

Kopp, Daniel J., Amn

45th Missile Security Squadron (45 MSS)

Minuteman Missile site "Juliet 6"

Ellsworth AFB, SD

8 Mar 1983

by Bret S. Whitmore,
formerly TSgt, USAF

© 2010

From: Bret & Cindy Whitmore [mailto:bretandcindy@rap.midco.net]
Sent: Friday, February 19, 2010 4:34 PM
To: DonPoss-LM37@vspa.com
Subject: VSPA: Memorial of AP/SP KIA or Line of Duty

Dear Sir--

This is an outstanding website and fitting tribute to these brave members of the Air Police/Security Police/Security Forces profession.

I too am a proud former USAF Security Policeman (Security Specialist) having been assigned to the 45th Missile Security Squadron, part of the 44th Security Police Group, under the 44th Strategic Missile Wing (Strategic Air Command) at Ellsworth AFB, SD from 1982 thru 1984.

I would like to make one minor correction to one entry you have listed for a fallen friend of mine. Under the heading: "WORLD WIDE, Known Non-Combat Deaths, in the Line of Duty, since 1956" under the name "Kopp, Daniel J., Amn" all the data you have listed for him is correct except for his squadron. At the time of his death he was assigned to the 45th Missile Security Squadron (**45 MSS**). I was senior to him and was his ICBM security OJT trainer. Just prior to the accident that claimed his life I was promoted to acting NCOIC and Scheduler/Dispatcher who actually assigned him to this unfortunately fatal trip. It was especially ironic because the man who shot him was his best friend and roommate. This incident involved the worst type of accident: a pure absent-minded weapon clearing accident which occurred on the remote Minuteman Missile site "Juliet 6". There was no altercation between the two men. Kopp's partner was simply tired and without thinking, went through the motions of clearing and dry-firing his weapon on-site (which even had nothing happened, was **completely** against the regulations), but to make matters worse, he forgot to remove the magazine. One errant move changed both men's lives forever. Even as the squadron dispatcher at the time, and nearly 100 miles away from the accident site when it occurred, it has still taken me years to stop blaming myself for having been the one who scheduled them for that day's duty.

Again, you are to be commended for all your hard work on this fine site. I have forwarded it to all my former SP buddies.

Bret S. Whitmore

formerly TSgt, USAF

formerly assigned to SCAT Flight, 45th Missile Squadron, (44th Security Police Group), Ellsworth AFB, (SAC).

I was also USAF Historian Specialist/Technician assigned to Ellsworth AFB 1984-1986, and 1993-1996.

Questions(?): lotsawurdz@rap.midco.net

We Take Care of Our Own

[Click to Report BROKEN LINKS or Photos, or Comment](#)