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# Alexandria's response on 9/11

Monday marked the 22nd anniversary of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, as well as Flight 93, whose passengers bravely prevented it from flying into the U.S. Capitol. When American Airlines Flight 77 struck the Pentagon, Alexandria's first responders answered the call to help other Northern Virginia emergency responders that day.

While the enduring images of Sept. 11, 2001 focus on the World Trade Center, the attack on the Pentagon and the resilience of Americans that day is memorialized in a photo by Michael Pendergrass, which pictures fire personnel hanging an American flag on the building. One of the firefighters captured in the photo was a member of the Alexandria Fire Department.

Another emergency responder that day was Officer Francis Powers of the Alexandria Police Department. Many years later, Powers remembered 9/11 starting just like any other day. His wife went to her office two blocks from the White House, and his one-year-old son was dropped off at child care.

Powers found out about the first planes flying into the World Trade Center towers while he waited for court proceedings to begin. The third

Patrol Division 2 J Assignment Sheet											
Command	Serial #	Unit #	Veh #	Remarks	Date: 9/11/2001	Prepared by: Sgt. Adcock					
Capt. B. Corle (F)	1003	201			Day: Tue	Payroll Entered By:					
Lt. R. Hazel	838	202			Off. K. Brown (M-F 0700-1600/1S)	Watch Commander Report:					
Off. D. Henderson	743	231			4.5 Ms. C. Webb (M-F 0800-1600) (S)	08:50-14:50 ✓					
Group A				Group D			Group E				
Sgt. P. Adcock	754	207	1910	Sector 2 0600/530	7.8	Sgt. J. Gregg	1247	206	1778	Sectors 3 & 4	4,6,7,8
Off. R. Blanchet	701	224/25	1731		6.8	Off. B. Cofresi-Toro	1093	241	1730		2,3,4,6,7
Off. T. Buckley	1449	222	1921			Off. K. Hatton	817	232	1959		4,6
Off. R. Estrada	1532	243	1751			Off. T. Leake	1609	242	1926	Hammond	
Off. T. Gholson	1208	221	1924			Off. C. McClish	1451	X	1764	EL ✓	2,4,7
Off. M. Grossman	1475	225	1855		4,9,10,11	Off. A. Semidary	1512	X	1935	SL ✓	3,4,11
Off. T. Tazelaar	710	X	1703	EL ✓	2	Off. N. Todaro	986	X	1748	Vacation ✓	4,10
Off. R. Newcomb	1763	X	2757	W/Grossman	4,2,11						
Off. M. Griffin	1898	223									
Group B				Group E			Hirebacks				
Sgt. D. Green	728	203	1707	Sector 1	7	Sgt. R. Wynn	561	204	1749		8
Off. B. Bailey	1624	X	1938	CR ✓	4,6	Off. D. Barnes	1432		2737		
Off. E. Fridley	772	211	1823			Off. J. Fowler	1619		1903		4,11
Off. R. Griffin	1060	215	1727	Lyles-Crouch		Off. C. Lloyd	1604		1774		4
Off. G. Lohman	1664	X	1733	FSL ✓	6	Off. V. Omundson	793		1732		8
Off. T. McCred	943	X	1716	SL ✓	4	Off. T. Ricks	1103		1752		4,7,8,7
Off. F. Powers	1477	212/13	1745		4,8,9,11	Off. V. Roman	1698		1936		3
Off. R. Smith	1379	X		Light Duty		Off. A. Gorham	1825				3
Off. M. Wigglesworth	1592	X	2753	Vacation ✓	5						
Group C				Hirebacks			Notes:				
Sgt. D. Webb	749	205		ICS	1,7,8	Off. La Pierre			214		
Off. B. Bolton	1342		2004		2,4,7,8	Off. Torchiani			233		
Off. D. Cantrill	1361		1744		4,11	Off. Hours					
Off. H. Duquette	931		1937		7,8	Patrol Beats: 11			Warrants		
Off. R. Johns	1062		1828		2,4,7	Hirebacks: 2			How AM:		
Off. V. Jones	1584		1934		2,4,7,8	School Post:			Abortion:		
Off. E. Milner	1717	X	1726	EL ✓	2,4,6,7,8	Traffic Post:			RCT:		
						Foot Patrol:			Ed Leave:		
						Bike Patrol:			Other:		
						Ride Along:			Translator:		

The duty roster for the Alexandria Police Department on Sept. 11, 2001.

IMAGE/INSPECTOR FRANCIS POWERS

plane struck the Pentagon at 9:45 that morning.

Powers was able to reach his wife to find out she was part of the pedestrian exodus from D.C. to Virginia. His son was picked up by his grandmother. His first assignment in response to the attack was to make sure that the on-ramp for Interstate 395 off King Street remained clear for ambulances to transport injured people from the Pentagon

to Alexandria Hospital.

Powers recalled the fleet of ambulances was much smaller than anticipated. The attack on the Pentagon killed 125 people in the building and all 64 people on Flight 77.

The enduring memories for Powers from that day were the smell of burning fuel, the rain of particles and ash from the fire at the Pentagon and the contrast of the day's events with the beautiful weather overhead.

The black plume of smoke from the fire was visible from Alexandria City Hall. It took multiple days to put out the fire. The damaged parts of the Pentagon were fully repaired by September 2002, and the National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial formally opened on Sept. 11, 2008.

*Out of the Attic is provided by the Office of Historic Alexandria.*