



KENNETH ARTHUR SHANNON

(SEPTEMBER 22, 1938 - MARCH 15, 1964)



Army
First
Lieutenant



Transportation,
Rotary Wing Aviation
Unit Commander



Aviator



Delta Aviation
Battalion



114th Aviation
Company

Years of Service: 30 NOV 1961 - 15 MAR 1964

Medals & Awards:

Bronze Star

Purple Heart

Air Medal

National Defense Service Medal

Vietnam Service Medal

Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation

Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal

One Overseas Service Bar



First Lieutenant Kenneth Shannon joined the United States Army in 1961, and completed pilot training for the UH-1-B helicopter in February, 1964. In Vietnam, 1LT Shannon was assigned to the 114th Aviation Company, 1st Aviation Brigade at Vinh Long, serving as a Rotary Wing Aviation Unit Commander. Just a few days later, 1LT Shannon embarked on his final mission, piloting a helicopter over the Bac Lieu Province, near the village of Gai Rai. He received an Air Medal posthumously, as well as a Bronze Star for Valor, with the Combat Distinguishing Device for "exemplary gallantry in action." The Vinh Long Army airfield was subsequently renamed the Shannon-Wright Compound in honor of 1LT Shannon and P5 Wyley Wright (KIA March 9, 1964), the 114th's first casualties.

Kenneth Shannon was born in Forest, Virginia, to Nellie Porter and Laron DeFerris "L. D." Shannon, Jr. Kenneth attended E. C. Glass High School and was a member of Memorial Christian Church. Shannon's father shared the rank of First Lieutenant with his son, and served as a fighter pilot in the Army during World War II. He later retired as the vice-president of Barker-Jennings, a wholesale hardware company. Kenneth attended Virginia Polytechnic Institute, serving as the Captain of Cadet Company E during his senior year, and graduated in 1961. While still a student, Kenneth married Ginger Campbell of Lynchburg in 1959. They had two children: L. D. Shannon III and Laura DeLong Shannon. In numerous posts, Ginger Shannon Young has commemorated her late husband, expressing: "Your death at 25 years of age, on March 15, 1964, left you forever young in my memories, forever loved in my heart, forever remembered and forever honored for serving and giving your all to our country."