

## **Ramos Richard**

### **Vietnam**



#### **When did you enter the military?**

“I was in January of 1966”

#### **How old were you?**

“Around 19 or 20 years old; I was drafted into the Marines. After high school I was in between schools. I had dropped out of a drafting school to switch schools and I got caught in the draft.”

#### **How long were you in the military?**

“I was in for 2 yrs of active and 2 yrs of reserve and 2 yrs of standby. I actually only stayed 2 years”

#### **What boot camp did you go to?**

“Parris Island South Caroline and Camp Geiger and Camp Lejeune in North Carolina”

#### **What branch were you in?**

“I was drafted into the marines. At that time they would pick people out of the lineup. I happened to be sitting in the third row and an army sergeant drafted the first three rows for marines. That’s how I got in. At the time you had a choice to go with the draft or run up to Canada. In those days people went to Canada to avoid the draft. I went in.”

### **What equipment use on daily basis?**

“I was in the infantry, we were sent to Vietnam and we were on outposts. You go on patrols and you carry an M16 rifle and then while we were over there they switched us over to an AR16 rifle, Automatic it was the automatic. One time one of our core man got shot and I had to carry his equip, a grenade launcher.....”

Depending, most of the time you carried a rifle. Vietnam lasted about 7 years but I was there for 67 and 68. I was overseas for about 13 months, on overseas duty.”

### **What rank did you achieve?**

“I got out an E-4 Corporal. That’s just short of sergeant.”

### **Were you ever wounded in the Military?**

“No when I was over there I got some very close calls. I didn’t actually get hit with a bullet. I did take a bullet that went into my helmet, around the lining and out the back of the helmet and hit another guy in the shoulder. I was very lucky it could have gone right through. When I was waiting around to go home, I was a short timer doing 13 months. I got malaria and dysentery while I was waiting around to go home. They cured it when I went to a naval hospital.”

### **Where you in any well known campaigns or battles?**

“Yeah in fact I was watching a show on discovery channel and I saw some areas I was in. part of my operations there was, I can’t think of the names. Do you want to know what operations I was on?”

In conjunction with the army, I was involved in operation Chinook 1 and 2, Operation Pulaski, Operation Yuba, and Operation Shawnee. These were the operations I was involved in. These took place in 1967. I wrote them on the back of the pictures. I was also involved in Operation Yuba. Those are the only ones I can remember. These were smaller operations.”

### **When you were in the military did you receive any ward or medals?**

“Everyone that was over there, I didn’t get no purple heart or anything, but everyone got the citation award. It went on the pocket, The Presidential Citation Vietnam Award metal or something like that. I can’t think of the names, I have them in with my discharge form; the DD214.”

**When you were in the military what would a normal or average day consist of?**

“Well I was over in a war zone, most of the time you were training. We trained for 52 days in Okinawa. When I first got here the outfit I joined had been decimated, a lot of the men had been killed. So they needed new troops. We trained in Camp Butler in Okinawa. If you were stationed at an outpost you would go on patrol at night or during the day. Sometimes you took part in big operations and the whole battalion or platoon would go into an operation and sweep the enemy. Then the enemy would take off and go back into the mountain. The soldiers we were fighting were either North Vietnamese or Vietcong. Sometimes they blended with the local people and you didn’t know who you were fighting. If you got fired upon, then everyone says shoot that way and these guys would take off. We would call in air strikes and bomb these villages because the enemy would use these people as a shield. People would get killed in the course of the war. They called it a conflict, a police thing. Basically you were training or in an operation or on patrol. When you were on an outpost, you had to guard the perimeter of the outpost and go on patrols. Certain soldiers would be selected to do that.”

**What would be the most common routine while you were at battle?**

“That’s kind of hard to say. You would be going in an area where you were told there was enemy. You would go on patrols. If you were unfortunate enough you would be in front or on point as it is called. Those are the first ones, if there is an ambush, which would get shot. The normal routine is patrols. It was a different type of war than like WWII. WWII was like a normal war, this was more dealing with guerilla warfare, very different. The enemy is not as visible. It wasn’t until the end of the war that the North Vietnamese started to show their full force in uniform.”

**Did you use any heavy weapon artillery while you were at war?**

“No, I wasn’t in an artillery unit. We used .... We would be walking a patrol in operations and walk next to a tank. Basically you carried machine guns or extra ammo, or rifles. I didn’t really partake in the artillery process those guys were mostly army. Marines don’t have artillery. There are some units but not all.”

**While at war what helped you pass the time?**

“Drinking beer in-between operations, I don’t know what to tell you”

**Did you ever receive care packages?**

“Oh yeah, my mom and dad used to send me care packages. I used to get camp food and everyone would be waiting for mine. A lot of people didn’t get them. Everyone would be around me going “oh yeah what did you get”; Dinty moor beef stew and stuff. You got rations when you were in the field. When you were in an outpost you would get regular mess hall food. When you were on an operation they would drop big crates and everyone would get a certain amount of rations.”

**After you came home from the war, did your perspective change in any way?**

“When I came home from the war everyone was against this war. So there was a lot of protesting. A lot of people were getting killed. I wasn’t a very popular war. We didn’t have the support of the public like Afghanistan or Iraq. You had to blend back in to the society. There were a lot of people who got a lot of flack when they came back and was called baby killers and such. I didn’t experience any of that myself. I am sure a lot of others did. There were a lot of hippies back then who would call you names if you were in uniform. They didn’t care a lick about you or that you were fighting for your country.”

**Is there anything that you would like to add that I might have missed?**

“No I can’t think of anything, I think we covered it all.”

**Thank you for your service.**

**Mr. Ramos provided several photos please see below**







