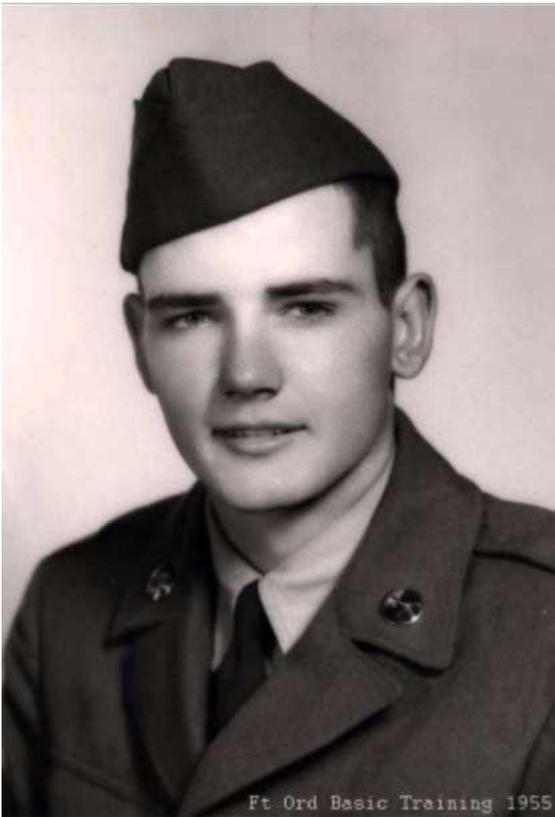


15 Nov. 2020

My Veterans Story by Jerry Butt



My name is Jerry Butt the son of William Francis Butt & Lucille Boren Butt

I was born in Lehi where my military experience began with the Lehi Utah National Guard when I was 16.

I attended Army Basic Training at Ft. Ord, Ca. Then I was assigned as the Caterpillar operator for our unit. I helped build the road from American Fork Canyon to Heber Valley, and widen the road above BYU.



I then served a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of latter-day Saints in the West Central States.

When I returned home, Joan Evans and I were married and sealed in the Salt Lake Temple. We settled in Helena near her family, and friends, while we waited for the birth of our son Kevin.

I transferred to the Montana National Guard, and was employed at the NG Maintenance Shop. I attended several military schools, and then a daughter Karylyn was born. I attended OCS at Ft. Benning, Ga., and graduated as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt.

Joan and I decided to try Army life. I volunteered, and we were assigned to Ft. Richardson, Alaska, with a stop at Aberdeen Proving Grounds for an Officers Maintenance School. The family went with me. As we were preparing to



leave for Alaska, Karylyn crawled into the sink and turn on the scalding hot water. She couldn't get out of the sink and it scalded her feet. We took her to the hospital where they did all that they could. Joan and Karylyn couldn't travel by car, so I flew them to Helena to stay with her folks until Kevin and I arrived. That drive was made in one day. Karylyn wasn't ready to travel yet up the Alaska Hi way, so they stayed in Helena, while I traveled to Alaska. Kraig was born in Alaska. We loved this three year assignment, and then we were assigned to the Army Career Course at Aberdeen. After graduation, my assignment was to be an advisor to a Vietnam Maintenance Unit. Prior to leaving for Vietnam I attended a 4 week Officers Overseas Orientation Course at Ft. Bragg, NC, and then the Vietnamese language school in Ft. Bliss, Tx. My family went with during this 8 week course. We returned home to Bountiful where I stayed for one week prior to leaving for Vietnam. My family was settled in Bountiful, and Joan again was taking the responsibility of caring for our family.

Arriving in Saigon on 15 Jul 1967, I viewed the hustle and bustle of the many people moving through the streets, a very busy people. The MACV headquarters didn't know where to assign me. After one week of waiting, I was assigned to the IV Corp in Cantho, some 100 miles south of Saigon in the Delta. I was then assigned as an advisor to a Vietnamese Maintenance Unit in Soc Trang, some 50 miles south. The families live with the soldiers, and their means are very meager, as was their living facilities. The unit was located in the front yard of a Pagoda.

I watched how the labor force was used to grow the food of vegetables or rice.

Every pond was used to raise fish, and they were used in their daily diet.

An orphanage was located in our area which was administered by the Catholic Church. Most drinking water was collected from rain and stored. The Mekong River was dirty and not suitable for drinking.

I helped obtain building materials for a new company area; I would arrange helicopter transportation to repair weapons at many outposts. I assisted a USAID (CIA) operative obtain weapons for his fighting force in combating the Viet Con. I assisted the US helicopter units with material (20 lb. bombs) in support of their suppressing attacks on the Vietnamese outposts.

Open air markets and restaurants were available in the central area of Soc Trang.

Vietnam is very beautiful and serene, yet it was an explosive area where danger was at every corner. The Vietnamese people were under threat constantly, as were the U.S. Civilian and Military personnel.

The District Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ came to Soc Trang and asked if I'd accept to be the Group Leader for the church. I was set apart, and arranged for church services at the airfield chapel each Sunday where we gathered for sacrament and a gospel discussion. One of the four US civilian nurses agreed to play the piano for us while we sang the songs of Zion. Approximately 5 to 10 attended our gatherings, depending on their availability.



Our lodging was the MACV house where I lived with two doctors and the other room had two doctors and a medical administrator. One doctor in our room had a brother serving in Vietnam, and two of the same family couldn't serve. He was reassigned to Japan, and his bunk was occupied by a Military Police office administrator. 50 cycle power and 100 volts was all that was available. Not like home.



During Christmas, donations of clothing, food, cooking oil and gifts were shipped from the U.S. for distribution to the Vietnamese military families, and the orphanage.

I enjoyed my service in Vietnam helping the people that I associated with. Two things that I didn't like was being shot at, and missing my family. I had no desire to be away from my family again. I took leave during 1968 and met Joan in Hawaii. We spent 10 days together visiting the Cultural Center and other sites of Hawaii. After leaving Vietnam I was assigned to Ft. Lee, Va. We visited the many historical sites in the area. Then when I was told that I would be returning to Vietnam, I request a release from the military, and on 29 Nov. 1968 we headed for Bountiful.

I'm grateful to have served our countries need to help those who were suffering under aggression.

We settled in a rented home on Center Street, Bountiful where a daughter Andrea was born.





Soc Trang 843rd company holiday. Gifts were provided by U.S. I'm assisting



I installed the TV and I lived in the house where I lived in Vietnam