

Interview of Jack Tueller.

Interviewer: All right, give us your full name.

Jack Tueller: Jack LeRoy Tueller.

Interviewer: And you were born --

Jack Tueller: In Evanston, Wyoming, the 28th of January, 1921.

Interviewer: All right. We're going to jump -- we don't -- we would love to go through your whole life. We will get ahead into World War II, if that's okay.

Jack Tueller: That's okay.

Interviewer: All right. Um, how did you get into the Air Force, and into the Air Corps?

Jack Tueller: At age six, my parents took me out to a dirt strip in Rock Springs, Wyoming. And I watched the first air mail by the Army Air Corps, this old twin engine, I mean, twin winged aircraft came down (unintelligible) with a liberty engine. And the pilot got out and it was snowing and rainy and he came down through the clouds, the engine sputtering, and he landed and he patted me on the head and he said, "Son, you'll fly one of these one of these days." And I knew what I wanted to do. And I think it dared me. But, um, I always wanted to fly and then, my mother died at age 28 and I was left alone with a brother by a father who left town the next day. So I was raised in Evanston, Wyoming by my father's sister, my aunt. And she taught me, at age 13, to play the trumpet because I was an angry little boy. Because I thought I'd caused the problem in the family. And I, uh, was very rebellious. When

she gave me that trumpet at age 13, I found my other love. And that was music. And it was later on that I found that flying and music are very similar.

Interviewer: Really.

Jack Tueller: They both use the principle of vibrating strings. And, uh, I loved both disciplines. I went to BYU, having won the trumpet soloist in Evanston, Wyoming High School Band for the state of Wyoming. I played for Professor Saller in front of 3500 students. That was their student body in those days. I had no support financially, so I was the janitor in the women's gym. That's where I learned all about women. I cleaned their bathrooms, and I, um, ran out of money. Came up, I saw the war, hear was happening, and my trumpet was stolen, the original one I had. So I came up to Dane's Music and purchased a new trumpet, went into debt, had no money for the next semester. I was a junior. As a sophomore, I went into the band room and there was this beautiful, black-eyed, black-haired gal, a freshman. And she said to me, "Did you play that trumpet solo at the freshman assembly?" And I said, "I sure did." She said, "You have strong lips," and being a sophomore, I said, "Would you like to try them?" And she nodded and I went over and kissed her. I never met her, and I knew what instrument she played. She was there on a two year scholarship on the trumpet. And boy, if you want a real thrill, smooch another trumpet player. We're both triple tongue, she's now my wife of 68 years, we've been married.

I came up to Fort Douglas because I always wanted to fly and I understood that if you had two years of college, you could go to cadets. This is the -- year is 1941, January. Passed the physical and the mental and everything seemed to be all clear and the recruiter came in very discouraged. He said, "You're not old enough. Go back to school for a year." I said, "I

can't. I only own this trumpet and a little sack of clothes over here and I haven't eaten for two days." He says, "Well, I can't -- you got to be 21 to get to be an officer. When you graduate from cadets, let me see if you want to enlist?" I said, "Sure. At least I'll be fed and I'll get some clothes." So I started out at 21 dollars a month, and I think all officers should come up through the ranks. I became a radio operator because of the musical ear. I could send and receive Morse code. I was the radio operator on a B-25 Billy Mitchell bomber, the first ones ever made up in Fort George Wright in Spokane, Washington. My crew was Captain Greening and Captain Hillger. And they called me up from the radio position and said, "Sergeant," I was a Sergeant by then. "Do you want to fly this airplane?" I said, "Sure." I got in there, right seat. The copilot stood behind me. And for ten minutes, they watched me. And they looked at each other and said, "Look at this guy. He's never flown before. But he intuitively knows what to do." I'd make a circle and pull back on the yoke instead of going into a deep stride roll like most people that had never flown would do. I'd pull back and kept it in a nice circle. And I kept it steady and it was more of an intuitive thing. I'd never had any lessons. So they both said, "This guy has got to become a flyer." So they wrote me letters of recommendation and as soon as I passed that magic age when I'd be 21 when I graduated, they sent me to flying school. Those same guys went down to Eglin and practiced short field take offs like you would in an aircraft carrier. That's where I would have been on the Doolittle Mission against Tokyo in April of 1942 and my crew, Captain Hillger and Greening; they were one of the two crews that had to crash on the coast of China that was held by the Japanese. And they were beheaded. And I would have been beheaded along with them.

But I was in flying school down at Santa Maria, and at basic school in San Jose where I flew through the dirigible hangars. Got in trouble. Went in one end, out the other, of that Macon and Akron hangar there at Moffett. And I went to primary flight training at Hancock School of Aviation in Santa Maria, California. And as luck would bless me, my first instructor was a crop duster. His name was Mr. Hull. He was a civilian under contract to instruct young cadets. And he taught me to love low-level. And that's why I was able to get through over 100 missions without a scratch. I would fly down a river bed off the target instead of coming up off the target, I'd go down the river bed on the highway a foot off the ground at 300 knots. I would get below where the ground guns could depress their carriage. And so, they'd say, "Where'd he go?" And I was busy going right down on the ground. So, that tactic enabled me to claim that I, out of my, over 100 missions, I never received one scratch. I came back alone out of 12, twice more out of four, all because of Mr. Hull and a "Go get 'em" attitude.

Interviewer: When were your first assigned to the P 47, and did you want that?

Jack Tueller: Um, I was one of the few instructors at Dale Mabry Field in Tallahassee, Florida. I flew P-39 Bell Airacobras, the worst plane ever designed. That's why we gave them all to the Russians. It fired a 37 millimeter canon through the hub of the propeller. Had 22 rounds and they used them for tank busters. But the engine was in back of the pilot, so the center of gravity on the airplane was unreal, and if you were too rough on the controls, it would go tail over nose and, uh, we killed a man a day for the first two weeks because of that characteristic of the airplane. Then we got P-40 Warhawks, and then, we were sent to Eglin to test fly the first P-51 Mustangs. A young up-start company called North American had taken the contracts away from Curtiss, who made the P-40, and Bell who made the P-39. And a lot of

politics came into that, so we instructors went over there and signed a petition that the P-51 be kept in the arsenal. So they made a dive bomber out of the P-51 and sold it to England to keep it alive. And the English put a Merlin engine in that airplane and it became the world's best propeller driven fighter. Then we got the first P-47s built by Republic, they weren't -- their tail assembly wasn't all that good. Then, I got most of my time in the second generation P-37 Thunderbolts. And it was a razorback, a good airplane. I named mine after my first little daughter born in Tallahassee and I left my wife and my little daughter there at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina to come home to Morgan, Utah.

Her folks came down on the train and took my gas ration stamps, and my little baby of two months and my wife and there again, I had that touch of loneliness that all of us have when we leave our loved ones.

Crew Member: Can we hold on one second? Is it Rebecca?

Interviewer: I'm sorry, the daughter?

Crew Member: The name of the daughter is, it's on the --

Interviewer: It's Roseanne?

Crew Member: Roseanne. She was Miss Utah Director for 22 years.

Unknown Person: Can you have him say that again, the name, because all of his pictures have that name on it.

Interviewer: Could you say your daughter's name again --

Crew Member: (Inaudible).

Interviewer: Over to me.

Crew Member: -- looking at Jeff and identify those pictures.

Jack Tueller: Her name is Roseanne Nielsen now. She married Norman Nielsen, who was Jane E. Thompson's understudy for the program here at BYU. And Roseanne went around with Curtain Time USA. She was first runner-up to Miss America in 19 --

Interviewer: What we need you to say is, "Roseanne was named after -- the plane was named after --"

Jack Tueller: Okay.

Interviewer: Just that plane statement.

Jack Tueller: And when we got to Europe, I named my airplane the "Roseanne." And I had the destroying angel painted on the other side of the cowling, and my biggest fight of the war was with the artist of the squadron who wanted to put wings on the angel. I said, "No wings."

Interviewer: Why?

Jack Tueller: My particular religion doesn't think angels have wings. So, I said, "No wings." And he was really upset. But, the Roseanne got me through without any hitch. Three months after I departed to come back to the states, that same airplane was destroyed strafing a German airfield with my replacement. So, somebody was keeping me safe and sound.

Interviewer: So --

Jack Tueller: So I could have this interview, I guess. I don't know.

Interviewer: Okay, so tell us about getting to England and getting into combat.

Jack Tueller: Okay, my family left from Morgan, Utah, and I went to Europe. And I sailed to Europe on the Queen Mary and all the P-47 parts were in the lower part of the ship in wings and pieces. That ship would go so fast the German U-boats could not keep

up with it. And we had no escort. We got to Southampton and I was assigned to the 404th fighter group, stationed in Wrington, England. But for our indoctrination flights, we flew out of Chilbolton, England. And I flew other P-47s of the ancient vintage on my first missions.

Interviewer: What date was your first mission?

Jack Tueller: November of 1943.

Interviewer: And tell us about that mission. Do you remember much about it?

Jack Tueller: Okay, we took off and, um, I'm a Flight Commander and there are four flights in a squadron. And as we passed over the white cliffs of Dover, this crisp British accent voice came over the radio. And I remember thinking, "What is the RAF, Royal Air Force, doing on our frequency?" And then he introduced himself. And he was the commander of the Abbeville Kid Sherman Gorings personnel Focke-Wulf 190 squadrons over Abbeville, France. They were known as the "Abbeville Kids." And they had fought together in the civil war in Spain, so they were just like the Pittsburgh Steelers. We were like Bountiful High School football team. Anyway, they had a dossier on the Squadron Commander and on the Flight Commander. And they came to me and they said, "Captain Tueller, isn't it too bad you're going to die today?" He said, "I went to Oxford for four years, that's where I picked up my good English." He said, "You went to Evanston, Wyoming High School, The Red Devils." He said, "You married Marjorie Rogers, your blood type is AB negative --" they had me down. And what they did is they had the Fifth Column in the United States and they subscribed to every high school newspaper, every small town newspaper, and they had -- the Germans were meticulous record keepers. And, talk about psychological warfare. My morale was down on the cockpit floor. I kept thinking, "How does he know all this stuff about me and my wife and my family?"

He even knew the name of my little daughter. And then he said, "We're over Abbeville waiting for you, and this is your first time in combat, and we're going to give you a real lesson." As we approached Abbeville, France, at 30,000 feet, he said, "Now, you put your thumb over the sun, and you can see us." And I did, and sure enough, there were little specks around my thumb. And here they came. Out of the 12 airplanes, six were shot down. I shot at everything and hit nothing. I have never been so scared. I kind of had thought that war would be like a John Wayne movie, and I was excited. It was a new adventure, and I had a rude awakening on my first mission.

I landed back to England and I had aged several years, mentally. So, I got my trumpet out and got rid of my stresses by playing homesick tunes. The other guys drank a lot and the more they drank, the better I sounded. Anyway, I played it every night. And I just can't tell people enough how wonderful music is as a form of communication. If you choose the right number and play with your heart, you can say things that words can't say. And they are remembered longer and they bring back memories. So I love music.

Interviewer: Tell us about the next missions.

Jack Tueller: As each mission from England, our first job was to, um, prepare for the invasion that we didn't know anything about. So, for six months, we hit every marshalling yard. We especially concentrated our effort, everything in Northern France, up near Caen; 22 miles to the west would be England. And, uh, down at the Cherbourg Peninsula where the invasion took place at Normandy, we hit every means of getting armed forces from northern France down to Normandy. And that's what allowed the invasion to be successful. So, we hit the rocket sites, the W-1 rocket sites, we hit trains, we hit German armor, we hit convoys, and

the Germans, uh, had a way of running all their gasoline as indicated in the Battle of the Bulge. They'd run their big convoy columns till they ran out of fuel. Then they commandeered all the French Clydesdales. Big Persian horses and I think that's where I learned a great compassion for animals. When I hit the backs of those horses pulling the German Lorries, they'd rear up on their hind legs, flesh going in all directions, and I thought how cruel that was to expose an animal to that. And, um, those were our missions.

Interviewer: So these were fighter bomber missions?

Jack Tueller: Fighter bomber missions.

Interviewer: Were you flying any escort missions?

Jack Tueller: We flew, um; I must have flown maybe 20 escort missions. I was on the first mission that escorted B-17s on a shuttle run. They'd go from England to a Russian base, right on the border, across Germany, and then from there to Fascia, Italy. And we were flying P-51s then with a squadron based in England. And, uh, that was our longest -- eight hours with a relief tube frozen up.

Interviewer: People don't know what a relief tube is.

Jack Tueller: When you have to go to the bathroom, you have a little kind of like a funnel and a rubber hose. And that gets frozen up so you wish you had Depends on.

Interviewer: So --

Jack Tueller: But anyway, that was the most tiring mission I've ever been on. Because when I landed in Russia, the other thing that happened is, those same, uh, P-39s that we had given to the Russians, we saw them come by over us with a red star and I told my flight, "Relax, because we've got friends." And the next few seconds, here came 37 millimeter shells over our wings. And we all broke for the deck, everybody. I didn't have any ammo, but our

replacement, a young graduate from flying school, young second lieutenant, had a full load of ammunition. And he turned around and shot seven of the Russians down. And they wouldn't let him put the hammer and sickle on the side of his airplane.

Interviewer: Did you get any repercussions from shooting down those aircraft?

Jack Tueller: No. No, in fact, uh, he was -- he received a lot of accolades and when we landed at Fascia, Italy. He did about six barrel rolls over the runway and we said, "What in the world is he doing?" We all came in singly, and finally everybody gathered and he came in all excited and told us what had happened because we had to go on a land and they wouldn't let me get out of the cockpit and stretch. The liaison officer says, "Captain, you get out of here because we've had some trouble." And I said, "Yeah, tell me about it." And so, they hushed it up.

Interviewer: Yeah. All right, let's -- tell me about D Day. You told me a very interesting story about that day and how that led to the playing of your trumpet and some Germans. Take us through that day and what happened.

Jack Tueller: The night before D Day, we were told our first mission would be at midnight. And we were to escort the transports, the, C-47s and the DC-3s, the civilian designation, and I was towing guiders to take the troops inland to cut off the communication lines before the actual invasion took place. And, uh, they were the paratroopers that landed and got hung up on the steeple in the movie, "The Longest Day." And, uh, we never did see them. The weather was so bad, we saw all the flack coming out of the clouds. So that mission was kind of bad. The next day, we were called in for a briefing.

Interviewer: This is on the second mission?

Jack Tueller: Yeah, this is on the 6th of June, 1944. We were still located at Wrington at Southern England near Bournemouth. And we were assigned 3,000 foot altitude over the beaches. So we had a ring-side seat watching 10,000 ships, two million men, and all the destroyers. And that was a sight to behold. A week later, the strip, A-5 at Omaha beach was finished and we were the first fighter squadron to land on a strip that had no barracks. It had no latrines, no toilet paper, no food, nothing. We had to sleep under the wings of our airplanes. It was muddy and rainy and lonely. Our first real mission was to take on a German Panzer Division stationed at Saint-Lô, or Filet, actually. And they had King Tiger tanks and they were there on rest and recuperation from their assignment up at Caen. All the rest of the German armed forces were up there expecting the invasion to take place north. Because of what we'd done the six months before, including the bombers, the 8th Air Force bombed the same targets. There was no way that the German Panzer Division stationed north could get down to help the one at Normandy. So, they were trying to, um, save their tanks. And they were bumper to bumper, and we would take out those tanks. Now the P-47 Thunderbolt is able to carry two 1,000 pound bombs, one under each wing. It's got ten rockets, and eight 50 caliber machine guns. So, you're a pretty good weapon against a tank. And as I went down on this tank, I could see red down the top of the tank, and yellow and purple. And at 1,000 feet, looking through the gun sight, I saw a French mother and her three children. She was trying to cover their bodies with hers. They were being held up there as human shields. And every tank had these on, innocent civilians. The Germans, again, masters of psychological warfare, knew that we would not fire and we didn't. 30 minutes later, after we reported what happened -- and I've never felt such anger, unfairness of it. But I was learning that war was not fair. We routed back to get that armor and those civilians were expendable. So, for 65 years ago, this last June, I live with that

image of what my guns did to an innocent civilian family. I think that's what breaks my heart more than anything are stories like that.

And we land at the strip at 10:00 that night and I'm stressed, obviously.

Funny thing about adrenaline, boy, when you get high, boy, you've got nerves of steel. But when it drains out, you go as low as you were high. I get my trumpet out. The commander says, "Jack, don't play tonight because we've had snipers around this air strip. There's one left. And he has a sound aimer." They had no night vision in those days. "He's going to pick that trumpet sound up and you're going to be his next target." Well, I thought to myself that that sniper's as homesick and scared as I am. He doesn't want to be here anymore than I do. Now, let's see. What's his love song? Then I played "Lily Marlene" (singing). And I wailed that trumpet out over those apple orchards. He didn't fire. Then, my guys yelled at me, "Jack, play our tune!" I played "Danny Boy." And there was a magic, there was silence. No light. Raining softly. And it's one of those unforgettable moments that only music can engender. So, in this context, my trumpet literally saved my life.

Interviewer: Something happened the next day.

Jack Tueller: The next day, here came the military police. "Here captain, here's a 50 (unintelligible) prisoners down on the beach. One keeps saying in broken English, 'Who played that trumpet?'" He was the sniper. I grabbed my trumpet and got in the jeep and it was only a mile and a half away to the beach and he saw me coming and he burst into tears. He said, "Lily Marlene reminded me of the tune that my fiancée and I got married to in Germany and I thought of my mother and father, and I thought of my brothers and sisters." And he said, "I couldn't fire. I couldn't fire." And I shook the hands of the enemy because music has soothed

the two savage beasts. He was no enemy. He was a scared 19 year old; I was a scared 22 year old.

Interviewer: Tell us about the Abbeville Kids. Did you have more encounters with them?

Jack Tueller: Three months later, we met them again, and, uh, by this time, they'd been decimated because in the German Luftwaffe, headed by Göring, there was a caste system between the officers and the sergeant pilots. They didn't talk to each other. They were treated like chattel, the lower enlisted men. And there was no camaraderie except among the elite. And if you knocked the leaders down, you can get the rest of them pretty easily because they're not trained as well as the officers and they don't get the cream of the crop in training. So, the Abbeville Kids had lost a lot of their leadership. They'd been thinned out and they had to go be commanders of other German squadrons. So we gave a better account of ourselves. I didn't get any of 'em. But I always figured that if I could get a train carrying all sorts of German armor, it was more effective than shooting down one German aircraft. That's the exciting part of stories, of aces. But they don't make you an ace because you got 24 tanks, or you got 10 trains. Or you take on 15,000 men hold up in the black forest. But I don't put much stock in metals, because people got metals that didn't deserve them, and people that did deserve them didn't get them. It all depended on how good of a write-up you had on the mission, and they, the officer that did the write-ups of the missions, his promotion was dependant on the commander. And the commanders love the metals, and so they got good write-ups. But the lower rank people barely made the back of the paper. So, there's a lot of politics. I put more stock in the eagle badge for scouting, and the principles that require that to be earned, and doing a good turn daily. That will get you through the pearly gates, but I'm not sure these will get me through the pearly gates.

Interviewer: So, what was your last mission of the war?

Jack Tueller: It was from Saint-Trond, Belgium. I was the last P-47 to land at Saint-Trond because I had been told to stay at this little German airbase near Paris, France. And being a non-drinker -- I had drinkers give their life for me. So I'm not questioning their health habits -- but I had no hangovers. And, so I was chosen to clean out the airbase. Make sure everybody's off. I go into this one room and there's this 19-year old French gal. And she had sold herself to everybody in the squadron except me. And she said to me in French, "Are you next?" I said, "No, I'm not next." Because I had a lovely wife home, and something that I yearned for desperately. But I felt so sorry for this little gal. She was covered with cigarette cartons, silk stockings, chocolate bars, loot of all sorts, perfume. And her parents had been killed in a street fight in Paris just two weeks before between the free French and the German occupiers. The free French. So, she was all alone. And I'd never seen a more lonely person in my life than she was. So I called my sergeant and my crew chief. I said, "Sergeant Helms, you already know this young lady." He got the most guilty look I've ever seen. He said, "Yes sir." I said, "I want you to take my jeep and take her and all of her loot into some friends in Paris." And those are the things I remember about World War II, are the human interest, what people do to each other, and how they help each other, so you get the two extremes. And how desperate people are when they're hungry. The people today, I wish the kids today understood the meaning of a tooth brush and a bar of soap and a roll of toilet paper.

Interviewer: So, your last mission was about August or so?

Jack Tueller: It was in August. And my replacement, I was given 15 minutes. I grabbed my trumpet and went down to the beach, got an airplane to England and was flown home where I met my family. I had to take the railroad from the Army base there in New

York all the way to Salt Lake City. My wife expected me on the train. Oh, that was the longest journey I ever had in that train coming through the pass out of Denver. And, I couldn't wait for the train to arrive in Morgan, Utah. So I took the bus at Salt Lake and Marge was down waiting for me at the depot there in Morgan and I didn't get off the train. And she was just -- meanwhile, I had gotten off the bus in front of her home there in Morgan and I met the folks and they said, "Hide behind the couch." So, I ducked down around the couch and Marjorie came in. She had tears on her cheeks. She said, "I don't know what happened. He didn't get off the train." And I said, "Here I am!" And you can just imagine the reception. I picked up my little daughter. And I knew that value, what true value is, is how we treat each other. Evil has to be fought. I wish that we'd do away with evil, and if it requires force and destruction, do it. This thing of trying to communicate with them doesn't work. Peace meeting doesn't work. That's my own opinion, that's not agreed with by several people, obviously. But I didn't mean to get carried away, Jeff.

Interviewer: Would you play us your trumpet? Would you play us a little more?

Jack Tueller: Sure.

Crew Member: Before we do that, or do you want to do that now?

Interviewer: Do you want to ask him something?

Crew Member: Well, just to tie it together a little bit, if you -- did he, Jack, did every mission, did you land and play your trumpet? I mean, that's the only thing I didn't get clear.

Jack Tueller: Just, like going to the officer's club and get a -- hoist a few? I take my trumpet; go into the pasture, the fields of England.

Crew Member: Jack, sorry. Can I get you to sit back?

Jack Tueller: And I would --

Crew Member: Start over.

Interviewer: Start over.

Jack Tueller: That would be my drink for the day. And you can't believe the relaxing and getting rid of your stresses.

Interviewer: So tell us again where you would play these things. You would play in fields and where?

Jack Tueller: I'd play them in the barracks, or I'd play -- and every night, I'd play taps by request. And I had, I learned, "Danny Boy" so well I could play it by blowing through the bell of the horn. I, uh, that's obviously not true. Put my lips over the horn (laughter).

Interviewer: So again, describe these places you would play. You said it beautifully. We didn't get it on tape. Fields and where? Where did you say?

Jack Tueller: In the trees, in the forest, in the fields. I'd go to a running brook, then by ear I could play all the low songs that my wife and I danced to. And I could play by ear and today I play with 101 Strings from Canada on CD and I play with Lee Anthonini's Big Band. He sent me all of his Dream Dancing series, and at my boom box, every time they change keys, I have to change keys. So, in my age, it keeps my brain alert. I have to think of the chords, the tune, when they change keys; I have to go right with them. And I can demonstrate that. I have the boom box out in the car.

Interviewer: We won't need that. We're going to have you play here a cappella in a minute.

Jack Tueller: But I want you to imagine, just playing trumpet, playing "Lily Marlene".

Interviewer: So, you were all over occupied France doing this?

Jack Tueller: Yep.

Interviewer: Tell us, is there any particular -- besides the D Day, is there any particular --

Jack Tueller: Liberation of Paris.

Interviewer: Tell us about that.

Jack Tueller: We were assigned, uh, to guard the Champs-Élysées while General de Gaulle made the victory parade into Paris. The Free French didn't liberate Paris, the Americans did. But General Eisenhower in his diplomatic wisdom let General de Gaulle. And he was a very pompous, liked attention. And we, uh, decided to put on a little mini-air show. Things were boring, there were no Luftwaffe around. And we were going up and down the Champs-Élysées and General de Gaulle didn't like our taking attention away from him. So he wanted all four of us court-martialed.

Interviewer: You did something extraordinary though, didn't you, on that day?

Jack Tueller: Yes, we flew under the Eiffel Tower. I hate -- I hope this doesn't go out over the air, because that's what I call "stupid judgment." But he was upset and the papers asking us to be court-martialed went to General LeMay, who tore them up and put them in the wastepaper basket. He says, "We've got to have spirit like that." And he didn't like General de Gaulle anyway. You can erase a lot of this.

Interviewer: Oh, no. I'm asking, other than the D Day beach, is it A-5, is that the air field?

Jack Tueller: A-5 is the name of the air strip.

Interviewer: Was there a spot in France that you played the trumpet that you particularly remember? A brook, or a field, or a pasture? Do you remember any particular spot?

Jack Tueller: I would say, uh, at A-5 around 11:00 at night, to stand that German sniper, that's the highlight of my musical career.

Interviewer: Would you play that for us now?

Jack Tueller: Yes sir.

Interviewer: Would you play "Lily Marlene" first and taps?

Jack Tueller: Sure.

Elizabeth: Do we need to have -- we need to set up audio.

Crew Member: So it doesn't blare?

Elizabeth: So we have a really good recording. Are you running audio up there?

Crew Member: I am, are you going to continue with the interview?

Elizabeth: Yes.

Crew Member: Just for a few more questions.

Interviewer: I got too eager to hear your trumpet.

Elizabeth: It's got to be the very last thing.

Interviewer: Has to be the last thing.

Jack Tueller: Okay.

Crew Member: Just let me know.

Crew Member: The two questions, if you could ask him. One is -- I'm asking Jeff to ask him the question. It's about the reaction, not just from the Germans --

Interviewer: (Inaudible).

Crew Member: How did it change the mood and the temperament?

Interviewer: Great question.

Crew Member: How did that affect them? And the second thing, I don't even know. Maybe you want to pursue he was the religious boy; he was the odd Mormon from Utah if they had anything to do with the relationship.

Interviewer: Sure.

Crew Member: And the second thing I want to know is if we can touch on the comrade, the group spirit in the plane. Okay, buddies, how we all need to work together, those two questions.

Interviewer: Yeah, are we running?

Crew Member: Just a second. Okay.

Interviewer: All right, when you'd play the trumpet, how would this affect your comrades?

Jack Tueller: Oh my goodness, that's why I kept playing. They kept yelling requests. And they loved it. In fact, I was asked by the commander, "You got to drink with us, Jack. Be a comrade." And all of the rest of the squadron said, "No, sir, colonel. Let him play for us." And they were homesick and the music soothed their savaged nerves, and I've had wingmen who went to the club every night, come out of the club and say, "We thought the music was just fantastic." Spike Jones and his City Slickers came over there at our air base there at A-5, and I became very good friends with Nick Cockrane, their trumpet player. And Spike Jones himself, and Red Ingle, the big saxophone player. I took them up to look for souvenirs on the front lines and a German 88 shelled our truck. When we came home, uh, they had us down as guests of theirs in Santa Monica at the Pirate's Club. And they put Marge in jail and she had a way out of

jail for her to kiss all the members of the Spike Jones band. So we, I've had some wonderful relationships. I flew Bob Hope from Phoenix to Los Angeles and got to go on the set of the rodeo with Bing Crosby and Bob Hope and that was a hilarious time.

Interviewer: Being a Mormon, you were a good Mormon, right? You were a devoted Mormon, correct?

Jack Tueller: Yeah.

Interviewer: Tell us about that and your experiences in war and how the fellows treated you, how they thought of you.

Jack Tueller: Well, the commander says, "You got to drink with us." And I said, "No, sir, can I make you a deal, Colonel McColpin?" I said, "Make me your wing man. Now, my job is to protect your tail. If an enemy aircraft is getting on your tail, I will swing in behind it and take all the shells for you." I said, "I'm willing to give my life for you, colonel. And every time you look over at me on your right wing, just realize I don't have a hangover. I got all my judgment factors. Give me 30 days." At the end of that time, he says, "I got your message. You no longer will be required to come into the club, except to play for us." And that was our gentleman's agreement, and I learned to love those guys and they didn't ever ridicule me about my religion. I never questioned theirs, I never said, "Quit drinking."

Interviewer: Would you -- (inaudible).

Crew Member: I just need little bites.

Interviewer: About camaraderie?

Crew Member: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: Tell us more about how important camaraderie is in a war, and more of what you experienced there.

Jack Tueller: It's, it's being ready to give your life for your comrade. And you, uh, and mean it, not just say it. And there's a bonding there that I can't explain. Except, it's the only time I've seen men really use the equipment their Maker gave them, and that's tear ducts. They say, "Men don't cry," that's a bunch of baloney. We've got tear ducts just like the women and we ought to use them. If you want to feel better after a bad hair day, cry. Nothing wrong with crying. The more you cry, the better you'll feel. And there's many a comrade that has been at the club hoisting a few, they can cry a little easier than the guys that try to retain it and all their feelings. In other words, express your feelings. If you love somebody, show it and tell them so. And, downgrade their thorns. We all have thorns, that's the imperfections. And keep your eye on the flower, that's the good points of the person. And if we would talk to each other that way, and that's the way I practiced over there with the squadron. That's what I did with my wing of 5,000 people in my last command. And it's funny how a spirit core will well up through any organization whether it's in a family, or a classroom, or an outing. The same technique works. Especially if you mean it. Downplay your resentments and your hatreds and your jealousies and speak only of the good points. Everybody's a special human being, their behavior may be lousy, but they're still, nobody ever been made like them or have they made anybody else like you or there never will be. You got your own print.

Interviewer: We, we have a lot of men, we've done a lot of interviews of men that were in bombers, crew, gunners, just -- a lot of pilots, but a lot of gunners. And they tell us, uh, how deeply they appreciate the fighter pilot. Um, they called you "little friend."

Jack Tueller: "Little friend."

Interviewer: Tell us about, did you have any account with any bomber crews or anything like that that you could tell us what it was like, how you knew it was like for them and why you were so impressed?

Jack Tueller: I have a picture of the symbols on the side of my airplane that look like a derby hat, and that's a cover. That's the missions you went out to cover a squadron of bombers. And, uh, you're usually a little faster than they are, so you kind of have to ess over the bombing formation. And, uh, they call you on the radio and say, "Thank you, thank you." And we had the advantage of being able to dodge and evasive tactics, and they would have to stay straight and level to make the Norden bombsight work. On this one occasion, this B-17, sorry B-24 was coming back from a mission and I was on my way back to England and I noticed that he was going really slow, so I told my flight, "We're about, uh, 100 miles from the French coast. I'll escort him in. I've got more fuel than the rest of you. And you head on into England." So, I sat on his wing and he only had two engines operating. And we hit the English Channel, and he said, "I'm out of fuel." I said, "Well, so am I." We landed at a place called Manston, right there on the coast. And as I landed that P-47 Thunderbolt, my engine quit. And when he landed his B-24, his last two engines quit. And when we got out of the cockpit, I went over to check to see if he's okay. He gave me a hug and I hugged him back. I guess that explains your question. It's a hug that only one human being who values another human being could give, it has nothing to do with sex or any of that nature, just admiration, respect, and holding something close and valuable to you.

Interviewer: You know, we wanted to cover what's on the side of your plane, what those symbols mean.

Jack Tueller: Okay, I have a symbol, like a bomb. And every bomb, that's when we either bombed a long train full of E-1s, or a train full of troops. It can mean an armored column, it usually meant an armored column or it could be the division of troops, strafing anything that moved, then we have a picture of an airplane, that's when we encountered the enemy Luftwaffe. And, uh, I think the picture I let you have shows maybe 50 on there and there should be 140, but that's halfway through the tour.

Interviewer: Why don't you pick up your trumpet and tell us about it? And show it to the camera and tell us, this is the trumpet --

Jack Tueller: This is the trumpet that I went into Dane's to go into debt with. But first, well, it was indirectly the reason -- I've been trying to find the person that stole my other trumpet because that's the reason I'm here today. A thief. I never did find him, but I bought this and that got me into debt which forced me to go into an entirely different career, one of a fighter pilot.

Interviewer: You love this trumpet?

Jack Tueller: I've had this reconditioned three times, it's 70 years old. I got my two boys, their two trumpets and my wife has a King Trumpet and we've had a family quartet as the boys were growing up through their teenage years. But one became, went through four years at the University of Utah on a track scholarship, 10,000 meter. And the other boy went through Utah State and the University of Utah on a track scholarship. Steven is my youngest son who just got back from Afghanistan, and he says, "Daddy, now I know what you talk about, what you mean when you talk about it."

Interviewer: Tell us about how you'd store this in your cockpit in your parachute.

Jack Tueller: It was in the little canvass bag, tied to my parachute and if I ever -- you didn't eject in those days. You had to climb out on the wing and this would go on my seat parachute. I had a parachute that you sat on. And it would go out with me, and I figured, if I ever got shot down and taken prisoner, and I played the prison guard his favorite tune, I'd get an extra bar of soap. But luckily, I was never shot down. I, um, I used this as my physical therapist.

Interviewer: So when you look at the trumpet, what do you think? Your life is in this trumpet.

Jack Tueller: Yeah, her favorite tune is "Affair to Remember" from the movie with Cary Grant and, uh, Deborah Kerr, I believe, was the lady.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Jack Tueller: And Marge loves this and she and I would play at the grave site. We'd play duets after we were married and she's a wonderful musician. She sticks strictly to the score; I like to play by ear and from the heart. But we would play, "When You Come to the End of a Perfect Day" at a funeral or "Because" or "In the Garden of Tomorrow" and the "Holy City" for sacrament meetings and church. And, uh, at the funeral, she'd be the echo one time and I'd be the echo the next time and if you don't think that isn't a bonding --

Interviewer: Sally, you had a question?

Crew Member: I'm just thinking, I mean, you said this is your physical therapist; it's also your mental, emotional therapist. This helped you work through your anger as an abandoned child. This soothed the savage beasts out on the fields and the forest and whatever. This is an important and extremely important part of your life. Can you talk to Jeff about that?

Jack Tueller: Well, my aunt taught me that. She was a good pianist. And I'm 13. And she said, "Jack, I want you to learn 'When You Come to the End of a Perfect Day' by memory." "Okay." So I'd go out and work on the ranch and I'd play for the cows and the chickens and all of the animals. Her best friend was dying next door up in Evanston. And she said, "Jack, get your horn." We went over there and there's something about a 13 year old and his emotions. If you got any rebellion or tendency to bully or anger or misbehave, music has a way of solving that. And as I looked through the bedroom door at the dying person, I could see her face full of pain and anguished pale. Then, I started and Irene struck the first chord on the piano and I started playing, "When You Come to the End of a Perfect Day." The dying person's face relaxed, I've never seen anything like it. A smile came on her face and she died to music. And that taught me that, if you get all excited and upset, just go "play." Quote, unquote "play."

Interviewer: Do you have anything, Elizabeth?

Elizabeth: I have one thing, look at Jeff.

Interviewer: Jack, we have one more question.

Jack Tueller: I'm sorry. I'm not used to this.

Crew Member: Don't do that.

Interviewer: Don't do that, because it will pick up the noise. You're a good man; you can put your fingers back on --

Jack Tueller: I'm learning a lesson today, okay.

Elizabeth: I'm just curious what possessed him --

Jack Tueller: Nervous twitch.

Elizabeth: -- to fly under the Eiffel Tower.

Jack Tueller: Please, please.

Interviewer: The Eiffel Tower, the Eiffel Tower. They want to know what possessed you to fly under the Eiffel Tower.

Jack Tueller: My wingman said, "I dare you." You're chosen as a fighter pilot because you're nuts.

Interviewer: Look at me.

Jack Tueller: You're absolutely nuts. I mean, that's why you're chosen to be a fighter pilot. You're a loner, you make instant decisions. That's why the man landed in the Hudson River successfully. He's a fighter pilot. He didn't think about the auxiliary field, I didn't think about options. You don't have time. So you make instant decisions and live with the consequences. And you're more of a daredevil. The bomber pilots work well with a crew. They're reliable, they're dependable, and they don't take chances. There's the answer. In this life, sometimes you have to take chances. I was asked the other day, "What's it like to be 89?" I said, "I always wanted to see what was on the top of that tall mountain peak that I saw when I was a little kid." Now, if the road was all paved and the path, I'd be tired getting up there. But that's not life. If there are wetlands and stinging nettles and wasps and cliffs to fall off, that's life. So, I learned to appreciate my "bad hair days" because that makes the view from up there a lot better. The journey, if it's tough, it makes the view a lot better than if you got up there easy.

Interviewer: So, you really were a natural flyer and you loved flying.

Jack Tueller: I loved it. I been two and a half times the speed of sound in an F-106 Delta Dagger, and I can hear music. I'm way ahead of my sound, but I can hear the vibrating string theory.

Crew Member: Can you explain that just a moment?

Interviewer: Yeah, explain that further when you fly, this relationship with music.

Jack Tueller: It's a sound of something that's vibrating. It's not a hum of the engine, and you're way ahead of your thrust sound coming out the tail pipe. It's more of a vibration and Armstrong that landed on the moon speaks of this, Buzz Aldrin, the astronaut speaks of this. Anyone who's been in that situation, you can hear music. Now, music is harmonious vibrations of vibrating strings, I can't explain it any more thoroughly than Professor McCucle, I guess, the replacement for Einstein on the Theory of the Universe. I'm a firm believer that, like music, we, our relationship, person to person, is related to the chemical electrical vibrations that we give off, not the infrared, and people call it charisma. I sense it with my interviewer. You have it. There's an attraction. And it is real and there are cameras that take pictures of it down at Huntsville, Alabama. And I think that that's the importance of flying is similar to that. The young man who wrote the poem "High Flight." "I've slipped the surly bonds of earth, and reached out and touched the face of God." He was 19 years old; he was a Canadian fighter pilot. He was killed in a mid-air collision over England flying a spit fire, only 19, but he was a poet growing up in his teenage years. And the poem High Flight's on every tombstone in Arlington Cemetery of a military person. Every graduate from the Colorado Air Force Academy have to memorize that poem, "High Flight," because it speaks of what it's like to fly.

Interviewer: Yes.

Elizabeth: Can he describe what the emotion is in engaging an enemy or a target, being a daredevil?

Interviewer: All right, you describe being a pilot as a "lone wolf" and a "daredevil." What are you feeling when you are engaging the enemy, or strafing a ground target? What are you feeling at that moment?

Jack Tueller: You realize that we're here in life for one reason, that's to experience things. Not security. A fighter pilot doesn't put much stock in security, or safety. He puts more stock in adventure, seeing what's on the other side of the mountain. What does that taste like? I was talking to a class in high school after I retired, and I was trying to explain this to them, the question that has been asked. I said, "In addition to that excitement and feeling of achieving something that no one else has done, the power of odor, smell --" I was showing them pictures of my gun camera film. They saw the picture, they heard the sounds, and then the chemical teacher was in there and he went down to the mortuary and got a slab of human skin and put it on a hot plate and opened up the classroom door and wafted the smell of burning human flesh. You can't believe how that reinforced the principle of learning in the minds of those high school kids. If I were teaching English and teaching, "The Forest Primeval," that famous poem, I'd have the smell of the forest come through the classroom and I bet you every student would pass the test. We don't use the old factory senses enough in our education system. Or, we don't use the principle of sound, the can be music to engender temperament.

Interviewer: So, what does it smell like to be in that cockpit of a P-47?

Jack Tueller: Well, uh, it smells of fuel, smells of leather, and other people flew my airplane. They wanted to, because it led a charmed life. And it was the only original Razorback left, everyone else got bubble canopies.

Interviewer: So --

Jack Tueller: You have the oxygen mask on, so you're getting the smell of the oxygen. I could fly higher than anyone else because I didn't drink. If you have alcohol in your bloodstream, and you go to high altitude in an unpressurized cabin, you get "the bends" about 2,000 feet lower than people who've had Coca Cola and sodas. So, a code of health is important if you take the human body to new heights without having the proper equipment like pressurized cabin like they do today.

Interviewer: So, when you're in that cockpit, you have the odors, you have the sounds --

Jack Tueller: The sound, if you turn your radio off, you can hear the propeller and the engine. But in a jet that goes faster than the speed of sound, which is 752 miles an hour at sea level ambient temperature, so going two and a half times the speed of sound, you're going about 1700 miles an hour. And you're way ahead of any sound, and yet, I could hear tinkling vibrations, kind of like wind chimes, except a lot softer. The words can't describe it.

Interviewer: Yes?

Elizabeth: He's talking about going very high, but in the beginning, he talked about going very low.

Interviewer: Oh, okay.

Jack Tueller: Give us a situation where that was working for you.

Interviewer: All right, your low level mastery, your ability to fly at a low level that that crop duster taught you. Tell us about flying low level. Describe that to us.

Jack Tueller: Okay, I'd go down on a --

Interviewer: Look up at me.

Jack Tueller: I'd go down on a tank. Instead of coming up like this, I would lay over and go down the river, or I'd go down between a row of trees. The ground gunner firing at me, firing at me, he had to depress the carriage of his gun down to a certain stop. And it would clink like that and all the shells would go over my head. That's why low-level is very exciting. It's skill, you're a foot off the ground at 300 miles an hour, and the slightest move and you're going to hit the ground. And, uh, it's a thrill. It's a challenge. And I love a challenge.

Elizabeth: I'm good.

Interviewer: Should we have him play the trumpet for us?

Elizabeth: I'm ready.

Interviewer: We're ready for you, master musician.

Jack Tueller: Oh, yeah, sure.

Elizabeth: Well, we're not quite ready yet.

(Trumpet playing).

Interviewer: Okay, that was a warm-up. We are going to have you do it again.

(Trumpet playing).

(Applause).

Elizabeth: (Inaudible).

Crew Member: Let's ask him first. Does that take a lot out you to play a song?

Jack Tueller: No, no.

Crew Member: Physically?

Jack Tueller: I'm disappointed I'm not better.

Elizabeth: Oh --

Jack Tueller: I'm never happy with -- I'm either too loud or my lips -- but at 89, I'm lucky to have my own teeth.

Crew Member: Yes, you are.

Interviewer: Okay, why don't you play your wife's favorite song? Or do we want to do another take?

Elizabeth: We will do second takes (inaudible).

Interviewer: Okay, so do your wife's favorite tune.

Crew Member: And what's it called?

Jack Tueller: It's, "An Affair to Remember." I'll try to remember it, but I like to have the chords. I can hear the chords if I have my CD here. Let's see if I can to it.

(Trumpet playing).

(Applause).

Crew Member: I think it's better not to clap right after.

Interviewer: Okay.

Crew Member: Thank you.

Jack Tueller: (Laughter).

Crew Member: Only because of audio, we need to keep it quiet I think,
maybe.

Interviewer: You're right.

Elizabeth: As long as he's not playing.

Crew Member: I think a five second after pause.

Interviewer: You're right, I just got too enthusiastic.

Crew Member: Yes, we will do one big grand clap at the end, how's that?

Interviewer: Okay.

Crew Member: Good job, Jack.

Interviewer: Okay, how about "Danny Boy?"

Jack Tueller: Okay.

(Trumpet playing).

Interviewer: Now, the fourth one we're going to have you play is taps.

Crew Member: Was the sniper song the Lily Marlene?

Interviewer: Yes.

(Trumpet playing).

Interviewer: Okay, so we do them all again, one more time?

Elizabeth: If he has it in him, I would love to.

Interviewer: We want you to do them all again one more time, if you've got
it in you.

Jack Tueller: Old age.

(Trumpet playing).

Interviewer: Marvelous.

Crew Member: You've done great.

Jack Tueller: Empty head but -- (inaudible).

Crew Member: Oh, stop.

Elizabeth: He's terrific.

Crew Member: You know --

End of recording.