

# Before I forget

By [Barry Grimm](#)

I left the 128<sup>th</sup> Assault Helicopter Company about end of July 68 and went over to fly for II FFV and flew brass around. Gen Abrams & Westmorland among the more well known. That set a trend, so back in the states I ended up flying for the White House and Pentagon for three years with DUSSA out of Davidson Army Airfield. We did not fly the President, but all the others that the Presidential Helicopter unit did not handle. Flying generals/diplomats around and practicing DEFCON took up 4 days a week and was off the other 3. Yes, I have even been in the Oval Office.

I was one of the last army pilots qualified in the CH-34 (matter of fact I qualified in one of President Eisenhower's Presidential CH-34's which is now on display at Ft Eustis Museum). Would you believe that it had a computer system? It was at Davidson that I also became one of the few Army Helicopter Pilots who are officially "Aircraft Carrier Qualified".

Like many CWOs, I was offered direct promotion to 1st Lt, took it, went to Transportation Officers School in Ft Eustis, and then sent to Nam again to take over the 650th. 650th Transportation Detachment was attached to A/377 ART 101 ABN at Camp Eagle (up by Hue). This unit was like the 605<sup>th</sup> (WITCH DOCTOR) was with the 128th, but over the years and with the changes for withdrawal, the scope of the units changed a lot.

I had a motor pool, UH-1H's, OH-6's, 84 men, myself as CO, an XO, First Sarge, several platoon officers, E-5s, hanger, repair shop, etc. etc. We would give a list each night to the A/377 on what was available to them for the next day.

So by 1971 up north units like the 650th operated as a company with all equipment/vehicles/aircraft assigned to the 650th instead of supported unit. Weird set up, but even stranger was that I had a motor pool which also contained my Jeep....but regulations did not permit me to drive it myself. I had to have an enlisted man as the assigned driver. BUT I could take off solo with any of my aircraft anytime I wanted! OK, had to take a crew along, but no co-pilot needed. One time I took off on a "parts run" and ended up going round trip from Hue to Saigon and back. Was gone for better part of a week and was never even questioned on it.

Before my tour ended they discovered an error had been made in my paperwork from Ft Eustis and I had to sign an time extension.....I said "Like Hell", and within three days I was back in USA and a civilian !!!!

Like many Vietnam Vets I had a number of jobs and ended up working for Uncle Sam. I work my way up through the postal system and I retired last year as Postmaster of Brookville, PA. FUNNY part is, I was born in that town because Clarion, where I grew up, did not have a hospital so was only in Brookville the first 3 days of my life.

Likely more than you wanted to know, but thought I would punch it out... afraid I am beginning to forget a lot of things in the past. NOT Alzheimer's, just my mind is getting old and forgetful.

Don't know how those guys remember enough to write a book-- I have forgotten 90 percent of my time in Nam.