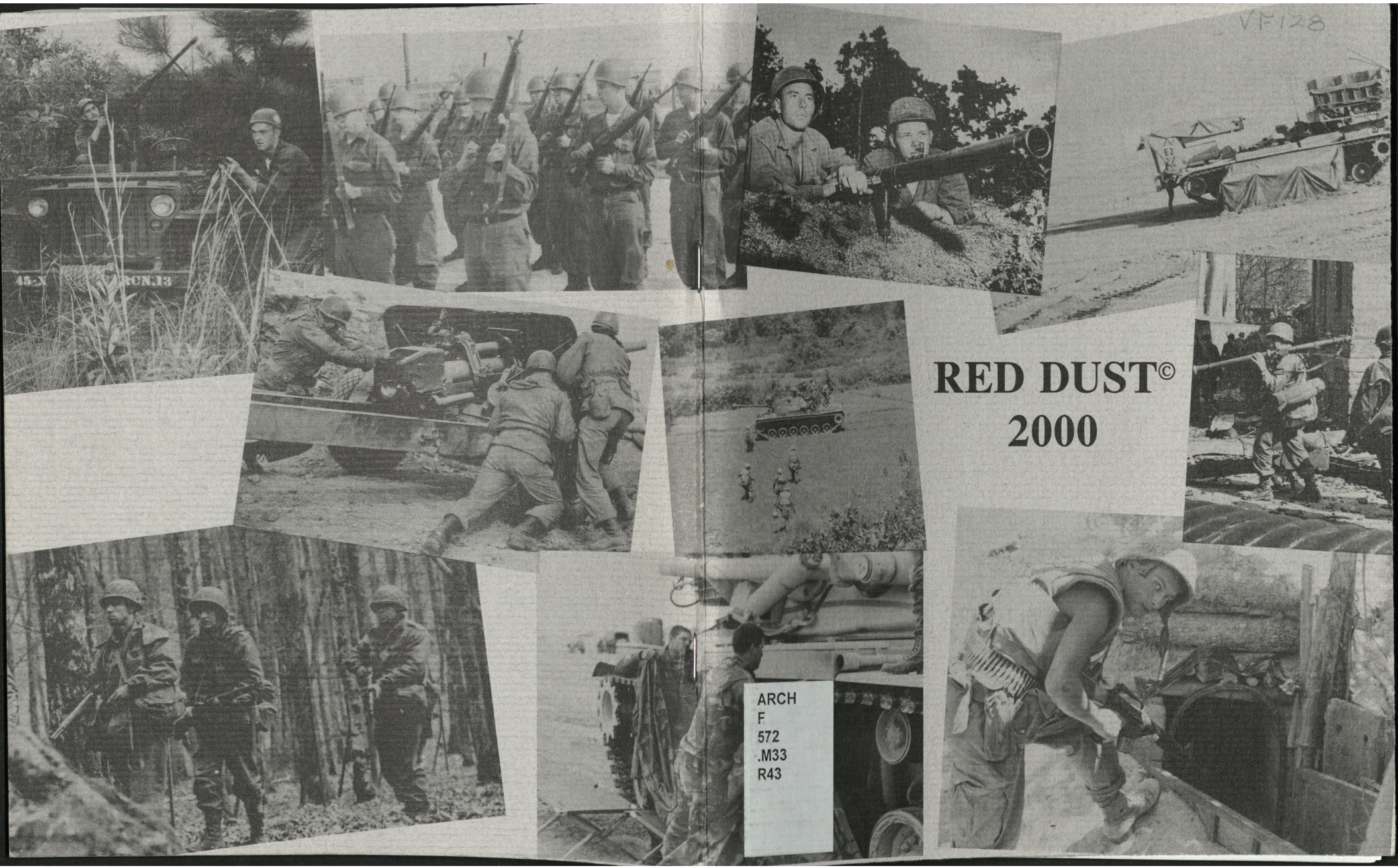

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2000

Thaddeus Tarkulay & Sharon Richards

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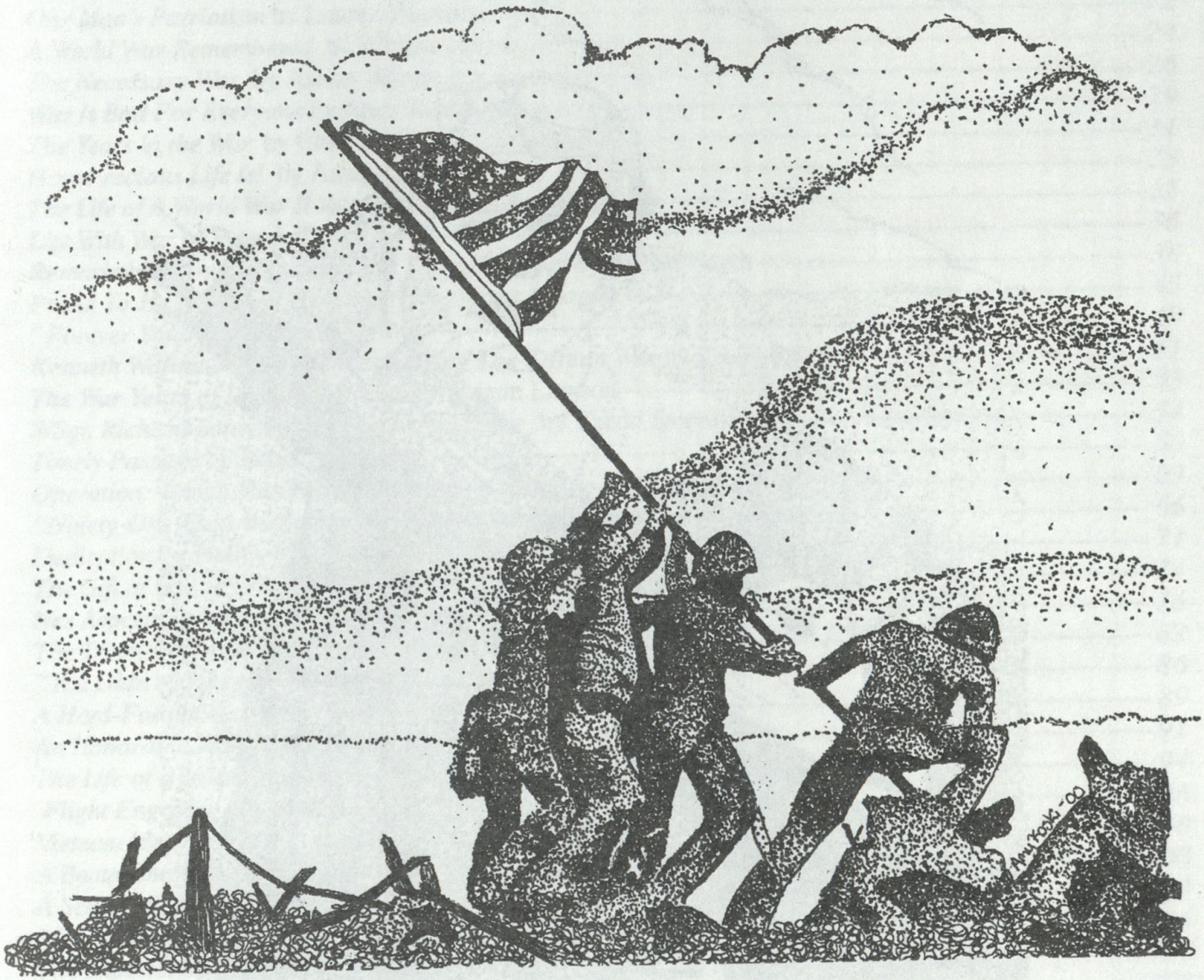

Illustration by Amy Koski

Illustration by Katherine Ross

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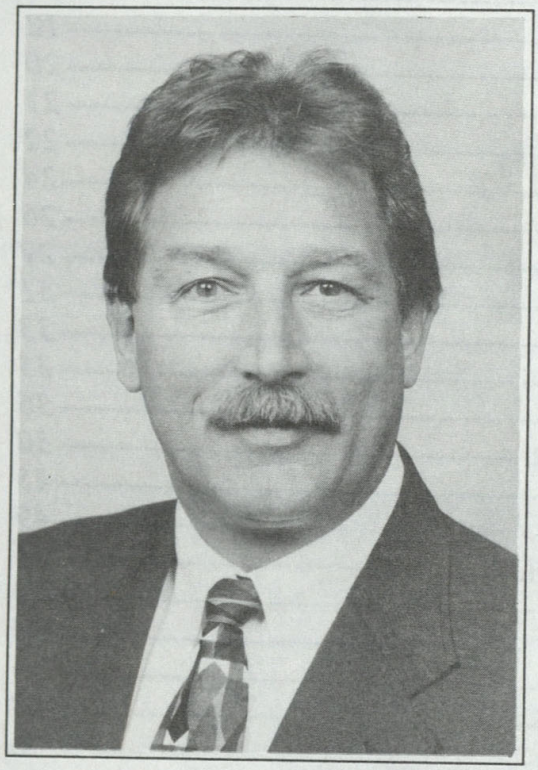
PREFACE



When I sat down to write this preface I began by looking back at previous Red Dust books. I enjoyed looking back at historic events from the perspective of individuals in our local community as told to the students on the Red Dust teams. For years the Red Dust project has shown that teachers open more than just books, they open minds. The stories that the students write about are a wonderful way to remember and learn from our past.

As we begin the new millennium with an even faster paced society, it is good to reminisce and reflect on the past. World War II was a time when heroes were made, not just in combat, but wherever Americans served. We are coming to a time when our veterans of foreign wars are becoming older and it is important to learn from their view of historic events. Many individuals sacrificed their lives so we may enjoy the freedoms we have today and they should never be forgotten.

For a long time many WWII Veterans rarely talked about their experience of war. They looked to the future, not to the past. Returning GIs came home and resumed their lives. Some sought education under the GI Bill, some married the girls they left behind and many became parents of the baby boom generation. Individuals who fought in World War II consisted of plain people who confronted the mortal threats to our country. They accepted their duty and performed it modestly, without show and with honor. This project will remind us that ordinary people, those you see every day, perhaps the gentleman ahead of you at the checkout line, your neighbor or your grandfather, when put to the test rose to the challenge and displayed more courage than many of us can ever imagine. The stories and memories these veterans tell come from the heart. Stories that can only be told by those who experienced war first hand.

Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. wrote that war when you are at it is horrible and dull. It is only when time has passed that you see that is message was divine. Veterans have many memories that should be shared to remind us of the past so we will not be forced to relive it. I am looking forward to reading this year's edition of Red Dust 2000. Thank you for the honor of including me in this wonderful historic project.

-Michael Prusi
State Representative
109th District

DEDICATION

Red Dust 2000 is dedicated to our dear friend and colleague Bobbi Ameen. Bobbi, along with the two of us, created and developed the idea of an oral history project, which in 1983 became the first publication of *Red Dust.* Together, we witnessed the growth of a wonderful integrated project that brought personal satisfaction and joy to us, and recognition to our students, school and community. Today, *Red Dust* publications are found throughout the United States as well as several European countries.

Bobbi guided her students' work far beyond the limits of what anyone would have imagined could have been produced. In her pleasant, encouraging manner she challenged the gifted and provided a nurturing environment for those students to produce quality artwork and provided a fertile environment where all students knew they could succeed.

Bobbi inspired us in our teaching and helped us to develop professionally. By her example, we learned not to be satisfied with the ordinary, but rather to continually stretch our creativity, imagination, and with increased production.

Red Dust 2000 features the veterans of this century. The work on this tribute began before Bobbi's untimely death. It was important for us to carry on this work and complete this edition. Now, the time has come to close this chapter of our teaching and the publication of the *Red Dust* book.

The work that we began with Bobbi will continue through other integrated projects. Her legacy of integration is tightly woven into the fiber of our curriculum at Aspen Ridge Middle School.

Maxine Honkala and Sharon Richards

1997 FIRST PLACE WINNERS
NATIONAL HISTORY DAY COMPETITION
Receiving a Special Resolution from the Board of Control - Northern Michigan University on October 3, 1997
Front Row Left to Right: Sharon Richards, Bobbi Ameen, Maxine Honkala
Second Row: President Judy Bailey, Michelle Morissette, Arianna Jeske, Christie Gibbons, Meredith Lamb, and Board Chairman Buzz Berube

WORLD WAR II

1941 - 1945

FREEDOM DOES NOT COME CHEAPLY

"I say there is no higher calling to serve God and your country," emphasized Mr. John Eskela as he confirmed his faith in the Lord and expressed his patriotism. John Eskela is a proud veteran of World War II. While interviewing him, I realized that he had many memories of pain, sorrow, mourning, and joy to uncover. I am proud to share the struggles and adventures that this man overcame. He is an ordinary man but in a sense, an American hero.

John Eskela was born in 1923, and he lived in Negaunee for a large part of his life. He had a happy childhood filled with sports and neighborhood pickup games of tag football, alley basketball, and group skiing. He attended the Case Street School in his earlier years, but had to move to a closer school during third grade. He was taught there for a total of one year. High school was full of fun and memories. He loved and played a number of sports. He tried baseball but was very successful at football. "I was on the varsity football team for my sophomore, junior, and senior years," Mr. Eskela stated proudly. He also enjoyed playing basketball for his high school team.

Mr. Eskela had a great interest in various artistic activities as well. In his first two years of high school, he studied the industrial arts courses and majored in woodworking. His class created machinery, joints, and many drawings to exhibit in the spring. During his junior year, he was a sound effects producer. His senior year was a promising one for he was cast in the leading role in his senior class play. "My father and mother stressed the importance of education," he explained. "They were my largest influence."

Mr. Eskela also believed in earning his own wages. During his grade school years he held a job as a paper carrier delivering the *Milwaukee Sunday Sentinel* and worked in a convenience store on weekends.

While all this was going on, he remembered that there was a Spanish Civil war raging in Europe. From what he had read, Mr. Eskela concluded that this war was a testing ground for Adolf Hitler where he could test and use equipment and ammunition to detect his weaknesses. About two years after that war began, he recollected the period of time when Italy invaded Ethiopia. "Maybe they were allies," he concluded. Hitler began to achieve a foothold in Europe. Many other of the German's allies invaded Asian and European nations to obtain many different footholds.

Germany felt their power again as they began the opening of World War II. Mr. Eskela was drafted in February of 1943, at the age of nineteen. He felt responsible because, "It was for a just cause." He started his basic training in Colorado with the 10th Mountain Division. This division provided a great amount of training for six to eight or more weeks. "Every ten minutes to the hour, you would get a ten minute break. You could rest or buy cigarettes. There was no smoking when you were doing your duty," he announced. Basic training consisted of calisthenics, hand to hand combat, machine and mortar drills, and hiking. "Sometimes our commander would have us climb a sheer cliff!" he exclaimed. Mr. Eskela remembered hiking all too well. "Sometimes we would hike two miles and when we got going, maybe twenty-five miles; 12.5 miles out and 12.5 miles back," he stated.

Mr. Eskela was able to relive parts of his childhood overseas through school and sports. He attended a division setup university where he took three courses: college algebra, physical geology, and German. Mr. Eskela remembered a special moment that occurred at the school. "I was called to the office to see my company commander in the foyer. I could

Mr. Eskela preparing to take a hike with his 10th Mountain Division.

Mr. Eskela

not imagine why. I went down to meet the captain and the company clerk and jeep driver were there. They congratulated me on my promotion to sergeant. Therefore, I thanked them and whatever else goes with the territory. About three weeks later, the same thing happened. I was addressed over the public address system to meet the company commander in the foyer and the captain congratulated me again for being promoted to staff sergeant. I had been a private first class for about thirteen months, a corporal for about fourteen months, and here I hold three grades in twenty-three days."

There was always time for sports and recreational activities as well. Someone always wanted to do what someone else wanted to. There was football, basketball, bowling, and so on. "There was always a good opportunity to ski when I was with the 10th Mountain Division. I was stationed most of the time in the Alps. You could ski there yet in June," he estimated.

Life was definitely different. Instead of having his own room, each man shared a room with seven double bunks on each side. The double barracks took care of about one hundred sixty men. If the men were sergeants, they slept in the small rooms upstairs on the second floor. When out and traveling, the divisions had to find their own places to sleep. "We didn't really have a home," Mr. Eskela explained, "but if we had to have accommodations, we had a runner to clear out the place. They kindly asked people to go stay with their neighbors or friends or relatives and we occupied the area for just an evening or so." He remembered a time later in the war when the Co. I 242 Regiment 42 Infantry (Rainbow Division), which he was part of, was lost in Munich. "Munich is a large city," he laughed. Mr. Eskela's sergeant went into a fairly large building and asked the occupants of one apartment to kindly leave. Mr. Eskela and the other soldiers stayed there until the early morning hours. Ironically when they left, they turned the corner to go down the street and they met their regional commander. "We asked him where our unit was and he told us. So we weren't as far off as we thought but when it is dark, it is difficult to tell where you are," he chuckled quietly. Although the sleeping situations were often quite cramped and crowded, Mr. Eskela remembers that the food was very much like home. "They were very satisfactory, very tasty meals."

Mr. Eskela's basic training prepared him for his military duties in the latter years. His training with the mortars and other various guns primed him in using his battle gun, the M- I rifle. Mr. Eskela remembered an occasion when they were suddenly attacked by air. They were approaching a small village and all of a sudden they heard the jets. "That was our first experience with jets," he chuckled. It caught them very much by surprise, but they were able to hit the ditch in time. Their young jeep driver was not quite so lucky. He was shot in the chest. When the men got back up, they realized that their hand grenades were strung along the ditch. "They had fallen off us," Mr. Eskela chortled.

The men in Mr. Eskela's division were the first to enter the village death camp of Krakow. "The sights and information they gave us was unbelievable! It was really horrible. The conditions that they were in and the treatment they received was difficult to believe," he informed me. When asked if men ever wept around him, he answered, "I think everybody has feelings and when you see some of these things happening and you know how other humans were treated, I think those feelings show." He also added his opinion of the worst parts of the war, "The prisoners of the war and of course the wounding and those that gave up their lives for us. It's always touching because you associated with them and you just have to move on."

While the soldiers were laboring away in training or defending our country in battle, our fellow Americans on the home front were rationing food, producing artillery in factories, and sending medicines and antiseptics overseas. In the Upper Peninsula, iron ore production was essential. The Negaunee Mine, where Mr. Eskela's father worked, was producing over a million tons a year. The Moss Mine produced eight hundred thousand tons a year and the Athens Mine produced about six hundred fifty-eight thousand tons a year. All together,

there was about two million tons, excluding the productions of other regional mines. All was used for steel to make tanks and other artillery.

Mr. Eskela knew of his country's contributions through his family's letters. "I received mail quite often," he laughed. "Like every other day my mother wrote to me, my sister wrote to me and the men would always yell, "Oh Eskela again, oh Eskela again! A little humor," he chuckled.

When the United States dropped the atomic bomb on Japan, he was stationed with his division in Austria. "At that time we were probably on an international roadblock," he explained. Anyone going from Germany or Austria to go to Italy had to go over the Bennett Pass, which meant that they had to pass his division's roadblock. A kilometer from the first roadblock, the French also had one. "It kept a good check on those that were trying to pass through without authority," he replied matter-of-factly.

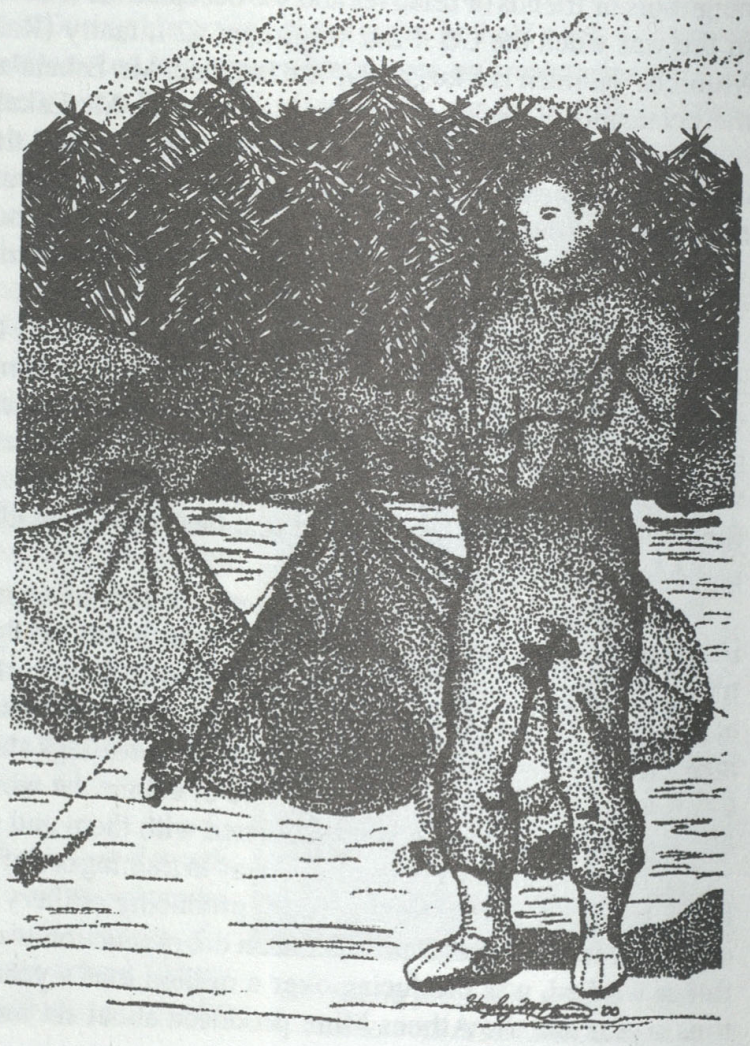
With the event of the nuclear bomb ending the war, Mr. Eskela was sent home to begin a normal life again. He had no injuries. When asked how people treated him, he replied, "People treated me graciously. Very kind, very humbling." He worked as an underground trammer at the Athen's Mine in Negaunee until September of 1946 when he started college at Northern Michigan University. He completed his studies for a bachelor's degree and received certification to teach mathematics and geography- history at the high school and junior high level.

He began teaching in Champion in September of 1950. He spent sixteen years at Champion, Humbolt, Spurr, and then he came to the Ishpeming Public Schools in 1965 and served there for 15.5 years. "I enjoyed being associated with so many young people, many who have made very distinctive progress and success in their careers. I'm kind of proud of my share that helped them along the line," he retorted contentedly.

In the present, Mr. Eskela and his wife enjoy working in the yard, and taking care of the snow. "Irene loves to work the snowblower. It is my job to saddle up and scrape the corner though," he chuckled. Sometimes he wishes for a rainy day so he can catch up on his reading. "Always time for work and always time for play," he grinned.

With one last smile, he gives me a life's lesson. "When someone has something of value, someone may want to take it away. No one can take his or her freedom for granted it must be bought with a price. Often times it doesn't come cheaply."

Hayley Eliason



Mr. Eskela next to his tent waiting for his next duty in basic training.

WOMEN IN UNIFORM

Mrs. Lillian Forslund (at left)

As I walked up the narrow stairway to Mrs. Lillian Forslund's home, I got the feeling that the day would be one that I would never forget. Stepping into the kitchen, a warm aroma of sweetness came over me, as we settled down to an enjoyable conversation about her life in World War II.

Lillian Irene Forslund was born in Ironwood, Michigan. Before joining the Waves, she worked at the Ahonen Lumber Company. That was a saw mill and logging operation; she worked in the office. Lillian also has two sisters, Kathleen and Joyce.

Lillian first heard of the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. She was home on her noon lunch break and found out about it on the radio. Lillian's cousin Don helped her decide to join the Waves. The Waves was an organization for women in the navy. He wrote to Lillian telling her how wonderful it was being in the navy, and that she should join too. She had not thought about it until a Wave recruiting officer called her to recruit her. At age twenty-three, she started her training for the Waves.

Lillian went to boot camp for six weeks. She loved to sing, and was very fortunate to find out there was a singing platoon. Thirty-five young women were chosen out of sixteen thousand girls, and Lillian was one of them. Out of all the young women she knew, Lillian was the only one chosen. Since she was in the singing platoon, she had her own private room during boot camp. "When I told my cousin Don that I had a private room in boot camp he was not going to believe me. He said he had never heard of such a thing. But that is because I was with a select group that was singing," comented Lillian. She also was able to sing at many functions.

After taking many aptitude tests, she attended school at Iowa State Teachers College to study to be a yeoman in the service. During yeoman's school, Lillian had the opportunity to use her musical skills again. There was an orchestra at the college and she could play her violin in it.

During yeoman's school, Lillian lived like the college kids did. She ate in the dining room with the college kids and even had pajama parties with some girls. There were only two to a room there and the dorm rooms were very pleasant.

When Lillian finished with yeoman's school, she moved onto her tour of duty in Washington, D.C. She ended up being a 3rd class petty officer. She could have reached a higher level than that. Lillian's cousin in the navy, Don, never got over being a seaman. When Lillian became a 3rd class petty officer, he was very jealous. When they offered her another promotion, she was probably the only person in the service who turned it down because she was so close to her cousin, and felt guilty.

Lillian had an important job. She was working in the office of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, which was a construction unit of the navy. She kept track of the equipment that was brought to different places. When the equipment was no longer being used in one place, she made sure they moved it to the correct area. Sometimes Lillian received special emergency orders and she hurried to see that the equipment was at the right bases. She knew where most of the equipment was located such as generators and bulldozers, which they needed for

Lillian Forslund and friends from the Waves.

construction. Lillian said that there was not anything difficult about being in the Waves. Since the young women in the Waves did not fight in battles, it was fun for her. "I just felt really patriotic and happy that I could help my country. I still had an important job even though I was not fighting," said Lillian.

When Lillian was on her main duty in Washington, D.C., her officers were very pleased with the work she did. Since she did so well, she never had to work in the galley. Everyone was supposed to take his or her turn in the galley for two or three months at a time. Lillian's commanding officer refused to let her go. He met her in the hallway and told her that if they ever put her on galley duty to let him know. He did not want her to leave the office. She did not know any other girls who had that privilege. "I was the only one and that is because they could depend on me if they needed a special job done. They'd always bring it to me cause they knew I'd get it done," added Lillian.

During Lillian's travels, people were always very nice to her, especially if she were dressed in uniform. Many times she road buses and trains to New York or Philadelphia to spend weekends with her girlfriends. When she was in Washington, she saw Eleanor Roosevelt; she was decorating the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Lillian was also invited to many parties at the Finnish American Society, and many important generals and colonels were there also. When Lillian went to Philadelphia, she often went to see her cousin's husband. He was in the army hospital there and was wounded very badly. Lillian found that no matter whom she met or where she went, there were wonderful people everywhere. She learned a lot from her relationships with people. She met many girls and boys that had been in the war and her heart went out to them because they had seen so much action. Lillian also met one of her future best friends, Doris Christiansen. Mrs. Christiansen now lives in Iowa and they see each other regularly.

There were many different types of entertainment when Lillian was in the service, and it was not expensive. There were Betty Boop shops for girls, where they could have sundaes and big thick malts and only pay ten cents. Lillian could attend movies regularly. She remembers traveling by bus to different naval air stations or army camps for dances.

Taking care of her personal belongings was a task of its own. Lillian had to make sure her clothes and rooms were clean. If she did not keep her room clean, there were points put against her. Lillian's roommate always begged her to clean up their things, since she was not very tidy.

Lillian also had very high standards for behavior. She met many people once and did not want to see them again, because their standards were different from hers. She went to church; Lillian strongly believed in worshiping and made sure she worshiped at least once a week.

Lillian has a few sentimental items from the war she has kept all her life. One of them is her Wave insignia pin. It means a lot to her. She also has her dog tag and her identification bracelet her parents gave her before she left Ironwood. One of Lillian's most dear possessions is the New Testament and psalms Bible her mother gave her for her purse. She still carries it with her until this day. "It's tattered and torn, but I treasure it and still use it," explains Lillian.

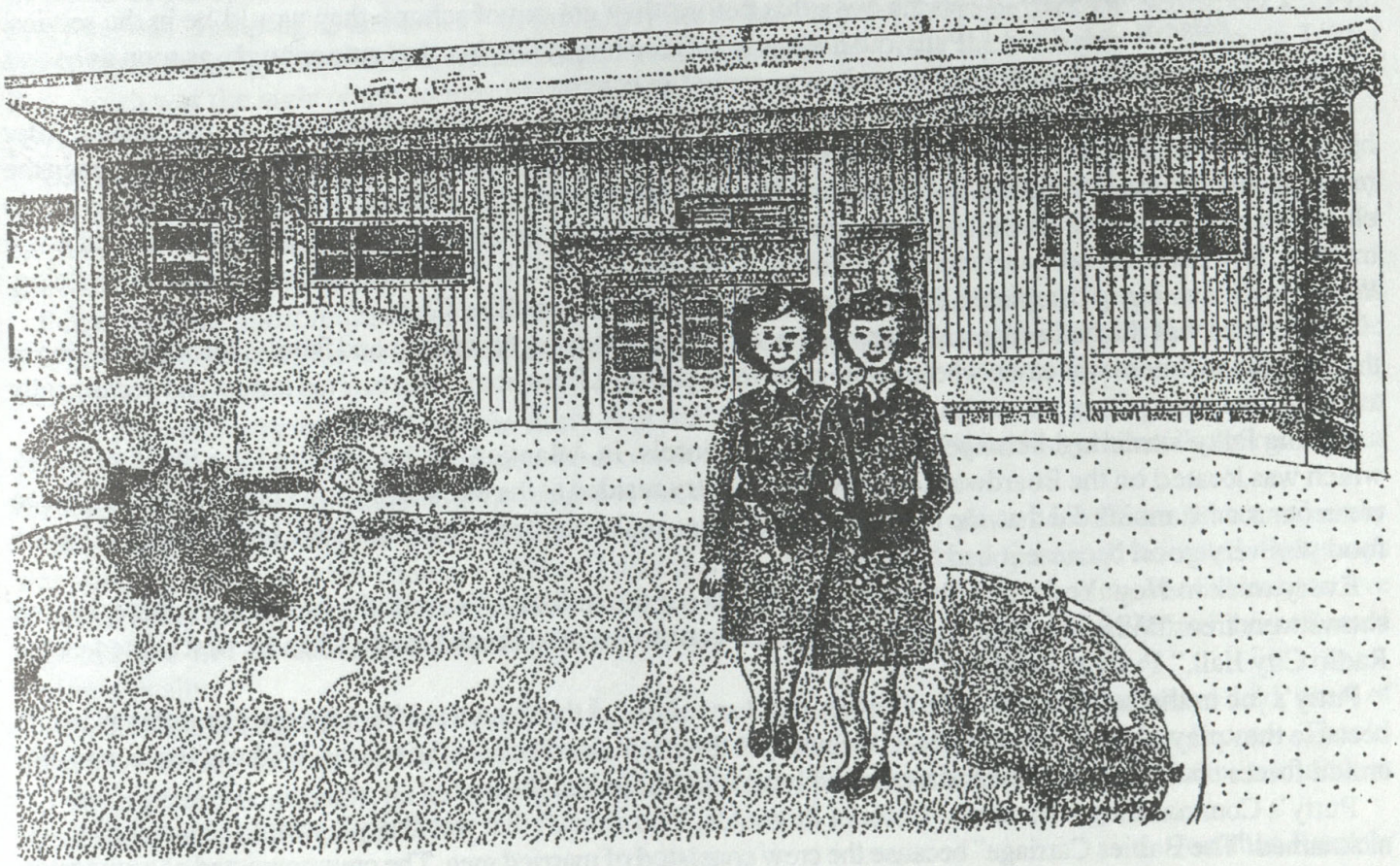
Lillian left the Waves feeling better about herself. "I think the war was wonderful for me. When I was growing

up, I grew up in the Depression, nobody had any money and everyone had a bad self-image of themselves," explained Lillian. "If you have a bad self-image, it is hard to get along in this world. When I went into the Waves, I really was able to find out that I could hold up to anyone. I could do just as well as anyone else, and I was just as popular as anyone else," she added. One of the most important things Lillian gained personally from the war was self-confidence. When she was away from home and not protected by her family, she had to stand on her own two feet.

In August of 1946, Lillian was home on leave, when the war ended. On May 10, 1946, Lillian was discharged. The first night she came home her sister Kathleen was going to be prom queen, and it was Joyce's birthday. Everyone was happy to see her. Lillian's commanding officer wanted her to stay on and join the regular navy. He begged her. Lillian told him, "I joined the navy to serve my country during the war and now I am home."

My conversation with Lillian was very inspiring. I have learned so much more from that experience and I hope that I see her very soon. Lillian has taught me many valuable lessons from this conversation about people and self-confidence. She has taught me to be confident in myself and to enjoy life to its fullest. I will never forget our wonderful conversation, and I hope she will not either.

Cassie Hegbloom



FORGOTTEN WARRIORS

Putty at his former home on Ridge St.

"We flew over Tokyo... They thought they were getting bombed again," exclaimed Reino Walter Lassila. He was remembering when the B-29's he worked on took the ground crews to fly over the battleship *Missouri* when the Peace Treaty was signed. I had the pleasure of conversing with him for about an hour concerning his participation in World War II.

Reino Walter Lassila was born on July 16, 1922, in Ishpeming, Michigan. As a child, Mr. Lassila attended several different schools in the area including Central Grade School and Ishpeming High School. During his schooling his favorite subject was geometry, because, "That's the only thing I was smart in," he commented.

As a child, Mr. Lassila acquired a nickname that has stuck with him throughout his life. Mr. Lassila was known as "Putty" because he had a very active life-style; everywhere he went, he always ran, never slowing down. When Putty was in eleventh grade, he received a job that coincided with his active nature. He had the task of delivering groceries for Rossberg's Grocery Store. He kept this job until he finished high school a year later.

While still in high school, Putty had a teacher, Proctor Maynard, who told all the boys that before they got out of school, they would be in the service. Putty did not really believe him at the time, but sure enough, as soon as he was out of high school the Army called upon him to serve his country.

The Army Air Corps drafted Putty and forwarded him to take his induction at Fort Sheridan in Chicago. After his induction, the air corps sent him to Atlantic City for basic training. During basic training, he woke up in the morning, did fitness exercises followed by breakfast. After the trainees had breakfast, they went outside to do close order drills. Once those had been completed, they practiced marches. Once Putty completed basic training, he went on to take a sixteen-week course at the New York City Technical School for aviation training. With all of his training completed, Putty received the rank of Private First Class.

Putty stated that the hardest part of entering the service was leaving his friends and family. He also mentioned that the homesickness was eased whenever he received a package from home. He received letters and occasionally a box of cookies.

During Putty's training, he stayed at two different hotels. In Atlantic City, he inhabited the Shelfont Hotel, which was located on the Boardwalk. In New York, Putty resided at the Manhattan Towers. "We didn't have to clean our rooms, maids did that, the only thing we did was make our beds." he exclaimed. He also stated that the food was very good because it had "No kick."

Every week in New York, the USO produced shows for the military. The recruits had to walk there, but the shows were free. "When I was in New York City we went to listen to Frank Sinatra when he first started, at the Radio City Hall." Putty pointed out.

Putty's job in the service was to be a power plant specialist. I think such soldiers are our forgotten warriors because they played an enormous role in the war, yet they remained behind the scenes. Without these men, our armed forces could not perform and we would have inevitably lost the war.

Putty's Commanding Officer was Colonel Reynolds. The aircraft that was Putty's prime responsibility was nicknamed "The Babies Carriage" because the crew consisted of married men. The crew consisted of a navigator, pilot, co-pilot, engineering officer and five gunners. After a couple of years in the service, the army air corps promoted him to be the Crew Chief of all of the B-29's on the base. He acquired his new position by having two and a half years more experience than the other person under consideration.

The B-29's that Putty worked on had five, fifty caliber machine guns to ward off any enemy aircraft on the way to a bombing run. This is because the range of these flying beasts was far greater than any fighter of that time. Before they made the final run, the armament loaded three, 2000-pound bombs, nicknamed blockbusters, onto the aircraft.

While stationed at Tinian, Putty looked in the Red Cross Book, which listed all men serving in an area, to see if anyone he knew was stationed close. Sure enough, there were four other men from Ishpeming stationed in the area. Ed Pantti, Chucky Mayrond, Leo Sundberg and Warren Farley were all good friends of his. "When I got to talk to Ed Pantti, all we did was talk Finn all day," Putty recalled.

Putty and his wife on the 4th of July.

Putty had two brothers that were in the service. His brother, William, was assigned to coastal artillery in New Guinea. Martin, his other brother, was part of the infantry and was tragically killed during the battle for Iwo Jima.

Not all of Putty's war experiences resulted in bad memories. In fact, he gets some of his best memories from the war. "When the B-29's started to bomb Japan, that was the best part of it right there." was Putty's answer to what he remembered most about the war. He was in Guam on the fateful day of August 6, 1945, when the B-29 *Enola Gay* dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Once news arrived that the attack was successful, everyone was "Jumping up and down!" because they knew the war would soon be over. On September 2, 1945, when Japan formally surrendered, the air corps flew the ground crew over the battleship *Missouri,* in Tokyo Bay, which was the sight of the signing of the peace treaty that ended the war. "That was nice to see, all those guys dressed in white." Putty recalled.

Once the war was officially over, Putty left the service and returned home in 1946. It took Putty fourteen days to reach California by boat. He said that the people in California did not have a celebration of any kind once they returned. "We didn't have anything back in Ishpeming either. I suppose they were all done celebrating when we got back in 1946." he avowed.

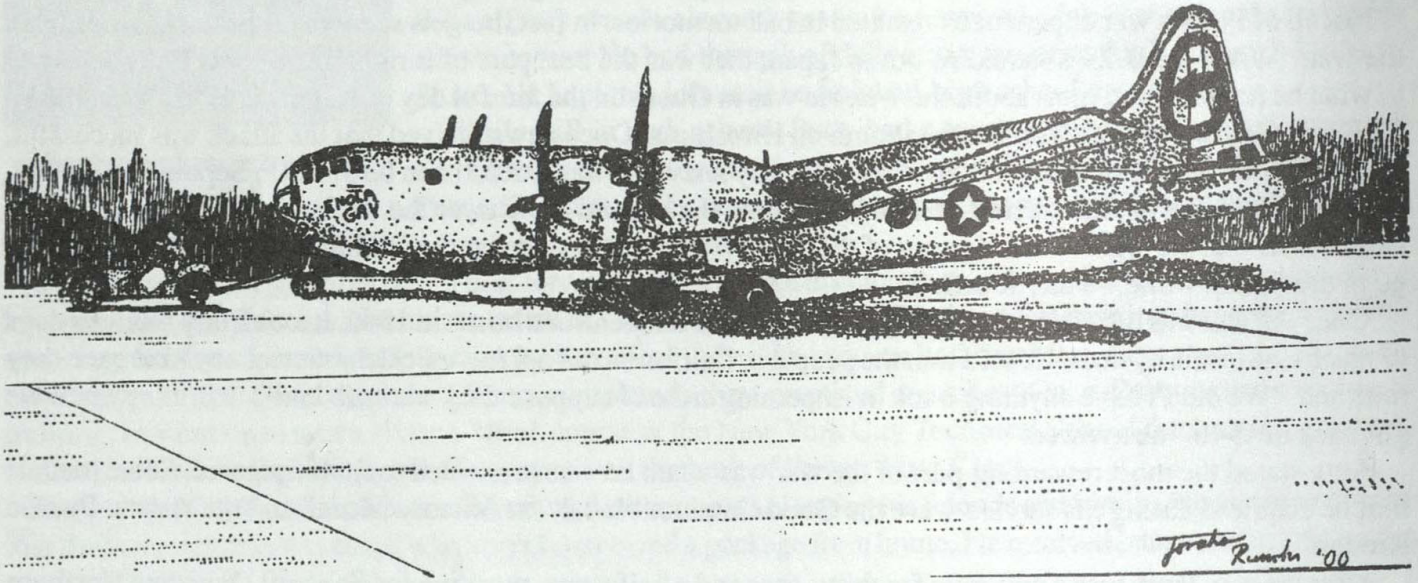
Putty stated the most rewarding part of the war was when he was promoted to Staff Sergeant. Some medals that he acquired during his service were the Good Conduct Medal, the Victory Medal, and the Asiatic Pacific Ribbon.

After the war, Putty was a milkman for thirty-four and a half years, working for Bancroft Dairy and Northern Dairy. After the dairy went out of business, he drove school bus for NICE Community Schools. He ran his bus route for seven and a half years until he retired at the age of sixty-seven.

As we were completing our conversation, Putty expressed his feelings about how the world was when he was younger and how it has changed. "When I was a child, we listened to our parents," he stated. Putty says that kids today are not afraid of their parents as they once were. He also says that society should learn to live together and not to cause any trouble. "But you are always gonna get people like that." he reflected philosophically.

I would like to thank Putty for letting me share his story. Thousands of WWII veterans have died, most of them never telling their story. The more veterans we lose, the more valuable the remaining few become. Thanks to Putty's generous accounts, he helps keep the memories alive, and helps my generation realize the tremendous contribution that these men made.

Jonathan Rumohr



The B-29 Enola Gay sitting on the tarmac in Tinian.

"I LIKED MY COMMANDERS"

"I had to go to war. That's how it affected my family life." Salvatore D. Andriacchi spoke these words at our interview. He left behind his comfortable life to save the world and his country from the Nazis.

"Fod", as we like to call him, was born in 1917, in Ishpeming, Michigan. His parents were Dominic and Catherine Andriacchi. Fod grew up in Ishpeming, Michigan where he attended St. John's Grade School. After St. John's, Fod attended Ishpeming High School. He had four brothers, Joseph, Louis, Francis, and Anthony. He had three sisters, Rose, Mary, and Teresa.

After high school, Fod continued his education by attending college at Notre Dame. In fact, he was on the Notre Dame football team. His coach was the famous Elmer Layden, one of the four horsemen. There was also a movie made about Knute Rockne, and if people look very closely, they can see Fod in the movie.

After college, Fod was getting ready to go to church in Lansing, Michigan when he heard the news that Japan had bombed Pearl Harbor. He heard President Roosevelt's broadcast about the bombing.

When Fod got called to war, he was a draftee. Life in Fod's family was totally disrupted. Fod also had three brothers enter the service. Those brothers were Joseph, Louis and Francis.

Fod received his basic training at Fort Leonardwood, Missouri. He was there for two sessions, because he was operated on during his first session. When I asked him what a typical day of training was like he laughingly replied, "It was go all day long, morning till night." Before Fod was sent into combat status, he had fourteen days of leave. He went into basic training as a private and I was still a private afterwards" he stated.

After basic training, he went to the University of Kentucky to study topographic drafting. He needed to take graphic drafting so that he could graph enemy positions for reconnaissance. He also mapped some of the Japanese islands before an invasion.

When in Europe, Fod was in a typical company. Fod was a map maker for the Corps of Engineers. A map maker in WWII is a person who makes maps of the enemy positions for strategic purposes. The maps had enemy positions like mine fields, artillery encampments, hills, bunkers, supply depots, infantry encampments, and many other obstacles that our infantrymen and allies might encounter. He also made area maps for terrain.

Fod slept in a barracks and ate regular army food. When Fod described the food, he said, "Well, it wasn't anything to write home about." The most common food he had was meat. Fod rarely slept on the ground and he got a lot of needed sleep.

The weapons that Fod used were a Carbine (M1 Garand) and a .45 caliber pistol. He only used the pistol when he was on guard duty. His Carbine was for if the enemy had rushed his position and he had to defend his base.

Fod communicated with his family via v-mail. He could not discuss any type of operations or any jobs that he had to do. The reason they did not allow him to discuss any of that was the Army thought the soldiers might tell some friends who could be Nazi sympathizers.

During the holidays, he ate the usual things. Holidays were, "Very far and few between. On some occasions you could've been on guard duty. On one New Year's Eve I was on guard duty."

Fod's favorite officer was Patton, but he was not Fod's commanding officer. Fod's commanding officer was Captain Eret. When I asked Fod if he liked all of his commanders, he laughing retorted "Oh yes, I liked them all."

At the end of the war, Fod was a sergeant. "I went in 1942, and I was discharged in 1947," he stated. Fod did not receive any medals for his actions in the war. When Fod returned home it was "Great."

I personally thank Fod for taking his time to have this interview with me. I also thank him for defending his country in its time of need riding the world of Adolf Hitler and his Nazis.

Dominic Andriacchi

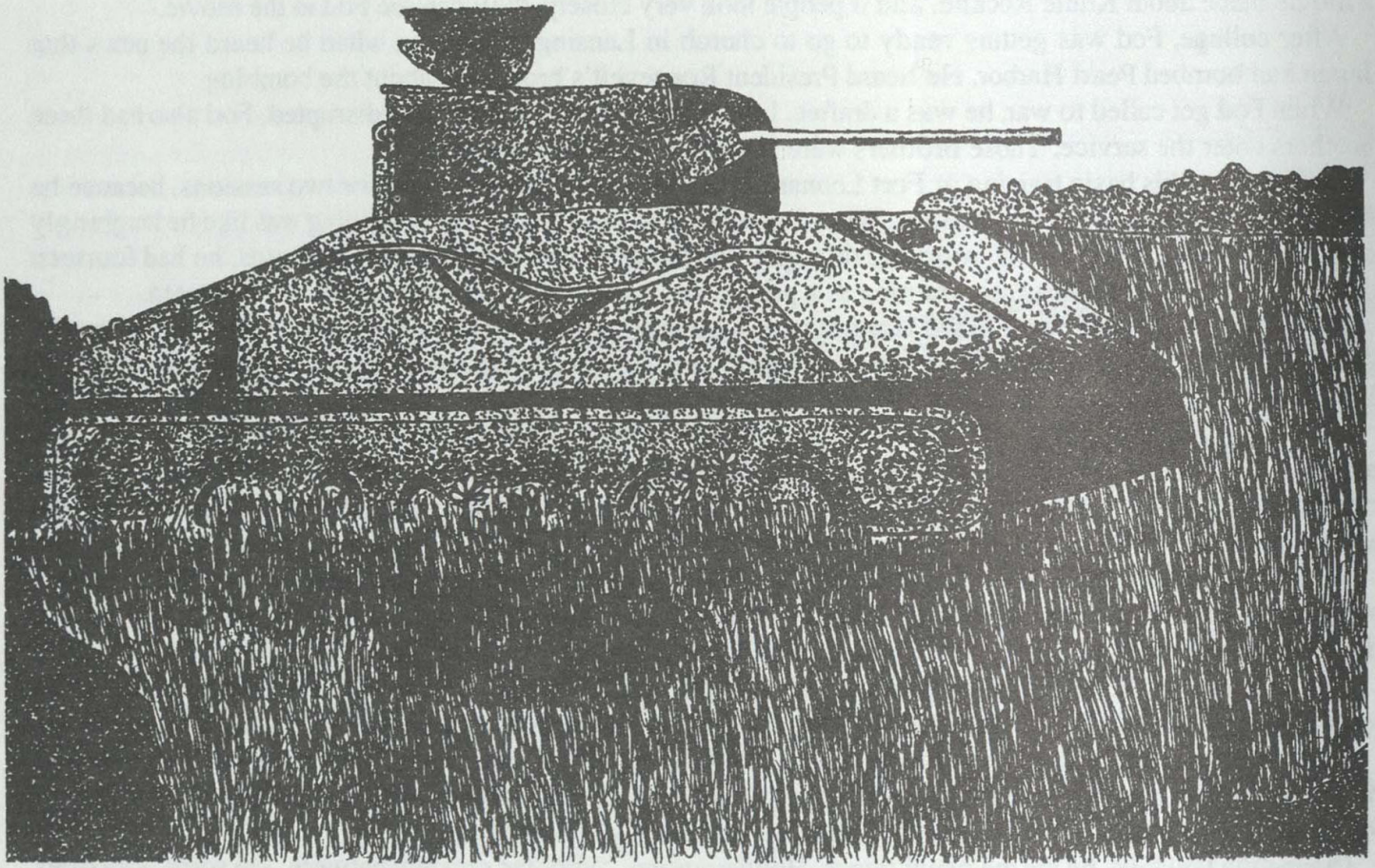


Illustration by Dominic Andriacchi

ALFRED CORON'S EXPERIENCES DURING WORLD WAR II

As I walk into my Grandpa Alfred Coron's house, I know I will have a great time doing this interview because I love to spend time with him. He greets me at the door and we go over to the table and take a seat. Pa, as I call him, has some of his old photo albums there and we start to look through them. As we are looking at the pictures from the past, I can hear the crackling of the fire, smell the sweet aroma of the homemade honey glazed bread being baked. I can hear their dog barking in the back round. We begin talking about the ships he was on and World War II overall, and before I know it, I am drifting through memories back into the 1940's.

Before Pa and I discussed, he told me a little bit about his childhood. Pa was born in the Junction location on Excelsior Street, on February 16, 1924. Pa shared the house with his parents, Mit and Rose, and his one sister, Bernice. His parents always put him to work with the chores that had to been done. In the summer, he got up very early to go to the hen house to pick the fresh eggs and bring in wood and coal to warm the house. In the winter Pa still had to bring in the wood, but also had to do other chores. Another one of his chores was to bank the sides of the houses with snow. He had to bank the house with snow because in those days there was no insulation. The snow worked as a good insulator. While he was doing these chores, his dogs Bush, June, and Tuffy always kept him company.

When Pa was about six years old, he went to Junction School for first, second, and third grades. The schools that he attended were very different from ones that we attend today. The Junction School had one teacher and only one room. This teacher had a very big responsibility because she had to teach all the grades that attended school at once. Next, Pa attended a school called Salisbury School for fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Since they did not have busses, the kids had to walk. Pa had to walk one mile to get to his school. For lunch the kids walked home, trudged back to school for the afternoon, and walked home at the end of the school day. During seventh and eighth grade he attended the Grammar School that was a two-mile walk one way. He continued his schooling at Ishpeming High School, but quit when his dad died so he could be at home to help his mom. Pa completed eight full years of schooling in all.

Photo taken during Alfred's leave in March, 1944

After leaving high school, Pa started to look for a job. He had been working since he was fourteen years old so he had many work experiences. Pa's jobs before entering the service included: "jerked pop", made ice cream, a truck driver, and for the most part, he worked on the railroads.

Pa learned about the war in Europe by reading the newspaper and listening to the radio. Pa was a young man working in Ishpeming, living at home with his mom and sister, when he heard that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. He was stunned at the news but did not think it would lead the U.S. into the war. However, when the United States did join the war, he felt he needed to do his part so he decided to join the military. Pa was the only member of his family that joined the service, but people from the community helped by donating money, copper, steel, and metals. A snow fence was built around "Old Ish" to house tires collected and recycled for the war effort.

He recalls that the most difficult thing going from civilian to military life was, "Being told what time to get up in the morning, what time to go to the bathroom, when you could eat and when you had to go to bed." This was

a big adjustment for him. When Pa was called for war, he felt thrilled to help to serve our country. The government did not call Pa to war, though. He volunteered for the Army, but ended up in the United States Navy. Before going down to volunteer, his friends had brought him to a movie as a going away present. The movie that they watched was based on submarine life during the wars. In the movie, the enemy was destroying the submarines right away, which led to many deaths. A little while after the movie he left for the recruiting office. There was a recruiter standing there that did not look very happy at all, so Pa went over to another person. They said they would put him in the submarines. Pa went to sit and wait. He was afraid because of what he just saw in the movie. The leader saw that he was troubled so he went to talk to him. Pa told the man what was bothering him and asked if there was any possible way for him to change to another station, but there was not. The leader went away for a while and got involved in doing something. In a few minutes he came running over to Pa and blurted, "If you'd rather go on the ships you have ten minutes to get your things gathered and hop on that truck." Pa had to get his cot rolled up and get things packed. When he finished, his pack weighed about fifty pounds; walking was hard for him. The truck started to leave. Pa's friends were near, so they each grabbed an arm and a leg and literally dragged him to the truck and threw him on.

Before Pa could enter the war, he had to go to basic training camps. The first one that he attended was the Great Lakes Naval Station in Chicago. He stayed in barracks with about one hundred people. He was there for thirteen weeks in all. On one of his typical days, he had to rise at 4:50 A.M. for a muster, which means to take roll call at 5:00. Next, they ran for about two miles. After they got back, they had to clean their barracks, which were the rooms that they stayed in, then go down for morning chow. After his basic training, Pa received a third class Coxswain, a deck rate used in the Navy. When his thirteen weeks were up in Chicago, Pa had a one-week leave, or vacation. He used this to visit his family. Soon after his training, he was stationed at the Great Lakes on the main side for just a couple of weeks. Second, he went to a destroyer base, and third he went to North Island, both of which are in San Diego. Pa's job in the service was that of master arms for a year. Then he tended to a sick base ensuring the people got their meals and juices. From there he went to the ships where he became a rigger.

He was first stationed on the ships in either 1942 or 1944. Pa's first ship was on a new attack cargo ship. Its home port was San Francisco. Pa was also on a Destroyer. On the ships, he worked as a rigger and a splicer. Splicing meant he had to put two ropes together, then make a loop on one end and put them together. A normal day on boared was to get up in the morning, sweep the decks and go down to the lower deck to have chow. After they ate, he had to climb down into the rigging and see if anything needed repairs. He was usually splicing, but there was always more to be done.

On the ships they did not have barracks as they did at boot camp. They had bunks. In the forward bunks, they had a couple of hundred people in them. Often, it was very uncomfortable in them. Their food was not much better, and it was very bland. Most of the food was steamed, sometimes fried, but it was never baked. They lived for three months on Australian Goat (lamb). " I mean not just once a day but for breakfast, lunch, and supper, I will never eat lamb again" he stated. In addition, the eggs were very poor. If the eggs were three months old then they were considered fresh. To cover up the horrid taste, they used to smother them with jam. Occasionally if they were lucky, they would get hard biscuits to munch on. During holidays such as Christmas, the men received a little extra in their meals, turkey for instance.

Although it was Christmas, the sailors did not get much of a break. All they did or had time for was a movie or two.

Most of Pa's was time was spent in the South Pacific Okinawa, the Philippines, Iwo Jima, Northern Japan, New Maya, and New Caledonia were places Pa visited

Pa in uniform

during his stay in the military. The biggest battles he was involved in were in Iwo Jima and the Philippines. The conflict in the Philippines was so intense that they called it the Red Sea because there was so much blood in the water. When the United States dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Pa's ship was being loaded to go to Japan.

For Pa, and surely many others, the war turned his whole life around, for they never knew what was going to happen next. Pa said the thought that helped him through the war was "staying alive, and knowing your buddies were always there for you." He was glad when the war was over, because people could have their lights on after dark, go to parties, smoke, and have a good time with family and friends. The war changed Pa's life a lot teaching him many things including: "Speak up, don't be afraid, get as much of an education as you can, never forget how to pray, it will help you through a great deal." Pa said the lesson I should learn from going through the war is "Hope and pray you never have to go to war, and if you are ever in need for something pray." He also advised me never to quit school, and get as much education as possible.

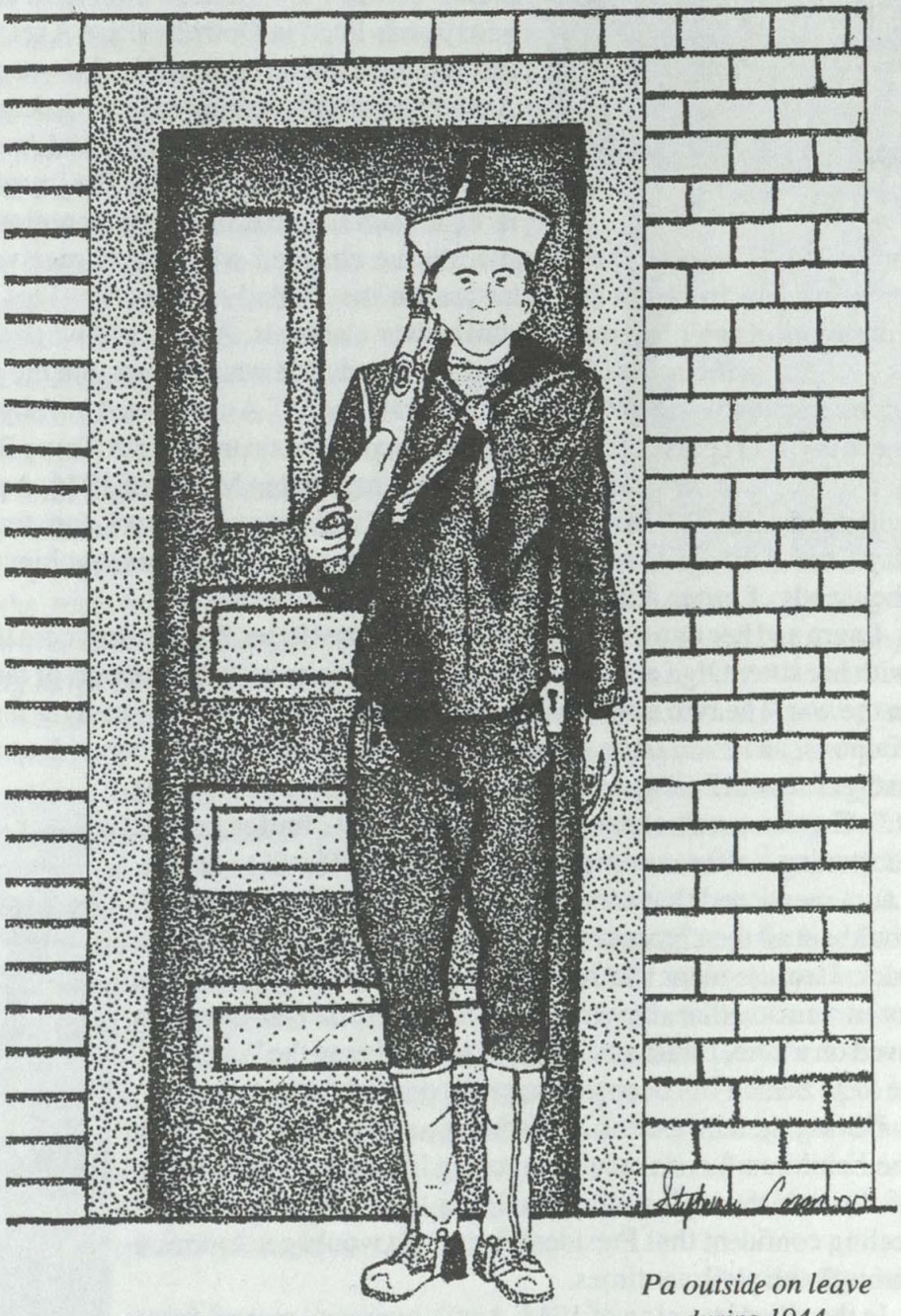
When Pa returned home, he was twenty-two years old. The first thing he wanted to do was relax and go out with his friends.

His life started out easy when he got back. He did not have to find a new job, because his old job on the railroads was waiting for him. When Johnny Beauchamp, or Bousha as he was called, retired from barbering he asked Pa if he would take care of his shop. First Pa had to go to barbering school in Toledo. When he got back, he used the same shop as Johnny had, and Pa continued to work there for forty-nine years.

During all of this, he met his wife Dorothy (my brother and I call her Mim). Mim and Pa met at Pa's sister's wedding. Then from there they just got to know each other. They got married in October of 1956.

Pa's present day life now consists of a wonderful family. This family includes his son Bruce who is our dad, a grandson, Mathew who is my brother, Kathy who is my mom, his wife Dorothy, Beagle Pudgy and I. Pa is now retired and enjoys his life.

Stephanie Coron



Pa outside on leave during 1944.

CALLED TO SERVE AND DID NOT RETURN

"The Secretary of War desires me to express his deep regret that your husband, Private Axel L. Sirtola, has been reported missing in action since seventeen November in Germany..." These fateful words, inscribed on a Western Union telegram dated December 13, 1944, were delivered to Laura Sirtola at her sister's home in Ishpeming. This dreaded message marked a turning point in Laura's life and brought a chilling fear of the possible outcome and doom that might lie ahead.

When World War II began, Laura was a new bride who married Axel only a month before the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The newlyweds lived in Detroit where Axel was employed at a manufacturing plant that produced materials used in the war effort. Like most Americans, Laura and Axel tuned in daily to hear radio broadcasts and bulletins about the war. Although living in the midst of a war, Laura and Axel delighted in the birth of their daughter, Arlene, in November of 1942. The joy of parenthood brought many happy days in their home. Life held many promises for this young family and optimism prevailed. However, their simple routine changed when Axel received a notice from the local draft board ordering him to report for induction on the second of October. This came as a surprise because of Axel's employment at a plant manufacturing war materials. Americans working in war production were exempt from active duty in the armed forces. Laura related, "He was exempt, but the clerk where he worked forgot to send in his exemption so he got called by the draft board." Axel passed his physical examination and was drafted into the army. He reported for duty and received his basic training at Camp Blanding in Florida as an infantryman in heavy weapons. When his training was completed in March of 1944, Axel received a short leave and spent time with his family. When the time came for him to return to duty, Laura traveled with him to Chicago, spent a few days, and then bid him farewell. She sadly recalled, "I never saw him or heard from him again." Axel joined thousands of other American soldiers overseas in Europe.

Laura and her daughter Arlene moved to the Upper Peninsula where they lived with her mother and then later with her sister Olga and son, Peter. Life was easier with the support of family and Olga's husband was also away in the war. The two sisters helped each other, combined their meager resources, carefully managed their ration coupons, and even enjoyed occasional rides in their 1940 Chevy. Laura stated, "We had a car but hardly ever had gas so we didn't go far, just did our errands and that was it." Gas was not the only scarcity. Meat, butter, eggs, shortening, coffee, and cigarettes were also difficult to obtain. Laura mentioned that another sister, who served in the WACS, could get all the cigarettes that she wanted for only a nickel a pack. Because meat was hard to get, Laura and Olga cooked a lot of venison that they received from a brother-in-law who lived on a farm. Laura smiled as the remembered the "salt lick" he kept behind his barn that kept the deer visiting.

During the summer of 1944, the two sisters kept busy with their children. Laura recalled keeping in touch with the news of the war through radio broadcasts, and she remembered feeling confident that President Roosevelt would get America through the perilous times.

In the allied invasion of 1944, Axel's company moved from

Arlene as a young girl

Arlene now

England across the Channel into France and continued fighting their way into Germany. During these months, Laura never heard a word from Axel and never knew of his whereabouts. She had only her precious memories and a prayer tucked in her heart that Axel was safe and would return. Instead, on December 13th, she answered the door and found a Western Union courier who delivered the telegram with news that would change her life forever. For exactly one year plus one day, her hope remained that Axel was alive and maybe taken captive. However, a letter from the Adjutant General of the United States Army confirmed her worst fears. His letter stated that Axel died on November 17, 1944 in the Hurtgen Forest in Germany in heavy mortar and artillery fire. A memorial service, with full military honors, was held for Axel at the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Negaunee.

For most Americans, the end of the war meant celebrations and the troops returning home to a hero's welcome. For Laura and her daughter, it was the beginning of difficult times and trying to deal with their great loss. All that was returned to Laura was a box full of unopened letters that her husband never received. She was left with many unanswered questions and did not receive any confirmation of his burial until October 1947. Laura finally learned that Axel was buried in Liege, Belgium in the United States Military Cemetery, Neuville-en-Condroz. From the United States government she received the Combat Infantry Badge and Purple Heart Medal that were awarded posthumously to her husband who sacrificed his life in defense of his country.

Laura and her sister Olga Honkala (on left)

In the years following the war, Laura returned to Detroit to begin her life again. She experienced many obstacles, as America did not always treat its war widows kindly. She remembers having a very difficult time in securing housing. She explained, "Landlords didn't want single women with children in their houses... I don't know what they thought we were." She also recalled having difficulties in getting her car serviced. She added, "They just look at you and wonder what you are doing in their garage." As a widow with a child, she received a small compensation from the government, but she still needed to work. She attended IBM School at night and learned how to keypunch. This training helped her to secure a job with Ford Motor Company that Laura feels was a real positive point in her life. Eventually, she advanced to data processing and remained with the company until she retired. In 1951, she used Axel's life insurance money and her GI benefits to buy her own home. She and her sister Edna lived together and each of them raised a child. Laura's daughter Arlene used the government benefits to finance her college education at Western Michigan University. Today, she is a third grade teacher and has taught for over thirty years. Arlene and her husband, Tom, have one son, Kyle.

In spite of the sorrow and difficulties she has faced, Laura feels she has had a good life and was quick to say, "life is what you make it." In 1965, Laura and her sister Edna traveled to Europe and visited Axel's grave. She described the cemetery as beautiful and filled with white crosses. Finding her husband's grave was a very important mission in Laura's life, and she felt a sense of peace after her visit to his final resting-place. Today, Laura is eighty-one years old and still living in a suburb of Detroit. She spends her time traveling and visiting with family in the Upper Peninsula. Although she is legally blind, she still views life on the bright side and is certainly a very special aunt and person in my life.

Maxine Honkala

SHOOTING DOWN THE ENEMY

Harry in his son's house

Harry Edmark was born in Mountain, Wisconsin, a small logging town in northern Wisconsin, on September 4, 1922. His parents were Harry Edmark and Della Fonder. Harry later moved to Cedarburg, Wisconsin where he grew up. He had two brothers and three sisters of whom one sister and one brother are living. Before the war, Harry attended the University of Dubuque.

At the age of nineteen, Harry was just out of high school and working at a gas station when he heard that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. "I was wiping the windshield of a car when the news came over the car radio," he said. He just waited and hoped that he would be drafted into the military service. Finally, he received his draft notification. "I was glad because all of my friends were already in, and it was a situation where I wanted to join my buddies. I didn't want to be the only one on the outside looking in," he recalled.

Harry received three to four months of basic training in Camp Stuart, Georgia, which is now Fort Stuart, Georgia. The basic training process was very hard. "Well, we got up very early in the morning, and we ran several miles before breakfast. After that we started our training program for the rest of the day," said Harry when asked what basic training was like. After the basic training was over, Harry was nominated for Officers Candidate School. "So soon as my training was over I had a short leave and reported to Camp Davis, North Carolina, for Officers Candidate School." After Officers Candidate School, he was commissioned a second lieutenant.

After OCS, they assigned Harry to artillery anti-aircraft as battery commander. He was stationed in various places. Harry stayed at Camp Davis, North Carolina, for a short time as an instructor in map reading and orientation until he was transferred to Fort Bliss, Texas, for another short time and then to Camp Hun, California, where he was assigned to the unit with which he went over seas. From there, he was trained at Camp Erwin, which is now Fort Irvine, in the Mojave Desert. Following this training, his unit went over seas.

The first base Harry and his battalion had was in Lae, New Guinea. "It was an airbase where we had our Anti Aircraft set up and that's where we shot down our first airplanes," he stated. Under Harry's command, he had about 200 men, which was a battery; four batteries formed a battalion. "The airplanes flying at that time were not supersonic speed but you were probably engaged at about two to four minutes at a time." This made it easy for him to shoot. Recalling his feelings about his military superiors he said, "By and large I guess I didn't have any feelings one way or another because I didn't come in very close contact with them. The orders would come down from way up in headquarters. And we just did what they told us to do."

Weapons played another important role in the war. "Yes, of course, that was part of your dress code. I carried a sidearm, a 45-Colt Automatic, and then I carried a Carbine and also at times a Thompson Sub machine-gun."

Harry's other overseas stations included: Port Moresby, New Guinea, Lae Madaing, Finch Haven, Hollandia, Wacti, Noemfor in the Netherlands, the East Indies and from there to the Philippines. In New Guinea, Harry contracted malaria. Throughout this time, he was often in the line of fire. "Well our first engagement with the Japanese anti Aircraft situation we shot down two Japanese airplanes. After that it's pretty hard to tell because you have a whole battalion of guns shooting at the same planes and it's pretty hard to tell who shot what." The biggest battle Harry was ever in was Holandia. "There isn't any one scariest moment; I had many scary moments and it's pretty hard to pick out a particular situation because you're confronted many times with scary situations," Harry stated.

During this time, Harry earned the Soldier's medal. He received it after he saved many lives from an explosion. He was working at a dock serving as a guard when a fire broke out on a boat loaded with many explosives. Around the boat, many other boats were docked with men working on them. Harry bravely risked his life for

Harry (center) in the Ishpeming 4th of July Parade, representing the VFW.

many others, going into the boat and extinguishing the fire before it set off the explosives and started the other boats on fire too. For his bravery and his action he received the "Soldier's Medal" which is the highest and very distinguished medal he received. He was awarded his medal at a battalion review in Manila, Philippines in 1945. "Well I was glad and I felt really good about that because I was in for about three and a half year and it was getting to be pretty boring," he stated.

Flashbacks are most common for veterans of war. Some people experience a lot and some people experience none. "Not so much anymore but I did have some after the war," Harry recalled. Some flashbacks come into mind when the veterans are watching war movies. However, this does not happen to Harry. "It depends on the movie; if they're authentic I enjoy them, but if it's a bunch of hogwash I don't have much patience for that. I've seen *Saving Private Ryan,* and *From Here to Eternity* was good." He thinks *Saving Private Ryan* is the best war movie ever.

After the war, Harry went back to school. He married Bernie Blank who he had met in high school and became reacquainted with after his service ended.

Today, Harry has some hobbies and games he likes to play. He does gardening and he collects stamps. He enjoys reading and he likes some music and will listen to anything except hard rock. His favorite band leader is Glenn Miller.

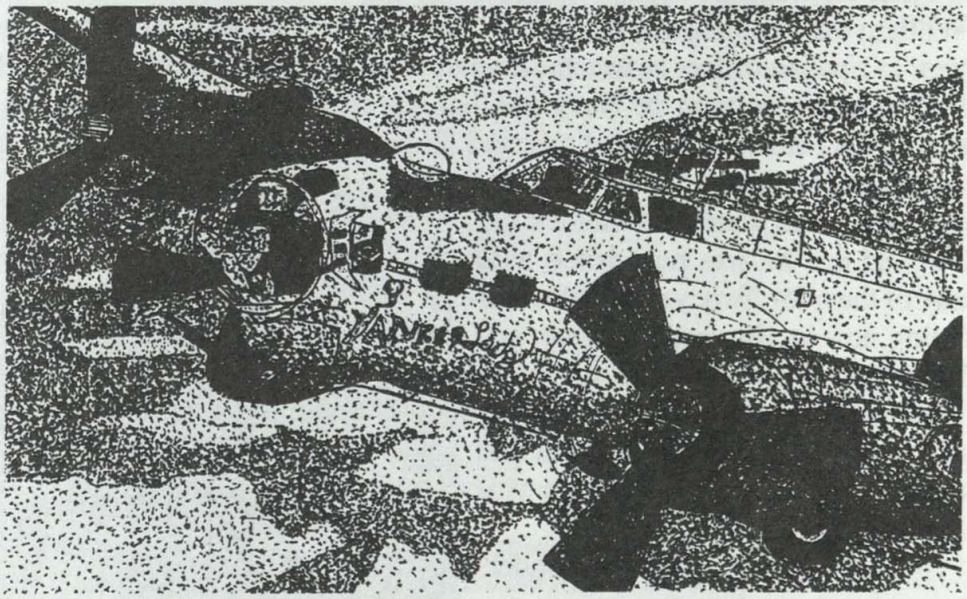
When Harry was little, his favorite sport was baseball, and he liked the Chicago Cubs. Currently, he likes football and his favorite team is the Green Bay Packers.

Following his marriage and military service, Harry decided to find a job. He began selling insurance in the corporate structure but then decided to start an office of his own. "After many years of the insurance business, working in the corporate structure for many years, I decided to go into business for myself and that was the beginning of Iron Range Agency," he stated. There he hired workers including my dad, Tom Edmark, his son. After working for many years, he retired and handed the office down to my dad. Now my dad successfully runs the business. Harry became a member of the VFW in town. After a long time being a member, his fellow members voted him in as commander of the organization. After he resigned, he still paid visits to say "Hi" after his two years as the president.

Three years ago, his wife, Bernie, passed away from lung cancer. He is a widowed man who lives off Stoneville Road on County Road POS.

He emphatically stated that he would never go back into war again. He said, "Hopefully not because the next war would be a lot different from the last one."

Kyle Edmark



NO GLORY

"People die in wars. They get maimed in war. They get hurt in wars; it is not glory any more." William Thome gave me this statement when I talked with him recently about his experiences as a radio operator in WWII.

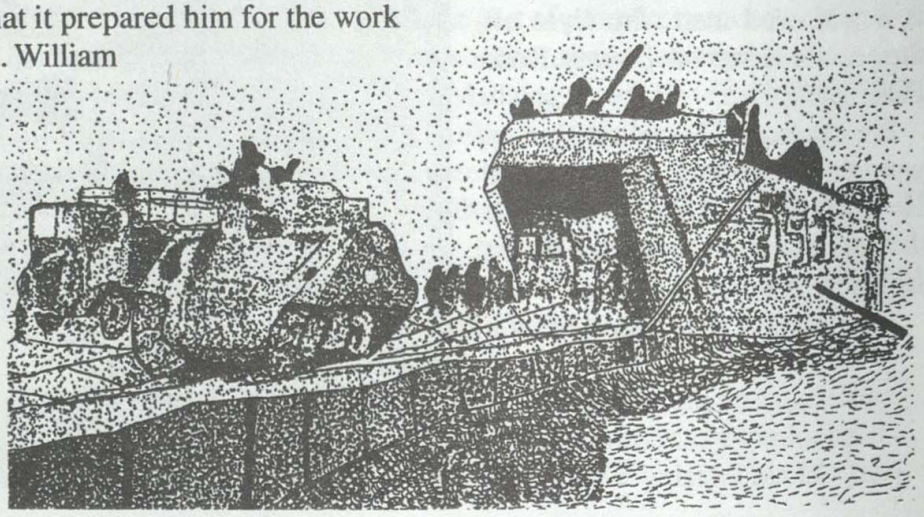
William Thome was born on September 21, 1926, in Zanesville, Ohio and attended school there. As a young man, William was a milkman and worked in an office that sold bread off delivery trucks. When he was a milkman, he awakened at five o'clock in the morning so he could finish the milk run on time. As a result, he fell asleep in school. One day his principal informed William that he would have to quit his job so he could go to school.

William then left home to join the United States Navy; he was seventeen years old. After he signed up for the Navy, he was sent to the Great Lakes Naval Training Facility in Chicago for six weeks of basic training. After he passed basic training, William had seven days of leave and then was sent to the University of Miami, Ohio for sixteen weeks of radio operators training. When I asked William what the most difficult thing about going from civilian life to military life he replied, "Being told what to do and when to do it." With job training completed, William received fourteen days of leave. He went home like he always did when he received leave and was still in the United States. With his leave over, William was given the rank of Radioman second class and stationed on *LST* 393, which they sailed to Europe.

On board the ship, the daily routine was almost identical to the day before it. A reveille was at five a.m., and after that he did his health benefits and went to the mess hall to have breakfast. If he was scheduled to work, he sent Morse Code messages between ships and bases on the land. If he was not scheduled to work, he did whatever he wanted with his time. William told me that the food on board was satisfactory; they had their own supply lines and bakers. William lived on the ship with one hundred other men and all they had was a bunk, a foot locker, and a normal locker to put belongings in. To communicate home he used a form of mail called V-Mail, but he never wrote home very often. When they had free time, they were always looking for entertainment so he played poker a lot. "I won four hundred dollars in a poker game," William told me when I asked him what was the best thing that happened to him during the war. When he took leave for entertainment they often went to see the USO shows and movies or visited the local bars. One time when William was in London, there was an air raid and he told me that he would never forget those because they were horrible. For Christmas, 1944, the only thing they did to celebrate was eat a special meal of hot dogs and beans. One of the scariest things that happened to him was another ship ran into them during a docking procedure "That shook you up pretty bad." William told me as he recalled the incident.

After the war was over, William and the rest of the crew sailed their *LST* back to the United States, where William was discharged. When he got home he went to business college and became a police officer. After one year as a police officer he became a weather man for the Federal Aviation Association. William told me that he had no regrets joining the Navy and that it prepared him for the work that he went into after he was discharged. William corresponded with his ship mates for ten years, but then communication stopped and he has not visited with any of them for forty years. William is living now in Harvey, Michigan, and has recently retired from the FAA. Although their role in the war may not seem very large, what William and thousands of men like him did are what made winning WWII possible.

James Saunders



"ROSIE THE RIVETER"

In December of 1941, the United States entered World War II and was desperately in need of military equipment and supplies. Men were drafted into the Armed Forces and women became the backbone of the wartime industries. Michigan led the nation in the production of war material and became the "Arsenal of Democracy."

Willow Run Bomber Plant, located near Ypsilanti, Michigan, was the largest assembly plant in the world and produced B-24 Liberator Bombers. Its assembly line was one mile long, and bombers were produced at the rate of one per hour. Working on this assembly line were hundreds of women who riveted sheet metal to build the B-24's. Dorothy Hebert and Olga Honkala served in this capacity, wore navy blue uniforms and scarves on their heads to ensure that their hair would not get caught in the machinery. These women, like thousands of other American women, were known as Rosie the Riveter and made a significant contribution to the war effort on the homefront.

We salute the efforts made by all of the women who worked in producing war materials on the homefront and especially pay tribute to our mothers who served their country in a time of special need.

Sharon Richards and Maxine Honkala

Mrs. Dorothy Hebert, mother of Sharon Richards

Mrs. Olga Honkala, mother of Maxine Honkala

Mrs. Olga Honkala and her husband, Oscar, pictured near the government housing at Willow Run Bomber Plant during World War II before Mr. Honkala entered the Navy.

ONE MAN'S PATRIOTISM

"You can learn that you have your freedom at the expense of the military personnel that carry on the war to end all wars," stated Vernon Kellner as we sat at his table in his cozy house. There at his table Mr. Kellner and I engaged in a two-hour conversation that I knew was going to be very educational.

Mr. Kellner was born to Evelyn and Joseph Kellner on May 8, 1917 in Menominee, Michigan. He has a twin sister named Verona, and a brother named Lloyd. While growing up, Mr. Kellner loved to go to school. He attended school through the twelfth grade.

As Mr. Kellner got older, he met a woman by the name of Ruth Nettleton over the Christmas holidays. Little did he know that she was going to be his future wife. Ruth started her teaching career when she was only sixteen years old. After the war started, though, she quite teaching and went to Milwaukee to work for a war plant.

Mr. Kellner was drafted into the war during April of 1940. He was in the fifth division Head Quarters Company, second battalion, second infantry. When Mr. Kellner was done with basic training, he was ranked as a private.

After basic training, Mr. Kellner went to Escanaba, Michigan by train to be inducted. Then he was sent to Fort Sheridan Illinois to get his uniform. After that, he went to Fort Custard Michigan.

Mr. Kellner was already in the service before the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. He was twenty-four and lying in his bunk in a New Jersey army camp when he heard those dreadful words, "Pearl Harbor has been bombed."

The first job Mr. Kellner had over seas was in Iceland. He and his unit boarded a boat in the middle of the night. They had no idea where they were headed until they were out on the Atlantic Ocean. Word finally got out then that they were headed for Iceland! They got to Iceland in January but had to stay offshore for two days because there were terrific storms on the water.

After they got to shore, they were deployed into different locations on the island. They were to act like stevedores, taking supplies from supply ships that came into the capital Reykjavik. They were to work the night shifts and go to their billets during the day. The main purpose for being in Iceland was to protect it from German submarines and airplanes.

After that, Mr. Kellner was promoted to Corporal. The first battle that Mr. Kellner was involved in after Iceland was in Normandy, on the beach. He was also involved in the Battle of the Bulge that went across France and right up to the side of Germany.

Mr. Kellner was also a Communication Sargent in the war. In completing these duties, he used a radio and Morse code. When asking Mr. Kellner what was the hardest thing to do in the war he replied, "To take orders!"

When Mr. Kellner was on the field, he did not have any special place to sleep. "We slept any place we got a chance," stated Mr. Kellner. He also told me that when they were in active duty they slept right on the field! For meals, they ate K ration, a type of food that was in cans. Sometimes if soldiers were on the field fighting, the food was brought to them, that is if the fighting had died down.

During the war, Mr. Kellner was hit in the right leg while trying to fix some communication wires. The two men helping him were reported dead at the scene. Medics brought Mr. Kellner to the field hospital to see how bad his injuries were. The doctors concluded that part of the leg had to be amputated. After the surgery, Mr. Kellner was shipped to another hospital in Paris where he stayed until he recuperated.

When Mr. Kellner was in better condition to fly, he was taken to New York. There the soldiers were sorted out by their disabilities and flown as close to home as the doctors could get them. With the disability Mr. Kellner had, they sent him to Fort Custard, which was the closest place to Menominee, Michigan where his family lived. After that, Mr. Kellner was moved to Percy Jones Hospital for fourteen months.

As Mr. Kellner was being pushed out of the field hospital to go home, a guy in uniform walked up to him and

announced, "This here is Vernon Kellner." Then a glimmering piece of metal was tossed on his stretcher. It was a Purple Heart!

After his discharge, Vernon Kellner married Ruth Nettleton in November of 1945. They lived in Menominee, Michigan where they lovingly raised four children named Kathy, Bobbi, Julie, and Mike. He worked for Michigan Bell Telephone Company until his sixty-third birthday when he retired.

Today, Mr. Kellner is involved in the Jacobetti Facility, U.F.W., D.A.V., the Purple Heart organization, and is part of the American Legion. He has also received a Sliver Star presented to him by a Colonel in Menominee after the war. He has received no further medals for his contribution in the war, but the Silver Star is a very prestigious medal.

I also asked Mr. Kellner what he thinks about when he remembers the war and he answered, "It was a tragic war, period. We think about all the people that we lost who will never return... people who are disabled who can't do anything... it takes a lot of territory. You can think of a lot of things everyday." This really touched my heart and opened my eyes to the real destruction of war. The people of this country owe their freedom to these veterans and we should all in every way we can try to repay them.

Lauren Hintsala

A WORLD WAR REMEMBERED

Wilson J. Boback in his uniform

He is fighting for his life, for the sake of a country. Everyone at home is depending on him to carry through three appalling years of World War II. Amazingly, I had the chance to talk with one of these courageous people. "I would fight again if I had to, especially if it was for the good of our country," Wilson J. Boback stated matter-of-factly. As I started a discussion with Wilson, who had enlisted in the U.S. Army at the time that WWII was happening, I realized that I had the chance to talk with a remarkable individual; a chance to talk to an individual that had seen things that we, as young citizens of America, may not think conceivable. After I nervously asked Wilson to state his birth date, he told me, "It was on December 16, the same day that the Germans broke through during the Battle of the Bulge." I was astounded at this detail, realizing that I was going to be taken back to the days of World War II throughout this conversation.

Wilson enlisted in the U.S. Army and was shipped to Scotland as a member of the 101st Airborne. The 101st Airborne division means that he went into the battles in planes. He parachuted from the sky into the field of battle, so that the Germans did not know that the enemy was there. Wilson's recollection of the trip to Scotland was not pleasant, for he was seasick.

If he had stayed longer, he could have earned a retirement, but he was very glad to get out. Wilson spent, by his guessing, about three years in the army.

Wilson listed the many battles he was involved in stating, "Normandy, Invasion of France, Invasion of Holland, September 1944, Battle of the Bulge, Bastogne, December 19, into the Battle of the Bulge. Then to Hitler's Hideout, Birches, Garden Germany, as they called it the "Eagles Nest." Then we came back to Mourmelon, France. Stayed until we were shipped home."

Wilson explained the Battle of the Bulge, "Yeah, I can even describe it in one word, Hell!" You had so many elements against you. Six hours standing in the back of a truck then walk to the battle center. People who were coming back said not to go up there because they are slaughtering everybody. We replied with, "Don't wait too long for us. We'll kill them really soon!" But it ended up that we were there for two days!" he stated.

Wilson also explained the Invasion of France. "It was the biggest thing I ever saw. Thousands of ships and airplanes and when they took off, the sky was full of them, and you could see all of these ships. It was like fireworks, except it was bigger!" Wilson exclaimed. I asked him how many days he was in Basting. He replied, "Twenty some days! We were right in the donut hole!"

He was in the planes for about four hours from England to France. In Holland it took about five hours before he jumped. Wilson jumped from the planes in certain battle places too. Wilson said that designated soldiers jumped first, marking the landing site. Next, the planes came over, were given the "green light" and Wilson and the other airborne jumped out. Of course, they did not always land where they wanted. In France they became mixed up, but in Holland they called it a "perfect jump". Once in the battlefield, they tried to hide the parachutes because they did not want the enemy to know that they had landed. They hid the chutes and crawled into the hedgerows. Altogether Wilson made sixteen jumps. He broke an ankle in England, but it did not put him out of the action. "When the invasion started, they came to the hospital to see if anyone could walk. They then asked me and I said 'Ya, I can walk.' At this time I had my cast of course and they just cut the cast off and put a bandage on it! They just sent me to camp with a broken ankle!" Wilson stated, amused.

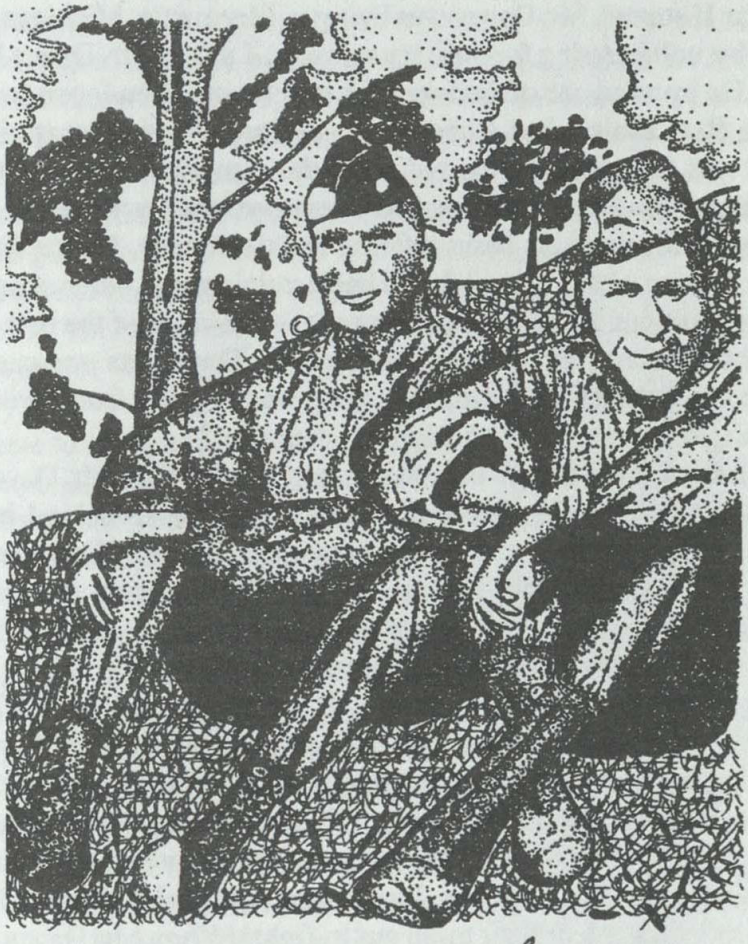
Wilson also told me what his job was once he was on the ground. "I was sergeant of the squad. To make sure that we held and stayed together. We ran into some Germans too. In Bastogne the F Company was going to dig

some foxholes. It was early in the morning, I told the squad to wait." Wilson continued, saying that he had heard the company digging so he walked up to see them. He walked up the tree line and could hear them talking and digging. At once he thought, "Gee, that don't sound like Americans talking!" And of course it was not. It was Germans! He said that one of the men came over to talk to him, and he just turned around and walked away. However, the German continued to talk as he followed Wilson. When Wilson got to the road, he jumped into the ditch and the German came out of the trees and started looking for him. Wilson's squads left after that because they knew the Germans were there.

Wilson later told me what he thought about looking back at the war, "Well, on my way home I took a train to Ishpeming and walked to my friend's house. He later drove me home in a hearse. My mom freaked when we pulled up! Although I wouldn't have done anything different, I wish that I would've stayed longer."

I will remember this conversation for a long time. I hope that you now understand more about the war and the people who served in it. Wilson was only one of many who served in World War II from our area. If you get the chance to meet with one of these individuals, take the time to talk with them, to learn of their experiences. They will greatly appreciate it.

Whitney Frisk



Wilson was involved in many battles, "Normandy, Invasion of France, Invasion of Holland, Bastogne, and the Battle of the Bulge. Then to Hitler's Hideout, Birches, Garden Germany, as they called it the "Eagles Nest." Then we came back to Mourmelon, France. Stayed until we were shipped home."

THE NECESSARY WAR

Mr. Davey in front row.

" War is hell!" Mr. Jack Davey stated as he was explaining his experiences in World War II. As the interview was about to start, I had anticipations that this would be a very interesting interview.

Samuel John Davey was a World War II Veteran with the United States Navy as a Machinist First Class. He was born in Negaunee, Michigan in 1911 to John Thomas and Lilly Davey. Mr. Davey lived in Negaunee with two brothers; Howard and Roy, and three sisters; Mildred, Olive, and Dorothy. It sure sounded like he lived in a busy household! The schools that Mr. Davey attended were in Negaunee, Michigan, where Mr. Davey completed high school. When I asked Mr. Davey if a person had a positive influence on him he replied, "Nobody, really. I was on my own all the time." After finishing school, Mr. Davey began his life's journey. Mr. Davey was married on June 1, 1941 to Gwendolyn Riopelle. Mr. and Mrs. Davey's daughter was named, Mary Lou Davey.

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and the United States entered World War II. When World War II started, Mr. Davey was living in Marquette, Michigan. Mr. Davey entered World War II in January of 1943, by volunteering for military services. I asked Mr. Davey how the war all got started. He said, "Hitler invaded. He invaded one of the countries over there. Then Japan bombed Pearl Harbor at the same time." When President Roosevelt asked Congress to declare war on Japan, Mr. Davey listened to this session. It was recorded and broadcast on the radio for the American people to hear. In addition, when the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor, Mr. Davey was twenty-seven years old.

Mr. Davey received his basic training in Providence, Rhode Island and it lasted about six weeks. When I asked Mr. Davey what a typical day in basic training was like, very quickly he told me, "Boring!" That made me giggle for a minute. After basic training was over, none of the men received vacations. After completing basic training Mr. Davey was stationed in England. There was one question swarming through my head. I really wanted to know what the most difficult thing was in going from civilian life to military life. Mr. Davey responded to my question saying, "Oh, discipline I suppose."

Leaving family and friends behind was not very hard for Mr. Davey. Wher I asked him what it was like leaving his family and friends behind, he said, "I did not have many friends, so it was not that hard for me." War did not affect Mr. Davey's family life either. He told me that it did not really affect his family life because his brothers were too old to serve. Mr. Davey said, "My family seemed all right with it," referring to his military service.

Mr. Davey in his Navy uniform.

Mr. Davey shared interesting facts and stories about World War II. He stayed in the service for about two and a half years. When I asked Mr. Davey what his job or duty in the service was, I found part of this very interesting because Mr. Davey said, "Oh, everything. I was a typist and when things got rough they took the typewriter away and gave us a gun!" As Mr. Davey was telling me this, I tried to imagine what that would be like suddenly to stop a job or duty to go out to fight! When Mr. Davey finished telling me this, all I could really say was "Wow!" I was so surprised at this. Mr. Davey also described a typical day in his service duty. Although he usually had a job and/or duty assigned, Mr. Davey said, "Well, it is hard to describe. Everything and everyday was different." I still sat in wonder and

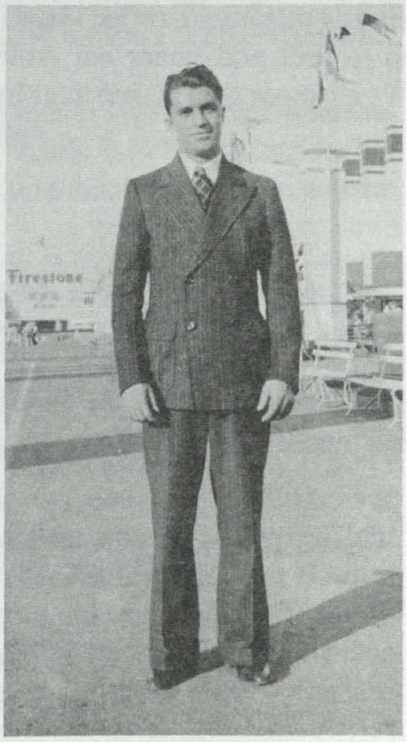
amazement while Mr. Davey told me his experiences.

Sleeping accommodations in the service were barracks. Mr. Davey told me about his. "They were regular army barracks. There was about thirty-five to forty men in mine. Nothing exciting ever happened in them," Mr. Davey said, "Food was prepared 'military style.' I thought the food was all right though." After Mr. Davey explained about his barracks and the food, I asked him about entertainment and fun. Mr. Davey replied, "The only entertainment we had was when we were stationed in England. We would go to town and have a few beers. That is about it." In his experience, Mr. Davey told me that they did not have any musical shows or entertainers visit them.

Communication was very important to people participating in the war. Many men and women had family left back at home, therefore, they tried to communicate as much as possible. I asked Mr. Davey how he communicated with his friends and family back home. Mr. Davey said, "We would v-mail each other letters." When Mr. Davey told me this, I was quite confused. I thought that he said that they would e-mail each other letters! Mr. Davey explained to me what v-mailing letters meant.

Mr. Davey and I started talking about transportation during the war years, I asked him if he remembered anything about the transportation. Mr. Davey said, "Well, we did not see much traffic. Other than an army bus or a navy bus, it was bad."

In World War II there were many people injured. I asked Mr. Davey if he ever experienced injuries in the line of duty. I also asked him what his injuries were. Mr. Davey said, "I was injured in the head." Mr. Davey also told me what his most frightening experience was. He said, "I suppose when a German 88 shell hit me. Therefore, I was knocked unconscious; they shipped me back to England by boat. I was in the hospital for six months. Then they retired me." As a result of his service and injury, Mr. Davey received the Purple Heart. Mr. Davey told me, "Well, it changed my life because I was in the hospital for six months. It did not actually change my life too much because I was discharged." When I asked Mr. Davey to describe the saddest thing that happened to him during the war, he said, "The saddest thing. Well, my best friend was killed in England and that was the worst thing that happened. Seeing all of the other Americans get killed was bad too." Mr. Davey did have many friends killed in the war. In the war a solider may have seen dead bodies being carried out in body bags which was a disturbing experience. Mr. Davey experienced seeing these bodies being carried away. Mr. Davey said, "I'd see about maybe forty to fifty bodies being shipped away per day."



Mr. Davey after his return from World War II.

After his discharge, Mr. Davey came home to Marquette, Michigan to get a job. "Other than living outside of Minneapolis, Minnesota, I have lived in Marquette, Michigan almost all of my life," he explained. Mr. Davey experienced a few jobs during his lifetime, in the Marquette, Michigan area and Minneapolis, Minnesota area. Mr. Davey's first job was working for Hanson Brothers, driving a horse and buggy. There are still a few more jobs to come. When I asked Mr. Davey what other kinds of jobs he had, he said, "Mostly bookkeeping." Mr. Davey also worked for Northern Stationers in Marquette, Michigan. He moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota for another job, which was managing and working at a food store. Mr. Davey also worked at the Vollwerth Meat Company as a sales agent, and at Spear and Sons.

As the interview was nearing the end, I still had a few questions to ask Mr. Davey. I wanted to know what he thought about the war. I asked Mr. Davey if he thought World War II was a worthwhile war. He said, "Worthwhile? Yes. We had to stop Hitler somehow! Moreover, the Japanese, of course they came in. That's when we actually entered the war." Mr. Davey also told me one of his conflicting feelings about World War II. He said, "I guess it is just that we wasted a couple years of our lives." When I asked Mr. Davey what one phrase,

picture, or activity comes to mind when he thought back to the war, he answered, "I'd have to say the time when my best friend was killed. He was only in the service for about two weeks. That's the hardest thing that I remember."

While the war was going on, life was not the same in America. Mr. Davey said, "A lot of people went to work that didn't work before. Everybody pitched in." Mr. Davey also told me about the end of the war when everyone came back to America. Mr. Davey explained, "The only thing that I remember really is people were parading around New York City and all around the country." I asked Mr. Davey how he felt after coming home from the war. Did he feel good about himself since he took part in helping our country? Mr. Davey said, "Oh yeah. The public treated us pretty good." When Mr. Davey thinks back to the war, he told me, "War is stupid. In addition, it is a bad way to settle an argument. If they would have done more talking instead of fighting, they could have saved a lot more lives!"

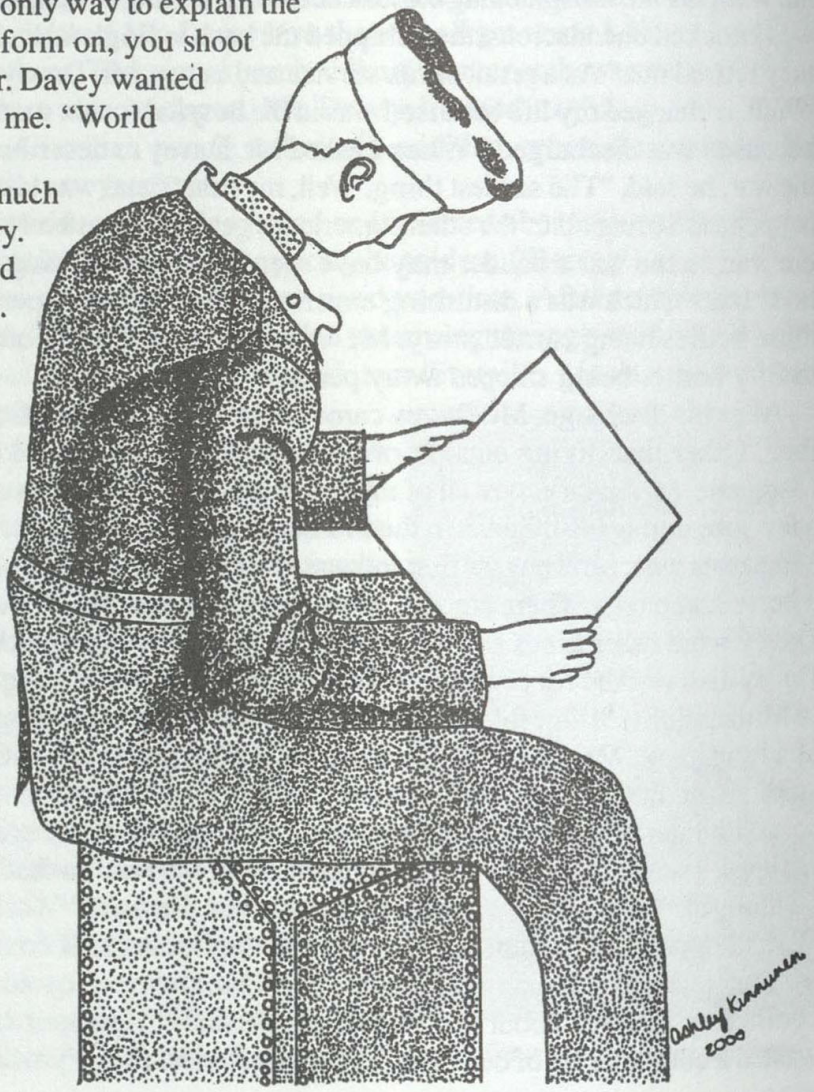
Upon returning from World War II, Mr. Davey became a member of the Marquette Kiwanis Club, a member of the Veterans of Foreign War, a life member of Marquette Elks Lodge #405 where he was a past Exalted Ruler, past Secretary, past District Vice President and past District Deputy. In his free time, he volunteered by teaching young children in Marquette and Minneapolis how to read. He was also a member of the local Barbershop chorus.

Before we ended our interview, Mr. Davey told me another small story about his World War II experiences. Mr. Davey said, "Well there was just every day experiences, nothing spectacular. The old saying, 'war is hell' is the only way to explain the war. If you see somebody with a different uniform on, you shoot him. There is nothing we could do about it." Mr. Davey wanted to tell me one more thing; this is what he told me. "World War II was the Necessary War."

Spending time with Mr. Davey has given me much information about World War II and our country. Having this interview has shown me that we need to respect and honor our American veterans. We all know they risked their lives for us!

Ashley Kinnunen

Samuel "Jack" Davey, 88 years old, of Marquette, Michigan passed away on Saturday evening January 22, 2000, at the D.J. Jacobetti Home for Veterans where he had resided for the past two years.



WAR IS BAD FOR EVERYONE

As soon as I saw Garfield Kintgen, who was born July 1, 1919, I knew my interview would be interesting. He greeted me outside when my mom and I pulled up; he was working in the garden. He showed us his garden and wonderful woodwork that he does in his free time while he guided us in.

Garfield was twenty-two and working in the woods on December 7, 1941, when he heard about the Japanese bombing Pearl Harbor. He was living in Snowville at that time. Soon after he enlisted in the Marine Corps to fight for his country.

Garfield received his basic training in San Diego, California for eight weeks. He noted that a typical day in basic training included marching and learning how to take care of himself. Basic training was mostly getting used to the military. He achieved the rank of Staff Sergeant after two years in basic training. Garfield went on to further training in signal school. After signal school, he was stationed in North Carolina to what was named New River; it is now called Camp LeJeune.

As time progressed, the army sent Garfield to Guam, then to fight in Okinawa. He acknowledged that he went to many other places while in the war but had never seen battle. His job in the service was primarily as a wire sergeant although he said he had many jobs within the signal corp.

Garfield said that the only time he was in barracks was when he was in basic training in North Carolina. He also pointed out that the housing was always full. There were always sixty to eighty people in the barracks. The food in the barracks was good. However, over seas the food was not very satisfying. They dropped the food by parachute. "Sometimes we got it sometimes the Japanese got it," he said giggling.

The home front is very important in every war. According to Garfield ordinary people helped in many ways. They worked on the aircrafts, built many ships, and other similar jobs. Actually, wives of many soldiers sometimes took over the jobs of the men who were fighting in the war.

The most difficult part of the war was their living conditions while in the field. When they slept, they slept in very uncomfortable conditions. They had to sleep in the mud and water for months. Garfield said that it rained for three weeks straight. " It was practically a monsoon," he said. They had to push the mud off the road with bulldozers. That was a big mistake because it turned the roads into rivers.

They used many different weapons in WWII. Garfield told me that they used mostly rifles. Other weapons used were; Thompson Machine guns, revolvers, and M1's. Identifying the worst battle in WWII is impossible because soldiers think of battles very differently. Garfield said that which ever battle the person was in was the worst.

Garfield was the only one in his family to fight in a war. His father was in WWI but did no fighting. Communication to Garfield's wife and family was only by mail. He got married while he was in the service, at the age of twenty-three. He said he wrote letters, but some mail he sent did not get home until six months after he was home. He also did not have any pictures to bring home because the military did not allow them to have any cameras.

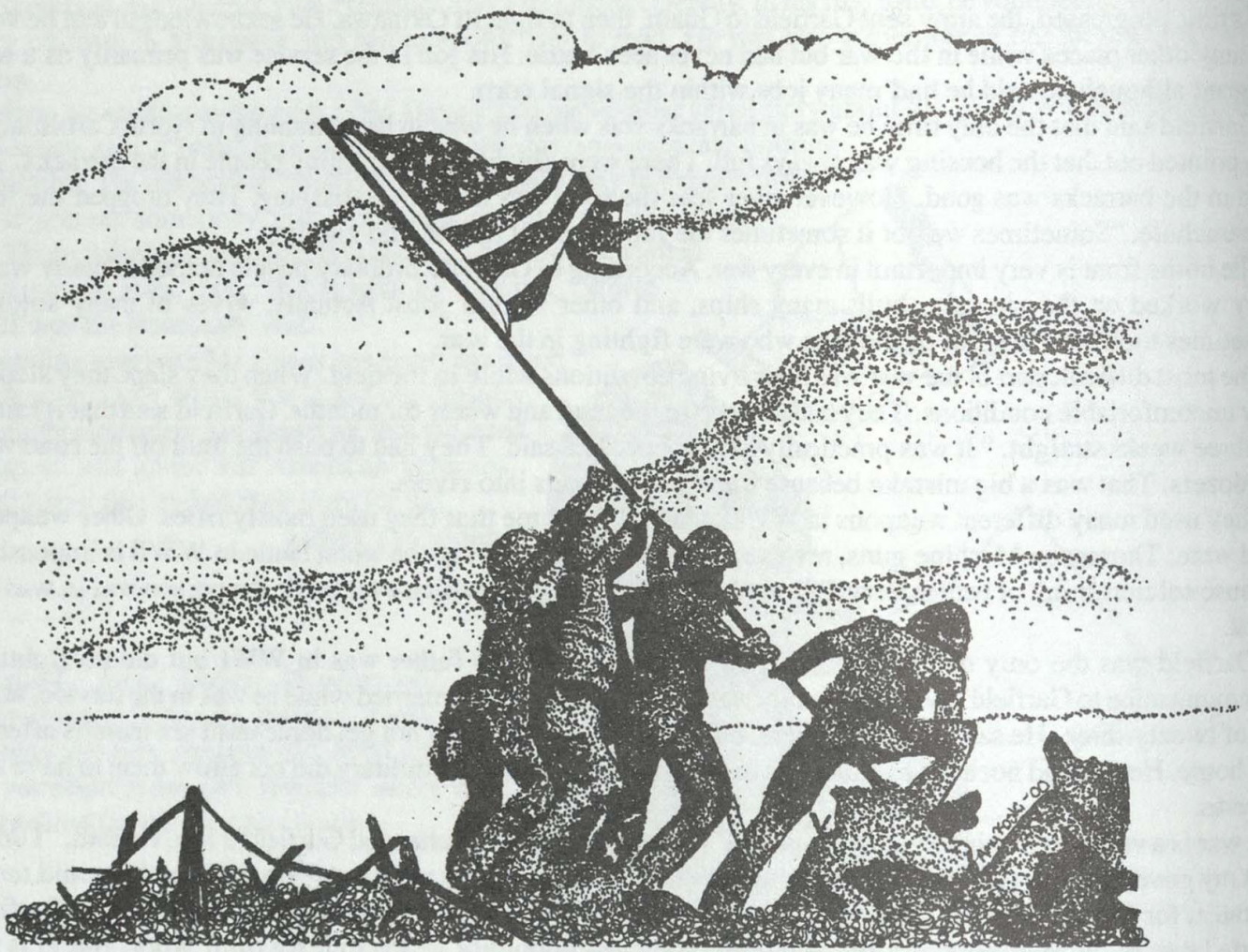
A war is a very tragic thing. It changes people's lives forever. It has changed Garfield's life. He said, "I don't trust my government anymore. That's all and I never will because they used you." He said that he would never volunteer for Clinton's government, but he would volunteer for another government and do it all again. Garfield retorted that he discourages every war and thinks the most important lesson to learn from World War II is not to get into war again. When I asked him what comes to mind when he thinks about the war he said, "Nothing good I guess. Any war, whether you win or live, win or lose, war is bad for everybody. Especially the civilians in the place were you were fighting because there were more civilian casualties in Okinawa than we had on either side, Japanese or Americans," Garfield said.

Garfield lives alone with his dog in Ely Township. He visits his family in Colorado very often. He has a wonderful garden which he tends in the summer. During the winter months he spends lots of time doing

beautiful woodwork.

I think our nation should follow Garfield's advice and never enter a war like World War II again. We should respect and honor the people of World War II for risking their lives to help our country. Many experiences change someone's life but war can change someone entirely. That is why the people who fought in the war will never be forgotten.

Amy Koski



Based on the famous photo of the flag raising at Iwo Jima.

THE YEARS IN THE WAR

Mr. Paris during the war.

"I'm not glad I went into the war, but I don't think I would've been glad if I stayed home either," said by Mr. R. Paris. I believe this is true for many war veterans. Mr. Paris shared these words in a recent interview about his experience in World War II. Mr. Paris was not born in the United States; he was born in Italy, on May 13, 1923 to Joseph and Teresa Paris. He had two siblings, Frank and Mary. He attended school, and he enjoyed the five years he went.

His father was in the USA during World War I. He came to Italy and married in 1922. Mr. Paris came to America when he was a two-year-old. When he was six, his father was killed in the mine, so he moved back to Italy.

Because of the war in Europe, His family moved back to the United States. He was eleven at the time. All of the trips to and from Italy were made by boat and they passed through Ellis Island every time. The first trip took him twenty-one days!

Mr. Paris's first job was working at a Chinese laundry for seventy-five cents per day. When the war began, he was twenty-one and did not think much of it. When asked the hardest thing about going from a civilian to being in the military, he said, "Well the hardest thing is leaving your family, that's for sure." His brother was also in the war.

Mr. Paris received infantry training at Camp Fanen in Texas. He had enlisted after two deferments. The Allies needed troops in Europe, so the United States Army cut his training short three weeks. He was a PFC. He served with the 327 combat division, 102nd Infantry Division.

In the war, Mr. Paris was a combat engineer. When I asked him what comes to mind when he thinks of the war, he replied, "I think of my friends, some of them that I lost." He found it difficult to describe a typical day in the service, saying, "Oh I don't know, it's pretty hard for me to describe anything cause, it was never the same thing, it was always different." He did see battle, earning two out of five battle stars. To get five, a soldier, "had to start right from the start."

Mr. Paris was not involved in any major battles, such as D-Day, but he did lose friends in them. He did not see any important Nazi leaders. He thinks the Nazis, "were crazy." Mr. Paris and the rest of the army had taken over a few concentration camps.

When Mr. Paris was in the service, Christmas and other holidays were not celebrated like at home. His name was drawn out of a hat once, and he got a week off the front line for a trip to Paris, France.

In the war, Mr. Paris thinks the people supported the war effort very well. Some songs that were popular during the war included "You Are My Sunshine" and "Lili Marlene."

In the war, the saddest thing that happened to Mr. Paris was losing his friends. He did not enjoy being in the war. He and his friends really celebrated when the war ended. The thing he hates most about it is that he never sees the friends he made in the war anymore. He is happy that Japan got bombed, "Because if they didn't, the war might still be going on," he commented.

When Mr. Paris got home from the war, people treated him all right. He said, "I can't complain. I got my job back when I got back." He received four battle ribbons.

Mr. Paris never attended a reunion because when he was young, he did not have enough money. Now that he does, he feels he is too old. Twenty years ago, two friends came up to visit. A friend from basic training came

up to visit last year. However, a friend of his, Charlie Tropodi, passed away on him.

Today, Mr. Paris has been retired for eighteen years. He is married and has two grown daughters. He also has four grandchildren. His favorite holiday is Christmas. In the summer, he plants a garden and spends a lot of time riding his ten-speed bike to visit friends and run errands.

Mr. Paris sometimes works for the St. Vincent De Paul Organization. He visits friends in the nursing home and plays the accordion. He spends a lot of time with his family and has a practical winter hobby, snow-blowing!

Mr. Paris is an interesting person. He served our country in its time of need. He deserves, and has received recognition, as well as my respect.

Chris Kulju

HOW PRECIOUS LIFE IS!

Grandpa Haircut

My grandpa, Donald Beauchamp, was born in Ishpeming Michigan on June 11, 1924. He has two sisters, Mary Armbrust and Margie Knudson. He was nicknamed Haircut because his father was the only barber in town. Grandpa Haircut's middle name, John was his father's first name. He attended elementary school at St. John's Catholic School, and his high school years were spent at Ishpeming High School. Grandpa Haircut enlisted in the army air force in 1942.

A typical day in basic training at Miami Beach, Florida, for Grandpa Haircut was not an easy task. He had to get up at 5:00 A.M., go to calisthenics, eat breakfast, train until noon, eat lunch, train all afternoon, eat supper, and then lights out at 10:00 P.M. His rank was Sargent after his basic training, and they stationed him at Wendover Field, Utah.

After Grandpa Haircut's basic training, he went to Armament School. When he finished Armament School, he went to Gunnery School. He got a fifteen-day delay in route when he finished Gunnery School. Grandpa Haircut said the most difficult thing in going from civilian life to military life was the discipline.

I asked him what a typical day in his service duty was in Africa and England, and he replied, "When we were not scheduled to fly our time was our own. If we were scheduled to fly, we went to breakfast around 5:00 A.M., waiting for our mission, and out to our plane to take off. When we got back, our time was our own." Grandpa Haircut was an armor gunner in the service. The saddest thing that he experienced was his buddies being killed in an air war battle over Germany. In the end, the most rewarding thing that happened to him was he saved his best friend's life. His friend was shot in the stomach, and Grandpa Haircut wrapped the wound. The doctor said that Grandpa Haircut probably saved his friend's life.

Enlisted men of two bomber crews lived in Quonset huts in England, ten men to a hut. When I asked Grandpa Haircut what he remembered about transportation during the war years, he replied, "Our air bases were spread out so when the Germans bombed us they couldn't destroy the whole base. We were issued bicycles to get around the base to the local pub."

Grandpa Haircut received mail about once a week. He wrote to his family by V-mail. V-mail was mailed in a small envelope. When he wrote the letter, the military took a photo of it before they shipped it home because they scrutinized all their mail to make sure soldiers were not saying anything they should not say.

After I asked Grandpa Haircut how the food was prepared and if he found it satisfactory, he chuckled, "The cooks did as good as they could with what they had, but it was a far cry from mom's home cooking."

While Grandpa Haircut was at the air base, they had special speakers come and Grandpa Haircut mentioned Bob Hope came to the airbase in Norwitch, Norfolk England twice and put on a show. If they could get a pass, they went to the local pub and had a few beers. "I spent Christmas in 1943 and 1944 over seas. They brought young children from the big cities and England to the country to be safe from the bombing. We would invite them to our airbase and throw them a big Christmas party. We had our parents send us candy, toys, and clothes for them. The kids had a ball and it was rewarding for us to see them so happy," he recalled.

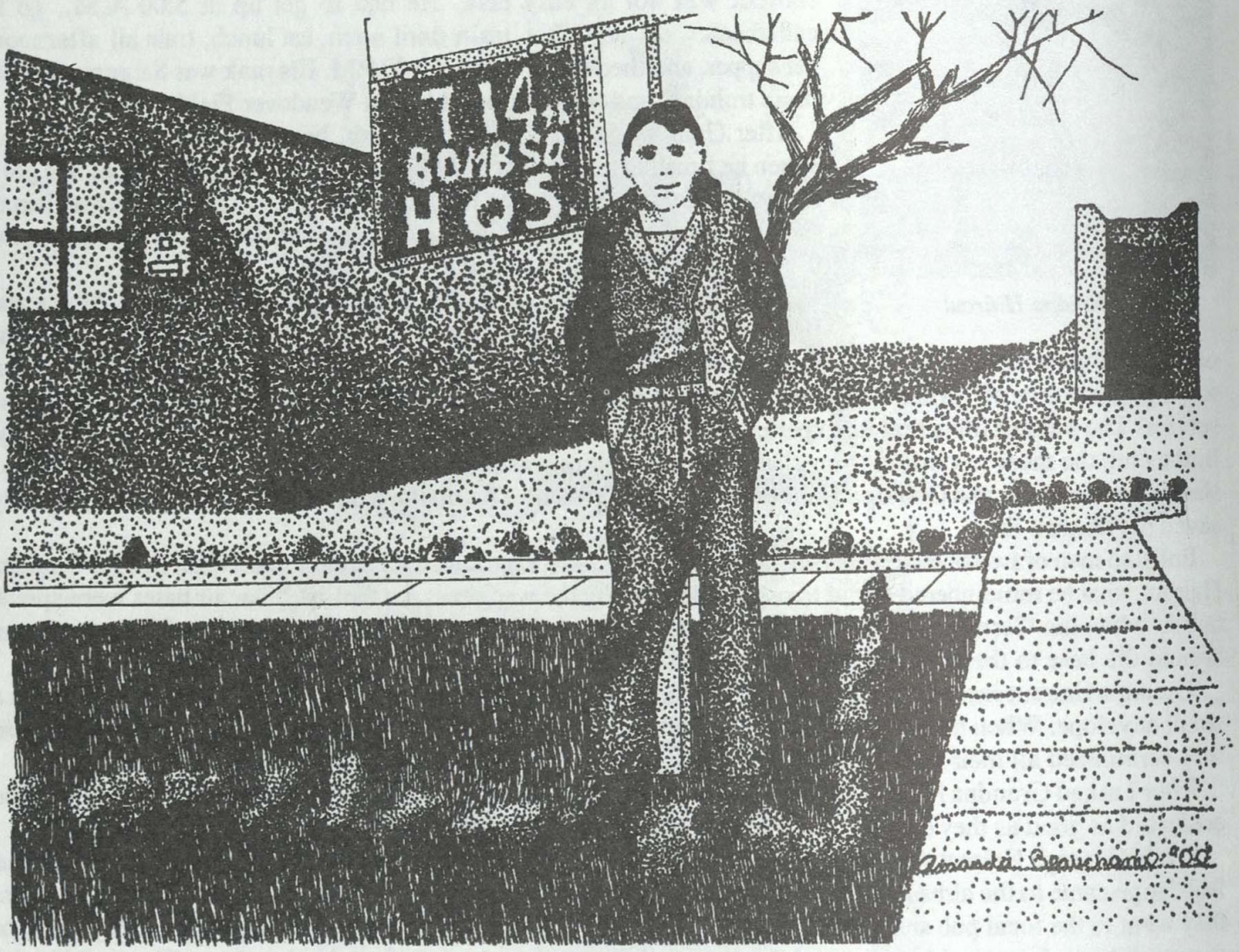
I asked Grandpa Haircut what he remembered about the end of the war and he said, "I was home on leave Church bells ringing, the town was crowded with people. They were hugging us and buying us drinks."

Grandpa Haircut's military service lasted thirty-three months. It affected his family life because he was an only son so his parents worried a lot. I asked him how the war experiences changed his life and he answered,

"It's made me more aware of how precious life is, and that we all have to respect all nationalities."

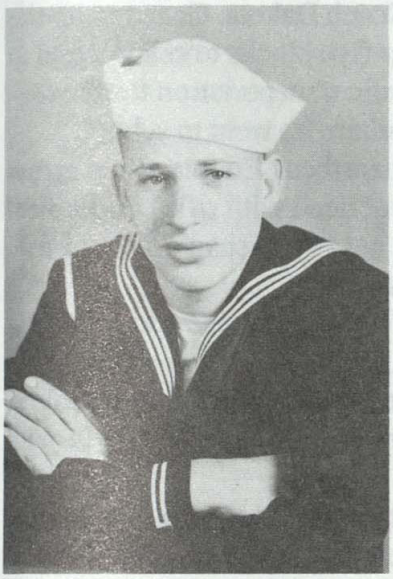
Although I have known my Grandpa all my life, I never knew he had these war experiences until this interview. I would like to thank my Grandpa for this interview and sharing with me all his war memories.

Amanda Beauchamp



Pointillism drawing by Amanda Beauchamp
Grandpa Haircut by Quonset Huts.

THE LIFE OF A WORLD WAR II VETERAN



Roy at boot camp in 1943.

Roy Roger Bowling was born on December 18, 1926 to his parents Rose and Joe Bowling. He has one brother, Edward, and three half brothers. Their names are Clyde, John, and Pete. Roy Bowling is a World War II veteran.

Roy grew up in Iowa. "I went to several schools," he replied naming a couple. They were Webster, which is a grade school in Sioux City, Iowa, and Hay Borden High. He also played baseball as he grew up.

Roy was seventeen and living in Iowa when he entered the war. He learned about some of the war from school. He was a volunteer for the U.S. Navy. He received his basic training in Faradic, Idaho. It lasted for five weeks. A typical day was "Marching. Getting up early," he answered. Basic training also included much drilling. In other words marching, physical training, and just plain training to be a sailor. After basic training, Roy received a rank of Seaman second class.

The function Roy performed was torpedoing submarines. For a typical day in the service, Roy followed through with the orders they gave him. Some tasks he did were watching monitors and making sure all systems were under control. There were also two hundred and forty people in his barracks. His food was prepared very well.

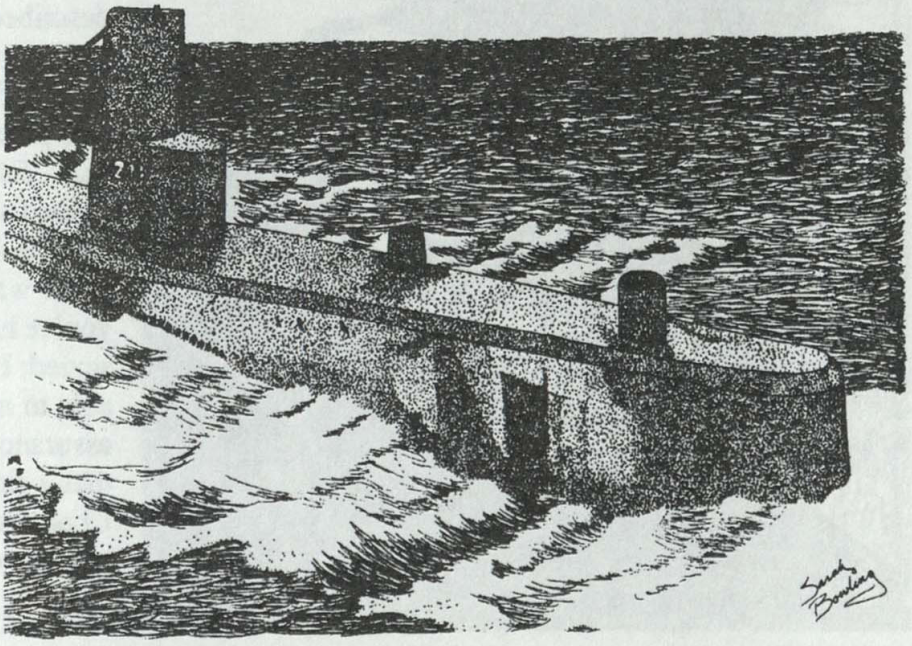
One of the most difficult things that happened to Roy was when his ship went down at the Battle of Coral Sea. The kamikaze shot his ship, which is an airplane on a suicide mission. When his ship was shot down, he faced a foot injury. One of the most rewarding things was, "When I got my first class petty officers raise," he answered. He also received a Purple Heart.

Some places he was stationed were Sydney and Perth Australia and Subic Bay in the Philippines. Roy served on an aircraft carrier, the *USS Bahammy*. He served on three submarines, they were the *Norwall*, the *Nautilus*, and the *Seawolf*.

Roy was in Subic Bay when the United States dropped the atomic bomb on Japan. His reaction to the atomic bomb dropping was happiness and excitement. He feels his war experiences helped to give him more compassion about other people. In addition, a lesson he thinks people should learn is it took many lives. World War II was a serious war that took a lot form many people. The end of the war celebrations were fantastic. Unfortunately, he was still in the Philippines when the war ended. He still had fun and went to some local parties.

Today Roy is the owner of Jake's Bar in Winona, Michigan. Roy also has one son named Daniel and two grandchildren Daniel and Sarah. Roy went on with his life but these are just some things Roy Bowling went through. World War II was an important war that nobody should ever overlook. I thank Roy along with all the World War II veterans for all of the things that they have done for all of us.

Sarah Bowling



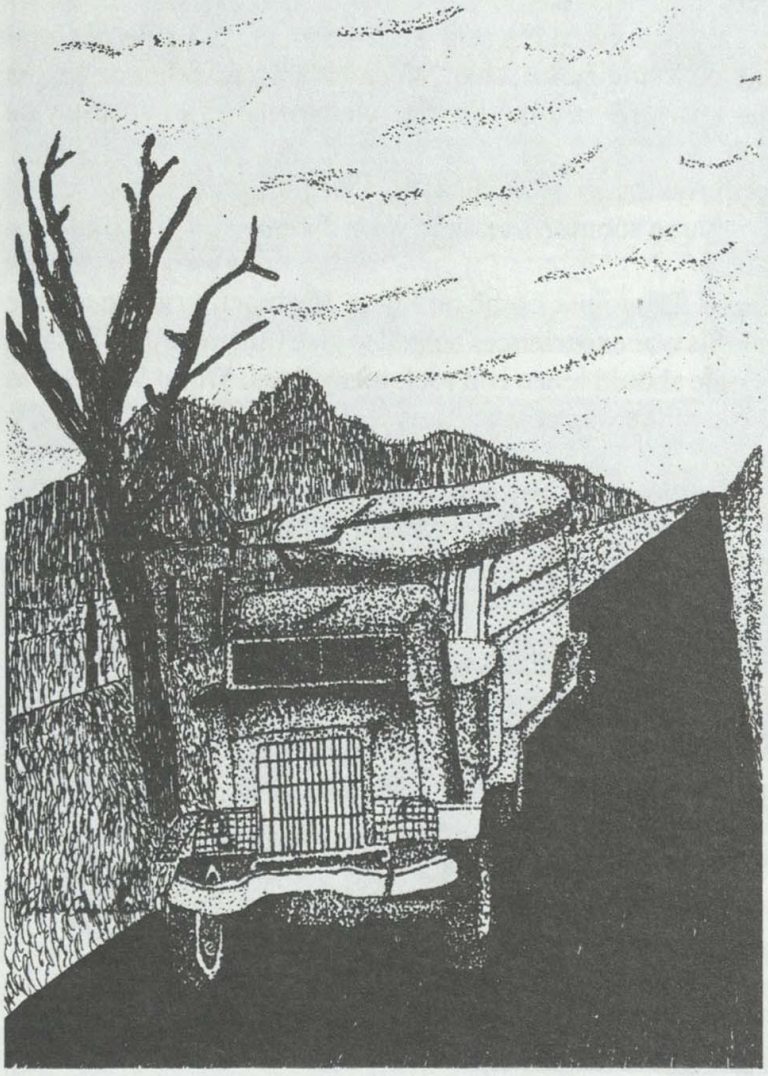
LIFE WITH WAR

On August 17, 1922, Edward James Mahon was born in the town of Woubay, South Dakota. Growing up the youngest of three children, Ed walked to school every day. He walked the four or five blocks to school, and at the end of the day he walked right back home. During high school, he needed public transportation for the ten-mile ride to school. Therefore, he took the streetcars to Crane Tech in Chicago where he went to school.

At the age of twenty-one, after the air force turned Ed down because of a fast heartbeat, Ed joined the army. He received basic training in Northern Mississippi. During basic training, he practiced with rifles, did target practice in the ranges, and experienced 25-mile hikes. "It was tough but it would get you in shape" he told me. Soon after, the army sent Ed over seas to the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific.

Most of the battles that he encountered were in the jungles. He commented, "You can't use a lot of tanks and heavy equipment because of the terrain." Ed said, "The hardest thing about. Military life was sleeping on the ground, eating field rations, and always being wet... You had your day all set out for you." Being moved around a lot must have been tough but Ed did it. They sent mail from home about once a month. He was encouraged to write back but sometimes doing those kinds of things was hard.

Sometimes people came over to entertain the troops including big name entertainers. Ed recalls seeing Bob Hope and his group. "Since ground warfare was tough, hard, and scary, it was great having groups perform for them to help them relax and have some fun."



Ed was in the Philippines when the United States dropped the atomic bomb on Japan. Ed and his fellow soldiers did not have radios so they did not know the exact details, but they heard rumors that something had happened. They remained where they were stationed. When the government officially ended the war, they stopped patrolling. Since Japanese soldiers in the jungles believed that if they surrendered they were going to get shot, they did not surrender often.

After the war Ed vacationed in Europe where he went through one concentration camp. He described, "Well the people lived very poor, no beds some people Just got flat boards, and they had the furnace. They cremated a lot of people. It was pretty depressing to go through a camp like that." Ed was relieved that the war was over. When I asked him how the war experiences changed his life, he said, "Well I think it's changed me in a good way. When you first get over seas, and you've had your first experience under fire, you're scared; I don't, think anyone is not scared. I was able to ask the Lord to help me and he gave me assurances that I would come out all right. After that, I didn't have near the fright that I had before. I had more a calm, and I could handle it more because of my faith in God."

Patrick Cathcart

KOREAN WAR

1950 - 1953

REMARKABLE REMINISCENCES OF THE FORGOTTEN WAR

"I don't think many people at the time knew where Korea was, or didn't much care either," stated my grandpa, Charles "Snook" Smith. The Korean War lasted from June 25, 1950 through July 27, 1953. Casualties of 55,000 dead and 8,000 missing in action were some numbers my grandpa shared. Today, there is still a North Korea and South Korea in existence, and America still has troops there, "So I really don't know what it proved," declared my grandpa. My grandpa, who has an exceptional memory, shared with me some of his experiences during the Korean W....

Front L-R: Viola Rajakangas, Lorraine Simons, Betty Gustafson
Back L-R: Francis (Thos) Williams, William (Governor) Anderson, Bernard Nault, Samule Genord, Roland Hill, Paul (Scrut) Decaire, Marvin Dobson, Clayton Cain, Charles Smith, Warren Dunstan
1935 Salisbury School

My grandpa was born in Ironwood, Michigan, on February 24, 1928. His father's name was Charles Paul Smith Senior, and his mother's name was Alice Kemp Beer, which was her maiden name. Before going to school the first four years, Grandpa lived in different towns because his dad's work for the Michigan Bell Telephone Company required moving. When Grandpa was four years old, he started school at the Salisbury School in Ishpeming. He attended that school from kindergarten through the sixth grade. School was very much like school is now. Teachers emphasized reading, writing, and arithmetic. Teachers also taught history and geography, along with the Palmer Method of penmanship. Sometimes, in the lower grades, there were two classes together. The room was divided in half; one half was the fourth grade, and one half was the fifth grade. The teacher gave the fourth grade some quiet work to do while she taught the fifth grade, and continued in this manner throughout the day.

While my grandpa was in the fourth grade, he started taking trombone lessons from George Pixlee who was a teacher that first started the band program in the Ishpeming Public Schools. He was the originator that started Grandpa on the trombone. Grandpa stayed with it right through high school, and still plays today. He is also in the Negaunee Band. "Today, there's so much sports that you can play. You can only play 'till you're a certain age, but music you have forever," affirmed Grandpa as he spoke about his trombone and accordion.

At the time, children had to walk to school. Even when he was four years old, Grandpa walked the three-quarters of a mile to school, home again for lunch, and back to school in the afternoon. Sometimes, he was lucky enough to hitch a ride on the back of a horse drawn sleigh driven by a Teamster for the grocery store. To do this, Grandpa had to be adept at timing the speed of the horses. He grabbed hold of the tailgate of the wagon or sleigh, and slid underneath to sit on the runner of the sleigh. For the seventh and eighth grade, my grandpa attended the Grammar School, which was located in Ishpeming. At the Grammar School, he had a home room, and for the first time, he changed rooms for different classes. After the Grammar School, Grandpa attended Ishpeming High School from the ninth grade through the twelfth grade.

Following his graduation in 1945, my grandpa worked at a hardware store for two years. After that, he worked at the Hercules Powder Plant. During these years, political problems were brewing in Korea. Until that point, Korea had been a possession of Japan. After the allies defeated Japan in World War II, Russia was one of America's allies, so the United States and Russia divided Korea as part of the treaty. A line was drawn called the 38th parallel right through the middle of the country. Half Korea was predominately Russian, and south of

the 38th parallel was our sphere of influence. Right away, the Russians started training a communist army, and the United States starting training military forces. Eventually, North Korea invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950, trying to unify the country, and the United States, an ally of South Korea, went to war to help them. This signaled the start of the Korean War. "Everyone thought that it would be over in a couple weeks. We didn't know that the Chinese would throw in with the North Koreans," my grandpa informed me.

At the age of twenty-two, my grandpa heard the news over the radio that the North Koreans had invaded South Korea, and the United States was at war. Right away, Grandpa knew that he was vulnerable to the draft. "I was too young to be drafted for the Second World War, but now that I was of draft age. I was sure they were going to get me," declared Grandpa.

A letter for Grandpa arrived in the mail, which started, "Greetings from the President of the United States. You have been drafted into the armed forces." The letter also stated where and when to report.

Grandpa took his basic training in Camp Polk, Louisiana. He awakened at 5:30 in the morning when trumpeters played reveille. After that, a sergeant came into the door of the barracks and blew his whistle. Grandpa had to get out of bed, and immediately fall out for physical training out in front of the barracks where he did a half-hour of calisthenics. Next, he went back into the barracks and took care of the area where his bunk was. Then, at 6:30 A.M., they blew a whistle and Grandpa marched for chow, otherwise known as breakfast. After breakfast, he came back, cleaned up the barracks, and fell out by 7:00 A.M. That was when his day of training started.

Every day was different. Sometimes, he went to schools where they taught him how to tear down a rifle and put it back together again. The next day, he went to first aid where he was taught how to take care of the wounded, people in shock, and how to stop bleeding. An option for the next day was a twenty-five-mile hike in full pack. After that, a possibility was an infiltration course where he crawled on his stomach under barbed wire, had live ammunition fired over his head while he crawled down through little trenches, and had hand grenades go off on the side of him to make it sound like a real battle. Following that, Grandpa went to the rifle range where he had to qualify for shooting a rifle. He had to have so many hits on the target to pass, and he received a rifle medal that stated his level of expertise. Everyone had to qualify on an M1 and a 45 pistol, and on a 30-caliber and 50-caliber machine gun. After all the training, he had a week of military courtesy where he was taught how to salute, when to salute, and who to salute. When each day was over, Grandpa came marching back at 5:00 P.M. He had exactly fifteen minutes to run in the barracks to change clothes and put on his dress uniform, to stand retreat at night. That was when he stood, and soldiers lowered the flag. After retreat was over, he went for supper. After supper, Grandpa had free time, "But you had to be ready the next day," Grandpa pointed out. He might have spent his time sewing a button on his shirt, or shining his shoes for the next day. When he thought he had everything done that he needed to get done, he went to the PX. The PX was a little store that the men could go to and drink beer, or pop, or buy candy bars. He did that for an hour or so, "Then back to the barracks at night. Lights out at 10:00, and sound asleep, and you slept like a baby 'cause you were all tired out," laughed Grandpa.

The barracks where my grandpa lived when he took his basic training consisted of two floors. The men were double bunked with thirty-five men on each floor. There were a lower bunk and an upper bunk, so my grandpa had a bunkmate above him all the time. "The idea of sleeping with another thirty-five guys in one room, you know, and some are snoring... that's kind of hard to get used to," Grandpa expressed. Besides sleeping with another thirty-five men in the same room, the men in the barracks also needed to use the latrine to get time to wash, shave, and shower. "But after awhile, you're in the swing of things," Grandpa continued.

While he was in Louisiana, Grandpa did have some fun. Every Saturday morning, Grandpa had an inspection. The sergeants went through his rack of clothing, and everything had to be perfect. The clothes had to be clean, pressed, every button buttoned, and his shoes had to be shined. Finally, he stood at an inspection. They looked Grandpa over, and if he passed, he had a pass to go to town for the weekend. That was a recreation. He went to Lake Charles, which was a bigger city in Louisiana where people put on chaperoned dances, and brought young women that had volunteered. Grandpa got to dance with, and talk to them and that was his fun

during basic training. There were also gambling joints around, but Grandpa never bothered with them because, "My dad always told me, 'Don't look for anybody else's money and you'll never lose your own.' ...so I never did gamble."

One weekend while on a pass, my grandpa and Joe Bombassaro attended one of the dances in Lake Charles. There was an elderly lady sitting down whose name was Miss Emma Mickey. She owned the Charleston Hotel in Lake Charles, and Grandpa and Joe happened to be sitting next to her. She asked them where they were from and they told her Ishpeming, Michigan. Then the lady questioned them, "Oh my where's that?" They told her in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and she did not have an inkling of where that was. She asked my grandpa what he had done before he got into the army, and he told her he had worked at the Hercules Powder Plant. She did not know what that was either so she asked him, "Well, what's that?"

My grandpa answered back, "Well, we made dynamite."

From then on, his nickname from her was "Dynamite".

Miss Emma Mickey asked my grandpa and Joe Bombassaro to come see her the next day after church. She told them where the church was, so they went there. She chauffeured my grandpa and his friend by car over to her house. "You've seen these types of homes on TV and in the movies. They have a big, long, blacktop driveway... and there's these big Cyprus trees and that mossy thing hanging down, like a plantation," Grandpa stated.

She took them through her house, and she had big photographs of different celebrities that had stayed in her house. One photograph was of Adolf Melchiore who was a great tenor opera singer. She also had a picture of General Eisenhower who was President of the United States, and many others. "And right along side, me and Joe Bombassaro from Ishpeming," Grandpa laughed.

They were not through yet though. They went into the yard where there were lawn chairs arranged around. Next, the governor of Louisiana came in, and they were introduced to him. "I'm sitting there, balancing a little mint julep and a little teacup on my knee being so dainty and everything," Grandpa laughed. Meeting the governor was really a highlight for Grandpa.

On either New Year's or Christmas Day, the men received a three-day pass to go home. My grandpa did not think it was worth it to go home for three days since it would have taken one and a half days to get there. So my grandpa took his leave for New Year's, and he and his buddy hitchhiked to New Orleans. On New Year's Eve, my grandpa and his friend were on Bourbon Street that is where all the dance bands and Dixie land jazz bands are found. When they got there, they bought their return bus tickets right away because they knew they were going to spend all of their money. "And it's a good thing 'cause when we woke up on New Year's Day, we didn't have any money at all, but we had our bus tickets to get back to camp," Grandpa said.

After Grandpa finished the training in Louisiana, he and others left from the Port of New Orleans which is on the Gulf of Mexico. They went around through the Panama Canal which is a long way around. Going through the Panama Canal was interesting. The Atlantic Ocean is lower than the Pacific Ocean, so when my grandpa's boat went into the Panama Canal, it went into a set of locks. The locks raised the ship. Then he sailed into a large lake called Gatun Lake, which is a natural lake. In Panama, there are tropical forests all around. When he came to the Pacific side, there was another set of locks. Then the ship dropped down into the Pacific Ocean. Next, he sailed out and was in Balboa, Panama. From Panama, they sailed up the coast of California, docked at Frisco, and took on some more troops. From there, they went on to Japan.

Camp Crawford, Hokkaido, Japan, July, 1951

Grandpa trained in Japan for eight more months. "We did nothing but train,"

Grandpa stated. Grandpa went on amphibious training for three weeks, that was when he loaded troop transports and had to climb up cargo nets. He had to climb up the cargo nets and load onto the ship. The ship stopped at designated places. They dropped the cargo nets down and Grandpa climbed down them into LST's which are landing ships and tanks that take troops into the shore to make a beachhead. LST's rode rough. The coxswain is the guy that runs the ship into shore as close as he can get it. When the ramp dropped near the shore, they taught my grandpa to run out on either side of the ship about fifty yards up the beach and drop down. The first thing he had to do was to get out of his life preserver. Making an amphibious landing is practicing taking a place that is already under control by the enemy. Grandpa spent three weeks doing that activity, making three landings each day. "That wasn't all that bad except if you were a person that was prone to seasickness. I saw guys on there that put in three miserable weeks. They couldn't eat or anything, and when they'd get on that LST, by the time they got to shore they were vomiting," Grandpa stated. There was a man who could not climb down the cargo nets because he was too scared, so they had to put a rope on him, and lower him down. The same thing had to happen to take him up. "He had to spend three miserable weeks like that. Felt sorry for him," Grandpa said.

As it turned out, after the eight months of training in Japan, Grandpa was transferred to an ambulance company from headquarters company. In the ambulance company, he became a platoon sergeant. His job as the platoon sergeant of one of their company's three platoons was to see that they could evacuate the wounded from Battalion Aid Stations, which is where the wounded first get taken care of, to a rear area Clearing Company. In a Clearing Company, the wounded received better care than they could at the front. Also, that was the place that the doctors examined the wounded and decided which were badly wounded, and which they could take care of right there. If there are badly wounded, they called in a helicopter. Unlike the Vietnam War, helicopters were a brand-new vehicle in the Korean War, so they only had small ones; the helicopters were not like those of today. If there had been a really badly wounded person, instead of trying to get him down over bumpy roads in the dark, they loaded him in the helicopter. When the helicopters came in, they could not load wounded in them. Instead, two coffin-like cases hung on the outside the helicopter. The wounded man laid in there just like a coffin and they put a top over him. The helicopters transported the wounded to a MASH Hospital, which was thirty miles behind the front. They saved many men that way.

Charles Smith in military uniform.

Grandpa landed in Korea on December 17, and immediately moved up to ten miles behind the front. "I remember the first night being there. You don't know really where you are," Grandpa stated. They landed at a place called Inchon, and loaded on a train. The train windows were all shot out. The train only went about twenty miles per hour, and it was very cold. They got off the train after about an hour or so, loaded onto two and a half ton trucks, and drove for another hour before they got off again, and went into squad tents. Squad tents were tents that held twelve men. They went into the squad tents, and there was one little stove. Grandpa and the rest of the men sat in the tent as they heard the artillery going off. "You know how the fourth of July is around here. The sky gets red... Well, the sky would be red, and flashes going. You'd hear these guns going off. It makes you swallow, you think, 'Jeez, where am I now?' You're kind of apprehensive," Grandpa remembered. What they did not know was that they were still about ten miles behind any of the fighting, but they could still hear all the guns going off, and see all the flashes. They were actually quite safe there. After about a week there, they moved up to Oui Jong Bu. That is when Grandpa's first indoctrination of going up to the Battalion Aid Station occurred. "You're pretty close to the front then, and you can actually hear the screaming, and the machine guns going off," Grandpa remembered. Again, his job was to pick up the wounded and get them back to the Battalion Aid Station as quickly as they could. "Engineers do a great job.

Army engineers can build roads almost anywhere," Grandpa added. The roads my grandpa had to travel on were really high up in the mountains, and narrow. He drove those roads at night with little blackout lights that could be compared with the size of postage stamps on the front of the vehicle. "If you look down, a river would look like a little ribbon down there. That's how high these mountains were," Grandpa added.

The climate in Korea could be compared with the climate of Upper Michigan, with very cold winters. To keep warm, the soldiers used layering. My grandpa had winter underwear, parkas, and an item called a pile jacket that went on underneath, which was fleece lined. They also had what they called Korean hats. They were army OD color and had big ear flaps. "Foot gear, to keep your feet warm, that was the main thing. That was hard to do," Grandpa explained. There were no insulated boots then. Companies just came out with them during the Korean War. They called the first insulated boots Mickey Mouse boots because they were so chubby. There were not enough boots to go around through all the different parts of the divisions, so the infantry men got them first."That was rightly so, the infantry men, they need 'em," stated my grandpa. Therefore, whenever the men came into the Battalion Aid Station, the first thing they took away from the wounded was their boots, and their rifle.

Grandpa also met with officers and non-Communists from the Line Company that were going to carry out a plan of attack. They told him if the probe would be of major or minor strength, and an estimate of casualties expected. It was then his responsibility to have the ambulances and men at the nearest Battalion Aid Station to handle the evacuation. Most of this was done over precipitous roads and sometimes incoming artillery fire, and in Blackout.

Charles and Lois, Wedding Day December 5, 1953

Once a day there was mail call, but Grandpa did not get mail every day. The people who wrote to him while he was in the service were his mother, father, and Lois. They were not married, but she was his girlfriend. He got one or two letters from them each week.

"Food was very good in the army, I thought," Grandpa recalled. Unlike in basic training, in Korea in the combat zone, he did not always get three hot meals a day. He might have had a hot meal in the middle of the day, then have C-rations the other two meals. C-rations were little cans that looked something like a tomato soup can, but a little shorter that had ham, lima beans, Vienna sausages, or spaghetti in them. He had a can opener, and he still has one today, that he used to open the can of C-rations by hand. If he wanted to heat it up, he crimped another can that was empty, poured some gasoline in that can with some sand, and lit it on fire. Then he put his other can on top of it, and heated up his food that way. "And they were all right, it was good," Grandpa said. They also had powdered milk to drink, and coffee, "But I never drank coffee anytime. I still don't like that," Grandpa pointed out.

"They'd be standing there, waiting for you to empty what you didn't eat out of your mess kit in garbage cans," Grandpa told me. He was talking about the saddest thing that he saw during the war. When Grandpa was in the combat zone, he never saw any of the real Korean people because he was out in the boondocks in bunkers and tents. When Grandpa was getting ready to go home from Korea, he got back to some bigger cities. Seoul, for example, was the capital of South Korea. When my grandpa was there, he saw little kids with distended stomachs. Their bellies looked huge because they were starving to death. Old people, some little old ladies with no teeth, were holding coffee cans, and scooping out of the garbage what Grandpa and the other men did not eat. "That was quite sad," Grandpa stated.

The war was not filled with all sadness though. There had been a big push on trying to take a hill called, "Old

Baldy". My grandpa showed me a letter, and on the letter, it said, during the week of June 11, 1952, to June 17, Grandpa's ambulance company evacuated 1,328 casualties. "That was quite satisfying to get all those boys back to the clearing companies, and we didn't lose any of them coming back as far as dying on us or anything. That was really satisfying," Grandpa declared.

Most of the time my grandpa was in Korea, he was on the western coast. He was there for six months, then they pulled his division off the line, and moved them over to the eastern coast. My grandpa went by convoy over to the eastern part. There was a boy from Ishpeming named Clarence Stone that lived in Frenchtown location. My grandpa played ball with him, and they grew up together. Grandpa got a letter from him once while he was in Korea. In the letter, it said that he was in the 25th engineers by the "punch bowl" area. This was the nickname they gave to the Iron Triangle where there was some heavy fighting going on. When my grandpa drove across by convoy, it took a day because the trucks went slowly on the mountain roads. They got over on the eastern coast, and grandpa happened to be driving along, and he saw the 25th engineer's sign. "I think, hey 'Tidder', that's what they used to call him, his nickname, that's what he said he was in. Maybe I can look him up and see him," Grandpa remembered. So after his company got settled, my grandpa went over to the first sergeant and said, "Can I have a jeep? I want to see a guy from home. I think he's around here somewhere."

"Go ahead." the first sergeant said.

My grandpa then took a driver to drive the jeep. Grandpa knew Tidder was in the Line Company B. Line companies are labeled A, B, C, D, etc. Grandpa saw the 25th engineer headquarters company. He figured the headquarters company would know where all the line companies were. He went in there and asked, "Do you know where your line companies are?" They did not know where the line companies were and said that they had just moved not long ago. Since Grandpa knew Tidder was in Baker Company, he went looking for it on different roads. Finally, he saw Baker Company, 25th engineer. He walked in there and found out Tidder was a cook. There was a big mess tent, which was very long. He went in with his steel helmet, and goggles on, mustache, all covered with dust from coming across the country and saw his friend in the back. He yelled to him, "Hey Tidder!" He stopped. Then he looked, and he said, "Snook!", and he came running over. Tidder's boss said, "That's a guy from home? You can have the rest of the day off." Grandpa and Tidder went over to his tent and drank some beer. "It's a good thing because I was feeling pretty good, and I had a driver with me. He could drive me back," Grandpa laughed. That was another fond memory of happy times in the war.

Grandpa went home before the war ended in Korea; he had served his time. The military operated on a point system. The men got four points for the time they were in a combat zone. Grandpa got one point for each month he was in Japan, and he was there for nine months. He had nine points when he got to Korea so he had plenty to come home. Grandpa qualified to leave in nine months when he got thirty-six points. He got home in October of 1952. The Korean War lasted another year. When Grandpa came home, there were no celebrations. "It was just like you came home, and that was it. Nobody paid any attention to the war ending. There were no parades. There were no anything. Korean War was like it didn't happen," Grandpa declared, "I'm not sure that it really was worth all that we sacrificed for that," Grandpa continued. He told me that the people in power always said that they stopped the expansion of communism. If they were not stopped there, they would have taken Korea, than the next step, they would have taken over Japan. Soon, the whole Far East would have been communist. "Well, maybe so, but if you were the parents of a boy that got killed over there in Korea, I don't think that you'd think it was worth it," Grandpa stated.

My grandpa thinks that, from remembering the Korean War, I should learn to appreciate the sacrifices that many boys made. "Laid down their lives and spent some time helping these other people, and if for no other reason, you have to think what your country did is right, and did some good," Grandpa said.

The first thing Grandpa did when he got home was go downtown. He bought some new clothes the next day after he got home from Korea. He also purchased new pants, new shoes, and a new jacket since he had been away for a couple years.

While men served in active war duty, employers held their job for them. Grandpa thought he could stay home

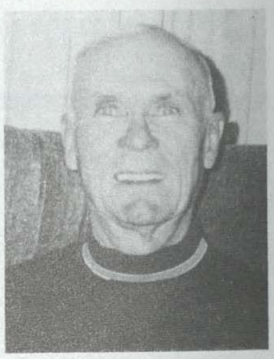
Roy Matthews and Grandpa, May 12, 1951

for a while before he went back to work, but he had no such luck. He was only home for about a day, and the telephone rang. They said, "We heard you're home now, when are you coming back to work?" My grandpa said he would be there next week, so he went back to work right away at the Hercules Powder Mill.

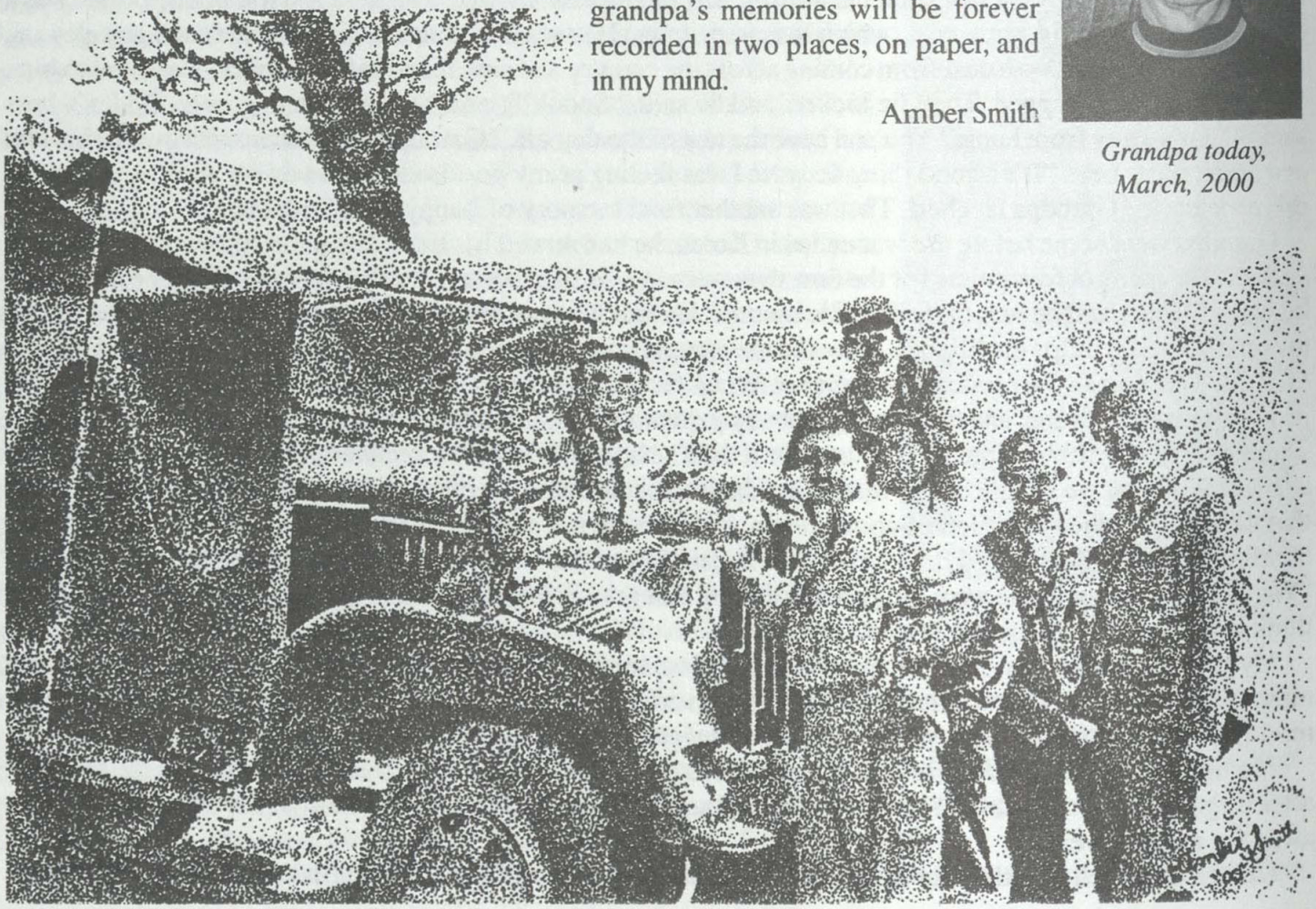
After the war, Grandpa and Joe Bombassaro went hunting together for five, or six years. He also gets Christmas cards from him and his family every year, but outside of that, he is not in close contact with him. There was one guy, Roy Matthews from Maridon, Connecticut, who called my grandpa a few years ago about something that happened when they first landed in Korea. As I mentioned previously, they landed in Korea around Christmas. The guys were all sitting in the squad tent with sad looks on their faces. It was very lonely. They were all gathered around one stove and my grandpa started singing, "Christmas Eve will find you down in Oui Jong Bu." Tears started running down the faces of everyone sitting around the stove. Just a few years ago, the telephone rang. My grandpa's wife, my grandma Lois, answered. She told my grandpa that someone named Roy Matthews was calling him. My grandpa said, "Oh, I knew him from the army." When he got on the telephone, Roy Matthews said, "You S.O.B., I'll never forget you for singing that song." "So he remembered that," my grandpa laughed.

These days, my grandpa and grandma still live in Ishpeming where he enjoys shooting hoops, playing the trombone, and swimming. He also enjoys watching his grandchildren's sporting events. Learning history through the eyes of someone who experienced it is very special. It is even more special when it is someone you know, and love. Now, my grandpa's memories will be forever recorded in two places, on paper, and in my mind.

Amber Smith



Grandpa today, March, 2000



PROUD TO HAVE SERVED MY COUNTRY

"I learned a lot. I learned to respect people; the flag and our country, which I still do to this day. I have to say I am proud; I feel so proud that I served my country," were words Donald Abel Byykkonen spoke to me one evening as he told me about his experiences in the Korean War. "I have a great deal of love for this country and I always will," he stated emphatically.

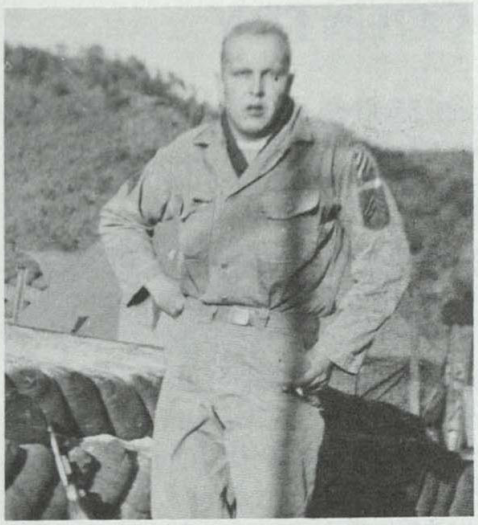
Don was born in Hurontown, Michigan, April 11, 1931 to Abel and Lillian Byykkonen. Don has four brothers, Robert, Roy, David, Bruce, and two sisters: Gertrude and, Eva. Abel and Lillian raised their seven children in Pelkie, Michigan.

At the age of five, Don started school in Laird Township, Alstin, Michigan called Laird High near Baraga, Michigan. "I only went eight grades of school, because at that time, most of us boys seemed to quit after eighth grade." His favorite subject in school was history. When he went to school, they had a hot lunch program, except that it was not anything like the lunch program now. It was free. Everybody donated food. The school appreciated it if people brought a bushel of potatoes or if they did some butchering and brought some meat. "One time, the neighbor boy... he went up to the teacher and said, 'We're going to be bringing meat here tomorrow,' the teacher said, 'Oh good,' and he said, 'Yea, we're killing our dog today'. Needless to say the teacher was quite perturbed," Don said chuckling. Another amusing incident he reported was the time he and the neighbor boys were running outside the schoolhouse, which was a farmhouse at the time, playing tag. "I didn't do it deliberately but I tripped the boy and he fell smack into the manure." Laughing, Don told me the manure was all over the boy's snow pants. "I got a pretty good reprimand; it wasn't my fault but..." Don went to school in the winter and spring and remembered playing outside during both seasons. He said that if students did not have a little manure in their boots they were out of style. His school clothes consisted of two pairs of jeans and two shirts. In the wintertime, he wore big boots with wool socks and long underwear.

As a kid, Don enjoyed the snow. "We were always outside." Kids in the neighborhood skated often and had skating parties. After skating the kids ate hot dogs and drank pop or hot cocoa, if they had the money. "We made ourselves happy, we made our own ski hills, skating rinks, and we did all this," Don told me. When they went skiing, they walked two to three miles and they also walked to go skating. Even in the summer, Don walked many miles at night.

Don quit school at the age of fourteen and worked in the woods at a sawmill. He also worked in a cheese factory. "I made cheese, and I really didn't like that job so I went back with my dad and uncle in the woods," mentioned Don. At the age of seventeen, Don worked for two years on the ore boats sailing the Great Lakes, which he said was quite interesting. "One nice thing about that was that you could save money cause you didn't have a place to spend it," he replied with a chuckle. Don left the boats at the age of eighteen and in November tried to get a job at the mine. Don was too close to the draft age for the Korean War, so the mine did not give him a job. However, he went back in April and asked for a job and they gave him one. Don worked for approximately one year before he volunteered for the military. The Korean War started because North Korea was under a communist control and wanted to control South Korea as well. After North Korea invaded South Korea, South Korea almost fell to the Communists until the American troops entered war and helped to save them.

Don received his basic training in Camp Chaffee, Arkansas, for sixteen weeks. I asked Don to describe a typical day in basic training. He told me most mornings began with a forty-five minute run, followed by breakfast. Next, there were more calisthenics for about an hour followed by many classes. There was a noon meal and then more classes or they went to a national rifle range to shoot their rifles. Following rifle practice, they went back in for evening supper, and after supper, there were one or two more classes. Around eight or nine o'clock everybody cleaned their rifles and made sure everything was in order before they finally went to bed. "Get up in the morning and start the same routine again," Don stated. When Don was in basic training,



Donald Abel Byykkonen

there were three barracks with two stories. In his company, there were about 200-210 people and everybody in his company took infantry basic and artillery.

Besides basic training, Don also had artillery training. "And in artillery training it was a little bit different." The people in artillery training did not have to carry around big heavy rifles like they did in basic training; they did not have nearly as much walking to do, because everybody rode wherever they went. "And so the second half of basic training was a lot more fun because we didn't have to walk so much," Don added with a laugh. Towards the end of basic training, the people went on maneuvers; they were out in the fields for about two weeks, training, what to expect in time of war. "When I was in the army it wasn't peacetime; we were taught how to defend ourselves, and how to kill the enemy. I didn't come out with anything that really helped me in life; I was just an artilleryman. When some people come out as electricians or something else, I didn't come out like that," Don commented. In military life, everything is "Yes Sir, No Sir," Don answered when I asked him what was the most difficult thing in going from civilian life to military life. He said, "Just being strict, I didn't have much of an adjustment." He also said that he went into the military with his eyes wide open. He was in the National Guard. He did not have to go into the army; he just felt it was his duty. Don volunteered for the military service. "I thought about it a lot but I was never sorry about what I did. I always felt that in time of war it is the duty of the young people to go and support your country. I have to say I am quite patriotic, I respect our flag and I really respect this country. I always felt that we have the best country in the world by far," he stated.

After Don finished basic training, he had five days to lie around. He went home for approximately three days. On September 8, 1952, Don traveled to Fort Sheridan, Illinois. He had an orientation, got his uniform and went out to Camp Stoneman, California. From there, he went overseas. The crew left overseas on a boat. "We left overseas underneath the Golden Gate Bridge, and we took a long look at the Golden Gate Bridge after we went through wondering if we'll ever see that again," Don said. It took them twelve days to get to Japan. From there, they took a boat to Korea and then they traveled by train. "We were put on those little trains; Japanese and Koreans are small people," he said laughing, "and their seats are all smaller put together then we are." Don and the crew spent that night and the next day in the train. After they got close to the lines, a truck brought them the rest of the way. Don's rank was a corporal over seas.

Don was stationed in numerous places in Korea. He said a typical day in Korea, was to get up in the morning, if there was no firearm going on, and eat breakfast between 6:30-7a.m. After breakfast he had to make sure his artillery piece was well cleaned and make sure everything was working and in order. He had to put ammunition away, and get new ammunition ready. During the winter, he made bunkers out of sandbags. In the summer time, he did not need to build as many bunkers because it was warm and he did not need to stay in them. Don often worked until suppertime and after supper, he worked again. If there was a fire mission, he could have been gone for many days. He had gone three to four days without sleep one time, because he said they needed him there. Once the crew started firing they went all night and day. Sometimes the crew slept days and fought nights, days and days on end.

The artillery was behind the lines so Don was not a front line soldier. He was back about three to five miles behind the lines. The artillery crew did not have direct contact with the enemy, but sometimes shot 1,000 times a night. "In case you are wondering why my hearing isn't good," he said laughing. There were about 150,000-200,000 troops stationed in Korea. There were about 20,000 troops in a division and there were eight to ten divisions. There were also soldiers from Greece, Australia, and Canada; the U.S. soldiers were not the only ones there.

Don during the cold weather.

People wrote letters often, during the Korean War, but nobody ever called home. Don received mail from home once or twice every week. His brothers and sisters were not that great at writing to him, but his mom wrote to him often. Don wrote home once or twice a week, for he had promised his mother when he left that he would write at least once a week.

When I asked Don if he found the food satisfactory, he laughed. "I don't think anybody found the food satisfactory. When you got hungry the food tasted pretty good," he said still laughing a bit. Don had lots of dehydrated food: eggs, potatoes and naturally no milk. "It was always coffee," he said.

The weather in Korea was hot and humid, with a lot of rain. For that reason, a lot of rice grew there. It was a country of two extremes; the summer was real hot and humid, but the winter was bitter cold. Two months of the winter was extremely cold weather and the ground froze six feet deep.

During the war, many different people visited the troops in Korea. Marilyn Monroe visited while Don was there but he did not get to see her. She had just married Joe Dimaggio, and they went to Korea after their honeymoon in Japan.

Don went to Japan for a week and he said it was a nice week; he got to relax. "Japan wasn't Japan as it is now, it was shortly after World War II so Japan was still pretty scarred. I could not help but marvel at the people how nice they were to us. They didn't hate us," Don said. Don drove through some major cities, not too far from South Korea. He said that most of the cities were hard to recognize because they were well war torn by the time he saw them.

After about seven months of war, the military began a point system, and a person needed twelve or thirteen points before they could rotate home. "I think I had like ten or eleven points so I was getting close to the point that I would be getting home," Don stated. The war ended in October. "After the war, they quit the point system so I did not get to leave until April," he said laughing. U.S. soldiers were still on the front lines when the war ended. Don had about fifteen to twenty South Korean soldiers within his unit. "They were very glad and happy because they had been fighting for years up and down the lines with North Korea and they just wanted to get home and get on with life," he said. The last day of the war was supposed to end at 10:00 that night. They fired until they were told to cease their fire and to get into their foxholes, which was about 9:50p.m. Everybody jumped into their foxholes and at 11:00 later that night, the word came out that the cease-fire was on. "It was an odd way to end the war but that's how she ended," he answered with a chuckle. The war lasted over three years. "The war was tiring and we were all happy when it ended." The day they left back, it was around April, everybody was put in trucks and had to stand in there just like cargo. "We were packed like sardines standing up in that truck," commented Don.

"I really don't have too many sad memories," Don replied when I asked him to describe the saddest thing that happened to him. As he lay down at night, he could hear the rat-at-tat of the gun and the helicopters flying over his head. "We knew there was a lot getting ruined and there were lots that were probably going to get killed. But I was never in a situation where I had to see a badly wounded man, and I always thought to myself that we're lucky."

When I asked Don to state the most rewarding thing that happened to him, he said, "That I came back not wounded." Another rewarding thing was to see the United States again. "Seattle was a nice sight, when we got back," he said smiling, "I was gone about sixteen months overseas."

When Don returned from Korea, he went back with the mining company, working two years in White Pine.

Don and his wife Verna at his home in Ishpeming

Don started writing to Verna Sandelin in Korea, and Don and Verna were married in the Pelkie Church, January 14, 1956. He has been married to Verna for forty-six years and has five children, three girls and two boys. The oldest girl is Roxanne; she is married and lives in Phoenix, Arizona. Glen, Renita, and Gerald are all married and they all live in Minnesota. The youngest is Ronda; she is single and lives in Minneapolis.

After Don married, he worked as a miner underground. He thought he should get some type of education so he took a welding course. "I'm glad I did; I had a chance to work a lot of overtime and the money was even a little bit better," he said. Don was a welder for about thirty-two years for the Cleveland Cliffs Mining Company. During his years at the mining company, he had two back surgeries. Don was going for his third back surgery when he was told by the Mayo clinic that they do not recommend him to go back to work. Don went on disability and he took the pension that he had, which was thirty-six years. He has now been retired about fourteen years. "It was a good place to work; I enjoyed working there," Don stated. The only thing he regrets in life was quitting school after the eighth grade. "The only thing I probably would do different, I'd try to get an education." However, Don did enroll in the Adult Education Program and received his high school diploma in the 1970s.

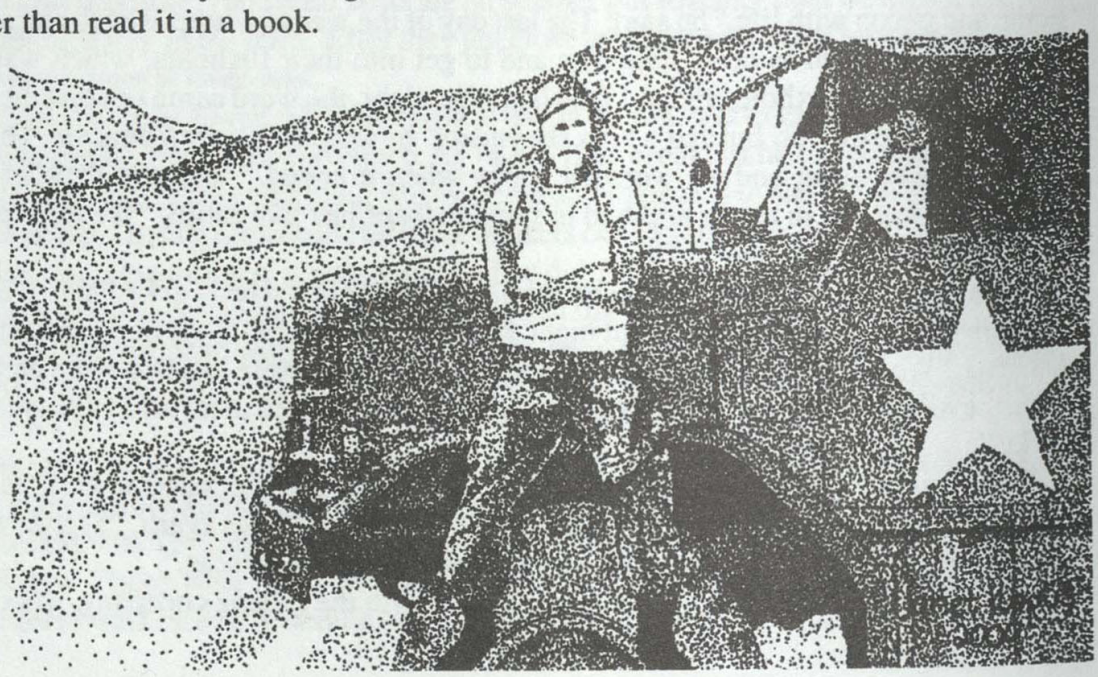
I asked Don if he would ever go back to Korea, and he said he would. He said he probably would not recognize either Korea or Japan if he ever did go back. He said he grew up a lot from when he was in the service. "I think growing up is somewhat respecting people. I always say the service makes a man out of a boy. You go in the army as a boy you come out a man. That's the difference."

Don and Verna have always wanted to enjoy life as much as they can. "I've been happy all my life; I can't complain at all. I've had a good family, and good wife, and my children have turned out good, which is a plus; you can always be proud of that. I've had a lot of fun. I've been lucky we haven't had hardships. My wife and I have been in good health, that's lots money can't buy."

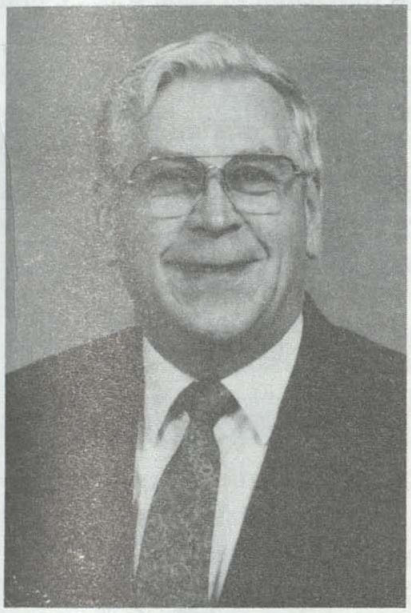
Visiting with Don and having him tell me about his experiences in the Korean War was quite an experience for me. I knew little about the war, so it was very interesting to listen to him and hear him tell his story about the Korean War rather than read it in a book.

Don reminded me that respecting this country and flag is something everyone should do. I think, we do live in the best country, thanks to all the veterans who have helped to serve our country.

Janet Kuopus



"FOREVER YOUNG"



Ensio Ostola

"I think it has made me a better person after seeing how all the people over there lived compared to how it is in America. Also to be thankful for what we do have." My grandfather Ensio Ostola believed that is how being over in Korea has changed his life.

Ensio Edwin Viljo Ostola was born in the North Lake location in Ishpeming Township on June 6, 1930. He was the fourth of six children, having two brothers and three sisters. Ensio explained, "My father's last name was Tukeva but just prior to leaving for America, my grandfather had changed our name to Ostola." It was common then in Finland for people to change their name when they moved to a new farm or got new property to what fit the land the best. After his father left for America, his grandfather decided to change his name back to Tukeva. However, since Ensio's father had a social security number and a job under the Ostola name, he could not change it back.

When Ensio and his friend Levi first started school at National Mine in the first grade, they did not know English well because they had learned to speak Finnish from their parents. Nevertheless, they learned the language quickly being in school. His favorite subjects in school were English and reading. Ensio remembers Miss Mason was his first grade teacher and Miss Austin taught kindergarten. Miss Austin was also the music teacher who always put on a Christmas operetta that all the children took part in. " The Honkala brothers had the bus that was kind of square and all drabby color. They would pull tricks all the time. They had this Model T coil rigged up so that whenever you got on the bus and grabbed the handle they could push a button and give you a shock similar to an electric fence." My grandpa Ensio Ostola chuckled these words as he recalled his enjoyable childhood school years in National Mine, Michigan. Ensio drove his mother and father's pickup truck to school in the morning when he was about thirteen years old. Ensio also had to deliver milk to a store in West Ishpeming before school began.

In 1947, Ensio enlisted in the U.S. Air Force at the age of seventeen, and somehow he ended up in the Army. He was in basic training for thirteen weeks at Fort Knox, Kentucky. A day in basic training usually started with revelry, where soldiers got up a six-o-clock a.m., to stand and get checked over to see if they had shaved and just how well they looked overall. This all took place before they had breakfast. After breakfast they spent time learning the proper ways to march and drill on the drill field. Some afternoons they had schooling to learn how to drive two and half-ton trucks. They were usually back in the barracks in time to clean up for chow time, "Which was a long stand in line, seemed like you were forever waiting," Ensio explained. He said the food was always good and he never remembers having a problem with it. Ensio said," We had an excellent baker in our mess hall, well I always thought." Following the dinner meal, there was playing cards and reading. The lights went out at ten p.m. and they had to be in bed by that time.

Ensio took a train from Fort Knox to Pittsburgh, California, where he spent about a week. He was shipped to Korea in the early part of 1948. It was about a twenty to twenty-five day trip. He did not get off in Korea because he received orders that he was supposed to be stationed in Japan. When he got to Japan, he got off in Yokohama, and was stationed there for two weeks. His unit then received orders to go back to Korea, and they crossed over the Japanese Sea into Korea. They finally stopped in a town called Kaisong in South Korea.

From Kaisong the unit was stationed at an outpost which was right on the thirty-eighth parallel. There were about twenty-five people in the outpost including the mess sergeant, the mechanic, and the company commander. The job they were assigned to was guard duty on the parallel, checking all the people who were coming into or leaving South Korea. All of the people who crossed the parallel were required to have government ID cards so

they could travel back and forth over the border. Ensio and the soldiers of his unit also did guard duty on different roads along the thirty-eighth parallel.

Transportation along the thirty-eighth parallel and in North and South Korea consisted of cars, trucks, and rickshaws, which are small buggies with two wheels pulled by a person. Trains were used most often though.

Ensio was in Korea before the war started and while on guard duty he experienced many skirmishes between the North Korean constabulary and the South Korean police. He remembers the North Koreans crossing over the parallel at night and blowing up the police stations. Consequently, he and the other men had to go investigate and take pictures of what had happened. The North Koreans that blew up the police stations usually killed at least two police officers with hand grenades. When the soldiers were in their barracks, people shot at them. They were not allowed to shoot back, because they had orders that if they did, they would surely cause a war.

When Ensio returned to America, he had many jobs. He remembers delivering furniture, milk, oil, and gasoline. He also said, "You cannot forget the work I did on the farm."

Ensio began his career in plumbing and pipefitting in 1957. Ensio served a four-year apprenticeship in the Pipefitters and joined the Union. He also tested and passed a Michigan State Plumbing exam and was a certified Pipewelder on construction jobs. Then in 1976 the members of the Plumbers and Pipefitters local union in Marquette, Michigan asked him to run for the office of business manager/financial secretary, which was a full time, day job. He was elected in December of 1976 for the job, which he held for fifteen years, until the time of his retirement.

Ensio was married in 1952 to E. Marie Marietti and they will be celebrating their fifty years of wedded life in the year 2001. They have five children, William, Ensio Jr., Gary, Christine, and Daniel. Ensio told me the biggest influences on his life were his mother and father. Ensio and Marie have thirteen grandchildren, two of which are in heaven. They also have two great grandchildren.

I am very thankful to have such a wonderful grandfather and I thank him for sharing his memories with me. He has had a very interesting life and I hope he keeps going strong forever. I hope I have as exciting a life as he has, so that I can share my memories with my grandchildren. Thanks Grandpa! I love you.

Christa Ostola

KENNETH WALIMAA'S EXPERIENCES DURING THE KOREAN WAR

As I walked in Mr. Kenneth Walimaa's home, I smelled the sweet aroma of turkey since he was making turkey noodle soup for supper. He had a table prepared for the interview and I knew that this was going to be a good interview since he seemed liked a very nice man.

Mr. Kenneth John Rudolph Walimaa is seventy-two years old. His parents did not name Mr. Walimaa after anyone. Nevertheless, he said "There are Johns in our family." He was referring to his middle name, John which was his grandfather's name, father's name, son's name, and his grandson's middle name.

Mr. Walimaa attended many different schools including North Lake School, Ishpeming High School, Cass Tech. He took courses at Michigan Technological University, attended Northern Michigan University and University of Michigan for real estate. While Mr. Walimaa was in grade school, he got the name "Mechanic" because he worked on a Model-T with his dad. His first job was while he was in high school; he worked as a mason's helper with a Construction Company in Ishpeming. After high school Mr. Walimaa went to Detroit and worked for CM Hall Lamp Company before entering the war.

Mr. Walimaa received his draft notice out of Detroit. However, he requested a registration change from Wayne County to Marquette County so that he could go into the service with other people from Marquette County. He completed basic training at Fort Leonard, Missouri. While in the service, Mr. Walimaa went to school, specializing in mechanical and electrical maintenance because that had been his major when he went to Cass Tech. Mr. Walimaa did repair and troubleshooting in the electrical components in bulldozers, cranes, earth moving equipment and trucks, compressors, every kind of equipment. They paid Mr. Walimaa $128 a month, but after he got married he sent his wife half his salary. Mr. Walimaa was stationed many places including Fort Sheridan, Illinois; Missouri; Texas; Georgia; Virginia; and Texas. When Mr. Walimaa and the people that he was working with got to their assigned places there were jobs lined up for them. The main job was to maintain and extend airfields because the jets were coming in too fast and the fields were not long enough. Mr. Walimaa had one narrow escape while working and a crane came down, almost hitting him with a ninety-foot boom.

Mr. Walimaa was in the Army for two years and was discharged with the rank of corporal. He served in the Army Reserve for seven years. When the Vietnam War started, he was married and had completed his obligation to the government for service time. Mr. Walimaa was home when the Korean War ended. He still gets together with his service friends. Some buddies are thinking about having the 835 Engineer Aviation group reunions just in Upper Michigan. The main battalion is from Kansas.

Mr. Walimaa got his first job at the post office in Ishpeming after he got back from the war. He could have gone back to the job that he had before the war, but he had a wife and child and wanted to stay in Ishpeming. Mr. Walimaa got a job at Jones and Laughlin Steel Company in Negaunee. He was there for fifteen years before he went on to Northern Michigan University where he became a professor in water and wastewater technology. Mr. Walimaa found it easier to get a job after the service because he had skills that made him successful on the job market. Mr. Walimaa retired after forty years of work.

Reflecting upon his military service, Mr. Walimaa said, "It was a good education. That was the first time I ever indoctrinated or got close to mixed people... from all categories of life. Being a Yooper your pretty well sheltered up here and when you get into the rest of the country you learn how fortunate you are to be in the Upper Peninsula." Mr. Walimaa is now living in Ishpeming, Michigan where he is married with four children and six grandchildren, four boys and two girls. I thank Mr. Walimaa for allowing me to interview him twice so that I could relate his experiences.

David Ruppel

Mr. Walimaa was in the Army for two years and was discharged with the rank of corporal. He served in the Army Reserve for seven years.

In 1948, Donny enlisted serving in the Fifth Army 25th Infantry Division. He was sent overseas to Korea. Donny stated, "It was there that I was in my first battle. We went as far as the Yula River and pushed back to Pusan.

THE WAR YEARS OF DONALD KOTHALA

Donald Kothala was born in Pequaming, Michigan on February 8, 1926. He is named after his uncle. Everyone calls him Donny. Donny has four sisters and four brothers. Donny likes Country-western music, but he has no favorite musical group. Donny does not think of himself as creative. He remembers his family discussing world events and politics. Regarding politics he said, "I listen to both sides and vote for which I think is the best man for the office."

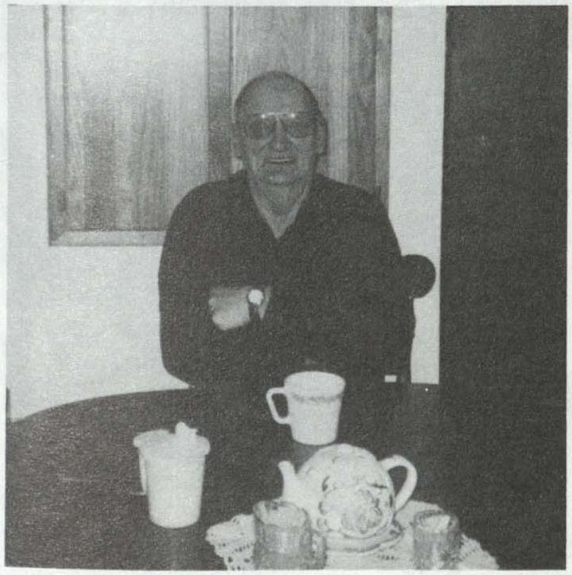
Donny went to school by bus. His favorite subject in school was algebra, and his least favorite subject in school was English. Donny got average grades in school. When Donny was older, he did not attend college.

Donny's first job was at a fish house at the age of sixteen. Later in life, he moved on to go work at the Morris Mine, where he worked eight hours a day. Donny started dating at the age of eighteen. He met a young woman named Eva Byykkonen. "Eva wrote to me when I was in Korea. In the letter to her, I asked for a date when I got home, and she said yes," Donny responded. On their first date, they went to a choral concert. They knew each other for six months before they got married. A few years later they had one girl and three boys. "The most rewarding thing about having kids is seeing them grow up to be good people." Donny proposed.

Donny was drafted into the military service in July 1944. He received his basic training for six weeks at Shepherd Field, Texas. He did not have any special jobs. Donny's rank in the service was a PFC. Donny said, "The most difficult thing from going into the military was the loneliness and not knowing what would happen to us from day to day." Donny was stationed in Calcutta, India and was assigned to the 443rd Engineer Base Company. Donny was then stationed in Kunming, China as an over guard patrol man, assisting in enforcement of military laws and regulations, maintenance of order, and control of traffic. Donny served in guarding property in defense areas helping in preventing uprisings and outbreaks in areas under guard. He was discharged in June 1946.

In 1948, Donny enlisted serving in the Fifth Army 25th Infantry Division. He was sent overseas to Korea. Donny stated, "It was there that I was in my first battle. We went as far as the Yula River and pushed back to Pusan, staying there for two months waiting for reinforcement at which time two or three divisions make amphibious landings in Inchon. Then we pushed forward to the 38th parallel and held there," Donny remembered that many of his friends lost their lives in battle.

A typical day for Donny was sleeping in and out of trucks. He drove an ammunition truck, and was a radio operator. "Our transportation was in convoy of trucks and we pushed forward." Donny said. Donny was in the service during Christmas. "There was a truce for one day, on Christmas in 1950. We had turkey and all the trimmings. It was the best meal I had for the whole time I was there," Donny replied.



Donald Kothala at the age of 73 sitting at his sister's drinking coffee.

"I returned home on the 'Rotation Plan' in May 1951, and stayed state side until discharge on December 31, 1951," Donny declared. Donny was not injured in the line of duty when he served in Korea. "The most rewarding thing in the war was learning discipline and how to take orders," Donny declared.

Donny did not attend any reunions after the war. "War is a terrible thing-the most terrible thing! It is terrible to send our young men into battle. This should be settled peacefully as could be," Donny confirmed.

Megan Lawson

S/SGT. RICHARD SANVILLE AND THE KOREAN WAR

As I opened the door to my grandpa's house, I got a hearty welcome from Sady, my grandpa's dog. Looking at the pictures around the house of my grandpa in the war and his Sargent, I could tell that this would be a very interesting interview. I hustled up the stairs to the living room; I saw my grandpa sitting on the couch as he uttered, "Shall we get started?"

My grandpa, Richard Sanville, was born on December 21, 1928, just outside Lansing, Michigan. Before he entered the army, he worked on iron ore ships. Grandpa enlisted in the army in 1948 when he was nineteen years old. He was not married when he entered the service. Grandpa said that basic training was fairly easy. He was awakened at 5:00 a.m.. After roll call they went back to the barracks to shave and clean up. At 6:00 a.m. they ate breakfast then marched to classes. After class they went to the firing range or physical education. "They'd keep you pretty busy till the end of the day," he remarked.

My Grandfather was stationed at Barksville Air Force Base in Louisiana when the Sargent called them out in formation to tell them that war had been declared. A few days later, at age twenty, he was shipped to Okinawa.

When Grandpa was shipped to the Korean War, he had already been in the service for one year so he had not seen his family in that period.

When the Air Force shipped Grandpa to Okinawa, he worked as Sargent of ammunition; he mainly guided, and loaded guns, ammunition, and bombs onto planes.

"The accommodations were crowded because they had to fit eight people to a tent," said Grandpa. He continued, "The food was sometimes harsh but when it was out of the mess hall it was all right." He received mail every couple of weeks and wrote back periodically. He was in battle a few times but indirectly. Grandpa was never injured during the war in any way.

Grandpa came back because he was in the service for two years before he entered the war, so two years after the war started he flew home on an airplane. He was happy to be home. When I asked him how people treated him when he got home from the war, he said, "They didn't pay much attention one way or another."

Since the war ended, Grandpa has met some people he was in the war with but not many. He is currently seventy years old and retired from his job as an electrician. Grandpa is married to Betty Sanville. He has four children. Guy, who is forty-four years old, is married to Nancy has one girl, Rose. Rod, who is thirty-six and married to Kathy, has two girls and one boy, Lindsey, Olivia, and Ryan. Dian, who is thirty, and Greg, who is forty-one and has four children, Shawn, Shannon, Shayne, and Shadd.

Shadd Sanville

THE VIETNAM WAR

1964 - 1975

TIMELY PASSAGE

Butch (Bernard) Jackovich in his Marine uniform

Twins. It was a total surprise to Martha and John Jackovich on August 31, 1948. So much they did not prepare names for *two* babies. Bernard and Bernice had become the youngest in a family of six. Nicknamed "Butch" and "Pee-wee", the newborns were often set in the oven to warm gently. The two demanded a great deal of time and effort from their parents, and their older siblings, Shirley, Liz, John Jr. and Donna.

As a baby, Butch seemed colicky, restless and often needed extra care. Doctors could not figure out what was wrong. Finally at the age of two, doctors found that he had a hernia and was in considerable pain. Unfortunately though, he could not have the surgery until age three, when they finally treated it.

The Jackovich's first home was at 65 North Tamarack Location, a rural area north of Calumet. Butch's father, John, was a carpenter for the Calumet and Hecla Mining Co. where he was assigned to work at various mines around the area. Growing up, Butch remembers his father putting some refreshments out on the fence post for the snow plow driver, showing his appreciation for coming up the driveway. His father earned a meager wage while Martha raised six children in a traditional mother role. They were hardworking, simple people, extending themselves for others wherever they could. At the time, Calumet was a booming copper mining town. Butch remembers, "They were working class people and they always voted democratic. A working man always voted democratic."

In 1959 his family moved to 4 North Tamarack Location in Calumet, a little closer to town. It was here that Butch acquired his new nickname, Jake, from the "Red Jacket Shaft gang" who lived down the dirt road about ¼ mile. All of his buddies had a nickname and he figures 'Jake' developed as a spin-off from his last name.

As a young boy, Jake was fascinated with the outdoors and hunting. He was especially intrigued with his older brother John, nicknamed Jocko, who was nearly ten years older. Jocko took him fishing and hunting and Jake was completely in awe of his room. Jake clearly recalls a favorite memory of him: "On the bottom of his gun cabinet that he had made he had carved a beautiful carving of a deer in the woods, climbing over a timber. He had carved it out of one of his drawings. Very, very artistic."

As a teenager, Jake was on the track team and pursued hunting and fishing in the wilderness of North Tamarack. He was best friends with Paul Pirkola, a boy his age who lived near "Tank Hill", a mile from the Jackovich home. They shared many interests and grew very close, not knowing how Vietnam would become a bond between them while separating them forever.

The first time Jake heard of Vietnam was his junior year in high school. "I was in the library. I remember seeing paper clippings of guys over there. Then you heard of pilots being shot down. Things were heating up '65 and that's when President Johnson was sending the first marines over there." President Kennedy's 1960 inaugural speech also inspired him and reinforced his growing desire to become a marine. "Those words, 'Ask what you can do for your country' spoke directly to me," Jake revealed.

Jake's first thoughts of the Vietnam War were, "It was the only thing for the United States to do. Communism was getting a foothold all over the world." Pro-communism countries like China and Russia were supporting tyranny and gaining power in the satellite countries around the world, including North Vietnam. "If we didn't support non-Communist countries, it would be a domino effect. We had to back'em up or those nations would fall." Jake explained that at this early point in the war, there was no "gray" area in the political decision making; Communism was so well supported around the world that the United States had no choice but to back the republic of South Vietnam—and the majority of the American people agreed.

The decision Jake made to join the Marines was unyielding, even with the possibility of going to Vietnam. In the summer of 1966, "It [Vietnam] was such a vague thing. I remember my cousin saying to me: 'If you join the

marines now, you'll end up going to Vietnam.' And I thought, So what?" As he made up his mind to become a marine, Jake revealed, "It was a goal I wanted and that's what I went after."

Jake had a delayed enlistment which meant he enlisted in May 1966 but he did not report for basic training until September. During the summer he went to see his brother, Jocko, in Wyoming. They enjoyed fishing and hunting together once again and Jake remembers riding horses. "We lived the lives of ranchers. All kinds of wildlife out there." It would be a long time before they saw each other again.

Jake was assigned to the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego. When the bus arrived, it was dusk. The new recruits were dropped off, filed in to get haircuts and then proceeded to get their gear. Jake remembers: "They kept us moving. We stripped off our civilian clothes and got into our utilities. They kept us up that whole night—and into the next day. We did *not* sleep. Twenty-four hours."

A day in basic training involved grueling physical and mental tasks. At 04:30 a.m. the drill instructor came down the aisle banging a baton inside a garbage can, spewing obscenities to get them moving. "It was sheer terror every day. They didn't let up. They wanted to break you." If the recruits so much as made a smirk at the drill instructor, they were "dead meat." He learned to anticipate the worst and cope with every vigorous challenge. The skills Jake learned honed his abilities as a marine and prepared him as well as it could for what he would later experience.

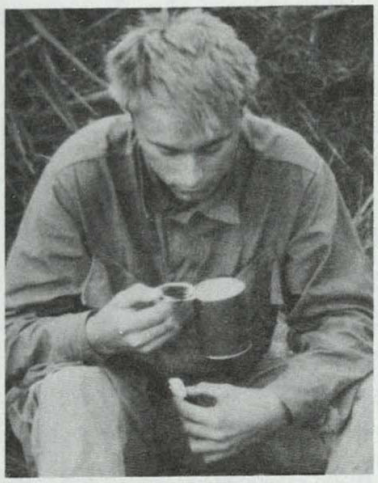
Jake really enjoyed the challenges of shooting the M14 rifle and the exercises on the rifle range. One of his aspirations was to go to sniper school and become more specialized in this area. It required an Expert marksmanship status and he felt it was well within his abilities. Vividly, he recalls qualification day: "It was real windy. I was very capable of earning the Expert badge." But due to the strong winds and slightly delayed sight adjustments, "I missed it by only 4 points." Although it was a great disappointment to him, he learned to polish his shooting skills even more, an immeasurable asset to a future combat marine.

At the conclusion of boot camp, Jake was assigned to ITR training camp, Infantry Training Regiment at Camp Pendleton, California where he engaged in field exercises, night firing drills and helicopter tactics, further sharpening his competence.

With his specialty as a marine rifleman 0311 complete, Jake figured he would surely be sent to Vietnam. When at last he learned of his assignment, it really was no surprise. He had expected it and in many ways, felt prepared and anxious for a marine's ultimate challenge. In February 1967, he boarded a ship headed for Japan and then DaNang, South Vietnam.

Jake, leaving Combat camp to check for enemy activity.

As a marine rifleman, Jake joined "K" Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Regiment, 1st Marine division. The 7th Marines tactical area covered an area 20 kilometers southwest of DaNang, providing security for the large American airbase located there. "It was forty square kilometers of hostile terrain dotted with rice paddies, swamps and honey-combed with camouflaged caves and tunnels" (Murphy 221). Jake expressed how the marines often had a dirty and painful job of sweeping, patrolling and setting up ambushes in this enemy-held territory. Infiltrating this area were two deadly adversaries, the Viet Cong (VC) and units of the North Vietnamese Army (NVA).



Jake with C-rations

The Vietcong were indigenous guerrillas who had the active support of communist North Vietnam. These elusive insurgents, clad in black pajamas, rarely engaged in open combat but instead used deadly hit-and–run tactics employing snipers, booby traps and land mines.

The NVA were a well-equipped army who were trained in North Vietnam and used the Ho Chi Minh trail to infiltrate into South Vietnam. They hid in deep jungle caves and sanctuaries, usually moving only at night. Masters of camouflage, they were well armed with weapons supplied by the Soviet Union and China.

After a month "in country", the marines were issued the new M-16 rifle which was lighter and provided more firepower than the M-14. Despite diligent cleaning, Jake recalls, the early rifles proved to be unreliable, jamming frequently and shaking the confidence of the marines whose lives they protected. Jake remembers his rifle jamming in several firefights, but luckily the enemy fled, giving him time to clear the malfunction. Eventually the rifles were refitted and made more reliable but the marines remained apprehensive.

For seven months, Jake carried the M-16 until he took over as squad grenadier, carrying an M-79 grenade launcher. It could fire an explosive shell 400 meters and was very effective against enemy bunkers. For a back up weapon, he carried a Colt .45 automatic pistol.

On December 15, 1967, Jake's company had begun *Operation Citrus*, a search and destroy mission designed to take out the NVA in triple canopy jungle around Charlie ridge. When asked about his most terrifying day in combat, he reveals with clarity and dignity: "It was December 18, 1967. After being mortared and sniped at for days, we had the NVA surrounded and on the run. As our platoon swept through an opening in the jungle, we caught a group of heavily camouflaged enemy running into a thick sugar cane field. Just as they disappeared into the thicket, I fired a volley of rounds with my M-79 grenade launcher that directly impacted the fleeing NVA. The air came alive with bursts of automatic rifle fire and exploding grenades. While ducking from enemy fire against an earthen berm across from the cane field, we waited to advance.

With adrenaline pumping through our veins, we waited for orders to pursue the NVA into that hellish thicket. Carter ordered our squad to '*Fix bayonets*,' a chilling command that further heightened our awareness of this precarious situation. We knew we had killed most of the enemy, but didn't know if any were lying in wait in the heavy cover, adding to our peril.

Suddenly, the command came down from our platoon leader to hold our position while the first squad swept the cane field. Moments later, bursts of automatic rifle fire erupted as they engaged the remaining NVA in a brief but fierce firefight. As the melee subsided, our squad entered the battle area finding numerous NVA bodies scattered through the cane field. However, when we linked up with the rest of the platoon, my elation over taking out so many enemy was shattered when I saw the corpse of my fellow marine buddy, Denny Senz lying in that wretched muddy field.

I had befriended Denny because he was from Wisconsin and all the guys from Michigan and Wisconsin hung close together."

The life of a combat marine, as Jake soon found out, was far from glamorous. There were endless tasks necessary for their survival: weapon cleaning, setting up sandbag bunkers, running patrols or conducting night ambushes. Night was the most devastating time and watches were rotated among the men. "We knew if they were going to hit us, it would be then," Jake admitted.

The marines carried up to 60 pounds of gear necessary for survival plus their weapons. "If we were going on a search and destroy mission, we had to take the maximum amount, especially ammo." And saturating every move, Jake remembers, was an overpowering, imminent feeling of danger.

A silent contender among them was the insurmountable heat. Unbearable, especially to those from a temperate

Jake in "Operation Foster" November 1967

climate, heat stroke casualties were common. Along with lack of good drinking water, poor food and little sleep, the heat compounded the difficulty of combat, stretching every human weakness.

The marines mostly ate C-rations, all out of a can, using an occasional heat tablet to make it more appealing. The tablets were put in an empty can and food was placed on top to warm it. Suppressed by the heat, hunger was not an act of enjoyment but a way to sustain themselves between grueling physical tasks. Among the twelve different meals offered, ham and lima beans was the least favorite.

During the monsoons, Jake remembers suffering from "emersion foot" which is a condition where the feet are white, cracked and bleeding from being constantly wet. If it was too bad, they were sent out of the area temporarily.

Jake was known as the "tall, skinny guy who smoked cigars." His mother sent them from home and he often wrote to her. She sent him care packages with his favorite goodies: Dutchmasters cigars, canned franks and Rice Krispy treats. On many occasions, the perishables were growing mold but "we just scraped it off. It was still a treat," he said.

The marines were "mostly blue-collar kids, from working class homes—young guys." Yet surprisingly, there were some who had a college education. None of that mattered though, since they all would bear the same burden of combat. Camaraderie among them grew out of necessity and the need for release in a place that berated the human spirit.

On December 23, 1966, Jake and his squad were transported by chopper to Hill 55, battalion headquarters. They had just completed *Operation Citrus* that day, relieved and ready to head back before dusk. The marines would take a convoy, a truck or two that included some local South Vietnamese ARVN, back to base camp. Jake had asked his squad leader, Carter, if he could stay back and catch the very last convoy out. He had been visiting with a friend, Rick Walker, and he wanted to stretch it a little longer. Carter agreed without hesitation—a decision that would change both their lives forever.

At 4:30 p.m. Jake got on the last convoy with fellow marine and friend, Greg Derieg, and several other people. They rode along for a few miles when a tremendous explosion inside the truck shocked everyone. A firefight broke out and the volume of the explosion disoriented and deafened Jake. He looked down and saw that his right leg below the knee had been shattered. "I saw the white bone sticking out and thought immediately, 'Damn. I'll never run again.'" A machine-gunner right next to him was firing rounds until the fight subsided, while Jake waited helplessly. The RPG shell that had hit them was a round designed to penetrate tanks, spraying shrapnel everywhere. "I could see him firing right next to me. But it only sounded like very light tap-tap-tapping." Derieg tied a tourniquet on Jake's leg, ultimately saving his life. Unaware of the injuries to his left hand, Jake feels that he could have easily died of shock. Derieg had taken the first step to save him and now his life took a different turn, enduring significant changes. "I remember them loading me into the chopper," spouting an array of encouraging words including, "'You're gonna be okay.'" But none of them knew for sure.

Jake was med-evacced to the nearest hospital in DaNang where he was stabilized. A team of doctors had him on a table where they cut off his clothing. A powerful astringent cleanser was used as they scrubbed his grimy skin vigorously, soiled by months without a shower. "I couldn't feel anything but the smell was pungent," he revealed. Jake then was flown to Japan and briefly stayed in the Philippines. "I was in and out of consciousness—until the pain came."

Merry Christmas. Welcome back. Jake woke up Christmas morning, 1967, to scurrying doctors humming Christmas carols as he became conscious. "It was the ultimate Christmas present. I had my life," he reflected. Jake had made it back to the United States and was at the Philadelphia Naval Hospital where he remained for fifteen months.

At age nineteen, Jake became a member of the Permanently Disabled Retired List. The nature of his wounds involved very painful skin grafts on his left hand, covering his forearm right down to his remaining three

fingers. The skin was first taken from the tops of his thighs. He then underwent a pedicle skin graft where his left forearm actually was grafted to his belly for several months; he bears a large smiley face scar from across his midsection. It was a long recovery for him in the hot summer months of 1968.

During one of his many surgeries, the doctor's damaged an artery in Jake's arm and he woke up in Intensive Care. Surprised by this bit of bad luck, he was relieved to see two visitors, John and Marge Ryan, friends of his parents who had come to visit. He knew that he looked sickly as some of his fellow patients jokingly called him, "The POW". It had been so refreshing to see friendly faces in his weakened condition and he later found out what they had said to his mother, Martha: "We didn't think he would make it."

Jake's injuries were life threatening for the first few months and recovery was rather slow. The jagged bone at his right shin was amputated straight, just below his right knee. His left arm had to be kept elevated for three months, and he dreaded every morning when the navy corpsman or the nurse would come in to change the bandages. He or she soaked the bandages with saline and then gently tore it from the tender, exposed skin. This went on for weeks, until it gradually healed. "If anything could be considered unbearable, it was having my dressings changed. They tried to give me a shot before they did it, but it wouldn't touch the pain. Excruciating, I suppose," he stated.

When asked of the most difficult part of recovery, Jake expressed with certainty, "pain management." Highly addictive, Demurol (morphine) was the pain killer he was given. Some of the most severe side effects included loss of appetite, constipation and depression. Jake explained, "I knew I had to get myself off. But there were some guys who asked for it even when they didn't need it. Who were the nurses to judge another's pain? So they gave it." Openly sharing the difficulty of weaning himself, Jake worked toward gaining normalcy in his life again.

Once his bandaged arm was at his side, he became more mobile. It was a leap toward independence when he could wheel himself down the aisle of the amputee ward to visit other patients or go downstairs to the cafeteria on his own.

After about nine months, Jake was fitted with his first artificial leg. It was a heavy, wooden leg worn with a waist strap and a thick wool sock to protect his stump. "At the time, it worked. I was up and walking and that was a great feeling."

Jake feels that he had been treated with impeccable care by the staff of nurses and doctors at Philadelphia Naval Hospital. On one occasion, he and some other amputees were treated to a fishing trip at a local park. In particular, he respects the hand surgeon, Dr. Sigurt Sandzen, who had been the driving force in fighting to keep Jake's hand and three fingers; other surgeons favored complete amputation.

Among his visitors, he remembers a priest who had given him communion a few times in the amputee ward. Ginger Rogers also passed through his ward, stopping for a photo with him, although he was groggy at the time.

His most memorable visit was from a fellow whose name escapes him— he was the other marine besides Derieg who was in the truck with him when he was wounded. This marine had lost his leg as well and tried to see Jake while they both were recovering at Philadelphia Naval Hospital. The struggle to remember names to match the faces ingrained in his mind plagues Jake from time to time. "He was a new guy. He wasn't with us very long," he admitted. There were many others he came into contact with but, regrettably, the passage of time fades any recollection that existed.

By 1968, the American public was being misled to believe that the U.S. was winning the war and upheaval among the nation grew intense.

Jake with Ginger Rogers at Philadelphia Naval Hospital

When Jake returned home in April, 1969, he received very positive responses from everyone he saw, although there was a growing negative stigma attached to Vietnam on a national scale. When asked of the misconceptions of the Vietnam veteran, he quotes ex-marine and renowned author, Philip Caputo. "The Vietnam veteran has been labeled as a drug-crazed loser." Jake feels strongly about the honor and integrity upheld by the marines in his unit and those he served with were "genuinely good guys." But by 1969, the attitude toward the war was changing drastically and the media was a catalyst for negativism toward Vietnam vets.

One of the turning points for Jake was when Life magazine published an issue in the spring of 1969. From cover to cover, it showed boys' graduation pictures who had gone to Vietnam and died—a sobering photo montage of the casualties in one week's time. "Over 200 of our boys lost in one week. That's when people asked, 'What the hell are we doing over there?'" Jake had also learned that his childhood friends, Paul Pirkola and Pat Coppo had been killed in combat. His mother had written him a letter with the shocking news while he was in Philadelphia. Another friend, Marshall Kipina, had been shot down during a night mission and was missing in action, an announcement more sobering that death. Jake began to alter his strong beliefs in favor of the war. The Vietnam conflict had taken a disturbing plunge in only a few years, with no significant gains. "I was just getting tired of seeing my friends killed," he stated.

At this point in his life, Jake struggled to adjust to his new lifestyle and admitted that he lacked direction. He met Paulette Shaltz at a summer beach party one evening in 1969. She was three years younger and had heard of him before because he was a local boy. Remembering reading newspaper articles about him being wounded, she reveals: "I had no idea this was who I'd marry." They did not see each other for several months but the foundation for a relationship had been built in just a short time.

During the summer of 1969, Jake and a friend went out to California for a few months, where he searched for something else to do with his life. Jake admits: "I don't know if I was really looking though." In the mean time, Paula had taken a job out in New Jersey but did not like the lifestyle enough to stay longer than a couple of months. Jake had sent her a card with a lock of his long hair taped to the inside, a sure sign that she had made an impression.

When Jake visited the campus of the University of San Francisco in 1970, he sensed a bitterness and animosity on campus toward him. "You almost were ashamed to say you were a vet," he explained. It was then that he knew this war had become a political battle with no end in sight.

In the spring of 1970, Jake returned to Calumet permanently and was living at home with his parents, a humbling change for him. It was hard because he had lost the stability and friends of his military lifestyle. "I didn't have that structure anymore." He kept busy with hunting and fishing and began seeing Paula on a regular basis. Aside from his rough exterior and fast Corvette, she enjoyed his laid-back nature. "There was a gentleness about him," she said.

1971 brought even more change as Jake sold his Corvette for a more practical Blazer and Paula announced that she was pregnant. It was a very difficult time for him. "I couldn't really talk to my family," he explained. Jake would spend the next few months pondering while Paula waited patiently for him— and the baby.

On October 19, 1971, Eric Bernard Jackovich was born at Calumet Public Hospital. The couple was thrilled and at Paula's side moments after the birth, Jake proposed. It was quite a surprise for Paula who was flat on her back in the maternity ward. Looking back, he reveals: "I don't know why I hesitated." They were married in a small ceremony at the Justice of the Peace on December 11, 1971.

For the first seven years of their marriage, Jake and Paula lived in an apartment above Paula's parents, Barb and Joe Shaltz, in Laurium. In 1972, Jake's father died suddenly of a heart attack. For the next few years, Jake and Paula continued to look after Martha with a watchful eye. When the time came, they were eager to pass on their good news to her: They were expecting another baby.

Now with a son and a daughter, Paula and Jake lost Martha to complications with lung cancer in 1978. In her will Martha had left Paula and Jake the house on North Tamarack and they moved in January 1979. Jamie and Eric grew up playing, building and discovering without restraint in the woods of North Tamarack, just like their

father had.

On December 11, 1999, Jake and Paula celebrated their 28th anniversary and crack jokes about "how they still like each other." They are very much enjoying grandparenthood and feel that they should have had more children. Jake is very involved in many hobbies, including reading, skiing, shooting trap and skeet and pistol competition.

Jake's fascination with guns has led him to become a gunsmith where he works on guns for the sole enjoyment of accomplishing a tedious task. He does not consider it a business, but through word of mouth, friends and family members always keep him working on something. The capabilities of his left hand are invaluable to him, even with limited use of his thumb and index finger.

He also enjoys cross-country skiing and the latest technologies to improve his once wooden leg have greatly improved. Jake now wears a lightweight, graphite leg with a flex-foot designed to absorb energy, using a neoprene sleeve to adhere his stump into the socket of the leg. The elimination of a waist strap really allows him more freedom to ski and remain very active. In July 1999, Jake took first place for the walkers in his age group in the ten mile Canal Run/Walk from McLain State Park to Hancock. On several occasions, he has said, "I feel like I could run again."

One of Jake's most powerful experiences has been recently, when he came into contact with several more of his combat buddies. Until now, Rick Walker had been the first one to contact Jake after more than twenty-five years. They now speak every Christmas. Greg Derieg also had written letters and sent Christmas cards to him. In the years before reuniting, there was a numbing uncertainty that surrounded the veterans, having almost no idea what had happened to each other once out of Vietnam.

It was when Jake stumbled across a web site dedicated to sharing information about the 3rd battalion, 7th Marine Regiment that new connections began to be made. His daughter, Jamie, visited the site, anxious to see what it had to offer. She signed the guest book and left her father's information in case anyone wanted to reach him. On one evening in May 1999, Jake's phone rang at midnight. Alarmed, he answered to find that it was "Mac", Don MacMillan, one of the men he served with and also a good friend of Carter. It had been thirty-two years since they last spoke to each other.

Through Mac, Jake's squad leader, Carter, was then able to reach him. Carter's first words to him: *Jake, I've thought about you a million times. I didn't know if you lived or died.* Carter had been one of the men loading Jake into the chopper the day he was wounded.

Currently, a reunion is being planned to reunite members of Kilo 3/7. The web site is improving daily and exhibits many photos that Jake submitted to feature known and unknown marines. Hope remains that through reconnecting with fellow marines, individuals can "fill in the blanks" for themselves and help others cope with experiences in Vietnam. One of Jake's remaining goals is to contact the family of Denny Senz, "just to let them know I was there." Shaking his head in bewilderment, he disclosed how dozens of times he barely escaped death, alongside those who sadly met another fate. "It could have easily been me not coming home." Indeed, he had made it.

Jamie Jackovich

Jake and his Daughter Jamie

Works Cited

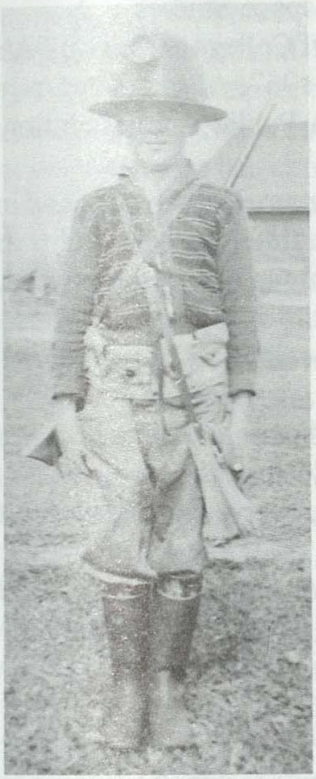
Edward F. Murphy, Semper Fi (Novado: Presidio Press, 1997) 221.

Highly recommended reading

Fields of Fire, James Webb, The Things They Carried, Tim O'Brien

The 13th Valley, John M. DelVecchio, Rumor of War, Philip Caputo

OPERATION: RANCH HAND



Al at age nine dressed up in his "army gear"

"This officer thrives on responsibility and gives each task that extra degree of perfection that ensures success," read Al Jokela's performance report. Every report written about him echoed that message. His reports were filled with remarks like, "I unhesitatingly put him in the top 5% of all the officers I have ever known," and, "I consider Al Jokela one of my finest officers." My grandpa, Al Jokela, shared these reports with me at our recent interview.

Born in Escanaba in 1933, Al grew up on a small farm near Rock, a small town in Michigan's Delta County. Growing up on a small farm, there were always more weeds to pull or wood to stack. "It seemed like we worked all summer storing up food for us and the cattle for the winter" recalled Al. The only time he did not have to do chores was when he was in school.

Throughout his life, he was very active in school. "I just enjoyed the challenge of learning and reading and doing well. I was always active," remarked Al. He certainly was involved, for he was on Rock High School's football team, basketball team, the track team, and even the baseball team, the one year there was one. His junior and senior years he was the class president, the class valedictorian, and he was the president of his church's Luther League his senior year.

After graduating from high school in 1951, Al earned a scholarship to the University of Michigan, and was working toward a degree in radio and television. While he was in college, the United States was defending South Korea from communist aggression. His brother, Harold, got his draft notice, but, because he had bad vision, he did not have to go. "He told me 'If the war is still on, you're gonna go, so you might as well go as an officer'" said Al.

Following his brother's advice, Al enlisted in the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps, or ROTC. He graduated with honors from Michigan in 1955, was designated a distinguished graduate, and received his commission as an officer. "It was quite an honor to receive that" Al commented.

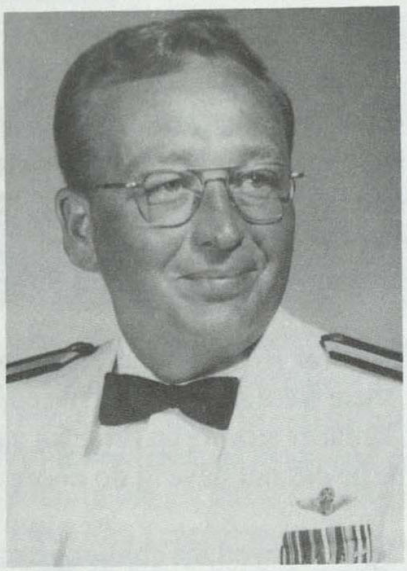
After graduating, Al went to James Conley Air Force base in Waco, Texas. Eight hours a day, he was taught about the basics of navigation, electronics, and weather as he completed his courses in navigator training. "There were classes eight hours a day and you usually had to spend three hours studying at night," remarked Al. He also flew two or three times a week to apply what he had learned in class.

After completing navigator training in 1956, Al's first assignment was with the 56th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron at Koyota Air Base, Japan. While Al was there, his unit earned the Presidential Unit Citation for their work tracking typhoons off the coast of Japan.

In 1959, Al was transferred to the 429th Air Refueling Squadron at Langley Air Force Base in Hampton, Virginia. That squadron refueled airplanes as they crossed the Atlantic Ocean. While there, he graduated from Squadron Officers School as a distinguished graduate and earned the rank of captain. Al's expertise and sound reasoning rescued several missions from disaster.

On one such mission, Al was flying out to refuel a group of six F-100 aircrafts. After take off, they could not contact the airplanes over the radio. When they reached the rendezvous point, the F-100's had been blown 200 miles off course by a storm. Al adjusted his radar and eventually picked up on their signal. They were running out of fuel rapidly. He used his navigation skills to locate the F-100's and direct his squadron toward them. They reached the planes with enough time to safely refuel them.

After serving with the 429th refueling squadron, Al moved to East Lansing in 1962 and taught Air Force ROTC at Michigan State University. "As the Commander of Cadets, his imaginative and vital leadership



Lt. Col. Allan M. Jokela, Wing Chief at Air Command and Staff College Maxwell AFB, Montgomery, Alabama

training program and the empathy he not only exerted but developed in his cadet officers decidedly improved cadet moral and enthusiasm and resulted in the greatest retention of freshman in our three years of voluntary ROTC," wrote Douglas Stewart, Assistant Professor of Aerospace Studies.

In March of 1966, Al left for his Command and Staff College at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery Alabama. On June 9th, 1967, Al graduated as a distinguished graduate, earned a master's degree in Public Administration, and reached the rank of major.

Shortly after, in September of 1968, Al left for Vietnam. He was stationed in Bein Hoa Air Base just north of Saigon. In the meantime, his wife and four children stayed at KI Sawyer Air Force Base in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, which was near to both their families. "We were fortunate enough to get housing at the KI Sawyer Air Force Base and my family was well taken care of there," said Al.

His housing, however, was unsatisfactory. "We had our old beat up hooches that reminded me of World War II Quonsets," recollected Al. His room was about seven by five feet, and his furnishings were a locker and cot. "It wasn't downtown Chicago, that's for sure," Al commented.

Al was a navigator in the 12th Air Commando Squadron, which sprayed defoliants like Agent Orange on the trees to reveal enemy trails and positions. He was responsible for all of the navigation of his plane on the defoliation missions. The plane he navigated did not have any navigation equipment, so Al had to do it all by map reading.

"We flew about four or five days a week, probably on average about four times a week. When we did, we would have to get up pretty early, probably 5:00, and go have breakfast at the mess hall and then go down to operations and get our maps... we'd always have a formal briefing with the crews that were going to participate in that day's mission," said Al.

After the morning formalities, Al navigated his squadron to the target area. "We'd usually fly in flights of three or five, depending on what kind of targets we had." They tried to get the missions completed in the morning, because when it was hot out, the Agent Orange and other defoliants would rise instead of settling on the vegetation.

While flying, Al and his squadron took more ground-based fire than any other unit in Vietnam. "We were vulnerable as we were ascending back up to a safe altitude. They were also vulnerable when they flew missions along canals or across farmland, because they could be seen for miles away. When I was flying... I was so busy; I didn't have time to be afraid, because we had to give the pilots corrections on a half degree, and we were so busy watching what we were doing and we were very careful where we sprayed and that we recorded everything," commented Al.

On one mission, an airplane ahead of Al's was shot down, and it crashed into the ocean below. His crew circled the airplane until a Coast Guard Cutter could get out and check to see if anyone survived. Al received the Air Force Flying Cross for this mission.

Al is now the Adjutant of American Legion Post 559 Rock, MI

Back at the base, Al had threats to deal with, too. The Vietcong frequently launched rocket attacks on the base, with very little warning. There was a man in a tower who watched for rockets headed their way, and if he saw one, he would turn on the alarm. When the alarm went off, the men had less than thirty seconds to get into the bunkers, but sometimes the alarm would not be sounded. In times like those, the best thing to do was to get down on the ground and make yourself as small as possible. "Sometimes I wished that I didn't have buttons so I could get a little closer to the ground," said Al. "A couple of times all I did was get down and grab a hotline to God and say, 'Please save me!'" Al recalled. There was one barracks directly hit while Al was stationed there, but the men there had enough time to get into the bunker. The men lost everything they had, except their lives.

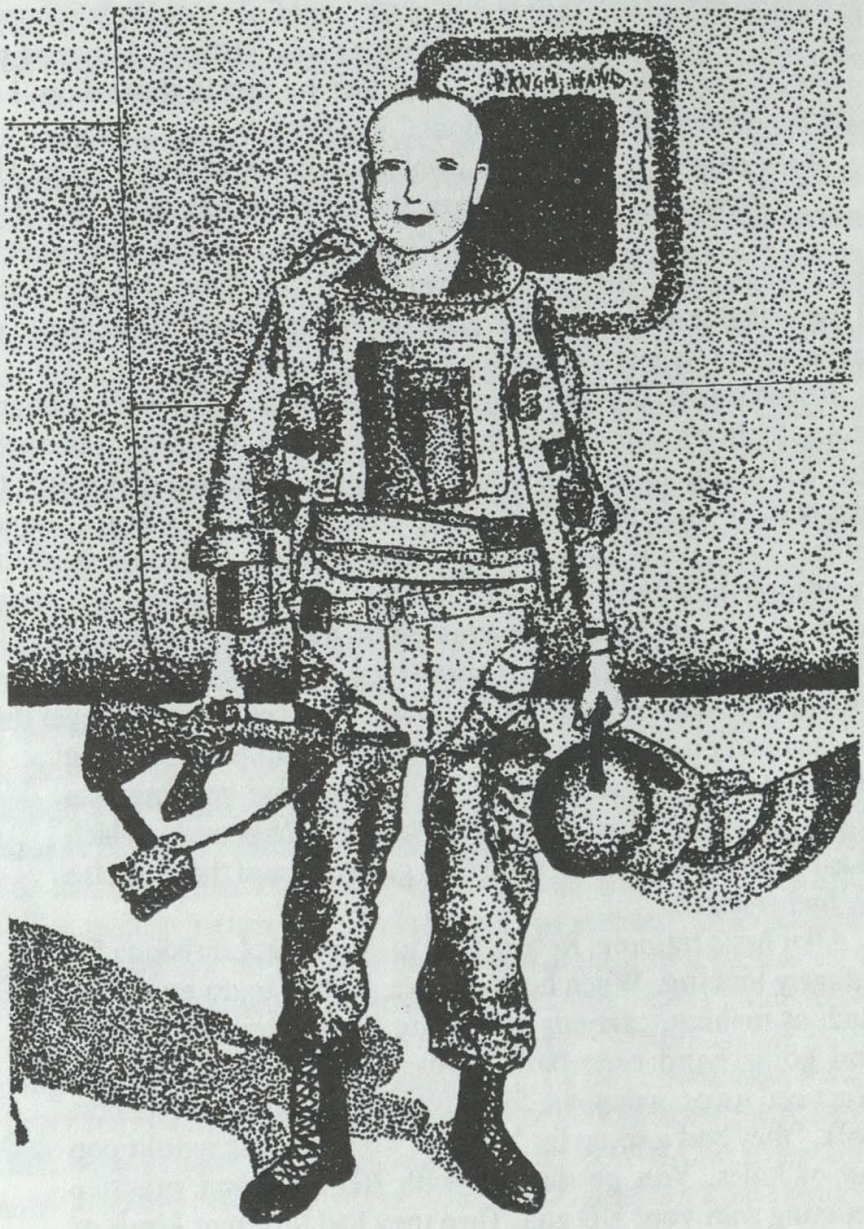
Aside from rocket attacks, the worst thing about Vietnam was the boredom. To combat the boredom, Al picked up an extra job as a targeting officer. "After the day's flying, I would spend the rest of the day down in operations, and pick out targets for the next week," Al said.

In Vietnam, Al flew 123 combat missions, earned the Air Force Flying Cross, received six air medals, each of which stands for twenty missions combat flown, and a Vietnam Campaign medal.

After Vietnam, Al served until 1975, twenty years after he entered the service. 1975 was also the end of the Vietnam War, with the fall of South Vietnam to communist North Vietnam. Al has five children and a wife of forty-four years. He currently resides in Rock, Michigan, where he was raised.

Before Al shared his military experiences with me, I had no idea how distinguished a veteran he really is. He always took his job seriously and completed every task to the best of his ability. I am proud to be the grandson of a man who devoted twenty years of his life to serve our country.

Isaac Delongchamp



"NINETY-ONE DAYS WITHOUT A BATH"

"In the lowlands they'd drive you nuts. You'd wrap up in your poncho in the lowlands and they'd still bite you. Then you'd be sweating in there like a bull moose, wrapped up in a, like a plastic bag. Little peep hole there then they'd bite your nose and lips... I didn't like that at all." This is just one example of what my father, Robert Haapala, faced while he served in Vietnam.

Robert Arthur Haapala

Robert Arthur Haapala was born July 1, 1948, in Laurium, Michigan, to George and Lillian Haapala. He lived in Florida Location, which is just outside Laurium. He first attended Washington School in Calumet for kindergarten. Robert attended Charles Briggs in Laurium for elementary school grades one through six. "I was a patrol boy in fifth grade. Then in sixth grade, I was elected lieutenant to the patrol. In fifth I think I rode on the bus as a patrol boy," he recalled. The patrol boy's were the oldest students in the school who helped kids across the street. They worked on foot and on the buses. After elementary school he attended junior high at Washington School in Calumet for seventh and eighth grade, and Calumet High School for ninth through grade twelve. During his high school education, Robert "delivered papers and sold night crawlers, there wasn't too many jobs that we had in those days. I don't remember having a job when I was in high school," he stated.

After Robert graduated from Calumet High School in 1966, he attended Michigan Technological University, located in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, hoping to receive a student deferment. The United States government awarded him a deferment throughout his college years. Before he graduated, in 1970, "They had the first lottery and my number was ninety-three. So I 'won' that lottery, and got to go in the Army. I was drafted, based on the lottery." He was drafted into the Army at the age of twenty-two on September 15, 1970.

Robert started in Fort Campbell, Kentucky for eight weeks of basic training. The first thing that he remembers doing there was running up the stairs of a three-floor brick barracks right after he got off the bus. He recalled, he "had to run up the stairs even though my bunk was on the first floor. I had to run all the way to the top, then run back down, with my duffel bag. Every day we would get up and run in the morning, before we ate, like five miles. Then we'd have to low crawl on some mats out in the field, crawl on your belly. Then you'd go hand-over-hand on the monkey bars before you'd go into the mess hall." Robert had to do other exercises like push-ups, sit-ups, and holding his legs in the air, and running. He also practiced with weapons, but mostly what he used was a rifle. Robert explained the difficulty of his adjustment to the military, saying, "Uncle Sam was in charge of you twenty-four hours a day. They sent you wherever they felt like sending you, and you can't jump in a car and go someplace." When he went into basic training he weighed less than 150 pounds. By the time training was finished he had gained muscle and weighed 176 pounds, which was due to the amount of food they gave him and the exercise he had endured.

Robert, during training exercises, at front far right

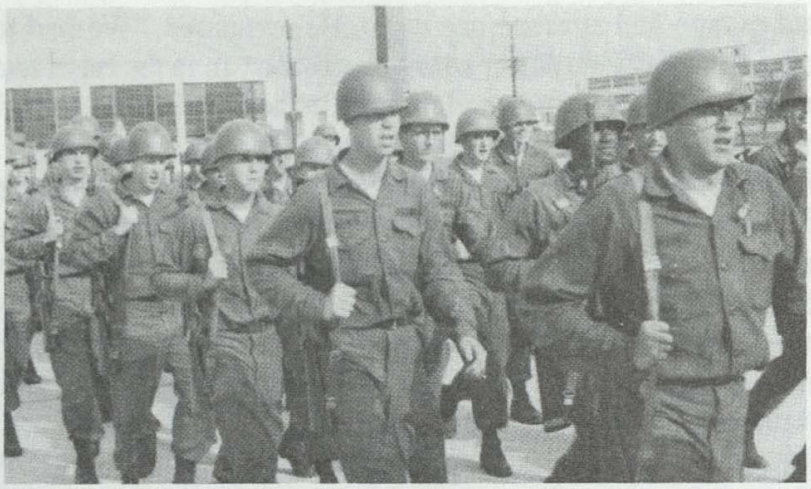
After basic training, Robert went to Fort Polk, Louisiana for infantry training. When he was there, he had to do exercises such as running, carrying somebody for one hundred yards, and going hand over hand across parallel bars. He also practiced using weapons, like grenades. In addition, at Fort Polk, "they had a setup for Vietnam where people would pop out of holes. You go through with BB guns and practice shooting with your BB gun. Then they had different kinds of

booby traps like they had in Vietnam." He also had escape and evasion one night. He explained, "We had to jump off a truck and they'd throw a stick of dynamite or a big firecracker after you. You'd run in the bush and find your way to some place, in the dark. I remember getting off the truck and running in the woods and I fell off a cliff."

After infantry training, Robert received the rank of E-2, Private Second Class. Following a one-month leave at home, he departed to Fort Louis Washington. At Fort Louis it was damp and cold. He was up for forty-eight hours straight, going on KP duty when he arrived. As a result, he became ill with a fever and went to the hospital. In the hospital, he slept for three entire days. "[The fever] didn't go away either. My fever got below 102, so they kicked me out of the hospital," he stated. Despite his illness, he was sent to Vietnam. After arriving, his temperature stayed at 101 degrees, resulting in a stay in Camron Bay for a month. Robert spent his time between guard duty and bed-rest. He was on guard duty for "four hours, and four hours off, four hours on, and four hours off. I was guarding different things. I went in the PX (Post Exchange Store) to guard that. All it is, you watch for people stealing. I used to, at night, walk the wire there. Go up in the guard tower. In between that they'd put you on bed-rest." He was supposed to be on bed-rest, but the Army still assigned him to duty. Fortunately, Camron Bay was a peaceful place. When his fever went away, he was shipped to his unit in Da Nang, which was the biggest city in the northern part of South Vietnam. The first night he was there some "rockets came in there and I didn't know what they were. Everybody was running to the bunkers... so I went into the bunkers," he stated.

After Da Nang, Robert went to Camp Evans that was north of Hue, the Imperial City of Vietnam. "I must have been there about a week. I didn't have any particular job other than guard duty... on the base. We had more training there. That's the first time we went out on training patrol." There were unfortunate incidents during this training. There was one man a short distance ahead of Robert who stepped on a booby trap and had his legs blown off. "He was just a cook and they had him in training," Robert explained. While Robert was guarding an ammo dump, a place where the Army kept ammunition, rockets started coming in. He did not know what to do, so he watched the rockets come in and explode. "And here I was guarding the ammo dump. If they hit that, that would blow the whole thing up. First, they sent in rockets... then they had a ground attack. Somebody came by and told me to lay low... so I went under a truck. I was there to watch and see if anybody would get through to try to blow up the ammo dump. The ground attack was repelled," he recalled. The next morning, Robert had to help find unexpended grenades because a village was close to the camp. "They told us to go out there and look for M-79 rounds, so the villagers wouldn't get blown up when they plow their fields." M-79's are grenades shot out of a gun. "They told us, 'If anybody shoots at you, just come back to the wire.' Because they said that there was VC (Viet Cong) in the village by the camp. They have to call the local police to go in there and get them, if they shot at you. That's what happened. We went out there for these things and somebody started taking pot shots at us. And we had to come back inside the wire. They sent the police over there, the local police, to get them." The local police did not did not catch them because "they just put their guns away."

Robert went south of Hue to Camp Eagle, which was outside a city called Phu Bai. Here, he went out into the "field" and became a Radio Telephone Operator or RTO. "I carried what they called a Secure Radio, one that scrambled your voice then was unscrambled on the other side. This radio was a big radio it was like forty-five pounds. It had two huge batteries" about three by twelve inches. You had to carry two extras," he explained. The first time Robert went out he had to put the radio on and all his food that he had to carry in a rucksack. "I put a whole case of C-Rations strapped on there. Put all kinds of ammunition and grenades; I didn't want to be lightweight." He got his rucksack on and he could not get up because it was too heavy! "I had a couple guys pull me up. I stood up and my legs were waving like this; because it was so heavy. I didn't know how I was supposed to walk," he stated. He had to walk up a high hill to go out on the helicopters. He had taken many cans of soda, so by the time he got to the top of the hill, he had drunk all his pop and any thing he could eat, to lighten his pack! Robert did not know it then, but he would spend ninety-one days in the "field" without a bath before



Robert, marching at front far right

returning to Camp Eagle.

On the helicopters, which transported soldiers, the men sat with their legs hanging over the side or cross-legged. There was a pilot and copilots who were both called Warrant Officers, in the front. Behind them, there was a door gunner on each side. There were eight people total: four infantrymen, and four with the helicopters. The door gunners operated thirty caliber machine-guns.

"I was in Reconnaissance; trying to locate where the enemy was and what he was doing. I had a radio, carried a M16 and a couple grenades." Usually Robert traveled with fifteen to thirty soldiers with two or three groups of similar size within close proximity. However, once he landed with a helicopter and all he did was go up a hill and crawl under a tree with two other soldiers. He sat there for three days, watching where he had came in to see what was going to happen. He sat "in one spot for three days on a little ammo can."

Many dangers existed during the Vietnam War. One example was fire fights. A fire fight was when a soldier started shooting with enemy personnel. Robert indicated these events were very few and always seemed a surprise and very short episodes. One time while Robert was near the Ashau Valley, he ran into a large group in an area the enemy was using as a hospital. He had a fire fight, and they killed a couple of guys there. "That time there was two battalions of NVA (North Vietnamese Army) operating in the area, a battalion is a big group of men, a lot more men than we had. We always gave our position, to the battalion commanders, so they knew where we were. A call came in that night when I was manning the Secure Radio, and they came in and said they intercepted messages. Said that we were surrounded by the K1 and K2 battalions; the NVA's two battalions, in the area. I was on the radio there and I couldn't even talk, when they were talking to me; I was so scared. I had the CO (commanding officer) talk," Robert said. The United States military brought in jet fighters and attack helicopters, to give Robert's unit a chance to escape. The aircraft pounded all around and almost on top of his group. The NVA had a big trail where they were bringing their big guns through. When they went by, Robert and his unit jumped on the trail and went the other way. Then Robert and his group set smoke bombs with trip wires, behind themselves. The idea was to make the enemy trip the smoke bombs off when the enemy figured out where they were and tried to follow. This was to cause smoke to go into the air so the American airplane and helicopter pilots could see where to attack. Robert indicated they escaped along this trail without incident. "Booby traps were another danger faced by American soldiers. These took many different forms, like punji sticks, pits, trip wires, and mines," Robert recalled. He remembers calling for a Medivac helicopter three times in one day to remove soldiers hurt by booby traps. In this area the enemy seemed to have covered a large area to protect a supply trail they had built. Robert also was a victim of an unfinished booby trap. Robert stated he was about the fourth person walking single file when he fell into a pit. Although it was a shocking experience to have the ground disappear beneath him, he was not injured.

While out in the field, Robert ate many different types of foods. C-Rations came in a drab green can, some types of food in the can were ham and eggs and fruit. Lurps were dried food; "they were really good. They had spaghetti, I really liked that," Robert stated. One time he had Flight Rations which "were no better than C-Rations," he pronounced. He also had water, which he got from the streams and in monsoon season he just caught it off his dirty old poncho into his canteen. "I used to have Tang. I would carry a bottle of Tang with me, and I would put a couple of drops in my water to make it taste better. Couple of grains just, to make it last. The

water was pretty good up in the mountains," Robert explained. He used to make a little stove out of a can. He put holes in an empty can, put a little heat tablet in there and placed his other can on top of there. "It worked good," he noted.

Another use for the heat tablet was during the monsoon season, to dry himself out. Robert sat on his ammo can with his poncho around him, with only his head sticking out. He put a can with a heat tablet in it at his feet to help him dry out. "At least you won't be so miserable. Because you were all wet, all of the time in the monsoon, it wasn't too pleasant," he added.

While he was in the field, Robert used his training and skills as a Radio Telephone Operator. Another man came that took turns carrying the heavy Secure Radio, when Robert had been in his unit for a while. When the unit was on field maneuvers, "there would be at the lowest, forty of us, highest was over a hundred men. It was divided into three platoons and headquarters. I was in what they call headquarters. I was the Radio Telephone Operator for the commanding officer, who was Captain Dix."

In Robert's group the helicopter was mostly used to transport them into the field and back to camp. "There usually wasn't anybody shooting at you when you went in, so that was okay with me. The first time I went on the helicopter, when I went out, I almost fell out of there, when they started shooting. Because the door gunner opened up. I could see green tracers and red tracers and I didn't which were coming or going. Every fifth round has a tracer with the bullets, so you could tell were you were shooting." On his first time in the helicopter, Robert had a funny experience. "I was in there cross-legged like that with my 150-pound pack on. They weren't even close to the ground and I was trying to get up. The door gunner and the copilot reached back and grabbed a hold of me and threw me out. I landed on my face. They weren't even going to bother getting any closer, because they were getting shot at. We were probably eight feet off the ground... they just flipped me out. But that was okay because I was laying in a prone position, so I was doing good down there on the ground," he recalled.

Fieldwork and reconnaissance were difficult and dangerous, but there were some better times. "On Thanksgiving Day, we were supposed to go out on the helicopters, but we were fogged in. We went over to the mess hall and ate all the turkey up. Had a good time eating the turkey up. The people who were supposed to eat the turkey didn't get it because we ate it," Robert chuckled.

Another time he had fun was when he was operating telephones at fire base Normandy. "My captain called in and said they had a pass for somebody to go to China Beach and I was the only one that could get there. I had a three-day pass for China Beach, and I stayed there for six days." Some things that there was to do at China Beach were: swimming, movies, and different games. "The water was beautiful and warm. What I remember is that you could just lay on the beach there and relax nobody would bother you. That was what I did mostly... lay on the beach," he stated. When they booted him off, he returned to his unit.

When he "went back to Camp Eagle, the First Sergeant said that he wasn't going to let me go to the fire base anymore, I had to go straight to my unit." Robert was assigned ambush duty, for every night, at the camp. He went outside the wire with three other guys, to check if anybody was coming. One of them was a Medic, who did not carry a weapon, because he was a Conscientious Objector. The first night Robert asked the man, "Where's your weapon?" The Medic said, "I'm a Conscientious Objector I don't carry a weapon." Robert replied, "Oh, good you can patch me up at least." Then Robert went back to his unit in the field. When he arrived, his commanding officer said that he would not be leaving, going anywhere anymore. He said "Hap, you are going to stay right here with me, till we're done." Robert could not have any more experiences like China Beach.

Robert faced many problems in the field. Some examples were: being cold, bugs biting, and jungle rot. "I had jungle rot. It's when your skin falls off where you sweat. It'd rot under my armpits; it all rotted." he explained. He had to take Tetracycline, which he ate like candy at times. Other members in his group had the same problem and more. One man, whom they called "Snakeman," had a weird problem. They called him that because a snake

bit him twice as he was getting off the helicopter. Luckily, both times, another helicopter was coming so he went back to camp on the helicopter. Another example, which the group faced, was about ten days without being resupplied.

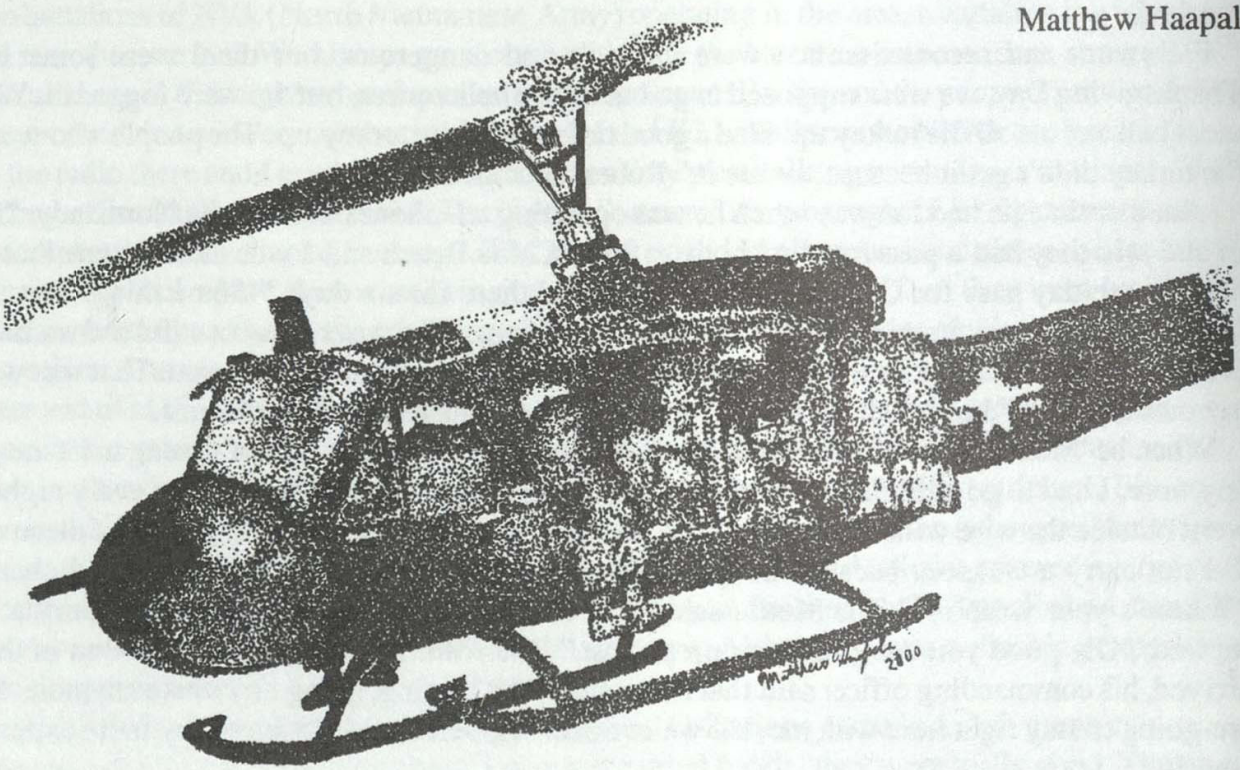
Robert explained about being cold during the monsoon season: "I slept sitting up on my ammo can. I tried sleeping there; it was cold, too, because we were up high. I don't know how cold it was, but it sure felt cold. Anyway, it was raining, it was raining lots. I sat on that ammo can, water was around every place and somehow I got my feet into an area where I got them out of the water. It's like over here going out in a thunder storm and sitting on an ammo can all night long and you're all wet to begin with. I didn't like being cold." Robert said being wet and cold did have one good point in the monsoon: "You didn't get shot at anyway... The enemy was smarter than you... they weren't out there."

The United States began pulling their troops out when Robert was in Vietnam. Towards the end, Robert and his group were pulled to the rear. "They [the NVA] were overrunning our fire bases before we were out of the country." He left from Vietnam at 12:30 and arrived back in the United States at 12:30. "I got back the same time I left. I think it was January 3, 1972. So I had been in Vietnam, I think, for ten months and one day." He was able to do this because he crossed the International Dateline.

On his return trip home, Robert wore his uniform, "Because you got a cheaper rate on the airlines," he explained. When Robert arrived back to Calumet, the Lions Club invited him for lunch and gave him an award for serving in Vietnam.

Robert feels that the Vietnam War was a waste of money, time, and lives. "It didn't make much sense to me. It was okay when I was there, but afterwards, when you read about it, it doesn't make much sense why we were there. We didn't prosecute the war to win it, we were just there as a political thing. [We] could have easily won it, I'm sure."

Matthew Haapala



In Robert's group the helicopter was mostly used to transport them into the field and back to camp.

DEDICATION

As I walked into the Vietnam Veterans of America building, I saw Vic Romback patiently waiting to start our interview. I could tell that this interview was going to be very interesting. I knew I would have a different aspect on life once we finished. He kindly gestured for me to be seated while I prepared for the story of a lifetime.

Vic Romback was born on April 12, 1946, and grew up in Suomi location in Negaunee, Michigan. When I asked him to describe his childhood, he answered "farm boy." He worked hard at home and in school. He earned his high school diploma from Negaunee High School and received a job as a carpenter apprentice. Afterward, he went to work on a Ford assembly line in Wayne, Michigan.

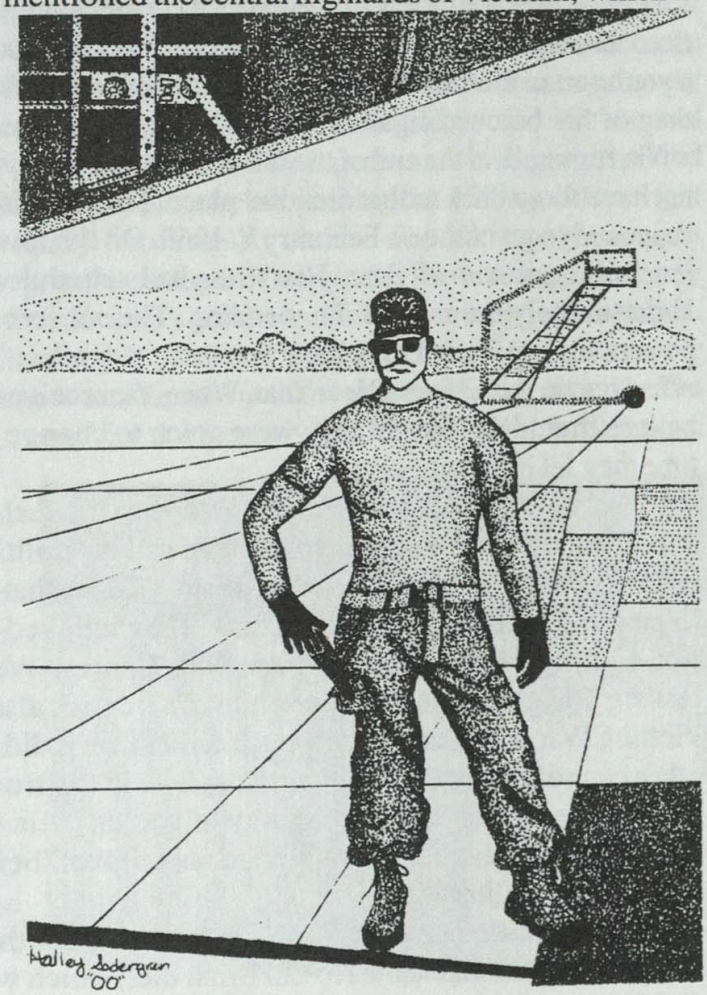
During this time the United States was drafting young men because of our troop commitment in Vietnam. Vic volunteered to join the United States Air Force. He gave me his reasons, "The army went to war and the Air Force didn't. That's what I thought. Less than a year later I found out that the Air Force went to war." He received his basic training in San Antonio, Texas at Lakeland Air Force Base. When I asked him what a typical day in training was like, he replied heartily, "March, and march and march, a little class learning, polish floors and march."

After basic training, Vic was trained as an aircraft loadmaster in Wichita Falls at Shepherd Air Force Base. He was then moved to his duty station, Ching Chaun Kang Air Base, Taiwan. He was there from early January, 1967 to mid April, 1968. Most of the time, his outfit spent twenty-two to twenty-five days in Vietnam. When an airplane needed maintenance, Vic and his crew flew it to Taiwan, and then headed back to Vietnam for another three-week stretch. Vic had faith in the planes he flew. He mentioned the central highlands of Vietnam, which is a mountainous region, had the most beautiful scenery he had ever seen. He reflected, "It would look as if you flew over the Upper Peninsula. Green, lush forest." Yet, not all of Vietnam was lush forest. Further south, the Mekong Delta was a rather swampy area with lots of rivers and wetlands.

On certain nights, Vic and his crew continued flights through the dark. They then rolled out of bed early the next day to prepare for another flight. They were supposed to get a good night sleep every night so they could be in good condition to fly. Yet, some nights the men sat up and played poker, pinochle, or just socialized. The crew had a minimum of thirteen hours from one flight to another, which was called crew rest. In the morning, they took an hour to preflight the plane to prepare it for its next trip. It was not supposed to be part of their crew rest time but there was a mission to do.

The food given to soldiers while overseas was not what Vic labeled as appetizing. They served them mostly C-rations, which is terrible canned food. They received soup, ham, lima beans, fruit cocktail, and pound cake. Vic referred to pound cake as, "The heaviest, ugliest, most terrible, no tasting stuff you ever had." Some people chopped up their pound cake and spread their fruit cocktail on it for their dessert. Vic surely did not.

While overseas, Vic communicated with his family by



Vic at an Air Force base near an airplane hanger

letters and the use of MARS stations. A MARS station was a place where GI's could contact a ham radio operator in the United States. They patched the call from the location to your destination. They were about six radio booths that soldiers could make the call from. Vic's mother was not happy when she saw the long distance bill, since all the calls were to Ann Arbor where Vic's fiancee was going to college!

After the Tet Offensive of 1968, Vic and his crew continually resupplied the under siege marine base at Khe Sanh. The only way to get in or out was by airplane. They used the runway until the North Vietnamese damaged it. Khe Sanh then had to have the supplies air dropped to them. Some unfortunate times the wind took the baggage across the line into Vietnamese territory instead of American territory. The seventy-seven day siege was an awful period in the war.

The warfare in Vietnam was much different from World War II, for it was guerilla warfare. One technique in warfare is the use of booby traps. Referring to booby traps, Vic explained that punji sticks were used quite often. Punji sticks are carved pieces of bamboo with razor sharp ends. They were placed into the ground jutting out of the soil, waiting for the next unsuspecting victim to slice or poke. Americans even used them at fire bases on the barbwire fences surrounding the location. They put them on an angle so if anyone tried to smash the fence, the punji sticks remained intact.

The most rewarding experience throughout the war for Vic was helping Vietnamese villages move out of harm's way. His crew loaded the villages, people, livestock, supplies and belongings onto airplanes and transported them to a safe area. They also helped the troops on the ground at fire bases and outposts, stay alive. They were aids to the men who put their lives on the line every day for our country. Vic explained that if there was such a thing as a good job in the war, he had it.

However, not all Vic's experiences were pleasant. Vic's worst experience in the war was on a medi vac flight from an outpost to Da Nang, which was the home of a huge hospital ship located on a harbor. On the return trip, a young man died while gripping Vic's hand. Vic held a cigarette in the man's mouth so he could take one last drag of his beloved cigarette before he passed away.

Vic remembers the end of the war as a happy, joyous time. He was pleased that the young men and women did not have to go back to that dreadful place. The first time Vic found out he was going home, he cheered. He was supposed to go home on February 7, 1968. On the fourth of February, he got orders extending his service for an indefinite amount of time. His sister had scheduled her wedding for after he was supposed to get back. Unfortunately, he missed the wedding. The air force kept many soldiers longer than expected because the powers finally started to believe that there was a Vietcong buildup. They thought there was going to be a huge offensive on the Chinese New Year. When Vic received word that he was allowed to go home in April, he did not believe them. He thought they were going to change their minds and keep him there again. Surprisingly, this time they let him come home.

Along with many other Vietnam Veterans, Vic feels that the United States could have put the war to an end during the first six months involvement, had the politicians allowed it. The American political involvement in wars started during the Korean War. History shows that the U.S. got involved by not allowing General MacArthur to push the Chinese north into China. They relieved him of his duties and put someone else in his place. A similar thing happened in Vietnam with General Westmoreland. He wanted to bomb Hanoi and Haiphong Harbor. The government relieved him of his duties also, and put General Creighton Abrahams in his place. The Vietnam War could have ended much earlier than it did, for Haiphong Harbor is where the North Vietnamese and other countries got their military supplies. If the troops had gone in and blocked the harbor off, the North Vietnamese would have had no way of getting their supplies. Therefore, they would have been defenseless. The United States could have also bombed Hanoi, before the North Vietnamese made a prisoner of war camp outside their military capital.

The infiltration between North Vietnam and South Vietnam could have subsided if they had gone in and completely annihilated the Ho Chi Minh trail, which was the main route to transport supplies to the parts of the divided country. Our United States government dictated how the war should be run. Politicians do not have the

military expertise needed to direct a war especially from a different continent.

Vic is very disappointed that people believe the soldiers and United States lost the war, and people still say that today. Vic believes that we did not lose the war; the government would not let us win!

Vic has suffered some after effects from the war. He has had malignant melanoma, which is a very dangerous skin cancer. If left untreated, it can metastasize and be fatal. He believes Agent Orange caused it. Agent Orange was a chemical sprayed on the forests and jungles of Vietnam that killed the trees, making it easier to detect Vietnamese enemies from the air. Vic has had some surgeries to remove the effects of his skin cancer. Periodically, he goes to the dermatologist for a check up.

Vic has seen a couple of Vietnam War movies. His favorite is Platoon. He thinks it describes what really happened in the war, very well. When Vic first went to see Platoon, he was shocked. When the movie started, he asked his wife, "Can you smell that?" She did not understand him and was confused. He then noted, "We're going through downtown Saigon." The movie was so realistic for Vic he thought he was actually there. It brought back the smell and memories of the war. Surprisingly, other men have said that the movie had a profound effect on them also.

Now that Vic is out of the military, he has a job at the Vietnam Veterans of America Association. He says that the best thing to come out of the military and the fighting in Vietnam was his job helping veterans. He pushed and fought for his job in the Upper Peninsula. The first year as an organization, they did not have enough money to pay him, so Vic took one day off his current job every week to help the veterans. He was a founding member of the Vietnam Veterans Chapter. He was president of the chapter for one year and vice-president of our state organization twice. He also served on the Board of Directors for two years.

Vic's occupation now is assisting veterans in filing disability claims. If veterans have an illness, psychological disability or military injury, they may file a claim. If a person cannot meet the requirements of their job because of military duty, the government will send that person a disability check. Every branch of the service, and every era of the military, has the right to a disability check if they meet the requirements. The oldest case Vic worked with was a ninety-three-year old widow from World War I. Vic filed for a widow's pension, which gave the kind lady a few bucks. The youngest people he has worked with are people who are coming out of the military right now. Dependants, veterans, and even veteran's children apply for disability claims. The VA now recognizes one form of spina bifida being directly related to the exposure of Agent Orange. If doctors diagnosed any Vietnam veteran's children with Spina Bifida they can receive disability compensation plus money for education.

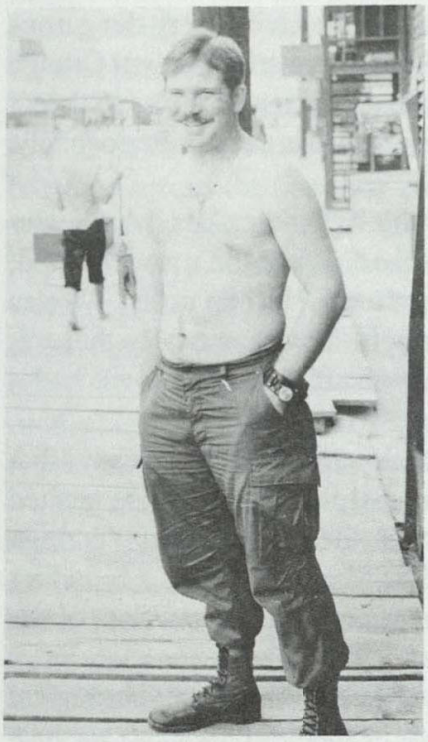
Vic absolutely loves his job as a benefits advocate. He said, "It's the best job I ever had." He is extremely happy when he can help other people get their claims. He gets satisfaction and an amazing feeling when he can tell someone they have won and that they will get their money. Vice does not give up. He will fight until the end to win the case.

Vic is now happily married to Carol and has two children, Lori and Cindy. It was a pleasure interviewing Mr. Romback. I found it very educational to hear about his war experience. He relived his story and made it vivid and interesting, which I appreciate. I understood the facts and details about the war more than I would have by reading it out of my history book. I asked Vic his final comment on the war that changed his life. He replied, "I'm proud to be a Vietnam Veteran." He has something else to make him proud. His daughter, Cindy, has joined the army as a Korean Linguist, so Vic is the father of a soldier. She is carrying on a brave military family tradition. And just like her father, she should feel proud for serving our country.

Halley Sodergren

Vic with his wife, Carol and daughter, Cindy

THE GIFT OF LIFE



James Dehlin, November, 1970

"Every day since 1970, for me, has been a gift." This statement reflects Mr. James Dehlin's feelings about his life since leaving the military. After talking with him for over an hour recently, I was impressed with his positive outlook and acceptance of the hardships life has brought him.

James, who is known by his friends as Jim, was born on May 30, 1950, and raised in the small town of Flushing, Michigan. "We like to say it's just down the drain from Flint," Jim joked. Jim's parents are Charles and Beatrice Dehlin. Jim has two older brothers, one younger brother and two sisters. His older brothers' names are Barry and Dick, and his younger brother is David. His two sisters are Pat and Kristen.

After Jim finished in high school, he was drafted into the army. He knew a friend who dodged the draft by going to Canada, but when he went to visit him, he knew that would not be his solution. He chose the army because many of his relatives had served when they were called, and he, "saw it as an avenue to get the money I needed to go to college." After enlisting, he traveled to Fort Knox for basic training. After that, he went to Fort Benning, then back to Fort Knox for officer candidate schooling. When Jim left Fort Benning he was a Second Lieutenant. During officer candidate school, he advanced to First Lieutenant. "That's as far as I got," Jim mused.

When the army sent Jim to Vietnam, he served in the Americal 23rd Infantry division. Later, he was in charge of Armored Personnel Carriers. He served out of a fire base north of Chu Lai called Hawk Hill. When I asked him what the countryside was like, "It was just beautiful," replied Jim. "Everything very neat, very ordered."

Jim was injured on the way from backing up a sniper team. He stepped on a land mine that blew both his legs off. In doing so, the shrapnel from the mine hit a guy behind him, but that man lived. Jim feels the helicopter crew that picked him up after the accident should get most of the credit for him still being alive today. Jim read a book called Ever Man a Tiger? by General Chuck Horner and Tom Clancy that tells about the air portion of the Gulf War. In that book a man explains how he should have died in a plane crash, but miraculously pulled out of his dive at the last minute. He felt he was destined to do something else and Jim told me that is exactly how he feels.

Following his injury in Vietnam, Jim went to Japan for hospitalization. Jim said, "When they got done hackin' and sawin', they (his legs) were removed above the knee." He was hospitalized for a year after this surgery. While he was in the hospital, Jim told me, "I was just tryin' to sort out what I wanted to say." For his injury, he received a Purple Heart, but he also received a Silver Star for valor. By not asking any of the men in the platoons he commanded to do something he would not do, he said, "I might've just helped some people."

When Jim came home from the war and was still in rehabilitation at a nearby hospital, he took part in the war protests in Washington, D.C. He marched with the contingent of hundreds of Vietnam veterans against the war. Jim threw his medals on the Capital steps, and peacefully protested. President Nixon tried to deny this uprising by claiming that Jim and his friends were not even veterans. Jim was an angry man when he got back from the war and, he used alcohol as a crutch. He worked his way out of his problems and became a great success.

Even without his legs, Jim does more than most people do in their lives. He drives and even flies his own airplane with hand controls. He was recently featured in the newspaper for his excellent skiing skills. He also hunts, fishes, snowmobiles, and drives his four wheeler. His skill that impressed me most though, was his ability to fly his private owned airplane. Jim feels flying his plane is the best way to get away from it all. Things are not as overwhelming when he is thousands of feet in the air. He also told me how awesomely beautiful

Jim, today

things are from that viewpoint. I had to agree with him based on previous flights I have experienced. At first when he came back from the war, he never wanted to go to a war movie. "To me it just wasn't entertainment. When I go to a movie I want to be entertained," explained Jim. The movies he did go to, certain scenes stirred up memories, but overall they were not very realistic.

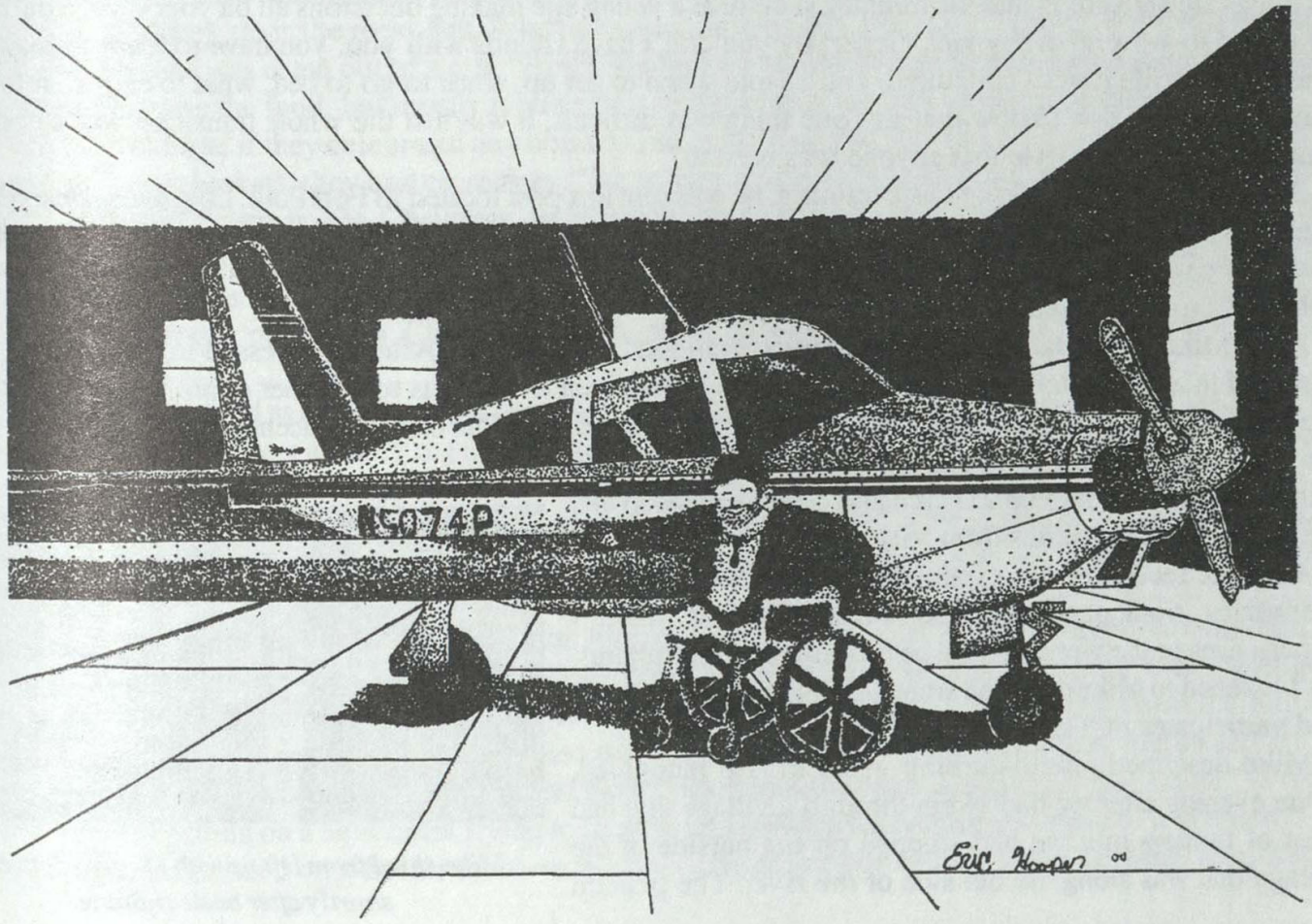
The numbers of casualties in wars like the Vietnam war were huge. There are a number of smaller monuments commemorating the casualties of the Vietnam War, but the memorial in Washington, D.C. lists the names of over 58,000 people killed in the war.

After leaving the service, Jim went to Kirtland Community College, then to Ferris State University. He earned his teaching degrees and now teaches Aviation Maintenance Technology at Northern Michigan University.

Jim's wife, Carol, and his children, Jesse and Kristen, are the most influential people of his life. They supported him through everything, good and bad, and helped him with his self-esteem. If he had a choice, he would probably only want his legs back so that he could play sports and other things like that. Other than that, he probably would not change a thing in his life.

I learned a lot about the Vietnam War and Jim's experience in it. I learned that war is not as much of a game as movies and TV shows make it out to be. I learned the good guys do not always win. I also learned important lessons about life including "You have to play the cards you're dealt."

Eric Hooper



NES ASPERA TERRENT- (NO FEAR ON EARTH)

"I don't agree with the war protesters. I don't agree with the people, like Jane Fonda, who said that we were wrong. We weren't wrong. We may have done some things wrong." Things may have been done in the wrong manner, "but after being in the military and after being around the world in many different countries, there is no other country better that this one, and it is worth fighting for." I received this reply when I asked Mike Koppinger of Champion about his military experience. He is a veteran of the Vietnam War who was kind enough to share his experiences with me.

Michael Francis Koppinger was born April 1, 1948, to Matthew and Marjorie Koppinger. Mike was born in Dearborn, Michigan, and lived there for the early years of his life with his seven brothers and sisters, Marjorie, Larry, Steve, Joe, Mary, Terry, and Lynn. He attended a parochial school in Dearborn Heights and went to Edsel Ford High School, for his high school years.

Following his graduation, Mike began his working career. "I was working as a printer's apprentice for Detroit News when I was drafted." A draft number changed all of his plans for the future. "Had I had enough hours in on an apprenticeship, I would have never been drafted in the first place. But you had to carry a 1,000 hours and have a 1,000 hours in to keep from being drafted. I did not have enough hours in, I was, therefore, drafted," he said. He and many of his friends were making plans to go attend college but, "The number of people being drafted kept picking up every month. We were a little uncertain as to how our lives were going to go, as to whether we were going to be drafted or not," he explained.

Mike's draft number did get picked. He was drafted and received about eight weeks of basic training at Fort Knox, Kentucky. After basic training, Mike was allowed a leave of one week that he spent with his family. When I asked Mike what was the most difficult part of going from civilian to life in the military, he replied, "Well lots of things are hard going into the military. You're at a young age making decisions all on your own. You're kind of forced to grow up pretty fast. Generally you don't have friends with you, you have to learn to make new friends. Your life is very structured, you're told when to get up, when to go to bed, what to eat, what to wear, how to wear it. I don't know that any one thing was difficult, it was just the whole transition was a complete change from the life style that anyone was used to."

After Mike's eight weeks of basic training, he was sent to a post located in Fort Polk, Louisiana. He explained the ranks he earned. "At the end of basic training I was a Private E 2, at the end of my advanced infantry training I was a Private First Class. I was trained as an infantrymen, the training covered all aspects of the infantry soldier, from basic riflemen, to the weapons platoon."

After Mike completed his training, he was stationed in Vietnam. "After I processed in the country, I was assigned to a unit. After being assigned to a unit I was given a choice as to whether or not I wanted to carry a machine gun or a radio. From there the helicopter took myself and four other replacements out to the field where our unit was already. I'm not sure exactly where it was but within four or five days on a search and destroy mission that we encountered hostilities from Vietcong."

As Mike recounted his experiences in the Vietnam War, memories, both good and bad were refreshed. Mike's experiences in the war can only be described as nightmares. As I listened to Mike describe some things that he witnessed and participated in, I almost came to tears.

Mike described one disturbing incident. He recounted, "One evening after we had swept through a village that had a lot of farmers in it we had stopped on the outside of the village that was along the out side of the river. The platoon

Mike, third from left, is with his grandparents, shortly after basic training.

next to mine sent out an ambush patrol that evening, and they went on navy PBR's, patrol boats. The patrol boat had just left from picking up part of the ambush patrol, when they were ambushed from the other side of the river. The boats were shot with RPG's, rocket propelled grenades. We were totally unprepared for this. We had to go and secure the area, move the enemy back away from the river, and get the boats, and take the bodies off. Before we could get everything secured, and get to the boats, the boats had burned." All the bodies were burned quite extensively, Mike and his men had to remove the burned bodies from the boat and try to identify the bodies. The task was quite heart breaking for Mike, even the memory brought tears to his eyes.

Not all of Mike's experiences in the Vietnam War were so horrific. In fact, he got to deliver a baby, which was the most rewarding thing that happened to him. He explained, "Every unit has a medic with them. We had gone into a village and received some resistance from some sniper fire, and we had taken cover in a hooch. And the way it turned out that it was just me and the medic who dove into one hooch. And there was a pregnant woman in their having a baby. And he had me help him deliver a baby!"

Mike was Vietnam for eleven months. During this time his accommodations varied. He described to me the base camp, out in the field, the hospital, and in some cities. He also described what it was like. In base camp, they ate warm meals, got mail, and had cots to sleep on. Things were different when they were out in the field.

Mike's base camp, Cu Chi, was approximately twenty-five miles northwest of Vietnam. They did many different jobs while in base camp. He explained, "Our typical day was rising early, eating, taking care of our weapons. Standing any kind of service of duty that was called for inside of the base camp, catching an escapee or whatever, maintenance had to be done on our weapons or anything else. It was mostly, more or less a rest period." He also described the living arrangements in base camp. He said that there were not many rooms, there was one big room, and there was one platoon per tent. He said that they slept on cots in military style tents that had wooden floors.

The meals also varied according to where Mike was. When in base camp, their food was cooked and prepared for the men, and they ate in the mess hall. When they were in the field, they ate C rations. They seldom got hot meals, and the food was eaten out of a can. "Every so often we would be able to take a little piece of explosive an light it to heat up the food, but mostly it was eaten straight from the can," Mike recounted.

When I asked Mike if they celebrated any holidays, he explained that they did not have Christmas trees and presents, or Easter baskets; they had cease fires. "We celebrated the holidays. When it was all possible, we had special meals on Christmas. On Christmas, in Vietnam, we had cease fires, supposedly we had cease fires. Which was good for us," he stated. They did have some special activities. He said, "Sometimes we had our own fireworks displays. We would set off some mines, and use tracer ammunition and create our own fire works. But most of the holidays, other than Christmas, really, went by unnoticed. They did try to treat us good on Christmas."

Base camp also served as a place to receive mail. Mike recalled, "Mail from home was sporadic, when we were in base camp, our mail was a pretty regular service, depending on how often they wrote from home. When we were out in the field, or out on duty, mail was a matter of space. If we were getting resupplied by helicopters, and we were in a hot area, where the helicopters didn't have enough room, or the space, or the mail weighed too much, and we were not receiving any mail at all. They would try to get mail to us out in the field, but it wasn't a guarantee."

Mike had days where he was in battle, fighting for his country and his life, but not all days were like that. His typical day in the service consisted of receiving orders from one unit or another, about what intelligence information the intelligence units had received. He explained, "In addition, we would go search villages on search and destroy missions or search and cease missions, or we would take helicopters, and sweep through villages, looking for Vietcong, any weapons, and North Vietnamese, tunnels, anything of that nature." A typical day consisted of getting on a helicopter, flying to an area, and doing whatever the intelligence unit ordered. The type of mission depended on whether there were heavy concentrations of the enemy. If there were, it might

have be search and destroy mission. "We would check people for ID's, make sure they were all South Vietnamese," Mike said.

When I asked Mike if he participated in any major battles, he replied, "It seemed like the people back home knew what the names were more than we did. They watched it on TV. I did participate in a Tet Offensive in 1968; we were the mop up crew that went into Saigon after the military police protected the embassy. We were out in the field at the time. We were flown in by helicopter to Tan Son Nhut Air Base." From there they took armored personal carriers into the city. They helped the military police secure the embassy, and clean out the enemy in a cemetery not far from the embassy. After that, he returned to base camp, to continue the search and destroy and search and cease missions.

Transportation in Vietnam as Mike described it as basically by helicopters. "Plain and simple, everywhere we went was by helicopter. When we were moving in and out of an area, when we were moving bodies, when we were moving anything it was by helicopter. There were mechanized units, but I never had any dealing with them. Anytime we did anything it was always by air." Mike liked flying in helicopters, and never became ill while flying.

Not all of Mike's time was devoted to military duties. He also had some free time. "Entertainment, I don't think there was much entertainment. Fun, we made our own fun. When you are put in a situation like that your sense of humor changed, and we had a what people call a lot of Black humor. If some misfortune was to befall somebody we could kind of laugh at it, and is was more or less to relieve the tension. I didn't play much cards myself, but we did have them. And I did get to see Bob Hope at Christmas time."

There are many ways that Vietnam is different from America, and climate is one of them. "Well there was two kinds of weather, hot and dry, or hot and wet. The monsoon season lasted about half a year, and that was the wet season. And the dry season, the temperature never really changed, we just never had any rain," Mike recalled.

While researching the Vietnam War, I read about the involvement of children. I asked Mike about the use of children in the war and he responded, " I don't know that the Vietcong used children. I think the children fought right alongside their parents. I think the Vietnamese, the Vietcong children were probably indoctrinated in believing the same thing their parents did, and they fought right alongside of them. I don't know that they were actually being used, but yes we seen many occasions where children were in combat right along with their fathers and mothers." He also gave the details of another instance involving children.

Mike explained that at one time nearly every night at base camp someone dropped mortar rounds on them. The timing was very sporadic, and the places where they hit were very sporadic. "It was very hard to hit whoever did it, and when we finally caught who it was, it was a Vietcong and his ten-year-old son. The father would carry mortar tube out, and the son would carry the mortar rounds. They just quickly set it up outside the perimeter, tossed a couple rounds in, and would take off," he recalled.

Being in such stressful conditions as war, brings people together. When I asked Mike if experienced this closeness he said, "Yes, you got very close, whether you liked it or not you get very close to a lot of people, because you have to depend on them, you have to count on them. You learn a lot about them in a short period of time, because a lot of times your life of their life depends on each other. So you do get, you do have friends a lot of friends. There were different people that who in my weapon's platoon lasted long enough to get close to, Kelley, Klaus, Conner."

This closeness made the combat situations experienced by the soldiers very difficult. Mike explained, "Anytime we encountered any North Vietnamese or Vietcong, it seemed like somebody always was getting wounded, and yes, we did try to save them. Did I personally try to save them, yes," He gave the details of an incident when he, as a machine gunner, Mike had an assistant gunner, and a ammo bearer. "During one fire fight the assistant gunner was shot in the head, and we tried to save him."

Mike recounted another incident involving a friend of his. He said, "In one sweep through a rubber plantation

I had a friend close to me, that had a rocket go off close to him. And he was disabled and it took him. We tried to get him back behind the lines to where a helicopter would come in and try to save him. He died the next morning, or we were told he did. The helicopter did pick him up, but we tried to do what we could to keep him alive." Mike also explained that helping those who were injured happened quite often. He explained, "There were other instances where people were wounded, you have to set down a field of fire, and either try to get a medic up to them or get them back to a medic. These were assurances that happened quite regularly."

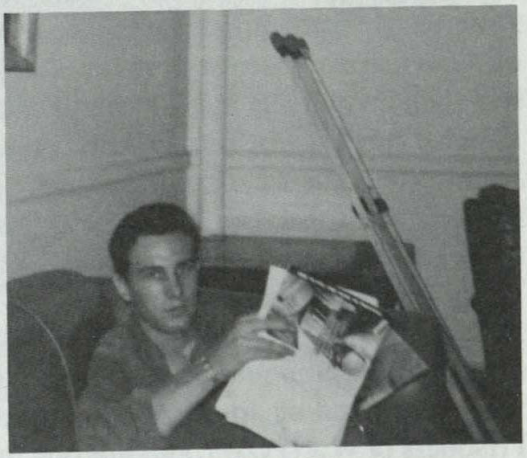
Mike not only witnessed the injuries of others, he was injured himself. "I was wounded twice when I was over there. The fourth month over there, we had gone into a village on a search and destroy mission, and had encountered a lot of resistance from Vietcong, who were in the village. On approaching one of the hooches, a grenade was tossed over my head behind me, it went off, and I got shrapnel in my back. They weren't very bad wounds; they weren't serious wounds at all. I was removed from the field, and given some antibiotics for infection, and they cleared me up and sent me back out to duty. The second time that I was wounded, was during my eleventh month over there, and I received multiple gun shot wounds when our unit was overrun by a North Vietnamese battalion. I was shot in both legs and in my right arm."

Mike had to help others throughout his stint in Vietnam, but this time others had to help him. "The second time that I was wounded I was wounded quite badly. I was separated from my unit by a little, a road and some space, and the North Vietnamese had worked its way down the road. A medic and a couple other guys had gotten to the road and dragged me back to where a helicopter could come in and pick me up and take me to a field hospital. I received immediate medical attention from the medic, he probably was the one that made sure that I kept my leg," Mike explained.

Mike's injuries were quite severe, and as a result they sent him out of the battle area. He recalled, "I left Vietnam because of my wounds. When I left the field by helicopter, I was taken to a field hospital. From the field hospital, I went to a hospital in Saigon, at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, from there they determined that I needed a lot of medical care. From there I was sent to the 106th General Hospital in Yokohama, Japan. I stayed there while they put on a lot of casts, and cleared up infection, and did what ever they could to keep my legs and arms in one piece."

Mike left Vietnam to receive medical attention at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C. He was flown in on a C130 cargo plane, from Yokohama, Japan to the West Coast, with various stops along the way, including the Philippines, Hawaii, and Oakland, California. Mike was on a stretcher during this flight.

In addition to the pain and suffering of his injuries, Mike had to endure the hate and ridicule of his own fellow citizens. He explained, "When I came back there were war protesters in Oakland, California. We went from the plane; they put us on a bus. They had to drive us through town to a hospital where we were checked out after our flight back, and the war protesters were along the route. They were spitting on the bus and calling us, 'Baby Killers', and saying we had no right to be over there, and why did we go. Carrying signs and generally causing trouble."



Mike, October 1968, at the Walter Reed Medical Center.

Unfortunately when Mike was wounded his family was not notified. They did not notify them until he called from the hospital in Japan, when he arrived at the hospital there. Mike recalled, "My mother was naturally quite upset, and when I knew that I was coming back to the states, and I was going to Walter Reed Hospital, I told them. They were there when I got there." This was the first time Mike's family saw him since he had left for Vietnam.

Mike was discharged from the service in February of 1971 with a military medical discharge. He stated, "I was not physically able to stay in the army, I could have gotten a different job in the army, but I

was not capable of being in the infantry like I was trained so I took a medical discharge."

When Mike was well enough to get out and around after each operation, he mostly stayed around Washington, D.C. He spent 1968 through 1971, in the hospital. He had seen his family quite frequently in the mean time though.

Some first activities that Mike did when he returned to the United States, was to appreciate flushing toilets and eating cheeseburgers. "Hot showers, things a lot of people take for granted, like ice cream. There was a time that I thought that I was never going to see any of this stuff again. You come to appreciate a lot of it. And you don't know if you are going to have it anymore," Mike emphasized.

After the war, Mike did not stay in touch, with anyone from the war, but he did get married. He had three children, two girls, Michelle, and Maria and a boy, Mathew. He also has four grandchildren.

Mike returned to the job that he had before he was drafted. "On my release from the service, when I was physically capable of going back to work, I went back to work in the same place, Detroit News, and finished my apprenticeship," he stated.

Mike and his wife, Cheryl, taken in 1999.

Mike's experiences in Vietnam War have made an indelible impression on him. "Vietnam, it was thirty years ago for me, but it isn't over. It is something that every veteran will keep for the rest of his life. And we don't think that we should abandon the P.O.W.'s or the M.I.A.'s. Any American who fought for their country had a right to return to it, even if it is just their remains. And that is what I am involved with now."

Mike does still have involvement with veterans of the Vietnam War. He explained, "Right now I am involved with a group called Rolling Thunder, it's a group of Veterans. The name of the group is derived from a bombing mission that used to take place over in Vietnam. That is where we got our name. Our purpose as veterans, is to educate the public on the P.O.W. and M.I.A. issue. We believe that all Americans should be brought home. No American should be left on foreign soil after a war. Over 2,089 Americans are still missing or unaccounted for, just in Vietnam. The 447 men that were captured in Laos, none of them had ever been seen again. We believe that it is the governments responsibility, that if they send us to war then they should bring us home. This is one of my main interests and, I guess hobby."

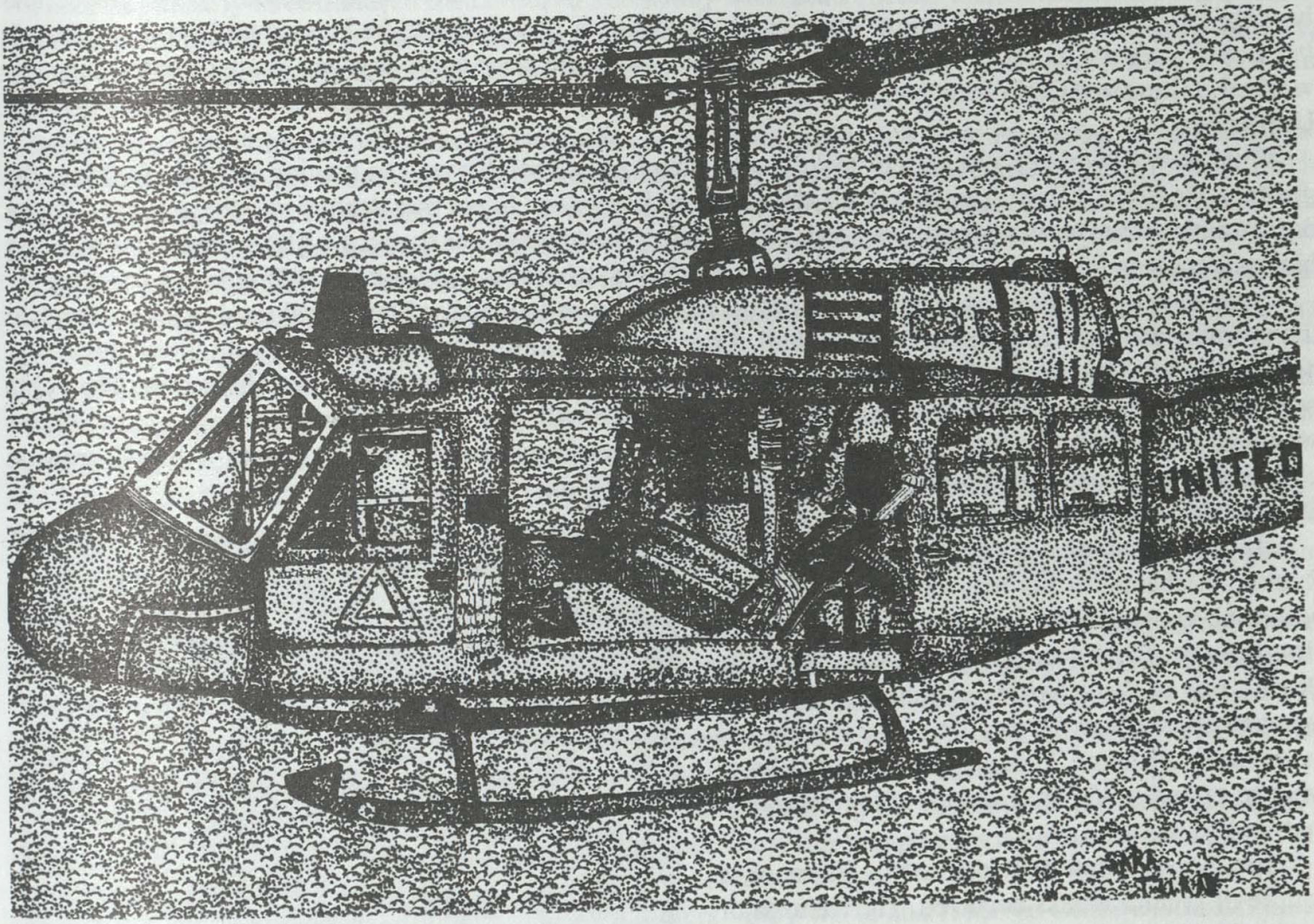
Mike also has met some other, "very good, loyal veterans who believe the same way," in the group of Rolling Thunder Veterans. Mike explains that their, "purpose is that we do not feel that this is right, and it should not happen to any veteran, not just from Vietnam. When one American is not worthy the effort to be found, we as Americans have lost. We actively support, publicize and educate the public about issues effecting the American veterans from all wars. We stand up for those who cannot speak for themselves: Prisoners of War (POW), and Missing in Action,(MIA).

Mike explained the endeavors the group does. "We want to protect

future veterans in the armed forces from having the same thing happen to them. We have letter writing campaigns. We are raising money for veterans homes, we hold fund-raising events, and give the money to needy veterans, and we particularly want to help disabled veterans, P.O.W.'s and the M.I.A's. And educating the public. We even have school seminars, that would show a class or even show the teachers what it is like, and educate them about the things that they were never around for."

As Mike said, although the war is over, it is something that every veteran will keep for the rest of his life. Mike and many other veterans are the reason that we Americans have freedom today. Many veterans died in wars for their country, and many were left on foreign soil. I agree with Mike, that all veterans who fight for their country should be able to return to their country. I most importantly thank all the veterans for doing what they did for our country. They deserve a lot more recognition. I also want to thank Mike for sharing his vivid Vietnam experience with me.

Sara Turay



A crew chief in the doorway of a 1st Calvary Division Huey aims his M-60 machine gun.

THE TRIUMPH OF A SOLDIER

"Friends are the most important thing in life." These words were spoken to me when I visited with Mr. Steven Liubakka. He told me all about his life, especially, the role he played in the Vietnam War. Mr. Liubakka's experiences helped me to better comprehend the closeness he had with his family and friends that helped him stay strong and come home from the devastating war.

Steve was born in Negaunee, Michigan on June 28, 1947. He was the oldest of four brothers and three sisters who lived on a farm in Republic. His family owned two dogs during his early years, a German Shepherd and a big Alaskan Husky. One of his most vivid childhood memories is of his father taking him fishing and hunting. Most of the time, it was only Steve and his father that went out because he was the oldest of all the children. Other than fishing and hunting, Steve liked to play typical childhood games, such as barn basketball and hide-and-go-seek.

When I asked about the most important thing that he learned during his time of adolescence, Steve replied, "How to say, 'I love you,' and how to hug people." Another important lesson Steve learned was to develop good work habits which he believes he inherited from his father. Steve's father had a very deep impact on Steve's life. As Steve grew up, he recalled he wanted to be just like his dad.

School was a part of life that Steve enjoyed the most, for he had many friends. He earned average grades, and he only missed one day of school in seven years. He believes he is lucky to be blessed with so many friends because friends are so hard to find. During his school years, he grew older and had many different jobs. He worked at Cleveland Cliffs Incorporated, Dow Chemical, and in the woods, and he attended Northern Michigan University.

While he was working at a variety of jobs and attending school, Steve was waiting to be drafted into the military. He joked, "They dragged me off the streets of Republic." Steve was drafted into the army and began basic training when he was twenty years old. His branch of the military was the army, 101st airborne. He received his basic training for ten weeks at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, where he also took his 101st airborne training.

A typical day in training was hard on everyone, physically and mentally. Steve awakened at four o'clock in the morning and ran five miles to the mess hall. After he ran, he enjoyed a hearty breakfast. Calisthenics were next on the list. Throughout the day, Steve's schedule varied between eating and doing calisthenics. The lights were out at eight o'clock in the evening. During my discussion with Steve, I asked him how the army disciplined soldiers. "Every five minutes," he chuckled. Since Steve was always smiling, the nickname "Smiley" grew on him. Another consequence for smiling so much was that he had to do extra calisthenics.

After basic training, they stationed Steve at Fort Rucker, Alabama for his helicopter training. Just before he was stationed overseas, he went to Fort Hood, Texas for Advanced Individual Training. During one of the activities of this training, they dropped Steve off in the middle of the woods and made him walk home. That taught him a little bit of what to expect in Vietnam and all of the hardships that he had to face.

When Steve's crew first arrived in Vietnam, a couple of ground attacks occurred. The first major battle that Steve's crew fought was the battle at Hamburger Hill. It occurred during the second week of May. The crew lost three choppers in five minutes

and five choppers in all.

The first time Steve's unit was fired upon in the Ashaw Valley, the crew could not shoot back. They were not in a free fire zone, so they had to establish the enemy's position and call in to see if they could fire back. However, by the time all this protocol was completed, the enemy was already gone.

Falkey, Steve, Frank, and Art

Steve's main job in the war was a crew chief on a helicopter, the Cobra gun ship. He sat in the front seat and fired the mini-guns. It was his job to keep the ship maintained. He also loaded the chopper with mini gun ammunition. The mini guns could shoot 18,000 rounds in one minute. "If you buried a football in a football field, I could find it in less than six seconds with one gun run. You get lots of fire power on one chopper," exclaimed Steve.

Weapons were a very important element of the Vietnam War. Steve used Cobra gun ships, rockets, an M-16, a M-76 grenade launcher, and a thirty-eight pistol. The most effective weapons for Steve and his crew were the rockets and mini guns.

There were nearly three hundred men in Steve's company with more officers than enlisted men. The officers received more privileges. The mess sergeants prepared the meals, and if a soldier was out helping another, picking someone up, or came in late, he did not get a meal. "I never really missed a meal. I love eating as you can tell," joked Steve.

During his tour of duty in Vietnam, Steve and his family were separated from each other by thousands of miles. The circumstances of the war made Steve's family worry about him more than he wished them to, but it was only natural. Steve's family sent letters, birthday cards, Christmas cards, cookies, and cakes. Steve was not the only one who loved the goodies; "Everybody in our company loved them too!"

Of course the conditions in Vietnam were not as they were at home. Yet, Steve still had a place to sleep, so that was all he asked for. His crew slept in tents for three months while they were helping the American division, and barracks, or "hooch" as Steve called it, for nine months.

Entertainment was not hard to find during the war. Steve and his company did many things to keep them occupied when they were not fighting. They arm wrestled often and listened to country music. "We never ran out of music," exclaimed Steve. There was also a boxer in the company. Everyone always wanted to box with him but he beat them all. They also tried to see who could build rockets the quickest. Steve also attended the Bob Hope Show. He sat in the fifth row and saw Bob Hope, Miss America, and her five runner-ups. Not all of the war was spent fighting. Many different forms of entertainment existed when they were not engaged in military maneuvers.

During the war, schooling was necessary to update skills. Steve went to turbine engine school for one week. They taught him what to expect, and how to look out for, land mines, satchel charges, and other obstacles.

On foggy nights, enemies sneaked in and put a satchel charge in his helicopter. When the sun shone on it, it blew up. Guards were necessary all around the whole perimeter. They went almost fifty feet apart to protect the perimeter. It was so black out they could not see their own hand in front of them.

One night, a typhoon off the coast of the Red China Sea brought thirty-six inches of rain in forty-eight hours. Regular combat boots were only six to eight inches high and the water was pouring over them. The water on the flight line was just trying to run off, but it could not run off fast enough.

Communication with Steve's family consisted of letters. They wrote and received letters from each other every day. Steve's first letter from Barb, his girlfriend at the time, was one hundred twenty pages long! He could not get mail for about a month, so she wrote to him every day and made a book out of it. "I was ready to be married but I didn't want to make a widow out of my wife when I got drafted." While Steve was in Vietnam, Barb

attended Northern Michigan University. She called The Mining Journal and had them send the newspaper to Steve. Barb did not watch the news, read the news, or even watch television while Steve was away. Being separated from Barb and his family was difficult for Steve.

The saddest thing, for Steve, was when somebody died at home. His grandpa, cousin, and his cousin's baby died while he was in the service. Steve told me that it was so difficult in the times of grieving because he could not go home to be with his family. As Steve thought about this more, one of the last statements said about this topic was, "It was all sad."

On the Home Front, Vietnam was very different from World War II. Ordinary people helped support the war effort by paying their taxes and giving their sons and daughters to help fight the war. Although many people were supportive, there were also many protesters. At first, Steve thought that all of them were just Hippies. Steve later realized that in this country we had our privilege to protest and say what they wanted to say. "Everybody's got their own mind," Steve noted.

To Steve, the end of the war was extremely sad because the United States did not help the people of Vietnam. If the Vietnamese did not listen to what the United States told them, they killed them. However, at the same time, if the Vietnamese did not listen to the Vietcong, they killed the Vietnamese. The farmers of Vietnam just wanted to farm and live their daily lives, peacefully and worry-free. The Prisoners of War were let loose in 1972 and Steve felt that the end was one of the saddest times. "At least they should have let South Vietnam govern their own country when we left. But that's how war is I guess. That's how politics are," Steve stated.

When they were first discharged, Steve and his acquaintances were guided to a room at four o'clock in the morning to enjoy a hearty steak dinner. Then they were brought into a room with four or five psychiatrists. "They would kind of de-program you," recalled Steve. The psychiatrists told them what to expect in the next few months as they returned home.

One of most difficult experiences returning home was the harassment in the airport. People were calling some military men "baby killers" as they got off the plane. When Steve first arrived at the airport, there were brand-new uniforms to be worn. Most of the crew that got them took them off because they did not wanted to be associated with the service. However, Steve left his on because, "I was too cheap to buy an airplane ticket," he confessed. Also, someone tried to swipe Steve's duffel bag at the airport while he was sleeping, but did not succeed.

The most rewarding thing that happened to Steve was that he came home with all parts of him. "The good Lord let me come home, and I still could count on all my fingers. You appreciate things more and it grows you up a little bit too," Steve exclaimed.

An important activity that has helped Steve after his experiences in the war was joining the Vietnam Veterans Chapter 380. There, they helped Steve get out his feelings and talk about Vietnam. They helped him to be proud of himself and the effort he put forth during the war. Steve calls the Vietnam Veterans Chapter 380 on occasion throughout the year. That is how Steve keeps contact with most of the other veterans.

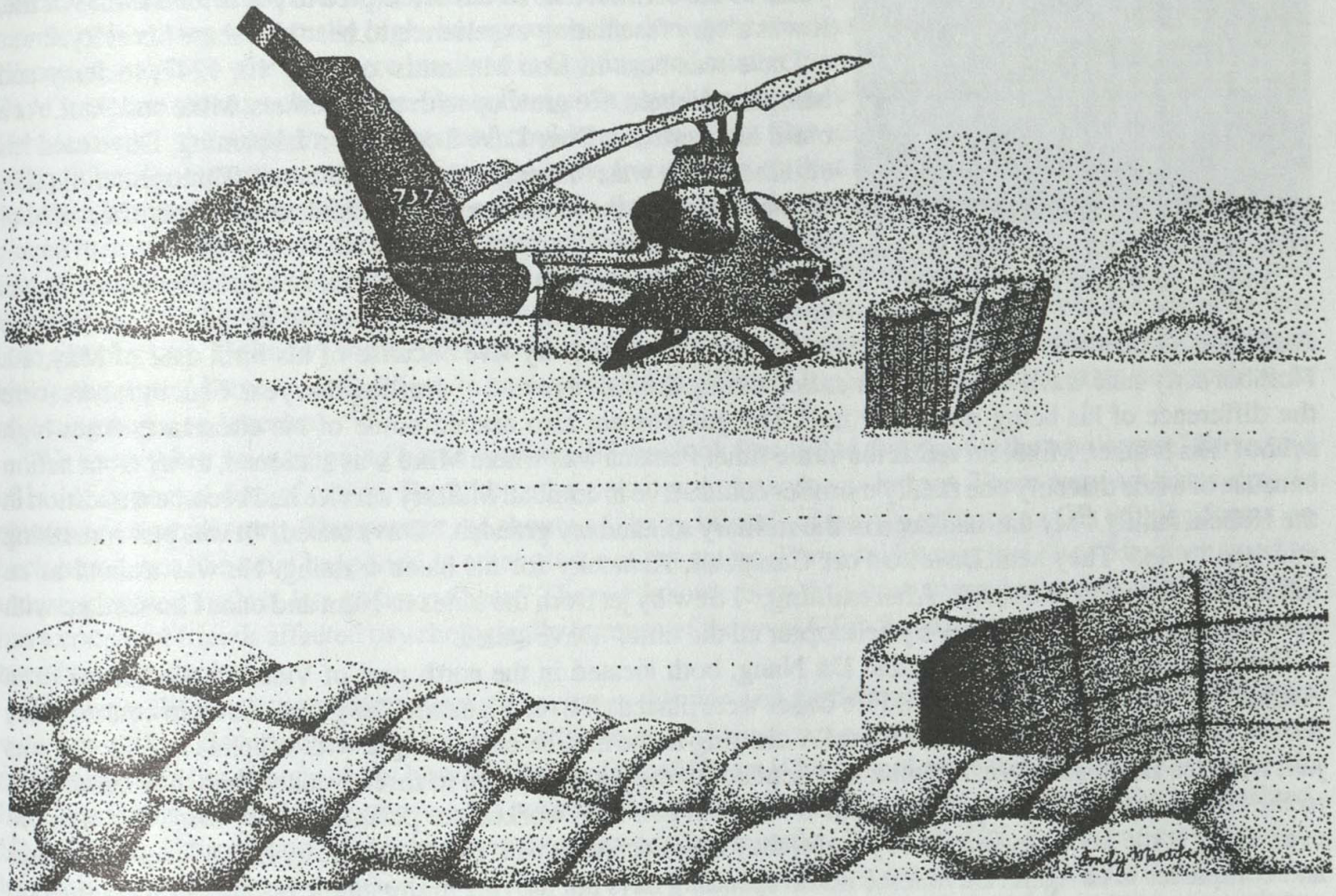
Steve has had a couple of reunions with old friends after the war. Randy Kunkelman from Ohio visited Steve last summer. They toured the Tilden Mine and Presque Isle. During the war, Mr. Kunkelman was an electronics man and repaired radios. It was very surprising to Steve that he and Mr. Kunkelman were in the same company, but had such different stories.

Steve is now happily married to his wife, Barb. They live in their home in Diorite, Michigan with their four daughters: Kasey, Kara, Kelly, and Krystal. Now, Steve is working for Cleveland Cliffs Incorporated.

Steve's wife, Barb, is now writing a book of all the letters sent and received by Steve during his service in the Vietnam War.

Steve Liubakka was a man of great courage. He went over to Vietnam and risked his life for the honor of our country. He was an interesting man to interview, and I learned a great deal about the tragedies of war and the devastating results that occurred from it.

Emily Mantila



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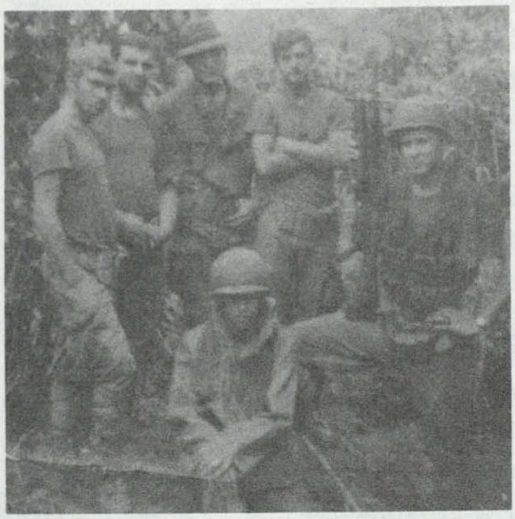
"YOU DIDN'T EXPECT TO RETURN"



Dave Hebein and his troop in the Vietnam jungle. Dave is the 2nd on the left

"When I was there you didn't expect to return," stated Mr. David Hebein. He was referring to his many experiences in the Vietnam War, specifically his expected date of return. As a young child, I can remember my fear of going to war, shooting people, and being killed. I can only imagine how horrible a point in life it was for some veterans. Recently, we sat at Mr. Hebein's home and spoke of his life during the troubling years of the conflict that he has attempted to put behind him. For me, it was a very fascinating experience to hear him share his story.

Dave was born in Iron Mountain on May 10, 1947, to Jerry and Margaret Hebein. He grew up with two brothers, Mike and Paul. As a child he resided in Deer Lake Location in Ishpeming. Dave said his childhood life was, "Average, for around here." Throughout his life, he has enjoyed the outdoors. As a child, instead of after school activities, he hunted and fished.

Dave came to serve in the Vietnam War because the United States government drafted him. "I didn't wanna do it," he told me. Dave's draft card number was sixty-five. He was assigned number sixty-five because of his birth date of May, 10. Number sixty-nine was the last number called during the active period of drafting that year. Four numbers were the difference of his being drafted or not! The government also drafted some of his classmates from high school. His brother, Mike, served at the same time. Panama was where Mike was stationed, away from action because of a rule that only one family member could serve in combat. Military service had become a tradition in the Hebein family. "My dad had been in the military so...and my grandpa," Dave stated, "It was just something you had to do." They sent Dave to Fort Campbell, Kentucky for his basic training. He was trained as an infantryman to serve in combat. After training, "I flew by jet from the states to Nam and once I hooked up with the company I was with we flew by helicopter all the time," Dave stated.

Dave was stationed in Chu Lai and Da Nang, both located in the north part of Vietnam. He served from August 1970 through October 1971. Fire bases were placed all over Vietnam. They were the main control place for the company that was stationed there. A clearing in the middle of the jungle with supplies and shelter was just what the fire bases were. A squad was sent out in the jungle for two to three weeks. Then they came back to the fire base to work the perimeter for a week. When they worked the perimeter, they slept, ate, and did everything at the fire base. Out in the jungle, they kept in contact with their fire base by radio. They used maps and compasses to navigate. Dave remembers spending days not moving in the jungle because of the monsoon rain. They hung up hooches, which were used to cover their belongings and to sleep under. They slept in hammocks. "Average. 7-8 hours a day. Sometimes we slept during t he day if we were up all night. It was like shift work," said Dave about the sleep they got in the jungle. Occasionally they could use bunks on the firebase to sleep. Big leeches were everywhere. The men had high boots they pulled up to prevent the leeches from attaching to their legs. Foods consumed were C-rations prepared over a heat tab. Dave said it was terrible. The Vietnamese supplied a radio station for the American forces. They played all the popular music of that time. Dave's favorite song was "We Gotta Get Outta This Place". Typical jungle animals and vegetation, water buffalo, snakes, small deer, wild pigs, thick triple canopy, and also mountains were the everyday setting for Dave and his troop.

Mark 2 anti-personnel hand-rifle grenade

Dave and his troop were assigned the same mission every day to search and destroy. "Every day was a battle to stay alive. It was just jungle warfare, day to

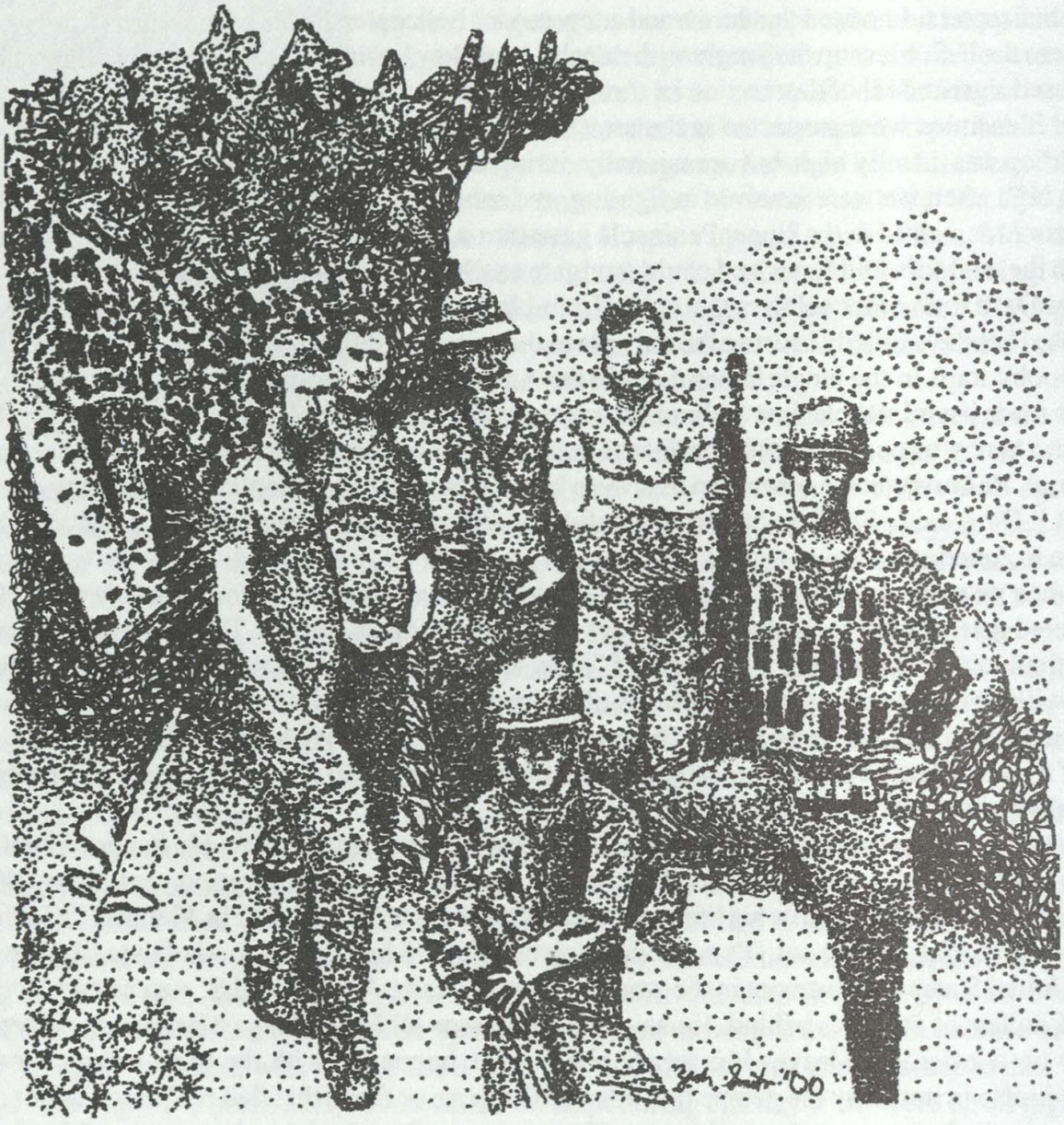
day. It didn't happen as a battle. The good guys against the bad guys. It was like guerilla warfare so you didn't know when it was gonna happen." They gave the soldiers M-16 rifles, 30-caliber machine guns, grenade launchers, explosives, different landmines, and booby traps. "Anything we needed they supplied us," stated Dave. Sometimes they wore jungle fatigues, but Dave said it was not very often they gave them those. Helicopters, primarily the Bell-UH1, were how the U.S. transported soldiers and attacked. This is where Dave got a liking of helicopters. I noticed that he owned a few model helicopters in his home when I interviewed him. Dave remembers the U.S. blew up the jungle with napalm to make clearings, for fire bases and other things. The whole war caused a great deal of destruction in some places of the jungle. They threw gas down to the ground from overhead if enemies were suspected in the area. This indicated any enemy movement. Dave told me the morale of his troop was usually high, but occasionally during the weeks they were walking the jungle, it go low. "Emotions ran high when we were involved in fighting, and relatively normal during easy times," he recounted. Dave's experiences as a child in the Upper Peninsula gave him a big advantage over other soldiers in the jungle. He was used to the outdoors and forest and could navigate easily. The adaptation to jungle life was much easier and quicker for Dave than other soldiers that came from big cities that have never seen a forest. Dave and his squads celebrated holidays quietly because the only place they could celebrate was in the jungle. The Vietnamese placed many booby-traps in the jungle to harm or kill the American men. Booby traps that attacked the feet and legs of soldiers made it a miserable time and caused many psychological problems for countless men. Dave said that running into booby traps on a regular basis was common. Dave lost a couple men from one squad he was in to a booby trap. He knows some other men that were killed in action but, "I don't remember any close friends biting the dust," Dave said. Soldiers in such stressful conditions looked forward with great anticipation to returning home to America.

"We knew when we were going home so all we did was look forward to that day for the whole year," Dave said of his of expected date of return. Back home he says it was the same as before. There were not many drastic changes in a small town. There were not shouts of "baby killers" or people spitting on GIs with uniforms on back home, not like what happened in other places of the nation. Dave said it was just like, "Hey man good to see ya, glad you made it, lets go have a beer." The war is something that Dave wants in the back of his mind. He has a couple of friends affected psychologically because of the war. A few have committed suicide while others have become alcoholics.

For Dave, the most rewarding aspect of serving in the war was getting out alive. He has not kept in contact with any of his fellow soldiers, and has put it all in the past. "It was a waste of two good years of my life," Dave said bitterly. He has thought about how his life would be different if he did not serve in Vietnam. "Maybe I might have been more successful, maybe not. It's not something to dwell on for a long period of time," he emphasized. He thinks the United States involvement in the war was a big mistake. When the U.S. evacuated Vietnam, they left millions of dollars of supplies behind. He says the battle was all for nothing. After seeing different news documentaries on television, it leaves him angry about what happened with the high-ranking government officials. Dave is also irritated by the people that attended college or those that fled to Canada to get out of the draft, while years later they were welcomed-back with open arms. Dave took his duty as something he just had to do and he did it although he did not want to. "When you're a young kid, you don't think of stuff like that or pay any attention to it. It's like it's your turn to go so you go and you don't question too much. And as you get older and learn more...I think the whole thing just left a bad taste in my mouth," said Dave.

Dave was married August 11, 1973 to Gail Pajula. They have two children, Lindy and Jill. He has been a construction worker throughout his life. As the interview closed, Dave showed me the pictures he owned from Vietnam. It must have been a hard time for many people, and I am glad to have had the experience of interviewing him. It was a great opportunity for me to interview a veteran and I learned a lot. Hopefully, more people will hear the story of a brave man that served his country through one of our country's most problematic times, the Vietnam War.

Zach Smith



Dave Hebein and his troop.

A HARD-FOUGHT WAR

"I was a major," stated Mr. Donald LaCosse referring to his experience in the Vietnam War. For over an hour Don and I talked about what it was like for him to serve as a maintenance control officer in the Vietnam War.

Donald Edward LaCosse was born to Edward and Grace LaCosse. "They were wonderful people," stated Don, "farmers and miners just like most other people here in Upper Michigan." His dad was in the mines starting in the Copper Country until he migrated to the Marquette area to work in the iron mines.

During his childhood years, Don and many of his friends enjoyed playing the sports of baseball and basketball. He liked playing cards, games like smear, kick the can, hide and seek, and tag. "I played them all, I was a tough competitor," Don said to explain the games he liked to play. Although he enjoyed playing these games, Don's favorite childhood toys were his bike and fishing pole.

Don attended elementary through high school grades in Champion. When I asked him how he got to school he exclaimed, "I hitchhiked a lot and once in a while I would borrow my dad's car." When asked if he liked school Don exclaimed, "I enjoyed it very much." During his schooling, Don's favorite subject was math. After he graduated from Champion High School, Don went to college at Michigan Technological University where he graduated as an electrical engineer. After graduating from Michigan Technological University, Don went into the Air Force where he received advanced training at many different schools.

Don did not have any difficulties adjusting to the military way of life. "I was born and raised on a farm and things had to be done on time. You could not wait until noon to milk the cow, because it was time to milk the cow, the cow needed to be milked. So getting into the service wasn't a difficult thing for me," Don stated.

Don's military training started in college because he joined the ROTC program, or Reserved Officer Training Corp. His basic training started in San Antonio. After primary flight school was completed, Don earned the rank of Second Lieutenant. The Air Force stationed Don in places such as Big Springs, Texas, Great Falls, Montana, Dow Air Force Base in Maine, Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana, Goose Bay, Labrador, K.I. Sawyer, and Vietnam. When the United States involvement in Vietnam escalated, Don volunteered to go.

Don's job in Vietnam was to help maintain, fix, and continue to patch up airplanes. After being rocketed and blasted out of Bien Wha, they moved Don and others to Ton Sun Nhut. Don and his group were shot at by what they called sappers. Sappers were enemy men that sneaked around at night with satchels and plastic that exploded and blew up everything nearby. The sappers somehow got through all the barbed wire or whatever they built to keep them out. They tried to blow up the airplanes. "You didn't know who they were," Don said, "one day could be talking to one and that night would go and blow up your whole area."

Don and the other soldiers needed a place to rest when not on duty. "How long a bed was that was the width of the room," Don said when recalling the size of the barracks, "The room was about four feet square, and there were no windows, just a door, but he said, "that was an okay place to sleep."

When the hostilities ceased Don and his crew played baseball, but during the reactions, Don could not recall any thing they did for fun. After the maneuver was over, they went down to Saigon, if they could sneak out of the post. "Entertainment wasn't entertainment," stated Don. "We would go down and visit the hospital and see how these people survived. It was just mere survival." When they got into the town, they saw people begging, for they had nothing. "It was worse than going to Mexico and the border towns," stated Don. "They had little children selling things, and I bought."

Don's tour of duty in Vietnam affected Don's family because it took him away from them for fourteen months. It was a terrible experience for his wife, and his children were too young to understand the fact that daddy was gone. "It did put a heavy toll on my wife though, mostly because of the fact that here I was in an area where she saw daily on TV what was happening not knowing if it was me that was getting shot at or not," Don said.

The one thing that Don did like about the war was the camaraderie. "I did meet a lot of wonderful people," stated Don. On the other hand, the thing that Don liked least about the war was, "People had to die and suffer.

There is nothing less desirable in the world than to see or cause someone to suffer or die," he emphasized.

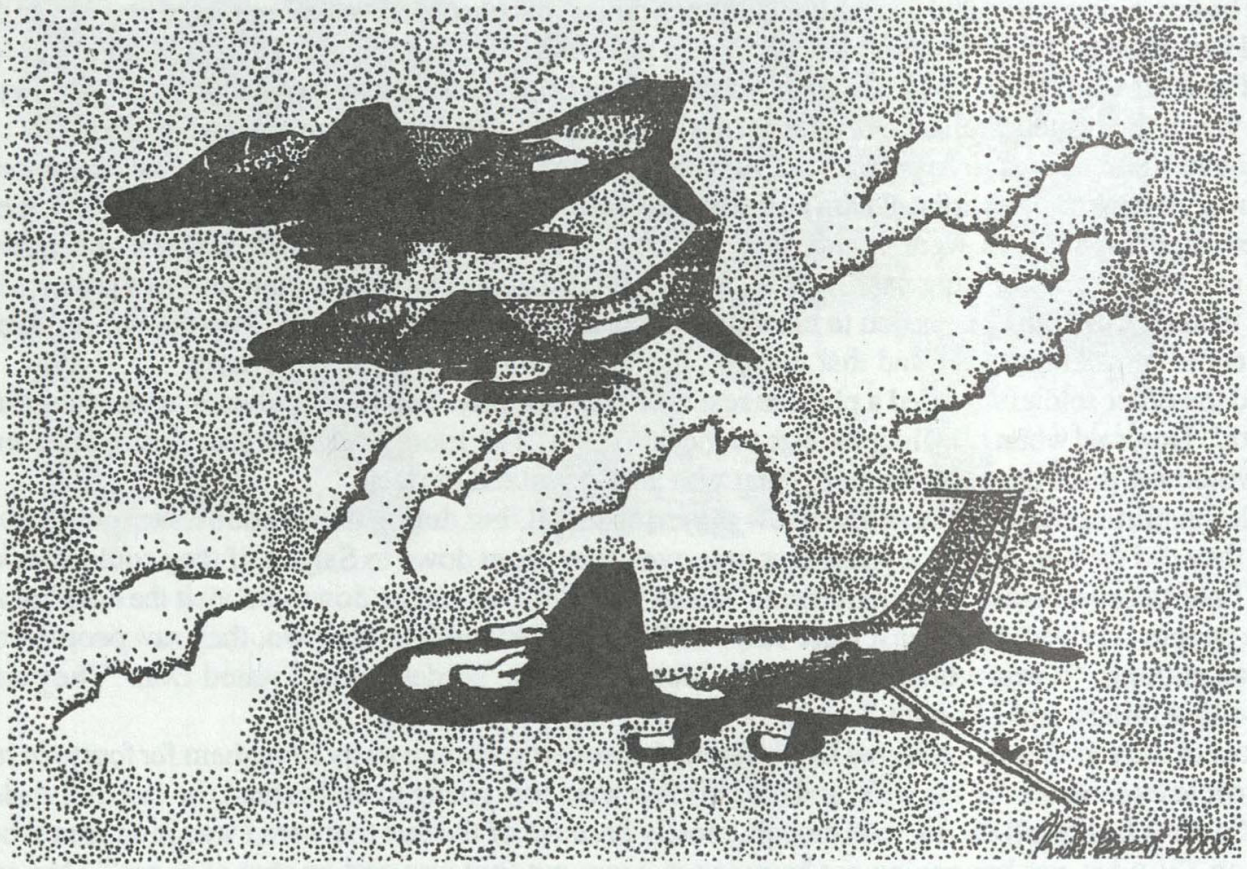
When I asked Don about the end of the war celebration he replied, "You have to be kidding, there was no celebration. It was a degradation." People spit at him and called him names. Things that should not happen to an American citizen coming home from a war "It was tragic," Don said, "to think that your own blood, your own people even your own family had little good to say about your time spent in Vietnam."

In 1979, Don retired from the United Stated Air Force. During his time, he has stationed in many different bases. His last assignment was at K.I. Sawyer where he stayed until he retired. Don recalled that while in the Air Force the most amazing thing that happened to him was soloing an aircraft. Don also flew thirteen different types of airplanes on three different continents and seven different countries.

For more than twenty years of his life Don devoted himself to protecting our country. While serving in Vietnam, Don had to make a hard choice to stay or go home. He chose to stay. "I could have done something to cause me to be sent home. There were some very ragtime times when I couldn't make up my mind if I wanted to go home bad enough to cause my self to be sent home," Don stated. "I had a difficult time staying my whole tour," he said.

I learned through this interview what a difficult time it was for soldiers in the Vietnam War. We must honor the men and women who serve our country, and be ever thankful for their sacrifices.

Kyle Barry



AN HONORABLE MAN

"The smell always comes back to you when you think of the war. You can smell it; it smelled like gun powder, smoke, matches, fire it is hard to explain" stated a friendly person known as James Allen Provost. James Provost greeted my dad and me at the door. He offered us pop and talked to my dad about work and the new house. I knew this would be a very exciting and interesting interview about the Vietnam War.

James Provost was born to Francis and Netty Provost on July 11, 1946, in Marquette, Michigan. James Provost has two brothers, Don and Bob. James was later nicknamed Jumbo. His jobs as a kid were picking potatoes on a potato farm, taking care of lawns, raking for people, and snow shoveling which he did to "scratch up a dollar here and there," he recalled. James Provost's first real job was at the pizza shop named Pizzarena in Marquette. He said the most important event that happened as a kid was the assassination of John F. Kennedy and, "It hit everyone real hard." The hardest choice for him as a young man was not going on to further education beyond high school. James Provost attended school through twelfth grade. Three days after graduation, at age nineteen, he volunteered for the military by enlisting into the Marine Corps. Soon he found himself in boot camp.

He received his basic training at San Diego, California, it was the last of the long boot camp, which lasted sixteen weeks. "It was a very vigorous and hectic day and you were ready for the sack at night," described James Provost. He received a ten-day leave after training instead of the five days that he was supposed to have. Taking the ten-day leave, he missed the outfit to which he was supposed to be assigned. Chuckling, he said, "I should have stayed with my unit by taking the five-day leave." The hardest adjustment to military life was the discipline, which was hard to accept. "They would drum it into you," he said. After his training was finished, he was flown to Vietnam to help in the war.

While James Provost was in the United States Marine Corps, he used an M-14 rifle, M-60 machine gun, and a forty-five-caliber pistol. When he was on operation, they assigned him as a perimeter guard sitting in bunkers. He did what they call a "Snoop and Poop" mission, where a group attempts to get secret information. He also joined many search and destroy missions; sometimes he worked with the South Koreans, who fought with them.

James Provost slept in tents; he put wood in them to make them sturdier, and to make a porch. They slept about eleven to twelve guys in a tent. He did not have to move his tent. All of the tents stayed at base camp. When he was not in base camp, he was on operation. He was continuously on the move; he was sometimes dug in, some places he was only half covered while he was standing or sitting.

On Christmas, James Provost and his fellow soldiers sang songs and had a decent meal. One favorite song was "We Got to Get Out of This Place"; every GI sang that song day after day. His other favorite song was "Satisfaction." He ate many meals of Spam; they prepared Spam any way they could. He ate some C-rations occasionally. Hot meals were flown in depending on the situation. For entertainment, he played football. Unfortunately, he missed every USO show presented; generally, all the guys made their own fun and entertainment.

On a typical day, he pulled off an eight-hour guard duty either in the airfield or in the field dump. The enemy mortared his group on typical days, "You got mortared every once in a while and it got hairy at times," recalled James Provost. "The rest of the time was yours," said James Provost. He took advantage of his time; he wrote notes and drank a few warm

beers. He was fortunate, for he received mail from his mother every day of the week. He also got mail from his grandparents, brothers and friends. Once he called home when he was on Rest and Recuperation leave, which was almost like a vacation. "You just raised heck for a few day and it was fun," he remarked.

James Provost went through some stressful experiences, particularly the night when John, his assistant machine gunner, was killed. Remembering a promise he made with John helped him cope with the loss. They promised each other that if anything would happen, both were going to get out of there together. "Unfortunately, John did not make it," he stated gravely. The saddest thing about the war for James Provost was the loss of so many people, especially those to which he was close. "They are here one day then gone the next," he said.

James Provost flew in and out of most places by helicopter. Occasionally he rode on a Duce and half-track. He also rode in personal carriers, which he did not like to get inside because he was claustrophobic. Also, he had visions of lead coming through it, so he took his chances up on top.

During the winter months the average temperature was seventy degrees. There were monsoons in which it rained continuously for days. When James Provost walked as part of an operation, he was on what they called lateright. When it got wet, it was like, "Trying to walk on grease," he explained.

James Provost also went on a rice run. In a rice run soldiers delivered rice to little villages such as Antong and Benshan. The mission was strictly volunteer. His group bagged some rice into three trucks, one was a Jeep with a machine gun, and two half tracks with machine guns. When his group got to Antong, they delivered the rice to the natives who were so elated and happy with the food. After they delivered rice to Antong, and they were between Antong and Benshan, his group was hit. "Pretty hard they lost a few men," said James Provost. When his group got to Benshan, at first no one came out. "Then all of a sudden they all poured out onto us, and this was the most exciting thing that happened to me during the war," he explained.

James Provost was elated when he heard that he was going to leave Vietnam. When he received his notice,

he went into some kind of survival phase where he did anything to stay alive. The first time he was supposed to leave officials notified him that there were too many casualties and he had to stay longer. When he finally left, he felt very relieved. Five of them left simultaneously. On the flight back he was worried because he heard stories about guys getting jumped and beaten; he did not know what to expect.

When James Provost finally landed in San Francisco, California, it was about two o'clock in the morning. They trucked him down to the base camp. "They confiscated all the stuff they wanted. We knew something was wrong, they wanted to send us home as stripped as they could," recalled James Provost. They then trucked him to Los Angeles where he boarded a plane and was flown to Chicago.

While in Chicago James Provost experienced something that he will never forget. "I was coming down in my uniform and this well-dressed guy was coming right toward me. He stopped right in front of me and he said 'Are you one of those war mongers, one of those killers, a baby killer? Killing, killing is that all you know?' just then I just about floored it," he recalled. A police officer came out of the clear blue, and nailed the man and took him away from him. The officer came back and talked to James Provost. The Police officer wanted to know where he was going and James Provost told him there was a delay and he could not leave. The Police officer said to him " My wife and I would be delighted if you will spend to night with us." However he had to catch the plane early so could not stay with them. The Police officer brought him to a place and said, " You will be safe here." In the morning he got up to board his plane. "The plane was full and I thought, 'here we go again.' This guy steps out of the plane and said ' You go home.'" he stated.

When James Provost got home, his family celebrated for about one week. He does not communicate with many of his war friends, but there is one to which he sometimes talks. " When I talk to him, he is drunk," remarked James Provost. He thinks that not many Veterans communicate about the war. He thinks it is that they just want to forget it.

James Provost shared his views on the war. When he first arrived in Vietnam he felt like a young man, but he grew into an old man in a hurry. Boot camp trained him to be a fighting man, but after a while he thought to himself, "What am I doing here?" While he served in Vietnam he did not know or think about what was happening in the United States. After he left Vietnam, and he looked back, he thought it was the most senseless thing that happened. He said, "Strictly economic is what started the war for us."

Currently James Provost works at the Wisconsin Power Plant. He has been working there for twenty-six years now. He spent most of his free time with his family. He also has hobbies like baseball, fishing, hunting, a little hockey, and he started golfing.

I will never forget this exciting interview with James Provost because he told me about his interesting life. He made the war come alive to me by answering my questions as much has he could. I never realized what the soldiers went through until he told me. Every time I look at a book or watch a movie about the Vietnam War, I think back to the information and experience that he shared with me.

Carl Honkala

THE LIFE OF A VETERAN

Scott Little was born on February 24, 1950, in Flint, Michigan, to Dallas and Arlene Little. He has one brother and two sisters. I knew the interview was going to be an experience for both of us. Scott informed me that he felt great that someone my age cared enough to ask about Vietnam.

At the age of eight, Scott moved to Negaunee. As he grew up, he loved to spend anytime he could at his favorite place, Pike Lake. In the meantime, he went snowmobiling, skiing and spent time with his best friend, Jeff Hiirronen, who was his neighbor while they were growing up.

Scott graduated from the Negaunee High School when he was eighteen. He was drafted at the age of nineteen in 1969. During the time of the Vietnam War there were two presidents, Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon. Scott went to basic training in Fort Campbell, Kentucky for eight weeks. His specialty was mortars, which were used as support weapons for the infantry. Scott felt that his training was really a shock to the system.

Scott arrived in Vietnam on January 5, 1970 as an infantry mortar man. There were also some friends, Tom Stanaway from Negaunee and Roger Hyttinen from Ishpeming, that were in Vietnam with him; it was good to know that he was not alone. He found Roger Hyttinen at Camp Evans, which was a base camp.

Since Scott was in Vietnam during Christmas of 1970 and New Years of 1971, he got to see a U.S.O. Christmas show. Scott thought the U.S.O. shows were a great diversion, very uplifting, for all the soldiers. He really enjoyed Bob Hope. Fourteen months in Vietnam was a long time. The days and nights were long, so he enjoyed listening to music. Groups like Credence Clearwater Revival, The Beatles, and Rare Earth were his favorites.

For transportation, the military had helicopters (also, known as Hueys), C-47 transport planes, two and a half ton trucks, and military jeeps. Their food was not just an ordinary home cooked meal; they had C -rations, which came in a can and LRPS out in the bush. LRPS were dehydrated food that he had to put in hot water. Back in the base camps, they had regular chow houses. Scott said, "It wasn't the best food you could have but it was eatable." Being out in the bush meant Scott had to sleep in foxholes, which were holes dug in the ground for protection. They dug gigantic ditches to protect them from the enemy with trees and leaves to cover them. Supplies were also kept in these places. Back at the base camps, they had plywood buildings that had cots in them. While sleeping out in the bush, soldiers had to be on guard duty; they took turns being on duty for two hours on and two hours off. "Hopefully the guys that were on guard stayed awake!?" Scott exclaimed.

There were times when Scott and his unit had to be out in the bush for two or three weeks. If he was lucky, he got to change clothes more than once. This meant that soldiers wore wet and dirty clothes that clung to their skin and played a part in making them sick or causing infections. Scott told me that he contracted a fungus known as jungle rot on his feet from the wet and mud of the jungle.

Some difficult tasks for Scott to go through were being up in the mountains, on patrol on the mountain areas, which the North Vietnamese Army controlled, or out in the bush because he always had to be on guard. He had to rely on people he did not know very well and had to trust that were there to back him up; he put his life in their hands. He also spent time on Fire Support Base Jack and Fire Support Base Rakkassan. These were small bases set up in the jungles.

Scott recieved much mail from his family, which helped him get through the long, rough, grueling times. The war helped Scott grow up and really realize that when people leave an area like the Upper Peninsula, it makes them see how naive they really are with what is going on with the outside world. One of the many things that affected Scott's life during the war was seeing the kids being burned so badly and not having enough medical assistance to keep them from death. Witnessing a buddy getting shot or wounded was also very difficult.

Miracles can happen; Scott found his to be life saving. His miracle occurred when he stepped on a mine and it did not go off. The mine was a Bouncing Betty with a 60-mortar round attached to it. If activated they go waist high and then they blow up. When he stepped on it, it did not activate! He said, "So I call that a miracle."

One thing that Scott remembered about the end of the war was the fall of Saigon. "The war went on so long that it just got to be an everyday thing," he recalled. Knowing that he could finally go home, he got very excited and counted every day for a year! When he returned, the public treated him well and his friends treated him with nothing but dignity. However there were a lot of anti-war sentiments going on at the time throughout the United States. For his service in Vietnam, Scott was awarded the Bronze Star for action against a hostile force!

At the age of twenty-five years Scott married Bonnie. They have two girls, Christi, twenty-two, and Amy, age twenty. His wife works at Wal-Mart where she is a department manager. Scott is currently a corrections officer at the Marquette Branch Prison which is a job that he likes. He is leading a great life, although the past is still present in his head.

I have learned a lot about what the veterans go through. The Vietnam War was interesting to write about and very enjoyable to listen and to learn about. I will never forget the hardship that the veterans such as Scott Little experienced.

Jenny Moyle

While sleeping out in the bush, soldiers had to be on guard duty; they took turns being on duty for two hours on and two hours off. "Hopefully the guys that were on guard stayed awake!?" Scott exclaimed.

FLIGHT ENGINEER AND MECHANIC IN VIETNAM

"I guess there isn't one event that stands out; just being a young man who loved to be around flying; I just loved to be flying, that was my biggest thrill." Forty-nine year-old Raymond Brown recently spoke to me about his life and experiences in the Vietnam War.

Raymond Charles Brown was born on September 22, 1950, in Dearborn, Michigan. Ray or "Brownie" as his friends nicknamed him, grew up in the Detroit suburbs with eleven other kids on his block. He recalls owning rabbits and always having "dogs around the house."

Ray's early school years were also spent near Detroit; he remembers enjoying the "hands on type stuff" more than book work. Ray told me that he was involved in the band through junior high and high school, and that he also pole-vaulted and played on the high school hockey team. He enjoyed building minibikes and scooters when he was young and "Anything that had to do with engines or mechanics."

It was during his high school years that he moved from Detroit to Little Lake, Michigan. It was then that he started hearing about the Vietnam War on the radio. "I lived in Little Lake, so there were only a few kids my age, so I figured I would get drafted," explained Ray. So, as he told me, he applied to the army after he graduated from Gwinn High School in June of 1969.

Ray enlisted in the army and was sent to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, for boot camp. After ten weeks of waking up at five a.m. every morning and going through strenuous physical training, Ray left boot camp as an E-2, which is a private, first class.

When I asked Ray about the difficulties in his transition from civilian life to military life, he told me, "I would have to say first off it was leaving your family and friends, and waking up one day and being with a bunch of strangers, but then how quickly everybody bonded because we were all in the same boat; we were all lonely and missing home."

After boot camp, Ray went to Fort Ustus, Virginia, for education on aviation maintenance and learned to repair jet engines and helicopters. Ray's title was the Turban Engine Repairman, and he was trained as crew chief and flight engineer.

Ray was sent to Vietnam, and he spent most of his time fixing helicopter engines, or flying in helicopters that carried provisions and weapons for ground troops... "If I had any off time the two or three places I was stationed in Vietnam were by the ocean, so we used to go down and swim," Ray recalled.

The holidays in the military for Ray were just routine work for the most part. "The mess hall put on a special meal during the holidays. We had Bob Hope come to Vietnam, but I never did get to see him; he wasn't ever in a place where I was," Ray stated.

During his life in the military, Ray encountered many sad things that remained with him the rest of his life. Ray remembers, "...seeing some of my buddies killed, the devastation that was happening because of the war, and the orphans." Ray recollects worrying about the Viet Cong capturing him, "That always enters your mind, especially when you are flying, and see other helicopters being shot down, and knowing of friends that were shot down and captured, I guess that was always a concern. You always hoped it wouldn't happen to you."

Things were looking grim in Vietnam, and, as Ray has told me, he had a good idea of the outcome of the war. "The way it was run by politicians in Washington, there was no real purpose, and I heard through basic training and boot camp from people that had come back, and when I finally got there, I had a pretty good idea that we wouldn't win it." Ray said.

Ray cites the protest marches on Washington, D.C. as one reason for the United States' ineffectiveness in the war. Ray says, "They (protesters) prolonged the war, I believe that when the communists were watching that on TV, they knew that civilians would finally convince the politicians to pull them out, so they thought, 'Hey, if we just stick it out, we'll be able to hold out long enough that we'll end up winning.'"

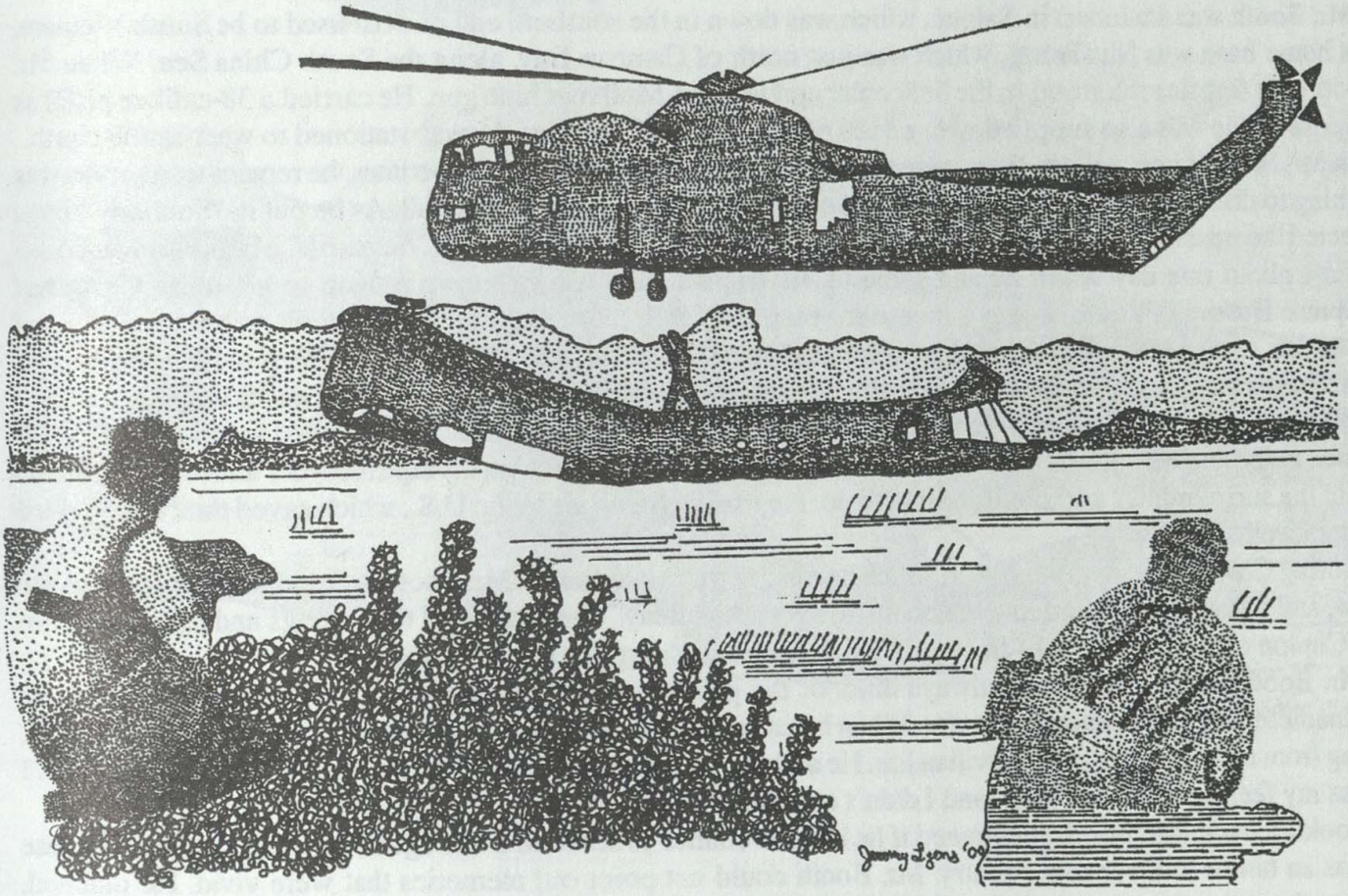
After he got out of combat, and flew out of Vietnam, Ray was disappointed with a few things. Ray said that

he was sad because of how the citizens of America treated the veterans, but he is glad," "the veterans (from the Persian Gulf War) were treated better than we (Vietnam Veterans) were." He also hopes, "Future generations that are growing up wouldn't let politicians railroad them into sending us off to other wars without a just cause."

In closing my interview with Ray, I asked him what everyone should learn from his experiences in the Vietnam War. He replied, "I guess that people should remember that when you see war movies and action movies on TV and at the show, that they're just movies and that war is very horrible and costly."

The interview that I had conducted with Ray Brown will stay with me for a long time, and help me remember what our Vietnam Veterans have sacrificed for us. I will also remember that they deserve the honor that they never received coming back home from the Vietnam War.

Jeremy Lyons



Ray recollects worrying about the Viet Cong capturing him, "That always enters your mind, especially when you are flying, and see other helicopters being shot down."

VIETNAM MEMORIES

"The most rewarding thing for me would be the chance to serve with such good people and pilots . . .that would've been the high point for me," explained Thomas Booth of Ishpeming, Michigan. As I sat with Mr. Booth at my house in Diorite, sipping coffee, with a plate of sugar cookies by my side, I knew this was going to be a very interesting interview and that I would learn a great deal about the Vietnam War.

Mr. Booth was born in Saginaw, Michigan on August 21, 1946, to Bill and Betty Booth. As Mr. Booth recalls, his most vivid memories of childhood were, "Trying to stay out of trouble." Growing up with three brothers, named Bob, Don and Dick, he had no trouble making mischief. In 1965, he graduated from Freeland High School, Freeland, Michigan. He recalled having many jobs before his notice of being drafted in the military. He expressed that when he realized that being drafted was imminent, he went to the Air Force recruiter. In his mind thinking that if he were "gonna get drafted," he wanted to pick his own brand of the military. So, he went proudly to the Air Force recruiter and picked his own location for the military.

Mr. Booth received his basic training in San Antonio, Texas at the Lakeland Air Force Base. From there, he was stationed in Wichita Falls, also in Texas, at the Shepherd Air Force Base where he attended basic helicopter repair school for two months. Booth transferred to Minot, North Dakota where they took crews back and forth to the missile silos with their UH-1F helicopters.

Mr. Booth was stationed in Saigon, which was down in the southern end of what used to be South Vietnam. His home base was NhaTrang, which was just north of Camron Bay, along the South China Sea. When Mr. Booth was fighting, he stood in the helicopter and used an M60 machine gun. He carried a 38-caliber pistol as a side arm. He was also supplied with a M16 rifle. Later in his service, he was stationed to work in the North.

In Mr. Booth's perspective, there were no "typical days" in the military. Sometimes, he remembered, there was nothing to do, and sometimes there was so much to do, he could not finish it all. As he put it, "So many things affected the mission, the weather was one thing. Rain could go on for days [in Vietnam]." Mr. Booth went on to tell me about one day when he and some of his friends went to downtown Saigon to get some Christmas supplies. During this time, it was a monsoon season. As they were picking up their items, it began to rain and the streets disappeared. They could not go on, because the water was about two feet deep so they had to wait until the water receded and could head back to base. It was one of many times he will never forget.

When I questioned Mr. Booth about how he communicated with his family, he described writing letters while he was in the states. Once he arrived in Vietnam, he recorded his voice on his tape recorder and told his parents about the surroundings and duties he had to do. He mailed the tapes to the U.S., which saved time and seemed to work well.

During Christmas, one occasion in which he missed his family most, Mr. Booth, four pilots, the maintenance crew, and a few chiefs decided to celebrate the giving holiday. They gathered their things and headed over to the Cholon area. They bought fresh vegetables and had a party in the bungalow.

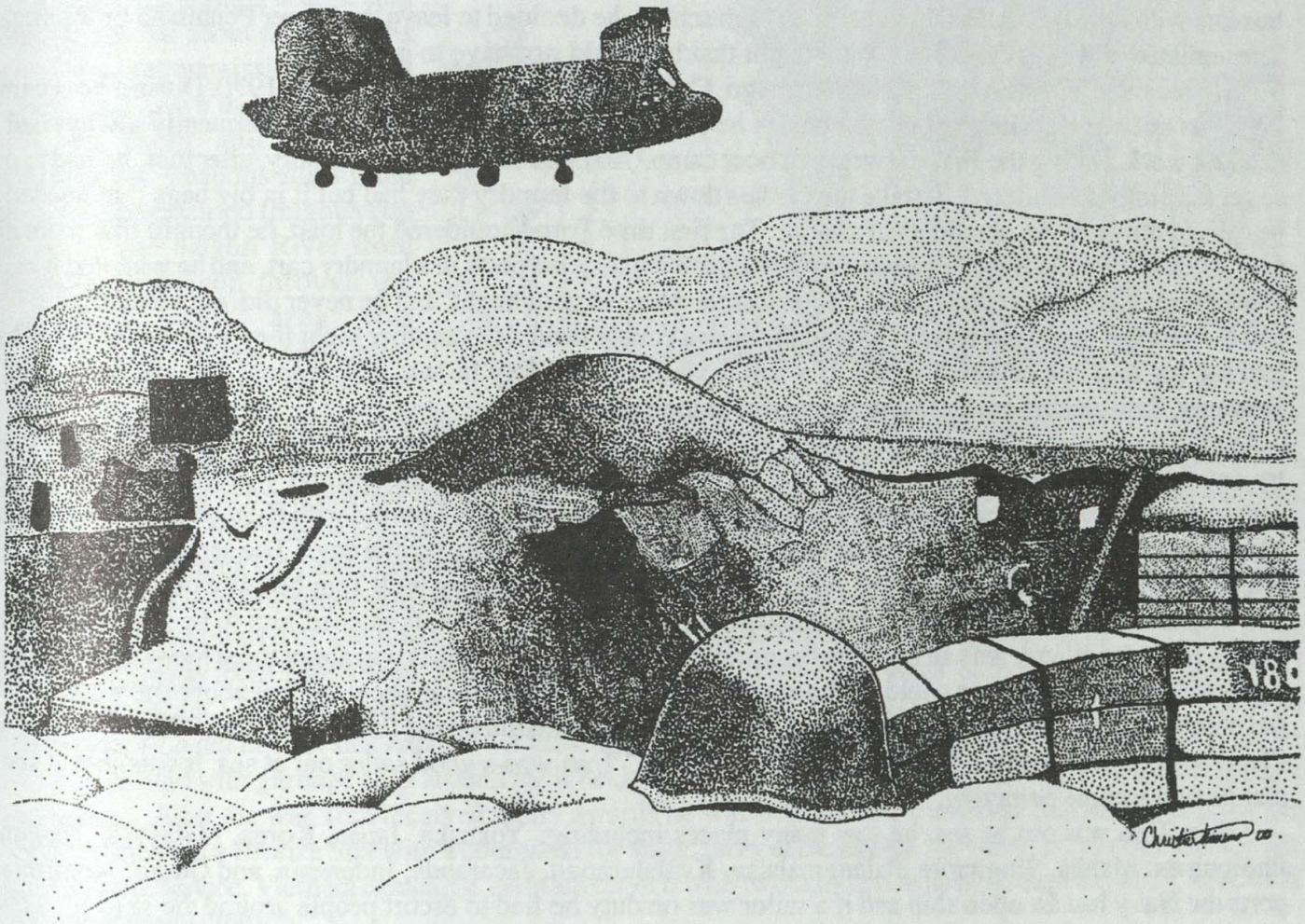
Mr. Booth states that he will always think of the people who were left behind in Vietnam, and of all the Vietnamese that had to endure the war. When he came back to America, he admitted it was a rough transition, going from military life back to civilian life. He added, "In your mind, you're still back in Vietnam. It was hard. I guess my feeling was I left there and I didn't complete the job."

Looking back, Mr. Booth mentioned if he had the chance to serve in a war again, he would want to because it was an honor to serve our country. Mr. Booth could not point out memories that were vivid. He claimed, "Everything that happened to me was vivid. You know, it was kind of exciting, but it seemed like there was adrenaline rush all the time. . .flying in hot situations. . . you felt pumped up."

Today, Mr. Booth is retired after working at Ameritech for some time. He is happily married and has three children, Sarah, Emily, and Clay. He goes to all the Vietnam reunions that he can, and enjoys being with his war friends. The Vietnam War was an experience that he never forgot and probably never will. It influenced his life

and many others in the war. We all need to remember the veterans in their struggles and the hard times they faced and need to appreciate what they did for us. The veterans gave us freedom and hope for a better life. Without them, I do not know where we would be today.

Christie Stiemsma



A BOATENSMATE DURING THE VIETNAM WAR

Born in a hospital bed in Detroit, Michigan on March 27, 1952, Thomas Richard Ogle was the name his parents gave him. Tom recently shared details of his life and especially his experiences in the Vietnam War.

Tom was the oldest out of five children. He has two sisters named Beth and Kim and two brothers named Edward and Dean. When I asked Tom what was his favorite band as a kid he said, "Beatles I guess." Tom's favorite song was the Association's "Cherish". He told me that his favorite toy as a child was his bike. Tom had two favorite TV shows as a kid, and they were *The Ed Sullivan Show* and *Candid Camera.* Al Kaline was a hero for many children including Tom because he liked and played baseball. Tom's favorite cookie was and still is oatmeal raisin.

Tom had many jobs before the war. He was a janitor for the Marquette High School and the Sandy Knoll School. In the summer of 1969 he worked as a laborer for the Cliffs Dow Charcoal Company where he loaded boxcars with charcoal. After Tom got out of high school, he decided to leave the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Tom enlisted in the Navy, because he thought that he would not have to go to war.

Tom received his basic training in San Diego, California: from July to October of 1970. During boot camp, Tom was not a good sailor, in his opinion, for he was often getting in trouble and consequently always had to do extra work. During the first six-weeks of boot camp, Tom had to do his own laundry, after that, he had to pay to get his clothes laundered. To take the clothes down to the laundry they had put it in big bags that needed to be carried down on the shoulders of a sailor. The first time Tom shouldered the load, he thought that there had to be an easier way. When Tom returned for his clean laundry, he put it in a laundry cart, and he wheeled it back. While Tom did that, everybody said, "Tom you are going to get caught" but he never did. On some nights Tom and his buddies snuck out and ran around the base a couple times. On another night they went to the chow hall looking for mid rats or small meals. If a sailor were not on duty he was not supposed to get these meals. However, Tom and his partner were successful in their attempt.

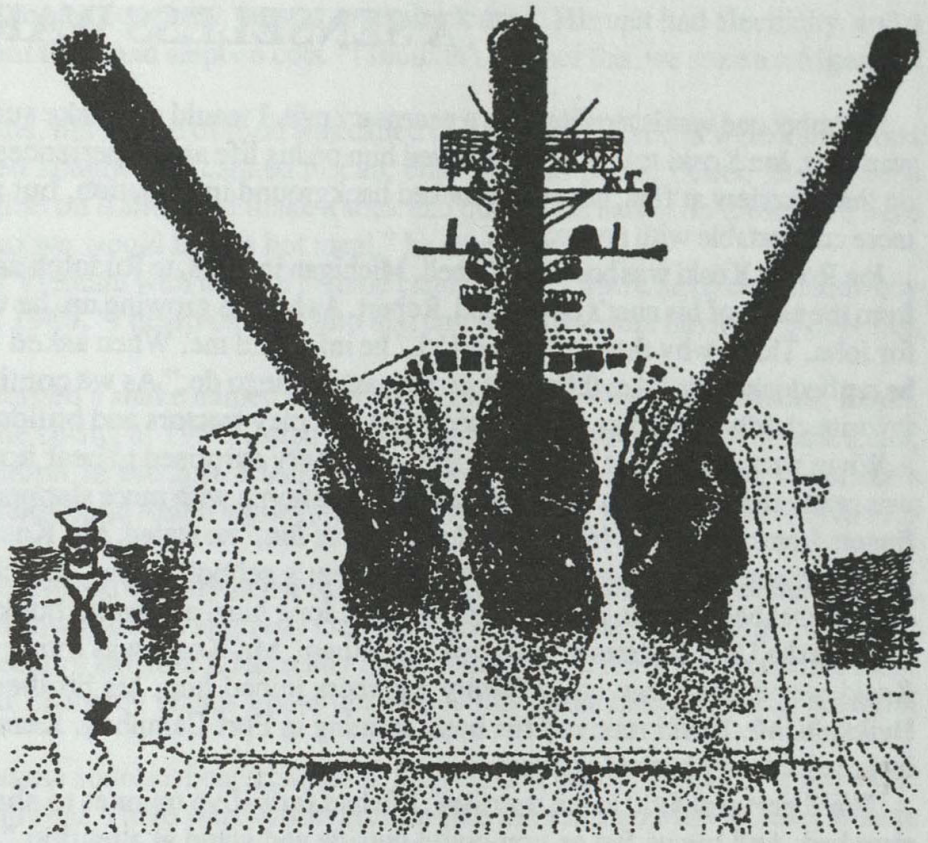
During boot camp, officials came around and asked if anybody wanted to be a SEAL, Tom said, "Yeah I will try out. I passed the physical; you had to run, swim, do pushups, and sit-ups and you had to do it under a certain time. I was eighteen years old; I was in the best shape of my life. I passed with flying colors. They asked, 'do you want to be a SEAL?' No, I just wanted to get out of boot camp, for the day." The sergeant replied, "We are not here for your entertainment." After that day they were so angry with Tom because of what he said.

When Tom finished his basic training and was out at sea, they often threatened him to be sent to Johnston Island. Johnston Island, was an island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. It was about three football fields long; it was not very big. A person could walk around it in a half hour and it was about six feet above the water. It was flat with no trees and some small buildings. Explaining the Johnston Island threat Tom said, "That was the only thing they could do to keep me from getting in trouble." Tom was a good sailor out at sea. It was just at shore that he had trouble behaving.

When Tom was out at sea, he saw many places including: Yokuska, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Manila, Singapore, Palangmalaisa, Kvalalumpan, Jacaranda, Indonesia, and Guam. At different ports the Navy had an open ship and if a sailor was on duty he had to escort people around the ship for a tour. If he was not on duty, he could go anywhere in town or what they called "the beach." Sometimes Tom and other sailors that were off duty, looked for the best looking girls and took them on board and gave them a sort of special tour. Tom took them to the pilothouse, the galley, up into the gun mounts and turrets. One time their ship had stopped in Manila and had an open ship until five o'clock. The police came to close it down, and everyone remaining in line was very angry. The line was a quarter mile of people wanting to get aboard the ship. The forced closing resulted in a riot on the pier. Civilians tipped over a cop car and lit it on fire. The police were throwing tear gas and hosing people with fire hoses. The waiting people had merely wanted to tour the ship.

One job that sailors had was checking Bum Boats. If sailors were not doing this checking, they conducted

night raids. Once the ship was doing a raid on Haiphong Harbor and two Migs attacked the ship. Americans shot one right out of the sky. "We hit the other one but it made it back over land, "Tom explained. When the boat was attacked, Tom was at the helm. While driving the ship he could see them buzzing around. Tom was just glad that they did not do a kamikaze attack on the ship.



Tom at an award Ceremony on the Oklahoma City.

When Tom was first on river patrol, The USS Krishna was the ship Tom was on for about nine months until it was decommissioned. They went up and down the rivers doing raids at night and checking bumboats for weapons during the day. Tom also escorted freighters up and down the Saigon River from Vonchow to Saigon through the Wroungsot. This area was considered an outlaw and never really controlled by anybody. Wroungsot was full of modern day pirates. It was like running the gauntlet taking freighters through there. After the decommissioning of the USS Krishna, the unit was turned over to the Vietnamese as part of a program. Tom was supposed to be an advisor but he ended up on a river boat being a captain. Next Tom went to an oilier called the Talugla, Tom was on that ship until the Navy decommissioned it in April of 1972. In May of 1972 Tom went to the Oklahoma City and finished out his enlistment on the ship. When Tom was on the Oklahoma City, he was involved in many minor skirmishes. The biggest battle Tom has been in was the Eastern Invasion of 72.

Tom was never injured or wounded, but he got close. An AK47 round stitched right along the bulkhead from about an inch away from Tom's head. There were fourteen hundred men on Toms' ship when they went through an intense typhoon. Only two hundred of them did not get sick, and Tom was one of the two hundred. Tom and other sailors who did not get sick had to do double duty. Some essential personnel that absolutely had to be on duty went around with garbage bags around their necks so they could vomit if they had to without leaving their duty stations. After the war Tom received many awards he was nominated for a Silver Star, but he did not get it. He was awarded a Bronze Star with a combat B for valor, navy achievement for valor, Navy combination for valor, Vietnam service, Vietnam campaign Vietnam service with two stars and American expeditionary force with a star presidential citation.

Years later, Tom married Cindy in May of 1980. During their marriage, they had two children Kelly nineteen, and Carrie seventeen. Some of Tom's hobbies include running, biking, doing Triathlons, and logrolling. Since the Vietnam War Tom has been a janitor, a construction laborer, and he is presently employed at the Marquette Branch Prison. It seemed to me that Tom had fun sharing his military experiences with me. When I was at Tom's house he set the environment with his many tales of battles where he won, lost and of boot camp. What I think Tom had the most fun telling me about were the stories of things that he did to people during boot camp, and I really enjoyed hearing them.

Andrew Hill

A SENSELESS WAR

"Number one war is terrible. It is a necessary evil. I would say make sure you support the soldiers fighting the war." Mr. Jon Koski told as I interviewed him on his life and experiences of the Vietnam War. I was hesitant to do the interview at first, because I lacked background information, but as we began to talk, I quickly became more comfortable with my project.

Jon Robert Koski was born in Hubbell, Michigan in 1948, to Rudolph and Edith Koski. His middle name came from the name of his aunt's boyfriend, Robert. As he was growing up, he was often called Usi. "That's Finlander for John. That's why they called me Usi," he informed me. When asked what chores he hated doing as a child, he replied jokingly, "Anything my parents asked me to do." As we continued to talk, he identified some of his favorite childhood games. "Oh I used to love to play tractors and bulldozers... I still do," he added.

When we talked about his school life, I was very surprised to hear how strict teachers were. "Grade school was really strict. I hated it with a passion. I came home with more slapped faces and ripped clothes and slapped fingers from the teacher. High school was a lot of fun," he stated. Mr. Koski completed four years of high school and six months of college. "And fifty-two year's school of hard knocks," he added. Mr. Koski remembers vividly that bell-bottom pants, the hula-hoop, long hair, and white bucks were popular during his youth.

When the United States sent troops to Vietnam, Mr. Koski was living in Three Lakes, Michigan. When Mr. Koski was drafted, two other family members joined him, his brother Richard Koski, and his cousin Bob Heikkala. Mr. Koski received his basic training in Fort Campbell, Kentucky. It lasted about eight weeks and included lots of physical activity.

"We'd get up at 5:00 in the morning. We had forty-five minutes to shave and shower, get dressed and make your bed. And run as fast as you could outside and stand at attention," he recalled. They had ten minutes to eat to start the day, before he ran back outside and did calisthenics for an hour. Next, he went to classes on shooting and hand to hand combat and military justice. After that he ate dinner and then studied in his barracks. Lights were out at 8:00 P.M. After his eight weeks of basic training, in September of 1967, he received the rank of Private E2 and went on to Fort Eustis, Virginia for helicopter training or AIT (Advanced Individual Training). When Mr. Koski finished helicopter training in January of 1968, they immediately shipped him to Vietnam. "I started out as a door gunner on a helicopter and then I ended up as a flight engineer." he stated.

When Mr. Koski entered the Vietnam War scene, a basic day sometimes consisted of missions. " Depending on if we had a mission to do, a guy would come out of operations and that's where they planned all of our days of flying," as he explained. He was awakened two hours before he was scheduled to fly out and told when he was scheduled to fly and where he was going. They ate breakfast and then depending on what kind of mission, they readied the helicopter. Before they left to go on their mission, the copilot came and inspected the plane with them. They then flew out to their mission. "And it could be medi-vac, that's an air ambulance, or it could be resupplying, bringing supplies back and forth, to bringing troops in and out, or when I was on a gun ship it would be assaulting the Vietcong, enemy position," he explained.

After Mr. Koski finished his mission, he came back to the barracks to do helicopter maintenance, inspect it and eat dinner. Last, he went to operations to tell operations that his helicopter was ready for the next day. He then went to bed around midnight."

In February of 1968, Mr. Koski witnessed battle. He was in country for three days and he was sent out as a helicopter crew member. "They started shooting at us while we were resupplying a fire base," he stated. A fire base is where artillery is kept and where we shot out at the enemy. They were bringing ammunition and supplies into a fire base as they were going in, the Vietcong were shooting at them in and out.

In Vietnam, Mr. Koski did not have barracks instead, they had what is called a hooch. "All it is, is a little tiny shack. There were four rooms to the hooch and two guys to the room. So there were usually about eight," he explained. Sandbags surrounded the hooch so when there was rocketing by the enemy, the shrapnel landed on the ground instead of in the hooch.

Because Mr. Koski he was in a helicopter company, he was in the back area. His unit had electricity, and a diesel generator. They also had a cement floor and slept on cots. "I shouldn't tell her this, we stole a refrigerator. So we had a refrigerator," he stated.

When Mr. Koski flew out on missions, his source of food was called C-Rations. C-Rations were a small box that contained canned peaches, canned spaghetti, a canned biscuit, crackers and peanut butter. "But to keep it hot see, our helicopters had a jet engine on it and we'd make a stick and put a little basket on it when we were flying and then that would heat it up so we would have a hot meal," he explained.

Mr. Koski shared many memories of Vietnam with me that included and incident where he rescued a little boy from the top of a house, in October of 1968. "I heard on the radio that day that they were having big flooding, that's a good memory," he recalled.

An unusual memory he shared concerned a snake named Ralph. Sergeant Landon, who was with Mr. Koski, found Ralph, the Boa Constrictor, in the spring of 1967. Ralph went to a zoo in Los Angeles, California. Later, Sergeant Landon's daughter found Ralph in the zoo. I learned there was a plaque underneath the snake's exhibit that told that Sergeant Landon had found Ralph while in Vietnam. Amazingly, this snake grew from 12.5 feet to 30 feet in that time!

Since Vietnam was such an underdeveloped country at the time, helicopter transported most of the soldiers. At the time, there was only one major highway called Highway One and a few backroads. "One thing I remember about Vietnam is that it's a beautiful country because it has really high mountains. It has high plains. In a place called Natrang there is a Buddha that probably stands about ten stories tall about the city block, beautiful country," he said.

In Vietnam, the soldiers all had the same source of entertainment. Singers and bands from all over the world came and sang and danced for entertainment. There were different clubs like the Enlisted Man's Club. "If there was no entertainment you'd just sit there and drink beer because that's all there was to do," he explained.

Around the holidays family members sent Mr. Koski baked goods and at Christmas times a Christmas tree. Several holidays were spent flying out hot food to troops fighting the war. One Easter, some troops, including Mr. Koski, were flown to Cameron Bay for a sunrise service on the ocean. Mr. Koski left Vietnam in February of 1969.

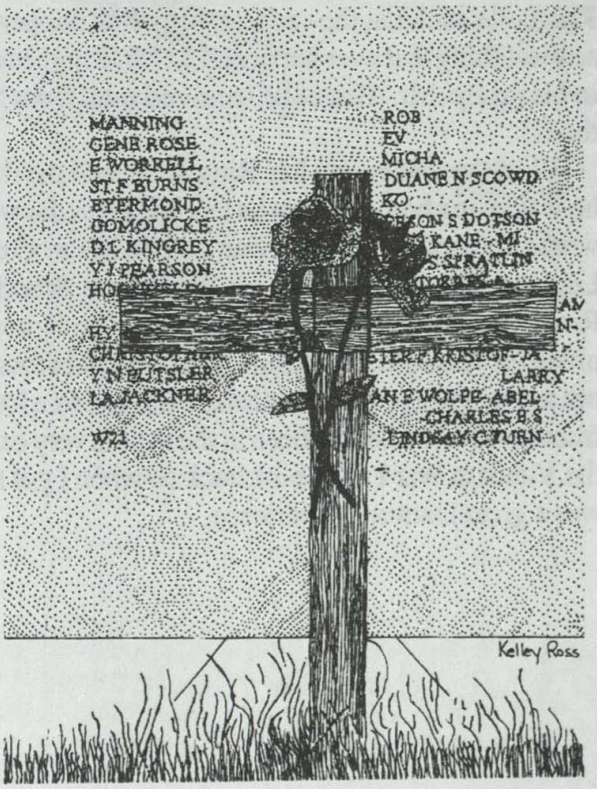
Mr. Koski married his wife Linda, on August 23, 1969 at the Methodist Church in Michigamme, Michigan. They now have two adult children named Daniel and Jennifer.

Since serving in Vietnam Mr. Koski has had a various array of jobs including: truck driver, bulldozer operator, loader operator, firefighter, and emergency medical technician. He credits his father, Rudolph for his positive influence on life "He gave me a real strong work ethic." Mr. Koski advised me.

"If I were to give anybody some kind of advice no matter what to do in the world. Treat people the way you want your parents, your boss to treat you. You can't go wrong," he said.

I had a wonderful time conducting this interview. I learned a lot about the Vietnam War and how important it really was. The facts I learned were very interesting and educational, but the most important things I learned were the feelings that a helicopter crew member had during this distressful time. This was a very brutal and senseless war and that is why it is so important for people to learn from it so it will never happen again.

Kelley Ross



MEMORIES OF VIETNAM

Hearing about Mr. Ronald Ringuette's childhood and war memories was an interesting learning experience for me. He shared a great deal of information about his experiences in the Vietnam War, and I really enjoyed learning about the war from someone who had served in Vietnam.

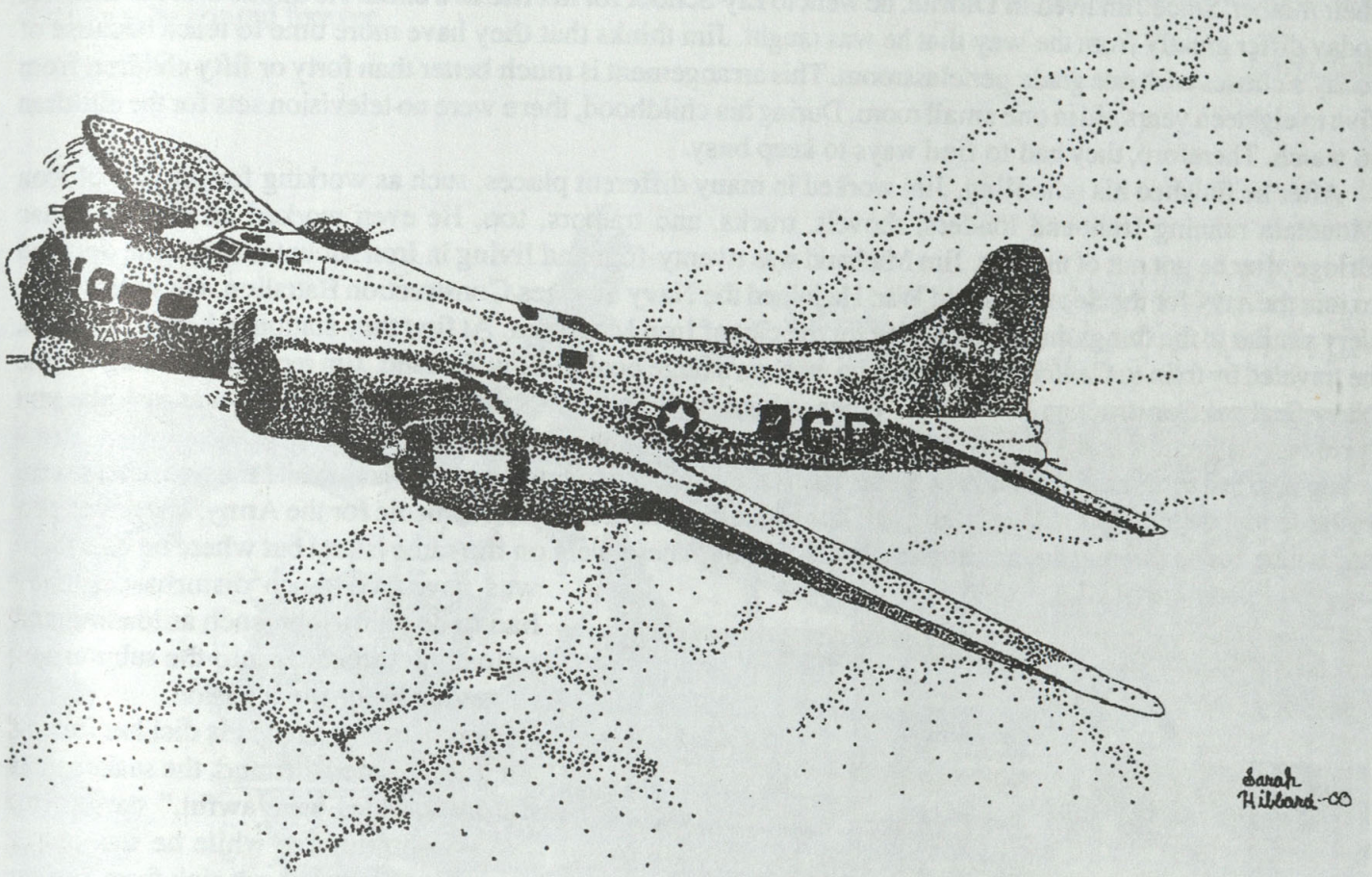
Mr. Ringuette was born in Republic, Michigan in 1947. He grew up with one brother named Ray Ringuette. Mr. Ringuette was named after his father, Ronald Robert. "Those were the good old days," Mr. Ringuette replied, referring to his childhood years. Mr. Ringuette stated that his childhood was enjoyable. He grew up with his mother, Beaula, and his father, Ronald. Mr. Ringuette's father also served in the Army. Mr. Ringuette had a nickname as he was growing up; it was Ringo. He also stated that he had many memories of his childhood in Republic, Michigan. When Mr. Ringuette was seventeen years old, he moved to Ishpeming, Michigan.

Mr. Ringuette was drafted when he was nineteen years old. On September 16, 1966, he left Channing, Michigan and traveled by train to Fort Polk, Louisiana where he received his basic training. Basic training lasted for six weeks and after that was over Mr. Ringuette went to AIT training for another six weeks. Mr. Ringuette explained what a typical day in basic training was like. "It was rough," he exclaimed, "there was a lot physical training." Mr. Ringuette was trained for infantry duty. After all of Mr. Ringuette's training was over, he was a Private First Class.

Mr. Ringuette was sent overseas to Vietnam in 1967. A typical day on duty for Mr. Ringuette was to look for the Vietcong, so he walked approximately fifteen to twenty miles a day. Food for the soldiers was flown in by helicopter three times a week. When that was gone, the soldiers ate C-rations. Mr. Ringuette was never injured in the line of duty. He said that the hardest thing about going to war is being apart from his family and friends. "The war really did not change my life," said Mr. Ringuette. Mr. Ringuette has met some famous people; for example, he met West Moreland, a four star general in Vietnam. When Mr. Ringuette was over in Vietnam, he won three bronze stars. The most difficult thing from going to civilian life to military life is all the work and training he had to do, and not having his family around. "A lot of hard times," is the phrase that comes to Mr. Ringuette's mind when he thinks of the war years. Mr. Ringuette was in Vietnam over Christmas time. Mr. Ringuette said that the saddest thing that happened to him in Vietnam was many of his friends were killed. The scariest thing that ever happened to Mr. Ringuette was while he was in Vietnam, sixty men out of 180 were killed in his group. Mr. Ringuette received mail from his family twice a week and that is how he stayed in touch with them.

When the war ended Mr. Ringuette said the thing he can remember most is the good feeling of knowing that he was going home. When he left Vietnam, he went to his current home in Ishpeming, Michigan. Mr. Ringuette works at Good Year for a living and he has worked there for twenty-seven years. Mr. Ringuette has two children, Lee and Jared Ringuette. Mr. Ringuette described himself as a lenient parent rather than a strict one. Mr. Ringuette likes to hunt and fish when he is not working. Mr. Ringuette has a dog-named Whiskers, who is nineteen years old. Mr. Ringuette has kept in touch with a couple of his friends from the Vietnam War, but he has not made it to any reunions held. I have read a lot about the Vietnam War, but hearing information about the war from someone who has been in the war is very exciting for me. In the future, whenever I will think or learn about the Vietnam War I will think back to when I got to talk and interview some one who has experienced war life. It was a great learning experience.

Sarah Hibbard



Sarah Hilbard -00

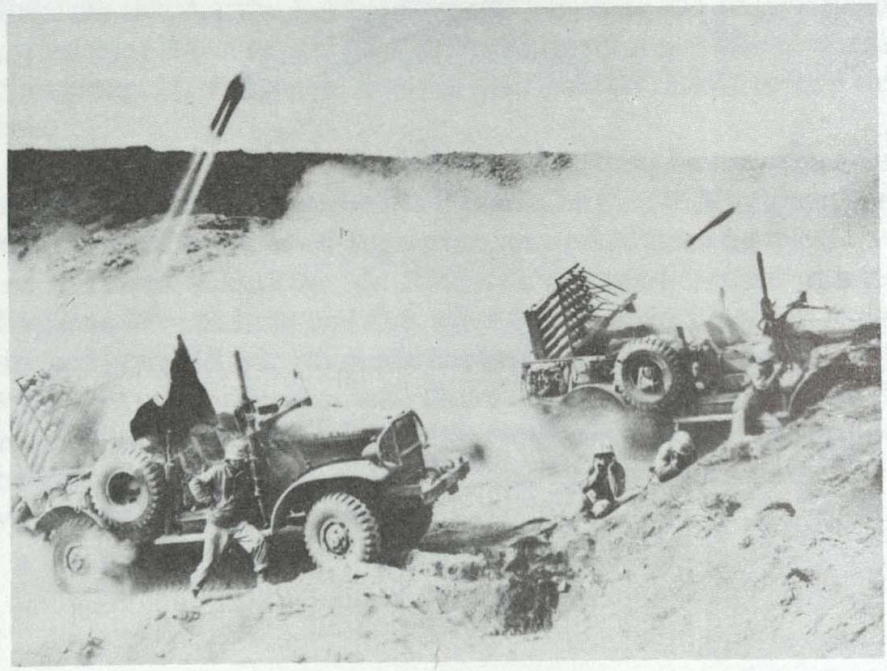
THE EXPERIENCE OF A LIFE TIME

"It was a great experience I'll tell you that, I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world that's for sure, but I wouldn't want to do it again," commented eighty-two year old James John Michaud.

James John Michaud was born in Diorite, Michigan on December 7, 1918. His parents were Joe and Alice Michaud. Jim had eleven brothers and sisters. His family is from Canada. While he was growing up his father became annoyed when his children would not speak French to him. He protested that the children were French and they were supposed to speak French. However, his mother argued that the children were born in America and they were going to speak English. Instead, it ended that they spoke French to their father and English to their mother. Since Jim lived in Diorite, he went to Ely School for his life as a child. He thinks that the teachers today differ greatly from the way that he was taught. Jim thinks that they have more time to teach because of today's classes with one grade per classroom. This arrangement is much better than forty or fifty children from five to eighteen years old in one small room. During his childhood, there were no television sets for the children to watch. Therefore, they had to find ways to keep busy.

After he finished his schooling, Jim worked in many different places, such as working for the city of Iron Mountain running front-end loaders, shovels, trucks, and tractors, too. He even worked on the Mackinac Bridge after he got out of the war. Jim Michaud was twenty-four and living in Iron Mountain when he decided to join the navy for the Second World War. He joined the Navy Seabees Construction Battalion. His duties were very similar to the things that he had done for the city of Iron Mountain. At first they stationed him in Virginia, he traveled by train to California, and then he went on a huge boat to New Zealand. Jim received training for the Navy Seabees Construction Battalion. "When you go through the training for the Seabees it was just like you were in a different world, you never had time to think about home," Jim stated.

Jim also had three other brothers in the service. One of his brothers was in the Navy while the two others were in the Army; the family totaled four boys in the military. One brother was a medic for the Army. Jim never saw any battle, for he did mostly maintenance work. The Japanese were on the same island but where he was there was never too much disturbance. They had to do many jobs, such as loading and unloading torpedoes into the submarines to get ready for the invasion.



Shootimg torpedoes from the back of a military vehicle.

Jim shared with me his dislikes during the war. "I hated the mud, the snakes, and the mosquitoes were awful," stated Jim. Jim was not injured while he was out at sea, although he did get sick from Jungle Fever. "I did get sick in New Guinea, I spent time in the hospital in New Guinea, and stayed in the hospital there for a couple of months. Then from there on they put me on limited duty until we got to Rhode Island and then I went and stayed in a hospital there for two months," Jim told me.

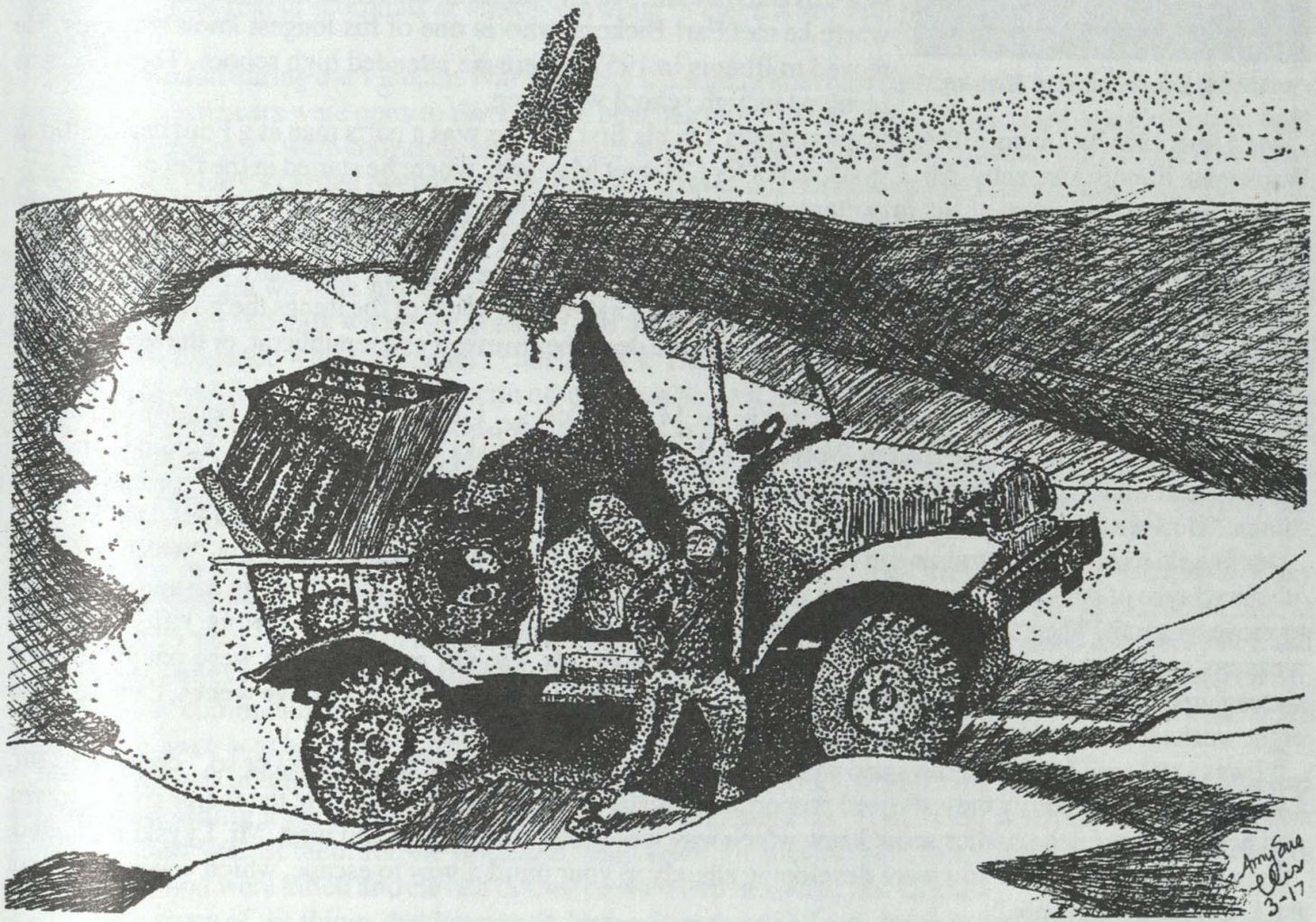
Jim believes that when the U.S. dropped the two bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it saved thousands of American's lives. When the war ended Jim

was glad to see that everyone was happy to see the soldiers come home. I asked Jim if he would ever like to go across the sea to visit Japan and the Islands and his reply was, "No. I have no interest what so ever," Jim commented. Jim has heard from a few people since he left the military. He moved back to Iron Mountain after the war, until he moved to Crystal Falls and worked in the mines there. Jim thinks that the most important thing that happened is that the Allies won the war.

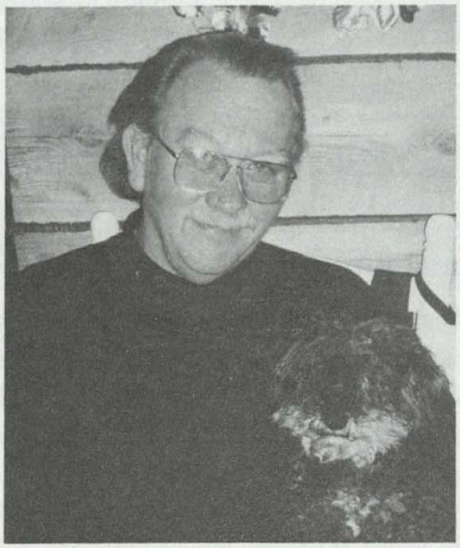
Jim thinks that when a soldier comes out of the war they get an idea of what they should do when they come home. Such as support the veterans, and help them out because the government is not always doing what they should be, or what they say that they will.

If you know anybody who has been in a war, try to get him/her to talk about it. It is the kind of memory that they may not often share with many people. They may have some wonderful experiences to share and they might not be around forever.

Amy Clisch



"ONE REWARDING EXPERIENCE"



Mr. Lyyski and his dog Meesha.

"You wanted to find out if the good Lord intended for you to die over there or intended for you to be alive; it's a tempting of fate!" Arvo Samuel Lyyski replied, as he shared information about himself, and his Vietnam War experiences. Mr. Lyyski is exceptionally impressive and has a variety of interests. The Three-Mile Supper Club in Manistique, Fontanta's in Iron Mountain, and the TNT in Aurora are three of his favorite restaurants. Mr. Lyyski also likes an assortment of music. "I enjoy all types of music so I've never really had a favorite song so to speak," replied Mr. Lyyski thoughtfully.

Mr. Lyyski was born in Ishpeming, Michigan, on October 21, 1944. As a child, he enjoyed skiing, skating, sledding, and spending time in the forest hunting and trapping. In his younger years, Mr. Lyyski participated in baseball and football. Mr. Lyyski attended North Lake School in the 1950s where he met Earl Bickers, who is one of his longest known friends. He moved to Illinois in 1957, where he attended high school. There, he was involved in high school wrestling.

Mr. Lyyski has had many different types of jobs. On his first job, he was a parts man at a Ford dealership in Waukegan, Illinois. Currently, Mr. Lyyski works for Calumet Machine, where he started in the fall of 1989.

Mr. Lyyski shared many of his important views on the world today. "I wasn't as conscious as I could have been," responded Mr. Lyyski vaguely remembering only the unpleasant things from the war. Mr. Lyyski describes the world as being more complicated today, than it was when he was a child. He has many different views on how the government works to this day. Mr. Lyyski does not agree with some of the things the government does, and is neither a republican nor democrat. Furthermore, he describes himself as a republicrat, or the term "hawk" is one he used.

Because of these views, Mr. Lyyski enlisted in the Marine Corps. "I always felt I guess because of various family members, actively involved in World War II," noted Mr. Lyyski on his reasons for volunteering. He cannot recall what type of effect the war had on his family's life, but it had changed the way he currently views things. "How we deal with terrorism I think, the world economy is a big problem," confirmed Mr. Lyyski.

Mr. Lyyski received basic training in ITR & Bits in San Onefre and San Clemente, California, "which is a more advanced type of activity." There, he learned military maneuvers, frontal assaults, flanking assaults, and how to move as a unit. They taught the use of many different individual weapons such as pistols, rifles, anti tank weapons and grenades. Basic training lasted sixteen weeks. Mr. Lyyski recalled, "We were one of the last sixteen week platoons to go through boot camp." Later, the military changed it to twelve weeks, then down to eight weeks to rush soldiers into Southeast Asia.

"I was just home for fifteen days and went to staging battalion, for about three weeks or so," confirmed Mr. Lyyski. There, generously they showed proportioned maps of the country, indicating the major rivers, towns and helped to orient the soldier so he knew which way was north, south, east, and west. Mr. Lyyski indicated, "So in the event of capture you were developing already in your mind a way to escape, which way to go to get back to your own people."

The highest rank Mr. Lyyski achieved was Lance Corporal. Mr. Lyyski spent most of his time overseas; the area he was in is called I core, which is adjacent to the demilitarized zone, or DMZ. The area that Mr. Lyyski and his unit were accountable for stretched from Quaviet on the South China Sea to the Laotian border.

While in Vietnam, Mr. Lyyski wore a regular T-shirt BDU's, jungle fatigues, or jungle utilities. However, it was too hot most of the time, and soldiers often cut the sleeves off their T-shirts and BDU's. In addition, some did

not wear underwear or socks. They always carried a military towel around to keep wiping off sweat. Mr. Lyyski recalled, "You had to put up with that (sweating) daily. No matter what you were doing, if you were back in the rear area for a three or four days, or you were on an actual operation that would last fifty days."

Vietnam's climate is extremely hot and humid. Other troublesome items included snakes, spiders, scorpions, and other sorts of insects. Mr. Lyyski commented on how soldiers often react on conditioned reflex. "But there was a lot of boredom because of the fact that you didn't spend all of your time fighting. When you did get attacked your adrenaline was so high that it's very difficult to sit down and remember what you did," he stated. Periodically the unit went out of the field for two or three days, and was sent to the South China Sea for R.R. because the fighting was so intense.

Once back in Vietnam they assigned units. A few weeks were spent with climatization and orientation with much map viewing. The climate is vastly different, as a result the control of water consumption was great. Water was extremely precious because of limited amounts, and germs.

In boot camp, Mr. Lyyski stayed in Quonset huts. A Quonset hut is round topped, with a cement floor and military beds with hard mattresses. In the field military tents are used with folding cots and no mattresses. There, people only had their down filled sleeping bags for the cold, your pancho, and pancho liner. No one took off their boots in fear of scorpions or snakes crawling in them. Also, with boots on soldiers were always ready for attack.

Transportation during the Vietnam War was easy if a soldier knew the right people. In boot camp, there were cattle cars. Cattle cars were open to the air with benches inside them. During operations, helicopters are used. Some of the aircraft's were cobra gun ships, which were two people machines, Loaches only carried about five or six people, Huey's carried twelve people, then the CH46 could fit thirty people, and finally the CH53 which you could fit about sixty to eighty people in there. "... you could pack them in like sardines," laughed Mr. Lyyski.

"I always thought we were fed well." acknowledged Mr. Lyyski thoughtfully. ITR and Bits served powdered eggs, ham, bread, and milk whenever possible. No fresh meat was provided. In the field canned food was eaten, and cans were opened with can openers called P38's. They carried six days of food and ammunition out in the field. Mr. Lyyski fished, and trapped with others from his unit. Snake, lizard, and other types of animals were eaten. Hot meals were provided if possible. Holidays were celebrated as traditionally as possible, with a hot meal. At Christmas time, good singers sang for them. Many got homesick. "If you know anyone in the service send them a card because it is a very lonely time for them, to be where you don't want to be," advised Mr. Lyyski.

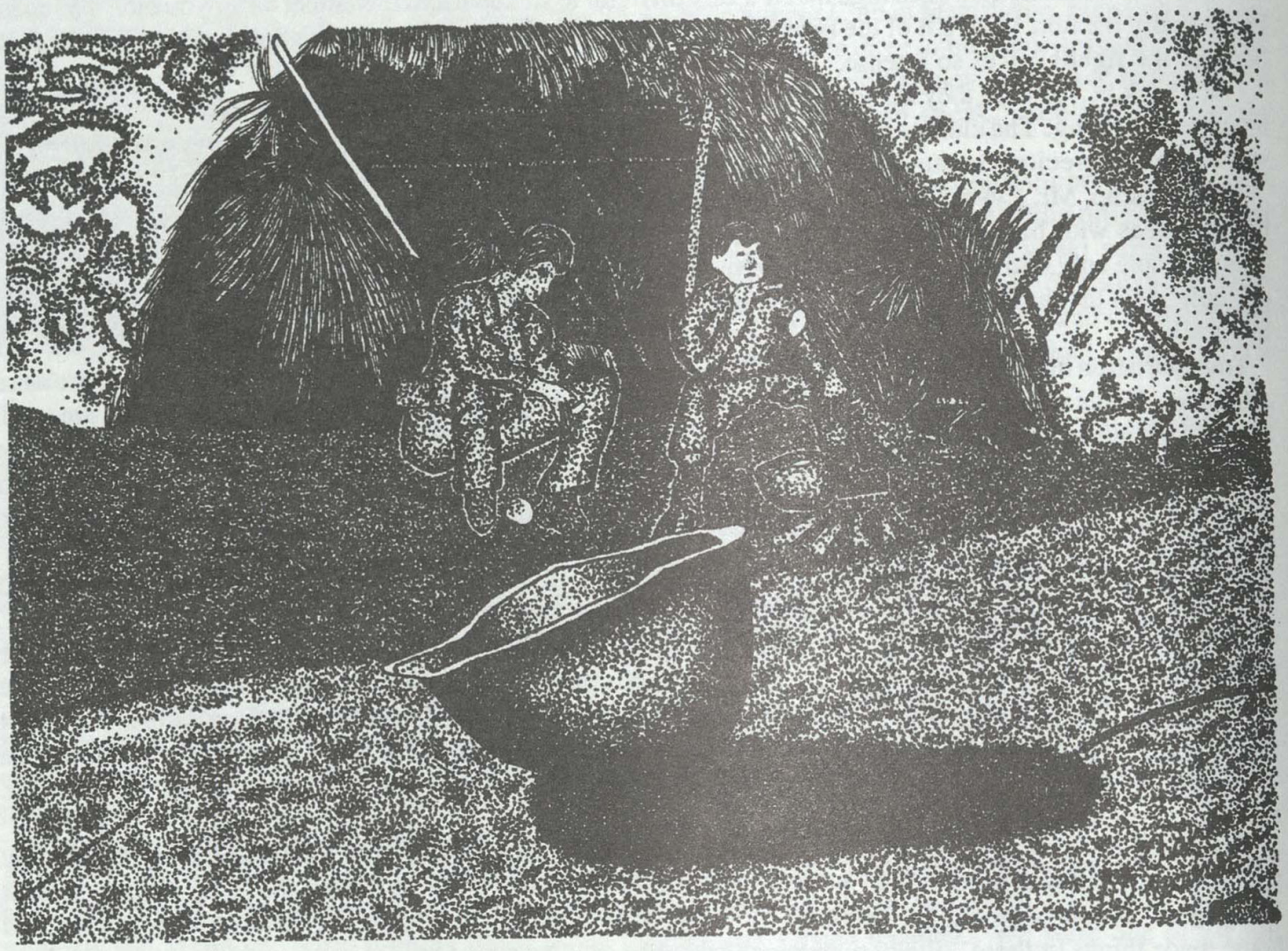
Mail came in regularly, and was received when units went back to the "area". During a forty to fifty day operation, no mail was received but was stacked, and waiting back at the base camp. Mr. Lyyski spent time at Vandergriff combat base, west of Dunkong Mountain. Care packages were sent with Kool-Aid, beef jerky, and home made things in them. "Every time my dad thought of it, he would send me some whiskey," laughed Mr. Lyyski. Most communication was done by postmark. However, Mr. Lyyski recalled, "We made some tapes though that were sent back and forth."

Mr. Lyyski was injured in the line of duty in April of 1969, for which he received a Purple Heart. His unit had just finished setting a perimeter for the night to protect themselves. They were attacked with no particular ground assault against them for the occasion. The North Vietnamese sent in a cluster of mortar rounds. As many as ten men were killed and eleven or twelve wounded including Mr. Lyyski.

"I regret some of the things that happened, losing friends and all that, but hey, war is hell. That's the way it is. There's nothing that I could do in my capacity that would have changed anything," indicated Mr. Lyyski.

The Vietnam War was terrible for those who served in it. The Vietnam Wall in Washington, D.C. serves as a remembrance for those who died or were lost in the war. I advise anyone to visit the wall to pay respect to those who served in the Vietnam War.

Ashlee Areseneau



"I always thought we were fed well." acknowledged Mr. Lyyski
They carried six days of food and ammunition out in the field.

VIETNAM CHANGED MANY LIVES

As I walked in to Daniel Bowling's house, I knew right than that I was going to have fun. Daniel and I went to a little room that housed the computer, so his children Sarah and Dan could not interfere with the recording. We started to talk about the Vietnam War and his life.

Daniel Bowling grew up near Menomonee Falls High School. Daniel also grew up listing to rock and roll music. He also wore bell-bottoms, jeans, and T-shirts. He was on the football team and the wrestling team. Daniel jokingly said, " I was kicked off the football team because the parents went to the school and complained that I was hurting too many people by twisting their ankles." Daniel graduated from high school at the age of seventeen. He decided that he was going to join the service hoping that the navy provided the education that he wanted and was interested in.

When Daniel turned seventeen he got a phone call from the navy to be on the ships for training and education he desired. After his enlistment, Daniel went to basic training in San Diego, California. After basic training Daniel and all the other men were put to work on ships.

While Daniel was on the ships, he had a tight schedule. First he ate breakfast in the galley and, worked for two hours before lunch. After that Daniel watched some TV until summoned to the office to work on radar and radios to make sure that they were operational. Daniel was on the boat for six to eight months. The job that he did on the aircraft carrier was working on the airplanes so that the planes could go bomb Vietnam. If any part of the plane broke, Daniel would have to go and fix it so it was ready to be used again.

Every now and then Daniel and all his friends got to go on land to see different places. Daniel recalled one time that they were all out past curfew, and the Philippine police started to shot at them. The other time Daniel remembered that they were passing by an inactive volcano on the aircraft carrier. Half of the volcano was lushes forests.

Daniel talked about the exciting experience in the war. He said, " We would be off the coast of Vietnam and see our bombs going off in the air and it would look like orange lightning in the sky." Daniel was also shared information about the times that the boat caught on fire. Daniel recalled, " One time we had a huge fire, and I thought for sure that we would abandon ship." Daniel said that was about the only exciting thing that went on because they did not get to see much action since Vietnam did not involve many naval confrontations during this time.

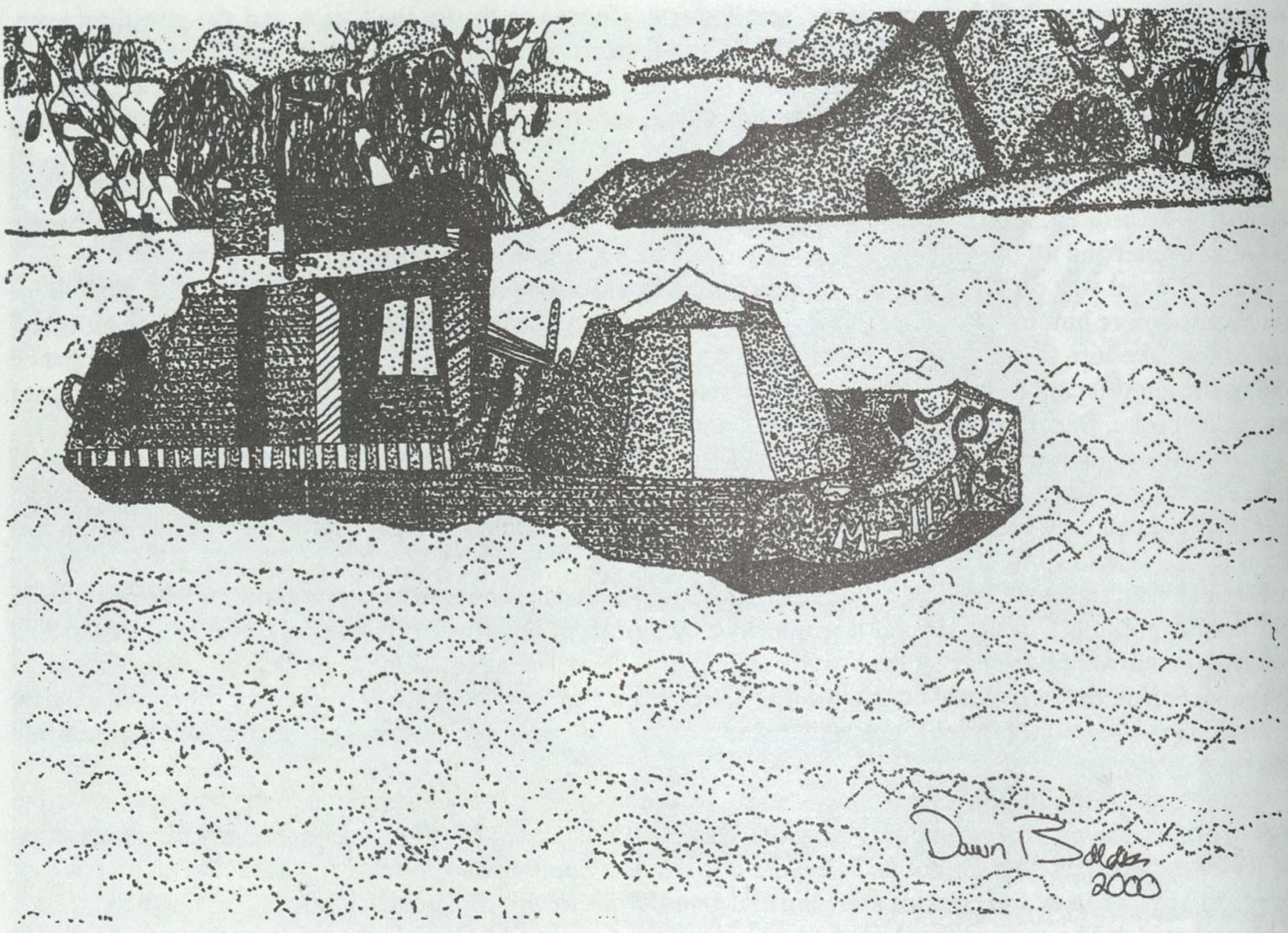
Daniel got his mail about every three weeks. It was delivered to the boat by plane. Betty, his mother, wrote to him often and sent him clothing and cookies. Daniel commented, " My mom use to send my big sweat shirts when it was like 103 degrees out and we were down in the South Pacific." Yeah, it was really funny opening boxes full of sweaters and cookies knowing that I would not wear it till I got back home." he laughed.

Daniel said, " The reward that I got from the war was, I survived." Daniel told me something that I should remember, " Study the war and the politic....understand it for when your older, and you can write your government to make sure that something like the war never happens again." Daniel added the war was a sad waste of men's lives.

About five years later, Daniel left the navy and went on to be a transportation specialist for the Federal Aviation Administration. Daniel was married at age of twenty-eight. Daniel meet Elizabeth in Winona, Michigan where they were married. They had two children, Sarah Melissa and Daniel Michael. They live in Ishpeming, Michigan.

I would like to say Thanks to Daniel Bowling for letting me come to his house and do this interview, for it really helped me learn about the Vietnam War and understand what went on more clearly.

Dawn Baldini



Daniel Bowling said, " We would be off the coast of Vietnam and see our bombs going off in the air and it would look like orange lightning in the sky."

TO 'NAM AND BACK

"One thing I remember is that I was sure glad to be back," my Uncle Bruce chuckled as he told me about his experiences in Vietnam. I learned a side of my uncle that I never knew before this interview. For instance, what he had to struggle with and endure in the years of the Vietnam War. I was so glad that I interviewed him instead of anybody else, and he willingly shared his story with me.

Bruce D. Hill was born on February 19, 1946, in a little town called Ishpeming in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. He grew up in a tiny house on Washington Street and was the stepbrother to three other children, Richard, Carla, and David Fredin. "The bond between us was just like a regular family," Uncle Bruce said. "We all worked hard around that house and we got along pretty well," he stated. Uncle Bruce's family moved from Ishpeming to Waukegan, Illinois when he was young. When Uncle Bruce was a teenager, he worked in an old grocery store in Waukegan. It was during this time that he was drafted into the service, on January 2, 1966. The first place that he arrived at was Fort Leonardwood Missouri. "Basic training was rough," he said when he first arrived there. He was stationed there from January 3, until sometime in March. "When I was there," he said, "it was winter time and it was colder than heck! The barracks that we slept in were old World War II barracks. Then in the morning we used to have to GI the barracks, and it was so cold that when we would try to mop the floor, the water would freeze. Then they used to have us sleeping in the barracks with the windows cracked wide open because of the spinal meningitis outbreak." Uncle Bruce then left Fort Leonardwood and was on his way to Vietnam.

"When I first got there, I flew in on a commercial air jet called Braniff Airlines, and we landed in Saigon and we went to Camp Alpha. I spent a few days in Camp Alpha, in Saigon, then they shipped us to the 90th Replacement Battalion, in Long Bin." Uncle Bruce was in Long Bin for about two weeks, and he said, "That was a tough way of living." For the first two weeks he was there, he never had a shower, because there was not enough water for everyone. "All of the people were on different duties and you couldn't make it. By the time you got down there all of the darn water was gone!" he laughingly said. When Uncle Bruce was in Long Bin, it was during the monsoon season and the weather was real sloppy. "It was quite something else...everything was just mud," he said. After he left Long Bin, he flew into Camp Red Ball, in Saigon. From there he was stationed in Vung Tao. Uncle Bruce was in supply so he really did not see that much action. However, he said to me, "I could see stuff happening you know, but nothing seemed like it was really the matter." He had also mentioned that when he was in supply, he usually worked in one place all of the time. However, they had a group of people go around in a helicopter to check things. "It was sort of exciting but scary at the same time" he told me, "because you really didn't know when you were going to run into trouble down there."

Uncle Bruce returned home on October 4, 1967. Two years later in January of 1969. He married Delight Podboyec and they had two children, John and Jodi Hill. Uncle Bruce enjoys fishing and hunting at his camp and likes being out in the woods. He is retired from working at the K. I. Sawyer Air Base near Gwinn, close to where he now lives. He summed up the interview by telling me, "I was one of the lucky guys who didn't have any kinds of troubles after the war, and I think Vietnam really showed me how nice our country really is." After this interview I realized another side to my uncle that I have never seen before. I thought about what he said. It really shows us how nice our country is, and made me ponder about our country and the men who gave years of their lives for it. In closing, I would like to thank Uncle Bruce for his time and cooperation to have this interview with me.

Brad Perala

Uncle Bruce was in Long Bin for about two weeks, and he said, "That was a tough way of living." It was during the monsoon season and the weather was real sloppy. After he left Long Bin, he flew into Camp Red Ball, in Saigon. From there he went to Vung Tao.

THE PERSIAN GULF WAR

1990 - 1991

TANKERS, CHEMICAL WARFARE; TOO YOUNG TO DIE?

Douglas John Etelamaki

"I remember thinking when I was eating Thanksgiving dinner there, I should've probably done a lot better in school and I should've gone to college. I was still so young. I said, man, I'm too young to die. Our family is so close, I was so close to my brothers and sisters I just wanted to be home visiting with them." Douglas John Etelamaki said these words as he recalled his time in the service during Thanksgiving. One evening we spent over an hour talking about his experiences in the Persian Gulf War.

Doug was born July 9, 1970, at Bell Memorial Hospital in Ishpeming, Michigan, to John and Mina (Kulju) Etelamaki. He has four siblings: David, Dan, Sarah, and Sabina.

Doug grew up in Ishpeming, Michigan and attended Westwood High School. His favorite subject was auto mechanics. "Although I didn't like school very much," he told me with a laugh. Doug said his first day of high school as a freshman and graduating were two vivid school memories. "It's a flip-flop from graduating, you're happy to be graduating, but then you're done with school, and you don't see your friends anymore," he stated.

After graduating from Westwood High School, Doug joined the United States Army and received his basic training in Fort Leonard, Missouri. The reason he joined the army was because he did not want to go to college; his grades were not great in high school and he was getting into a bit of trouble around home. "I remember telling my mother when I enlisted in the army that I was going to go for four years and she said, 'what if there is a war?' I remember telling my mother; ma there hasn't been a war since Vietnam I don't think there is going to be one in the next four years, which is the least of my worries right now."A year later Doug had to call his mom and tell her that he was going to the Persian Gulf. There was going to be a war.

When I asked Doug how long basic training lasted, he replied with a laugh, "It lasted too long!" Doug left from home August 16, 1989, and came home for Christmas, arriving around December 20, 1989. During basic training, he woke up between four and eight in the morning, did calisthenics, physical fitness training, and marched extensively, with drill sergeants barking and yelling at him all the time. Some days training was seventeen to nineteen hours long, or sometimes even twenty-four hours. After basic training, his rank was PFC or private first class. He said the early mornings were the most difficult aspect of going from civilian life to military life. When Doug was in high school, some mornings he slept until noon. When he was in basic training, getting up between 4:30-5:00 each morning was difficult for him. Also, getting familiar with the army food was hard for him. "It was nothing like mom's," he explained. Doug's two weeks leave ended, and he left for overseas on January 10, for Germany.

Doug was stationed for almost two years in a little town in Nuernberg, Germany. In Germany, there were usually three soldiers to a room. The troops could store whatever kinds of food they wanted in the available refrigerator. However, they always had to eat the army food at what they called the chow hall. "That got to be old after awhile you just couldn't eat whatever you wanted to," Doug said. The accommodations did not have individual showers; they had what is called bay showers, which had about five to ten showerheads in one large room. A typical day in Germany started by waking at 5:00 a.m., shaving and getting ready for the day. Six o'clock a.m. was formation. During this time the troops ran for a few miles, followed by a game of football, volleyball or whatever they wanted to do. Next was breakfast, at 8:00 a.m. they started their daily duties, which usually consisted of maintenance on the machinery, trucks and tanks or whatever job was assigned that day.

Doug was stationed in Germany when he called home to inform his family that the army assigned him to the gulf. His crew's commitment was Germany so they figured they would not send German-based troops. "For some reason I had twenty-four hour duty. We had the tv set up and that was when the secretary of defense was going to announce the units from Germany going to the Persian Gulf. My unit, my corps that I was attached to, was one of the first ones they said were going... I couldn't believe it!" Doug said with surprise. Their objective was going to be to seek and destroy the republican guard. Doug said they never told him what their destination was, but he thinks it was to go as far as Baghdad. It took them a long time to get all the equipment ready and loaded on the trains. There were about twenty-five to thirty tanks to load at once so it took all night to chain everything down correctly. The equipment left sometime in November, the men did get some time to relax, but that was when the training for chemical warfare began. "We trained every, every day. I was getting so sick of it," he said. They trained every day for two months putting the protective suit on, taking the suit off, putting the suit on. The chemical warfare protection was a suit; which consisted of a pair of rubber gloves, and a pair of pants that were filled with charcoal. The suit was sealed in a bag. The pants had snaps in the back. They had to make sure everything was snapped and, then put on the chemical mask. "It's so hot; it is just unbearable. I thought I better do it, because this is probably going to save my life," Doug emphasized. A soldier did not want to be exposed to the chemicals. The consequences were dreadful; it was not an instant death, but a long-suffering death drowning in body fluids. His crew flew out of Nuernberg International Airport early on December 23.

Doug & Tank crew in Tent City, Saudi Arabia

When the United States troops landed in Rome, Italy to refuel the airplane, nobody was allowed off, because there were so many terrorists. When they left from Germany, it had been a cold and snowy day, but when they landed in Daharon, Saudi Arabia it was about 100 degrees. Doug was wearing his longjohns to keep himself warm in Germany. Consequently in Saudi Arabia he was unbearably hot.

After the soldiers got off the plane, they were given big bottles of water to drink. "It was warm, nasty, nasty water; it got real old after awhile. You'd do anything to make Kool-Aid or anything just to kill the taste of it," Doug said. The guys were told to drink the big jugs of water, so Doug drank some but convinced himself that he did not have to drink it all; they were just going on the bus. He put the water bottle back in his bag. The guy next to Doug drank all his water. He said, "I'm not passing out." Doug did not know how a person could pass out by just going on a bus. "I told him we're just getting on the bus it's not like we have to walk twenty miles," he explained with a chuckle. That night they stayed in what they called Dew Drop Inn Tent City, USA. They stayed there through Christmas and New Years.

When the U.S. troops got to Kuwait, they were warmly received. Doug said the Kuwaitans would have done anything for them. Walking around in Kuwait, they gave the American soldiers the thumbs up symbol. The air war started January 15, 1992, with the bombing. Doug's unit was there through the bombing until finally their equipment came. The equipment was banged up from hitting rough seas, so his crew made repairs and painted everything a tan color. All the equipment was green when it arrived, and green is too noticeable in the desert. After they painted all the equipment, everything was loaded on the back of a semi and moved to the front lines.

"I was really nervous in that truck, because that truck weighed about sixty-seven tons and then he's going ninety miles/hour down the road, and I thought oh man we aren't going to make it. We did make it; amazingly we did make it," Doug said laughing. As the equipment was readied, everybody started wondering how long they were going to be there. "I thought to myself, how long am I going to be here? Is it going to be a year, two months, three months, six months? Nobody knew how long we were going to be there, nobody knew how long the war was going to last," he stated. The enemy, Iraq, had the fourth-largest army in the world. Everything of theirs was soviet made. Doug was about ten to twenty miles off the border of Iraq while he was waiting for action to start, waiting for the president to make his decision.

Finally the task force did get the word. Doug said he probably slept about an hour or so that night, because he knew he was going to see combat soon. That next morning they loaded everything and put on their chemical suits. Everybody knew that Saddam Hussein would start hitting them with his artillery loaded with the chemical gasses when they crossed the border of Iraq. As they crossed the Iraqi border, they waited for machine fire or some type of artillery to come, but none occurred. About five to ten more miles into Iraq, the shooting began. Iraqis surrendered so fast; they did not fight. Some were starving and had no clothing.

The second or third day into the war, at 8:00 a.m. Doug was shot at while driving his tank. He was flicking out a cigarette and when he looked up, there was a huge explosion about 100 yards away from him. The next one was at seventy-five yards and the fire kept getting closer and closer. In fact, Doug's platoon sergeant pulled up to give them food, but he had to pull up close beside the tank for cover. The platoon sergeant's windshield was blown out of his humvee, which was how close the firing was getting to them. "I could hear the dirt clods and shrapnel hitting the tank and finally they told us to pull back. Our tank was so big, I just threw it in reverse and put it right to the floor. I said I hope nothing is behind me 'cause I could not see anything; nobody could see anything," he explained with great expression. Doug pulled the tank back about 3000 meters and then the United States artillery hit the enemy artillery.

Doug was part of a tank crew, part of what is called a CEV, combat engineer vehicle. It was used for demolition and for mines that were put in the Gulf. Conditions in the tank were terrible for Doug. They were rough, primitive, terrible, smelly, dirty, and noisy. There was constant engine noise. "It just got on your nerves, sometimes you just wanted to shut if off, you just wanted peace and quiet," Doug added. A tank crew consisted of four people. The tank commander never drove because he was in charge of the tank and received all the operations. He told his crew where to go and what to do. He was responsible for the tank and his crew members. Another member is the loader. He is inside the tank, and if they fired the main gun, he loaded another round into the gun. The gunner was the one with all the sites, he controlled the trigger and fired the main gun, and he also had a machine gun. The fourth person is the driver. The driver and the tank commander communicated constantly. In a tank, there is a little hatch above the driver's head; the driver sits in a comfortable little seat that goes up and down. Although, the tank also has little windows, the driver cannot see outside the tank very well. The driver could open the little hatch above his head and slide his seat up a bit to see out, but during combat it was not a good idea because the enemy could see the driver from the head down to the chest. The crew carried about 100 rounds of ammunition for the main gun, and from 900 to 1000 rounds for the 50-caliber machine gun, which carried a big bullet, and about 2000 rounds for the small machine gun. The projectile on the main gun weighed

about 100 pounds. In the tank the crew had no free time. There was always something to do. The weapons had to be covered with garbage bags to keep the dust out of them. The machine gun was very effective, but it was not worth anything if it were dirty and not able to be fired when needed. The crew wore helmets inside the tank; which gave the tankers the ability to talk to each other. Every section had a lieutenant, and the lieutenant got word from higher up and he relayed the messages to the platoon sergeant. The platoon sergeant relayed messages, keeping everybody well informed. If Doug ever dismounted the tank, he drew his pistol and kept it in front of him for protection.

Chances of being captured were high. Doug said once a women army sergeant and another sergeant took a wrong turn somewhere into enemy territory and they were taken prisoners of war. The troops had to be careful over there; they had to know where they were at all times. "Another scary thing was, if you did get captured what were they going to do with you?" Doug questioned.

The weather there was hot when the U. S. troops first got there. During the war it was miserably rainy, cold weather. It got quite cold, not below zero but, between twenty and forty degrees. There were downpours all the time. When Doug was leaving in April, it was miserably hot. The last few days Doug was there he got sunburned and was miserable for about two days.

There were many camels. Doug remembers, sitting in his tent and hearing a stampede. He stuck his head out of the tent and there were many camels running through. Doug saw lots of scorpions, snakes, and other poisonous things. "I am not too fond of snakes either, and here I was out in the desert with who knows what kinds of snakes out there," he added.

It was about the third day into the war, when the soldiers were told that, they were going to stop. The military was supposed to see intense fighting that last day so they were told to get some rest. Someone had to do guard duty, but Doug did not go because he was driving the tank, and needed to be well rested. A person could sleep in the tank or outside. However, when sleeping outside, the sand kicked up because there were people shooting artillery within five miles of the tank. "Our artillery was so loud and the concussion from the gun going off, it felt like the tank was jumping a foot in the air so how could you get any sleep anyway?" Doug questioned with a smile. He finally put in some ear protection and did doze off because he was so exhausted. At first light the U. S. troops started slowly. They shot a little bit then rested for about twenty minutes and afterwards moved ahead a little. It was around 8:05 a.m. because Doug remembers glancing at his watch, when president bush announced the cease-fire. "I remember thinking to myself; I made it. I am probably going to go home if nothing goes crazy over here," Doug commented. After the cease-fire was called there was still a sprout of fire because the Iraqis did not get the word of the cease-fire. "It did not really seem like there was a cease-fire because there still was a lot of gunfire going on," Doug added. "I saw a lot of enemy, lot of wounded, and lot of dead. I saw only one American casualty," he said.

Doug in Desert Storm Uniform in Germany

That same night of the cease-fire was mail call, and Doug thinks everybody from Westwood High School wrote to him in addition to his mom and relatives. Doug's mom and aunts sent him Kool-Aid to mix with the water. Care packages were full of candy and lots of letters. Doug lay down at night and read the letters from home. He said many guys did not get letters so he was quite happy. "I just got stacks of letters, and I apologize because I could not respond to all my letters," he did not hesitate to say. Doug called home once or twice a month with a telephone calling card; he could talk for twenty minutes. Bell telephone systems set up big tents, and they followed the crew around. About ten to fifteen guys could jump in the truck and go to the telephone place to call home. Doug had not talked to his family in three months, so he asked if he could go and use the phone at the telephone tent. He received permission and when he called, he talked for about fifteen minutes to his dad, mom, and his brothers and sisters. "It was a

good feeling talking to them, because when you are home you take so much for granted and then when you finally lose everything you realize how much you love them. Just like the old saying; you don't know what you got till it is gone, " related Doug.

After the action stopped, Doug remembered thinking; I can finally take a shower. He had not taken a shower in probably a month. It was about a day or two after the cease-fire when Doug could take a shower. The chemical suits that the troops had to wear were filled with charcoal and the charcoal came through when a person sweat.

After the war was over and soldiers were allowed to go visit their families, Doug went straight to the ticket office and asked for a round trip plane ticket to Michigan. They wanted to know how much he would pay. "I said, I don't care what I have to pay I just want a plane ticket to get home," he added laughing. Doug booked a nonstop flight from Yumak, Germany to Chicago, on April 30, 1992. When he talked to his mother in Chicago and told her he would be in Marquette in a couple of hours. She asked him, "Do you have your army uniform?" Doug told her he did have it. She wanted him to put it on, although Doug was not enthusiastic about the idea. When he got to the Marquette Airport, there were probably about two hundred people there, welcoming him home. His mother and father threw a big party for him. Doug was home for forty-five days before he had to return to Germany. He came back to the states after about six months in Germany.

In the states, Doug was a year and a half at Fort Hood, Texas, in a rapid deployment unit. He was put on alert to go back to the Persian Gulf two more times, but another crew went in their place. "That was when I said this is enough. My two years were up, I did my four-year commitment in the army and I came back home," Doug said smiling.

Doug thinks it was a worthwhile cause, to see the Kuwait people going back to their homes, to see the look on their faces. They could go back home without any fear. The kids were also happy. However, Saddam is still playing his games in Iraq; Doug thinks that if you look in that aspect of it, the war was not a worthwhile cause. He thinks they should haye gone to Baghdad and fought longer although, his life would have been in danger. I asked Doug if he would ever consider going back to the countries he was in and he replied, "No. I'd go overseas again but not to Saudi Arabia. The culture is so different, especially the Iraq culture."

Doug has two children, Madeline is three, and Ryan is seven. He has one dog, a golden retriever named, Rudy. He has never told his kids about the war, and when Ryan saw the photo album on the table, he was asking Doug questions. "He'll say, 'daddy, did you have to kill someone over there'? and Doug will answer, "no, not face-to-face."

The government has sent letters to Doug suggesting that he should be checked at the local veteran's hospital in Iron Mountain. Doug found out he was near a chemical bunker when stationed overseas, but he has never had any ill effects. "A lot of people have had children with birth defects, but I've had two children since and they are perfectly normal, healthy kids," he added.

Doug said he has not really talked about the Gulf War in many months. People will ask him questions once in awhile when they find out he served, but he does not offer information. "I just don't talk about this stuff anymore; I try to forget about it. I was told to talk about it, but I don't," he explained. He talks about his experiences to his friends once in awhile when there is something bothering him. At one time, he had dreams, but he said he has not had one in a long time. There are certain smells Doug remembers. "I remember the smell of diesel fuel, so when I smell a diesel truck running, it reminds me of the Gulf," Doug mentioned. Now, he cannot eat rice because overseas there was lots of rice, and he does not like it anymore.

Having this talk with Doug was quite an interesting experience for me. I have read about the Gulf War in many places, but reading is not at all like having a person who has experienced it all, tell it to you. I would like to thank Doug for sharing his many experiences with me. I realized that we Americans do have a great and beautiful place to live, as we understand through Doug's descriptions of his experiences in the war-torn foreign countries in the Mideast.

Janet Kuopus

"SOMETHING WAITING FOR YOU WHEN YOU GOT HOME"

Mr. Stacy was born William Douglas Stacy, on September 13, 1955 in Crystal Falls, Michigan, to a loving family. His mother worked at Coleman Industries putting harnesses together while his father toiled in the mines of Upper Michigan. As he grew up in Crystal Falls, he, along with his older sister Linda, attended school together through the twelfth grade at the local schools. For extracurricular activities, Mr. Stacy was a member of the Science Club while also playing outside linebacker and guard for the Crystal Falls football team. After school and on the weekends, Mr. Stacy worked as a dishwasher for a local restaurant called the Bright Spot. "The pay was probably about a dollar an hour if I can remember correctly. It wasn't much," he commented. With the money he earned from scrubbing pots and pans, Mr. Stacy purchased a 1959 Ford Galaxy, which served him until he joined the Air Force after his high school graduation in June of 1973.

After joining the Air Force, Mr. Stacy continued with his schooling through the Community College of the Air Force, and received an associate's degree in communications technologies. Still following the quest for knowledge, Mr. Stacy attended Embry-Riddle University in Daytona Beach, graduating with a four-year degree in professional aeronautics.

Mr. Stacy has been stationed around the globe. He started basic training at Lakeland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas and extended training in Biloxi, Mississippi. He was then assigned to the 100th strategic reconnaissance wing and the 390th strategic missile wing in Tucson, Arizona along with monitoring the assets of the 15th Air Force of Riverside, California. After the stint in the U.S., Mr. Stacy and his family packed their bags and moved to Verona, Italy, where he spent two years with the 5th Allied Tactical Air Force.

Mr. Stacy continued to become a commanding control specialist. He explained, "I worked in the command post. I monitored and directed all of the activities on the base such as making sure the aircrafts were ready for flying as far as maintenance, making sure they had the right bomb loads, the correct fuel loads, the pilots were out there, they asked permission to take off, I monitored them through the mission. On the return I took their recovery and made sure maintenance was out there to do everything they had to do." A normal day for Mr. Stacy in peacetime consisted of three shifts; seven to three, three to eleven, and eleven to seven. He would arrive at the base a half-hour before and would put on a headset while changing over with the guy he was relieving. Mr. Stacy monitored everything the man he was relieving had been doing, and between the quiet times they talked about what was going on and what needed to be done. The other guy left about 7:10-7:15, Mr. Stacy sat down and the rest of the day he was basically on the phone or the radio, coordinating activities on the base. "Basically, we did the same thing during Desert Storm except...it was a lot busier and the peacetime rules were thrown out the window. We could do things that we couldn't do during peacetime such as land a bomber with bombs on it and taxi it over to...un-dropped bombs that didn't release, we could taxi it over to the hanger to have the guys work on it." Although Mr. Stacy was never part of flying a mission in Desert Storm, a commanding control specialist was a very important piece of the coordination of military efforts in the Middle East. Mr. Stacy then retired after his endeavor in Desert Storm.

"I met Brenda through a friend. We got introduced and about eight months later we got married," explained Mr. Stacy, who is now living in Ishpeming, Michigan. He has two children; Michael, who lives in Louisiana, and Steven who lives in Marquette, Michigan. Currently, Mr. Stacy works at Marquette General Hospital as the Y2K project systems analyst, meaning he is getting the computer systems ready for the year 2000. In his spare time, Mr. Stacy enjoys hunting and fishing, "Not always in that order though!" he quickly adds.

Mr. Stacy's parting advice was not to take your family for granted. He said, "Being in the military and having to go on no notice and the wife and children having to stay behind, some of the time I would leave in the middle of the night. The kids would wonder where I went or when I was coming back, it's very important to remember

that you are a family and no matter what that it's the family that counts. It was a huge benefit that Brenda and the kids were at home and no matter what happened, they'd still be there when I got back. Because you know they're back there, you know you have something waiting for you when you got home. And I thank them deeply for their support."

Mr. Stacy showed me through this insightful interview that family comes first and to think and plan for the future because tomorrow will come. I would like to thank Mr. Stacy for his eagerness to take part in this interview and present his experiences to me.

Kyle Smith