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Alex Daverede

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U.S. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION  
Transcript of National Archives History Office  
Oral History Interview  
Subject: Alex Daverede  
Interviewer: Erik Moshe  
Date: 10/11/2017

MR. ERIK MOSHE: Hi, Mr. Daverede. Good morning.

MR. DAVEREDE: Hey, Eric. Good morning to you.

MR. MOSHE: How are you today?

MR. DAVEREDE: Any better I couldn't stand it.

MR. MOSHE: Can you just please make an introductory announcement for what service you were in and for what rank that you were before you got discharged?

MR. DAVEREDE: My name is Alex Daverede and I was a lieutenant in the Fly Corps, United States Navy.

MR. MOSHE: Where were you living at the time that you enlisted?

MR. DAVEREDE: When I joined the Navy, I was in New Orleans. I was born and raised in New Orleans, so I enlisted there to attend the Naval Academy Preparatory School in August of 1979, and then I graduated from the Naval Academy in 1984.

MR. MOSHE: Why did you decide to join the Navy?

MR. DAVEREDE: A variety of reasons. The Navy story has always inspired me. I have always had this thing about seeing the ships, so I wanted to be a part of that. Naval history was a real inspiration for me, and I developed some heroes in naval history, and I wanted to go down that path.

MR. MOSHE: Could I ask who those heroes were? For example, what kind of books did you read?

MR. DAVEREDE: They were general Navy histories. I recall reading a Random House book called *All About the U.S. Navy*, and I was a wee child at the time and I saw things there that you know, spoke in generality but for the most part, you are looking at World War II histories. People like Admiral Chester Nimitz, Admiral Raymond A. Spruance were inspirational characters to me because they seemed like ideal leaders, and what they had in common was their origins at the Naval Academy and that kind of inspired me to work to gain entrance there.

MR. MOSHE: Do you remember your first days in service?

MR. DAVEREDE: Vividly. My parents drove me to the preparatory school; we drove from New Orleans to Newport, Rhode Island, and they, as usual—I am kind of a time person—I want to be places on time or in advance of time, and my order is to go to the prep school. It said, "report no earlier than 08:00 3 August 1979," and so my parents drove up at 08:00 and on 3 August 1979. I recall my mom saying, "I am just going to drop your stuff off and come back out and we will go get some breakfast." And oh my lord, that was the furthest thing

that ever happened! When I went in, they said “you have 10 minutes to get your stuff and get down here,” along with some other kinds of words I wouldn’t use. My mom was just in complete shock when she heard that. My brother and my father were scrambling to get my gear out of the car so I could hustle back down because once you entered those doors you weren’t going back out for breakfast; that is for sure. So that day was quite remarkable, in my mind.

MR. MOSHE: Letting someone get their breakfast. They were being a little stingy that day for sure.

MR. DAVEREDE: No, no. The Navy food once you got going was fine. It is just that it wasn’t going to be a family breakfast.

MR. MOSHE: What did it feel like to finally be in?

MR. DAVEREDE: I couldn’t believe it, there were such mixed feelings because there were moments where you kind of feel like you are on top of the world, and then there are times when you are saying, “oh my lord, what did I just do?” Because I am a New Orleans kid, and I first faced snow up there in Newport, Rhode Island, over there by Narragansett because they made us shovel the sidewalks. I never cleared sidewalks in my life, so you get introduced to some things. You get introduced to the Marine sergeant who ran you through the obstacle course they had up there at Newport, which wasn’t necessarily the most fun experience I ever had. But then there were the other things like some of the courses of study, which were fabulous. Others were just downright hard. The new environment, having to work with people you never worked before. I had always been in all male schools down in New Orleans. Never went to school with girls, and so that was the very first opportunity I ever had to serve with women. Never had that chance before so you know, there was always something new around the corner, always a new obstacle, like keeping your room clean, making sure your room was in tip-top shape every single day. But then you could always wait for the weekend, and they gave you liberty. You get normal liberty like sailors normally had. So from Friday afternoon until Sunday evening, you had liberty and could explore Newport to the best of the funds that E-3 in 1979 could afford. So that was all pretty neat to me.

MR. MOSHE: Do you remember your training instructors?

MR. DAVEREDE: It was primarily an academic environment so it was more of the civilian teachers that you had. I had military staff in terms of a company officer and an assistant company officer, and the company officer was a Marine captain, and all we knew at that point was to keep our distance. We interacted more with the assistant company officer, who was a chief. And you know, again, it was more keeping on the good side because you are trying to adjust to this new military environment, and although I had been in junior ROTC in high school, that is an in-and-out kind of thing. You have military evolutions in high school during the day that would last for a certain period of time and then you were done, you went home and everything was normal. Being immersed in the environment was a lot different, and you learn quickly, especially from observing the troubles of others; what to do and what not to do. I kind of kept clear of the military staff as much as I could. I could not avoid the Gunny who was running the obstacle course though. He was there every day. The civilian instructors were challenging. I had to take two calculus courses, and one of them was just plain intimidating because he just insisted that you weren’t going to make it, and of course, not making it at the prep school meant that you weren’t going to Annapolis in the end. It was a challenge for me just to make it through the kinds of courses that they had at the prep school, but I eventually prevailed so I could make it down to Annapolis.

MR. MOSHE: Where exactly did you go when you finished all that calculus and all that training?

MR. DAVEREDE: Went down to the Naval Academy so I could go through four more years of the same. You go through the Annapolis schooling and because you are kind of older, you are treated a little bit differently because you had gone through the prep school and are looked at a bit differently. The first year, which is often a

shock to kids coming into the civilian world, wasn't as difficult to transition because you can sort of say I cheated in going through the prep school first. Knowing how to rig a uniform, knowing how to deal with superiors, keeping your room clean. All that other stuff had been second nature, and I didn't have to learn it, so it was a great advantage, but the academics were still a challenge, and there were times over the four years that it would be very difficult—especially the third year. Second-class year at the Naval Academy is traditionally a heartbreaker for many of the guys, and when you are taking some of the courses like electrical engineering (I am just not built that way). I turned out to be an English major, and so electrical engineering or any kind of engineering was a big challenge for me. It was a bit of a struggle but I was able to make it through that. I graduated about the middle of the class but again a rewarding experience, probably based on learning how not to do things, but it was just the beginning of the education because things don't really turn around until you get to the fleet. Then you start unlearning some of the bad habits that you picked up over the four years.

MR. MOSHE: So it was more on the job than it was on the books?

MR. DAVEREDE: Absolutely. It was quite a different environment between what the instructors tell you in a classroom or what you practice in the yard at a Naval Academy then when you go out to an actual ship and you are actually dealing with sailors and chiefs on a regular basis. You are leader at that point, you are an authority. You have to know what you are doing, and in addition to that, sound like you know what you are doing, which is more challenging than most people think. Your education really begins when you get commissioned and you start that service in the fleet and you start returning back to the Navy what it has given you so far. For me that was five and a half years of school. I had to go through six more months of school for the Navy Supply Corps because that is the logistics part of the Navy, and you had to learn how to be a supply officer.

MR. MOSHE: Was that what your assignment was, supply office?

MR. DAVEREDE: Yes. You serve in a variety of different roles wherever the Navy put you, so I did five different areas. I started out as a dispersing officer, the guy in charge of the money in a lovely little place in the Aleutians called Adak. It was about the middle of the Aleutians chain in Alaska. We were closer to the Soviet Union than to the mainland USA. It was a very interesting place, a very challenging place. My wife and I spent two years there. It was quite a bit of a challenge. As a dispersing officer, duties were pretty regular, you just "got to make sure you got the money." People got paid. People got their travel claims done on time. It wasn't a terribly challenging tour but it was a necessary tour, and so you just have to be precise and when you do your balances at the end of the day, you have to balance out. You are accountable to every penny. There are a lot harder jobs in the Navy, and being a dispersing officer on an isolated island in the Aleutians wasn't that to me. You have to really go on board the ship to face those challenges.

MR. MOSHE: Did you go anywhere while you were in Alaska?

MR. DAVEREDE: No. My wife was an officer as well, so we couldn't afford really to go far. We only went back to Anchorage, Alaska, that is as far as we could go. We spent a few days off the island and then we went back. And then in two years that is all we did. We did that once. In your first years you just don't get a lot of time to yourself. It was just difficult to get off the island because there was only one way on and off; you had to pick your time. You had to pick your weather because the weather was never very good. The time that you are off the island, you want to make sure that where you are going to have at least decent weather so you can have a good time. Alaska is just a fascinating place besides the weather; just the sites, the mountains, the water, the glaciers, the whole thing. It is just a fascinating place to be.

MR. MOSHE: Can you tell me some more about your some memorable experiences in Alaska?

MR. DAVEREDE: There wasn't that much to Alaska simply because Adak was the end of a fairly long chain, and

my duties—my wife probably had a more exciting experience than I did. She was the assistant Navy Exchange Officer at one point and then she was the Food and Service Officer, so between us, I ran the money and she ran the food, and pretty much controlled a good portion of the happiness that was in Adak at the time that we were there in the 1980s.

The real times that you had is when you go on board ship because obviously the tempo picks up on things that you do. I served on board a helicopter carrier, *USS Guadalcanal LPH-7*. She was an old ship at the time, and I reported on board her in the middle of 1987. You just go out and you start doing things. I hadn't been on board the ship long before we were headed to the Caribbean and doing some exercises and had the opportunity to sail with the battleship *USS Iowa*. With the *Iowa*, we went down to the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, which at the time part of the island was being used as a target range. It was there we were able to see the *Iowa* fire with 60-inch guns, which was something else, and a number of other junior officers were able to observe Vieques. Any time you can see a battleship open fire is something worthwhile and we were able to do that. Once you are done with these exercises, then it is time to deploy. So by the middle of 1987, within a couple of months of reporting on board, I was off on my first deployment headed to the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean.

Deployments always bring exotic things, and you see exotic places, so we stopped at Rota, Spain. Almost all Navy ships go into the Mediterranean to do what they call "change in operation" or "control choppies." You in chop at Rota and you become part of the sixth fleet at that location, and your job as part of an Amphibious Ready Group is carrying a battalion of Marines and having them ready to do whatever needs to be done, so there's training exercises that are done with the Marines. The ship is an aviation ship, so you are constantly bringing Marines on and off with your helicopters and you go from place to place. There is a presence, there are port visits, although we didn't get into those terribly much during this cruise. We ended up sailing through the Suez Canal—one of the more exotic places that I went was Mombasa, Kenya. We had to dip down to Mombasa in the Indian Ocean, and that is where we did the line crossing because when you cross the equator there usually is a line crossing ceremony. That is where all the Pollywogs who have never been across the Equator get turned into Trusty Shellbacks. Not necessarily a family-friendly ceremony, and the whole ship goes through this, and it had been a long time since the ship had crossed the equator, and so there were a lot more Pollywogs than there were Trusty Shellbacks. The ceremony was a bit drawn out as a result, but everybody survived the experience.

And we go down to Mombasa for a port visit. There we get redirected by the Joint Chiefs of Staff because a situation had developed in the Persian Gulf because of Iranian mining activity at the time. This is July of 1987, and so the ship is going in there carrying mine-sweeping helicopters. We had to go in from Mombasa, Kenya, to a little spot in the Chagos Archipelago called Diego Garcia, and from Diego Garcia we had to switch out the Marines we had with Navy mine-sweeping helicopters. From that point, we had to practice with those mine-sweeping helicopters, and we had to transit through the Persian Gulf through the Strait, being on the lookout for mines along the way. For that, we ended up going to general quarters for extended periods of time because of various threats in the area, and life became much more exciting when you are actually doing the business of a war ship at sea.

My duties at the time, I was a ship store officer so I am contributing to crew morale by making sure we have the right stuff on board, making sure the laundry gets taken care of, making sure the barbershop's running properly, but not going to general quarters with everybody else. That was kind of the downside of what I did because you know, you are not really participating in some of the things that most of the crew are participating in. That is the struggle with working with logistics at sea. It is not quite like the duties of other men that are performing on the ship but we are all in it together.

For a few months, we ran the *Guadalcanal* up and down, escorting Kuwaiti tankers to make sure that the Iranians didn't do anything to those tankers, and it was all covered by something called Operation Earnest Will, and that ran long into 1990, long after my ship departed. But it is something that I have a lot of memories about

because a lot of things happened during that cruise and those memories do stick with you.

MR. MOSHE: Did you see any casualties in your unit?

MR. DAVEREDE: No. We could come close, but we are actually part of an operation that captured an Iranian mine layer that was putting mines not far from where my ship was anchoring. And so there was a special operation that took down a landing craft that the Iranians were using to drop mines in the Persian Gulf, and in the course of that special operation the Iranians took casualties and the survivors of the crew were taken prisoner. They eventually showed up on my ship. They were treated by the medical crew on board the *Guadalcanal*, and they were transported off the ship. But the other thing we run into, and that is whenever you are dealing with aviation is dealing with crashes, and we did have a helo crash during that cruise: one of the UH-1 helicopters that was part of the Marine contingent on the ship that remained on board attempted a landing on another vessel and crashed into the Persian Gulf, and a couple of members of that crew were lost. So the Marine division did have a few casualties in the course of the deployment.

MR. MOSHE: Thank you for all these stories.

MR. DAVEREDE: You ask most sailors and there is a sea story or something out there. It doesn't take much poking to come up with them.

MR. MOSHE: So what were helicopter pilots like?

MR. DAVEREDE: Naval aviators of any type are very confident and sure of themselves. Some of them, you know, carry it a bit too far. A squadron commander was known to be traveling with a foot-long cigar dangling from his lips constantly. Large man, but these guys they were the tip of the spear and I understand why they carry themselves the way they do. They are interesting to be with, but ships that have aircrews like that, there is not a lot of co-mingling. Everybody, the officers dine in a place called the Ward Room, and what happens in the ship's company stays with the ship's company. The air group stays with the air group. You don't mingle much. I had to bother them because I needed to collect money for their food so they didn't care much for my presence, because anytime you loosen them of their money they are not very happy. And there is always the discussion of the quality of the food that they are paying for, so you always end up with interesting conversations when dealing with a pilot's money. The circumstances bring you all together. You find a way to make it work, especially on board a ship, because honestly, there is no place else to go. If you can't get along with each other, where are you going to go? And so each of us kind of learns that teamwork is vital, not only in getting the mission done, but being able to live day to day on a ship.

MR. MOSHE: Were you awarded any medals or citations?

MR. DAVEREDE: In that deployment, no. I got some stuff later on, but as a fairly junior officer doing a service job, there is not much recognition in that. And yes, I didn't expect it. It is just the way that it turns out when you are in the supply corps and you are working services—there is not a lot that gets recognition, but like I said, it came later on in other tours that I had, so that was okay.

MR. MOSHE: Going to Spain, the Suez, Kenya, the Persian Gulf, Diego Garcia, what was it like to be in those places? How surprised were you about their culture and did you know anything before you got there?

MR. DAVEREDE: As a student of military history, I was fascinated by some of this stuff. What is really neat when you are transiting by the Suez Canal—this is 1987, so 14 years before, you had the October War between the Israelis, the Egyptians, the Syrians, and a lot of fighting took place on the edge of the Suez Canal. You can still see remnants of that as the ship was transiting the Suez Canal. You can look at the Sinai side of the Suez Canal and

you can see remnants of Egyptian fortifications, remnants of the Israeli fortifications. Occasionally you would see wreckage of armored vehicles or you would see armored vehicles set up as memorials, because this was all '87 in Egyptian territories. Naturally, the memorials that you saw were Egyptian memorials, and that was a constant reminder when you transited the length of the Suez. You saw lots of military installations, anti-aircraft gun batteries, missile gun batteries, and whatnot.

The Suez was a really intriguing; if you are on the flight deck of aircraft carrier, you see from side to side and you get this great view of everything as you go by, and then when you emerge from the southern end of the Suez Canal, there is always a flock of ships that are waiting for the next convoy that goes North through the canal. We ended up passing the USS *Stark* (FFG31), and the *Stark* was struck by two Exocet missiles launched by an Iraqi aircraft in May of 1987. The *Stark* had lost 37 crew and her superstructure was pretty well torn up by the impact of those missiles, and so she had been repaired in Bahrain. When we saw her at the mouth of the Suez awaiting transit north, she had been superficially repaired, and as we passed her, we rendered honors. Everybody lined the flight deck and saluted as we went past the *Stark* in memory of her losses and the trauma that she went through, and so that was quite a remarkable sight for us as well. All kinds of things that you could see.

MR. MOSHE: Yes. Must have been pretty emotional for everybody.

MR. DAVEREDE: Well, it was. I mean, we knew that there had been deadly business now at the time. We had no idea that we would be going there ourselves. We thought that once we had finished our little Indian Ocean deployment that we would transit back through the Suez Canal north and resume our deployment in the Mediterranean. Little did we know that a couple of weeks later, we would be headed to Diego Garcia and then headed to the zone where the *Stark* had gotten her casualties. That is how quickly life in the Navy could change sometimes.

MR. MOSHE: Throughout your military journey, how did you stay in touch with your family?

MR. DAVEREDE: Well, back in the day it was letters. You wrote letters and it had to go through the fleet post office, which for the bulk of my Navy career was in New York. So if you are on a ship in the Mediterranean when you put your mail in the slot on board the ship, it is taken off the ship and it has got to go all the way back to New York where they process it and then have it sent back out. Now during one of the second of my cruises, my wife's ship was deployed at roughly the same time as mine, and so sending a letter at that point was really difficult because you had to send it back to the FPO who has got to send it back to the Mediterranean to catch up with my wife's ship. That was rather difficult. We didn't hear from each other for a while. The Navy does have a means you can send a message from ship to ship for a personal message. If you were a family member on another ship, I could write what was called a 'class easy message' to get to my wife, which would be quicker. The only problem is everybody and their grandmother reads the message. And so your division officer, your department has to read it, the communications officer has to read it, the executive officer has to read it, the captain has to read it and then the radio men who actually have to send it have to read it.

And then the reverse happens when you send it to its destination, so you have to be very careful what you write in class easy messages. You don't want anything in there that you don't want basically a crowd of people to see. So that is basically another way of doing it and then the final way was when you hit a port, a lot of places that you went to, you just had banks of phones. Everybody figured out how to do international dialing from these phones and that was the expensive part of it because international dialing was so expensive, especially the way we were doing it. You have lines waiting outside of phone booths; people waiting to be able to call home and then mentally trying to figure out the math, figuring out what time it is when you are back home because you didn't want people to necessarily to dump out of bed, but you had to take advantage of whatever time it was, especially in some of the further locations. If you were at say, Israel, that is quite a leap from the East Coast with the U.S. and there is quite a time separation. You have to be cognizant of that.

MR. MOSHE: What was the food like in your experience?

MR. DAVEREDE: Navy food is Navy food. It is a tough food service environment because you are kind of stuck with the ingredients that you can get. I know a little bit more about this so you know, there is a catalog of food store that you are limited to. When you are close to port or if you are in homeport, you get regular supplies of fresh fruits and vegetables and dairy and all that kind of stuff. All that changes when you get underway. At the time, the ship had a salad bar and so you can kind of tell the status of what happened by watching the salad bar, like what ingredients started to disappear. And it was a constant challenge if you are in the food service organization. It was a constant challenge to come up with making sure you had the quantities available, the quality available. Was the stuff even good anymore? And then with dairy, the same thing. At a certain point, the fresh milk will run out and then you are stuck with a rather unpalatable alternative, but they are there nonetheless.

And you are dependent when you are underway on hitting what we call the unrep ships, the underway replenishment ships and in the Navy it was called a food storage ship or an AFS and they had a shopping list. When they were tagged up, you are not quite sure how old that pack out was, and so the quality of the food on the ship that is giving it to you that is sending it over that was questionable. Even after you do a replenishment, you may not necessarily get back what you are hoping for. And you can hear that when people sit down for their meals, you just hear a bellyful from some of them, why they can't have this, why they can't have that. People could be picky on their brands. So you are dealing with okay, what kind of cereal do I have and if the ship doesn't have certain kinds, you go without because it is just too difficult or too expensive to do it overseas.

You are kind of stuck within the Navy system, and that is not necessarily what your customers are looking for, so you end up with some things that people just hated to see, like a lot of sliders. People detested having sliders but sliders were pretty reliable. They were always there and as long as you had freezers on board you had a ready supply of frozen burgers available. You work a cycle menu and you do the best with the standard Navy recipes that they give you, and the rest will depend on the cooks in your outfit to make sure that they put a palatable meal that is hot and nourishing and most of the guys at the end of a hard day's work are hungry and they are going to eat it anyway. It is just a matter of how much grouching they are going to have about it.

MR. MOSHE: Yes. It makes sense. You guys have a very limited environment to get those good food items for them.

MR. DAVEREDE: There are a lot of worst places to be. The ground pounders that you talk to have probably talked about things as ancient as sea rats or the more modern guys will talk about MREs and any of them would trade in a heartbeat a chance to eat in a Navy galley. So it is all about perspective. Sailors will grouch about it because they live with it so long and since they are not exposed to say, MREs, they are none the wiser for it. But I know Marines or soldiers will probably come back as "oh my lord, you guys get away with murder," and they have a point. They do have a point.

MR. MOSHE: Throughout your deployments, did you feel pressure or stress?

MR. DAVEREDE: Yes. But in the line of work that I did, it was in working with logistics which is a different kind of stress. It is more in the lines of the leadership kinds of things where you are trying to foster an environment where people can work together to get the mission done. It is more difficult on the ship because the environment is difficult, what you end up with are some things that you couldn't change very much. And understand at the time, I am a junior officer so I am still learning this game. The lessons come naturally to some and but for me it wasn't as natural an experience; I learned some tough lessons there, like how do you get guys to work in a laundry. It is hot outside and so it is hot inside the skin of the ship, and we are putting them in places where we have work with presses, washers and dryers, or as the Navy calls them, extractors, because



they have to make sure they get all the water out of the stuff and nobody says a thing nice about anybody in the supply department. They are just expected to do this work, so you are doing it without expecting a lot in the way of compliments. Nobody goes around to the guys working the presses and says thanks so much for crushing my buttons, and things of that nature. Leadership in such an organization is difficult, and I struggled, to be honest, I struggled with that, because you are always looking for answers. And it was in some occasions—it wasn't easy to do and in some cases you have mixed success and sometimes you didn't pull it off very well. That is a concerted effort between your chief, your senior petty officers, and yourself to try to make that environment, and the physical environmental conditions just add to the mental environmental conditions.

And then there is just the kinds of things that sailors get into, be it with family, be it with girls back at home, be it with their personal situation with money. They went and got a loan and did this, that, and the other thing and it is going south on them. You have to be careful that you don't personalize all this stuff and don't make those troubles your own, and you have to walk a fine line between standing above the fray so you can be effective and being personable enough that you can communicate with people and be credible as a leader.

MR. MOSHE: Is there something you did for good luck?

MR. DAVEREDE: Maybe, I didn't have much. There wasn't anything specific. Once you get into a routine wherever you are at—I got into routines, you know, living overseas. I spent over a year in Bahrain living in a fuel region in the Middle East. My job was to check on fuel that the government bought, so I had to work on civilian tankers to check on if are they clean enough to take petroleum products on board. I had to be sure the right amounts were discharged. I had to be sure that the fuel quality met specifications and so you kind of get into a routine on how you do those things and a variety of locations. I lived in Bahrain for a year but I had to go to Saudi Arabia once. I spent a lot of time in the Emirates and this was in the Emirates around 1991, so at the time, the Emirates weren't the big vacation destination they were making themselves out to be these days. They had some build-up but it was nowhere near as fancy, and it was really a kind of odd place to operate, but when you went to each of these places, you sort of developed routines because I was on my own. The only time I interacted with my office was by phone. The rest of the time, I had my work cut out for me, and I was visiting labs, ships, or fuel tanks. I pretty much got the smell of JP5 jet fuel and diesel-5 marine in my nostrils for a great deal of the time. You develop a new routine for each of those things to suit your comfort zone, and when new things come up, the old service saying is like Gumby: Just be flexible.

MR. MOSHE: How did people entertain themselves?

MR. DAVEREDE: Variety of things. Onboard ship is a challenge because your workday is so undefined. Your workday can stretch almost until the time you hit the rack. There would be some television in various places, so the cruise usually in the berthing spaces would have a lounge. The ship had what was termed a site TV so there would be a daily broadcast of things that they got from the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service that gets packaged in the form of videotapes. They set up a videocast day, but that broadcast day really didn't begin until the afternoon where you might have people stopping ship's work at that time. Reading was big; you had card games; you had just telling more sea stories to take the time away. And the ship had a library. The usual chaplain activities were available on a regular basis. The big changes occurred when you got into port and you could see different things.

During the Persian Gulf experience, that didn't happen as much simply because the situation we were in. We got ashore a couple of times, but you got folks who are, they are giving you a briefing before the ship ties up and the ship will point out where things are, and one case during a port visit to the French port of Tulane, there was a map and they were telling people, "these are the places you shouldn't go." Most of the officers, or at least most of the officers and the chiefs, were thinking, "why the hell are you telling them where not to go and pointing out where that is?" Because usually the first thing that sailors do . . . that is where they are going to go. It would

have been far better had they not briefed the places where they shouldn't be going, and the sailors just would have remained ignorant of that stuff and they wouldn't have gone there. You constantly scratch your head sometimes on how the Navy does things, but that was one port visit that really stood out. You got used to seeing places on foot, you walked around a lot. There was no internet so any research you did, you tried to hit places that might have guidebooks or whatnot to kind of help you out. What time you had on liberty generally was quite limited, and it depended on the duty sections that you had on board. If the port visit only lasted three or four days, the chances are you are only going to get off the ship once because liberty would be granted after the ship's work ended or on the weekend and if your duty section was up. There were a couple of times where I never made it off the ships at all. I made it, I had the duty and my time didn't come around while the ship was still at port. And that was just the breaks. It works out that way. But it was also kind of exciting, sometimes disappointing, because you would see the Americans in foreign ports and you would think they would get into seeing what things are like in a foreign city, but a lot of guys weren't comfortable with that and they would end up going to some regular establishments that serve American stuff.

I remember one Italian port near the fleet landing, and I think just about everybody who came in on liberty went through. Here you are in Italy, which has got such a vast expanse of drinking and dining experiences, and here we've got Americans buying American-style pizza and washing it down with Budweiser. And that was just criminal to me. I mean, just not being able to step out and enjoy what some of these ports could offer, but I also could understand where young folks aren't necessarily comfortable with new experiences. It takes a little courage to go see an Italian hole-in-the wall in the city of Naples, and taking a chance on it even though it may have some of the finest cuisine and the best table wine you will run into. That is not just a chance that some of the folks will take. So you shake your head. You take advantage of them yourself if you are comfortable with that, then just wish the best for everybody else.

MR. MOSHE: Do you recall any particular humorous or unusual event that happened to you?

MR. DAVEREDE: Let's see, there was the time when we were driving around in the supply officer's car, and he decided that he was going to show us how to do police turns, and he did that a few times on the street in Israel, I think, and at one point they got overenthusiastic, slammed the right rear tire into a curb and blew it out, then returned the car to an agent to say that he had a defective vehicle. So that was a bit funny. The rest of it was just exhausting. It is when you get off the ship, there is so much you want to see that you just run yourself ragged in the hours that you have. I did find myself one time in Golan Heights in Israel. I don't think that I was supposed to be there. I was with another officer and we were following some vehicles, some paths, passing some signs in Hebrew that probably said something along the lines of "Do Not Enter" but since we didn't read Hebrew, we ended up being stopped by some guards at the Israeli border patrol. After a few minutes of trying to figure out who the hell we are and me and the other guy kind of sweating bullets thinking "oh my lord, we have a diplomatic incident going on." We eventually get pointed in the right direction and out of the area, so sometimes fun times are not always as fun as we hope them to be, but it was definitely a different experience and one I carry with me always.

MR. MOSHE: What were some of the jokes or pranks you or others would pull?

MR. DAVEREDE: Those are harder to come up with. One does stick out though and it picks on Marines, and I love Marines, you know, we sail together on so much stuff, but when you are on a ship with Marines, the things that you could do sometimes can be a little cruel. And one of them was down by the ship's mast, which is kind of the larger open areas on the ship below decks. There was an area where we had vending machines and whatnot, and I recall a couple of times where some sailors would just get into a line on the mess decks and pretty soon after that happens some Marines will start joining the line, and because the Marines have lots of time on their hands on board ship, at least back in the day, more and more Marines would join in the line and at some point the sailors would disengage themselves from the line and just disappear. You would just end up with a bunch of

Marines standing there in a line and nobody had a clue what they were doing there. So somebody finally figures out that there is nothing here, so break it up! That was pretty good.

MR. MOSHE: Do you remember the day that your service ended?

MR. DAVEREDE: Yes. I was here in DC, I belonged to an organization called Naval District in Washington, and one of the unfortunate facts of officer life is something called "Up and Out." If you fail to select for the next rank, you have to leave. You go up with something called the Selection Board and you have two options to use before you go to the Selection Board, and if you fail to select for the next pay grade on the second board, you are out. You are automatically out. And so that is all clock-driven; within 90 days of being notified, you have to be out. I knew this was going to happen when I got to my last duty station because I had not made some good choices as a junior officer either in the places that I went to or some of the things that I did. And the competition at the time for getting selected is always rough and so I just I knew I was not going to make it. That was in March of 1996. On March 1, I signed all that stuff up and that was pretty much it. I had made up in my mind that going for reserves was probably not for me, because in the supply officer community, reserve duty is not very good. There is not much point to it, and so rather than make that commitment for the Naval Reserve, I said I will do a clean break and just get out. That kind of ended it for me and started a six-month period of unemployment that took a few job applications to do, but ultimately six months later I found myself here at College Park and the National Archives. That was a miraculous transition for me.

MR. MOSHE: You went straight from the military to the National Archives? Have you been there ever since?

MR. DAVEREDE: Yes, I have been here since September 30, 1996.

MR. MOSHE: Did you also go back to school at all?

MR. DAVEREDE: I did, actually. I went through an outfit called American Military University, and now this was all pre-9/11 so it doesn't have the 9/11 GI bill. I ended up being able to go through that school with some assistance through there, and I was able to pull out a Master of Arts in Military Studies from AMU, and I completed that program in 2002. It has been a great tour being able to work here in the National Declassification Center using my military background and military history education to be able to work the records and work on making records available to the public. It has been a godsend for me. It has been great. The transition was not that long compared to others' experience, and so I figure myself lucky in that respect, although when I was in the middle of it I didn't feel particularly lucky. I put out dozens of job applications and just was not coming up with any luck. I applied to be an archives technician in the Declass Branch as it was called back then, and I didn't have any idea what that was, but my supervisor at the time, the Division Director, a lady by the name of Jean, took a chance. She took a chance. She didn't have to, but she took a chance with me, and this has been a great stop for me all this time.

MR. MOSHE: Did you make any close friendships and did you continue any of those relationships when you got out?

MR. DAVEREDE: Not as much. Part of it is just the moving. It is just so difficult to keep that together. Moving from coast to coast and place to place, it was difficult to keep those relationships up. The shore installations for ships, the social organization is a little bit tighter because your wives get together on things, and the ward room is just much tighter with the camaraderie, but when you get to shore installations which is where I spent four out of the five tours in the Navy, things aren't quite as tight. It is more of a day thing, and you kind of treat it like an office job, and the Middle East tour was great. I actually maintained contact with my boss from that tour for a number of years. My boss in Bahrain was an Army colonel, and lord forgive me for even saying that, but he was one of the finest officers I ever worked for. We kept things up, but just over the years they turned out to be too

tough to sustain, but fond memories nonetheless but I have lots of pictures and from the ship, I have the cruise books, so lots of memories and faces from those.

MR. MOSHE: Have you ever tried to access your military records at NARA?

MR. DAVEREDE: Actually no, I really haven't felt the need because I have a decent copy of stuff at home so I never had to go and look at my official record out of St. Louis. I probably should at some point, maybe as I get closer to retirement I should do that, but I haven't done it yet.

MR. MOSHE: Did you join a veteran's organization when you were done?

MR. DAVEREDE: Not really. No. It just never appealed to me because, while I enjoy a good sea story and spinning a tale, when you compare it to like folks who have really gone into combat and whatnot . . . during the early part of my post-Navy career, the organizations were pretty well dominated by Korea and Vietnam veterans, and now we have more and more of the veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan showing up from more modern conflicts and being a Cold War veteran it is kind of a tough place. Yes, I served in one pseudo-combat operation in Earnest Will, but it is nothing compared to what the younger ones have dealt with or the older folks, say in Vietnam. So it is difficult to go into a hall and kind rub shoulders with guys and gals like that who have actually done the thing. I am proud in my service and the time that I was able to serve, but in terms of kind of perpetuating that stuff I have a feeling I just don't hold a candle to true combat veterans because they have dealt with things that I had never had to feel or face, and they have been tested in ways I never would be. It is just an uneasy thought of being in there presence and kind of being looked at on the same plane, and I don't feel that way.

MR. MOSHE: How did your service and experiences affect your life overall?

MR. DAVEREDE: Well, I met my wife at the Naval Academy so I would say that is a great effect. I matured a great deal during my service. When I first got commissioned, I was not a very mature young man. The reason I was commissioned in the Navy Supply Corps was I ended up with a medical condition that would not allow me to become an unrestricted line officer—the guys who wear the stars on their sleeves. All I wanted to do since I was a kid was drive a ship, and I found out fairly close to the end of my time at the Naval Academy that I wasn't going to be able to do that, but I still had to serve and I still wanted to be in the Navy. Being a supply officer was not part of the plan, and my transition, shall we say, was not graceful, and in retrospect it could have been done a lot better. I should have grown up a lot sooner, and part of the reason for that is I couldn't get promoted later on because I made some errors early on that I really couldn't recover from. Although, at the time, I didn't really understand that, but what ended up happening during the time that I was in the Navy was that I grew up a great deal. And I learned how not to be a leader. Ultimately, when I came to NARA, I was fortunate enough to be selected to be a supervisor or a manager, and I kind of got a second time around, because when I came to NARA as an archives technician I was in GS-5, and that was kind of a rough transition because I was going from being an officer to a GS-5 technician. I kind of had to go to school again, to learn things over again, but learn them right this time. When I became a supervisor again and when I became a manager again, I was able to at least apply some of those lessons learned when I was in uniform and hopefully be a better manager and supervisor for it, and I think that is what benefited me so much. Plus the fact that just the variety of experiences broadens your horizons to see how other people live. It is all things that most Americans will never see, and you get an appreciation for that kind of stuff that I think to this day and age is most definitely needed because we have to understand our place in the world, and I think only trips overseas and seeing how the rest of the world lives is how to do that.

MR. MOSHE: Thank you for your service, Mr. Daverede, and thank you for your interview.

MR. DAVEREDE: You are quite welcome.