

**is honored on Panel 18E, Row 53 of  
the Vietnam Veterans Memorial**

**Full Name: WILLIAM EDWARD LAWSON JR**  
**Wall Name: WILLIAM E LAWSON JR**  
**Date of Birth: 12/1/1938**  
**Date of Casualty: 4/20/1967**  
**Date of Death: 4/20/1967**  
**Home of Record: ROYAL OAK**  
**State: MI**  
**Branch of Service: ARMY**  
**Rank: 1LT**  
**Casualty Country: SOUTH VIETNAM**  
**Casualty Province: PLEIKU**



1LT Lawson served with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 4th Battalion, 42nd Artillery, 4th Infantry Division. He was attached to the 3rd ARVN Cavalry as a Forward Observer on an operation in the Ia Drang Valley and was killed when his tank was hit by a rocket propelled grenade (RPG).

#### **A TRIBUTE TO A FALLEN OCS COMRAD AND FRIEND**

BILL, HERE I AM AT FT SILL OKLAHOMA WHERE WE ALL WERE BAPTISED FIELD ARTILLERY AND MEMBERS OF THE OFFICER'S CORPS. I CAN STILL SEE YOUR DEVILISH GRIN TURNING INTO A BIG SMILE AS YOU WOULD GREET OLD FRIENDS. "MAGIC BILL" WE USE TO CALL YOU BECAUSE YOU COULD ALWAYS COME UP WITH AN EASIER WAY TO DO A SWEAT DETAIL AT OCS. I REMEMBER IN VIET NAM WHEN YOU SENT OUT THE DONUT DOLLY TO MY FIRE SUPPORT BASE ON MY BIRTHDAY. SHE BROUGHT A BIG CAKE AND ICE CREAM (A REAL TREAT) AND SHE ENTERTAINED ALL THE TROOPS TOO. THEY REALLY THOUGHT I WAS SOMEBODY TO RATE SUCH A BIRTHDAY. I REMEMBER HEARING THE MORTOR ROUNDS AND THE ARTILLERY ROUNDS WHEN YOU FOUGHT YOUR LAST BATTLE 14 CLICKS SOUTH OF OUR LOCATION. I HEARD YOUR LAST FIRE MISSION AND CRIED WHEN ALL WENT SILENT. WE RUSHED TO YOUR LOCATION IN THE EARLY MORNING BUT YOU AND YOUR BRAVE COMRADS WERE ALL DEAD. I HELPED ID YOU AND MY FORMER BRAVE RECON SGT AND CRIED MORE. I FINALLY VISITED THE WALL AND TOUCHED YOUR NAME AND ALL THESE MEMORIES FLOWED THROUGH ME. REST WELL.YOU AND YOUR BRAVE DEEDS ARE NOT FORGOTTEN NOR IS YOUR SACRIFICE.

YOUR CLASSMATE OF 3-66 FA OCS

MAJ RET ROBERT T FLOCKOI, RADIO CALL SIGN "SNAGGLE TOOTH"

## Remembered by School Groups

Bill Lawson was my OCS classmate and fellow member of the 4th ID at Ft. Lewis and Vietnam. He was a funny guy in OCS who cracked up the other members of our platoon in Artillery OCS Class 3-66 at Fort Sill. We were together from Sept. 1965 to Feb. 1966. I think his wife used to bring his polished boots and brass to him after dark in the OCS back parking lot, that's because he was a former NCO who knew how to make the system work! He was a great teacher to the majority of us in OCS who hadn't been in the Army very long. I saw him in his quarters at Ft. Lewis. I think he had two young children who he loved very much. In Vietnam he was sent on a temporary patrol in the Ia Drang valley with the ARVN Cav. I was supposed to replace him two days before the end of the patrol, but he elected to stay the last couple of days with the patrol because he knew the terrain and the troops. The second to last day of the patrol he was killed in an ambush. It was a loss felt throughout the division headquarters. I tell his story to high school classes I teach as they learn about Vietnam. I cry every time. I take student groups to Washington every spring. When we approach The Wall I stand on a park bench and tell them about Bill Lawson. Many of them have taken rubbings of his name. His dedication and selfless service are remembered by hundreds of American school children every year and Bill Lawson is a soldier who means patriotism and devotion to them.

Posted by: Dean Phillips

Relationship: OCS Class & 4th ID comrade

March 2, 2002

