

## COMPREHENSIVE TERMINOLOGY FOR VIETNAM VETERANS:

A1E: propeller-driven bomber.

AAA: antiaircraft artillery.

AC: aircraft commander.

ACAV: armored cavalry assault vehicle.

A DUFFLE BAG DRAG AND A BOWL OF CORN FLAKES:  
the final meal at Ton Son Nhut Air Force Base prior to boarding  
the Big bird for the flight back to the land of the big PX.

AF: Air Force.

AFB: Air Force base.

AFT: from AFTer...directional--in, at, toward, or close to the back  
or stern of a vessel or tail of an airplane.

AHC: assault helicopter company. (Hueys and gunships)

AID: Agency for International Development.

AIDS-TO-NAVIGATION: refers to all elements relating to functions of  
maritime navigation such as buoys, range markers,  
wreck markers, lights and lighthouses, including  
maintenance.

AIRBORNE: (Abn) paratrooper or parachutist-qualified.

AIRBURST: explosion of a munition in the air.

AIRMOBILE: people or material delivered by helicopter.

AIR CAV: air cavalry, referring to helicopter-borne infantry.

AIT: Advanced Individual Training, the period following Basic Training,  
specialized training given each soldier based on his MOS (Military  
Occupational Specialty), ie MOS 11B10, 11B20 received Infantry  
training, 13E20 received artillery training.

AK-47: (also AK or Kalishnikov) rifle.

The AK-47 was the basic infantry weapon of the North Vietnamese Army

(NVA) and the Vietcong (VC). Originally manufactured by the Soviet Union, most of these "Assault rifles" used in the war were made in the People's Republic of China, which was the major supplier of armaments to NVA and VC forces.

Also known as the Kalashnikov, after its Russian inventor, this weapon was sturdy, reliable, compact, and relatively lightweight. It fired a 7.62mm bullet in a fully automatic mode (continuous firing, like a machine gun, as long as the trigger was squeezed). The high muzzle velocity (speed of the bullet after firing) and the tumbling action of the bullet contributed to its effectiveness. The combination of these effects plus its rapid-fire capability meant that accuracy was not a major requirement, thus reducing the training time before a soldier could be sent into combat.

Most armaments analysts judge the AK-47, which normally holds thirty bullets, to be superior to the U.S. M-16, which became the standard weapon of American, Korean, and South Vietnamese troops. It was more durable and less adversely affected by the climate and conditions of Vietnam. There are a number of accounts of cases in which American troops preferred to use the AK-47 and in fact did use it when combat conditions permitted. An inherent risk, however, to U.S. troops using the 'AK,' was that its distinctive "popping" sound might cause the firer to be mistaken for the enemy.

A LAUGH A MINUTE: similar to the Naval Aviators "Walk in the Park," but it meant going up a river.

ALCE - Airlift Control Element - A regional Tactical Airlift Command Post Sand Box "ALCE" - The "ALCE" at Cam Ranh Bay Rocket Alley "ALCE" - The "ALCE" at Bien Hoa.

ALL AMERICAN: in 1970, what D, 2/8 Cav was calling the automatic ambush.

ALPHA-ALPHA: Automatic Ambush, a combination of claymore mines configured to detonate simultaneously when triggered by a trip-wire/battery mechanism.

ALPHA BOAT - Assault Support Patrol Boat (ASPB). A light, fast shallow draft boat designed specifically to provide close support to riverine infantry. Armament consisted of machine guns (M-60 and .50 cal.), plus whatever the boat crew could scrounge. M-79s and LAWs were common.

ALPHA BRAVO: slang expression for ambush, taken from the initials AB.

AMERICAL: 23rd Infantry Division.

AMF: literally, "Adios, Mother F\*\*\*\*\*."

AMMO: ammunition

ANZAC: Australian and New Zealand Armed Corps Memorial Day on April 25th, commemorating the devastating losses which Australian and New Zealand forces suffered at Gallipoli in 1915.

A-O: area of operations.

AO DAI: traditional slit skirt and trousers worn by Vietnamese women.

APC: an armored personnel carrier.

AP ROUND: armor piercing round.

ARA: aerial rocket artillery.

ARC LIGHT OPERATIONS:

code name for the devastating aerial raids of B-52 Stratofortresses against enemy positions in Southeast Asia, the first B-52 Arc Light raid took place on June 18, 1965, on a suspected Vietcong base north of Saigon. In November 1965, B-52s directly supported American ground forces for the first time, and were used regularly for that purpose thereafter.

ARCOMS: Army Commendation Medals

ARTICLE 15: summary disciplinary judgement of a soldier by his commander, may result in fines or confinement in the stockade.

ARTY: artillery.

ARVN: Army of the Republic of Vietnam (Army of South Vietnam).

ASAP: (A-sap) as soon as possible; a request for extreme urgency in a military assignment.

ASH AND TRASH:

helicopter term similar to "Pigs & Rice." Taking on mission flights that are considered non-combative (don't mean you aren't going to get shot at)

and generally assigned to an area and taking men from field to rear base camp, taking hot food out to the field, evacuating men, etc.

The term was perverted to "Ass and Trash" by many in-country aircrews to differentiate between hauling people and supplies.

#### A SHAU VALLEY:

the A Shau Valley is located in Thua Thien Province of I Corps near the Laotian border. Actually several valleys and mountains, the A Shau Valley was one of the principal entry points to South Vietnam of the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

It was an area that was critical to the North Vietnamese since it was the conduit for supplies, additional troops, and communications for units of the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and Vietcong (VC) operating in I Corps. Because of its importance to the NVA and VC, it was the target of repeated major operations by allied forces, especially the U.S. 101st Airborne Division. Likewise, it was defended vigorously by the NVA and VC.

Consequently, the A Shau Valley was the scene of much fighting throughout the war, and it acquired a fearsome reputation for soldiers on both sides. Being a Veteran of A Shau Valley operations became a mark of distinction among combat Veterans.

The most famous battle of the A Shau Valley was Operation Apache Snow, also known as Hamburger Hill.

ASHC: assault support helicopter company.

A TEAMS: 12-man Green Beret units.

ATFV OR ATFG: Australian Task Force, Vietnam.

AWOL: absent without official leave. Far more serious and harder to prove, than "UA:" unauthorized absence.

B-40 ROCKET: a shoulder-held RPG launcher.

#### B-52 BOMBER:

the B-52 is regarded by experts as the most successful military aircraft ever produced. It began entering service in the mid-1950s and by 1959 had replaced the awesome but obsolete B-36 as the backbone of Strategic Air Command's (SAC) heavy bomber force. Its primary mission was nuclear deterrence through retaliation.

The B-52 has been amazingly adaptable. It was initially designed to achieve very high-altitude penetration of enemy airspace. But when that concept was rendered obsolete by the development of accurate surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), the B-52 was redesigned and reconstructed for low-altitude penetration. It has undergone eight major

design changes since first flown in 1952, from B-52A to B-52H. When the Vietnam situation began to deteriorate in 1964, Key SAC commanders began pressing for SAC to get involved in any U.S. action in Vietnam. But the first problem was one of mission. How could a heavy strategic bomber designed to carry nuclear bombs be used in Vietnam? The answer was to modify the B-52 again.

Two B-52 units, the 320th Bomb Wing and the 2nd Bomb Wing, had their aircraft modified to carry "iron bombs," conventional high explosive bombs. After a second modification, each B-52 used in Vietnam could carry eighty-four 500-pound bombs internally and twenty-four 750-pound bombs on underwing racks, for a 3,000-mile nonstop range. The two bomb wings were deployed to operate from Guam as the 133rd Provisional Wing. Later, additional units were deployed to Thailand and Okinawa to reduce in-flight time, and thus warning time.

The first B-52 raids against a target in South Vietnam (and the first war action for the B-52) took place on June 18, 1965. The target was a Vietcong jungle sanctuary. The results were not encouraging. Two B-52s collided in flight to the target and were lost in the Pacific Ocean. The results of the bombing could not be evaluated because the area was controlled by the Vietcong.

Although the press criticized the use of B-52s, ground commanders were much impressed with the potential of the B-52. Previous attempts to use tactical bombers and fighter-bombers to disrupt enemy troop concentrations and supply depots had not been successful. But the B-52 was a veritable flying boxcar, and the effect of a squadron-size attack was to create a virtual Armageddon on the ground.

Ironically, the most effective use of the B-52 in Vietnam was for tactical support of ground troops. B-52s were called in to disrupt enemy troop concentrations and supply areas with devastating effect. From June 1965 until August 1973, when operations ceased, B-52s flew 124,532 sorties which successfully dropped their bomb loads on target. Thirty-one B-52s were lost: eighteen shot down by the enemy, and thirteen lost to operational problems.

**BAC SI:** Vietnamese term for Medical Corpsman/Doctor.

**BA-MA-BA:** term for "33" Vietnamese beer ("Tiger Piss.") More properly, "BA-MOI-BA" (Vietnamese for "33"). Ba Moi being 30 and Ba being three. Moi counts 10s.

**BAHT:** Thai unit of currency.

**BANANA CLIP:** banana shaped magazine, standard on the AK-47 assault rifle.

**BAR:** Browning Automatic Rifle, .30 cal, heavy, shoulder fired weapon,

used in WWII and Korea. The M-14 sought to combine the firepower BAR with portability of the M-1. The M-60 machinegun replaced both the BAR and the Browning light machinegun.

**BASE CAMP:** a semipermanent field headquarters and center for a given unit usually within that unit's tactical areas responsibility. A unit may operate in or away from its base camp. Base camps usually contain all or part of a given unit's support elements.

**BATTALION:** (Bn) a battalion is an organizational institution in the Army and Marine Corps. Commanded by a lieutenant colonel, an infantry battalion usually has around 900 people and an artillery battalion about 500 people. During the Vietnam War, American battalions were usually much smaller than that.

**BEEHIVE:** a direct-fire artillery round which incorporated steel darts (fleshettes), used as a primary base defense munition against ground attack.

**BERM, BERM LINE:** hedgerow or foliated built-up area which divided rice paddies; also, a rise in the ground such as dikes or a dirt parapet around fortifications.

**BIC (biet):** Vietnamese term for "understand".

**BIG RED ONE (BRO):**  
nickname for the 1st Infantry Division, based on the red numeral "1" on the division shoulder patch. "If your gonna be one, be a Big Red One!!"  
Also known as the "Bloody One," "Bloody Red One," or "Big Dead One." See the 1st Div. shoulder patch.

**BIG SHOTGUN:** a 106mm recoilless rifle using antipersonnel canister ammunition.

**BINGO:** Air Force term for the point in a flight in which there's only enough fuel remaining to return to base.

**BINJO MARU:** name given to the White River.

**BIPOD:** two-legged, supportive stand on the front of many weapons.

**BIRD:** any aircraft, usually helicopters.

**BIRD DOG:** O-1 Aircraft.

**BLADDER:** a heavy-duty, rubberized collapsible petroleum drum ranging

from 2,000 to 50,000 gallons.

BLADDER BAG: collapsible canteen.

BLIVET: a heavy rubber bladder in which fuel was transported in an aircraft.

BLUELEG: infantryman, aka "grunt".

BLUE LINE: a river on a map.

BOAT PEOPLE: refugees fleeing Vietnam by boat after 1975.

BOATSWAIN: an enlisted rating, running from boatswain's striker (E-2) thru Master Chief and then into Warrant Officers. A Navy and Coast Guard rating for deck crew.

Also, personnel, generally specified as specializing in water transportation and all affiliated chores pertaining to operation and maintenance of deckequipment such as lines, paint, etc., which reflect the general "health" of the ship. The Boatswain also carried a "pipe" or whistle used to make shipboard announcements, often just a series of notes (a melody) not even accompanied by words of instruction. The tune itself was the announcement.

BOATSWAIN'S MATE 1st CLASS: usually the "deck apes" and small box coxswains. The Aviation Boatswain's Mates were usually the guys who took care of towing the birds around the ramp area or flight decks and who made sure they were secured to the 'ground' when the weather went to pot.

BO DOI: a uniformed NVA soldier.

BODY BAGS: plastic bags used for retrieval of bodies on the battlefield.

BOHICA: short for "Bend Over, Here It Comes Again." Usually describing another undesirable assignment.

BOK-BOK: fight/fighting.

BOOBY TRAP: an explosive charge hidden in a harmless object which explodes on contact.

BOOKOO: (beaucoup) Vietnamese/French term for "many," or "lots of..."

BOOM BOOM: "short time" with a prostitute, typically cost \$3-\$5.

**BOONDOCKS, BOONIES, BRUSH, BUSH:** expressions for the jungle, or any remote area away from a base camp or city; sometimes used to refer to any area in Vietnam.

**BOQ:** bachelor officer's quarters.

**BOU:** a C-7A Caribou aircraft.

**BOUNCING BETTY:** explosive that propels upward about four feet into the air and then detonates.

**BOW:** front of the ship or boat.

**BREAK SQUELCH:** to send a "click-hiss" signal on a radio by depressing the push-to-talk button without speaking, used by LLRPs and others when actually speaking into the microphone might reveal your position.

**BRIGADE:** the term "brigade" is a basic military organizational institution.

During the Vietnam War, a division was organized into three brigades, with each brigade commanded by a colonel. A division consists of approximately 20,000 people.

There were also separate infantry brigades functioning in the Vietnam War. The 11th, 196th, and 198th Infantry Brigades fought in the war until 1967, when they were brought together to reconstitute the American Division, or the 23rd Infantry. The 199th Infantry Brigade and the 173rd Airborne Brigade continued to fight as independent entities. A number of combat support brigades, designed to provide supplies, medical care, and maintenance, also functioned in South Vietnam during the 1960s and 1970s.

**BRING SMOKE:** to direct intense artillery fire or air force ordnance on an enemy position.

**BRONCO:** OV-10 Aircraft

**BUF:** a B-52 aircraft (mnemonic for Big Ugly F\*\*\*\*\*).

**BUFF:** slang for B-52 (esp. D model). Stands for big ugly fat f\*\*\*er.

**BuSHIPS:** Bureau of Ships; Washington, D.C.; in charge of monitoring all Naval vessel activities, especially in regards to civilian contracts.

**BUSH MASTERS:** any elite unit skilled in jungle operations.

**BUS TRANSFERS:** standard tongue-in-cheek expression. Use your metro bus transfers to change buses at a transfer point. Meant humorously, as troops did not have their "bus passes" with them at the time.

**BUTTER BAR:** 2nd Lieutenant, based on the insignia - a single gold bar.

**BVR:** Beyond Visual Range. (Air Force).

**BX:** base exchange.

**C-4:** a very stable plastic explosive carried by infantry soldiers.

"C-4" was a plastic explosive popular among soldiers in Vietnam because of its various properties. It was easy to carry because of its lightweight, stable nature, and had a potent explosive power. Malleable with a texture similar to play dough, it could be formed into a shaped charge of infinite configuration. The availability of "C-4" reduced the necessity of carrying a variety of explosive charges.

"C-4" would not explode without use of detonation devices, even when dropped, beaten, shot or burned. It was not destabilized by water, an important consideration given the Vietnam climate. Because it could be safely burned, "C-4" was popular with GIs, who would break off a small piece of it for heating water or C-rations. Sometimes they used it in foxholes to warm hands and feet on chilly nights.

"C-4" replaced sterno as the heating fuel of choice. Soldiers in the field could obtain "C-4" on a resupply mission whereas sterno required a trip to the PX which, of course, was not necessarily possible.

**CACA DAU:** Vietnamese Phrase for "I'll kill you."

**CAL:** caliber

**CAMMIES:** camouflage uniforms. Some Coastguardsmen wore any of the various types and styles used in Vietnam.

**CAR:** rifle, predecessor to the M-16, the Carbine, CAR-15.

**CAS:** Close Air Support, missions flown in support of infantry forces in contact with NVA or VC hostiles.

**CAV:** nickname for air cavalry. Also referred to armored cavalry using M113 APCs, and other light armored vehicles.

**C & C:** command and control.

**CCB:** Command & Control Boat. A converted landing craft of the

Monitor class of riverine boats, packed with radios, designed for forward command and communications. Traveling with the flotilla of boats and landing craft of a typical riverine operation, it was used for relaying communications between the commanders in the field and the Army's Tactical Operations Center and Fire Support groups. By using larger antennas than would be practical in the field, communications range could be extended to 10 to 15 miles.

CCN (CCC,CCS): Command and Control, North. The poor SOB's who ran the ops north, instead of west, etc. There was also CCC (central) and CCS (south).

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS: The Central Highlands, a plateau area at the southern edge of the Truong Son Mountains, was a strategically important region of South Vietnam throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Nearly one million people, primarily Montagnard tribesmen, lived in the 20,000 square miles of the Central Highlands in 1968. The region was economically known for its production of coffee, tea, and vegetables.

CG: Coast Guard.

CG: commanding general.

CHARGE: an amount of explosive, powder, etc required to perform a task.

CHARLIE, CHARLES, CHUCK: Vietcong--short for the phonetic representation Victor Charlie.

CHECK IT OUT: a slang as ubiquitous as "okay" during the late sixties, meaning to have a close look at something or someone.

CHERRY: a new troop replacement.

CHICKEN PLATE: chest protector (body armor) worn by helicopter gunners.

CHICOM: (Cheye-com); a term describing a Chinese Communist or weapons manufactured in China.

CHIEU HOI: (Choo Hoy); "Open arms." Program under which GVN offered amnesty to VC defectors.

CHINOOK: the CH-47 cargo helicopter; also called "S\*\*\*hook" or "Hook."

CHOGIE, CUT A CHOGIE: to move out quickly. Term brought to Vietnam by soldiers who had served in Korea.

CHOI OI: Vietnamese term, exclamation like "Good heavens" or "What the hell!"

CHOKER: peanut butter.

CHOPPER: helicopter.

CHURCH KEY: bottle opener.

CIA: Central Intelligence Agency or simply "The Agency" or "The Company."

CIB: Combat Infantry Badge for actual time in combat.

The CIB was awarded only to combat veterans holding an infantry MOS and several award levels based on number of tours in a combat zone (meeting the base requirement each time).

CIC: Combat Information Center. Also, Communications and Information Center, but not aboard ship.

CIC: Commander-in-Chief. (President of the United States)

CIDG: (Sidgee) Civilian Irregular Defense Group.

CINCPAC: Commander in Chief, Pacific.

CLACKER: firing device ('exploder') for triggering claymore mines and other electrically initiated demolitions.

CLAYMORE: a popular, fan-shaped, antipersonnel land mine.

Widely used in Vietnam, the claymore antipersonnel mine was designed to produce a directionalized, fan-shaped pattern of fragments. The claymore used a curved block of C-4 explosive, shaped to blow all its force outward in a semicircular pattern. A large number of pellets were embedded in the face of the explosive, creating a devastating blast of fragments similar to the effect of an oversized shotgun.

With their directional pattern, claymores were well-suited as a perimeter-defense weapon. With electronic firing, defenders in bunkers could set claymores in a pattern to cover all approaches and fire them at will. One problem with this was the tendency of the enemy to use infiltrators to sneak into the defense perimeter before an attack and simply turn the claymores around. Then when defenders fired the mine, its fragments

peppered their own position.

A more unorthodox use was found for claymores by many American GIs. The explosive burned with intense heat, and a small amount of explosive could quickly heat a can of C-rations in the field. While never designed for it, and certainly never sanctioned, claymores became one of the most popular field stoves in the war.

**CLEATS:** a strong device, usually metal, used to secure (tie down) to. Such tie-down points, for instance, would line a pier and provide places for mooring lines to attach to.

**CLOSE AIR SUPPORT:** air strikes against enemy targets that are close to friendly forces, requiring detailed integration of each air mission with the fire and movement of those forces.

**CLUSTER BOMBS:** a generic term for a number of different CBUs: "SADEYE/BLU-26B" Cluster Bombs, later nicknamed "guava" bombs by the Vietnamese. These one-pound, baseball-sized bombs were usually dropped in lots of 600 or more. The bomblets were released from a dispenser in such a way as to spread them across a wide area. When they hit the ground, they exploded sending out smaller, steel balls embedded in their cases.

There were also CBU-24; CBU-25; Clamshell CBU, which exploded in a donut pattern, creating a circle of fire in a hollow; and CBU-49, a canister of time-delayed, baseball-sized bomblets that go off randomly over a thirty-minute period, each blasting out 250 white-hot ball bearings and Rockeye CBU, a thermite device used for burning targets.

**CMB:** Combat Medic Badge.

**CO:** commanding officer.

**COASTIES:** nickname used to identify the United States Coast Guard servicemen and women.

**COBRA:** the AH-1G "attack helicopter." Nicknamed by some the "Shark" or "Snake."

The Cobra carried 2.75s, mini-guns, and a 40mm gun mounted in a turret under the nose of the aircraft. There were other configurations, also. The old "D" model Hueys were phased out and the Cobras used in greater strength around 1968. Most of the Cobras were painted with eyes and big, scary teeth like a shark for psychological impact.

**COMIC BOOKS (FUNNY BOOKS):** military maps.

**COMM (COMMO):** communications.

COMPANY: a company is an organizational institution commanded by a captain and consisting of two or more platoons. It varies widely in size according to its mission. An artillery company is called a battery, and a cavalry company is called a troop.

CONTACT: condition of being in contact with the enemy, a firefight, also "in the s\*\*\*."

CONUS: continental United States.

COOK-OFF: a situation where an automatic weapon has fired so many rounds that the heat has built up enough in the weapon to set off the remaining rounds without using the trigger mech. This was common in the 50 cal., and the only way to stop it was to rip the belt.

CORK: a drug used in the field with small teams to prevent defecation.

CORK: burnt cork was used for facial camouflage.

CORPS: two or more divisions, responsible for the defense of a Military Region.

The term "corps" has a dual meaning in the armed services. It can be used to designate any group of military personnel performing a similar function, like the Signal Corps or the Medical Corps. As an organizational element in the military, a corps is a unit made up of at least two divisions. The corps commander, usually a lieutenant general, controls combat operations by issuing directives to division commanders and coordinating the work of artillery and cavalry groups. There were four corps operating in Vietnam during the war:  
III Marine Amphibious Force,  
The XXIV Corps,  
I Field Force Vietnam, and  
II Field Force Vietnam.

COXSWAIN: the person, generally a Boatswain's Mate, in charge of steering and/or directing the crew of a boat. A boat is defined as a vessel smaller than a ship.

CP: command post.

CRACKER BOX: field ambulance.

CREW CHIEF: Huey crew member who maintains the aircraft.

CRID: (Crid) Republic of Korea Capitol Infantry Division. Americans

called it the "Tiger" Division.

CROSSCHECK: everyone checks everyone else for things that are loose, make noise, light up, smell bad, etc.

CS: Composite Service. Also, riot control gas agent, such as a CS-grenade, used widely to clear out enemy tunnel works. Also, a type of tear gas.

C's: C-rations, C-rats, Charlie rats, or combat rations--canned meals used in military operations. The term "Charlie" was both the phonetic alphabetization of the "C" in C-rations and signified the enemy or enemy activity.

CT-O: communications technician--Operation Branch.

CYA: cover your ass.

CYCLO: a three-wheel passenger vehicle powered by a human on a bicycle.

DAP: a stylized, ritualized manner of shaking hands, started by African-American troops.

DAPSONE: small pill taken periodically by U.S. troops, ostensibly to prevent malaria but actually to prevent leprosy.

DASH: Drone Anti-Submarine Helicopter (DASH), a remote-controlled airborne miniature helicopter used to track and detect submarines at a distance.

DENT CAP: Dental Civilian Action Program. U.S. Military dental personnel went into the villes and tended to the dental problems and hygiene of the locals.

DD: destroyer. Variations: DDG--destroyer with guided missiles; etc.

DEEP SERIOUS/DEEP S\*\*\*: the worst possible position, such as being nearly overrun.

DEROS: date eligible for return from overseas; the date a person's tour in Vietnam was estimated to end.

DET CORD: detonating cord. An 'instantaneous fuse' in the form of a long thin flexible tube loaded with explosive (PETN). Used to obtain the simultaneous explosion from widely spaced demolitions, such as multiple

claymores. Transmitted the explosive chain at 25,000 feet per second. Also used to fell trees by wrapping 3 turns per foot of tree diameter around the tree and firing.

DEUCE: two.

DEUCE AND A HALF: 2.5 ton truck.

DEUCE GEAR: Marine term for the web gear issued to troops, named for the gear's Requisition Form 782, "Seven-Eighty-Deuce."

DI DI MAU: move quickly.  
Also shortened to just "Di Di."

DINKY DAU: Vietnamese term for "crazy" or "You're crazy."

DIME NICKEL: a 105mm howitzer.

DIRTY THIRTY: pilots who C47 out of Than San Nhut as copilots to Viet Pilots.

DIV: division.

A division is a nearly universal military organization consisting of approximately 20,000 troops commanded by a major general. During the Vietnam War, the following U.S. divisions or elements thereof participated in the War.

DI WEE: captain.

DMZ: demilitarized zone.

DOC: affectionate title for enlisted medical aidman.

DOC: what the grunts would call medics.

DOD: Department of Defense.

DOI MOI: renovation.

DONUT DOLLY: American Red Cross Volunteer--female. Also seen as "Doughnut Dolly(ies)." Namesake of World War I counterpart; helped the morale of the troops.

DOPE: Marine term for the adjustments made to weapon sights. Also a term for marijuana and other illicit drugs.

**DOUBTFULS:** indigenous personnel who cannot be categorized as either Vietcong or civil offenders. It also can mean suspect personnel spotted from ground or aircraft.

**(THE) DRAG:** squad behind the main maneuver element to ensure rear safety.

**DRESS WHITES:** the formal light weight uniform for the Navy and Coast Guard.

**DRUM:** holds ammunition until ready to mount on the weapon and "feed" the ammo.

**DU:** the F-word.

**DUFFLEBAG:** the oblong, unwieldy bag in which troops stored all their gear. Also, an artillery term for motion/sound/seismic sensors placed along suspected enemy trails or areas. Dufflebag sensors contained small radio transmitters which sent a signal to an intelligence unit when triggered. Once triggered, the artillery fired on the "dufflebag" target to intercept or interdict the enemy.

**DU MI AMI:** the F-word with maternal overtones.

**DUNG LAI:** Vietnamese for "STOP!" or "HALT!"

**DUSTER:** the M-42. It was an automatic twin 40mm "ack-ack" set up on a tank body. It was used for firebase and convoy security.

**DUSTER:** these were WWII tracked vehicles brought to RVN. They were medium size and sported two 40mm pom-poms plus one M60 Machine Gun, plus a crew of about 4 to 5 with individual weapons. They were used for convoy security and perimeter security for artillery bases each night.

**DUSTOFF:** a nickname for a medical evacuation helicopter or mission. Also, see "Medevac."

"I need a Dustoff" became an all-too-familiar call on the airwaves of Vietnam. Dustoff missions were medical evacuation missions using helicopters. While the term has been used to apply to all medical evacuation missions, GIs reserved the term for missions flown to pick up wounded soldiers in the field, often under fire. When a soldier was hit, the call went out for a Dustoff, and any helicopter in the area without a higher priority mission could respond.

Many of the early helicopters used in Vietnam did not fare well in Dustoff missions due to their lack of maneuverability and relatively slow

speed, combined with a small door. The UH-1 "Huey" excelled in this role, with its wide doors and ability to get in and out quickly.

Still, flying Dustoffs took courage on the part of the crew, as groundfire was the rule rather than the exception. The rewards, however, were great. Dustoffs allowed wounded soldiers to be brought to medical facilities much more quickly than in any other war, usually in a matter of minutes, and saved many lives.

#### 82nd AIRBORNE DIVISION:

although the Joint Chiefs of Staff considered deploying the entire 82nd Airborne Division to Vietnam, only the 3rd Brigade ever received such orders, serving in Vietnam between February 18, 1968, and December 11, 1969. Attached to the 101st Airborne Division, the 3rd Brigade fought in I Corps, primarily in Hue. Late in 1968, the 3rd Brigade was moved down to Saigon to defend Tan Son Nhut Air Base.

#### 82' WPB:

82' means 82 feet long. The Coast Guard numbers its small boats by adding the vessels length to the hull number, i.e. 82301 is a 82' boat with a hull number of 301. The hull number also defines the class of boat. The Coast Guard sent A and B class "versions" of the boat to VN. The C class was built to replace those sent.

"WPB." The Coast Guard used the designation of "W" for all its vessels.

"W" simply means Coast Guard. The "PB" stands for patrol boat.

Therefore, this is an 82' Coast Guard Patrol Boat.

#### E1, E2, ETC.:

enlisted men's grades, E1-Trainee, E2-Private, E3-Private First Class, E4-Corporal or Specialist-4, E5 Sergeant or Specialist-5, etc.

E & E: escape and evasion.

ECM: electronic counter measures, such as jamming, deception, and detection.

EGG BEATER: affectionate name for Huey or any helicopter.

ELD: USCG Explosive Loading Detachment. There were four ELDs assigned to the Army in VN. They supervised the off loading of all the ammo in VN.

ELECTRIC STRAWBERRY: a nickname for the 25th Infantry Division because of the division's shoulder patch representation of "Tropic Lightning."

ELEPHANT GRASS: tall, sharp-edged grass found in the highlands of

Vietnam.

ELINT: electronic intelligence.

EM: enlisted man.

ENSIGN: entry level officer rank in the Navy and Coast Guard.

EOD: explosive ordnance disposal.

ET: electronics technicians.

ETS: date of departure from overseas duty station.

EVAC: see "Medevac."

EXFIL: exfiltrate, exfiltration--sneak out/pick up/extract personnel; point of exit from an AO.

EXTRACTION: voluntary or involuntary withdrawal by air of troops from any operational area via helicopter.

#### F-4 PHANTOM II:

the F-4 Phantom II, a twin-engine, all-weather, tactical fighter-bomber, was one of the principal aircraft deployed to Southeast Asia. Capable of operating at speeds of more than 1,600 miles per hour and at altitudes approaching 60,000 feet, the first F-4s were deployed to participate in the air war over Vietnam in August 1964 by the United States Navy. On August 6, 1964, in response to the Gulf of Tonkin incident, five F-4Bs from the USS Constellation attacked North Vietnamese patrol boat bases. The F-4 aircraft expanded their operations beginning on April 3, 1965, when fifty F-4Bs attacked a road bridge 65 miles south of Hanoi. The first United States Air Force (USAF) F-4s were deployed to Southeast Asia in early 1965 and became involved in significant air operations during the summer. On July 10, 1965, two F-4Cs shot down two MiG-17 fighters over North Vietnam with Sidewinder missiles. In October 1965 the first RF-4s, aircraft equipped with reconnaissance equipment, were deployed to the theater. By March 1966, seven USAF F-4 squadrons were in South Vietnam and three were in Thailand. Buildup of F-4 aircraft and operations continued thereafter including F-4s from the Marine Corps.

A total of 511 F-4s from all services were lost in Southeast Asia from June 6, 1965, through June 29, 1973. Of these, 430 were combat losses, while 81 resulted from aerial or ground accidents.

The F-4 was called a lot of things, mostly with respect. It was referred to by some as "Fox 4."

**44TH MEDICAL BRIGADE:**

the 44th Medical Brigade deployed to Vietnam in April 1966 and remained there until 1970, when it was dissolved into subordinate units. The 44th consisted of the 32nd Medical Depot at Long Binh; the 43rd and 55th Medical Groups in II Corps; the 67th Medical Group in III Corps; and the 68th Medical Group in III and IV Corps. The 44th Medical Brigade was responsible for medical evacuation (see "Medevac"), evacuation hospitals, field hospitals, Mobile Army Surgical Hospitals (MASH), convalescent centers, and ambulance detachments.

**FAC:** (Fack) Forward air controller.

The forward air controller (FAC) had the responsibility for calling in air strikes on enemy positions during the Vietnam War. Usually flying a low-level, low-speed aircraft, such as a single-engine Cessna O-1 Bird Dog spotter plane, the FAC identified Vietcong or North Vietnamese positions and relayed the information to attack aircraft, helicopter gunships, or high-altitude bombers. On the ground, a forward air controller would call in similar information.

**FAG:** field artillery guy.

**FANTAIL:** the stern or aft open area of a ship, also called the afterdeck.

**FAST MOVER:** jet; usually the F-4.

**FAT ALBERT:** a C-5A aircraft.

**FATIGUES:** standard combat uniform, green in color.

**FBI:** Federal Bureau of Investigation.

**FEATHER:** a propeller adjusted in pitch so that it will neither pull nor push air (if it must be shut down, the prop will be "feathered" so as not to 'windmill').

**FEET WET:** expression used by pilots to indicate they were over water (South China Sea or Gulf of Thailand).

**FIELD OF FIRE:** area that a weapon or group of weapons can cover effectively with fire from a given position.

**FIGHTING HOLE:** a foxhole with sandbag protection and sometimes an elevated roof of sheet metal, reinforced with sandbags. Sized for one or two troops, fighting holes might be dispersed around a company or battery area for defensive use during a ground attack.

**FIGMO:** state of blissful abandon, achieved after receiving orders out of Vietnam. Literally "F\*\*\*\*\*, I Got My Orders."

**FINI FLIGHT:** an Air Force pilot's last mission in Vietnam.

**FIRE BASE or FB:** (sometimes called a fire support base) temporary artillery firing position often secured by infantry. These bases dotted VN and usually were comprised of four howitzers with crews and a company of Infantry.

**FIRECRACKER:** artillery round incorporating many small bomblets which are ejected over a target area and explode in 'bouncing-betty' fashion almost simultaneously, the name comes from the fast popping sound (best heard at a distance).

**FIREFIGHT:** exchange of small arms fire between opposing units.

**FIRE FOR EFFECT:** when all ordnance was aimed at the enemy in continual firing.

**FIRE MISSION:** an artillery mission.

**FIRST CAVALRY DIVISION:** during the nineteenth century, American cavalry units were horse-mounted troops designed to survey enemy positions and provide screens for incoming infantry units. The horse-mounted cavalry gave way during the twentieth century to armored personnel carriers and tanks. A major innovation of the Vietnam War was the use of air cavalry units where troops are moved into battlefield positions by helicopters. The **FIRST CAVALRY DIVISION** was one of the main air cavalry units in Southeast Asia.

Originally activated in 1921, the First Cavalry Division fought (dismounted) in the Pacific during World War II and later in Korea. In 1965 the division's flag was taken from Korea and presented to the experimental 11th Air Assault Division, which became the First Cavalry Division (Airmobile). (The former First Cavalry Division, still in Korea, became the new 2nd Infantry Division.)

The division was deployed to South Vietnam in September 1965 and was the first full division to arrive in the country. It was almost immediately in battle in the Ia Drang Valley. The division won a Presidential Unit Citation for its fierce fighting. During 1966 and 1967 elements of the division were engaged in numerous actions throughout the II Corps Tactical Zone.

Initially committed to operations in Binh Dinh Province in early 1968, the bulk of the division was hurriedly recommitted to the Battle for Hue and then to the relief of the marine position at Khe Sanh.

Later in the year the division served in the A Shau Valley before being shifted to protect the northern and western approaches to Saigon. As the army's first airmobile division, the First Cavalry Division pioneered air assault tactics... It was considered one of the army's elite units in Vietnam, highly valuable because of its extreme mobility. The division suffered over 30,000 casualties during the war.

**FIRST SHIRT:** 1st Sgt.

**FLACK JACKET:** heavy fiberglass-filled vest worn for protection from shrapnel.

Later, 1969-70, incorporated pyroceramic plates to protect back and chest from rifle-fire.

**FLARE:** illumination projectile.

**FLYING COW:** C-123 or C-130 aircraft equipped with a rubberized collapsible drum and 350-GPM (gallons per minute) pumps. Also called "Bladder Bird" or "Cow."

**FNG:** most common name for newly arrived person in Vietnam. It was literally translated as a "F\*\*\*\*\* new guy."

**FO:** forward observer; calls fire missions to artillery and sometimes Air and Naval gunfire.

**FORWARD:** directional--in, at, toward, or near the bow or front of the ship or boat.

**FRAG:** the common term for any grenade.

**FREE FIRE ZONE:** any area in which permission was not required prior to firing on targets.

**FREEDOM BIRD:** any aircraft that took you back to the "world" (U.S.A.). The aircraft on which you left Vietnam.

**FREQ:** radio frequency.

**FRIENDLIES:** U.S. troops, allies, or anyone not on the other side.

**FRIENDLY AIR ASSETS:** U.S. air support.

**FRIENDLY FIRE:** "Friendly Fire" was a euphemism used during the war in Vietnam to describe air, artillery or small-arms fire from

American forces mistakenly directed at American positions.

FTA: Free the Army. Actually, "F\*\*\* the Army," a derogatory phrase used by frustrated soldiers. Often publicly re-interpreted to "Fire The Artillery."

"FTA" also referred to the "First Team Academy" where 1st Cav assignees spent their first few days getting outfitted, learning the ropes, and such Cav things as rappelling, etc.

FUBAR: short for "F\*\*\*\*\* Up Beyond All Repair" or "Recognition." To describe impossible situations, equipment, or persons as in, "It is (or they are) totally Fubar!"

FUSE: cord filled with pyrotechnic composition, burned at a precise rate after ignition.

FUZE: triggering mechanism attached to the nose of an artillery shell or bomb.

GA MUG: thank you.

GHOST BOATS: what command called the four LSMRs in country.

G.I.: government issue.

GMG1: Gunner's Mate Guns Class Petty Officer or just GMG First Class, which is the same as an E-6 in any service.

GOMERS: North Vietnamese.

GOOKS: slang expression brought to Vietnam by Korean War Veterans. The term refers to anyone of Asian origin.

GP: general purpose, as in general purpose tent: large rectangular tent sleeping 10 to 12 men with an aisle down the middle.

G.P STRAP: general purpose strap that came off your rucksack. Many uses, but used mainly to replace the sling on an M-16.

GPM: gallons per minute.

GQ: general quarters--battle stations where military personnel are assigned to go ASAP when alarm sounds.

GREASE GUN: M2-A1 sub-machinegun, .45cal automatic weapon.

**GREEN BERETS:** members of the Special Forces of the U.S. Army. They were awarded the green beret head gear as a mark of distinction. Also referred to as Green Beanies.

**GREEN TRACERS:** color left by the ammunition fired from enemy AAA or AK-47s whereby you could track/trace its path.

**GREEN-EYE:** Starlight scope. Light amplifying telescope, used to see at night.

**GRUNT:** a popular nickname for an infantryman in Vietnam; supposedly derived from the sound one made from lifting up his rucksack. Also Ground Pounder or Crunchie.

**GSW-TTH:** casualty report term meaning 'gunshot wound, thru and thru.'

**GUERRILLA:** soldiers of a resistance movement who are organized on a military or para military basis.

**GUERRILLA WARFARE:** military operations conducted in enemy-held or hostile territory by irregular, predominantly indigenous forces.

**GUNG HO:** very enthusiastic and committed. Chinese term for "All together."

**GUNSHIP:** an armed helicopter or adapted fixed-wing aircraft.

**GUN TRUCKS:** the deuce-and-a-halves that would accompany convoys. They were usually fitted with a .50 and one or two M60s, plus individual weapons for usually a crew of four to five.

**GVN:** Government of South Vietnam.

**HAI VAN PASS:** a particularly treacherous pass through the mountains south of Phu Bai, just before coming into Da Nang.

**HAM N'MOTHERF\*\*\*\*\*:** C-Ration 'Ham and Lima Beans,' a well hated meal among soldiers.

**HAM N'CHOKERS:** see HAM N'MOTHERF\*\*\*\*\*.

**HANOI HILTON:** nickname American prisoners of war used to describe the Hoa Loa Prison in Hanoi.

**HAWSERS:** heavy line used in mooring a ship; often 4 or 6 inches in

diameter or more. These lines are \*never\* referred to as "rope."

HE: high explosive.

HEAT: High Explosive, Anti Tank.

HEAT TABS: fuel pellets used for heating C-Rations.

HEAVY: LRRPs usually operated in teams of 5 or 6 guys. On occasion, when it was \*known\* the team was going to be in deep s\*\*\*, they were assigned 10. This was commonly called a heavy team. It was more difficult to hide, but the additional M-60 machine gun and other firepower made the inconvenience worth the trouble.

HILLSBORO: an AF "command and control" aircraft.

HOOTCH: house or living quarters or a native hut.  
Also, the term had several meanings--house, weed, booze.

HORN: radio, "Get the CO on the horn..."

HOSE (DOWN): massive automatic weapons fire, as from a minigun, Spooky or other high firepower gunship. Basecamp perimeters suspected of being infiltrated by sappers would be 'hosed down' by gunships and 'mad minutes'.

HOT: dangerous, such as Hot LZ (where aircraft are receiving enemy fire).

HOT HOIST: extraction of a soldier by helicopter, using its hoist due to the triple canopy, while under fire.

HQ: headquarters.

HUE: First built by Emperor Gia Long early in the nineteenth century, Hue was the imperial capital of Vietnam between 1802 and 1945. It is located on Highway 1 about 420 miles south of Hanoi and 670 miles north of Saigon and was an independent municipality under the Republic of Vietnam (RVN).

For the Vietcong and North Vietnamese, Hue was a city with tremendous historical significance. Being the former imperial capital of a united Vietnam, the center of Vietnamese cultural and religious life, and the capital of Thua Thien Province, Hue became an important symbol in the struggle for dominance of Indochina.

It was also a difficult city to defend.

Isolated by the Annamese mountain chain and bordered by Laos to the

west and the Demilitarized Zone to the north, Hue was without access to a major port for resupply. Still, before the Tet Offensive, Hue was considered secure for South Vietnam. That all ended on January 31, 1968.

At 3:40 a.m. that morning North Vietnamese Army (NVA) artillery began pounding the city. Elements of the NVA 6th Regiment simultaneously attacked Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) headquarters in Hue and ARVN 1st Division headquarters. Other NVA troops blockaded Highway 1 north and south of the city and attacked several hundred other sites in the city. By daylight, the Vietcong flag was flying atop the Imperial Citadel of the Nguyen emperors. Hue had fallen to the Communists.

The American and ARVN counterattack on Hue began almost immediately with huge volumes of artillery, naval bombardment, and air strikes reducing much of Hue to rubble while elements of the First Air Cavalry Division, the 101st Airborne Division, the ARVN 1st Division, the U.S. 1st Marines, and ARVN Rangers and Marines engaged in house-to-house, hand-to-hand combat with NVA troops and Vietcong.

The Imperial Citadel was not recaptured from the Communists until February 24, 1968. Hue had been devastated. More than 50 percent of the city had been totally destroyed, and 116,000 people of a total population of 140,000 had been rendered homeless. Nearly 6,000 civilians were dead or missing, and several thousand more were assassinated outright during the Vietcong occupation. The NVA and Vietcong suffered 5,000 dead; the United States, 216 dead and 1,364 seriously wounded; and the ARVN, 384 dead and 1,830 seriously wounded.

Like the Tet Offensive in general, the battle for Hue was a tactical defeat for the Communists as well as a strategic victory. In taking control of the city, if only for several weeks, they had proven that MACV predictions of an imminent Communist collapse were totally groundless, undermining American faith in the credibility of political and military leaders. Hue in particular, and Tet in general, was indeed the turning point in the war.

**HUEY:** nickname for the UH-series helicopters: "utility helicopter."

**HUEY SLICK:** UH-1. The Bell UH-1 helicopter is one of aviation's true success stories. Thousands of the aircraft have been made in a number of variations, serving a multitude of roles. Called the "Iroquois" by the United States Army, the aircraft is much better known by its nickname of "Huey," derived from its initial designation of HU-1. In its multitude of roles in Vietnam, the Huey became a familiar sight on the television screens of America. Hardly a night passed without the evening news showing Hueys in dustoff, slick or other missions.

Bell was chosen in 1955 to provide the army with a utility helicopter capable of serving as a front-line medical evacuation (see "Medevac") aircraft, a general utility aircraft, and an instrument training aircraft.

Deliveries to the U.S. Army began in 1959.

In 1961 a more powerful version, the UH-1B, was introduced. In 1967, starting with the UH-1D series, the airframe length was increased, giving the Huey a much roomier passenger-cargo compartment capable of carrying more troops or supplies. In 1968 Bell developed a specialized version of the aircraft with a stronger airframe and more powerful engine. The "Huey tug," as it was nicknamed, was capable of lifting loads up to three tons, nearly double that of a conventional Huey. Powered by a 1,400 SHP Avco Lycoming engine, the Huey had a cruising speed of 127 mph and a range of 318 miles. Fast and highly maneuverable, the Huey proved far superior to the CH-21 or CH-34 as an assault helicopter. Combat troops normally rode in the wide doors on each side of the aircraft, and could exit quickly, greatly reducing the time the helicopter was on the ground. Often troops jumped from a Huey just above the ground as it "bounced" in ground effect and then left, with the entire ground time reduced to a matter of seconds.

HUMP: to slog around on foot.

HUN: an F-100 aircraft.

I CORPS: northernmost military region in South Vietnam.

Also known as "Eye" Corps, I Corps was one of the four major military and administrative units of the Vietnamese government in the 1960s and early 1970s. In particular, I Corps was the Central Vietnam Lowlands administrative unit and consisted of the five northern most provinces: Quang Tri, Thua Thien, Quang Nam, Quang Tin, and Quang Ngai.

The headquarters of I Corps was located in Da Nang. The major cities in I Corps were Hue, Quang Tri City, Da Nang, and Chu Lai.

I Corps was also known as Military Region 1. During the course of the Vietnam War, the following U.S. military units fought in I Corps:

9th Marine Amphibious Brigade,  
Third Marine Division,  
III Marine Amphibious Force,  
1st Marine Division,  
American Division,  
XXIV Corps,  
First (1st) Cavalry Division (Airmobile),  
101st Airborne Division,  
First Brigade,  
Fifth Infantry Division, and  
the 82nd Airborne Division.

II CORPS: Central Highlands military region in South Vietnam.

III CORPS: military region between Saigon and the Highlands.

IV CORPS: the southernmost military region in South Vietnam, located in the Mekong Delta.

I&I: intoxication and intercourse. This term was used in lieu of R&R.

ILLUM: illumination. Flares dropped by aircraft and fired from the ground by hand, artillery or mortars.

INCOMING: receiving enemy mortar or rocket fire.

IN COUNTRY: Vietnam.

INSERTION/INSERTED: secret helicopter placement of combat troops in an operational area.

INTEL: intelligence.

IN THE FIELD: any forward combat area or any area outside of a town or base camp.

IP: instructor pilot.

IRREGULARS: armed individuals and groups not members of the regular armed forces, police, or other internal security forces.

IVY (IV) DIVISION: nickname of the 4th Infantry Division.

JESUS NUT: main rotor retaining nut that holds the main rotor onto the rest of the helicopter!!!! If it came off, only Jesus could help you.

JINK: Air Force term for turning hard to avoid enemy fire or detection.

JOLLY GREEN GIANT: heavily armed air force C-47 aircraft supporting troops or an air force HH-53 heavy rescue helicopter.

JUSPAO: Joint United States Public Affairs Office.

JVC: Victor Company of Japan, a Japanese electronics company, like Sony.

KAK WHEEL: carried on a thick string around an RTO's neck to encrypt map coordinates.

K-BAR: combat knife with a six-inch blade and hard leather handle, used mostly by the Marine Corps.

**KHMER ROUGE:** "Red Khmers." The forces of the Cambodian Communist Party.

**KHONG BIET:** Vietnamese for "I don't know" or "I don't understand."

**KIA:** Killed In Action.

**KLICK, K:** short for kilometer (.62 miles).

**KOON SA:** the wacky weed.

**KP:** kitchen police.

**LAI DAI:** "Bring to me" or "Come to me."

**LA VAY:** beer.

**LAW:** (Law) M72 Light Antitank Weapon. A shoulder-fired, 66mm rocket with a one-time disposable fiberglass launcher.

**LAY CHILLY:** lie motionless.

**LBGB:** little bitty gook boat (small watercraft, usually one or two people, sometimes made from reeds).

**LBJ RANCH:** (L-B-J) the Long Binh Stockade. The last word was changed to make a pun on the initials of President Lyndon Baines Johnson.

**LC:** Library of Congress.

**LEANING S\*\*\*HOUSE:** nickname of the 1st Log (logistics)(patch).

**LEATHERNECK:** term for MARINE..(Marines wore a Leather neckband 1798-1880 for protection of the neck during sword combat.)

**LIFER:** career soldier.

**LIGHT UP:** to fire on the enemy.

**LIMA-LIMA:** low level, as in aircraft altitude GCI - Ground-Controlled Intercept.

**LOACH OR LOH:** light observation helicopter, notably the OH-6A.

**LO DUN:** land mines. Referred to as such by tiger scouts.

LONELY HEARTS: nickname of 24 Corp (patch).

LONG GREEN LINE: column of infantry advancing through jungle terrain.

LONG KNIFE: call sign of the Army Air Cav Hueys - also "Long Knives" as a generic term for the Air Cav.

LORAN: a "long-range radio-navigation" position fixing system using the time difference of reception of pulse type transmissions from two or more fixed stations.

The USCG operated four "LORAN" stations in SE Asia: two in Vietnam and two in Thailand. These stations were part of the chain of stations across the Pacific Ocean. "LORAN" operated in two modes: "A" and "C." "A" model began operation in World War II and was eventually replaced in some areas of the world by "C" model

"LORAN" is being made obsolete by the global positioning system (GPS), and the USCG closed its last Pacific "LORAN" station at Marcus Island in September 1993 and transferred to the Japanese Maritime Safety Agency.

LP: Listening Position. A 3-man post placed outside the barbwire surrounding a fire base. Each would lay out claymore mines; they would have 1 radio and take turns during the night listening and looking. They were the early warning for the troops inside the parameter.

LRP OR LRRP: (Lurp) long-range reconnaissance patrol.

LSMR 536: meaning toilet boat.

LURPS: long-range reconnaissance patrol members. Also, an experimental lightweight food packet consisting of a dehydrated meal and named after the soldiers it was most often issued to.

LZ: landing zone.

LZ CUT: performed from C-130 aircraft usually by rolling a large bomb out the rear which was attached to a 6' fuse. The bomb blew horizontally, not creating a crater but making an instant LZ.

M-1: World War II vintage American rifle/carbine. The 8 shot, .30 caliber "M-1" was superseded by the M-14 and subsequently by the 18 shot .223 M-16.

M11: large, anti-malaria pill (Chloroquine). Taken every Monday,

produced persistent diarrhea.

M-14: .30 cal, select-fire rifle used in early portion of Vietnam War.

M-16: nicknamed the widow-maker, the standard American rifle used in Vietnam after 1966.

M-60: American-made 7.62mm (.308 cal) machine gun.

M-79: single-barreled, break-action grenade launcher, which fired 40mm projectiles, nicknamed the "Blooper." aka "Thumper" or "Thumpgun"

MAC-SOG: Military Assistance Command Studies and Observation Group.

MACV: (Mac-vee) Military Assistance Command, Vietnam.

MAD MINUTE: concentrated fire of all weapons for a brief period of time at maximum rate; also called "Mike-mike."

MAG-16: Marine Air Group 16, attached to the 1st MAW, the First Marine Aircraft Wing. They were stationed just south of Da Nang, near Marble Mountain.

MAGS: magazines where ammunition kept/stored until placed in a weapon.

MAMA-SAN: mature Vietnamese woman.

MASH: Mobile Army Surgical Hospital.

MAT: Mobile Advisory Team. Usually a six-member team of two U.S. Army officers, three enlisted men, and an interpreter responsible for training territorial forces (RF and PF).

MECH: mechanized infantry.

MEDCAP: (Med-cap) Medical Civil Action Program.

MEDEVAC: medical evacuation by helicopter; also called an "evac" or "Dustoff."

"Medevac" was an acronym for medical evacuation, almost always associated with evacuation of casualties by helicopter during or after a battle. Consequently, the helicopters used for these missions also were called "medevac helicopters," or simply "medevacs."

The use of the helicopter in a variety of missions was a distinguishing feature of the Vietnam War. For American and Allied troops, the sound of the helicopter was perhaps the most nearly ubiquitous sound of the war. Usually it evoked positive feelings for troops in the field, since the helicopter almost always meant relief in some form, be it additional troop reinforcements; supplies such as ammunition, food, and medicine; or evacuation of the wounded and/or dead.

The medevac helicopter was an especially important factor in enhancing and sustaining troop morale in the field. Soldiers knew that if they were wounded, the probability was high that they would be transported quickly to a field hospital. Statistics suggest the validity of this assumption: nearly 98 percent of those wounded in action were evacuated from the battlefield alive, and no battle- field was more than one hour's flying time from a hospital.

Medevac helicopter crews often had to fly into "hot" landing zones to evacuate the wounded, and all of those involved in evacuating wounded under such conditions were at great risk of becoming casualties.

The use of the helicopter for medical evacuation contributed substantially to the military performance of American and Allied troops during the Vietnam War, and medevacs resulted in many wounded being saved who might otherwise have died.

A synonym for medevac was "Dustoff," used to refer to medevac missions and medevac helicopters after the death of Lieutenant Paul B. Kelley in 1964 while on a medevac mission. Dustoff was Kelley's radio call sign.

**MET MESSAGE:** weather conditions report sent from a meteorological unit.

**MIA:** Missing In Action.

**MIC:** microphone.

**MIG:** (MiG) Soviet fighter plane.

**MIHN OI:** sweetheart.

**MIKE:** minute. Such as, "Move out in two-zero Mikes..." (20 minutes).

**MIKE-MIKE:** millimeters, as in "...a 60 Mike Mike" (60mm mortar).

**MIKE FORCE, MSF:** Special Forces Mobile Strike Force; composed of indigenous personnel and used as a reaction or reinforcing unit.

**MINI-POUNDER:** small radar transmitter used to mark locations on the ground for radar-carrying aircraft.

MOONBEAM: nighttime name of "Hillsboro."

Moonbeam was a night-time command and control aircraft that flew with BIG searchlights at fairly low altitudes, illuminating the ground.

MOS: Military Occupational Specialty--the job designator; one's job title.

MPC: military payment currency; used instead of U.S. dollars.

MRF - the Mobile Riverine Force, 2nd Brigade 9th Infantry Division and River Assault Flotilla 1.

MULE: small 4-wheeled cargo vehicle.

NAILS: a type of warhead attached to a 2.75-inch, spin-stabilized, folding-fin, aerial rocket. Called flechettes, this round was used against personnel targets. It was usually launched from helicopter gunships. The number of nails in a round escapes me, but it is around several hundred.

NAPALM/NAPE: An incendiary used in Vietnam by French and Americans both as defoliant and antipersonnel weapon.

Consisted of a flammable organic solvent, usually gasoline, gelled by soap. Delivered by bombs or flame thrower, napalm clung to the surfaces it touched, holding the burning solvent in place on the target.

NAV: navigator or radar navigator in an aircraft.

NCO: noncommissioned officer.

NEWBIE: any person with less time in Vietnam than the speaker.

NGFS: Naval Gun Fire Support (with 5" to 16" shells).

NGO: non-governmental organization.

NIPA PALM: very sharp-edged palms that grew in very dense concentrations. Edges much like sawgrass. Nasty stuff.

NKP: Nakhon Phanom Air Base, Thailand. Major comm and electronic warfare base.

NLF: National Liberation Front, officially the National Front for the Liberation of the South.

NOOK: water.

NOOKDAU: ice.

NO SWEAT: can do...easily done or accomplished.

NON LA: conical hat, part of traditional Vietnamese costume.

NSA: Naval Support Activity.

NSD: Naval Supply Depot, aka: NAVSUPDEP.

NUC or NOUC: water.

NUMBER ONE: good.

NUMBER TEN: bad.

NUMBER TEN-THOUSAND: VERY bad.

NUOC MAM: fermented fish sauce, called "armpit sauce" by many.

NVA: North Vietnamese Army, Pg. or referring to a soldier in same.

105: 105mm howitzer or F-105 Thunderchief fighter-bomber ("Thud").  
122mm, 140mm, ETC.: large-caliber enemy rockets.

O2: Cessna Skymaster, also known as push-me-pull-you. FAC aircraft.  
Twin engine, one fore and one aft of cabin section.

O3: Really O3--an infantryman. This is based on the O3 series of MOS.  
The pay grade O3 is Captain (US Marine Corps/US Army/US Air Force);  
or as a Lt. (US Navy/US Coast Guard). The grunt MOS is often referred  
to as "Oh-3"--at least in the Corps.

OCS: Officer's Candidate School.

OSS: Office of Strategic Services. Created in 1942, the OSS was an  
intelligence-gathering operation which became a forerunner of the CIA.

OD: olive drab color, standard "Army Green" color. Also, Officer of the  
Day.

ONE O DEUCE: refers to a 105mm howitzer. Many do not know the  
105mm is actually 102mm.

OUC-DA-LOI: Vietnamese for Australian.

**OUT-COUNTRY:** the Southeast Asian conflict outside South Vietnam (i.e., Laos and North Vietnam, sometimes Thailand, Cambodia, and China)

**P-38:** can opener for canned C-rations.

**PAPA-SAN:** an elderly Vietnamese man.

**PAVN:** (Pavin) People's Army of Vietnam; also known as the NVA.

**PETER PILOT:** co-pilot, the less-experienced pilot in a Huey.

**PF:** Popular Forces.

**PFC:** Private First Class.

In an aviation company, a "PFC" was not necessarily a Private First Class but rather a "Private F\*\*\*\*\* Civilian," which we all aspired to become once again when our tour was over.

**PH:** Purple Heart

**PLATOON:** approximately 45 men belonging to a company. Commanded by a lieutenant, a platoon is an organizational unit composed of two or more squads. A sergeant is usually second in command.

**POINT MAN:** lead soldier in a unit cutting a path through dense vegetation if needed and constantly exposed to the danger of tripping booby traps or being the first in contact with the enemy.

**PONCHO LINER:** nylon insert to the military rain poncho, used as a blanket.

**POP:** generically, to 'trigger' or 'initiate', as in "...pop a flare."

**POPEYE:** expression used by a pilot to indicate that he was flying in Instrument Meteorological Conditions (IMC); i.e., in the clouds.

**POP SMOKE:** to mark a target, team sight (location), or Landing Zone (LZ) with a smoke grenade.

During extraction, the inbound helicopter crew would call out the color of the smoke they were seeing, normally yellow, purple, or green. This allowed a team on the ground to confirm for the chopper that the chopper was "on our smoke" because the enemy would occasionally pop a smoke grenade in an effort to lure the chopper to their location where they could have 'em for lunch. Many units reserved red smoke grenades for marking targets for gunships.

PORT: on the left of the ship or boat when facing forward.

POW: Prisoner of War.

PRC-25: nicknamed Prick. lightweight infantry field radio.

PRC-77: radio, similar to PRC-25 but incorporated an encryption feature for secure communication.

PROJOS: Howitzer projectile - term used by pilots transporting same.

P's: piasters, the Vietnamese monetary unit.

PSP: Perforated Steel Plate. Construction panels, about 3'X8', made of plate steel, punched with 2" holes, and having features on the sides for interlocking together. PSP could be linked together to surface a road, airstrip, etc. or several sheets could be linked into a large plate to form the roof of a bunker, fighting hole, etc., usually covered with sandbags.

PSYCHEDELIC COOKIE: nickname of the 9th Infantry Division (patch).

PTSD: post-traumatic stress disorder.

PUCKER FACTOR: assessment of the 'fear factor,' as in the difficulty/risk in an upcoming mission.

PUFF (the Magic Dragon): AC-47 aircraft fitted with side-firing miniguns and flares.

PUSH: referring to a radio frequency, ie 'PUSH 71.675' meaning a frequency of 71.675 megahertz.

PX: post exchange.

QC: Qua^n Ca~nh. Vietnamese equivalent of an American MP.

QUAD 50s: A World War II vintage, anti-aircraft weapon used in Vietnam as an anti-personnel weapon. It consisted of four electric solenoids fired 50 cal. machine guns mounted in a movable turret, sometimes put on the back of a deuce and a half. It was used for firebase and convoy security.

RC: radio control, as in radio control models.

RECON: reconnaissance.

REDLEG: or cannon-cocker: Artilleryman.

RED LZ: landing zone under hostile fire. Also see Hot.

REMF: Rear Echelon Mother F\*\*\*\*\*. Nickname given to men serving in the rear by front-line soldiers. Could also be RAMF attributed to the U.S. Marine Corps: Rear Area Mother F\*\*\*\*\*.

RF/PF: Regional and Popular Forces of South Vietnam; also known as "Ruff-Puffs."

ROCK 'N' ROLL: to put a M16 A1 rifle on full automatic fire.

ROKs: Republic of Korea ground troops.

ROME PLOW: large bulldozer fitted with a large blade, used to clear jungle and undergrowth in order to make friendly operations easier in that area.

RONONE: USCG Squadron One.

RONTHREE or RON3: larger Coast Guard vessels assigned off-shore patrol work.

ROUND EYE: slang term used by American soldiers to describe another American or an individual of European descent.

RPD: enemy weapon; light machine gun.

RPG: Russian-manufactured antitank grenade launcher; also, rocket-propelled grenade.

RPG SCREEN: chain link fence erected around a valuable position to protect it from RPG attack by causing the enemy rocket to explode on the fence and not on the protected bunker, etc.

R & R: rest-and-recreation vacation taken during a one-year duty tour in Vietnam. Out-of-country R & R was at Bangkok, Hawaii, Tokyo, Australia, Hong Kong, Manila, Penang, Taipei, Kuala Lumpur or Singapore.

In-country R & R locations were at Vung Tau, Cam Rahn Bay or China Beach.

ROCKn'ROLL: firing of weapons on full automatic.

RTO: radio telephone operator who carried the PRC-25.

RUCK, RUCKSACK: backpack issued to infantry in Vietnam.

RVN: Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam).

7.62 MINIS: the AK-47; refers to the caliber bullet the AK used.

SAME-SAME: same as....

SANDY: the navigational name of the northeastern-most corner of the Saigon Flight Information Region (FIR), of which flight past assured the crew of combat pay and combat income tax exemption.

SAPPERS: North Vietnamese Army or Vietcong demolition commandos.

SAR: search and rescue.

SKY PILOT: another name for the Chaplain.

SEA: Southeast Asia.

SEABEES: Naval construction engineers. Derived from C.B.--Navy construction battalion.

SEA HUTS: Southeast Asia huts. Standard-designed buildings of corrugated tin roofs; walls of horizontal-louvered boards four feet up from the bottom, and screen from the bottom to the roof inside; some were on concrete pads and some were on blocks; some had sandbags around them about 30 inches from the wall and waist high; you could walk inside the sandbags from door to door; wooden walkways between buildings so you didn't have to walk in mud; a few sandbags were placed on the roofs to keep them from blowing away in a hurricane.

There were literally tens of thousands of these buildings all over Vietnam and Thailand being used for everything from offices to living quarters to clubs to BXs to "you name it."

SEAL: Navy special-warfare force members.

SEARCH AND CLEAR: offensive military operations to sweep through areas to locate and attack the enemy.

SEARCH AND DESTROY: offensive operations designed to find and destroy enemy forces rather than establish permanent government control; also, called "Zippo missions."

SEMPER FI: short for "Semper Fidelis," Latin for "Always Faithful."

SERETTE: little disposable needle with morphine.

SEVENTEENTH PARALLEL: temporary division line between North and South Vietnam established by the Geneva Accords of 1954.

SFTG: Special Forces Training Group.

SHACKLE: encrypt, a method of encoding sensitive information, such as unit locations, in order to be able to send the information by radio.

SHAKE'nBAKE: an officer straight out of OCS (Officer Candidate School) without any combat experience.

SHELL: artillery projectile.

S\*\*\*: a catchall multipurpose term, ie, a firefight was 'in the s\*\*\*', a bad situation was 'deep s\*\*\*', to be well prepared and alert was to have your 's\*\*\* wired tight.'

S\*\*\*HOOK: slang for a Chinook Helicopter.

SHORT ORBIT: aircraft circling to land; small, close orbit by aircraft overhead.

SHORT, SHORT-TIME, SHORT-TIMER: individual with little time remaining in Vietnam.

An expression which indicated you were close to your Fini Flight and the Freedom Bird. In your last couple of weeks, you were so "short" you were invisible.

SHOTGUN/SHOTGUNNER: armed guard on or in a vehicle who watches for enemy activity and returns fire if attacked. Also a door gunner on a helicopter.

SIN LOI, MINOI: too bad, honey. (see "XIN LOI.")

SIN LOY: see "XIN LOI."

SIT-REP: situation report.

SIX: from aviation jargon: "my 6 o'clock"--directly behind me; hence, my back--cover my back or rear of operation.

SKATE: goof off.

SKYRAIDER: Douglas A1-H aircraft, single propeller aircraft used for Close Air Support (CAS).

SKY PILOT: Navy Chaplain.

SKYSPOT: Ground directed bombing conducted by the 1st Combat Evaluation Group of the Strategic Air Command. Directed and released ordinance from B-52, B-57 F-4 and other aircraft of the US, Australian and RVN. Ground sites were located on Vietnam and Thailand.

SLACK MAN: second man in a patrol, behind the POINTMAN.

SLEEPER: an undercover agent or a mole.

SLICK: helicopter used to lift troops or cargo with only protective armaments systems. Also, see Huey Slick.

The Vietnam War became a helicopter war for American forces, and a common way for an infantryman to go into action was by "Slick." "Slick" was the term used to refer to an assault helicopter used to place troops into combat during airmobile operations. The UH-1 became the premier helicopter for this. Troops could ride in the wide doors of the aircraft, normally in two rows on each side, and could exit quickly when landing in a "hot LZ"--a landing zone under fire. Often a UH-1 would not touch down during "Slick" operations; instead, it would hover a couple of feet above the ground while troops evacuated the aircraft. Troops learned to feel the UH-1 "bounce" as it came in quickly and went into a hover, and would exit on the bounce, so that Slicks spent very little time close to the ground.

SLOPE: a derogatory term used to refer to any Asian.

SLOW MOVER: propeller driven AF fighter aircraft.

SNAFU: Situation Normal All F\*\*\*\*\* Up.

SNAKE: Snake-Eye bombs used for close air support, as in "Snake N' Nape"(bombs and napalm).

SNAKE: in reference to the AH-1G Cobra.

SNEAKY PETES: U.S. Army Special Forces or Rangers.

SNOOP 'N' POOP: Marine search and destroy offensive mission.

**SNOOPY:** this was a mission flown often in Nam (129th Assault Helicopter Co.). One ship flew at tree-top level, trying to draw enemy fire from hidden troops (this was "Snoopy"). The second ship (at high elevation) would then observe where the shots came from and dive and attack. These were Snoopy Missions.

**SNUFFY:** was/is the term Marines use in the same way Army calls themselves grunts. This term's footnoted in one of the major books on Khe Sahn and was in common use in I Corps (1/67-7/68).

It has triple meaning to Marines: 1. to snuff is the mission, 2. we don't grunt under our loads, and 3. a wry reference to the historical willingness of Marine leaders to expend their lives for what may seem like small gains (arising from the fact that this small service just doesn't have the logistical ability to throw much ordnance on an objective beforehand). It is a most fundamental term.

**SOG:** Studies and Observations Group. Also, Special Operations Group.

**SORTIE:** one aircraft making one takeoff and landing to conduct the mission for which it was scheduled.

**SOS:** "S\*\*\* On A Shingle." Creamed meat on toast.

**SPC-(4,6,...):** Specialist Rank, having no command function.

**SPECIAL FORCES OR SF:** U.S. Army soldiers; also called "Green Berets," trained in techniques of guerrilla warfare.

**SQUAD:** a squad is a basic organizational institution in the United States Army and Marine Corps. A sergeant usually commands the squad, and the squad is composed of two teams of four men each. A tank and its crew is considered the squad for an armored unit, as is the howitzer or gun and its crew in an artillery unit.

**STAND-DOWN:** period of rest and refitting in which all operational activity, except for security, is stopped.

**STAY BEHIND (LEAVE BEHIND):** ambush tactic wherein a small group is left behind after a unit breaks camp in order to ambush enemy sweeping thru the 'deserted' area.

**STANSIONS:** stabilizing devices.

**STARBOARD:** on the right when facing forward.

STARLIGHT: night-vision telescope, used by snipers and base camp defense troops to see in the dark.

STERILIZED: restore a site to its original condition before moving out of it, particularly if there was a more than remote possibility of enemy troops coming across where American troops had been.

This included not leaving any C-ration cans, bending bushes back that may have been leaned on, brushing the ground free of footprints or other impressions left by sitting or lying, etc. This was not always possible; but it was worth the effort because 6 (and even 10) men could be, and often where, outnumbered. Success (survival) depended upon not being discovered by their counterparts.

STERN: back of a ship or boat.

STOL: short takeoff and landing. C-123 and C-130 aircraft were noted for using little runway when not over-loaded.

STRAP HANGER: comes from the Airborne--someone who is not a part/regular member of the organization/team but is along for the ride.

SWIFT BOAT: U.S. Navy patrol boat, designated PCF (patrol craft fast), part of operation Market Time, used to patrol coastal waters and rivers of Vietnam.

III MAF: III Marine Amphibious Force.

2.75: diameter of the side (pod) mounted rockets carried on all older "D" model Huey gunships and the newer Cobras.

TAILBOOM: the back 1/3 of a Huey.

TALLY-HO: or just "Tally" - acknowledgement by a pilot that he had visually acquired another aircraft or ground target which had been called to his attention.

TANGO BOAT: Armored Troop Carrier (ATC). Sorta like an APC that really did float, but didn't do so good on land. The originals were LCM-6 with armor plate and bar armor added. They had nine seats for the troop and a canvas top to keep the sun out. Each tango could carry a fully equipped rifle platoon. They had two twin .50 cal. machine gun mounts on and a canvas top to keep the sun out. Each tango could carry a fully equipped rifle platoon. They had two twin .50 cal. machine gun mounts on the boat deck and four Browning .30 cal. light machine guns rechambered for NATO 7.62 mm in the well deck. In 1968 the Navy deployed two new river assault squadrons with tango boats built from the keel up specifically for riverine operation.

TEE-TEE: Vietnamese term for "A little bit."

TET: Vietnamese Lunar New Year holiday period. Also refers to the nationwide NVA-VC offensive that began during Tet, 1968.

THE ROCK: Guam.

THUD: F-105 aircraft.

THUNDER ROAD: Highway 13, from Saigon to Loc Ninh, known for many mines, ambushes, etc.

THUMPER (THUMPGUN): M-79 grenade launcher.

TIGER BALM: a foul-smelling oil used by many Vietnamese to ward off evil spirits.

TOC: Tactical Operations Center.

TOMMY-GUN: .45cal, Thompson sub-machinegun, fully automatic shoulder fired weapon.

TONKIN: northern section of Vietnam.

TONKIN GULF YACHT CLUB: the U.S. Navy in operations offshore of both North and South Vietnam.

TOT: 'Time On Target,' multi-battery artillery tactic to provide massive destruction instantaneously.

TRI-BORDER: in SEA, the area where Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos meet.

TRIP-WIRE: thin wire used by both sides strung across an area someone may walk through. Usually attached to a mine, flare, or booby trap.

TRIPLE CANOPY: thick jungle, plants growing at 3 levels - ground level, intermediate, and high levels.

TRUNG WEE: sergeant.

TU DAI: a big concern in country was booby traps. The VC used to warn the locals of booby trapped areas by posting little wooden signs with those words on it just at the edge of the wood line. Ironically it was pronounced "To Die." The term "Tu Dai Area" was used in sit-reps.

**TWO DIGIT NUMBERS:** used at Cam Rah Bay Air Base in 1969/70. Meant less than one hundred days to that freedom bird out of Vietnam. Everyone in the Security Police Squadron would say it every time someone asked "How's it going."

**UA:** unauthorized absence. (See "AWOL")

**USAF:** United States Air Force.

**USAID:** U.S. Agency for International Development.

**USARPAC:** United States Army, Pacific.

**USARV:** United States Army, Vietnam.

**USCG:** United States Coast Guard.

**USMC:** United States Marine Corps.

**USN:** United States Navy.

**USO:** United Service Organization.

**VC, CONG:** Vietcong.

**VFW:** Veterans of Foreign Wars.

**VHPA:** Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association.

**VIETCONG:** Communist forces fighting the South Vietnamese government.

**VIETMINH:** Viet Nam Doc Lap Dong Minh Hoi or the Vietnamese Independence League.

**VIETNAM WAR MEMORIAL:** after watching the film "The Deer Hunter" in 1979, Vietnam Veteran Jan C. Scruggs first conceived of the idea for a Vietnam Veteran's Memorial.

**VILLE (VILL):** ostensibly "village" but used to refer to any group of hooches.

**VN:** Vietnam.

**VNAF:** Vietnamese Air Force.

VT: Variable Time artillery fuse, incorporated a small radar transceiver, used to obtain a reliable 20 meter air burst.

VVA: Vietnam Veterans of America.

WAKEY: the last day in country before going home.

WALLABEE: an Australian Caribou aircraft.

WART HOG: A-10 aircraft. So slanted due to its 'ugly' appearance.

WATCHER: enemy.

WEB GEAR: canvas belt and shoulder straps used for packing equipment and ammunition on infantry operations.

WESPAC: Navy and Coast Guard terms for Western Pacific operations, which extended to the Asian Pacific. A WESPAC tour, then, was a tour of duty in the Western Pacific, generally synonymous with service in/around Vietnam.

WHITE MICE: South Vietnamese police. The nickname came from their uniform white helmets and gloves.

WIA: Wounded In Action.

WILLIE PETER/WILLIE PETE/WHISKEY PAPA/W-P:  
popular nicknames for white phosphorus mortar or  
artillery rounds or grenades.  
Also, rockets used by FACs to mark placement for bomb runs.

WO: Warrant Officer.

WOBBLY ONE: Warrant Officer, Grade W1.

WOC: Warrant Officer Candidate.

(THE) WORLD: the United States  
Any place outside of Vietnam.

WWII: World War II.

XIN LOI or XOINE LOI: pronounced by GIs as "Sin Loy," meaning 'too bad,' 'tough s\*\*\*,' 'sorry bout that.' The literal translation is "excuse me."

XM-203: fired the 40mm shells, fit on the M-16.

YARDS: Montagnard soldiers.

ZIPPO: flame thrower. Also refers to the popular cigarette lighter of that brand name.

ZIPPO BOATS: LCMs with flame throwers.

ZIPPO MISSION: search and destroy mission.

ZONE AND SWEEP: artillery tactic/fire pattern to cover a target with an "X" pattern of fire.

ZULU: casualty report, also the phonetic pronunciation of the letter 'Z.'