

**Jan Klebukowski Jr.
Veteran**

**Mike Russert and Wayne Clarke
Interviewers**

**Interviewed on August 7, 2007
at Day's Inn
Hicksville, NY**

Q: Could you give me your full name, date of birth and place of birth please?

JK: My full name is Jan Klebukowski Jr., my date of birth is 3/17/1964, place of birth is Glen Cove, NY.

Q: What was your educational background prior to entering the service?

JK: High School diploma.

Q: When did you enter the service?

JK: March of '85.

Q: Why did you decide to go into the service?

JK: I wanted more opportunity for advancement. I felt the Air Force and the Air National Guard would give me all the training I need. Originally, I was working on a very unpleasant job, as far as the, it was a minimum wage job working at a pet store.

Q: Why did you decide to go the Air Force, you thought the Air Force would offer you more...

JK: More opportunity.

Q: ... More opportunities, okay, alright thank you. Where did you go for your basic training?

JK: Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

Q: How long was your basic training, and what was it like?

JK: Lackland, it was approximately six weeks, when I first went there it was, it was a little bit of a shock but, first week wasn't as tough as I thought it would be.

Q: Why was it a shock?

JK: It was just when the first, the day when the drill instructors came out they started yelling at everybody, that's kind of a shock.

Q: Was it your first time away from home?

JK: Yes, it was.

Q: Do you have any remembrances from your time in basic that stand out over others?

JK: Just the regimented lifestyle, it was a little bit tough for me to get used to, but as far as the memories, mainly they were all good.

Q: Did you get any specialized training after Lackland?

JK: Yes, I did. After I graduated Lackland, I went down to Lowry Air Force Base, for aircraft maintenance.

Q: What kind of aircraft did you train on?

JK: F-111's

Q: And specifically?

JK: Avionics, com-nav, just, you know, basic communications. I have the electronics background.

Q: How long was that school?

JK: It was about, 3 months.

Q: Where did you go from there?

JK: From there, I went to my first duty station in Mountain Home Air Force Base.

Q: Where's that?

JK: Idaho, that was my second transition because there was a field training detachment, where they offered the actual hands on training for the actual equipment.

Q: So, that's what you specialized with, the F-111, then. Did it have any special communication problems, or did you find it an easy craft to work on?

JK: It was an easier craft to work on, but, it was just that the fact that I had to work on my own, which I never did before. I had a little bit of a problem initially, getting used to working on my own. I didn't have a lot of self-confidence. But after a while I started working on my self-confidence, and I was able to work on my own.

Q: All the work you did on the aircraft, was everything done with a tech manual?

JK: Everything was done with a tech manual, everything was done step by step, and everything was outlined.

Q: How did you like being out in Idaho?

JK: Idaho, was again, coming from a big city like New York, was a bit of a shock. I didn't think it was that open, I mean it was enjoyable at first, but, it was, after three years of being there I didn't like it anymore because it was so open. But as far as making friends, I enjoyed the job itself, it was great.

Q: So, you were there for three years. Where did you go after that?

JK: I went to Air National Guard. What happened was, I was sitting in a break room one day, and I saw an advertisement for the Air National Guard. And, I remember, when I called, I called right from the break room, and I called the recruiters, because I wanted a change, and I wanted to see what it was like.

Q: But, to join the Air National Guard, you had to commit to a specific area and a specific type unit?

JK: Actually, I was doing a little research, and, I was looking to go back to New York. And, since I have a heavy electronics background in aircraft maintenance and everything, the one closest unit was Roslyn Air National Guard station, New York. And they had a ground radio, and I felt that was the best fit for me.

Q: How long were you there?

JK: Initially I joined the unit in 1988 and I didn't leave until they closed the base in July 2000. So, I would say 15 years, around there.

Q: After Roslyn was closed down, where did you go?

JK: Gabreski Air National Guard Base, West Hampton Beach, New York.

Q: Were you doing the same type of work there?

JK: No, actually before I was hired at Gabreski, I was doing training manager. I was full time at Roslyn, and then all I did was I transferred that job over to West Hampton.

Q: Were there any assignments that you had that were kind of interesting, while you were in the Air National Guard? Any kind of deployments, anything like that?

JK: Yeah, yes there were, there were a couple of them overseas that I liked. One of them was France, Greece. Each assignment was about two weeks. There was another one for a navy picket ship, it was called the U.S.S. Redstone. We had to wire up, I guess some, wires, breadboards, stuff like that, into the ship so that all the communication equipment could be put in there. There was another one, where we went to Fort Drum. I remember one very good memory, I had went for some computer training before that, we had went up to the Global Apache, Global Patriot exercises. And we were setting up a land server and administrator rights for all the combatants at the time. And I remember one time, I was out in a field and this four star general comes up to me and he says, because I was taking pictures, and he says you want to take a picture of one of the aircraft that was passing by, and he actually radioed the control tower to make them pass over me so I could take a good picture.

Q: Were you active during 9/11?

JK: Yes, I was.

Q: What were your duties?

JK: I actually wasn't at the ground zero site, but I was more like administrative supporting those who were actually at the site.

Q: Where were you assigned?

JK: At the base in Gabreski.

Q: Did you actually get to go down to ground zero at all?

JK: No.

Q: Several, well a number of years ago, there was that airliner that crashed. Were you involved, with the plane that went down, off the coast of Long Island?

JK: No, like I said, I was more of an admin support for the guys that were there. So I was never really activated for any, sort of, contingency, other than like I said 9/11 I just provided the support.

Q: Like you said there was a supervisor out in Mountain Home that you thought helped you a lot, gained your confidence?

JK: Yes, there was one supervisor that I became friends with. He noticed that I had a problem working on my own. And because I had a lot of lack of self-confidence, and he wanted me to build up that confidence, so I can work myself up to making my own team. So, over the next 6 or 7 months he worked with me, he worked one on one with me, to

help me overcome my fears of working on my own. Because as far as I thought at the time, I didn't want to make a mistake, and make their aircraft crash. When he came up to me he says just keep working at it, overcome your fears. And then by the time the three years were up, I had my own maintenance team.

Q: And one of the things that I know you did extra, that we have at our museum, was the history of the base at Roslyn, could you talk about that a little but?

JK: Yes, actually when I first started, I started in 1995. One of my friends at the Roslyn station, presented me, or gave me, a brochure that was very old and tattered. It only had one paragraph on Roslyn history, it was very vague and very short. So, after looking at it, I just started looking into the internet sites and various libraries and everything, trying to find out what this place was all about, because nobody knew. They knew it was a communications site, but they didn't know where it came from. So, after like a lot of research I went into the internet, and I managed to find one of the original members of the base, when it was an active duty base. Her name was Virginia Taylor, and she had her own little history on the base. She gave me her stuff, I started looking at it, and from there I did a lot of research off of that. And then I started putting all that stuff together.

Q: I know I saw it in her collection, so I am glad you did that. Okay, are there any other things you want to mention, that are part of...?

JK: Actually, I just want to let you know, some of the Roslyn history, is now officially included in several libraries and historical institutions. One of them is Hofstra University in Long Island studies institute, the other is the Library of Congress, I got a letter with that, and the other one is the New York City Public Library, I just got the letter this weekend.

Q: So, you provided them with copies of the history?

JK: Yes, and I am also, my own public library in Glen Cove took my history, and they gave me all these acknowledgement letters. I am also working with channel 21, public TV. Hopefully it'll be put on the public TV station. I met with Mrs. Stats, who is the producer of channel 21, and we met one day and I showed her my work, I showed her all the research I did, and she is hopeful going to put it on the vault TV presentation on World War II.

Q: Could you hold this up? I know you sent this to us. Tell us where and what that was taken.

JK: This was taken, actually when I got the Outstanding NCOB quarter award. I guess because, at Gabreski Air National Guard Base I work a lot of overtime hours, to try to get things done, and try to get the school allocations done on time and stuff.

Q: So, you are presently an E-7 or and E-8?

JK: E-7.

Q: So, about what year was this [referring to the picture]?

JK: That was actually 2003.

Q: And how many years service do you have total right now?

JK: 22. And like I said, as far as the, I used to coordinate a lot of classes for Roslyn, like extra classes on top of what I was already doing. One of them was build a computer classroom from scratch. There was an old unused classroom, or room in our building

that was really worn and tattered. And what I did was one night I decided to stay late and I repainted the whole room, I fixed all the broken computing equipment. I wrote all my own lesson plans for the computer stuff, and then I put it all together and they were using it for computer training. So, that's one of the things I did. And that was done in December 1992. There was a couple other ones I did from 1992 all the way until 1995, dealing with computers, computer training classes, fiber optic classes. I improved the computer training room that I built originally, stuff like that. And like I said I participated in Global Apache, Global Patriot, both exercises.

Q: What did those exercises do, what were they and what did they..?

JK: That was a deployable land, local area network. The Roslyn detachment command decided to send me to four [inaudible] before that, to prepare me for deployment. And what that was, we set up the local servers on a field, right in the middle of a field, and you use that to communicate with the soldiers who are out there. That was the first use of the land when I came up, that's when the four star general came up to me.

Q: Do you think there is anything else you want to add?

JK: Other than the Roslyn history that's about it. Like I said I have been to many great places, like I said Hawaii, Florida, Upstate New York, Shepard, Brandywine, Maryland, and Salt Lake City, Utah. Oh and I went to the Senior NCO Academy in Residence. That was a tough issue, because I needed to make the weight standards and everything, but after I was able to get my weight down to the appropriate levels and make all the requirements for the course. I was able to attend a course and I found it to be very, it best thing that happened.

Q: Where about was that?

JK: Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. And right now I am working on donating some of my Roslyn history with them too, so hopefully they'll take it. And like I said I went to Germany for two weeks, Korea, Hawaii, Canada, Greece, and that's about it really.

Q: I noticed you said you were proficient in Polish, were you ever able to use that while you were in the military?

JK: Yes, actually there was one time where, in Roslyn, one of the guys that came in, I guess was a contractor, was talking in Polish. And they came up to me and asked me to translate it for them.

Interviewers: Alright, well thank you very much for your interview.

JK: Okay, thank you.