

Roy Pline

Lowe Veterans Appreciation Video – November 11, 2020

My name is Roy Pline. I was served in the US Army from 1966 to 1968. After my training I went to Vietnam. I was in a mechanized infantry unit. We were in the central highlands of Vietnam. I was there for 51 weeks and one day. Because it was a leap year that year, I spent an extra day.

My experiences there were similar to most other soldiers. We had our good days and had our bad days and we worked well together as a unit. We all had our short-timers calendars, counting the days when we would be able to come back home and get back to the world. That's what we called the world. Many things happened over there. But more good, more good than bad. So we got through it.

When we got back home, I flew into SeaTac, Washington, air base; got off the plane and got down on my knees and kissed the ground. After that we had our steak dinner and they measured us for clothes. And we had time, we had our steak dinner, our clothes were ready so we went from there to the airport and flew home. We had a 30-day leave.

I still had some time to do in the service after I got back home. So I was stationed in Fort Carson, Colorado, after a month's vacation and finished my time up there. After that, I - we got married, had a family, and most of us never talked after that.

We never got acquainted with any of the guys and I started contacting guys in the year 2000. The first couple guys I contacted I could remember their name and the town they were from. One was from [?], West Virginia, and another one was from Billings, Montana. Shortly after that we started with a reunion.

I contacted different people and some of these other people had a list of people, so we combined lists and since then we've had reunions every year. Many, many stories, great stories about reunions. We have them all over the country so we get to see people from everywhere.

People - some - we've had some young kids. I call them kids. Their fathers served in Vietnam and would never talk about it and they wanted just to join us at a reunion and spend some time with us to see what all went on. You know, we were, there's been soldiers that we were with that were reluctant to come. But once we get the ice broke, everybody is on the same page and we just love to spend the time together.

And I've been active in the honor guard and American Legion. So I stay up with, you know, some of the military things, not everything. But we'll keep on having our reunions and getting with people for a long as we live. So, we had a great bond with each other. We've lost a lot of people since we've started reunions. We're getting old. It's just the way life is, you know.

But the stories we have of company commander that was special to us. He's buried in Arlington Cemetery. He was a captain over there and was a two-star general and we could at a reunion, we could sit there and drink beer, do whatever - just one of the guys, you know.

And so, a lot of great experiences and some of the guys that won't come to reunions, I have visited them personally, and welcomed. They just don't want to join big crowds. They don't have anything against what we're doing, but it's just it's not for them. So there's quite a few of those guys that I'll visit periodically.

When I could never remember the guy's name from New York. Just never came to me, but when somebody mentioned it, that he had contacted this guy, Steve. I called Steve and he was tickled hearing my voice again, and he had a long list of people. One particular guy on the

list was Jimmy Kelly from New York, or from the Bronx. And how many thousands of Jimmy Kelly's would there be in the Bronx? How would you ever find this one guy? Somehow, somehow, we contacted him. And he's been to many of our reunions.

Probably one of the first guys I contacted was from Georgia. His name was Bobby Newton. So we called information. I got a number for a Bobby Newton. I called this person and his wife answered. The guy's wife answered and she said, well, my husband isn't the guy that you're wanting. But she says, my dad was in the military. She says, I understand what you're doing, and I want to help you, and she says my husband's gone now, but when he gets home, I'll see what he can do, you know, about finding the right Bobby Newton. When I put the phone down, 20 minutes later the right Bobby Newton called me. How's that?