

“Life-Changing”

Arthur Adams and I met after we were both assigned permanent duty at the Data Processing Service Center (DPSC) at Ft. Myer, VA. I processed civilian payroll while Art processed military payroll for the Military District of Washington (MDW).

After a few months of working together and spending free time discovering the sights in and around Washington, we felt a strong love connection growing and knew we would eventually marry following our respective discharges from the military.

Art was drafted in 1967 having to serve 2 years of duty, which was mandatory then, so in 1969, with only 7 months left before his discharge, he "came down on orders" for Vietnam. He was stationed in Long Binh performing similar duties as at Ft. Myer, VA. Even though he was not on the battlefield, the base was securely located, however, it was only a short distance from a small mountainous area where our military jets would dump excess amounts of Agent Orange used in the defoliation of enemy territories.

Unfortunately, no matter how slight the breeze, this AO would make its way from the dumping area into Long Binh's living area. No one had any idea how this would affect the rest of our lives!

Art was honorably discharged in 1969; as I was in 1970. We married October 24, 1970. Between 1980 and 1989, he was hospitalized 13 times always with no clear explanation for his symptoms or cause. He was mostly unemployable during this period and becoming more depressed and anxious. He passed away on September 26, 1989. During those final 9 years of his life, I saw the soldier I fell madly in love with, become a sad, depressed, helpless husband and father, unable to participate in his children's' lives as their father and literally wasting away, I truly feel that Arthur Adams "gave up" after so many years of hospital stays.

—Mary Ann, Saratoga Springs