

Arleigh Burke Association Oral History Project  
Rules of Engagement

Rev -, March 20 2024

General:

- The only agenda (purpose) of the oral histories is remember our heroes and document what they contributed to *“Arleigh Burke to Sea”*
  - o The interviews are not to collect answers to current topics, action items, or personal curiosity. This can be done outside the interview as the interviewee agrees.

Interviewer:

- The interviewee must know what questions to expect
  - o We are all getting older, and the memory engine may need some time to recall and refresh the topic.
  - o We have generic questions, but the interviewees specific background may suggest additional topics.
    - Write these down and share complete list prior to the interview (goal - one week)
    - The interviewer must do their memory recall during prep, not during the interview
  - o Logical follow-ons are ok, but do not introduce topics that were not disclosed
- Don't go outside the interviewees area of expertise or experience
- If the interviewee shows reluctance to a question, do not pursue the topic
- Do not make the transcription process harder than it already is.
  - o Avoid sidebar discussions, extended intros and outros
  - o Mark off your list of questions as they are addressed
  - o If it has been answered, do not repeat the question, ask to resummarize, etc.
  - o Do not “read lists into the record”
- The interviewer needs to be as transparent to the process as possible.
  - o This is the interviewees story, do not answer questions in place of the interviewee
  - o If there is a second person listening in (good for training in the process), do not have discussion between the interviewers
- Two hours is probably an upper limit on time. That will generate ~ 60 pages raw transcription, 25-35 once edited.

Editing:

- Goal is a very light edit, preserve the form of the oral interview, but make it readable
- Remove verbal ticks (and so, etc.), dry runs (partial sentence while thoughts are collected, then restarted), sidebars, interviewer calling for provisions, etc.
- When needed, indicate editor explanation notes in [ ]
- Don't change what was said, unless there is a critical reason, then disclose in editor notes – example, an industry person repeatedly states they were onboard for OpEval (a big violation of test processs), when the schedule shows they were referring to TechEval, and then with permission of the interviewee.