

**Peter Hurd**  
**Veteran**

**Elizabeth Haley**  
**Hannah Wesler**  
**Joe Kardnone**  
**Interviewers**

**Interviewed on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2006**  
**Orchard Park High School**  
**Orchard Park, New York**

**Q:** Were you drafted or did you enlist?

**PH:** I enlisted.

**Q:** Do you recall your first days in service? Can you tell us about them?

**PH:** I was very proud and I think most people think [unclear, 1:04] when once you get to the boot camp and the first time you go on the parade field and they play the national anthem and they play 'Anchors Away' it makes the hair in the back of your neck stand up that your proud to be there and proud to be serving your country.

**Q:** Telling about your boot/training camp.

**PH:** I was outside Chicago, in Waukegan Illinois and I spent 6 weeks of boot camp there. Bootcamp is not as rigorous in the navy as it would be in the Marine core. You had to wash all your clothes by hand and learned how to take and fold them. And learned the language and the disciplined and the culture. That's primarily what boot camp is, is learning the culture that you have a deck you don't have a hallway you got things [unclear, 2:02]. And it's very disciplined and if you keep your nose clean and in a pretty good physical shape you get right through it. If you're not then you can have problem and be sent back to [unclear, 2:19] district.

**Q:** Where were you stationed?

**PH:** I was stationed when I got out of boot camp, I was stationed in [unclear, 2:29] school in Providence Island. And from Providence Island I went to the [unclear, 2:35]. Then I spent 4 years in [unclear, 2:41].

**Q:** What was your job assignment there?

**PH:** I was an obligation coordinate master. Do you know what an obligation coordinate master does? You're in charge of all where the ship is. All of the charts, you do all the plotting. You're in charge of [unclear, 3:02], you take all the

fixes so you know where you are. You take and shoot the stars or the sun so that the captain of the ship and the executer officer knows exactly where the ship is and all things. And you're also the alongside Helmsmen, where you get in a parallel situation either coming in to port or alongside for fueling and that you're [unclear, 3:26].

**Q:** Was there any casualties that you experienced or on your ship or anything?

**PH:** Yes. I have two arm forces expeditionary mode. I did not go, I was in prior till no starting up, we were in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Istanbul, Turkey. But we had one radium and it killed at sea. He did something and was electrocuted. And right after I was out of the service, my ship left for Vietnam and was hit. And ended up [unclear, 4:11].

**Q:** So, you never actually went to Vietnam?

**PH:** No, I never went to Vietnam. I went to Cuba, I was prior to [unclear, 4:19], when Kennedy was assassinated. Then we went down [unclear, 4:26] the blockades. Then we went to the Dominican Republic when there was a revolt there and we evacuated the American citizens and protected the US interest there. And then we were in Istanbul, Turkey when there was the uprising in Turkey.

**Q:** What was the food like while you were in the Navy?

**PH:** Table food was good food. I mean you know you had extended areas where you would see and you did get fresh milk [unclear, 5:00] But I will hold that the food was very good: good cook, fresh bread fresh food, it was good. We were fortunate, the army doesn't do that.

**Q:** How did you stay in touch with your family?

**PH:** The only way you could at the time was letters when you're at sea. So, you sent a letter and then they pick them up either mail one out picks one out through the carrier, they come over and pick up mail. And then the mail will go out to the carrier and the carrier would put it out [unclear, 5:32].

**Q:** What did you think of your officers and soldier, were they all very disciplined?

**PH:** Well, you know it's like any large organization, you have good and you have bad. Nobody is every going to tell you that everybody who was in the military was a great person they're not going to say they were bad people. The main thing is that everybody did their job. If your, when you go into combat everybody has to perform together and that's what happens.

**Q:** Do you recall a day when the war ended? Like what were you doing?

**PH:** I was out of the service when the Vietnam War ended, I was out. I was in Canada actually. I didn't go there for that service, I was on vacation.

**Q:** While on board the ship and stuff, did you like pull pranks on any of your fellow?

**PH:** Yah there was some pranks pulled but I'd rather not get into that.

**Q:** Was there anything that was like anything humorous or like an unusual event onboard the boat.

**PH:** I have to think about that [unclear, 6:49]. Well, the most humorous thing is what everybody thought was a joke is when were pulling in to Greece and we had a review by the king of Greece. And we had to take and stop in the middle of ocean, and saltwater all over the ship, pain the entire ship up all over again at sea to go buy a revealing stand, which two days later was all rust from the salt water. So that was kind of you know, different.

**Q:** Um, did you join a veteran's organization?

**PH:** Yes, I did.

**Q:** What career did you do after the war? Did you continue with something else?

**PH:** I was a first fulltime manager of the West Attica (?) Chamber of Commerce. After that I was a vice president of a printing business. And then I changed career and I was a president and founder of [unclear, 7:44] manufacturer in Buffalo. Which manufactures recycling equipment, I sold that company. And I'm the managing partner of a company [unclear, 7:53] international that is involved in recycling all over North America [unclear, 7:58] in recycle products and build equipment for them.

**Q:** How did your experiences in the service affect your lifestyle?

**PH:** I went in at 18 years old directly, I signed up my senior year of high school and went in the fall of the year I graduated. And uh it immensely, I grew up in the service and I was a little bit wild in high school. And uh it was a learned how to be a man and how to take care of yourself.

**Q:** Is there anything you'd like to add, about anything?

**PH:** Well If I was to tell you people, just don't believe everything you read and everything you hear on TV. Today the news media has gotten so saturated that the least little thing of what they view they tell you are not necessarily the views of the troop that are on the combat zone and the ones that are serving. They twist a lot of stuff. I know that I am the commander of the American allegiance post and we have a number of returning veterans and what they tell us is quite contradictory to what you see in the media. And their feelings about what's going on. And I know I'm also a member of the [unclear, 9:24]. One of the problems we have is that the veterans' organizations over the years because a lot of Vietnam Veterans did not join the allegiance and the FW that the membership of these organizations getting quite low. But we are very happy to see that the Iran Iraq vets that are coming in and the Afghanistan vets are joining and getting younger

people there. All of these organizations do one thing: they protect the veteran. Without them, politicians have the tendency to forget, without them we'd have no GI bill, we'd had no health care benefits and things in that nature: childcare [unclear, 10:09]. In the navy, today on an aircraft [unclear, 10:16] you'd never see home again for a year. So those family need support, and they need support then they get out. And that's what your American allegiance FW does, is it supports these people and their family. And that's very important in some [unclear, 10:33].

**Q:** Overall would you say it was a positive experience? Would you recommend it to student seniors graduating from high school?

**PH:** I think I would recommend it to the right personality. You know some people when they graduate from high school are ready to go to four years of college and go on a career. Other ones are not going to take full advantage of the college education, they're going there because mom and dad want them to go. I would take a two year/four year would be very appropriate. I think they would learn a lot, grow up a lot, and learn about themselves. That when they go back and go to college or go to work, they have a career path that's firmly established and their education is then put to work and they find it in the long run and they would make a lot more money.

**Q:** Thank you very much.

**PH:** You're welcome.