

NC CROSSROADS

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BREAKING THE SILENCE:

THE UNSPOKEN BROTHERHOOD OF VIETNAM VETERANS

by Sharon Raynor

I have possessed a genuine curiosity about my father's experiences in Vietnam ever since I found his diary and photo album from the war when I was in middle school. He reluctantly shared those items with me for a class project, but he didn't talk much about his experiences, at least not to me.

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As a matter of fact, I cannot recall that he talked about his war experiences with anyone in our family except for my Uncle Tex, who also served in Vietnam. I do remember that my father would stare at his old

photographs with a strange look in his eyes. The look was unfamiliar to me because those pictures and that diary were the only things that produced in him the look of a lonely child—the look of a person traveling backwards in time to a dark place. He used to flip through the diary and read some of the entries as if he did not recognize his own words. Now I understand that he did not recognize himself as the person he was back then: so many years had passed. But within the flash of a moment, an old photograph or his old diary took him back to the place that had matured a nineteen-year-old boy.

photo courtesy of Louis Raynor



Louis Raynor in Vietnam.

When we were growing up, my mother Katie taught us certain rules that made no sense at the time. “Never wake your dad when he is sleeping, even if he is shaking and sweating. Just let him sleep; the nightmare will end.” “Never sneak up behind your father to surprise him. I know how you children like to play.” “Do not bring any more Vietnam War movies home to watch.” “No! We cannot have salmon and rice for dinner; Daddy can’t stand the smell.” To my siblings and me, it seemed that Daddy did not have time for us. He was always away on the road, driving trucks for his job, or working the graveyard shift as a mechanic. Momma would remind us of the rules, but she would never tell us why Daddy wasn’t home that much. It wasn’t until much later that it became obvious that the time he spent in Vietnam had a lasting effect on every aspect of our lives. The time he spent away from us was the time he needed for himself—time alone so that he could stay in our lives at all.

Over the years I have witnessed my father’s battles with various debilitating illnesses, numerous visits to the Veteran’s Administration (VA) Hospital in Fayetteville, long hours in the waiting room, and hospitalizations. I’ve seen tubes running in and out of his body while he lay in intensive care with several other veterans while doctors tried to pinpoint the exact nature of their problems. My father went from being a working man to a man who suffered from diabetes, degenerative disc disorder, massive headaches, and skin irritation (from exposure to Agent Orange). Medications did not solve the problems but only allowed him to endure. Doctors determined that he could not continue to work, but the VA said that, according to their regulations, he was only ten-percent disabled. Not being able to work and support his family and receiving only partial disability from the VA for service-connected illnesses wounded my father deeply. And there was not a thing anyone in the family could do to help him



photo courtesy of Bob Patrikios

continue to fight his battle with the VA. Even my uncle, who received two Purple Hearts, has a hard time mustering up enough strength to continue to fight the VA for his own rightfully deserved benefits.

In 1999 I got the idea to do an oral history interview project with Vietnam veterans. Starting this project was very personal for me: I wanted to understand the experiences of veterans in general, but I also saw an opportunity to get to know my father better and possibly understand the demons that he chose for many years to fight alone and in silence. One lesson that I learned right away was that veterans neither trust nor talk to outsiders, and in the beginning I was an outsider. I learned this valuable lesson when I went to the Greenville Vet Center to talk with a group of Vietnam veterans about my interest in their war-time experiences. Even though I was invited by the group leader, Dr. Harold McMillion, I did not feel very welcomed. The veterans told me that they had no intentions of talking to me about their experiences and were suspicious about why I wanted to hear their stories. With my hopes about to disappear, a World War II veteran spoke up and encouraged the Vietnam veterans to talk about their experiences while they still could. He was the only one still alive from his unit, and he wished someone would record his story and those of other World War II veterans before it was too late. One Vietnam veteran responded, "I don't have anything to say to her!" My presence as a woman trying to enter a man's domain really hit home. I left the meeting almost in tears, with a crumbling project in hand. Harold assured me that the veterans had heard me and that the project would go on.



photo courtesy of Louis Raynor

The experience showed me that before I could conduct any interviews, I needed to earn the trust of the veterans and show them that I was sincerely interested in their experiences. An NCHC grant made possible the hiring of project staff, and we decided to sponsor a series of public oral history programs, mediated by Harold, that we hoped would provide a comfortable atmosphere for veterans to share some of their experiences with each other, their families, and the general public. Harold, who became a bright star in this project, worked his magic and convinced several veterans to sign up. We also created a traveling exhibit from diaries, photographs, books, maps and articles.



photo courtesy of Sharon Raynor

Program participants at oral history program with Vietnam vets.

From February to November of 2000, at least forty Vietnam veterans from eastern North

Carolina, including my father and uncle, participated as keynote speakers, panelists, or audience members at four community forums. The men talked and shared, laughed and cried. The most overwhelming response was at the end of each forum, when the veterans would linger for hours and talk informally with each other about their experiences in Vietnam. They were willing to start the healing process, but it had to include each other.

Until the forums, some families of veterans did not understand the depths of the wounds left by the war. The veterans were ready to shatter their silence and share some of their stories with those who were willing to listen. Family members who came seeking answers also shattered their silences: they had been afraid or hesitant to ask questions. To have them share their stories and to hear wives, daughters and sons talk about their husbands and fathers brought tears to the eyes of even the toughest guys in the room. The veterans finally got the opportunity to hear why it was important for their stories to be told: their families needed healing, too. We heard a brother and sister, both in tears, talk about how they had never heard their father share any positive memories of Vietnam as some of the other veterans did. We learned that every soldier had his own war experiences and remembered them in personal ways. A woman talked about losing her husband, age 48, to complications due to exposure to Agent Orange. We heard several stories about veterans who felt rejected by the public and thus isolated themselves from their families for fear of further rejection. Some children of veterans came to hear things from other veterans that their own fathers would never tell them.

The forums gave the men a place not only to share stories, but also to relinquish some of the burdens of war that they had carried for decades: the guilt of a squad leader witnessing at age 21 the deaths of younger squad members; the responsibility of having another's life in one's hands; the courage to petition to go Vietnam in place of a friend whose mother was ill in spite of racial strife he feared he might find; the shame that replaced the valor of war; the disappointment at never receiving a Purple Heart for which one had qualified; the utter confusion of being drafted at age nineteen and having to grow up instantly in the face of death; the chronic pains that are nightmarish reminders of war; the bravery of maintaining a silent code of honor to avoid further alienation; and the unpopularity back home that loomed like a dark veil. Children of veterans listened, learned, and cried as their parents embraced decades of despair right before their eyes. The forums attracted veterans from other wars, too, who wanted to show their support. Some of these veterans participated in the storytelling sessions; they also needed to relinquish some of the burdens of war that they carried.

One particular veteran, Robert Jones, who is active in the Vet Center in Raleigh, became an avid participant in the project. He became very comfortable sharing certain stories with me about his tour of duty as a 'tunnel rat.' Robert expanded the geographic scope of the project by convincing several of his buddies from Durham to participate in the forums with him. I mention this particular group of men



Sharon Raynor leading a group forum.

photo courtesy of Sharon Raynor

because they formed a friendship that reached out and touched my father and uncle. They talked with my father and uncle about the difference that the Vet Center had made in their lives and convinced them to visit one themselves. After a while my uncle and father started meeting Robert and his friends James Jones, John Nesbit and Robert L. Jones, Jr. (no relation) in Greenville on a regular basis to have lunch and simply spend time with each other. One veteran told me that after Vietnam he found it very difficult to form friendships with other men. The friendship these six men formed some thirty years after returning home from the war has helped them not only with their current lives, but it's also helped them look back on Vietnam with greater understanding.

I began to rely on this circle of friends quite a bit. At one point I invited them to talk with some history classes at a Greenville high school. This marked the first time that some of the men had spoken publicly about their Vietnam experiences. They were forthcoming about certain topics, but when the students asked about combat experiences, the veterans felt it best to move on to the next question. At times, their silence said and meant more than their words. I have learned that veterans are very protective of what they share with younger generations. Their refusal or hesitancy to speak about certain situations often stems from a desire to protect the innocence of their listeners. The students wanted to hear about the realities of war, but the veterans felt a need to protect them from things that they prayed would never happen again.

After the exhibit was installed at its first location, my father would visit it and remove photographs I'd taken from his album that he did not feel comfortable sharing with a broad audience. He would say that there are some things we do not need to see, and I have learned that there are some things we do not need to hear as well as things that veterans will never tell. They do not want to pass their memories on to the next generation. They thought they were fighting to make things better for their children, and they didn't expect to have to explain the 'how' and 'why' of Vietnam and what they did there.

My father and uncle now attend the Raleigh Vet Center on a regular basis. My father's ten-year battle with the VA is ongoing but he realizes now that he is not alone in his fight. He and my uncle and their new friends have visited each other at home and hold cookouts just to be in each other's company. Harold is still offering guidance to other veterans and to me.

Through all of this, I have gained the most. I cherish the stories the veterans have told me because sharing them meant they trusted me. I have formed friendships with men who have helped me better understand my father, and I feel as if I have gained a whole new set of uncles. I have always thought of myself as daddy's little girl, but since this project began, my father and I have created a new relationship. He no longer just looks out for me; now I can help him, too. We have so much more to talk about, and my mother also joins in the conversation. He is now able to share more of himself with us, and we have a lot of catching up to do. I never realized how much I did not know about my own father.



Sharon's mother, Katie Raynor, with the traveling replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall.

photo courtesy of Sharon Raynor

LOUIS RAYNOR

There are many reasons why Vietnam veterans decided not to talk about our war experiences when we arrived home. For me, no one seemed to care about my time in Vietnam, especially people who hadn't themselves been vets. Everyone either looked at me like I had done something bad or they didn't believe what I had to say about my tour of duty. Usually people would ask questions like, "How many people did you kill?" I never would answer that question. People have mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters, and I did not want to think about having taken that life from someone else, so I just kept quiet.

I did not want Sharon to pursue her project at first. My daughter did not listen to me. Now the families of other veterans are grateful, and I am, too. But back then I knew that the veterans were not going to help her and that she would be rejected. I also knew that the rejection would hurt her, and I did not know how to protect her from that because I am good at rejecting people myself. I wanted to protect her from disappointment and hurt because I had already endured enough of that. Veterans did not talk to anyone except other veterans. We have felt too much rejection and hurt from our experiences. Too many stories are twisted the wrong way. We felt that no one cared for a veteran, especially a Vietnam veteran, so it has become easy to reject anyone that did not understand us or listen to us about what we were feeling.

Even though Sharon was rejected, she did not stop or give up. She had to gain the trust of the veterans and assure them that she was not only there to collect stories but to help others, including her own family. Once she earned their trust and confidence, she became a friend to the veterans. This project has helped veterans from Greenville to Chapel Hill. I am happy that someone is trying to understand the veterans and the reasons for their feelings about things. This project makes me and other veterans reach out and try to help each other understand that we are not alone. I will always be thankful to the staff at the Greenville and Raleigh Vet Centers for supporting her.

Through the project, I have found help for my family and me. I am now attending the Vet Center in Raleigh where I have been able to deal with many problems I did not realize I had been fighting since Vietnam. Men that I met through Sharon and who had worked with the project convinced me to go and just visit the center. These men have now become my friends. They assured me and helped me realize this is a battle that I do not want to fight alone. I found courage and strength to continue a long, lonesome, hard fight. And I learned that there are many other veterans that need each other's help. I found out why I am the way that I am and I began working on some of my problems. It has made a tremendous difference to my family and me. It is easy to shut someone out when you do not understand or you feel that people do not care. It was hard being criticized for doing what your duty called for you to do. It is a great comfort to know that someone cares about you. I have found that there are people who are willing to listen. The staff at the Vet Center are a very important part of my life as well as my family's life at this point.

The project works very closely with the Vet Centers. Their goal is to help the veteran and to let us know that we are not alone. We need to share our stories and experiences with our loved ones. I realize now that if we reach out and not push away, just open up and not shut down and speak instead of being silent that



photo by Lisa Yarger



photo courtesy of Louis Raynor

we have family and friends who are waiting to accept us. It is a very slow process but it's working for me. Sharon feels that she now has family in many areas. She says to me that the veterans are her brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts and she is proud of them. I did not realize how much healing there is in getting together in groups or one-on-one to just talk to anyone that wants to be a part of what we have dealt with during war and at home.

I never realized until now that the type of work I did driving 18-wheelers long-distance and staying away from home and not being there was

not protecting my family from those things I never talked about or could not explain. Distancing myself from them only pushed them further away because I did not know how to communicate with them about my experiences. I now realize that all those years I spent fighting this battle alone only made me weaker and more angry. It sometimes takes a very strong man to admit that he needs help. I feel that all veterans should have the opportunity and privilege to sit down and share their memories with one another. I hope that there are more people that are willing to help and willing to keep on trying, even if we turn away from them at first, because it can be the turning point in a veteran's life for the better.



Louis Raynor, James Jones and Tex Howard at the Raleigh Vet Center.

photo by Lisa Yarger



Lisa Carmelle talks with a group of Vietnam veterans at the Raleigh Vet Center.

photo by Lisa Yarger

TEX HOWARD, U.S. ARMY SFC RETIRED

I first entered the Army in August of 1965 and went to Vietnam in December of 1967. From the time I was assigned to my first unit, I began training as an infantryman. The mission of an infantryman is to stay close with, to kill, to capture and to destroy the enemy with whatever means necessary. While I was taking all this training, the Army taught me how to take a life in lots of different ways, but it did not prepare me for losing a friend or the thought of losing my own life. I had friends killed all around me while serving in that war. I was wounded the first time in April of 1968 and a second time on June 21, 1968. You see, I was a squad leader and some of the men wounded and killed were members of my squad, and that hurts. My own wounds were nothing compared with my friends getting arms and legs blown off or losing their lives. I was medically evacuated to Japan and from Japan to the United States. I was released from the Army in October of 1968, and I rejoined in March of 1970 and served a total of 21 years, one month, and one day. During all that time, not once were the words Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder mentioned.



photo by Lisa Yarger

After my retirement from the Army I got an associate's degree. I then got a job with the North Carolina Department of Corrections where I worked from 1990 to 1996; this is when I had two strokes in a row, leaving me paralyzed on my left side. In 1998 I filed a claim with the VA Hospital in Winston-Salem that later was denied. I did not feel like fighting the VA at that time and I did not know what to do about it. So I just waited until I had more knowledge about how to file the claim, not knowing how or where I would get this knowledge. Then I was talking with my niece, Sharon Raynor, and she told me about the project, "Breaking the Silence: The Unspoken Brotherhood of Vietnam Veterans." My first thought was: Do I really want to get involved in this again? I didn't believe so, but after thinking about it for a while I decided to participate.

I had not talked about my experiences in Vietnam for a very long time for several reasons. Mainly, I felt that the average person did not want to hear about Vietnam, or wanted to hear about only the things that the veteran usually does not want to talk about. The impression I got when I returned home from the war was that we soldiers were a reminder of our country's mistakes in Vietnam, so if you get rid of the soldiers, you are no longer reminded of your mistakes. We ended up carrying the burdens of this country's mistakes. The soldiers suffered for something we did not create or ask for—we did not beg to go to Vietnam. We were sent there to do what we were asked to do, and now we continue to suffer for it, because we are still fighting the VA for benefits. I sit at home sometimes when it is really quiet and think back to the nights in the jungle when I was waiting for 'Charley' to come and kill me or be killed, and I would think about all the people back home who never had to worry about being killed or maimed. And now we cannot even receive compensation for damages sustained in war. I felt that people's attitude toward me was: *Just go away! Quit looking for compensation for something that happened over thirty-four years ago!*

I've learned that veterans do not want to be reminded of bad things; we do not want to remember the hurtful things because it's like opening old wounds all over again. Thinking about it now, I could not figure out why I could barely remember certain things in an organized manner from my tours in Vietnam. When I returned home in October 1968, I could have told about my experiences in an organized manner, but no one wanted to hear it. We will never completely get rid of it—we can never undo what happened all those years ago. The things that happened in Vietnam are cemented into our nervous systems and burned into our brains. We were thrown into war and then we were thrown back into society without any

help in readjusting. The sad and pitiful thing about our experiences is that some of the men that survived Vietnam were not able to survive the aftershock of Vietnam. Some soldiers were using alcohol and drugs when they first returned home to help them cope with what happened in war; they died from that, and we are still dying.



photo by Lisa Yarger

Group at Raleigh Vet Center

took time to fellowship, one vet to another. We gave each other names and other information like what unit we served with and what year or years we were in Vietnam. After that some of us, I guess you could say, bonded. The individuals I am referring to are John, James, Robert, Louis, Robert and I. Because of these other veterans, Louis and I are receiving help in more than one way.

I must say none of this would have been possible if it had not been for my niece, Louis's daughter, Sharon, who brought it all together. Now for the first time after 34 years, we're able to talk about Vietnam and not be ashamed. Thanks, Sharon, for not giving up on yourself and us. I have learned that maybe veterans need to seek help just to make life livable one day to the next. We need to learn how to deal with the past the best we can. Thanks to Sharon and some new friends (Vietnam veterans) whom I mentioned before, Louis and I are now receiving some of the help that we need. We now attend the Vet Center in Raleigh each Thursday night. The groups helped me identify with problems that I thought I faced alone. Now for the first time in all these years, we are able to talk about Vietnam and feel good while doing so.

JAMES N. JONES

As I sit thinking today about the project, "Breaking the Silence: The Unspoken Brotherhood of Vietnam Veterans," I think that it is something that could have helped me very much some 35 years ago. Certainly I am where I am today as a result of me getting involved with other veterans in the late 1980s. The years from 1967 until 1989 were some of the worst years of my life. After I returned home from Vietnam in June 1967, my life was a mess. My family noticed a big difference in my attitude and personality. A year later I was married and my first child was born. Two years later my nightmares and problems with alcohol had worsened. Not knowing what the outcome of my future was going to be, my young wife saw a part of me that she could not understand. She had no idea what to do or how to try and get me help for my problems.

As my drinking continued and other medical problems seemed to get worse, I attempted to get help from the Durham VA Medical Center. I had countless appointments with mental health counselors before being diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). In 1989 after being diagnosed with PTSD, it was suggested that I start to attend a support group for Vietnam veterans. At that point in my life I had started to feel as if I had no reason to continue to live. In the fall of 1989, my wife and I separated. I felt at that time it was a necessity that I get all the



John Nesbit and James Jones.

photo by Lisa Yarger

help I could for my problems in hopes of getting my family back together. I started to attend PTSD and alcohol-abuse support groups on a regular basis. After a short while I learned that I was not just an isolated case but that other veterans felt the same way I did. Just the fact that I had other vets that I could communicate with was a miracle and major turning point in my life.

Within a few weeks in the PTSD group I received help in filing my first claim for PTSD. For more than three years, the VA had me fill out a number of different forms. I collected information from all medical facilities at which I had been treated dating back to 1967. At that time the VA gave me very little help in collecting needed information. There were many times when I felt like giving up, and had it not been for the encouragement I received from the other veterans in the groups, I would have given up. After seven long years of appeals with the VA, I was awarded a 100% rating for PTSD. Today, as I look back over the years of dealing with the VA claims, I think the most valuable thing to me was the time spent with other veterans. There have been times I have been able to offer encouragement to other vets as it was offered to me.

Today, I give thanks to God and to the Raleigh Vet Center. The counselors and groups are a big part of my life and the reason why I continue on. Sharon, I thank you for allowing me to be a small part of your project.

HAROLD D. MCMILLION, ED.D.

Team Leader, Greenville Vet Center

Vietnam Veteran, 1968-69 Americal Division, 11th Light Infantry Brigade

I have worked with hundreds of Vietnam veterans over the past eighteen years in the employ of the VA's Readjustment Counseling Service (Vet Centers). Our mission is to provide mental health counseling, primarily to war zone veterans. The Department of Veterans Affairs has 206 Vet Centers across the country, which reach out to veterans often left behind since Vietnam.



photo courtesy of Bob Matthews

Sharon Raynor of the ECU English Department solicited my support in coordinating efforts in bringing a forum to campus, "Breaking the Silence: The Unspoken Brotherhood of Vietnam Veterans." The fact that most Vietnam veterans avoided discussing their combat experience with anyone posed a true challenge. How could we recruit enough veterans and convince them to volunteer for this unique program? The purpose of the program was discussed among the Vet Center PTSD combat vet groups. The protocol was established for interviews and initial plans developed for four community forums. The overall response from the Vietnam veterans was unbelievable. Many Vietnam veterans viewed this opportunity as a way to tell their personal stories. This program was not only informative to the community but also formed the basis of emotional healing. The old psychic scars hidden through the years by emotional numbing began to open up and drain. Vietnam veterans faced their community eyeball to eyeball, telling their stories with vigor, openness and raw courage. The response from the campus community and questions to Vietnam veterans were filmed and recorded during the sessions. Veterans left the program with a deep sense of pride and satisfaction: *My story was told, someone listened, and I can be at peace with myself after thirty years.*

"Breaking the Silence: The Unspoken Brotherhood of Vietnam Veterans" is a model for other programs that want to deal with our nation's warriors. The Vet Center was honored to be a vital part of this program. The historical record of the Vietnam War was tainted by an unpopular political action. By focusing on the negative aspects of the Vietnam experience, society overlooked the personal sacrifices made by more than three million of its young men and ten thousand of its women. "Breaking the Silence" highlighted detailed individual histories, each of which is a story of monumental significance.

AFTERWORD

When I read Sharon Raynor's *Breaking the Silence* and the responses that follow, I cried. It had been our intent to publish this issue of *NC CROSSROADS* before Monday, May 27, 2002, Memorial Day. Although most of the remarkable narrative already was available, our issue team—Lisa Yarger, Katherine Kubel, Sharon Raynor and I—was unprepared to visualize reducing the powerful stories to fit our regular *NC CROSSROADS* format. The words came with such care and spirit; how could we edit out sections of words so long held in? We felt at a loss to try to let our contributors “break the silence” while simultaneously breaking their narratives. For this reason we present this material in a special format.

“Breaking the Silence: An Oral History of the Unspoken Brotherhood of Vietnam Veterans” originally was intended to be another project. In June 1999, NCHC funded Sharon to do an oral history project titled, “The Indignities of War: An Oral History of the African American experience in the Vietnam War.” As Sharon began interviewing vets and meeting them at the Greenville Vet Center, she heard from them that focusing only on race was not the story most wanted to tell. Rather, the only color that really mattered was green. In fact, in Vietnam, if not in America, these black and white soldiers forged an “unspoken brotherhood.” Sharon also learned that the war was not over; as Tex Howard noted, “We can never undo what happened all those years ago. The things that happened in Vietnam are cemented into our nervous systems and burned into our brains.” Profoundly, these veterans had no way to bring to the fore “a swelling in [their bellies], a great swollen grief that was pushing [at their] throats,” as Leslie Marmon Silko describes this experience for World War II vets in her book *Ceremony*.

It is with awesome courage that Louis Raynor, Tex Howard, James Jones and others began to shatter their silence; I simply cannot imagine the force they felt as they yielded to the power of story to connect with themselves, with their past experiences, with each other, with their families. Actors and witnesses, storytellers and listeners, these men began to bond with other vets as members of a recognizable community that seems to carry beyond race and geography.

“The only cure...is a good ceremony,” Silko writes, and each week a ceremony of story-telling takes place at the Vet Center in Raleigh. It is a ceremony that allows for the telling not only of specific experiences of Vietnam, but also for the telling of why it has been difficult—impossible, for some—to speak these experiences until now. Perhaps more than the shared experiences of Vietnam, it is the shared silences, and the very fact of speaking through them, that Sharon's project and this issue explore.

Harlan Joel Gradin
NCHC, Assistant Director/Director of Programs

CEREMONY

I will tell you something about stories,
[he said]

They aren't just entertainment.
Don't be fooled.

They are all we have, you see,
all we have to fight off
illness and death.

You don't have anything
if you don't have stories.

Their evil is mighty
but it can't stand up to our stories.
So they try to destroy the stories
let the stories be confused or forgotten.

They would like that
They would be happy
Because we would be defenseless against them.

He rubbed his belly.

I keep them here

[he said]

Here, put your hand on it

See, it is moving.

There is life here
for the people.

And in the belly of this story
the rituals and the ceremony
are still growing.

What She Said:

The only cure
I know
is a good ceremony,
that's what she said.

Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony*. Penguin Books, 1977.

VIETNAM WAR FILMS:

Apocalypse Now, 1979

Born on the Fourth of July, 1989

Boys in Company C, 1977

Coming Home, 1978

The Deer Hunter, 1978

Full Metal Jacket, 1987

Go Tell the Spartans, 1977

Good Morning, Vietnam, 1987

The Green Berets, 1968

Hamburger Hill, 1987

To Heal a Nation, (TV) 1988

The Killing Fields, 1984

Platoon, 1986

Platoon Leader, 1987

The Siege of Firebase Gloria, 1989

Television's Vietnam: The Real Story, (TV) 1985

Tiger Land, 2000

The Walking Dead, 1995



photo courtesy of Bob Patrikios

FOR TEACHERS:

The Center for Social Studies Education (CSSE) was established in 1984 to promote more and better teaching of the Vietnam War in U.S. schools. CSSE offers a variety of educational materials, including a full semester curriculum, a teachers manual with projects and activities, an annotated resource guide and a teacher training handbook and video. CSSE coordinates about 100 Vietnam veterans speakers bureaus and 40 master teachers who do workshops and conference presentations on teaching the Vietnam War.

For more information, contact:

Center for Social Studies Education
901 Old Hickory Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15243
Phone: 412-341-1967
Fax: 412-341-6533
Website: <http://members.aol.com/jmstarr/index.html>

Also, Vietnam veteran and social studies teacher Bob Matthews, in concert with other North Carolina veterans, has developed the course, "Lessons of the Vietnam War: To Teach a Nation." Curriculum materials for this course are in use in 14 Wake County high schools. To discuss curriculum development and the possible use of this course in your school, contact:

Bob Matthews
600 Webster Street
Cary, NC 27511
Home: 919-469-9892

DOCUMENTING THE EXPERIENCE OF VETERANS:

The Military Collection of the State Archives seeks donations of original photographs and papers related to the military service of North Carolinians, regardless of when the veteran served. For more information, please contact LTC (Ret.) Sion H. Harrington III, Military Collection Archivist, State Archives of North Carolina, at (919) 733-3952, or by email at: sion.harrington@ncmail.net.

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RESOURCES FOR VETERANS:

Vet Centers offer group and individual counseling and outreach to all veterans of combat theaters, veterans who were sexually traumatized in the military, and all veterans of the Vietnam era. Vet Centers are funded by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

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Greensboro: (336) 333-5366

Greenville: (252) 355-7920

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