

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

ABSTRACT

INTERVIEWEE NAME: Barney Gorey

COLLECTION: 4700.0944

IDENTIFICATION: Vietnam veteran

INTERVIEWER: Bailey Vinson

SERIES: Americans in Vietnam

INTERVIEW DATES: 4/26/77

FOCUS DATES: Oct. 13, 1970-Aug. 15, 1974; July 1972-July 1973

ABSTRACT:

Tape 1380

Childhood and education in New Orleans; joined Air Force, boot camp in San Antonio; enlisted because he didn't want to go to college, didn't want to work; AZR combat training course; missile base training in Cheyenne, WY; sent to Thailand in summer; served at base in Nakhon Phanom in Golden Triangle; worked as security police; motion detection system along Ho Chi Minh Trail; types of aircraft involved; tower duty; canine patrols; communication control center; avoiding getting shot; working with Thai soldiers in tanks; description of weaponry; staying in bungalows off-base; housing for Thai army looked like cardboard; learned Thai, enjoyed Thai culture; renting motorcycles to see countryside; talking to locals about all subjects; Thais weren't ready for democracy; ARVN troops; Communist-backed Laotian troops called Pathet Lao; little contact with Vietnamese; prostitution; renting a bungalow with a friend; had two girlfriends and five other girls living in their bungalow; girls were combination housekeepers/prostitutes; Vietnamese girls wanted American husbands; availability and potency of Thai stick marijuana; bribing Thai policemen; Gorey used drugs the whole time he was there to keep his sanity; fragmentation grenades; smoked marijuana almost every day he was there; heroin was incredibly cheap; could only count on people on drugs because they didn't care and weren't afraid; escaping through alcohol and marijuana; writing letters, exercising and listening to music to combat boredom; Red Cross girls; inability of commanding officers to control the men; laughing at an officer who gave them a pep talk; self-segregation of black and white soldiers; total failure of war effort; learned discipline there; learned to kill, cheat, lie and steal.

TAPES: 1 (T1380)

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 44 minutes

PAGES TRANSCRIPT: 22 pages

RESTRICTIONS: None