New York State Military
4 Museum Interview

INTERVIEW OF DUANE FRUDD

November 8, 2005

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MR. CLARK: All right. This is
(indiscernible) interview (indiscernible) New York.
It is the 8 th of November, 2005, approximately two
thirty p.m. The interviewers are Wayne Clark and Mike Russert.

INTERVIEW

BY MR. CLARK:
Q. Could you give me your full name, date of birth, and place of birth, please?
A. Duane E. Frudd. 3/24/47. Place of birth was Rochester, New York.
Q. Okay. What was your educational
background prior to entering service?
A. High school.
Q. All right. Did you enlist or
were you drafted?
A. Drafted.
Q. And what was your -- you were
drafted in what branch of service?
A. The Army.
Q. What was your date entered --
that you entered?
A. I think it was July 10th, 1966.
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Q. And your discharge date?
A. It would have been the same in
172, six years.
Q. Okay. And where did you enter
service?
A. Rochester.
Q. When you entered service, where
did you go for your basic training?
A. Fort Dix.
Q. How long were you there?
A. It was eight weeks. And then we
were allowed to go home and then I spent eight more
weeks there for AI team.
Q. Were you given any additional
training or?
A. Truck driving. That was my MO.
Q. Where -- let's see, now where did
you -- when did you go to Vietnam?
A. We went there December of '66.
Q. How long were you there?
A. Eighteen months.
Q. How -- let's see. All right.
How did you get over to Vietnam?

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A. C-141 from LaGuardia.
Q. Did you go with a unit or were you assigned when you got there?
A. Just assigned, there was no unit.
Q. Okay. What unit were you
eventually assigned to?
A. 93rd 1st Battalion.
Q. Let's see, what were your general
duties?
A. Constructing building.
Q. All right. You told us earlier,
how did you end up doing construction?
A. My brother built Ridge homes.

Were -- they were a prefab house.
Q. And you told a little story about
how did you --?
Something about you -- you could use a hammer?
A. Oh, in Vietnam? Oh, like I said,
my first day there, $I$ was put on guard duty and this sergeant came up to me and he says, "Is your name Frudd?" And I told myself I've only been in this country one day and I'm in trouble. And he said, "So you're a contractor?" And I said, "No,

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sir, I'm not." And he said, "Well can you pound a nail?" And I said, "Yes, I can." He says, "Good, you're duty for ninety days." And I stayed there the whole year.
Q. What were your duties -- I know construction but -- basically what did you do while you were there?
A. On the 93rd placement compound we build officer's quarters. We remodeled the -- the mess hall. We remodeled the interview area for the employees we completely redid that. A bunch of other stuff on the compound.
Q. Did you ever have Coast Guard duty or anything?
A. No, because we were -- I don't know if we could consider it elite, but we were -we were not -- we were a part of the $93 r d$ battalion but we weren't -- we were just supposedly temporary and so no, we had -- I mean we would have if we were told to. During the Tet Offensive we did. But that was after $I$ came -- came back home -- or came from home back to Vietnam. And that was during the Tet Offensive and everybody had

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to pull some kind of duty.
Q. So, when was the first time that
you were under fire?
A. Actually when during the Tet

Offensive it probably would have been February or March.
Q. And -- ?
A. Myself. The actual the TET
offensive started January 28 th of '68.
Q. Right. Were you actually under
any ground attack or --?
A. Oh, yeah. And I remember the one
time distinctly. Well, the -- the one time
distinctly that $I$ remember is Pan American did the $R$ and $R$ flights. And during TET offensive we did not allow -- or they did not -- whoever the powers to be, did not allow Vietnamese on base.

So, the Vietnamese were basically
the ones that cleaned the aircraft and did the cleanup and whatever.

When they were allowed, then we were -- after I came home -- after I went back in '68-- came back in '68 I was assigned to the

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actual $R$ and $R$ part of it where $I$ actually processed guys going to Bangkok Thailand or wherever they were going on $R$ and $R$.

During the last four months, like in, I think it was February or March, one of the guys went home so $I$ was detailed to go to Seven Air terminal just to make sure a hundred and sixty-two people got out and a hundred and sixty-two people got off. And to take care of VIP's, colonel's and generals and whatever.
When -- one day -- well there
were two incidents. One I didn't have actual direct -- wasn't directly involved with me but a flight came in about six thirty, seven o'clock every morning from Guam.

And this one Pan American -- this
one came in and as it was taxing and going to stop I noticed that there was something dripping from the wing. And when we looked underneath it there was a fifty caliber machine gun bullet that had gone through the -- and I tell you, if you could have seen -- if you could have seen the pilots, they were white as a ghost.

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And there was a Trans World cargo plane that came in right after him and he ran over to that guy and he says, "What is the matter with you?" And he says, "I -- I tried to get you on my radio. He says, "You were being shot at." And he says, "I could see the tracer routes. I told you get up, get up, get up, and there was no response." That was the -- that -- even though it wasn't involved with me but that was my first signs that something was wrong. And then there was oh, probably another -- maybe a month after that, after we got used to be rocketed, whatever.

I was walking from the plane -the Pan American plane back to the Sevan Air Terminal and I -- and I heard this zing going over my head and I said, what the heck? Well, it didn't take a rocket scientist again to figure out that somebody was shooting at me.

So, by the time I got back to the
Sevan Air Terminal, there was about thirty rounds that actually hit the -- the -- actually the Sevan Air Terminal Restaurant. Busted the glass and

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whatever.
We were allowed to carry rifles but we were never -- never authorized to shoot. That was I guess supposedly the air force AAP's whatever that was supposed to take care of gun battle or whatever the unit was that was supposed to be watching over. But they, you know, somehow they didn't do that.

That's a frightening experience.
The other thing that really --
really -- it was undoubtedly printed in my mind was, I used to watch about four times a day the flag draped coffins go from wherever the mortuary was to the C-141's to take them home. And I'll tell you, you don't ever forget that either. I lost three of my high school classmates, and I always wondered when my turn was going to happen, but thank goodness it never did.

I tried when I was -- when I was doing $R$ and $R$ flights, I'm crazy. But when $I$ tried to do the $R$ and $R$ flights, $I$ felt guilty because $I$ really wasn't out there quote unquote action." So, I tried when $I$ did my $R$ and $R$ flights to make them

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as -- as -- I tried to get them to laugh. I would say, all those people going to Hawaii, your flight has been cancelled. You could hear a pin drop. Some of those guys on a special ops. But I would just say, I just want to see if you're awake. If somebody came along that $I$ knew about -- we had a manifest of people that were going on a flight and you'd have to check them off and ask them how much baggage they had and stuff like that. And if they weren't, they'd stay over night and you had to go get a blue card, fill it out and take it to the -the place where they get their laundry and there were stuff from there beds and stuff like that. And when I saw somebody was having some trouble understanding or whatever, there was one guy his name was Lee Black and the poor guy didn't know backwards from forwards. Why he was ever able to kill a man, I'll never know if he killed or not, but anyway, when I saw somebody like that $I$ would take it personally and make sure that they got there -- knew where their -- where their housing was and take them to the company club and you know, try to do the best I could to cheer

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them up before they went back.
In a way, $I$ felt guilty about not being in the combat zone, but on the other hand, I tried my best to make it as nice and pleasurable if that's the word, as I could.

BY MR. CLARK: (Cont'g.)
Q. Could you describe daily life,
your equipment --?
A. When I came home -- well actually the eighteen months, with the exception of February, March, and April it was just fatigues. Normal -- never carried a weapon. Just do your -you know, do your construction for the first twelve months. And then after that just do five to six $R$ and $R$ flights a day.

## Usually the Hawaii flights

started at six thirty, seven o'clock. And then the last one was three thirty or four, somewhere around there and you were done. And you would find things to do. And you could either go downtown to Saigon or they had movies.

Tonk Sun Nook air base was -- air force was the best air force always had the best of

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everything. They had the best -- I play
basketball, and they had the best basketball courts and they had the best food. So, we would go over -- some of us guys when we did earlier on our flights would get out at five or five thirty and would go over to the air force mess hall because they had really good food.

I never -- except for -- for
the -- I never had $C$ - rations. Usually it was cooked you know, whatever and that's one thing $I$ will say about the army. When they did $R$ and $R$, we tried to make things available to them that they didn't have in the field. You know. I was proud of that. $I$ was - I was proud of that.

MR. RUSSERT: When you were
there, were they allowing people to live off base?
MR. FRUDD: Oh, yeah. Oh yes.
MR. RUSSERT: So you could
actually live inside?
MR. FRUDD: Absolutely.
Absolutely. I'll tell you one story if I can. The first day $I$ was there -- well actually, I didn't -I didn't get to several -- until about six or seven

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days after I was supposed to be there. The C-141 that we went over on had air troubles so we stopped in Tokyo, Japan, so we spent about -- there was about I don't know, a hundred of us guys or whatever spent at least three to five days in -- in Japan. And so there was five of us that decided we're going to be real macho people. We're never going to be in Japan again.

So we went to downtown Tokyo. We went into this restaurant and ordered spaghetti. And I kid you not there was -- there was a wiggly -- what do you it -- cockroach that were climbing up the walls and that was normal for them. It wasn't for us. I think we paid for our food and left.

But anyway, we got to sing
Christmas -- Christmas carols with all the Japanese -- Salvation Army and I thought that was cool. So I never got to -- I never go to Tonk San Nuit I guess it was after Christmas of -- of '66. But the first day that I was there, I think it was a Sunday afternoon. This guy goes, come on, I want to take you downtown Saigon.

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2 So he took me down there and there was this -- I guess it was a palace. Anyway there was like a flower wake or something.

Anyway, he said watch this, about twelve o'clock or whatever it was, there was thirteen Buddhist monks I guess they were and they marched around thing about five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten times. And then the twelfth time I think it was, I can't remember, they all took out a vile and one went in the middle, put a vile of something on this poor guys head. And I said what the heck is going on?

And the next time they all threw a match on him and burned him. Right there. I said don't you ever do that to me again. Don't ever do that to me again. That was terrible. It was actually -- but you see, one thing that we have to -- I hope to -- when you don't have a value of life, it's meaningless. Absolutely meaningless. And we're finding it out in Iraq and we did find out in Vietnam.

Quite honestly, I think
fifty-eight thousand guys lost their lives for

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nothing. For absolutely nothing. We could have ended that war in one day. All we would have had to say is listen guys, you have twenty-four hours. If you don't cut it out I'm going to nuke you. And we didn't do it. We didn't do it. We spent heaven knows how many years over there. And fifty-eight thousand guys, for nothing. For absolutely nothing. Would I do it again? Absolutely. I would die for my country. I feel sorry for those people who gave draft dodgers and whatever because they -- someday they're going to be accountable for that. You don't do that. You defend your country because freedom is worth everything. And that's not just me talking, it's -- I believe it. I really believe it.
Q. Were you aware of any war protests while you were there?
A. Absolutely. Absolutely.
Q. And how did you feel about?
A. Well, it was terrible. I thought it was unbelievable. And you know, I love my country, I really do. But I'll tell you I wouldn't be a politician for all the tea in China because

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number one, I don't know how Johnson could have lived with himself. I don't know how Westmoreland could have lived with himself. Maybe I'm not supposed to say that.

But -- but -- but if we had
killed as many guys as we said that we had, there would have been nobody left. There would be nobody left. But when -- but when -- when you've got congressmen who are protesting and saying we can't do this, we can't do that and yet they own the stock in Winchester orf McDonald Douglas, Northrop that are making these weapons. That's kind of two faced. And then to top that all off, you've got people who -- who basically didn't want to die. They didn't want to be inconvenienced with two years of service with their life for their country.

Hey, if you can't do that, get
the heck out. That's the way I look at it. If somebody were to come up to me and say would you be willing to go to Iraq? In a minute. Because at least we're fighting for something over there. If we don't stop that war over there, they're coming over here, and heaven help us if they do.

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We're -- we're going to be in for some things that I'm afraid that we're never going to be able to get out of. We really are. And that's the same way with -- what they're doing -if we would have gone with the -- with the skills and the knowledge we had we could have had busted their tunnel system which was unbelievable. Why didn't we anticipate that? And if we did, why didn't we do something about it? I mean while $I$ am on that, they had intricate tunnel systems. I don't know we had corridors. Where were we? Where were we? You know, and it created jobs and that's all I can say for being in Vietnam. It created jobs and made somebody rich. And to me it's wrong. It's definitely wrong.

If -- if you're going over to win
or to free some depressed people or oppressed people, that's another thing. To go over to a country which could care less whether were there or not.

I mean, here we are, fighting for
freedom for these people and they're killing us.

1 Duane Frudd - 11-8-2005 did, how did you deal with that?

I value life more now than I ever have before because I realize how fragile it is. You're here one day and gone the next.

MR. CLARK: One -- one other question how did you think about what Jane Fonda

MR. FRUDD: Jane Fonda. I think she's a good Russian. I think she should live in Russia. But I think that she should -- and let me tell you something else, again, maybe I'm not supposed to say this. But it really irritates me. My wife and I went shopping -- I can't remember it's TFC or Penny's or wherever it was. That we were looking at flannel shirts and it said, "Made in Vietnam." I said, women don't you ever -- don't you ever bring anything into this house that has that name on it. I can't believe that our country would back people that killed us. Just like Japan.

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What is wrong with us?
You know, I'm over for a -- for entrepreneurship and -- and making as much money as you want to. But mother of Mary when you kill fifty-eight thousand of us guys and -- it's like again slapping us in the face and saying well, it wasn't worth it. Well you know what? Yeah it was. Like I said, three of my classmates never made it home. And -- and watching those stupid -- well not stupid -- those coffins every single day for seven or eight months, again, it does something to you. Maybe you're not killing somebody but let me tell you, you might as well be because you watch it every single day.

The first year I was there, it was nothing. The -- the first day I was back --. It was funny, we had double bunking in our housing. And the guy above me, I can still see him, his name was Robert Cochran. And I -- I never even heard of a Hubbell. And it was so close, you could hear it leave the tubes and by the time I got on the floor with the mattress over my face, the guy on the top was already down there.

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But let me tell you something, those six foot giant Russian rockets were worse than any thunder and lightening you ever heard of. And when you got up -- and they were always trying to get Westmoreland we used to call it the wag mail, it was made -- did you ever see them? MR. CLARK: NO. MR. FRUDD: Well, it was made specifically for him, by the whole nine yards. And they -- they used -- they had -- they tried to get it him but you were -- they were throwing six or seven or eight or nine rounds or whatever. And you go out and you see fire or they would hit something or whatever. And you -- again hear the Wosh sky hawks or whatever they use, they screen them out -and whatever never stopped. Never stopped.

That was something my -- that was -- it was something I would hope my kids never have to do but I would hope that they would be patriotic enough to do what the government told them to do.

Because again, if you -- if you
enjoy living in this country, somebody died for

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you, why shouldn't you return the favor. Nobody wants to die. But sooner or later we're all going to. But it is all relative.

MR. CLARK: How did you feel
about your immediate officers?
MR. FRUDD: Fine. We had a riot. Like I said, there were some really, really good times. The officer's -- the only one bad officer -- and he really wasn't bad, he just didn't know any better. We had one major that came in -the Captain that was in charge of the one 780 to replace the $R$ and $R$, went back home. So they sent this R.O.T.C. Major over.

On the second or third night he was there we got rocketed. And he made us fill sandbags for three nights because we didn't go screaming out running to get out rifles. Well, anybody in their right mind, I think, will know enough to know that if you're being rocketed, you don't try and go find your weapon. If you don't got your weapon with you, you stay still until the thing is over then you go get it.

But I think they sent him -- they

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complained to the adjutant General. And he didn't make us do that again.

But that's any -- after that he was really nice. No, I can't say that the officers that I had were nothing but gentlemen. And they took their job very serious.

It was more casual over there. I mean, every single officer that you see, you didn't have to salute him fifteen times a day. They were part of you. They would have a -- they would go to the club with you. They would share anything that they had. Like, I can't say that any of the people -- there were some bad people there were some good people, but you hung around the good people or you hung around the bad people.

But so those guys I still see their faces. Carl Paul he was the craziest person I have ever met in my life and if $I$ can ever find him again -- he was crazy. But he was so much fun. So much fun.

We had a more relaxed -- and
again, that's probably why $I$ feel a little bit guilty. We had it more relaxed where we were

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2 because we were supposed to be the security, but.

They had a -- they had a eighteen hole golf course I think it was and by the time the offense was done you can put and get a hole. They had a horse track and I believe there was nothing left of that after -- after they got through bombing it.

There was -- we would have
company parties, enough to make the people -- the people stayed overnight, relaxing. A lot of times we would have movies that we would show. A couple of months I ran the projector.

But you can do little things to make their lives a little bit more comfortable. If you were serious all the time, which I'm not, but if I were, I don't think I would have made it. I think you've got to have some sense of humor to keep your wits about you.

If you took everything that you saw, personable, or personal you're made a nut. You may be in a nut house.

I remember, I came home July
10th, I think it was. And the week before, July

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4 th, they -- all around the perimeter they shot off blue -- blue, yellow, and red flares. I'm thinking you guys, what are you doing? We've only got six days in the country, why are you doing that?

Luckily, we weren't rocketed but there was -- you had to have fun. I mean you had to. I really -- I hand it to those guys in the field. I really do. You never make friends out there because they're here today, gone tomorrow. Where we -- I made friends, that even though I don't have contact with them, I'll never forget. Never forget. Because you built that bond you know exactly what you're supposed to do and how you're supposed to do it, and you react because the other guy know exactly when he or she is supposed to do.
If -- if -- if I didn't learn
anything else from the army, I think -- well, I did learn a lot of things from the army but one, I came from like I said a rural community where nothing ever happened. And to be thrown into a situation -- especially at Fort Dix New Jersey, where you never heard the words that were used on us. You were never called a scum bag. You were

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never in the face with somebody telling you that you're a jerk, or you're worthless, or whatever. But you know, the discipline that you learn from that is what keeps you going when the bad times come. If you get -- you be scared and you wouldn't know what to do, you'd be the first one. I always told my company commander that the only way that Charlie was ever going to get me was in the back running. I think I filled sandbag for three nights after that. No, I'm kidding. I -- no, I'm kidding. Yeah, I had fun. Yeah, I did.

> Would I do it again? Yeah.

Yeah, I would do it again in a minute. BY MR. RUSSERT:
Q. What were race relationships within your unit?
A. Race?
Q. Yes.
A. No.
Q. Any problems?
A. No. No. Again, you had good
people, you had your bad people. I'd say a lot --

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a lot of the guys that were in our unit, they had a choice, Vietnam or jail. But, I know two guys specifically that had that choice. And I'll tell you what, they were some of the nicest people I had ever met in my life. Would I do that? No. But hey, I am not a bit better than anybody else. They did their job and one of them got shot in the head when -- a direct hit. It must have been their turn to get it.

The one thing that was bad about
that was is Vietnamese worked right during the day fought at night. So, they had exact -- I mean this General, got a direct hit. How did they get that? You know? And that's not -- I'll never understand why you would hire or have somebody work for you that's going to kill you. It doesn't make any sense. But that's the way it was.
Q. What about Vietnamese people in
general?
A. The Vietnamese people, I would say there's probably good Vietnamese. But I wouldn't trust them past my nose. I think they're very lazy. I think they're very -- they're users.

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They were our friends during the day and they killed us at night. I don't they valued at all what we were there for. I guess we were there for free elections but the only one on the ballot was Woodcock Aid so I question that too.

But anyway, there was -- we had some good relationships with the Vietnamese that would help us on the -- in the -- in the (indiscernible). And I'm sure that there are good Vietnamese people. But I think they're -- being afraid of Vietcong. They're having any loyalty to us. Would I -- would I cross the street if some Vietnamese were coming down the other side? No. Would I be friendly to them if they -- if they wanted a handshake or a hug or wanted a cup of coffee or take them out for a meal or whatever? Absolutely. I would do it. Do I respect them? Absolutely not.

MR. CLARK: Do you have any
desire to go back?
MR. FRUDD: Absolutely.
Absolutely. I mean this time for the right reasons. Yes. Because communism, I don't care who

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you are, communism -- let me give an illustration I spent a little bit of time at Phon Bien. And one of the duties I had to was (indiscernible) go in the middle of the field of the (indiscernible) where there was a -- where a refugee -- where soldiers that were killed from the Vietnamese families lived that were up north. And there was about three or four hundred people.

And there was a little girl, her name was Kim Shi. I can still see her. She haunts me. Not every night, but she haunts me. Me and my wife talk about it. Her name was Kim Shi, she was two years old. And she was one of the most loving, lovable little girls that you ever met. And her mother -- her husband was a lieutenant in the army and he was killed up north.

And she begged me, she begged me, please take her home with you. Please take her home with you. When that came -- when I left to spend thirty days home here in 167 , Christmas of 167, I came back Tet. And they had -- the Vietcong had come in and they had killed all three hundred of those people, including that little girl. You

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I -- the only -- your thing --
did you bring anything home from Vietnam? I don't want to have to remember that country when I was over there, anyway, except I did bring a picture of the home of that little girl. I don't know where it is now but she haunts me. She -- she haunts me. If I could have, I would have in a minute. In a minute $I$ would have taken her. MR. CLARK: What do you think are some of the experiences that perhaps, you mentioning her, besides her, that made the greatest impression on you?

MR. FRUDD: The country was
beautiful. It had beautiful birds. It had big snakes. One of the times that we had an armful like this but this one guy came into the compound

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and I kid you not, this is -- the gospel truth. He had about a thirty foot boa constrictor and the head of that snake was about as big as a softball. And I said, what in the world are you going to do with that snake? He said, I'm taking it to Hawaii, my wife is going to take it home. I said you've got to be kidding me? He said no, I'm going to do it.

When the Pam Am stewardess's
found out that there was going to be a thirty foot boa constrictor on the air plane they said that this plane is not leaving. You are not putting that -- we babysat a thirty foot boa constrictor. The Vietnamese had made a cage for that thing. And when you talk about rats, in Vietnam they're big as cats and they caught one. And I'll never forget the thing tormented that boa constrictor and just tormented the daylights out of it and then all of a sudden, one move, and the thing was gone.

But the -- the look on the Pan American stewardess's face when they said we're going to have a thirty foot boa constrictor. Oh it's going to be all crated up. No, it's not.

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It's not going to be on the plane.
That -- that I will never forget.
I don't know, you get -- there's a lot of things that you remember, a lot of good things that you remember. There's a lot of bad things that you remember. But the good things are -- where in the world would you ever in your lifetime get a chance to go to Vietnam? I didn't even know what the country -- the name of the country. That's my -and on my way there I got to visit Tokyo. I'll never go there in my life.

The country was beautiful,
beautiful. Unbelievable birds, they were like -like game hens, roosters, and then they had bright orange and bright red, bright greens, and they could fly.

Those are the things that you
remember. Saigon, I don't want to remember.
Saigon was dirty, filthy. There was no sanitation.
You could -- we were three miles I think from the fish market. You could smell those carp they caught up in the Mekong River they hung for about thirty days and they would be so bloated they'd

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2 explode. You'd stay away from that place.

The other thing is, the stewardess's out of Pam American flights, a lot would make repetitious flights.

There used to be a race to the -to the ones that came up from Hawaii because they had -- and we were used to drinking vegetable milk. And anyway, and ice cream.

The other thing that I remember is just before I left, they had started Australian flights Quanta I think it was.

This is the truth. I kid you
not. They had a cutting -- a ribbon cutting ceremony and all this kind of God off the wall stuff and we put the first a hundred and sixty-two people on and -- maybe I shouldn't say this but anyhow, a hundred and sixty-two people on and one

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stewardess and I love to hear Australians talk. Oh, I love to hear them talk.

But anyway, he came up to me and says, would do us a favor? Would you make a hundred and sixty-two names and put them -- put them in a hat. And I'm need a piece of this paper and I said, yeah, but what are you going to use it for? Never mind, I'll tell you. So, I made a hundred and sixty-two, after I got permission from my company commander by the way. And she said okay, now I want you to seven -- just draw seven numbers. So, I drew. And those seven people got to be escorted by the stewardess's for the night in Australia, and I thought that was kind of interesting. Not that I condone that kind of stuff but hey, those guys deserve anything that they could get. And again, if you tried to make their lives a little bit more comfortable, that was my job.

> And when I -- when I was over
there, that's exactly what I tried to do. I would -- I can still remember the locale that I

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used to say when -- when you would come on our flight or transportation to some place or whatever and there was a PA system and I would pretend sometimes that I was from Texas. And I would change my voice and -- and -- and whatever.

And you'd be surprised at the number of people that would come and say they appreciated it. Put a little humor in. I mean, even if you just said may I have your attention please? What was this -- the -- ya' all personnel manifest on today on flight to Texas. All senior officers and CO's are -- go to the front of the line. And have your boarding pass out and please show it to the man at the gate.

Well, you know, duh. But if you
put a little humor in it and -- and made it kind of like, you know, you go through enough stress you try to stay alive. Make it a little bit easier, and that's what I tried to do. And really honest with you.

MR. RUSSERT: Did you get to see any U.S.O shows while you were over there? MR. FRUDD: Oh, yeah. One of

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them I did was -- was -- who was it -- Nancy Sinatra. Can you imagine? Can you imagine, there's ten thousand GI's. They probably haven't seen a woman like that in probably over a year and she comes out in this white mini skirt and orange boots. And I'm thinking, this gal has either got to be crazy or she has no feeling whatsoever.

And I tell you, those guys were wild. I mean they went wild. They saw her -- I saw Martha Ray. My God, I can't remember, there must have been someone else but we used to have some local bands in the club. Some of the bands were pretty good that were singing rock and roll songs.

And again, like I said we had company parties, we would invite anybody on the compound to come in and a lot of them were grateful. And you know, we didn't have a compound big enough to have a baseball field. Next door again, the air force had a -- had a basketball court so $I$ spent a lot of my time playing basketball.

There was this one guy in the

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kitchen he had a contract signed with the Harlem Globe Trotters. That guy could shoot from anywhere in the court. Anywhere in the court and he would make it without even looking at it. And I don't know if he ever made it but what a waste of talent.

And you talk about nice guys -oh, I did meet Clint Walker. Yes. He came over on some flight and I didn't even know who he was. But here's this big monstrous guy. I know that guy. I saw him on TV. And you know, he was Jackson -what's his -- I can't remember. Colored guy.

MR. RUSSERT: Reggie Jackson?
MR. FRUDD: No, not Reggie -- no a singer. But anyway, he was there was it Michael Jackson.

MR. RUSSERT: Did --.
MR. FRUDD: It will come to me. But anyway, I didn't go see him. But if you wanted to keep yourself busy there were certainly plenty of things to do.

I spent a lot of my time like I
said -- there'd be some people that I would know from this area that would come back through. And I

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would spend a lot of time with them. And again, if somebody I could see was having trouble either writing their name or filling out a card or whatever, after, I would just say to the guy, you know, stay after. And I would help him fill out paperwork. Get it so they could do whatever they had to do.

Vietnam?
MR. CLARK: When did you leave

MR. FRUDD: July -- I think July
10th of '68.
BY MR. RUSSERT:
Q. Okay. Now, you were in the service until '72. What did you do between ' 68 and '72?
A. Okay. '68-- well, '68 to '70 we
were supposed to be on active -- active reserve. But one year after Vietnam $I$ was waived. The other two I was active because you have to spend six years.
Q. Did you ever -- did you make use of any GI bills (indiscernible) at all?
A. No. The only thing I'm getting

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right now is a hundred and twelve dollars I think it is for diabetes which they say I got when I was in the service. No, I never did.
Q. Okay.
A. Agent orange. That's another story. We were at a basketball court one night and all of a sudden this cloud of something came over us and I kid you not, it literally burned the hair out of your nose. It watered your eyes and you could tell it was something coming of a chemical. It was awful.

My -- I had a daughter who was
born with a tumor on the liver the size of an orange, which didn't have anything -- not necessarily, an orange takes up, as I understand it agent orange has dioxin in it. Dioxin attacks the lymph node, the blood system.

The tumor on the liver was the size of an orange and it would have been the size of a basketball. She had teeth that had no roots. She had no pigment in her eyes, the retinas of her eyes. I went to Erie VA hospital to have an agent orange test and I had a rash on my feet which they

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said was not -- not -- didn't have anything to do with it.

But I was concerned about my
daughter. She went to Children's Hospital in Buffalo. She was not expected to live. And they operated on her and she did -- twenty-two days she was there and we literally had to force feed her and whatever. But I think she's definitely going to have some problems.

But it was two days -- two weeks before she had hers, there was another one and the guy's name was Doctor Chewy. He said that's the only second one he'd ever seen. And I would have loved to know if that guy was ever in the military. I really honestly don't know.

Was I looking for anything?
Absolutely not, except giving some information to the people that do whatever they did.

I've got one -- I'm not one --
even though I shouldn't say this, but I'm not one to look for free handouts. If you did something wrong and you don't live up to it, that's your problem, don't worry about it.

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These stuff on us, the thing that irritates me the most is number one, we were there for no reason, as far as $I$ can see. But number two, why not using something if you use it? I don't like that. I'm not going to say that I'm a saint but if you do something -- if I do something wrong, $I$ can't stand there until $I$ make it right. That's my God given thing that my Christian parents taught me.

Now, you know everybody has, this
is a subject of our country. Duh. I mean if you were there, you'd know. Why are they all of a sudden saying it is now? Of course, I think they got some kind -- but by the time the lawyers and whatever got their hands on it, I guess there was not a whole lot left.

But, as far as I'm concerned what the military does with your life for two years is their business. You are owe it to this country to be patriotic enough to do whatever you have to do. If I do that however, then they should respect me enough to be honest and tell me say, yeah, we did use it.

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What -- what can I do about it
now? Except keep after them I guess. You know, hey that's life. Nobody has guarantees.

MR. CLARK: Did you join any
Veterans Organizations after?
MR. FRUDD: No. No. I got a honorary membership to the American Legion in Rockland, New York when I was in Vietnam. No, because -- again, I was brought up in a very religious home. Those places don't do anything. Now, I learn better. I know better.

The VA -- or the VFW keeps on bugging me to join them but $I$ don't really have time number one. I don't have the money. I'm on disability and $I$ wouldn't feel right you know, just blowing money that $I$ don't have. Which I don't have anyway, but -- and no I never -- never did.

MR. CLARK: Did you stay in
contact with anyone that you sexved with at all?
MR. FRUDD: No. No. Well, see,
I went to high school up near Rochester. So the guys that I knew up there, live too far away. I've got guys around here that in fact I have a

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brother-in-law that spent a little -- a little time over there. But I've got a lot of friends that were over there. But I -- and probably was the same time but I went through Rochester, they went through Fredonia.

MR. CLARK: How do you think your time in the service changed or had any factor in your life?

MR. FRUDD: Drastically. Again, you're coming from a very rural Christian home where you don't do anything wrong and you don't -you know, you don't step out of line.

It's a -- it's a eye opener to find out what the world is like and you better grow up in a hurry because if you don't, soon you're going to be among the missing.

The basic training really makes you feel like you're absolutely worthless piece of candy. But again, they have the reasons for doing that. If you're not disciplined enough to follow orders and do what you're taught to do, then when you get to places like Vietnam you're going to be in deep trouble. Very deep trouble.

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It has -- it has opened my eyes to realize how fragile life is. And it also has made me believe that the creator takes care of you no matter where you are. I -- I am totally convinced that had it not been for that sergeant that came up to me and asked me if I could build -or pound a nail, I probably would be dead and not talking to you.
I - I absolutely strongly
believe that it was -- that was somebody else's intentions, not mine. For whatever reason, I don't know but you -- you -- you value life a lot more. And -- and you also realize that a country that you live in, even though we got problems, is a heck of a lot better than living anywhere else. A heck of a lot better.
You can -- you can talk -- you can complain, you can -- for something like today. You don't see garbage all over like you did over there. Basically the people that you work with are the people that you're in contact with you choose to be their friends or whatever.

Although you didn't -- you can

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make some good friends that are long lasting. You can't remember names all the time but you can remember faces and something will come out to remind you of some of that -- that -- that you did over there.

I think there was a couple --
like I said, there are some positive things and then negative things and that anti-protesters certainly didn't help the situation.

When you're over there giving your life for whatever reason, you certainly don't want to hear about somebody complaining about their rights or whatever. You know, when it comes right down to it, you really don't have any rights. It's -- it's something that's given to you. It's not something that you earn. And you better be appreciative and -- and keep a hold of it for as long as you can.

MR. RUSSERT: Okay. Thank you very much for the interview.

MR. FRUDD: You're very welcome.
(The interview concluded)

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