

Nawal Dandachi

Julianne Alejos

Claudia Yabar

Name: Mark Duffy

Branch: United States Army Infantry

Years in Service: 1973-1977

Year Interviewed: 2018



Mark Duffy

Mark Duffy is a Vietnam War veteran who served in the United States Army Infantry. Mark Duffy was born and raised in Torrance, California where he grew up as the ninth kid out of his eleven siblings. Mr. Duffy was not the first person in his family to serve in the army as his uncle, father, and brother had also served. As the son of a WW2 veteran, Mark always considered joining the army once he was eligible. At about the age of 19, Mr. Duffy chose to enlist in the army. In 1973, he chose to drop classes at Riverside Community College and follow in his father's footsteps. Once he was enlisted, he was given the opportunity to choose a hardship location, in which he debated whether to choose Panama, Vietnam, or Korea. After much consideration, he chose Korea because a neighbor of his who had previously served in Korea convinced him. Before being stationed in Korea, Mr. Duffy went to bootcamp in Fort Ord, a former United States army post in California. During his time at Fort Ord, he underwent a series of intense training exercises, such as prisoners of war exercises which were meant as preparation for any possibilities. This also consisted of many drill practices, which included a majority of

exercise, and kitchen duty. This was meant to teach them discipline and strengthen their character. Being away from his family for the first time for such an extended amount of time, his first days attending boot camp were a quite fearful and intimidating. On the other hand, boot camp had also showed him another side of himself. Being one of the youngest in such a large family, Mr. Duffy realized he had what it takes to be a leader. After spending approximately a year at boot camp in Fort Ord, he was sent off to Infantry camp in Fort Polk, Louisiana. During his time in Infantry camp, he became a stronger and better leader than before. As a result, he was promoted to Corporal, gaining more responsibility. As a Corporal, his Sergeant assigned him to a platoon where he would command a team of soldiers. After completing both his time at boot camp and in Infantry training, Mr. Duffy was finally sent off to South Korea. In May of 1975, he would be promoted from Corporal to Sergeant. As Sergeant, he was in charge of conducting reconnaissance with the help of his team, which consisted of a total of three Jeeps. During this, his team would maneuver in the darkness as to gain any information about their surroundings and enemies. Mr. Duffy's team included not only of Americans, since it also consisted of two men involved with the KATUSA. In his squad, he also led two South Korean soldiers. Since he was in charge of the two South Korean soldiers, he learned Korean in order to be able to communicate with them, which he can still speak a little today. Also, his time on base consisted of test exercises to keep their men in constant shape, such as prisoners of war exercises which he was once experienced in boot camp. When he had free time at the base, Mr. Duffy was interested in listening to music on the Armed Forces Radio Network or writing letters to his loved ones. If allowed off base, he would pass time in the nearby GI town where his unit would hang out at the bar. In February of 1977, Mr. Duffy was discharged from the army. Today, Mr. Duffy is a retired

employee of the United States Postal Office and a well-respected member of the Riverside community. After meeting his wife while enlisted in Korea, they would soon marry and have three children, a son and two daughters. Not only did joining the army open up many possibilities and doors for his future, but it also helped him become the leader he is today.