

Barnes, Robert Crozier Jr. (Rob), 1st Platoon

4 June 1944 - 30 May 1968

Santa Fe Nat'l Cemetery, NM

Robert Crozier Barnes, Jr. was born on 4 June 1944 in Carmi, IL. He graduated from Highland High School and attended the University of New Mexico, where he conferred a bachelor's degree in Business Administration in 1967. He served as battalion executive officer in the NROTC unit at UNM where he received the Corps' award as the outstanding midshipman. He arrived in Vietnam on January 27, 1968 and served with 1st Marine Division, 1st Recon Battalion, B Company. Basic Infantry Officer. 2nd Lieutenant Barnes was killed on 30 May 1968 by hostile gunfire in Quang Nam Province near UTM grid AT816862. He was with Recon Team Aldbrook 13 KM SW of Hai Van Bridge. He earned the following awards: National Defense Service Medal, Combat Infantryman Badge, Purple Heart, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal.

Barnes' father was in command of the Navy Special Weapons Facility at Kirtland and chief of what is now the stockpile management of Sandia Base from 1962-1965. At the time of his son's death he was Commander of Lake Mead Base Nev. Memorial services were held at Sandia Base Chapel. Robert Barnes was buried with full military honors at the National Cemetery in Santa Fe, NM.

Second Lieutenant Barnes is honored on Panel 63W, Row 14 of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Barnes is also listed on the 1st Reconnaissance Battalion Association memorial at the Semper Fidelis Memorial Park, National Museum of the Marine Corps.

1st Recon Battalion's Command Chronology for May 1968:

A nine-man recon patrol led by 2ndLt Barnes was inserted into Elephant Valley at 0900 26 May and spent the next four days observing enemy activities in the patrol area. They were to be extracted on the morning of 30 May.

Extract from Post-operation Report:

SYNOPSIS: This patrol covered a period of 98 hours with 1 contact with an estimated 40 VC. Contact resulted in 1 USMC KIA, 1 USMC WIA, and 2 VC KIA confirmed. 1 FM [artillery fire mission] and 1 airstrike were called with unknown results.

"300800H at AT816872 - Estimated 40 VC engaging patrol, khakis and black PJ's; AK-47'S and M16'S and packs. The patrol was in their extract LZ when they observed 2 VC moving down a streambed. The patrol took the VC under fire, resulting in 2 VC KIA confirmed, almost immediately the patrol came under fire from 40 VC, resulting in 1 USMC KIA and 1 USMC WIA. Arty and fixed wing were utilized with unknown results. The fixed wing and the birds which extracted the patrol took heavy fire."

Although the only available copy of the Situation Report associated with the incident (1st Recon Bn SITREP 151-68) is nearly illegible, it is clear that the extraction effort involved A-4s from Marine Attack Squadron 121, 4 (perhaps 6) UH-1E gunships, and two CH-46s. CH-46A tail number 152518 is known to

have taken hits while on the ground but it appears there were no casualties other than 2ndLt Barnes and the enlisted Marine wounded in the exchange described above.

Personal Reflections about Robert Barnes:

Sandia/Albuquerque NM area newspaper (Tribune) clipping without a date (approx. June 1968).

Killed in Vietnam Patrol

Lt. Robert Barnes Was Top Marine Reservist

The top student officer and outstanding Marine Corps reservist graduating from the University of New Mexico last year was killed in combat in Vietnam, Sandia Base reported. Second Lt. Robert Crozier Barnes Jr., 23, was killed while on patrol May 30 with the First Reconnaissance Battalion of the First Marine Division. He received top Marine Corps Association honors last year when he was commissioned. The commandant of the Eighth Naval district presented him with a Marine officers sword awarded by the Marine Corps Reserves Officers Association of Albuquerque.

He also won the Corps' award as the outstanding midshipman. A 1963 graduate of Highland High School, Lt. Barnes received his bachelor's degree in business administration from UNM last year.

Blond, blue eyed, well built, he was described by his senior Marine Instructor as "a real man ... an outstanding student ... an outstanding Marine." "He was the type you liked as soon as you met him," added Maj. Jerry Bowlin, senior instructor. "He had leadership potential, he showed initiative and he was well thought of by his peers." Barnes was battalion executive officer during his senior year. Barnes' father was in command of the Navy Special Weapons Facility at Kirtland and chief of what is now the stockpile management of Sandia Base from 1962-1965. He is now Commander of Lake Mead Base Nev. Memorial services will be at Sandia Base Chapel. Burial will be in the National Cemetery in Santa Fe.