

# “Honor”

I spent my first year after Transportation School at Fort Eustis, VA, assigned to the Deep Water Port (DWP) of Sattahip, Thailand. After a couple of short stints in other offices, I settled in as NCOIC of the Backload/Documentation Office of Headquarters, Terminal Command-Thailand.

NCO - yeah! I arrived in-country as a Private/E-1 (PVT). After promotion to Specialist 4/E-4 (SP4) I even served at Staff Duty NCO at HQ on night/weekend duty. Funny thing was that after rising to Sergeant/E-5 (SGT), I never covered a real NCO position other than my office.

My primary job always seemed to be clearing USAF offerings of CBU (cluster bomb unit) containers for transport by ship back to CONUS for reload. We used to watch the B-52's take off from U-Tapao RTNAS from our open-air theater at Camp Samae San, just a couple of miles away; I knew where the CBU containers were being emptied.

After a month's leave at the end of my tour in Thailand, I reported to my next duty station, Fort Carson, CO (HHC 5th S&T Bn, 5th Infantry Division [Mech]). About a month or so later, someone came around asking if any E-5 (SGT or SP5) would be interested in 3 months TDY (Temporary Duty) in the Republic of Viet Nam (RVN). Both I and the SP5 I worked with expressed interest, and were told we'd be contacted later. As would happen, the day they came around for a definite commitment, I was the only one in the office.

I was in the RVN from 5/1/70 to 7/31/70, assigned to the 34th AM&S Grp (34th Aircraft Maintenance & Support Group) at Tan Son Nhut AB. As a member of QRAT5 (Quick Reaction Assistance Team 5), I was one of five SGT/SP5's on the team; we'd go out to subordinate units at Vung Tau, Vinh Long, Long Than, Phu Loi, Cu Chi, and Tan Son Nhut; our job was simply to find which units had excess aircraft maintenance parts before everything was turned over to the ARVN.

I returned to CONUS, took a week's leave to marry my fiancée, and spent my final year of service at Fort Carson before getting a 30-day drop to return to college.

—*Ralph, Albany*