

Hello! My name is Fred Doebler.



My Military Experience

I was born in Chicago, IL. but spent most of my formative years growing up in central Wisconsin. I graduated from Mosinee High School in 1963 and then headed for college in Milwaukee. After three years, (1966) I received a cordial invitation from my Uncle Sam that I should report to the military induction center in Milwaukee for an initial physical and to complete any necessary paperwork, which might follow me soon thereafter.

On my way home from Milwaukee, I thought long and hard on just what may lie ahead. So I went up and visited the Air Force Recruiter in Wausau to see what they might have to offer. He introduced me to the Delayed Enlistment Program, which is to say, you're going in, but you get to decide when. So I made my decision that I would leave for the service on January 16th, 1967. The day after the Packers beat the Chiefs in the first Super Bowl.

On 1-16-67, I reported to my assigned Milwaukee address for all the preliminary paperwork, another physical and the oath swearing us into military service. Sometime in the after noon, we boarded a bus for Mitchell Field and our trip to Lackland AFB in San Antonio, TX. Once there, we boarded another bus for the ride out to the base and the first stop was the chow hall. From there we were taken to our assigned barrack, which would be our new home for the next six weeks. After we were assigned our quarters, we finally got to bed about 1 AM. Suffice it to say, it was a short night.

When Basic was over, most of the fella's had their orders and knew where and what Training Base they were headed. Some of us were transferred to the other side of the base to a transit holding area until further notice. I found that I was transferred over there, because it seems that the government was not finished doing a full background check on me back home. What I was being trained for, I would need a Top-Secret clearance. After a little more than two weeks, I finally received my orders for Keesler AFB in Biloxi, MS. After a week or two of processing in and daily policing duties, I received notice that I

would be starting my Technical training in a little over two weeks. I would be trained as a Morse Intercept Operator.

Being a Morse Intercept Operator, you learned to take Morse Code with a Typewriter. Five letters were the equivalent of one word. In the end, you had to be able to convert (16) words a minute with accuracy. Learning the dots and dashes of all the letters, numbers and symbols could be somewhat of a challenge. For those of us that didn't quite make it to (16), our travel agent arranged for us to transfer to Goodfellow ABF out in San Angelo, TX. Goodfellow was known as the Country Club of the Air Force.

We were there to train as Non-Morse Intercept operators. That school also lasted 12 weeks. There were 10 airmen to a class and upon graduation, we were assigned our travel itinerary, which didn't necessarily co-inside with our requests as to where we would like to be stationed. Of course we all wanted either England or Germany. Of our specialized training, there were only ten locations around the world where we could possibly go. Of the 10 of us in our class, (8) of us got Karamursel, Turkey and the other (2) Misawa, Japan. Each of these would be 18 month assignment.

We left Goodfellow on October 23rd for our first leave home. Later, three of us from the Midwest left Chicago for Istanbul, Turkey on Thanksgiving Day. The other five left from New York. Where we were going and what we would be doing, we were required to fly in civilian attire. After arriving at Istanbul, we recovered our luggage and boarded an Air Force bus for our trip to Karamursel AFB. We were escorted by two Turkish soldiers with rifles for our trip to the base. Not used to seeing that, it kind of made one feel a little uneasy. Why would they need those rifles? We finally arrived at our base about 1 AM and then checked in.

After a day or so, we reported to work. In the line of work that we all did at any of our Security Communication locations, we worked four swing shifts (3 to 11), then 24 hours off, four mid shifts (11 to 7), 24 hours off and then 4 days (7 to 3) and then 96 hours off, before starting over. Karamursel was not considered a remote location, even though it was located out in the middle of nowhere, right on the shores of the Sea of Marmara. In our spare time, we played a lot of softball, we had a movie theatre, a gym, a bowling alley, and we played cards and spent time at the Airmen's club. The food at the base was excellent.

Then in May of 1967, I left Karamursel for home with my next permanent party assignment in Misawa, Japan. I was home for about six weeks and then left right after the 4th of July for Travis, AFB near San Francisco. One should note that during this particular time, Vietnam was going hot and heavy. During this time, the government had contracts with most all of the larger domestic airlines for transporting military personnel to the Far East. Vietnam, Japan, The Philippines, Okinawa or wherever. Travis was the primary departure point from the U.S. with flights leaving about every half hour. Of course when I arrived at the San Francisco airport, I experienced the heckling of hippies' bad mouthing those of us G.I.'s heading for our bus ride out to the base.

Several days later. my flight was finally called and we left Travis for Honolulu about 4 PM. We arrived there about 9 PM and then departed Honolulu about midnight. I wasn't privy to

our flight plan, but some three or so hours later, I could sense that our plane seemed to be losing altitude. I was a bit concerned, because I'm not a very good swimmer. All of a sudden, I looked out the window and saw the landing lights shining on the white sands of Wake Island. To say the least, I was much relieved. Again, we stopped for fuel and a can of soda and back in the air for Okinawa.

Finally, an hour or so later, we again took off and headed for Tachikawa Air Force Base located just outside of Tokyo. After we cleared customs, we were shuttled over to the transit quarters where we could shower get a hot meal and some sleep. Misawa is located on the upper east shoreline of the Honshu Island. There are three primary islands of Japan. Honshu being the largest and located in the middle. Misawa is a large airbase where we also had fighter aircraft domiciled. (F-4's and C-130's at the time). Our 6921st Security Group was stationed up on the hill. It was literally up on a hill about five miles from the Main base

In both locations, Turkey and Japan, our job was to collect data on page print along with two different tape systems of communication signals of foreign adversaries for our government's security purposes. This information was then shipped back to Washington every day for analysis and interpretation. Today, just about all those Security bases no longer exist. All that data today is captured via satellite and available for immediate analysis.

I was at Misawa for a total of 13 months, at which time I was granted an early out because of the health of my mother. I had no other siblings. I flew out of Yokota Airbase to Mc Cord AFB in Seattle-Tacoma for my military discharge on Aug. 22nd on 1970. I arrived back in my hometown on August 23rd.

After being in the service, I will never regret that experience. It made me a better and more respectful person. It taught me that I needed to buckle down and finish my schooling. I went back to school in June of 1971 and graduated in June of 1972 with my degree in Traffic and Transportation Management from Spencerian College, which today is known as Concordia College in Mequon.

After graduation I spent 42 years in the transportation field. The last 34 as the Transportation Manager at the Carnes Company in Verona. I retired in 2010 and am enjoying time with my wife Diane and playing a little golf in the summer.