

My job in Gitmo was, I was assigned to the Atlantic Fleet Mobile Photographic Group which was the offshoot of the WWII Combat Camera groups and our basic job was to document any newsworthy events, both still and motion pictures.

Well, the admiral, he was a sailor's admiral. He appreciated everything that we did for him and he showed us a great deal of respect. And there was a tremendous amount of respect from us, the junior enlisted, towards him. Every morning, every evening he was at the northeast gate when the Cuban workers came in and left. You would always see him driving down Sherman Avenue, which was the main road through the base. He drove a little blue sports car and had two stars on the front hood so you always knew that it was the admiral and you would see him there and then he was... he attended many, many functions. If there were special events, when they opened the Jamaican Barracks, or there were special events up at the cheese club or something.

I do not really recall when I had first heard that the water had been cut off but I do know when I arrived I knew that the water was cut off. And I was kind of surprised that the showers were on and everything was open, got a nice hot shower. And that was the last hot shower I got for probably a month or more. The next day there was a master at arms that controlled how long we could keep the water on. We shaved in cold water, the commodes, if you were going to use the commodes, you had to go outside. There was 55-gallon drums of salt water which you took a bucket and you got your salt water, came back, did your daily functions and then used it to flush the commodes. You did not use the fresh water flushing system. This went on for approximately a week to ten days before enough water in barges had been brought in from Key West and Jamaica. After about ten days I would say the water was available. There was more than enough water and it was good-quality water; it did not have any bad taste to it... They did not start watering the grass at the golf course, they did not open the swimming pools. In fact the swimming pools stayed closed all the time I was down there. And they were selling cans of dehydrated water and it was a can about the size of a large pork and beans can and I remember it was yellow with black printing on it and the instructions were to add the contents to one gallon of water, stir briskly, chill, and drink and the contents made one gallon of water.

We had a pet. He was a labrador retriever. His name was Tuey which was short for Hatuey, a Cuban beer and he had the run of the base. He rode the busses wherever he went and if he was going someplace he would go to the bus stop and sit there and the bus driver would see him and stop, and he would get on the bus and sit in a window seat and he would ride the bus until he got to where he was going and they would let him off and he would go visit and he would come back to the food lab and... but he traveled all over and when we left, the Mobile Photo Group left Guantanamo Bay, we went over to Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, we took him with us.

How do you compare Gitmo? Gitmo was unique. That is the best way you can describe it. It was definitely a part of my growing up and many other young men that were down there at that time.