



Honoring Our Vietnam War and Vietnam Era Veterans



February 28, 1961 - May 7, 1975



Town of West Seneca, New York

Name: **OWCZARCZAK**

MELVIN J.

Hometown: WEST SENECA

Address: 75 CIRCLE END DRIVE

- Vietnam Era*
- Vietnam War Veteran*

Service Branch: ARMY

Rank: 2LT

Year Entered: 1967

Year Discharged: KIA

Unit / Squadron:

A BATTERY, 1ST BATTALION, 321ST ARTILLERY, 101ST AIRBORNE DIV, UNITED STATES ARMY
REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (USARV)

Medals / Citations:

PURPLE HEART

VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL

REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM CAMPAIGN MEDAL

NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE RIBBON

Served in War Zone *Theater of Operations / Assignment:* VIETNAM

Service Notes:

Second Lieutenant Melvin J. Owczarczak was Killed in Action on 1 September 1968 from a booby trap set by the enemy in Thua Thien Province, South Vietnam / The injury was fatal as Lt. Owczarczak died on the hospital ship "Repose"

Melvin J. Owczarczak received his commission as Second Lieutenant in 1967 at Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania

Lt Owczarczak had served in Vietnam less than three months and was a Field Artillery Unit Commander

Melvin Owczarczak received his Lieutenant's commission in 1967 at Indiana Gap, PA and received Artillery Training at Ft. Sill

Base Assignments:

Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania - A U.S. Army post primarily located in Lebanon County, Pennsylvania and served as a National Guard Training Center / During the late 1960s and early 1970s, during the Vietnam War, Fort Indiantown Gap served as one of the largest Reserve Officers Training Corps summer camps for the U.S. Army

Ft. Sill, Oklahoma - Located north of Lawton, Oklahoma, Fort Sill remains the only active Army installation of all the forts on the Southern Plains built during the Indian Wars / Ft. Sill serves as the home of the United States Army Field Artillery School as well as the Marine Corps' site for Field Artillery MOS school, United States Army Air



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Defense Artillery School, the 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade, and the 75th Fires Brigade / Fort Sill is also one of the four locations for Army Basic Combat Training / In 1963 the 1st Aerial Artillery Group (Provisional) was organized to test equipping CH-34 helicopters with rocket pods attached to each side. The rockets converted a transport aircraft, an easy target in most combat situations, into a sophisticated flying weapon capable of direct or indirect fires. It was the ancestor to the Cheyenne and Long Bow attack helicopters of today

Miscellaneous:

Melvin Owczarczak was a 1961 graduate of St. Francis High School and graduated in 1967 from St. Bonaventure University with a degree in Mathematics / Owczarczak also operated a radio station on the St. Bonaventure campus

Second Lieutenant Melvin J. Owczarczak was 25 years of age at the time of his death

The 101st Airborne Division ("Screaming Eagles") is an elite modular specialized light infantry division of the US Army and trained for air assault operations / it has been referred to as "the tip of the spear" and is the most potent and tactically mobile of the U.S. Army's divisions / The 101st Airborne is able to plan, coordinate, and execute brigade-size air assault operations capable of seizing key terrain in support of operational objectives, and is capable of working in austere environments with limited or degraded infrastructure / During World War II, the 101st was renowned for its role in Operation Overlord (the D-Day landings and airborne landings on 6 June 1944, in Normandy, France), Operation Market Garden, the liberation of the Netherlands and, perhaps most famously, its action during the Battle of the Bulge around the city of Bastogne, Belgium / During the Vietnam War, the 101st Airborne Division fought in several major campaigns and battles, including the Battle of Hamburger Hill in May 1969