

Jacksonville Beach Fallen Wartime Veterans



Vietnam War

SPC5 Jimmie E. Keith
US Army (Top Right)



Korean War

PFC. William L. Robinson "Lester"
US Army (Bottom Left)



World War II

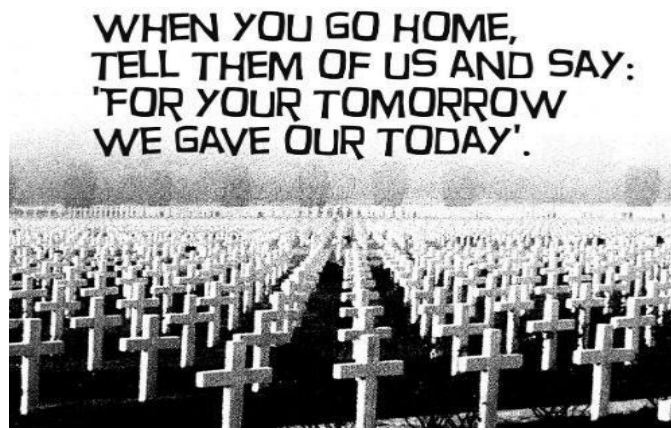
PFC Clarence E. Hurst –
US Marines (Top Left)



Jacksonville Beach Fallen Heroes

This information package is for three Jacksonville Beach Fallen Wartime Veterans/Heroes who are nominated for Memorial Day 2024 "Signs of Honor". This information packet includes a summary of who they were and the sacrifices they made for our community and country.

We ask you to remember each of them because they called Jacksonville Beach their home. They lived, 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.



As we approach Memorial Day 2024, we salute, honor and vow to always remember our fallen Jacksonville Beach heroes; Pfc. Clarence E. Hurst, USMC; Pfc. William Lester Robinson, USA; and SPC5 Jimmie E. Keith, USA as well as all the fallen veterans who have died defending our country's freedom! ~Lenny Jevic, BVMP Historian

World War II

Pfc. Clarence E. Hurst, USMC

Clarence E. Hurst, the son of Mike and Arlie Maistros of 330 Pablo Ave., Jacksonville Beach, enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in July 1941.

He was a member of the Marine Corps detachment aboard the USS Wasp when the aircraft carrier was torpedoed and sunk in the southwest Pacific on Sept. 15, 1942.

In December 1943, Pfc. Hurst, an automatic rifleman with the 1st Marine Regiment, participated in the attack and capture of the Cape Gloucester airfields in New Britain as part of the Bismark Archipelago Campaign.

On May 11, 1945, while serving as an ammo tech during the Battle of Okinawa, he was severely wounded in action, incurring 3rd degree burns to his entire body. He was medically evacuated to the USS Bottineau, where he succumbed to his wounds without regaining consciousness.

His remains were initially interred at the 1st Marine Division Cemetery on Okinawa and reinterred at Warren Smith Cemetery in 1948. He was a member of Greater Beaches VFW Post 3270.

Pfc. Clarence E. Hurst's commendations:

- ★ Purple Heart
- ★ Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with one gold star
- ★ American Defense Service Medal
- ★ World War II Victory Medal

Sign of Honor Sponsor: Greater Beaches VFW 3270, Bill Pugh, Commander

Location of Sign of Honor: Pablo Ave/4th St (parallel with Pablo Ave)

**Pvt. C. E. Hurst
Fatally Wounded
In South Pacific**

Mrs. Mike Maistros of 230 Pablo Avenue, Jacksonville Beach, received a message this week from the War Department that her son, Pvt. Clarence Edward Hurst of the Marine Corps has been killed in action in the South Pacific.

Private Hurst, 23, had been in the South Pacific for the past two years and previously served in the European area. He enlisted before Pearl Harbor.

He was among survivors of the Aircraft Carrier Wasp, torpedoed in the southwest Pacific on September 15, 1942. Later he was inducted into Greater Beaches Post 3270, Veterans of Foreign Wars.

He is survived by his step-father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Mike Maistros of Jacksonville Beach; his grandmother, Mrs. M. C. Sweat of Lake City; five aunts, Mrs. L. E. House of Jacksonville, Mrs. W. A. Davis of Clewiston, Mrs. A. B. Moody of Lake City, Mrs. W. Wilmot of White Springs and Mrs. J. Hines, of Akron, Ohio; two uncles, William Sweat of White Springs and Dr. A. C. Sweat, U. S. Coast Guard, serving overseas.



Clarence E. Hurst headstone, H. Warren Smith Cemetery, Jacksonville Beach, FL
His Epitaph reads:

*He gave his all for country and our lord, for you and me,
for those as yet unborn for freedom and for liberty.
I pray he gained his final goal with God the Lord of All.
Mother*

Refs:

- ~Find a Grave.com
- ~Beaches Leader
- ~Beaches Museum
- ~Ancestry.com
- ~Johnny Woodhouse, Military Historian

Korean War

Pfc. William L. “Lester” Robinson, US Army

Pfc. William L. Robinson of the U.S. Army’s 2nd Infantry Division, 9th Infantry Regiment, was the first Korean War casualty from the Jacksonville Beaches. A resident of Jacksonville Beach, Robinson grew up in Mayport and dropped out of Fletcher High School to join the U.S. Army in 1948.

In June 1950, he was stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington, when President Harry S. Truman authorized the use of American ground forces in South Korea.

A heavy weapons infantryman who manned a 30-caliber machine gun, Pfc. Robinson, 19 years old, was mortally wounded on Aug. 10, 1950. During a strong counterattack by the enemy on Company D's positions, four enemy soldiers penetrated the defensive lines and engaged two members of the company at close quarters.

Observing this, Robinson, with complete indifference for his personal safety, left the security of his foxhole and dashed to the assistance of his hard-pressed comrades. Engaging the enemy in hand-to-hand combat he killed two of them and enabled his comrades to kill the other two.

In this gallant action, Pfc. Robinson sustained mortal wounds. The intrepidity and selflessness of Pfc. Robinson in sacrificing his life for his comrades provides a lasting tribute to himself and to the Infantry and are in keeping with the highest ideals of military service.

For his gallantry in action, Pfc. Robinson received the Silver Star Medal (posthumously) and the Purple Heart. He had only been in Korea for 7 days prior to his death.

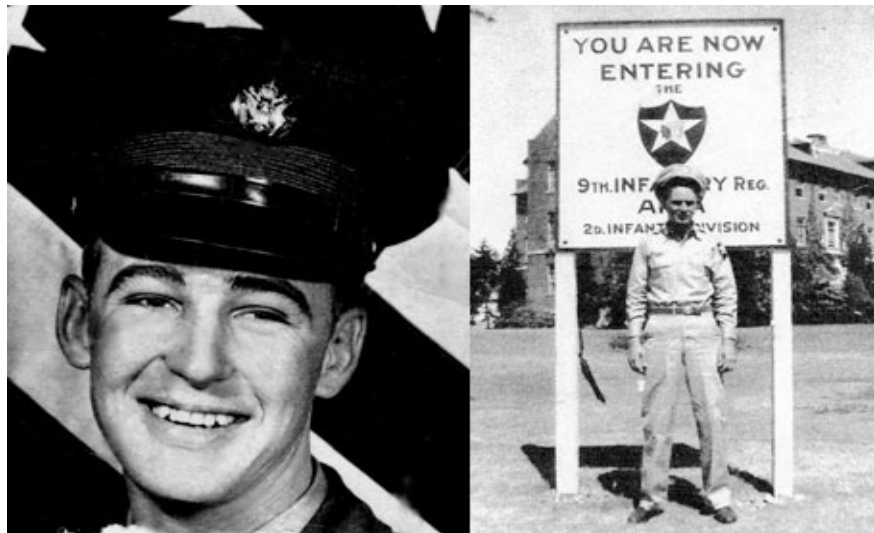
Pfc. William L. Robinson awards/commendations

- ★ Silver Star
- ★ Purple Heart
- ★ Combat Infantryman Badge
- ★ Marksmanship Badge
- ★ Korean Service Medal
- ★ National Defense Service Medal
- ★ Republic of Korea Presidential Citation

- ★ Republic of Korea War Service Medal
- ★ United Nations Service Medal
- ★ Army Presidential Unit Citation
- ★ Army Good Conduct Medal

His remains were returned to his hometown and buried at Warren Smith Cemetery in Jacksonville Beach. He was a member of Greater Beaches VFW Post 3270.

Sign of Honor Sponsor: Greater Beaches VFW 3270, Bill Pugh, Commander
 Location of Sign of Honor: 8th Ave S/9th St S (Parallel with 9th St. S)



Refs:

~Patricia Robinson – Sister-In-Law
~Find a Grave Website
~Beaches Leader
~Beaches Museum
~Ancestry.com
~Johnny Woodhouse, Military Historian

Vietnam War

SPC5 Jimmie E. Keith of 2120 9th Ave. N., Jacksonville Beach, enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1967 and was stationed in Germany for a year before receiving his orders for Vietnam in the summer of 1968. A quarry specialist with a combat engineer battalion in Binh Dinh Province, Specialist 5 Keith completed a 12-month tour of duty with Army's 73rd Engineer Company before extending his overseas tour for another 90 days.

On Aug. 8, 1969, approximately one month before returning to the U.S., Specialist Keith lost his balance while working on a rock crusher and was fatally injured. He was only 21 years old.

His remains are buried in H. Warren Smith Cemetery.

Spc5 Jimmie E. Keith's awards/commendations

- ★ Bronze Star
- ★ Army Good Conduct Medal
- ★ National Defense Service Medal
- ★ Vietnam Campaign Medal
- ★ Vietnam Service Medal with one bronze service star
- ★ Army Presidential Unit Citation
- ★ Vietnam Gallantry Cross
- ★ Military Merit Medal (highest decoration bestowed to enlisted personnel by the Republic of Vietnam)

Keith is honored on the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Wall in Washington DC.
Panel 20w, Line 113.

Sign of Honor Sponsor: The Jean Ribault Chapter, NSDAR

Location of Sign of Honor: 9th Ave N/22nd St. N (Parallel with 9th Ave N)



REFS:

~Johnny Woodhouse, Military Historian

~Pat Boatwright & Shirley Smith – SPC5 Jimmie Keith's Gold Star Sisters

~Beaches Leader

~Beaches Museum

~Find a Grave.com

~Ancestry.com

Special Thanks

~Many thanks to Johnny Woodhouse for sharing his amazing stories which he wrote for all of us 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 utmost support from the Beaches Veterans Memorial Park committee, American Legion Posts 316 & 129, American Legion Auxiliary Units 316 & 129, Greater Beaches VFW Post 3270, Jean Ribault Chapter, NSDAR.

~Many thanks to the Gold Star Family Members who shared stories of their loved ones with me. We will never forget the sacrifices these families have made. A debt we can never repay! You all are forever in our hearts!

~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.

~Thank you to Mayor Hoffman and City Councilmembers of Jacksonville Beach; Mayor Brown and City Council members of Neptune Beach, and Mayor Ford and City Commission members of Atlantic Beach for supporting the Beaches Signs of Honor Project along with their continued support of our local veterans, past and present.