HAMPTON ROADS
NAVAL ★ MUSEUM
Local History. World Events.

SEALs in Vietnam

Rick Woolard joined the Navy in 1965 after he graduated from college. He joined the Navy so he could serve his country on his own terms instead of being drafted. Rick was an officer and served with the Navy's UDT (Underwater Demolition Team) community before becoming a member of SEAL Team 2. SEALs are the Navy's special forces, and "SEAL" stands for "Sea, Air, and Land Forces." As a member of SEAL Team 2, Rick deployed to Vietnam twice and operated in the region known as the Mekong Delta.

Watch Rick's oral history to learn about what made SEALs different from other units that were serving in Vietnam. The video is available on YouTube: **https://tinyurl.com/RickWoolard** or you can click directly on this QR code from your smartphone or tablet (using either a QR reader app or your phone's camera).

Questions to consider:

1. What is the importance of oral histories? Why do we spend the time to speak with veterans about their experiences?
2. Is this oral history a primary source or secondary source? Why?
3. What was different about each Navy SEAL and what was the same? Why do you think this was?
4. How was a SEAL's job different from other troops in Vietnam?
5. How were they different from soldiers today?
6. Would you want to be a Navy SEAL? Why or why not?

Watch Rick's oral history to hear about an encounter with the enemy. The video is available on YouTube: https://tinyurl.com/RickWoolard2 or you can click directly on this QR code from your smartphone or tablet (using either a QR reader app or your phone's camera).

Questions to consider (second video):

1. When were the SEALs going on patrol? Why might they prefer this time?
2. If you were in Rick's place, what kind of emotion might you feel when you saw the enemy? When you accidentally put the wrong setting on your weapon?
3. Would you have wanted to be part of that mission? Why or why not?
4. How do you think the SEALs felt the next day when they found out that the enemy had been the rocket squad they had been searching for?