

Special Forces Association Chapter XVI
Has the honor and the privilege of perpetuating the memory of

Major William R. Card, Jr. U. S. Army Special Forces
22 October 1930 - 1 March 1971

Major William R. Card, Jr. was born on 22 October 1930 in Brooklyn, New York. He graduated from Elmhurst Agriculture High School in Queens, NY during June of 1948.

MAJ Card enlisted in the Regular Army at Brooklyn, NY on 25 June 1948. After finishing Basic Airborne Training he was assigned to the 11th Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky and attended Pathfinder School. He was serving with the 7th Ranger Company at Fort Benning, Georgia when the company was deactivated. At his request, he entered the conflict in Korea with the 187th Regimental Combat Team (Airborne) to serve on the Pathfinder Team.

MAJ Card joined Special Forces after the Korean Conflict and while stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina was assigned to the 8231st Army Special Operational Detachment, which was shipped to Camp Drake, Japan in 1956. The 8231st ASOD and the 14 Special Forces Operational Detachment relocated to Fort Buckner, Okinawa during June 1957 to form the 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne). MAJ Card while with the 8231st ASOD and 1st SFGA completed the Officer's Candidate Series 10 and 20 correspondence courses and was awarded a Reserve Officers Commission. He continued on active duty as a Non-commissioned Officer. He was high altitude low opening parachute (HALO) qualified and received his self-contained underwater breathing apparatus (SCUBA) qualification from Underwater Demolition Team (UDT) instructors in the Philippines. MAJ Card served two tours in Laos on Operation Hotfoot/Whitestar missions, one Training Laotian Royal Army soldiers and one training Lao Theung tribesmen on guerrilla warfare. He served in the Republic of Vietnam on the Civilian Irregular Defense Group project, the in-country long range patrol, Project Delta, mission, and the MACV-SOG project that interdicted the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos. When the United States committed conventional forces to the Vietnam War, the Army's need for commissioned Officers increased. MAJ Card was called to active duty in his Reserve Officer's rank of Captain in 1966. He returned to the States to attend the Infantry Officer's Course, after which he was assigned as an instructor to the Military Academe at West Point. Returning to Southeast Asia in 1968, MAJ Card was assigned to the 46th Special Forces Company (Airborne) in Thailand. He commanded Special Forces Teams loaned to the Central Intelligence Agency to train Laotian Commando Raiders for hit and run attacks on Peoples Army of Vietnam targets in eastern Laos. They re-outfitted and re-trained combat decimated units from LTG Vang Pao's Hmong Army that defended the Plaine des Jarres in Laos. The teams provided basic training for Unity Battalions, which were composed of Thai volunteers for duty in Laos.

MAJ Card was killed at Prachinburi Camp in Thailand on 1 March 1971 by a friendly booby trap, which he had previously ordered disarmed. The errant soldier who disobeyed the order was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment. MAJ Card was survived by his wife, Mrs. Jean Card, a son John Michael now a professor at Dartmouth College, his father, William Sr, mother, Florence Albert Card, and two sisters, Ann Card Ellis and Gladys Card Arnold.

MAJ "Willie" Card's awards and decorations include the Silver Star Medal, Legion of Merit Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Army of Occupation Medal, National Defense Medal, Korea Service Medal with two Battle Stars, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with two Battle Stars, United Nations Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Presidential Unit Citation with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Combat Infantryman's Badge with Star, Master Parachutist Badge, Pathfinder Badge, Ranger Tab, Vietnamese Gallantry Cross, Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation, Thai, Vietnamese, and other foreign Parachutist Badges.