

Two tours in Vietnam and a trip back

By Lisa Loomis Dick Kingsbury was 17, a high school dropout, when he enlisted in the U.S. Navy to fight in the Vietnam War.

He served two tours, enduring what he called a "horri-ble war," before he returned home to Waitsfield where he went to found a very successful excavation and contracting business. But he carried with him a severe case of PTSD that informed everything in his life. That PTSD came from the horrors of war but also from what greeted him when the young man returned to the states at the height of the civil protests over the war.

Kingsbury started his basic training at 17 and, in 1967 at 19 years old, began his tour of duty in Vietnam as a "riverine," serving on Task Force 116 as a member of a four-man team patrolling the rivers of Vietnam in a 30-foot fiberglass-sided boat.

"When I first got there, the first month, we never heard a gunshot. Then all hell broke loose," he said.

"Our boats were called death traps. We were basically sitting ducks. The boats went 35 miles an hour which is not fast compared to a bullet," he said



From left to right: Dick Kingsbury, Clesson Eurich and Kevin Eurich.

verted ship. After three and a half months in the south they were transferred north to the DMZ following the TET offensive

"We were in Dong Ha where it was much more dangerous,

strators who were gathered around our bus, throwing tomatoes and protesting the war. People were so bad to soldiers. I wanted to come home so badly. They took us to the airport and I sat there still. As horrible as his wartime experiences were, being greeted by tomato-throwing protesters was pretty difficult for a 21-year-old to understand.

"I was talking to someone

about this not long ago and how we didn't know anything going into this. I'd be a lot more scared now if I were going into the service because I've been there. I know what Continued on Page 2



Dick and Laura Kingsbury on a return trip to Vietnam. Photos courtesy of Dick Kingsbury

sualties. That was not his first

or last experience with losing

When his second tour end-

friends and fellow crewmen.

he said

Riverines patrolled the rivers 24 hours a day in the Mekong Delta in some 250 Patrol Boats River (PBR), stopping native boats called "sand pans," checking identificachecking identifications and searching for enemy combatants.

"I liked patrolling nights better because you could see the incoming fire," he said. Their base, when they didn't

sleep on the boats, was a con-

for two days waiting for a mili-tary standby seat," Kingsbury His boat was blown up on the Perfume River in an atsaid. tack where his crew saw ca-

When he got home he began experiencing the symptoms of PTSD and at the urging of his wife, Laura, began seeing a counselor.

ed, he and others were flown "But people didn't know to Norton Air Force Base and what it was then," he said. He got better, with some therapy and some medication, then bused to a rehab facility. "The biggest thing that bothered me was the crap demonbut the PTSD stays with him





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Vic and Anne Dumas and their two sons moved around the country during his time in the Air Force.

By Lisa Loomis

For Waitsfield resident (and Warren native) Vic Dumas, the constant educational opportunities were one thing that led to his career in the armed services.

The 87-year-old volunteered Air Force Base in Texas be-

fore being deployed to Okinawa where he began his work as an airman first class. When he retired from the service, he'd risen to the rank of master sergeant and had flown 15,000 hours.

Dumas was moved around a fair amount during his career, spending time in New Hampshire, New Jersey, Newfoundland, Maryland and Kansas (which he really did not like). As a career service member, his wife, Anne, and later his sons, Spencer and Steve, moved around the country with him.

"I could have stayed in lon-

ger, but by then we were back at Mc-Guire Air Force Base and Anne and I didn't like it. At the time, I was gone a lot flying cargo and personnel into Vietnam," Dumas said.

"Our missions took us from McGuire to Anchorage and then to Yokota, Japan, and then down somewhere to Vietnam," he said.

"The worst part about those flights was that because Vietnam was such a big political deal, we were fine when we had a load of cargo, but going into most bases, when we were carrying personnel, we could expect ground fire," he recalled.

interested. He took me up on Dum in lon- two or three flights. During service "We need more negotiation. We sure don't need more armed conflict; that's for sure," Vic Dumas on tensions with North

The C-141 planes they were

flying could carry 160 troops

plus their equipment. In addi-

tion to transporting troops in,

they ran medivac flights, picking up wounded soldiers and

Dumas' interest in the Air

Force was fostered by his neighbor and good friend

Lauren Whitworth, a career

serviceman who serviced in World War II, Korea and Viet-

"I enlisted because I liked

the Air Force. Lauren got me

nam over 30 years.

returning them stateside.

World War II, I used to do a tour in observation posts and would report every time an airplane went over," Dumas recalled.

Korea.

After high school Dumas spent several years hauling granite to Chicago and then hauling lumber and logs and Christmas trees to New Jer-

Their son Steve considered the service as a career, but they did not encourage him to pursue it. He's a structural engineer in Burlington today. Their other son, Spencer, owns Key Krafter in Waitsfield.

When they returned to Waitsfield, Dumas had a small engine repair service and worked at Bisbee's. His wife, Anne, worked at Mehuron's where she'd worked before they were married. Her maiden name is Mehuron. She worked at the grocery store from 1971 through 1989 and Dumas went part time at Bisbee's in 1996 and retired completely in 2000.

Dumas said that military service has changed so much since he was in the

service. Asked if he had any advice for people considering the service, he said, "Stay out."

"It offered such a great education years ago, but it has changed so much

now. Living on a base is like living in a hotel and there are so many more regulations," he said.

Asked for his thoughts on the current tension with North Korea, Dumas favors negotiation over war.

"We need more negotiation. We sure don't need more armed conflict; that's for sure," he added.

Continued from Page 1 Continued from Page 1 group, but I resisted. She kept a portion

it's like," he said.

"Vietnam was horrible. It was the nastiest war," he said. When he returned he worked for several companies in Vermont before forming Kingsbury Construction and raising his children. Jamie

raising his children, Jamie and TJ, with Laura. But the PTSD was always there. About a decade ago, Laura was reading the book Up Country and got interested in Vietnam and asked if he'd ever think about going back.

"My shrink had been trying eral homestays, including to get me to go back with a one where they were driven

group, but I resisted. She kept at me and finally I said yes," he recalled.

and enlisted in the Air Force

in 1951 when he was 21 years old. He completed his ba-

sic training at Sampson Air Force Base in Geneva, New

York, and went to flight engi-

neering school at Randolph

"The first few nights were pretty bad. I had the sweats and couldn't sleep and then it got better. I'm so glad we went," he said.

"The people were so open and so forgiving. When our boat got blown up, I lost everything, all my pictures, so going back and seeing the country again helped," he said.

They were there for a month and their trip included several homestays, including one where they were driven a portion of the way and had to hike up the terraced rice paddies to a tiny home where their host was cooking over an open stove into which she kept feeding rice stalks.

Those homestays and the warmth of the people they met helped him heal, he said, especially the faces of the children.

"But what helps the most is to try and put it out of your mind. It will bother me for a few days after now after talking to you," he said at the end of this interview.







By Helen Whybrow, contributing writer

Art Trezise

rean War.

On Upper Mountain Road

above Mad River Glen, Art Trezise lives in a modest log

cabin that he built from a kit

many decades ago. His love of

skiing drew him to the Green

Mountains in 1954, on his re-

turn from service in the Ko-

Inside the cabin the wood-

President Trump visits South terests in Korea impact-ed his life many years ago

A native of Long Island, Trezise went to Colum-bia University where 90 percent of his classmates were just returning from World War II. "Back then, was a very non-typical military candidate," he said. "I had even had a letter published in the *New York Times* as a young man opposing the draft in peace time

But after touring Europe for "six weeks on \$600, from a small inheritance from my grandmother," Trezise came home to a draft notice. It was 1950. Korea, which had been a Japanese colony, was split in half at the end of World War II. When North Korea invad-ed South Korea, the U.S. de-clared war against the Sovietbacked forces in North Korea. Trezise joined the 4th Infan-try Division and was sent to Fort Benning for basic training. He never went to Korea. Instead, he was assigned to that gathered intelligence on through the winter. the Soviet military and sent

Korea in a time of esca-lating tension, Trezise **"As an old man, now I feel that** er. From a childhood friend also posted in talks about how U.S. in- **there should be compulsory mili-** Germany, he bought tary service for everybody, the way the Swiss do. Once there's a draft, the mothers and fathers start paying attention, and when stuffed there's no draft, they don't." - Arthur Trezise

> air-drops of food and supplies into Berlin.

> "It was a tense atmosphere. Berlin was then complete-encircled by the Soviet Union." Flights were taking off minutes apart day and night, he recalled. "We were always in a state of readiness for something to happen.'

He remembers young Czech and Lithuanian refugees who were taken in by the U.S. Army. He helped tutor them in English.

He remembers many times having to leave the barracks with no warning and set up bivouacs in the German forest as a way of testing their readi-ness and self-sufficiency. They

Other memories are light-

a 1931 Chevy which he drove around whenever he had a chance. "Every spare part imaginable was under the seats," he said.

"We had marvel-ous accommodations for the infantry, in a stone building outside

of Frankfurt. There I saw for the first time a never-stopping elevator. The elevator would come by and never stopped and you had to jump on it quickly. Apparently no one ever died!"

After the war, Trezise vorked for a company in New York that transferred him to Brazil, and there he became the head of the overseas division

He was reluctant to be posted to Brazil at first. But he thought, "Maybe this is just what I need, and I'll meet my wife there." That's exactly what happened. He married Maria Lucia, who was known by her nickname Puzas, and

they raised three children. She died in 2013.

His profession, first in international business and later in the foreign service, took him to Bogota for three years and Paris for two, but most of his life has been split between Sao Paulo, Brazil, and Fayston.

He has changed his mind about the draft and says he learned a lot in the military. "As an old man, now I feel that there should be compulsory military service for everybody, the way the Swiss do. Once there's a draft, the mothers and fathers start paying attention, and when there's no draft, they don't."

Trezise is concerned about the trends he sees away from democratic participation and toward what he calls "a state of perpetual war." He is ac tive in Democratic politics and with Veterans for Peace, a group that meets regularly in Montpelier. "We as citizens need to have stronger control of our military," he said. "Young people need to get engaged locally. ... Otherwise, I don't know how democracy is going to survive



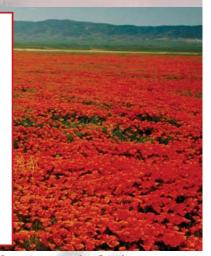
In Flanders Fields

by John McCrae, May 1915

In Flanders fields the poppies blow Between the crosses, row on row, That mark our place; and in the sky The larks, still bravely singing, fly Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow, Loved and were loved, and now we lie In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe: To you from failing hands we throw The torch: be yours to hold it high. If ye break faith with us who die We shall not sleep, though poppies grow In Flanders fields.



Bob Brightbill a member of the ASA

By Christopher Keating

At age 86, Bob Brightbill, Waitsfield, can still tap out his name in Morse code at a rate of 50 words per minute, a skill he learned while serving in the Army during the early stages of the Cold War.

After Brightbill was drafted, he was able to defer entering the Army until he graduated from West Chester University in May of 1953, and because of a back injury he sustained as a gymnast, he had to wait longer.

However, Brightbill said he still needed a job in the meantime, so he got a job teaching

in Ohio. When his back was healed though, the Army took him in out of the school and sent him to basic training.

Europe, between Austria and Germany, listening to Soviet operations across the Iron Curtain.

"There ought to be better ways to solve problems."

- Bob Brightbill

While he was in basic train-ing, the Korean War ended and he was chosen to serve in the Army Security Agencv (ASA), where he learned Morse code and trained as a high-speed radio operator.

After finishing his training, Brightbill spent two years in

"We weren't trusting those guys over there so we listened to everything they did,' Brightbill said.

Brightbill explained that he and other "receivers" worked 24 hours a day in three shifts listening and transcribing five-letter codes

Brightbill got out of the service in 1956, after two years, and moved to New Jersey to become a teacher once again. He taught at an elementary school for three years and then left to become an eighthgrade science teacher, where he stayed for 33 years before moving to The Valley to ski.

Brightbill said that he left the Army realizing how stupid war is.

There ought to be better ways to solve problems," Brightbill said.



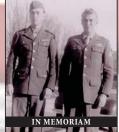
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Joe Gabaree Moretown U.S. Army 1967-1970

William Gabaree Waitsfield U.S. Marine Corps Vietnam



Robert & Norris Gallagher 10th Combat Zone, 10th AAF C.B.I. Theater 1943-1945

Russ Gauslin Warren U.S.A.F. Maine & Japan 1950-1954



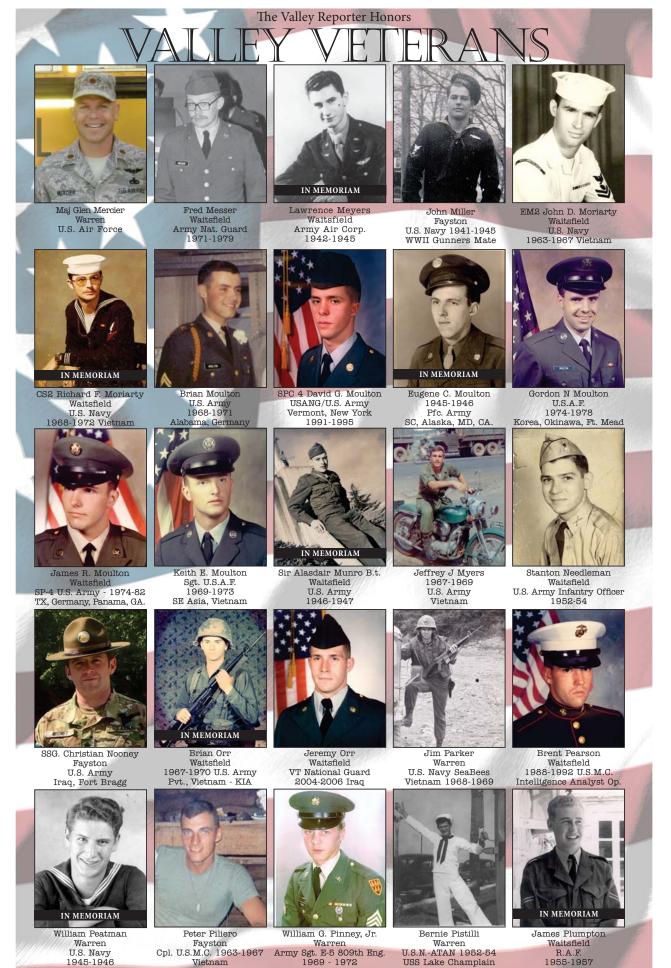
Vincent Gauthier Waitsfield U.S. Army 1965-1968 Germany





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Vietnam

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Geri Streeter SSG Warren U.S. Army/VTARNG 1982-2002 Ret.

Keith Streeter CW4 U.S. Army 126 AVN Co.1975-Present Iraq 2010-2011

Floyd Swink Warren North Africa & Italy 1940-1945

Pat Thompson Fayston Army Nat. Guard 1971-2006 Cpl. Margaret Bisbee Thompson "Peggy" U.S.M.C. 1943-1945

