

**Christina Imhof
Veteran**

**Wayne Clarke
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Interviewer**

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Q: For the record please state your name, your date of birth and place of birth

CI: My name is Christina Imhof. I was born April 17, 1953 in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Q: Did you attend school in Colorado?

CI: No because I was an army brat. I did finish high school there but no further schooling all over.

Q: Was your father in the Army?

CI: Yes.

Q: What position was he in?

CI: Tank, mechanic and motor pool guy.

Q: What was his name?

CI: Jack Tinny.

Q: Is he still alive?

CI: No.

Q: What year did you graduate from high school?

CI: 1971.

Q: Did you go on to college after graduating from high school?

CI: No, I worked at for the army exchange service at Peterson Field in Colorado Springs. After several years of doing that I said "I got to do something" then I joined the army.

Q: Why did you join the Army? Was it because of your father?

CI: Not really, I wanted to join the air force. I wanted to become a MP. At the time they didn't have security police positions at the time. I was at a recruiting station that had marines and the navy, then the army came in and grabbed me right up and said, "we can make you an MP". I said "okay you got me"

Q: Where did you go for your basic training?

CI: Fort McClellan, when it was still the WAC

Q: Have you been there before?

CI: No not there, I went to Fort Gordon, Georgia for my MP training.

Q: What was your basic training like?

CI: Different. I trained with all women because that was the WAC post. A lot of the people that I went to AIT with trained with men and women. AIT training was difficult because I'm not very athletic and there was a lot of running and push-ups. But the schooling part was easy for me having been in the military all my life. I knew all the ranks and procedures pretty well, so that part wasn't hard.

Q: Now at that point when you went to AIT, have they gotten rid of the WAC branch?

CI: No not at that point.

Q: The basic training lasted for about eight weeks?

CI: I think so.

Q: Then you went on to MP training was that there also?

CI: No that was at Fort Gordon

Q: What was MP training like?

CI: That was even harder because then we started to train with the men, to me the marching and running was difficult. Running has always been difficult for me, but there it was even worse because of our powers that be in that unit. You know, the first sergeants and all of that, they were all airborne, they loved to run. I thought I was going to die

Q: How many women were in MP training?

CI: Boy., there was a whole group of us that filled up a Quonset that was away from the men and we had to march up to train with the men every morning. So, I would say there was probably about 40 of us.

Q: Did everyone make it through?

CI: No, quite few ended up being cooks.

Q: Was it woman or men?

CI: Both. I didn't graduate with the group because there was a group of us set aside and they then trained us to be MP security for missile sites. They pulled us out of training about two weeks before we graduated with the rest of the MPs and started us in the specialties.

Q: When you graduated you still received the MP MOS, was there an advantage to have that identifier? Do you think helped or hindered?

CI: Yes, because I had the identifier on the back of it saying that I could guard missiles. I think it was a help because then I could continue on in that field.

Q: You did mention that one unit there were using women for office work. Did that happen right away?

CI: No, the first unit I went to with that identifier on there, I got sent to right to North Dakota to a missile site that was brand new. I worked there for a little over a year guarding missiles.

Q: Any incidents at all during that time?

CI: Nope.

Q: What did your day consist of? What time did you start?

CI: We started probably at sevenish in the morning for formation with all our gear on then we were bussed out to the missile site, and that was for a 24-hour shift.

Q: You said for twenty-four hours, were you on for twenty four hours?

CI: Yes, at the missile site there were groups of about 6 of us that would go out, then we would take turns rotating. Checking the cameras and perimeter checks.

Q: So, you weren't up for twenty-four hours straight?

CI: Well sometimes we were, I mean it was up to us if we wanted to go to sleep or something we could. They had an area for us to sleep, they had a kitchen, and you know all the comforts of home underground.

Q: Did anything unusual happen during that time

CI: No

Q: Was is desolate?

CI: It was, during the day they were still putting the warheads in the missiles at that time. Martin Marietta is the company they did it. Then we would watch that everything was okay out there and really in northern North Dakota not much happened.

Q: Were you exposed to radiation at all?

CI: No- I mean they had all of the safety equipment if something did happen, you know walking through the showers and all that, we were all trained to do that, but nothing happened.

Q: At the end of that year where did you go?

CI: I got a swap with somebody, somebody that wanted to come to North Dakota that was from there and he was at Fort Carson my hometown in Colorado Springs. So, I took the swap. That's went I got into the secretarial pool.

Q: Now your parents were still in that area?

CI: Yes, my mother still lives there.

Q: Was your dad retried from the military at that point living in Fort Carson?

CI: Yes, they both lived in Colorado Springs-nearby.

Q: Do you want to tell us about what transpired there?

CI: Well, when I got there, they didn't have a job for us, but they did put us in an MP company.

Q: Now you say, "They did have a job for us,"- as far as the women went. Can you explain?

CI: Yes, as far as the women went. We would show up for formation in the morning and then we pretty much sat around all day waiting for a job to do and then we were eventually, I was eventually given a job as a secretary for some lieutenant at a destruction place where they would take papers and destroy them. I don't even remember all of what I had to do there. I know I had to type and oh it took me all day to type a letter, this was pre-computers so me typing on carbon paper.

Q: Did you have a clerk MOS?

CI: Oh no, I was an MP. I couldn't do that job.

Q: Did you consider going to the IG and file a complaint?

CI: No, I always just went home and complained to my parents that I had nothing to do because I mean I didn't have that secretarial job very long because I couldn't do it. I wasn't a filer. They did let me go when they destroyed materials because I was a MP, they needed that guard to do that, and so I would go and do that. As far a secretary work, they didn't keep me long because I wasn't good at it, my ratings were terrible. They sent me back to company and they really didn't have anything to do for me but they kind of told us to clean the barracks that the men used.

Q: You had to clean the men's barracks?

CI: We were told to. I did not do it. I refused I wasn't a maid. I really had to stand up for myself. I said I wasn't going to do it and I didn't do it.

Q: Now at this point what rank where you?

CI: at that time, I was an E3 and I wasn't going to do it. There was a group of us girls that sat on the steps every day and waited for things to do, and hung around the day room then we would get cut loose and I would go to my parent's house for lunch and hang there until noon formation. Then we when were cut loose and I would leave again. I only complained to them about it, the sergeants and the company commander all knew we didn't have anything to do. It wasn't a real issue because we weren't traffic cops and those were the only women on the road at that time.

Q: How long did this go on for?

CI: Several months.

Q: You mention that your parents were at a party. Can you explain?

CI: They went to some retirement function, there they met the battalion commander.

Q: Your battalion commander?

CI: My battalion commander. My mother said to him that they weren't utilizing me as they should, he didn't have any idea this was going on. My father was trying to shush

her, and she said no she had to talk about this. Only then then he find out they weren't using women on the road. Maybe he saw traffic girls out there and that was enough.

Q: Did you want to be out on the road?

CI: Yes, I was trained to do that.

Q: Now the ones that were out of the road, any idea why they didn't switch off with you guys?

CI: Because we weren't traffic. I was trained as security. You had to go to a different school then to do traffic, that's why we didn't do that.

Q: Do you want to tell us about what happened after her talk with the Colonel?

CI: Then we had our monthly battalion formation and boy that commander found me in that whole mess of people. As he came through and tried to talk to everyone, at least said hello and ask how they were doing, but he found me. I don't know if talked to everyone else then found me. He said he talked to my mother and you should've seen the look on my captain and the company commander faces. It was priceless. He said he heard that I wasn't being used in the position I wanted to be used in. Which was being on the road, or at least doing MP work, I told him that was true. He said he would see what he could do about it. Then I was made a liaison with the Colorado Springs Police Department.

Q: Do you want to tell us about that?

CI: I had a male partner. He and I worked downtown, they found us an office downtown at the Colorado Springs Police Department.

Q: Why was it necessary to have a liaison?

CI: Because there was so many in the military, that either had problems downtown or gotten into trouble downtown, that's why.

Q: Was it basically like bar fights?

CI: Yes, a lot of those, but what my partner and I would do was if military people were being ripped off, like by the community somehow by purchasing cars or equipment. We went in kind of posing as husband and wife, to see that if in fact certain businesses were cheating and ripping off the military personnel.

Q: Did you find many business' doing that?

CI: Yes, mainly car dealerships, used car dealerships.

Q: What where they doing?

CI: Trying to sell a clunker to anyone who would buy it. When you have an E3 that's needs a car that's what would happen.

Q: Did you enjoy doing that?

CI: Yes, I did.

Q: As a liaison?

CI: Yes, I did but when it got to be where it wasn't enough and I found out that the

commander I had then, the company commander that was more over the road at peace. I became friendly with him and asked if there was something on the post that we could do. They were developing at the time a behavioral services unit that would work closely with the house area with families and kids.

Q: What kind of problems did you encounter there?

CI: A lot of domestic. A lot of children problems

Q: Now were you armed?

CI: Yes.

Q: Did you have male partner?

CI: Yes, they always teamed us up with a male partner.

Q: Any incidents, anything major as far as disturbances?

CI: The domestic disturbances were always, always...

Q: Violent?

CI: Some of them, I would always tell my partner to take the guy and I'll take the women to separate them.

Q: How did that work out, were you able to calm things down or did the incidences result in arrests?

CI: some of them did, but a lot of the time when we go there the husband would be already be gone and then somebody would have to go hunt him down. Then you would have to get the statement from the women. It was pretty crazy sometimes, some of houses (quarters) were disgusting, absolutely filthy. The kids were not being taken care of, so that just progressed into a whole new field of welfare for the children.

Q: Did you find that job satisfying?

CI: Yes, I like that. That kept me busy, that I enjoyed.

Q: How long did you do that for?

CI: Until I got out so that was probably a year and half to two years.

Q: When were you discharged?

CI: 1977, I think in June

Q: At that point have you considered making the military a career at all?

CI: I had considered it and when I went to talk to them about reenlisting, they said "we will make you an E5" but with all the trouble I had to get to that point. It's still a very male dominated world then and I just really didn't want to deal with it anymore. I wanted to get out and go to college

Q: Where you still a WAC at that point?

CI: Yes, I was. There was still a women's army core still there. We had a special patch that we wore, a women's army core patch. I wish I could find it. I will find it. I know I have one.

Q: Now being discharged where did you go at this point? Did you stay in Colorado Springs?

CI: No, I moved to Erie, Pennsylvania for a while because I had a friend there and I worked there for a while. Then eventually about year later I moved back to Colorado, but I moved to Denver.

Q: Did you attend college at some point?

CI: I did, I went to a community college and I was taking sign language which was not VA approved at the time. That's the real reason I joined the army was so that I could go to college, but those courses were not VA approved so I ended up having to pay for those anyway.

Q: While you were going to community college did you work at all or was that a full-time endeavor?

CI: I went full time. Then I had gotten married in-between and had a baby while I was going to college.

Q: Did you receive an associates-degree?

CI: Nope, I didn't finish because my husband at the time moved to Alaska. I was a semester shy of graduating, but we moved to Alaska.

Q: What did he do? Was he in the military?

CI: He was an MP to that's all

Q: You went to Alaska. Did you further your education at all?

CI: No, I started working and I went right back to work with the army and air force exchange service at Elmendorf air force base and Fort Richardson which are right next to each other, and I ended up doing that for seven years.

Q: Did your husband retire from the military?

CI: No, he got out and worked for a helicopter company up there (Alaska) then we divorced in the meantime. While I was working at Fort Richardson that's where security job came in handy, my security identifier got me a job as store security at the army and air force exchange service. I did that for seven years.

Q: Did you have problems on base with thefts?

CI: Oh, employee theft and shoplifting sure.

Q: On the military base?

CI: Unbelievable, unbelievable, yeah very big, and I actually met my husband, my current husband, because I was about to arrest the store manager at Fort Richardson for stealing. But since she was a civilian and lived off post, I had to go see him at the JAG office to find out the legality of getting her. We eventually did bust her, my husband and I eventually of course got married.

Q: Now was your husband an officer?

CI: Yes, he was a lawyer.

Q: How did you end up in Cambridge?

CI: Well he's from Greenwich so we came back to the area and I liked it. We lived in Alaska then we moved to Germany.

Q: Where about in Germany?

CI: Darmstadt, which is south of Frankfurt and that's where we had our daughter. Then we moved to Turkey.

Q: With the military?

CI: Yes, he worked for a general there for NATO and I loved it there. Turkey was a fantastic assignment, then we just moved back here. I'm glad I like this area.

Q: Did you join any Veterans organizations at all?

CI: I belong to the American legion and I joined the DAV a little while back.

Q: Did you have any injury(s)?

CI: Yes, when I was in North Dakota I broke my back.

Q: You did?

CI: Yes.

Q: How did that happen?

CI: Well we had a lot of downtime there because we would work our twenty-four shifts then we would have like three days off. With that downtime we would be at the gym a lot. There was a sergeant that was a tai-kwon-do instructor. He was teaching me tai-kwon-do, and I fell, and I missed the mat. I hit the floor and broke some bones in my back.

Q: Have you had any problems with that currently?

CI: Yes, as I age it gets worse.

Q: Do you make use of the Veterans Hospital?

CI: I just went down there just recently, it's a very nice hospital. I was down there maybe a month ago.

Q: Do you receive any sort of disability because of that?

CI: I do, I get a ten percent disability right now. I'm just going to see if that can be raised because I have an increasing problem.

Q: Did you stay in contact with anyone you were in service with?

CI: Well you know I was just talking to my daughter about that the other day, because she's in contact with so many of the people she went to basic and AIT with through Facebook and email. Unfortunately, we didn't have that back then. I did keep in contact with two of my patrol partners but have since lost contact with them. I'm trying through the computer to find them. Those are the two I really remember the most and had the

most contact with. I haven't had much luck. I'm not great with the computer but I'll work on it.

Q: How do you think your time in the service had changed or effected your life?

CI: Well I think being raised in the military and having a military father gave us a lot of discipline my brothers and I. Being on time for everything and being organized. I already had that going in. But my time in the service, when I was in I those hard times with not being given the jobs that I wanted, but I think now looking back on it, I'm really grateful to have been in. It gives you a sense of pride.

Q: Of course you wouldn't have met your current husband either?

CI: Well I was out of the service by then, but I have always seemed to work for AFEES. I probably would have met him. But with that string of events, I don't know that I would've gone to Alaska had if I had not met my first husband in the military. Things happen for a reason, well with that chain of events of course.

Q: Is there anything else you you'd like to touch on? Maybe something we missed?

CI: I think it is a fantastic opportunity. When my daughter first told me she's going in the military, she's the last one ever "little miss princess" that I ever would thought would have gone into the military. She loves putting that uniform on as I did. She's learning so much, I think she's really going to go far with it. She's does here reserve duties now.

Q: What rank is your daughter?

CI: She's still an E3. She got out of high school a year and half ago. She's going to ACC right now. But when she finishes that she wants to go to a four year school that has ROTC, so she can become an officer. She's the one that's going to go far with this.

Q: Well I'm sure she will. (Interviewers comment)

CI: I really think it's an opportunity that more people should take advantage of. I really think so.

Q: Okay thank you for your Interview.

CI: You're more than welcome.