know a little bit more about this airplane crash. So were you at home when it happened?

TB: Yeah.

AK: So you heard it crash and everything?

TB: In fact, I was down in the basement sleeping because we'd just got home from the parade. My dad had his horse and everything riding in the parade. He worked with the Palomino Posse, and so we were getting ready to go to the rodeos because they would perform at the rodeos, too. So that's when that happened.

AK: OK. So I would imagine that would be intimidating. But for you, you thought, "How cool?"

TB: Well, it was cool. It didn't hit the house [laughs]. But it just took the antenna off the roof. I don't have the pictures for that, but I do have pictures of the aircraft when my grandpa come and he was out there looking at the aircraft, too. He walked down the road.

AK: That's really cool. So it obviously wasn't a big enough crash to where you could still walk inside of it and check it out and everything.

TB: Oh yeah. They bounced it, made a landing with it.

AK: Did you ever go flying with your dad?

TB: No. Well, that's not true, either. But that was when I was in the Air Force and he come down to Texas where I was stationed. And there's another story to go

along with this, OK? While I was in the military, I always had something going on. OK? Not just the military, but I was trying to get my license, A&P license for aircraft. So I worked in Del Rio, Texas as a worker on the aircraft. And that was all private aircraft. And there was different kinds. There was Cessnas, I even worked on the Border Patrol airplanes, because the border was right there at Del Rio and so I worked on those. But I was just trying to get a license and I got shipped out from there. But anyway, my dad come down and spent some time with us. And base housing was right there and he come down and my mother and that. And with the last name, "Bean," Judge Roy Bean was down in that area. So we flew down and he got to fly the airplane. Of course, we had Kennedy, and J.J. Kennedy flew the airplane and we were in a Cessna 182. My dad was sitting up in the front there and I was in the back. Mom didn't go with us. And we went down to Judge Roy Bean's place and then we flew down. Dad got to fly the airplane. I got to fly the aircraft too, but I got to fly it at another time when I'd go out and work on them, and we'd go out and fly around.

AK: That is so cool. So you were a relative of Judge Roy Bean, then?

TB: No.

AK: OK.

TB: Yeah, it was to honor that. And like I say, he hired me, training me and teaching me all the different things about the aircraft and all I should know and everything. So that was part of the deal. But I always had something going on.

AK: Why was that? I feel like you would have been really busy with your military job. Why did you have other things going on?

TB: Just to keep busy.

AK: Ok. Yeah.

TB: Yeah. When I went in the Air Force - Well, I'll give you a little bit of history.

AK: Sure.

TB: I went in the Air Force, went through basic training, then I got shipped - this is another story - I got shipped to Mississippi. And when I got there, they wanted to put me where I'd be in a job that was not aircraft. That's when it was all getting started with all the stuff we're doing now. And I said, "Wait a minute, when I went in the Air Force, I was told I could be an aircraft electrician." And so I got down there and I spent time down there going through the training and everything, and that got what I wanted.

I spent eight months down there in Mississippi. After that, I went to Williams Air Force Base and they had me going and they were training me as an aircraft electrician down there. And we had the T-38s, and that's training aircraft. I worked on them, got to fly in them. I could tell you a story there, too, that's kind of cool. But anyway, we got to fly in those and then we had the T-38s and the T-37s. And it was T-37s that then I got to fly in. I had to fly 40 miles from Williams, further down into Arizona. And we had an airplane go down, which had a fire warning problem. And it was just a training aircraft and it was just a single pilot in it. There was two seats in the T-37 and we flew down, I checked it all out and everything, fixed the problem because he had to pull the T-handle and I got that fixed, so. The other pilot took our aircraft and we flew back to the base.

While going back to the base, the fire warning light come on again. We had black smoke coming out of the right engine. So the pilot, he was a Major, he says, "OK, we're 40 miles from the base." And then we had a T-38 come up behind us, check, and says, "Yeah you got smoke in the engine." We're just getting ready to come in on the final. And he says, "The minute we get down on the ground, I'm going to open the canopy. Once we slow down, I'm opening the canopy." And it opens like this [motions upward with hands, like a garage door opening] and he says, "You get out that wing [pointing to his right] and go. I'm going this way [points to left]." "[laughs nervously] OK!" But we landed and here's these fire trucks coming from all directions. But all we did, it just had a pork chop leak and it was leaking oil back into the exhaust of the aircraft.

AK: Ok. So no fire.

TB: [laughing] But it was, you know, just another story.

AK: That is so scary.

TB: [laughs] Yeah. And then from there, William's Air Force Base, I got shipped to Vietnam. I was there for, let's see, probably a year and a half, or two years, in the program. And then from there, I went to Vietnam and I went to Nha Trang first. And also ended up in Pleiku. And that was in 1966, 1967.

AK: Did you have a family at this time?

TB: At that time, no. But when I was in Vietnam, they give you a 30-day break while you're over there. And so I come back to the states and that's when I got married and my son was born. That's another story. But anyway, you've got pictures of when I was in Vietnam. So if you want to put a few of those in the interview... And

I was at Nha Trang and Pleiku. I got to work on all types of different aircraft; whatever was on the ground, basically. That's what you worked on when you were involved in this.

AK: And you were an Aircraft Electrician in Vietnam as well?

TB: In Vietnam. Yeah.

AK: OK. So was there a difference between the things you did at Nha Trang versus Pleiku?

TB: Yeah. Nha Trang was kind of like an R and R center [laughs]. We're right on the water. It was beautiful. The beaches were perfect. It was just a beautiful place to be. And there would be times where you'd seem like you had North Vietnamese and you had everybody in there. Everybody wanted to be in that area. But being with the Air Force, it wasn't like being out in the field either. But we did get shot at. There was problems all the time.

AK: Now, was that while you were at Nha Trang? Getting shot at and everything?

TB: No, that was more up in Pleiku.

AK: OK. So was Nha Trang train kind of like a forward operating base, and then Pleiku was kind of --

TB: Well, no, that was a base.

AK: Oh, OK.

TB: Oh yeah, it was an active base, but it wasn't as active. Like I say, there's pictures of the city there that are really cool. Now that whole area, Vietnam is completely changed. They get big, huge old hotels and everything, and it's open to the public.

AK: Interesting. Yeah that makes sense.

TB: I don't care to ever go back there, but [laughs].

AK: Yeah, I don't blame you. How long were you at Nha Trang before you went to Pleiku?

TB: Approximately six months. I don't know, I should have pulled history because I've got all that stacks of history, but [inaudible] I was shipped up to Pleiku and that's where I worked on the other aircraft.

AK: OK. Are there any good anecdotes or stories you want to tell about Nha Trang? Kinda interesting or even funny, etc?

TB: Well, let's see. There was a lot of things to see and do. Like I said, the city was completely different. It was a nice area, it was a beautiful area. It was built by the French, and so there's like one picture in there you'd be able to see the city and that it was real beautiful area and being on the water and everything else. And it was kind of a more quiet area than the other area.

AK: So you got to go out into the city then and kind of mingle?

TB: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. That's one thing about the Air Force: We got to do a lot of the things that the Army couldn't with the way it was controlled.

AK: That's really cool. So did they have any restaurants you could go to in the area? Or was it not that much of a developed country?

TB: They had places you could go shop and stuff like that, but you didn't do a lot of that. No.

AK: Okay, interesting. So tell me a little bit more about Pleiku, then.

TB: Well, when I got up there, that was kind of an interesting base because it was more in a war area. It was closer. We had bombers and aircraft, and you see me standing on the aircraft in that picture so you could get that information. But it was quite an area and completely different, and I didn't really like going downtown. It was one of those areas with dirt roads and the whole bit, and I'd seen a lot of things and that just was disturbing. So anyway, it was completely different. And like I say, you could watch combat. We had a little movie screen and the guys could sit out on bomb canisters, and that was where we'd sit and watch the show and combat was going down the road from you. You could see aircraft going in, and I even got a picture of one of the airplanes tipped over like this [motioning sideways] shooting rounds down into the ground.

AK: Wow, that's amazing. What aircraft did you work on while you were out there?

TB: Mainly the A-10. We've got one out here in the museum's hangar, so you could see that. And you'll see it there in the pictures. But that was the main aircraft that we worked on over there. Here's a story for you that's a good one: The south Vietnamese had the same airplanes we did.

AK: Really?

TB: They were flying out of the same base, and every time their aircraft were gone, we'd get hit [laughs]. It was crazy. Every time, something would happen around the base or in that area. It's like they knew what was going on. But that's yeah.

AK: Oh, so you worked with the South Vietnamese a little bit, then?

TB: Yeah.

AK: That's interesting. Did you guys both live on the same base and kind of correlate like that?

TB: We did. As far as us taking care of their aircraft, no.

AK: Ok, it's more like a side by side thing, then?

TB: It's more like a side by side thing.

AK: Interesting. Tell me more about the A-10 because I don't know a lot about what it is or what it does. Is it a bomber?

TB: Well it's a fighter aircraft. OK. And let's see if you got the picture there real quick. It's in this scrapbook here... There it is, right here. Ok, I know I've got a better picture...

AK: No, you're just fine.

TB: Actually, my dad used to fly one like that.

AK: Is that an A-10 as well?

TB: Well, OK, this one here is a C-124.

AK: Ok. That's pretty cool.

TB: Ok. That's what it looks like right there. And it'll carry the bombs and the guns and the whole bit. There's me standing on the wing.

AK: Oh, that's a great picture. Look at that.

TB: This is another one. This is Nha Trang. This is our dinner menu.

AK: Oh, your Thanksgiving dinner! It looks good! Shrimp cocktail, and...

TB: We had everything.

AK: How fun is that!

TB: Of course, you could get the beer and everything, too [laughs].

AK: I had another question with those photos. You said that you got to see Bob Hope perform? Was that at Nha Trang or was that at Pleiku?

TB: That was at Pleiku. There was over 10,000 people there, and that was quite a deal. And like I say, there was only 250 Air Force guys. And it was like a drawing, I don't know how I even got picked. But yeah, I got to go see the Christmas show.

AK: Oh, OK, so it was a Christmas show. That's really cool. So I was going to ask, So there was only 250 Air Force guys? Was that how many Air Force guys were out there? Or were you just one of the lucky ones who got picked?

TB: I was one of the lucky ones that got picked.

AK: That's cool. Who were some other performers that came out?

TB: Oh, there's a bunch of them that come out. Like I say, in the book there, there's several different performers we got to see. People did it quite a bit, go around to the bases and put on a show for the Army and stuff like that. Because like I said, the Army, to me, those guys had it a lot rougher than we did. We'd get our share of it, but not like they did. They were right in the middle of it.

AK: Ok. So a lot rougher. How so?

TB: Well, they were being shot at out in the field.

AK: Gotcha.

TB: We had the 25th Infantry just set up on the hill at Pleiku. They'd set up on there and fire the guns over the top of us.

AK: And you told me that there was one of the bases you were at that had a sort of dog pound.

TB: Yeah, that was in Pleiku.

AK: OK. And then behind that you said it was a “free kill zone.” What did that mean, exactly?

TB: Well, it dropped over kind of into a hill and there was water down below there and then it had rice paddies down in there. Ok? And then at night, sometime after 6:00 at night when it started getting dark, they called it a free kill zone because anything could come through there. We didn't know where it was coming from. So anybody that come across here, ended up being like a free kill zone. If you were out there, you were going to be shot at, basically.

AK: OK, interesting. That's crazy.

TB: Well, you're protecting yourself. But, you know, the dogs would usually let us know.

AK: Yeah, that makes sense. What were the dogs used for at that time?

TB: They'd go around and check all the equipment. And boy, we had a couple of dogs that were, I'd say, Vietnamese dogs. But they'd hang around the base because they could be fed. We did have, like I say, the dogs across from us.

AK: Did you make a pet out of any of them?

TB: There was one that come around a lot. So yeah, but that was kind of cool.

AK: Did you have a name for him? Do you remember?

TB: Oh, I can't remember the name. But it'd sit out, and from what I heard, it got to fly in one of the aircraft.

AK: That's very cool. So would they be sniffing for bombs and such, when they'd sniff the equipment?

TB: Did different things. And they'd also warn if somebody was coming in.

AK: It's interesting how intimidating dogs can be [both laugh]. But that works. So how often were you able to hear from family and loved ones at home during this time?

TB: Well, one of the pictures I've got in there shows you. We all had a postbox. It depended. They'd come around and they'd pass out the mail sometimes. It depended on where you were based at, and where we were at. But we had postboxes.

AK: OK. So was it like every few weeks you typically would get a letter?

TB: Whenever it showed up. [laughs].

AK: So it was a bit sporadic?

TB: It was sporadic. Yeah.

AK: So you obviously have a lot of photos here. What kind of camera did you bring with you? Do you remember?

TB: Oh, it was 35 mm, but I can't think what it was. I'd have to look. I think I still got it. I'd have to check it out. I'm not sure what it was, but there was quite a few of us that had pictures all the time.

AK: That's pretty cool. Did they have a place on base where you could get your photos developed and such, too?

TB: There was a few of them. That was usually in the BX area. And you could sometimes get it done.

AK: That's pretty nice. Did you ever send them home? Or did you keep them with you while you were out there?

TB: Most of them got sent home.

AK: OK. I was just wondering because I figured it'd be hard to pack around pictures with you. Um, I'm trying to remember if there were any other questions I had about your time in Vietnam [looking through photo album]. I know we looked at several photos earlier. And if there's any that come to your mind, feel free to pipe in.

TB: Actually, Nha Trang, there was a variety of aircraft, and a lot of times we had a variety of aircraft that would come up in Pleiku, but not as much.

AK: OK. Mostly the A-10s in Pleiku?

TB: Yeah.

AK: Ok. And what do you mean by a variety? There were A-10s and then what else?

TB: Depending on the aircraft, we'd be bringing cargo in and we had like these [pointing to open photo album] see, these are all different.

AK: OK.

TB: Any aircraft to come in over there, if they had a problem on it, electrical problems or something like that, our crew would go out and we'd work on it.

AK: Oh cool, OK. So are any of these photos of the hangar where you would work on the aircraft? Did you use hangars to work on the aircraft out there?

TB: Mm hm. Or we'd work on the line too. And see, they were building these hangars. I could tell you a story about one of them, too.

AK: Yeah, I want to hear.

TB: It got blown over and it hit an aircraft and actually killed the guy who was working on it. He was Vietnamese.

AK: Oh my goodness. Was it a wind storm that blew it over?

TB: Yeah. And they actually took us - let's see what it was. I can't remember the aircraft, but they put it in front of it to block the wind and make it go up in it and run the engines real high because it just kept breaking over. And it wasn't all the way built.

AK: What was the weather like out there? Was it pretty rainy out there?

TB: Oh yeah. We got our share of the rain. [looking back at the photo album] Ok, these are just pictures like I said of some of the cities.

AK: Oh okay, cool.

TB: And it was all built by the French.

AK: That's pretty amazing.

TB: And this was South Vietnamese.

AK: OK. I can't tell what that building is.

TB: Oh that's their area. So I couldn't tell you all of that.

AK: Oh ok. Gotcha. And you're out on the beach, too. That looks nice.

TB: Oh yeah, you've got to get on the beach. Hey, you did what you could.

AK: Absolutely.

TB: This is when I joined the Air Force.

AK: Oh that's cool. So that went into the paper.

TB: Like I say, there's a whole bunch of pictures in there you can look through and that, and stories, and some of the programs, and just like this.

AK: That's great. So you were at Pleiku for Thanksgiving and Christmas, is that right?

[Terry nods]

TB: And, like I say, here's the mail boxes [pointing at picture].

AK: That's really cool. You'd have keys to get into it? [Terry gives a silent "yep"] This is great. That helps me know, too, what I'm looking at when I put them in with your interview and such. So perfect. OK. I have a couple of questions real quick about basic training, if that's OK. So where did you go for basic training?

TB: Texas.

AK: OK. Do you remember what base in Texas?

TB: San Antonio. And that was a treat. I mean, we got - oh I got a picture of that! [points to photo on cell phone] And I'm over here.

AK: Ok. So you were first row or second row?

TB: Uh, the top of right up there.

AK: OK. Very cool.

TB: That's me. [laughs]. And then there's the date on it.

AK: Oh ok, there you go. 1963. That's awesome. How many months were you in basic?

TB: What was it, two months? Something like that. Two or three months. We did everything. We'd shoot the guns, we'd do everything.

AK: So did they do basic training and then also a course for your specific job?

TB: No. You just went out and shot the guns, did all the training, "whatever they said, that's what you did." The whole bit.

AK: So Vietnam started for us in 1965. Is that right? Or was it going on in 1963? I can't remember.

TB: It actually started earlier than that. Yeah, I don't know the exact date on it.

AK: I was just wondering: you often hear about how, in Vietnam, there was a lot of political contention and stuff about that war. Did you see that or feel it at all in Utah? Or was Utah a little less polarized?

TB: Explain that question.

AK: So, in history class or certain documentaries, they make a big thing out of how a lot of America didn't want to go to the Vietnam War. And so there were some people who were pretty against it.

TB: Oh there was definitely that. Yeah. But most anybody that was there at the time with us, that's why they were there

AK: Right. Yeah. That makes sense. I was just wondering if Utah, where you grew up, if you saw a lot of that polarization? Or was Utah pretty patriotic?

TB: I think they were more patriotic.

AK: OK.

TB: I do believe that. My brother was in the Army. He passed away when he was 44 or 43. But anyway, he was in the Army and he was over in Germany and that. And, of course, he was in before I was. But he didn't get in any action at all, and he was in that time period. And I got a picture of him on my phone. But, no, I don't think there was any. Just, it was one of those things that they were asking for people to be involved in that, and so...

AK: And people were glad to sign up and be a part of that?

TB: Mm hm.

AK: Ok. Yeah. That makes sense. So you mentioned on the phone that you moved all over the world during your Air Force career. Would you tell me a little about that?

TB: I went to Williams Air Force Base, I went over to Vietnam. After Vietnam, I got orders to Frankfurt, Germany. And this is where it really got interesting [laughs]. So I went to Frankfurt, Germany, and that was Rhein-Main Air Force Base. And that was the main hub for all the airlines - they would come in there too. So we were sharing the base, basically. And I was there and I was sent over there to work on the 141s. But! We worked as a team. So any aircraft to come in over there, if I had a problem, the whole group would go out and work on the aircraft, because we didn't own any of the aircraft that was over there. Did you follow? The base was more of a transfer base going different places and, yeah.

AK: So when you say you didn't own any of the aircraft, do you mean they were German airplanes? Or commercial airplanes?

TB: They were military aircraft coming through.

AK: OK.

TB: So whatever landed there is what we worked on. So I worked on a whole bunch of different airplanes. I counted over twenty-seven different aircraft that I worked on. And whatever landed, just, like I say, our team would go out and we'd do what we had to do on the aircraft. And most of them were 141s, cargo aircraft, coming in from the states and all over.

Now, I want to add to the story: Working over there, I met a gentleman that was from Utah. He was the director for Pan American in Frankfurt, Germany.

And my wife and I lived down in North Island, but we moved up on the base. Well the base was right next to where the airline would come in and all that stuff, we were on the other side of the base from the runway. So anyway, Howard Cook is his name, and he's since passed away, but I met him and his wife, and we sat and talked and he said, "Where are you from?"

And I says, "Well, I'm from Utah," and all that. And I says, "Aircraft electrician over here."

And he says, "Hey, would you like to come and help us once in a while?" So he hired me on. Part time, just one of my off-duty times. He hired me on to come and work at Pan American.

AK: That's pretty cool.

TB: And so I'd go out there and I got to work on the first 747 to come across the pond. And they'd fly around the world with that aircraft. One would go this way and the other one would go that way, going East to West. It was really something to do. But I got to work on all the different airliners coming in, too, when I was on duty. And at that time, there was only five Americans working there, and the rest were all German.

AK: Was there a bit of a language barrier then?

TB: Oh no, they all spoke English real good. But anyway, I met friends over there, my wife and I did, and we've been friends ever since. I've had their kids come and live with me and spend time. And they come over, visited and everything else, and we're still in contact.

AK: That's cool.

TB: And that's years ago, so. [chuckles]

AK: Did he stay out in Germany? Or did he ever move back to America?

TB: He did get back to America, yeah. And we got together when he come back to the states and everything before he passed away. And then I got to know his son out here at Thiokol. He was an engineer out there at Thiokol. But anyway, that's another story.

AK: I probably should have asked this question earlier, but with all of this engineering stuff that you were doing, how did you learn it? It sounds pretty complex and you had to know how to work on several kinds of airplanes...

TB: I'm losing some of my memory just a little bit, too, you know, but you got to know the systems and have an idea of how it works and then you better have the book to go through and make sure you're doing it the way it's supposed to be.

AK: OK, so you had like a manual you were using?

TB: You always had to have something like, yeah.

AK: OK.

TB: Any time you did anything, you always had something: The training and that, and the basics of everything.

AK: Was each airplane pretty distinct as far as how its systems worked and everything?

TB: Oh yeah.

AK: OK. That's where the manual comes in.

TB: So anyway, from over there, then I got shipped back to the states. I went to Del Rio, Texas, and that's where I worked on the T-38s. And it's a training base. And

that's when I really started getting to fly with the aircraft because they would fly me down again and fix airplanes. So I got stories I could tell, and that's where I told you about my dad going down when we were stationed down there in Del Rio, Texas. And that was quite an area, you know, with J.J. Kennedy and that. And I wish I had those pictures, but I don't have those either. Like I say, that's where I got my other training, and that's when I wanted my AMP license to go in and learn all and have a license to do it. But I never did get it, because they turn right around after I was stationed there and had my family with me, and I was sent off to Germany again.

I got stationed at Zweibrucken, Germany. And that's on the French border. So both times I was in Germany, I got to travel the world. I got to travel every place: Where they made the Sound of Music, everywhere, the whole country around there. And so I was on the French border, I was down in France, I was down in Italy, I was down in [laughs]. So that made a big difference. But that was quite a deal, too. And I worked on the F-4s there. Now, William's Air Force Base is no longer, so I reckon Germany is no longer. They closed the bases, OK? So it's not a base anymore.

So from there, after doing that, I spent about 20 months there. And again, traveling all through, I knew how to speak a little German. I still can't do it now, but I used to be able to speak a little German and everything else. Then they turned right around and I got shipped to Alconbury, England [laughs]. That's why, you see, I traveled the world.

AK: Truly, though.

TB: So in Alconbury, England, that was completely different, too, but then I was working the F-4s in Alconbury, England.

AK: So F-4s both in Germany and in England, then?

TB: Mm hm.

AK: Ok.

TB: That was the aircraft that we worked on. And that was quite a deal there, too. And from there, after spending what was, what? Probably 18 months there, I got shipped to the Loring Air Force Base, Maine. B-52s and KC-135s.

AK: KC-135?

TB: Mm hm.

AK: Ok. I haven't heard that one before.

TB: That's the ones that refuel the aircraft.

AK: Oh, Ok.

TB: And we worked on the B-52s and they were "on-alert" aircraft. They were carrying weapons, big time. Big stuff. And then we'd have four aircraft on-alert, bombers, and then thirteen 135s ready to go. And then, of course, they all have different aircraft where they could fly and do things and, you know, just without the bombs and the weapons on them.

AK: So "on-alert" means they're ready to go?

TB: They're ready to go on a moment's notice. They stay on-alert seven days a week, all week and then they put another team in. So going there, instead of being an electrician, I ended up being in Quality Assurance. This is where I told you things changed on me. So.

AK: And this was in Maine, is that right? Where things changed?

TB: This is in Maine. And they says, "Hey, you want to be in Quality Assurance?"

And I says, "Sure." Why not? At that time, I was staff sergeant going for tech sergeant, and I said "Sure." So I got to go beyond, and at that point, everything changed again because now they sent me back to go to another school and learn all the egress systems and everything on the air on the bombers. So I went to Norfolk and I got sent up to do the training on the B-52 egress systems and stuff like that.

I knew the aircraft. I had no problem with the aircraft. I understood it and knew basically where everything was. 'Course, you learn all of that as you go. And so I was probably there, I want to say at least 18 months. And again, now I got to see the other end of the world and all the different places. And then from there, I ended up at Hill Air Force Base...[pause] as Electrician [laughs].

AK: Was Electrician still part of your Quality Assurance umbrella?

TB: No. It put me back into being the aircraft electrician. And I was in the 14th Squadron down here, and then they moved to the 34th Squadron because the 14th was no longer here at Hill.

AK: And the 34th Squadron isn't here anymore either, right?

TB: The 34th is.

AK: Oh it is still?

TB: Oh yeah.

AK: OK, so going back to Norfolk, you said that you learned the Egress System? What is that?

TB: Ejection seat.

AK: Oh, OK, gotcha.

TB: I had spent two weeks doing that training, just because of [inaudible] that's quite a system. Some blow out the bottom and some blow out the top. But there's four people on board the B-52s.

AK: Oh, OK, gotcha.

TB: So that's why [laughs].

AK: That's interesting. So you learned how to check to make sure that they were up to code?

TB: Everything was up to code and what had to be. Any time anything was touched, we had to go out and inspect. And we inspected the whole aircraft, too. It wasn't just the egress. It was just getting the training to know about it.

AK: OK. So if it wasn't up to code, then would you work on it? Or would you get other people to come work on it?

TB: Oh no. The teams would come in and have to make it right.

AK: That makes sense.

TB: That's how I got my training as far as being in Quality Assurance.

AK: OK. And so you weren't in Quality Assurance for very long, then, it sounds like. It was only when you were in Norfolk and then you went back to Hill Air Force Base and were an electrician again. Is that correct?

TB: Yeah. I went from Maine to [points forward], went back to electrician and that was on [points to Hill AFB sign behind him]. And that was really cool on the F-16s. And I got to fly in those, too, and we did a lot of traveling with the aircraft. Our

group would go to different bases, too, and take our aircraft and that. We'd take the team down. So it was really cool.

AK: Interesting. Is that where this photo here is from? [pointing to photo]

TB: That's when I got sent, just me, representing the 12th Air Force. And I got sent down there through all the modifications they were going to put on the F-16. And that's not the F-16. That is an F-16, but it's a different model. And they only made like six airplanes.

AK: Oh, that's right. OK. And where was this one then?

TB: That was in Texas. I don't remember the name, but it's where they make the aircraft [Laughs]. Anyway, it'll come to me here in a minute. I got sent down there and we were down there for like four weeks, five weeks, and going through all the modifications they were doing on the F-16. And so I was representing the base here at Hill for the modifications. And then they would send a team down to do some of the modifications on the aircraft.

AK: Ok. That's cool. So you were mainly there to kind of just observe and report?

TB: Yeah. So that was really cool to do.

AK: Did you get to fly in it at all or just watched as it flew?

TB: Well, not that aircraft, but I got to fly in the F-16, yeah. That was here at Hill. And that was my last flight. And that was when they took me all over, every place around here. And then I got to fly the aircraft. We made a touch-and-go on Salt Lake and the whole bit. And you fly it like this [motions holding gear stick with right hand and slightly flicking wrist front and back, side to side]

AK: Oh wow, so just very slight movements.

TB: That's all you had. The throttle was over here [motioning to his left] and the [gently moving right hand again] whatever you moved. And that's how they flew the aircraft.

AK: So you'd have to have just the right touch then, it sounds like.

TB: Oh yeah!

AK: Was it intimidating to fly that thing? To make sure you're able to move it just right?

TB: Yeah, it was, but that was cool to do.

AK: Yeah.

TB: We're flying down over Salt Lake and he says, "Keep your altitude up."

"OK. Oh, I used to live over--" [motions leaning to one side as if looking out a window and steering the aircraft sideways].

And I did that too! I moved it like this and he says, "Hey! No!" because I could see the house. That's when I was living down in West Jordan. So anyway, long story.

AK: No, that's a great story!

TB: And that was my last flight before I ended up going out to Thiokol.

AK: That is really funny. I feel like I would do the same thing because it's such a slight movement, I can see that being so easy to accidentally tilt your steering hand while looking out the window.

TB: Yeah, oh yeah.

AK: That's cool. So how long were you at Hill Air Force Base before you retired then?

TB: Uh, let's see. When I left, I had twenty-one years, two months, and twenty-five days in the Air Force.

AK: So about two of those years were at Hill Air Force Base?

TB: I was probably there for two years, maybe. Right before I retired, I got remarried. I met my wife through an old girlfriend from when I was in high school. She was living out in West Jordan and she was divorced and she was a dispatcher with the West Jordan Police department. So anyway, that's how I met her. But anyway, this old girlfriend says, "I know this lady. Why don't you come in?" So I met her and everything, and we got along real great. Been married, what, thirty-seven years now?

AK: Oh, congratulations.

TB: She had a son. I raised him since he was 10 years old and he worked out here at the base. He was in the Air Force for ten years, and then he got out of the Air Force because he was stationed here for ten years.

AK: Was he really? Wow!

TB: Ten years here! He was a medic. He finally got out of the Air Force, and when he did, he knew all the firemen up on base. And so one day he went out, he was working for a contractor - I can't remember which company it was - but anyway, one of the firemen seen him and hired him, and he says, "Hey, I'm going to send you to school and you're going to be a fireman here on base." So they did that. And when they did that, everything changed. They sent him to school and everything. And since he had a medical background, they all knew him at the Hill Air Force Base fire department, because most of them are civilian. They're not all

military. And so they all knew him and everything. They hired him and he spent seventeen years there, and then he passed away about three years ago. He was on a snorkeling trip. Drowned in 2018.

AK: I'm sorry.

TB: So anyway, that's another story.

AK: Thank you for sharing that. Is that part of how you got into firefighting, yourself? Or was that later on down the road?

TB: No, that was later when I retired.

AK: OK

TB: I went out to Thiokol and was working out there. And I was out there for 22 years. They gave me a plaque and the whole bit for 22 years of service and all kinds of stuff. But that was where I got really involved with a lot of people because they put me in Quality Assurance. They didn't have an opening for Electrician, so I was put in Quality since I had a background in Quality and I got hired even at a higher wage and the whole bit because of my training and being in the Air Force and everything else. They put me right in and then that's when I got involved with all the space shuttle, and making the rockets and stuff like that.

AK: So were you glad to be put in Quality Assurance?

TB: Oh yeah. I got to do things. And then after a short period after basic [inaudible] go on a bunch of training and continuous. Then, they put me as a quality rep at Hercules. And that's when the space shuttle went down. After that is why this job ended over there. I worked there for maybe 18 months, and what we were doing is we were doing the filament-wound motors. We were building those, because a

lot of the aircraft you built was filament-wound, and we were testing the rockets with those. And then all of a sudden - this is going on with your story - all of a sudden, we had that disaster on The Challenger. So that whole project stopped at that point. But see, that's those other pictures that I showed you, where we were doing all that testing with the book and everything, that's part of that before that happened.

AK: OK.

TB: Different tests we were doing on all the filament-wound motors, the whole bit. We were exploding them, putting water in them, and making them blow apart to see what would happen. We took three million pounds of pressure and squeeze them like this [pushing hands together]. In some of the books on that, I'm in some of the pictures, and on the papers they sent out. And we'd squeeze it to see where we'd break.

AK: What would you squeeze it with? Did you have a machine?

TB: Three million pounds of pressure. And then they'd just push it like this together, and it would see where it would break. Well it broke off the ends and that's what we wanted, because that's where all the metal was. The rest of it was all filament-wound. So it was really cool to see and be a part of that. So I actually did that. And so that changed my position again, because we had to close everything we did down here and I moved back out to the plant. So I went out to the plant, and he says, "Hey, I'm going to put you in reliability engineering." So that was even better because things changed there because that's when we

were rebuilding the Space Shuttle rocket motors, coming up with all the new designs. And so I was completely involved with that.

AK: That's pretty cool. And you were rebuilding that because of the Challenger accident?

TB: [nodding] Rebuilding the motors, because what they did is, the way the motors were built - Let me show you something [gets up to look at the photo album across the table]. This is just a quick picture just to show ya. This is what I was telling you about blowing them up. That's where it broke.

AK: Oh, OK, interesting.

TB: We'd put them out here this way to pull the water and watch them try to explode, and see what would happen.

AK: That's pretty cool.

TB: And then this is just to show you, these rings was like this. That's how they put the motors together. Then there was a bolt, just a metal bolt. It was about three inches long and that's what held these sections together. And then there was a ring that went around the outside and locked it all into place. So what would happen is, in the minute of fire, it would lock itself. And see, back over here is where it burnt and broke. And there were three rubber seals that went all the way around. And that's what broke. That's where the problem was that caused the accident.

AK: Oh ok. Interesting. The newspaper article I was reading yesterday was saying the issue happened partly because it was brittle from the cold? Is that correct?

TB: Yeah. It was 40 degrees, and you don't launch in 40 degrees because it never been tested at that temperature. And I was involved in all of that.

AK: Yeah? How were you involved?

TB: Because we were doing all the finding, trying to determine what happened.

AK: OK, gotcha.

TB: Of course, I was working with a whole bunch of engineers and everything else.

AK: So was the Challenger meant to go out to outer space? Or was it just to orbit the earth?

TB: No. The Challenger was going to be out in space flying around. It was going up to the Russian space station.

AK: Oh OK. So the problem was the 40 degree weather was too cold?

TB: The shields didn't lock and it burned that hole. Instead of burning out the back there, it burned inside and burned out the side. And that's what caused it to...

AK: That makes sense. OK. Because I was thinking outer space is colder than 40 degrees, right? But the seals would have locked by the time they got up there?

TB: It would have locked by then. [Pointing to diagram of rocket] See how it goes down and it's a little wider down here? I used to have to crawl right up in here, and these are fins. And all you could do is lay down and back yourself in and look at the fins.

AK: Oh my gosh. That's claustrophobic [laughs].

TB: And then going down the whole thing [laughs].

AK: Wow. That's amazing.

TB: It was 144 feet long.

AK: I imagine you weren't claustrophobic, then, in order to be able to do that?

TB: No.

AK: How cool is that!

TB: So anyway, that's what happened.

AK: So in all of that post-Challenger stuff you were doing, was that all out at Cape Canaveral? Was that when you were out there?

TB: No, I was out here.

AK: At Thiokol.

TB: So anyway, I was in that reliability engineering. I got to be in a lot of the test fires and I got to watch it at night. We fired one at night and I was in the control room and everything when we fired the motor out here and there was a satellite going over. They wanted to pick it up with the satellite to see if they could see the test fire. So we had to time it just perfectly for this so when it fired, it would [motions with hand symbolizing the satellite going over at the same time as the fire]. And when they fire those, they would only go for just a little over two minutes.

AK: The combustion would?

TB: Yeah.

AK: OK. Did you pick it up with the satellite?

TB: Oh yeah. Everything worked just perfect. So I got to do it and got involved with all that testing and all that kind of stuff. So then I ended up, after doing that for probably over a year and a half, they put me in final assembly. Now, the story changes again!

AK: Ok

TB: [laughs] Because, uh, you're enjoying this, aren't ya?

AK: I actually am, yeah [laughs].

TB: Now, it's bringing back history but it's kind of confusing to me a little bit. But anyway, so then they did that again to me and put me in final assembly. So that means getting all the motors ready, putting them on the rail cars and sending them to the Cape from here.

AK: Oh, Okay.

TB: So then I went to railroad school [laughs]. I had to learn about all the rail cars. So I got involved with all of that.

AK: Why did you have to learn about all the rail cars?

TB: Because we would load them out here and put them on the train and everything had to be just perfect. And whatever they heard us, final say, was what had to happen. So we wanted to make sure they did their job and could be involved. So I was involved with all of that and final assembly, plus putting the domes on the forward rocket motors and everything else, doing all of that and inspecting all of that. And that's when things changed and I started going down to the Cape at that point. As we shipped them and that, then somebody would go down and inspect them [laughs]. And we'd take a crew down there and then sometimes we had to modify some of the parts as they were putting it together out in the big building.

AK: OK, that's really interesting. And was that the Endeavor? Because that was the next ship, right?

TB: Well, the one I've got a picture of is Discovery. I think it is.

AK: Oh, that's right. OK.

TB: But that's one of them that we were on board.

AK: OK.

TB: And that was, like I say, right there at the Cape. And [inaudible] not everybody got to do what we got to do.

AK: So what did they do with the Discovery? Was it more like a test to make sure that the same accident didn't happen? Or...I was just wondering what the purpose was of the Discovery?

TB: Oh no, this is probably way after. They'd already fired several motors several times since that happened. But I'm going through a 22 year period, basically.

AK: Right. Yeah. That makes sense.

TB: So yeah.

AK: Because you showed me a picture of going back out and collecting the Discovery in the ocean after it had come back to Earth, so I was wondering, did it orbit the Earth? Or what did it do?

TB: Oh yeah. It come back.

AK: Ok. Gotcha.

TB: Yeah.

AK: How long was it in orbit?

TB: No, no. It went up to the Russian space station.

AK: OK, gotcha.

TB: And I've had the astronaut who was flying it as a guest speaker, Charles Precort, four times.

AK: That's cool. Does he live around here, then?

TB: Yeah.

AK: That's awesome.

TB: He ended up being a good friend, too, and that, so.

AK: So you said that you were on the boat when it went out to get the Discovery after it landed. Tell me a little bit more about that. Why were you out there?

TB: Oh no. We got on the boat and everything else when it was in dock. We didn't go out. No, we didn't. Because they'd go out and they'd be sitting out in the water for three or four days.

AK: Oh OK, gotcha. OK, so it was more that you got to take a picture on the boat and everything?

TB: Yeah. We got to go on the boat and everything else that people don't ever get to do.

AK: That's really cool. OK, so I wanted to ask you: we've been going for an hour and a half. Would you like to continue for a little longer? Or, if you wanted, I could always schedule a time where we can meet again and finish up your story?

TB: Well, I gotta head up on base here in a little bit.

AK: Are you OK with re-meeting another time then? So that way we won't have to rush through the rest of your story?

TB: Sure.

AK: Ok, perfect. We'll pick back up next time.

Terry Bean Interview Part Two

AK: Today is February 22nd, 2022. This is Alyssa Kammerman interviewing Terry Bean for part two of his interview. So we'll just jump right into it. So for the recording's sake, last time we talked about your time with Thiokol, and then you're going out to Cape Canaveral to be able to tour the Discovery. So from there, we talked about how you were still working at Thiokol when you started volunteering as a firefighter with, was it Pleasant View?

TB: North View.

AK: North View, OK.

TB: North View Fire Department,

AK: OK, and I felt really dumb asking you this question, Is North View out by North Ogden-ish area?

TB: We took care of North Ogden, Pleasant View, and Harrisville

AK: OK.

TB: Then we also would go into town into Ogden and [inaudible] if we had to. We were the backup. So that's how that worked. That was our three areas that we had.

AK: And that comprised North View?

TB: Mm Hm. North View.

AK: So, why did you choose to become a firefighter?

TB: Well, let's see. When I got out of the service, I was 38, 39 years old and went out to Thiokol. When I was out at Thiokol, they didn't have much of a fire department at that time. I started there as a volunteer and I have a picture of the first fire engine with all of the group firemen that was volunteers there. So I'll send you

that photo, too. But anyway, so that's what got me started with the fire department and basic training going through all the different training that we went through and that.

The only thing about being a fireman that was real hard is, and especially going into being a medic that made it even worse was some of the stuff that I seen. I didn't like a lot of that stuff, but I knew what I was doing. I knew people had to be taken care of and that, but it's kind of hard to take care of bodies, you know, stuff like that. And then be able to deal with the family. That was one of the hard parts about being a fireman and a medic and having to go out and do things like that and be part of it.

And that's what I feel right now. What's going on with what's happening right here in Utah, even, with the medics and everything that with the stuff they have to go through and being a fireman and seeing and things that you just don't really, "Oh, I didn't want to see that, but I'm right in the middle of it right now." And so, yeah, those are the hard parts.

But I've really enjoyed it. And like I said, I was 18 years as a part-time fireman and I put part-time because we always had people there. And first one in the fire department when there was nobody at the fire station. We were just on a crew where we'd get a call, it sent out a message to us and say, "Hey, you're going to be here at such and such." And there goes, Terry! And that's how it would go.

So that was the way it was for a number of years. That was in the older station and we were on a pager where we'd get paged out. And it would be in the

middle of the night and the pager would go off, from home, three miles away from the fire station. But by the time I got there, the fire station, the fire engine was already gone. There'd always be somebody living closer to there, so it was already gone. And then after that period of time when they built the new fire station, that was really nice because then we had the big bedrooms and everything, and that's where we went on 24-hour shifts. And now they've got one, two, three big engines. They've got three ambulances and I think three grass trucks ready to go at any time they get called out, and that made a big difference. And like, say, when I was there, I was trained to be a driver engineer and work on any place they needed us to go in. But again, going into fires, that was something else, because, I don't know, you said you lived in North Ogden?

AK: Mm hm.

TB: That whole hillside behind there was on fire one year.

AK: Oh my gosh.

TB: It went all the way across all the way up to the Divide, where you go up the canyon, and that's where we stopped it. And sitting on a fire hose behind these houses that was up there, there wasn't a lot at the time, but sitting back there, that's what we did. And we put fire trucks all over just to keep it from getting to all the houses. Sitting on a fire hose and shooting water [laughs]. So it was something else.

Anyway, so then we went through training as medics and that was quite a deal to do, go through, because it was a lot of study and stuff like that, and I

couldn't do that nowadays. There's just no way. In fact, I can't remember a lot of stuff that we're supposed to know now. But yeah, it was a very interesting job.

Anyway, when I retired from out there at Thiokol, I got more involved with the fire department for a number of years where I was on call times and actually had to live at the fire station on 24-hour shifts, and that's when they started actually paying us to be there.

AK: OK, so a couple of quick questions: Did you say you started with the fire department around 1998?

TB: Uh, No, it was probably earlier than that.

AK: OK.

TB: And I was probably out at Thiokol for about 10 years before I started as a volunteer.

AK: OK, and I'm trying to remember: You were out at Thiokol in the '80s, right?

TB: Yeah. When I retired from the Air Force was 1984

AK: '84.

TB: Yeah, I went out from there.

AK: Ok. And then you were at Thiokol for about 10 years, so you would have retired from Thiokol around 1994?

TB: About '94, in that timeframe. Yeah.

AK: So it sounds like you signed up because you saw a need and decided to fill a need?

TB: Fill a need, and see if I could do it [laughs]. Which, I think I did a pretty good job.

AK: It sounds like it. A new challenge. So the fire department was already established, so you decided to just go volunteer as a...?

TB: Go volunteer, [inaudible]. And like I say, that first station was strictly by, you get a page and there you go. And you never knew what you were going to go into. But we had good training and that. We'd be there every week and get together, a bunch of us. We knew what we had to do and we went through all the fire training. And we had to meet the state requirements and stuff like that.

AK: OK, tell me a little bit about your training. What kind of stuff did they have you do?

TB: Oh boy, there was one that really got me. We had to, of course, do the ladders and stuff like that. But we did one that was really fun. Exciting, let's put it that way. We had to go climb a 30-foot ladder, go up one side and go down the other side, turn around, and come down the other side. But the ladder was being held by four ropes. The guys were holding the ropes like this.

AK: Oh my Gosh.

TB: I know I'd got a picture of that even, but I don't know where it's at. But [laughs] you had to go all the way up, come down the other side and they're holding with ropes. So we had to do all types of training and then we go into a burning building. And we did that kind of training. There's a training range down there in the Ogden area.

AK: Down by the BDO, Right? OK. I wondered about that.

TB: Yeah. And we'd go down there and do our training, too. And we had to do them climbing off the roofs and going all around and everything like that.

AK: That's cool.

TB: And then going through all the tunnels and everything. And so, yeah, we did all the basic training that you could think of. And like I say, each day that the alarms go off, you never know what you're going to be up against. And a lot of buildings burned. We were involved and pulled out a body one day, which I didn't want to do, but yeah.

AK: Did they ever give you any resilience training or any kind of training to help cope with the trauma?

TB: Yeah, we'd get together and talk about it after and what was going on and if we needed anything. We were well taken care of that way. But yeah, it's just that kind of things, you know, after you remember all this, just bring it back. There were a lot of things that I seen while I was in Vietnam, seen a lot of different things happen, too. It kind of surprised me.

AK: Yeah. I can imagine.

TB: But, that's life.

AK: You mentioned a new fire station was built. Do you remember about what year that was?

TB: Oh, I wish I knew that. I don't.

AK: That's OK. Do you remember how long it was after you joined? Because you started out at the old fire station, so do you remember how many years until the new fire station was built?

TB: I'm guessing about five or six years.

AK: OK.

TB: You know, like I said, I was one of the first ones to stay at the old fire station. There was two of us there, and that way we'd be ready to go when the alarm went off. And then after that, we could put four people in the box right next to each other and be ready to go. But when the new fire station come in it completely changed everything, and [inaudible].

AK: And you said there were six rooms in the new fire station?

TB: Yeah, I think there was six bedrooms.

AK: OK. And then you said you started training as a medic. Tell me about kind of what that looked like. What were some of the trainings they had you do for that?

TB: Oh boy. That went into a lot of studying and different things, learning about what to do, when to do it and going through all the book studies and stuff what we did. And we'd have classroom study, and then we'd have to go up to the hospitals and stuff like that, and get training there. We got to meet with all the doctors we were working under. We always are trained under a doctor and they're working under their basic, I guess you could say, their license. Don't quote me on that, but I'm pretty sure that's how it goes. And then we'd get together and we'd practice all this, and that was always interesting [laughs].

AK: How so?

TB: Just with some of the things you had to do and how to do it. But like a broken leg or something and you'd go in and [inaudible]. We had some stuff to help put it all back together and stuff like that. Or we had somebody that went down and had a heart attack, and what to do there. Like I say, we had a lot of different trainings, and as you went up in the status, I was intermediate, and most firemen over

there now are intermediate firefighter or medics besides, so they can go on the fire engine or they can be on an ambulance, and so they're trained that way.

Almost all fire stations now are pretty much that way. But there's a lot of training involved and traveling around to different fire stations when they're doing some training, and you go and train with them, do what had to be done and as far as being a medic, even.

AK: Did you graduate from your training as an intermediate or did you have to work your way up to that after graduation?

TB: Oh no, you work your way up.

AK: OK. What did that consist of? More trainings or more experience?

TB: More training, especially when we got with the ambulance and running the ambulance and that. You had to know what you saw in there. You had to know the equipment that you were working with. You had to be able to say, "Ah, OK, this is what this guy needs," reference a heart attack or whatever. Had to set it all up, get everything ready to go. And with the intermediate, you progressed up in your training. We were able to carry certain drugs that needed to be carried in case there was something drastic had to be right then and we couldn't wait for somebody. And we always had a driver and it was always somebody in the back. And sometimes there might be two guys in the back, or women in the back here. It went on for a long time [laughs]. There was always something new coming up.

AK: So you obviously learned how to administer drugs, but did you also learn how to do IVs and stuff?

TB: Yeah.

AK: And you said that there were women who sometimes were firefighters too?

TB: Yeah,

AK: That's cool. How common was it to have women as firefighters at that time?

TB: Well, when we got the new station, that's when most women started coming. We did have a few at the old station for just a short period, and then they went over to the new station. That's why all the separate rooms and everything.

AK: Yeah, that's really cool.

TB: It was really cool. It was. It was exciting.

AK: OK, this is a really random question, but what is a grass truck? You mentioned you had grass trucks.

TB: When you see the field fires out here, we'd take the grass trucks out any time we had a grass fire burning alongside the road or we'd go up in the fields. And we had some big fires. In fact, I was on the grass truck one time, there was three of us, and we got up on the hill behind Pleasant View, and the fire went way over the top of the gas truck, and jumped the road - there was a little path that we were on - and come right up over the top of us. The wind was picking up and come right over the top of us. So yeah. But they'd have about three or four hundred gallons of water on board, depending on the size of the truck. Or we could go out and put the fire down

AK: Wow. Did you just use water or were there like some chemicals that you would put on the fire as well?

TB: Most of it was water. We do have firefighting equipment that does have the chemical in it. And it puts out a lot of foam.

AK: Was that similar to what you used to fight that massive fire in North Ogden Mountains?

TB: That was mainly water. I don't think there was any chemical. The massive fire up there was something else when it was going. All we were doing was basically trying to protect the homes, because it went all the way across the backside. It started up the hill, going up to the Divide.

AK: Why just use water? Why not chemicals?

TB: Well, what we're fighting is a grass fire.

AK: OK. Do the chemicals smother the fire any faster than water?

TB: No. Water's the best thing to put down. Chemicals is when you're dealing with propellants and gas and stuff like that, and that's a better way to do that.

AK: That makes sense. OK. So for that fire in North Ogden, did you also have the airplanes come in and drop water and whatnot on it?

TB: They did on the second fire that was up in Ogden area. Well, it was more towards Ogden. And we had, I don't remember, we might have had a helicopter. There might have been a helicopter up there, but I don't remember.

AK: Yeah, I'm just intrigued.

TB: That big fire was kind of crazy.

AK: Yeah. How long did that last, just out of curiosity?

TB: Oh, geez. It went on from morning to night.

AK: OK.

TB: And with the wind picking it up and moving it all around, it went pretty, pretty fast.

AK: That's crazy. I'm just intrigued because I live out in that area and so I just can't imagine such a massive space, so. Wow, that's pretty cool. When you were on big wildfires like that, did you ever have to sleep out in that area? Or did you come home occasionally to sleep and then go back out and keep fighting the fire? How did that work?

TB: Hmm. No, I don't never remember having to. We were never out far enough away from our home station

AK: Ok. Was it ever long enough for you to have to rotate out? Or were they short-lived enough that you were able to just fight the fire and then it was over, if that makes sense?

TB: We've had extra people come in and take it so we can take a break and get away. Yeah, that's pretty common.

AK: OK, that's crazy.

TB: Because you could burn yourself out in a heartbeat.

AK: I can imagine. How long were you with the fire department then?

TB: Well, I'm throwing a guess, it was between 16 and 18 years. I don't remember when I actually left. I'm sorry. I wish I could, but I don't.

AK: No, that's OK. It's good to know a ballpark at least. That's a long time. That's pretty cool.

TB: As you get older, you know, you start running down. [laughs]

AK: I totally understand. You're just fine. Did any of the training that you received at Thiokol help prepare you for any of the stuff you did as a firefighter? Because I

remember thinking you said something about how you used some of the training you received at Thiokol when you were with the fire department.

TB: Oh I did a fire training class out at Thiokol.

AK: That's right, because you would have been working with a lot of electricity, shooting the lightning bolts into your engine or whatever there. So did you use any of your engineering skills while you were in the fire department at all? With fixing up the firefighting trucks or anything like that?

TB: Oh, when you get a fire truck, you take care of that truck. So you got to know the truck in which they're there and how it works and everything else. In fact, when my son died, my stepson, I went right to the fire station, talked to the fire chief, which I worked with my son for years, and I says, "Hey, I need a fire truck."

And he said, "What do you need it for?"

I says, "Well John died," my son. He was a fireman out here on base. And I says, "I need a fire truck to go down to the airport. They're bringing his ashes in on an aircraft, and I'd like to have him on the fire truck when we bring him back to Salt Lake. Got the fire truck and he had a driver and everything, and it was one that I used to drive, and my wife and his wife were onboard the fire truck with me. We had the fireman drive and there he was in uniform and the whole bit. Went down there, took a ride out to the airplane. They even escorted the airplane in with four big trucks with the lights and blinking, escorting the airplane in and parked it, and so, yeah, that was kind of cool. And so we got his ashes there [inaudible], and nobody could get out of the aircraft until that box was out. And

the pilot even come down on the ground and come out and we did that. And so that was quite a deal.

AK: That's amazing. What a fitting tribute. That's awesome.

TB: Yeah, it was definitely a tribute. And it was really cool. And we took him to where he was living, and then his wife took care of it there. But anyway, that was...

AK: That's beautiful.

TB: So everything worked out good. I can still go to the fire station any time I want and sit down and talk with the guys and stuff like that. But, they're all new now. Most of them

AK: Do you still know them all?

TB: I know some of them. Oh yeah. The fire chief and Dave Wade, like I say, he's still there. And he was one of the first guys I was with and he's the fire chief now.

AK: And that's really cool. That's got to be fun to still be in touch with them. So.

TB: So yeah.

AK: So tell me, when did you start volunteering with the museum? Was it in the middle of all of this?

TB: Oh geez. I asked the other day, last week, when you're here to find my records. I couldn't find the exact date but I've been here probably about fourteen years, fifteen years.

AK: OK, that's right, I remember us talking about that last time I was here.

TB: It's in that time range. I don't know exactly. I'd have to look it up myself.

AK: So like 2008? Is that 14 years ago?

TB: Something like that.

AK: I'm not good at math [laughs]

TB: It's in that time frame. Again, I'm not sure exactly.

AK: That's OK. Around 2008. OK.

TB: Yeah. That's when I was volunteering and putting the aircraft together and everything else. And then General Reynolds asked me to be on the board of directors with him.

AK: Oh, that's cool.

TB: And so I still work out here any time. And then if they're moving aircraft and they need help, I'm going to be out here just to volunteer. And that used to be where I could do everything with the people and stuff like that. But now they're more rigid and instructed than we used to be. But it's always been a great group and there's a lot of old guys here. And I'm not getting any younger, so [laughs].

AK: So why did you decide to start volunteering with Hill Aerospace Museum?

TB: It just felt good. I'm one of these guys that - and there's a lot of us - that like to stay active. I have to be doing something. I can't sit down too long. This chair is getting too soft. [both laugh] But Yeah. So that's why - one of the reasons.

AK: So when you first got involved, you were a volunteer, and the other volunteers I've spoken to often had specific jobs that were assigned to them. Did you have a specific thing that you were helping with or in charge of?

TB: Um, not so much that time. My specific actually came when I came on the board of directors here.

AK: OK.

TB: And that's when I got assigned to get guest speakers in. Every Saturday we'd have a new guest speaker, and I got to be involved with that. It was probably 100 or more. And that was always exciting. And then we'd have them talk and we'd make a DVD for them and the whole bit. So they had a copy of it, then we can copy and file.

AK: That's cool.

TB: And that was always fun to be involved with that. And then any time we have anything special, we're involved with that.

AK: So how did Plane Talk get started?

TB: So that started actually by General Reynolds. He started it before I even got here and they started Plane Talk, but it really started growing after, well, I'm not saying because of me or anybody else, but after we had more people coming in and more people wanting to talk. I get calls at least once a week, somebody, "When are we gonna do Plane Talk again? I'd like to come and talk."

AK: That's cool.

TB: So, but if we ever get started, that's, [laugh] get it back up going again.

AK: You've got a list of people who want to come?

TB: Oh yeah [inaudible] I got a whole folder right here [laughs].

AK: That's awesome. OK, that goes along with the other question I had, which was, how do you get names of people to come and talk. But it sounds like by the time you started being in charge of it, people were calling to volunteer.

TB: Once we got more in the public where people knew what was going on, everybody wanted to tell their story. What they did in the military, and that. I've

had ladies come in and speak that actually flew the aircraft, or I had a lady that I went to church with and she was a flight engineer on the C-130s out here and she told her story. And everybody has a story to tell, it's just getting them to. And I don't talk that good, so. [laughs] But I can get people to talk [laughs].

AK: You do a good job. But I understand. I feel the same way [laughs]. That's really cool, though.

TB: So that's how that's going. And I hope they keep me around for a while.

AK: Yeah, I bet they will.

TB: We've got a lot of guys that've been on the board long before I ever started.

AK: How many people are on the board right now?

TB: Oh just a casual guess here...I would imagine at least 15, 16, maybe. But we've got some key people on the board, a couple of generals and like that.

AK: Oh, OK. So generals that are still serving in the military?

TB: No. They're retired. And lots of colonels. And a sergeant [laughs and points to self]

AK: [laughs] Nothing wrong with sergeants. How often do you have board meetings?

TB: Once a month. Right now, it's virtual. There's three or four of us that still come here when we have the board meeting. And this room is the board office, basically. So when they're going to have the meetings and that, everybody sits around, and we've got people from up on base that have been involved for a number of years. It's really cool what goes on. A lot of it has to do with the raising of the money because that's what keeps this place open. That's what brought this all together. The base didn't, but the foundation did.

AK: And General Reynolds was the one who started the foundation, right? He and his wife, Ellie?

TB: He was one of the key factors in the foundation. There was other people before him, too, but I'm not sure of how many. But, you know, he was a key factor. And if that wasn't the nicest guy in the world. Yeah, everybody just thought, "Oh boy, three-star general," and he was just as easygoing as can be. So, yeah, but that's what's keeping this place going, and that's basically what's building the new hangar.

AK: OK, before we get too far into the new hangar and everything - which I do want to know about - I wanted to first ask a little more about the guest speakers. Were there any guest speakers that came in that you really connected with or that you really enjoyed visiting with? Any that had an impact on you?

TB: Oh yeah. Just like Gail Halverson, the Candy Bomber, and like those guys. And meeting our astronauts and everything. I had Charles Precourt, the astronaut, come in. Four times in space and he just retired from Thiokol. And I've known him a long time and got to meet with him. And see, we deal with the space, too, with the rockets and everything else. We're actually involved with a lot of that stuff. We get a lot of items from Thiokol. They've sent motors and stuff like that out. So it's pretty cool.

AK: That is really cool. I wanted to ask you a little more about Gail Halverson. Just for the recording, I wanted to hear a little bit more about what you were telling me earlier. You said that you got to spend the day with him. Is that correct?

TB: We got to spend the day with him and we took him out to brunch. And what was really exciting about that is while we were at brunch, there was probably at least eight of us there, and we were sitting there and eating and pretty soon everybody around us was listening to what was going on. And we were talking back and forth and who he was and all that kind of stuff. And the young lady who was serving us, her mother was one of the girls over there that was getting the candy. And boy, she just went nuts. She just got so excited and said, "Oh mom would love to hear this." She was just going on and on and on. And that just made the whole day out there. It was really cool to do. And we just had a meeting here this last week, and right after the meeting, we got to talking about Halverson and I says, "Rob, do you remember when we had that brunch and everything?" And we started again talking, and then the next thing you know, he passed away. Today's his funeral, actually.

But yeah, there was a lot of key people we got to meet. The engineer from Thiokol, I had him as a guest speaker and he was the one that told them, "We should have never launched the Challenger." He knew it would fly to pieces because we've never tested it in the cold. And that day it was 40 degrees or actually less in Florida when they launched. He said, "That's got to be the cause." And yeah, people like that that you get to meet and be involved with. And I've known him for a number of years, too. He passed away just recently here.

AK: And you mentioned there was a gentleman who was a P.O.W. in Vietnam.

TB: Mm hm

AK: Remind me what his name was again.

TB: Oh, uh, Jess.

AK: I know we just looked at his plaque, but I'm struggling to remember. Was Jess his last name?

TB: Oh, I'm trying to remember. I'm sorry.

AK: No, you're OK.

TB: J. Hess

AK: J. Hess. OK. And then also the one who broke the record. Do you remember what his name was as well?

TB: Oh, I don't have that one with me right now. I can't think of that one. He set the world record from New York to England.

AK: Was it in that one stealth plane that you were showing me?

TB: No, it was one just like it.

AK: What kind of airplane was that again? Do you remember?

TB: SR-71

AK: Ok. And was it pretty standard to take your speakers out to a brunch and everything and kind of spend the day with them?

TB: Um, depending on the speaker, yeah, you get to know them. Not so much the pilots from out at the base and stuff like that. Just the key names, you know.

AK: OK. Yeah. And especially, I would assume, if they fly in from somewhere to speak.

TB: Oh Yeah

AK: OK

TB: Well, we've got the Thunderbirds coming here. They'll be here on a Saturday in June, the 26th or 24th, whatever the date is. But anyway, they're coming in and the foundation throws a big dinner for them.

AK: That's cool.

TB: And we'll have a big dinner party in the back here and everything. It's quite a deal when they all come in, and we'll have the whole crew and everybody. It's pretty fun.

AK: They're going to perform out here as well?

TB: Oh, they'll be out here at the base. Yeah.

AK: That's so cool.

TB: I didn't think they were going to do it because we didn't get them last year - we were supposed to have them - because of what was going on. I don't know how they're going to open the base up again but it's a go. So.

AK: Did they ever try to do any kind of virtual Plane Talk during COVID? Or was it completely just shut down?

TB: We didn't have any virtual, no. Like I say, we do have records of everybody [inaudible] as far as I've been here and that, and we have the DVDs on them. But you can go online and pull up the museum and see a lot of different things. So yeah, there's various ways you can do that. And once we get started back up, that'll go out that same way too.

AK: Oh so the interviews are online?

TB: Well, that might happen. That's up to Aaron and Rob and everything, but that might happen eventually.

AK: That would be awesome. That would be so cool to see that.

TB: But yeah, that might be possible.

AK: OK, so it's in the works.

TB: It might be in the works. There's a lot of things going out of here that's in the works [laughs].

AK: Well, speaking of which, let's talk a little bit about that. So I know you have got a new hangar that you're trying to get built out here, and it sounds like you got the funding and everything. Is that correct?

TB: Mm hm. I'll tell you what, let's pause this and you can ask some of the questions to Rob.

AK: Oh I'll just make a note and ask him later if that's OK. Just because that way I can get your input and your perspective on things. And then, yeah, I'll just ask Rob later.

TB: We'll stop by there and you can ask him those kinds of questions so you know what's going on.

AK: Yeah. That's no problem. I can always ask him later. I just like to hear what you've been involved with, you know, and kind of what you're seeing going on, so. Tell me a little bit about some of the other new things that are coming that you've kind of had a hand in.

TB: Well, once we get the hangar going, there's going to be new aircraft coming in. And so that's going to make a big change. All aircraft outside other than three of them will be in the hangar.

AK: Oh, wow.

TB: So that's going to be a change. This whole area is going to change.

AK: That's crazy.

TB: And then the gate down here, even, will probably change. This whole area is going to change, so. Like I say, Rob could give you more information on that, because he's right there, one of those guys that's saying, "This is what we need." So, that's part of what we've been discussing. So that's going to be really cool. And um, let's see, with the new aircraft. Like I told you earlier, we've got the Army that's given us two drones. I don't know if they've showed up yet or not, but they're supposed to be coming, so that'll be cool [laughs]

AK: That is really cool.

TB: And this is one of the top museums in the country now.

AK: Really? Oh, that's awesome.

TB: Yeah.

AK: Well, you guys have worked hard enough that that's great, that you've achieved that now.

TB: There's so much going on around us and everything. So that's why everybody kind of pressure and all these changes, even so.

AK: Yeah. Were you involved with the new exhibit you were showing me earlier of the Cold War, with the silo and everything? Do you help out with planning any of that at all?

TB: Not really.

AK: OK. That's mainly the museum staff versus the board of directors?

TB: Mm-hm.

AK: OK, that makes sense. And you also mentioned that you had helped put some of the aircraft together. Was that while you were volunteer? Or as a board member?

TB: Well I'm a volunteer here. But yeah, That had a lot to do with it, and get to work on the aircraft and help out. Or when they were moving an aircraft I would be an extra person that needs to be here. Like I say, when you get my age or anybody's age, you got to go along with the flow, and you've got to stay busy. You don't stay busy, it's all downhill from there [laughs].

AK: So I'm curious, during your career, before you got here, you did a lot of engineering things. So did they ask you for help with putting some of that aircraft together since you had a little bit of the expertise? I mean, I know you didn't build airplanes when you were in the military, but you at least kind of knew how they worked and everything.

TB: Oh yeah. Basically, my job was just to help.

AK: OK.

TB: Yeah, usually any time they got an aircraft in here or something like that, it's designed and it's right by the book, basically. So like the F-22, when it comes in or 117 that we got out there, that's black all the way at the other end. It's all stripped basically because it's all still secret. So we have to rebuild the aircraft, basically, is what they do here.

AK: Oh, interesting, OK.

TB: They're putting it back together, making it look as original as they can.

AK: Oh, that's crazy. And they probably don't have the plans for that airplane either, because that's probably classified, too.

TB: They'll have drawings and stuff like that. And what it's going to look like.

AK: OK.

TB: Oh yeah, they'll have that, but they don't have anything that's real classified because my understanding of what's happened here is this belongs to the base because it's on base property from that. And don't quote me on this either, but what I understand, the base like pays the electric and stuff like that. It's all there. But the buildings and everything else are built by the foundation and then it's turned over to the base, just like everything that's in here is basically turned over to the base at that point. So that's how it works. Again, don't quote me on that.

AK: No, I think that's correct, because I feel like I heard that in other interviews, too. So I think that makes sense.

TB: Yeah.

AK: So those airplanes come in and they're kind of stripped and have to be rebuilt. Did you have any kind of a hand in that process of rebuilding?

TB: Some of the aircraft out here I have, but just a few. Like I said, the B-24 out here, I helped on that. Put everything together and put the wings on and stuff like that. I was involved with that. That was years ago. But we have other people here that's gone out and actually picked up the airplanes, brought them here and everything. And mud and everything else [laughs] from wherever they got them. Yeah, they were involved with that. And on the board here, we've got a bunch of guys that's been really involved with that.

AK: Do you put them together in same the hangars that have the displays? Or do you have a separate hangar that you use for putting new airplanes together?

TB: Most of it's done - what's been done here - inside the inside the hangar. They do have a big place out back. I don't know if you've ever been out there. It's a new building that was built by Northrop. They built it for us because they tore down our other building that had all the equipment in it. So they built a whole new, it's a big building back here and they have a little classroom for training people and stuff like that. It's really cool. Like I say, I can take you out and show you that if you wanted to see it. But it's really cool to see. And they built all of that, again, I'm not quite the right person to be asking these questions, because all of those will all be told better.

AK: No, that's OK. That's good to know. So you are more involved with the Plane Talk versus putting together the airplanes, for the most part?

TB: Most part. That and being involved in the museum here for a long time.

AK: Were there other ways that you were involved with the museum, then?

TB: Yeah just being out on the floor with people and stuff like that

AK: OK. Yeah, that's cool. One of the other people we interviewed talked about how people from so many different countries will come to the museum.

TB: Oh geez. The whole world comes here.

AK: Yeah. Which countries have you seen people come from?

TB: Which country do you want to know? [both laugh] Well, the Chinese, oh they would have busloads come here. And they'd be early in the morning before it was basically even open. They would show up and they'd be on tour. And what was funny about it was every one of them had a camera. You've probably heard this from somebody else, too. Everybody had a camera and they would take a

picture of every airplane. They didn't want to miss a thing [laughs]. And it was so fun. And then quick on the bus and then they'd be heading it down south, and they'd travel the country. Well, we haven't had them in a while with what's going on right now, so. It has been the last, what? Two and a half years now since they've been coming through.

AK: I'll bet, yeah.

TB: It was crazy to see. But yeah [laughs]. You name it. Germany, all around the world, they come here.

AK: Is there ever a language barrier when you give them tours or anything?

TB: Well, you noticed, on the outside of the door, there is some Chinese lettering and everything. So as you come in the door, I think it's still out there, there is a sign in Chinese and what's required.

AK: Oh, that's so smart. Is that new?

TB: That's been there for a number of years now.

AK: OK.

TB: But yeah, that's one of the only ones like that that I know of.

AK: The rest mostly speak English?

TB: Yeah most of them that come speak English. Or some.

AK: Did you personally conduct any tours with people from other countries? Or do they prefer to explore the museum on their own?

TB: Most of them will do their own thing. But sometimes we'll have some of the ladies come out of some classroom or something like and, like you saw with those kids today, they'll take them on the tour, let them walk around, and then they put them

in the class back here and teach them all these other different things that's going on around here. So, yeah, that's how that works.

AK: That's super fun. How did you see COVID 19 change the way that you guys operated the museum?

TB: Oh, basically it shut down for a while. And then the base finally authorized that the museum staff could come in, so there might be Aaron and a few people in here checking on everything. But again, those questions would be better off if you ask the museum staff.

AK: Did it affect anything that you on the board did with fundraising or anything like that?

TB: It slowed things down a little bit. The gift shop slowed down a whole bunch. But now you can go online and order stuff from here. But that, yeah, it made a big change there because that closed everything down for a period of time.

AK: Yeah, I'll bet. And I'm assuming you still had to continue with fundraising, even though the museum was mostly closed down, right? Because you still have people who are keeping an eye on things around here.

TB: Oh, yeah. Well, that would be Rob, mainly. And Rob is unbelievable because he knows everybody [laughs].

AK: Yeah, he really does. It's amazing.

TB: It's amazing because he does; he just knows everybody all around us. And when he wants something, we're going down to the Senate or wherever and he goes down there and tells them what he needs. And all of a sudden, it kind of shows up.

AK: Well he's such a friendly guy, it would be hard to say no to Rob [both laugh].

TB: So, yeah, so that's been cool. And we go down to the Capitol, too, when they have the meetings going on and we'll set up down below where they can come through and see all the different changes that's going on. They did it this year a little bit, but like we go down and set it up down there too. And I did that twice down at the Capitol.

AK: OK. And you're there to kind of help tell them about what you're doing?

TB: Tell all about what's happening.

AK: That's really cool. So tell me more about some of the new changes. You've mentioned a couple of them, but are there any others that you've been involved with telling the legislators about that we haven't covered yet?

TB: Basically, what's happening right now is getting the money. And I don't know if you know how much we got from the State, but we got a bunch of money from the State. And like I say, with Rob, he goes out and we're getting money from the different cities around us and everything to help build a new hangar and everything else. That's how that works. I wish I could explain more about that, but I don't think I can.

AK: No, that makes sense. Now that COVID is slowly, I mean, I feel like it's been going in waves, but I feel like things are slowly getting back to normal. How are you seeing that affect the museum, particularly from where you stand? Are you affected by that?

TB: Well, you notice when you come in here, you put a mask on?

AK: Yeah.

TB: See, before it was just completely shut down. Now it's opened. But even when you go on base you wear a mask the whole time you're on base. So that's, again, what I brought up before about having the airshow this year, we missed the first one, because that was, it had been two years ago. Having the airshow here, they're getting set up for the air show, so I don't know what they're going to do about masks or anything else. So that's kind of one of those "iffy" things. But they have big meetings up on base and everything else there to get that going.

AK: That's exciting. So are you part of the group that's in charge of bringing the airshow in, then?

TB: No. But one of our board members is. He's in charge of it, he puts air shows on all around the country. So, but yeah, he's in charge of that.

AK: And are they going to do a plane talk with them where they speak to the public at all? Or are they just performing?

TB: They'll do performing and stuff like that. That'll be it. The only time we'll have a public - When we have the big dinner for them and everything is completely different. It's just us.

AK: OK. Not for the public. It's just you guys?

TB: Yeah, it won't be open to the public that way.

AK: Yeah, that makes sense. That probably would be hard to coordinate a big dinner like that.

TB: Oh geez. And that's why I'm wondering about what's going to happen [laughing]. But yeah, it's really fun to be part of.

AK: I'll bet. Are there any other memories of the museum or projects that you were a part of that you'd like to share or record?

TB: Mainly one of the best parts is being with all these different people. Everybody has a story to tell. Everybody's been around the world basically, and the people you get to deal with, like all these friends out here, you get to know people in all different aspects. Some of them are pilots, some of them are ground people, some of them are, you know. It's always been exciting that way. We even let the Army in here, which you already add one of them [laughing].

AK: [laughing] Yeah, that's right.

TB: But yeah, we even let them in.

AK: And I think you had one Marine, right? Bob Weiss? Wasn't he a Marine?

TB: Right. There's been a bunch of them. So yeah, we let anybody in, basically.

AK: [laughing] I was going to say, I remember he was all honored that you let him in because he's like, "I think I'm the only Marine on the board." When I interviewed him.

TB: Oh yeah, but yeah, it's pretty cool [laughs]

AK: No that definitely is. How have you seen the museum change since you started?

TB: Well, I grew up around here when it was going on. So I've been out to the museum before, years ago, when they first started putting that all together and everything else, and so I got to see a lot of that and be involved in it. But yeah, it's completely different now. It's just amazing to see and the growth that's going on. And again, Aaron can tell you this about the ratings, we're rating one of the top nation-wide.

AK: That's great. Why do you think that is?

TB: Because of the people around that's doing it now. We've got good people here that push to make things happen. We've had, there's been a couple that's, nothing was really happening. I don't mention any names [laughs].

AK: No, I don't blame you.

TB: But yeah, and that's what's made the difference around here now.

AK: That's great. And all the new programs they're bringing in and education—

TB: Everything that's going on, and yeah, like I say, you can go online now to pull up anything you want and they'll tell the story. And they're doing right now, got a young lady in there who goes out to the aircraft and takes pictures all inside there. And all you got to do is push the button that tells the story about it.

AK: Oh wow!

TB: So yeah, that's happening right now. So, yeah, there's been some major changes going on.

AK: That's really cool. That's really cool. How much do you guys work with the museum staff? Because I know that you have more people in your museum staff than you did before, when this was all starting. So it sounds like it's a separate thing, like the board is in charge of fundraising, right? And the museum staff has like the curators and such. Do you guys interact quite a bit?

TB: Oh, geez. Again, you're talking to the wrong person on that. But yeah, it's just like this [Interlocks his fingers]. They work together continuously. Yeah, that's what keeps it going and makes everything change. And we've had great programs here, with Christmas time, Easter. [inaudible] Easter program that's going to

happen again this year. And we'd have thousands during the Easter program out front here, kids lined up by age groups to get out and grab candy. This year, it's going to be inside where they go around and have to pick out airplanes and then they get so many points and then they get a big gift at the end when they leave with a bunch of candy and stuff.

AK: Oh, that's clever.

TB: So yeah, that's been changed. We have, during Christmas time, we have it open and I've had Santa Claus here. I've got a friend that's Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus, and I've had them there. And we might be bringing that back again as soon as we get back out of these [points to his mask].

AK: That's so cool. I didn't know about your Christmas things.

TB: Oh yeah, that's a big to-do. And then come in and sit on Santa's lap, there'll be 2 or 300 kids come through.

AK: Oh my gosh. That is so cool. I remember I talked to, oh who was it? To Deloy...

TB: Spencer. He passed away.

AK: OK, that's right, I did hear that. It was a couple of years ago, but I think he said that he had been involved with filling the little eggs and then hiding them all around. And what a nightmare that was because there were so many.

TB: Yeah, see Deloy was there a long time before I ever showed up. So yeah, he'd been here a long time. He was a school teacher and everything else. But he's quite a character. I miss him because we used to sit next to each other in the meetings. But yeah [chuckles]

AK: Yeah, he was a good guy. It was fun to interview him.

TB: He lived out in my area, where I live.

AK: Oh, no kidding. That's cool. Were you ever a part of helping to fill the eggs, and putting them out and everything, too?

TB: Oh yeah. We'd sit in here on the table, and boxes of them! In fact, Rob could tell you we got, what'd they say? 10,000 empty ones sitting in there right now [laughs].

AK: That's so great. I think one time when I came for an interview, there were actually boxes of candy over on this side of the table and they were like, "Oh yeah, we're getting ready for Easter." So, that's fun. How do you feel that the Hill Aerospace Museum has made a difference in the community?

TB: Take a look at the number of people who come through. Yes, it's made a big difference. And like I said before, with all the people around the different areas around here, they all get tied to it. And boy, they're all involved in it. So yeah, it's getting bigger, it's getting better, and it's outstanding [laughs] through all the way. So it's fun to be part of it. I really enjoy that.

AK: Do you feel like it does help to kind of instill some more patriotic pride in the local community to be able to have this museum?

TB: Oh, yes, definitely. And it don't bother the people now when the airplanes fly over. Because they're noisier now [laughs] You know when they're flying. But yeah.

AK: That's an interesting point I hadn't thought of before: You've seen people a little more open to the noisy airplanes because they're able to come out and look at some of them?

TB: Well, yeah. But I mean, I think there is a base or something or an airport out here someplace.

AK: Yeah, yeah.

TB: Yeah, I say, "Geez! That's why I can't hear anymore." And there was a little truth in that, but never mind [laughs].

AK: I can imagine. What do you hope that the community takes away from their visit to the museum?

TB: One of the things would probably be understanding. I guess what you're looking at here - and this is my opinion - what you're looking at here is a lot of these are warplanes. You know what I'm saying? And so it's history all the way down the line. So it's more understanding and what went on years ago, and, well, it's still going on. We don't know what's going to happen right now.

AK: Yeah,

TB: But yeah, because, see, the Thirty-fourth Squadron is gone. They're in Germany.

AK: Because of the whole Ukraine issue?

TB: And they left here, what, last week? And so that idea, that's what I'm getting at. So yeah. And then see what's going on and what the base has been here, well, we put on a big program here, what? Last year, two years ago, for the 80th birthday of the base. And we've got pictures around here that show when it all got started and the whole bit, building the base out here and that. So, yeah, there's quite a history here. And then the other thing would be what's built here in this area. A lot of it has to do with aircraft, a lot of it has to do with missiles. A lot of it has to do with all types of that stuff. That's unbelievable in this area, that's why

this base is going so big now. That's why the whole base is changing because it's being upgraded continuously. And it's one of the top in the nation.

AK: I don't know if this is another one of those Rob questions, but where is the museum going from here? Are there any kind of big pushes that you've been told about or that you're a part of? I know for a long time it was trying to get funding for the hangar that is now being built out there.

TB: That is the big thing right now, that I know of. Yeah. That's the big thing that's happening right now. There's changes around this area, too, because like with hotels and everything going down the road here and the whole bit, everything is going to change. So this is going to be one of the key points people can come to and visit. Not so much getting on base, but to visit around what's going on. If you come out here for the drone air show and you can't get on base, you come here because this place usually gets packed. [laughs] But I'm usually up on base when the airshow's going on, so.

AK: So I'd have to come early. I would love to come to an air show. I haven't been to yet, so that's good to know.

TB: Oh you need to come. You don't want to miss one of the air shows. If it opens up, they open the base— because two years ago, what did they say, over 350,000 people? Coming in on base.

AK: Holy cow. That's amazing

TB: And during the air show, it's not just the Thunderbirds. There're all kinds of aircraft flying over and there's something going on every minute you're out there.

And then they have all the static airplanes parked all over the place where you can look inside the whole bit just like being here at the museum.

AK: That's so cool. Of all of the things that you've been involved in with the Aerospace Museum, what are some of the things that you're the most proud of? Like accomplishments that you've had or efforts that you've been a part of?

TB: One of them that I'm proud of is, like I say, with the Plane Talk. I'm glad to be part of that because it's just exciting to meet all these different people and be involved with them and be friends with them. That's the other thing that makes a big difference. So, yeah, that's one of the main things. But again, creating and being with the people that come in here, that's always fun. I'm always, like I told you before, I travel the world. I got to see both sides of the world, basically. Even had a chance to go to Russia but the Air Force wouldn't let me go [laughs]. But yeah, so. Yeah, that's one of the key things that I, being part of that and being able to hear other people's stories, like you. I don't write them down like you, my handwriting is not good anymore [laughs].

AK: Mine is not either [both laugh].

TB: But yeah, hearing their stories and getting along with a lot of different people. And then, like I say, the people that come in. Getting to meet with some of them and see where they're from. Ask questions.

AK: You know what, that makes me wonder, how do you feel like you've seen the Plane Talk affect the people who come and listen to it? Have you seen good things come from starting and continuing the Plane Talk at the museum?

TB: Uh, I'll tell you a story real quick. I think I told you about my uncle in the Korean war. He was a tank. And he would never tell these stories. And I talked to him into coming out here and doing it. He's still alive. I lost my aunt just recently here. But anyway, he came in and told his story. And one of his sons put it up on the screen. And he had pictures and put them up on the screen. But he would never tell these stories. I could never get the story out of him. What is he? He's got to be ninety-something, now. But yeah, things like that. That was one of the cool things, getting people to express themselves. And that's hard to do. I'm having a hard time. I'm going to be so confused with everything I'm doing. But I'm losing it a little bit, so, you know, just put up with me [both laugh].

AK: You're doing great.

TB: So yeah, that's one of the key things about that. But that's a good example because, boy, fighting him to do that. And we had a full house, listening to Uncle Harry's story. He was driving a tank over in Korea. Had pictures and the whole bit. But he opened up and finally started telling his story. So, it's just things like that that make you feel good.

AK: Definitely. Well, thank you so much!

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW AGREEMENT

This Interview Agreement is made and entered into this 10 day(s) of November, 2023 by and between the Hill Aerospace Museum, Weber State University, Stewart Library Oral History Program (WSUSLOHP) and Terry Bean, hereinafter called "Interviewee." Interviewee agrees to participate in a recorded interview, commencing on or about Feb. 4th 2022 ~~the~~ (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 Hill Aerospace Museum and WSUSLOHP all his or her copyright, title, and interest in and to the interview.
2. Hill Aerospace Museum and WSUSLOHP 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. Hill Aerospace Museum and WSUSLOHP 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

Terry P Bean
(Signature)

Alyssa Kammerman
(Signature)

Terry P Bean
(Printed Name)

Alyssa Kammerman
(Printed Name)

