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Lance Hatten
February 27, 2002

Interview conducted by Mark Schoepfle
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September 11, 2001
Oral History Documentation Project
Northeast Region, National Park Service

INTERVIEWEE: Lance Hatten
(Interview No. Unlisted)

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INTERVIEW DATE: February 27, 2002

PLACE: NCR Ranger Station

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START OF TAPE

Mark Schoepfle: ... Lance Hatten, 27 February, '02. Lance, the first question that I'm going to ask is from the moment you were aware of what was going on, what all happened?

Lance Hatten: Actually, at the time I was giving a presentation on September 11 at the Old Post Office Tower to the Federal Women's Program. And so, I was presenting information to the group when I received word initially that there had been an incident in New York. Of course, the details, this was between 9:00 and 10:00 o'clock. The details were unavailable. It was just indicated to me by a U.S. Park Police person who was present at the meeting, that there had been an incident in New York.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: And what happened from there was I was talking to the group, and then I got another call shortly thereafter, I can't remember from whom it was, but that we were here beginning preparations, emergency operations sorts of preparations. But at that point, it was actually unclear, the scale or scope of what was taking place. And myself, I called back to this building which is Survey Lodge, and I asked for someone to transport me from the Old Post Office Tower to this location, or Survey Lodge, so we could begin to inform both the visitors and the employees, and kind of decide what actions needed to be taken, and what actions that we would take.

Lance Hatten: James Berger one of our maintenance people, he came to pick up Rosanna Wilson and I, and again, this was sometime between 9:30 and 10:00. By that point, I'm not sure when exactly the Pentagon incident happened, but at this point already in DC there was so much congestion. That was the first thing I noticed when Mr. James Berger tried to take us, transport us from the Old Post Office Tower to Survey Lodge. We got to 15th Street near Constitution and it was just, there was a gridlock.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: And I was, you know, realizing, again, that it was not localized yet, but that something was terribly wrong, and I wanted to get here quickly so I could begin to provide information to our staff. I — I decided — I talked to Rosanna Wilson and I said I'm going to — I'm going to run over there, because we were on 15th Street and Constitution, it's really not that far. But it seemed like traffic was so thick, it would have taken us longer to negotiate the traffic than myself and Rosanna running over.

- Lance Hatten: So, we kind of got the vehicle and we started to make our way over to Survey Lodge very quickly, and actually there was a U.S. Park Police person who kind of picked us up. They recognized me in uniform, picked both, firstly me, and then went and got Rosanna, and then they brought us to Survey Lodge. By this point though, what we became aware of is that evacuations were taking place, and within the mall area, of all the sites — and these were being managed by U.S. Park Police and Park Rangers. And it was shortly thereafter, and it could have been a secondary explosion, I heard a large sound.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.
- Lance Hatten: And it was somewhere, again, it could have, I don't think it was a primary explosion, it could have been a second one. I was out here, I was inside my office and I heard a sound, and when I arrived here, there were several employees already assembled here in Survey Lodge and they were watching the television. And we were just trying to get an account of where everyone was located, accounting for where everyone was located. And also, we were effecting communications with our headquarters, which is 900 Ohio Drive, to, we were getting direction from them, and also information about what was going on, so there was a constant communication.
- Lance Hatten: What's more, realizing that, you know, this was, realizing the scale and proportions — By this time I'm aware of what's going on at the Pentagon because you can along with hearing the secondary explosions, you can see it on the news.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.
- Lance Hatten: And you know we, a lot of us are kind of reassuring each other that you know, things are going to be all right. We're again getting to account for everyone, which that was effected pretty quickly. And where, what happens then? We, we, we, we leave one phone line open so the employees can begin to contact their families and loved ones, just to let them know that they're all right. I thought that that would be very important. Again, it was, I was getting calls from my family. I got a call from my, from my brother, for example. He caught me on my personal cell phone. He called me just to say, you know, how are you doing? I said I'm fine.
- Lance Hatten: And you know things here — everybody here was pretty calm. In fact, that was one of the things that impressed me, our, the staff was very collected throughout the course of the event. And everybody was just really collected.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: And, although there was perhaps worry on the face of people, there was no panic.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: But you know, I only can speculate now but you know, we're watching television and you see what happens and you could hear people saying — well — one of the buildings, one of the towers collapsed. And there is smoke on the other side of, of the Potomac.

Lance Hatten: And you know, we're in a situation here where. we're watching television and there are so many conflicting reports about—I can remember hearing about how many planes were still in the air, and how many planes could be accounted for. And again, no one really at that very early stage — we were talking about between now, a little bit between 10 and 12 — no one really had a firm grasp of what had started or when it was going to end.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: So, we had gotten a quick accounting for the staff. That happened within the first half an hour to 45 minutes. We knew where all of our people were, and most had — were — assembled here, and most people were assembled here, and again, making those contacts with family members and, kind of watching television, and—Whereas others were—Because most of the sites had been, the U.S. Park Police had effected closure in most of the sites. And now we're talking about, you know, between ten and again, ten and 12.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: But again, there was a lot of uncertainty. You just didn't know.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: You could see this thing happening on television. I think that was a dimension that was just surreal. And by — I can't remember what time. — we decided to — it was decided that all of the employees would be released.

Mark Schoepfle: This was about what time?

Lance Hatten: I'm really unsure. I'm unsure of what time. We had one person...

Mark Schoepfle: That's okay.

Lance Hatten: I'm unsure of what time, but it was very orderly, though. As far as the way — everything was very orderly, and particularly amongst the employees, everything was calm. Once — we have a sheet and I have to put my hands on it, which says when people left and all that. Because again, we were making sure we can account for everyone because again, with the uncertainty, who knew what tomorrow would hold.

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.

Lance Hatten: And we wanted to make sure that we had records, and we were making sure that all of our records were accurate so in case we had to call someone after hours — just those operational things that you need to do.

Lance Hatten: Another interesting thing is that it was payroll day. It's the day that we have to send all of our payroll out so our employees can get paid. So, we were also making sure that that happened too, you know? I was really concerned that — okay — this is a crisis. I don't know what tomorrow is going to hold but the last thing people are going to need — their paychecks. I mean, they always need their paychecks. But people are going to...

Lance Hatten: So, we made sure that that was taken care of. And again, we had people here in our—And so, it gave them something to do too.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: You know, I guess without, there was a lot of nervous energy. So, people were really coming together. We made sure that we had an accounting for all of our medical supplies in case we had to provide any support.

Lance Hatten: I tell you one thing that I remember. There was a gentleman, I believe he was from Dallas. He was traveling — I believe he was from Dallas — but he was from out of town; he was just passing through. He was a fire fighter, and he gave me his card and his hotel number. He said, "look, if anything comes up let me know, and give me a call in case you need any help."

Lance Hatten: But again, we were very fortunate that we didn't, you know, although things were in Virginia, here we didn't have any visitor injuries.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: Or employee injuries.

Mark Schoepfle: Well, you were mentioning you were assembling most of the folks here. This was between about 10:00 and 12:00 noon.

Lance Hatten: Mmhmm.

Mark Schoepfle: The park police had already closed the sites.

Lance Hatten: Yes. They were, they were pretty much managing, you know, directing the visitors, what have you. And again, outside, it was, you have a lot of, you know, we're watching a television set.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: We know what's going on. And you have a lot of visitors who — they're in DC and it's — you can see the smoke but not, maybe not necessarily knowing what's happened in in New York or what's happened at the Pentagon. And again, information was still sketchy.

Lance Hatten: I know the Rangers were in an awkward position there. I can remember one ranger contacting us and saying — because at this time also we have to realize between 10:00 to 12:00 especially, maybe up until 2:00, traffic is terrible outside.

Mark Schoepfle: I was going to ask about that.

Lance Hatten: Traffic is terrible. And a ranger contacted us, and they were — Visitors were asking where do we go, what road do we take? And, you know, it's important for rangers — we feel responsible to have answers, but we didn't have any answers.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: I mean, we just didn't know where, we didn't — No one knew the scale or scope, so you didn't really know where to direct, to direct people.

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.

Lance Hatten: And again, traffic is so bad throughout the city, it was just tough to say okay, this is where you go.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: You know, the best thing to do if you had shelter and a safe place is to remain there. And so again, most of our people were assembled right in this building and we were just kind of watching TV and having regular updates until everyone was released, and people were also staying informed again, by virtue of watching the television, but there were just so many conflicting reports.

Lance Hatten: I can remember there was one report saying you needed an identification card — this was a news report — to even get in Washington, DC at one point. Now who knows? Because there were so many crazy stories coming out. There was a story that there had been an attack on the mall.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: That's right, we were like whoa, we're fine, and there was no evidence of that. But there was, again, a lot of conflicting information.

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah, I'll bet that that was confusing, those kinds of rumors. So, one of the things you were trying to do was just to get information to your visitors and to your staff, right?

Lance Hatten: Right.

Mark Schoepfle: What did you do about this when you couldn't, when you were mentioning that you couldn't get information even on what roads to take to the tourists and stuff?

Lance Hatten: Because I was here, and most of our rangers were here—

Mark Schoepfle: Right.

Lance Hatten: We have very few at this point. Again, what has happened is that mostly the park police have taken over.

Mark Schoepfle: Right.

Lance Hatten: Because that is pretty much their function. And again, we didn't have any sound information, so we really didn't have anything to say concretely.

Mark Schoepfle: I see.

Lance Hatten: Because again, now we know it started here and it stopped there. Well, then no one knew that.

Mark Schoepfle: Right.

Lance Hatten: So, we didn't have, we didn't know what to do. And it was — again — the best thing we can do is try to keep our staff here informed.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: But things were changing so rapidly again, for the early part of it — the media — the information we were getting from the news media was that, you know, they were trying to ground all the planes and there were some that were unaccounted for. And of course, there was concern about — again — planes in and around Dulles and National, but again, no specifics

Lance Hatten: Then when the crash was reported in Pennsylvania. Again, at this point no one knew whether or not it was related.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: I mean, right now it seems like yes, hindsight, but no one knew.

Mark Schoepfle: That's true, no one...

Lance Hatten: No one knew. It was a plane crash. You know, this was a part of the information.

Mark Schoepfle: Right.

Lance Hatten: We get. — As I get the information, I get the crash is, the plane running into the one tour, then of course the plane running into the other tour. Then I hear the secondary explosion at the Pentagon, I believe they're secondary, I didn't really know.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: We see it on the news that there has been an incident at the Pentagon, and then shortly thereafter you hear about the crash in Pennsylvania. But you know, from where we're positioned, particularly with the crash in Pennsylvania we're unsure if it's all related.

Mark Schoepfle: Right.

Lance Hatten: We don't know. We don't know.

Mark Schoepfle: Right.

Lance Hatten: And we're just trying to make sure that people here are safe, and people here have a way to communicate with their families.

Mark Schoepfle: Yes.

Lance Hatten: That was for me, between the communication with the families and everyone here being safe, and everyone here being informed, now that was my concern. And everybody — again — the staff was just so calm, and it made it easier to manage and direct, as you can imagine.

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.

Lance Hatten: And people were just kind of gathering around watching television, seeing what was going on, and kind of waiting for further direction.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: And the U.S. park police again — I only can presume that they were taking care of their role because they knew — when they came and picked me up — they knew, and they were actually taking action at that point.

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah. This happened, this was all lasting until you just mentioned what, about 2:00 o'clock, at around 2:00?

Lance Hatten: Yes, about some time after we released all the employees—

Mark Schoepfle: This was when, about?

Lance Hatten: Between 12:00 and 2:00.

Mark Schoepfle: Sometime then, got it. Go ahead

Lance Hatten: There were a few of us who stayed to make sure that all the sites were secure, and we also had all of our medical supplies and wanted to make sure they were readily available in case — and centralized — in case they were needed. So, as I can recall Rosanna and myself, we took all the medical supplies to the headquarters building in case they were needed. And then, it was Rosanna and, yeah, Rosanna, myself, and we sat down. Then later after that, myself and the superintendent, we went to all the sites. By this time, it was later in the day. There was hardly anyone out. I'm speculating it's after 3:00 now. There is hardly no traffic. It's a strange calmness, I would say.

Mark Schoepfle: Others were remarking on that too.

Lance Hatten: It was a strange — oh yeah — you see very few visitors; you see very few cars. Absent the visitors, things look normal because there is no one around, there are very few people around. And we were just making sure all of the sites were secure.

Mark Schoepfle: When you're saying "secure" what does that mean?

Lance Hatten: The park police are establishing perimeters and things like that.

Mark Schoepfle: Okay.

Lance Hatten: We make sure all the doors are locked, and things like that. Because you know, people left in a hasty fashion.

Mark Schoepfle: Right.

Lance Hatten: We just wanted to make sure everything was secure. And we were kind of communicating with the U.S. Park Police about all of those issues, and...

Mark Schoepfle: Okay. So, after 3:00 o'clock.

Lance Hatten: Most of the employees are gone by this point.

Mark Schoepfle: I'm sure. So, what else happened? What happened then?

Lance Hatten: Myself, Robert Fudge, myself and Artie, we were just going to all the sites. We used to go to all the sites to make sure they're secure. There are some maintenance people there because we are setting up snow fencing.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

- Lance Hatten: Again, because we don't know what's going to happen — but we're taking direction — we're getting feedback from the U.S. Park Police as far as things are changed, things are now different now. All of the sites [laughter] — You know? And it's realized from that moment that again, we don't know what tomorrow is going to hold. And—
- Mark Schoepfle: What happened after that, I mean, in the days following what went on?
- Lance Hatten: Well, I think I probably got home after we secured all the sites and everything, and then we decided that you know, we turned the lights on the Washington Monument and things like that. So, we do all that, and we do that with—The maintenance person and I would go and turn on the lights.
- Lance Hatten: So, I would get home, and I live in Virginia. I would get home between 7:30 and 8:00 o'clock. And the thing I remember most which kind of is hard for me to talk about, is how you see it on television, but I was driving home, and I had to go over 395. [Crying] And I had to drive through all that smoke.
- Mark Schoepfle: Oh yeah.
- Lance Hatten: And you could smell it. You could smell, I was smelling the smoke. You just knew a lot of people—[Crying, sniffing]. [Blows nose]. There were a lot of people that were hurt.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.
- Lance Hatten: [Crying] You know, it was, it wasn't the stuff that was on television.
- Mark Schoepfle: Is that the way it was on television you're saying?
- Lance Hatten: [Crying] You see it, and you know; you can see all the shock. But when you drive through it, you could smell the smoke [Sniffles].
- Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.
- Lance Hatten: It was terrible. It was bad, and you could smell it. You smell death and it smelled—driving through it.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.
- Lance Hatten: It was hard. [Sniffles]. But everybody, people here were fine, I knew that. But a lot of people weren't.
- Mark Schoepfle: So, it really kind of suddenly hit you?

- Lance Hatten: Yes. [Crying] Then every day, you know, I drive to work every day, I drive right by that spot every day when I go to work. I drive right by it. And I remember watching the news and there was a and she was out with a lawn chair and sitting there hoping to hear about her husband, whether or not he was okay. And I didn't know how long — the route I used to take, I used to drive on 110.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.
- Lance Hatten: And I didn't know how long the road was going to be closed, so I guess it was like three or four days later I was driving to work, and I thought maybe it was going to be open, that road. So, I drove, and I mean, I had to go past that spot, and it wasn't open.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.
- Lance Hatten: So, I had to take a detour and it was early in the morning, I was going to work. I saw that lady sitting up there. It was 7:00 in the morning or something like that. She was sitting out there waiting, hoping [Crying] — that it was going to be okay for her family, but I just don't think it was. I don't know, but just seeing it again, it wasn't. It was something. It was so surreal.
- Mark Schoepfle: Oh yeah.
- Lance Hatten: Oh boy. It's bad.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.
- Lance Hatten: You see things all the time. It was so near, but I really don't, I mean I drove through it when I had to go home at night. My wife was okay. I talked to her and all of this.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.
- Lance Hatten: She was fine, and she knew I was fine, my family knew I was fine, and we knew everybody here was fine.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.
- Lance Hatten: But when you drive through that smoky smell, it lasted for days, the smoke. It was terrible.
- Mark Schoepfle: What was it like, considering all of that, what was it like as the days went on?
- Lance Hatten: The next day, I remember early the next day when I got to work. These places are very important, each of them.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.

Lance Hatten: And I was just walking around, looking. Now we have snow fences everywhere, and everything looks different. Memorials are still there, but everything looks different. We're open...

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.

Lance Hatten: But you know, enhanced law enforcement presence there we're having.

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.

Lance Hatten: And let's see, it was early the next day the 12th and I was walking to FDR, I was in Room 4 and it has FDR talking about the freedom, and it has a big sign up there that says freedom from fear.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: And you know, it meant as much as it did right at that moment. And when it went up there at first, I didn't read it. [Crying] You know, there are so many things you take for granted.

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.

Lance Hatten: But you know, it's so important that we kind of get back to normal as it were.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: So, we wouldn't, maybe not kind of dwell on it. And it was very important that all these places, the places are lit. People know what we represent, what we stand for. It is so important.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: Excuse me. [Crying] I'm sorry. It's so important that people be able to experience them. There was a family, I believe they were from Germany and they were there, and I said — you know — I said these memorials, they commemorate a particular time, but their meanings transcend that. And it was apparent — it's apparent now and it was especially apparent then — that it's something we can't take for granted and it's something we have to value.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: And again, then I heard that there was a volunteer who had gotten burned.

Mark Schoepfle: At the Pentagon?

Lance Hatten: Yeah, one of our volunteers.

Mark Schoepfle: What happened?

Lance Hatten: I got the information sort of late, but he's — I believe, I'm not sure, that — he's a firefighter.

Mark Schoepfle: Oh.

Lance Hatten: Or something, and he was there. And he received some burns. His name is Alan. But Alan made it through, a lot of people didn't. But again—The thing that strikes me most again is the smoke. I felt, I didn't weep, I didn't cry or anything at that point. I did when I passed that lady on the street the following day, I did.

Mark Schoepfle: Was that kind of what really triggered it?

Lance Hatten: Well, you know, it probably was a combination of things. You know, when you're in the midst of something and you have a lot of people depending on you, you know that's— [Laughter] Your feelings are irrelevant.

Mark Schoepfle: Right.

Lance Hatten: They weren't. And I didn't feel panicked or anything like that. Again, things were very orderly here. We were just kind of following through on our planning approach. Things were very orderly.

Lance Hatten: I can remember. [Laughter] There was a group. There was a group of senior citizens here and they asked for a bathroom, and we said we have a bathroom here.

Mark Schoepfle: Mhmm.

Lance Hatten: They lined up and they came and used the bathroom. They were just happy. You know we didn't, it was—So, it was interesting, because in the midst of all of this, some normal things. That's one thing, you know, that's one of the most frequently asked questions, where are the rest rooms.

Mark Schoepfle: [Laughter].

Lance Hatten: [Laughter]. You know what I mean? It's—

Mark Schoepfle: Sure.

Lance Hatten: Yeah.

Mark Schoepfle: Was there a sense of normalcy that came back? When did that, did you get a feeling that things went back to normal? Did they go back to normal?

Lance Hatten: No, not for days after.

Mark Schoepfle: Uh-huh.

- Lance Hatten: No. Because again, all of the snow fencing and all of the added law enforcement presence with the U.S. Park Police. We're functioning in a state of war. We're here in the nation's capital. Things looked different and there were fewer visitors, of course. There were some people, but just fewer.
- Lance Hatten: And, you know, we — the staff was here — we were here. But, you know, then at this point everything is tentative, that's the thing, there was a tentativeness.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.
- Lance Hatten: It's like you're waiting for the other shoe to drop, you know what I mean?
- END OF SIDE 1
- START OF SIDE 2
- Mark Schoepfle: So, there was a tentativeness, a kind of jumpiness...
- Lance Hatten: Yeah. Everything you know, it was just, everything was very tentative, and it remained that way for some weeks. I mean, we were open. The superintendent sent out a memo thanking everyone for their response. I remember that Saturday the regional director came for roll call, Terry Carlstrom. I wasn't present, but he came that morning just to, you know, reassure the staff. And I thought that was very important. And there was a lot of that going on.
- Lance Hatten: I tell you, the staff here every day they demonstrate their professionalism, and it was so evident on that day. Because again, I would have fully understood if any person had panicked.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.
- Lance Hatten: You know? No, no person. No person panicked and said, you know, no one thought it was Armageddon or anything like that. No one was like frantic.
- Mark Schoepfle: Not like in the movies.
- Lance Hatten: No, no. You know, people were more concerned about what they could do for others, whether it be their peers or in public, you know, what can I do? You know, let's get our medical thing. The main thing was let's consolidate all of our medical supplies in case we need to go and donate them, or you know, we need to be ready to help others.
- Lance Hatten: That wasn't, just my approach, that was consistently what everyone was thinking of: how can I help. How can I help?
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

- Lance Hatten: And that's the group of people you want to work with. Yes, there are but that was the feeling I got. And it made it easy for myself and Rosanna who was here supervising, Wayne Branxton, he was a supervisor here, he was here that day. Carol. She was out. She actually had to go to a meeting. People, all the communications face to face over the phone, people wanted to know what they could to help.
- Lance Hatten: The gentleman I mentioned, I don't recall where he was from, I think he was a firefighter, he gave me his card, you know, what can I do to help? People weren't thinking of themselves. No one said hey, what about me, blah, blah, blah? People were thinking about what they could do to help.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.
- Lance Hatten: But and you know people, everyone watched the news. And also, again, it was so important. I wanted everyone just to kind of call their family. Because you hear all of these rumors, that's when you want to say just call, just let them know you're all right. And that night you're glued to the television and you don't know what the status of the federal government is going to be.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.
- Lance Hatten: And so, we were all watching. I was up all night just kind of watching television, pretty much so, maybe I got an hour or two...
- Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.
- Lance Hatten: But we have to tell, we have to let employees know what we're going to do the next day. And we said hey, things are going to be open — things are going to be open — so that's what we did, and we're here.
- Lance Hatten: And I was here, people were here in the morning. We went — checked out on the sites, walked around. The visitors who were here, we talked to them. Again, we talked, what I can remember talking about—I'm sure I was talking about the event, but again these places, when you go to the Korean War Veteran's Memorial you see that in the front it says, "Freedom is not free." Again, all these messages.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.
- Lance Hatten: It was as if we were there at all those events and I can remember talking to Robert Fudge, our former — I think — Chief of Visitor Services, and I said this is the second time in my life that I realized I was in the midst of not only a personal historic event but a national historic event.

- Lance Hatten: And I said this is so, this is so, this is worse than Pearl Harbor — said this is bad and he was agreeing with me. We just — we talked about that from that context, and you know, it's a set of moments that we—were in the midst of it.
- Mark Schoepfle: Would I be right in saying it's like your personal place in a major historical event?
- Lance Hatten: Absolutely, absolutely. Yes. But — I mean — it's not the historical event you want to be a part of. I mean, that's the tragedy of it. You know, you want to be a part of something.
- Lance Hatten: I can remember being here, for example, I had been in the mall for nearly two years during the presidential inauguration. I said — standing here in the mall, while the president of the United States is being inaugurated—
- Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.
- Lance Hatten: —that's something else. I'll never forget it.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.
- Lance Hatten: That's the kind of event you want to observe. I can remember shaking President Bush's hand. We came to Jefferson Memorial one day — July 3rd. It was like — I shook the president's hand. I just met the first lady. They were so kind and friendly. They made a point when they were there to say hello, greet every employee. They went up to every employee there, and also members of the public, and shook their hand and talked to them. That is the kind of moment. That was not an official assembly, but that's the moment.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.
- Lance Hatten: And those are the moments that frequently happen here. I can remember President Clinton was at the FDR Memorial. Again, that was a moment too, but—And we were opening up, unveiling the [inaudible] and that was a moment too. But this was different from all of those because again, it's not the sort of moment that you—It's not the kind of moment, I'm reflecting now, it's not the kind of moment that you want to be part of. It's not the kind of moment. Because you realize again it's—It's just a tragic, it's a tragedy.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.
- Lance Hatten: And the thing I remember most is just driving home and when I drove through that smoke I just...

Mark Schoepfle: Am I stretching my reasoning a little bit too far to kind of figure that when you were talking beforehand about how you and everybody else was focused on other people, you weren't thinking about yourself? I'm sensing you were kind of sensitized toward thinking, "what can I do? What can I help?" You were driving past—

Lance Hatten: Well, you know what—

Mark Schoepfle: —and you see that poor lady sitting out there.

Lance Hatten: Well, you can't help, you're powerless.

Mark Schoepfle: [Inaudible] is that it?

Lance Hatten: There is nothing that can be done, and—

Mark Schoepfle: Is that kind of like the core of it?

Lance Hatten: Yeah. But you know what? I also thought this up in the military.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: I was a law enforcement person for several years, and I mean, every bit of training I ever had, I was prepared to emotionally deal with it. And I felt I knew what to do for all those people. I knew it was important for me to be able to communicate to the family. I knew it was important that we get an accounting for everyone and where they were at and things like that.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: I felt prepared. And it was important to keep people calm — calm and informed. I'm speaking particularly about the rangers here because they're acting as — they're carrying on the message.

Mark Schoepfle: Sure.

Lance Hatten: And you know, we did our best at doing that. And again, people were calm, so I trusted that means that we were successful. Again, they had the television on, so people are getting information, and people are also able to communicate and share information with their families. But I felt prepared, and I felt that the staff reacted appropriately. But [deep sigh] —

Mark Schoepfle: Couldn't do anything for that lady.

Lance Hatten: Nuh-uh. You couldn't do anything for, for all the people. You ask them if you could—yeah. Yeah. And again, it was maybe at that point late in the— Well, once all the planes had been accounted for, except for those four, I think there was a general feeling that, you know, a wave had passed, you know what I mean?

- Lance Hatten: Because in the midst, you know, between this morning I don't even know what to tell my staff, other than we need to all watch television and see what's going on. I'm getting communications from the headquarters office, what have you. But you don't know what's started, you don't know when it's going to end. You don't know that. And no one knew. It was, it was you know, no one knew.
- Mark Schoepfle: Was there a point — I know I asked the question before but let me revisit a little bit.
- Lance Hatten: Mmhmm.
- Mark Schoepfle: Knowing what you just said about how it was something new altogether. No one knew quite what to do, no one knew what to think or where the other shoe was going to drop, and things like that. Has there ever been a point where people are now back to normal?
- Lance Hatten: We just had an evacuation drill this morning [laughter].
- Mark Schoepfle: So not quite back to normal huh? Things are never going to be normal again?
- Lance Hatten: No. We're—And you know, we're something that—Part of the way we do business now to make sure firstly, we do it to make sure that when people come here, they feel safe, and if there is an incident, we can provide for their safety so—And we constantly drill, we constantly drill, we constantly be drilling to make sure we know how—
- Lance Hatten: And we had no problems on that day.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.
- Lance Hatten: But people need to feel confident. You know what I mean?
- Mark Schoepfle: Sure. To know what to do without having to worry about it.
- Lance Hatten: Yeah. They already know what to do, they already showed that. And we have procedures in place, but we need to, we, and no one was but we have other people too. We have, you know, partners and stakeholders, like you know, the Tour Mobile, Parks and History, and stuff like that, so we'll constantly drill them, we'll constantly keep them informed to say okay, this is what's happening, and giving them the particular scenario that this is what we would do.
- Lance Hatten: So that again, that's one of those elements, operationally that helps to keep people calm, and given a real situation people know what to do. So, now we are — again — we had the drill today, we'll have one in two weeks, and we've had several beforehand, since between September 11 and this day.

Mark Schoepfle: Wow, just today?

Lance Hatten: Yes. That's what we're doing. I can remember going to a training session at USDA — the training place? It was about — it was in October. There was a drill then. All the students who were taking training classes, we all had to go outside. It's different now.

Mark Schoepfle: How else is it different? You mentioned the drills and the readiness, and now not so much just dealing with your own staff, but now reaching out to some of these other stakeholders.

Lance Hatten: Yes.

Mark Schoepfle: And concessionaires I gather also?

Lance Hatten: Yes, yes.

Mark Schoepfle: What else like that?

Lance Hatten: Again, I'm glad we had the drill today because things are actually — right now — people are getting away from it. Particularly, there was — once we entered October and the bombing started—Oh, this is interesting. The day of — later in that evening — immediately it was reported that some kind of, this was on the news, some kind of, something was happening in Afghanistan.

Mark Schoepfle: Yes.

Lance Hatten: I never heard anything more about it. I tried to—[Laughter]. It was just that day, it said something was happening in Afghanistan. And then of course, I think the bombing started in early October. And, and it probably, once the bombing stopped, I think it was a little bit more relaxed, a little bit more relaxed, still not there. Because I can remember that the plane that crashed in New York, it was a Monday — you know that plane that crashed?

Mark Schoepfle: Oh yeah, yeah.

Lance Hatten: And immediately, we just kind of would call people, let them know that everything was okay here. We called all of our stakeholders, things were fine, we were still open for business. That the situation was being monitored but there was no indication that it was a repeat, and that again—

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: —it was — that's part of that skittishness, that tentativeness.

Mark Schoepfle: Who are your stakeholders, just curious?

- Lance Hatten: The Tour mobile, Parks and History. Now we have [inaudible] who distributes tickets for the Washington Monument which wasn't open then, it was still closed for restoration.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.
- Lance Hatten: Volunteers. Yeah, those groups. We have the concession specialists, what have you. And we've been trying to make sure that everybody is informed. Like when we had the drill today, everybody is called. Even if you're not directly—just to know, we are conducting the drill and we give the [inaudible]. So—
- Mark Schoepfle: Oh, just [inaudible] this is just a drill?
- Lance Hatten: Right. And again, it's letting people know how we manage these things. Again, it helps to kind of give people some peace of mind. I think again we're getting there now. We had that, you know, you go out there, visitor's out there and they don't seem to be, I mean, I am not out there, granted, talking to visitors day-to-day—
- Lance Hatten: You know what's interesting too? Let's see. After that, a lot of people would come and gather for candlelight vigils on that mall, in that first week or so, after, afterwards.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.
- Lance Hatten: They would just gather on the mall; you know in shows of patriotism and unity.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.
- Lance Hatten: And people had candles, but near Lincoln, people with chalk would write little things.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.
- Lance Hatten: You know, little statements about freedom and democracy and the 17 value of them. I'm trying to see if I — because I took a picture. I just don't know if they should be on here. I took pictures of some of the things that people would write. Because everybody felt there was so much, there was just a strong feeling. I took pictures too of all the sites wherever we would go.
- Lance Hatten: Hey look, this is, [inaudible] 3:30. That's it, that's the day—
- Mark Schoepfle: No. I see—
- Lance Hatten: That's the Pentagon. I just went around there and took the pictures—
- Mark Schoepfle: Yeah, you can definitely see the smoke off of there.

Lance Hatten: Yeah.

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.

Lance Hatten: That's the Pentagon. You can see all the traffic too, look. Look at all of the cars. Those cars aren't parked.

Mark Schoepfle: Yes. That's gridlock.

Lance Hatten: Yes.

Mark Schoepfle: That's amazing. That gridlock was over with by about 3:00 o'clock they were saying.

Lance Hatten: Oh yeah, yeah.

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.

Lance Hatten: Yes. I took pictures.

Mark Schoepfle: Well, you know, considering the pictures, if we were looking down...

Lance Hatten: This is good. Now 3:50. Look at Jefferson, no people.

Mark Schoepfle: Wow.

Lance Hatten: None of the people out there.

Mark Schoepfle: Before and after.

Lance Hatten: Yes. And this is—This is 3:50. Just a few employees out there. That's, that's the maintenance people. They were putting the snow fence in at about 3:50, yeah. And—

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.

Lance Hatten: Look it, 4:07, 9/11. Look that, I'm glad I remembered that. That's the Lincoln Memorial, no people.

Mark Schoepfle: That's amazing.

Lance Hatten: Beautiful day.

Mark Schoepfle: Yes, I remember—

Lance Hatten: It's a beautiful day.

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.

Lance Hatten: You see actually no people out there, you know?

Mark Schoepfle: Yes, so.

Lance Hatten: But let me try to find that. That's a beautiful picture. [Inaudible] pictures, no people out there. Remember I told you, this is 9/12, 10:36, Room [4] and I took picture of Room [4] all the freedom on the wall.

Mark Schoepfle: Oh yes—Oh yes, yes.

Lance Hatten: Yeah.

Mark Schoepfle: That quote really stands out.

Lance Hatten: Yeah. Freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, freedom from fear. Yes, it was the next day.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: You see visitors, there were visitors there. So, people were here. Yes. I'm trying to find—Yes, 9/16 I went down there, and you see the wax on the ground. It's hard to see but there is wax on the ground where people have written things.

Mark Schoepfle: Yes.

Lance Hatten: I don't think you can see it. There is so much glare, I didn't—If it was on my computer at home, it comes up, it's a very clear picture. This is the camera too—This is the camera I used to take pictures of that.

Mark Schoepfle: For heaven sakes.

Lance Hatten: Yes [laughter].

Mark Schoepfle: A little I [Module] camera.

Lance Hatten: Yeah.

Mark Schoepfle: That's great.

Lance Hatten: So, I was just taking pictures, yes.

Mark Schoepfle: If you're looking back about a year after this and somebody was considering a memorial to what had happened here, do you have any vision about how that would be pictured?

Lance Hatten: You know what? I don't know. I haven't thought about it.

Mark Schoepfle: Or what should be remembered? I mean, you're talking, for example, about how all the staff pulled together?

Lance Hatten: I would think again, that's not only the tragedy of all the people who died in the World Trade Center, all the people who died at the Pentagon and all the people who died in the plane crash in Pennsylvania, but I think we also have to remember all the, the coming together, how that brought people together.

Lance Hatten: I remember reading an article in The Weekly Standard, shortly thereafter, and again I have a degree in history, so I always think of things in that way. And they said we didn't start the new millennium on January 1, 2000. The millennium started September the 11th. It totally changed — it's a whole different epoch. Everything is different now.

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.

Lance Hatten: That's what the article said. And they said things that we would debate socially, politically, a lot of things that we would debate before that are irrelevant.

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.

Lance Hatten: And I think because you have this, we all walk around with flags and things like that. I think that what needs to be remembered is that we all came together and our things which we perceive as different from us didn't matter. All that mattered was that our neighbors mattered, all of our—That's what was important. Yeah.

Lance Hatten: And you can still see. I see now again, sometimes you wonder if the rangers—I say I wonder if the people understand what these places mean. You know, that's part of your job, what have you.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: See, again, the people—There is a renewed sense of pride. I think we have to remember that.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: I think that benefits us and I think that's important. It's generated out of tragedy, but that's not unusual. It's a shame that sometimes it takes that to prompt us to value our neighbors.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: But I think there is something in that that needs to be remembered as well. Whatever I haven't thought of, as far as any physical dimensions of a memorial and where it should be or anything like that, I haven't thought about that. But I can think about — I do have feelings about the meanings of the event.

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.

Lance Hatten: That should be commemorated.

Mark Schoepfle: The meaning that should be communicated you're saying, right?

Lance Hatten: And again, it's that coming together, that patriotism, that—Again, so many things didn't mean anything? We were all—I mean it's still there to some extent, but I think we were kind of, but for good and bad things are more becoming normal, or whatever that means.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: We, all that, the whole concept and the ideal, I mean that's what we commemorate here. We talk about American citizenship. That's what the mall is about. And the places that we commemorate and the times that are commemorated, people you know, feel that we're not living up to the promises of the Constitution. This is where they come to show, this is, they come here to demonstrate or to gather. They gathered here in you know, the week afterwards to show, a unifying and shared experience. This is, this is the place for that.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: And you know so we, there is, all of the places here, their meanings became renewed on that day. So, we talk about in the park service national significance, and one of the things I did that day, I went and read the Gettysburg Address that day.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: And it talked about the sacrifices made for freedom.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: The rebirth of freedom.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: All that, it was a rebirth. And so, I was thinking, you know, all of these things are things that we see every day. And for those, I don't think we take them for granted here because we're sharing these stories with the public. But I think it gave the public an opportunity to reconnect to all, to these places.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: You know, whether it be, we share with [inaudible] or Korea —

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: —or Freedom is not free, or Gettysburg address, because that's what it's all about. That's what all these places are about, you know, the ideal, and there is the reality. And the realities were brought forth for us on that day, on the 11th. The reality of it, that we can't take it for granted. And then it's, it's an abstract value, but when it's, when you feel it's not there you feel this burden. You know what I mean?

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: Any more questions? I'm sorry.

Mark Schoepfle: Well, this has been very interesting. And I guess my main question would be is there anything that I should have asked about but didn't?

Lance Hatten: I can't think of anything. Again...

Mark Schoepfle: Anything else you'd like to know about us?

Lance Hatten: How, once you, what's the time frame of you know, collecting of information and how will it be presented, or what will be presented and things like that? Or is it just right now going to be a record?

Mark Schoepfle: Well, the time frame is going to be kind of limited, I think, by people's memories. That's why we want to really hustle—

Lance Hatten: Right.

Mark Schoepfle: And within a couple of months do this.

Lance Hatten: Mmhmm.

Mark Schoepfle: What's down the line so far, like I was mentioning, the tapes have started an archive.

Lance Hatten: Mmhmm.

Mark Schoepfle: We want to write something up from it. And, because I think, you know, the sorts of things you've just been talking about are exceedingly important to get out, not even just to the Park Service, but to the public as well.

Lance Hatten: Mmhmm.

Mark Schoepfle: And so, we want to be able to write those things up. That's pretty much the commitment we've made to that.

Lance Hatten: Mmhmm.

Mark Schoepfle: How we push that in the Park Service remains yet to be seen.

Lance Hatten: Mmhmm.

Mark Schoepfle: So far, it's mostly get those tapes into an archive.

Lance Hatten: Mmhmm.

Mark Schoepfle: Well, personally we feel that if you get it into an archive, it will be forgotten. I mean, nobody is really going to go look, looking for it.

Lance Hatten: Besides writer projects types.

Mark Schoepfle: Right.

Lance Hatten: A huge amount of information collected

Mark Schoepfle: So, a number of us are going to be working on a report.

Lance Hatten: Mmhmm.

Mark Schoepfle: So, what I'd like to be able to do as the months go on, on this is to keep in touch with you on what we're doing.

Lance Hatten: Yeah.

Mark Schoepfle: [Inaudible] picture here—

Lance Hatten: Look what the read out says. Can you see it?

Mark Schoepfle: It—

Lance Hatten: We need to be strong together.

Mark Schoepfle: We need to be strong together, three stars.

Lance Hatten: Yes. And these are people, this was, I took this photograph at the Lincoln, near the Lincoln Memorial on 9/16.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm.

Lance Hatten: People were willing to express themselves.

Mark Schoepfle: Yes.

Lance Hatten: Express unity. I had, until, until you and I had, I hadn't even looked at the pictures from September 11.

Mark Schoepfle: I see.

Lance Hatten: No, I hadn't looked.

Mark Schoepfle: Is this the first time you've looked through them too?

Lance Hatten: Yes. I hadn't looked at them.

Mark Schoepfle: Wow.

Lance Hatten: I knew they were here. I hadn't looked at them. I knew they were here.

Mark Schoepfle: Is that on one of those digital camera disks, the mini disks or something?

Lance Hatten: No, it stores it, it's right in here.

Mark Schoepfle: Okay.

Lance Hatten: Let me show you this. It's pretty cool. Watch this.

Mark Schoepfle: I was just going to say, do you think there is any way we can load those onto a computer?

Lance Hatten: Sure.

Mark Schoepfle: Oh, for heaven's sake.

Lance Hatten: [Laughter].

Mark Schoepfle: Motion picture as well.

Lance Hatten: Yeah, yeah, which you can, I have every, do you have a Palm Pilot?

Mark Schoepfle: No, I don't.

Lance Hatten: When you, when you do what you call a hot sync it loads it up.

Mark Schoepfle: Oh, okay.

Lance Hatten: It's just a regular J-Peg Image.

Mark Schoepfle: I was going to say, I would really like to see those.

Lance Hatten: Oh yeah. I think yeah, of course. Yeah, you're welcome. I can make, I can put copies on a disk.

Mark Schoepfle: Could you?

Lance Hatten: Sure, sure.

Mark Schoepfle: I would be very grateful for that.

Lance Hatten: Yeah, yeah. I remember going out and taking those pictures though.

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah?

Lance Hatten: But it's interesting, again. You don't see people, you see the cars, but you don't see people running around in the streets screaming or anything like that.

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah.

Lance Hatten: Yeah. People just—Yeah. I had this gentleman riding his bike here [inaudible]—It's pretty empty.

Mark Schoepfle: Yeah. That's what—

Lance Hatten: 10:33. I see one person here; this is the Washington monument grounds. Everybody was just in cars, was [inaudible].

Mark Schoepfle: Yes.

Lance Hatten: Yes, yes, yes. I hadn't looked at them.

END OF TAPE