

**is honored on Panel 40W, Row 70 of
the Vietnam Veterans Memorial**

Full Name: RONALD ALAN WOLTER
Wall Name: RONALD A WOLTER
Date of Birth: 3/17/1947
Date of Casualty: 10/31/1968
Home of Record: CARPENTERSVILLE
County of Record: KANE COUNTY
State: IL
Branch of Service: ARMY
Rank: 1LT
Casualty Country: SOUTH VIETNAM
Casualty Province: LONG AN



1LT Wolter was the pilot of a UH-1D helicopter from Troop A, 17th Cavalry conducting a "fire fly" mission. The aircraft involved was one of two flare ships, with two AH-1G Cobra escorts. The mission included dropping flares for illumination on radar sightings from ground surveillance radar. The normal flare load for this type of mission is 25 flares. 1LT Wolters aircraft had dropped six flares on target number one. The ground radar gave the mission commander another sighting and the flight of four proceeded to the area and prepared to make the second flare drop of the mission. As his aircraft was approaching the second target at approximately 1500 feet altitude the aircraft commander reported an emergency. A flare had gone off inside the ship. Eyewitnesses, in the other three aircraft, stated that they could see a fire inside the cabin. Others stated that the fire was hanging outside the right cabin door near the skid. The aircraft started to descend very slowly and the fire appeared to increase in intensity. At approximately 1000 feet altitude, there was an explosion in the aircraft. The aircraft then disintegrated and fell almost vertically to the ground. There were no survivors. It was his 13th day in Vietnam.

Ronald is buried at Elmwood Cemetery in Warren, Illinois

From www.flyarmy.org

WOLTER RONALD ALAN

Name: 1LT Ronald Alan Wolter

Status: Killed In Action from an incident on 10/31/1968 while performing the duty of Pilot.

Age at death: 21.6

Date of Birth: 03/17/1947

Home City: Carpentersville, IL

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

Unit: A/3/17 CAV

Major organization: 1st Aviation Brigade

Flight class: 68-512/68-20

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

The Wall location: 40W-070

Short Summary: Flare ignited inside aircraft at 1500 ft. on a Fire Fly mission. A/C explode at 1500 ft. 6 KIA Pate, Gheer, Bourne, Mesa, Lemus.

Aircraft: UH-1H tail number 66-16033

Service number: O5428374

Country: South Vietnam

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

Primary cause: Flare ignited

Major attributing cause: aircraft connected not at sea

Compliment cause: weapons

Vehicle involved: helicopter

Position in vehicle: pilot

Started Tour: 10/19/1968

"Official" listing: helicopter air casualty - pilot

Length of service: 02

Location: Long An Province III Corps.

Military grid coordinates of event: XS8962

Reason: aircraft lost or crashed

Casualty type: Hostile - killed

married male U.S. citizen

Race: Caucasian

Religion: Lutheran (Missouri Synod)

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 07/29/1994

Helicopter UH-1D 66-16033

Information on U.S. Army helicopter UH-1D tail number 66-16033

The Army purchased this helicopter 0267

Total flight hours at this point: 00000808

Date: 10/31/1968

Incident number: 681031131ACD Accident case number: 681031131 Total loss or fatality Accident

Unit: A/3/17 CAV

The station for this helicopter was Long Binh in South Vietnam

Number killed in accident = 6 . . Injured = 0. . Passengers = 2

costing 599354

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:

AC 1LT PATE MILTON DALE KIA

P 1LT WOLTER RONALD ALAN KIA

CE SP4 BOURNE LAWRENCE GILBERT KIA

G SP5 GHEER JAMES MELVIN KIA

PX PFC LEMUS CHARLES RUIZ JR KIA

Passengers and/or other participants:

SP4 MESA TOMAS REYES, AR, PX, KIA

Accident Summary:

The aircraft involved was one of two flare ships, with AH-1G escort, conducting a fire fly mission which included dropping flares for illumination on radar sightings from ground surveillance radar. The normal flare load for this type of mission is 25 flares. 1LT Pate's aircraft had dropped six (6) flares on target number one. The ground radar gave the mission commander another sighting in grid XS8962. The flight of four proceeded to the area and prepared to make the second flare drop of the mission. 1LT Pate's aircraft was approaching the second target for a flare drop at approximately 1500 feet altitude, when the aircraft commander, 1LT Pate, transmitted on the radio. He said, quote "we have an emergency, we have a flare off inside the ship, kick it out." eyewitnesses, in the other three aircraft, stated that they could see a fire inside the cabin. Others stated that the fire was hanging outside the right cabin door near the skid. The aircraft started to descend very slowly after the transmission and the fire appeared to increase in intensity. At approximately 1000 feet altitude, there was an explosion in the aircraft. It should be noted that the time lapse between the emergency transmission and the explosion was 45 seconds to 60 seconds. The aircraft then disintegrated and fell almost vertically to the ground. The wreckage was thrown over a wide area. Adverse conditions at the scene of the accident such as water and soft mud did not permit exact measurements between the fallen parts of the aircraft.

This record was last updated on 04/14/1999