

## JAMES REEVE HEIMBOLD

Class 1B-68

is honored on Panel 6W, Row 106 of  
the Vietnam Veterans Memorial

**Full Name:** JAMES REEVE HEIMBOLD  
**Wall Name:** JAMES R HEIMBOLD  
**Date of Birth:** 2/3/1943  
**Date of Casualty:** 12/4/1970  
**Home of Record:** SAN JOSE  
**County of Record:** SANTA CLARA COUNTY  
**State:** CA  
**Branch of Service:** ARMY  
**Rank:** CAPT  
**Casualty Country:** SOUTH VIETNAM  
**Casualty Province:** KHANH HOA



CPT Heimbold was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 17th Artillery, 41st Artillery Group. He was a passenger in an OH-58 Kiowa helicopter that was flying from Nha Trang to Ban Me Thuot and crashed into the side of a mountain in bad weather. All four men on board perished in the accident.

### Such a great and fun filled classmate

James was a classmate of mine at Arty OCS Class 1-68. He always had a great sense of humor and would always brighten up any situation. To this day I could still hear his infectious laugh. He was a warm and special friend to all.

Posted by: Robert L Bento  
Relationship: We served together  
September 26, 2003

### To my Captain

I'm so sad that you're gone. I remember the day you got notification that you wife gave birth to your son. You were so happy. You never lived to see or enjoy him.

Posted by: Dennis Proulx  
February 13, 2001

### A Fallen Comrade

Capt Heimbold died in a tragic helicopter crash and was assigned to the 2/17th FA. His sacrifice for his country will always be remembered by his fellow 17th Artillery vets.

Posted by: Jack Picciolo - April 25, 2003

## **Jim Heimbold – Duty, Honor, Country**

### **By Greg Kelly on November 1, 2011**

#### ***“Freedom isn’t Free”***

As we all keep Veterans’ Day in mind, I wanted to pay tribute to a Monmouth County soldier who sacrificed all for America.

It was over 40 years ago when Monmouth Beach native, Captain James Reeve Heimbold, was killed in action in the Vietnam War. A 1957 MB School graduate, Captain Heimbold died in a helicopter crash during a military mission on December 4, 1970. He was 27 years old and left a young wife, Yvonne, and 6-month-old daughter, Heather.

For those who don’t know the Heimbold family of Monmouth County—you should. They’ve done a lot of meaningful things for our community and the nation.

#### **A Worthy**

Each year since 1972 the MB School has presented an important community award to an 8th grade student—the Captain James R. Heimbold Memorial Award for citizenship. In fact, Jim’s class inspired the award, led by his devoted classmate, Bev Bradley McClave.

Jim Heimbold’s life was a meaningful one. The baseball field at Griffin Park in town was also dedicated in his honor in June 1970. A local boy, he graduated from RBC High School and attended Steven’s Institute of Technology.

His parents, Joseph and Jeanne, moved to Monmouth Beach in 1943 and raised their family on Monmouth Parkway. A marketing man supreme, Mr. Heimbold, Sr., literally helped put a “tiger in your tank” during the ground-breaking Exxon gas ad campaign in the 1970s. Jim also had a twin brother, Joseph, Jr. and a sister, Jeanne.

A career soldier, Captain Heimbold entered the US Army in 1966 and graduated as an outstanding trainee from the Officer Candidate School at the Army Artillery and Missile Center at Fort Sill. For his duties as a battery commander, Captain Heimbold was awarded the Bronze Star, US Army Commendation Medal, and a Purple Heart.

#### **Lives Touched**

“Jim was someone who never let you down,” said his older sister, Jeanne Boehles, a former teacher and borough resident who now presents the award during graduation exercises. “He was an extraordinary human being. Even to this day I miss him so very much. Citizenship was very important to Jim. I never saw him lose his temper with another person. So many people loved him and gravitated to him.”

Jeanne said that her brother would be very proud of his daughter, who is today a mother and teacher (and an Alaska resident). “She’s really a chip off the old block. A very strong and decent person,” Jeanne explained. “Jim left behind a fine legacy.”

His brother, Joseph, Jr., (a former borough school board member) also served with honor in the military, seeing combat action in Southeast Asia before his brother did. For the dangerous duties of a forward observer, Joe won the Silver Star and two Bronze Stars for valor.



**Capt. James R. Heimbold**

**James Reeve Heimbold** was born on February 3, 1943, and was a resident of Monmouth Beach, NJ. He graduated from Monmouth Beach Grammar School and Red Bank Catholic High School and attended the Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken.

Heimbold, a career officer, entered the US Army in 1966. He graduated as an outstanding officer trainee from the Officer Candidate School at the Army Artillery and Missile Center at Fort Sill, OK, where he was a battery commander.

He went to Vietnam in July 1970, while serving with the Sixth Battalion of the 14th Artillery as an artillery officer. He attained the rank of Captain (CAPT). Several weeks before his death, he was transferred to another unit. On December 4, 1970, he was killed in a helicopter crash in the Vietnamese Central Highlands while on a military mission.

He had been awarded the Bronze Star, the Army Commendation Medal and the Purple Heart.

In addition to his parents, Heimbold left behind a wife, Mrs. Yvonne Capps Heimbold, a five-month old daughter, Heather Marie Heimbold, a twin brother, Joseph L. Heimbold, Jr., and a sister, Miss Jeanne E. Heimbold.

Sources: Jeanne Boehles (sister) and NJVVMF.

*From www.flyarmy.org*

**Helicopter OH-58A 68-16803**

Information on U.S. Army helicopter OH-58A tail number 68-16803

The Army purchased this helicopter 0170

Total flight hours at this point: 00000426

Date: 12/04/1970

Incident number: 701204171ACD Accident case number: 701204171 Total loss or fatality Accident

Unit: 2S13 FA 23 ARTY

The station for this helicopter was Ban Me Thuot in South Vietnam

Number killed in accident = 4 . . Injured = 0. . Passengers = 3

costing 295102

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 WO1 BEHRENS PETER CLAUS KIA

**OB CPT HEIMBOLD JAMES REEVE KIA**

P CW2 MATTHEWS KERMIT LESLIE KIA

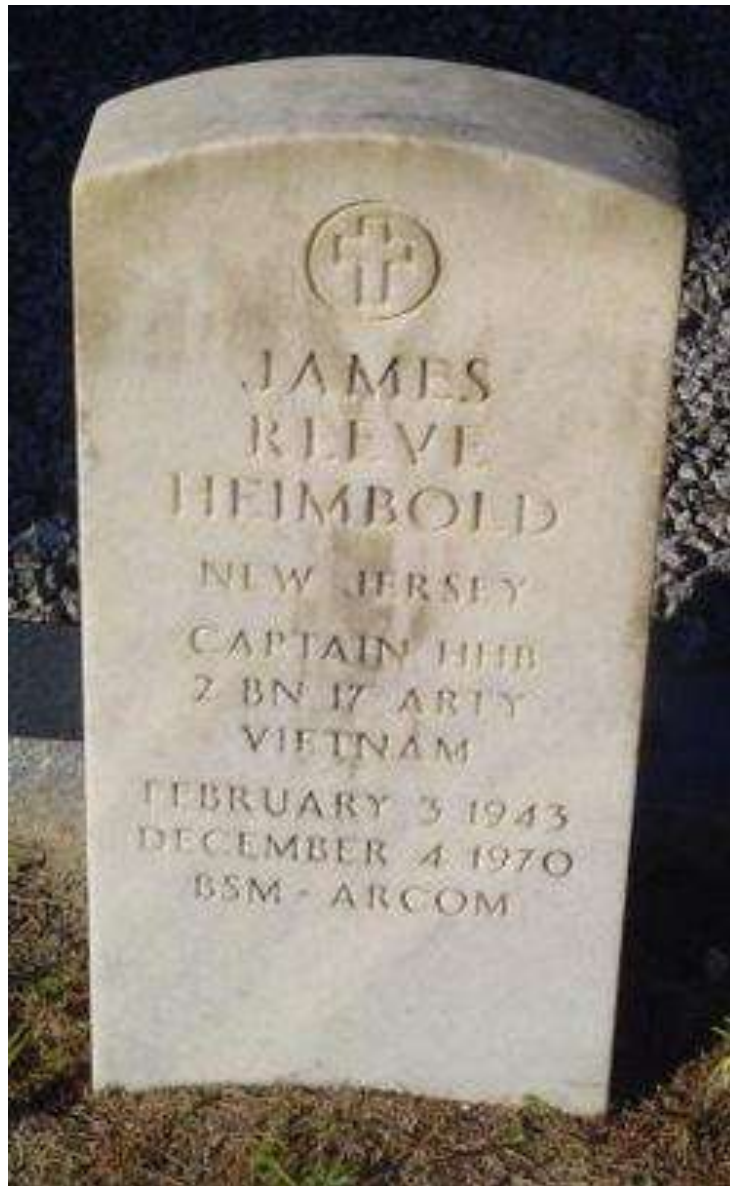
Passengers and/or other participants:

SGM MACHRISTIE ANDREW, AR, PX, KIA

Accident Summary:

Aircraft departed IFFV Artillery helipad, at Nha Trang, at approximately 14:09 hours (local) on 4 December 1970. After take-off the pilot proceeded via Highway 1 Ninh Hoa then via Highway 21 enroute to Ban Me Thuot through the Duc My Pass. The weather in the Duc My Pass had been marginal to IFR all day as reported by pilots of the 48th Assault Helicopter Company. From departure at Nha Trang till entering the Duc My Pass and subsequent crash, the pilot at no time used flight following or Artillery Advisory Services for weather PIREPS or artillery missions. The weather in the Duc My Pass just prior to the time of the accident was reported to be a ceiling of less than 100 feet and visibility of less than 1/4 of a mile with rain, haze, and clouds. Shortly after 1430 hours (local) on 4 December 1970 the aircraft was heard returning from the Ban Me Thuot area towards Ninh Hoa. At this time the aircraft could not be seen due to the poor weather conditions in the Pass. The exact location where the aircraft turned around could not be determined, however, with the time of flight and distance traveled at a probable airspeed indicated, the turnaround point was within 5 nautical miles of the impact area. Following the pilots decision to return, he was under IFR conditions, and at approximately 1435 hours, at a heading of approximately 035, an approximate altitude of 2400 feet and 200 meters left of Highway 21, the aircraft struck the side of the mountain.

At the point of impact the left skid contacted the ground first at approximately a 20 degree angle causing the aircraft to roll at which time the nose of the aircraft, left pilots area, and main rotor blade made contact with the ground. With the impact depth of aircraft components such as the left skid (two feet), the nose mounted radio apx-72 (14"), left pilots armor panel (1"), pilot tube (16") and main rotor blades (6) it can be seen that the aircraft was nose low and in a power on condition with 50-70 knots of airspeed. From this point the aircraft slid along the ground nose first cutting an arc which can be seen in enclosed photographs. Almost immediately following impact the power being applied by the tail rotor and the 'g' forces of impact caused the tail boom section to tear off moving to the right and forward, aft of the tail boom attaching points. The tail section came to rest approximately 30 feet away from the point of impact below the wreckage path, with only minor structural damage sustained upon ground contact. As the aircraft continued to slide across the ground, the underside of the aircraft and aircraft components were torn loose by the decelerating force. As can be seen by the wreckage diagram the aircraft maintained considerable momentum in a nose forward condition and a relatively straight line for approximately 150 feet. The decelerating forces were quite excessive as can be seen by the distribution of the wreckage parts and scattered human remains. At this point the forces of gravity and the reduction of forward speed caused the remaining portion of the aircraft to slide down the hill, at the same time the heavier nose portion with the displaced transmission and engine rotated downward and to the right so that the wreckage came to a halt 190 feet from the point of impact angled downhill and pointing approximately 120 degrees away from the direction of impact. At this time the fire which had initially started when the fuel cells ruptured on impact causing fuel to be sprayed over the major portion of the wreckage path, burnt itself out causing extensive damage to the aft passenger area and avionics compartment. Charring was noted on the tail boom, pieces of aircraft skin and surrounding ground area indicating an immediate fuel fire upon impact, however, no apparent fire damage was done to components which were mounted on the "I" beam above the passenger compartment. At the time of impact the Korean personnel located at an outpost just south of the road and approximately 1000 meters from the accident site, heard the aircraft impact. Unable to determine, due to the sounds heard, if an aircraft had crashed or a gunship was firing, delayed investigation for approximately 30 minutes. After this time a patrol was sent out to investigate and found an aircraft had crashed and that all persons on board were killed and the aircraft was destroyed. The bodies were taken down the ROK compound and later that evening an American Advisor transported the 4 bodies to the Province Headquarters where they were medevaced to Cam Ranh Bay on the morning of 5 December 1970. Due to the inclement weather conditions at the time of and following the accident, medical, recovery, and investigating personnel were unable to reach the site until the following morning.



**James is buried at Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery  
Wimauma, Hillsborough County, Florida**