

ALL GAVE SOME; SOME GAVE ALL

This week's veteran is Charlie Jackson.

January 10, 1956, Charlie was driven by his mother, Hildegard, to Decatur to board a two AM train for Great Lakes Training Station, Chicago, to take a physical to determine his eligibility to join the Navy. Since Charlie had lost an eye when he fell off a cliff at Turkey Run State Park, Indiana, on an Assumption school band trip at the age of 11, his mother expected him back on the afternoon train.

But his mother didn't realize that the Navy was low on personal, and had a large quota to fill. When he came to the eye testing room, Charlie says, "I was instructed to hold a card over one eye and read the chart which I did. I was then instructed to cover my right eye and read the chart again. I told the corpsman that I could not see the chart, so I was instructed to walk closer to the wall until I could read the chart. When I literally walked into the wall, the corpsman became very agitated, exclaimed that I was a 'wise guy', stamped my chart as passed, hollered 'next', and I was in the Navy".

After boot camp, Charlie was sent to the photo school at Naval Air Station, Pensacola, FL. He spent almost four years at Mobile Intelligence Production Unit, Norfolk, VA, assembling target folders for carrier based squadrons shadowing the Soviet Union.

Charlie reenlisted in 1960 and was sent to the Mobile Photo Unit at North Island Naval Station, Coronado, CA, as a motion picture cameraman on a four man team. He would spend six months taking pictures on the West Coast, Hawaii, and aboard ships, and the other six months working out of Yokosuka, Japan, where he would deploy to various ships for filming at sea and to many Far East countries to cover news events.

Because many of his assignments required him to fly, Charlie had to take a flight physical which he failed because of having no sight in one eye. He persuaded the flight surgeon to write the Bureau of Navy Personnel(BUPERS) requesting a waiver because he had already been flying for several years without incident. The wavier was granted.

In 1962, Charlie was sent to South Vietnam to film U. S. Forces training the ARVN troops to fight the Viet Cong. When he left in May 1962, only 12 to 16 American soldiers had been killed.

After covering the Australian Sea Festival which celebrates the Battle of the Coral Sea, Charlie returned to NAS, Pensacola, FL, in 1963. He was a motion picture instructor in "C" school.

In October 1963, Charlie and two others were sent to the Arctic Research Laboratory Ice Island(ARLIS II), a small iceberg floating around the North Pole. The Navy had stationed scientists on the Island to study the Arctic ocean floor, life at extreme ocean depths, and atmospheric conditions above the surface. The temperatures were so extreme that he could only remain out of doors for just a couple of minutes before the cameras would freeze. Charlie was stranded on ARLIS II for forty-four days because their plane was damaged landing at Point Barrow, Alaska, after leaving ARLIS II

In 1965, Charlie was sent to the University of Southern California to obtain his Director's Code in Cinematography. After finishing his classes in July 1966, he was transferred to the Combat Camera Group, Detachment Alfa, Yokosuka, Japan. From 1966 to 1969, Charlie was sent to many areas of Southeast Asia to photograph Naval and Marine events. Much of the time , he was assigned to Vietnam carrying out

ALL GAVE SOME; SOME GAVE ALL

photographic assignments in South Vietnam and Northern Thailand, many times flying in combat. He was in Saigon during the 1968 Tet Offensive.

Charlie was attached to the VO-67, a squadron of Navy OP-2 Es, stationed at Nakhon Phanom Royal Air Force Base, Thailand. The plane had two reciprocal engines and two small jet engines. The squadron flew missions over the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Vietnam and Laos, implanting electronic sensory devices(Adsids) to detect North Vietnamese troop and supply movements. The Squadron received the Navy Unit Commendation and the Presidential Unit Citation. Charlie was awarded his first Air Medal while flying with the VO-67, and a second Air Medal for air to air, and air to ground combat photography while flying with Army Huey combat gunships stationed at Long Binh, Vietnam.

After his 1968 tour in Vietnam, Charlie was transferred to the Naval Photo Center in Washington, D. C., as a chief photographer producing motion pictures documenting Naval activities in the U. S. The movies would be of Naval Academy ceremonies, ship commissioning, etc. In 1968, he also covered the Pueblo Incident when the North Koreans captured the ship, Pueblo, and accused it of spying. Its Commander, CDR. Lloyd Bucher, and crew were held captive for eleven months.

In 1972 Charlie was promoted to both Senior Chief and Warrant Officer One. He was transferred to VQ-1 on Guam as a photo maintenance officer. In 1974, he was promoted to Chief Warrant Officer and was sent to VP-62 at Miramar Naval Station, San Diego, CA. While there, he was promoted to LTJG, but had to revert back to Chief Warrant Officer when he retired. His last two deployments to Vietnam were in 1972 and 1973.

Charlie is married to Ann Joyner of Windsor, VA. After he retired, Ann and Charlie opened a commercial photographic laboratory in San Diego. When they sold the business in 2001, it was one of the largest labs in the city. They now reside in New Bern, NC. Charlie and Ann have three children.

Thank you, Chief Warrant Officer Charles Edward Jackson, for what you gave for us.