

DOUGLAS DRUE GAYLORD**Class 5-67**

is honored on Panel 29W, Row 53 of
the Vietnam Veterans Memorial

Full Name: DOUGLAS DRUE GAYLORD
Wall Name: DOUGLAS D GAYLORD
Date of Birth: 10/19/1946
Date of Casualty: 3/16/1969
Home of Record: ST PETERS
County of Record: ST. CHARLES COUNTY
State: MO
Branch of Service: ARMY
Rank: CAPT
Casualty Country: SOUTH VIETNAM
Casualty Province: DINH TUONG



CPT Gaylord served with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 9th Division Artillery, 9th Infantry Division. He was killed in action during a night-time artillery spotting mission near Dong Tam in the Mekong Delta. The O-1 Birddog that he was riding in was brought down, killing him and the pilot.

I served as part of ground crew

I served with Capt. Gaylord at Dong Tam, in the Mekong Delta, as part of ground crew for O1 birddogs. I was TDY with the 184th Recon, while he was an aerial observer with the 9th Division Artillery. There was an article in the 9th Division magazine (OLD Reliable) about him. They referred to him as the "Blue Baron" due to his professionalism. The night he died, he was flying the eagle watch mission (12 midnight to 4 am) watching for mortar flashes. Dong Tam was a frequent candidate for nighttime mortar attacks. The perimeter guard saw the aircraft go down at about 4 am. He was on his third tour when he was killed in action.

Posted by: Terry Durkin
Relationship: We served together
July 9, 2003

Memorial Day 2008

I was with you in Nam. I remember talking with you about your daughter and working with you day to day. You were the ultimate professional and I looked forward to what you could teach me. You still live in my memory.

Rest in peace, brother.

Posted by: David Linton

Relationship: A fellow air observer

May 26, 2008

From thewall-usa.com

A True Warrior

I first met him on the radios. I was FDC for C Btry, 1st Bn, 11th Arty, and 9th Inf Division in 69. We worked well together as he was our AO. His dedication to the missions always seemed to overshadow his regard for his own safety. He was the first one to make me feel comfortable on the radios and so I told him the next time that he stopped into Dong Tam he should stop by as I wanted to meet him. He went by the name of "The Blue Baron." I was surprised to see this young 1st Lt. blonde headed like me. He was on his fifth tour and I asked him why he kept coming back, "Well, the wife and I don't get along any longer and the pay is good. And I really like what I do," he said. He'd already crashed one aircraft. I believe he told me it was a Loach. Somewhere in the middle of March 1969 we were running a rather long fire mission one night. He just didn't give up. The grunts on the ground meant a lot to him. As we ended the fire mission he told me "Well, looks like I'm not going to make it this time. I asked him why and he told me he didn't have enough fuel to make it back. I wished him Good luck. The next morning I checked on him. I was told that he didn't make it. Somewhere there are a lot of men who owe their lives to this man. It was my honor and a pleasure to know him.

Dan Mauldin

Friend

404 Woodruff Cr 656

McCrary, Arkansas 72101

July 11, 2000

Doug Gaylord was one of those perpetually happy & enthusiastic guys that everybody loves. He looked like a young Clark Gable, talked constantly about his daughter and came back from every R&R with gifts for his whole family (Aunts, uncles and cousins). He had a scar on his right forearm, and he would laughingly tell the story about how he once called in a close fire mission, and when it was on target he started cheering and punched his arm into the air, catching frags from his own rounds. We were having a St. Patrick's Day party the night of the 16th when Doug left to fly cover in one of our birddogs as an AO. They made it back to Dong Tam but may have been out of fuel. They hit a banana tree, flipped and crashed on landing. It was a hard loss for all of us. My private memory came in a difficult way. As XO of Headquarters Battery I had to go through, inventory, pack up and send home the personal effects of the guys we lost. I often got to know the secrets and very personal side of these men. When I cleaned out Doug's room, in the bottom of his locker I found work books partially completed for courses in English, Math & other subjects which Doug had worked on in private. This good looking, swaggering, cheerful war hero had his head on straight. It was my great pleasure to know and serve with him.

Jerry Finnigan
same unit
40 Gavin Street
Yonkers, NY 10701 USA
April 06, 2003

From the 9th Infantry Division The Old Reliable Magazine

“Blue Baron” calls in close artillery support from air

DONG TAM — He's called “The Blue Baron” and the “Flying Ace”. And in artillery fire direction centers throughout the Mekong Delta, he has quite a reputation, the mention of his call sign bringing on an avalanche of comment.

First Lieutenant Douglas Gaylord, of St. Louis, Mo., has been adjusting fire for the 1st Battalion, 11th Artillery units in the 9th Division for 14 months and has quite a distinguished record, which all but matches his reputation.

He has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, Air Medal and Army Commendation Medal, the latter three with “V” devices for valor, and he is praised for the cool manner while in action.

“It's nice to see who you're working with. It makes things a little more personal and it makes it easier to work with them,” Gaylord explained.

Adjusting more than one battery presents quite a problem, but Gaylord rates as his hardest task the adjusting of fire in the middle of a black night for a unit in contact. “It's really scary I know if I mess up, I'm going

to kill many of the wrong people.

But it's really a great feeling of satisfaction being able to help those people on the ground when all the rounds are on target.”

Although his aircraft is above the fighting, Gaylord is certainly not out of the action. Once, his chopper took a round through the engine and was forced to land out in the open. Another time, his “Bird Dog” crash-landed while returning to Dong Tam. “I guess I've taken about 200 hits,” said the war veteran.

Despite the hits and the close calls, the “Blue Baron” is still flying high, bringing smiles to the faces of the FDC people and misery to the enemy.