

KENNETH LOREN FOUNTAIN

Class 40A-67

KENNETH LOREN FOUNTAIN
is honored on Panel 35W, Row 34 of
the Vietnam Veterans Memorial

Full Name: KENNETH LOREN FOUNTAIN
Wall Name: KENNETH L FOUNTAIN
Date of Birth: 8/17/1947
Date of Casualty: 1/4/1969
Home of Record: SAVANNAH
County of Record: CHATHAM COUNTY
State: GA
Branch of Service: ARMY
Rank: 1LT
Casualty Country: SOUTH VIETNAM
Casualty Province: THUA THIEN



1LT Fountain served with Battery A, 377th Artillery (Aviation), 101st Airborne Division. According to official documents: The OH-6A Cayuse helicopter that he was flying crashed and burned while relocating at night with low ceilings at Fire Support Base T-Bone. While hovering the aircraft from a lower pad which was outside the normal perimeter to an upper pad (100 feet in elevation higher), the aircraft entered clouds and pilot experienced vertigo, crashing 37' below the landing area.

My Friend

Kenny and I were classmates in OCS. In addition we shared an apartment in Lawton, OK after we graduated. He was my friend and buddy. I have thought of him often over the years and still miss him to this day.

Posted by: Ron Hildreth
Relationship: We served together
December 11, 2005

From www.flyarmy.org

FOUNTAIN KENNETH LOREN

Name: 1LT Kenneth Loren Fountain

Status: Killed In Action from an incident on 01/04/1969 while performing the duty of Pilot.

Age at death: 21.4

Date of Birth: 08/17/1947

Home City: Savannah, GA

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

Unit: A/377 ART 101 ABN

Major organization: 101st Airborne Division

Flight class: 68-516/68-28

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

The Wall location: 35W-034

Short Summary: Crashed and burned while relocating OH-6A at night at an artillery fire support base under orders.

Aircraft: OH-6A tail number 67-16363

Service number: O5430358

Country: South Vietnam

MOS: 1193 = 11 Field Artillery Unit Commander

Primary cause: A/C Accident

Major attributing cause: aircraft connected not at sea

Compliment cause: fire or burns

Vehicle involved: helicopter

Position in vehicle: pilot

Started Tour: 12/04/1968

"Official" listing: helicopter air casualty - pilot

Length of service: 02

Location: Thua Thien Province I Corps.

Reason: aircraft lost or crashed

Casualty type: Non-hostile - died of other causes

single male U.S. citizen

Race: Caucasian

Religion: Baptist - other groups

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 07/29/1995

Helicopter OH-6A 67-16363

Information on U.S. Army helicopter OH-6A tail number 67-16363

The Army purchased this helicopter 0968

Total flight hours at this point: 00000145

Date: 01/04/1969

Incident number: 690104131ACD Accident case number: 690104131 Total loss or fatality Accident

Unit: A/377 ARTY

The station for this helicopter was Phu Bai in South Vietnam

Number killed in accident = 2 . . Injured = 0. . Passengers = 1

costing 247969

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 1LT FOUNTAIN KENNETH LOREN KIA

Passengers and/or other participants:

PFC WESSEL STEVEN ARTHUR, AR, PX, KIA

Accident Summary:

At 1230 hours, 4 January 1969, OH-6A 67-16363 departed the helipad located at "D" Btry, 377 Arty AVN operations. The aircraft was dispatched in support of 1st Bn, 321st Artillery. The pilot flew for two hours within the area of operations terminating at fire support base "T" Bone at approximately 1630 hours. After landing, the pilot contacted his aviation operations via GIA LE radio and stated that he had landed at fire base "T" Bone and was unable to return to camp eagle due to bad weather. Pilot was advised to remain overnight at his present location if the weather did not improve by 1830 hours. At 1830 hours, pilot made the decision to remain overnight.

Between the hours of 1830 and 1845, pilot was advised by personnel at fire base "T" Bone that the aircraft was outside the established perimeter. Pilot stated that he would move the aircraft from the "lower pad" to the "upper" or "VIP pad" which was within the perimeter. Pilot started aircraft at approximately 1900 hours and established communication with personnel located on the "upper pad". Strobe lights were set up in the shape of a "T" to provide a landing area on the "upper pad". Pilot then proceeded to hover up the incline of the hill. Relocation required moving the aircraft a distance of approximately 135 meters along a heading of 040 degrees. The route of flight was along an obstacle covered incline of 25 to 30 degrees. The take-off point was situated at an elevation of approximately 875 feet. The intended landing area was at 975 feet or approximately 100 feet above the take-off point. Pilot maneuvered the aircraft to the "upper pad" and terminated at a high hover (25 to 30 feet) over the pad. Ground personnel inquired via radio if pilot had the strobe light in sight. Pilot then executed

forward flight and disappeared from sight of the ground personnel after aircraft had traveled 50-75 feet. Pilot obviously lost visual contact with the ground, but was able to maintain very limited visual contact with the base camp lights and the strobe lights located on the "upper pad".

The board concluded that pilot utilized the existing camp lights as his only ground reference in executing a 360 degree right turn to align the aircraft on an approach heading of approximately 040 degrees. Aircraft was next observed by personnel on the "upper pad" approximately 3-5 seconds before impact. Aircraft impacted 37 feet below the landing area. Aircraft was in a left crab, nose low, and airspeed was in excess of "normal approach" speed. Attitude of aircraft and distance of impact from landing area indicate that pilot experienced vertigo. Front portion of right skid made initial contact with the ground, aircraft rolled onto its right side and impacted approximately 14 feet from initial contact with ground. Explosion and burning occurred immediately after impact. Ground personnel were unable to approach the burning wreckage due to the intensity of the heat generated by the fire. Aircraft burned for approximately thirty-five minutes before final flames were extinguished by ground personnel.

This record was last updated on 09/20/1998