

Salute to Veterans

In recognition of Veterans Day
November 11, 2019

The Wilmington
Rotary
Club



Veterans share their histories of military service

In advance of Veterans Day 2019, members of the Wilmington Rotary Club were asked to describe their time in the

armed service and comment on what it meant to them. Here are their answers.

Larry Anderson

**Maryland U.S. Army National Guard
Specialist 5th Class**



I served in the Maryland Army National Guard from 1965 to 1971. I started with the 29th Infantry Division, a high-priority unit during the Vietnam War, where I was a member of a rifle platoon. During the last

year and a half of my service time, our company became part of the 729 Maintenance Battalion. My final job was serving as an accounting specialist in charge of controlling the company's inventory programs.



Editor's note: An earlier version of this publication was distributed at the club's Nov. 5, 2019 meeting. This updated edition includes information about additional Rotarian veterans who chose to submit statements and photos.

Joseph F. Augustine

U.S. Army, Private First Class



My education at UNC Chapel Hill was interrupted when I enlisted in the United States Army. I was sent to Medical and Surgical Tech School at Fort Sam Houston. Upon completion of the requirements, I became a member of the Medical Corps. I was sent to the 98th General Hospital in Munich, Germany and was in the WWII Army Occupation. For 14 months as a physical therapy instructor, my duties were to help rehabilitate injured soldiers. At that time Munich was 95% destroyed from the bombings and had not been reconstructed. My ability to speak fluently in German gave me a unique opportunity to get to know the local people of Munich.

Later, I was a major in the Civil Air Patrol as well as commander of the Chapel Hill Civil Air Patrol. I was the pilot on many NC missions where we searched for missing civilian and military aircraft.

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Scott Betz
U.S. Navy,
Petty Officer Second Class



I served in the United States Navy from 1970 to 1979. I was stationed aboard the USS *John F Kennedy*, CV-67, for three and a half cruises. For two and a half cruises I was a member of Attack Squadron VA-72 where I worked on the jets' radar and bombing computers. For my final

cruise I was a member of ship's company. It was an incredible time in my life. The experiences and places I traveled shaped my adult life. I was honorably discharged and am still proud of my service to our country.



Ken Bishop
U.S. Army, Corporal

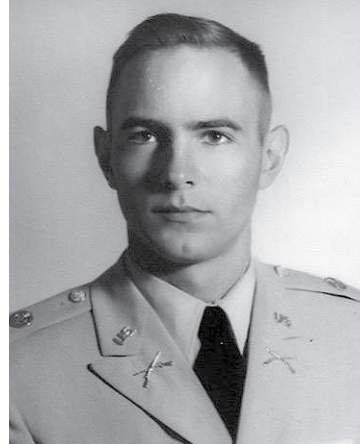


I was drafted into the U.S. Army January 21, 1953. I was sent to Camp Gordon in Georgia, where I was placed into the Signal Corps. I completed my basic training plus six weeks of radio repair. After my training I went to Camp Loeder in Salzburg, Austria. This is a beautiful city,

divided by the Salzach River. I worked in a small house on a mountain with Morse Code and teletype equipment. I worked with the teletype equipment keeping the signals 5/5, which went downtown to the crypto guys. I received an honorable discharge as a corporal on December 21, 1954.



Henry Brown
U.S. Army, Major



I graduated from the Virginia Military Institute with a BS in civil engineering in June, 1960. I received a commission as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army on June 14, 1960. I was assigned to Fort Benning, Georgia and graduated from the Officers Basic Program. I was subsequently assigned to Fort Jackson, S.C., where I served as commander of a basic

training company. In 1961, I was assigned to serve as post engineer at Fort Jackson based on my engineering background. I subsequently applied for and received a branch transfer to the Army Corps of Engineers. I was promoted to first lieutenant in 1961. At the end of my active duty obligation in 1963 I entered the Corps of Engineers Reserves, being promoted to captain and later major during my tenure.



Kathryn Bruner
U.S. Coast Guard,
Operations Specialist



Joining the U.S. Coast Guard felt like my calling. I have a younger sister I wanted to set an example for. I had the great privilege of working in Washington at a Small Boat Search and Rescue

Unit, in Oregon at a Search and Rescue Air Station and finally in North Carolina working for the Command Center for the State. Serving in the Coast Guard was an honor and I would do it all over again if I could.



Bunny Donohue

U.S. Navy, Lieutenant

I served in the United States Navy Nurse Corps from 1969-1973. I began at the hospital in Portsmouth, Virginia as an ICU nurse. I then served on the USS *Sanctuary* hospital ship in Vietnam where I worked in the Intensive Care Unit 18 hours a day taking care of wounded U.S. soldiers and Vietnamese Nationals that were brought in on helicopters. I then served at the Subic Bay Air Station in the Philippines where I took care of men and women assigned to the base and those arriving on incoming ships. Finally, I served on Parris Island in South Carolina where I took care of Marine recruits and I met my husband who was a Navy doctor. I grew up in a Navy family. My dad served in the Navy for 30 years and both of my parents are buried in Arlington National Cemetery.



William Bryan Fuller

U.S. Navy, Lieutenant

After finishing Officer Candidate School, I served as an officer aboard a ship where we replenished the United States Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean Sea. My



main job was performing officer of the deck bridge watches. I served active duty from 1964 through 1967.



James L. Edge

U.S. Army, Sergeant First Class



I served in the United States Army 82nd Airborne Division from 1952 to 1955 and for six years as an active reserve. This included



combat action in Hay Street Bars. I grew up in and around Fort Bragg and always planned to be a trooper and earn a GI bill.

Robert Greer

U.S. Coast Guard Reserve, Port Securityman Second Class

I joined the US Coast Guard Reserve in the mid-sixties. I was going to college and worked as a lifeguard at Wrightsville Beach in the summer. We worked closely with the Coast Guard. I was getting close to graduation and the draft was in play. I decided on the Coast Guard rather than be drafted. I stayed in the reserves until September of 1972 when I was honorably discharged with the rank of Port Securityman Second Class.



James Hundley

U.S. Air Force, Major

I served in the Air Force as an orthopedic surgeon at Carswell AFB in Fort Worth, Texas for two years.



Special thanks to:

- Rotary Veterans Committee – Scott Betz, Matt Mylott, Noah Woods, and David Grandey
- John Meyer for layout and design of this publication
- John Lyon for printing this publication

Bill Humphrey U.S. Army, Corporal



I served for two years during the Korean War doing cryptography code work under the “for eyes only” classification for



the Army, which was the highest classification they had. I was an S3 corporal and served at a well-secured location.

Wilbur D. Jones, Jr. U.S. Navy, Captain

I was commissioned from Officer Candidate School in 1956. As both a Regular Navy and Navy Reserve officer, I served on six ships in the Pacific and Mediterranean with a specialty in amphibious warfare. I commanded two Navy Reserve units including an amphibious assault support unit. I served for four and a half years as a captain in the Pentagon and served on the staff of the chief of naval operations as the Navy’s weapons systems integrated logistics support coordinator. I retired in 1984 after 28 years of ser-



vice. I served the Department of Defense nearly 41 years as a Navy officer and civilian, including seven and a half years at the Pentagon.



Russ La Belle U.S. Army, Sergeant



I served in the Civil Air Patrol, which prepared me for being drafted into the U.S. Army, where I served from 1962 to 1964. I began in Fort Hood, Texas, doing artillery surveying as an Army MOS 153a. I then served in the 2nd Armored Division. Highlights included amphibious

training and being on the trains headed to Cuba and then turning back around when the Missile Crisis subsided. We were also air-lifted to Germany to perform maneuvers for three weeks to prove to NATO that the Army could deploy a division vs. having to have a permanent presence. Finally, President Kennedy was supposed to review our division on his fateful day in Dallas.



Howard H. Loving Jr. U.S. Navy, Captain



I am a retired United States Navy captain. I served from 1960 to 1990. I served in combat during the Vietnam War from 1971 to 1972 and in the Persian Gulf and North Arabian Sea from 1980 to 1981. During my career I had four tours as a commanding officer. The Navy

provides significant leadership opportunities to young officers serving at sea starting with underway officer of the deck responsibilities in a battle group in unscripted situations. My family’s complete support during my four command tours and their willingness to live overseas on four occasions meant the most to me during my career.



Richard McGraw

U.S. Air Force, Major



I served in the United States Air Force from 1955 to 1983 both as an enlisted man and as a public affairs officer. I retired from the Air Force



Reserves as a major. I served in Vietnam in 1969 and 1970. For me, the service was all about growing up, teamwork and looking out for your brothers-in-arms.

Bill McMillan

U.S. Air Force, Major



I served in the Air Force Reserves from 1963 until 1968 and went on active duty from 1968 to 1970. I served as a major in the USAF Medical Corps at Travis Air Force Base in California where I became chief of the Gastroenterology De-



partment at a 400-bed general hospital and a 200-bed casualty staging unit. This experience gave me great insight into what our troops faced in Vietnam. My Air Force experience was very useful throughout my medical career.

Tom McMillan

U.S. Coast Guard Hospital Corpsman First Class (HM1)



I served in the U.S. Coast Guard on active duty from 1965 to early 1967. After leaving boot camp at Cape May, N.J., I attended Hospital Corps School at the Great Lakes Naval Base in Illi-



nois. After graduation, I served at the Great Lakes Naval Hospital, then spent time in Cleveland, Ohio and Yorktown, Va. After active duty, I remained in the Coast Guard Reserve for six years, last serving as a hospital corpsman first class (HM1).

John Meehl

U.S. Air Force, Staff Sergeant



I served in the Air Force from 1969 to 1972, including two tours in Vietnam and one tour inside Cheyenne Mountain, Colo., tracking

satellites. While in Vietnam, I served in Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City) attached to a four-service joint command called Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV). I also served as an adjunct to the U.S. Embassy in Saigon and received a letter of commendation from Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker for my night teaching at the University of Saigon.



Matt Mylott

U.S. Marine Corps, Captain



I enlisted and was later commissioned in the Marine Corps from 1999 to 2008. I was a critical skills operator at 2d Reconnaissance Battalion and ultimately with 2d Force Recon Company. My team was one of the very first American elements in Afghanistan and my battalion ran point for 2d Marine Division in the invasion of Iraq. I returned to both countries later as a platoon commander and company executive officer. I left the Marine Corps as a junior captain. I was most

passionate about being accountable for the lives of my brothers, for fighting tyranny and evil and fighting for those who can't fight for themselves.



Billy King

North Carolina U.S. Air Force National Guard, Sergeant

I served from 1968 to 1974 in the North Carolina Air National Guard.



Clark Pearson

U.S. Army, First Lieutenant



I was in the Reserve Officer's Training program (ROTC) at the University of Southern Mississippi from 1954 to 1958. I also joined the Army Reserves in 1956-1957 before graduation. After graduation, I was assigned to active duty

at Ft. Lee, Va., for training, schooling, and assigned as battalion executive officer in 1958 and 1959. After active duty I served in the Army Reserves as a first lieutenant from 1960 to 1967. I am currently a member of Post 10, American Legion.



Nick Rhodes Jr.

U.S. Air Force, Lieutenant Colonel



I served in the Air Force from 1966 to 1987. I was commissioned through the ROTC program at N.C.A&T State University. I served on active duty beginning as an aircraft maintenance officer at Chanute AFB in Illinois, Kunsan AFB in South Korea and Norton AFB in California. After completing graduate school, I became an R&D systems acquisition

management officer in the satellite communications office at Hanscom AFB in Massachusetts. I then attended the Air Command Staff College at Maxwell AFB in Alabama before returning to Hanscom AFB as an acquisition and information technology officer in the Space Surveillance System Directorate. I returned to South Korea as director of logistics for the Air Force Military Assistance Group and finished my career at the Pentagon as the program manager for the Saudi Arabian AWACS Procurement.



Robert 'R.B.' Richey

U.S. Navy, Lieutenant



Following graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1964 and temporary duty as a computer instructor during Plebe Summer at the Academy, I entered the Navy's Nuclear Power Program and became a nuclear submarine officer. I served aboard two ballistic missile submarines and as the senior nuclear ship superintendent at the Charleston

Naval Shipyard. Submarine patrols related to serving as a strategic deterrent during the Cold War with the Soviet Union and shipyard duty involved refueling and retrofitting nuclear submarines. I left the Navy after five years of active duty as a lieutenant, USN, upon concluding that submarine patrols during the Vietnam War were not the best way to raise a family.



Page Teer

U.S. Army, First Lieutenant



I served two tours with the 11th Calvary "Black Horse" Regiment in the U.S. Army as a first lieutenant and platoon leader in 1967 and 1968. We were all tanks, probably the toughest, baddest bunch of all. We survived

the worst of the Tet Offensive in Vietnam. One of my jobs was "tunnel ratting" and in my photo I had just set some charges to blow them up. I married my wife Joan two weeks before my first trip.



R. Joe Rogers

U.S. Army, Colonel



I grew up at the Army post in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas where my father served in the Army. So it was a natural that I would make the Army a career where I served from 1945 to 1976. I served as an infantry rifle platoon leader and infantry heavy weapons company commander in the Third In-

fantry Division in Korea from 1952 to 1953. I served as an aviation battalion commander in the First Aviation Brigade in Vietnam from 1965 to 1996. I served as chief of staff of the First Aviation Brigade in Vietnam from 1971 to 1972. I retired as a colonel.



Bill Rose

U.S. Navy, Commander



Upon graduation from UNC, I entered the Navy Officer Candidate School in Newport, R.I., and received my reserve commission. My first assignment was as gunnery officer aboard USS *Eldorado*, an amphibious flagship out of San Diego. I spent the next two years aboard, most of that time deployed to WESTPAC support-

ing the war in Vietnam. After two years at sea, I asked for a transfer to serve with the River Patrol Forces in Vietnam. I arrived two weeks before the big Tet Offensive in 1968 and saw lots of action then and during the remainder of my tour there. After Vietnam, I entered the Reserves. Alongside my career in banking and active civic life, I ended up staying in the Reserves for twenty years, retiring with the rank of commander.



Jacob N. Shepherd
U.S. Army Air Force, Captain



Air Force in Alaska and I was raised in Greensboro which had a large airport.

I was a captain in the Eighth Air Force, which now serves as the Air Force's Global Strike Command. During World War II, I was stationed in England and was a first pilot, flying 27 bombing missions over Germany in a four-engine B-17 bomber named Bottle Baby. I was always interested in flying. I had an uncle who served in the



Frederick Willetts III
U.S. Coast Guard,
Petty Officer Second Class



In 1969, I did a six-month tour of active duty at Cape May, New Jersey, Yorktown, Virginia and during the Vietnam War on Governors Island in New York where I was involved with the loading of explosives. I then served five more years in the Reserves doing monthly drills and

two weeks of deployment each summer where I was assigned to the Coast Guard Captain of the Port inspecting ships at the Port of Wilmington and served at the Reserve Training Center in Yorktown, Virginia. I was honorably discharged in 1975.



Julie Wilsey
U.S. Army, Captain



I was commissioned as an engineer officer directly after graduation from West Point in June, 1992. I served in construction and combat engineer units in Germany, Macedonia and Fort

Bragg. I completed service in 1998 as a captain, earning airborne and jumpmaster qualifications.

