

## JOHN FRANCIS DUGAN

Class 36A-67

**JOHN FRANCIS DUGAN**  
is honored on Panel 4W, Row 60 of  
the Vietnam Veterans Memorial

**Full Name:** JOHN FRANCIS DUGAN  
**Wall Name:** JOHN F DUGAN  
**Date of Birth:** 11/10/1947  
**Date of Casualty:** 3/20/1971  
**Home of Record:** ROSELLE  
**County of Record:** UNION COUNTY  
**State:** NJ  
**Branch of Service:** ARMY  
**Rank:** CAPT  
**Casualty Country:** LAOS  
**Casualty Province:** LZ  
**Status:** MIA



CPT Dugan was the co-pilot of a UH-1H helicopter attempting to land to extract ARVN troops about 20 miles west of Khe Sanh during Operation Lam-Son 719. During the attempt, the aircraft came under enemy fire and was seen to spin, explode, catch fire and then break up in the air. No signs of survivors were seen. Because of the presence of enemy forces in the area, no subsequent search could be made for survivors.

CPT Dugan and three other members of B Company, 101st Aviation Battalion, died in the crash. The remains of the four crewmen were repatriated on 5 Dec 2002; the DOD announced identification of the remains on 30 August 2005. He was buried at Arlington National Cemetery on April 12, 2006.

### A great friend ,schoolmate and fellow Trooper

I grew up with John, we went to school together. I was also in the 101st, 1/502.  
There was no better friend or soldier!  
God Bless you and your family John.

Posted by: Joe Hurley

Email:

Relationship: We grew up together

May 28, 2003

## **Class 36A-67**

I remember John in OCS, he wanted to fly. John was in the 4th Platoon. John you will never be forgotten and will always be forever young.

Posted by: Samuel Ault, LTC, FA, Retired

Relationship:

March 13, 2007

## **Lest we forget**

CPT John Dugan, it's been 20 years since we last spoke or served. I still miss you, MAJ Barker, and my fellow crew members. I will never forget March 21 1971, during Lam-Son 719, when our unit (B Co. Kingsmen) lost so much, friends, AC Commander, and our CO. The loss was sad, but you and our other team members were attempting to aid others, lost to the same SAMs that took you away from us that day. I still see you and the crew smiling, and answering the call to duty when MAJ Barker requested your crew to join him in that attempted rescue of a downed Chopper Crew. Rest in peace Brother.

Jon S. Koehler

SP/4 Crew Chief

2nd Flt Plt,

B Co. 101st Assault AVN Bn.

Opera Non Verbra - Actions Not Words

May 30,2000

## **Fond Memory of Captain Dugan**

I served as a crew chief with the Kingsmen and flew with Captain Dugan on several occasions. One memory I have of him, and it speaks volumes about the type of officer he was, is as follows: We had come in from a long day of flying. The door gunner had taken the M-60's for cleaning, the two pilots, one of which was Captain Dugan, had left for chow and the officers club, and I was left to repair something or other on the aircraft. By now it is getting dark, and I was getting tired, thirsty and frustrated. I saw a figure coming up the flight line with a flashlight and carrying something else. It was Captain Dugan, he had two Cokes. He stood there and held the flashlight and we shot the breeze while I finished my repairs. It may seem like a small, insignificant thing, but I'll always remember him for it. He was killed about three weeks after I got home. Not a day goes by that I don't think about him.

Posted by: Joe Kline

SP/5 Crew Chief, 2nd Flt. Plt.

December 21, 2002

### *From the wall-usa.com*

John was a good man, a good friend, a good soldier, a good pilot and a good leader. We celebrated our birthdays together (same age, 5, days apart) and we're both from NJ. His address was 234 Walnut Ave., Roselle, NJ. (if I remember, correctly) I always wanted to visit his family but didn't and I am very sorry about that. Good-Bye John, Sleep Well, I miss you, Butch.

Boni M. "Butch" Buoni "Kingsman 27"  
Friend - In his platoon, at Camp Eagle, RVN.  
4834, Doe Run, Evans, GA., 30809-6204, USA  
May 25, 1999

### *Notes from The Virtual Wall*

Beginning in January 1971, the South Vietnamese Army initiated a drive to cut NVA communications lines in Laos. The intent was to cut the Ho Chi Minh Trail, seize Tchepone (Laos) and return to Vietnam. The ARVN would provide and command the ground forces, while the US Army and Air Force would furnish aviation resources and supporting firepower.

In early February the ARVN began its push into Laos. The NVA reacted fiercely, but the ARVN held its positions supported by U.S. airstrikes and resupply runs by Army helicopters.

A helicopter assault on Tchepone was successful, with the abandoned village seized on March 6. Two weeks of hard combat were necessary for the ARVN task force to fight its way back to Vietnam. Towards the end of the removal, a helicopter from Company B, 101st Aviation Battalion was lost.

Flown by Major Jack L. Barker, UH-1H tail number 66-16185 was attempting to land to extract ARVN troops about 20 miles west of Khe Sanh. During the attempt, the aircraft came under enemy fire and was seen to spin, explode, and catch fire, then to break up in the air. No signs of survivors were seen. Because of the presence of enemy forces in the area, no subsequent search could be made for survivors.

Four men of B Company, 101st Aviation Battalion, died in the crash:

- MAJ Jack Lamar Barker, pilot (Dist Svc Cross)
- **CPT John Francis Dugan, copilot (Silver Star)**
- SGT William E. Dillender, crew chief (Silver Star)
- PFC John J. Chubb, gunner (Silver Star)

The remains of the four crewmen were repatriated on 05 Dec 2002; the DoD announced identification of the remains on 30 August 2005.



**NEWS RELEASES from the United States Department of Defense  
No. 136-06 IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 14, 2006**

**Media Contact: (703)697-5131 Public/Industry (703) 428-0711  
Army MIA Soldiers from Vietnam War Identified**

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of four U.S. servicemen, missing in action since the Vietnam War, have been identified. They will be returned to their families for burial with full military honors.

They are: Major Jack L. Barker of Waycross, Georgia; Captain John F. Dugan of Roselle, New Jersey; Sergeant William E. Dillender of Naples, Florida; and Private First Class John J. Chubb of Gardena, California. All were from the Army's 101st Airborne Division. Chubb will be buried in Inglewood, California, on February 18, 2006. Barker, Dugan and Dillender will be buried on April 12, 2006, in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C.

On March 20, 1971, Barker and Dugan were piloting a UH-1H Huey helicopter with Dillender and Chubb on board. The aircraft was participating in a troop extraction mission in the Savannakhet Province of Laos. As the helicopter approached the landing zone, it was hit by heavy enemy ground fire. It exploded in the air and there were no survivors. Continued enemy activity in the area prevented any recovery attempts.

A refugee in Nakhon Phanom, Thailand, showed an identification tag of Private First Class Chubb and a medallion to a U.S. interviewer in 1986. The medallion was reportedly recovered near the same general location from an F-105 crash site. However, the location and the aircraft type did not correlate with the missing aircraft and soldiers.

Between 1988 and 2001, joint U.S.-Lao People's Democratic Republic teams, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), conducted four investigations and three excavations for these soldiers without positive results. An investigation team surveyed three crash sites in 2002 after interviewing local villagers from the province. The team recovered a fragment of human tooth and some crew-related artifacts from one of the crash sites.

In October and November 2004, another joint investigation team excavated the crash site and recovered additional human remains and crew-related evidence. The wreckage was of a UH-1H helicopter, and contained insignia worn by members of the 101st Airborne Division.

The remains included nine fragments of teeth that the forensic anthropologists at JPAC were able to match with detailed information from medical and dental records.

From the Vietnam War, 1,807 Americans are still unaccounted-for with 364 of those from Laos. Another 839 have been accounted-for in Southeast Asia with 208 of those from losses in Laos.

## **35-year wait ends for families of 4 lost soldiers**

### **Wednesday, February 15, 2006**

They waited 35 years, never giving up hope that the remains of their loved ones, whose helicopter crashed on a rescue mission in Laos, would be found.

Four members of the 101st Airborne Division -- including Captain John F. Dugan of Roselle -- died on March 20, 1971, when their UH-1H Huey chopper was hit by enemy fire as they tried to rescue troops surrounded by North Vietnamese soldiers.

The helicopter exploded in air. There were no survivors. Enemy activity in the area prevented any recovery attempts.

On Tuesday, the Defense Department's POW/Missing Personnel Office officially announced that the remains of the soldiers had been found by search teams from Laos and the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command.

"We were notified in November they had been identified," said Debbie Winder of Waycross, Georgia, whose uncle, Major Jack Barker, was the chopper pilot. "We are just thankful we can put this to rest, and bring him home."

Winder was 15 when she answered the phone and an Army official told her that her uncle was missing in action.

"It was devastating," she said. "My grandmother felt like he was still alive. She could never give in that he was killed. "

John Dugan was 24 and on his second tour in Vietnam when he died.

In "Where They Lay: Searching for America's Lost Soldiers," author Earl Swift describes Dugan as chunky, 5-foot-6, with a passion for rock-and-roll, cars and the New York Yankees. Dugan graduated from Roselle Catholic High School and attended Union College in Cranford, then surprised friends by eloping with his sweetheart, Barbara, in Maryland.

Dugan signed up for Army Officers Candidate School and went to Vietnam in 1968 as a forward observer. He received a Purple Heart and Bronze Star, but never mentioned the decorations to his family, according to Swift.

Impressed with helicopter pilots because they helped people, Dugan went to flight school in Texas, then volunteered for combat because he felt the Vietnamese needed American help.

His mother tried to talk him out of going back to Vietnam, Swift said. Before leaving for the final time, in 1970, Dugan treated her to a Yankees game.

Search teams had been looking for the remains of the missing crew since 1986, when a Thai refugee showed an identification tag of one of them, Pfc. John Chubb of Gardena, California.

Between 1988 and 2001, the search teams went out again, digging three sites, with no results.

In 2002, the teams recovered a fragment of a human tooth and some crew-related artifacts, the Department of Defense said. In October and November 2004, another joint team excavated a Huey crash site and recovered additional human remains and crew-related evidence. The Huey contained insignia worn by the 101st.

The remains included fragments of teeth that forensic anthropologists at the Joint Command were able to match, using detailed information from medical and dental records.

Barker was identified through dental records, said a nephew, Steve Hinson of Brunswick, Georgia.

"I was [Barker's] ring bearer at his wedding," Hinson said. "It's just like a dream. For us, it's been 30 years ... and just for him being found ... it's been just remarkable."

Hinson has kept in touch with relatives of the crew members.

"I talk to [Sgt. William Dillender's] brother once a week," Hinson said. "We're pretty close. He's now ready for this chapter to close."

Hinson also recently talked to Chubb's brother.

Dugan's relatives could not be found Tuesday.

Barker and Dugan were piloting the helicopter with Dillender and Chubb on board while on a troop extraction mission in the Savannakhet province of Laos. Officials said that as the chopper approached the landing zone, it was hit by heavy enemy ground fire and exploded.

There are still 1,807 Americans unaccounted for from the Vietnam War, 364 of those from Laos, the Defense Department said.

Chubb will be buried in Inglewood, Calif., this week, and Barker, Dugan and Dillender will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery in April, said the Defense Department's POW/Missing Personnel Office.



Soldiers wait to remove a casket containing the remains of four U.S. Army servicemen from a horse-drawn caisson, Wednesday, April 12, 2006 at Arlington National Cemetery. The four, Major Jack L. Barker, Waycross, Georgia; Captain John F. Dugan, Roselle, New Jersey; Sergeant William E. Dillender, Naples, Florida, and Private First Class John J. Chubb, Gardena, California, all members of the Army 101st Airborne Division, were killed in Vietnam March 20, 1971 when their UH-1H Huey helicopter was shot down





**From www.flyarmy.org**

**DUGAN JOHN FRANCIS**

Name: CPT John Francis Dugan

Status: Remains were returned on 10/2005 from an incident on 03/20/1971 while performing the duty of Pilot.

Declared dead on 04/28/1971.

Age at death: 23.4

Date of Birth: 11/10/1947

Home City: Roselle, NJ

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

Unit: B/101 AVN 101 ABN

Major organization: 101st Airborne Division

Flight class: 70-4

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

The Wall location: 04W-060

Short Summary: Shotdown during LamSon 719 with MAJ Jack L. Barker leading an extraction of ARVN troops 3/19/71.

Aircraft: UH-1H tail number 66-16185

Call sign: Kingsman 16

Service number: O5430353

Country: Laos

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

Primary cause: Laos-BNR

Major attributing cause: aircraft connected not at sea

Compliment cause: small arms fire

Vehicle involved: helicopter

Position in vehicle: aircraft commander

Vehicle ownership: government

Started Tour: 09/06/1970

"Official" listing: helicopter air casualty - other aircrew

The initial status of this person was: missing in action - interim

Length of service: \*

Military grid coordinates of event: XD515352

Reason: aircraft lost or crashed

Casualty type: Hostile - died while missing

single male U.S. citizen

Race: Caucasian

Religion: Roman Catholic

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 10/17/2005

## Helicopter UH-1D 66-16185

Information on U.S. Army helicopter UH-1D tail number 66-16185

The Army purchased this helicopter 0367

Total flight hours at this point: 00003496

Date: 03/20/1971 MIA-POW file reference number: 1731

Incident number: 71032010.TXT

Unit: B/101 AHB 101 ABN

Laos

UTM grid coordinates: XD515352

Original source(s) and document(s) from which the incident was created or updated:

Defense Intelligence Agency Reference Notes. Defense Intelligence Agency Helicopter Loss database. Also: 1731, Al Fischer ()

Loss to Inventory

### Crew Members:

P MAJ BARKER JACK LAMAR RR

**P CPT DUGAN JOHN FRANCIS RR**

CE SGT DILLENDER WILLIAM EDWARD RR

G PFC CHUBB JOHN JACOBSEN RR

### REFNO Synopsis:

Source: Compiled by Homecoming II Project 01 September 1990 from one or more of the following: raw data from U.S. Government agency sources, correspondence with POW/MIA families, published sources, interviews. SYNOPSIS: LAM SON 719 was a large offensive operation against NVA communications lines in Laos. The operation called for ARVN troops to drive west from Khe Sanh, cut the Ho Chi Minh Trail, seize Tchpone and return to Vietnam. The ARVN would provide and command the ground forces, while U.S. Army and Air Force would furnish aviation airlift and supporting firepower. The 101st Airborne Division commanded all U.S. Army aviation units in direct support of the operation. Most of the first part of the operation, begun January 30, 1971, was called Operation DEWEY CANYON II, and was conducted by U.S. ground forces in Vietnam. The ARVN were halfway on February 11 and positioned for the attack across the Laotian border. On 8 February, ARVN began to push into Laos. The NVA reacted fiercely, but the ARVN held its positions supported by U.S. airstrikes and resupply runs by Army helicopters. President Nguyen Van Thieu ordered a helicopter assault on Tchepone, and the abandoned village was seized March 6. Two weeks of hard combat were necessary for the ARVN task force to fight its way back to Vietnam. Towards the end of the removal, a helicopter from Company B, 101st Aviation Battalion was lost. Flown by Maj. Jack L. Barker, the UH1H (serial #66-16185) was attempting to land to extract ARVN troops about 20 miles west of Khe Sanh. During the attempt, the aircraft came under enemy fire and was seen to spin, explode, and catch fire, then to break up in the air. No signs of survivors were seen. The crew aboard the aircraft were PCF John J. Chubb, Sgt. William E. Dillender, and Capt. John F. Dugan. Because of the presence of enemy forces in the area, no subsequent search could be made for survivors. Losses were heavy in Lam Son 719. The ARVN lost almost 50% of their force.

U.S. aviation units lost 168 helicopters; another 618 were damaged. Fifty-five aircrewmembers were killed, 178 wounded, and 34 missing in action in the entire operation, lasting until April 6, 1971.

#### War Story:

Earlier in the day, the crew of #68-16492 (AI Fischer, Kingsman 18, WO Edward R. Cash, SP4 Lyle C. Smith, and SP4 Roger L. Perales) were shoot down and crashed on FSB Delta 1. After some time, they contacted Kingsman 69, CWO Bill Singletary in 185 on the radio. He had been Chalk 6 in the initial flight of the day. Kingsman 69's crew members were WO Joe St. John, CE Sergeant Bill Dillender, and door gunner PFC John Chubb. Singletary's bird had also been hit going into the original PZ and couldn't make the PZ. After identifying where the downed crew was, Singletary and St. John were told the situation on Delta 1 was getting very hot with small arms and mortars and that they should break off and not risk it. Singletary replied with a chuckle and said he would come in low level from the north. AI Fischer distinctively remembers hearing both the bird and the shooting increasing steadily as Singletary approached. As the downed crew came aboard Singletary pulled in all the power he had and nosed over staying as low as possible until they broke free of the small arms fire. All six in back were firing. We returned to where the Kingsmen birds were to sit at Khe Sanh. After landing Singletary's bird #185 was Red X-ed due to extensive battle damage. Later in the day, Major Baker took 185 since it had better Red Xs than his bird. This is how 185 departed on the mission where it was lost. Submitted by AI Fischer in March, 1996.

**About Jack Barker.** I went to the Infantry Officers Advance Course with him just prior to both of us going back to Viet Nam for second tours. We were both fixed wing aviators who had gone through a "Q" Course. I went through the course set up in Schleissheim, Germany, and I'm not sure where Jack went through. Anyway, I hadn't seen him since we graduated from the IOAC (Infantry Officers Advanced Course in June of 1970), until that morning just before the first lift. We went into that LZ that morning with three or four companies and when we made it back to Khe Sanh from the first lift we were only able to put together a total of about ten or twelve flyable aircraft from all the companies together. I think Jack was the only one left flyable from his company and I think we had about four flyable Dolphins left when the word came down that we were going to make another attempt to get into the LZ. I'm pretty sure I was Chalk 6, flying 30 second separation, single ship LZ, and I was either the first or second aircraft behind Jack. I saw him get hit in the LZ when we were about 500-1000 feet descending, and about that time "Big Ben" the General in charge called it off, saying we were suffering excessive losses. WELL, NO SHIT!!! That should have been recognized after the first attempt that morning, but I can tell you that I don't know of anybody who refused to go back into the LZ. I don't believe that happened. If that had happened it would have been big news. I can tell you that I had probably made my peace as we were descending into that LZ because I was sure we wouldn't make it out of there. Thank God for small favors. From Dale Spratt, commander of the 174th Assault Helicopter Company who was in the air behind Barker when he went in.

On Wednesday, April 12, 2006 the crew of Kingsmen 185, shot down on 3/20/71 over Laos was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery. The crew was Major Jack Barker (our C.O.), Captain John Dugan, Sgt. Bill Dillender and PFC John Chubb. The search for the crew, their family backgrounds, and the circumstances of their loss, was detailed in the book "Where They Lay" by Earl Swift.

23 Former Kingsmen from all over the country, as well as veterans from many other units, were in attendance. The families of the crew were amazed by this outpouring of support, and we, in turn, were humbled to be in their presence. A "visitation" was held at a funeral home in Arlington the night before the burial. This afforded many of us an opportunity to meet the family members, and share some of our remembrances of the crew. Michael Barker, the son of Jack, was 1 1/2 years old when his father was killed. He bears an uncanny resemblance, both physically and in mannerism, to his father. Austin Dillender, the 16 year-old nephew of Bill Dillender, is Bill re-incarnated. The visitation was continued by some at the infamous Red, Hot & Blue. The burial ceremony began at the Old Post Chapel at Ft. Myer, which adjoins the western perimeter of the cemetery, and is home to the "Old Guard." The chapel service was standing room only, with families seated in pews, and veterans standing along either side. A single flag-draped casket (containing the actual remains of the crew) was front and center in the Chapel.

After the chapel service, it was taken by horse drawn caisson to the graveside in section 60, where the three other flag draped caskets awaited. The graveside services were extremely moving. Each of the four caskets had its own honor guard, there was a band, and of course, the rifle squad. There was also a fly-over of 4 Blackhawks in a slow, diamond formation. Following the graveside ceremony, we gathered at Spates Hall on Ft. Myer for a reception with the veterans, families, and guests. I would publicly like to thank Mike Sloniker for his advice and guidance which helped us (the Kingsmen) do what we needed to do logistically. Mike also put us in touch with former Blue Star Tom Edmonds, whose experience and ability to recon the area as a local were invaluable. The following day, services were held just below the Tomb of the Unknowns for Mike Novosel, Vietnam medevac pilot and Medal of Honor winner. All of this, coupled with trips to the Wall, and a first reunion of sorts to some who came, made this a very memorable week. Joe Kline CE B/101 AHB Kingsmen 70-71 Gilroy, CA This record was last updated on 02/14/2006



Arlington National Cemetery Plot: SECTION 60 SITE 8361

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## **Silver Star Citation**

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 8, 1918 (amended by act of July 25, 1963), takes pride in presenting the Silver Star (Posthumously) to Captain John Francis Dugan, United States Army, for gallantry in action while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force, while serving with Company B, 101st Aviation Battalion (Assault Helicopter), (Ambulance), 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile), in Laos. Captain Dugan distinguished himself on 20 March 1971 while serving as Aircraft Commander of a UH-1H helicopter during the emergency extraction of allied troops in Laos. The friendly firebase was completely surrounded by enemy troops, and visibility was severely limited by the smoke from recent air and artillery strikes. Despite these hazards, Captain Dugan made three attempts to reach the landing zone, but was forced off by enemy fire. After the third attempt, his aircraft was so badly damaged by hostile fire that he was forced to pilot it back to a secure area. After checking to insure that his crew members were unhurt, he acquired another aircraft and volunteered to make another attempt to reach the landing zone. As Captain Dugan made his final descent towards the firebase, his aircraft was hit by an enemy rocket propelled grenade, causing the aircraft to explode, and mortally wounding the entire crew. Captain Dugan's gallantry in 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.

**Action Date:** March 20, 1971

**Service:** Army

**Rank:** Captain

**Company:** Company B

**Battalion:** 101st Aviation Battalion (Assault Helicopter) (Ambulance)

**Division:** 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile)

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