

Veterans interviews – RETURN TO: Judy Allen, Choctaw Historic Projects, PO Box 1210, Durant OK 74702 – judy.allen@choctawnation.com. 580.513.7984.

Interview conducted by: Judy Allen at (location): Wilburton CCC Date and time: 1 pm Oct 30

NAME -- Darrell Hampton (Dewayne is MIDDLE)

Birthday --1-6-62

PHONE –

Next of Kin and their contact info:

Wife Kathryn

Are you Choctaw? Can you share a copy of your CDIB and/or Membership card?Y

In which branch did you enter? Army

Division -- Air Defense Artillery 32nd Division

Unit --

Were you Drafted or Enlisted or Commissioned? – Enlisted

(If given a choice) Why did you choose that branch?

My uncles had been in army and also Stepfather

RANK at discharge: E2 reached E5 prior to that

Years served – from- 1980 to 83

Peace or wartime? peacetime

Where did you attend basic training? --Fort Bliss El Paso, AIT at Fort Bliss

WHERE DID YOU SERVE ? –

In Ansbach Germany for full time after training

What was your job while in service? - Hawk missile operator; We are the ones who track the airplane and when lock on, would shoot them down. Majority of training was hands-on.

Did you make any special friends in service? Who were they and do you have any stories? -

Had some pretty good friends in the same division. We spent a lot of time together when not on tactical side. We went to concerts, went to country side to meet people and see things.

And commanding officers that you especially remember? Lt Col was very thorough. He was very fair. He was pretty much no nonsense. Robert Horton.

He stayed in the barracks and when wife came for 8 months they lived off base.

Were there any animals (work or pet) around the areas you served? If so, what was their role? –

Was there a point during your service, that you decided the military was, or was not, the right career choice? (Please explain) –

I was interested in oil and natural gas business and making a better living. Came stateside and started oilfield career in Kayuga Texas on a roustabout team and spent 32 years in oil and gas business.

Senior Grounds manager for N region of CN. Have four counties tht you oversee. Leflore Haskell Latimer and Pittsburg. Been with Choctaw Nation for 7 years.

Is there a battle or point during your service that you would like to describe so that future generations can better understand what military life can be – for better or worse?

The military is good for showing younger people how to grow up. It helps make you very responsible for your actons.

We were required to be on a tacticle side 24 on 2 off. It was our responsibility to get up, get there on time. We had some who couldn't seem to do that and there were consequences.

MEDALS AND CITATIONS RECEIVED

Overseas medal, Army achievement medal for an evaluation on equipment operation

Stories of Military Service:

What or who did you leave behind when you joined the service? (family, child, pet) came home on leave after basic to marry. Kathryn. she is from Ada.

Mother – Patsy Grissom

How did you get to your initial point of entry?

Flew to Fort Bliss from OKC

What type of training or schooling did you have?

What is your most vivid memory of your time training or in school? What was the BEST part? What was the WORST part

Best training was getting in shape and staying in shape.

Worst part eing away from home

Did you serve alongside other Native/American Indians? How did that inform your experience?

There were some Cherokees and Comanches with us in basic/AIT.

What did you think about the chow? (at base and in the field!)

Pretty good food in Germany. Enjoyed lunches – if you went off base could eat German specialties

What was your first assignment after basic training?

Did you receive any specialized training? If so, what?

How to run the radars tht we operated to lock on to other airplanes. Six different radars we had to qualify on.

Did you qualify with equipment (vehicles, aircraft, radios, weapons, etc.)?
(If Yes) What was training with that equipment like

What was the hardest part of training?

Learning the electrical side of all the radars for repair purposes

Did you receive any promotions? Could you tell me about them?

What was the hardest part of the military life-style for you to adapt to? Why do you think it was?

What was the easiest part of the military life-style for you to adapt to? Why do you think it was?

Having a steady paycheck and knowing you earned that paycheck. I had worked different jobs as a young man and finally had now had one I concentrated on constantly.

Wartime Service vs. peacetime service.

Where did you serve?

Were you in a combat, combat support, or combat service support role? Or did the war zone make that designation irrelevant?

(If combat/ wartime) How did your combat (wartime) experience change you?

What kinds of friendships and camaraderie did you form while serving, and with whom?

How did you stay in touch with family and friends?

What did you do for recreation or when you were off duty?

Do you recall any particularly humorous or unusual events?

One of funniest was me and second Lt. went to evaluation he got a little drunk and I had to reel him in and babysit him. We both ran equipment and radars to be evaluated.

Was there something you did for "good luck?"

What was the best part of your service experience? Growing up – being on my own. Learning a lot of responsibility. I was 18 when I went in.

Do you recall the day service ended? Where were you when your service ended? ▪ Did you return home? Where were you?

I was still in Germany. They flew us back to Fort Dix NJ.

How did you readjust to civilian life? Did you work or go back to school?

Went right to work with a co in Texas. I ran a dozer for them 6 or 8 months building a lake dam.

Then was able to get into oilfield. 32 years.

Reflections

How did your military service experiences affect your life?

Yes. It did. It showed me you have to take ownership of your actions.

What are some life lessons you learned from your military service?

Family first. Take care of the family.

Are there lessons to be learned from the way Native communities treat their veterans?

How has your military service impacted your feelings about war and the military in general?

I was always willing to fight for my country and I enjoy the freedoms we have.

Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to share your recollections of your military service.

Is there anything you would like to add that we have not covered in this interview?

I really enjoyed the countryside in Germany, I got to see a lot while I was there and feel I would not have ever seen it without the military.

Is there anything else we should talk about that we haven't covered?

Oldest son 41 – Darrell Jr, and son Mark Steven is 32 -

What do you wish more people knew about veterans?

I am very proud to be a Choctaw veteran.

Native American veterans?

Questions not related to your military life:

Where were you born and who were your parents and siblings? Any of them veterans?

Born in Ada.

What did your parents/grandparents do for a living?

Mother was a dog groomer and stay at home mom

Grandfather worked 44 years at Brockway glass in Ada.

Where did you go to school? (youth and adult)

Several school sbecasue stepdad retriedf rom military and worked at Tinker. He was in the Navy and air force

What did you do for fun growing up

Did you have brothers and sisters?

What are some family traditions that have been passed down?

Try to get together once a yar as a family and spend the day together.eat, reminisce and talk.

What was it like growing up Choctaw? Did you ever face adversity as a youth, or as an adult?

I knew I was Choctaw. Some other students weho were NA. Had people say bad things as I gew up because I was NA.

Do you speak any Choctaw? not a lot.

Did you marry and have children? Tell me about them, including their names.

Did you have a non-military career after service?

Do you have advice for future generations?

Everyone needs to join the military. Understand the world and the way of things. Military is a great place for some kids.

How would you describe yourself?

Very dedicated – been married 43 years. Dedicated to my famly and the CN.

What is most important invention you have seen in your lifetime

What has amazed you most during your lifetime:

How has COVID 19 affected your life? _____

Do you have any photos from your life (including time in the military, when you were a youth, during your career, adult life with family, or other photos that are important to you and your memories)? Can you share up to 15 of those photos with us? Please list a description of any photos you are sharing?

Can you share copies/images of any discharge papers or other military documents? Please list what they are:

Do you have any news clippings, significant event programs, or other material you would like to share? Please list the items.

Can you please share an image or copy of your DD214?

Anything else you would like to share or donate that helps tell your story?
