

RONALD LEONARD WARNETT**Class 37A-67**

is honored on Panel 30W, Row 50 of
the Vietnam Veterans Memorial

Full Name: RONALD LEONARD WARNETT
Wall Name: RONALD L WARNETT
Date of Birth: 5/30/1946
Date of Casualty: 3/5/1969
Home of Record: LINDEN
County of Record: UNION COUNTY
State: NJ
Branch of Service: ARMY
Rank: 1LT
Casualty Country: SOUTH VIETNAM
Casualty Province: KONTUM



1LT Warnett was Executive Officer of B Battery, 6th Battalion, 29th Field Artillery, 4th Infantry Division. He was critically wounded during a rocket attack at the Polei Kleng airfield on 4 March 1969 and died the next day in Kontum. (Taken from the 6th Battalion, 29th Field Artillery website)

togetherness

I was a classmate of Ron's at OCS at Ft Sill, Ok. Our class #37-67 we graduated on 3 October 1967.

Posted by: Wayne A. Backes
Relationship: classmate in OCS
July 29, 1999

6th Bn, 29th Arty Redleg

Ronald Warnett was serving in Hqs & Service Battery of the 6th Bn, 29th Field Artillery, 4th Inf Div when fatally wounded at Polei Kleng.

Posted by: Jon Aldridge
November 2, 2010

Ronald is buried at Golden Gate National Cemetery

Ron Warnett

FROM the 6-29 Field Artillery Unit History Files: At 0850 hours on 4 March, the air strip at Polei Kleng received 14 rounds of enemy 122mm rocket fire, which destroyed the artillery resupply Class V waiting on the helicopter pad to be airlifted to the firebases. The resulting fires and explosions not only destroyed approximately 900 rounds of 105mm HE ammunition but also the five remaining sorties to complete the move of B/6/29 Artillery. During the rocket attack the Executive Officer of B/6/29 Artillery was critically wounded. Ron Warnett died of wounds he had received, on March 5, 1969 but his assigned unit is unknown. I believe the officer mentioned in the history files is he, but have exhausted all available means to confirm this. If you knew Ron Warnett, and his assigned unit, please advise me.

Posted by: Dan Fisher
Relationship: 29th FA Regiment Webmaster
July 27, 1999

30 Years Later: A Vietnam War Mystery *by* **Dan Fisher**

It has been 27 years since I served in South Vietnam. Some memories from that time remain *burned* in my mind. Others are more elusive, a fog in history. This story begins well before I came in-country, and I only became aware of it recently, some 30 years after it happened, while reading the 6-29 Field Artillery unit history files for 1969.

"During the first two weeks of January 1969, activity was light in Kontum Province as the 6th Battalion 29th Field Artillery continued its operations in the Dak To area. On 21 January 1969, 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division terminated operations in that area and established a new Brigade Forward Command Post at FSB McNerney. Contact was very light and sporadic throughout the Brigade AO during the early part of February, however the maneuver elements found numerous huts, fortified positions, weapons, rice and ordnance storage areas. Artillery activity during this period consisted mainly of firing on intelligence targets and firing Night Firing Programs based on target data gathered by the maneuver elements. Extensive aerial reconnaissance missions were conducted by the battalion S-2/S-3 elements in order to pin-point selected enemy locations, trail and bunker complexes, bivouac areas and routes of movement. The information gathered during these aerial reconnaissance missions was used to prepare night firing programs.

On 15 February 1969, the 1st Brigade received the mission to move to the southwest Kontum City and conduct offensive operations against the 24th and 66th NVA regiments. Intelligence reports indicated that these enemy elements had been given the mission to attack Kontum City and interdict Highway 14. In order to facilitate command and control the 1st Brigade and 6/29 Arty deployed a Tactical Command Post to Plei

Mrong. Contacts with enemy elements throughout the operations were numerous, but small. On 28 February 1969, 1st Brigade terminated operations in the vicinity of Plei Mrong and moved the Tactical CP, maneuver elements, and artillery to the vicinity of Polei Kleng and subsequent deployment into the Plei Trap Valley area.

The 1st Brigade's mission at its new location was to block and destroy NVA transportation routes in the Plei Trap Valley. The 6th Battalion 29th Field Artillery, as the direct support battalion to the 1st Brigade, moved its operations center, with the Brigade TOC, from Plei Mrong to Polei Kleng to facilitate control of the operation.

The operation began on 1 March 1969 with the CA of A/3/12 Infantry into LZ Swinger. The LZ was considered of primary importance for artillery when the 155mm howitzers of C/6/29 Artillery were emplaced at that location the majority of the Brigade could be supported by their fires. A/6/29 Artillery began its move from Polei Kleng to FSB 20 of the same day. C/6/29 Artillery moved to LZ Pause on 1 March 1969, and B/6/29 Artillery left Plei Mrong, spending the night at FSB Mary Lou. All artillery moves were completed by 3 March 1969.

Late in the afternoon 3 March, A/3/8 Infantry made contact with an estimated enemy company. Initial contact was heavy and the RTO in the Artillery Forward Observer Party was killed in the first few minutes. Elements of 3/8 Infantry remained in contact with the NVA forces through 6 March. B/6/29 and C/6/29 Artillery fired a total of 4478 rounds HE, 58 FC rounds, and 8 CS rounds, primarily in support of the contacts and as preparations for the combat assault of reinforcements.

At 0850 hours on 4 March, the air strip at Polei Kleng received 14 rounds of 122mm rocket fire, which destroyed the artillery resupply Class V waiting on the helicopter pad to be airlifted to the firebases.

The resulting fires and explosions not only destroyed approximately 900 rounds of 105mm HE ammunition but also the five remaining sorties to complete the move of B/6/29 Artillery. During the rocket attack the Executive Officer of B/6/29 Artillery was critically wounded."

This is all that is known about this action. Names of the two casualties, were not specified, and this is the mystery. Who were these two heroes?

Research has shown that over 20 men of the 4th Infantry Division were killed in action in Kontum Province on 3 March 1969. Of these, the RTO killed on 3 Mar 69 appears to be PFC Layne Michael Santos, Panel 30W, Line 30. His specialty was 13A10, Artillery. The only casualty with an artillery specialty killed that day.

The XO, critically wounded on 4 Mar 69, was not mentioned as having died. However, from research into casualties on the very next day, he appears to be 1LT Ronald Leonard Warnett, Panel 30W, Line 50. He died of wounds received, on 5 Mar 69. His

specialty was 1193, Artillery. Again, the only casualty with an artillery specialty during the period.

All of the names listed on Panel 30W, between Line 30 and Line 50 are 4th Infantry Division soldiers, for the most part. Except for the two names noted above, all are infantry related specialties, which rule them out as the unidentified casualties mentioned in our unit history files.

Research has not yet positively confirmed these men as the soldiers mentioned in the story. I never knew either of these men, but 30 years after their deaths, I find myself consumed with confirming the identities of these two men. Hopefully, with time I can find some closure in this story, and recognize our unknowns.

Secondary Identity Confirmation Received!

PFC Santos was confirmed as a casualty of 6-29 FA by Albert Jasquez, former A/3-8 Infantry.

1LT Warnett was confirmed by Tom LaCombe, former B/3-12 Infantry, AND Jim Lehmann, B/6-29 FA Medic.

