

Jacksonville Beach's Fallen Wartime Veterans



Operation Iraqi Freedom

CPL Marcus W. Preudhomme
(Top Left)



Korean War

PFC Phillip O. Hammond (MIA)
(Top Right)



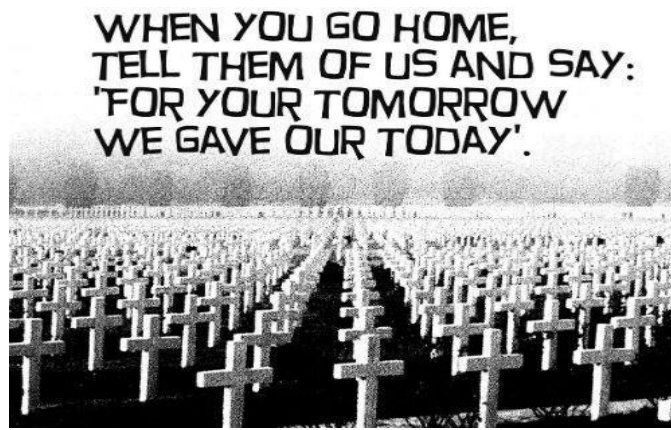
Vietnam War

PFC John H. Franks
(Bottom Left)



We ask you to remember each of them because they all called Jacksonville Beach their home. They too, worked and played on the streets of Jacksonville Beach, they walked to school with their best friends and shared dreams of what they wanted to do for the summer and in life. Their dreams were endless but none of those dreams were ever fulfilled..... because the course of history altered them.

So as we approach Veterans Day 2021, we salute and honor and vow to always remember our fallen Jacksonville Beach Heroes; Marcus Preudhomme, Phillip Hammond and Johnny Franks and all the Brave Military Veterans who have served this great nation especially those who died defending our country's freedom!



This information package is for Jacksonville Beach's three Fallen Wartime Veterans/Heroes who are nominated for Veterans Day 2021. This information packet includes a short summary of who they were and the sacrifices they made for our community and country. ~Lenny Jevic, BVMP Historian

Operation Iraqi Freedom

Cpl Marcus Preudhomme

Marcus Preudhomme's goal to become a conference champion in wrestling eluded him as a senior at Fletcher High School.

A four-year letterman, Preudhomme worked as hard as anyone on his team, said George Paugh, Preudhomme's former wrestling coach at Fletcher.

But a skin infection kept the former Fletcher co-captain off the mats for the 2004 Gateway Conference tournament.

"He never did quite achieve the glory he wanted in wrestling," said Paugh, a Jacksonville Beach resident.

"But when he got into the Marine Corps, I think he found it."

Marcus worked as a cook at the Beach Hut Café when he was 16 years old, he learned how to cook from his father, Jean Francois.

Marcus followed his older brother, Chris, into the Marine Corps. Chris Preudhomme, also a Fletcher High grad, served a tour of duty in Iraq in 2003.

The 2004 Fletcher High graduate was a highly decorated Marine who was among three Marines killed June 26, 2008 in a suicide bomb attack 30 miles west of Baghdad, Iraq.

Preudhomme, an administrative clerk with Fox Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, and his commanding officers, Lt. Col. Max Galeai, 42, and Capt. Phil Dykeman, 38, were attending a meeting of tribal sheiks in the town of Karmah in Anbar province when the attacker, reportedly dressed as an Iraqi policeman, detonated an explosive belt inside a municipal building.

At least 22 people were killed in the blast, including the town's top official, according to U.S. military officials. The Sunni insurgent group al-Qaeda in Iraq has claimed responsibility for the bombing, the U.S. military said.

Prior to his tour of duty in Iraq, Preudhomme had served in Afghanistan, according to his Marine Corps record.

His awards include the Purple Heart, the Combat Action Ribbon, two Navy Meritorious Unit Commendations, the Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, the Iraq Campaign medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal and two Sea Service Deployment Ribbons.

Marcus was buried at Oaklawn Cemetery, Jacksonville, FL.



Refs:

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/98115287/marcus-william-preud_homme

<https://thefallen.militarytimes.com/marine-cpl-marcus-w-preudhomme/3608729>

Beaches Leader Article: Former Fletcher High wrestler found niche in Marine Corps by Johnny Woodhouse

PFC Phillip O. Hammond

The Florida native attended Fletcher High School in 1946 and 1947, before enlisting in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1948 at age 17. He was stationed at Guam with the 5th Marine Regiment when the Korean War broke out in 1950. He landed at Inchon on October 1950 and was wounded in action a month later while assigned to the 7th Marine Regiment. He was declared missing in action on Dec. 6, 1950, during the Chosin Reservoir Campaign and presumed dead in 1953. His remains were never found.

His decorations include the Purple Heart with two gold stars and the Combat Action Ribbon. He was 19.

Summary of Action: On November 27, 1950, members of the 1st Marine Division were positioned in Yudam-ni, on the western side of the Chosin Reservoir in northeast North Korea when Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) launched a sudden and massive attack against U.S. forces at the reservoir. The Marines defended their position at Yudam-ni for several days, but the overwhelming size of the CCF made the position untenable. On December 1, the 1st Marines began a fighting withdraw from Yudam-ni toward Hagaru-ri, located south at the base of the Chosin Reservoir. Lead elements of the withdraw began to arrive at Hagaru-ri on December 2, while it took until December 4 for the rearguard to reach the town. The 1st Marines met the 31st Regimental Combat Team at Hagaru-ri, which had withdrawn from the east side of the Chosin Reservoir. Soon after the U.S. troops' arrival, the CCF surrounded Hagaru-ri, and U.S. leaders decided to have their units attempt to breakout and withdraw further south to Hamhung, where they could be evacuated from the peninsula. All through the fighting withdraw, the CCF established roadblocks, segmented the U.S. columns, and fired down from high points around the road, leading to heavy casualties among the men retreating from Chosin.

Private First Class Phillip Oliver Hammond, who joined the U.S. Marine Corps from Florida, was a member of Company I, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division. On the night of December 6-7, the Marine withdrawal column was moving through an area known as “Hellfire Valley,” about halfway from Hagaru-ri to Koto-ri, when CCF troops fired on the Marines from the high ground around the valley. Whenever the withdrawal column stopped, the Chinese advanced and engaged the Marines at close range. Fighting in Hellfire Valley was intense, and the U.S. suffered heavy casualties before pushing back the CCF and moving on to Koto-ri. Private First Class Hammond went missing in action during the fighting in Hellfire Valley on December 6. He was never reported as a prisoner of war, and his remains have not been recovered or identified among those returned to U.S. custody after the war.

Private First Class Hammond is memorialized on the Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific.



Refs:

<https://www.koreanwar.org/html/12026/korean-war-project-florida-670311-pfc-phillip-oliver-hammond>

<https://dpaa-mil.sites.crmforce.mil/dpaaProfile?id=a0Jt0000006RrTkEAK>

PFC John H. Franks

A 1966 Fletcher High School graduate, Johnny Franks played college baseball at Chipola Junior College and Florida State University before enlisting in the Army in July 1970. The son of a Jacksonville Beach police chief, Franks was assigned to the 504th Military Police Battalion in Vietnam, the only combat unit of its kind in the war. He was killed on April 10, 1971, after the three-person, V-100 armored vehicle he was riding in rolled over during a convoy escort mission near the border of Laos.

His remains were buried April 17, 1971, at H. Warren Smith Cemetery in Jacksonville Beach. He was 22.

Forever honored on the Vietnam Memorial Wall on Panel 4W, Line 115.

Commendations

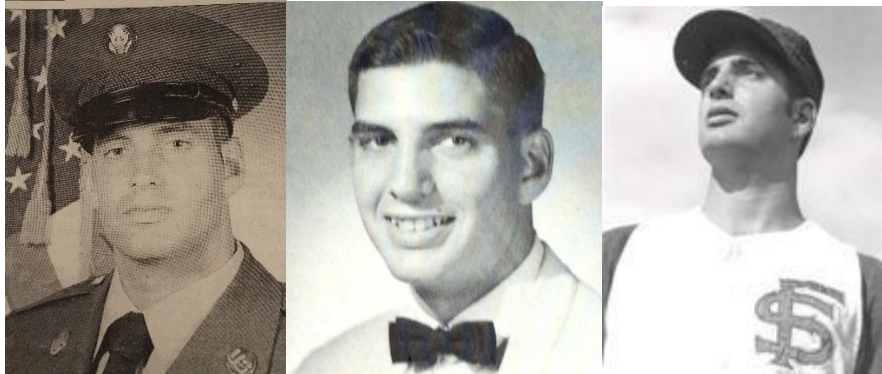
- ★ National Defense Service Medal
- ★ Vietnam Campaign Medal
- ★ Vietnam Service Medal
- ★ Army Presidential Unit Citation
- ★ Vietnam Gallantry Cross
- ★ Army Good Conduct

A remembrance left on John Franks' VVMF Wall of Faces page:

POSTED BY: RAY LEAPTROT LONELY BEACH

John Franks and I served together at Phu Bai. We hit it off right away and became very good friends. We are both southerners. John, some of the things we talked about doing when we got back to "The World" I did. Many I didn't do. One I did was to never forget you. In 84 my job took me to Jacksonville for four months to work on a railroad project. Many a night I stood on the beach and thought about you. I cried. I thought about how your hometown must have changed since you left for Nam and about how my life would have been better had our friendship been allowed to continue. I'm told that God has a plan. Since Nam and you guys

were taken out of our lives I sometimes can't fathom such a plan. Seems cruel and unjust. I miss you and Jake alot. thought about you guys alot over the years. I'll never forget you John..



REFS:

<https://www.nolefan.org/summary/ba1969.html>

<https://www.vvmf.org/Wall-of-Faces/17055/JOHN-H-FRANKS/>

Special Thanks

~Many thanks to Johnny Woodhouse for his sharing his amazing stories he wrote for us all in the Beaches Leader and for keeping the memories of our local veterans who paid the ultimate sacrifice alive and never to be forgotten. Johnny's stories helped inspire me to undertake this project!

~Thanks for the strong support from the Beaches Veterans Memorial Park committee, American Legion Posts 316 & 129, American Legion Auxiliary Units 316 & 129, VFW 3270, Jean Ribault Chapter, NSDAR.

~Thanks to Operations Manager, John Graham, and his creative team of professionals at Florida TransCor for partnering with me to develop these beautiful honor street signs.