

NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU
Historical Services Branch

Interview NGB-14

INTERVIEW OF

SGT JOSEPH KING
HHC, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry

CONDUCTED BY

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National Guard Bureau

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Editorial clarifications indicated with brackets []

TAPE TRANSCRIPTION

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MAJ MELNYK: This is MAJ Les' Melnyk, Army National Guard Historian for the National Guard Bureau, and I talk talking to SGT Joseph E. King, of Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry.

We are speaking at the Regimental Armory at 68 Lexington Avenue, on the 17th of September, at 12:45 in the afternoon.

And, SGT King, if you would, state for the tape, so that people can hear it, your full name, your rank, your unit, and let's leave out the social security number, for Privacy Act reasons.

SGT KING: Okay. I'm SGT Joseph E. King, with Headquarters, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, Scout platoon.

MAJ MELNYK: So you're a scout team leader.

SGT KING: Right. Scout team leader.

MAJ MELNYK: Roger that. You have read the access agreement for oral history and you have signed it, and you indicated by your initials that you have no reservations about any of this material being used by

1 historians; is that correct?

2 **SGT KING:** Correct.

3 **MAJ MELNYK:** So let's begin at the beginning.

4 Where were you when you found out about the attack on
5 the World Trade Center? What was your initial reaction
6 and what did you do? Tell the story.

7 **SGT KING:** Well, I work four blocks away on
8 180 Maiden Lane. I work for a law firm. And I was on
9 my way into the building when -- between the first and
10 the second strike.

11 **MAJ MELNYK:** What do you do, by the way?

12 **SGT KING:** I supervise 12 people in a data
13 entry position.

14 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right.

15 **SGT KING:** Basically, they do asbestos
16 litigation and I handle all the paperwork and make sure
17 it's all on the computer.

18 And it just happened that I was on my way up
19 to work when the first plane hit. Everybody was saying
20 a plane struck the World Trade Center.

21 But I was late for work, and I assumed it was

1 just a Cessna or a small plane or whatever. I didn't
2 have time and I didn't know I'd have time in two hours
3 -- I didn't want to get in the way of the rescue
4 workers.

5 But I wasn't even halfway up the escalator
6 when they said a second plane had struck. Then I knew
7 that this wasn't happenstance.

8 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right.

9 **SGT KING:** So the first day this year that
10 I've brought -- I had a duffel bag with two uniforms
11 and a pair of boots. There was a new dry cleaners I
12 was going to try out.

13 So I had boots and uniform and, it turns out,
14 a dirty tee shirt, but it was a tee shirt that was in
15 one of the side compartments in my drill bag, the bag I
16 take to drill every -- you know, usually every month.

17 Normally, I don't have uniforms or boots on
18 me. So I -- my first thought was I don't have my hat.

19 I'm an NCO. I've got full BDUs, but not my hat.

20 I figured, well, I'm also a scout, I'm not a
21 cook or whatever. The scout motto is you got your

1 boots, you're going in.

2 So I was prepared. I ran to the tower.

3 **MAJ MELNYK:** Did you get changed first or did

4 --

5 **SGT KING:** Yeah, I did get changed. I asked
6 the security guard to borrow the bathroom, went there.

7 It was really hectic, people running everywhere. Just
8 an amazing hectic day.

9 I was really busy just helping people get away
10 from the building for a couple hours, til --

11 **MAJ MELNYK:** So people were already running in
12 the streets away from the towers as you ran towards
13 them.

14 **SGT KING:** Yeah. I'm new to New York. I just
15 moved here in November.

16 But I think they were running away because
17 this was a more successful attack, and a lot of New
18 Yorkers down here knew that the first one, they wanted
19 to use chemical or biological weapons.

20 So a lot of people were panicking, what's in
21 the smoke, what's in the smoke, you know, is it

1 dangerous, you know.

2 So they were going away. I don't know. I
3 didn't -- I mean, I worry about that, but my first
4 concern was get people out.

5 **MAJ MELNYK:** So on your own initiative, you
6 ran towards the towers and you said you started
7 directing people away.

8 **SGT KING:** Yeah. I started to -- I mean, it
9 was actually very amazing the amount of police that
10 showed up as quickly as they did and just getting them
11 away, getting them away, and we managed to do that.

12 And we really didn't climb up on the rubble or
13 whatever. They started pulling -- right away, a
14 lieutenant colonel or lieutenant commander from the
15 Navy started collecting all the Department of Defense
16 people.

17 We had everything. We had every branch of
18 service, including the Coast Guard, Reserve, active,
19 retired.

20 I mean, I can remember when we were put into
21 groups, so we could control each other, my group had a

1 Marine, an Army Guard, two 82nd Airborne soldiers on
2 leave, and one 82nd soldier that just got furloughed a
3 month ago.

4 **MAJ MELNYK:** You were the only one in uniform?

5 **SGT KING:** No. There were several uniforms,
6 three uniforms. I mean, I remember seeing guys in Air
7 Force uniforms and Navy uniforms, a lot of different
8 uniforms.

9 **MAJ MELNYK:** So this is down on the scene,
10 this lieutenant commander shows up and begins
11 organizing people. This is before the first tower
12 collapses.

13 **SGT KING:** The first tower collapsed at like -
14 - it took me a while to -- because I was helping the
15 guys get people out of (inaudible) out of the building.
16 And then I went --

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** In your building where you were.

18 **SGT KING:** Yeah. Right.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay.

20 **SGT KING:** Then I went and changed. So it
21 actually took me like half an hour. I'm guessing.

1 The day is really kind of foggy, because I was
2 so busy, and I really only slept an hour and a half
3 between when it started and 10:00 o'clock the next
4 night, Wednesday.

5 I didn't get to bed til -- it was probably
6 later than that. Actually, I slept on the park bench
7 for an hour and a half when we had some downtime on
8 Wednesday.

9 But other than that, I only had an hour and a
10 half and I had gone off the night before to Monday
11 Night Football. So I didn't get home til like one.

12 So I really only had like six hours sleep.
13 But, I mean, I do data entry and I can do that in my
14 sleep.

15 **MAJ MELNYK:** So you figured you didn't need
16 your sleep.

17 **SGT KING:** Right. I wasn't planning on doing
18 a marathon.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** As I recall, that Monday night
20 game was not worth staying up for if you were a Giants
21 fan, which most of the people in the city were.

1 **SGT KING:** Yeah. Well, I'm a Green Bay fan.
2 I don't know. Some of my fantasy players were doing
3 well and I needed the points to win the game. And I
4 won, by the way. That's important.

5 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay. Moving back to the World
6 Trade Center. You arrived on scene there, the towers
7 had collapsed.

8 **SGT KING:** Right. I didn't see Seven [World
9 Trade Center] -- I guess Seven collapsed later in the
10 day. I was on the other side, didn't really see. I
11 mean, we heard, it collapsed, it collapsed, again. I
12 didn't really see that.

13 I actually didn't even see -- you really
14 couldn't see the -- you know, you look at the tapes and
15 I didn't see tapes until Thursday, I think Friday even.
16 I didn't see any TV really until Friday.

17 It looks a lot clearer than it was on the
18 ground.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** Sure.

20 **SGT KING:** On the ground, it was midnight.

21 **MAJ MELNYK:** Once the first tower collapsed,

1 the visibility was reduced. What was visibility like?

2 **SGT KING:** It was so bad, I saw police
3 breaking in doors so they could drag people into
4 buildings.

5 **MAJ MELNYK:** And why was that?

6 **SGT KING:** Because it just was choking,
7 choking dust.

8 **MAJ MELNYK:** You couldn't breath.

9 **SGT KING:** Yeah.

10 **MAJ MELNYK:** How did you deal with that?

11 **SGT KING:** I just put my tee shirt over my
12 throat and I was hoarse for a while, but -- I mean,
13 that's -- the amazing thing that I will always remember
14 is the amount of water that arrives right away. I
15 don't know how Pepsi or Coca-Cola did it, but I saw
16 Coca-Cola trucks dropping -- I think they're Dasani,
17 the water.

18 **MAJ MELNYK:** Dasani, yeah.

19 **SGT KING:** Just crates, ten foot high, case
20 after case of water everywhere. I guess that was about
21 noon. That sort of -- I mean, it took them a while,

1 I'm sure, but this all seems to be both compressed and
2 let me think about it, you know.

3 Some of the things that I think didn't take
4 any time took three hours.

5 **MAJ MELNYK:** It's interesting. You're very
6 aware that you are not aware of time in its normal
7 sense because of the crisis and because of now your
8 lack of sleep.

9 **SGT KING:** And I lost my watch. I broke my
10 watch band. So I had no idea like what times were.
11 Somehow I broke my watch band. I don't remember how
12 that happened.

13 So I -- and I'm the type of person that checks
14 my watch every 15 minutes.

15 **MAJ MELNYK:** So you've been organized into
16 these ad hoc groups by this Naval officer.

17 **SGT KING:** Well, no. Actually, that came
18 later. You just had all the Defense Department people.
19 We had to go up to Pier 40, we were told.

20 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay.

21 **SGT KING:** Pier 40 was where they were

1 supposed to get together.

2 **MAJ MELNYK:** And Pier 40 is on the west -- on
3 the east side.

4 **SGT KING:** West side, I think it's this, I
5 think it's near Canal Street.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** Near Canal Street.

7 **SGT KING:** Across from Canal Street.

8 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay. So you hoofed it on foot
9 up to Pier 40 with the other DOD --

10 **SGT KING:** Yeah. That's when I had the six
11 guys there. We went up there and right away they asked
12 for guys that had rescue experience for going into
13 buildings. And I actually belonged to the Oklahoma
14 National Guard before I transferred here.

15 So we had a two day class on what it was like
16 to go into a building, what you should do, do's and
17 don'ts.

18 **MAJ MELNYK:** Was that because of Oklahoma
19 City?

20 **SGT KING:** Yeah, I think so.

21 **MAJ MELNYK:** Or was it just --

1 **SGT KING:** Just a historical class, because
2 the Oklahoma Guard was caught unprepared and they
3 didn't want to have that happen again.

4 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right.

5 **SGT KING:** I was in a combat engineering unit
6 there. So they just -- it was an interesting class.

7 **MAJ MELNYK:** So you had some minimal training
8 --

9 **SGT KING:** I don't know that I felt confident
10 enough to --

11 **MAJ MELNYK:** So you didn't volunteer for that.

12 **SGT KING:** Right. I was like sure, I'll go
13 forward. But I didn't think we were going to be
14 needed. I mean, there were literally thousands of
15 firemen and cops and I felt as much as I could have
16 helped, I thought those guys could help more.

17 I mean, a fireman is used to that stuff.

18 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right.

19 **SGT KING:** Not on the same scale, by any
20 means, but that's --

21 **MAJ MELNYK:** I don't know that anybody had

1 seen it on that scale.

2 **SGT KING:** But the smoke, they have the
3 respirators, the fire, they're just -- and they've got
4 command and control, and we didn't have any helmets.

5 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right.

6 **SGT KING:** We had to go and steal helmets from
7 (inaudible,) taking them off trucks.

8 **MAJ MELNYK:** What happened then? You went up
9 to Pier 40.

10 **SGT KING:** We went to Pier 40. I actually
11 caught a breather for about an hour. They took a
12 roster. I've got that roster, the initial one, of who
13 was there initially that we could count, conglomerate
14 together, all their units.

15 And Michael Bloomberg was in the primaries
16 here. I don't know if you follow city politics.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** As a Republican candidate for
18 mayor.

19 **SGT KING:** Right. His company, Bloomberg, has
20 the logistics center across from Pier 40. Well, at
21 4:00 o'clock, they had all this food. What it looked

1 like -- I mean, I've done a lot of stuff with political
2 parties for primaries, public (inaudible) for political
3 parties.

4 It looked like it was his campaign
5 headquarters, the catered food they already had for the
6 campaign.

7 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right.

8 **SGT KING:** For the campaign workers.

9 **MAJ MELNYK:** Because Tuesday was the primary.

10 **SGT KING:** Right.

11 **MAJ MELNYK:** Yeah. There was an election
12 held.

13 **SGT KING:** So we go in there and it's salmon
14 and shrimp and, I mean, just excellent food, and it was
15 actually a sign of things to come, because the food
16 here has been tremendous.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** So you were -- they opened up
18 their doors and invited in the people who were working
19 on --

20 **SGT KING:** Yeah. We had the whole center. We
21 had access to all the phones. We could make any kind

1 of long distance phone call we wanted to make, call
2 anywhere we wanted.

3 **MAJ MELNYK:** Did you try and make a call?

4 **SGT KING:** Sure. I called home. I called --

5 **MAJ MELNYK:** And you had success getting a
6 phone line out.

7 **SGT KING:** Yeah. Actually, we --

8 **MAJ MELNYK:** That was unusual, from what I
9 have heard during the day.

10 **SGT KING:** I don't know how. Yeah. We had no
11 problem. I mean, I called -- there was this other
12 Naval officer that was from Japan. There were a lot of
13 active duty people that were there, that just reported
14 in. Same thing. Just run at the sound of gunfire and
15 get it done.

16 And we're trying. We had access to the
17 internet, high speed internet, and trying to find a
18 phone number for Cabal Air Base. Now, we managed to
19 trace one. We went through -- I mean, I do internet
20 research. Part of my job is doing research.

21 I was able to track down his address by

1 finding the phone number to the headquarters in a Naval
2 depot outside of Seattle, because they deal with
3 Pacific fleets. So they knew a number to get in
4 contact with Japan, and from there, boom, boom, boom,
5 and we reported to him on site.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** So did you then go down with that
7 unit, that ad hoc unit?

8 **SGT KING:** Yeah. We went down and we assisted
9 the firemen as best we could.

10 **MAJ MELNYK:** How close were you then?

11 **SGT KING:** On site, right there. And then
12 they had some tactical officers, SWAT guys, and cops.
13 They asked for guys to go up and start climbing
14 buildings, go look for people, gawkers, because they
15 started abandoning, pushing people back.

16 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right.

17 **SGT KING:** So we had to go up a whole bunch of
18 flight of steps and start clearing buildings, room to
19 room. Whatever was -- and there was talk, you know,
20 look for secondaries, look for secondaries, look for --
21 pay attention.

1 Right away, security started getting really
2 tight. Like to get back in --

3 **MAJ MELNYK:** What do you mean by look for
4 secondaries?

5 **SGT KING:** Well, that's some of the stuff many
6 of the guys kept telling the cops, because there's
7 terrorists in Israel, if you read, what they do is
8 they'll plant one bomb.

9 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right.

10 **SGT KING:** And that might not be the big one
11 and they'll suck all the police in and then the second
12 one will go off.

13 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay. So you guys were searching
14 for bombs that might have been planted on site.

15 **SGT KING:** Well, not really. That's what we
16 were just telling people. But then we were going up
17 buildings.

18 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right.

19 **SGT KING:** Looking up buildings, you know,
20 going to roof tops. That's -- what was in the streets
21 and what was on the roof tops was some of the most

1 disgusting stuff I've ever seen in my life. Body parts
2 all over the place.

3 We found a woman in a chair. She was still in
4 her airplane seat, up on a roof, behind where the plane
5 hit. I seen that. The explosion just flipped her
6 back, one block back. So --

7 **MAJ MELNYK:** Pretty gruesome.

8 **SGT KING:** Yeah. I've never seen anything
9 like that.

10 **MAJ MELNYK:** So at what point did you get back
11 to Guard duty? At what point did you determine, hey,
12 you know, my Guard unit is probably on scene, or did
13 you...?

14 **SGT KING:** The organized us into search
15 parties, because they decided they would use us. Then
16 they decided that they weren't going to use us.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** Who is they?

18 **SGT KING:** The -- whoever.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** You just took your orders from --

20 **SGT KING:** We organized in Stuyvesant High
21 School. It's on Rector Street.

1 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right. On the west side.

2 **SGT KING:** Right. We organized there in the
3 auditorium and then we started practicing and started
4 getting in groups. That's when we were organizing the
5 groups.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** And you started practicing what?

7 **SGT KING:** Just going over, okay, what are the
8 procedures for going into a building, check yourself,
9 buddy teams, you know. Really basic stuff. But common
10 sense, that's -- tapering down our uniforms so that we
11 didn't snag anything, doing that sort of stuff.

12 That was probably like from 10:00 o'clock
13 until four in the morning.

14 Then we got word that any New York National
15 Guard personnel that were on site had to report to
16 their unit.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right.

18 **SGT KING:** Which we didn't do. We just -- I
19 put a call into this unit and said, you know, I'm down
20 here, sure you're going to be coming down here, if you
21 need me, I'll find you, it's not that big down here.

1 And that's eventually what happened. I slept
2 between 4:30 and six. I don't remember when I -- I
3 didn't have a watch, but I remember asking, it was like
4 -- I had been up for a little bit and it was like 6:15,
5 6:20.

6 I saw colonel [LTC Geoffrey] Slack the
7 battalion commander walk by. My commander, CPT Daniels
8 was behind him.

9 So I just tagged around. And that was the --
10 basically, what it was was the commander, of all the
11 company commanders, walking the perimeter, setting the
12 perimeter, and I got to walk and be a part of that.

13 **MAJ MELNYK:** So this is, roughly, seven in the
14 morning, Wednesday morning.

15 **SGT KING:** Right. And then did that and we
16 found -- we set -- went out to Battery Park and set up
17 where our TOC was going to be, just set the location,
18 didn't actually set the TOC up.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** TOC being tactical operations
20 center.

21 **SGT KING:** Correct.

1 **MAJ MELNYK:** Just so someone who is not in the
2 military listening to this tape will know the acronyms
3 that you use.

4 **SGT KING:** Okay.

5 **MAJ MELNYK:** All right.

6 **SGT KING:** And then we found a telephone and I
7 called the operator and tried to get both phones
8 functioning. I let her know (inaudible) receive phone
9 calls from there right away. But you couldn't receive,
10 you could only send.

11 So it was better than nothing. And then I
12 hooked up with my platoon, the scout platoon, and they
13 immediately sent us out and we patrolled -- well, we
14 walked the perimeter, just moving, it would be
15 immediate reaction force. So we walked the entire
16 perimeter, again, for where all the units were to be.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** So that you could familiarize
18 yourself with --

19 **SGT KING:** So that we knew where everything
20 was, roughly. If we had to get somewhere fast, we
21 could orientate and move.

1 **MAJ MELNYK:** You were dismounted or mounted?

2 **SGT KING:** Dismounted.

3 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay. So all on foot.

4 **SGT KING:** All on foot.

5 **MAJ MELNYK:** Where did you stage to be ready
6 to deploy?

7 **SGT KING:** Battery Park City.

8 **MAJ MELNYK:** So near where the TOC was
9 located.

10 **SGT KING:** Right. Exactly right behind it, a
11 little strip of grass there. And we really didn't --
12 we didn't leave until -- well, we slept at the armory
13 that night, but that was that was the last night we
14 slept at the armory.

15 We slept in the Battery Park City from
16 Wednesday morning -- we stayed in Battery Park City
17 from Wednesday morning until Monday. We hadn't gone
18 back. This is the first I've seen the armory.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** Today is Monday.

20 **SGT KING:** Right.

21 **MAJ MELNYK:** So you came back last night, I

1 assume.

2 **SGT KING:** No, I didn't. I slept outside.

3 **MAJ MELNYK:** You slept in Battery Park City
4 last night, as well?

5 **SGT KING:** Correct.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** So most of the battalion was
7 back, but the scouts were not.

8 **SGT KING:** Roger.

9 **MAJ MELNYK:** So Wednesday night, Thursday
10 night, Friday night.

11 **SGT KING:** We slept out there. And the first
12 night, we didn't bring -- we didn't bring our gear to
13 sleep, but it was okay. We got some blankets from the
14 civilians and we were okay, til it rained.

15 Then we got on the vehicles and we're okay.
16 It wasn't the most comfortable evening, but it was
17 better than the guys in the rubble.

18 **MAJ MELNYK:** What other missions did the
19 scouts perform?

20 **SGT KING:** Well, primarily what we did is we
21 acted as a screen, because at first they only did three

1 quarters. They felt that would be enough, but there's
2 -- lower Manhattan is like a sieve and people were
3 sneaking by.

4 **MAJ MELNYK:** Where was it open?

5 **SGT KING:** The bank side, along Vessey Street.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** Are you talking the river side or
7 the south end?

8 **SGT KING:** No. The south end.

9 **MAJ MELNYK:** The south end, along Vessey
10 Street.

11 **SGT KING:** Along Vessey Street is where we set
12 up a picket. There was six guys there and we had to
13 pick -- Charlie Company was somehow or other deployed
14 late. I don't know what the deal there was, but we had
15 guys on the north, northwest near the marina, I guess
16 along Barclay.

17 I didn't see where they all were. So we had
18 to divide the platoon and we basically -- we didn't
19 know how long we were going to be there, so we didn't
20 post everybody.

21 We covered our sector, but we had to assume

1 this was going to be 24 hours til we were going to
2 leave. So right away, we got to square away our
3 platoon, so right away, we organized it so we had
4 enough so we could relieve people and not be over-
5 taxing, because you got to be alert (inaudible.)

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** Did you get relieved by another
7 unit? At what point did that happen?

8 **SGT KING:** Like 8:00 o'clock at night. So we
9 got there, we got posted by 8:00 o'clock in the
10 morning. It was very early in the morning.

11 **MAJ MELNYK:** Wednesday morning?

12 **SGT KING:** Yeah. It was like an hour after I
13 hooked up with the company. We were on post. And
14 about 8:00 o'clock, we got relieved, and I can't even
15 remember the name of the unit who relieved us.

16 We had to stop a lot of people from going in.
17 Curiosity seekers, trying to take photos and stuff.
18 Orders put out, no photos, no photos at all.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** So you turned them back. Did you
20 --

21 **SGT KING:** We turned them back and --

1 **MAJ MELNYK:** Were there any people that you
2 detained?

3 **SGT KING:** No, but we could have. But we had
4 -- basically, we were understanding. I mean,
5 curiosity, people want to go see it.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** What were your instructions? Who
7 were you to let by? I mean, did you have any kind of
8 printed rules of engagement? I mean, I know it's the
9 wrong term, you weren't armed, but --

10 **SGT KING:** No.

11 **MAJ MELNYK:** What were your instructions in
12 terms of dealing with the public and the emergency
13 workers and who would give you orders?

14 **SGT KING:** Badges, firemen, and obvious
15 construction workers. Anybody else had to turn away,
16 they had to go elsewhere. Then they'd ask, you know,
17 well, where do I go. I don't know that. That's not my
18 job. Go that way.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** And you took your orders from?

20 **SGT KING:** From my company commander. Even
21 the police weren't allowed, either that day, and it's a

1 little fuzzy, either that day or the next day, I'm
2 pretty sure it was that day, later on in the day,
3 people were trying to get back into their apartments
4 and we weren't letting people.

5 **MAJ MELNYK:** This is Wednesday, the day after.

6 **SGT KING:** Right. Yeah. That was Wednesday.
7 I'm fairly certain it was Wednesday.

8 People were trying to get into their
9 apartments or their businesses and we're just telling
10 them no, no one is going into their apartment. And one
11 woman, she was like, well, my dog is in there. Well,
12 your dog has got water, he'll be fine.

13 She says, well, she's only got one bowl of
14 water. No, she's got more water than that. There's
15 plenty of water in that toilet. My dog doesn't drink
16 toilet water.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** So you supplemented the line
18 companies by pulling picket duty.

19 **SGT KING:** Correct.

20 **MAJ MELNYK:** What else did you do?

21 **SGT KING:** That was okay. That was fine. It

1 was very frustrating doing that, though, because
2 everybody wanted to get up on the pile and start
3 digging.

4 Then that night we went back and we found out
5 that someone had broken into the morgue. So they
6 wanted a quick reaction force always on site. So then
7 scouts, fine, we'll stay down there. We'll stay here.

8 **MAJ MELNYK:** So Wednesday night you went back
9 to the armory.

10 **SGT KING:** Correct.

11 **MAJ MELNYK:** And you got word, what, Thursday
12 that the morgue had been broken into.

13 **SGT KING:** Right.

14 **MAJ MELNYK:** Where was this morgue; do you
15 know?

16 **SGT KING:** I've heard it was one block from
17 the site.

18 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay. So from that point on, the
19 scouts were staged down at Battery Park City at night.

20 **SGT KING:** AS a reaction force, because the
21 police were really -- see, the police weren't really

1 paying attention to security. They were more focused
2 on getting in the pile.

3 I mean, they were doing their job, if it was
4 pointed out, but it was really hectic. They were
5 missing people. No one was in charge. Now it's
6 organized, but before, forget about it. It wasn't even
7 vaguely organized.

8 You know, it was a dangerous time. People
9 trying to get in. The other thing you -- probably the
10 most rewarding thing we've done, I've done in my entire
11 service in the military, though, was yesterday, being
12 Sunday, and Saturday, we took people up to their
13 apartments, after two days of turning people away from
14 their apartments, because we didn't have the manpower.

15 We spun off 30 people roughly, not just
16 scouts. But whenever we didn't have a scout mission,
17 we go escort people up and take them to their
18 apartments, give them 15 minutes to get their stuff,
19 take them back.

20 Between that time, though, I guess Friday, on
21 Friday we began on the process of going up on the roofs

1 south and west of the site and we had the whole platoon
2 and we'd pair up two men, two Guardsmen with two cops,
3 and we'd go up on the roof tops, check the roof tops
4 for any kind of evidence, whether it was physical
5 remains, personal effects, or aircraft parts.

6 We found a little -- a few things, an ear,
7 some skin, and about a block and a half way, actually,
8 more than that, had about -- I think it's building 250
9 on Albany Street, we found a hat that said World Trade
10 Center fire (inaudible) or floor (inaudible) and that's
11 a good distance away.

12 **MAJ MELNYK:** So it sounds like you had a
13 variety of missions that the scouts were tasked to do.

14 **SGT KING:** Yeah. And there were many even
15 varied. There was a lot of steps. I climbed up -- I
16 estimate -- I mean, I counted, at a stretch, you know,
17 200 flights in one day, 250 the next day. So I've done
18 a lot of -- conservatively, 550 flights of stairs in
19 three days. Legs were pretty much jello.

20 **MAJ MELNYK:** You were ready to go home and get
21 a rest. So you came back this morning from Battery

1 Park City.

2 **SGT KING:** Right.

3 **MAJ MELNYK:** And you've just been released by
4 your commander.

5 **SGT KING:** Right. Yeah. We just got
6 released.

7 **MAJ MELNYK:** Do you have any other impressions
8 of your service down there? Did you see any of the
9 people who came by to tour the site?

10 **SGT KING:** No.

11 **MAJ MELNYK:** The Mayor, Governor, President.

12 **SGT KING:** I saw Mayor Giuliani at about -- he
13 was -- it was early, like 1:00 o'clock in the morning
14 on Tuesday -- it would be Wednesday morning.

15 **MAJ MELNYK:** Wednesday morning.

16 **SGT KING:** I remember seeing him. Other than
17 that, no. No dignitaries, that I'm aware of seeing.
18 Some of our guys saw the Giants, Jason Sehorn.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** Really.

20 **SGT KING:** Yeah.

21 **MAJ MELNYK:** They came down to the site.

1 **SGT KING:** Yeah. They came down to the docks,
2 whatever that dock is, Hollow, North Cove.

3 **MAJ MELNYK:** The marina that they have there.

4 **SGT KING:** Yeah.

5 **MAJ MELNYK:** Is there anything you want to add
6 about --

7 **SGT KING:** No. I mean, that's -- I mean, we'd
8 go back down and help out, if we could, but we
9 understand there's more than enough people. They want
10 to get done and get someone with fresh legs to go down
11 and take all these people up.

12 **MAJ MELNYK:** Aside from tired right now, how
13 do you feel about this last week, what you've --

14 **SGT KING:** I don't know. I have to
15 decompress, because I'm just tired.

16 **MAJ MELNYK:** Thank you very much.

17 **SGT KING:** No problem, sir.

18 (The interview was concluded.)