

*New York State
Individual Record of Officers and Enlisted Personnel*



PART 1 – BASIC INFORMATION

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PART II – SERVICE HISTORY

Branch of Service: US Army **Date Entered:** June 15, 1964
Place Entered: Syracuse, NY **Date Discharged:** June 10, 1966
Service In: Active Duty and later the US Army Reserve
Highest Rank Held: Sgt E5 (In The Reserve) - Specialist E-4 (Highest Active Duty rank)
Unit Assigned To: 362nd Signal Core – US Army Republic of Viet Nam

War, theater, campaigns, or locations were you in?

Republic of Viet Nam, South East Asia. I spent time in several different areas during my tour of duty.

What were your general duties, skills or rating?

My MOS was "Fixed Plant Carrier Repairman". This is a person who installs, maintains and repairs communications equipment designed to bounce signals off the Troposphere. In the years before Satellite Communications, this was the militaries means of carrying telephone communications over the horizon.

However, due to lack of equipment in Viet Nam, I spent much of tour in the role of common infantry soldier. The Collin's Radio equipment that was to be available when I arrived was sabotaged after it was taken off ship and it took months to replace it in the quantity needed.

It was only during the last three months of my tour that we received equipment to install and maintain at the site I was located at.

Did you have combat service?

Yes. Several times.

When were you first under fire?

The first time was at night in July of 1965 while on guard duty. This was one of my temporary duty assignments while the army awaited the communications equipments arrival in Viet Nam. The camp was located near Pleiku, which is in the central highlands of South Viet Nam. Because of my status (no equipment to work on) I did a lot of "special assignments" and night guard duty was a regular thing or me.

What were your feelings in combat?

The first time I remember being initially terrified when I heard the gunfire, the explosions from incoming mortars and the flares lighting up the sky temporarily. The ARVN's were the first line of defense around the camp and the sergeant who posted the guard had warned us that if they ran it meant the VC were coming in force. The sound of gunfire was coming from all directions and I could see muzzle flashes aimed in my direction, so I knew that this wasn't some scared guard shooting at shadows (which happened a lot on my previous watches). I had an M16 with four magazines, two grenades and three parachute flares. I remember thinking of my family and my girl friend (who would later become my wife) and wondering if I would ever see them again. My hands were shaking and I was having difficulty keeping my M16 steady as I aimed at movement in the center of my kill zone. Everything seemed to be happening in slow motion. I put up a flare and I saw an ARVN running toward me. I remember the Sergeant saying " Don't let the ARVN's get in with you as many of them are VC themselves and they will kill you. " I aimed at the center of his body and remember thinking I only had a couple of minutes of light before the flare hit the ground. I agonized over whether I should pull the trigger. In that moment I decided I couldn't shoot a person just because he "might" be the enemy. That wasn't the way I was brought up. When he ran past without stopping I remember feeling both relieved and still afraid that I might have made a wrong decision and he would shoot me in the back.

After what seemed a long time (probably less than a minute) I remember becoming very calm. Somehow I accepted that death was a possibility and if that was God's will there was nothing I could do about it. I also thought about the men in camp. They needed time to wake up and get armed to defend themselves. Finally, I thought about my self and whether I would die as coward or fighting every second of my life. In that instant I made my peace with death and from that point forward I would never fear death again. In future battles I would always transition from terror to that strange calmness immediately upon recognizing the threat and my fear.

I was careful not to write home about my experiences, I didn't want my folks or girl friend to live with the worry. To this day I haven't spoken about any of this to any one until now.

Did you receive any injuries, wounds, or illness?

My only injury while there was a couple of minor wounds on two different occasions from fragments. In one case it was little more than a cut and in the other I had to dig a couple of pieces of shrapnel out of my arm with my knife. I did not report these instances because they were so minor. I had seen too many dead soldiers and those who were "really" wounded. I was too embarrassed to reporting these minor injuries.

Today, more than 36 years leaving Vietnam, I find that I did get a "delayed injury" that I was unaware of at the time. I am currently suffering from illnesses tied to the herbicide used to kill the jungle growth in that country. I spent a lot of time in areas sprayed by "Agent Orange", including being sprayed myself while on patrol.

After Veterans Administration review and several VA medical exams, I have been "awarded" disability compensation and medical care. I have diabetes type 2, neuropathy in both of my hands and both of my feet, growing cataracts on both eyes and Prostate Cancer. The VA is treating all of these illnesses, which over time will ultimately result in my death.

Were you captured?

No.

What was your daily life like?

My experiences in Viet Nam were extremely varied due to the situation. Without the communications equipment I was trained on being "in country" I became an infantry soldier. I caught a lot of different duty assignments during my first few months in country. I will also admit, I was the first to volunteer for "special assignments" as I felt an obligation to make a difference with my presence "in country".

Once the equipment was available we worked around the clock to get it up and running. Our communications site was near the top of a mountain that had been repeatedly sprayed with Agent Orange. There were no real facilities since everything had to be brought in by helicopter. We lived in tents, ate cold C Rations and bathed in a stream for several months. I remember vividly my first Thanksgiving and Christmas away from home as the Marine's chopper'd in some hot food for us. It was the highlight of two very depressing days away from home. Later, near the end of my tour I saw an article in "Stars and Stripes" which said the Army had determined you shouldn't be on "C Rations" for more than two weeks at a time. It was a joke as we were on "C's" for months.

Just as I was ending my tour the Army put in a road up the mountain and began building a real camp with buildings, showers, latrines and three hot meals a day.

Did your equipment work well?

What equipment we had worked well, but there were a lot of things we didn't have. These were early days in the war and things were continually coming in or being upgraded. At first, much of the stuff was "Korean War Vintage" but as the American War Machine back home began cranking out improvements they were passed down the line to us.

How was it compared to the enemies?

Their equipment was either "very old" or the same as ours. In fact, much of what the VC had was in fact stolen from the US.

What was your unit/ship like?

I was initially assigned to MACV upon arrival in Viet Nam and bounced around in different roles. The "unit" I was eventually assigned to (362nd Signal Corp) was responsible for communications in. Most of my tour was without communications equipment, permanent structures, running water, hot food, etc. etc.

We slept in tents surrounded by sand bags, bathed in a stream, drank water from the same stream (treated with pills), ate cans and cans of "C Rations" and performed duties like infantry soldiers.

How were your officers?

The Officers I served under ranged from combat experienced to right out of OCS training. During much of my tour there wasn't an Officer with us. They tended to stay at headquarters (permanent structures, hot meals, etc.) and visited the remote sites by helicopter every couple of weeks.

Did you receive any decorations, medals or commendations?

Vietnam Service medal, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service medal and Marksman Badge.

I received one other "award" while I was in Vietnam, but not from the Army. It was a "George Washington Freedom Foundation" award for an essay I had written while in Vietnam. Somehow the award was passed to the Army for presentation. I was flown by helicopter from the "boonies" to Nha Trang and our Division Commander presented it to me. I was supposed to get a few days "on the beach" along with it, but that didn't happen. "Charlie" attacked our site again on the night that I received the award and I was flown back to the site the next morning. We had less than a dozen guys at the site, so every man was needed.

What was the most interesting or inspiring thing you experienced during your service?

I learned the value of life, the horror of war and the price of freedom. My entire life would be built from the experiences I had in Vietnam.

What person(s) do you remember best from your service and why?

I remember the faces of the men who died in my presence. A few of them were friends, many were comrades and some were the enemy. Most of them are nameless, but I still see their faces in my dreams.

What experience(s) left the greatest impressions on you?

To understand this, you have to understand where and how I was brought up.

I grew up in a loving home located in the small, friendly village of Oriskany in upstate New York. This was a town where people valued honesty, patriotism and hard work. Oriskany is famous for being the site of a major battle in the Revolutionary War and as a child I collected arrowheads and musket balls from these early Patriots. Everyone I know looked out for each other, never locked their doors and contributed to every good cause that came along.

The oldest Son of hard working parents and grandparents, I was blessed with the innocence and inexperience of youth. I was sheltered from so much of the harshness, poverty and death, which was more common in the rest of the world. Death to me was shooting a pheasant, partridge or deer to put food on the table. At 18, I had only had one close relative die (my Grand Father – My Mom's dad) and that was when I was almost too young to remember. It was "Storybook Americana" with everyone a Patriot and Honest, God fearing person.

After graduating from Oriskany Central School, I volunteered for the Army and later for Vietnam. It was my chance to help others in the struggling for freedom. I had grown up "ducking under my desk" in response to drills for a Communist nuclear attack and now "they" were challenging the freedom of good men, women and children in other parts of the world. Later in life, people like me would be call me naïve, fools, brainwashed, someone to be spit on for serving their country.

With that as a background, my experiences in Vietnam were such dramatic contrasts.

Being surrounded by death and sights too horrible to comprehend destroyed my innocence. As I took the life of others, I came to understand the value of life to us all. I learned of the finality of death and how important it is to live each day with honor.

I learned that the courage in a person's heart has nothing to do with the color of their skin.

I learned that being in the right was no guarantee of winning.

I learned that the men you fought and killed had more honor than some of your countrymen at home.

So much of what I am today was forged in those moments of horror, terror and hardship so long ago.

Did you perform any unusual service or duties?

Not from my viewpoint. In war nothing is common and few things are unusual.

Part III – Civilian History

Date Of Birth

August 25, 1945

Place of Birth

Rome, New York USA

Education prior to Service:

High School – Oriskany Central School

Education after Service:

Some College, Coursework in numerous Company sponsored classes, seminars, etc.

Employment Prior To Service:

Loom Repairman – Waterbury Mills, Oriskany, N.Y.

Employment After Service:

Vice President – Global Program Management & Implementation – Global Crossing (1/01 – 2/02)

Worldwide responsibility for Global Solution Program Management and Support of multiple networks outsource implementations.

Vice President – Engineering & Program Management – Global Operations – IXnet (3/00 – 1/01)

Worldwide responsibility for Pre-Sales Engineering, Post-Sales Design Engineering and Program Management implementations for IXnet Corporation. IXnet built the biggest shared WAN infrastructure for the Wall Street Financial community in the world. Global Crossing acquired IXnet in 2001.

Vice President – Global Support Operations – Worldwide Marketing – Timeplex Group (7/98 – 9/99)

Worldwide responsibility for Customer Service Business Development, Business Line Management, Company RFP/RFQ Proposal Response, Network Design & Consulting, Global Education, Project Management and Multi-National Partners Program groups.

Vice President – Customer Service Center – Americas Division – Ascom Timeplex (12/96 – 7/98))

Responsible for Customer Service Centralized Functions: Call Center, Technical Support, Network Management Center, Project Management, and Installation Planning & Staging.

Vice President – Worldwide Network Services – Ascom Timeplex (6/96–12/96)

Worldwide responsibility for product Service Planning Group and Worldwide Educational Services Groups.

Consultant – Project Management – Worldwide Network Services – Ascom Timeplex (9/94 – 6/96)

Independent contractor providing Project Management for Ascom Timeplex network implementations. Major projects: Program Director, Chicago 911 1/95 – 12/95. Program Director, Rotterdam Police 4/96 – 6/96.

Group Director – Customer Services Engineering, PAAD Division – Unisys Corporation (6/98 – 2/94)

Responsible for the customer service engineering business in Canada, Mexico, South America, Asia, Japan, and South pacific countries. \$ 337 million dollar services revenue, 2,200 people, \$ 157.5 million dollar budget, 20 subsidiary countries, 10 major distributors and three joint ventures.

Vice President – Corporate Product Services – Unisys (5/85 – 6/89)

Corporate responsibility for product services plan development, project management and implementation for Unisys service business worldwide; \$ 2 billion dollar service business revenue, direct organization: \$ 10.9 million dollar budget, 150 people in 10 worldwide locations.

Director – Systems Maintainability – Sperry (2/81 – 5/85)

Corporate responsibility for all service aspects of Sperry product services development, planning, program management and implementation, diagnostics, logistics, training, repair, contracts, pricing and P & L. \$ 1 billion dollar service business, 130 people in 3 development centers.

Manager – Corporate Technical Services – Sperry Univac (8/76 – 2/81)

Corporate responsibility for development and implementation of worldwide distributed parts repair program for high technology circuit assemblies; managed hardware & software engineering group, manufacturing, education and support functions.

Part IV – Other Information

Member - Institute of Electronics Electrical Engineers

Member - American Legion

Member - Disabled American Veterans

US Merchant Marine Masters License – US Coast Guard

Photograph

Artifacts: