

HORNET + 3



1  
00:00:14,330 --> 00:00:11,720  
I was in the recovery force the Pacific

2  
00:00:16,540 --> 00:00:14,340  
recovery for CTF 130s did four combined

3  
00:00:18,620 --> 00:00:16,550  
task force 130 was a Navy Air Force

4  
00:00:20,359 --> 00:00:18,630  
operation there was a great fleet of

5  
00:00:24,170 --> 00:00:20,369  
Navy people and three of us Air Force

6  
00:00:26,750 --> 00:00:24,180  
people involved in recovery of all

7  
00:00:29,480 --> 00:00:26,760  
Apollo missions and I was a public

8  
00:00:35,150 --> 00:00:29,490  
forest guy for one of those couple for

9  
00:00:37,430 --> 00:00:35,160  
CTF 130 and involved in in recovery of

10  
00:00:38,570 --> 00:00:37,440  
Apollo 11 back in Honolulu well I've

11  
00:00:41,930 --> 00:00:38,580  
been I had to sit in an underground

12  
00:00:46,460 --> 00:00:41,940  
control center lots of nights listening

13  
00:00:49,639 --> 00:00:46,470

to to the Apollo spacecraft talked to to

14

00:00:52,400 --> 00:00:49,649

Houston and occasionally we would break

15

00:00:55,240 --> 00:00:52,410

the boredom by getting to call the ship

16

00:00:57,590 --> 00:00:55,250

for a for a communications check

17

00:00:59,299 --> 00:00:57,600

translunar Coast there was no way when

18

00:01:01,010 --> 00:00:59,309

the once the crew left Earth orbit on

19

00:01:02,900 --> 00:01:01,020

her way to the moon it was no earthly

20

00:01:04,430 --> 00:01:02,910

way that they could you know get back

21

00:01:06,380 --> 00:01:04,440

and land in the in the ocean

22

00:01:08,660 --> 00:01:06,390

inadvertently or unexpectedly who just

23

00:01:11,779 --> 00:01:08,670

physics don't allow that so we had these

24

00:01:15,260 --> 00:01:11,789

long gaps of time when we sat on

25

00:01:17,060 --> 00:01:15,270

consoles and listen to the conversation

26

00:01:18,170 --> 00:01:17,070

back and forth but knew that we didn't

27

00:01:20,719 --> 00:01:18,180

really have any action other than to

28

00:01:22,190 --> 00:01:20,729

keep the ships out there I sort of had

29

00:01:23,420 --> 00:01:22,200

to make a choice for some reason we

30

00:01:25,580 --> 00:01:23,430

didn't have the television in the

31

00:01:27,050 --> 00:01:25,590

underground control center and in one

32

00:01:28,850 --> 00:01:27,060

hand I remember thinking about this I

33

00:01:30,859 --> 00:01:28,860

was a young first lieutenant and I was

34

00:01:33,109 --> 00:01:30,869

very very excited about being part of

35

00:01:34,840 --> 00:01:33,119

this Apollo program even though we were

36

00:01:37,070 --> 00:01:34,850

sort of felt we were on the fringes and

37

00:01:38,660 --> 00:01:37,080

we weren't real NASA we were the

38

00:01:42,800 --> 00:01:38,670

military who was doing a service for

39

00:01:44,660 --> 00:01:42,810

NASA and I remember thinking gee where

40

00:01:46,460 --> 00:01:44,670

do I want to be when they land on the

41

00:01:48,620 --> 00:01:46,470

moon should I be in the control center

42

00:01:51,140 --> 00:01:48,630

sitting on console so that I can tell my

43

00:01:53,149 --> 00:01:51,150

grandchildren that I was there and in

44

00:01:55,940 --> 00:01:53,159

the recovery control center

45

00:01:58,640 --> 00:01:55,950

plugged in listening to this epic event

46

00:02:00,530 --> 00:01:58,650

and then I discovered that we weren't

47

00:02:02,810 --> 00:02:00,540

going to get TV signals so this down in

48

00:02:04,100 --> 00:02:02,820

the control center so I elected to sit

49

00:02:06,499 --> 00:02:04,110

home and watch it so I can see it on

50

00:02:08,419 --> 00:02:06,509

television rather than be in the control

51  
00:02:13,479 --> 00:02:08,429  
center and I think I've made the right

52  
00:02:19,360 --> 00:02:16,449  
okay there was a concern that there

53  
00:02:23,020 --> 00:02:19,370  
might possibly be some bacterial

54  
00:02:25,059 --> 00:02:23,030  
microbes on the surface of the of the

55  
00:02:27,220 --> 00:02:25,069  
moon that would be brought back and all

56  
00:02:30,699 --> 00:02:27,230  
the dust that was coarse on their

57  
00:02:32,199 --> 00:02:30,709  
clothes and hands and when they bring it

58  
00:02:35,530 --> 00:02:32,209  
bring the suits back and they get

59  
00:02:37,690 --> 00:02:35,540  
exposed to the to the dust you have to

60  
00:02:40,420 --> 00:02:37,700  
put it in context the Andromeda Strain

61  
00:02:43,440 --> 00:02:40,430  
Michael Crichton's book it was very

62  
00:02:45,399 --> 00:02:43,450  
successful about you know a

63  
00:02:48,610 --> 00:02:45,409

extraterrestrial microbe that gets loose

64

00:02:49,869 --> 00:02:48,620

and eats the earth so I don't know

65

00:02:51,699 --> 00:02:49,879

whether there was a I don't know how

66

00:02:53,379 --> 00:02:51,709

much of a concern there was I wasn't

67

00:02:55,899 --> 00:02:53,389

part of NASA so I couldn't judge that

68

00:02:58,089 --> 00:02:55,909

but the bottom line was they shipped us

69

00:02:59,229 --> 00:02:58,099

this what looked like a Airstream

70

00:03:01,990 --> 00:02:59,239

trailer without wheels

71

00:03:03,670 --> 00:03:02,000

in fact it said Airstream on the end of

72

00:03:05,289 --> 00:03:03,680

it over the window just and the

73

00:03:08,289 --> 00:03:05,299

instructions were to quarantine the

74

00:03:09,119 --> 00:03:08,299

astronauts as soon as we got her back on

75

00:03:14,110 --> 00:03:09,129

the ship

76  
00:03:16,420 --> 00:03:14,120  
so when the helicopters would would land

77  
00:03:19,960 --> 00:03:16,430  
on on the ship and this was true of

78  
00:03:21,189 --> 00:03:19,970  
three missions the the the crewmen three

79  
00:03:24,670 --> 00:03:21,199  
crew members would get out of the

80  
00:03:27,899 --> 00:03:24,680  
helicopter wearing masks that was some

81  
00:03:31,689 --> 00:03:27,909  
sort of biological isolation masks and

82  
00:03:35,759 --> 00:03:31,699  
biological isolation well flight suits

83  
00:03:39,429 --> 00:03:35,769  
they were not real real contained but

84  
00:03:40,839 --> 00:03:39,439  
then after a brief physical they put him

85  
00:03:43,149 --> 00:03:40,849  
in this trailer which was sitting on the

86  
00:03:44,710 --> 00:03:43,159  
hangar deck of the ship not very not

87  
00:03:46,089 --> 00:03:44,720  
very plush no air-conditioning it was

88  
00:03:49,059 --> 00:03:46,099

hot down in the South Pacific

89

00:03:51,069 --> 00:03:49,069

so the the mqf would be put on the

90

00:03:52,929 --> 00:03:51,079

hangar deck which is the second deck

91

00:03:56,319 --> 00:03:52,939

it's the deck immediately below the

92

00:03:58,449 --> 00:03:56,329

flight deck and it's kind of open

93

00:03:59,559 --> 00:03:58,459

there's big gaps or you could see out

94

00:04:01,059 --> 00:03:59,569

into the ocean and they had the thing

95

00:04:04,960 --> 00:04:01,069

oriented in a way that the crew members

96

00:04:07,119 --> 00:04:04,970

stuck in this trailer could sit and look

97

00:04:09,280 --> 00:04:07,129

out through the window towards the ocean

98

00:04:10,960 --> 00:04:09,290

so they could see a horizon reference if

99

00:04:12,129 --> 00:04:10,970

the seas were choppy you could you know

100

00:04:16,629 --> 00:04:12,139

at least get a reference to the horizon

101  
00:04:17,890 --> 00:04:16,639  
so you wouldn't get sick so they were

102  
00:04:20,860 --> 00:04:17,900  
stuck in that thing while the ship

103  
00:04:22,209 --> 00:04:20,870  
steamed all the way to Pearl Harbor most

104  
00:04:26,140 --> 00:04:22,219  
of the recovery took place down the

105  
00:04:26,890 --> 00:04:26,150  
South Pacific in the samoa area so that

106  
00:04:30,070 --> 00:04:26,900  
was took a

107  
00:04:32,590 --> 00:04:30,080  
while I remember maybe five days six

108  
00:04:35,320 --> 00:04:32,600  
days to steam up to Pearl Harbor in the

109  
00:04:37,960 --> 00:04:35,330  
case of Apollo 11 when the ship docked

110  
00:04:39,730 --> 00:04:37,970  
at Pearl Harbor at dock Donna not a main

111  
00:04:44,350 --> 00:04:39,740  
pier right across from the BX the

112  
00:04:49,150 --> 00:04:44,360  
exchange highly visible area and we had

113  
00:04:51,070 --> 00:04:49,160

set up a reviewing stand there we had

114

00:04:52,840 --> 00:04:51,080

chairs put out for dignitaries and on

115

00:04:56,439 --> 00:04:52,850

this big platform that we had built

116

00:04:59,409 --> 00:04:56,449

wooden plywood covered platform we had

117

00:05:00,909 --> 00:04:59,419

on all six or seven chairs gap and then

118

00:05:03,990 --> 00:05:00,919

six or seven chairs on the other side

119

00:05:07,629 --> 00:05:04,000

and the gap was for the mqf so the ship

120

00:05:09,430 --> 00:05:07,639

took this Airstream trailer wasted it

121

00:05:12,820 --> 00:05:09,440

over the side and lowered it carefully

122

00:05:14,830 --> 00:05:12,830

down onto this platform and seated up on

123

00:05:17,560 --> 00:05:14,840

the platform were people like the

124

00:05:19,300 --> 00:05:17,570

president the United States and we had a

125

00:05:21,580 --> 00:05:19,310

little welcoming ceremony there Pearl

126

00:05:23,740 --> 00:05:21,590

Harbor this was the first chance that

127

00:05:26,350 --> 00:05:23,750

the media other than the cool people

128

00:05:27,939 --> 00:05:26,360

that were on the ship had to see then

129

00:05:30,219 --> 00:05:27,949

and hear from the crew and if I remember

130

00:05:33,159 --> 00:05:30,229

right we plugged a PA system in where

131

00:05:34,360 --> 00:05:33,169

the where the crew could talk kneel you

132

00:05:37,089 --> 00:05:34,370

know if I remember right Neal was the

133

00:05:38,230 --> 00:05:37,099

spokesman and said a few words as part

134

00:05:41,620 --> 00:05:38,240

of this little ceremony they were all

135

00:05:43,420 --> 00:05:41,630

duly welcomed back all the dignitaries

136

00:05:44,920 --> 00:05:43,430

went off to a reception leaving a few of

137

00:05:48,000 --> 00:05:44,930

us there to figure out what to do with

138

00:05:53,700 --> 00:05:48,010

these guys and their Airstream trailer

139

00:05:59,050 --> 00:05:56,320

vehicle designed to carry cargo and

140

00:06:02,560 --> 00:05:59,060

slide it into the inside of an airplane

141

00:06:04,960 --> 00:06:02,570

so it's a it's a big platform with

142

00:06:07,480 --> 00:06:04,970

rollers and it has wheels and it can go

143

00:06:09,070 --> 00:06:07,490

up and down different heights and we had

144

00:06:10,600 --> 00:06:09,080

hallways things over from Hickam Air

145

00:06:15,070 --> 00:06:10,610

Force Base which is next door to Pearl

146

00:06:16,870 --> 00:06:15,080

Harbor and after the crowd left we again

147

00:06:19,029 --> 00:06:16,880

used a crane to lift the thing up and

148

00:06:20,680 --> 00:06:19,039

set it on this K loader strap it down

149

00:06:23,320 --> 00:06:20,690

because k-loaders got wheels on it

150

00:06:27,670 --> 00:06:23,330

rollers on the top of this platform and

151  
00:06:30,580 --> 00:06:27,680  
an airman I got in the cab of this thing

152  
00:06:33,610 --> 00:06:30,590  
and started off down the pier and there

153  
00:06:35,080 --> 00:06:33,620  
was a flatbed truck that had come over

154  
00:06:36,909 --> 00:06:35,090  
with some of the equipment that was

155  
00:06:39,550 --> 00:06:36,919  
associated the k-loaders so two or three

156  
00:06:40,159 --> 00:06:39,560  
of us got in the back of the steak truck

157  
00:06:41,360 --> 00:06:40,169  
and

158  
00:06:43,730 --> 00:06:41,370  
it up in the front you know with their

159  
00:06:47,929 --> 00:06:43,740  
arms over the cab and followed behind

160  
00:06:50,629 --> 00:06:47,939  
the mqf and the mqf had safety belts on

161  
00:06:53,080 --> 00:06:50,639  
the seats that were designed for use in

162  
00:06:55,399 --> 00:06:53,090  
flight takeoffs and landings I assume

163  
00:06:56,950 --> 00:06:55,409

that the crew didn't I guess they

164

00:06:59,989 --> 00:06:56,960

assumed they were pretty safe so they

165

00:07:01,309 --> 00:06:59,999

they stayed in the window so we looked

166

00:07:03,379 --> 00:07:01,319

at them and they looked at us for about

167

00:07:06,860 --> 00:07:03,389

the 20 minute bumpy drive around this

168

00:07:08,929 --> 00:07:06,870

back road and it was it was not a main

169

00:07:11,149 --> 00:07:08,939

thoroughfare it was a back road that

170

00:07:15,050 --> 00:07:11,159

went around parallel to the to the

171

00:07:16,550 --> 00:07:15,060

channel Pearl Harbor channel to get to

172

00:07:17,869 --> 00:07:16,560

Hickam Air Force Base and we wound our

173

00:07:20,300 --> 00:07:17,879

way this little procession around its

174

00:07:23,779 --> 00:07:20,310

way through the base out on the flight

175

00:07:25,129 --> 00:07:23,789

line and we had the Apollo command

176

00:07:27,110 --> 00:07:25,139

module was already there I don't know

177

00:07:28,159 --> 00:07:27,120

who called it over I guess the Navy had

178

00:07:30,019 --> 00:07:28,169

brought it over I don't know how it got

179

00:07:31,820 --> 00:07:30,029

there but I remember the Apollo command

180

00:07:34,309 --> 00:07:31,830

module was sitting on the ramp on a

181

00:07:37,939 --> 00:07:34,319

little cradle we all went over and you

182

00:07:39,999 --> 00:07:37,949

know knocked on it and felt it which I

183

00:07:42,290 --> 00:07:40,009

realize now we shouldn't have done but

184

00:07:44,600 --> 00:07:42,300

and the crew sat there on the scale odor

185

00:07:47,959 --> 00:07:44,610

and there was a c-141 Starlifter that's

186

00:07:49,909 --> 00:07:47,969

a rather large for engine jet with a big

187

00:07:55,909 --> 00:07:49,919

opening in the back and rows on the

188

00:07:58,189 --> 00:07:55,919

floor inside and after some some effort

189

00:08:00,170 --> 00:07:58,199

they took the k-loader and ran it up

190

00:08:03,529 --> 00:08:00,180

flush with the floor of that airplane

191

00:08:06,110 --> 00:08:03,539

and manually pushed the trailer into the

192

00:08:06,800 --> 00:08:06,120

inside still with the window facing

193

00:08:09,409 --> 00:08:06,810

backwards

194

00:08:12,139 --> 00:08:09,419

you know plane didn't take off I don't

195

00:08:14,899 --> 00:08:12,149

know why but they weren't ready to go so

196

00:08:17,480 --> 00:08:14,909

they they locked the mqf down and the to

197

00:08:21,829 --> 00:08:17,490

the floor got it tight to the floor and

198

00:08:24,860 --> 00:08:21,839

we all stood around and here's the mike

199

00:08:26,570 --> 00:08:24,870

buzz and Neil sitting him again still in

200

00:08:28,579 --> 00:08:26,580

the window this rather small window you

201  
00:08:30,170 --> 00:08:28,589  
see their little three faces like maybe

202  
00:08:34,180 --> 00:08:30,180  
like urchins looking at you through

203  
00:08:36,709 --> 00:08:34,190  
through a window of a store or something

204  
00:08:38,389 --> 00:08:36,719  
and they sat and they stared out and and

205  
00:08:39,649 --> 00:08:38,399  
then they disappear I guess they go sit

206  
00:08:42,529 --> 00:08:39,659  
down for a while then they come back and

207  
00:08:44,540 --> 00:08:42,539  
look out and because I suppose they were

208  
00:08:46,639 --> 00:08:44,550  
anticipating uh what would have been

209  
00:08:49,220 --> 00:08:46,649  
maybe a seven-hour eight-hour flight to

210  
00:08:51,019 --> 00:08:49,230  
Houston and they were gonna be locked up

211  
00:08:52,069 --> 00:08:51,029  
in there with no daylight or anything so

212  
00:08:53,990 --> 00:08:52,079  
they stayed in the window for a while

213  
00:08:54,230 --> 00:08:54,000

and people would come by and wave at

214

00:08:56,660 --> 00:08:54,240

them

215

00:08:58,280 --> 00:08:56,670

they way back and it must have been

216

00:09:04,880 --> 00:08:58,290

interesting for them after being the

217

00:09:06,440 --> 00:09:04,890

focus of really the whole world to now

218

00:09:07,699 --> 00:09:06,450

be totally without any control of

219

00:09:09,680 --> 00:09:07,709

anything you know they drove this

220

00:09:11,210 --> 00:09:09,690

vehicle to the moon and we're in charge

221

00:09:13,000 --> 00:09:11,220

of the whole program and now they're

222

00:09:15,680 --> 00:09:13,010

sitting in this mqf why everybody is

223

00:09:22,490 --> 00:09:15,690

flowing around them and they probably

224

00:09:26,329 --> 00:09:24,199

one of the things that it's kind of

225

00:09:27,590 --> 00:09:26,339

interesting as you stand in the museum

226

00:09:29,660 --> 00:09:27,600

and look at the mobile quarantine

227

00:09:31,819 --> 00:09:29,670

facility today as you'll see him there's

228

00:09:34,819 --> 00:09:31,829

the above the window is these big thick

229

00:09:41,329 --> 00:09:34,829

3d letters that say Airstream and you'll

230

00:09:44,030 --> 00:09:41,339

notice there's some tape velcro residue

231

00:09:46,309 --> 00:09:44,040

it's just kind of crumbly pieces of

232

00:09:47,689 --> 00:09:46,319

velcro stuck up there and nobody's ever

233

00:09:49,100 --> 00:09:47,699

taken it off because they weren't sure

234

00:09:53,090 --> 00:09:49,110

whether it was historical or not I kind

235

00:09:58,819 --> 00:09:53,100

of think it is that held a sign that

236

00:10:00,410 --> 00:09:58,829

said Hornet plus three and oh we had put

237

00:10:02,449 --> 00:10:00,420

that sign or actually the ship people

238

00:10:05,720 --> 00:10:02,459

the ship had had made this sign up it

239

00:10:09,920 --> 00:10:05,730

was a paper cardboard sign and they'd

240

00:10:12,439 --> 00:10:09,930

stuck it on this velcro so that all the

241

00:10:13,910 --> 00:10:12,449

time that that the cameras were like

242

00:10:17,300 --> 00:10:13,920

during the ceremony that when they

243

00:10:19,910 --> 00:10:17,310

landed at Pearl Harbor the cameras were

244

00:10:23,329 --> 00:10:19,920

fixed on that window you saw this legend

245

00:10:24,679 --> 00:10:23,339

that said Hornet plus three the next

246

00:10:26,269 --> 00:10:24,689

time around by the way they when the

247

00:10:28,189 --> 00:10:26,279

same quarantine facility was used it

248

00:10:30,800 --> 00:10:28,199

said the sign was put back on it said

249

00:10:33,499 --> 00:10:30,810

three more like before I can just

250

00:10:34,910 --> 00:10:33,509

imagine the PR guy at at Airstream the

251

00:10:38,210 --> 00:10:34,920

Earth's ring probably built this thing

252

00:10:39,590 --> 00:10:38,220

for nothing because they knew that every

253

00:10:40,819 --> 00:10:39,600

camera in the world I mean the eyes of

254

00:10:42,379 --> 00:10:40,829

the world are gonna be focused on this

255

00:10:46,429 --> 00:10:42,389

little window and above this window was

256

00:10:48,679 --> 00:10:46,439

their logo big and instead imagine their

257

00:10:50,389 --> 00:10:48,689

chagrin one when they they saw this

258

00:10:52,370 --> 00:10:50,399

great event on television and there is

259

00:10:53,629 --> 00:10:52,380

the president and there is the the first

260

00:10:55,910 --> 00:10:53,639

three guys come back to the moon and

261

00:10:57,679 --> 00:10:55,920

above the window it says Hornet plus

262

00:10:59,389 --> 00:10:57,689

three instead of air stream because this