

Binh Thuy AB

A Funny Thing Happened To Me While On Post

© 2013 by [Jaime A. Lleras](#), CMSgt, USAF, (Ret.)
632nd SPS - 1970

Photo: A1C Jaime Lleras



*This is a story I wrote about my first few months in Vietnam at Binh Thuy AB,
and links to the photos I took.*

A Funny Thing Happened To Me While On Post

It was January 6, 1970 and I was somewhat okay with getting on a flight to Vietnam, especially since I had volunteered for the assignment. However, once I got to Ton Sun Nut, for in-country training, I started to wonder why I wanted to go to Vietnam. It was hot, (in January) and it was scary listening to the 'booms' (mortar attacks) at a distance and seeing the sky light up at night, while everyone took it as the norm. I also couldn't deal with the amount of and the size of the mosquitoes. I remember the first few nights there when I dressed up for bed – wearing my state-side fatigues, buttoned all up and wore my long black boot socks before getting into my mosquito netted bunk – and they still ate me up.

Once I arrived at Binh Thuy in mid-January, my opinion of Vietnam was getting better, especially since I got a sense of belonging and welcoming. It was easy to set-in with the guys there. Coming from the law enforcement side of the house, working security was interesting, but I really got comfortable with the guys on the 632nd. I don't remember how long I spent on the mid-night shift, but working nights was still very scary.

One night as I stood guard on one of the towers on the perimeter road, facing the *Basic River* along the *Tra-noch* village (I believe). While using my night goggles, I started to notice that there was some flashing lights going on/off between two trees on the other side of the river bank. It seemed to me as though some sort of signaling was going on. Trying to do 'my job' of identifying suspicious activities, I called it in to CSC. Awhile later the desk sergeant came back on the radio with an 'all-clear' response. Now, that bothered me and I was getting concerned because as I kept looking at these trees, I continued to see the signaling, so about a half hour later, I called it in again. The desk sergeant checked with the 'out-post' and came back with an 'all-clear' response again.

I think it was after the third time I called in this activity when a vehicle stopped at the bottom of the tower. I challenged the person – "Halt who goes there?" – and found out it was my flight chief. He responded and started coming up the tower. Upon reaching my post he asked me to show him what my concern was, so I explained to him what I was seeing. After hearing my explanation, he took the night goggles and checked out the river bank to see if he saw the flashing lights I was talking about. As he

As he scanned the tree line, he made a grunt sound as if to agree with me. He even said "I see" after checking both trees – [here comes the funny part] he then turned to me and said "boy where the F--- are you from?" to which I proudly said "Brooklyn, NY, sir" thinking he was impressed with my actions. He said,

"Brooklyn!" "How old are you?" and I said "19 Sir," to which he said, "You piece of sh--." "young punk-ass kid." "Are you f---ing stupid or just plain dumb?" to which I replied, "NO SIR" while being confused and changing my concern. My look must have been killing him because after shaking his head, he said, "boy, haven't you even seen a lightning bug"? I said "a what?" A lightning bug, you Sh--Head" and I said "NO SIR." He then explained it to me while laughing his ass off. He laughed so much that he almost fell off the ladder as he was going down to his jeep. After that, I was known as 'Lightning Bug' for about a month. The truth is I had never seen a lightning bug during my childhood in New York City, roaches, for sure, but not lightning bugs.

I realized that my flight chief could have handled this in a better way, especially since I was a 'newbie,' however; I also understand how funny this seemed to him and any other person not growing up in an urban city. Needless to say, I have never forgotten this lesson in life, especially when I mention this story and people still laugh.

After a few months on flight, I developed a skin rash which the doctors said was skin malaria and after being treated, I was required to work in air conditioning areas, which is how I ended up in the armory the rest of my tour – another interesting assignment.

Jaime A. Lleras - aka Sgt LQ



BT 1970 IN FRONT OF CSC

- 1. BT AB: Sgt Jaime (LQ) in front of CSC. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.
- 2. BT AB: SSgt in front of CSC. I don't recall his name. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970

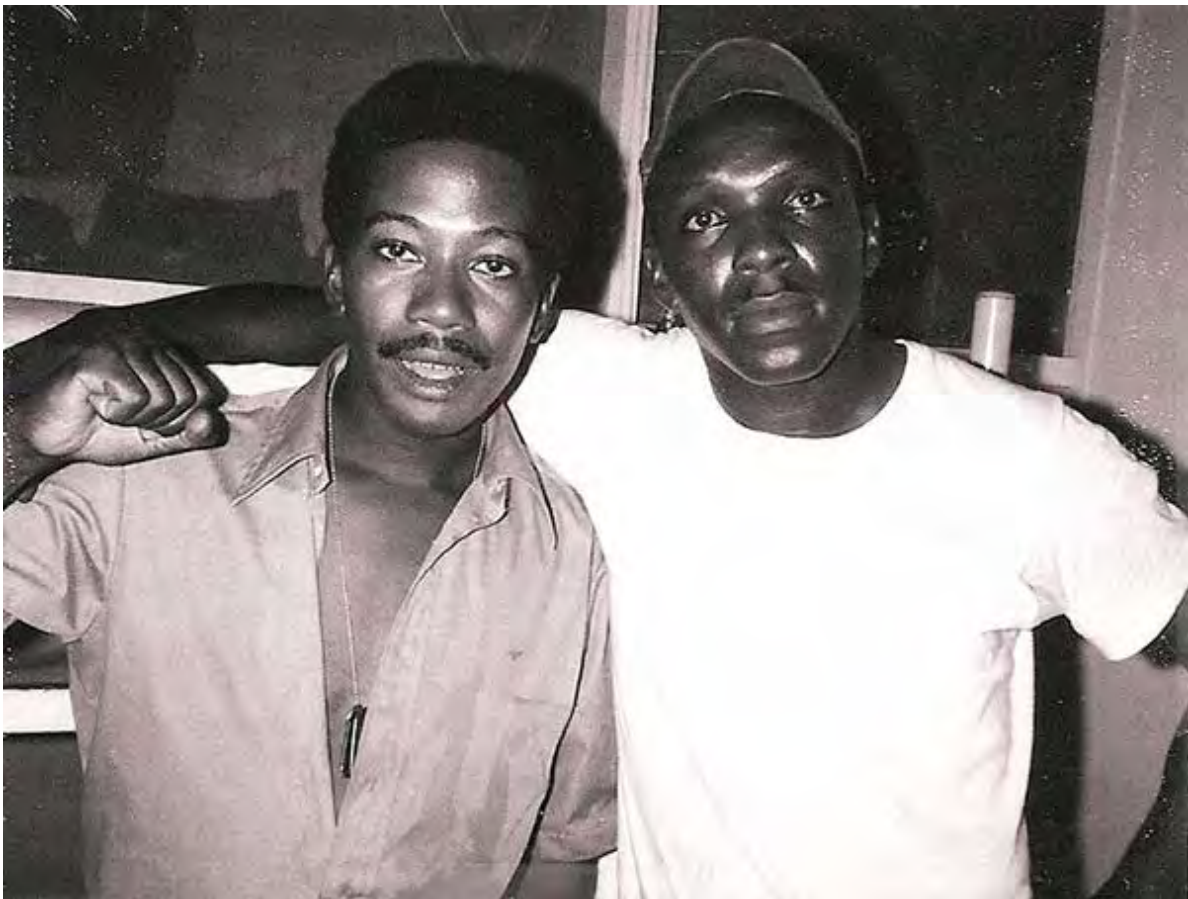


BT-1970 IN FRONT ON CSC

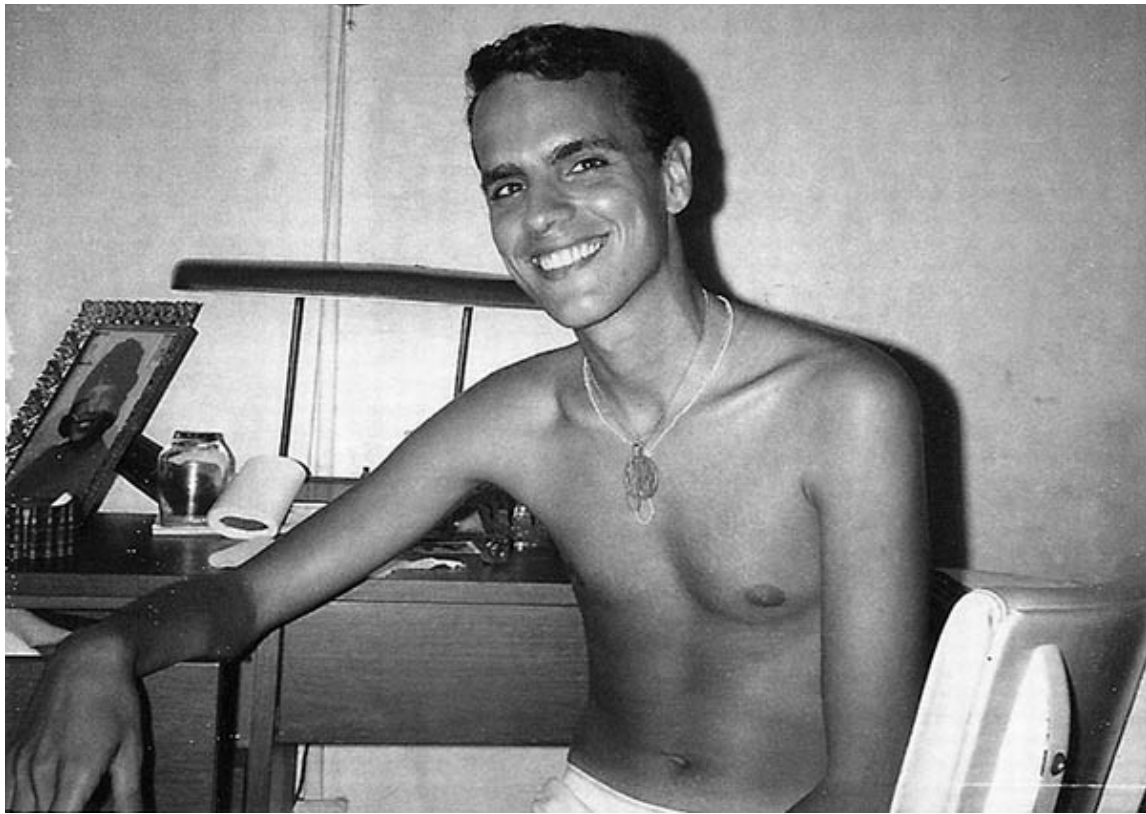


Sgt. LQ in the Armory

3. BT AB: Jaime in the Armory. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



4. BT AB: Two A-Flight Soul Brother Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



5. BT AB: Recognize this guy? I think he worked in CSC. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



6. BT AB: Brother outside of Hooch 1310 (?) Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



7. BT AB: Weyland, Campos and Curly. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



8. BT AB: Guys on Fox-1, V100 A-Flight, Binh Thuy, 197 Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



9. BT AB: Fox-4, Concrete bunker with M60. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



10. BT AB: Guy on old tank – can't recall his name. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



11. BT AB: Local snake wrapped on a mounted M60. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



12. BT Huey chopper landing. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



13. BT AB: Jaime driving a V100. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970



14. BT AB: Jaime with two other brothers and the Base Chaplain (in uniform) after a mortar attack on 9/1/70. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



15. BT AB: Jaime in front of the Delta Queen, Base Commander's bird.
Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.





16. BT AB: Jaime in the Delta Queen, heading for 3-day R&R in Hong Kong. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



17 BT AB (left): Cutest QC on post! [Note QC Patch on blouse pocket.] Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.

18 BT AB (below): Liu -- the Ice Cream shop girl. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.





20. BT AB: Jaime - Radio check outside CSC (USAF: Central Security Control). Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



21. BT AB: Dragon and a Puerto Rican brother. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.

Recognize this guy?

JUNE 1970



22. BT AB: Jaime and a Puerto Rican brother. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



23. BT AB: Jaime riding a scooter. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



24. BT AB: Jaime sitting outside of the club. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



25. AB: Jaime on top of bunker. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



26. AB: Jaime, front of bunker. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



27. BT AB: Jaime outside of bunker. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



28. & 29. BT AB: PAR-TAA! Seagram's 7 & Cutty Sark! Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



30. BT AB: USO Gal with Stan Levinson and others. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



31. BT AB: South Vietnamese Money. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



32. BT AB: 1970 Party Animals. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.



Wild-N-Crazy
Guys

Always
Partying
In our
Hooch
After
work.



APR 1970

Recognize
Anyone?



APR 1970



33. BT AB: Club Girls. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.

The girls that worked at the Club



Baby-son – NCO Club waitress



Girls that worked in the NCO Club



Girls that worked in the NCO Club's kitchen



NCO Club's cashier



Funniest and sweetest waitress at the club



Baby-son – NCO Club waitress

The mama-sons that took care of our hooch needs.



Baby-son hooch maid



Mama-son hooch maid shinning boots



Mama-son hooch maid



Grand Mama-son



**Great-Grand Mama-son
(all solid gold teeth)**

35. BT AB: Hooch #1310 Mamasans. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.

35. BT AB: D-Golden Knights Band. Photo by Jaime Lleras. 1970.

'D Golden Knights' – one of the best Pilipino band that ever came to our club in 1970.

Cirilo, Jerry, Rody, Peter, Oscar and John



Mercedes



Lydia



Mila

