

DOUGLAS JAMES CAVIN**Class 7-67**

DOUGLAS JAMES CAVIN
is honored on Panel 43W, Row 52 of
the Vietnam Veterans Memorial

Full Name: DOUGLAS JAMES CAVIN
Wall Name: DOUGLAS J CAVIN
Date of Birth: 10/4/1942
Date of Casualty: 9/21/1968
Home of Record: CORPUS CHRISTI
County of Record: NUECES COUNTY
State: TX
Branch of Service: ARMY
Rank: 1LT
Casualty Country: SOUTH VIETNAM
Casualty Province: BIEN HOA



1LT Cavin served with Company B, 9th Aviation Battalion, 9th Infantry Division. While hovering his UH-1C helicopter gunship, a lightning strike caused the rockets of a trailing aircraft to be set off. He was killed when the rockets from that aircraft went through his seat.

Classmate

I was a classmate of Doug's at Flight School at Ft. Wolters, TX. I remember he and his wife had brought their horse with them and he was always "complaining" in a kidding sort of way about taking care of it. He and his wife were an enjoyable fun loving couple. Doug had a great sense of humor and his death was a tragic loss.

Posted by: Gerry Canevaro
Relationship: We served together
January 21, 2003

He is buried in Memory Gardens Cemetery in Corpus Christi, Texas

From www.flyarmy.org

1LT Douglas James Cavin

Status: Killed In Action from an incident on 09/21/1968 while performing the duty of Pilot.

Age at death: 26.0

Date of Birth: 10/04/1942

Home City: Corpus Christi, TX

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

Unit: B/9 AVN 9 INF

Major organization: 9th Infantry Division

Flight class: 68-2

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

The Wall location: 43W-052

Short Summary: While hovering trailing aircraft rockets were set off by lighting causing rocket to go through Cavin's seat. DOD says ground casualty.

Aircraft: UH-1C

Service number: O5425558

Country: South Vietnam

MOS: 1981 = 19 Rotary Wing Aviator (Unit Commander)

Primary cause: Rocket Accident

Major attributing cause: aircraft connected not at sea

Compliment cause: weapons

Vehicle involved: helicopter

Position in vehicle: passenger

Started Tour: 05/04/1968

"Official" listing: ground casualty

Length of service: 02

Location: Bien Hoa Province III Corps.Reason: other causes

Casualty type: Non-hostile - died of other causes

married male U.S. citizen

Race: Caucasian

Religion: Protestant - no denominational preference

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

Category of casualty as defined by the Army: non-battle dead Category of personnel:

active duty Army Military class: officer

This record was last updated on 04/26/2002

Additional information about this casualty:

As we headed into monsoon season there we got the Delta thunderstorms. In Pleiku and up to Dak To they appeared to be faster moving storms with fewer breaks but the Delta version could be outwalked if they came towards you. Well this afternoon was like any other with the storms slowly coming towards us. The difference was it was a very low roll cloud and pitch black downpour. Just then from under the edge a slick appeared. We all commented on how lucky they were to have made it under the squall line. As they hovered past us to their revetment they then rotated 180 to slide into their assigned revetment. Just before they got into position they were about a foot off the ground. I was watching them try to get into the revetment before the storm broke when a bolt of lightning hit the radio antenna on a Charlie model heavy hog sitting in the middle of the field in back of them. The strike salvoed the rockets and one out of the right side did a momentary hang fire and then went to the left but then bounced off of one out of the left tube and then went hard right finally disappearing into the tail boom of the hovering ship. Meanwhile all the rest of the rockets came flying in a wide spray straight down the airfield. We unassed the bunker as rockets passed by on both sides. As we went over the side we saw the guys in the bunker straight at the end of the field go out the front and down the perimeter as the rockets took out their bunker. On the perimeter road some poor GI that was doing nothing but driving a 3/4 ton had his life pass in front of his eyes as he dove out the door of the still rolling truck and slid face first in the mud as the truck took some rocket hits. After all was over and done I looked up the field and the blades were still slowing down on that ship that had been hovering into the revetment but something was not right. Several guys ran across the field as we headed up the field. The rocket had gone through the tail boom and had hit the pilot's seat. LT Doug Cavin of the 9th Aviation is listed as just another Non Hostile loss but he is not forgotten.

From Don Armstrong 604th Trans / 52nd CAB, Pleiku, Apr / July 68 D Troop 3/5 Cav, Bearcat /Dong Tam, July 68 May 69