

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Richard Friemel

Part of the Illinois Public Media ([WILL radio.tv.online](http://WILL.radio.tv.online))
Central Illinois Vietnam War Stories project

Interview # VRV-V-D-2015-068

Richard Friemel, an Air Force aircraft mechanic in Vietnam, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Illinois Public Media – WILL AM-FM-TV Central Illinois Vietnam War Stories project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Mar 17, 2015

Location: WILL-TV, 300 N. Goodwin, Urbana, IL 61801

Interview Format: Digital video

Interviewer: Will Robinson, Stretch Ledford, Kimberlie Kranich and Austin Keating,
Illinois Public Media

Technical Support (videographers): WILL Staff

Transcription by: Illinois Public Media staff

Edited by: Illinois Public Media staff

Total Pages: 33 pgs. Total Time: 1:03 / 1.05 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on March 3,
2016.

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

Richard Friemel, *Veterans Remember*, VRV-V-D-2015-068

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Richard Friemel was born in Chicago, Illinois on June 27, 1939. He enlisted in the Air Force in 1958, re-enlisting in 1962. Friemel went to Lackland Air Force Base near San Antonio, Texas for basic training, and to California for three days to be trained in marksmanship and other skills. Sergeant Friemel served with the 366th Fighter Wing in Vietnam from 1969 to 1970. As an aircraft engine mechanic while in South Vietnam, he mainly repaired piston engines and serviced propeller driven airplanes, working primarily on A-1 'Skyraiders,' C-123 'Providers' and C-119 'Flying Boxcars.' He was stationed in both Pleiku and Da Nang while in South Vietnam. His work as a mechanic put him in contact with the herbicide Agent Orange, which was sprayed widely in South Vietnam to defoliate rural forested land. He believes the heart condition he suffers from is a result of his exposure to the defoliant. Friemel remained in the Air Force, including a tour at Chanute Air Force base, until he retired on October 31, 1981.

Subject Headings/Key Words: U.S. Air Force during Vietnam War; propeller driven airplane mechanic; Agent Orange; Richard Friemel; Da Nang, South Vietnam; Pleiku, South Vietnam; Communism; Air Force training during 1960s; mama san; Vietnam Veterans Memorial; 366th Fighter Wing, U.S. Air Force;

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