

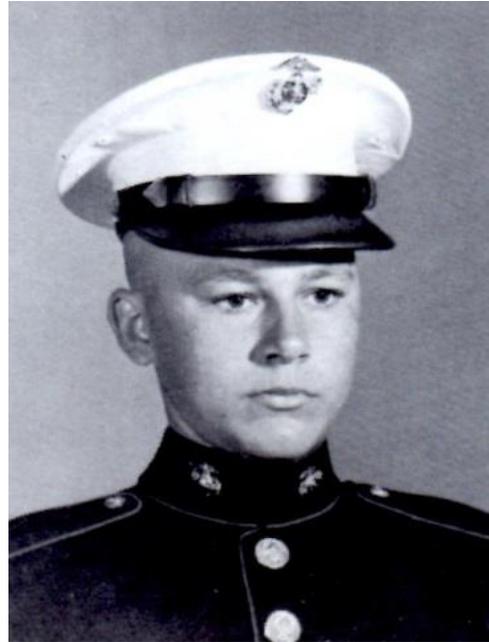
# Victor S. Hansen

as interviewed by Judy Hansen

June 2014

Victor Swen Hansen was born to John Peter and Marjorie Mae Gaisford Hansen on December 28, 1950 in the Lehi Hospital. His siblings are Gary, Larry, and Judy Hansen. He was raised on Locust Lane and attended schools in Lehi to the 11<sup>th</sup> grade when he enlisted in the Marines.

Victor decided to go into the service around his 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. He had taken some lectures in High school about minutemen and how the farmers would leave their fields to take up arms. These men had pride and wanted to fight for their freedom. He found it interesting and intriguing that in the spur of the moment they would take off, leave their families and everything they had with the good possibility that they would never come back. This is what got him started thinking about the military. He felt a lot of pride for his country.



He started looking around at the different military units. As he studied the different branches of service he decided he was more impressed with the Marine Corp. He went to the Marine Corp recruiting office in Provo and they told him he wasn't old enough. He had to wait until he was 17 years and 9 months in order to sign the papers. So when he reached that age he went back in, got the papers, and took them home. It required his parents' signature. His mother didn't want to sign. She was reluctant and didn't want him to join but his dad said, "Give 'em here" and he sit down at the table and signed them. There was no discussion. He also had to get the Principal's signature so he took the papers to the High School and talked with Mr. Price for quite a while about it. Mr. Price told Victor that once he signed them he was out of school and Victor said he understood that. Mr. Price said if that is what he really wanted then he would sign them.

The Marines had to have a certain amount of people in each platoon so when someone was discharged an opening came up. They would assign that date to another recruit and you would go. Victor was supposed to have gone into the Utah platoon but it had already filled up so they asked him if he would go into the next one a month later. He agreed. Victor and another kid from Pleasant Grove were assigned to platoon 1075 US Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, California. He was able to attend school right to the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade even though he was legally out of school as of the date Mr. Price signed his enlistment papers. There was one teacher that found out about it and kicked him out of his class. Victor didn't mind because it was a teacher he never got along with anyway.

Victor had to go up to the Utah Hotel for his physical. They put him up overnight while he had his full physical done and then he came home. After he got his papers back letting him know he had passed the physicals and that he was fully accepted then he was assigned an entry date of September 2, 1968.

They all met in the Salt Lake recruiting center where there were 30+ recruits. Victor was assigned squad leader which meant he had to physically carry all the paperwork for every individual in that group. He was also responsible for counting heads. There was a head count when they got on the bus, another getting into the airport, and another one getting on the bus in San Diego. Once they got off the bus onto the training base he handed all the paperwork to the Sargent and then the screaming and hollering began.

The first 15 minute they were taught how to stand at attention. Then they went into a room where they had to strip and someone would come and ask them for the underwear size. They were issued a pair of boxer shorts and told to box up all their civilian clothing and everything they had, put their address on the box and the Marines then mailed it all home. After that they gave every man sweat pants and a yellow t-shirt that said, "Marines," a duffle bag, towels, laundry bag, personal hygiene items, etc. Everything weighed about 15 pounds. They went outside and stood on yellow footprints that showed the recruit where to put his feet to stand at attention. The DI (drill instructor) started hollering at them again. The language he used can't be repeated but any dirty word you can think of was somewhere in that lecture. He made them turn to the right and start marching. No one could stay in step so he halted them and made them hold their duffle bags over their head and march all the way to their barracks like that. Marching 350-400 yards holding 15 pounds over your head is not an easy task. There were 77 recruits in platoon 1075 which was a big platoon. There was not one recruit that was not sore, tired, and upset because they had to march with their duffle bag over their head.

They placed them in their billet (housing barracks) and assigned them to their bunks. By this time it was dark and they had the rest of the night to themselves. The next day the real fun started. The first day they got their first shots, tailored uniforms, boots, etc. The second day they went and picked up all their gear, packs, belt, rifle, and accessories. The first week was orientation where they were taught about the Marine Corp., their history, their uniforms, and all their traditions. The second week started the physical training. The first Monday they had to run five miles and it was a disaster. They also went through the obstacle course. Their days were pretty much waking up, running five miles, eating breakfast, going through the obstacle course, then classes the rest of the day. Their days would end about 5:30-6:00 pm.

If someone goofed up the DI would haze them. Hazing was common and relentless for everyone. Once, Victor had to stand on his hands with his heels on the top of the wall locker, belly facing outwards. Two DI's came in with tied bath towels dipped in a bucket of water and then sat there and had him repeat the chain of command from Private to General. Every time he made a mistake he got hit in the stomach with the towel. Everything he was expected to memorize was asked and it was expected the answer would be barked out. Whenever he missed he was hit in the stomach with the towel. That only happened to him once because he decided that was not a good thing to have happen.

Later on in boot camp, Victor had a heel contusion and was put on 'light duty' for five days. For those five days when they hit the obstacle course he would stand there and hold everyone's personal belongings. Victor always liked to talk and he would talk to himself if he didn't have anyone to talk to. He was standing there all alone holding all this stuff mutterin' to himself and

it happened that the company commander (Lieutenant) was standing behind him. He got in Victor's face and accused him of talking to him like an ol' time buddy. Then he turned onto Victor's DI and started chewing him out for not teaching him personal discipline. After the commander left the DI turned to Victor and told him he had to do squat thrusts forever. After he completed three squat thrusts the DI told him, "No, not there, over there," pointing to a water pond under a rope swing. So he had to climb into the water pond, get down, complete a squat thrust, come up for air, and say, "one sir," do another one, come up, "two sir" until the last man in the whole company finished the obstacle course. He had completed a little over 175 squat thrusts under water. The DI pulled him out and told him to get back to the barracks and put on clean UT's (uniform of the day – green work uniform), and get to the mess hall. Victor was making a bee line as hard as he could and ran upon two officers going in the same direction as he was going. He had to come to a complete stop behind them, stand at attention, and say, "By your leave sir" to get permission to pass. One lieutenant said, "Go" so he took off and all of a sudden he hollered to him to stop. He asked why he was all wet and Victor told them, they both started laughing and said, "Go." He made their day. He got changed and into the mess hall just as the last man in the platoon was going into line so he got to eat that day.

Boot camp was 12 weeks and Victor only got in trouble those couple of times. There were other guys that were constantly in trouble. Out of 77 men they graduated 74 men. They only lost three out of their platoon which was very unusual. The percentage of washouts was usually much higher than that. One man went to the 'fat farm.' He was overweight and couldn't get his weight down in the platoon so they sent him to the 'fat farm' and if he succeeded there he would re-enter another platoon at the same point he left the 1057. One man went UA (unauthorized absence) and just disappeared. He got caught about 12 hours later and Victor said he would have hated to have been that guy. Then there was a little black man that was very likeable but he was really 'touched in the head.' He wanted out and decided he needed to relief himself while everyone was on the bench braking down their 45 pistols. They sectioned him out of the Marines.

Each step of boot camp you are trained on hand-to-hand combat, rifles, marching, first aide, small arms, etc. Every platoon in the company was rated. The 1075 took top honors in every subject so they were known as the 'top honor platoon.'

After twelve weeks in San Diego's boot camp he graduated and went to ITR (advanced infantry training) at Camp Pendleton. ITR was a lot like boot camp only 4 times more physical – a lot more hiking, full packs, longer runs and still quite a bit of classroom.

Victor fired expert with any weapon they put in his hands. On the range one day they were firing M-79 grenade launchers. They look like a single barrel shotgun but the barrel is about  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches across. You put the round in it, set the sight, then bring it up to the elevation, angle it, and shoot. The shell goes up and laubs. They call it a 'blooper' because when it goes off it simply makes a small 'bloop' sound, not a big loud bang. Victor asked the PMI'er (the instructor) where on the tank (about 130 yards out) was he supposed to hit it. The PMI told him the ideal place was to put it right inside the turret (the hole in the top of the tank that the tank crew climbs into – or the hatch). Victor looked at it and set his elevation. They gave him a practice round (not a live round) and it went right down the turrett. The PMI thought it was pretty funny and

said it was a lucky shot. Victor told him he didn't know if it was luck or not. The PMI told him to try a 2<sup>nd</sup> time and Victor put it right down the turret again. They called the DI over and he took a look. Then they gave him a Willy Pete (a live white prosperous round) and told him to do it again. Victor again put it in the center of the hatch. He was proud of himself and felt he could hit anything. His head got really swollen and he acted really arrogant. When he got next to his buddy, his buddy elbowed him pretty hard. Victor asked him why he did that and his buddy said, "You dumb son-of-a-bitch, do you know what they're gonna have you doing in Vietnam now. You're going to be humping that thing all through the rest of your tour." Well, that sat Victor back. He had to think about that for a while. Then he realized that maybe he shouldn't have been quite so good. Maybe the other guys that were missing it by a mile were doing that on purpose.

When they got to the rifle range later on in ITR Victor was classified an expert. There were several experts. They had long tunnels buried in the ground and you would have to go through the long tunnel to the pit area where the some would pull targets and others would shoot. The experts would go shoot then they would pass the guys coming in to shoot from the long tunnels after their turn. The experts would change into the shirts of the guys that couldn't shoot well. Then they went back and fired expert under the other guys' names. Victor wore three different shirts that day. They couldn't change shirts at the pistol range because they were all lined up together.

The first time they fired live ammunition in a training session his PMI was out there explaining what to do and Victor couldn't hit the target. He explained to Victor what he was doing wrong and where he should put the butt of his rifle into his shoulder. He told him not to concentrate on the sight, even if it gets blurry; just keep the top of the front sight square in the center circle then place the target on top of that just like balancing a ball. This actually was better instruction than in the classroom. Victor said to him, "Man I wish I wasn't so nervous. I wish I could have a cigarette." The instructor told him to have one so Vic reached into his sock, got a cigarette, and was smoking it, waiting for the guy upon the platform to say commence firing. Well, when the smoke lamp was out you weren't supposed to have a cigarette. The DI came over and started hollering at him asking why he was smoking a cigarette when the smoking candle was out. The PMI told the DI it was OK because he gave him permission to help calm his nerves so he could shoot better. So the DI says, "OK, lets see if you can shoot better." He told Victor he had to make a 'round trip' for every 'maggie drawers' he got (a maggie drawers is when a flag waives letting you know you didn't hit your target). Victor knew exactly what a 'round trip' was. There was a hill that was called 'ass hanging hill.' A round trip meant you would have to duck walk up the hill then crawl back down on your belly. Victor had ten rounds and ten bulls-eyes and his DI never said another word to him the entire time they were at the rifle range. Victor was not about to miss the bulls-eye because he didn't want to duck walk up that hill and have to crawl back down.

Using the 30 caliber machine gun Victor was able to draw pictures with it, but admits the 50 caliber machine gun was not so easy. He managed to keep 80% which still qualified him as an expert. There was grenade throwing. He threw a lot of grenades and thought that was pretty fun. There were tractor tires out in an open field and they had to go down into a pit and they would teach them how to hold it, cock it (bring their arm back), and throw it. It was supposed to land in

the tractor tires. This was all with live grenades, there were not dummies. They thought it was fun listening to them go off.

Victor was there three months (13 weeks). After graduating Victor had made PFC (private first class) so he was able to wear his first stripe. There was one drill instructor there that was little guy with a long black handled mustache rolled at the ends. He would walk around with a pair of black leather dress gloves. If someone got in trouble he would start yelling at them and then slap them up the side of the face hard with those gloves. Victor never gave this DI an excuse to yell at him. He was walking up and down the rows inspecting them making sure their dress uniforms were perfect for graduation. He got to Victor, got right in his face, and started calling him names – think you're tough – think you're a Marine – think you can do this and this and that huh – Then he looked at Victor, smiled, and said, "Just because I haven't." He hauled off and hit him with those black leather gloves and it was the hardest Victor had ever been hit in his life. He spun around and just barely kept from going to his knee he was hit so hard. Oh did it burn! He got back up and the DI smiles and again said, "Just because I never got a chance too." Back in the 1960's the men all got hazed. They couldn't do that now-a-days. Victor said they all got beat on terribly. But in retrospect, they earned what they got. That was one of the things Victor loved about the Marine corp. The only thing the Marine Corp gave were opportunities and what you did with those opportunities determined what kind of Marine you were going to be. Victor signed up for everything he could get into.

After everyone graduated they all went back to the barracks and started packing up. They were all so happy because they would get to go home on leave now. Everybody gets their first seven days home. They came and started passing out orders to everyone (for all four platoons in the company, about 800 men). They just couldn't wait to get that big brown envelope. Pretty soon everyone got their envelopes and had went back into the barracks except Victor and four others who were still standing outside in formation with no orders. They all wondered what they had done wrong. Finally here comes a Lieutenant walking out and hands them orders. He said, "Get your gear and get on that bus over there." The first thing Victor saw when he opened the envelope was orders that said, "Schools battalion." They had already got their MOS's (job classifications – what they were going to do while they were in the Marine Corp). No one but these five got their MOS. All the other guys wouldn't get theirs until they came back from leave. No leave for Victor – but he was relieved he wasn't in trouble. The MOS for all five men was 2511- field wireman. Victor would run line in the field. Any kind of wire that needed to be run he would have to run it, it was usually communication wires.

They thought once they got through school battalion they would get leave and go home. They got on the bus talkin' to each other and when they got over on the other side of Camp Pendleton the first thing they saw were rolls of telephone poles. Every 10 foot apart is a telephone pole and there are five rolls of them. This was communications school. They learned how to splice cables, how to run wires, and how to climb poles. The five of them buddied up together. They spent four weeks there then they graduated. They were excited because they thought they would finally get to go home on leave now. The five of them were stoked. It had been 29 weeks since he entered the Marine Corp surely he would get leave now. When they graduated they were handed orders. Victor and two of his buddies Marvin and Steve's orders said, "Proceed

immediately to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (Gitmo).” That meant no leave. The other two buddies got their seven day leave.

Guantanamo Bay, Cuba<sup>1</sup> became Victor’s home duty port/station - 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 8<sup>th</sup> Marines. They packed their bags, went on a commercial flight with a stopover at O’Hare in Chicago, then onto an old, old plane with the doors in the tail end of the plane and bench seats inside. They landed on the Marine Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. From there he went to the Naval air station and they boarded a C1-41 cargo plane that flew them straight into leeward airstrip<sup>2</sup> at Gitmo, Cuba. When they got off the plane it was 102°-103°. It was HOT, MUGGY, and it STUNK like jet fuel, diesel oil, etc. That heat radiated off everything. After getting off the plane and into the hanger they went to a room and got their instructions. They were told where they were going, what they were going to do, getting the run down on the Officers on the Navy base, and the restricted areas (civilian quarters) where only Officers Major up could go. There were no women on the base and no liberty ports. They were ISOLATED ! Gitmo is the only US Navel base that is in the middle of communist country. They could not leave base.

They got assigned to their billets and Victor’s first night on duty the Armor (the man that takes care of and issues out all weapons) tried to shoot himself in the head. Victor was sitting at the communications switchboard. A gun went off and it echoed through the barracks. The Sargent of the guard was standing right next to Victor, looked at him, and said “you check all the bunks on the lower section and I’ll check all the bunks on the upper section then meet back here in a minute.” Victor grabbed his flashlight and headed down the barracks looking at every bunk and counting heads. Everyone was accounted for on both the lower and upper sections. As they stood talking they noticed the padlock was off the door to the Armory, which was very unusual. Neither of them had seen anyone go into that room so anyone in there had to have been in there a long time. The Sargent said, “We’re going to hit this door, I’ll hit (tackle) anything high and you hit anything low.” They hit the door, taking it right off its hinges and sure enough there was the Armor with a loaded 45 in his hand. They tackled him and took him down. The Sargent took the gun out of his hand. The man had black powder marks all across his face. He was so out of it and shaking that he couldn’t even hold the gun still enough to his head when he pulled the trigger. Victor called the OD (Officer of the Day) and a couple of MP’s (Military Police) came and took the man. That guy was history – they sent him to the mental hospital. The first night on duty and Victor thought, “What in the Sam hell have I got myself into here? This isn’t supposed to be happenin.”

Victor had fun in Cuba, he worked his butt off. It was hard work from sun up to sunset seven days a week. They re-wired the entire base, all the outside cable, they put new communications in, new field phones, got everything up and running. On the winward side they rewired all the tank positions, mortar positions, and sentry posts. They put in all new sounding devices in the

---

<sup>1</sup> Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (nicknamed Gitmo) is a Navy base and the Marines were stationed there to provide them with security. Life expectancy on the base if there was an all-out attack by the Cubans and Russians was 15 minutes. The base is the most strategic spot for the US Navy to protect the shoreline of the US and our allies in South America. Gitmo is to the Atlantic what Pearl Harbor is to the Pacific.

<sup>2</sup> There were two air strips at Gitmo, Leeward and Winward. Winward is no longer there because they used that space to build the current prison camp at Guantanamo Bay.

ground so they could hear people walking at night. There were two other communications men at the base when they got there so there were five men doing the work. By this time Victor had made Lance Corporal.

There were more land mines in Gitmo than were used all through WWII and the Korean war. If there was any open ground between the duty post and the base area it was mined. A short fence about 10 inches high with little triangles on it warned it was a mine field. A lot of Cuban refugees who wanted to get out of Cuba would jump the 10 foot razor wire fence, drop down and the sounding devices would pick up their footprints. Victor knew exactly where they were and what posts they were between. He would call the particular post and let them know they had a fence jumper and tell them where to find them (3:00 abt. 30 yards out). The post guard would go and pick em' up. They would process them and send them to the United States. They had to jump the fence because there were no gates. They had orders to 'shoot to kill' any American that set foot in Cuba as an American traitor. That was a standing order. They were a very isolated base with no liberty ports.

Once Victor was in a jeep and the steering leakage fell out. They couldn't control it and they started going off the road and into the embankment. The mud built up on the wheels and they just started flippin' right into the mine field. They got out and had to carry two of the men to safety walking in the places where the jeep had hit 'till they got over the fence. They had to sit and wait for another vehicle to come who was sent out by the guard that had seen it happen and called it in. They sent out a 'deuce and a half' (M35 2½ ton cargo truck) to pick them up. They ended up with a totaled jeep about 20 yards into a mine field and one of the men broke a thumb. That was it. They were very-very lucky they didn't get blown up.

The Navy used Gitmo to train all their reserved fighter pilots that were land based. During a practice session a Russian Mig (fighter jet) pilot was flying his patrol and watching our Naval reserve guys coming out over the ocean, over the base, and do a 'touch and go'<sup>3</sup> on the runway. The Russian was watching and when the last US plane finished his touch and go the Russian came in behind and did one on the US runway too. No one at the time really noticed him. Victor's buddy turned to him and said, "Damn that plane had a red star on it." Victor said, "No ! Wow, it really did, didn't it?" They were dumbfounded. They caught the whole incident on film and this threw the whole naval base into panic. They couldn't believe it was that easy for a Russian pilot to come in, do a touch and go on our runway, in our base, and leave without anyone stopping it. The Russian was showing off. He was going to show everyone how it was really done and that he was a better pilot than anyone the US had. The Navy brought in another radar ship and positioned it so many miles out and that is all that ship done was patrol for unauthorized aircraft because of that incident. That really stirred up a hornets nest.

Another man went nuts. He took a rifle and tried to take pot shots at everyone that moved. They had to circle him, march around him, until finally the corpsman and another guy got in and tackled him. A lot of guys came from Vietnam, spent two months there, and then requested

---

<sup>3</sup> A landing pattern where the pilot would come around, drop their wheels, touch/bounce off the runway, hit their afterburners, then climb back up

transfer back to Vietnam to get out of Cuba. The isolation really caused psychological problems and some of the guys couldn't take the long term isolation.

You had to put your name on a waiting list for any type of recreation. Victor would go to the base bowling alley and bowl two games once a month because that is how full the waiting list was. The base was a big base. You could go to the gym and sign up for all the courses there. You could take martial arts, hand-to-hand combat, weight training, and boxing. Victor actually boxed for the Marine Corp for a short period of time. You could sign up for sail boating and scuba diving. Victor got his certification in scuba diving. You had to sign up for everything and if you couldn't keep yourself busy when you weren't working you would either go get drunk every night or go crazy. Victor stayed busy – so busy he didn't write home much.

He picked up two more secondary MOS's (jobs) in communications. Since he knew how to operate the radios and splice cables he made the mistake of volunteering one time for a special project. It was one of those little projects that for 20 or so years you couldn't talk about. He was assigned to splice into Cuban communication wires, set up a very low frequency transmitter, and then go back after a certain period of time and retrieve it, while making the splice look like a natural patch. That way when the Cubans or Russians were doing an inspection of the lines they would have thought they had come across a natural patch done during a repair. He would have to sneak into Cuba from a diesel submarine. It was the only diesel submarine they had in any fleet at that time. It was listed as a practice or target submarine for the Navy to practice on but it was also used for special assignments. Because he had gotten his scuba diving certification three of them would leave the sub, go in, splice the wires, and return. They would only dare leave the splice in about a week before they went and removed it.

Once the USS Boxer (1945-1969), one of the oldest flat top aircraft carriers the Navy had came into Gitmo and Victor went in and put a bunch of listening equipment on board that ship in their communication center. He asked the Captain why he just didn't go to Norfolk to have the work done because it could be done in far less time and done by more qualified people. The Captain leaned into Victor and told him if he went to Norfolk then everyone would know what they were putting on the ship. That is when Victor first found out the entire ocean throughout the world has been rigged with sound listening devices. The US has all the oceans rigged for sound so they can listen to any ship traveling anywhere in the world at any given time 24/7. They know how fast their going, what direction they are going, what size they are, everything.

Once a Russian ship came in and Vic was assigned to be the escort or guide for two Russians. He was to keep them out of restricted areas. He was surprised how good all the Russian's English was. They taught English to their children in Russia as a second language. He would take them to the bowling alley and all the different places inside camp. When he took them to the PX they would load up on gum and cigarettes. They would get as much gum and cigarettes as they could carry in their pockets, bags, etc. The Russians tried to convince them that they were only stocking their PX like this because they were there. They couldn't believe they always had that much stuff to sell. Victor tried to convince them that a person could buy most anything they wanted in any amount at any store in the US but the Russians wouldn't believe him. They didn't have stores like that in Russia. None of the other countries the Russian's went into had those kinds of supplies either.

At one time BYU entertainment USO came to Gitmo and performed for the service men. They put on a very good show. They were there for five days and Victor spent the whole time with them. He made friends with all of them. Victor has always had the gift of gab and has been able to make friends with anyone, anywhere, any time. There were about 40 LDS military men at Gitmo. A married couple presided over the branch and they drove a little Volkswagen car. They were one of the very few people that had a car. A few of the Navel officers wives had cars brought over for their transportation but most everyone else had a scooter. Victor had a little yellow motorized scooter that he bought for \$50 and sold to the next guy that wanted it when he got his orders to leave. There was no transfer of titles to deal with and no one ever even wrote out a bill of sale.

Victor became a TAD rat (temporarily assigned duty) because it was on his record that he was willing to volunteer. When something would come up he would get a call. He was asked to come and teach recon how to call in for an “instant L Z’s” (instant landing zone<sup>4</sup>). Vic said, “Cuba was a trip.” He was there for a little over six months.

After he left Cuba he went to Camp Lejeune North Carolina. He spent most of his time between Camp Lejeune and Fort Bragg which is an army base. The way you tell the difference is ‘camp’ is a Marine Base and ‘fort’ is an army base. Guantanamo Bay was a ‘port’ because it was a naval base. When Victor got back to Camp Lejeune he got his first leave home.

He came home for leave and his best friend Terry Neilson informed him he was getting married. Terry said he really wished Victor would have been able to be there and be his best man at his wedding. Victor told him not to worry about it because he would come back. He had so much leave built up. After he went back to Camp Lejeune he pulled some strings, got another 7 day leave, and went back home the night before Terry got married. It blew everyone’s mind. They ended staying up all night, so the night Terry got married he only had about three hours of sleep (Terry Neilson was from Lehi, joined the military, and was later killed in Vietnam). However, Terry had already arranged for Lee Neil to be the best man thinking Victor wouldn’t make it back.

When Victor returned he went to Fort Bragg for artillery exercises (the only place close where there was an artillery impact range). They had a tent on top of a mountain that he would set up and tie a whole bunch of radios together with directional antenna’s so they could communicate from air to wire anywhere in the world. With that system set up he would jump in a jeep and go out with the forward observers.<sup>5</sup> If he wasn’t out with them he was sitting at a plotting table where the forward observer would call in and you would put the information on the map and pass it over to the guns so they could make adjustments. This was all real basic training exercises.

---

<sup>4</sup> Calling in an aircraft to drop a bomb on a specific designated area. You would mark an area and they would drop a 2000 lb. bomb in the area that would level everything. The bomb would create a crater, burn out everything around the crater, and then flatten out everything beyond that.

<sup>5</sup> Forward Observers are the Radio guys that would call in the artillery strikes on the targets and adjust the fire so they could hit the targets.

He also got called to go with other outfits such as the South Korean Marines, British Marines, Iceland Marines, etc. He was sent to these countries where he would spend a week doing training exercises with them. The purpose was to teach them but sometime they would train him and he would go back to the US and train others. He was sent all over the world. He said the Korean Marines were frightening and scared the crap out of him. They specialized in 'night-time silent killing' and they could sneak up on someone in the night, slice their throat, and their victim would never hear them coming. Their goal was to get in, take out specific targets, and leave without ever being seen. They were very good at it. Victor picked up the name 'Spooky' because he learned from the Korean's how to walk up on someone without anyone knowing he was there. He would walk up on guys in guard duty and put them into panic because they wouldn't know he was there. They would call him 'Spooky son-of-a bitch' which got shortened down to 'Spooky.' That nick-name back in the 1960's could get you into a lot of fights especially when you were billeted with blacks. He was billeted 90% of the time with black people. Most of his friends were black because he lived with them. Whenever someone said, 'There's Spook the black guys would want to fight until they seen it was him then it was laughs and fun.'<sup>6</sup> But if he was somewhere people didn't know him and he was called Spook he would get into a fight because the name was a derogatory and a racist remark - but that is the nickname he ended up with in the Marines.

Victor reached the rank of Corporal. He was in Camp Lejeune about 4 months and then got orders to go to Vietnam. He thought that was strange because his time was about up and now he was getting orders to go to Nam. He went back to Camp Pendleton California for more training before he was supposed to go. Everyone was sitting in the bleachers getting assignments one day and they holler Victor's name and called him down. No one else was getting called down like that. He didn't know what was going on. They said to him he had less than six months to serve in the Marine Corp. Victor told him he didn't think so but they informed him he was short one day of six months. He asked them if they wanted him to re-up and they told him no. They were going to send him to instructor's course to become a communications instructor instead of sending him to Vietnam. They weren't going to send him to Nam because he did not have 6 months left. Victor served 2 years and 6 months although he had enlisted for 3 years. He was in a delayed program so the time he had to wait to get into boot camp counted as service. If he had not been in the delayed program he would have went to Vietnam. He was upset they wouldn't allow him to re-up because he had a 98% evaluation rating during his service. They told him it was because his hearing was going bad so he said a few choice words. They busted him down to the rank of Lance Corporal again.

After a week of training he went in and got his instructors card. He was not a D.I. or drill instructor. He was assigned to H & S Co. 2<sup>nd</sup> ITR Battalion, Camp Pendleton, California. The boots (recruits) would come in and he would instruct them to use field phones, radios, and trace lines. The rest of the time was his. He could come, go, and do whatever he wanted as long as he was in the class when he was supposed to be there. He had a higher TS clearance than his own commanding officer, who didn't much like that fact. He had time to travel so he would go through El Toro Marine Air Base near Irvine, California to check flight rosters where he could

---

<sup>6</sup> The reason it was funny was because Victor was a white Caucasian.

catch a ride somewhere for a couple days and then go back and teach another class. He wrote his own schedule the last six months.

He was honorably discharged September 3, 1970 and received a good conduct medal. His parents brought their camp trailer out and set it up on base and stayed a couple of days while he was going through his discharge. They picked him up and took him home.

After serving in the Marines Victor rode the rodeo circuit all over the U.S. both as a Rodeo Clown and Bull rider. While riding the circuit in Texas he met and married Nancy Kathryn Nichols May 31, 1975 in Frisco, Texas. They are the parents of three girls; Nancy Elizabeth, Marjorie Lou, and Sarah Johanna. They raised their family in Little Elm, Texas where Victor worked as a carpenter. The family moved back to Lehi around 1994. After living in Lehi for about a year and a half, they found out that his wife had stomach cancer. She wanted to go back to Texas to be closer to her family. They moved their family to Galveston where she passed away November 3, 1997. After her death, Victor came back to Lehi and continued to raise his two youngest daughters alone. He continues living in Lehi today.