

*Vietnam Security Police Association*  
**A1C JAMES STANLEY CLOSSON**

**1947-1968**

**366th Security Police Squadron,  
China Beach, Đà Nẵng, Vietnam**  
by **Willingham, William E.**, MSgt (Ret)



My name is Bill Willingham, and I was assigned to the 366th Combat Security Police Squadron, Đà Nẵng AB, from June 1968 to March 1970 (22 months). I retired from the Air Force as a MSgt career cop. I worked as a peace officer here in Washington State, and now work for the Boeing CO as a Security Officer.

I just read George Adaza's letter about A1C James Closson's being lost in the South China Sea. I was friends with both James and George, and we lived in the same hutch (third from the end). I will never forget that day as long as I live. *It hurt me deeply.*

We were at China Beach, near Đà Nẵng Air Base, for a Flight Cookout. I was in the water with James and a couple of other guys, playing around. The water began to get rough and large waves began to roll in. At that time I told James and a couple of other guys that we should get out of the water. But all of a sudden we saw a big wave coming in and decided to ride it in to the beach. When the wave got to us we all started swimming like hell for the beach. After a while, I was able to stand up in the waist-deep water. When I looked around I saw Joe and the other guy, but did not see James. We started yelling his name but could not find him.

At that time, the other Flight members hit the water swimming out and looking for James. A couple of guys tried to launch a row boat, but the sea and waves were too rough and the boat kept rolling over.

After a long search, our Flight Sergeant told everyone to get out of the water and on the beach. Some of us were crying, and I remember TSgt Dilly having tears in his eyes. We were told to pack up and get back to the Squadron area. When we left, we all felt like crap. All the Flight members hurt for a long time after this, and I have never forgotten James...

*... I can still remember his face.*



**You Tube: Videos of China Beach:**

**China Beach, Đà Nẵng, Vietnam - Dec. 05 (Red Flag)**  
**China Beach, Đà Nẵng, Vietnam - Calm and Beautiful**

## **CLOSSON, JAMES STANLEY**

**A1C - Air Force - Regular**

**21 year old Single, Caucasian, Male**

**Born on Sep 21, 1947**

**From SARATOGA SPRINGS, NEW YORK**

**366th SPS, Đà Nẵng AB**

**Length of service 1 year.**

**His tour of duty began on Jul 13, 1968**

**Casualty was on Jan 12, 1969**

**in QUANG NAM, SOUTH VIETNAM**

**Non Hostile, GROUND CASUALTY**

**DROWNED, SUFFOCATED**

**Body was recovered**

**Panel 35W - Line 75**

*Circumstances: Died of accidental drowning  
while swimming at China Beach with some friends.*

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