



# Waggener High School



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam, 2nd Edition

This is one of many sections that contain information, photos, newspaper articles, internet items, etc. of the St. Matthews area and especially of Waggener High School. Many of the items came from Al Ring's personal collections but many people have helped and I have tried to give credit where I can.

The purpose of this "collection" was to create the history of Waggener and the students and teachers who were there during my time. Being retired I now have time to do many of the things I have always wanted, this project is just one of them. The collection is continuing today, so if you should have old or new information on the St. Matthews area from 1950 to 1962 or Waggener High, please contact Al Ring.

All graphics have been improved to make the resolution as good as possible, but the reader should remember that many came from copies of old newspaper articles and photos. Credit to the source of the photos, etc. is provided whenever it was available. We realize that many items are not identified and regret that we weren't able to provide this information. As far as the newspaper articles that are not identified, 99% of them would have to be from one of three possible sources. *The Courier-Journal*, *The Louisville Times* or one of the *Voice* publications. Books that we have used for some information include, *Randy*, *Cactus*, *Uncle, Ed and the Golden age of Louisville Television*, *Waggener High School Alumni Directory 1996*, *Waggener Traditional High School Alumni Directory 2007*, *Memories of Fontaine Ferry Park*, *St. Matthews The Crossroads of Beargrass* by Samuel W. Thomas, *St. Matthews, 25 Years a City Two Centuries a Community*, *St. Matthews 1960-1995*, *Waggener Lair's 1958 to 1962*, *The Holy Warrior*, *Muhammad Ali*, *Louisville's Own (An Illustrated Encyclopedia Of Louisville Area Recorded Pop Music From 1953 to 1983)*.

### Thanks

**A special thanks to Ken Draut, Al Clements and Mark Fenzel, the Waggener Vietnam Memorial committee. Also Kristen Heckel current Waggener librarian, Marie VanHoose Sayre, Billy Pfeister, Edith Hokenson, Craig Woolley, Helen C. Nelson and the many Internet sites where information was gained from. Also know and unknown newspaper articles and many more unnamed sources.**

Please use this information as a reference tool only. If the reader uses any of the information for any purpose other than a reference tool, they should get permission from the source.



**First Lieutenant  
William M. Duncan (61)  
Army**



**First Lieutenant  
John Harlan Sweet (62)  
Air Force**



**Specialist Fourth Class  
Kirk Allen Woolley (61)  
Army**

**A Tribute To  
Waggener  
High School  
Heroes Killed In  
Vietnam**



**Sergeant  
Thomas Scott Hamilton (65)  
Army**



**Specialist Fourth Class  
Wayne Allen Hokenson (66)  
Army**



**Specialist Fourth Class  
Robert Stagner Pfeister (66)  
Army**



**Sergeant  
William Gayle Cox (67)  
Army**

## **Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

### **Explanation of the following pages, (Please Read)**

This section is dedicated to the seven young men who attended Waggener High School and answered their countries call to join the United States Military. All seven of these young men served in the Vietnam War and were killed there. If you take the time to read their stories I think you will come to the same conclusion that I have. These seven fine young men were truly heroes and were the very best from the Waggener and the St. Matthews community.

John Harlan Sweet did not graduate from Waggener High School. He attended a private school the last couple of years before graduating, but was a Waggenerette from 7th through 10th grade. However, the “Class of 1962” and others keep him on the roll so that’s what I have chosen to do. John is still a Waggenerette in the minds of his fellow Waggenerette’s so he will be covered in this section as a Waggener Hero.

For those who have a “political feeling” on the Vietnam War (as I do), this is not the place or forum for that discussion. No matter how we feel about it, our country was at war and these young men did their duty, gave their best and gave the ultimate sacrifice, their lives. At the least, we can honor them for who they were and what they did unselfishly.

This is a salute to them, God bless them——

**First Lieutenant William M. Duncan (61) Army**

**Specialist Fourth Class Kirk Allen Woolley (61) Army**

**First Lieutenant John Harlan Sweet (62) Air Force**

**Sergeant Thomas Scott Hamilton (65) Army**

**Specialist Fourth Class Wayne Allen Hokenson (66) Army**

**Specialist Fourth Class Robert Stagner Pfeister (66) Army**

**Sergeant William Gayle Cox (67) Army**

*“We believed in Vietnam. I still believe it was a noble cause.....*

*Maybe I have to believe that way.”*

*Billy Pfeister*

**Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

# **Support Our Troops**

**Then & Now**

**Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

**Webster's defines HERO as—**

**A man admired for his achievements and noble qualities, one  
that shows great courage.**

**I think they could say right after that, the names—**

**First Lieutenant William M. Duncan**

**Specialist Fourth Class Kirk Allen Woolley**

**First Lieutenant John Harlan Sweet**

**Sergeant Thomas Scott Hamilton**

**Specialist Fourth Class Wayne Allen Hokenson**

**Specialist Fourth Class Robert Stagner Pfeister**

**Sergeant William Gayle Cox**

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Four of Our Waggener Heroes Are Buried At Zachary Taylor National Cemetery

Specialist Fourth Class Kirk Allen Woolley (61) Army, Section D site 2054  
First Lieutenant John Harlan Sweet (62) Air Force, Section D site 208  
Sergeant Thomas Scott Hamilton (65) Army, Section C site 1241  
Specialist Fourth Class Robert Stagner Pfeister (66) Army, Section H site 273

#### Cemeteries - Zachary Taylor National Cemetery

Zachary Taylor National Cemetery  
4701 Brownboro Road  
Louisville, KY 40207  
Phone: (502) 893-3852  
FAX: (502) 893-6612

**Office Hours:**  
Monday thru Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Closed federal holidays except Memorial Day  
and Veterans Day.

**Visitation Hours:**  
Open daily from sunrise to sunset

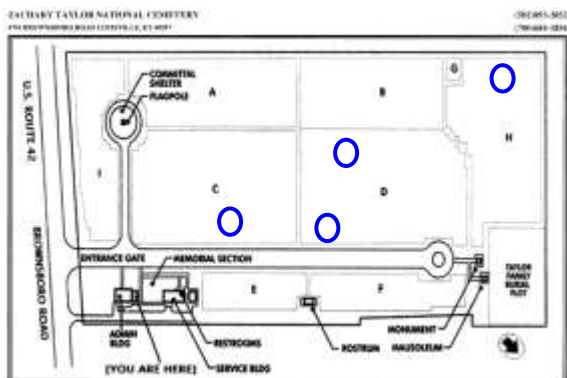
**Burial Space:** This cemetery is closed to new interments. However, space may be available in the same gravesite for eligible family members.

**Acreage:** 16.4

**Number of Interments**  
Thru Fiscal Year 2006: 13,426

**General Information Kiosk on Site?** Yes

**Floral/Ground Regulations**



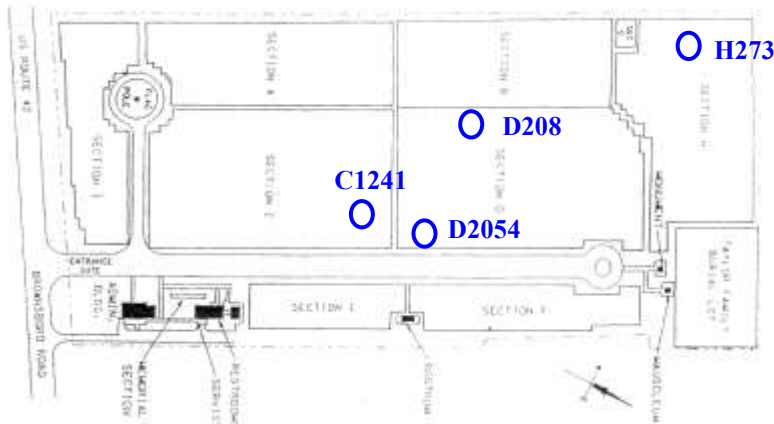
Courtesy Al Ring:



**Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

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**MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE**



**MAY 26 2008**

**2:00 P.M.**

**ZACHARY TAYLOR  
NATIONAL CEMETERY**

**SPONSOR**

**AMVETS**

**3<sup>rd</sup>.District of Kentucky**

**Parade of Colors.....VFW Color Guard**

**National Anthem.....**

**Pledge of Allegiance.....Frank E. Konermann**

**Invocation.....Jim Montgomery Sr.  
Chaplain AMVETS Dept. Ky**

**Introduction.....Frank E. Konermann**

**Memorial Address.....Glenn R. Powers  
Director Memorial Service Network IV**

**Wreath Presentations**

**Echo Taps.....Tracy Hayes & Mike Hanke**

**Firing Squad Salute.....Middletown VFW**

**Benediction.....Chaplain Montgomery**

**Retire Colors.....Color Guards**

**ORGANIZATIONS**

**AMVETS**

**American Legion**

**Disabled American Veterans**

**Grand Voiture of Kentucky 40 & 8**

**Greater Lou. Eagles Chapter MOAA**

**Kosair Shrine Temple Legion of Honor**

**Military Order of the Purple Heart**

**Sons of the American Revolution**

**Daughters of the American Revolution**

**DESA(Destroyer Escort Sailors Assn.)**

**Submarine Veterans of World War II**

**American Ex POWS**

**Vietnam Veterans of America**

**Veteran of World War I**

**Veterans of Foreign War**

*Courtesy, The Courier-Journal, Scouts to honor soldiers at Zachary Taylor Cemetery.*

Hundreds of Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts will place small American flags at the more than 11,000 headstones of soldiers buried at Zachary Taylor Cemetery, 4701 Brownsboro Road, on Saturday, in honor of Memorial Day on Monday.

The public event will begin with a flag-raising ceremony at 8:45 a.m. The Scouts are in the Lincoln Heritage Council, which serves 25 counties in north central Kentucky and Southern Indiana.

**Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

**Four of Our Waggener Heroes Are Buried At  
Zachary Taylor National Cemetery  
Memorial Day, May 26, 2008 at Zachary Taylor**



Courtesy Al Ring:





**Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

**Four of Our Waggener Heroes Are Buried At  
Zachary Taylor National Cemetery  
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**Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

**Four of Our Waggener Heroes Are Buried At  
Zachary Taylor National Cemetery  
*The Voice-Tribune, May 29, 2008 for May 26, 2008***



**Remembering Heroes**

Beverly Dragg and her son, Brock, attended a Memorial Day ceremony at Zachary Taylor National Cemetery on May 26. For additional photos, visit [Voice-Tribune.com](http://Voice-Tribune.com).

**Memorial Day at Zachary Taylor**



The Dr. V. Edward Masters Memorial Color Guard.



Robley Rex, 107, a World War I era veteran, attended the ceremony.



photos by FRANKIE STEEL  
www.DraggPhoto.com



Ralph Christy reflected before the ceremony.



Don Potts and Don Rigazio Jr.

**Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

**Four of Our Waggener Heroes Are Buried At  
Zachary Taylor National Cemetery  
*The Voice-Tribune, May 29, 2008 for May 26, 2008***



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

Courtesy *The Courier-Journal*, January 3, 1990, by Joe Koniak. (NOTE: This article did not include William Gayle Cox or John Harlan Sweet.)

### Vietnam memorial will bring war home for Waggener High



William M. Duncan  
Class of '61  
Died July 21, 1967



Thomas S. Hamilton  
Class of '65  
Died Feb. 15, 1968



Wayne A. Hokenson  
Class of '66  
Died March 31, 1968



Robert Pfeister  
Class of '65  
Died Jan. 10, 1968



Kirk A. Woolley  
Class of '61  
Died Feb. 11, 1968

For Al Clements, establishing a memorial for Waggener High School's Vietnam War veterans makes him recall a skitish evening spent with high school buddy Bill Duncan in spring 1967, just before each entered the war.

That night at Dutch's Tavern in St. Matthews, Duncan and Clements shared beers and memories from their days in Waggener's Class of '61. They talked "mostly about old girlfriends and football games," Clements said.

The stocky pair of 24-year-olds also nervously discussed their impending entry into the Vietnam War, Clements in the Navy and Duncan with the army.

"Neither one of us was really ready," said Clements, now co-owner of a landscaping business.

About three months later, on July 21, 1967, Duncan died in battle.

"He didn't last long," said Clements of Blue Ridge Manor. "Of course, a lot of people didn't."

Of all those who didn't, Duncan was one of five Waggener alumni. The others were Thomas Hamilton, Wayne Hokenson, Robert Pfeister and Kirk Woolley.

In an effort to honor those five, Clements is collaborating with Ken Draut and Mark Fenzel, both 1973 Waggener graduates, to establish a library memorial at their alma mater.

The goal is to amass books, memorabilia and, if enough money is raised, videotapes to be housed in a section of the library designated as the Waggener High School Vietnam War Memorial.

A plaque and a biographical folder commutating the five who died—and all Waggener alumni who served in the war—will embellish the section, which is to open this fall.

"Hopefully this will generate continuous interest among kids at Waggener to learn about the Vietnam War," said Draut, who served in the Navy on active duty in Guam from 1973 to 1975. "When they walk by and see this plaque, maybe it will draw interest, not jus now but in five, 10, 15 years, as our memories of the war begin to dim."

Draut, of St. Matthews, came up with the idea last September, when he discovered he was eligible for a \$300 Vietnam War era bonus to be issued in April by the state. Because he never actually fought in Vietnam, Draut felt he didn't deserve the money, and he brainstormed for an appropriate use for it.

After deciding to establish the memorial at Waggener, Draut enlisted the support of other Waggener alumni, including Clements and Fenzel, who served on active duty, but not in Vietnam. All three are now in military reserve units.

After getting approval from Waggener principal Donna Ludwig, Draut scoured 1955-75 issues of the school paper, the Chit chat, for names of possible contributors. After writing them about the library plan, the trio have netted \$500 in pledges, including Draut's \$300. Draut, whose father, art Draut, was principal at Waggener from 1969-83, expects the drive to net about \$1,000 in all.

## **Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

Courtesy *The Courier-Journal*, January 3, 1990, by Joe Koniak. (NOTE: This article did not include William Gayle Cox or John Harlan Sweet.)

### **Vietnam memorial will bring war home for Waggener High**

For now Draut, Fenzel and Clements are sending out more pledge letters and considering which books should stock the shelves.

Relatives of the dead soldiers say they're please with the endeavor.

"It's nice for them to have that in the school for the kids to read and understand a little more about what went on," said Edith Hokenson, Wayne Hokenson's mother. She and her husband, Carl, of Hemingway Road in Fairmeade, said they will contribute to the biography for the memorial.

Librarian Brenda Sheeley expects the section to be frequented by students, many of whom have relatives who fought in Vietnam.

The memorial should prove an educational boon for Waggener, Fenzel said.

"We hope the students will feel as we do, that his is a very important part of our country's history, and they will read up about it," said Fenzel, of Village Drive south of Cherokee Park. "We're not trying to press an opinion on them about whether the war was good or bad—we'll let them draw their own conclusion. We just want them to learn about it."

From *The Courier-Journal*, March 6, 1991, by Martha Elson:

### **A page in history**

#### **Waggener accepts book collection as part of its Vietnam memorial**

Vietnam veteran Ron Ray thinks U. S. leaders learned critical lessons from the country's "long and painful involvement" in Southeast Asia — lessons that brought about "decisive, deliberate, clear objectives" in the Persian Gulf war and widespread national support.

Ray and others hope that a new collection of books on the Vietnam War will help Waggener High School students learn, too, as they seek to understand Vietnam and make decisions about the future. Three Louisville-area veterans who had attended Waggener raised money to buy the books, which are part of a new Waggener High School Vietnam Memorial. The memorial honors those who served and died in Vietnam, including six Waggener alumni who were killed in the war.

The aim, said memorial organizer Ken Draut, is to create a "good educational resource" where students can "find out about the good and the bad — read stories of inspiration and stories of despair."

"We wanted to make an effort to bring in all sides," said librarian Brenda Sheeley.

Draut and Ray, a Louisville attorney who was the founder and chief fund-raiser for the Vietnam War memorial in Frankfurt, spoke at the dedication of the collection last Wednesday — as news spread of the apparent end to the Persian Gulf war.

Draut, a 1973 Waggener graduate, said the latest war has forced students to talk about patriotism, duty, politics, life and death and that the new collection will enable them to "read about how others faced similar issues in the past."

"It's the least we can do to honor Vietnam veterans," said Dorothy Bottom, a World War II Army nurse and a member of VFW Post 6376 in St. Matthews, who was in the audience. "They're deserving of more than we've given them."

Draut and the two other Waggener alumni — attorney Mark Fenzel and landscape business owner Al Clements — raised money for the memorial by soliciting donations from Waggener alumni, families of the slain soldiers, veterans groups and others. Draut, Fenzel and Clements all served in the military, though not in Vietnam.

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

Courtesy *The Courier-Journal*, January 3, 1990, by Joe Koniak. (NOTE: This article did not include William Gayle Cox or John Harlan Sweet.)

### A page in history

#### Waggener accepts book collection as part of its Vietnam memorial

Draut had the idea for the collection about a year and a half ago, when he discovered he was eligible for a \$300 Vietnam War era state bonus. Draut had served in the Navy in Guam from 1973 to 1975, but didn't think he deserved the money. (Draut, who works for the Kentucky Department of Education in Frankfort, is the son of Art Draut, mayor of St. Matthews and principal at Waggener from 1969-83.)

Rather than keep the money, Draut decided to use it to create the library memorial. He and the others have raised \$3,384, and have spent about half that amount to buy or order about 150 books.

Money left over will be used to buy other books and perhaps to sponsor annual essay contests, Draut said.

Besides the books, the collection includes a plaque honoring those who served and died in Vietnam, including the six Waggener alumni who were killed: William M. Duncan (Class of '61), Kirk Allen Woolley ('61), Thomas Scott Hamilton ('65), Wayne Allen Hokenson ('66), Robert Pfeister (66) and William Gayle Cox (67).

At last week's dedication, Draut and Fenzel spoke about the soldiers lives and deaths: how Hamilton died trying to save several of his fellow soldiers; how Duncan, an only child, was nervous but excited about going to Vietnam and how his death was devastating to his parents;" how Woolley was killed while being lowered from a helicopter to rescue a U. S. paratrooper trapped in a tree.

Yearbook photos of the soldiers are mounted on a plaque in a double bookcase stocked with books and videos relating to Vietnam. The plaque was donated by Kirk Woolley's brother, Craig Woolley.

Among the titles in the collection are 'Home Before Morning: The True Story of An Army Nurse in Vietnam,' "The Elephant and the Tiger: The Full Story of the Vietnam War," "A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann & America in Vietnam," "What Should We Tell Our Children About Vietnam?"

Also, "Inside the Green Berets: The Story of the U. S Army Special Forces" and the fiction work *Steel Message From Nam* by Danielle Steel.

Videos include "Vietnam: The Ten Thousand Day War," written by Peter Arnett, and "Vietnam: A Chronicle of War." narrated by Walter Cronkite.

Also at the ceremony was Vietnam veteran Randy Simms, 42. of St. Matthews, a Trinity High School graduate. With him was his 11-month-old son, Charles Randall, whose T-shirt read: "My Dad is a Vietnam vet and I'm proud of it."

Simms said he thinks the collection is "fantastic" and that he's pleased to see "a lot of books on both sides of the fence."

The Vietnam war, he said, "was the most ridiculous thing. There was no reason to lose 58,000 men. That's been proved in Desert Storm."



Waggener High, Lair 1961



# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

Courtesy Waggener High School Library, Mrs. Kristen Heckel:

## Vietnam memorial in the Waggener High Library



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

Courtesy Al Ring:

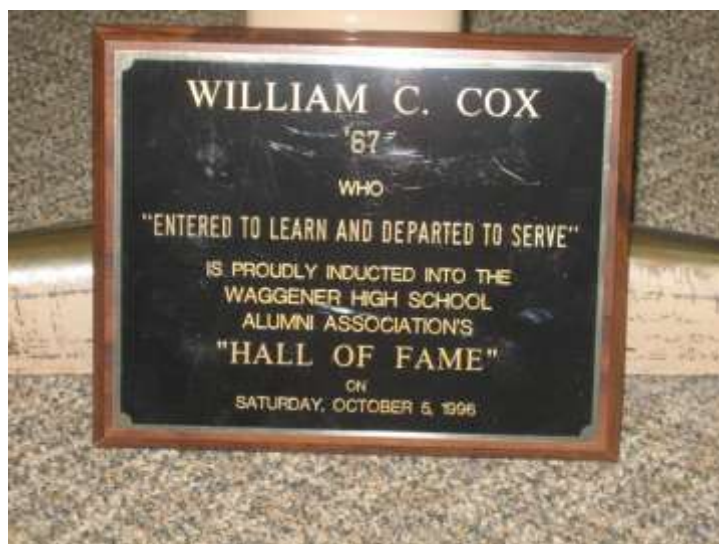
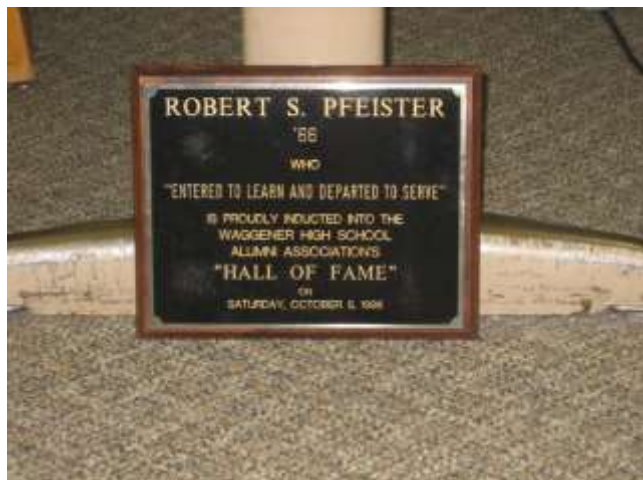
### Vietnam memorial in the Waggener High Library



# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

Courtesy Al Ring:

## Vietnam memorial in the Waggener High Library



**Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

Courtesy Waggener High School Library, Mrs. Kristen Heckel:

**Vietnam memorial in the Waggener High Library**



# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

Courtesy Helen C. Cox Nelson:

## Books on Shelf

A Rumor of War  
Dispatches  
Everything We Had  
A Bright and Shining Lie  
My Father, My Son  
Sherman's March and Vietnam  
F-4 Phantom  
The Vietnam War  
Waiting for an Army to Die  
The Bad War  
Air War Over Vietnam  
The Killing Zone  
Writing Under Fire  
Phantoms Over Vietnam  
Fields of Fire  
Vietnam: The Other War  
NAM  
The Elephant and the Tiger  
And One for All  
Fire in the Lake  
Travelers  
The American Experience  
Fallen Angels  
December Stillness  
Vietnam, A History  
Sweetness History of Vietnam  
Combat Photographer  
A Contagion of War  
America Takes Over  
Setting the Stage  
Nam: The Vietnam Experience  
Life: War Goes On  
Life: MIA  
Life: Faces of Dead  
Ringed in Steel  
The Grunts  
Battles of the Vietnam War  
Pictorial History of Vietnam  
Born on the Fourth July  
Green Knight, Red Mourning  
Going after Cacciato  
A Soldier's Report  
Infantry in Vietnam  
A Piece of My Heart  
Marine Sniper  
Thud Ridge  
Air War Over Vietnam  
Home from the War  
On Yankee Station  
Pak Six  
Over the Beach  
Bat 21  
Fox 2  
Professional LRRP  
Inside the Green Berets  
Death Valley  
Casualties of War

Air War Vietnam  
Cambodia File  
Tunnels of Chu-Chi  
Long Time Passing  
My Secret War  
Huey  
Killing Zone  
War  
War Years  
Guide to the Air War: Vietnam  
Mission MIA  
DAU  
Home Before Morning  
Survives  
Bloods  
National Geographic: Vietnam  
Hard Road to Peace  
Aircraft of the Vietnam War  
USAF Phantom  
USN Phantom  
Vietnam Magazine  
Army Blue  
Flight of the Intruder  
Vietnam  
What should we tell our children  
A Lonely Kind of War  
The Aftermath  
Thunder from Above  
Raising the Stakes  
Passing the Torch  
Setting the Stage  
War in the Shadows  
Fighting for Time  
The Fall of the South  
Portrait of a Tragedy  
The Things They Carried  
Song of Napalm  
MIA: Missing in Action  
In the Combat Zone  
The Killing Fields  
Images of War  
Always to Remember  
Combat Zone  
Vietnam Ten Years After  
Vietnam Diary  
Dear America: Letters Home  
Cambodian Odyssey  
Vietnam: Between Two Truces  
The War in Vietnam  
Dotline: Vietnam  
The Battle of Dienbienphu  
Dien Bien Phu, 1954

## Books on Order

America in Vietnam  
The Memorial: A novel  
Service for the Dead  
Army at War  
Vietnam War: Opposing Views  
Vietnam: Valor and Sorrow  
A Code to Keep  
Brothers in Arms  
Homefront: Women and Vietnam  
Carrying the Darkness  
Portrait of the Enemy  
A Contagion of War  
A Collision of Cultures  
Word of Honor  
False Peace  
Flags into Battle  
Pocket Change  
Dien Cai Dou  
In Country  
Chickenhawk  
Vietnam Experience  
1968  
The North  
Shaped in the Heart  
Rain of Fire  
Best of Friends  
Hester's War  
Buffalo Afternoon  
South Vietnam on Trial  
Facing the Wall  
Tools of War  
A Vietcong Memoir  
A War of Remembered  
A Soldier's Report  
Words of War  
Vietnam War Facts: A Quiz  
The Passing of the Night  
Vietnam Literature  
Vietnam Almanac  
How We Won the War  
Run to Cadence  
Cadences: The Jody Call Book  
Page After Page

## Tape Sets:

Vietnam: Chronicle of War  
Vietnam: A Television History

## WAGGENER HIGH SCHOOL

## VIETNAM MEMORIAL

## DEDICATION CEREMONY

February 27, 1991

7:00 p.m.

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

Courtesy Helen C. Cox Nelson:

<b>Waggener High School Vietnam Memorial Dedication Ceremony Program</b>		February 27, 1991			
Welcome and Introductions	Kathy Hopper Principal, Waggener High	<p style="text-align: center;">A special thanks to the Donors who made the Memorial possible:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">                     Andrea Ashchbacher Evelyn B. Barner Robert Barnes Brenda Black In memory of Ron Black Rebecca Blunk Ron Braehler In memory of Michael Caller Sallie Potter Carwell Catherine Coggeshall Sarah Wood Cox Arthur K. Draut Doug Draut Ken Draut Robert Droste Gail Fenzel Mark Fenzel Steve Frazier Seldon Fritschner Bob Garrett Kit Georgehead Richard and Angela Gimmel Mary Gliessner Betty Baker Haisten Barbara Haller T.A. Hamilton and Family Donna Hart Hawley Cooke Booksellers Greg Haynes and Family of Bill Duncan Edith Hokenson and Family Home Video, Bob Pittman, President Diane Huffman Martha Katz Bob King Katherine Kirwan Beverly Carr Kiser Rick Krauth Mrs. John Lapsley Linda Mason Dennis McGraw                 </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;">                     Allen Mercke Julie Schmitt Metzger Dennis Meyer William Montgomery and Associates Duke Morris Mindy Rice Needleman Hap Nelson Sharon Ostendorf James Peloff The Pfeister Family Foster Puckett Kenneth Roederer Terry Rogers Sheryl Scott William Sherman David Shepherd John Silvey Maren Heuser Smith Thomas Stigger St. Matthews Fraternal Order of Police St. Matthews Veterans of Foreign War Bruce Tasch Charleen Thornton Jacqueline Turner Elizabeth Tyrell Robert Unterreiner Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 454, Louisville Tina Rudy Volz The Woolley Family Fred and Margaret Yaeck                 </td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">A special thanks to Scholl Trophies and Craig Woolley for donating the memorial plaque. Also, thanks to Brenda Sheeley, Waggener's librarian, for her special assistance.</p>		Andrea Ashchbacher Evelyn B. Barner Robert Barnes Brenda Black In memory of Ron Black Rebecca Blunk Ron Braehler In memory of Michael Caller Sallie Potter Carwell Catherine Coggeshall Sarah Wood Cox Arthur K. Draut Doug Draut Ken Draut Robert Droste Gail Fenzel Mark Fenzel Steve Frazier Seldon Fritschner Bob Garrett Kit Georgehead Richard and Angela Gimmel Mary Gliessner Betty Baker Haisten Barbara Haller T.A. Hamilton and Family Donna Hart Hawley Cooke Booksellers Greg Haynes and Family of Bill Duncan Edith Hokenson and Family Home Video, Bob Pittman, President Diane Huffman Martha Katz Bob King Katherine Kirwan Beverly Carr Kiser Rick Krauth Mrs. John Lapsley Linda Mason Dennis McGraw	Allen Mercke Julie Schmitt Metzger Dennis Meyer William Montgomery and Associates Duke Morris Mindy Rice Needleman Hap Nelson Sharon Ostendorf James Peloff The Pfeister Family Foster Puckett Kenneth Roederer Terry Rogers Sheryl Scott William Sherman David Shepherd John Silvey Maren Heuser Smith Thomas Stigger St. Matthews Fraternal Order of Police St. Matthews Veterans of Foreign War Bruce Tasch Charleen Thornton Jacqueline Turner Elizabeth Tyrell Robert Unterreiner Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 454, Louisville Tina Rudy Volz The Woolley Family Fred and Margaret Yaeck
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Presentation of Colors	Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 454				
Project Review	Ken Draut				
Memorial Roll Call	Mark Fenzel				
William M. Duncan	Class of 1961				
Kirk Allen Woolley	Class of 1961				
Thomas Scott Hamilton	Class of 1965				
Wayne Allen Hokenson	Class of 1966				
Robert Pfeister	Class of 1966				
William Gayle Cox	Class of 1967				
Guest Speaker	Ron Ray, Class of 1960				
Poem	Dante Murry Waggener Student				
Musical Selection "Adagio for Strings"	Waggener Quintet Jody Cummins, Chad Frith Keith Hornung, Nathan Roby, Angela Slates				
Closing Remarks	Ken Draut				
Reception					

## A page in history

### Waggener accepts book collection as part of its Vietnam memorial

By MARTHA ELSON  
Staff Writer

Vietnam veteran Ron Ray thinks U. S. leaders learned critical lessons from the country's "long and painful involvement" in Southeast Asia — lessons that brought about "decisive, deliberate, clear objectives" in the Persian Gulf war and widespread national support.

Ray and others hope that a new collection of books on the Vietnam War will help Waggener High School students learn, too, as they seek to understand Vietnam and make decisions about the future. Three Louisville-area veterans who had attended Waggener raised money to buy the

books, which are part of a new Waggener High School Vietnam Memorial. The memorial honors those who served and died in Vietnam, including six Waggener alumni who were killed in the war.

The aim, said memorial organizer Ken Draut, is to create a "good educational resource" where students can "find out about the good and the bad — read stories of inspiration and stories of despair."

"We wanted to make an effort to bring in all sides," said librarian Brenda Sheeley.

See A PAGE  
Page 3, col. 1

Do not have remainder of article.

**Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

**Photo's of the Vietnam War Memorial & More**

Courtesy: <http://thewall-usa.com/gallery.asp>

**Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:  
Photo's of the Vietnam War Memorial & More**



Courtesy: <http://www.vietvet.org/thewall.htm>  
[http://www.pbase.com/april\\_sims/image/33385156](http://www.pbase.com/april_sims/image/33385156)



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Kentucky Vietnam Veteran Memorial, Frankfort, KY



Duncan, William	1LT	USA	6/22/43	7/21/67	Jefferson
Woolley, Kirk	SP4	USA	4/15/43	2/11/69	Jefferson
Sweet, John	Not listed, had moved from St. Matthews to try for Air Force Academy				
Hamilton, Thomas	SGT	USA	9/24/47	2/15/69	Jefferson
Hokenson, Wayne	SP4	USA	3/2/47	3/31/68	Jefferson
Pfeister, Robert	SP4	USA	8/23/47	1/10/68	Jefferson
Cox, William	SGT	USA	2/21/49	3/29/71	Jefferson

Courtesy: <http://www.kyvietnammemorial.net/pics5.html>

## **Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

# **Kentucky Vietnam Veteran Memorial, Frankfort, KY**

This sundial was commissioned and erected as memorial to those men from Kentucky who lost their lives in the Vietnam war. Their names are engraved on a polished stone plaza in such a way that on the anniversary of their death the shadow of the Style falls on their name and date. The dial is also set up for telling time, of course. It functions like a huge perpetual solar calendar counting off the names of the fallen soldiers. Its quite a moving memorial and incredible ingenious, writes John Mize who provided the description below.

### **HISTORY OF THE MEMORIAL**

The Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc., a non-profit organization, founded by Ronald D. Ray, a Marine veteran of Vietnam, and other concerned veterans, was first endorsed by Governor Martha Layne Collins. The Kentucky General Assembly, on March 23, 1984, encouraged the Memorial Fund, "to design and raise the necessary funds for a monument to those Kentuckians who fought and died in Vietnam." Funds for construction were provided through private donations from business, corporate, and individual sources. The unique site overlooking the State Capitol was donated by the Commonwealth of Kentucky in 1987. Upon completion, the Memorial was transferred to the Commonwealth with perpetual maintenance provided by the Memorial Fund. The design for the Memorial was chosen in a national competition which required each entrant to submit drawings and a scale model. The design criteria stated that, "The monument should be distinctive yet dignified. It should not seek to imitate other monuments, yet it should evoke an emotional remembrance while being aesthetically authentic as a work of art. The monument should display the names of all Kentuckians who died in the Vietnam Conflict...or who are still unaccounted for." The design unanimously selected was that of a sundial submitted by Helm Roberts, a Kentucky Architect. The ground breaking ceremony and "Gnomon" dedication, by Governor Martha Layne Collins, was held November 7, 1987. The remaining work for the Memorial was accomplished during the summer of 1988. The Board of Directors dedicated the Memorial on November 11, 1988, and Governor Wallace G. Wilkinson presided over the official ceremony on November 12, 1988.

### **DESIGN CONCEPT**

The Memorial was conceived to be a place of contemplation and quiet meditation, to reflect upon the nature of the Vietnam War and those who served. It was also to be a place of ceremony and remembrance to honor those lost in this conflict. It takes the form of a large sundial whose shadow points to and touches the name of each Kentuckian killed in service on the anniversary of his death. The plaza for the Memorial contains the names of the 1,069 dead and missing in action or prisoners of the Vietnam War at the time of dedication. Each hour line of the sundial represents a year of American service during the war; thus, each sector between the walkways includes on year of service in Vietnam. The length of the shadow of the gnomon varies with the season of the year, with the longest shadows at the winter solstice, December 21, and the shortest on June 21, the summer solstice. Each name on the Memorial is located so that the tip of the gnomon shadow touches that name on the anniversary of death; thus each Kentuckian is honored with a personal memorial day. Veterans Day is commemorated with an inscription located on the plaza where the shadow falls on November 11, at 11:11 AM, Eastern Standard Time, the date and time which marked the Armistice in 1918, officially ending the First World War. The arrangement of names was intended to demonstrate a visual pattern of Kentucky casualties during the Vietnam War. The first two deaths occurred in 1962 and the last Kentuckian was killed during the American evacuation in 1975. The year of heaviest losses was 1968, which falls between Noon and 1 PM, Eastern Standard Time. The names of those missing in action or prisoners of war are located behind the gnomon, where the shadow will never fall. The inner circle is marked with words from the Book of Ecclesiastes which reflect upon the ever changing nature of man in relation to the heavens and re-affirm that we, like the seasons and time itself, always move on and pass away. The timeless nature of the sun and earth stand in sharp contrast to man's brief life. The meditation area overlooking the plaza provides a beautiful view of the State Capitol, framed by the gnomon and the flags of the United States and Kentucky.

### **MEMORIAL STATISTICS:**

The curved lines on the plaza mark the location of the summer and winter solstice and the path of the shortest and longest shadows of the year. The straight east / west line locates the path of the spring and fall equinox. The times inscribed on the stone outer circle represent natural or "sun" time. The walkways are located at the mean position of Eastern Standard Time. The "gnomon" or pointer stands 14.62 feet above the surface of the plaza and is 24.27 feet long. The angle of the gnomon is equal to the latitude, or 39 deg. 19 min. 25 seconds, from horizontal and points to the true North Pole and Polaris, the North Star. The gnomon was cut from a single piece of 3/16 inch thick stainless steel and fabricated in Lexington, Kentucky. It is filled with concrete and weighs over 5,000 pounds. The plaza is 89 ft., 4 in. long by 71 ft. , 1.1 in. wide, including the benches. The plaza contains 327 pieces of 4 in. thick granite with pieces ranging from 2,421 to 133 pounds in weight. The average weight of each plaza slab is 1, 144 pounds. The largest pieces are 12 feet in length. This is one of the largest granite memorials in the country, weighing more than 215 tons. All granite for the Memorial was cut from the "Pyramid Blue" quarry located in Elberton, Georgia [U.S.A.]. The face of each piece was honed to remove saw marks and finished with a sandblasted surface to provide the lightest possible color to contrast with the shadow of the gnomon. All granite fabrication was done in Elberton from computer generated drawings which included full size templates for exact location and spelling of each name. Lettering and line work was cut into the granite using rubber stencils and sandblasting. All engraving was done in the factory with the exception of the summer and winter solstice lines and

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Kentucky Vietnam Veteran Memorial, Frankfort, KY

bench lines, which were done in place. The lettering of all names, months, and the Ecclesiastes verse is the same style as that used for official government stone grave markers throughout the Nation, including Arlington National Cemetery. The flagpoles are 35 ft. in height and are located 10 ft. to each side of the true north line. The area north of the winter solstice line is designated for ceremonies.

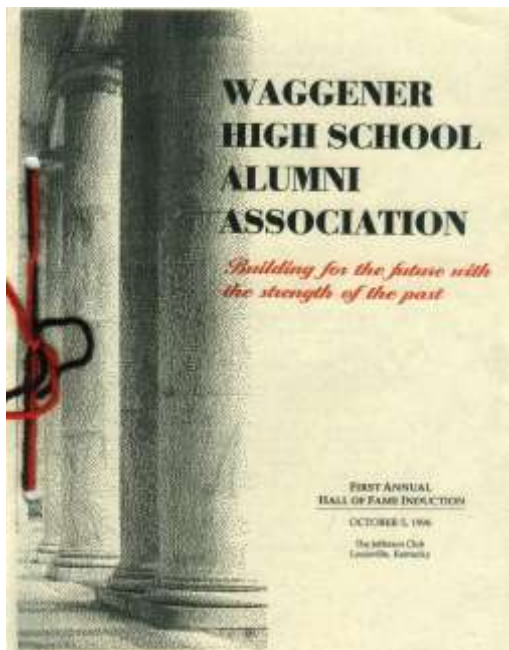
The preceding transcribed from the plaques at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Frankfort, Kentucky, U.S.A.  
<http://www.vietvet.org/kymem.htm>

Courtesy: <http://www.helmr.com/ky.htm>



Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

**Waggener High School Alumni Association  
First Annual Hall Of Fame Induction  
October 5, 1996**



**WAGGENER HIGH SCHOOL  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

*1st Annual Hall of Fame Dinner*

**INVOCATION** Walker Cunningham

**DINNER**

**WELCOME** Lohelen Hambrick, Waggener High School Principal

**INTRODUCTION OF JOHN ABBOTT, FIRST WAGGENER GRADUATE**  
Lohelen Hambrick

**ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT** Larry Ethridge  
Recognition of Alumni by Class

**SPECIAL RECOGNITION AND THANKS** Marty Coker  
Presentation of Plaque for WHS Alumni Association Charter Members

**DEDICATION OF THE MARGARET F. BEATTY DINING ROOM**  
**INTRODUCTION OF NAN F. GWINNER, Niece of Margaret Beatty**  
Lohelen Hambrick

**RECOGNITION OF VIETNAM VETERANS** Ken Draut  
Honoring WHS Graduates who lost their lives in the service of their country.  
"We have been too long in saying thank you. Our heartfelt gratitude goes to you and to your families."

<b>WILLIAM M. DUNCAN</b>	CLASS OF 1961
<b>KIRK ALLEN WOOLLEY</b>	CLASS OF 1961
<b>THOMAS SCOTT HAMILTON</b>	CLASS OF 1965
<b>WAYNE ALLEN HOKENSON</b>	CLASS OF 1966
<b>ROBERT PFEISTER</b>	CLASS OF 1966
<b>WILLIAM GAYLE COX</b>	CLASS OF 1967

**HALL OF FAME INDUCTION** Larry Ethridge

**ADDRESS BY WTHS SENIOR CLASS PRESIDENT** Katy English

**PROGRAM CLOSE** Lohelen Hambrick

**DANCE** Paul Jeffries, Jr., Disc Jockey

**Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

**William M. Duncan (61)**

June 22, 1943 — July 21, 1967



1958 Lair



1959 Lair



1960 Lair



1961 Lair



1961 Lair



Nassau Miller's Trio enjoyed a short rise to popularity, as did so many other senior groups. 1961 Lair



1961 Lair  
Senior Will: Wills the 4,311 flies that he has killed in the lunchroom to Mrs. Beatty.

December 19, 1960 Chit Chat

Bill Duncan, who was in the Senior play cast, is a member of the track team, Introspect Staff, and the Pep Club, and is treasurer of the German Club.



BILL DUNCAN

Each year Bill looks forward to Christmas so he can "leave beer (8 cases) and bratwurst for Santa Claus, so his reindeer will not get hungry."

His favorite winter pastimes are sled riding and ice skating. He also enjoys New Year's Eve.

Bill's ambition is "to be a college history professor (after finishing high school) or a professional vagabond."

Marilyn Newman is a member of the French Club, Pep Club

May 23, 1961 Chit Chat



WAGGENER LAKE? . . . Bill Duncan found boating quite good lately. Fishing was another matter.

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### William M. Duncan (61)



Debate Society, 1961 Lair



Senior staff members study submitted compositions for creative writing contest Lair 1961 Debate Society, 1961 Lair



GERMAN CLUB OFFICERS ANHETTE WAHL, SECRETARY, MAREN HEUSER, PRESIDENT, BILL DUNCAN, TREASURER, AND BILL ESPICH, VICE-PRESIDENT, DISCUSS PLANS FOR GERMAN CHRISTMAS PARTY

Courtesy: **Ken Draut (73)**, of the **Waggener Vietnam Memorial committee**.

**William M. Duncan, Class of '61:** Details about Bill were hard to gather as Bill was an only child and both of Bill's parents are deceased. His cousin, Greg Haynes is a donor to the memorial and provided a letter about Bill. (letter can not be found)

Bill was voted most humorous by his classmates. He was killed on July 21, 1967. Waggener High School has created a scholarship in Bill's name. Bill was the first grad killed in Vietnam.



Bill at Chenoweth Elementary School, November 12, 1954 at party for Safety Patrol.

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### William M. Duncan (61)



Bill's 6th grade class, 1954/55, Chenoweth Elementary School. Bill on top row, third from left just after Steve Porter and before Nicky Burrice. See entire photo in the School history section.



Winter 66-67, from Pen Watts  
Bucky Woodward, Ron Stewart & Bill Duncan  
All Class of 1961



The home at 407 Chenoweth Lane that Bill grew up in. Photo May 2008, by Al Ring

T Bar V: Boy that song brings back memories.... I think that was the TV show that Bill Mike Duncan appeared on when he was 6 years old. He received a special award because he gave the license plate number to the police of a child molester who was preying on children as they walked to and from Greathouse. The man was arrested as a result of the license plate info. Bill Mike and I were best friends growing up, and I was walking with him the day that the molester drove by and talked to us. He had heard the announcement made in school that morning to watch out for this man.

Bill Mike and I remained close friends all through school. I was deeply affected when he was killed in Vietnam. I have been back to Washington and have found his name on The Wall (Vietnam Memorial). Barbara Hampton Henderson

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### William M. Duncan (61)

Courtesy of William Sewell, II:

Bill was a member of the Sigma Nus at the University of Kentucky  
Here he is shown at a groundbreaking ceremony #15



- |                           |                                 |                             |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 B. Reynolds             | 12 Mike ("Cockles") Dew         | 23 Steve ("Scooter") Scott  |
| 2 Dave Noyes              | 13 + Roy Lang                   | 24 Bill Callaway ?          |
| 3 ????                    | 14 Wayne Caddell                | 24.5 ????                   |
| 4 Gary Cranor             | 15 + Bill Duncan                | 25 Tom Chapala ?            |
| 5 Lucien Johnson          | 16 Jerry ("Mother") Mills **MIA | 26 Jeff Gilbert             |
| 6 Jack Jones              | 17 Gene King                    | 27 Eddie Tincer             |
| 7 Danny Key               | 18 Kent ("Lightning") Taylor    | 28 + Rufus Lisle            |
| 8 Thurmon ("Nate") Davis  | 19 Larry Orr                    | 29 Ed Fleigauf              |
| 9 John Gale               | 20 Mom Stillwagon               | 30 Ron Cathey               |
| 10 Dave ("Frosh") Reddel  | 21 John Aboud                   | 31 Richard Fletcher         |
| 11 John ("Roto") Piparato | 22 Jim Phelps                   | 32. Pat Vaughn              |
|                           |                                 | 33. Dr. J. Farrah Van Meter |



# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## William M. Duncan (61)

Courtesy of William Sewell, II:

Bill was a member of the Sigma Nus at the University of Kentucky



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

**William M. Duncan (61)**

Courtesy of Lieutenant Colonel, Christopher S. Holly, U. S. Army, Professor of Military Science, University of Kentucky:



# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## William M. Duncan (61)

Courtesy: The City of Henderson, Fairmont Cemetery, Thank you Beth Austin:

*The Gleaner*, Henderson, KY

Section A, Lot 98, — 9, 10, 11

1982

### WILLIAM MICHAEL DUNCAN

First Lt. William Duncan's plans for a career in the U.S. Army were ended July 21, 1967, when he was killed in combat in Vietnam at age 24.

He was the only child of Mr. and Mrs. S.W. Duncan of Louisville. His mother still lives in Louisville, while his uncle, Marvin Duncan, lives in Henderson.

He is buried in Fairmont Cemetery here.

### MRS. ALTA MAE DUNCAN

LOUISVILLE— Mrs. Alta Mae Duncan, 71, of Louisville, died here Friday.

She is a former Henderson resident and a member of the Second Presbyterian Church in Louisville. Her late husband, Scoville, died in 1969.

Survivors include two brothers, Alton Haynes of Franklin, Tenn., and Kenneth I. Haynes of Louisville; and a sister, Mrs. Virginia Haman of Lawrenceburg.

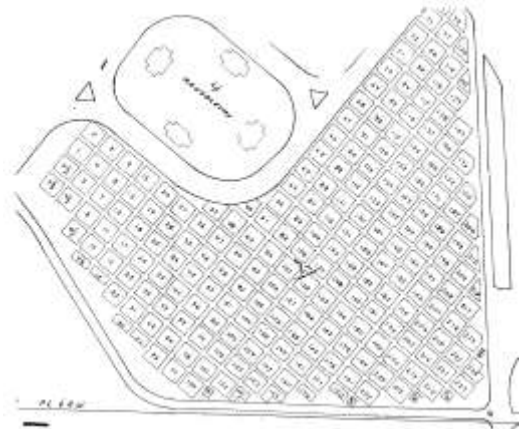
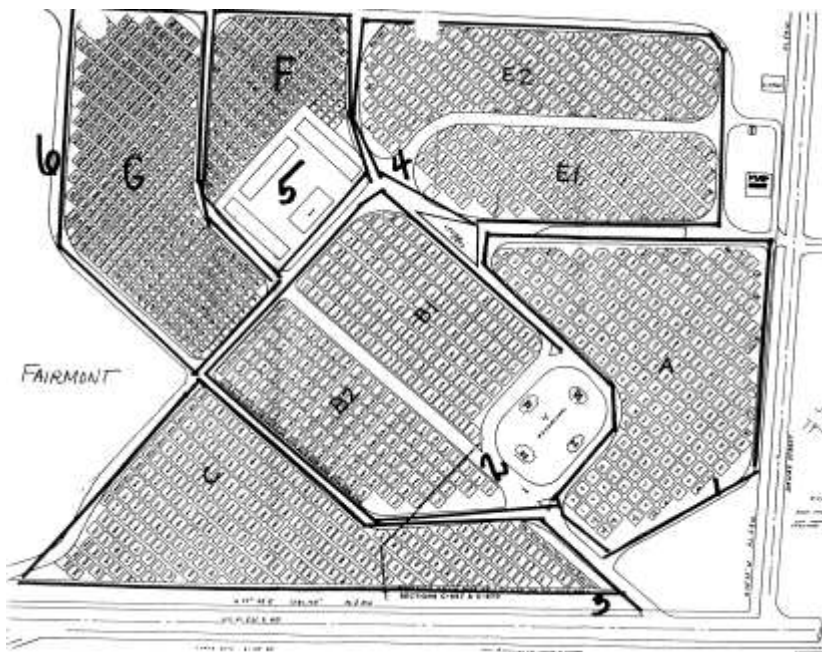
Friends may call at Highlands Funeral Home in Louisville Sunday between 6 and 9 p.m. Graveside services will be at 1 p.m. Monday at Fairmont Cemetery in Henderson.

Benton-Glunt Funeral Home is in charge of local arrangements.

### MRS. ALTA MAE DUNCAN

Graveside services for Mrs. Alta Mae Duncan, 71, of Louisville, who died Friday, will be at 1 p.m. Monday at Fairmont Cemetery, Dr. Elliott Massey officiating.

Expressions of sympathy may take the form of contributions to The Cabbage Patch in Louisville.



		DATE					
		12	11	10	9	8	7
SOUTH	1						
	2						
	3						
	4						
	5						
	6						
		ROAD					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
NORTH							

BURIALS		98
NAME		DATE
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9	Scoville Duncan	7-9-1969
10	Alta Mae Duncan	8-9-1982
11	William M. Duncan	7-29-1967
12		

**Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

**William M. Duncan (61)**

Courtesy: The City of Henderson, Fairmont Cemetery, Thank you Beth Austin:



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### William M. Duncan (61)

Courtesy: Newspaper:

#### Fund at Waggener Will Memorialize Viet War Casualty

Members of Waggener High school's class of 1961 have set up a scholarship fund to honor a classmate killed in Vietnam in July.

The fund will be in memory of First Lt. William M. Duncan, son of Mr. and Mrs. S. W. Duncan, of 407 Chenoweth Lane. Duncan was the first Waggener alumnus to die in the Vietnam War.

Claude Guyton, of 3015 Winchester Acres, and Jim Lapsley, of 8607 Whipps Mill Road, are co-chairman of the committee in charge of the scholarship fund.

If sufficient funds are available, the first scholarship will be given to a 1968 graduate of Waggener. One prerequisite, said Mrs. John B. Lapsley, a Waggener teacher and adviser to Duncan's class, will be that the student have an interest in history.

Duncan was a history major at the University of Kentucky.

Contributions to the William M. Duncan Memorial Fund should be sent to Waggener High School, 330 S. Hubbard Lane.

#### Letter from Mrs. Lapsley to Ken Draut:

February 26, 1993

Dear Ken,

Thanks so much for sending me your recent report on the Waggener Vietnam memorial. I had shown interest in the books and pictures. Whoever thought of promoting the contest which stimulated the reading is greatly to be commended. We are too prone to forget the sacrifice others have made.

Last summer while cleaning our various accumulations of the past I ran across the enclosed photo and yellowed news clipping. I intended to drop by Waggener some time to see if the Librarian might be interested. But school was not in session, I stuck the items away and forgot about them until your letter came. Then I could not remember (old age) where I had put them. Only yesterday I did run across them so will send to you. You may destroy if you already have duplicates.

Most interesting are the pictures of Mr. and Mrs. Duncan. The back row pictures are those who made up the committee which raised money for a Scholarship Fund in Bill Duncan's name. Evidently the money was long ago exhausted. I've heard nothing about it since I retired in 1971.

Best wishes to all your family especially your Dad.

Sincerely, Elizabeth Lapsley

PS I presume the older couple are Mr. & Mrs. Duncan. I do not remember ever seeing him but I am sure the woman is Mrs. Duncan. You may have pictures which will definitely identify.

I am also slightly confused about dates. The clipping states Kirk was 25 when he was killed which must have been in late Feb. of 1964. He must have been 25 in 1968 because Jim Lapsley was the youngest in his class and he was born, Jan. 22, 1944. Dates are really not that important. I have no recollection of this picture being taken but it must have been in 1967, 2 years after the boys graduated from high school.

Probably taken in 1968: Back Row from left to right: Danny Gray, Mrs. Lapsley, Kirk Woolley, Jim Lapsley, Bob Rosenbaum Claude Guyton Chairman.

This committee raised money to start a Scholarship Fund in memory of Bill Duncan WHS's first graduate to die in Vietnam War.



# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## William M. Duncan (61)

ARMY Second Lieutenant William M. Duncan, 23, son of Mr. and Mrs. S. W. Duncan, 407 Chenoweth Lane, has been assigned to the 101st Airborne Division near Phan Rang, Vietnam.

July 20, 1967  
*The Voice-Jeffersonian*

### St. Matthews officer killed in Viet Nam

First Lt. William M. Duncan, 24, a paratroop officer with the 101st Airborne Division, died Friday, July 21, at a base hospital at Pleiku of injuries suffered while he was leading his platoon in combat in Vietnam.

Lieutenant Duncan, a graduate of Waggener High School and the University of Ken-

returned home.

He and Mrs. Duncan live at 407 Chenoweth Ln.

Lieutenant Duncan received a regular Army commission when he was graduated from the University of Kentucky in 1964 and had planned to make the Army his career.

A distinguished military student in ROTC at U. of K., Duncan was a member of Seaboard and Blade. He also had studied in Germany under the program of the International Center of the University of Louisville.

Duncan entered the Army after graduation and had been in Vietnam since May 23. He was a member of the Second Presbyterian Church.

The body will be at the Highlands Funeral Home, 3331 Taylorsville Rd.



LT. WILLIAM DUNCAN

July 27, 1967  
*The Voice-Jeffersonian*

ucky, was hit by mortar fragments while he was on perimeter guard duty. He was evacuated to the base hospital.

The victim's father, S.W. Duncan, a commissioner with the Federal Mediation Service, was completing a month's stay in a hospital when he was informed of the officer's death. The elder Duncan, who was receiving treatment after a heart attack, has



Mrs. S.W. Duncan expresses her thanks after receiving funds totaling more than \$1,400 to set up a scholarship fund in honor of her son, Lt. William M. Duncan, who was killed in Viet Nam. Behind her are Don Gray III, treasurer of the fund-raising group, and her husband. The presentation was made at last Thursday night's meeting of the Waggener High School PTA.

## Fund honoring soldier to be dedicated tonight

A living tribute to Army Lt. William M. Duncan, who was killed in Vietnam last July, has been established at Waggener High School by his family, friends and classmates.

The tribute is a memorial scholarship fund, named after Lt. Duncan, a member of the class of 1961.

Dedication of the fund, which now totals \$1,400, will take place tonight at 7:30 at the regular meeting of the Waggener High PTA.

Present for the ceremony will be Mr. and Mrs. Scoville W. Duncan, 407 Chenoweth Ln. parents of Lt. Duncan.

The fund will provide a schol-

arship for a senior who plans to major in history in college.

Chairmen of the scholarship fund committee are Claude Guyton and Jim Lapsley. The treasurer is Don T. Gray III.

Contributions may still be sent to Waggener in care of Mrs. Elizabeth T. Lapsley, who helped organize the scholarship fund.

For three years Duncan was on Waggener's track team. He belonged to the Beta Club and was active in the Debate Society, Latin and German Clubs. He was a graduate of the University of Kentucky.

January 25, 1968 below February 1, 1968  
*The Voice-Jeffersonian*

## Scholarship fund honors Lt. Duncan

By Susan James

A ceremony establishing the Lt. William M. Duncan Memorial Scholarship opened the Waggener PTA meeting last Thursday night.

Duncan was the first Waggener graduate to die in the Armed-Services, in Viet Nam. He was killed in action last July.

The fund, over \$1,400, will provide annual scholarships to a graduating senior who plans to major in history at college. Duncan was an outstanding history student at Waggener and the University of Kentucky.

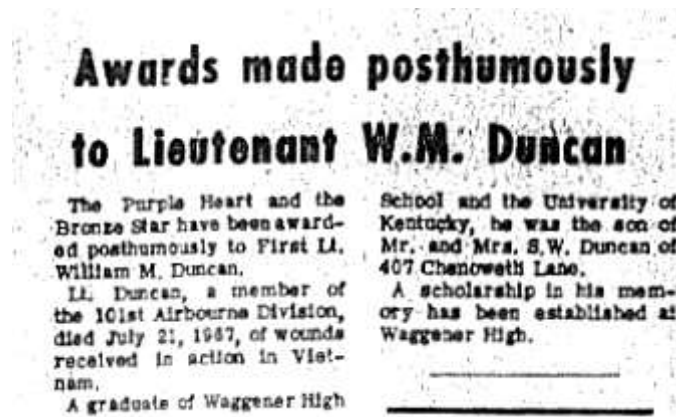
A check for the fund was presented to the veteran's parents, Mr. and Mrs. S.W. Duncan, who will administer the scholarship. The sum will be increased by them and invested so that the interest will pay for the scholarships.

A group of his former classmates and members of the Class of '61 launched the memorial fund last September.

Steering the committee has been Mrs. Elizabeth T. Lapsley, a faculty member and former history teacher of Duncan's. Representing the Class of '61 have been chairman, Claude Guyton; Co-chairman, Jim Lapsley, and treasurer, Danny Gray III.

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### William M. Duncan (61)



May 30, 1968  
*The Voice-Jeffersonian*



#### **Purple Heart**

The Purple Heart is awarded in the name of the President of the United States to any member of an Armed Force who, while serving with the U.S. Armed Services after 5 April 1917, has been wounded or killed, or who has died or may hereafter die after being wounded.



#### **Bronze Star Medal**

The Bronze Star Medal was established by Executive Order 9419, 4 February 1944 (superseded by Executive Order 11046, 24 August 1962).

The Bronze Star Medal is awarded to any person who, while serving in any capacity in or with the Army of the United States after 6 December 1941, distinguished himself or herself by heroic or meritorious achievement or service, not involving participation in aerial flight, in connection with military operations against an armed enemy; or while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

Awards may be made for acts of heroism, performed under circumstances described above, which are of lesser degree than required for the award of the Silver Star.

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## William M. Duncan (61)

Courtesy: <http://tanaya.net/cgi-bin/vmw.cgi?14179>

### *In Memory of First Lieutenant William M Duncan*



Let us not forget First Lieutenant William M Duncan, casualty of the Vietnam War. As a member of the Army, 1LT Duncan served our country until July 21st, 1967 in Quang, South Vietnam. He was 24 years old and was not married. William died from multiple fragmentation wounds/mine. His body was recovered. William was born on June 22nd, 1943 in Louisville, Kentucky.

1LT Duncan is on panel 23E, line 099 of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington D.C. He served our country for one year.



[Home](#) [FAQ](#) [Previous](#) [Next](#) [Search](#) [Random](#)

Remember this memorial: [Del.icio.us](#), [Digg](#), [Technorati](#), [Blinklist](#), [Furl](#), [reddit](#)



Courtesy: [http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=110,110&Wall\\_Id\\_No=14203](http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=110,110&Wall_Id_No=14203)

**WILLIAM M DUNCAN**      **23E, 99**

WILLIAM M DUNCAN  
is honored on Panel 23E, Row 99 of  
the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Full Name: WILLIAM M DUNCAN  
Wall Name: WILLIAM M DUNCAN  
Date of Birth: 6/22/1943  
Date of Casualty: 7/21/1967  
Home of Record: LOUISVILLE  
State: KY  
Branch of Service: ARMY  
Rank: 1LT  
Casualty Country: SOUTH VIETNAM  
Casualty Province: QUANG NGAI

#### Thanks, Brother Bill

Posted for: WILLIAM M DUNCAN

You made the supreme sacrifice.  
If you were here today, I believe you would be Ram-Rodding the War set to launch  
tomorrow, 18 March 2003.

Posted by: Fritz Bodenheimer Sigma Nu, Gamma Iota 764  
Email:  
Relationship: He is my brother  
Tuesday, March 18, 2003

#### RIP, Gamma Iota of Sigma Nu Brother

Posted for: WILLIAM M DUNCAN

Your brothers from Gamma Iota Chapter of Sigma Nu Fraternity, U of Kentucky, in  
the 60's, miss you, remember you and honor you for giving your life for our country.  
We are now in our late 50's and early 60's but you will be forever young. God be  
with you Bill.

Posted by: William Sewell, GI 798  
Email:  
Relationship:  
Wednesday, March 19, 2003

#### Untitled

Posted for: WILLIAM M DUNCAN:

#### FOREVER REMEMBERED

"If you are able, save for them a place inside of you....and save one backward  
glance when you are leaving for the places they can no longer go....Be not  
ashamed to say you loved them....  
Take what they have left and what they have taught you with their dying and keep it  
with your own....And in that time when men decide and feel safe to call the war  
insane, take one moment to embrace those gentle heroes you left behind...."

Quote from a letter home by Maj. Michael Davis O'Donnell  
KIA 24 March 1970, Distinguished Flying Cross: Shot down and killed while  
attempting to rescue 8 fellow soldiers surrounded by attacking enemy forces.

We Nam Brothers pause to give a backward glance, and post this remembrance to  
you . one of the gentle heroes lost to the War in Vietnam .

Sit off that pack. Set it down by the crooked trail. Drop your steel pot alongside.  
Shed those magazine-laden bandoliers away from your sweat-soaked shirt. Lay  
that silent weapon down and step out of the heat. Feel the soothing cool breeze  
right down to your soul ... and rest forever in the shade of our love, brother.

From your 2/502nd Infantry, 101st Airborne STRIKE FORCE Nam-Band-Of-  
Brothers

Posted by: Bill Nelson 2/502 Infantry 101st Airborne  
Email: [qrlno@yahoo.com](mailto:qrlno@yahoo.com)  
Relationship: Nam Vet 7/69-9/70  
Monday, March 12, 2007

#### Ei Diablo--

Posted for: WILLIAM M DUNCAN:

Duty. Honor. Country. Thanks for the good times. I've not forgotten. Nor your  
sacrifice.

#### Ei Sinverguenza

Posted by: Donald Morrison  
Email:  
Relationship: He is my brother  
Wednesday, October 24, 2001



# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## William M. Duncan (61)

Courtesy: <http://www.viethero.us/Search/Searchlink.html>

Panel 23 East



ROW 099 \* DONALD FRED FEE \* STANLEY FERBOS  
\* ARTHUR M JR DRIGGERS \* WILLIAM M DUNCAN \* PAUL LOUIS DOMKE

Courtesy: <http://thewall-usa.com/info.asp?recid=14198>

### Personal comments on this site

#### WILLIAM M DUNCAN

manny g  
Fellow Veteran 69-70 An Khe  
Union Gap, WA, 98903  
"You are Remembered"

Peace and condolence, to the family and friends. "He which hath no stomach to this fight let him depart. But we in it shall be remembered. We few, we happy few, we band of brothers!! For he today, that sheds his blood with me, shall always be my brother." Rest in peace brave soldier, you have not been forgotten. (W.Shakespeare) May God Bless You for your Sacrifice!!!  
Jul 21, 2007

The Wall-USA

Ron Sheehan  
rwsheehan@bellsouth.net  
Fellow Veteran

I'm a retired MSG U.S.Army from Louisville, Ky who wants to keep your memory alive. We soldiers do not question our duty, but do our part to keep and preserve freedom. However! You gave the ultimate sacrifice. It would have been nice to have known you as a person. You forever will be a HERO. We should never let these brave men "Fade Away", their memory and the Vietnam War should never disappear from our thoughts and history.  
Tuesday, May 24, 2005

The Wall-USA

Clyde Adams  
csajr@simflex.com  
Fellow RVN Vet

Today is your day William,happy birthday. You are not forgotten. I hope time has found peace for your family and that God has blessed you well  
Saturday, June 22, 2002

The Wall-USA

William H. Sewell, II  
bezerk1944@hotmail.com  
fraternity brother  
11 W 3rd St  
Maysville, KY 41056 USA  
RIP Gamma Iota of Sigma Nu Brother

Your brothers from Gamma Iota Chapter, Sigma Nu Fraternity, U of Kentucky, in the 1960's, miss you, remember you and honor you for giving your life for our country. We are now in our late 50's and early 60's, but you will be forever young. God be with you Bill.  
Thursday, April 24, 2003

The Wall-USA

Phil Thornton  
phil11b40@bellsouth.net  
Louisville Vietnam Vet

The reasons for these brave young men going to Vietnam can be varied and numerous. But in the end what really matters is that they went. They answered their country's call and served honorably. We should be forever grateful for their service, dedication and sacrifice and make certain that they are not forgotten.  
Wednesday, November 16, 2005

#### WILLIAM M DUNCAN

1LT - O2 - Army - Regular

Length of service 1 years  
His tour began on Jun 2, 1967  
Casualty was on Jul 21, 1967  
In QUANG NGAI, SOUTH VIETNAM  
Hostile, died of wounds, GROUND CASUALTY  
MULTIPLE FRAGMENTATION WOUNDS  
Body was recovered

Panel 23E - Line 99

From: Ancestry.com

#### Vietnam War: U.S. Military Casualties, 1956-1998

Name:	WILLIAM M Duncan
Birth Date:	22 Jun 1943
Death Date:	21 Jul 1967
Home City:	Louisville
Home State:	Kentucky
SSN/Service #:	OF108552
Death Date:	21 Jul 1967
Casualty Country:	Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam)
Tour Start Date:	2
Service Branch:	Department of the Army
Component:	Regular (RA, USN, USAF, USMC, USCG)
RANK:	First Lieutenant
Military Grade:	First Lieutenant
Pay Grade:	First Lieutenant (U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps) or Lieutenant Junior Grade (U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard)
COMPANY:	HHC
REGIMENT:	502nd Inf
Battalion:	2nd Bn
Province:	05
Decotation:	Not Available
CN:	Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam)
Service:	71542
Occupation:	
Data Source:	Cofelt Database

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Kirk Allen Woolley (61)

April 15, 1943 - February 11, 1969



1958 Lair



1959 Lair



1960 Lair



1961 Lair

**Courtesy: Ken Draut (73), of the Waggener Vietnam Memorial committee.**

**Kirk Allen Woolley, Class of '61:** Kirk participated in a variety of activities at Waggener including the Spanish Club, the Science Club, the Senior Play and the Track Team. He graduated from U of L's Speed Scientific School with a degree in Engineering. He entered the Army as an enlisted man and arrived in Vietnam in 1968. His younger brother, Craig, recalls that when Kirk learned that Craig would be sent to Vietnam, Kirk "re-upped" for another 12 months in Vietnam so that his little brother would not have to go to Vietnam. Kirk was killed on February 11, 1969, while being lowered out of a helicopter in an attempt to rescue a fellow soldier who had been trapped in a tree while parachuting into the jungle. In addition to other military commendations, Kirk received the Silver Star.

His brother reports that many of Kirk's teenage escapades are probably not appropriate for public discussion. However, it is very evident that Kirk had a tremendous zest for life and a deep dedication to his family and friends.



**The home at 3921 Druid Hill Road that Kirk grew up in.  
Photo 2008 by Al Ring**

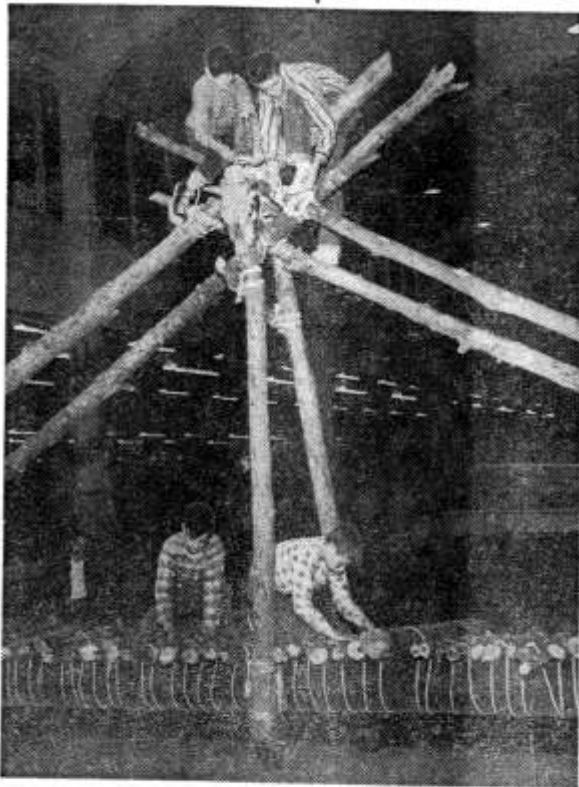


**Kirk Woolley to right of Gary Morris, and left of Principal Marguerite Lewis, Chenoweth Elementary School, Safety Patrol Party, November 12, 1954.**

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Kirk Allen Woolley (61)

Courtesy Glynn Payne Troop 1, Crescent Hill United Methodist Church, *The Louisville Times*, April 12, 1957:



### .. Bridging A Pool Is Demonstrated...

Building a bridge across a pool—it could be a stream—is demonstrated by Troop 1's Garvin E. Davis (left) and Bruce Tollefsen (lower level) and, topside, Jimmy May and Kirk Woolley. Some 6,000 Scouts from 19 counties of Old Kentucky Home Council are participating.

Jeffersonian:

### ★ STARS and STRIPES

ARMY PFC Kirk A. Woolley, 25, son of Mr. and Mrs. Albert A. Woolley, 3921 Druid Hill Rd., has been assigned as a gunner in the First Air Cavalry Division at Camp Evans, Vietnam.

### Two Waggener high grads killed in action in Vietnam

Two St. Matthews area service men, both graduates of Waggener High School, are among the latest victims of the war in Vietnam, according to word received this week from the Defense Department.

They were Sgt. Thomas Scott Hamilton 21, son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Hamilton, 3709 Hillsboro Rd., and Specialist Four Kirk A. Woolley, 25, son of Mr. and Mrs. Albert A. Woolley, 3921 Druid Hill Rd.

Hamilton was killed in action last Saturday, 40 days after landing in Vietnam. Woolley was killed in action Tuesday, Feb. 11. He had been in Vietnam since July, 1968.

Hamilton was a 1965 graduate of Waggener and had been in the Army since December, 1967. He was a member of Harvey Browne Memorial Presbyterian Church and attended Eastern Kentucky University.

Woolley, a 1961 Waggener graduate, formerly worked in the chemical laboratory at General Electric and had attended the Speed Scientific School of the University of Louisville. He had been in the army since February, 1968.

Besides his parents, Hamilton leaves a brother, Douglas Hamilton; a sister; Miss Connie Sue Hamilton, and grandmothers, Mrs. Thomas Hamilton and Mrs. Iva Allen, both of Kallspeil, Mont. In addition to his parents, Woolley leaves a brother, Specialist Four Craig Woolley, Fort Sill, Okla., and his grandmother, Mrs. Myrtle Curtis, Stratford, Conn.

Both bodies will be at Pearson's, 149 Breckinridge Ln.

26,

September 1968, *The Voice*—

February 20, 1969

*The*

### Silver Star awarded posthumously to local soldier killed in Viet Nam

The Silver Star, the nation's third highest award for heroism in combat, has been awarded posthumously to Army Specialist Four Kirk A. Woolley, son of Mr. and Mrs. Albert A. Woolley, 3921 Druid Hill Rd.

Woolley, 25, was killed Feb. 11 in Vietnam during a medical evacuation mission.

The citation that accompanied the award said Woolley died during a "heroic rescue attempt" for which he volunteered.

He was serving as a door gunner with Headquarters and Support Company of the 10th Medical Battalion (Airmobile) the day he was mortally wounded.

"Disregarding the danger of the strain the weight of two men would produce on the helicopter hoist," the citation said, Woolley "descended on the hoist and skillfully maneuvered through the obstacles" and hooked up with an injured man who had been stranded high in a tree during an earlier medical evacuation mission.

"When the hoisting operation began," the citation continued, "the ship was thrown into a roll and was headed for certain destruction until the pilots were forced to cut the cable supporting the two men."

In addition to the Silver Star, he received posthumously the Bronze Star and the Air Medal.

Woolley, a graduate of Waggener High School, entered the Army in February, 1968, and was sent to Vietnam the following July. He also attended the University of Louisville.

June 19, 1969  
*The Voice-Jeffersonian*

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

**Kirk Allen Woolley (61)**

Courtesy Craig Woolley, Kirk's brother:



This committee raised money to start a Scholarship Fund in memory of Bill Duncan WHS's first graduate to die in Vietnam War. Kirk is back row, 3rd from left.

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Kirk Allen Woolley (61)

Courtesy Craig Woolley, Kirk's brother: Letter from Kirk to Family, December 2, 1968:



1st AIR CAVALRY DIVISION  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96490



*3 Dec 1968  
Tuesday Evening*

*H<sup>o</sup> Folko*

I am sitting at my desk drinking a bourbon and ginger and I have a little time to write. I have been real busy since I last wrote and this is the first chance I have had. I have been flying #2 missions and VIP out of Phouc Vinh where I am now and have been averaging about 8 hours flying time a day, which is quite a bit. There is a war going on down here but I still haven't seen any of it. I know things are worse because we are picking up more wounded than we were before. We take the patients that need surgery and more care to Long Bien which is just outside of Saigon and that is about twenty minutes flying time away, from here. Sometime this week I will move to Tay Ninh which is west of here and just a little North. The mail there is quite slow so I hope I get some letters soon before I go to Tay Ninh. I have gotten letters from McAdoo, Sarah Stiglitz and from Nana but I haven't had a chance to write back yet.

I am glad to here that Red Guinn came by to see you and tell you something about what goes on here. He flew as a door-gunner for a while before I got here. If you haven't bought a tape recorder yet just borrow one from GE, the Chem lab has some, and then I'll order an AKAI tape recorder from Japan but it is likely to take a while. The one I want cost \$228 but it is really nice.

It is now getting late and I am going to get some sleep because I have to fly again tomorrow. Say hi to the gang and tell them I'm thinking about them. I'll write again soon on my new stationery when I get a chance.

Tell Sarah I'll write as soon as I'm able to.

Love Kirk

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Kirk Allen Woolley (61)

Courtesy Craig Woolley, Kirk's brother: Letter from Kirk to Family, December 21, 1968:



1st AIR CAVALRY DIVISION  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96490



Dec 21, 1968  
Saturday 4 PM

I hope that you have received my tape and also the packet that I found for Brian. I haven't received anymore packages or letters in the last couple of days because we haven't had a mail call lately. I'm still at Tay Ninh and we still don't have a chopper. We haven't had a chopper since early this week and it makes life a lot easier knowing that you don't have anything to do.

Day before yesterday I went to the Philippine PX and picked out a camera. I have to wait for the finance officer to show up, he'll probably be here tomorrow. That same day we sat around the beer garden for a couple of hours and then we went to one of the clubs and played pool until about ten at night. Yesterday I slept until noon then I went swimming all afternoon and played cribbage last night. Today we played cribbage and then a little basketball. Now I am on radio watch until midnight.

It's hard to believe this is Christmas week because there isn't much chance for snow. The temperatures are still in the 80's & 90's and I have been out sunbathing. Some industrious people have put up outdoor Christmas decorations complete with lights and loudspeakers with Christmas music. All this really goes to show you that "War is Hell." This is the longest vacation that I ever hope to have. All that we do is what we feel like and it's starting to get boring.

I bet Craig wishes he had nothing to do back at Fort Sill but I guess not everyone can be lucky.

I guess we'll watch the moon shot on television, it starts at 8 o'clock tonight. I took a break for dinner and I'm listening to the space launch preliminaries now.

Please send some more blank tapes when you get a chance. A company named AMPEX makes plastic markers for tapes. I'm sure they are available in Louisville either at P I Burkes or the Tape Center in St. Matthews. They also have stick on address labels.

There was just a broadcast on our internal radio that one of our pilots let some passengers off at the wrong place they were supposed to go to the Bob Hope Show.

I guess I don't have much to say right now and I'm getting mad at the pen so I guess I'll close for now. I hope everyone enjoyed the holiday.

Love Kirk

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

**Kirk Allen Woolley (61)**

Courtesy Craig Woolley, Kirk's brother:



## A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Heavenly Father we confess that it is our custom to accept Thy gifts and direct little thought to the giver. We thank Thee for invading history that we might for all time understand the intensity of Thy love for us. We ask that the gift of Thy Son may guide us to present our gifts of service to Thee regardless of the station of those to whom Thy love is to be revealed. Make of us modern wise men who dare to serve Thee from the heat of Vietnam to the pavement of our cities. Grant that as we celebrate Thy Nativity our lives shall radiate Thy love, Thy humility and Thy selflessness. Amen.

*Gerard J. GEFELL*  
GERARD J. GEFELL  
Chaplain (COL), USA  
Staff Chaplain

## Christmas Day Dinner

1968

Shrimp Cocktail	
Cocktails	
Roast Turkey	Turkey Gravy
Cornbread Dressing	Cranberry Sauce
Masked Potatoes	
Glazed Sweet Potatoes	
Buttered Mixed Vegetables or Buttered Peas	
Assorted Crisp Relishes	Hot Rolls with Butter
Fruit Cake	
Mincemeat Pie	
Pumpkin Pie with Whipped Topping	
Assorted Nuts	Assorted Candy
Assorted Fresh Fruits	
Ice Tea with Lemon	Milk

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Kirk Allen Woolley (61)

Courtesy Craig Woolley, Kirk's brother: Letter from Kirk to Family, December 26, 1968:



1st AIR CAVALRY DIVISION  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96490



*Dec 26, 1968  
Thursday Morning*

*Hi Folks*

While I sit here and write this letter you are probably eating cold Turkey sandwiches and watching television on Christmas Night. I am sitting at a picnic table under a parachute at Cu Chi. I was moved down here on the 24th so that we could relieve the other crew. Since Dec. 4th when I went to the field I have been on four missions. Early this morning we picked up a NVA soldier who was shot in the knee.

Christmas eve we sat around and had a party until about two in the morning and I didn't get up until 11:30 yesterday. For Christmas dinner we had roast turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, shrimp cocktail, crackers, peas, mixed vegetables, Hot Rolls, fruit cake, mincemeat pie, pumpkin pie, relishes, nuts, candy, fresh fruit iced tea, milk, egg nog, and coffee. Needless to say my eyes were much bigger than my stomach and I didn't even finish half of what I had taken.

Cu Chi is the base camp for the twenty fifth Infantry Division and we are living with the 159th Dust Off Detachment. They have a real nice area complete with FLUSH TOILETS and the usual assortment of bars and clubs. Out half of the bunker is above ground and the other half is underground.

Myself and three others live in the underground portion which is quite compact but comfortable. This is really a nice place complete with swimming pools and a snack bar that serves cheeseburgers and steaks smothered in onions.

I received your three packages from the Wisconsin Cheeseman and also one from the Sitglers, I need their address. I also received the Christmas package you sent. Your letters have been held up and on the 25th I received nine letters, two packages and a newspaper. In these I received your letters of the 9th, 15th and 17th and also two letters from Ruth and Pete and one from Nana.

By now I guess you know that the tape wasn't blank I just didn't get my recorder working right. The one I didn't here was the one from the Red Cross that apparently played all right for y'all. The boy from troop #1 is Donald Miller but I don't know where in Louisville he lives.

I will order a tape recorder and also send you some money. I don't know what I got a bill from 1st National for I've got a receipt somewhere that said paid in full. I will send you \$100 dollars, as soon as I can get to the finance office and the tape recorder will cost about \$250 to buy and send it home.

I am looking forward to hearing the Christmas tape and I am sending another tape in a regular plastic mailer. Extra mailing labels can be affixed to the mailer as it makes mailing a lot easier.

Well I don't have anything more to say so I guess I'll close. Say hello to the gang for me.

Love Kirk

P.S. I mailed this and the other letter together.



# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

**Kirk Allen Woolley (61)**

Courtesy Craig Woolley, Kirk's brother:

<b>CLASS OF SERVICE</b> This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.	<b>WESTERN UNION</b> <b>TELEGRAM</b>	<b>SYMBOLS</b> DL = Day Letter NL = Night Letter LT = International Letter Telegram
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The filing time shown in the date line on domestic telegrams is LOCAL TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is LOCAL TIME at point of destination.

1134A EST FEB 15 69 CTA128

LV CT WA123 JW XV GOVT PDB 4 EXTRA WASHINGTON DC 15 1043A

EST

MR AND MRS ALBERT A WOOLLEY, DONT PHONE, DONT DLE BTWN 10PM AND 6AM, CHECK BLY CHGS ABOVE 75 CTS

3921 DRUID HILL RD LVILLE

THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY HAS ASKED ME TO EXPRESS HIS

DEEP REGRET THAT YOUR SON, SPECIALIST FOUR KIRK A WOOLLEY DIED IN VIETNAM ON 11 FEBRUARY 1969 AS A RESULT OF INJURIES. YOUR SON WAS SERVING AS A DOOR GUNNER ON A MILITARY AIRCRAFT ON A RESCUE MISSION WHEN HE VOLUNTEERED TO DESCEND FROM THE AIRCRAFT ON A HOIST TO ASSIST IN THE EXTRACTION OF A WOUNDED INDIVIDUAL. AN ATTEMPT HAD BEEN MADE TO EXTRACT THE WOUNDED MAN EARLIER AND THE HOIST LITTER HAD BECOME CAUGHT IN THE JUNGLE CANOPY. YOUR SON REACHED THE WOUNDED INDIVIDUAL BUT AS BOTH WERE BEING RAISED UP TO THE HOVERING AIRCRAFT,

F1201 (R3-65)

THE AIRCRAFT BEGAN TO TILT SEVERELY AND THE PILOT COULD NOT CONTROL THE AIRCRAFT OR LAND. DUE TO THE PROXIMITY OF THE AIRCRAFT TO THE JUNGLE CANOPY, THE LIFT CABLE WAS SEVERED TO AVOID A CRASH AND YOUR SON AND THE MAN HE WAS ASSISTING FELL TO THE GROUND. PLEASE ACCEPT MY DEEPEST SYMPATHY. THIS CONFIRMS PERSONAL NOTIFICATION MADE BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

KENNETH G WICKHAM MAJOR GENERAL USA F3 THE ADJUTANT GENERAL (1128).

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Kirk Allen Woolley (61)

Courtesy Craig Woolley, Kirk's brother:



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON



WASHINGTON

18 February 1969

February 24, 1969

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Woolley:

Please accept my deepest sympathy for the death of your son, Specialist Four Kirk A. Woolley, in Vietnam on February 11, 1969.

We are proud of his military accomplishments and grateful to him for his contribution to our Nation's strength. All members of the United States Army join me in expressing the hope that the memory of his dedicated service will help to ease your sorrow.

Sincerely yours,

Stanley R. Resor

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Woolley:

It was with sadness that I learned of the passing of your son, Specialist Four Kirk A. Woolley, on 11 February, in Vietnam.

I know that the loss of a loved one is one of the most difficult things a person has to face, but perhaps you may find some measure of comfort in knowing that he served his Nation with courage and honor at a time of great need.

The memory of his service will be treasured by a grateful Nation because he has joined the long line of American soldiers who in times of national peril have given their lives for freedom and for peace. In Vietnam today, as in other fields in earlier days, we are defending the right of men to choose their own destiny, the right of men to live in dignity and freedom.

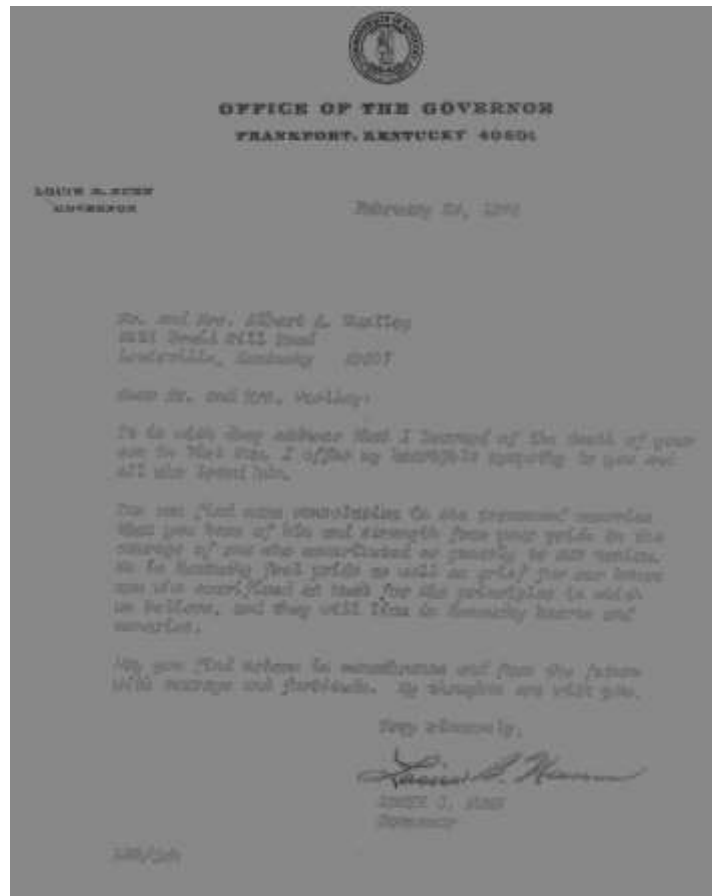
On behalf of the United States Army, I express heartfelt sympathy to you.

Sincerely,

W. C. WESTMORELAND  
General, United States Army  
Chief of Staff

Mr. and Mrs. Albert A. Woolley  
3921 Druid Hills Road  
Louisville, Kentucky 40207

Mr. and Mrs. Albert A. Woolley  
3921 Druid Hill Road  
Louisville, Kentucky 40207



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Kirk Allen Woolley (61)

#### Silver Star awarded posthumously to local soldier killed in Vietnam

The Silver Star, the nation's third highest award for heroism in combat, has been awarded posthumously to Army Specialist Four Kirk A. Woolley, son of Mr. and Mrs. Albert A. Woolley, 3921 Druid Hill Road.

Woolley, 25, was killed February 11, in Vietnam during a medical evacuation mission.

The citation that accompanied the award said Woolley died during a "Heroic rescue attempt" for which he volunteered. He was serving as a door gunner with Headquarters and Support Company of the 15th Medical Battalion (Airmobile) the day he was mortally wounded.

"Disregarding the danger of the strain the weight of two men would produce on the helicopter hoist," the citation said, Woolley "descended on the hoist and skillfully maneuvered through the obstacles" and hooked up with an injured man who had been stranded high in a tree during an earlier medical evacuation mission.

"When the hoisting operation began," the citation continued, "the ship was thrown into a roll and was headed for certain destruction until the pilots were forced to cut the cable supporting the two men."

In addition to the Silver Star, he received posthumously the Bronze star and the air Medal.

Woolley, a graduate of Waggener High School, entered the army in February, 1968, and was sent to Vietnam the following July. He also attended the University of Louisville.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20315

Courtesy Craig  
Woolley, Kirk's  
brother:

AGPB-AC Woolley, Kirk A.  
US 51 946 901 (11 Feb 69)

Mr. and Mrs. Albert A. Woolley  
3921 Druid Hill Road  
Louisville, Kentucky 40207

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Woolley:

I have the honor to inform you that your son has been awarded posthumously the Silver Star for gallantry in action, Bronze Star Medal and the Air Medal (First through Seventh Oak Leaf Clusters).

Prior to death, Kirk had been awarded the Air Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Ribbon, Aircraft Crewman Badge and the Sharpshooter Badge with rifle bar.

Arrangements are being made to have these awards presented to you in the near future by a representative of the Commanding General, First United States Army.

The representative selected will communicate with you in the next few weeks to arrange for presentation. Any inquiry or correspondence concerning presentation should be addressed to the Commanding General, First United States Army, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland 20755.

My continued sympathy is with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kenneth G. Wickham".

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Kirk Allen Woolley (61)

Courtesy Craig Woolley, Kirk's brother:



### The Silver Star

The Silver Star, section 3746, title 10, United States Code (10 USC 3746), was established by Act of Congress 9 July 1918 (amended by act of 25 July 1963).

The Silver Star is awarded to a person who, while serving in any capacity with the U.S. Army, is cited for gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force, or while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party. The required gallantry, while of a lesser degree than that required for the Distinguished Service Cross, must nevertheless have been performed with marked distinction.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION (AIRMOBILE)  
APO San Francisco 96490

GENERAL ORDERS  
NUMBER 4371

9 April 1969

### AWARD OF THE SILVER STAR

1. TC 320. The following AWARD is announced posthumously.

WOOLLEY, KIRK A. US51946901 (SSAN: 404-36-2994) SPECIALIST FOUR  
United States Army Headquarters and Support Company, 15th Medical  
Battalion (Airmobile)

Awarded: Silver Star

Date action: 11 February 1969

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason: For gallantry in action while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. Specialist Four Woolley distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous action on 11 February 1969 while serving as a door gunner with Headquarters and Support Company, 15th Medical Battalion (Airmobile) during a medical evacuation mission. Upon learning that a medical evacuation mission had been aborted due to heavy enemy ground fire, leaving the casualty stranded high in a tree, Specialist Four Woolley volunteered to be a part of the next crew sent to extract the soldier. Disregarding the danger of the strain the weight of two men would produce on the helicopter hoist, Specialist Four Woolley descended on the hoist and skillfully maneuvered through the obstacles, hooking up with the injured man. When the hoisting operation began, the ship was thrown into a roll and was headed for certain destruction until the pilots were forced to cut the cable supporting the two men. Although he was fatally injured during his heroic rescue attempt, Specialist Four Woolley's performance was an inspiration to the men who served with him. His gallant action was in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service, and reflects great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.

Authority: By direction of the President, under the provisions of the Act of Congress, approved 9 July 1918.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

OFFICIAL:

ROBERT N. MACKINNON  
Colonel, GS  
Chief of Staff

*Lester J. Evans*  
LESTER J. EVANS  
LTC, AGC  
Adjutant General

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Kirk Allen Woolley (61)

Courtesy Craig Woolley, Kirk's brother:



#### Bronze Star Medal

The Bronze Star Medal was established by Executive Order 9419, 4 February 1944 (superseded by Executive Order 11046, 24 August 1962).

The Bronze Star Medal is awarded to any person who, while serving in any capacity in or with the Army of the United States after 6 December 1941, distinguished himself or herself by heroic or meritorious achievement or service, not involving participation in aerial flight, in connection with military operations against an armed enemy; or while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

Awards may be made for acts of heroism, performed under circumstances described above, which are of lesser degree than required for the award of the Silver Star.

## Citation

BY DIRECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

### THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL

IS PRESENTED TO

SPECIALIST FOUR KIRK A. WOOLLEY US51946901  
UNITED STATES ARMY  
POSTHUMOUSLY

who distinguished himself by outstandingly meritorious service in connection with military operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. During the period

JULY 1968 TO FEBRUARY 1969

he consistently manifested exemplary professionalism and initiative in obtaining outstanding results. His rapid assessment and solution of numerous problems inherent in a combat environment greatly enhanced the allied effectiveness against a determined and aggressive enemy. Despite many adversities, he invariably performed his duties in a resolute and efficient manner. Energetically applying his sound judgment and extensive knowledge, he has contributed materially to the successful accomplishment of the United States mission in the Republic of Vietnam. His loyalty, diligence and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Army.

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Kirk Allen Woolley (61)

Courtesy Craig Woolley, Kirk's brother:



### Air Medal

The Air Medal was established by Executive Order 9158, 11 May 1942 as amended by Executive Order 9242-A, 11 September 1942.

The Air Medal is awarded to any person who, while serving in any capacity in or with the U.S. Army, will have distinguished himself or herself by meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight. Awards may be made to recognize single acts of merit or heroism, or for meritorious service as described below.

Awards may be made for acts of heroism in connection with military operations against an armed enemy or while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party, which are of a lesser degree than required for award of the Distinguished Flying Cross.

## Citation

BY DIRECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

### THE AIR MEDAL (FIRST THRU SEVENTH OAK LEAF CLUSTERS) IS PRESENTED TO

SPECIALIST FOUR KIRK A. WOOLLEY US51946901  
UNITED STATES ARMY  
POSTHUMOUSLY

who distinguished himself by meritorious achievement, while participating in sustained aerial flight, in support of combat ground forces in the Republic of Vietnam. During the period

26 SEPTEMBER 1968 TO 11 FEBRUARY 1969

he actively participated in more than twenty-five aerial missions over hostile territory in support of operations against communist aggression. During all of these flights, he displayed the highest order of air discipline and acted in accordance with the best traditions of the service. By his determination to accomplish his mission, in spite of the hazards inherent in repeated aerial flights over hostile territory, and by his outstanding degree of professionalism and devotion to duty, he has brought credit upon himself, his organization, and the United States Army.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION (AIRMOBILE)  
APO San Francisco 96490

GENERAL ORDERS  
NUMBER 2098

21 February 1969

### AWARD OF THE AIR MEDAL

1. TO 380. The following AWARD is announced posthumously.

Awarded: Air Medal (First thru Seventh Oak Leaf Clusters)  
Date action: 26 September 1968 to 11 February 1969

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason: For meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight in the Republic of Vietnam.

Authority: By direction of the President, under the provisions of Executive Order 9158, 11 May 1942, as amended by Executive Order 9242-A, 11 September 1942, and DA Message 979888, dated 29 July 1964.

WOOLLEY, KIRK A. US51946901 (SSAN: 404-56-2994) SPECIALIST FOUR United States Army Headquarters and Support Company, 15th Medical Battalion (Airmobile)

FOR THE COMMANDER:

OFFICIAL:

ROBERT H. MUMFORD  
Colonel, GS  
Chief of Staff

LESTER J. SWANS  
LTC, AGC  
Adjutant General

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## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Kirk Allen Woolley (61)

#### Other Medals Kirk received::



#### National Defense Service Medal

The National Defense Service Medal was awarded for honorable active service for any period between 27 June 1950 and 27 July 1954; between 1 January 1961 and 14 August 1974; between 2 August 1990 and 30 November 1995 and between 11 September 2001 and a closing date to be determined. For the purpose of the award, the following persons will not be considered as performing active service:

#### Vi- etnam Service Medal



Awarded to all members of the Armed Forces of the United States serving in Vietnam and contiguous waters or airspace thereover, after 3 July 1965 through 28 March 1973. Members of the Armed Forces of the United States in Thailand, Laos, or Cambodia, or the airspace thereover, during the same period and serving in direct support of operations in Vietnam are also eligible for this award.



#### Vietnam Campaign Ribbon

The Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal is awarded to personnel who meet one of the following requirements:

Six months service is not required for individuals who were wounded by hostile forces; killed in action or otherwise in line of duty; or captured by hostile forces.



#### Aircraft Crewman Badge

The **Aircrew Badge** is a qualification badge of the United States military that is awarded by all five branches of armed services to personnel who serve as crew members on board military aircraft. The badge is intended to recognize the training and qualifications required by aircrew of military aircraft. In order to qualify as an aircrew member and receive the Aircrew Badge, such personnel typically undergo advanced training in aircraft in-flight support roles.

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Kirk Allen Woolley (61)

Courtesy: [http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=110,110&Wall\\_Id\\_No=14203](http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=110,110&Wall_Id_No=14203)

**KIRK ALLEN WOOLLEY** 32W, 18

KIRK ALLEN WOOLLEY  
is honored on Panel 32W, Row 18 of  
the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Full Name: KIRK ALLEN WOOLLEY  
Wall Name: KIRK A WOOLLEY  
Date of Birth: 4/15/1943  
Date of Casualty: 2/11/1969  
Home of Record: LOUISVILLE  
State: KY  
Branch of Service: ARMY  
Rank: SP4  
Casualty Country: SOUTH VIETNAM  
Casualty Province: TAY NINH

### Thank You

Posted for: KIRK ALLEN WOOLLEY:

Dear Kirk,  
I am a sophomore at Gridley High School, Gridley, Illinois. I am writing this for the Gridley High School posting Project. I would like to thank you for all you have given our country. I am very grateful for your time and efforts serving our country. You will always be remembered.  
Thank You and God Bless!  
Emily Ringger

Posted by: Emily Ringger  
Email: ei\_xoxo\_08@hotmail.com  
Relationship:  
Thursday, February 19, 2004

### Never Forgotten

Posted for: KIRK ALLEN WOOLLEY:

#### FOREVER REMEMBERED

"If you are able, save for them a place inside of you....and save one backward glance when you are leaving for the places they can no longer go.....Be not ashamed to say you loved them....  
Take what they have left and what they have taught you with their dying and keep it with your own....And in that time when men decide and feel safe to call the war insane, take one moment to embrace those gentle heroes you left behind...."

Quote from a letter home by Maj. Michael Davis O'Donnell  
KIA 24 March 1970. Distinguished Flying Cross: Shot down and Killed while attempting to rescue 8 fellow soldiers surrounded by attacking enemy forces.

We Nam Brothers pause to give a backward glance, and post this remembrance to you, one of the gentle heroes lost to the War in Vietnam:

Slip off that pack. Set it down by the crooked trail. Drop your steel pot alongside. Shed those magazine-laden bandoliers away from your sweat-soaked shirt. Lay that silent weapon down and step out of the heat. Feel the soothing cool breeze right down to your soul ... and rest forever in the shade of our love, brother.

From your Nam-Band-Of-Brothers

Posted by: Bill Nelson  
Email: grite@yahoo.com  
Relationship: NamVet 2/502 Inf 101 Abn 69-70  
Monday, January 9, 2006

Courtesy: <http://tanaya.net/cgi-bin/vmw.cgi?57334>

### *In Memory of Specialist Four Kirk Allen Woolley*



**Let us not forget Specialist Four Kirk Allen Woolley, casualty of the Vietnam War. As a member of the Army Selective Service, SP4 Woolley served our country until February 11th, 1969 in Tay Ninh, South Vietnam. He was 25 years old and was not married. Kirk died when his helicopter crashed into the land. His body was recovered. Kirk was born on April 15th, 1943 in Louisville, Kentucky.**

**SP4 Woolley is on panel 32W, line 018 of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington D.C. He served our country for less than a year.**



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0783107



# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Kirk Allen Woolley (61)

Courtesy: Ancestry.com

### Vietnam War: U.S. Military Casualties, 1956-1998

Name:	<b>Kirk Allen Woolley</b>
Birth Date:	15 Apr 1943
Death Date:	11 Feb 1969
Gender:	Male
Age:	25
Race:	Caucasian
Home City:	Louisville
Home State:	Kentucky
Religion:	Episcopal (Anglican)
Marital Status:	Single (Spouse Not Listed)
SSN/Service #:	51946901
Citizen Status:	U.S.
Death Date:	11 Feb 1969
Processed Date:	Feb 1969
Casualty Country:	Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam)
Casualty Type:	Non-Hostile - Died of Other Causes
Casualty Reason:	Aircraft Loss/Crash Not at Sea
Casualty Air:	Helicopter Air Casualty - Non-Aircrew
Body Status:	Body Recovered
Service Branch:	Department of the Army
Component:	Selective Service
Military Grade:	Specialist Fourth Class
Pay Grade:	Specialist Fourth Class (U.S. Army) or Corporal (U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps) or Sergeant (U.S. Air Force) or Grade/Rate Abbreviations With First Column: Any Entry; Second Column: N; Third Column: 3; Fourth Column: Blank (U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard) or
Province:	Military Region 3 - Tay Ninh
Length of Service :	00
Service Occupation:	Aircraft Maintenance Crewman (ARMY)
Data Source:	Combat Area Casualties Current File

### U.S. Army Personnel and Dependent Casualties, 1961-1981

Name:	<b>Kirk A Woolley</b>
Birth Date:	1943
Gender:	Male
Race:	Caucasian (White)
Home State:	Kansas
Casualty Country:	Vietnam, Republic of
Casualty Category:	Non-battle Dead
Casualty Status:	Non-hostile Dead: Died Out-right (previous)
Casualty Date:	11 Feb 1969
Cause of Death:	Not Booby Trap Connected: Aircraft Connected Not At Sea; Other Causes (includes Animal Attack, Lightning, Electrocution, Malnutrition, Thirst, Exposure (heat Or Cold), Collapsing Structure/falling Debris, Fall (parachute Or Otherwise), Assault By Human Without Weapon, Non-drug Poisoning (including Snake Bite).
Vehicle:	Rotary Wing Aircraft (owner)
Position in Vehicle :	Door Gunner
Report Date:	11 Feb 1969
Military Occupation:	Aircraft Maintenance Crewman (army)
Division:	1st Cav Div (Aml)
Personnel Category:	Active Duty Army
Military Class:	Enlisted Personnel
RANK:	Specialist Fourth Class

### U.S. Veterans Gravesites, ca.1775-2006

Name:	<b>Kirk Allen Woolley</b>
Service Info.:	<b>SP 4 US ARMY VIETNAM</b>
Birth Date:	15 Apr 1943
Death Date:	11 Feb 1969
Interment Date:	22 Feb 1969
Cemetery:	Zachary Taylor National Cemetery
Cemetery Address:	4701 Brownsboro Road Louisville, KY 40207
Buried At:	Section D Site 208

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Kirk Allen Woolley (61)

Kirk Allen Woolley is buried At Zachary Taylor Cemetery, Section D, Site 208.



Courtesy of Al Ring:

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:



### Kirk Allen Woolley (61)

Courtesy: <http://www.vietnamdustoff.com/honorroll.html>

*These 215 DUSTOFF and MEDEVAC warriors made the ultimate sacrifice so that Others May Live. They have departed from the physical world, but they live in our hearts and minds.*

**"Greater Love Hath No Man Than This,  
That A Man Lay Down His Life For His Friends."**

John 15:13

WO1 Thomas Edward Adams  
SP5 Russell George Ahrens  
SP4 Ronald Kevin Allgood  
SP4 John Stephen Alling Jr.  
PFC Orin Larry Allred  
SP4 Robert Warren Alverson Jr.  
WO1 Rocky D. Armstead  
WO1 Rodney Keith Arnold  
SP5 Steven Ernest Arnold  
WO1 Orval Arthur Baldwin  
MAJ William Joseph Ballinger  
1LT Stephen Carl Beals  
SP4 Gary Lee Bowdler  
CPT Robert Neal Bradley  
WO1 Michael Lee Bradley  
WO1 Paul Robert Brass  
SP4 Clifford Sheran Bratcher  
WO1 John Ramsey Bregler  
SFC James Harrison Brooks Jr.  
CW2 Joseph Gordon Brown  
SP5 Harry Willis Brown  
SP5 Michael Lee Brummer  
1LT Robert Gene Burlingham  
WO1 Edward L. Bush  
WO1 Gerald Lewis Caton  
WO1 William Charles Cheney  
1LT Thomas James Chiminello  
WO1 John Stephen Chrin  
SP4 Ralph Silvio Cinotti  
WO1 Timothy Cole Jr.  
SP6 James Thaddeus Conway  
CW2 Donald Richard Cook  
CPT Robert Lee Cottman  
SP4 Charles Allen Covey  
SP5 Daniel Franklin Cox  
SGT Michael Lee Darrah  
WO1 Sylvester Davis  
CPL Ray Delgado  
SP5 Billy Wayne Denley  
SP5 Louis Scott DiBari  
SP4 Robert W. Dieffenbach Jr.  
SP5 Herbert C. Donaldson Jr.  
SP5 Ronald L. Doolittle  
WO1 Gary Wayne Doolittle  
WO1 James Donald Doran  
SP4 Gary Lynn Dubach  
SP4 Zettie J. C. Dulin  
1LT Dennis Boyd Easley  
CW2 Gary W. Engelhardt  
1LT Guy Bernard Ephland Jr.  
PFC William Esposito Jr.  
SP5 David J. Ewing  
SP5 Joseph Michael Feeney

SGT Tennis Crispian Ferrell  
SP4 Ronald Richard Fillmore  
CPL Joel Carol Fowler  
WO1 Reinis Fox  
WO1 Randall Gaylord Freeman  
CPT Joe Raymond Fulghum Jr.  
SGT David John Funes  
WO1 Alfred James Gaidis  
1LT Lawrence Gallego  
MAJ Kent Ellsworth Gandy  
SP4 Harold Cornell Gay  
SP4 Charles Elbert Gay  
SGT Hugo Araux Gaytan  
SP4 Dennis Elbert Gilliland  
SP4 Francis E. Glazebrook  
SP4 Dalton Truro Goff  
WO1 Bruce Elliot Graham  
SP4 Ronald Lester Granville  
SP5 Willie F. Green  
SP5 Johnny Glen Gregg  
WO1 Dennis Arthur Groth  
SP4 Wade Lawrence Groth  
WO1 Alan Wendell Gunn  
SP4 Gregory Lee Habets  
CW2 Terence Arnold Handley  
SP4 William Edward Hawkins  
SFC William Roy Henderson  
SGT Victor R. Hernandez  
SP4 Ramiro Herrera Jr.  
PFC Clifford Herrin  
SP5 Theodore W. High IV  
CPT John Richard Hill  
CW2 Robert Oren Hill Jr.  
WO1 William Colqueth Hix Jr.  
CW3 Ferman Bobby Hodges  
PFC Joseph Hoggatt  
PFC William Delbert Holland  
CW2 Robert Louis Horst  
PFC Rudolph Jackymack  
CW2 John C. Johnson  
SP4 Gary Morgan Johnson  
SGT David Keith Johnson  
WO1 Guy Frederick Johnson  
SP5 Stephen Freddie Johnson  
PFC Phillip Harry Johnson  
PFC Robert Earnest Jones  
CPT Charles Franklin Kane Jr.  
SP5 Kevin Reynolds Keleher  
SP4 Michael Patrick Kelley  
MAJ Charles L. Kelly  
SP4 Jeffery David Kuersten  
CPT Kurt Lloyd Kuhns  
PFC Douglas Mason Kyser  
SP4 Kenneth Howard Lamborn  
SP4 Larry Gay Lance  
SP5 Lawrence Lano  
SP4 John Alyn Largent  
SP4 Brent Robin Law

WO1 Robert Emmett Layman Jr.  
1LT Jerry Tyrus Lee  
SP4 John Joseph Levulis  
1LT William Russel Lewis Jr.  
1LT Jack Rowley Lichte Jr.  
PFC Randall Wayne Love  
CW2 Chester Anthony Luc  
WO1 Christopher Dutcher Lucci  
SP5 Charles Lavern Lumm  
SP4 David Webster MacLurg  
1LT Douglas Gerald MacNeil  
SP4 William Arthur Malenfant  
SP4 James Anthony Margro  
SP5 Donald Ray Marlow  
SP4 Ronald Andrew Martin  
SGT Givaldo A. Martinez Jr  
SP4 Thomas Michael Martinez  
SP4 Alan Louis Matte  
SP4 Calvin Eugene McGilton  
SP4 James Ronald McNish  
SP4 Guy Lamar Mears Jr.  
SP5 David Phillip Medina  
SP5 James Wood Megehee  
CW2 Anthony Joseph Mensen  
CPT George Louis Miner  
SP4 Billy Vance Morris  
SP4 John William Murphy  
WO1 John Laurence Nesovanovic  
SP5 Roland Albert Nielsen  
SP5 Kenneth Clifford Nokes  
WO1 Edward Terry O'Brien  
WO1 William Avalon Parker  
PFC Ricky Alan Pate  
CW2 Billy Dean Pedings  
WO1 Hugh Michael Pettit  
MAJ Harry V. Phillips Jr.  
SP5 Michael John Poll  
CPT Otha Lensey Poole  
WO1 Robert George Porea  
MAJ Larry Gene Powell  
WO1 Thomas Ronald Pursell  
WO1 Forrest De Vere Rains Jr.  
WO1 John Veron Rauen  
SP4 Dennis Edward Reese  
PFC Karl Lewis Reineccius  
WO1 George Warren Rice  
Jeffery Allen Richardson  
SP5 James Evert Richardson  
SP5 Charles Samuel Rochout  
SP4 Richard John Rochacz  
WO1 Don Leslie Rock  
1LT Jerry Lee Roe  
WO1 Roger Clarke Rose  
SGT Kenneth Ray Rucker  
SP5 Carlos Wilson Rucker  
CPT Marion Gilmer Runion  
SP5 Stephen J. Saluga III  
SP4 Richard W. Sanders

1LT Kenneth Martin Schlie  
1LT Phillip Nicholas Schmitz  
1LT Howard Jon Schnabolk  
SP4 Anton John Schnobrich  
CW2 Ronald Kenneth Schulz  
SP4 Stephen Lawren Schumacher  
WO1 Arvid Oscar Silverberg  
SP5 Wayne Carl Simmons  
SP4 Teddy Ray Sininger  
PFC Robert Royce Sloppy  
WO1 Charles Franklin Smith  
CW2 John Raymond Smith  
WO1 John Martin Souther  
SP5 Robert Fritz Speer  
CW2 Thomas Joseph Stanush  
WO1 Roy Miles Stillwell  
WO1 Douglas Earl Stover  
WO1 John Phillip Supple  
SP5 Hubert Daniel Sutton  
SP5 Loran Edgar Sweat Jr.  
SGT Gary Lynn Taylor  
WO1 Gary David Thatcher  
SP4 John Douglas Thrasher  
PFC Lewis Arthur Trask  
SP4 Ronald Gale Trogon  
WO1 Jonathan R. Vars  
1LT David Bard Wainwright  
SP4 James Reese Walters  
WO1 Fredrick Stephen Walters  
SP4 Richard Freeman Walton  
SP4 Thomas Ray Weiss  
SGT David A. Wencl  
SP5 Gregory Lee White  
SP4 Jeffrey Merle White  
SGT James Lawrence Wieler  
SSG Leroy Williams  
PFC Morris Edward Williams  
CPT Jesse Allan Wisdom  
SP5 Jack Lee Wolfe  
SP5 Donald Wood  
CPT Donald Coles Woodruff  
SP5 Dwight D. Woolf  
**SP4 Kirk Allen Woolley**  
WO1 James George Zeimet  
1LT Alan Harry Zimmerman

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Kirk Allen Woolley (61)

Courtesy: <http://www.viethero.us/Wall/panelW32.html>

Panel 32 West



ROW 018 \* WILLIAM DONALD BAKKEN \* ROBERTO ACEVEDO \* ROBERT JOHN ZUKOWSKI \* THOMAS LEON ARMITAGE \* KIRK ALLEN WOOLLEY

Courtesy: <http://thewall-usa.com/info.asp?recid=57387>

Personal comments on this site

### KIRK ALLEN WOOLLEY

Bill Gallenstein  
Fellow Kentuckian  
Zephyrhills FL

A very proud cold war USAF veteran remembers you on this day. My God bless you and your family always. I salute you, Thank you  
Feb 11, 2008

The Wall-USA

Manuel Pino B/2/8th Cav 68-69



### KIRK ALLEN WOOLLEY

SP4 - E4 - Army - Selective Service  
1st Cav Division (AMBL)

Length of service 9 years  
His tour began on Jul 19, 1968  
Casualty was on Feb 11, 1969

In TAY NINH, SOUTH VIETNAM  
NON-HOSTILE, HELICOPTER - NONCREW  
AIR LOSS, CRASH ON LAND  
Body was recovered

Panel 32W - Line 18

HSC/15th Med Bn, 1st Cav Div  
Oct 28, 2007

The Wall-USA

Tom Tollefson  
tmtollefson@yahoo.com  
neighbor

Kirk lived behind us on Druid Hills Road. He was older than I and more of a friend of my brother Bruce. Craig and I were closer in age. I have good memories of Kirk and think of him and Coleman Groves often.

Oct 25, 2007

The Wall-USA

Garnet Jenkins  
Grand Junction Co.  
Tribute to a Fallen 1st Cav. Hero

In Remembrance of this Young Soldier, with a Multitude of Thanks for his Courage, Service and Dedication to our Country and for Freedom. Rest well and know that you will NEVER BE FORGOTTEN. I am the sister of such a young hero, who made the Supreme Sacrifice in Vietnam 1967....."NOR SHALL YOUR GLORY BE FORGOT, WHILE FAME HER RECORD KEEPS, OR HONOR POINTS TO THE HALLOWED SPOT, WHERE VALOR PROUDLY SLEEPS" ~ Theodore O'Hara ~

Apr 15, 2007

The Wall-USA

Manuel Pino Jr Bco 2/8th 1st Cav 68-69  
mpjr54@msn.com  
Fellow Cav Brother

"They grow not old, as we who remain grow old, age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn, at the going down of the sun, and in the morning, we shall remember them. We shall remember them."

Wednesday, August 24, 2005

The Wall-USA

Armond "Si" Simmons  
psysim@coosahs.net  
A fellow DUSTOFF crewman  
104 Wadsworth Lane  
Pell City, AL 35128 USA  
DUSTOFF Vietnam Memorial

<http://psysim.www7.50megs.com/dustkia.htm>

On behalf of fellow DUSTOFFers, please accept my condolences to the family of our comrade, Kirk Woolley. I invite family and friends to visit the official webpage of The DUSTOFF Association, a nonprofit organization for Army Medical Department enlisted and officer personnel, aviation crewmembers, and others who are (or ever were) engaged in (or actively supported in any capacity) Army aeromedical evacuation programs in war or peace. Many loved ones of our fallen comrades have found solace in visiting the site, found friends who served with their loved one and enjoyed having their family become a part of their loved one's DUSTOFF family, a relationship that we fellow DUSTOFFers cherish and respect. All the best - Si Simmons - psysim@coosahs.net - The DUSTOFF Association webpage: -

<http://www.dustoff.org/> - My DUSTOFF webpage: -  
<http://psysim.www7.50megs.com/html/dustoff.htm>

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

The Wall-USA

mark kaginos  
schmur70@yahoo.com  
rest well my cav brother  
Tuesday, April 15, 2003

The Wall-USA

fizzy anon  
fellow eagle

SPC. WOOLLEY, I WAS NOT A CAV BROTHER, BUT WAS ATTACHED TO THE 7TH CAV. W/THE 1/501 101ST AIRBORNE. I JUST WANT TO SAY A FEW WORDS, ON THIS, YOUR DAY OF BIRTH. REST EASY,, BRO AND SEE YOU WHERE ONLY THE ANGELS, EAGLES AND AMBL. SOAR. NAM, 67/68.

Tuesday, April 15, 2003

The Wall-USA

Ron Sheehan  
rwsheehan@bellsouth.net  
Fellow Veteran

I'm a retired MSG U.S.Army from Louisville, Ky who wants to keep your memory alive. You are not forgotten. We soldiers do not question our duty, but do our part to keep and preserve freedom. However! You gave the ultimate sacrifice. It would have been nice to have known you as a person. You forever will be a HERO. We should never let these brave men "fade Away", their memory and the Vietnam War should never disappear from our thoughts and history.

Thursday, October 20, 2005

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## John Harlan Sweet (62)

January 6, 1944—August 5, 1969



1958 Lair



1959 Lair



1960 Lair



### Training Days

Posted for: JOHN HARLAN SWEET



I took this snapshot of John when his T-4 training class and our instructors left at Tan Phu (5) went for a party visiting to a Los Angeles flying group at the Coliseum. You said I didn't have a picture of John and his helmeted Aussie-Philly 5800. Another really nice guy who gave his life ensuring that the rest of the world did not forget.

Posted by: Bob Miller  
Email: [redacted]  
Relationship: We served together  
Friday, March 26, 2002

### NOTE: John Harlan

Sweet did not graduate from Waggener High School. He attended a private school the last couple of years before graduating but was a Waggenerite from 7th through 10th grade. However the "Class of 1962" and others keep him on the roll so that's what I have chosen to go by. John is still a Waggenerite so he will be covered in this section as a Waggener Hero.

From: [http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=110,110&Wall\\_Id\\_No=14203](http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=110,110&Wall_Id_No=14203)

### JOHN HARLAN SWEET

20W, 99

JOHN HARLAN SWEET is honored on Panel 20W, Row 99 of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Full Name: JOHN HARLAN SWEET  
Wall Name: JOHN H SWEET  
Date of Birth: 1/6/1944  
Date of Casualty: 8/5/1969  
Home of Record: CORAL GABLES  
State: FL  
Branch of Service: AIR FORCE  
Rank: 1LT  
Casualty Country: SOUTH VIETNAM  
Casualty Province: KHANH HOA

To locate profiles of others on The Wall who share commonalities with JOHN HARLAN SWEET, click on the links above.



### Those were the days.

Posted for: JOHN HARLAN SWEET:

We have a lot to talk about, John.

Posted by: FTG  
Email: tgardner@mtc.org  
Relationship: We were close friends  
Thursday, January 31, 2008

### Your sister has never forgotten you, John

Posted for: JOHN HARLAN SWEET:

Such a surprise to find your picture on the Internet, that you would have loved, had you lived to see it! I miss you every day of my life! I am the lawyer you were meant to be.

Posted by: Merrill Lee Sweet Toole  
Email: merrilllee@earthlink.net  
Relationship: He is my brother  
Monday, October 1, 2007

### We Remember

Posted for: JOHN HARLAN SWEET:



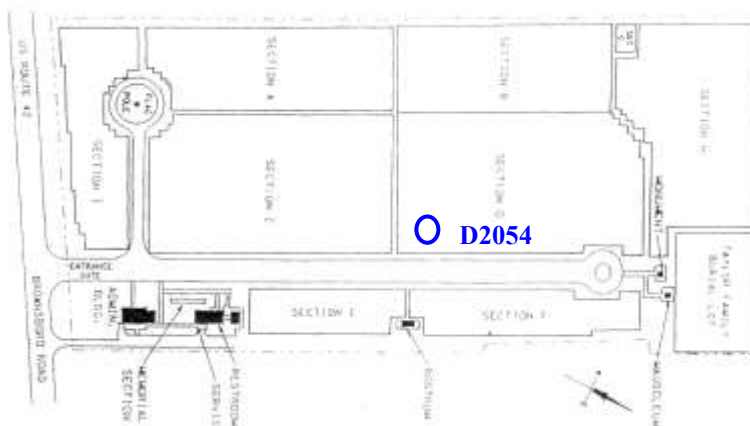
John is buried at Zachary Taylor Nat Cem

Posted by: Robert Sage  
Email: rsage@aol.com  
Relationship: [redacted]  
Saturday, October 6, 2007

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## John Harlan Sweet (62)

John Harlan Sweet is buried in Zachary Taylor Cemetery, Section D, Site 2054.



Courtesy of Al Ring:

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

**John Harlan Sweet (62)**

Courtesy The Voice Of St. Matthews: February 16, 1956:

# Katherine Travis Named Chenoweth News Editor



Chenoweth News cartoonist John Sweet shows associate editor Susan Simpson the front page he designed for the school paper. Seated are Miss Simpson, Mr. Sweet, editor Katherine Travis, business manager Shannon Clarkson, and society editor Jeannie Gerard. Standing are feature editor John Dickerson, sports editor David Stallard, and faculty advisor Mrs. Inez Goheen.

The staff of The Chenoweth News, monthly newspaper of Chenoweth Elementary School, was named last week.

Editor is Katherine Travis, 11, of 603 Zorn Avenue. The rest of the staff:

Associate editor, Susan Simpson, 11 of 418 Pennington Lane; business manager, Shannon Clarkson, 12, of 3935 Gilman; feature editor, John Dickerson, 11, of 402 Oread; cartoonist, John Sweet, 12, of 4048 Ormond; sports editor, David Stallard, 11, of 3812 Napanee; and society editor, Jennie Gerard, 11, of 152 Totem. All are sixth-graders.

The fourth issue of the paper will be out this month. Since the paper was started in November, it has been put together by Chenoweth sixth-graders, under the direction of Mrs. Inez Goheen and Mrs. Ruth Ruter faculty advisors.

Selling for five cents a copy, the little mimeographed paper of eight pages is earning money to buy supplementary readers for the entire school. About \$25 has been cleared on the last two issues, said Mrs. Goheen.

The faculty advisors waited until now to pick a staff, to give themselves time to discover who had the talent, said Mrs. Goheen.

Each room in the school has a reporter, who turns in copy on his or her particular class's activities. Circulation is about 800 copies.

## Lt. Sweet killed near Cam Ranh Bay

First Lt. John Harlan Sweet, 26, was killed when a helicopter he was in was shot down by ground fire near Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam, Aug. 5.

The helicopter was shot down while on a non-military mission, authorities reported. Sweet was an Air Force jet pilot.

He attended Waggener High School two years and graduated from the Principia in St. Louis. He received his B.A. degree in political science from Principia College at Elsah, Ill.

Survivors include his mother, Mrs. Clara O. Sweet, of 4048 Ormond Rd.; his father, Norman Sweet, of 2320 Cross Hill Rd., and a sister, Merrill Lee Toole, of Louisville.

The burial will be at Zachary Taylor Memorial Cemetery.

August 14, 1969  
*The Voice-Jeffersonian*

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## John Harlan Sweet (62)

Courtesy: <http://tanaya.net/cgi-bin/vmw.cgi?50754>

*In Memory of  
First Lieutenant John Harlan Sweet*



Let us not forget First Lieutenant John Harlan Sweet, casualty of the Vietnam War. As a member of the Air Force Reserve, 1LT Sweet served our country until August 5th, 1969 in Darlac, South Vietnam. He was 25 years old and was not married. John died when his helicopter crashed into the land. His body was recovered. John was born on January 6th, 1944 in Coral Gables, Florida.

1LT Sweet is on panel 20W, line 099 of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington D.C. He served our country for 2 years.



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### U.S. Veterans Gravesites, ca.1775-2006

Name:	<b>John H Sweet</b>
Service Info.:	1LT US AIR FORCE VIETNAM
Birth Date:	6 Jan 1944
Death Date:	5 Aug 1969
Interment Date:	14 Aug 1969
Cemetery:	Zachary Taylor National Cemetery
Cemetery Address:	4701 Brownsboro Road Louisville, KY 40207
Buried At:	Section D Site 2054
<b>Source Information:</b> National Cemetery Administration, <i>U.S. Veterans Gravesites, ca.1775-2006</i> [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: The Generations Network, Inc., 2006. Original data: National Cemetery Administration, <i>Nationwide Gravesite Locator</i>	
<b>Description:</b> This database is a compilation of burial records from a variety of sources and cemeteries. These records provide information on the burials of U.S. veterans and their dependents who were buried in the various Veterans Affairs (VA) National Cemeteries, state veterans cemeteries, or other military cemeteries. Because the information regarding the burials is compiled from multiple sources, the amount of information provided for each burial will vary. Some of the information you may find in this database includes: name of deceased, birth date, death date, interment date, burial location/site, cemetery name, cemetery address, relationship to veteran, veteran service dates, military rank, and military branch. <a href="#">Learn more...</a>	



### Purple Heart

The Purple Heart is awarded in the name of the President of the United States to any member of an Armed Force who, while serving with the U.S. Armed Services after 5 April 1917, has been wounded or killed, or who has died or may hereafter die after being wounded.

NOTE: I have not been able to find out about additional medals John was awarded.



# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## John Harlan Sweet (62)

Courtesy: <http://thewall-usa.com/search.asp>

Panel 20 West



ROW 099 \* DAVID HENRY II WILSON \* RONALD HUBERT ST GERMAINE \* JOHN LEE ALLEN \* JOHN HARLAN SWEET \* DAVID MARTIN SWAN

Courtesy: <http://thewall-usa.com/>

Personal comments on this site

### JOHN HARLAN SWEET

manny g  
Fellow Veteran 69-70 An Khe  
Union Gap, WA, 98903  
"You are Remembered"

Peace and condolence, to the family and friends. "He which hath no stomach to this fight let him depart. But we in it shall be remembered. We few, we happy few, we band of brothers!! For he today, that sheds his blood with me, shall always be my brother". Rest in peace brave soldier, you have not been forgotten. (W.Shakespeare) May God Bless You for your Sacrifice!!!  
Jan 6, 2008

The Wall USA

Bill Gallenstein  
USAF Veteran  
Zephyrhills FL 33541 USA

A very proud cold war USAF veteran remembers you on this day. My God bless you and your family always. I salute you, Thank you  
Apr 29, 2007

The Wall USA

Carl Allan Ramsey  
caramsey@flash.net  
Pilot Training Classmate - Moody68F  
3807 Park Center Ct.  
Houston, TX 77059 USA



John was a friend who had a real zest for life. His car in pilot training was an Austin Healey 3000, the year with the 3 SU carbs. He would take the windshield off (just 4 bolts) and drive around with his WW2 leather flying helmet, goggles and white scarf having a good old time. He got a back seat F4 assignment out of UPT and when I did my Vietnam tour in O1's someone there told me he had gone down taking a ride in a Cobra gunship. Wish I could say

welcome home buddy.  
Friday, June 30, 2000

The Wall USA

D. BURT  
A GRATEFUL AMERICAN  
Rhode Island USA

\*\*\*TO HONOR AN AMERICAN HERO NOT FORGOTTEN\*\*\*



"Let us solemnly remember the sacrifices of all those who fought so valiantly, on the seas, in the air, and on foreign shores, to preserve our heritage of freedom, and let us re-consecrate ourselves to the task of promoting an enduring peace so that their efforts shall not have been in vain." ~Dwight Eisenhower ~ ~ ~ You are not forgotten this day nor will you ever be. Thank you for your supreme sacrifice and honorable service to this great nation. You will forever live in the hearts of all who knew and loved you.  
Friday, January 06, 2006

### JOHN HARLAN SWEET

1LT - O2 - Air Force - Reserve

Length of service 2 years  
His tour began on Mar 11, 1969  
Casualty was on Aug 5, 1969  
In KHANH HOA, SOUTH VIETNAM  
Hostile, died of wounds, HELICOPTER - NONCREW  
AIR LOSS, CRASH ON LAND  
Body was recovered

Panel 20W - Line 99

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Thomas Scott Hamilton (65)

September 24, 1947 — February 15, 1969



1961 Lair



1962 Lair



1963 Lair



1964 Lair  
Junior



Thomas S. Hamilton  
Class of '65  
Died Feb. 15, 1969



Courtesy: Ken Draut (73), of the Waggener Vietnam Memorial committee.

**THOMAS SCOTT HAMILTON, CLASS of '65:** Scott spent two years at Eastern Kentucky University after graduating from Waggener in 1965. He joined the Army in 1967, and was killed in Vietnam in February of 1969, about 40 days after arriving there. He had attained the rank of Sergeant and received many citations, including the Bronze Star and Purple Heart. Scott died trying to save several of his fellow soldiers. For his efforts he received the Silver Star the Army's third highest award for valor. The citation reads in part as follows:

“When his unit became heavily engaged with a large enemy force, Sergeant Hamilton exposed himself to the intense hostile fire as he maneuvered his men into effective fighting positions. With complete disregard for his own safety, Sergeant Hamilton moved forward to administer first aid to his wounded comrades and help evacuate them to safety,” the citation continued.

“When members of his squad became in need of additional ammunition, he moved from position to position, distributing the badly needed ammunition. As the enemy launched a determined attack, Sergeant Hamilton was mortally wounded while rallying his men to repulse the assault.”

Those that knew Scott remember his love for fishing, hunting, golf, music and camping. He was a member of Harvey Browne Church.

**Home Scott grew up in at 3708 Hillsboro Road**



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

**Thomas Scott Hamilton (65)**

Courtesy: **The Voice Of St. Matthews:**



Waggener students have produced their own band--the Essentials--and are currently playing for private parties and dances. Left, are singers, Ricky Eigelbach, Terry Dearing and Jess Bargaess. At the piano is Scott Hamilton and on the sax is Bob Brandt. With electric guitars are Greg Walker and Wayne Hokenson and Stuart Payne on the drums. Skip Golden, student at Bellarmine is the bands technician and manager.

**April 26, 1962**

ARMY Pvt. Thomas S. Hamilton, 20-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Hamilton, 3709 Hillsboro Rd., has completed nine weeks of advanced infantry training at Fort McClellan, Ala.

**June 13, 1968**  
*The Voice—Jeffersonian*

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Thomas Scott Hamilton (65)

Courtesy: The Voice Of St. Matthews:

### Two Waggener high grads killed in action in Vietnam

Two St. Matthews area service men, both graduates of Waggener High School, are among the latest victims of the war in Vietnam, according to word received this week from the Defense Department.

They were Sgt. Thomas Scott Hamilton 21, son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Hamilton, 3709 Hillsboro Rd., and Specialist Four Kirk A. Woolley, 25, son of Mr. and Mrs. Albert A. Woolley, 3921 Druid Hill Rd.

Hamilton was killed in action last Saturday, 40 days after landing in Vietnam. Woolley was killed in action Tuesday, Feb. 11. He had been in Vietnam since July, 1968.

Hamilton was a 1965 graduate of Waggener and had been in the Army since December, 1967. He was a member of Harvey Browne Memorial Presbyterian Church and attended Eastern Kentucky University.

Woolley, a 1961 Waggener graduate, formerly worked in the chemical laboratory at General Electric and had attended the Speed Scientific School of the University of Louisville. He had been in the army since February, 1968.

Besides his parents, Hamilton leaves a brother, Douglas Hamilton; a sister; Miss Connie Sue Hamilton, and grandmothers, Mrs. Thomas Hamilton and Mrs. Iva Allen, both of Kalispell, Mont.

In addition to his parents, Woolley leaves a brother, Specialist Four Craig Woolley, Fort Sill, Okla., and his grandmother, Mrs. Myrtle Curtis, Stratford, Conn.

Both bodies will be at Pearson's, 149 Breckinridge Ln.

February 20, 1969  
*The Voice—Jeffersonian*

### Silver Star awarded posthumously to Sergeant Thomas S. Hamilton

The Silver Star, the third highest award issued for valor, and other medals have been issued posthumously to Sgt. Thomas S. Hamilton, 21, who was killed in action Feb. 15 in Vietnam.

Sergeant Hamilton, son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Hamilton, 3709 Hillsboro Rd., also received the Bronze Star, the Air Medal, Purple Heart, Good Conduct Medal and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

Prior to his death, Hamilton had received the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Ribbon and the Sharpshooter Badge with automatic rifle and rifle bars.

The posthumous awards were presented to members of the Hamilton family at Fort Knox May 29.

"Sergeant Hamilton distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous action Feb. 15, 1969, while serving as a squad leader during a reconnaissance in force mission near Dien Hoa," the Silver Star citation said.

"When his unit became heavily engaged with a large enemy force, Sergeant Hamilton exposed himself to the intense hostile fire as he maneuvered his men into effective fighting positions. With complete disregard for his own safety, Sergeant Hamilton moved forward to administer first aid to his wounded comrades and help evacuate them to safety," the citation continued.

"When members of his squad became in need of additional ammunition, he moved from position to position, distributing the badly needed ammunition. As the enemy launched a determined attack, Sergeant Hamilton was mortally wounded while rallying his men to repulse the assault."

Hamilton, a 1965 graduate of Waggener High School, had been in the Army since December 1967. His death came after he had been in Vietnam 40 days. He was a member of Harvey Browne Memorial Presbyterian Church and attended Eastern Kentucky University.

June 12, 1969  
*The Voice—Jeffersonian*



Seargent Thomas Hamilton

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Thomas Scott Hamilton (65)

September 24, 1947 — February 15, 1969

#### Medals awarded to Sergeant Thomas Scott Hamilton.

##### Bronze Star Medal



The Bronze Star Medal was established by Executive Order 9419, 4 February 1944 (superseded by Executive Order 11046, 24 August 1962).

The Bronze Star Medal is awarded to any person who, while serving in any capacity in or with the Army of the United States after 6 December 1941, distinguished himself or herself by heroic or meritorious achievement or service, not involving participation in aerial flight, in connection with military operations against an armed enemy; or while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

Awards may be made for acts of heroism, performed under circumstances described above, which are of lesser degree than required for the award of the Silver Star.

##### The Silver Star



The Silver Star, section 3746, title 10, United States Code (10 USC 3746), was established by Act of Congress 9 July 1918 (amended by act of 25 July 1963).

The Silver Star is awarded to a person who, while serving in any capacity with the U.S. Army, is cited for gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force, or while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party. The required gallantry, while of a lesser degree than that required for the Distinguished Service Cross, must nevertheless have been performed with marked distinction.

##### Purple Heart



The Purple Heart is awarded in the name of the President of the United States to any member of an Armed Force who, while serving with the U.S. Armed Services after 5 April 1917, has been wounded or killed, or who has died or may hereafter die after being wounded.

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Thomas Scott Hamilton (65)

Courtesy: <http://tanaya.net/cgi-bin/vmw.cgi?20984>

### *In Memory of Sergeant Thomas Scott Hamilton*



**Let us not forget Sergeant Thomas Scott Hamilton, casualty of the Vietnam War. As a member of the Army, SGT Hamilton served our country until February 15th, 1969 in Quang Duc, South Vietnam. He was 21 years old and was not married. Thomas died from small arms fire/grenade. His body was recovered. Thomas was born on September 24th, 1947 in Louisville, Kentucky.**

**SGT Hamilton is on panel 32W, line 038 of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington D.C. He served our country for one year.**



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**0738195**

Courtesy: [http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=110,110&Wall\\_Id\\_No=14203](http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=110,110&Wall_Id_No=14203)

#### THOMAS SCOTT HAMILTON 32W, 38

THOMAS SCOTT HAMILTON  
is honored on Panel 32W, Row 38 of  
the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Full Name: THOMAS SCOTT HAMILTON  
Wall Name: THOMAS S HAMILTON  
Date of Birth: 9/24/1947  
Date of Casualty: 2/15/1969  
Home of Record: LOUISVILLE  
State: KY  
Branch of Service: ARMY  
Rank: SGT  
Casualty Country: SOUTH VIETNAM  
Casualty Province: PHUOC LONG

#### Love lives on forever...

Posted for: THOMAS SCOTT HAMILTON:

Love lives on forever  
in each memory  
and thought  
Of the special ones  
who meant so much  
and the happiness  
they brought.

Love lives on forever-  
it will never fade away-  
For, in our hearts,  
our loved ones  
are with us everyday.

May this poem bring you and your family the peace and comfort that it has  
continued to give me after the passing of my grandpa. You will always remain in my  
thoughts for the bravery you portrayed in fighting for our country. God bless.

Posted by: Kristin Zimmerman  
Email:  
Relationship: Other:  
Monday, April 14, 2003

#### We Remember

Posted for: THOMAS SCOTT HAMILTON:



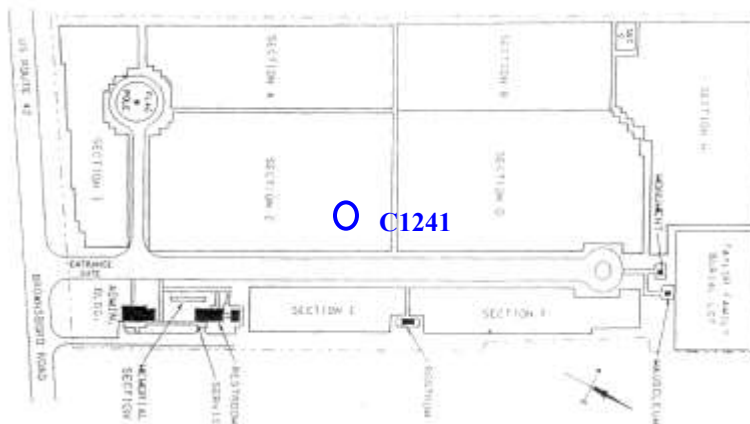
Scott is buried at Zachary Taylor Nat Cem.

Posted by: Robert Sage  
Email: rs200@waxtin.com  
Relationship:  
Saturday, October 13, 2007

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Thomas Scott Hamilton (65)

Thomas Scott Hamilton is buried at Zachary Taylor Cemetery, Section C, Site 1241.



Courtesy of Al Ring:

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Thomas Scott Hamilton (65)

Courtesy: [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com)

#### Vietnam War: U.S. Military Casualties, 1956-1998

Name:	<b>Thomas Scott Hamilton</b>
Birth Date:	<b>24 Sep 1947</b>
Death Date:	<b>15 Feb 1969</b>
Gender:	<b>Male</b>
Age:	<b>21</b>
Race:	<b>Caucasian</b>
Home City:	<b>Louisville</b>
Home State:	<b>Kentucky</b>
Religion:	<b>Presbyterian</b>
Marital Status:	<b>Single (Spouse Not Listed)</b>
SSN/Service #:	<b>11742746</b>
Citizen Status:	<b>U.S.</b>
Death Date:	<b>15 Feb 1969</b>
Processed Date:	<b>Feb 1969</b>
Casualty Country:	<b>Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam)</b>
Casualty Type:	<b>Hostile - Killed</b>
Casualty Reason:	<b>Gunshot or Small Arms Fire</b>
Casualty Air:	<b>Ground Casualty</b>
Body Status:	<b>Body Recovered</b>
Service Branch:	<b>Department of the Army</b>
Component:	<b>Regular (RA, USN, USAF, USMC, USCG)</b>
Military Grade:	<b>Sergeant</b>
Pay Grade:	<b>Specialist Fifth Class (U.S. Army) or Sergeant (U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps) or Staff Sergeant (U.S. Air Force) or Grade/Rate Abbreviations With First Column: Any Entry; Second Column: Any Entry; Third Column: 2; Fourth Column: Blank (U.S. Navy, U.S. Coa</b>
Province:	<b>Military Region 3 - Phuoc Long</b>
Length of Service :	<b>01</b>
Service Occupation:	<b>Light Weapons Infantry (ARMY)</b>
Data Source:	<b>Combat Area Casualties Current File</b>



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Thomas Scott Hamilton (65)

By Adrienne Frey, Class of 1998, at the Waggener Library:

#### Life's Journey

Life is like a Journey  
Taken on a Train  
With a pair of Travelers  
At each window pane

I May Sit Beside you  
All The Journey Through  
Or I May sit Elsewhere  
Never Knowing you

But if fate should hit me  
And I sit By your side  
Let's Be Pleasant Travelers  
Its Such a Short ride

By Scott Hamilton — St. Matthews Elementary School

"Life's Journey" was a poem that Scott T. Hamilton wrote as a boy. His life and his family's were forever changed when he enlisted on the twelfth day of December, in 1967, for the Vietnam War. The vast number of deaths in the Vietnam War branded the lives of the soldiers and their families forever. 58,000 men and women died in this controversial war. Some Americans loyally supported the war and some were so strongly against it they took it upon themselves to rally against the United States' involvement in the war.

This war brought hate towards America's involvement to stop the spread of communism in Vietnam. This is the largest war Americans have ever fought in the United States history. The media had a large part in the misinterpretation of the Vietnam War and in result turned many citizens against our involvement.

Some thought the war didn't effect them because they had not been affected (or at least they thought). One mother had said, "Drugs in California are okay as long as the drugs stay there, but when it comes to Kentucky, to your town, then you are not too happy. That's the way it was with the war." (Raisor. 139) In small towns such as Bardstown, Kentucky the absence of young men in their town changed their lives drastically and for some, forever. For all the young men that went to serve for their country, that was their life. One veteran says, "Vietnam is what I had instead of a happy childhood." (Chuck Online)

One man remembers life during the war. A veteran of the Vietnam War, Mr. Duff explains by the time he was in high school "Vietnam was like a dark cloud." (Duff Online) He says most of the kids that he knew didn't go to college. "Nobody sane wanted to go to Vietnam and end up like the news footage... screaming in pain....but for some stupid reason I volunteered and went." (Duff Online) At first this soldier hated it everyday, but eventually he says he began to like war and he hasn't been the same since. He enjoyed the intensity and sometimes the danger. He says, "Those of us who came back alive and with at least partially functional emotions quickly developed a high quality war meter. "On one end of the scale is death and horror.. on the other end.. delusion." (Duff Online)

One soldier, Scott Hamilton wrote letters to his family, back home in Kentucky, often, and this is one written about a contact he made with the enemy in February in 1969.

11 February

Hi.

Well, it's been a long time (3 days) since my last letter. We've been real busy though and I haven't had much time. Yesterday was a real fine day for us. We made contact early in the morning (about 9:30). Killed four gooks and took two prisoners. The prisoners spilled the beans and really gave us a lot of good information. They were a forward reconnaissance element for an NVA Battle that is about 5000 meters away moving straight toward our area of operation. Only one thing, they don't know we're here. When they get here, probably late tomorrow we'll bring the max on them. Yesterday we had one killed and eleven more wounded. The men wounded weren't hurt too bad, most of them got it from friendly shrapnel. My platoon leader and my squad took the prisoners. Those gooks really are hard corps. They were in a bunk and we threw a total of four frags in it. They wounded by frags yet they still wouldn't come out. We had to kill two of them before the other three would come out. One of them died before we could get him to the rear. One had a head wound with pin holes from shrapnel in his chest. The third one had half his rear end blown away and two broken legs. The one that died was one I shot. My platoon leader had crawled up to the bunker door and thrown some frags. He looked around behind him to see where my machine gunner had placed his gun. I saw a rifle and an arm stick out of the hole aiming at him, so I brought the max. on it with my rifle. I hit the

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Thomas Scott Hamilton (65)

By Adrienne Frey, Class of 1998, at the Waggener Library:

arm four times before he could get out of the way. The gook shimped into the opening trying to draw back in and I lowered the boom on him.

I won't write about that kind of stuff too often, but I am definitely proud of the action this time. I was lucky none of my men got hurt. I got a small fig wound in my left index finger. It's not bad enough for a purple heart, which is fine with me. It's comparable to a hangnail.

Well, I'd better sign off for now. I'll write again as soon as possible.

Write soon and let me know what's going on in the world.

Love, Scott

That is just one example of what the soldiers experienced and endured everyday.

Duff says he has heard "both friendly and unfriendly politicians devoid of appreciation for the life of beauty turns this country into a sea of mediocrity. Fixing a problem is liberalism. Hate and suspicion is conservatism. We have ages, ethnic groups, social classes, races, religious, minorities, hate groups, but no people. Our kids never learn to play... no more sandlot, ball, or jump-rope. ...it's all preparation for life at the brokerage or where ever. War taught me to not hate. Why can't we learn that without war?" (Duff Online) War teaches us not to hate. That is a good thing that the soldiers who survived could bring home to their families. A positive aspect that could change soldiers and their families lives forever.

Are there any lessons that need to be discussed about the sixties and the seventies? "Is it better that we had demonstrations rather than the neo-nazi lockstep we have today? Youth is no longer a force. Only greed and hate have any power today." (Duff Online) Our future is not yet clear as it was in the past during the war. Our focus has been lost to the evils of the world.

In November of 1969 massive anti-war rallies began. There were 250,000 people that marched in Washington, D.C. and almost an equally large amount in San Francisco. One nation wide Moratorium with opponents (supporters of the troops) displayed flags in front of their houses and cars. (Kelt1603 Online)

To Yvonne, a high school student at the time, the war wasn't just about communism or Che', but it was about "leaving friends and family and probably not coming home." (Yvonne Online) She says that almost every one she knew that went didn't expect to stay alive through it. Yvonne says that the natural teen-age point of view in South Florida was that the war "sucked" and if the press and the "Big University" students were against it, then it had to be wrong. This explains why so many were against the war and participated in the rallies. That was all they knew and all they cared about at that age.

For teen-agers and college students, they were scared to leave their friends and families to go to war, but they also found the loyalty inside them for their county, when drafted. Some men who were not even drafted and probably wouldn't have been enlisted patriotically, as Scott Hamilton did after just two years at Eastern Kentucky University. "It was a miserable time to be young. There were too many things to be worried about. It fit our agenda to be against the war. Death was not part of our planned adolescence. All in all though, everyone knew who got drafted and went." (Yvonne Online)

After thirty years we are just now getting rid of the lies and the myths perpetrated by the media and the government and the money machines that drove the war effort. Yvonne says the worst part and most shameful is the way the Vietnam Veterans have been neglected by the government they obeyed and by the citizens they served and bled for. The need of education about the truth would had helped the citizens left home to understand the need and rationalization of America's involvement.

One young man gave the ultimate sacrifice for his country. Sergeant Thomas Scott Hamilton went to Vietnam in 1968. He served forty days before his death. During his adolescence he grew up in Louisville, Kentucky. Scott participated in Boy Scouts, Troop #315, when he was young and attended Harvey Brown Church. Scott left behind two younger siblings Doug and Connie, and his parents. "He was killed while serving as squad leader during a reconnaissance in force mission, near Bien Hoa, in North Vietnam." (Silver Star, *Courier Journal* 1969)

Scott was a well-decorated soldier. He received the Bronze Medal, Air Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Combat Infantryman Badge, Vietnam Service Medal, Sharpshooter Badge, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, the Silver Star posthumously, and finally the Purple Heart.

Scott's death changed his family's life forever. His parents are very proud of him and miss him dearly. It has brought changes in his parents marriage, and he has left Connie and Doug to grow up without their big brother. The Army had reported Scott died instantly when coming in contact with the enemy gunfire. The Silver Star citation read, "When his unit became heavily engaged with a large enemy force, Sergeant Hamilton exposed himself to the intense hostile fire as he maneuvered his men into effective fighting positions. With complete disregard for his own safety, Sergeant Hamilton moved

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Thomas Scott Hamilton (65)

By Adrienne Frey, Class of 1998, at the Waggener Library:

forward to administer first aid to his wounded comrades and help evacuate them to safety. When members of his squad became in need of additional ammunition, he moved from position to position, distributing the badly needed ammunition. As the enemy launched a determined attack, Sergeant Hamilton was mortally wounded while rallying his men to repulse the assault.”

The report says that he died instantly yet when his father, T. A. Hamilton, received the declassified report from the government years later, it stated he was shot in the arm, shoulder, and abdomen. These are not places on the human body that if shot you would die instantly. This brings some question to the military's truth. Were they trying to protect Scott's family from any unnecessary emotional pain? The letter Scott's family received by Robert C. Meager, Infantry Commanding Captain, said his "death came quickly and he was not subject to any unnecessary suffering." A letter written Ian J. Barclay, First Lieutenant, Infantry and Executive Officer said, "Before he could seek cover again he was killed. He died instantly."

Two days before Scott's death, on February 13, 1969, he wrote a letter to his family.

13 February

Hi.

**This is going to be short cause I don't have much time I'm in charge of the platoon LP.**

**We moved 4400 meters today down a major gook trail and made no contact at all. That was all right with me. We're going to be extracted tomorrow to L2 liz.**

**The day before yesterday we made contact and lost four guys. One of them was Sgt. Wollard a guy I went through NCOC with. It made me sick to my stomach when I saw him dead.**

**Must sign off now.**

**Since I can't get to the rear, this is a Valentine.**

**Happy Valentine's Day!**

**Love, Scott**

The Vietnam War caused many deaths and affected lives of soldiers and their families with great pain. Scott's life was such a short ride as he once said in his poem "Life's Journey." The 58,000 lives that were taken during the war will be remembered forever and the Vietnam War Memorial will keep the soldiers names alive. Our country will owe all the men and women that served in this war for lives to come. Generations from now Americans will still have the knowledge of this controversial war, and one day everyone in America will honor and acknowledge the sacrifices made to support their country.

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# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Thomas Scott Hamilton (65)

Courtesy: <http://www.viethero.us/Search/Searchlink.html>

Panel 32 West



ROW 038 \* THOMAS SCOTT HAMILTON \* ALVIN JOCK HO \* FRANCIS KENNETH KULBATSKI \* RICHARD RAYMOND HURLIHE \* RONALD ANTHONY MONISH

Courtesy: <http://thewall-usa.com/search.asp>

### Personal comments on this site

#### THOMAS SCOTT HAMILTON

SGT - E5 - Army - Regular  
1st Cav Division (AMBL)

Length of service 1 years  
His tour began on Jan 7, 1969  
Casualty was on Feb 15, 1969  
In PHUOC LONG, SOUTH VIETNAM  
HOSTILE, GROUND CASUALTY  
GUN, SMALL ARMS FIRE  
Body was recovered

Panel 32W - Line 38

#### HAMILTON, T SCOTT

SGT US ARMY

VIETNAM

DATE OF BIRTH: 09/24/1947

DATE OF DEATH: 02/15/1969

BURIED AT: SECTION C SITE 1241 [View Map](#)

ZACHARY TAYLOR NATIONAL CEMETERY

4701 BROWNSBORO ROAD LOUISVILLE, KY 40207

(502) 893-3852

#### THOMAS SCOTT HAMILTON

Bill Gallenstein  
Fellow Kentuckian  
Zephyrhills FL

A very proud cold war USAF veteran remembers you on this day. My God bless you and your family always. I salute you, Thank you  
Feb 15, 2008

The Wall-USA

Manuel Pino B/2/8th Cav 68-69



C/2/7th Cav Rgt, 1st Cav Div  
Dec 30, 2007

The Wall-USA

Manuel Pino Jr Bco 2/8th 1st Cav 68-69  
mpjr54@msn.com  
Fellow Cav Brother

MY COUNTRY'S FLAG CRIED the flag bowed it's bars and wept starry tears as it hung at half-mast for a soldier's years. another youth it had called and another youth had died. I stood and i watched as my country's flag cried. It clothed the drab coffin in it's red, white, and blue, silently protecting the contents for the comfort of a few. it brought strength to some, to others, bitter pride. but as mourners filed by, my country's flag cried. as it rode to the field where the soldier was laid away, the flag recalled the pledge that he used to stand and say, but to war he went and to keep that pledge, he tried. as the guns fired their last salute, my country's flag cried. as taps rang out, it was folded with care, for the soldier's soul a chaplain whispered a prayer. he asked god for peace in this world to abide, and in a grieving mother's arms my country's flag cried!  
Wednesday, September 07, 2005

The Wall-USA

mark kapinos  
schmur705@yahoo.com  
rest well my cav brother  
Wednesday, September 24, 2003

The Wall-USA

Ron Sheehan  
rwsheehan@bellsouth.net

Fellow Veteran

I'm a retired MSG U.Army from Louisville, Ky who wants to keep your memory alive. We soldiers do not question our duty, but do our part to keep and preserve freedom. However! You gave the ultimate sacrifice. It would have been nice to have known you as a person. You forever will be a HERD. We should never let these brave men "Fade Away", their memory and the Vietnam War should never disappear from our thoughts and history. You are not forgotten!  
Monday, December 05, 2005

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Wayne Allen Hokenson (66)

March 2, 1947—March 31, 1968



1960 Lair



1961 Lair



1962 Lair



1963 Lair



1964 Lair



Wayne A. Hokenson  
Class of '66  
Died March 31, 1968



Courtesy: Ken Draut (73), of the Waggener Vietnam Memorial committee.

Wayne Allen Hokenson, Class of '66: Wayne graduated in 1966. His favorite courses were History and Humanities. He was also involved in the German Club, the Red Cross, Pep Club and Vaudeville. He went by the nickname of Hoke and Hokie. He liked fishing, archery and playing the guitar. He entered the army as a communications specialist shortly after graduating. He arrived in Vietnam in October of 1967. He was killed on March 31, 1968, just a few short months after his arrival. His favorite quotation was from Longfellow: "Youth comes but once in a lifetime."

Courtesy [http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=110&Wall\\_Id\\_No=40565](http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=110&Wall_Id_No=40565)

### WAYNE ALLEN HOKENSON

47E, 22

### Never Forgotten

WAYNE ALLEN HOKENSON  
is honored on Panel 47E, Row 22 of  
the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Posted for: WAYNE ALLEN HOKENSON:

#### FOREVER REMEMBERED

"If you are able, save for them a place inside of you...and save one backward glance when you are leaving for the places they can no longer go....Be not ashamed to say you loved them....

Take what they have left and what they have taught you with their dying and keep it with your own....And in that time when men decide and feel safe to call the war insane, take one moment to embrace those gentle hero's you left behind...."

Quote from a letter home by Maj. Michael Davis O'Donnell  
KIA 24 March 1970. Distinguished Flying Cross: Shot down and Killed while attempting to rescue 8 fellow soldiers surrounded by attacking enemy forces.

We Nam Brothers pause to give a backward glance, and post this remembrance to you, one of the gentle heroes lost to the War in Vietnam:

Slip off that pack. Set it down by the crooked trail. Drop your steel pot alongside. Shed those magazine-laden bandoliers away from your sweat-soaked shirt. Lay that silent weapon down and step out of the heat. Feel the soothing cool breeze right down to your soul ... and rest forever in the shade of our love, brother.

From your Nam-Band-Of-Brothers

Full Name: WAYNE ALLEN HOKENSON  
Wall Name: WAYNE A HOKENSON  
Date of Birth: 3/2/1947  
Date of Casualty: 3/31/1968  
Home of Record: LOUISVILLE  
State: KY  
Branch of Service: ARMY  
Rank: SP4  
Casualty Country: SOUTH VIETNAM  
Casualty Province: LONG AN

Posted by: Bill Nelson  
Email: grite@yahoo.com  
Relationship: NamVet 2/502 Inf 101 Abn 69-70  
Tuesday, January 3, 2006

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Wayne Allen Hokenson (66)

Courtesy: *The Voice Of St. Matthews.*



April 26, 1962

Home he grew up in at 4304 Briarwood Road



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Wayne Allen Hokenson (66)

Courtesy Edith Hokenson:



**December, 1966, Germany**

**Dear People,**

I am sorry it has been a million years, but the field, the mortar pool and every other goddam thing has had me pretty well sewed up.

I got all of your cards and letters and money, but the packages haven't come yet. I am beginning to wonder. Thanks for the picture.

Hope you had a pretty good Christmas. You could imagine mine was a drag. The only highlight was lunch with Gen. Bennet, the division second-in-command. I was reading the paper and drinking my coffee when the general come in. He looked around, filled his tray, then came over and sat down across the table from me. I felt surprised and honored. We talked for about 30 minutes. It seems he was intrigued to see someone sitting alone reading war news on Christmas. Ces't la vie.

Also of interest, I got to meet Cardinal Spellman. I was on K. P. the day he had lunch here and was setting up the loud-speaker system. His Eminence came over and talked to him for several minutes. I told him that you were an admirer of his, though not Catholic, etc. We conspired a little, so here is 1 mark piece with the Cardinal's Blessing. Be sure and show it to Eleanor.

I got Christmas cards from all sorts of people: the Mullins, the Stonefields, Liz, the Markerts, Mary, the Herhsbargers, Bill and Linda Merwin, Bill and Kathy, Bill Alexander, and so on. Argh! GROG! Also got some more lute (English spelling).

Another rumor. The 2/B and/or the 8th Div. may move stateside this year. This rumor has the smell of possibility because of the large rank types talking about it. Maybe March or April. PRAY!

Army Jokes.

About the guy who had been in the army so long he was advance guard for the Three Wise Men and on K. P. at the Last Supper. Which leads to "I don't care if you're Jesus Christ. You can't get in without a meal card."

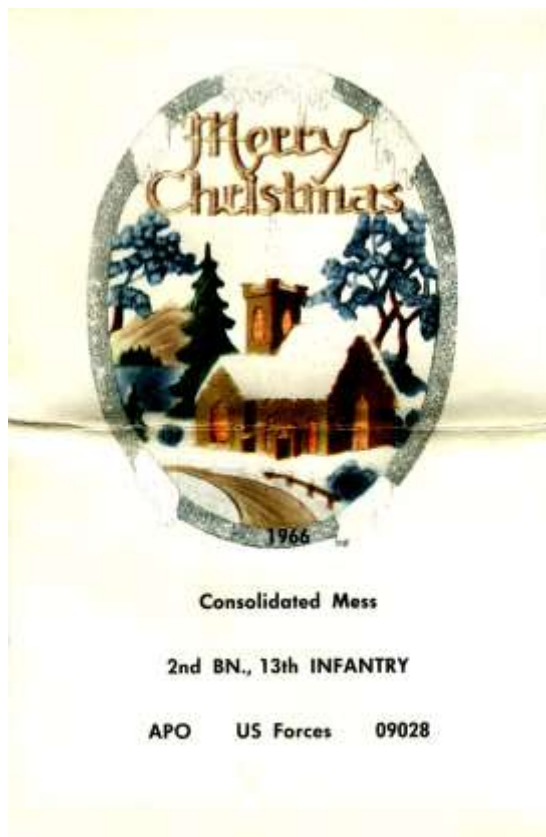
GROG!

Hope all is well with you Pop. Will write again soon. Love, Wayne Let me know if your present arrives okay. Gawp! Roar!

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Wayne Allen Hokenson (66)

Courtesy Edith Hokenson:



### *Christmas 1966*

On this most blessed of days, please accept my sincerest wishes for a merry and rewarding Christmas.

Today is the birthday of the Prince of Peace, who came to us with inspiring hope of bringing peace to a troubled world. Yet nearly two thousand years later there is no peace. The Godless forces of communism stand ready and determined to destroy us and the principles for which we stand. It is you, the soldier standing between the Communists and our homes on this Christmas Day that has so far managed to keep us free. This gift of freedom which you give the world on this day of giving, is a precious gift and part of the cost requires we celebrate so many miles from our homes. This is a happy Christmas, however, for we are all rich with the friendship we have made and the pride we share in our unit and in our country.

To our comrades, who will leave soon, we say goodbye and Godspeed. What you have done here has given our nation a Merry and Free Christmas and perhaps contributed in some way to bringing peace and good will on earth to all men.

May God bless and keep you in all your doings.

THOMAS B BLAKE  
LTC, Inf  
Commanding

### *Christmas Day Dinner Menu*

Shrimp Cocktail	
Cocktail Sauce	Lemon Wedges
Crackers	
Roast Turkey	
Bread or Cornbread Dressing	
Giblet Gravy	Cranberry Sauce
Mashed Potatoes	
Candied Sweet Potatoes	
Buttered Green Beans	Buttered Corn
Assorted Salads and Dressings	
Hot Rolls	Butter
Fruit Cake	Mincemeat Pie
Pumpkin Pie with Whipped Cream	
Coffee	Tea w/Lemon Wedges
Fresh Milk	Chocolate Milk
Apples	Bananas
Grapes	Tangerines
Assorted Candy	
Assorted Nuts	



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Wayne Allen Hokenson (66)

#### Courtesy Edith Hokenson:

January, 1967 Germany

Dear People, Happy New Year!

You wouldn't believe my New Years Eve Harbin, Hansen, and I all had overnight passes. We went downtown and bought some fireworks and spent two hours walking around town shooting firecrackers. Big firecrackers. The police asked us to refrain from dropping cherry bombs in the trash cans, raising much hell.

We went hopping around from gasthaus to gasthaus getting gradually crocked. About ten o'clock we hit one on a side street and decided to stay. We were the only Americans in the place. The owner greeted us warmly and set up a round on the house.

It seems he was captured in 1943 by the Americans and sent to the states to prison camp. He said he wasn't being shot at any more, but he got better pay and food than he had in the German army, and the guards gave him candy and cigarettes. Anyway when time came for his release, he tried like hell to stay in the states, but they wouldn't let him. However he thinks the world of America and Americans. He broke out his best bottle of schnapps (Old Heaven Hill) and we toasted the United States.

A while later our host (crocked) was singing with the jukebox (Beach Boy records). He wanted me to sing with him. When he found that I knew the songs and could sing them with the record, he was ecstatic. Wunderbar! I have someone I want you to meet, he says, my daughter. I cast a worried glance at the waitress (yech) and prayed it wasn't her. My host yells "Christa." A minute later the kitchen door opened and in came Christa. I was stunned. Christa is 5'5", blue eyes, platinum blond, and about 38-21-36. Oboy, Oboy, Oboy... Would I like to dance? Say no more HAPPY NEW YEAR!

God Christa is beautiful.

At the stroke of twelve, everybody began to shot rockets and pinwheels and firecrackers and every other damn thing, indoors and out. The din was ungodly. Every firework in Mannheim (Germany) was going off all at once. I'll never forget it as long as I live. When these Germans celebrate, they really raise hell.

When the war was over, Harbin and Hansen went back to Coleman (Barracks) and I went back to mein host and Christa. Guess you know I didn't leave until nine in the morning. Whoopee!

Hope you all had a good New Year too. Love to everyone. Love, Wayne Gawp! Roar!

March, 1967, Germany

Dear People,

Thought I had forgotten about you, eh? We'll I damn near did. We have been as busy and in the field as much, and I have been so tired, that I hardly can tell day from night. You just wouldn't believe. Anyway, I'm back for a couple of days.

I received your letters today. You know, mail is the best part of coming back from the field. Yes, Nanook (Wayne's nick name for his Mom) I did get everything you have sent me. I am pretty sure I let you know before, but mox nix. Got your valentine and birthday cards and the money orders and the letters. Thank you with all my heart. I really feel touched. Bless you both, Luv.

Dad, sorry to hear that business is in a mess right now. I can imagine what you think of the situation and you have my sympathy. We can only pray that things improve. Good Luck.

Hope you are getting along okay at work, Nanook. Is James mean as ever? You worry me to death with your arm trouble. Will you please get better. Maybe if you concentrate, you can wish your problem off on the Viet Cong.

I got a valentine from Eleanor and birthday cares from Liz, also Bill and Kattie. The Selbys sent me 5 rugs which I will thank them for. Please tell everyone that written notes are on the way, but thins are screwed up (you know why) and time is scarce. I hope they understand.

By the way, please call up the Courier-Journal and change the subscription to the Times. Also have it sent to Co. B not Co. A as they are now mailing it. Thanks.

Ask me if I have done any sight seeing lately. Hell, no! No further comment.

You remember I went to Baumholder in November? Well, I leave again for Baumholder on March 6. Will return to garrison on March 23. Please keep writing, as I do believe we will receive mail there. I should also be able to write back. About a week after the return from Baumholder, we go to Wildflecken (Germany) for 2 weeks. I believe mail will be screwed up during this time. All I can say about the whole mess is GROG! Also crap, Also.....

Junior Allgeier and I are going to get together for a couple of days after Wildflecken. Oh, boy!

My mistake. I have not received the birthday packages yet. I'm on the lookout for it. Thank you now and thank you again later. I'm sure I'll like it.

Pardon my pencil. Out of ink again, but hope you can read this letter.

Well, this is about all for now. More later. GAWP! ROAR! All my love, Wayne

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Wayne Allen Hokenson (66)

#### Courtesy Edith Hokenson:

February 28, 1968, Vietnam,

Dear People,

Not much to tell you right now, as everything is pretty "blah." The battery is still at Biah Chua. We are getting ready to move to another position about 300 yards from where we are now; the new place is higher ground so we won't be submerged when the monsoon starts.

The V. C. drop in a dozen mortar rounds about every other night, just to keep up honest. No important damage yet; everyone is getting used to the whole thing they sleep right through it.

Got the first two National Geographic's the other day. They were really quite interesting. Received a Care package from Bob & Aggie. Will write to them.

Like I said, nothing much to say.

I am well and I hope you are too., Love to everyone. Love Wayne

P. S. I am getting my papers and things okay. Love Wayne

Unknown date, Vietnam.

Dear People,

I am fine. How are you?

I received a package with cigarettes, guitar strings, and stuff. Thank you so very much. Being out in the field like this, I haven't seen a PX in a month. We are supposed to get a pack of cigarettes a day free in the field but they don't always arrive; consequently cigarettes are worth their weight in gold. Keep them coming please, regularly. Let me know how much they cost. I will keep score and pay you for them at the end of every month. Thanks again.

More Soon, Love Wayne

PS Received books, candy, etc. Thanks.

Unknown date, envelope not included, Vietnam

Dear People,

Well, we've moved again. The place has no name; it is just a spot about ten miles from Hill 44. It is very hot here and there is little shade. Working like hell again.

Anyway I'm fine and I hope you are, too.

Glad to hear that you received my letter and the money okay. I received letters from you; also a package of books, candy, etc. Thank you very much. They miss-sent the package to another unit, so it was quite late arriving.

I am looking for the other packages when they get here, which I hope is soon.

Hope you haven't worried about me too much.

How are Dog and Cat. Fine, right?

Both of you stay well. I'll write again in a few days. Love Wayne



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

Wayne Allen Hokenson (66)

Courtesy The Voice—Jeffersonian:

### Two more killed in Viet Nam

Two more residents of the eastern section of Jefferson County have become victims of the war in Vietnam. They were:

Specialist Four Wayne Allen Hoskenson, 21, son of Mr. and Mrs. Carl A. Hoskenson, 4304 Briarwood Rd., and Specialist Four John Phillip Matlock, 23, son of Mr. and Mrs. Selden W. Matlock, 3312 Breaux Dr. Both died the latter part of March.

Hoskenson died of injuries suffered in a mortar attack in a base hospital in the Saigon area. He was assigned to a communications section of an artillery unit. He had been in Vietnam since October and also had served in Germany since entering the Army in February, 1966.

A member of the Harvey Browne Memorial Presbyterian Church, Hoskenson attended Waggener High School.

Funeral services were planned for 2:30 o'clock this afternoon in the Harvey Browne Memorial Presbyterian Church, with burial in Resthaven Memorial Park.

Matlock, who had been in the Army since September, 1966, was killed in a mortar attack on Quan Loi. He was trained as a drill instructor at Fort Knox before going to Vietnam for assignment with the First Infantry Division.

Matlock, a 1962 graduate of Soneca High School, attended Murray State University and Bellarmine College.

Besides his parents, he leaves two sisters, Misses Lou Coan and Lee Ann Matlock, and his paternal grandfather, John Matlock, Eddyville, Ky.

Memorial services were held in the Neady Hikes Point Funeral Home Monday morning. Other services were held Tuesday at Eddyville. Burial was in Kuttawa Cemetery there.

### 6 service awards presented to family of Wayne A. Hokenson

Four U. S. Army honors and two Vietnam awards have been conferred posthumously on Specialist Four Wayne A. Hokenson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Carl A. Hokenson, 4304 Briarwood Rd., who was killed March 31 by mortar fire in Vietnam.

The U. S. awards were the Bronze Star, the Army Commendation Medal, the Purple Heart and Good Conduct Medal. The Vietnamese honors were the Military Merit Medal and the Gallantry Cross with Palm.

The awards were delivered to the Hokenson home by an Army major who was en route to Vietnam. The soldier was a student at Waggener High School when he enlisted in the Army and had been a life long resident of the St. Matthews area.

"Through his untiring efforts and professional ability," the Bronze Star citation, stated, "he consistently obtained outstanding results. He was quick to grasp the implications of new problems with which he was faced as a result of the ever changing situations inherent in a countersurgency operation and to find ways and means to solve those problems.

"The energetic application of his extensive knowledge has materially contributed to the efforts of the United States mission to the Republic of Vietnam to assist that country in ridding itself of the community threat to its freedom."

"During his entire tour," the Commendation Medal citation said, "Specialist Hokenson displayed the courage, dedication and determination that characterize an outstanding soldier.

"Serving initially as a wireman and later as a wire team leader, he performed his duties in a professional manner and accomplished every task assigned him with exceptional proficiency and speed. He often worked long hours repairing communication circuits which had been destroyed during enemy mortar attacks."

June 5, 1969  
The Voice-Jeffersonian

February 20, 1969

## **Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

### **Wayne Allen Hokenson (66)**

**Courtesy Edith Hokenson:**

**On April 15 to April 19, 1985 the *Washington Post* ran a series of articles on the Vietnam War. One article was also run in *The Courier-Journal* on April 28, 1985. These articles were written in part by Arthur S. Brisbane. The April 28 article is provided below and is condensed by the Post for *The Courier-Journal*. Reader should keep in mind that Mrs. Hokenson also lost her brother in World War II. Wayne was named for him.**

#### **Families still search for meaning to ease the loss of loved ones**

MOUNT PLEASANT, Texas - It was nearly 21 years ago that an enemy bullet pierced the chest of Lt. Harold L. McNeil in Vietnam. The date was Aug. 12, 1964, only five days after Congress passed the Tonkin resolution, giving President Johnson authority to wage war in Southeast Asia.

Since that time, the Army helicopter pilot's children have grown up, his father has died and the bronze plaque that identifies the Lt. Harold L. McNeil Armory here has its shine. All those years later, Ernest "Tex" McNeil Jr. still chokes up when he talks of the war that claimed his younger brother.

"It seems kind of futile to have gone through all that and still as far as I am concerned, I can't see what they accomplished over there," he said, gazing at a scrapbook of his brother's Army career. "In my own thinking, it seemed an awful waste to me. Not meaning the boys wasted their lives for nothing. They had a reason. Me, I cannot actually figure out the reason."

A compulsion to find a reason, to attach meaning and significance to the loss of a loved one, drives Vietnam War victims' families beyond the ordinary experience of bereavement, according to mental-health professionals and veterans counselors who have worked with them.

"They are genuinely and humanly torn between on the one hand wishing to feel that the loss was for some purpose, that it mattered to be fighting in Vietnam," said Robert Jay Lifton, a psychiatrist who has written about Vietnam veterans and survivors of Hiroshima and the Holocaust. "Otherwise there seems to be the unendurable, unacceptable loss without meaning. Without any sense of purpose."

"I think it hurts more in Vietnam even than in other wars. I believe that the effort to give that death and loss convincing significance is harder, more difficult. That has to do with the whole country's feeling about the war - not just the family."

The past recedes uncertainly for the families of men killed or listed as missing in Vietnam. For other Americans, great events fix the war's course in history - from the Tonkin Gulf to the abdication, in effect, of Lyndon Johnson, from the ascendancy of Henry Kissinger to the fall of Saigon. But the families remember Vietnam differently. Seemingly timeless, their feelings of loss eclipse historic dates and fleeting decades.

**On March 31, 1968, Johnson announced that divisions over the war had persuaded him not to run for reelection. That same day, Wayne Hokenson, the adopted and only child of Edith and Carl Hokenson of Louisville, died in a mortar barrage. For Edith Hokenson, everything stopped on March 31, 1968.**

**"You have hopes for your children," she said, remembering the sudden loss. "You look forward to seeing them grow up and develop and seeing what is going to happen, what they are going to be. It's like stepping off the edge of the earth because there is nothing there.**

**"I had visions of thousands and thousands of dollars of College tuition to be paid. And then all of a sudden I had nothing to save money for. Everything stopped."**

To Rosa Flott, a Rockville, Md., resident and widow of a Green Beret, "it's like a sad story, a sad book or a sad movie. Once in a while, you really think, 'Did I go through all this?'"

Parents struggle to justify losses suffered in a lost cause. Widows face remarriage, with one eye on the past. The children of lost servicemen discover their peers don't know or care much about Vietnam. All the while, sharp divisions, engendered years ago when the war was on, linger in the hearts and minds of the surviving families.

"There are a lot of commonalities among the feelings of surviving families and the feelings of the combat vets," said Heather Brandon, psychologist and author of "Casualties," an oral history of families who lost someone in Vietnam. "There is a tremendous amount of anger. There is a tremendous sense still 10 years, 15 years later, of loss. There is a lot of confusion about the war. I think you see in families a micro-cosm of the war."

For some families, there is consolation in the belief that the war was worth waging, or at least that the men who fought it would have won if the military had gone all out.

"My brother definitely believed in it, so it had to be right," Tex McNeil said. "He said they could win that war in 30 days if they would just turn them loose. He said there wouldn't be a blade of grass left there."

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Wayne Allen Hokenson (66)

Courtesy Edith Hokenson:

### Families still search for meaning to ease the loss of loved ones

Medals mounted and hung on parlor walls, assertions that "he took 43 of them with him when he died" and religious faith that God shapes destiny - these also are the building blocks of Consolation. In the home of Robert and Louise Ransom in Williston, Vt., however, there is another kind of consolation, the kind that grows out of a conviction that the war was immoral.

Robert C. "Mike" Hanson Jr., the eldest of their six sons, was wounded by a mine while on night patrol near Quang Ngai and died eight days later. Until then Louise and Robert Ransom were just the anxious par-ents of another Army lieutenant. His death plunged them into the anti-war movement.

"For us, It was a way of bringing something good out of what we lost," Louise Ransom said. "I think that when you are confronted with the death of a young person, you try to get something of value out of it. I couldn't see anything of value for the country, but I thought maybe if it would help to wake up people, that it was worth putting myself on the line."

Many families, reacting to their losses in Vietnam, found it necessary to make Sharp changes In their lives and move In new directions.

Katherine Mannion, whose only son was killed in December 1966, and came home in a coffin on his 21st birthday, became active in American Gold Star Mothers, volunteering her time in Baltimore's VA medical Center. The Ransoms became activists, first working against the war and then for amnesty for war resisters. **Edith Hokenson got a job with a travel agency and saw most of the world - except South-east Asia.**

George and Helen Shine of Southbury, Ct., enrolled in the POW-MIA movement in the early 1970s and found themselves at odds with a government that never seemed to do enough for the 2,477 missing men.

Their youngest son, Jonathan, an Army platoon leader, was killed In a firefight. The Air Force jet of their eldest son, Anthony, disappeared over Laos without a trace.

"With Jon," Helen Shine said, "I knew he was well and happy in heaven. But with Tony, you don't know. Was he wounded somewhere? Was he struggling to escape?"

For the widows of the war, a serviceman's death in Vietnam was especially disruptive. Efforts to remarry and establish a second family life, in many cases, failed in the face of old memories and laments for what might have been.

Susan Tanfield, who had been married for just two years when her husband was killed, remarried after the war, then divorced and later felt that perhaps the memory of her slain husband had interfered. "From the very beginning, I said to myself, 'You cannot compare, It's not fair.' I really don't think t did until after the divorce and then I would say, 'Well, this would not have been a problem, that wouldn't have been a problem.'"

And the children of the Vietnam war dead have had to cope with the fact that most of their age group have little interest in or understand-ing of the Southeast Asian conflict.

Monica Flott, the 14-year-old daughter of Rosa Flott, said her friends at school don't mention Viet-nam. "They don't really care," she said. "Alt my close friends, they never talk about it I don't really think they are interested in Vietnam. ... If my father hadn't died in Vietnam. I don't think I would really care about it."



Staff Photo by Mary Ann Lyons  
Carl and Edith Hokenson:  
"It's like stepping off the edge  
of the earth," she said of the  
death of their son, Wayne.

THE WASHINGTON POST

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 1965 A15



EDITH AND CARL HOKENSON

When the Hokensons' son Wayne, last, died in 1968, it was, Edith Hokenson said, "like stepping off the edge of the Earth because there is nothing there . . . Everything stopped."

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Wayne Allen Hokenson (66)

Courtesy Edith Hokenson:



#### Bronze Star Medal

The Bronze Star Medal was established by Executive Order 9419, 4 February 1944 (superseded by Executive Order 11046, 24 August 1962).

The Bronze Star Medal is awarded to any person who, while serving in any capacity in or with the Army of the United States after 6 December 1941, distinguished himself or herself by heroic or meritorious achievement or service, not involving participation in aerial flight, in connection with military operations against an armed enemy; or while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

Awards may be made for acts of heroism, performed under circumstances described above, which are of lesser degree than required for the award of the Silver Star.



#### Purple Heart

The Purple Heart is awarded in the name of the President of the United States to any member of an Armed Force who, while serving with the U.S. Armed Services after 5 April 1917, has been wounded or killed, or who has died or may hereafter die after being wounded.



#### Vietnam Service Medal

Awarded to all members of the Armed Forces of the United States serving in Vietnam and contiguous waters or airspace thereover, after 3 July 1965 through 28 March 1973. Members of the Armed Forces of the United States in Thailand, Laos, or Cambodia, or the airspace thereover, during the same period and serving in direct support of operations in Vietnam are also eligible for this award.



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Wayne Allen Hokenson (66)

Courtesy Edith Hokenson:



#### **Army Commendation Medal**

A mid-level award presented for sustained acts of heroism or meritorious service. Awarded by local commanders, allowing for a broad interpretation of the criteria for which the medal may be awarded. For actions where such performance was in direct contact with an enemy force, the Valor device ("V" device) is authorized as an attachment to the decoration. The Army Commendation Medal is typically awarded to junior officers and enlisted personnel as an end-of-tour award. Additional awards are denoted by oak leaf clusters.



#### **Republic of Vietnam (RVN) Gallantry Cross Medal w/Palm**

A military decoration of South Vietnam established in August 1950. Awarded to any U.S. military personnel who have accomplished deeds of valor or displayed heroic conduct while fighting an enemy force. The medal is issued in four degrees with the basic medal followed by higher degrees the result of personal citations on an organizational level (also known as having been "mentioned in dispatches"). The degrees are as follows: Gallantry Cross with Palm (Individual Award); Gallantry Cross with Bronze Star (Regiment-level or Brigade-level citation); Gallantry Cross with Silver Star (Division-level citation); Gallantry Cross with Gold Star (Corps-level citation). The devices to the Gallantry Cross are not worn simultaneously but instead are upgradeable to the next higher device which would replace the previous device for wear on the decoration. The most common award is the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) Gallantry Cross Medal w/Palm – the individual award version.

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Wayne Allen Hokenson (66)

Courtesy: <http://tanaya.net/cgi-bin/vmw.cgi?23631>

### *In Memory of Specialist Four Wayne Allen Hokenson*



**Let us not forget Specialist Four Wayne Allen Hokenson, casualty of the Vietnam War. As a member of the Army, SP4 Hokenson served our country until March 31st, 1968 in Long An, South Vietnam. He was 21 years old and was not married. Wayne died from artillery fire. His body was recovered. Wayne was born on March 2nd, 1947 in Louisville, Kentucky.**

**SP4 Hokenson is on panel 47E, line 022 of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington D.C. He served our country for 2 years.**



[Home](#) [FAQ](#) [Previous](#) [Next](#) [Search](#) [Random](#)

Remember this memorial: [Del.icio.us](#), [Digg](#), [Technorati](#), [Blinklist](#), [Furl](#), [reddit](#)

**0788197**

Courtesy: [Ancestry.com](http://Ancestry.com)

#### Vietnam War: U.S. Military Casualties, 1956-1998

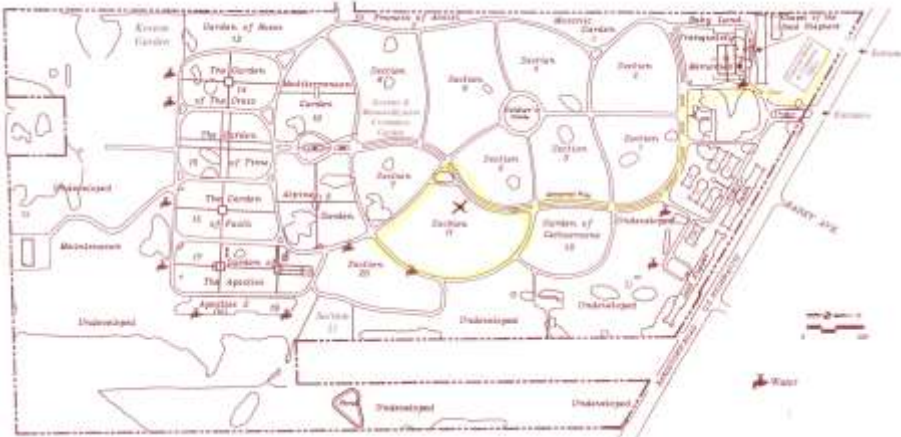
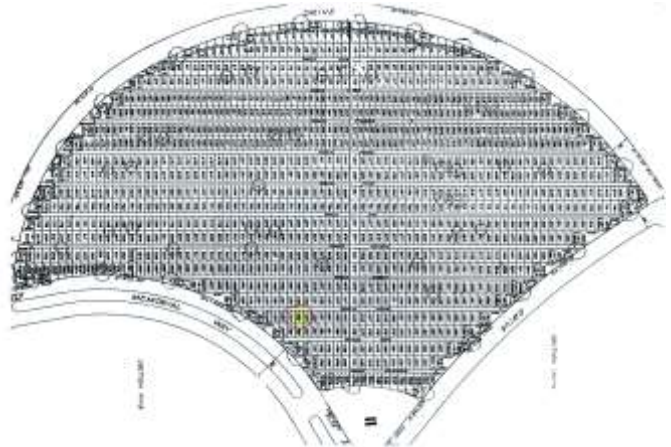
Name:	<b>WAYNE ALLEN Hokenson</b>
Birth Date:	2 Mar 1947
Death Date:	31 Mar 1968
Home City:	Louisville
Home State:	Kentucky
SSN/Service #:	15750447
Death Date:	31 Mar 1968
Casualty Country:	Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam)
Tour Start Date:	10
Service Branch:	Department of the Army
Component:	Regular (RA, USN, USAF, USMC, USCG)
RANK:	Specialist Fourth Class
Military Grade:	Specialist Fourth Class
Pay Grade:	Specialist Fourth Class (U.S. Army) or Corporal (U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps) or Sergeant (U.S. Air Force) or Grade/Rate Abbreviations With First Column: Any Entry; Second Column: N; Third Column: 3; Fourth Column: Blank (U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard) or
COMPANY:	B Co
REGIMENT:	7th Inf
Battalion:	3rd Bn
Province:	27
Decoration:	Not Available
CN:	Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam)
Service:	Field Wireman (ARMY)
Occupation:	
Data Source:	Coffelt Database



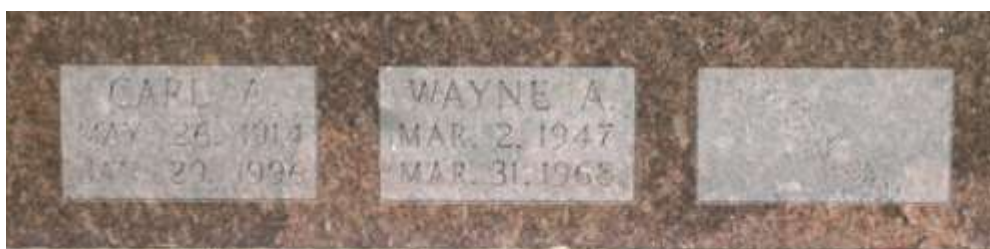
# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Wayne Allen Hokenson (66)

Wayne Allen Hokenson is buried at Resthaven Memorial Park and Funeral Home, 440 Bardstown Road, Louisville, KY. Section 11, grave 5, #1138 His father Carl A. Hokenson is also buried their, and there is a spot for his mother Edith M. Hokenson.



Courtesy of  
Al Ring:

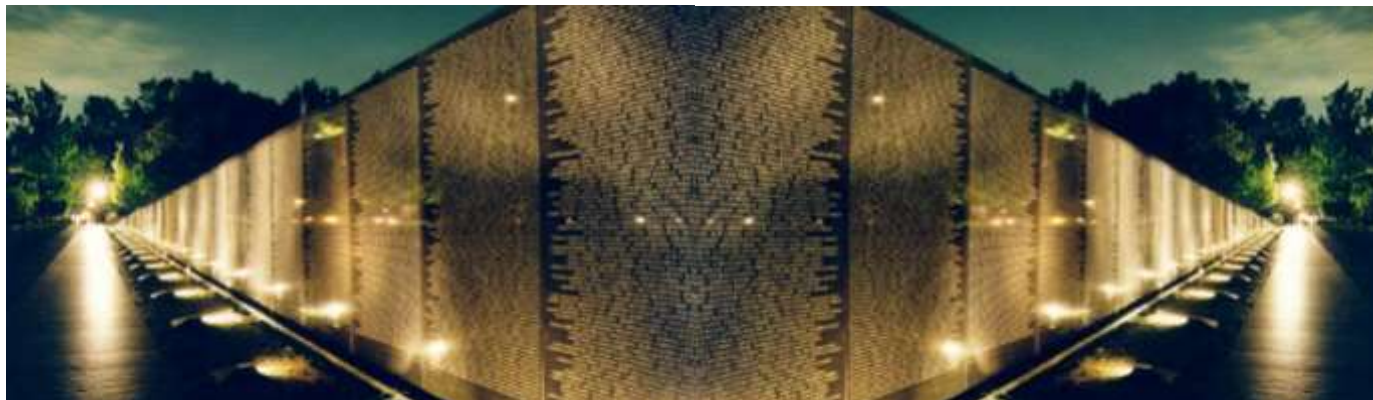


# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Wayne Allen Hokenson (66)

Courtesy: <http://www.viethero.us/Search/Searchlink.htm>

Panel 47



### East

ROW 022 \* GERALD LYNN JOHNSON \* MICHAEL RODNEY GREENIDGE  
\* MARK EDWARD HODEL \* WAYNE ALLEN HOKENSON \* ROBERT  
KENT HORSPOOL

Courtesy: From: <http://www.viethero.us/Search/Searchlink.htm>

#### WAYNE ALLEN HOKENSON

manny g  
Fellow Veteran 69-70 An Khe  
Union Gap, WA. 98903  
"You are Remembered"

Peace and condolence, to the family and friends. "He which hath no stomach to this fight let him depart. But we in it shall be remembered. We few, we happy few, we band of brothers!! For he today, that sheds his blood with me, shall always be my brother." Rest in peace brave soldier, you have not been forgotten. (W.Shakespeare) May God Bless You for your Sacrifice!!!  
Mar 31, 2007

-----  
The Wall-USA  
-----

In Honored Remembrance  
To a Fallen Hero

Honoring your memory on the date you made the Ultimate Sacrifice in 1968. Wayne, your dedication, courage and service to our nation will always be remembered.  
Thursday, March 31, 2005

-----  
The Wall-USA  
-----

Ron Sheehan  
[rwsheehan@bellsouth.net](mailto:rwsheehan@bellsouth.net)  
Fellow Veteran

I'm a retired veteran (U.S.Army) from Louisville, Ky who wants to keep your memory alive. You have not been forgotten. We soldiers do not question our duty, but do our part to keep and preserve freedom. However! You gave the ultimate sacrifice. It would have been nice to have known you as a person, you forever will be a HERO. We should never let these soldiers "Fade Away", their memory and the Vietnam War should never disappear from our thoughts and history.  
Tuesday, April 05, 2005

#### WAYNE ALLEN HOKENSON

SP4 - E4 - Army - Regular  
199th Light Infantry Brigade

Length of service 2 years  
His tour began on Oct 10, 1967  
Casualty was on Mar 31, 1968  
In LONG AN, SOUTH VIETNAM  
HOSTILE, GROUND CASUALTY  
ARTILLERY, ROCKET, or MORTAR  
Body was recovered

Panel 47E - Line 22

[Personal comments on this site](#)

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Robert "Bobby" Stagner Pfeister (66)

August 23, 1947 - January 10, 1968



1961 Lair



1963 Lair



Robert Pfeister  
Class of '66  
Died Jan. 10, 1968

**From: Ken Draut (73), of the Waggener Vietnam Memorial committee.**

Robert Stagner Pfeister, Class of '66: Bobby graduated in 1966 and he joined the army the following fall. A year later he arrived in Vietnam and spent only a few short months there as a gunship crew chief before he was killed in the Tet offensive in January of 1968. His military commendations include the Purple Heart, the Vietnam of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit citation, Service Medal, Republic and Expert Marksman Badges for both the M-16 and M-60 machine gun.

His family remembers his fond affecting for two of his Junior High school teachers, John Stephens and Ray Watkins, and Mrs. Dorthy Southard of the bookkeeping department.

As a teenager, his friends remember him and his 1960 Chevrolet Corvette. He liked cruising Frish's Big Boy and skating at the National Guard Armory on Sherrin Avenue.

### Purple Heart



The Purple Heart is awarded in the name of the President of the United States to any member of an Armed Force who, while serving with the U.S. Armed Services after 5 April 1917, has been wounded or killed, or who has died or may hereafter die after being wounded.

### Vietnam Service Medal



Awarded to all members of the Armed Forces of the United States serving in Vietnam and contiguous waters or airspace thereover, after 3 July 1965 through 28 March 1973. Members of the Armed Forces of the United States in Thailand, Laos, or Cambodia, or the airspace thereover, during the same period and serving in direct support of operations in Vietnam are also eligible for this award.

### Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with palm Unit citation



U.S. Military units were individually cited for award of the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) Gallantry Cross; however, the Vietnamese Government issued the award to all units subordinate to Military Assistance Command (MACV) during the period 8 February 1962 and 28 March 1973 and to U.S. Army Vietnam and its subordinate units for the period 20 July 1965 to 28 March 1973. This permits all personnel who served in Vietnam to wear the RVN Gallantry Cross unit citation.

The medal was awarded by the Vietnam Government to military personnel who have accomplished deeds of valor or displayed heroic conduct while fighting the enemy and have been cited individually at the regiment, brigade, division, corps, or armed forces level.

**Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

**Robert "Bobby" Stagner Pfeister (66)**

# Social and Personal



*The Voice Of St. Matthews,*  
January 26, 1956

While her friends look on, Judy Pfeister opens a birthday present at her 13th birthday party Saturday at her home, 212 Exchange. Pictured are, first row, Susie Turley, left, Miss Pfeister, Bonnie Groves and Carol Hall. Second row, Jean Housekeeper, Peggy Ranson, Cindy Hartley, Bobbie and Billy Pfeister, Melissa Klein, and Martha Ann Mead. Third row, Donna Sue Gibbons, Judy Housekeeper, and Susan Nickles. Guests not pictured were Gloria Taylor, Sharon Westwood, Alleia Anderson, Deanna Bergan, Charlotte Cardwell, Dawn Sterner, Penny Kesselman, Lorella Todd, Connie Corey, Marilyn Gordon, Pam Flack and Karalee Goranflo.

*The Voice - Jeffersonian*  
December 15, 1966

April 13, 1967



Privates William and Robert Pfeister, twin sons of Mr. and Mrs. George Pfeister, 212 Exchange Ave., have completed eight weeks basic training at Fort Knox, Ky., and have been selected for training as airplane mechanics at Fort Rucker, Ala. They are 1966 graduates of Waggener High School.

## ★ STARS AND STRIPES ★

TWIN brothers, Robert and William Pfeister, 19, sons of Mr. and Mrs. George L. Pfeister, 212 Exchange Ave., completed a helicopter maintenance course at the Army Aviation School, Ft. Rucker, Ala., March 31.

**Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

**Robert “Bobby” Stagner Pfeister (66)**



**Mr. Pfeister, Bobby Pfeister, Mrs. Pfeister and Billy Pfeister, Fort Knox, KY, 1967**



**Fort Bragg, North Carolina, Billy & Bobby Pfeister, April 1967**

**Above photos, courtesy Billy Pfeister:**

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Robert "Bobby" Stagner Pfeister (66)



November or December 1967, Vietnam, Billy, bottom left, Bobby top, far right.

STATEMENT (AR 190-45; AR 600-140)		
Explain the nature of the investigation. If person making statement is accused or suspected of an offense he or she must be so informed and this fact affirmatively shown.		
PLACE	DATE	FILE NUMBER
Fort Bragg, North Carolina	25 May 1967	
LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL	SERVICE NUMBER	GRADE
Pfeister, William	US-51942036	Pvt E-2
ORGANIZATION (If civilian, give address)		
134th Aviation Company (AHL)		
I HAVE BEEN INFORMED BY <u>Ronald D. Gilsore</u>		
WHO STATED HE IS (is) <u>(an) Warrant Officer</u>		
OF THE UNITED STATES (Army) (Navy) (Air Force), AND THAT HE IS CONDUCTING AN INVESTIGATION OF <u>My Assignment to Vietnam</u>		
<input type="checkbox"/> OF WHICH I AM (accused) (suspected). (Strike out words between brackets if person is neither accused nor suspected of a criminal offense.)		
"THE UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE, ARTICLE 31, (and Title 10, United States Code, Section 1219) (Retain words in parentheses if statement is taken in connection with line-of-duty investigation)		
<input type="checkbox"/> the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. (Retain words between brackets if person making statement is a civilian) (has) (has not) BEEN READ AND EXPLAINED TO ME BY <u>Ronald D. Gilsore</u>		
I UNDERSTAND THAT I DO NOT HAVE TO MAKE ANY STATEMENT WHATSOEVER AND ANY STATEMENT I MAKE MAY BE USED AS EVIDENCE AGAINST ME.		
1. I William Pfeister, Pvt E2, US-51942036, have been advised of provisions of 3rd Army CIR 614-15 dated September 1966 and DA message 778005 dated 13 August 1966, which would allow me to request <del>deferment</del> of assignment to Vietnam.		

Above photo & information, courtesy Billy Pfeister:



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Robert “Bobby” Stagner Pfeister (66)

January 10, 1968



#### Louisville GI, One of Twins Killed in War

One of the twin sons of Mr. and Mrs. George Pfeister, of 212 Exchange, was killed Wednesday in a mortar attack on their helicopter base at Kontum in the Central Highlands of South Vietnam.

He was Spec. 4 Robert Pfeister, 20, a 1966 graduate of Waggener High School. His brother Spec. 4 William Pfeister, is also serving at Kontum.

During the battle, enemy assault troops fired widely into the tents of soldiers defending the airstrip, killing seven Americans and wounding 25.

The GIs charged out as the first rounds went off. They later counted the bodies of 14 uniformed North Vietnamese within the compound.

The Louisville soldiers, both assault helicopter crew chiefs, asked to serve together when they were drafted 16 months ago.

Robert was a member of Bethel Methodist Church.

In addition to his parents and twin brother, he is survived by another brother, George, a sister Judy, and his grandmothers, Mrs. Anna Pfeister, Mount Carmel, Ill., and Mrs. Bessie Willoughby.

Upon arrival from Vietnam the body will be at Pearson's, 149 Breckenridge Lane.

#### Slain GI's Twin Brother Is Wounded

Mr. and Mrs. George Pfeister, parents of twin sons who served in Vietnam, received a second a sad notice from the army today.

They learned that 20-year-old William was badly wounded in the same mortar attack last Wednesday that claimed the life of his brother, Robert.

The Pfeisters, of 212 Exchange, had been anxiously awaiting word of William's fate ever since they were notified Thursday of the other son's death.

This morning, Mrs. Pfeister said, a major at Ft. Knox called them. He said William had been "pretty seriously wounded" in the right shoulder, right thigh and left leg.

**Both Were Crew Chiefs:** The twins were both assault-helicopter crew chiefs with the rank of specialist 4th class. They asked to serve together when they were drafted 16 months ago.

At the time of the attack, they were stationed at a helicopter base at Kontum in the central Highlands of South Vietnam.

During the battle, enemy assault troops fired widely into the tents of soldiers defending the airstrip. Seven Americans were killed and 25 wounded.

Mrs. Pfeister said William is being sent back to this country, presumably to Ireland Army Hospital at Ft. Knox.

He is not expected to arrive for another three weeks, however—too late to attend his brother's funeral. Mrs. Pfeister said the funeral will be held some time next week. Pearson's, 149 Breckenridge Lane, is in charge of arrangements.

Above information, courtesy Billy Pfeister:



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

Robert "Bobby" Stagner Pfeister (66)

# Robert Pfeister killed in Vietnam

Specialist Four Robert Pfeister, 20, twin son of Mr. and Mrs. George Pfeister, 212 Exchange Ave., was killed Wednesday, Jan. 10 during a mortar attack on a helicopter base at Kontum in the Central Highlands of Vietnam.

His twin brother, William, who holds the same rank, was wounded. This information was received Monday, four days after news of Robert's death was reported.

William received wounds in the right shoulder, right thigh and left leg and is expected to be returned to the U.S., perhaps to Ireland Army Hospital at Fort Knox.

The two St. Matthews soldiers, who became assault helicopter crew chiefs, requested that they serve together when they were drafted 16 months ago.

According to service dispatches, enemy assault troops fired into tents of soldiers defending an airstrip, killing

seven Americans and wounding 26. After the first rounds of mortar shells exploded, the Americans went into action and killed 14 unformed North Vietnamese in the compound.

Robert, a 1966 graduate of Waggener High School, was a member of Bethel Methodist Church. The body will be at Pearson's, 149 Breckinridge Ln., after it arrives from Vietnam.

Besides his parents and twin brother, Robert leaves another brother, George; a sister, Judy, and grandmothers, Mrs. Anna Pfeister, Mount Carmel, Ill., and Mrs. Bessie Willoughby.

The Pfeister youth is the second Waggener graduate to lose his life in Vietnam. The other was Lt. William Duncan who was killed in 1967.

January 18, 1968  
*The Voice—Jeffersonian*

## Services held for soldier killed in war

Funeral services for Specialist Four Robert Pfeister, 20, twin son of Mr. and Mrs. George L. Pfeister, 212 Exchange Ave., victim of a Jan. 10 mortar attack in Vietnam, were held Saturday, Jan. 20, at 11 am at Pearson's—on Breckinridge Lane. Burial was in Zachary Taylor National Cemetery.

The victim's twin brother, William, was seriously wounded in the same attack. The brothers, graduates of Waggener High School, had served together since they were drafted almost a year and a half ago.

Besides his parents and twin brother, Robert leaves another brother, George L. Pfeister; a sister, Mrs. Lonnie Chesser, and grandparents, Mrs. Anna Pfeister, Mt. Carmel, Ill., and Mrs. Bessie Willoughby.

January 25, 1968  
*The Voice—Jeffersonian*

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

**Robert "Bobby" Stagner Pfeister (66)**



**PRESENTS MEDAL:** Eugene E. Speer, Jr., right, director of Veterans Hospital, presents the Purple Heart medal to Pfc. William Pfeister, of 212 Exchange Ave., St. Matthews.

## St. Matthews veteran receives Purple Heart

Pfc. William Pfeister, a patient in the Veterans Hospital, was presented a Purple Heart medal June 28 by Eugene E. Speer, Jr., hospital director.

The medal was awarded for injuries received January 10, 1968, while with the 57th Helicopter Squadron in Vietnam.

Pfc. Pfeister and his brother Robert, in the same squadron, were repairing a helicopter at 2 am when a sneak attack was launched by the Viet Cong. In the battle Robert was

fatally injured, and William suffered shrapnel wounds to both legs and a gunshot wound in the right shoulder.

William, who lives at 212 Exchange Avenue, St. Matthews, graduated from Waggener High School in 1966 and entered the Army the following September.

He has been a patient at the Veterans Hospital since June 14, 1968, and plans to go to I. B. M. school upon discharge.

**January 25, 1968**  
*The Voice—Jeffersonian*

**July 4, 1968**  
*The Voice—Jeffersonian*

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Robert "Bobby" Stagner Pfeister (66)

#### LETTER TO MY BROTHER

Dear Bobby;

I was looking at some pictures taken a long time ago  
It made me think of the times we had so many years ago.  
Oh, those times were so wonderful, I thought that they would never end.  
Those times when we were younger, my brother, my twin, my Friend.

When our Country needed us, off together to Viet Nam, me and you.  
We went into the service to do what we had to do.  
We would do this job together and come back home to stay.  
But sometimes plans change and things don't go our way.  
For God had other plans for us on that day.

God had another journey for me to begin.  
But he opened up his door to Heaven and let you in.  
But even though we are not together, we are never really apart.  
Because my dear sweet Brother, you are always in my heart.

It's time to close this letter, I really need to go.  
I'll keep thinking about those wonderful memories from those years  
so long ago.  
Yes, I still miss you, but hold a place for me.  
For someday, I'll be there with you, just like we used to be.

Love Billy

written by Sharon Watts  
and dedicated to Billy Pfeister in memory of his brother, Bobby

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Robert “Bobby” Stagner Pfeister (66)

**November 11, 1993, by Charles Wolfe, Associated Press: Shining Memories—Personal tokens help sundial highlight Vietnam veterans. “For all the young men—Thank you—a grateful citizen” This was a note left with poinsettia at the Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Christmas 1988.**

Frankfort, Ky.—For five years, the flowers, letters and memories have been laid at Kentucky’s sundial memorial to Vietnam veterans.

And for five years a state curator has collected and cataloged the stuff of remembrance—flags, medals, candles, poems, letters and flowers of every description.

Ellie Pfeister placed a rose by her son’s engraved name the day the imposing granite memorial was dedicated on a hillside overlooking the Capitol.

The tip of the huge sundial’s shadow touches the name each January 10, the date that a mortar attack killed 20-year-old Robert Pfeister and gravely wounded his twin brother in 1968.

Pfeister, who was a helicopter crew chief from Louisville, is among 1,088 Kentuckians whose names are shadowed on the dates they died in Vietnam.

“Probably one of the most outstanding memorials I’ve ever seen in my life,” said Robert Cundiff of Hodgenville, who commanded a national Guard field artillery battalion that was mobilized in Bardstown and sent to Vietnam in 1968.

“It took a little bit of the sting out of the reception the people who went to Vietnam got—how they were treated,” Cundiff said.

The memorial is unusual because the names of the dead are plotted along curving time lines engraved on a spacious granite plaza. Some are densely clustered, others widely spaced, reflecting the war’s escalation and tapering.

Helm Roberts, the Lexington architect who designed the memorial, said he was unsure at first how people would react.

“All I hear is good, positive things about it, particularly from the veterans themselves,” Roberts said. “It is satisfying to me to hear people talk about its simplicity...It’s probably the only thing I’ve done professionally that anyone will remember.”

Cundiff, who retired as a brigadier general in 1981, will be the keynote speaker tomorrow in a ceremony to commemorate the memorial’s fifth anniversary.

At the state archives building nearby, Tom Fugate, curator of the Kentucky Military History Museum, will display many of the items he has collected from the memorial since 1988.

Recent items included a silk rose taped to a small American flag. Sandwiched between them was a *Louisville Times* clipping about the death of Robert Pfeister in the mortar attack on his helicopter base at Kontum, Vietnam.

Ellie Pfeister, 72, said it probably was left by Robert's twin, William, now 46. He also left one at Robert’s grave in Zachary Taylor National Cemetery in Louisville.

“He keeps his brother’s memory alive,” she said. “He’s very dedicated. We all are.”

The twins, the youngest of her four children, were inseparable, she said. They graduated from Waggener High School together in 1966. Then they were drafted together, trained together and went to Vietnam together. But they did not come home together.

“When Billy came home without Bobby, it was so unreal,” their mother said.

William Pfeister relayed word through his mother that he did not wish to be interviewed.

“Apparently he doesn’t want to talk about it,” she said, “and we don’t bring it up.”



Tom Fugate of the Kentucky Military History Museum looked at items left at the Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Robert “Bobby” Stagner Pfeister (66)

Courtesy: *The Courier-Journal*, December 29, 1998, by Jack Hicks, *The Cincinnati Post*, Viet Memorial preserves heartfelt tributes.

Frankfort, Ky.—Five full cans of beer sat on the base of the Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

As if to say, “This one’s for you, friend,” the sixth can sat empty and crunched beside the five.

“I’m sure it was done as a token of affection, from a veteran to others who died,” said Tom Fugate. “It’s all a part of the healing process.”

Fugate is curator of the Kentucky Military History Museum, which has become the repository for mementos left at the memorial. They range from poems and letters to flags, rosaries and even beer cans.

When the memorial was dedicated in 1988, no one thought much about what visitors would leave. The items quickly began to collect, however, and Fugate began making almost daily stops at the memorial to gather them.

Now a display occupies a sizable area of the museum, and more is being stored.

Some who leave tokens behind later visit the museum, where they are pleased to find their offering has been preserved. One man who left several beer cans, flags and poems told Fugate that seeing them was “as though those whom I was speaking to had returned them to me.”

The monument itself evokes deep emotions. On a quiet, windswept hill overlooking Frankfort, it is designed like a large sundial, with the gnomon, or arm, casting a shadow on the names of individual casualties, on the anniversary that each died.

The granite tables of the monument include the names of 1,100 Kentuckians who died in Vietnam. A letter from a Louisville-area woman left at the monument relates how she never married and still grieves for a young soldier.

Another letter, apparently written shortly after Bill Clinton was elected president, says: “Can you believe it boys? The country elected a draft dodger.”

Fugate thinks that most of the pictures left at the monument are of grandchildren or other relatives that the dead soldiers never had the chance to see.

A former soldier from Louisville has left flowers, flags and newspaper clippings about the death of this twin brother. The brothers were assigned to a helicopter unit; the surviving twin, who was wounded in action, has also left a wooden toy helicopter.

But it is the teddy bears that moves Fugate the most.

“A lot of these casualties were just kids, not far removed from being children. The teddy bear sort of symbolizes a generation with its innocence lost,” he said. Distributed by The Associated Press

Courtesy: *The Courier-Journal*, June 1, 1999: By John Sommers II, Special to the C-J.

### War dead remembered in memorial Day rites



BY JOHN SOMMERS II, SPECIAL TO THE C-J  
Billy Pfeister touched the headstone of his twin brother, Robert, yesterday at Zachary Taylor National Cemetery. They served together in Vietnam. A mortar attack killed Robert.

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Robert "Bobby" Stagner Pfeister (66)

Courtesy: *The Courier Journal*, A Veterans Day Recollection, "It's so easy to remember, so hard to forget, by Pam Platt, public editor. Friday November 11, 2005.

*"We believed in Vietnam. I still believe it was a noble cause.....Maybe I have to believe that way."*

*By Billy Pfeister*

# 'It's so easy to remember, so hard to forget'



The twins posed for a photograph in 1967 on the front of a sports car at Fort Bragg. "They made my life happy," said their mother, Ellie Pfeister.

*"We believed in Vietnam. I still believe it was a noble cause. ... Maybe I have to believe that way."*

**BILLY PFEISTER**

### A VETERANS DAY RECOLLECTION

A twin honors his fallen brother on this - and every - day



By Michael Cloverges, The Courier-Journal

Twice a week, Billy Pfeister visits the grave of his brother, Bobby Pfeister, at the Zachary Taylor National Cemetery on Brownsboro Road. Billy Pfeister was wounded in Vietnam in January 1968 during a battle in which his brother was killed.



By Michael Cloverges, The Courier-Journal

"Half of me died in Vietnam," said Billy Pfeister, who has arranged to be buried with his twin brother, using the other side of the tombstone for his grave. While engaged three times, Pfeister has never married.



China  
Hanoi  
Laos  
Gulf of Tonkin  
Dong Hoi  
Hue  
Da Nang  
Thailand  
Kontum  
Cambodia  
Vietnam  
Ho Chi Minh City  
South China Sea  
100 Miles

The Courier-Journal

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Robert "Bobby" Stagner Pfeister (66)

**Courtesy: *The Courier Journal*, A Veterans Day Recollection, "It's so easy to remember, so hard to forget, by Pam Platt, public editor. Friday November 11, 2005.**

In a sunny living room in St. Matthews, in the very house Billy Pfeister and his twin brother, Bobby, were raised, Billy hauls out a scrapbook that's at least three inches thick. Between its black binders are plastic-covered pages that detail, in word and picture, two intertwined lives, and perhaps more than one death.

"Half of me died in Vietnam," Billy says, as he begins to turn the pages.

A day later, Billy makes one of his two weekly trips to the Zachary Taylor National Cemetery on Brownsboro Road. This is no sun-dappled morning. It's raining, and Billy, leaning on a cane and carrying red, white and blue artificial flowers to commemorate Veterans Day, remarks that God's tears are falling on true American heroes here, that there is nothing Hollywood about the people in this sacred ground.

He treads an old path, literal and emotional, to plot H273. Each time he visits, he doffs his Vietnam Veterans cap and salutes the four corners of the cemetery. Billy carefully steps around where his brother's body rests, lays a palm on the top of Bobby's white headstone and greets the twin he lost to battle almost 38 years ago, when both were 20 years old. "Hello, Bobby," Billy says.

And so it is that Kontum, half a world and more than half a lifetime gone, is never very far away.

Billy Pfeister -- pronounced Feaster -- has lived almost twice as long without his twin as he did with him. As an adult who retired from the Army and works as a tireless volunteer with various veterans' organizations, Billy knows the truth about living in the past.

"If you look in the past, it will get you no place," he says. "But it's so easy to remember, so hard to forget."

This is the unseen asterisk by the casualty count of every war: the price the living pay after the dead are claimed.

For Billy, that has been life without Bobby. And for brothers who were virtually inseparable, even when it came to being drafted and going to war, the cost is unimaginable.

They were perfect boys, says their mother, Ellie, who is 84. (Father George died in 1981; there are two other Pfeister siblings.)

She put them in the same bed when they were babies, and they were fine. Later on, when they came home from school, they did their homework and stayed in the yard to avoid the neighborhood bully. When it came time to work the family's five-acre garden in Lyndon, no complaints.

When high school rolled around -- they graduated from Waggener -- they worked at the A&P, stocking shelves, for 85 cents an hour. Pictures show the plaid-clad teens standing in front of the green Corvair they shared. Cruising Fontaine Ferry and Frisch's Big Boy were favorite pastimes. So was roller-skating.

Summer of '66, all that changed.

They were "working class people," Billy says. Dad was a landscaper, Mom ran the nursery at church. They didn't have money to go to college, which meant the twins were eligible for the draft.

Only a two-month window separated them from high school graduation to induction into the Army for basic training at Fort Knox. Once in the service, they volunteered to go to Vietnam.

"We believed in Vietnam," Billy says. "I still believe it was a noble cause, fighting the Communists. Maybe I have to believe that way."

The twins were helicopter crew chiefs, part of the 57th Assault Helicopter Company, and their training took them to Fort Bragg in North Carolina and Fort Rucker in Alabama before it took them even farther from home: to Kontum in the Central Highlands of South Vietnam.

Two photos from 1967:

Billy and Bobby are in uniform, one stripe on each of their arms, perched on the front of a Triumph sports car (not theirs) at Fort Bragg. They squint in the bright sun that shines against their brown hair and their black Army boots. There is a fresh and sweet something in their young but older faces that triggers a reminder of what Ellie said about them: "They made my life happy."

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Robert "Bobby" Stagner Pfeister (66)

**Courtesy: *The Courier Journal*, A Veterans Day Recollection, "It's so easy to remember, so hard to forget, by Pam Platt, public editor. Friday November 11, 2005.**

Several months later, the twins are in a grainy group picture in Vietnam. The knot of metal on each of their left hands is the Waggener class ring. In the bottom row, a shirtless Billy, wearing an easy smile, squats in front of sandbags with another soldier. Three others are positioned behind them. The one on the far right, looking at a can in his hands instead of the camera, is Bobby. Less than two months after the picture is taken, the three soldiers in the top tier will be killed. If this isn't the last picture of Bobby, it's one of the last.

A March 1968 *Courier-Journal* story about the twins reads:

"Both helicopter mechanics, they were working on the same aircraft at their base at Kontum in the Central Highlands the night of Jan. 9. Just before 2 a.m. Billy decided to knock off a few minutes to go get a drink of water.

"The twins were separated forever.

" 'The first thing I heard,' said Billy last week at his parents' home ... 'was a loud explosion down on the end of the compound. It was our mess hall blowing up. It had been open only two weeks.'

" 'Then mortars and rockets started coming in like the stars themselves had fallen,' the fuzzy-cheeked specialist recalled. 'Helicopters turned into balls of fire, and I saw a rocket hit right in where I had been working.' "

Billy told the reporter how Viet Cong overran the compound.

" I started for my rifle (an M16). We kept them stacked together. But it was too late. The VC had cut me off.

" I turned around and started back. One spotted me and started chasing me. I ran around the corner of a tent and dived under the helicopter. When I did, the VC shot me in the right leg.

" I lay there a few seconds, playing like I was dead, and he went on a few yards. Then I looked up and he had started back and someone shot him in the back.

" I was scared the helicopter I was under would blow up, so I got out from under it and crawled over to some sandbags.

" 'Another VC saw me and just as I reached the sandbags he threw a grenade on me. It felt like the whole world had blown up beneath me. I didn't feel much pain but I could see blood all over me.' "

A helicopter under enemy fire was able to take off and deliver Billy to a hospital in Pleiku.

Billy said in 1968, " 'They fixed up my wounds, then a doctor came and told me that my brother had been killed. What had happened to me didn't seem to be important anymore.' "

In St. Matthews, Ellie says a captain came to the family home to break the news about Bobby. When she asked about Billy, the officer said he didn't know they had another son in the war. The family waited six days before knowing whether Billy was dead or alive.

Billy missed his brother's funeral. He needed four operations to mend the injuries to his right shoulder, right thigh and left leg.

The hurt never goes away, Billy says, it's always painful.

He is not talking about the old injuries that force him to use a cane, although they're cause for discomfort enough.

He's talking about the lasting wound: Living without Bobby.

In the past, Billy has been private about his feelings but he's talking about Bobby now because he doesn't want him to be forgotten, and because of another war and another Kentucky military man who lost his twin in this current war.

Billy wrote a letter to the surviving brother. And he wants that family to know that if the Pfeister family can do the unimaginable, which is to wake up every day and go about the business of living with an empty space in their heart, then maybe they can too.

Billy's life now revolves around being and working with other veterans at the VA, the VFW, the American Legion, the Vietnam Veterans of America. In 2001, he received the Liberty Award for his service to veterans. His empathy and positive outlook are balms in that important work. He says his fellow veterans are his extended family.

He helps take care of his mother, who says he watches after some of her friends too.



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Robert "Bobby" Stagner Pfeister (66)

**Courtesy: *The Courier Journal*, A Veterans Day Recollection, "It's so easy to remember, so hard to forget, by Pam Platt, public editor. Friday November 11, 2005.**

A childhood friend of the boys once wrote a poem titled, "Billy and Bobby." The last line noted that Billy had a Corvette, but not a wife. He still has the Corvette, an '81 silver T-top. And though he has been engaged three times, he has never married. Billy says he has had trouble getting close to people since Bobby died.

Soldiers do not leave their brothers behind.

And so, first and last, Billy is there for Bobby.

With the twice-weekly visits to the cemetery, where he talks to his brother.

With the voluminous and neatly tended scrapbook that details two intertwined lives.

With treasuring the twin Purple Heart medals the brothers earned.

And there is this:

When Billy dies, he has arranged to be buried with Bobby, and his name will be etched on the opposite side of his brother's headstone.

Bobby faces east, Billy says, and he will face west.

### Photo's of Billy Pfeister today, Volunteer of the Year Award, Louisville, KY VA Hospital



**Robert & William Pfeister, 1961 & 1963 Lair**

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Robert "Bobby" Stagner Pfeister (66)

Courtesy [http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=110&Wall\\_Id\\_No=40565](http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=110&Wall_Id_No=40565)

**ROBERT PFEISTER** 34E, 24

ROBERT PFEISTER  
is honored on Panel 34E, Row 24  
of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Full Name: ROBERT PFEISTER  
Wall Name: ROBERT PFEISTER  
Date of Birth: 8/23/1947  
Date of Casualty: 1/10/1968  
Home of Record: LOUISVILLE  
State: KY  
Branch of Service: ARMY  
Rank: SP4  
Casualty Country: SOUTH VIETNAM  
Casualty Province: KONTUM

To locate profiles of others on The Wall who  
share commonalities with ROBERT  
PFEISTER, click on the links above.



We Remember  
Posted for: ROBERT PFEISTER



Robert is buried at Zachary Taylor National Cemetery.

Robert

Posted for: ROBERT PFEISTER:



We all love and miss you very much. Someday we will all be together again.  
Love,  
God Bless  
Family and Friends

Posted by: Twin Brother Billy Pfeister  
Email:  
Relationship: He is my brother  
Tuesday, August 26, 2003

Courtesy Ancestry.com:

### Vietnam War: U.S. Military Casualties, 1956-1998

Name:	<b>ROBERT Pfeister</b>
Birth Date:	23 Aug 1947
Death Date:	10 Jan 1968
Home City:	Louisville
Home State:	Kentucky
SSN/Service #:	51942040
Death Date:	10 Jan 1968
Casualty Country:	Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam)
Tour Start Date:	20
Service Branch:	Department of the Army
Component:	Selective Service
RANK:	Specialist Fourth Class
Military Grade:	Specialist Fourth Class
Pay Grade:	Specialist Fourth Class (U.S. Army) or Corporal (U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps) or Sergeant (U.S. Air Force) or Grade/Rate Abbreviations With First Column: N; Fourth Entry; Second Column: N; Third Column: 3; Fourth Column: Blank (U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard) or
COMPANY:	57th Aviation Co
Province:	06
Decoration:	Not Available
CN:	Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam)
Service Occupation:	Single-Rotor Turbine Observation/ Utility Helicopter Repairman (ARMY)
Data Source:	Coffelt Database

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

**Robert “Bobby” Stagner Pfeister (66)**

**Robert “Bobby” Stagner Pfeister is buried in Zachary Taylor Cemetery, Section H, Site 273.**



**Courtesy of Al Ring:**

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Robert "Bobby" Stagner Pfeister (66)

Courtesy: <http://tanaya.net/cgi-bin/vmw.cgi?40500>

*In Memory of  
Specialist Four Robert Pfeister*



**Let us not forget Specialist Four Robert Pfeister, casualty of the Vietnam War. As a member of the Army Selective Service, SP4 Pfeister served our country until January 10th, 1968 in Ngai, South Vietnam. He was 20 years old and was not married. Robert died from small arms fire/grenade. His body was recovered. Robert was born on August 23rd, 1947 in Louisville, Kentucky.**

**SP4 Pfeister is on panel 34E, line 024 of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington D.C. He served our country for one year.**



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Courtesy <http://www.flyarmy.org/panel/battle/68011021.HTM>  
information for 57 AHC 615 TC DET 52 CAB For date 680110

Attack on Kontum infor-

57 AHC was a US Army unit  
615 TC DET was a US Army unit  
52 CAB was a US Army unit  
Primary service involved, US Army  
Operation MACARTHUR  
Incident reference: 68011061.BAT  
Kontum Province, II Corps, South Vietnam  
Location, Kontum  
57 AHC losses were 6 KIA, 17 WIA  
Aircraft lost in 57 AHC were 2 UH-1H, 2 UH-1C

Description: The 52d CAB unit history states that the 57th AHC and Kontum Airfield came under heavy enemy attack at approximately 0200H. The NVA used mortars, B-40 rockets, satchel charges and heavy small arms fires. The contact lasted approximately 7 - 8 minutes, resulting in: six US KIA, 20 WIA, two UH-1Hs destroyed, two UH-1Cs destroyed, two UH-1Hs major damage, seven UH-1H and two UH-1C moderate damage. Member of the 57th AHC close with and killed one NVA. Additionally, B Troop 2/1st Cav had five KIAs. Four enclosures to the history provide even more details. The first lists the names, ranks, SNs, units, and MOS for the 23 KIAs and WIAs from the 57th AHC and 615th TC Det (which was attached to the 57th). The other three list all the equipment destroyed. Editor's Note: This sudden and sizeable lost of mostly maintenance skills and aircraft had a ripple effect for other units not only within the 52d CAB but also the 17th CAG. For the next few days, units would be asked to transfer and lend maintenance EM, an extremely valuable resource, to the 57th

Comments: SP4 ARMOR LOYDE DEAN; 615th TC DET KIA; ; SP4 CARPENTER THOMAS JR; 615th TC DET KIA; ; PVT DEVINE RICHARD DANIEL JR; 615th TC DET KIA; ; PFC GOMEZ ANDRES ARMANDO R; 57th AHC KIA; ; SP4 MUNCY ROBERT WILLIAM; 615th TC DET KIA; ; SP4 PFEISTER ROBERT; 57th AHC KIA;

WO1 Young, David P.; 615th TC DET WIA; ; SSG George, Billy J.; 615th TC DET WIA; ; SP5 Nichols, Leon; 615th TC DET WIA; ; SP4 Cichanowski, Michael; 615th TC DET WIA; ; SP4 Joseph, Jerry W.; 615th TC DET WIA; ; SP4 Walter, Lonny G.; 615th TC DET WIA; ; SP4 Sanford, Wilbert; 615th TC DET WIA; ; SP4 Ward, Dean B.; 615th TC DET WIA; ; SP4 Osher, Ollie B.; 615th TC DET WIA; ; SP4 Turner, Lester D.; 615th TC DET WIA; ; SSG Ray, James E.; 57th AHC WIA; ; SP4 Buenafe, Ernest; 57th AHC WIA; ; PFC Pfeister, William; 57th AHC WIA; ; SP4 Garner, Terry W.; 57th AHC WIA; ; SP4 Kietzke, Karl E.; 57th AHC WIA; ; PFC King, Anthony L.; 57th AHC WIA; ; PFC Williams, Floyd L.; 57th AHC WIA; ; WO1 Weng, Russel L. Jr.; QMC Supply Officer; ; CPT Davis, Paul R.;

Also SP/4 Wolinski, Thomas P., 57th AHC, provided documentation to prove that he was also wounded that day.

The source for this information was *52 CAB Detailed Chronology 1 Nov - 31 Jan 68*

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### Robert (Bobby) Stagner Pfeister (66)

Courtesy: <http://www.57thahgladiators.com/1968.htm>

(Edited)

#### *UNIT ACTIVITIES AND OPERATIONS*

January and the new year, 1968, brought the 57th AML its first disaster and its first bitter taste of the war. A North Vietnamese sapper platoon slipped into the Gladiator compound on the morning of 10 January. Executing a well planned attack, the sappers blitzed the 615th maintenance area and motor pool, planting charges in helicopters and in most of the unit's Motor vehicles. At the time the 615th Trans Det had its night shift working in that area. In the surprise attack, the sappers killed 6 members of the unit and wounded 17 others.

At 0200 the compound was shocked into stunned consciousness by the sound of gun fire and exploding demolition charges. Quickly rallying, the unit's personnel rushed to the maintenance area where the enemy sappers were quickly routed. Nine NVA were killed inside the perimeter and 10 others were found the next morning outside the fences. Dawn on the morning of the 10th found parts of the maintenance area a smoldering ruins. The NVA had destroyed 7 ships and damaged several others. The unit Armament Shop, Airframe Repair Shop and Electrical Repair Shop were completely burned to the ground. The motor pool was almost completely paralyzed. Vehicle damage was assessed in the vicinity of 3 million dollars, not to mention a much more serious toll, the lives of our 6 friends who were killed in defense of their compatriots.

As a result of the 10 January attack, an all out effort to improve the unit's perimeter was made. Bunkers were improved and added. Concertina was strung in second rows, a mine field was laid on the perimeter, lights were strung around the perimeter. The 52nd Bn sent a security detachment of 40 troops. The 57th was determined not to be unprepared again.

In recognition of those soldiers that died for their country, the 57th has petitioned the 17th Aviation Group to make 10 January the annual Organization Day. **The unit has also decided to name the compound Camp Pfeister in honor of the Pfeister twins, who were members of the 615th Trans Co. The twins were working in the maintenance area at the time of the attack. SP4 Robert Pfeister was killed and his brother William was wounded. It should be noted that they had submitted a DA 1049 form (Ed: Request for Personnel Action) in order to come to Vietnam together, even though one of them could have remained in the United States.**

The missions flown during the month of January were in support of Northern II Corps. Flights in support of the 24th Special Tactical Zone, MACV, Special Forces Camps, ARVN II Corps and the 4th Division in the Dak-To area were the normal day's mission assignments. At the end of the month, the 57th began preparations for assuming the FOB II Special Forces mission from the 119th AHC. The 57th was to have the FOB missions for the normal tour of 60 days. The mission consisted of supporting Special Forces reconnaissance team which operate along Vietnam's Western border providing intelligence as to the movement of NVA troops and equipment units infiltrating the country along the Ho-Chi-Minh Trail.

Following the 10 January attack, the 57th began a new policy of sleeping with one eye open. The unit's personnel began pulling 25%, 50% and even 100% alert depending on a particular night's intelligence reports. As the month of January was coming to a close, a new devastating section of the war's history was about to begin. Coming in from a long day flying the FOB II mission on the evening of 29 January, several of the unit's ships received fire as they came in over Kontum city on final for the Coliseum, the unit's aircraft revetment area.. This was attributed to the ARVN's celebrating the arrival of Tet. Throughout the night of 29 January, small arms fire could be heard from the city as streams of bright red machine gun fire brought all members of the 57th AML out of their tents and to their battle stations. The Cougars scrambled 4 gun ships while slicks became airborne to provide flare support. The compound as well as Kontum city was under siege. The Tet offensive had begun. When the main NVA attack came along the unit's eastern perimeter, the company poured M60 machine gun and small arm from every bunker. Neighboring Cavalry elements wheeled several tanks and APCs in along the norther flank and opened up with murderous beehive. Overhead, the Cougars, along with the Buccaneers of the 170th AHC, Avengers (189th AHC) and Croc (119th AHC) gun ships of Pleiku made pass after pass along the perimeter spewing hail of mini gun and 40MM fire. After breaking the ground attack, they turned to the numerous mortar positions which were spotted by blazing muzzle flashes. Rolling in on these positions with 2.75 rockets brought great satisfaction to many gun pilots as numerous secondary explosions resulted from direct hits.

As dawn broke on the Gladiator Compound and Kontum City, it appeared that the attack was over. This assumption was quickly dispelled as throughout the day the compound was subject to numerous sniper rounds. In Kontum the battle was waged from house to house. A partial police of the unit's eastern perimeter accounted for 59 enemy dead. It can easily be assumed that the actual number of enemy dead was somewhat higher.

The entire article may re read on the Internet site listed above.

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## Robert "Bobby" Stagner Pfeister (66)

Courtesy: <http://www.viethero.us/Search/Searchlink.html>

Panel 34 East



ROW 024 \* DAVID EARL MC GLOCHLIN \* JEFFREY PEREZ \* ROBERT PFEISTER \* HENRY LEE III PRATHER \* HARRY PRESTON MC FALLS

Courtesy: <http://thewall-usa.com/guest.asp?recid=40541> Personal comments on this site

### ROBERT PFEISTER

Bill Gallenstein  
Fellow Kentuckian  
Zephyrhills FL

A cold war USAF veteran remembers you on this day. May God bless you and your family always. I salute you. Thank you  
Jan 10, 2008

The Wall-USA

Vanessa Coulter  
inbluestarmom@insightbb.com  
Family Friend

306 E Carter Ave Clarksville IN 47129 USA  
Our Fallen Hero

Through knowing your twin brother Billy, I feel I have known you. Although we haven't known each other long he, and other Vietnam Veterans, have made an amazing and wonderful impact on my life. I am the mother of a combat medic in the US Army who has served in Iraq. Until I became involved with Volunteer Services at the VA Medical Center in Louisville, KY, I still had no real concept of the true sacrifices made. Then a trip to the Memorial Wall put it all into perspective. Words will never be enough to express the feelings I had that day. Thank you is too small of a word. So my life is dedicated to honoring our Veterans and supporting them and our Troops. Thank you Billy for keeping Robert's memory alive. Thank you Robert for your sacrifice. Thank you to all Veterans for paving the way for all Americans to have the liberties and freedoms that we have. I will NEVER forget the price that has been paid and continues to be paid for those gifts. Thank you!  
Jun 7, 2007

The Wall-USA

Manuel Pino Bco 2/8th 1st Cav 68-69  
mpg54@msn.com  
Fellow Vietnam Army Vet  
615th Trans Co, 1st Avn Bde



Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth and danced the skies on laughter-slivered wings, Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth of sun-split clouds and done a hundred things. You have not dreamed of wheeled and soared and swung, high in the sunlit silence, hov'ring there, I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung my eager craft through footless halls of air. Up, up the long delirious, burning blue I've topped the windswept heights with easy grace, where never lark, or even eagle flew, and, while with silent, sifting mind I've trod the high untrespassed sanctity of space, put out my hand and touched the face of God. By John G. Magee, Jr.  
May 26, 2007

The Wall-USA

Bill Pfeister  
jldew1@aol.com  
Mother, Brother, Sister, Niece

A Joy To Our Family, That Will Never Be Forgotten

Robert Pfeister was and is a joy to our life. Everyone who met this brave, courageous, caring man loved him. He will never be forgotten. There is not a second that goes by when he is not in our thoughts. You are with us everyday of our lives and one sweet day we will all be together again. Words cannot express the love and warmth we feel for him.  
Monday, March 22, 1999

Ron Sheehan  
rwsheehan@bellsouth.net  
Fellow Veteran

I'm a retired MSG U.S.Army from Louisville, Ky who wants to keep your memory alive. You are not forgotten. We soldiers do not question our duty, but do our part to keep and preserve freedom. However! You gave the ultimate sacrifice. It would have been nice to have known you as person. You forever will be a HERO. We should never let these brave men "Fade Away", their memory and the Vietnam War should never disappear from our thoughts and history.

Monday, July 18, 2005

The Wall-USA

Marcella Smith (Allen)  
meoland@peoplepc.com  
Attended high school with him  
704 Harper-Henderson Ln  
Hardinsburg, Ky 40143 Hardinsburg

I am donating a clock in your memory  
I graduated in 70 from Waggener and remember both you and your twin brother. On a visit of the wall through Louisville I met with your brother. I think about all those who have fought for our freedom and those of you that gave the ultimate sacrifice. I am a member of the V.F.W. in Hardinsburg now and have found this clock I am going to donate to them in your honor. I currently have a Son, Stepson, & Son-in Law serving Actvily in the Air Force and Navy and I am so proud of each of them for the service they give to help ensure our freedom. Thank You Marcy  
Tuesday, September 06, 2005

### ROBERT PFEISTER

SP4 - E4 - Army - Selective Service  
1st Avn Bde

Length of service 1 years  
His tour began on Oct 20, 1967  
Casualty was on Jan 10, 1968  
In , SOUTH VIETNAM  
HOSTILE, GROUND CASUALTY  
GUN, SMALL ARMS FIRE  
Body was recovered

Panel 34E - Line 24

### PFEISTER, ROBERT

PFC US ARMY

VIETNAM

DATE OF BIRTH: 08/24/1947

DATE OF DEATH: 01/10/1968

BURIED AT: SECTION H SITE 273 [View Map](#)

ZACHARY TAYLOR NATIONAL CEMETERY

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(502) 893-3852

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:



### William Gayle Cox (67)

February 21, 1949 — March 29, 1971

Courtesy: **Ken Draut (73)**, of the **Waggener Vietnam Memorial committee**.

**William Gayle Cox, Class of '67:** Gayle Cox was a 1967 graduate. His mother Helen Cox Nelson, still lives on Richland Avenue here in the St. Mathews area where Gayle grew up. Gayle was a fine athlete and participated in a number of sports. He was a big baseball fan and played in a local little league and four years at Waggener. He also played Basketball his freshman year and was a member of the Pep Club. He entered the Army as a gunner in November 1969. He arrived in Vietnam in May of 1970 and was killed on March 29, 1971. He received the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star. His favorite quote as listed in the 1967 Lair was from Herrick: "Gather ye Rosebuds while ye may, old time is still a-flying"

Courtesy: <http://tanaya.net/cgi-bin/vmw.cgi?10813>



*In Memory of  
Sergeant William Gayle Cox*



Let us not forget Sergeant William Gayle Cox, casualty of the Vietnam War. As a member of the Army Selective Service, SGT Cox served our country until March 29th, 1971 in Quang Tri, South Vietnam. He was 22 years old and was not married. William died from small arms fire/grenade. His body was recovered. William was born on February 21st, 1949 in Louisville, Kentucky.

SGT Cox is on panel 04W, line 091 of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington D.C.



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0799189



Courtesy Al Ring, taken August 2009, the home Gayle grew up in and mother has lived in all these years.

2804 Richland avenue

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### William Gayle Cox (67)



Lair

1966 BASEBALL TEAM: Front row: Mgr. Barry Rodgers, Tierney Sullivan, Bruce Hennies, Steve Fradenberger, Ken Roederer, Jim Noland, Gayle Cox, Larry Nail, Bill Gatti, Dugie Morris, Steve Phillips, Jim Weaver, Don Kissler, Tom Hartz, Adam Rauh, Standing: Coach Jones, Coach Nealis, Mgr. Mike Davis, Charlie Lotz, Paul Bailey, Alan Aho, Skip Tadlock, Dave Everhart, Dave Scheurmer, Terry Rodgers, Steve Zah, Jim Mauck, Larry Bennett, Steve Dills.

Courtesy Helen Cox Nelson:



Gayle Cox  
Little League Baseball



Gayle Cox  
Graduation, May 1967



Gayle Cox  
May 29, 1967—Baccalaureate



**Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

**William Gayle Cox (67)**

**Courtesy Helen Cox Nelson:**

Louisville, Ky.

7/29/66

Dear Gayle:

It was a pleasure and privilege to work with you over the past few weeks on our Pirate team in Connie Mack.

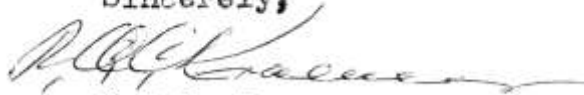
Every successful club must have a willing utility man capable of fitting into almost any position. You certainly filled that bill for us.

Since you are one of the returning men for the 1967 season I expect to have the pleasure of watching you as one of the leaders in a successful pennant drive. Just a few more games and it might have been this year.

Thanks for your efforts Gayle and I'll be following your career with a deal of interest.

Good luck.

Sincerely,



R.O.C. Kraemer

**Gayle Cox not only played in Little League and on Waggener's team but in Connie Mack League**

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## William Gayle Cox (67)

Courtesy Helen Cox Nelson:

Letter to Mom from Gayle Cox, June 8, 1970

June 8, 1970 12:30 P.M.

Mom,

Well I've been in country a month now. The army counted the day before I left the states. In a way it seems like I've been gone a long time in a way it has gone pretty fast. Just think twelve and a half months and I'll be home for good.

We had church again this past Thursday. It seems that's the only time the chaplains make it out to the field. Next Thursday we are going to have communion services.

Man it's hot. It's getting hotter by the day. I don't know what the temperature is but it has to be way up there. They say it will keep getting hotter till the rain starts in September or October, then it will rain for about six months straight.

Took a shower last night for the first time in a week. They call them Australian bush showers. It's a little burlap bag you fill up with water, slide it on a pole off the side of the track.

It has a little faucet underneath to adjust the water. Its not much but it's better than nothing. Where we are now its hard to take one because helicopter's bring the water in and it has to be rationed out.

Not a whole lot going on we haven't had any contact in a couple of weeks so things are pretty quiet. That's the way I like it though.

Hope everyone's fine at home, still haven't received a letter but it should be coming soon. Hope you write a lot. Make Mickey be good.

Love Gayle

Sorry for the dirty paper but I'm sweating a little.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
TROOP C 3D SQUADRON 5TH AVIATION  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96377

17 APR 1971

Mrs. Helen F. Cox  
2009 Richmond Avenue  
Louisville, Kentucky 40245

Dear Mrs. Cox:

I extend my most profound sympathy to you on the recent loss of your son, William G. Cox, who died in the service of his country on March 29, 1971.


On the afternoon of March 29, William was with his platoon near the area of Khe Sanh, Republic of Vietnam. His platoon was conducting operations when it came under an enemy ambush. William died instantly, from the wounds he received in this attack.

While there is little that can be said to alleviate your grief for the loss of your son, we sincerely hope you will find a degree of comfort in knowing that we also share your loss. William was a forthright, loyal soldier who won the respect and admiration of all who served with him. You may take pride that William was an outstanding soldier and a great credit to his country.

William's many friends and associates attended a memorial service in his honor held by the Squadron Chaplain.

Once again, personally and for the men of this troop, please accept this letter as a symbol of our sympathy.

Sincerely yours,

  
STEWART D. CARR  
Captain, Armor  
Commanding

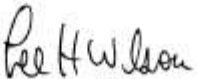
# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## William Gayle Cox (67)

Courtesy Helen Cox Nelson:

HEADQUARTERS  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20315

jeb

REPORT OF CASUALTY	REPORT NUMBER AND TYPE	DATE PREPARED
	A-1487 FINAL RVN 29297	7 April 1971
1. SERVICE IDENTIFICATION (Name, Service Number, Grade or Rate, Component, Branch and Organization)		
COX, WILLIAM GAYLE; (NO SN); SGT; AUS; TRP C, 3D SQDN, 5TH CAV, 1ST BDE, 5TH INF DIV, (MECH), VIETNAM		
2. CASUALTY STATUS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BATTLE <input type="checkbox"/> NON-BATTLE		
KILLED in action in Vietnam on 29 March 1971.		
SP4 William G. Cox was promoted posthumously to grade of SGT E-5, AUS, as of 28 March 1971, under provisions of PL 680, 77th Congress, as amended. Pay grade shown in item 5 is that of E-4, since additional pay is not involved. Commenced tour in Vietnam 11 May 1970		
3. DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH, RACE, RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE		
21 February 1949; Lexington, Kentucky Caucasian Methodist		
4. DATE AND PLACE OF LAST ENTRY ON ACTIVE DUTY IN CURRENT STATUS AND HOME OF RECORD AT TIME		
25 November 1969; Louisville, Kentucky Louisville, Kentucky		
5. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER, PAY GRADE, LENGTH OF SERVICE FOR PAY, BASIC PAY, INCENTIVE PAY		CHECK IF APPLICABLE
401-70-0708 E-4 \$249.90		<input type="checkbox"/> CREW <input type="checkbox"/> NON-CREW
6. DUTY STATUS		
ACTIVE: ON DUTY		
7. INTERESTED PERSONS (Name, Address, Relationship)		
Mrs. Helen F. Cox, 2804 Richland Avenue, Louisville, Kentucky 40220, Mother, 1,2,3 Notified 2 April 1971 (Father deceased)		
DA Form 41 dated 25 November 1969		
8. REPORT FOR VA TO FOLLOW <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO		9. REPORTING COMMAND AND DATE REPORT RECEIVED IN DEPARTMENT
		CG USARV LBN RVN 1 April 1971
10. SELECTIVE SERVICE NUMBER, LOCAL BOARD, AND LOCATION (If unknown, enter date and place of first entry in Armed Services)		
15 42 49 156 LB #42 Louisville, Kentucky		
11. PRIOR SERVICE DATA <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO		
12. REMARKS		
FOR VA: Certification of Basic Pay UP PL 89-622. None		
QUANG TRI (01) I MR		
FOOTNOTES: 1 Adult next of kin. 2 Beneficiary for gratuity pay in event there is no surviving wife or child-as designated on record of emergency data. 3 Beneficiary for unpaid pay and allowances-as designated on record of emergency data.		
13. DISTRIBUTION		14. BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:
B-8 I		 Adjutant General

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### William Gayle Cox (67)

Courtesy Helen Cox Nelson:

## Army sergeant from Louisville killed in Vietnam

A 22-year-old Army sergeant from Louisville has been killed in action in Vietnam.

Sgt. William Gayle Cox, son of Mrs. Helen Cox, of 2804 Richland Ave., was killed March 29 while serving as a gunner on a military vehicle when an enemy force attacked, according to an Army telegram received by his mother yesterday.

He entered the service in November 1969, and was trained at Ft. Knox. He was in his 11th month of duty in South Vietnam.

Sgt. Cox was a 1967 graduate of Waggener High School.

Survivors besides Sgt. William Cox his mother include grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Noble Perkins, of Richmond, Ky., and Mrs. Mary Cox, of Murfreesboro, Tenn.

The funeral will be at 2 p.m. Thursday at Highlands Funeral Home, 3331 Taylorsville Road, with burial in Louisville Memorial Gardens, East.



GAYLE COX

## Gayle Cox Is Killed In Vietnam

Sergeant William Gayle Cox, 22, Louisville, son of Mrs. Helen Perkins Cox, formerly of Richmond, was killed in action on March 29 while serving in Vietnam as a gunner on a military vehicle when an enemy force attacked, according to a military telegram received by his mother on Tuesday.

Sgt. Cox entered the service in November, 1969, and was trained at Ft. Knox. He was in his 11th month of duty in South Vietnam.

Other than his mother, he is survived by his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Noble Perkins, Richmond, and Mrs. Mary Cox, Murfreesboro, Tenn.

The body will be returned to Highlands Funeral Home, Louisville, where services will be conducted at 2 p.m. Thursday. Burial will be in Louisville Memorial Gardens.

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## William Gayle Cox (67)

Courtesy Helen Cox Nelson:

AGPB-AC Cox, William G.  
SSAN 401-70-0708 (29 Mar 71)

30 JUN 1971

Mrs. Helen F. Cox  
2804 Richland Avenue  
Louisville, Kentucky 40220

Dear Mrs. Cox:

I have the honor to inform you that your son has been awarded posthumously the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, and the Good Conduct Medal.

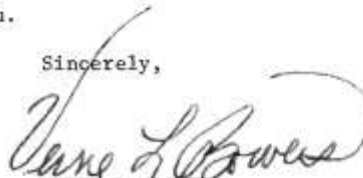
Prior to death, William had been awarded the Purple Heart, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Combat Infantryman Badge, and the Sharpshooter Badge with rifle bar.

Arrangements are being made to have these awards presented to you in the near future by a representative of the Commanding General, First United States Army.

The representative selected will communicate with you in the next few weeks to arrange for presentation. Any inquiry or correspondence concerning presentation should be addressed to the Commanding General, First United States Army, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland 20755.

My continued sympathy is with you.

Sincerely,



VERNE L. BOWERS  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General



### Bronze Star Medal

The Bronze Star Medal was established by Executive Order 9419, 4 February 1944 (superseded by Executive Order 11046, 24 August 1962).

The Bronze Star Medal is awarded to any person who, while serving in any capacity in or with the Army of the United States after 6 December 1941, distinguished himself or herself by heroic or meritorious achievement or service, not involving participation in aerial flight, in connection with military operations against an armed enemy; or while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

Awards may be made for acts of heroism, performed under circumstances described above, which are of lesser degree than required for the award of the Silver Star.



### Purple Heart

The Purple Heart is awarded in the name of the President of the United States to any member of an Armed Force who, while serving with the U. S. Armed Services after 5 April 1917, has been wounded or killed, or who has died or may hereafter die after being wounded.

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### William Gayle Cox (67)

#### Other Medals Gayle received:



#### National Defense Service Medal

The National Defense Service Medal was awarded for honorable active service for any period between 27 June 1950 and 27 July 1954; between 1 January 1961 and 14 August 1974; between 2 August 1990 and 30 November 1995 and between 11 September 2001 and a closing date to be determined. For the purpose of the award, the following persons will not be considered as performing active service:



#### Vietnam Service Medal

Awarded to all members of the Armed Forces of the United States serving in Vietnam and contiguous waters or airspace thereover, after 3 July 1965 through 28 March 1973. Members of the Armed Forces of the United States in Thailand, Laos, or Cambodia, or the airspace thereover, during the same period and serving in direct support of operations in Vietnam are also eligible for this award.



#### Vietnam Campaign Ribbon

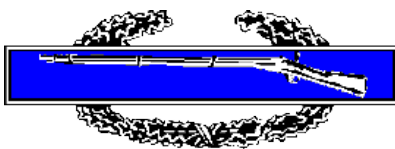
The Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal is awarded to personnel who meet one of the following requirements:

Six months service is not required for individuals who were wounded by hostile forces; killed in action or otherwise in line of duty; or captured by hostile forces.



#### Army Good Conduct Medal

The Army Good Conduct Medal (AGCM) was established by Executive Order 8809, 28 June 1941 and was amended by Executive Order 9323, 1943 and by Executive Order 10444, 10 April 1953. It is awarded on a selective basis to each soldier who distinguishes himself or herself from among his or her fellow soldiers by their exemplary conduct, efficiency, and fidelity throughout a specified period of continuous enlisted active Federal military service, as outlined in this chapter. There is no right or entitlement to the medal until the immediate commander has approved the award and the award has been announced in permanent orders. See glossary for definition of "active Federal military service."



#### Combat Infantryman Badge

The Combat Infantryman Badge (CIB) was established by the War Department on 27 October 1943. Lieutenant General Lesley J. McNair, then the Army Ground Forces commanding general, was instrumental in its creation. He originally recommended that it be called the "fighter badge." The CIB was designed to enhance morale and the prestige of the "Queen of Battle." Then Secretary of War Henry Stinson said, "It is high time we recognize in a personal way the skill and heroism of the American infantry."

Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

William Gayle Cox (67)

Courtesy Helen Cox Nelson:



in the Armed Forces of the United States of America

*In grateful Memory of*

SERGEANT WILLIAM GAYLE COX

*Who Died while in the Service of our Country  
as a Member of the*

**United States Army**

*on the* 29TH *day of* MARCH 1971 *This certificate is awarded  
as a testimonial of Honest and Faithful Service*

Stanley R. Resor  
*Secretary of the Army*

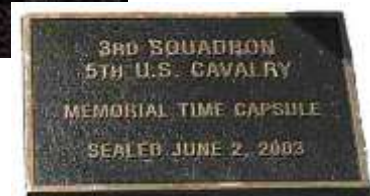
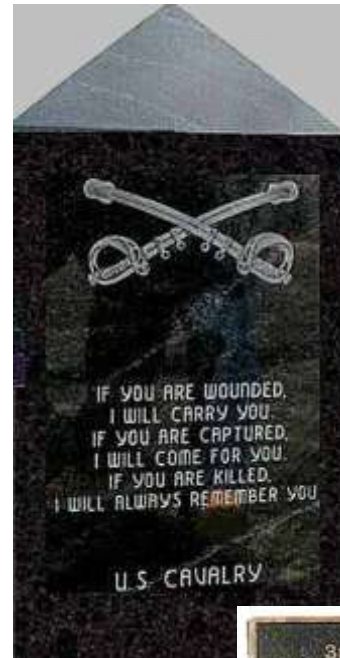
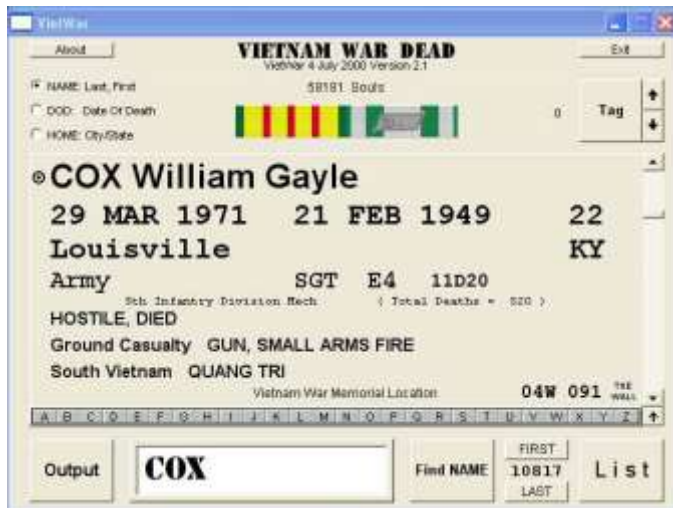
# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

**William Gayle Cox (67)**

Courtesy <http://www.3-5cav-blackknights.org/index.html>



## 3rd/5th Armored Cavalry Memorial Monument Erected in the Memorial Garden, Ft. Knox, Kentucky 2003





## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### William Gayle Cox (67)

William Gayle Cox is buried at Louisville Memorial Gardens East, 11601 Ballardsville Road, Louisville, KY 40241. Mrs. Marie Shepherd supplied these photos.



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### William Gayle Cox (67)

William Gayle Cox is buried at Louisville Memorial Gardens East, 11601 Ballardsville Road, Louisville, KY 40241. Mrs. Marie Shepherd and Al Ring supplied these photos.

Veterans memorial at Louisville Memorial Gardens East



## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### William Gayle Cox (67)

Courtesy: <http://www.virtualwall.org/dp/PedersonRA01a.htm> This is from the website honoring Roger Allen Pederson Specialist Four HHT, 3RD SQDN, 5TH CAV RGT, 5 INF DIV Army of the United States 02 May 1951 - 29 March 1971 Elk Mound, Wisconsin Panel 04W Line 092

20 Jun 2006

I served with Roger Pederson, in fact I was his senior medic. I had been wounded three weeks earlier and Roger was riding in my place. It took me many years to come to grips with that. One of the people he tried to save was my best friend **Gayle Cox**. We were to meet up that day to say goodbye as he was leaving Vietnam in just a day or two. I had just linked up with the convoy, but didn't get a chance to see either of them before the ambush that killed them both. I was at the end of the convoy and had several wounded men to take care of during the ambush. By the time I made it forward both of them were killed. I was the one who had to put their bodies on the chopper, and I was told of Roger's brave effort to save his men. I never left my people again until my DEROS date later that year.

From a fellow medic. [lehman9275@hotmail.com](mailto:lehman9275@hotmail.com)

A Note from The Virtual Wall

Only two men from the 3rd Sqdn, 5th Cavalry can be associated with the convoy ambush: **SGT William Gayle Cox** of Louisville, Kentucky, in "C" Troop, and SP4 Roger A. Pederson. Six other soldiers died in Quang Tri Province on 29 March 1971 and it may be that one or more of them were on the convoy.

Visit John Dennison's Medics on the Wall memorial which honors the Army Medics and Navy Corpsmen who died in Vietnam.

Courtesy [http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=110&Wall\\_Id\\_No=40565](http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=110&Wall_Id_No=40565)

**WILLIAM GAYLE COX** 4W, 91

WILLIAM GAYLE COX  
is honored on Panel 4W, Row 91 of  
the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Full Name: WILLIAM GAYLE COX  
Wall Name: WILLIAM G COX  
Date of Birth: 2/21/1949  
Date of Casualty: 3/29/1971  
Home of Record: LOUISVILLE  
State: KY  
Branch of Service: ARMY  
Rank: SGT  
Casualty Country: SOUTH VIETNAM  
Casualty Province: QUANG TRI

#### Not forgotten

Posted for: WILLIAM GAYLE COX:

William, Although we never met, I just want you to know you are not forgotten. You gave the ultimate sacrifice, your life for what you believed in. Sleep well and thank you.

Posted by: Dave Kruger, 196th LIB, 66-67  
Email:  
Relationship: Fellow vet  
Tuesday, March 29, 2005

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### William Gayle Cox (67)

**Courtesy:** *Akron Beacon Journal*, November 11, 2007, by Jim Carney: (Note, though William Gayle Cox is not the center of this article, he is mentioned in it, and this article shows why all these young men were heroes.)

#### Veteran remembers fallen savior

**Bullets were flying that March day in Vietnam. A medic helped him; then was shot and killed. Decades later, he found out his name**

It was the Buddy Holly glasses that Gary Jackson could never get out of his mind.

The medic who came running to his rescue on that day of the firefight so many years ago in Quang Tn Province was wearing big thick black glasses — the kind Buddy Holly wore.

It was March 29, 1971, and the Rittman High School graduate was on the ground in Vietnam, wounded by shrapnel and shot in the back.

**Sgt. William Gayle Cox, a 22-year-old from Louisville, Ky., whom Jackson had met earlier that day, was now lying on top of him -- dead.**

Bullets from the enemy were everywhere, kicking up dirt around them, and Jackson began screaming for a medic.

In the midst of the chaos, it was the medic -- the one with the thick black glasses -- who rushed to Jackson's side to comfort him.

As Jackson remembered it: "He slid on his knees in front of me and he said, 'I got you, buddy. I got you.'"

Jackson had been drafted into the military, receiving his notice on May 4, 1970—the same day as the Kent State shootings.

A born-again Christian at the age of 13, he had arrived in Vietnam with the 3/5 Cay Mechanized Infantry, 9th Infantry Division the week before Halloween.

He was a gunner on an armored personnel carrier, but after more than five months in Vietnam, Jackson said, he had developed a bad attitude: "I didn't care anymore."

And on Monday, March 29, 1971, when a soldier told him of a church service that day, he also handed Jackson a grim prediction: "Today," he said, "you're gonna get hit and you're gonna die and go to hell."

Jackson, who was 20 then, said he decided to attend the service and while he was there, he got word of the firefight that had broken out near the base.

He was ordered to get on his vehicle and head into the fight.

"I started getting my sick feeling as usual," he recalled.

Jackson said as his vehicle approached the fight, American GIs were firing their weapons, pumping bullets into both sides of the road, and the enemy was returning fire with rocket-propelled grenades and small-arms fire.

Jackson said he first took shrapnel in his right arm and leg and had a punctured right ear drum, **yet he said he and Cox "were the only two not wounded severely."**

**But as he and Cox began yelling for medics, Cox was shot and killed, falling on top of him. A bullet then struck Jackson in the back.**

"It burned so bad and I was screaming," Jackson said.

In less than a minute, he recalled, the medic with the black glasses was there.

**He comforted him, dragged Cox's body off him, and went about treating the other wounded.** Before he could return, though, the medic himself was cut down by gunfire as Jackson watched. "He fell in one motion and he was down and he was beside me," Jackson said.

"Before he could get to me, he was shot and killed." And Jackson didn't even know his name.

Someone told him later the medic with the Buddy Holly glasses was a 19-year-old called Peterson. But that was as much as anyone knew.

Jackson left Vietnam after several weeks of hospitalization and spent the rest of his time in the Army at Fort Lewis, Wash.

As the years slipped by, Jackson tried to find out more about Peterson, but without any success. Finally, he said, "I gave up."

Decades later, in June 2006, Jackson and his wife, Fatima -- also an Army veteran who was a paratrooper with the 525th Military Intelligence Battalion, at Fort Bragg, N.C. -- went to New Philadelphia, to see the Moving Wall, a replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### William Gayle Cox (67)

**Courtesy:** *Akron Beacon Journal*, November 11, 1007, by Jim Carney: (Note, though William Gayle Cox is not the center of this article, he is mentioned in it, and this article shows why all these young men were heroes.)

#### Veteran remembers fallen savior

The Wadsworth couple -- by then parents of five and grandparents of four -- asked a volunteer at the display to look for the name Peterson.

Again, no luck.

This time, though, the volunteer suggested that maybe the soldier's name was Pederson, with a "D."

And when that name was entered into the database, in a split second, the name came up on a computer screen: Army Spec. 4 Roger Allen Pederson, killed in action March 29, 1971.

Jackson was stunned.

"I started bawling," he said. "There it was in print."

From that point, Jackson, a mail handler at the U.S. Postal Service in Akron for 23 years, began searching the Internet for more information about Roger Allen Pederson.

On a Web site, he found a phone number and called it.

A woman answered.

He told her he was looking for the family of Roger Allen Pederson.

The woman answered: "I'm his mom."

From there Jeanne Pederson of Eau Claire, Wis., began to tell the other half of the story.

Roger Pederson had enlisted in the Army out of Elk Mound, Wis.

"He always said, 'I'll never be able to shoot anybody,' and he decided to become a medic," his mother said.

He was engaged to be married when he returned from Vietnam.

In fact, the 19-year-old's tour of duty was just a few days from finished when the firefight broke out in Quang Tn Province. His death devastated his family.

And the time that had since slipped by had made its mark. His father, Roman, died in 1989.

His sisters had grown up without him. And the family had moved a long time ago from Elk Mound to Eau Claire.

His mother said she had always wanted to know more about what happened to her son and whom he was helping.

But more than that, there was a burning question she had always wanted to ask of the man he was trying to save.

"I just gotta know," she asked, "are you a good person?"

Jackson and Mrs. Pederson spoke frequently on the phone and in early September, he drove the 700 miles to meet the mother of the medic with the Buddy Holly glasses. It was dark when he arrived at her home at 8:45 p.m.

But Mrs. Pederson was standing in the driveway, her arms outstretched.

Over the next three days, Jackson and the 80-year-old woman visited her son's grave, saw his high school, and sat down to a reunion of his family.

But the most important mission of the weekend was for Jackson to answer the question that Mrs. Pederson had pondered for so long.

"I told her: 'Yes, I am a good man. I gave my life to Christ when I was 13. I am a new creature in Christ and therefore I am a good man.' I told her: 'I spent all this time trying to find you.'" "I don't think a man would have spent all that time."

Mrs. Pederson, who still works full time at a Taco John's restaurant in Eau Claire, thought she never would meet the soldier her son was with that day.

And she said she felt a tremendous sense of relief finally knowing him.

The pain of losing her son is still with her, of course, but her life, she said, has been good.

"Once in a while, things happen, and I wish he was here," she said.

But after all the years and all the pain, she said she finally got the answer to her question.

She knew the soldier her son had saved was indeed a good man.

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## William Gayle Cox (67)

**Courtesy: Gary Jackson, June 2008:**

Al,

I hope you don't mind but I'm sending you a lot more than requested. A friend of mine prompted me 2 years ago to write my entire Vietnam experience, so I did and he made about 5 copies. I'll let you have one. If you don't want all of it just throw out what you don't need. William G. Cox is in the middle, and after that. I hope this helps.

God Bless Gary

**NOTE AL RING DID EDIT PART OF THE FRONT OF THIS STORY**

My name is Gary Jackson. I was born in Wadsworth, Ohio in 1950 and lived in Rittman most of my life. I graduated from Rittman High School in 1969.

**Some highlights of my childhood:** January 1963 I accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal savior which was the most significant event of my life.

November 1966, I got my drivers license, FREEDOM.

June 1969, graduation, FINALLY.

May 4, 1970, greetings from Uncle Sam.

I did my basic at Ft. Campbell KY, 8 weeks of "WOW!!"

Then I went to Ft. Know, KY for Armor Training, 8 more weeks of technical training for tanks and armor vehicles. After AIT was over, they ask me where I wanted to do my overseas duty, I said "How bout Hawaii" they said how bout Vietnam. I said "OK."

**October 30, 1970 arrived in Nam.**

Before I left for Nam, my pastor, William Harris told me that a chaplain over there named Cecil was a good friend of his, and maybe I would find him. I figured what were the chances of that. When I arrived at Bin Hoa, I decided to take a walk to the Chapel, just to ask about a Chaplain Cecil. Guess what? He was the Chaplain. He prayed for my protection and gave me 15 dollars.

Shortly afterwards, I rode a C130 to Quang Tri which was up north very close to the DMZ. I was thinking that being that close to the DMZ was pretty dangerous. Then the next manifest came down and I was on it to go to Dong Ha – 12 miles north. (CTRP, 3<sup>rd</sup> SQON, 5<sup>th</sup> CAV.RET 9<sup>th</sup> DIV). When I arrived at Dong Ha, the troops were all out in the field, and they came back that evening. None of them said much to me. But one guy struck up a friendship with me. His name was Terry Gibbens. He turned out to be one of my best friends.

Another friend was Darrell Smith. They were both gunners on APC'S. (Armor Personnel Carriers). After a short stand down, we went out into the field. I hadn't been assigned to a vehicle yet so they put me in a tent.

All night long I remember hearing gun fire and men shouting at one another. As it turned out, the perimeter had been breached, and several of the enemy had been killed. I didn't think there were any casualties on our side.

The next morning I was assigned to track 14 (pronounced one four) as the right gunner. I stayed there pretty much my whole tour. That 1<sup>st</sup> day we went out and hit a mine, not my track but another. I remember thinking "365 days of this" aahhh.

We stayed in the Quang Tri province most of the time. Once in a while we would venture out. We would go to the "back yard." The back yard was the name given to the area around Quang Tri city – I guess you could call it the "Burbs" of Quang Tri.

We also went to Alpha 4, you could see the NVA flag. We patrolled the whole Quang Tri province. Some of the time we would travel on a real paved road. But most of the time we were off roading it. When we had a full company of tracks, we had 10 "APC'S and 3 Sheridan's. The APC'S were made of lightweight aluminum while the Sheridan's were more of an actual tank with steel. Each APC had 2 MGC machine guns and 1, 50 caliber. The Sheridan's had a 50 caliber or a 30 caliber machine gun and a 152 MM main gun. The tracks were fast and would repel small arms fire. But a mine or an RPG would decimate both of them. A Sheridan could withstand an RPG because of its shape better than a APC.

We would travel the country side as an ever present force so as to squelch enemy activity. We were like police men. But we were always making contact. And when we made contact, machinery was destroyed and people would die or go back home wounded.

**Some incidents I remember:** We were heading up toward Khe Sahn when we stopped to make camp. The night was rather

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### William Gayle Cox (67)

quiet I was chosen along with 3 other men to go out on a night ambush patrol. We would go out in the dark and stop along the path somewhere and set up an ambush, and wait for the bad guys. When they came along we were expected to kill them. Fortunately no one came along so in the morning we walked back to our company. I was told that the rest of the company was going on a mine sweep and me along with the other 3 guys would stay behind and sleep because we were up all night. So we stayed behind with about 3 or 4 other guys and the rest of the company left for the sweep. We were left with one tank (APC) and they were supposed to be back in a couple of hours. About 1 mile into the sweep they made contact, and very bad contact. We could hear the fighting but couldn't get back to us. Now it is getting along toward evening and we were ripe for the picking with no defense. They called back and said to hunker down for the night and try to stay alive because there was a whole company of bad guys supposed to be coming our way. So one brilliant sergeant grabbed a large tow chain, fired up the APC I told me to go with him. There were about 3 or 4 dead APC's in the area, so we went to each one, hooked up to it and dragged them all back to our location. We set them up in a tight circle, put some steel pots on top of the gun mounts and at 50 feet back, we looked like an armed platoon of tracks. The bad guys must have been convinced because they left us alone.

How about Christmas Eve, 1970. We were in the back yard doing who knows what. We wanted to go back to camp for a stand-down but the old man says not tell tomorrow. So we set up camp and put the radar out. About 5 or 6 clicks out, we picked up a squad of bad guys coming straight toward us. We called up the old man to see if we should engage and he said "what? Christmas Eve, cease fire? Geneva Convention-regulations? HA!" Did anybody tell the other guys. So LT hung up the phone and told us to put a 60 on a tripod and aim high. He said what ever you do, don't kill anybody. So the gunner fired 20 or 25 rounds of tracer over their heads and we watched the radar screen. The blips stopped and started going back the way they came. If we had not done that, I'm sure we would have been doing more than exchanging Christmas Greetings when they arrived.

Being in Nam was a different experience every day and night. We would try to make the best of it in every situation. Some days were easier to cope with than others. I guess the hardest thing to deal with was trying to figure out what we were doing there. We would start out here and travel over there only to hit a mine on the way and get into a firefight. Then we would continue on till we got there. Then set up camp and fight in the middle of the night. Get up about eight, and move out back to where we were the day before, hit a mine, get into a firefight and do this several times a week. Week after week. You would watch guys die and get maimed and it would work on you. You would think every morning. Is today my day, for a Christian, it was a little easier to take than some guys who had no faith to fall back on.

Living on a track was a unique experience in itself. The inside of a track was about 8' by 5'. The bottom was covered with ammo, M16, M79, M60, M50 cal., grenades, TNT, and C04. We ate, cooked, slept, and rode on top of all this every day. ARPG would go right through an APC and explode. So if you are in it at the time, you could imagine the fire works when the ammo went up. When we got to our rond site every night we would dismount and point the tracks outward and put a fox hole in between each tank. Then we put an M60 at each fox hole pointing out between the tanks. We put concertina wire in front of our tanks to repel the RPG'S, and then put trip flairs in front of the tracks with claymore mines in between. If someone tripped a flair, we would fire the claymores and hopefully that would slow them down enough for us to get them before they got us. On a rainy night, the foxholes would fill up with water. So when the firing started we would leap from our sleeping bags and jump straight into 36" of cold muddy water. Sometimes it was to shoot at bad guys. Sometimes it was to shoot at cows and water buffalo. Then we were soaked all night in 45° weather. We would climb back into our sleeping bags after the fighting stopped with mud and water dripping off our clothes and try to sleep the rest of the night unless of course you had guard duty. The next morning, we would climb back out of our sleeping bags, turn the bags inside out and let the rain wash the mud out of the bags. Then we would put the bag over the diesel stack and rev up the engine and the bag would blow straight up like a gig condom and the water would dry up in about 5 minutes. Next you roll up the bag and put it away till the next night. It would stink like diesel but it was warm and dry. We would eat c-rations all the time. The date on the cans was 1966. still good after 5 years. In 5 ½ months, I got one shower, and it was cold. Normally we would take rain showers. Can you imagine? The whole column would stop in a storm. All the guys would stand naked on top of the tracks with a bar of soap and take a shower. 50 or 60 naked guys all in a row of mechanized infantry.

A little about the firefights. When we made contact, the shooting would only last about 3 minutes. The VC (Vietcong) would usually come up out of spider holes and ambush us as we would drive by. Or they would plant a command detonated mine to destroy the vehicle of choice, then open up on us when the men would rush to help the wounded crew members on the track. A command detonated mine is a mine with a blasting cap triggered by a remote device from a strategic location. When a firefight erupted, we were so superior with the weaponry and ammo, that they would stop shooting rather quickly before they were totally destroyed. We could decimate an entire area within minutes, so they would usually do all their damage by surprise. If the fight lasted longer than a few minutes, we would call in air support. Our air support was a gun ship unit called Charlie Horse. It was a unit of Cobra gun ships armed with rocket launchers and mini guns. The mini guns were basically the old gatling guns run electronically. They would fire M-60 ammo by the thousands per minute. So the enemy made sure they were packed up and gone before that happened. After a firefight we would call in the Huey Chopper. We called it a "dustoff" because of the dust it would generate when it took off. It would pick up the wounded and dead. We would put the dead on the floor of the chopper and then the wounded on top of them. We did it that way so any bullets coming into the chopper from underneath would be absorbed by the dead bodies and protect the wounded.

After the dustoff was complete, we would assess the damage. Usually we would have at least one track blown apart by a

## Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

### William Gayle Cox (67)

mine, and another crippled by an RPG. We would then strip the bad tracks of everything useable and call back to the rear to the motor pool so they could come out and pick up the wrecks.

So that is basically our itinerary that we would follow each day. Sometimes, about twice a month, we would get to go to a USO show back in the rear. Most of the time it was Vietnamese kids trying to act like rockers. But on occasions, we would have Aussies or even American for entertainment. We had to have this to keep our sanity. Without a party one in a while or mail call, we would turn into monsters in a matter of weeks. One phrase we used to blow off a bad experience would be "IT DON'T MEAN NOTHIN." If you would say that enough times, anything could happen and it wouldn't affect you to the point to where you couldn't go on.

#### 29 March 71

Awakened like any other day as soon as I would wake up on any day, for the first few seconds I would forget where I was or what was going on. Then "BANG" reality would set in. I was in Vietnam. I had lived through another night, and what would today bring me. Life or death. Then I would think about home and family and chocolate pie and then the sounds and smells would soon jerk me back to the present. I had to live through October 30, 1971.

I sat up inside my track with my back against the engine compartment. I didn't feel good. One of my best friends, Terry Gibbens had been wounded and sent back home the week before. I had myself a real "TUDE." I didn't care to speak with anyone. I hadn't cleaned my M-60 in a week. We were headed up to Khe Sahn with the engineers building roads into Laos for a big invasion. We were told that all our "stuff" in the rear had been confiscated by 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne because we had been "moved" while we were in the field. Some of the guys who had went to the rear and came back said our hooches were ransacked and our stuff gone. My stuff from home. My pictures, everything. Yep. I had a "TUDE" I was sitting on a box of TNT or C-4 or whatever and smoking a cigar at about noon, and didn't want to be bothered. I knew the Chaplin was coming in because the day before, we were socked in with fog and he couldn't land. I wasn't interested. Somebody said "hey the preacher's here, lets go." I wasn't interested. So the other guys went up the hill to the service but I stayed back. Suddenly the back hatch to the track opened. The bright light came in around a figure of a man standing there looking at me.

He said, is your name Jackson. I covered my eyes from the bright light and said yea, who are you? He said the Chaplin is here, come on up to the service, I said no, not interested. He said "are you a Christian." I said yea. He said, "today you are going to die and go to hell." I immediately grabbed my gun and jumped up and said "what did you say?" He just turned and walked away. Boy did that burn me. I ran outside to see who this guy was, and he was gone. Just like that. But the guys at the service were calling me to come up so I did. They wanted me to help them with the songs and the communion. We had a nice little service. But about 2/3 through the service, the radio went off. Some guy screaming for help. We could here some fighting going on some distance away. And I was hoping we wouldn't have to go. But the lieutenant called out, "track one three, one four, one five and one six, lets go," well, I was on one four, so we ran back to the tracks and fired them up. We were almost out of diesel because of the fog, we hadn't refueled in about a week. I mounted my 60 and in about 5 minutes we were rolling. I could hear the fighting getting worse; the machine guns, the RPG'S exploding as we approached the contact site. The road we were on was recently built by the army Corps of Engineers. It was to be used as withdrawal routs by the South Vietnamese when they invaded Laos. This particular stretch of road was dubbed ambush alley because it was a simple road about 10 feet wide right through the forest with trees, on both sides. We were working our way toward the contact site reconning by fire. That means we were firing our weapons ahead of us and to the sides to discourage the enemy from attacking. About 5 minutes into the trip, BPPM, an RPG hit one of the tracks. Our column opened up with every thing we had, I pulled the trigger on my 60. It rapped off about 3 rounds then jammed. Remember, I hadn't changed it for awhile. In the meantime, the track in front of us was hit and William G. Cox was knocked off and landed in front of our track. I jumped off and went running up to him and helped him back to our track. He was short on time from Headquarter Troop who should not have even been out in the field. He was due to leave country in 3 days. we were both on the track and taking a lot of fire. The two tracks in front of us took off to get out of the ill zone, and the one behind us went the other way. I started to go down inside of the track to get my 16, and something told me, "NO." I stayed up top and no more than 3 seconds later "BOOM." We took an RPG through the right side of the track. It exploded so hard it knocked Cox and I off the back and I landed in the road. All the ammo started exploding and a bandolier of tear gas went off and came down right on top of me. I was gagging and choking and couldn't see where I was going. They were shooting at me because the bullets were hitting the dirt and the track all around me. I heard someone yelling my name and said over here. I looked and saw the rest of the crew off the road behind some trees. I low-crawled toward their position and Cox and I slid over a mound of dirt for protection. We decided we better go get the medic on the track behind us.

We had no weapons because they were on the track. The driver was sitting up against a tree with one of his eyes knocked out. The other guys were all wounded also. So I told Cox, "lets run back and get the medic." He said "OK, let's go." So we stood up to run, and was immediately hit with a barrage of small arms fire. I dropped to the ground and Cox came down on top of me. The bullets were hitting all around me. I was behind a mound of dirt lying on my stomach. Every time they would shoot, the dirt would hit my face. So I tried putting dirt on top of my head to hide myself. But every time I would move they would shoot. I kept telling Cox to get off me but he didn't. Then all at once the sharpest, most burning pain went through my back. I screamed for a medic and screamed again for Cox to get off me. Then everything went silent. I layed there wondering how bad I was hit. I slowly moved my arm so I could feel my legs. They were both there



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and I could feel myself touching them, so I wasn't paralyzed I figured. I didn't move my head to look at the other guys out of fear of being shot again. So I layed there thinking about home and if I would make it back. I thought of the big green Caddy my Dad bought just before I left. I thought about my mom and brothers and I prayed and apologized to God for being such a heathen. I wondered if the bad guys would come and take us to the Hanoi Hilton. It seemed like hours had passed and then I saw a medic running toward me. I didn't know him. He slid on his knees beside me. He leaned over me and said something like "I got ya buddy." Then all I remember was him pulling Cox off me but he never came back for me. I remember at one point seeing him lunge forward. Then silence again, which seemed like forever. Then all at once, the beautiful sound of mechanized infantry coming around the bend. I saw Smitty (Daryl Smith) on the 60 just blowing everything away. His track pulled up between us and the bad guys and he continued to fire up the area. Some guys jumped off his track and came running up to me and dragged me to his track and threw me inside. I heard men screaming "over there is one, get him he's still alive." "Don't leave, yet, there's another one." Then the guys tossed another body in on top of me. The momentum caused the body to roll over. I looked at him. It was Cox. he had been dead the whole time as he was lying on top of me. Then another body landed on top of Cox. The whole time, Smitty was firing ways and the hot brass was landing on top of me. I was stripped naked so they could see how bad I was hit, and the brass was hot. I yelled at Smitty "you are burning me up Smitty," He reached down and grabbed a blanket and put it on top of me and kept firing. Soon the track started moving back up to where we started out that day. we arrived back to LZ old guard and when they opened the back hatch I saw the chaplain standing there with his shirt off and he was crying. Smitty dragged me out of the track and carried me to an awaiting dust off, and put me on the chopper and said goodbye. I asked someone who the medic was, they said his name was Peterson, and he had been killed trying to help me.

The chopper landed at a small MASH hospital and unloaded us. I remember being carried into the tent or whatever it was. There were people all around. The ambulatory were standing in one corner. The priority patients were in another corner, and the dead were in another corner. I remember getting sick from the amithesia. Sometime in the night, the hospital took mortar, and we were flown to another hospital in Da Nang. The "ARVN wing was hit with 122MM that night, so they flew us to the USS Sanctuary in the South China Sea. I stayed there for 2 weeks I healed up, then they flew us to camp Zana, Japan, where I stayed for a couple more weeks. Then they released me to go to Walter Reed in DC. But before I could get a flight, I developed an infection and had to be readmitted again for another week. After all was said and done I had been shot in the lower back, had shrapnel wounds in my right leg, hip and ribs, and had a broken eardrum.

Finally I landed in Washington to go to Walter Reed and at the airport, there were three nurses waving flags. They had to ask the people to please move to make room for the gurneys coming through.

That was our welcome home. They loaded us onto buses for the trip to Walter Reed. I asked one of the nurses why there was chicken wire on the windows. She said it was to keep the rocks and bottles from breaking the glass. The college kids set trash cans on fire and pushed them out in front of the buses. We felt safer in Vietnam. At least we had guns to fight back with. I stayed at Walter Reed for about a week, then they let me go home for 30 days, where I received my real welcome home.

After I got out of the Army, I just lived my life. From time to time, I would think about Nam, and would wonder whatever happened to the guys. But there were kids to raise and a job to go to every day, and Vietnam just kind of took a back seat. But I never forgot about the guys who died that day. Then in the late 80's, I went to the wall in D.C. with my family. I found some guys I knew including William G. Cox. I looked for Peterson but to no avail. We later went to Louisville, Kentucky. I wanted to find Cox's grave. At Highland Memorial Cemetery, the man in the office looked for an hour through his files for William G. Cox. Finally he found a report on William O. Cox, killed 29 March 1971. So we went to the spot where his grave was supposed to be, and we couldn't find it. After a while, he finally located it. It was between 2<sup>nd</sup> WWII soldiers, in an unmarked grave. I asked him how this could be, and he said that the cemetery required a granite slab to be placed so the copper plaque could be attached to it. The slab cost \$100.00 and no one from the family would pay for it. So the grave went unmarked. I offered to pay the money if he could prove that it was William G. Cox and not William O. Cox. He said he couldn't, so to this day, I suppose it is still unmarked.

I got in touch with Terry Gibbens in the 80's. He was doing fine. He had a broken disc in his back from the mine he hit, but it healed OK. In 2001, I started thinking real strong about Vietnam. Probably because I was getting older, and more sentimental. So I started calling around trying to get in touch with some of the guys. One person I really wanted to talk to was Darrell Smith (Smitty). So I called information and asked the operator. She said she had dozens and dozens of Darrell Smiths. I knew Smitty was from Independence or Warsaw, MO. I got it narrowed down to 5 guys. So I started calling them on the 4<sup>th</sup> one, the man said that he had been in the Navy, but he said there was a "yellowed haired boy up Lincoln Way that had been in the Army." So I called and a lady answered. She said she would get her husband. As soon as he said hello, I knew it was him. He said he didn't know me and didn't care to talk about Nam. I told him I had a letter from him with his SS number on it. I told him if it wasn't his number, I wouldn't bother him anymore. When I read the number to him, he said "yea that's me." We talked awhile. He said as far as 29 March 1971 goes, all he remembered was picking me up and his finger slipping into a bullet hole as he was putting me on the dust off. We stayed in contact with each other regularly. Then, on Veterans Day weekend 2003, I went down to Missouri to see him and his wife. I drove 11 and 1/2 hours and only stopped for gas, food and potty. At 11:00 at night, I arrived at his house to find him standing on the porch waiting for me. we had the greatest visit. I met his family and went to church with them. While at church, the pastor asked me to stand up and tell our story. So briefly I described our relationship in Nam and our getting back together. We had a very

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warm welcome. Smitty's wife, Debbie called me and told me that Smitty had accepted Jesus Christ as his savior, "Praise the Lord." They came to visit Fatima and I in 2005. We showed them all the sites. Smuckers, Lehman's Hardware, Amish Country. Another great time. We still talk on the phone quite a bit. Smitty was there for me when I needed him.

#### Roger Allen "Peterson?"

All through the years, I would think about this medic that was killed trying to rescue me. As I said before, I had looked for him on the Wall in DC but couldn't find him. I had begun to think that maybe the guys had told me wrong as far as what his name was concerned. I had talked to Smitty about him and he wasn't familiar with him either. So time passed and I didn't pursue it too much. But on 10 June 2006, I took my wife to the New Philly area on our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. While we were seeing the sights a truck passed me and on the side it said something about the traveling wall. We had about 2 hours to kill before the next place we were going, so I followed the truck. When it stopped an older vet got out of the truck and I asked him if the wall was in the area and he said yes, just up the road. So we figured we would go up and see the names, I was familiar with. It was beautiful. There must have been 58,000 flags lining the road all the way to the wall. I started getting a little wimpy before I got there. Then a big poster of the 3 soldiers looking at the wall was right at the entrance. There were two guards, one at each end of the wall at parade rest. It was awesome. We walked up to the tent to look at the stuff for sale and a lady was there with a laptop. She spoke to me as I passed by and said "could I help you find someone?" I said no thanks; I know who I'm looking for. She said "are you sure I can't help you find someone." Then I said "well, there is one guy I have been looking for, for a long time. But I'm not even positive of his name. She said "let's try it." So I said his name is Peterson. She asked me if I had a date for her. I said 29 March 71. She pecked away at the computer but no results. I said "that's OK. I've looked for a long time and never had any luck either." She said "No don't leave. Lets try some different spellings." I said OK and waited. In about 20 seconds, the printer kicked out a paper and she handed it to me. Roger Allen Pederson killed 29 March 71, Quang Tri Province. 19 years old. I completely fell apart. To see this on print after all these years was more than I could handle. I still get a lump in my throat thinking about it. My wife asked if I would be OK. I said "I don't know!" It was so hard, to think that this 19 year old teenager was dead because of me, was overwhelming. I had to know more. When I got home, I buried myself in the computer trying to find out more about him. After several hours, I stumbled upon the Virtual Wall. ORG. There I typed in his name, and a beautiful memorial came up and told all about him and how he died. It said that he distinguished himself as a medical aid and that he was on his way to an ambush site in a column of armored personnel carriers, and the column was hit. With enemy bullets spraying all around, he leaped from his vehicle and dragged two men to safety. As he was attempting to rescue a third, he was killed by small arms fire. Exactly the same thing I remember. As I read this, I could just picture myself there and him working on us.

I began to try and find his family using the information on the memorial. I called and called different locations trying to find anybody. I found one lady with that name but she didn't return my call. I called and e-mailed different Veterans organizations in Elk Mound, WI where he was from, but nothing. I called the Chamber of Commerce up there but no one returned my call. I tried the High School but it wasn't built till after he died. I e-mailed junior high schools looking for him, still nothing.

So I turned to the Cemeteries. E-mailing them and calling, nothing. I tried the libraries but no one would get back to me. Finally I tried this library, and I spoke to a young man who said he would contact the department of archives for that county located in Stout University in WI. About a week later a man e-mailed me from the University to tell me he had found an obituary he thought would help me and would mail it to me. About 2 weeks later, the letter arrived. I was nervous about opening it, but when I did, there was his obit from a 21 April 71 CO. newspaper. But it didn't have his picture. It did however, have his parents names. So I got on the computer and found them with a phone number. I called and a little girl answered the phone. She said her Grandma wasn't there but would be back later. I said I would call again later. I hung up and was a little confused. If this was Mrs. Pederson, she would be too old to have a granddaughter that young unless of course the granddaughter was actually a great granddaughter. Did I find this family or not?

About 2 hours later, I called back and an older lady answered the phone. I told her my name and where I lived and explained that I had been in Vietnam with Roger Allen Pederson and was looking for his family. There was a short pause and she said "I'm his mother." I about passed out, now I had this person on the phone after all this time, and now she was expecting me to tell her something about her boy. I told her I was with him the day he died. She said "oh my" and went silent. Suddenly I got very nervous. Had I opened old wounds? Was I out for my own selfish desires without thinking about her feelings. I mean, she buried her son 35 years ago and I'm dragging all this back up. Did I have the right to do this? So I said, I'm so sorry, maybe I should just hang up. I'll give you my number and if you want to call me later, you could just do that? She said NO, NO, NO! Please don't hang up. I've been wanting to talk to someone like you for all these years. She said the Army asked her to refrain from talking with the other men about this. That they might just confuse her. So she never did. But she had a lot of questions. I told her that I would try to answer her questions. She said the Army told her that he had helped some men in a firefight and was trying to help another one when he was killed. She asked me if I knew who that man was. I said yes Mam, that was me. She told me that all these years, she wondered what kind of man did my son die for. Did he die for a good man. I was struck silent. She was right. Her son had given his life to save someone he didn't know. Did this person deserve this grace, this gift? I mean, to die for someone you know, someone you love or care for is one thing, but to throw yourself in front of bullets to save someone you don't know. Could I do that? I stumbled a little trying to come up with an answer. Then I realized, yes, I am a good person. I gave my life to Christ and I am a

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new creature in Christ. So I answered yes Mam, I am a good person. Your son didn't die for someone who didn't appreciate it. She seemed satisfied with that. She wanted all the detail of his death, so I explained how he died. She said she told him to do his job, but don't make yourself a target. His running around helping everyone made him a target though. She explained to me that he was 1 week from arriving at home. And that he was going to be married soon after coming back. She talked, about when he was a boy how he would help people, especially old people. She talked freely about him. She told me that the day he died, she felt that something was wrong. And soon after that her and her husband received the "visit." She said the men from the army didn't even have to say anything because she knew that her son had died Vietnam. She said it was the hardest part of her life, burying her son. We exchanged pictures and she gave me pictures of Roger, and also of the rest of her family.

Mrs. Pederson invited me to come to WI to see her. I'm not sure when I can go. But I don't want to wait too long.

Shortly after this, I went back to the Virtual Wall.ORG. I noticed someone else had left another memorial at Pederson's site. It was his senior medic. He said he was very close to Roger and William G. Cox, I e-mailed him and he wrote back and explained t me that on 29 March 71, he was on his way up to where we were camped to relieve Pederson and say good-bye to him and Cox. Both of them only had a few days left and were leaving country. On the way to our site, they made contact. This was all the fighting that we were hearing. So they were delayed getting to our site because they were ambushed. Then we were called out to assist them and "We" got ambushed. Pederson and Cox were both killed together about 15 minutes before they were to leave.

The chopper that was sent to pick them up did indeed pick them up, but it was too late. How completely unfair. And to think, I was with both of them and lived and as far as I can figure, I lived because Cox was lying on top of me the whole time protecting me, unknowingly but still protecting me all the same. And Pederson was drawing fire by running around trying to help us. I can't help but feel partially responsible for Pederson's death. And I will always be in his debt.

I know God has a purpose in all this, but as of right now, I'm not sure. I can only trust him and try to live the life of a God honoring man. His Son died on the cross for me to give me eternal life. And Roger Allan Pederson and William Gayle Cox died in a mud hole in Vietnam to save my life so I could live as an example to other people as a recipient of God's wonderful grace. Did I deserve either one of these. No, but I have been given this opportunity at life and I am going to do my best to honor first God then to pay honor to these brave men that I hardly knew who also died for me. And I'll never forget Smitty who was there for me protecting me until they could get me out of there. Thank you guys. I love you all.

P. Gary Jackson.



**29 Mar 71  
Red Devil Highway Khe Sahn  
Track No 14 Looking in through rear  
hatch, arrow points to machine gun**



**Typical Vietnam  
"Track"**



**Breakfast in the backyard of Quang Tri 1970**



**Gary Jackson February 1971**

# Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:

## William Gayle Cox (67)

Courtesy: <http://www.viethero.us/Search/Searchlink.html>

Panel 04 West



ROW 091 \* RUSSELL LELAND CLAY \* MICHAEL ANGELO FRATTALI \* KENT DOUGLAS ERICKSON \* WILLIAM GAYLE COX \* CHARLES HAROLD JR EDWARDS

Courtesy: <http://thewall-usa.com/info.asp?recid=10829>

### Personal comments on this site

#### WILLIAM GAYLE COX

manny\_g  
Fellow Veteran 69-70 An Khe  
Union Gap, WA. 98903  
"You are Remembered"

Peace and condolence, to the family and friends. "He which hath no stomach to this fight let him depart. But we in it shall be remembered. We few, we happy few, we band of brothers!! for he today, that sheds his blood with me, shall always be my brother." Rest in peace brave soldier, you have not been forgotten. (W.Shakespeare) May God Bless You for your Sacrifice!!!  
Mar 29, 2007

The Wall-USA

Gary Kindred  
gkind6@abelink.com  
cousin  
506 S. Mary St. Box 457  
Atlanta, IL 61723 USA

William Gayle Cox and I were in Nam at the same time but never knew each other. He was a cousin I never met and never got to know. I came home and he didn't so I will never know him unless some of the veteran's that did would contact me and tell me about him. Even though we never knew each other I feel close to him somehow. Maybe because we were in Nam at the same time or maybe because I feel like I should have met him before we got there. I will honor his memory and the memory of all the men who didn't come home like me.  
Friday, May 28, 1999

The Wall-USA

Gary Kindred  
gkind6@abelink.com  
cousin  
506 S. Mary St. Box 457  
Atlanta, Illinois 61723-0457 USA  
Friday, May 28, 1999

#### WILLIAM GAYLE COX

SGT - E5 - Army - Selective Service  
5th Infantry Division Mechanized

His tour began on May 11, 1970  
Casualty was on Mar 29, 1971  
In QUANG TRI, SOUTH VIETNAM  
HOSTILE, GROUND CASUALTY  
GUN, SMALL ARMS FIRE  
Body was recovered

Panel 04W - Line 91



William Gayle Cox'

Saturday, May 29, 1999

The Wall-USA

Ron Sheehan  
rnsheehan@bellsouth.net  
Follow Veteran

I'm a retired veteran (U.S.Army) from Louisville, Ky who wants to keep your memory alive. You are not forgotten. We soldiers do not question our duty, but do our part to keep and preserve freedom. However! You gave the ultimate sacrifice. It would have been nice to have known you as a person, you will forever be a HERO. We should never let these brave men "Fade Away", their memory and the Vietnam War should never disappear from our thoughts and history.  
Thursday, May 12, 2005

The Wall-USA

Vickie Coplin  
foxk@wownet.com  
SISTER IN CHRIST  
GA USA

ALWAYS REMEMBERED BY THOSE OF US WHO CARE! ALL OF YOU WILL FOREVER BE ETCHED IN OUR HEART! NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN! DANCE WITH THE ANGELS!  
Friday, February 21, 2003

The Wall-USA

Phil Thornton  
ph11b40@bellsouth.net  
Louisville Vietnam Vet

The reasons for these brave young men going to Vietnam can be varied and numerous. But in the end what really matters is that they went. They answered their country's call and served honorably. We should be forever grateful for their service, dedication and sacrifice and make certain that they are not forgotten.  
Wednesday, November 16, 2005

## **Tribute To Waggener High School Heroes Killed In Vietnam:**

### **Note From Ken Draut (73) Waggener High school Vietnam Memorial Committee**

The Waggener High School Vietnam Memorial was created in 1991 to honor the six Waggener students who served and were killed in Vietnam. The memorial is a dedicated set of bookshelves inside the Waggener High School library containing a plaque and hundreds of books about the Vietnam War. The intent was to create an educational memorial where current Waggener students could read about the Vietnam War and be reminded of the sacrifice made by fellow students. The books chosen for present many sides of the Vietnam War. Al Clements (1961), Ken Draut (1973), and Mark Fenzel (1973) helped launch the memorial and they keep in contact with the Waggener library staff to maintain the memorial.

Money raised in 1991 was put into an endowment fund held at Waggener High School; the fund allows the librarians to purchase new material or replace worn out material. **Contributions may be sent to:**

Waggener High School Vietnam Memorial Fund, C/O Principal, Waggener High School, 330 S. Hubbards Layne, St. Matthews, KY 40207. Money donated to this fund is tax-exempt as a contribution to a Kentucky Public School. If anyone has specific questions, they may be addressed to Ken Draut (1973), [kendraut@bellsouth.net](mailto:kendraut@bellsouth.net).