

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Roger Poszgai

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Veterans Remember Oral History project

Interview # VRV-A-L-2010-047

Roger Poszgai, a Vietnam veteran who served during the war as a medical equipment maintenance specialist, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Veterans Remember* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Oct 14, 2010 Location: Atonement Lutheran Church, Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Transcription by: Audio Transcription Center, Boston, MA

Edited by: Cheryl Wycoff and Rozanne Flatt, ALPL Volunteers

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The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Roger Poszgai, *Veterans Remember*, VRV-A-L-2010-047

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Roger Poszgai was born in September, 1944 in Joliet, Illinois. As the son of a career Chief Petty Officer in the Navy, he moved often during his early years, but spent his early teen and high school years in Dundalk, Maryland, devoting much of his time to the Boy Scouts and with the Junior NRA. Upon graduation, Poszgai joined the Army, signing up for the missile maintenance course, a year-long program at Ft. Bliss, Texas. Following that training, he was stationed in Brea, California, working at a Nike Hercules missile site, one of many sites throughout the United States that guarded major metropolitan areas. In 1964 he was transferred to a missile site in Rockenhausen, Germany. By 1966, seeing little opportunity for rank, Poszgai decided to change his specialty and received training in medical equipment repair at Fitzsimmons Army Hospital in Denver, Colorado. His next duty station was at Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri where he worked in the hospital, and then Ft. Sheridan, IL with the 5th Army Medical Maintenance Team.

Newly married, Poszgai deployed to South Vietnam in September, 1967, and was assigned to the 2nd Platoon of the 32nd Medical Depot. He was stationed at a tiny compound at Qui Nhon, South Vietnam, a small coastal city near the Central Highlands region of Vietnam. Roger spoke at length about his experiences while in Vietnam, his specific duties, impressions of the Vietnamese people and the soldiers with which he served. Although he saw no direct combat, Poszgai was instrumental in turning around the maintenance of medical equipment in the Army's II Corps area. He spoke about the heightened tension during the Tet Offensive of January, 1968, and about the soldier's universal practice of counting the days until rotating home. Poszgai returned to the states in September 1968, and returned to civilian life.

Subject Headings/Key Words: medical maintenance during the Vietnam War; Nike Hercules missile maintenance; Tet Offensive at Qui Nhon, South Vietnam; Ft. Bliss, Texas; 32nd Medical Depot, Vietnam; Rockenhausen, Germany; Fitzsimmons Army Hospital; Ft. Leonard Wood, MO; 5th Army Medical Maintenance Team; Ft. Sheridan, IL

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