

PHILLIP REX BERGFELD

Class 7-67

PHILLIP REX BERGFELD
is honored on Panel 3W, Row 97 of
the Vietnam Veterans Memorial

Full Name: PHILLIP REX BERGFELD
Wall Name: PHILLIP R BERGFELD
Date of Birth: 7/31/1947
Date of Casualty: 7/3/1971
Home of Record: ST JACOB
County of Record: MADISON COUNTY
State: IL
Branch of Service: ARMY
Rank: CAPT
Casualty Country: SOUTH VIETNAM
Casualty Province: THUA THIEN



CPT Bergfeld was serving with Battery A, 4th Battalion, 77th Artillery (Aerial Rocket), 101st Airborne Division. He was the lead pilot in a formation of two AH-1G Cobra helicopters that had established a night-time circular orbit overhead ground troops in contact. The last radio contact with the flight was his radio call "Rolling in hot". The ground troops observed rockets being fired and a large flash of light from the lead aircraft's position, then watched as a burning aircraft fell to earth beyond a ridgeline approximately 800 meters distant from them. A second flash of light was observed beyond the ridgeline.

A search and rescue team in a UH-1H Huey was launched at once. When the Huey arrived on scene the SAR team found two fires about 200 meters apart. Close observation of the fires revealed that the two AH-1G Cobras had crashed as the direct result of a mid-air collision. Four men died in the incident. CPT Bergfeld's co-pilot was CPT Terry J. Martell, a graduate of Field Artillery OCS Class 15-69.

My OCS & Flight School Classmate & Friend

Phil Bergfeld was my classmate at OCS, and during flight training. After our initial VN tours, we were stationed together at Hunter AAF for about a year, A good man and a friend. He died doing his duty and I miss him.

Posted by: Gerry Canevaro
Relationship: We served together
January 31, 2006

We Were Flight Instructors Together

I was really sorry to hear about the mid-air collision. Phil and I were Flight Commanders at Hunter AAF, Savannah, GA in 1969-1970. We were teaching flight instrumentation to American flight students and then contact flight training to the South Vietnamese in the UH-1 Huey. In addition to being an excellent soldier and aviator, Phil was a good guy and well liked by all.

Captain Phillip Rex Bergfield: Captain Bergfield was killed in Action on 3 July 1971 in Thua Thien Province while flying in Aircraft # 67-15760. The cause of the accident was reported (and witnessed) to be a night-time mid-air collision with his wingman. The aircraft came to rest at Military Grid Coordinates YD875014. His loss was listed as a result of hostile action and he is reported to have died while missing. Prior to this (and as a testament to his courage), he was awarded the Silver Star for his heroism on the ground while defending the Battery CP/OPNS at Khe Sahn during Operation Lam Son 719. Phil was married to an Army Nurse (stationed at Phu Bai) at the time of his death.



AH-1G Cobra File Photo

From www.flyarmy.org

CPT Phillip Rex Bergfield

Status: Killed In Action from an incident on 07/03/1971 while performing the duty of Pilot.

Age at death: 23.9

Date of Birth: 07/31/1947

Home City: St Jacob, IL

Service: FA branch of the reserve component of the U.S. Army.

Unit: A/4/77 ARA 101 ABN

Major organization: 101st Airborne Division

Flight class: 68-2

Service: FA branch of the U.S. Army.

The Wall location: 03W-097

Short Summary: Mid-air of two Cobras south west of Camp Eagle. See Martell, Schettig, and Tomlinson.

Aircraft: AH-1G tail number 68-15185

Country: South Vietnam

MOS: 61193

Primary cause: Mid-Air?

Major attributing cause: aircraft connected not at sea

Compliment cause: vehicular accident

Vehicle involved: helicopter

Position in vehicle: aircraft commander

Vehicle ownership: government

Started Tour: 11/11/1970

"Official" listing: helicopter air casualty - other aircrew

The initial status of this person was: non-hostile dead - died while missing

Length of service: *

Location: Thua Thien Province I Corps.

Military grid coordinates of event: YD875014

Reason: aircraft lost or crashed

Casualty type: Hostile - died while missing

married male U.S. citizen

Race: Caucasian

Religion: Baptist - other groups

The following information secondary, but may help in explaining this incident.

Category of casualty as defined by the Army: battle dead Category of personnel: active duty Army Military class: officer

This record was last updated on 11/11/1997

Helicopter AH-1G 68-15185

Information on U.S. Army helicopter AH-1G tail number 68-15185

The Army purchased this helicopter 0769

Total flight hours at this point: 00001139

Date: 07/03/1971

Incident number: 710703011ACD Accident case number: 710703011 Total loss or fatality Accident

Unit: A/4/77 ARA 101 ABN

The station for this helicopter was Phu Bai in South Vietnam

UTM grid coordinates: YD874005

Number killed in accident = 2. . Injured = 0. . Passengers = 0
costing 753033

Original source(s) and document(s) from which the incident was created or updated:
Defense Intelligence Agency Helicopter Loss database. Army Aviation Safety Center
database. Also: OPERA (Operations Report.)

Loss to Inventory

Crew Members:

P CPT BERGFELD PHILLIP REX KIA

P CPT MARTELL TERRY JACK KIA

Accident Summary:

The aircraft in question were on 2 minute alert status with an aerial rocket artillery battery. They received a contact mission at approximately 2320 hours and were immediately launched. Arriving on station at 2330 hours in trail formation, a circling orbit was set up by the lead aircraft and was observed by ground troops, who indicated the orbit got smaller and smaller. The last radio transmission monitored was that the lead aircraft, flown by CPT Bergfield, was "rolling in hot". At this time the troops on the ground observed a large flash of fire and some rockets being fired. The burning aircraft fell to the ground over a ridge line 800 meters from the ground troops who also reported shortly after the flash of fire in the sky, there was another flash on the ground over the ridge line. The flash of fire in the sky was also observed by CW2 Barry Martens, 310-56-6339, of A Btry, 4/77th Arty, 101st ABN DIV who watched the aircraft launched, and depart the Phu Bai Combat Base to the southwest in trail formation. CW2 Martens observed the aircraft set up their orbit over the contact area and was watching for the section to commence their firing runs. CW2 Martens then observed a large flash in the area of the aircraft and could no longer see the aircraft positions lights. He went to the battery operations center and informed the personnel on duty, who initiated a radio search with negative results. The ground commander also radioed that it was possible that the aircraft had crashed. At this time the 4th Battalion, 77th Artillery Headquarters Tactical Operations Center was notified, who in turn launched a search and rescue team in a UH-1H. Upon arriving on the scene, two fires were observed approximately 200 meters apart and with close observation of the fires, it was determined that both aircraft were totally destroyed with little chance of survivors.