



**TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE**  
COMMISSIONER DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

---

1700 N. Congress Ave. • Austin, TX 78701-1495 • 512-463-5339 • FAX: 512-475-1415

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Voices of Veterans: Dotson Lewis Shares His Story of Service in the U.S. Army**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**October 04, 2024**

**Contact: Kimberly Hubbard**  
**(512) 936-9582**  
**[media@glo.texas.gov](mailto:media@glo.texas.gov)**

AUSTIN — Today, Texas Land Commissioner and Veterans Land Board (VLB) Chairwoman Dawn Buckingham, M.D., is proud to introduce the next installment of the series highlighting the VLB's Voices of Veterans oral history program. This week, we highlight the service of MSgt. Dotson Lewis who served in U.S. Army.

Dotson was born 35 miles south of the Oklahoma border in Gunter, Texas but didn't live in Texas his whole life, and moved to Fayetteville, Arkansas before high school because of his mother's preference.

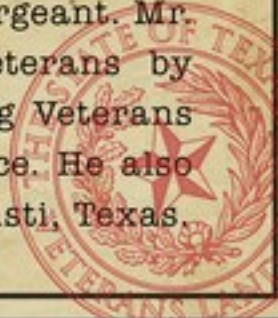
"We moved to Arkansas because we were having too many sandstorms and my mother wanted to move, she was from Arkansas, in the mid-30's during The Depression," Lewis explained.



## VOICES OF VETERANS

name <b>Lewis, Dotson</b>		
military branch <b>Army</b>	rank <b>MSgt</b>	conflict <b>Korea</b>
date interviewed <b>06/11/2024</b>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interview available on voicesofveterans.org

Dotson Lewis joined the U.S. Army in 1946. He arrived in Korea a few days after the war started and spent thirteen months in combat serving with the 1st Cavalry Division. Once the Korean War was over, he served in Fort Bliss, working on surface-to-air missile systems. He has always loved sports, and while serving in the Army, he had the opportunity to play baseball with the Chunichi Dragons Japanese Baseball League. He left active duty in 1968 and retired from the reserves as a Master Sergeant. Mr. Dotson continues to serve his community and Veterans by hosting The Veterans Radio Round Table and helping Veterans write their own stories about their time in the service. He also writes for The Island Moon newspaper in Corpus Christi, Texas.



Lewis said he remembers when the United States was thrust into World War II, a foreshadowing of his future, December 7, 1941.

"I remember it very vividly, I was out playing, it was a Sunday after church and a bunch of us kids were out playing football in a field in Arkansas when my dad called me and said you better get in here, we're at war," Lewis said as he recalled that day in his mind. "He was listening to the radio and I remember it specifically and the next morning, my Uncle who just turned 19, he and I went down to the recruiting to join the Marines and, of course, I was only 13 or 14 so they wouldn't let me go, but he went."

Lewis said while the war changed things growing up, as anyone can imagine, he had earned a scholarship to college and considered going. While his parents were split on his decision to forego college, he felt getting drafted was inevitable and decided volunteering to enter the service was his best bet.



## VOICES OF VETERANS

VLB CHAIRWOMAN, DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

"I had no choice, I was going to get drafted but if you volunteered for three years you got the appointment of your choice and the school you'd like to go to if you joined for

three years and, naturally, I went to Japan immediately after I finished basic training," he explained, adding he attended basic training at Fort Lewis, Washington.

In Tokyo, Lewis said he was drafted to play in some sports since he was an athlete growing up but with an automotive mechanic background, he said he ended up in an ordinance outfit in Japan working on bomb disposal shortly after World War II ended and he helped clean up tunnels around the country.

"When I first got there, McArthur decided he wanted one American to play on every baseball team and the Japanese loved baseball, so I was assigned to play shortstop with the [Chunichi Dragons](#)," Lewis shared, admitting his start in the Army wasn't the same as others before him or after him.



## VOICES OF VETERANS

VLB CHAIRWOMAN, DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

Lewis said for the next three years he would be in Japan and then, when he was getting ready to reenlist, things got dicey in Korea, adding his platoon was the first to land in the hostile area before the war even started.

"It was my outfit, the First Cavalry Division, that arrived in Korea when it was still a police action at that point, it wasn't a war," he explained.

Lewis went on to say he will never forget when the stark reality of war set in for him, not long after they landed.

"We landed in Korea on the 13th of July of 1950 and we didn't know what war was, but we were immediately at war. I had a platoon and I sent my squad out to find out what was going on because the North Koreans weren't there," he said about his First Cavalry Division. "My squad sent three up there and they found the North Koreans about 20 miles north. We didn't hear back from them but we found them two days later, they had been massacred up there and we found their bodies."

To listen to MSgt. Dotson Lewis tell his story, click the button below:

[MSgt. Lewis's Story](#)

---

Veterans can email [VoicesofVeterans@glo.texas.gov](mailto:VoicesofVeterans@glo.texas.gov) to tell their stories. Please note that the Veteran must be a resident of Texas at the time of their interview.

Voices of Veterans is a state agency's first Veteran oral history program. It records the stories of Texas Veterans through their time in service and after returning home from combat.

The VLB records interviews with veterans over the phone or in person. Their interviews are then permanently archived in the Office of Veterans Records at the GLO, where they join the historical documents of other Texas heroes such as Sam Houston, Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, and William Barret Travis.

Veterans' interviews are also available to researchers, historians, genealogists, and the public. These precious records inspire future generations and remind us of our Veterans' sacrifices.

To listen to the over 500 archived stories of Veterans documented through the GLO's Voices of Veterans oral history program, click the button below:

[Voices of Veterans](#)