



## Melvin C. DeWitt Papers (R1418)

**Collection Number:** R1418

**Collection Title:** Melvin C. DeWitt Papers

**Dates:** 1966-2009

**Creator:** DeWitt, Melvin C.

**Abstract:** These are the personal military papers and photographs of Melvin C. DeWitt who served in the United States Army from 1966 until his retirement in 1986. Also included are DeWitt's papers related to his employment with the Missouri Department of Corrections.

**Collection Size:** 0.5 cubic foot  
(18 folders)

**Language:** Collection materials are in English.

**Repository:** The State Historical Society of Missouri

**Restrictions on Access:** Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center – Rolla](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at [rolla@shsmo.org](mailto:rolla@shsmo.org). Collections may be viewed at any research center.

**Restrictions on Use:** The Donor has given, assigned, and transferred to the Society all copyrights, and associated rights the Donor may possess in the materials.

**Preferred Citation:** [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Melvin C. DeWitt Papers* (R1418); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Rolla [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Rolla].

**Donor Information:** The papers were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Petra DeWitt on January 19, 2018 (Accession No. RA1651).

**Processed by:** Processed by Kathleen Seale, April 12, 2018

### Historical Note:

Melvin C. DeWitt was born on February 20, 1943, to Melvin DeWitt and Sylvia Cole DeWitt in Gillespie, Illinois. The family moved to Texas County, Missouri, where DeWitt went to school in Raymondsville until 1956 when they moved to Gould, Colorado. DeWitt attempted to enlist in

the United States Army in April of 1966 but was initially turned away due to his age and the fact that he was a father to four children. However, in August of 1966 the draft board contacted him with the news that he had been drafted.

DeWitt completed basic training at Fort Lewis, Washington, in January 1967. He then served briefly in Vietnam before being medically evacuated after contracting malaria. While stateside, he reenlisted and attended Army Engineering School at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. He enlisted for a second tour of duty in Vietnam in 1969 and served with Company A, 4<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, Combat at Camp Enari in Plei Ku. DeWitt returned stateside in 1970 and was stationed at several bases around the United States. He was also stationed in Germany in 1973 and 1980. DeWitt retired from the Army on September 30, 1986.

After leaving the Army, DeWitt returned to Houston, Missouri, where he lived for the next twenty-six years. He worked for the Missouri Department of Corrections from 1998 to 2009 first at the Algoa Correctional Center in Jefferson City and then at the newly built correctional facility in Licking, Missouri. DeWitt passed away on September 30, 2017, after a long battle with Parkinson Disease.

### **Arrangement:**

The collection has been arranged into the following 4 series:

Military Records  
Photographs  
Department of Corrections Records  
Oral History

### **Scope and Content Note:**

#### **Military Records**

This series contains materials related to Melvin C. DeWitt's service in the United States Army from 1966 to 1986. These records include military orders, commendations, performance evaluations, and skills qualifications.

#### **Photographs**

This series consists of photographs pertaining to Melvin C. DeWitt's military service including his tours in Vietnam and Germany. The photographs in Vietnam include members of Company A, 4<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, their work in Plei Ku, Vietnam, and USO shows. Photographs in folder 14 include images of DeWitt while stationed in Germany, his promotion to Sergeant First Class, and class photographs from Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course (ANCOC) in Maryland.

#### **Department of Corrections**

This series contains the employment records for Melvin C. DeWitt while he worked for the Missouri Department of Corrections first in Jefferson City, Missouri, and then at the newly opened correctional facility in Licking, Missouri. The papers include certificates of achievement, performance evaluations, and letters of transfer.

## Oral History

This series contains two oral histories conducted by Melvin C. DeWitt's wife Petra DeWitt in August 2009. The interviews covered his military career and his employment with the Missouri Department of Corrections.

### Container List:

f. 1-10	Military Records
f. 1	Biography
f. 2	Records, 1966-1969
f. 3	Records, 1970
f. 4	Records, 1971-1972
f. 5	Records, 1973-1975
f. 6	Records, 1976-1979
f. 7	Records, 1980-1981
f. 8	Records, 1982-1984
f. 9	Records, 1985-1986
f. 10	Retirement, 1991-2008
f. 11-14	Photographs
f. 11	Military graduation, 1966
f. 12	Vietnam, 1967
f. 13	Vietnam, Alpha Company 4 <sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, Combat, 1969-1970
f. 14	Military, 1971-1986
f. 15-16	Department of Corrections records
f. 15	Employment records, 1998-2003
f. 16	Employment records, 2004-2009
f. 17-18	Oral History
f. 17	Military service, 2009
f. 18	Missouri Department of Corrections employment, 2009

### Index:

Index Term	Folder	Image
DeWitt, Melvin C., 1943-2017	1-10, 15-18	
DeWitt, Melvin C., 1943-2017	11-14	Yes
DeWitt, Petra, 1961-	1, 8, 14	
Fire Base Meredith (Vietnam)	1-2, 13	Yes
Fort Belvoir (Va.)	1-2, 6	
Fort Benning (Ga.)	1, 4-5	
Fort Carson (Co.)	3-4	
Fort Hood (Tex.)	9	
Fort Leonard Wood (Mo.)	10	
Fort Lewis (Wash.)	1-2, 6-7	
Missouri. Department of Corrections	15-16, 18	
Nuremberg (Germany)	1, 5, 14, 17	

<b>Index Term</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Image</b>
United States. Army	1-14, 17	
United States. Army. 2nd Battalion. 8th Infantry	1-2, 12	Yes
United States. Army. 42nd Heavy Equipment Maintenance Company	14	Yes
United States. Army. 4th Engineer Battalion, Company A	1	
United States. Army. 864th Engineer Battalion, Company C	6-7	
Vietnam	12-13	Yes
Vietnam War, 1961-1975	1-3, 12-13, 17	