

I'm not a bot



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After the time you said you weren't very involved in the war so you think that plays into it at all? Of course, I think it does. I just didn't know how much it did. I didn't get involved. Well, thank you very much for letting me interview you today. You brought me great insight about the average American during the war. And you were very nice. You're welcome.***** Kyle Yen Interviews His Uncle Jack ShumanMy name is Kyle Yen, and recently I used the StoryCorps app to interview my Dad's friend and mentor, Jack Shuman. Hi. My name is Kyle Yen and I am 16 years old. Today, I am interviewing Mr. Jack Shuman, my dad's friend and mentor. We are recording this interview at his residence in Rancho Palos Verdes, California.Uncle Jack, thanks for giving me the time to interview you. In my US History class this summer, we've learned about the Vietnam War, so I have an assignment to interview someone. I thought this would be a good opportunity to learn about someone who my dad respects. So, first question: In what year did you graduate from high school? 1966.Did you do anything after high school? I worked at an abalone company and went out on a boat and took supplies to divers, and brought back the abalone, and then we unloaded at the dock in San Pedro, and we took them to our processing plant. So this was right after high school, that you were doing this? Yeah, I actually started on holidays and vacations working there after high school. I worked there, and one of the woman working there said, I told my husband about this, and told him you were a good worker, and he said they'll hire you at Quaker Oats, so I went to Quaker Oats and worked there, and I stuck in your memory. Several things. Um, one night, I was walking point for our company, as the lead person, and its so dark there at night because theres no lights whatsoever, no moon or anything. You cant see hardly anything except the tops of hills or the tops of trees. You could make out different things like that, but you couldnt really see your hand in front of your face, so the guys behind you would kind of hold onto an article of yours, so they wouldnt get lost. We had to stay that close together, because you couldnt see anybody.They had passed word up to me, to go to a certain direction, and they said, Go in that direction, go into that treeline. Were going to meet up with another company. I was in K-Company. They called it Kilo-Company, and we were supposed to meet up with the Mike-Company, which was the M-Company. So they passed the word up, and we had these ponchos on, because there was some light rain. I had to get inside of my poncho with a compass, and we didnt have a flashlight, so I used my cigarette lighter to get the compass and coordinate which way I was supposed to be going. And then I had to put that away and wait a little bit to kinda get my night vision back, cause you lose it once you have that light on there. So I coordinated myself in that direction as soon as I could see good enough again, and we took off in that direction. Well, we were kind of in lower land and we got to this treeline where they were supposed to be, and the ground was maybe 5 feet higher than the ground we were on, and it had been wet and slippery, like clay, like mud, so you could hardly walk in it. I was using roots and stuff to kind of pull myself up. So I pulled myself up, and you got all of your pack and you got a lot of weight, so its kind of hard to get up there. And the guy behind me was my squad leader, so I was helping him get up. And the two of us got up. You had so many straps on you, from your ammo you were carrying, your bandolier, your Laws Rocket, your flak jacket, your rounds of machine gun ammo. You had so many on you that your arm would go dead, because it couldnt get any circulation. So I used to carry this claymore mine pouch. I had my flak jacket and I had this claymore mine pouch in front of it, and I kept all my magazines in it, and my M16, I would put a magazine of it between my flak jacket and that magazine pouch that I had. And I would just rest my arm on it, so it wouldnt go to sleep. And I always had my finger on the trigger, and my thumb on the selector. The selector is for the safety, to switch from auto and regular single-shot fire. And I kept my rifle right there, and Id rest my arm on it.Well as soon as we both got up there, somebody told us to stop in Vietnamese, they said dung lai, and that means stop in Vietnamese. So we stopped, we both stopped there. Hes about arms length from me, and these two figures start coming towards us, and the one that was directly in front of me, his legs were shining. For some reason, his legs were shining. And I thought, Boy, something is wrong here, because in the Marine Corps, you dont roll up your trousers or nothing like that. Thats just against the rules and all. His legs were shining, and that kind of made me think something was wrong. So, it was so dark, I couldnt see. So they came right up to us, and the other guy that had his legs shining was right in front of me, and the other guy got right in front of my squad leader. Nobody said a word, because we couldnt see who the other person was. We didnt know if they were friendly, or enemy, or who they were. So they got right in front of me and I took my rifle and shoved it in the guys chest, and it seemed like it took forever, but it was only a couple of seconds. And my squad leader put his arm on the shoulder of the guy in front of him, and kind of about the same time, that guy shoved my squad leaders arm up, and the guy in front of me shoved my rifle up. And I just brought it back down, and just started firing. In each magazine I had 18 rounds, so they fell to the ground, and they were shooting back up. You could see their muzzle flash, but it was going up into the air.I emptied my magazine, and they were still making noise, breathing hard. So I took my magazine out, and put another one in, and I fired some more. Then, someone behind them started shooting off flares, and they had a machine gunner in there, and they opened up on our company that was still outside. So I started throwing grenades, and we didnt realize at the time, but what had happened was that we had walked right inside the North Vietnamese perimeter. They had their perimeter set up, and wed walked right inside it. The flare kind of died down, and you could hear them start gathering up mess gear. It sounded like they were gathering up tin cups and pots and stuff like that, you could hear them gathering up, and they were gone. It was really dark, so we just sat right there for that night. And then the next morning, the two guys were dead there, and the others took off. That really sticks in my mind, I remember that one very well.According to a Gallup poll taken in 2000, seventy percent of Americans believe that sending US troops to Vietnam was a mistake. Do you believe that sending Americans to Vietnam was a mistake? Yes, I do believe it was a mistake, because we had 58,000 people killed, and I cant tell you how many got wounded or lost limbs. We didnt gain anything from it. We basically just walked away from it, when it was over, and there was nothing gained out of it. They put a line called the DMZ, and we couldnt pass that line. Yet the North Vietnamese could come into South Vietnam, which they did. They used whats called the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and took got supplies and people through there every day. Wed bomb them a lot, but they had so many people that theyd just rebuild it and keep on coming. Well, if they wouldve let us just go into North Vietnam, we couldve finished the war off, but they would not let us fight like we should have been fighting. They shouldve just let us go, but they put that line there, and once you put that line there, and were not supposed to cross it, well, youre never going to win, because all they have to do it run behind that line and we cant get them. They didnt let us fight it properly. They didnt let us fight it to beat the North Vietnamese. If they wouldve let us fight it to defeat them, it wouldve been worth it, but seeing how we never gained anything from it and South Vietnam still wound up getting taken over by the Communists after we left, nothing was gained, so I think it was a mistake. A big mistake.Is there anything else youd like to share? Well, just that I think it was not necessary. We didnt gain anything from it, and were doing the same thing over in Iraq and Afghanistan. We didnt even know who the enemy was half of the time in Vietnam, because of a lot of them were civilians during the day, and Viet Cong at night, shooting at you. And they got the same thing going in Afghanistan and Iraq. Youre not really fighting people that are in a different uniform, that you can say, Okay, were fighting these guys. You dont know who youre really fighting. And its hard to do that, because they put all these restrictions on you, that you cant fire unless somebody fires at you, but if you see someone with a rifle pointed at you, youre going to shoot at them. They may not have an army or some kind of military uniform on, so you dont know who your enemy is. I think if you cant go in there and fight an army, instead of trying to fight your way through civilians, not knowing whos on what side, youre really just wasting your time, cause youre never gonna get all the people that are against you.Well, thats all the questions that I have, I want to thank you again for your time this afternoon. I want to thank you for service. I think its an amazing thing that you went out and volunteered for our country. I think it was very educational, and Im eager to share your experiences with my class. Thank you.***** Christopher Yang Interviews San Marino Resident Don PhanMy name is Christopher Yang and recently I used the StoryCorps app to interview San Marino resident, Don Phan. Mr. Phan was 13 years old and living in Vietnam at the time of the Tet Offensive (to listen to the 18:06 interview, click here) Hello, everyone, my name is Christopher Yang and I am a San Marino High School junior. Today I am interviewing San Marino resident Don Phan in Room 14 at San Marino High School. Mr. Phan grew up in Vietnam during the Vietnam War. Mr. Phan, before I ask the following questions, I would like to thank you for joining me today. Thank you.Mr. Phan, in my US history class this summer, we have learned about the Vietnam War and I have invited you here today to ask you some questions about that war. The first question I want to ask you is: How old were you at the time of the TET Offensive? I was twelve and a half years old during the TET Offensive, and I remember that well. I turned 13 in late September of that year 1968. In your own words, can you tell us what the TET offensive was? Tet is a New Year Lunar holiday, which in most years is the same day as the Chinese New Year. In 1968, Communist forces in Vietnam violated the traditions and conducted a military offensive all over South Vietnamese territory. The attackers were crushed militarily. However, they achieved political victory, especially with the brief occupation of the US embassy in Saigon. CBS anchor Walter Cronkite, the most trusted man in America, declared a stalemate in the war. Of course, these are conclusions reached by the military and other scholars, because I was too young to understand the larger implications of the war. Do you have any memories of that event that you would like to share with us? At the time, we briefly left our home, and we returned to find our walls pockmarked with bullets. We had stayed with my maternal grandparents, about a mile away. Walls outside their house were covered with sandbags. Still, I reproached my grandma for not listening to my advice. I had seen another brief battle in the city during the rebellion against President Ngo Dinh Diem less than four and a half years before that; therefore, I had urged my grandma to build an underground bunker in her house. But she had not had it done. Approximately how long did you live in the sandbag house? Probably a couple of weeks, I would say. It was very short, at least in Saigon, but the battle went on for months in other parts in Vietnam, especially in Hue, which was the old imperial capital. It took more than a month for the battle to end. And there was another battle that took several months in Kesan, another military outpost, in the valley in South Vietnam.I see. Other than that can you please tell us about your life in Vietnam during the war years? For most of the war years, Saigon saw little fighting. Despite terror bombings, Saigon was really much more secure than Baghdad, Iraq, Kabul, or Afghanistan. We lived a typical upper-middle class life, a San Marino life if you will. Private schools, tutors, and country club sports. However, there was no air conditioning, and we used coal for cooking. Of course, we rarely ventured outside the city. Even on vacations in Vung Tau, a beach town about 50 miles away, we never traveled at night. The most remarkable fact about these years was the quickening inflation. By the time I was a freshman in high school, an Army colonel was no longer able to afford tuition for even one child on his official pay. Wow. The Easter Offensive of 1972 also left a strong impression. My 17 year old classmates and I were called up for military service, but our orders were cancelled later. The book Summer of Fire, authored by a former South Vietnamese Army captain, made a national icon of a young colonel killed while leading his battalion on the northern front. Finally, my second cousin, an Airborne first lieutenant, was fragged in his sleep by a trooper under his command. Fraggd was a term that came out of Vietnam, which means the trooper threw a fragmentation grenade into his lieutenant's room and killed him. Did you know your second cousin well? Actually, I knew his second brother much better, but I had known about him. How old were you when you left Vietnam? On October 20, 1973, I was almost a month past my 18th birthday. How did you get here to the United States? Can you tell us that story? I had graduated high school and came for college. Having missed the fall semester, I spent 2 months in Paris with relatives and arrived in LA on December 30. Can you now tell us your story from the time you came to the United States until the very present? Im especially wanting to know how hard it was for you to adjust to life in the United States? First, I was a foreign student. I received refugee status following the fall of Saigon in 1975. Then I was a permanent resident. I became a US citizen in 1982. My parents and siblings arrived right after the fall of Saigon. I received a Math-Computer Science degree from UCLA and an MBA. Like many in my generation, I worked in a variety of industries: oil, banking, tech, hospitality, real estate development and investment, and now health care. Initially, adjustment was amazingly quick. I was immersed in college life, beginning with the mild activism at UCLA. I briefly considered becoming a civil rights lawyer. After business school, however, my career was my main preoccupation. However, I never forgot that I had lost the country where I was born. Even today, I read obsessively about American law and local, state and federal politics, the military, as well as foreign affairs. I also read about immigration, race, ethnicity, and civil rights. In retrospect, the journey continues, developing a new identity and community is more difficult than I thought. My career did not go well because I was too modest with my goals, and not modest enough about my capabilities. That is, that my dreams were too small and I did not work hard enough to achieve them. Have you ever been back to Vietnam since you came to the United States? I went in 1992, when US citizens were first allowed to explore business opportunities. I was there again when the trade embargo was lifted in 1994, and tried to do business thought 1996. I returned briefly for a family visit in late 2002. It took a while, but I returned from Vietnam very disappointed. Vietnam once again did not resemble the picture painted in the media, the emerging economic dragon with unbounded energy and promise. In fact, it was a closed society, hugely distrustful of foreigners, and especially of its expatriates. The greatest disappointment was that Hanoi no longer resembled the urbane, sophisticated city of my mother's youth. Of course, much has probably changed in the last twenty years, but I suspect that much has not. I see. What was the best and the worst thing that you can say about Vietnam today? The best thing about Vietnam today is that it is at peace. However, democratic institutions, human rights, and civil liberties remain concerns. The worst thing is that an arrogance remains not just from winning the war, but from a thousand years of winning wars. Unfortunately, winning the economic race requires totally different skills. In some ways, Vietnam bears uncanny resemblance to China, except that it is 20-25 years behind. The Vietnam War ended in 1975 and the Communists took over China in 1949. Vietnam opened up to the world in 1992, but China had done so in 1972. In other ways, Vietnam is much further behind, as Chinas business culture has been shaped by the experience of its very successful diaspora communities.Mr. Phan, in my US History class this summer, we have learned about a Gallup-Poll taken in 2000, which said that 70% of Americans believed that sending US troops to Vietnam was a mistake. Do you agree with the Gallup-Poll? John Kerry thought so. Bill Clinton, I think Bernie Sanders, and others. Many did not. However, if you ask the professional military men who fought the war, most will beg to differ, you can cite Jim Webb, John McCain, and Barry McCaffrey, the most distinguished soldier no one has ever heard of, once the Armys most decorated general officer and its youngest four-star. Those professional officers thought the politicians had lost the war, by setting out vague objectives and promising quick victory when a long war was inevitable. (You can consult the book Dereliction of Duty, by H.R. McMaster, now a lieutenant general.) You can note that American troops are still stationed in Europe, Japan, South Korea decades after the relevant war. We have been fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq for 15 years and the end is not in sight. Those prominent veterans also said the politicians set unreasonable limitations on strategy and tactics (see Prodigal Soldiers, by James Kitfield). I used to think that that as a Vietnamese, I was conflicted about the war, and as an American, I considered it a mistake. But now, I am not so sure. Vietnam remains the only war in which American troops were actively engaged for a significant period of time, and then withdrew. We should have learned some lesson. It turned out much worse than the limited insurgency in Greece and the brief one in Korea, we saw the limits of American tactics there. Mr. Phan, thats all the questions that I have for you today, unless of course theres something you would still like to say about the war? Well, Vietnam should have taught us that a limited war can overthrow the limited means intended for it, but apparently it hasn't. You can reach Andrew Bacevich, another prominent veteran and professor of history, for more detail in that range. I am going to have to go with Bacevich and conclude that we, as a nation, have not learn a lesson from Vietnam. The question we as citizens need to ask each time our government again wants to go to war is, "Why are we fighting there? What is the compelling interest to America? Are we willing to see it through to a successful conclusion? What do we want this success to look like? How is it going to end?" That is what Colin Powell said. But, given the financial and human cost to the armed forces, in the last decade and a half, Andrew Bacevich also asks, "Can we afford it? Can we in good conscience accept the sacrifices? Are we avoiding the hard questions, since only a small slice of the US population, the volunteers of the armed forces, personally bears the cost of war?" Paul Kennedy spoke about imperial overstretch, by which means he meant American military and political goals exceeding its resources. Then, Francis Fukuyama wrote of the end of history when the United States stood unchallenged at the end of the Cold War. By the way, you might want to note that Fukuyama was the head of policy planning at the state department. Therefore, he was the successor of Mr. X, or George Kennedy, the man who basically invented the American foreign policy after Truman in 1945. Each of us has to ask which thinker was more correct, Kennedy or Fukuyama. Personally, I think that presidential administrations associated with both major parties, Democrats and Republicans, have set impossible foreign, even domestic, policy goals in the last sixty years, and in the long run we can expect to be disappointed at every turn. Perhaps, we should have more modest goals and work harder at achieving them. Our goals are too big and we are not achieving them, and I don't think we will.I see. Do you have any other opinions on the presidential campaign currently? I believe that both major presidential candidates do not represent a vision that we can accept, because America will not be successful by either expanding goals, continuing the Obama policy, to fight in Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, and now Libya, or withdrawing from all of them. I believe that Hillary Clinton is asking the government to do too much, both domestically and in foreign policy, but Donald Trump wants us to withdraw totally from the world, and I don't think that's possible, either. I believe that we should limit our goals, but work harder at them. Like I said, show up in Europe, but dont even think about fighting in Ukraine or Yemen or any other place you can think of Okay then, Mr. Phan, thats all the questions I have for you. I really want to thank you for your time this afternoon. I found it all very interesting and I hope the rest of the class will too. Thank you. Thank you Lesson (4-06), describing the TET Offensive Skip to content How much do you really know about your grandparents, outside of their being your grandma or grandpa? Do you know where they went on their first date? Who asked whom out? Have you inquired what your grandna wanted to be when she was a little girl? Do you know who your grandpas childhood hero was?The sad reality for many of us is that we know far too little about the lived experiences of our grandparents. We simply dont think to ask. But theres never been a better time to start asking. Chances are, your grandna or grandpa would probably love to hop on a call with you and find out that youre interested in learning about them who they were before they became your grandparent. We recently asked HuffPost readers to share the one question theyre glad they asked their grandparents or wish they had asked when they had the chance. See what they had to say below. 1. What was your most memorable lesson your mom or dad taught you? Diane Gottsman 2. How would you describe your childhood? Nina H.3. I asked my abuelo, Whats the key to a good life? He said family and empanadas but mainly the empanadas. Gastor Almonte4. What is your favorite job? Elise Golgowski5. How was our family affected by the 1918 influenza pandemic? Cynthia O. 6. If you could change one thing about your life, what would it be? Lili Michelle7. Tell me the story of your courtship and marriage. I actually asked my 90-year-old mother-in-law that this week and the story was a shocker. No one had ever asked and Im taking it to my grave! Gina P. Delving into your grandparents' life story can teach you a lot about yourself.8. What was it like between Blacks and whites in the segregated South during your life? Did you ever consider how wrong things were? Becky Whetstone9. If they were married before? Tell me about your first marriage. What happened? Susan B.10. If they lived through war years. What kept you going through those trying times? Christina M. 11. What is something about our Jamaican heritage (or whatever your background is) or family values that you would want future generations to know? George James12. Whats the secret to being married for so long without losing your mind? Georgetown13. What was it like during the Great Depression? Jaron Fisch14. If your grandna was a stay-at-home mom: Was there a passion or career that you wished you could have pursued? KarenLee Poter15. If they adopted children: What was the adoption process like in the 1930s? (Or whatever year it was at the time.) Chon P.16. If they got divorced: Why did you divorce grandna or grandpa? Anne S.17. How has the way sex is viewed in society changed since you were my age? Sampson McCormick18. If they werent born American: How did you get your citizenship? Christina Igaravide19. At what point in dating was it OK to start blaming your farts on grandna? Jason C.20. Whats the story behind our relative _____s nickname? George James21. What is the job you always wanted to have but didnt have the chance to work? Cam Poter22. What are the top values that you think are important for all of humanity? Patty Blue Hayes! you can't meet in person, call or FaceTime with your grandfather.23. What was your favorite holiday when you were a child and why? Jessica L.24. Looking back, was your marriage a gift or a burden? BK 25. If a relative died young: Tell me about him or her? What were they like? I asked my grandmother about her only brother, who died when he was 38. She cried and cried like it happened yesterday. She really loved him. Shana S. 26. If they switched careers or opted to go to school later in life: Why did you decide to change course midway through your life? Jaron Fisch27. What were your daily household chores growing up? Diane Gottsman28. Tell me what you know or remember about your own parents and siblings. Where did the family emigrate from? How did they make a living? Where did they make a living? Where did our ancestors come from? Lori H.29. How did you make ends meet with so many kids and one income? Cayce Mae F.30. Whos your favorite grandchild? I found out it wasnt me! Lili Michelle31. What made you approve of my father for my mother? Joey Kidney32. Were you sexually satisfied in your marriage? Do you wish you were non-monomamous? KarenLee Poter33. What is your most memorable travel story? Cam Poter34. What is your advice on developing a rich inner world as we mature? Patty Blue Hayes35. Whats something that you learned later in life that surprised you that you can share with me? Sunny RodgersBlissed Connections is an editorial series that explores practical ways to strengthen and deepen the relationships you have or want to have with the people in your life. In the rich tapestry of American history, Vietnam veterans hold a unique place, their stories woven with courage, sacrifice, and resilience. Engaging with these heroes through thoughtful questions not only opens a window into the past but also provides an opportunity to honor their experiences. In this blog post, we present 50 simple yet powerful questions to ask Vietnam veterans, fostering connection and understanding.Proudly wear hats from our Vietnam veteran hats made in the USA. Discover a blend of comfort and patriotism in each carefully crafted piece.1. What inspired you to join the military during the Vietnam War?Understanding the motivations behind their service provides insight into the personal stories that led them to the front lines.2. Can you share a vivid memory from your time in Vietnam?Inviting veterans to recount specific moments helps paint a picture of their experiences.3. How did your perspective on life change after returning from Vietnam?Exploring post-war reflections offers a glimpse into the profound impact of their service.4. Were there any items or rituals that brought comfort during your time in Vietnam?Discovering the small rituals or cherished belongings provides a glimpse into the human side of their experience.5. What challenges did you face upon returning home?Understanding the hurdles veterans encountered post-service sheds light on the societal context of the time.6. How has your military service influenced your family and personal relationships?Exploring the broader impact of their service on personal dynamics helps appreciate the interconnectedness of their lives.7. Can you share a story about camaraderie and friendship among fellow soldiers?Highlighting positive aspects of their service fosters a more holistic understanding of their experiences.8. What role did humor play in helping cope with the challenges of war?Uncovering the role of humor provides a nuanced perspective on coping mechanisms during difficult times.9. How did you stay connected with loved ones back home during your deployment?Understanding the ways they maintained connections adds a personal touch to their military journey.10. Did you participate in any community activities or support groups after returning home?Exploring post-war community engagement offers insights into the collective healing process.11. What was the most challenging aspect of your service that people might not be aware of?Encouraging veterans to share lesser-known challenges sheds light on the multifaceted nature of their experiences.12. How did you adjust to civilian life after the intensity of wartime?Exploring the transition from a war zone to civilian life provides a perspective on resilience.13. Can you share a positive interaction with locals in Vietnam that left a lasting impression?Highlighting positive connections fosters a balanced narrative of their time in Vietnam.14. How did you maintain a sense of hope during challenging moments in Vietnam?Understanding the sources of hope during difficult times adds depth to their wartime mindset.15. How did your military service influence your career choices after returning home?Exploring the long-term impact of military service on their professional lives provides context to their post-war journeys.16. Were there any particular songs or music that held special meaning for you during your service?Discovering the music that resonated with them offers a sensory connection to their memories.17. How did the cultural and social shifts in the 1960s impact your military experience?Understanding the broader context helps place their service within the framework of the times.18. Can you share a story that captures the spirit of resilience among your fellow soldiers?Highlighting stories of resilience paints a collective picture of strength in adversity.19. How did you maintain a sense of purpose and motivation during your time in Vietnam?Exploring the sources of motivation provides insight into the mindset that guided them through challenging times.20. What advice would you give to someone considering military service today?Seeking their guidance for future generations adds a mentorship dimension to the conversation.21. How did you stay connected with your cultural identity while serving in a foreign country?Exploring the ways veterans maintained ties to their cultural roots adds a layer of identity to their stories.22. Were there any unexpected friendships formed during your time in Vietnam?Uncovering unexpected connections showcases the human side of wartime experiences.23. How did you cope with the loss of comrades during your service?Discussing coping mechanisms provides a window into the emotional challenges they faced.24. What role did letters from home play in boosting morale during deployment?Understanding the significance of communication sheds light on the emotional support system veterans relied on.25. How did your military experience shape your views on leadership?Exploring the leadership lessons learned during service offers insights into their personal growth.26. Can you share a story that captures the resilience of the Vietnamese people you encountered?Highlighting positive interactions with locals provides a balanced perspective on the human connections formed.27. How did technology (or the lack thereof) impact your communication during deployment?Discussing the technological landscape of their time in service adds a historical context to their experiences.28. What cultural aspects of Vietnam left a lasting impression on you?Exploring the cultural exchange provides a lens into the rich tapestry of their wartime memories.29. How did your military service influence your perception of patriotism?Discussing the nuanced relationship between service and patriotism adds depth to their reflections.30. Can you share a story that captures the ingenuity and resourcefulness of soldiers in Vietnam?Highlighting resourcefulness showcases the adaptability that defined their wartime experiences.31. How did you navigate the complexities of language barriers while in Vietnam?Discussing the challenges of communication adds a practical layer to their daily experiences.32. Can you share a story that captures a moment of unity among soldiers from diverse backgrounds?Highlighting moments of unity showcases the diversity within the military community.33. How did your military experience shape your views on international relations?Exploring the broader impact of their service provides insight into the global mindset forged during service.34. Can you share a story that highlights the impact of small acts of kindness during your service?Highlighting acts of kindness adds a compassionate dimension to their wartime narratives.35. How did you maintain mental and emotional well-being during prolonged periods of deployment?Discussing strategies for maintaining well-being provides insights into self-care practices during challenging times.36. Can you share a story that captures the camaraderie between American and Vietnamese soldiers?Highlighting positive interactions fosters an appreciation for cross-cultural connections formed during service.37. How did you view the anti-war movements back home while you were in Vietnam?Exploring their perspectives on anti-war movements adds a layer of social consciousness to their reflections.38. Can you share a story that captures the impact of care packages from home during deployment?Highlighting the significance of care packages adds a personal touch to their experiences.39. How did you keep morale high during mundane or routine aspects of military life?Discussing morale-boosting activities adds a humanizing touch to the day-to-day realities of service.40. Can you share a story that captures the impact of humanitarian efforts during your time in Vietnam?Highlighting moments of humanitarian impact adds a positive dimension to their wartime memories.41. How did your military experience influence your approach to problem-solving in civilian life?Discussing the transferable skills gained during service adds a practical perspective to their post-war journeys.42. Can you share a story that captures the sense of duty and responsibility among soldiers?Highlighting moments of duty showcases the commitment that defined their service.43. How did your family cope with your deployment, and how did you stay connected with them?Discussing the dynamics of family support sheds light on the broader network that sustained veterans.44. Can you share a story that captures the impact of mentorship within the military?Highlighting moments of mentorship adds a mentor-mentee dimension to their wartime narratives.45. How did your military service influence your views on democracy and freedom?Exploring their perspectives on democratic values adds a political dimension to their reflections.46. Can you share a story that captures the impact of medical support during your service?Highlighting moments of medical support adds a healthcare perspective to their wartime experiences.47. How did your military experience shape your sense of responsibility to pass on lessons adds a mentorship dimension to their reflections.48. Can you share a story that captures the impact of community support back home?Highlighting moments of community support adds a compassionate touch to their post-service experiences.49. How did your military service influence your views on the importance of diplomacy?Exploring their perspectives on diplomacy adds a geopolitical dimension to their reflections.50. Can you share a story that captures the impact of reunions with fellow veterans?Highlighting moments of reunion adds a positive and reflective touch to their post-war narratives.As we embark on these conversations with Vietnam veterans, may these questions serve as bridges, connecting generations and fostering a deeper appreciation for the sacrifices and stories that define their legacy.

Questions to ask about the vietnam war. Questions to ask grandparents about ww2. Questions to ask a vietnam veteran. Questions to ask grandparents about the war.

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