



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE
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PRESS RELEASE

Voices of Veterans: Cpl. Robert Shand Shares His Story of Service in the U.S. Navy

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AUSTIN — Today, Texas Land Commissioner and Veterans Land Board (VLB) Chairwoman Dawn Buckingham, M.D., is proud to introduce the next installment of the series highlighting the VLB's Voices of Veterans oral history program. This week, we highlight the service of Cpl. Robert Shand who served in United States Navy during Vietnam.

Born in Lynn, Massachusetts, Shand enlisted in the service when he was 17 years old and since he was underage at the time, his parents had to sign off and did so after some questions.

"Yes, yes, my dad is the one who signed up for me so I could join, I picked to go into the Navy because that's where my dad served during WWII," Shand explained. "My dad asked me if I was sure I wanted to do this and he signed me up after I told him I was sure."


Shand said once he was signed up, he left for Boot Camp in Great Lakes, Illinois, an experience he said lasted for 12 weeks.



VOICES OF VETERANS

<small>name</small> Shand, Robert		
<small>military branch</small> Navy	<small>rank</small> HM3	<small>conflict</small> Vietnam
<small>date interviewed</small> 9/21/2020		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <small>interview available on voicesofveterans.org</small>

Robert Shand joined the U.S. Navy in 1966 and served as a Hospital Corpsman in New Port, Rhode Island. In 1968 he attended Fleet Marine Force School in San Diego, California, at Camp Pendleton and became a Navy Corpsman (medic) assigned to the U.S. Marine Corps. Mr. Shand spent thirteen months in Vietnam serving with the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, and with the 1st Medical Battalion.



"It was a lot of physical exercise, a lot of physical conditioning and a lot of time in school studying the military protocol and military history," Shand explained. "There was also basic skills centered around being at sea but not too much."

Shand said he was offered an opportunity to go to Accession training, commonly known as A School, where sailors go to receive technical training in their selected military occupational specialty (MOS) field.

"I was offered this opportunity to go to A School and I took it because I was a high school graduate and a lot of people going in right then, weren't, and they put me in Hospital Corps School," Shand explained, "which is essentially nurses training but for combat troops. It's very extensive, advanced First Aid life-saving skills."

Following A School, Shand said he was sent to Rhode Island and worked in a hospital ward and continued to learn and grow while doing all the things a nurse does, including IV's and even helping to deliver a baby. Following two years in Rhode Island, Shand went to Marine Fleet School at Camp Pendleton in San Diego.

"This is where corpsman go to become corpsman for the Marine Corps and that was six weeks of, we used to joke about it, how you become a Marine in six weeks or less," Shand said. "This was, a lot of it was field medicine training, how to treat people in the field with particular pieces of equipment and emergency techniques that were really advanced for that time."

Shand said once he finished his six weeks of training at Camp Pendleton, he put on a uniform and headed to Vietnam where he would spend 13 months serving with the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, and with the 1st Medical Battalion.

"I thought it was a beautiful country but I got shot at the first day and thought it might be just as well that I wasn't there for sightseeing," Shand said about his first moments in Vietnam. "It was on our way from the airport to the Battalion Headquarters, we got ambushed."

To listen to Cpl. Robert Shand tell his story, click the button below:

[Cpl. Robert Shand's Story](#)

Veterans can email VoicesofVeterans@glo.texas.gov to tell their stories. Please note that the Veteran must be a resident of Texas at the time of their interview.

Voices of Veterans is a state agency's first Veteran oral history program. It records the stories of Texas Veterans through their time in service and after returning home from combat.

The VLB records interviews with veterans over the phone or in person. Their interviews are then permanently archived in the Office of Veterans Records at the GLO, where they join the historical documents of other Texas heroes such as Sam Houston, Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, and William Barret Travis.

Veterans' interviews are also available to researchers, historians, genealogists, and the public. These precious records inspire future generations and remind us of our Veterans' sacrifices.

To listen to the over 500 archived stories of Veterans documented through the GLO's Voices of Veterans oral history program, click the button below:

[Voices of Veterans](#)