

DAVID PATRICK SULLIVAN

Class 1B-68

**is honored on Panel 45W, Row 39 of
the Vietnam Veterans Memorial**

Full Name: DAVID PATRICK SULLIVAN
Wall Name: DAVID P SULLIVAN
Date of Birth: 6/4/1944
Date of Casualty: 9/4/1968
Home of Record: MISSOULA
County of Record: MISSOULA COUNTY
State: MT
Branch of Service: ARMY
Rank: 2LT
Casualty Country: SOUTH VIETNAM
Casualty Province: QUANG TRI



2LT Sullivan was killed in action while serving with Battery B, 5th Battalion, 4th Artillery, 5th Mechanized Infantry Division.

David is buried at St Mary's Cemetery in Missoula, Montana

You are a fallen hero ...

As you rest in heaven, please be assured that all of us earthly soles truly appreciate your sacrifice. May God continue to bless you and your family.

Posted by: Al Davis, Class 3-68A
Relationship: We served together
January 19, 2005

From the wall-usa.com

Classmate
We went through Artillery OCS together. He was a Warrior and a friend.
Len Griffin
Classmate
Cleveland GA
Dec 9, 2009

MY L.T.

DAVID was a good man, leader and friend. I know he rests in peace now. We were so young, proud and sure we were doing the correct thing (saving the world). NO greater praise can be given than to say with pride he was MY LT.

Bob Rader
R.T.O.
502 Lakeview Dr
Dalton, GA 30720
April 12, 2000

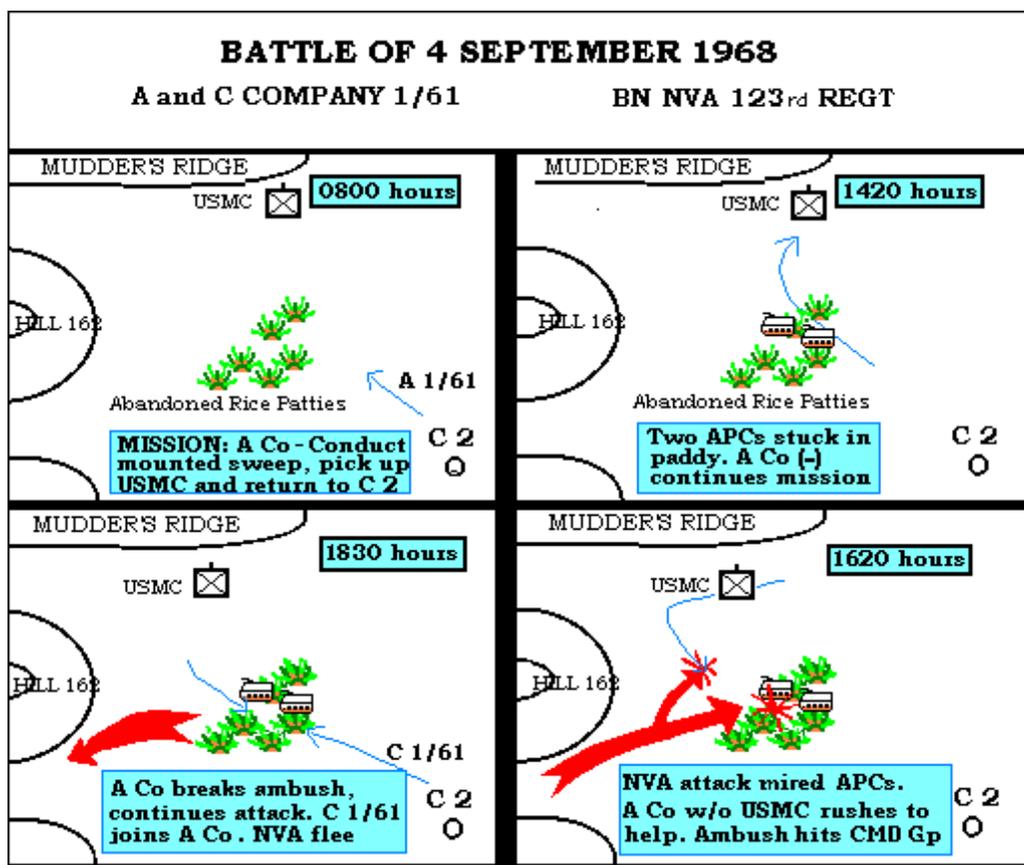
I had the honor of serving with David Sullivan for six months before the 5th Bn 4th Artillery was deployed for Viet Nam. He knew how to make the most out of life, with a ready smile and quick wit. The magnitude of losing him really hit home when his family arrived for a ceremony dedicating an artillery piece in his memory. He was an only son, surrounded by beautiful sisters and wonderful parents. He touched the lives of many with his professional, but compassionate attitude. May he rest in peace.

Neil Esson
Fellow soldier
1820 E Iowa Ave
Nampa, ID 83686
May 28, 2006



Special Thanks To Col. Jack The Webmaster At The Unofficial 1/61st Site For The Making Of The Maps and the Battle Map of 4 Sept. 68.

A sketch map overview of the sequence of events on 4 September 1968. While there were 4 American soldiers killed there were 23 NVA bodies left on the battle field



Extracts from the radio logs kept by the BDE and BN HDQ are presented below the sketch map.

0845 hours

A 1/61 moved out at 0645, is now at 065650, pick up point for M/3/9 (MIKE Company, 3rd BN, 9th REGT, 3rd DIV, USMC)

1140 hours

M/3/9 is located at 058653. Sighted an active Arty position at 034683, A 1/61 is located 500-700m south of M/3/9.

1205 hours

Have A 1/61 link up with M/3/9. Be prepared for A 1/61 to stay out. Tentatively M/3/9 is scheduled to be extracted at 1400. In either case select a night defensive for A 1/61 and M/3/9

1335 hours

M/3/9 Marines spotted 6 NVA in open moving to SW direction carrying packs could not determine if they were carrying weapons due to lack of visibility.

1550 hours

From Commander A 1/61, M/3/9 and A 1/61 have linked up and returning, one of their security elements is in contact, will keep you informed. Location of contact is YDO58647. A 1/61 has dropped M/3/9 and going to the relief of that platoon at 060668.

1630 hours

From Co A 1/61, A 1/61 is in heavy contact at YDO63640. Receiving RPG rounds, need a Medevac. CO A 1/61 is hit, the VC are trying to capture the APC that CO A 1/61 and FO are in.

1715 hours

From 1/11, A/161 needs two more Medevacs immediately.

1725 hours

From A1/61, M/3/9 receiving much Arty fire. Casualties 3 KIA, 27 WIA to include CO. Need two Medevacs.

1755 hours

M/3/9 sighted 18 VC moving west at 080650.

1845 hours

A 1/61 Have 60 mm incoming.

1815 hours

A Co 1/61 in contact approx 1600 hr at 058646, contact continues, RPG's used, also enemy Arty at 1715 hrs on A Co position. Evac WIA, leaguer and reinforce A 1/61 with C 1/61 Co C enroute now. Casualties (Cumulative) FR KIA 2 FR WIA 25, IN KIA 9, IN WIA 0

1915 hours

From CO 1/61 to TOC, M/3/9 is located at YDO075662. I have given him orders to hold where he is.

1918 hours

From CO 1/61 to TOC. Request to know condition of CO A/1/61 and his FO's as soon as you can find out.

1928 hours

A and C 1/61 are in position and are towing disabled vehicles into their leaguers.

1932 hours

From A 1/61 reports 38 NVA approaching from the west.

2125 hours

From S-3 A 1/61, If you prepare LZ at A and C Co location we will send Medevac while there is a break in weather.

2140 hours

From XO 1st Bde to TOC for CO 1/61 CO A 1/61 was just going into surgery. They are worried about his arm. FO was sent to Da Nang. No word of RTO yet.

2246 hours

From A 1/61 Medevac lifted off at 2246 hours. Surgeon stayed on ground. Location of A and C at YDO70635.

OPERATION SUMMARY:

A Co 1/61 moved west along the KW grid line 65 to effect link up with M/3/9 Marines. Link up was effected with M/3/9 with one platoon of A Co at 1550 hrs, About the same time another platoon of A 1/61 made enemy contact at YD 058647. A Co dropped M/3/9 and went to relief of the platoon. Heavy contact developed with the enemy, mortar, RPG and Arty employed by the enemy. Friendly losses thus far 3 KIA, 27 WIA. Enemy 9 KIA. Contact continued past 1900 hr.



From the 5th Bn, 4th Arty, 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division
VIETNAM RED DEVILS Site

Dedicated
To The Memory Of 2Lt Sullivan

The Training and Commission

David P. Sullivan was commissioned an Army second lieutenant upon graduation from the Officer Candidate School at the Army Artillery and Missile Center, Ft. Sill, Oklahoma on December 12, 1967.

Gunnery was the primary subject taught during the 23-week course, designed to prepare men for officer duties in artillery units. He was also trained in artillery survey and transport, communications, map and aerial photo reading, electronics, counterinsurgency and leadership.

The Last Mission

The following information was provided by Lt. Col. James H. Ashhurst III, Artillery, 5th Battalion. This was in a letter sent to his father, dated 15 November 1968.

Dear Dean Sullivan:

Please excuse the delay in answering your 10 October letter to Captain Kludt. After reading your letter I wanted to take the time to visit the 1st Battalion 61st Infantry and gather the answers to your questions personally.

Dave was a fine, young officer who enjoyed the admiration and respect of superiors, peers and subordinates of both the Artillery and the Infantry. He enjoyed his duties as a forward observer and was well received by the personnel of Company A. He often stated that he preferred duty with his infantry company to a firing battery assignment. Captain Vernon, an unusually mature and experienced Company Commander serving his second tour in Vietnam, often praised Dave's ability as his forward observer. Again, we of the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division share your tragic loss.

On the morning of 4 September, Company A had the mission of sweeping the area to the west of their base of operations known as fire base C-2, to an area west of Con Thien, link-up with the marine infantry company and transport the marines back to C-2 on Company A's armored personnel carriers (APC's). It was raining, visibility was poor and trafficability of the terrain deteriorated as the rain continued. During the sweep two APC's became stuck in the mud and could not be immediately extracted.

Captain Vernon left a portion of his force to secure the immobilized tracks and continued with his mission. They located the marine unit at about 2:40 PM, loaded them on and into the APC's and began the return trip to the site of the downed tracks. While enroute, Captain Vernon received a radio message that his people with the downed tracks had been ambushed and were under heavy enemy small arms fire. Captain Vernon dismounted the marines from his tracks and rushed to the aid of his people. Captain Vernon, Dave and three soldiers manned the leading command track. At approximately 4:20 PM as the APC's were closing on the ambush location, Dave spotted the first North Vietnamese soldiers and started to call for artillery fire on their position. Almost immediately the command track was hit at the top right side by an RPG (rocket propelled grenade). This shot wounded both Dave and Captain Vernon. The track driver turned the vehicle in an attempt to avoid further direct fire, but a second RPG hit the track in the tailgate, went completely through the vehicle and exploded in the engine compartment. This shot wounded all the remaining crew of the command track and immobilized the vehicle. The other APC's closed around the command track and engaged the enemy with small arms, machine guns and 81mm mortars. More than 20 RPG's were fired by the enemy with 6 scoring hits on APC's. As soon as the fury of the initial contact subsided, Dave and the other wounded were recovered from the APC's and evacuated by helicopter. In spite of continuing ground fire and poor visibility, it was getting dark and the rain was increasing, the helicopter evacuation was quickly executed. Flight time from the scene of the battle to the hospital at Quang Tri was on the order of 10 minutes.

Dave was wounded in the right shoulder, right side of the neck and right temple area of the head. He never regained consciousness from the time he was removed from the APC until he died. Father Kras, the Brigade's Catholic Chaplain administered the Last Rites, and remained with Dave until he was evacuated to DaNang.

Meanwhile, Company C, 1st Battalion 61st Infantry had been dispatched from C-2 to reinforce Company A at the scene of the fighting. Company C left C-2 about 4:30 PM and linked-up with Company A about two hours later. By that time the fighting had subsided and the two companies took up defensive positions on Hill 162 for the night. They returned to C-2 the following day without further incident. The enemy force was estimated to be a North Vietnamese Company reinforced with at least 20 RPG rocket launchers. Twenty-three enemy soldiers were killed in the engagement. I have enclosed a map of the area and have marked the locations I mentioned above.

I hope the additional details I have been able to gather will help to complete your understanding of the circumstances surrounding your son's death. If I may be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

James H. Ashhurst III
LTC, Artillery
Commanding

Knife Shows Up After 31 Years



This knife was handmade by an old knife maker in Bosman, Montana. David got the knife in 1968 while home on leave, and brought it with him to Ft. Carson and then to Vietnam. It was never used for its intended purpose of self-defense in close combat.

When David was KIA (Sept 4, 1968), Tommy Dorris removed it from his body with plans to send back to the states to David's father. Unfortunately, Tommy only had the knife for 5 days when he himself was shot (Sept 9, 1968) and medvaced out. Everything was taken from Tommy at the hospital, and the knife was lost.

David's father wrote the Commander of 5/4th Arty and also went to the Commander of the 1/61st Inf. A congressman was perhaps involved in the 2 month long investigation into the whereabouts of the knife. It is unknown where exactly the knife was finally found. It was returned to David's father (Nov, 1968) in Montana two months after it was lost.

Just recently Mr. Sullivan mailed the knife to Tommy. It was 31 years and 1 month since Tommy had seen it. A proud symbol of a strong friendship shared many years ago, and a bonding for life.



Tommy Dorris, Mr. Sullivan (David's Father) and Bob Rader

From the Rocky Mountain Museum of Military History

LT David Sullivan, U.S. Army, Second Lieutenant David P. Sullivan, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Sullivan of Missoula, Montana was a 1962 graduate of Loyola High School. He attended Notre Dame University and Carroll College at Helena. He left school to pursue work in Seattle and was subsequently inducted into the armed forces. Following basic training, Sullivan was accepted to Officer Candidate School at the Army Artillery and Missile Center, Ft. Sill, Oklahoma. He was commissioned a 2nd Lt. on December 12, 1967. Lt. Sullivan was killed in action in Quang Tri Province, Republic of Vietnam, on September 5, 1968. He was a member of Battery B, 5th Battalion, 4th Artillery and at the time of his death was assigned to a maneuver element of the 1st Battalion, 61st Infantry. Lt. Sullivan and his comrades were in an Armored Personnel Carrier that was rushing to aid their ambushed comrades when Sullivan spotted the North Vietnamese and called down artillery fire upon their position. Almost immediately Lt. Sullivan's APC was hit by an enemy rocket-propelled grenade and he and a fellow officer were seriously wounded. A second RPG hit the vehicle and exploded in the engine compartment, wounding all members inside. Lt. Sullivan was medevaced from the ambush site to Danang. Sullivan never regained consciousness and died shortly thereafter. Lt. Sullivan was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star medals. A memorial cannon mounted in front of Division Artillery Headquarters at Fort Carson, Colorado was dedicated in his memory. He is buried in St. Mary's Cemetery, Missoula.