

Smiling faces... Sergeant Herndon

by **Johnnie Hubbs**

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Biên Hòa, 1st Air Cav. Div. C/229th - 1971-1972

I remember serving in the 1st Air Cav. Div. C/229th AHB out of Biên Hòa, Army base 71-72. When we were off on some weekends, and if we weren't flying or not much going on in the field to request our helicopters, we could go one over to the Air Base. After flying all week, from 12 to 16 hours a day, we wanted some time to cool off. Looking out a door of a UH-1 Huey helicopter all day at the war does something to a person.

I served with ONE of the units in Vietnam, and we were the Cav---the crazy outfit that traded our horses in for Helicopters. What a move to make, in the card of life. Turns out that it was a helicopter war. Our helicopter units were filled with men that wanted to be here, in-country, and to do what they could to help the men in the field. The Cav never left a man in the field---no matter what the outcome. Anytime and anyplace we would fly to help our men or any other people who needed us, Air Force, Navy, Marines. So, when it came to down-time we would jump to the opportunity to go over to the Air Base.

One night on our off time, some crew chiefs and door gunners wanted to go over to the Biên Hòa AB (USAF) in which they had the best NCO Club in this part of the Vietnam. Shows, with music and everything on weekends with real live girls and all. So we took a jeep ride on over to the club and parked and went in and sat down at one of the empty tables. The show was to start in 20 minutes or so, and we had already downed two beers. I needed to use the Latrine (Bathroom, Head, John---whatever Air Force types call it) so I entered this place and went on over to one of the stalls and looked over my left shoulder---the man standing there was my old Drill Sergeant with a SH*T- Eaten grin on his face!

Sarge looked right into my eyes and said, "So Hubbs how do you like VIETNAM?" Good thing I liked my Drill Sergeant in boot camp, but I was feeling no pain and answered, "Okay, I guess, and if I make it home---even better *SIR!*" I halfway expected the *Don't call me Sir... I work for a living* reply, but he just kinda chuckled. He was good to his people in boot camp and already had two tours in-country, up to this point.

I remember when he was teaching us young kids in boot, and told us to think about what you do... yeah, right. Nevertheless, Sarge was good to us and I never forgot the training we went through. Not all Drill Sergeants were that good to their people but he was, maybe because he knew what we were going too. I never saw him again and to this day, I wonder if he made it home from his 3rd tour.

Of all the places to see your boot camp Drill Sergeant---in the John. So with that, Johnny Hubbs says "Hi to you, SGT. HERNDON, wherever you may be, *Sir!* Thank's for all you did for us, take care."

**Johnny Hubbs C/229th
AHB, 1st Air Can.71-72
Door gunner, "WELCOME HOME"**

We Take Care of Our Own

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