

From: Waters, Gary [mailto:watersg@portsmouthva.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2004 9:05 PM
To: 'Killblane, Richard '
Subject: RE: 368th TC

In July 1965, I was drafted into the Army. I was at that time living in Long Beach, California, working for the telephone company. My draft board was in Statesville, North Carolina. There was a large outbreak of meningitis in California at that time so I drove back to go into the Army in Statesville. I went to basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. I was transferred for specialized training to Fort Knox, Kentucky where I was trained at a tank crewman. I was then sent to Hanau, Germany to work with a heavy equipment maintenance company. At that time the Army found out that I had an administrative background so they placed me in personnel. My company was split up in June 1966 and I was sent to Fort George G. Meade, Maryland, to form another company to go to Vietnam.

My new company with the 368th Transportation Company. Half the company was in Fort Meade, Maryland and the other at Fort Story, Virginia. We got the company together and was sent to Vietnam as longshoremen? Again with my administrative background, I ended up as company clerk. My father was career Navy so I obtained a Uniform Code of Criminal Justice Manual from him. I also went to the Pentagon and traded coffee for morning reports, typewriters, etc to take with me to Vietnam. While in the States, I found that half the people transferred to the new company didn't show up. They either couldn't find where to go or didn't elect to go. We had to look for 50 plus people. I cut the orders, recommended to the CO and First Sergeant who should get promoted. My First Sergeant was a former Mess Cook and the CO was a 2nd Lt. I practically ran the company.

We had an advance team fly to Vietnam to set up. The rest of us went by Ship. [The 368th TC arrived in Vietnam on 21 October 1966.] While in Vietnam we lived in tents, originally with mud up to our tails. We then built platforms for tent flooring. None of our company knew anything about loading and unloading ships but we all learned. We were attached to the 71st Transportation Battalion. Our New CO was a Captain who later taught ROTC at Howard University in Washington, D.C. We were stationed at Long Binh. The mosquitoes were as big as horse flies. Our showers were made up of a tank, mounted high above the tents and filled with water from the lakes. When it rained we all hit the outsides and got a good bath. When we washed in the showers, the water was wet but as dirty as we were. The only real action that we saw was from mortars and kids bringing grenades into the camp to blow us and themselves up. We worked 14 hours a day, seven days a week. The tenth day of work we were allowed a day of rest. Most of us hit the town and messed around with the bar girls. We could get stuff on the black market that we couldn't get issued. We were not entitled to jungle boots so we purchased them in town from the Vietnamese.

I was promoted to E-5 with the MOS of a crane operator, Even though I never stepped foot in a crane my whole tour. My secondary MOS was Personnel Specialist. I personally did all of the personnel matters from promotions to leave to ETS. I had it

pretty good compared to the rest. I left in July 1967, just prior to the Tet Offense, when MACV [Military Assistance command (Vietnam)] was moving from Saigon to Long Binh. I could go on and on but I think you can get the basic. After Vietnam I got out of the Army and went on the local police force. I served for 16 years as a police officer before I ran for Sheriff. I have been Sheriff for 24 years....By the way, while the Army guys were in tents, down the road the Air Force guys were in air condition barracks.