

KIAs

SSgt Wissig and A1C Davis

USAF, 12th Security Police Squadron,

Command Detonated Mine!

by **Johnny T. (Tommy) Williams, SSgt,**

USAF 12 Security Police Squadron,

Intelligence Section

Phu Cat Air Base, 2/70 - 2/71: Phu Cat, RVN



12th Security Police Squadron
"The Fighting 12th"

The events surrounding the deaths of SSgt Wissig and A1C Davis were as follows:

SSgt Wissig and A1C Davis were a 2-man security team working the midnight shift at Phu Cat Air Base, South Vietnam, on the morning of February 12, 1971. As they were driving along one of the dirt paths that ran just outside the Northern perimeter of the base, their jeep crossed over a command detonation land mine. The mine exploded, blowing the vehicle into two pieces, just behind the driver and passenger. Both SSgt Wissig and A1C Davis sustained fatal wounds as a result of the explosion.

Despite the noise of the explosion, their unit was not determined to be missing for several hours. It was not unusual to hear unexplained explosions at night due to NVA and VC activity in the area surrounding the base.

When it was finally determined that their security unit was not responding to radio calls, a search team was formed and the vehicle and its occupants were ultimately located. SSgt Wissig and A1C Davis were transported to the Base hospital where they ultimately died of their wounds.

Mines were often "marked" by the enemy to indicate their location to other "friendly" troops in the area. After sunrise, during a subsequent search of the area for personal effects and other evidence, we found what is believed to be a marker approximately 150 meters from the mine's location. The marker, two bamboo shafts, was made from a section of bamboo cut and laid across the top of a hedge row, a safe distance from the area where the mine had been buried. The stick pointed directly towards the location of the mine and along a path frequently used by the Vietnamese children that cut wood and herded cattle in the area." Both shafts pointed directly toward the mine and were determined to be warning devices, telling others who used this path to avoid the area of the mine.

This area of the base perimeter was routinely used by young "cowboys" to graze their cattle. During our search of the area for remains, a young "cowboy" watched our activities with great interest. It seemed obvious to those of us that day that he at least knew what had happened. Whether he had been personally involved, we will never know.

I was on the search team that found the remains of the mine and other evidence of the type of device used. I also wrote a training outline to be used with future Security Police personnel to increase their awareness of land mine techniques.

I honor the lives of these 2 Security Police professionals who paid the ultimate price for peace in our world!SSgt Wissig and A1C Davis gave their lives in the defense of Phu Cat Air Base and the interests of the US Air Force in South Vietnam. Their deaths served to point out the deficiency in training for Security Police personnel in the identification of various NVA/VC booby trap and land mine techniques. This training might not have saved their lives. The evidence indicated the mine had been detonated by an individual who was lying in the bushes, waiting for someone to travel down that dirt path. However, had they known to be cautious of any area that appeared to have been disturbed or in which the dirt had been dug up and replaced, they might have taken a different path that night.

I honor the lives of these 2 Security Police professionals who paid the ultimate price for peace in our world!

Johnny T. (Tommy) Williams, SSgt, USAF
12 Security Police Squadron, Intelligence Section
Phu Cat Air Base - 2/70 - 2/71

Official Information

Purple Heart, Posthumously

WISSIG, EDWARD SIMON

SSgt - Air Force - Regular
39 year old Married, Caucasian, Male
Born on 05/24/31
From LAKE RONKONKOMA, NEW YORK
His tour of duty began on 07/31/70
Casualty was on 02/12/71
in BINH DINH, SOUTH VIETNAM
HOSTILE, GROUND CASUALTY OTHER
EXPLOSIVE DEVICE
Body was recovered
Religion - ROMAN CATHOLIC
Panel 05W - Line 100

Purple Heart, Posthumously

AARON DAVIS JR

A1C - Air Force - Regular
21 year old Married, Negro, Male Born on
Oct 04 1949
From ROCHESTER, NEW YORK
His tour of duty began on May 16 1970
Casualty was on Feb 12 1971
in BINH DINH, SOUTH VIETNAM HOSTILE,
GROUND CASUALTY OTHER
EXPLOSIVE DEVICE
Body was recovered
Panel 05W - Line 98

Email: June 9, 2017

From: Lynus Rankins (lynus.rankins@gmail.com) wrote:

Don, Was there with 821st Combat Security Police(Air FORCE RANGERS) which patrolled and set up in those areas. Very,very sad night as I remember it. With all of the ammo (60cal., 40mm and the SAT members having web belts filled with M-16 ammunition as well, it's miracle we found anything of the explosion. Sad day....

Sgt. Rankins,
lynus.rankins@gmail.com

We

Click to Report BROKEN LINKS or Photos, or Comment