

# QUANTICO MARINE ATHLETES MEMORIAL

TO HONOR THE ATHLETES  
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES,  
IN VIETNAM,  
IN SERVICE TO THEIR COUNTRY



Ron Brown



Bruce Capel



Fred Cobb



Tom Holden



W. Dale Marshall



Paul McGrath



Gene McMullen



Tyrone Pannell



John Prichard



Robert Smith



Walt Spainhour

## DEDICATION CEREMONY

JUNE 15, 2007

THE BASIC SCHOOL  
QUANTICO, VIRGINIA

# Quantico Marine Athletes Group

## HISTORY

On March 31, 2001 six members of the 1964 and 1965 Quantico football teams visited a small cemetery in Bangall, NY. They were there to visit the grave of Tommy Holden who gave his life for his country on October 22, 1966 in Vietnam. Tommy, awarded two Silver Stars, was a member of the 1964 and 1965 Quantico teams. Also at the grave that day were classmates of Tommy's from St. Mary's High School, Rutherford, NJ, Class of 1959. Tommy's high school buddies invited his Marine buddies to attend St. Mary's High School homecoming game on October 27th. At the game Tommy's Marine teammates would present the Most Valuable Player Award given annually in Tommy's name.

Tom's six Marine teammates decided to try to expand their group. By the time the game rolled around in October the list of former Quantico ballplayers had grown to over 30. Thirteen members from the 1964 and 1965 teams attended the game. Everyone had a great time and it was decided to hold a yearly reunion, the first of which was held at Camp Lejeune in May, 2002.

Our group had expanded to 50 by the time of our first reunion. 24 ball players plus wives, friends and relatives attended the 2002 Reunion at Camp Lejeune.

In 2003 and 2004 our Reunions were held at Quantico. We returned to Camp Lejeune for our 2005 Reunion. In 2006, we journeyed to the left coast and held our Reunion in San Diego. Our roster has gone over the 270 member mark and is still growing. Approximately 50 athletes, plus wives, friends and family, attend each Reunion. Quantico teams from the late '40's through early '70's are represented and include athletes from all Quantico varsity sports.

**All Former Quantico Athletes Are Welcome To Join The Group.**

## MISSION

Our group's mission is twofold: to locate former Quantico athletes so they may renew friendships at reunions, and to honor and perpetuate the memory of our fallen teammates.

# Program

Call to Order ..... **Granville “Granny” Amos**

Invocation ..... **Chaplain Larry P. Greenslit**  
**Captain, USN**

Welcome Remarks ..... **Col. Royal Mortenson**  
**Commanding Officer, TBS**

Memorial Donation ..... **Gene “Bear” Carrington**

Dedication Remarks ..... **Gene “Bear” Carrington**  
*Recognition of Family Members of Fallen Teammates*

Music Selections..... **Eternal Father (Navy Hymn)**  
**Marines Hymn**  
**Taps**

Benediction..... **Chaplain Larry P. Greenslit**  
**Captain, USN**

Reception

**Captain**  
**Ronald Howard**  
**Brown**

**KIA 02-07-68**

**1965 Football**



Ron was born in California and attended grammar and high school there. He played football at Los Angeles Valley Community College before heading to Montana State where he lettered for two years before being commissioned in the Marine Corps in December of 1960.

Ron began his coaching career with the Camp Sukiran (Okinawa) Royals in 1962. He was the line coach for the San Diego Marines in 1963 and 1964 before joining the Quantico Staff as offensive line coach for the 1965 season.

In Vietnam, Ron served as a battery commander for Bravo Battery, 1/11. At the time of his death he was assigned to Headquarters Battery, 1/11. A corporal who served with Ron wrote the following for Ron's virtual wall information on January 4, 2003, "I was on a convoy near Hue City on February 7, 1968. We were headed to the 11<sup>th</sup> Marines' position southwest of Hue. On the return to Phu Bai we were overrun by a superior NVA force. None of the vehicles made it back. Captain Brown was in charge of the convoy. He was killed in the initial attack. I was one of the few survivors that day."

Ron's nephew, Skip Dunn of Eagle River, AK wrote on the Virtual Wall, on May 3, 2001, "Ronny was 14 years older than me and not around much when we visited his mom and dad's house. I remember him as bigger than life though, a football player for the Marine Corps team. When he was around, he was always willing to throw a ball so a little cousin could catch it, or not, or walk in the park across the street and push my little sister and me on the swings. I got the news of his death when I was in high school. It rocked the whole family. We all adored him. We still miss him 32 years later."

Ron was a great guy. He loved football and knew how to teach it, but he never forgot that football is a game played by grownup boys. He let the players have some fun and his efforts were appreciated.

*Ron is buried in Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery in San Diego, CA.*

**2nd Lieutenant**  
**John Bruce Capel**

**KIA 05-12-66**

**1965 Football**



Bruce as he was always known to his friends, was born in Evansville, Indiana. The family moved to Chicago and then to Glen Ellyn, IL where he grew up. He attended Glenbard High School (now Glenbard West), where he lettered in baseball and football. His high school football team still gives an annual award in his name, "The Bruce Capel Hitters Club" Award.

After being recruited by several Division I schools, Bruce chose to walk-on at the University of Illinois.

He lettered in football at Illinois and spent his freshman year playing in the shadows of All-American Dick Butkus. Bruce was referred to as "the best second team center in the Big 10". He played in the 1964 Rose Bowl and completed his career at Illinois earning Academic All-American Honorable Mention. Bruce's college coach, Pete Elliott, had this to say, "Bruce Capel was the nicest, toughest and, honestly, most courageous player I have known". Each year, the Illinois football team recognizes their most courageous player with the Bruce Capel Award for Courage. He graduated in August, 1965 with a degree in Leisure Studies. The Leisure Studies department gives an annual scholarship in Bruce's name.

After graduation in 1965, Bruce was commissioned a 2nd LT in the Marine Corps. He played linebacker for the Quantico football team in 1965 and received Leatherneck magazine's All-Marine linebacker award. Before he went to Vietnam, Bruce had the opportunity to visit the Illinois campus as a Marine Recruiter. Bruce had only been in Vietnam for six weeks when he was killed while leading a 14-man patrol southwest of Da Nang. The patrol was ambushed by a large force of Viet Cong. Bruce was killed instantly, along with 12 other Marines. There were only two survivors.

His friends and family members remember Bruce for his ever-present smile, friendly manner, and depth of character. He is remembered today by a number of scholarships at the University of Illinois, Glenbard (West) High School and his church, via five schools constructed in his name in Guatemala. His memory lives on in the hearts of his teammates, coaches, family and friends across the country.

Bruce was buried in his home town of Glen Ellyn, IL.

*Thanks to Steve Capel, Bruce's brother, for contributing to this story.*

**2nd Lieutenant**  
**Paul Frederick**  
**Cobb**

**KIA 05-16-68**

**1967 Football**



A native of Suffolk, VA , Freddie Cobb starred at quarterback at Woodrow Wilson High School in nearby Portsmouth. Although heavily recruited, he chose instead to prep at Fork Union Military Academy. When he enrolled at Virginia Tech in 1963 his drop back passing style did not fit in with the new coach's roll out passing philosophy. He never became a starter, but he never let that dampen his enthusiasm for Tech. When asked by a reporter, how it felt not to be playing, he replied, "I came here to get an education. Besides, this is where I met my wife Bonnie. I have no regrets at all." The Tech coach at the time, Jerry Claiborne had this to say about Freddie; "Even though he knew he probably would not play in the games, he came to practice with great enthusiasm and gave 100% on every play. His spirit rubbed off on all those around him."

Freddie was a member of the OCS class of March 1967. After getting his commission he attended Basic School as a member of "O" Company, Basic Class 6-67. While at Basic School he won the starting quarterback job of the Quantico team. Freddie displayed great ability and showed his leadership in directing the '67 team.

Freddie's tour in Vietnam started on January 17, 1968 when he was assigned as a platoon commander. On May 16, during Operation Allen Brook in Quang Nam Province, Lt. Cobb's platoon was assigned the mission of reinforcing an adjacent unit which was heavily engaged with a well-entrenched enemy force. During the operation Lt. Cobb's courageous leadership during the initial and ensuing assaults inspired his men to continue to advance and overwhelm the enemy to the point of defeat. Freddie Cobb was awarded the Navy Cross, posthumously, for his actions that day. Fred's Basic School Class, 6-67, suffered the highest casualties of any Basic Class since the Korean War. In 1996 a scholarship fund was established at Virginia Tech honoring Freddie. His final resting place is Sherwood Memorial Park, Salem, VA.

*Thanks to Paul Cobb, Jr. and Cal Esleack, a friend and fellow Marine, for their information used in this story.*

**1st Lieutenant**  
**Thomas James**  
**Holden**

**KIA 10-22-66**

**1964-65 Football**



Tommy was brought up in Hasbrouck Heights, NJ, and attended St. Mary's High School in nearby Rutherford, NJ. While at St. Mary's, Tommy was a 3 sport star, excelling in football. After one year at Bullis Prep he was sworn in as a Navy Midshipman during the summer of 1960. The highlight of his football career at Annapolis was winning Navy's Most Valuable Defensive Player Award for his 11 solo tackles in #2 Navy's loss to #1 Texas in the 1964 Cotton Bowl.

Members of Tommy's family love to tell the story of his graduation. 20 of Tommy's relatives arrived for his graduation but there was no Tommy. Famous for his pranks, he continued right to the end. The only part of his graduation weekend that he took part in was the graduation ceremony, the rest of the time he was walking off demerits.

While at Quantico Tommy was an offensive guard on the 1964 team, and a linebacker on the 1965 team. Tommy was all guts on the field; the words, "quit" and "I've had enough" were not in his vocabulary.

The Quantico Marine Athletes of The Sixties was founded as a direct result of our search to find out where our friend Tommy was buried. On March 31, 2001 six of his Quantico teammates visited his grave at St. Mary's Cemetery in Bangall, NY. From that small beginning we have grown to over 270 members.

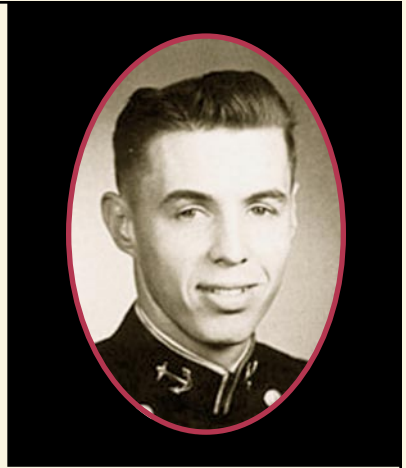
Tommy was awarded the Silver Star for Operation Allegheny and was awarded a second Silver Star, posthumously, for his actions during Operation Kern. To those of us who knew him and loved him, he could be an angel or a devil. But regardless of what he did, as soon as he flashed that big smile that showed his dimples you simply couldn't stay upset with him. Tommy may have died young but he left a legacy, The Quantico Marine Athletes of The Sixties.

*Thanks to Tommy's cousin, Arlene Stewart for the family story about Tommy's last days at the academy.*

**Captain**  
**Willard Dale**  
**Marshall**

**KIA 06-11-68**

**1962 Track**



We have been unsuccessful in our attempts to find members of Dale's family so our information is a bit sketchy, but here's what we do know. Dale was born and grew up in California. He was a 1961 graduate of the Naval Academy. While at Navy, Dale was a member of the track team. He was also a member of the 1962 Quantico track team. Prior to his second tour in Vietnam, Dale graduated from the Vietnamese Language School and went to Vietnam as an Interrogator/Translator. At the time of his death Dale was serving as Team Commander of the 19<sup>th</sup> ITT. On June 11, 1968, Dale was killed in action in Quang Nam Province. While on patrol to obtain information of intelligence value, his unit was ambushed by a vastly superior force of Viet Cong, and Dale was fatally wounded during the ensuing fire fight. Dale was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star medal for heroic action.

We do have one story about Dale that involves a group called TOP. This group's goal is to authenticate dog tags and other personal belongings of Vietnam veterans. TOP representatives were in Vietnam in 1999 on a Tour of Peace. Mr. Le Sinh, from DaNang, an ex-ARVN staff sergeant, served with the Marines as an interpreter during the war. He met with TOP members in Hoi An; with him he had an old green burlap sandbag with an aging green vinyl rain poncho folded up inside. Mr. Sinh told them that the poncho belonged to his "best friend" Marine Captain Willard Dale Marshall. He told them about the events of June 11; the explosion that severely wounded Dale and lastly, Dale dying in his arms. Mr. Sinh presented TOP members with the poncho and asked them to bring it to America and find Captain Marshall's family, and return it to them. "There's not a day that goes by that I do not think about my friend."

TOP officials eventually found one of Dale's sons and presented him with his dad's poncho. Dale's son Rod was very pleased to get this memento of his father. He told TOP, "If you have the chance to talk to Mr. Sinh, please tell him that it's not so much the poncho that mattered, but it's his friendship with my father, which so obviously remains to this day." Unfortunately, Rod moved and we have been unable to find him. Dale is buried at El Toro Cemetery in El Toro, CA.



**2nd Lieutenant**  
**Paul Martin**  
**McGrath**

**KIA 06-7-68**

**1967 Football**



Paul was born in New Rochelle, NY in 1944, the fourth son of Mariam Hogan McGrath and Hugh McGrath. There were seven children in the family, Paul was the sixth.

After graduating from Canterbury School, New Milford, CT in 1962 Paul attended Villanova University, located outside of Philadelphia. There, Paul pursued his passion for football as a reserve linebacker, without ever getting into a game. The coach considered Paul too small to be effective and refused to play him.

Upon graduation from Villanova, Paul enlisted in the Marine Corps and went to Officer Candidate School in Quantico, VA. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant fulfilling his ambition to become a Marine Corps Officer.

While attending Basic School, Class 6-67, Paul was recruited for the Quantico football team. Low and behold, Paul returned to the gridiron at Villanova and finally started a game, in the capacity of Captain, "Of the opposing team"! On the opening kickoff to Villanova, the 160 lb. Captain McGrath made a clean tackle on the return, breaking the leg of the ball carrier, ending his season and any doubt as to Paul's toughness and ability.

While in Vietnam, Paul wrote a letter to his parents. It was addressed, "To Whom It May Concern" in order that the contents could be made public. Paul's letter was read in the United States House of Representatives in September of 1968, three months after Paul's death. The letter is located on the inside back cover of this program.

As a member of Basic Class 6-67, Paul was among a group of young lieutenants who suffered the highest casualty rate of any Basic School class since the Korean War. The Mac Dinh Chi School, in Quang Nam Province is the only school in Vietnam that is dedicated to a Basic School Class, Basic Class 6-67. Funds are still being raised to help improve facilities at the school and all donations are handled by East Meets West Foundation, Oakland CA.

Paul is buried at Gate of Heaven Cemetery in Valhalla, NY. We can think of no better final resting place for a fallen warrior than Valhalla.

*Thanks to Paul's brother and sister-in-law, Dick and Jane McGrath, of Huntington Valley, PA for their help and input for this story.*

**2nd Lieutenant**  
**Gene Smedley**  
**McMullen**

**KIA 07-16-66**

**1965 Football**



Gene was born in West Chester, PA. His dad was in the Marine Corps and Gene attended grade schools, both public and military base schools, throughout the country. He graduated from Punahou High School in Hawaii where he lettered in three sports: football, basketball and track. He then moved back to the states to attend Penn State University. While at State he played football under coach Rip Engle. Gene was a member of the Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity. He enrolled in the Platoon Leaders Course and attended summer training during his sophomore and junior years at Quantico.

Gene had many interests; in addition to sports, he loved music and dancing. Although he had a quiet demeanor, he was popular with his classmates, who called him Smedley or their favorite pet nickname, "Smed". Gene got his height at an early age, when he shot up to 6 feet 3 inches his family started calling him "Long Gene".

Gene entered Basic School during the summer of 1965. While at Basic School he was a member of the 1965 Quantico football team. After graduation he chose artillery and was sent to Fort Sill, OK and then on to Camp Pendelton. In May of 1966 he was sent to Vietnam where he was assigned to the 12th Marine Regiment as a Forward Observer. Gene was killed in action on July 16, 1966 by the Viet Cong counter battery fire in Quang Tri Province. He was buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery.

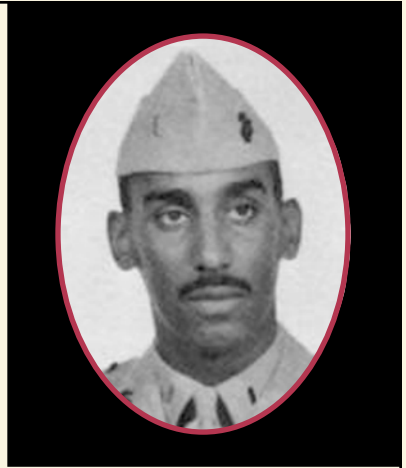
Gene's father, Colonel Rick McMullen, USMC Ret. is one of our most loyal members. Twice Colonel Rick has driven solo cross country to attend one of our reunions. Colonel Rick had this to say about his son, "Gene would have wanted to stay with the USMC Active Reserve because of his familiarity of the United States Marine Corps and he understood the ethos and ideals of the Corps. He knew the Marines not only enjoy one another's company but they love one another." The Quantico Athletic Association proves this true.

*Thanks to Colonel Rick for contributing to his son's story.*

**2nd Lieutenant**  
**Tyrone Sidney**  
**Pannell**

**KIA 11-30-65**

**1964 Track**



Tyrone Sidney Pannell was born in West Virginia and grew up in Amityville, Long Island. His track career began at Bishop Loughlin Memorial High School, Brooklyn, NY where he served as the vice-president of the student body, set three school records in the hurdles and was introduced to his future wife, Marlene.

Ty turned down many college scholarships to attend Manhattan College, 1960-1964. He was co-captain his senior year and one of the stars of the track team, winning several individual honors, among them the 60-yard high hurdles and high jump at the indoor 1962 Metropolitan Track Meet (MET'S). In 1963 he repeated those victories as well as winning the long jump. At the 1964 outdoor MET'S he won the 120-yard high hurdles. Ty received his BA in 1964 and as a Marine PLC grad was commissioned a Marine Second Lieutenant.

Upon their graduations, Tyrone and Marlene were married and Ty's best friends from the track team, Eddie Bowes and Vin McCardle, were in the wedding party. While at Quantico, Ty was a member of the track team. On Memorial Day, 1965, daughter Tracy was born in Quantico.

In Vietnam, Ty was a platoon commander in "D' Company, 1/7. He was on patrol with his men in the Chu Lai area when a booby trap was tripped and Ty was killed. On Tracy's first birthday, Ty's broken hearted family and friends memorialized his November 30 death.

In the words of Ty's roommate of four years, Vin McCardle. "Nearly 40 years later, I can still vividly recall the regal bearing with which he carried himself, not conveying arrogance, but a quiet self confidence that certainly intimidated all around him".

For several years, a Quantico Marine Track Competition Trophy was given in Ty's name. Marlene handed out the award in 1967. Tyrone is a member of Manhattan College's Hall of Fame and a Spike Shoe Club track award is given in his name annually. Bishop Loughlin Memorial High School gives an annual scholarship and track medal in his name. Tyrone is featured in a book and HBO movie version of "Dear America-Letters Home from Vietnam", including excerpts he wrote to his nine week old daughter Tracy.

Tracy, graduated from Stanford University, attended Oxford University in England, modeled in Europe and the US and is now a bilingual teacher and real estate agent and the mother of a 2½ year old daughter, Epiphany Sidney.

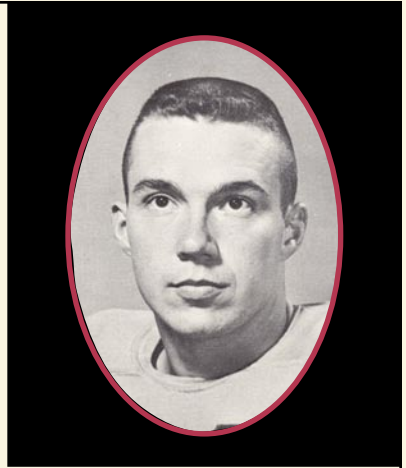
Ty is interred at Pine Lawn Cemetery in Suffix County, NY.

*Thanks to Marlene Pannell and Vin McCardle for their help with Ty's story.*

**Captain**  
**John Lee Prichard**

**KIA 01-27-68**

**1961-62 Football**  
**1962 Track**



John grew up in Oklahoma City, OK. He graduated from Southeast High School in 1957. While at Southeast, John was a star athlete as well as an outstanding student. He excelled in track, football and basketball, winning All-American honors in the latter. He was voted All-Around Boy Athlete. Scholastically, he received the Phi Beta Kappa Award, Math Award, American Legion Award, and Presidency of the Honor Society. He was named Young Man of the Year in the State of Oklahoma in his senior year.

John graduated from the Naval Academy in June of 1961. As a midshipman, he was a member of the 1960 football team that played in the Orange Bowl. He was also a star sprinter and broad jumper on the track team. In 1959 he won the Heptagonal broad jump championship.

John was a halfback on the 1961 and 1962 Quantico teams. He was also a member of the 1962 track team at Quantico. From 1965-67 he was stationed at the Naval Academy Prep School, Bainbridge, MD where he taught military introduction and served as an assistant football coach.

On January 27, 1968 during the battle for Mike's Hill, the Battalion Commander of 3/4 directed Captain Prichard, the India Company Commander to link up with Lima Company, a distance of about 1,000 meters over terrain that was open ground interspersed with hedgerows and heavy brush. About two hundred meters from Lima Company, Captain Prichard and his men ran into a well-camouflaged North Vietnamese Army Company. Captain Prichard led his men on repeated frontal assaults that failed to overcome the NVA resistance. Reinforcements were called in and the two companies linked up ending the battle for Mike's Hill.

Captain Prichard, wounded during the fighting was evacuated but later died from his wounds. Among his decorations are the Silver Star and Bronze Star with combat "V". John is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

*Our thanks to John's brother Bobby for his contributions to this story.*

**Colonel**  
**Robert Norman**  
**Smith**

**MIA 08-19-69**  
**Declared KIA 03-06-79**

**1948-49 Football & Track**



Bob prepped for the Naval Academy at Wyoming Seminary in Kingston, PA. At Wyoming he was a three year letterman who captained the football team as well as being president of his class. Bob entered the Naval Academy in 1944. He was a member of the football team and CO of his Regiment. Bob graduated in 1948 and was commissioned a Second Lt. in the Marine Corps. He played end on the 1948 and 1949 Quantico teams and was selected twice to All-Marine teams. He was also a member of the track team while at Quantico, taking several first places in the javelin throw.

Bob won his wings in 1952. He saw extensive carrier duty aboard Wright, Coral Sea and Forrestal; flying Corsairs, AD's, the F-8 and the F-4B. He also served in various staff positions including the staff of the Commander Sixth Fleet. On August 19, 1969 Lt. Col. Robert N. Smith and his RIO, Capt. John N. Flanigan departed DaNang in their F4B Phantom fighter/bomber jet aircraft to fly escort on a photo reconnaissance mission just north of the Demilitarized Zone. Bob's aircraft made one run over the target and then he and the other aircraft separated. They were supposed to rendezvous for a second run, but Bob never returned for the second run and contact was never established with Bob or his RIO. The area in which they were last seen, about 5 miles east of the city of Ninh Linh in Quang Binh Province, North Vietnam was known to be heavily defended. The U.S. believed that the enemy knew what happened to Smith and Flanigan.

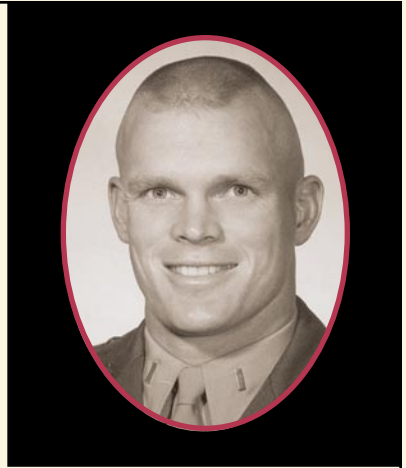
In 1995, Bob's daughter, Robin, visited his crash site in Vietnam and filmed a documentary about her trip. The documentary was shown on the CBS Eye to Eye program. Memorial services were held at Arlington National Cemetery. His marker is in the MIA section at Arlington. Bob's name is also on "The Wall". Maya Lin, the young architect who designed the Vietnam Wall grew up in Athens, OH and was a neighbor of Bob's widow, Jane.

*Thanks to Bob's widow, Jane Smith Wood for her help with this story.*

**Captain**  
**Walter Judson**  
**Spainhour Jr.**

**KIA 09-15-66**

**1962 Football**



Jud was born in Lenoir, NC. He graduated from Lenoir High School in June of 1958. Jud graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1962. While at Chapel Hill, he was a member of the "Tarheel's" football team. At Carolina, Jud joined the Marine Platoon Leader's Class and attended summer training in 1961 and 1962.

Jud played quarterback for the 1962 Quantico team. Quantico had a 5-2 record before their last 5 games were abruptly cancelled due to the Cuban missile crisis. After graduation from Basic School, in order to prepare for Marine Reconnaissance, Jud attended the U.S. Navy Underwater Swimmer's School at Key West, FL. From there he went to Ft. Benning, GA for Airborne and Ranger training. After USMC Mountain Warfare Training in Bridgeport, CA and the US Army Special Warfare School at Ft. Bragg, Jud ended up back at Quantico for Counterinsurgency training.

Before leaving for Vietnam aboard the USS Iwo Jima, Jud wrote to his father on April 25, 1966, "It makes it sort of hard for me knowing that you're not really up for what I'm doing. I don't suppose I can get you to understand but I've got to do what I think is right and what I think God would want me to do — otherwise I wouldn't be much of a man."

On September 14, Jud again wrote home, this time to his Mom and Dad, "Tomorrow we (my platoon) will go in on another mission and I feel confident that with the good Lord's help we'll be successful and come out without harm. I'm most thankful that He has been so good to me and let me be part of such a great family."

On September 15, 1st Lt. W.J. Spainhour was leading the First Platoon, Company A, Fifth Reconnaissance Battalion during the Amphibious Operation Deckhouse 1V in the vicinity of Dong Ha. While maneuvering his Marines in contact with a North Vietnamese regiment, Jud was fatally wounded. For his gallantry, Jud was awarded the Silver Star.

*We are grateful to Jud's brother Mike, an Army Vietnam veteran, who provided valuable input for this story.*



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 90<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 114

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1968

No. 143

## VOICE FROM THE GRAVE—VIETNAM

(Mr. DEVINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEVINE. Mr. Speaker, rarely do we hear from those who have gone to eternity. A young man, in full bloom with a bright future, Paul McGrath, was a 24-year-old U.S. Marine lieutenant in Vietnam. He was killed on June 7, 1968. Prior to his death, he wrote a letter to his parents in Rye, N.Y., but addressed it "To Whom It May Concern" in order that the contents would be made public.

Paul McGrath, a graduate of Villanova College, has a message for all Americans:

MARCH 24, 1968.

### *To Whom It May Concern:*

While my young Marines give their lives for what they know is right, too many Americans sit back and argue over trivial details. This letter is a plea from a Marine platoon commander in

Viet-Nam, that Americans get together and support us in a cruel, miserable, but necessary war. Let us not lose sight of the basic truths under a pile of trite arguments.

As far as being a "popular war of liberation" or anything resembling such, this isn't. We here in Khe-Sanh are surrounded by numerous enemy troops. They are North Vietnamese regulars, not the "popular liberation forces" some people would have us believe are behind the war. The war is simply a case of North Viet-Nam (with agents and pawns in South Viet-Nam, and Red China and Russian backing) trying to take over South Viet-Nam by force. There is no doubt in my mind what they have in theirs. The conquest of Asia. They have already begun the same thing in Laos. "Popular liberation forces" don't demolish cities and slaughter their own people in the streets.

The real question is not what is going on here, though. Anybody who does not know is either stupid or fooling himself. The real question is whether we as Americans consider it our job to stop them. It is a long way from home and seems not to bother our own security. It is costly in money, but more importantly, in American lives.

To me the answer is simple. Yes! We must stop them. Read again the inscription under the Statue of Liberty:

"Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, the tempest-tossed,  
to me:  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

The spirit that inspired that was one that said we must seek and accept responsibility in a positive manner, not just wallow in our own good fortune. The thing I love most about the United States is that spirit. "Give me your tired, your poor." We want them because we will do something with them!

Are we, today, willing to stand up for what we know is right or are we willing to make phony excuses for ourselves?

Please remember us in your prayers.

Semper Fidelis,

2D LT. PAUL McGRATH.

August 5, 1944-June 7, 1968.

# Quantico Marine Athlete KIA'S

## **Second Lieutenant Tyrone Sidney Pannell,**

Serial Number 089518, Casualty Date 11-30-1965,  
Interment, Pine Lawn Cemetery, Suffolk County, New York

## **Second Lieutenant John Bruce Capel,**

Serial Number 092008, Casualty Date 05-12-1966,  
Interment, Forest Hills Cemetery, Glen Ellyn, Illinois

## **Second Lieutenant Gene Smedley McMullen,**

Serial Number 092189, Casualty Date 07-16-1966,  
Interment, Arlington National Cemetery

## **Captain Walter Judson Spainhour Jr.,**

Serial Number 085875, Casualty Date 09-15-1966,  
Interment, City Cemetery, Lenoir, North Carolina

## **First Lieutenant Thomas James Holden,**

Serial Number 089419, Casualty Date 10-22-1966,  
Interment, St. Mary's Cemetery, Bangall, New York

## **Captain John Lee Prichard,**

Serial Number 081650, Casualty Date 01-27-1968,  
Interment, Arlington National Cemetery

## **Captain Ronald Howard Brown,**

Serial Number 080706, Casualty Date 02-07-1968,  
Interment, Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, San Diego, CA

## **Second Lieutenant Paul Frederick Cobb,**

Serial Number 0103410, Casualty Date 05-16-1968,  
Interment, Sherwood Memorial Park, Salem, Virginia

## **Second Lieutenant Paul Martin McGrath,**

Serial Number 0103672, Casualty Date 06-07-1968,  
Interment, Gate of Heaven Cemetery, Valhalla, New York

## **Captain Willard Dale Marshall,**

Serial Number 081639, Casualty Date 06-11-1968,  
Interment, El Toro Cemetery, El Toro, California

## **Colonel Robert Norman Smith,**

Serial # 278363449, 08-19-1969 Declared Missing in Action,  
03-06-1979 Declared Killed in Action, Colonel Smith has a  
marker in the MIA section of Arlington National Cemetery