



1<sup>ST</sup> CAVALRY  
DIVISION

# ROBERT IRVING BALLARD

"B" Company, Executive Officer, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion (Mechanized), 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry  
First Lieutenant, O2, OF110105, MOS 1542

Home of Record: West Monroe, LA

Date of Birth: February 23, 1943, Age at time of loss: 24, Single

1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division (Airmobile), Binh Dinh Province, Republic of Vietnam

Start of Tour: September 1, 1967, Date of Casualty: February 3, 1968, Days in Country: 155

Casualty Type A1, MFW, Panel 37E - Row 003



1<sup>ST</sup> BATTALION  
50<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY



"B" COMPANY  
EXECUTIVE  
OFFICER  
CALL SIGN:  
"BOLD  
BARBARIAN 5"

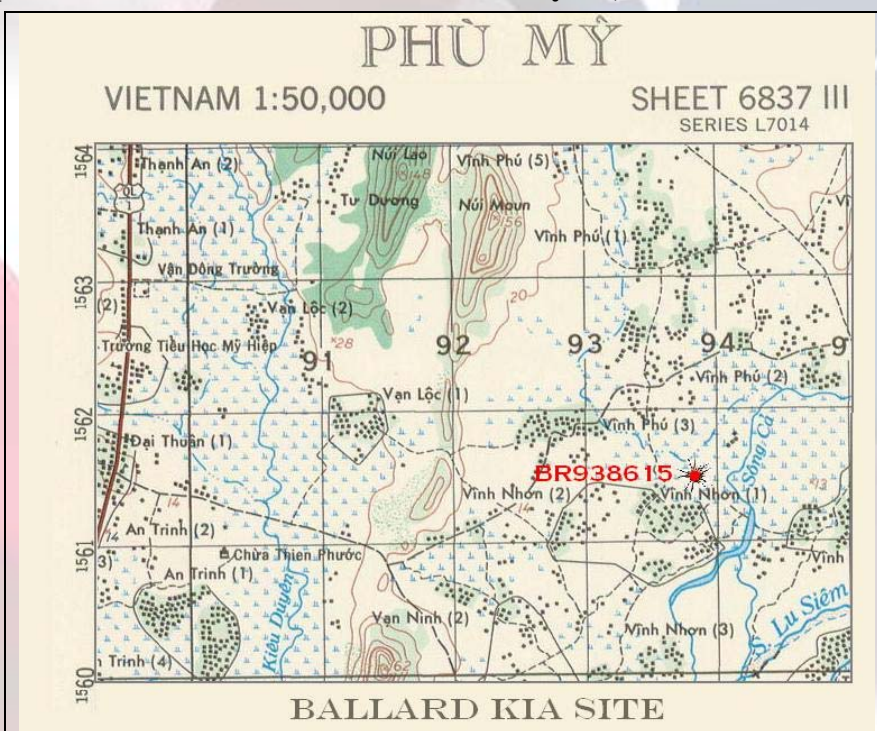
As The "Bravo" Company Executive Officer (Second in Command) Bob Ballard could have spent his time back in the relative safety of LZ Uplift...but the Tet Offensive was raging in Binh Dinh Province and Bob's proven bravery manifest itself once again as he was with his troops on the field of battle Southeast of Phu My on February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Former Bravo Company Commander Dick Guthrie witnessed the fight from the air. The enemy had dug in along a vegetated hedge row north of the village of Vinh Nhon, and was delivering Rocket and small arms fire from several strong points. Guthrie, who had rotated to serve as the S-3 "Air" Officer for the Battalion, flew in with the C&C Chopper to evacuate the severely wounded officer who had been struck by a B40 rocket...which had not "armed". The rocket entered Bob Ballard's chest through the arm pit hole in his flack vest.



Bob Ballard died of his wounds without regaining consciousness. He was awarded the Silver Star for his actions. Ballard had previously been awarded Silver Stars for his actions in the Battle of Tam Quan on December 10, 1967, and during the An Lac(2) portion of the Battle of An Tinh on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1968.

A map of the location of the action on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, North of Vinh Nhon, is shown below:



Continued...



1<sup>ST</sup> LIEUTENANT



ARMOR

Pictured below-left are the Officers from "B" Company...sometime prior to December 10<sup>th</sup> of 1967. Left to right: Jim Wonsick, Weapons Platoon; Bob Ballard, 3rd Platoon; Brian Thomas, 1st Platoon; Howie Pontuck, Executive Officer (KIA 8 Mar 68); Dick Guthrie, Commanding Officer; Thurman Pike, 2nd Platoon; Rennerfelt, Artillery Forward Observer. Below-right is Bob Ballard while with "A" Co. during the summer of 1967 at Fort Hood Texas.



Bob Ballard is buried near his childhood home of West Monroe, Louisiana, at the New Chapel Hill Baptist Church Cemetery, Ouachita Parish, Arkansas Road & Slocum Road (Picture below)



**BOB BALLARD'S AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:**



Combat Infantry Badge



Silver Star  
With two  
Oak Leaf Clusters



Air  
Medal



Purple  
Heart



National  
Defense



Vietnam  
Service



Vietnam  
Campaign