

FOREWORD

THOUSANDS OF VIETNAM War veterans have produced memoirs about their war and post-war experiences. Now comes the one-and-only Dan Dana's *Diary*, which is like no other. Some memoirs contain snippets of diary entries; some are based on them. Dan, on the other hand, gives us an account of his last two months in the Vietnam War and his worldwide travels afterward solely through the words he wrote every day in his journal.

They are words that take us back in time to his waning days with the 527th Personnel Service Company in Qui Nhon where he and I both served. I can attest to the fact that Dan's diary entries make the place come alive, but also—and more importantly—give us a clear look at his restless, inquiring mind as he mulls over his place in the world, his service in the war, his immediate and long-term future, and more.

The same is true with the diary entries in the book that Dan wrote after his discharge as he set out on a path of discovery, late-sixties-hippie style, through Panama, Mexico, and Honduras. His words during that time convey his unvarnished thoughts as he worked his way through a unique rite of passage that would set Dan's course for the rest of his life. *Diary* also comes with a bonus: Dan's artful, thoughtful haiku quintet that follows his war and immediate post-war adventures.

I'll say no more except to guarantee that just about anyone who served in the U.S. military in South Vietnam in the late sixties who reads Dan's diary will be transported back to that time and place more than a half century ago. And

DAN DANA

for those who weren't there: Welcome to one man's journey through war and peace and into adulthood as he navigated the stormy tides of The Sixties.

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