

Mark Ryan Black Collection

AFC 2001/001/12749

Guides to the Collections in the Veterans History Project



**Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2023**

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/vhp.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2022655451>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/eadvhp.vh023001>

Prepared by Veterans History Project staff

Finding aid encoded by Nathan Cross, June 2023

Collection Summary

Title: Mark Ryan Black collection, 1966-2011 : Veterans History Project (U.S.)

Inclusive Dates: 1966-2011

Bulk Dates: 1966-1980

Call No.: AFC 2001/001/12749

Creator: Black, Mark Ryan

Extent (sound recordings): 26 sound recordings.

Extent (video recordings): 2 video recordings.

Extent (photographs): 352 photographs.

Extent (books): 1 book.

Extent (scrapbooks): 1 scrapbook.

Language: Collection material in English.

Location: Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2022655451>

Summary: Collection includes audio correspondence, home movie footage, a book, a scrapbook, and digital copies of photographs documenting Black's service as an infantryman in the United States Marine Corps during the Vietnam War.

Acquisition

Accessioned, 2004-2011.

Copyright Status

Duplication of collection materials may be governed by copyright and other restrictions.

Access and Restrictions

Collection is open for research; access restrictions apply. To request materials, please contact the Veterans History Project at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/vhp.contact>

Preferred Citation

Mark Ryan Black Collection (AFC/2001/001/12749), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress

Biographical Note

Mark Ryan Black was born on April 10, 1945 in Sweetser, Indiana, to Paul L. Black and Carol Baldwin Black. In 1963, he graduated from Oak Hill High School in Grant County, Indiana, where he was an All-State quarterback on the football team. After high school, Black trained as a barber and worked in his father's barbershop in Sweetser.

Black enlisted in the United States Marine Corps on April 29, 1966, and completed recruit training in San Diego. He completed Basic Infantry Training at Camp Pendleton in August 1966 and was assigned to Company D, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines. In November and December 1966 Black's unit conducted training in Okinawa and the Philippines. In January 1967 he participated in Operation Deckhouse V in the Mekong Delta. With 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, Black was later based at Phu Bai and Dong Ha, and took part in Operation Chinook II, Operation Prairie II, Operation Prairie III, and Operation Big Horn II.

In May 1967, Black volunteered to serve in the Combined Action Program (CAP), wherein he served with the Papa 3 unit based near the village of Cam Hieu in Quang Tri Province. During a nighttime attack on his unit's compound on August 14, 1967, Black was killed in action by enemy fire.

Scope and Content

Collection includes audio correspondence, home movie footage, a book, a scrapbook, and digital copies of photographs. The collection consists of audio correspondence recorded by Black during his time in Vietnam in 1966-1967, as well as home movies produced by his family that include images of Black's letters and photographs. Also found in the collection are digital copies of photographs taken by Black during his time in Vietnam as well as from his civilian life before the war, and a scrapbook and book produced by his family that include photocopies of his letters and photographs as well as photocopies of correspondence and other materials related to his death in Vietnam and subsequent memorialization in his hometown of Sweetser, Indiana. Also included are reference copies of audio correspondence and home movie footage.

Arrangement

Collection is arranged in three series: manuscripts, recordings, and computer files. Recordings are arranged by type, and computer files are arranged by storage medium and type.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Black, Carol Elizabeth, 1918-2006.
Black, Mark Ryan, 1945-1967, creator.
Black, Mark Ryan, 1945-1967--Correspondence.
Black, Mark Ryan, 1945-1967--Photographs.
Lugar, Richard

Organizations

American Folklife Center
United States. Marine Corps--Military life.
United States. Marine Corps.
United States. Marine Corps. Combined Action Program.
United States. Marine Corps. Marine Regiment, 9th.
Veterans History Project (U.S.)

Subjects

Basic training (Military education)
Military casualties.
Shooters of firearms.
Vietnam War, 1961-1975--Personal narratives, American.
Vietnam War, 1961-1975--Veterans--Indiana.

Places

Okinawa Island (Japan)
Philippines
San Diego (Calif.)
Vietnam

Form/Genre

Books.
Correspondence.
Manuscripts.
Photographs.
Scrapbooks.
Sound recordings.

Video recordings.

Description of Series

Container

Series

Series I: Manuscripts

Series II: Recordings

Series III: Computer Files

Container List

Container	Contents
Series I: Manuscripts	
BOX-FOLDER MSS-595/1	Scrapbook, 1987 Digital content available MS01: Scrapbook compiling copies of the following materials: letters written by veteran to his family at home; transcripts of written letters; transcripts of audio letters that veteran sent to his family at home; news clippings; military telegrams informing family that veteran was killed in action; letters of sympathy from the military, and from veteran's family and friends; photographs of veteran in Vietnam; letters from friends describing how veteran was killed.
BOX-FOLDER MSS-1642/1	Book, 2008 Digital content available MS02: Book titled "Too Young to Die: One Man's Personal Account of Vietnam, Every Man's Quest for Contribution." Compilation of veteran's 93 letters, transcripts of 26 audio letters, and photographs sent home to his family and compiled by them. 288 pages.
Series II: Recordings	
BOX CD/DVD-9	Audio Correspondence, December 10, 1966-August 10, 1967 Digital content available SR01: 26 audio letters recorded by veteran and sent home to his family during his military service in Vietnam (12/10/1966-8/10/1967). Topics covered include: training in the Philippines; training in Okinawa; serving as his unit's barber; Operation Deckhouse V; living conditions at Phu Bai; feelings of resentment towards rear-echelon support personnel; weather and terrain conditions in Vietnam; summaries of involvement in combat action; Viet Cong tactics; hardships faced in the field; negative opinions of South Vietnamese military personnel; care packages and mail received from home; unreliability of the M-16 rifle; volunteering and training for service in the Combined Action Program; future plans for building a house; casualties suffered among his friends and acquaintances; reflections on Vietnamese society; patrolling and ambush operations; relations with the South Vietnamese Provincial Forces; interactions with local population at Cam Hieu; reading the Bible and attending church services in Vietnam; descriptions of the other Marines in his unit; heavy casualties suffered by companies in 9th Marines; describes defenses and operations at the camp near Cam Hieu; frustration with team leader.
BOX VHS-169	Home movie footage Digital content available MV01: Video of a slide program featuring selections from veteran's tape-recorded letters and photos that he sent to his parents from Vietnam.
BOX CD/DVD-9	Slide Presentation, 2011 Digital content available MV03: Slide-show style presentation of veteran's photos with narration provided by his "audio letters" sent home to his family and music.
Series III: Computer Files	
BOX FD-17	Photographs Digital content available CF01: 10 electronic copies of photographs included within MS01 (scrapbook).

Series III: Computer Files

Container	Contents
BOX CD/DVD-9	Book, 2008 Digital content available CF02: Copy of MS02 (book) in PDF format.
BOX CD/DVD-9	Photographs, 1967-1980 Digital content available CF03: 342 of veteran's photographs in JPEG format with captions (1967-1980).