

Charles J. "Coby" O'Brien¹
Pensacola Pre-Flight Class 18-48 (Batt 3)

This is Charles J. O'Brien, "Coby" O'Brien. I was in class 18-49-3--that's the 3rd battalion Got my wings in May of 1950, and after fighter training and going to JTU-1 [Jet Training Unit One] at North Whiting Field--flying the F-80s [TO-1s] at that time. I was assigned to VF-44 in Jacksonville, Florida. [I] stayed with that squadron for four years, making two Mediterranean cruises and one Korean cruise.

August, 1954, I went to ... back to Pensacola and instructed at Whiting Field for the next three years, in A, B, and C stages of the SNJ and later on the T-34. I then went to Photo School over at Mainside, ... Pensacola, and subsequently reported to VFP-62 in Jacksonville, where I flew the F9F-8P and the F8U-1P. I made the first F8U-1 cruise aboard the ... let's see ... the *Forrestal*, and ... during that time, in VFP-62, made three cruises.

[From] VFP-62 we went to ... I was selected ... I was going to go back to Monterey to get my degree, but I had a [garbled] tours and at NAS New York. Which wasn't a lot of fun. I was an officer ... a procurement officer there.

Upon finishing PG [Post Graduate] School in 1965, with a degree, I went to the *Bonnie Dick* as assistant Air Boss and Air Boss, and was--that was an 18-month tour--and then to ComFAir Norfolk, in Norfolk, for two years.

After that two years, I went to [garbled] in Saigon where we had two C-1As, and got a lot of carrier landings operating with CTF-77 and the ... and the Air Force.

They saved my job at ComFAir Norfolk, and I went back there and spent the next few years at ComFAir Norfolk. In 1971, I became the operations officer at NAS Norfolk, and remained there until I retired in 1976.

The Midshipman Program, I think, was one of the best things that happened to Naval Aviation, and I sure would like to see a program like that ...not continue, but ... [be] reestablished.

I guess ... that's all I have to say ... the Navy was sure good to me, and I'd like to do it again. And, I'd recommend it to anybody. A career well spent.

¹ Oral Interview, recorded 4-07-88 at JAX by Lou Ives.

Now, at the present time, I am a fl ... still flying SNJs with the [Skytypers] out of New York (SNJ-2s)--on a part-time basis. On a full-time basis, I'm a ... I went back to school when I retired and got a [garbled] degree in counseling, and now I'm now doing outplacement--and outplacement as counseling high-level executives who have been terminated ... from their jobs. Their companies send them to my company, and they get four day's intensive counseling and follow-up. It's a very rewarding thing, but a not as exciting as flying.

The [Skytypers] provide that outlet for me. That's it.

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