



173RD
AIRBORNE
BRIGADE



1ST BATTALION
50TH INFANTRY



"HQ" COMPANY

SCOUTS

1/50 INF

SCOUTS
PLATOON



SPECIALIST
5TH CLASS



INFANTRY

STEVEN CRAIG OWEN

"HQ" Company, Scouts Platoon, 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry
Specialist 5th Class, E5, RA19859217, MOS 71B30

Home of Record: Long Beach, CA

Date of Birth: April 25, 1947, Age at time of loss: 22, Single

173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate), Binh Dinh Province, Republic of Vietnam

Start of Tour: April 1, 1969, Date of Incident: May 30, 1969, Date of Casualty: May 31, 1969,

Days in Country: 60, Casualty Type A2, Hostile OED, Panel 23W - Row 029

The incident where Steven Owen was initially wounded was an ambush on May 30, 1969. An enemy Claymore Mine was detonated as his Scout Platoon, Point Element moved out, heading North, from a small village they had just swept in a search operation. Seven soldiers were dusted off via Med-Evac helicopter, 2 of whom were killed...Virgil Hamilton was killed outright and Jerome Collins died of his wounds shortly after. Of the 5 others who were wounded, Steven Owen died the next day of his wounds.

The remaining Scout Platoon elements fired on two Viet Cong to the Southwest, killing one and capturing the 2nd. The 50th Infantry's Short Range Ambush Platoon (SRAP) moved two of their machine gun equipped boats into a blocking position on the nearby Lake Dam Tra O to cut off the lake as an escape route. The SRAP elements received 4 or 5 rounds of sniper fire from the West with no casualties and returned fire with unknown results. A second adult male with no ID was detained and removed for questioning.



A map of the location where Hamilton, Collins and Owen were killed is shown below:



Continued...

Steve Owen's mother, Trudy Potter of California, shared with us that her son was drawn to volunteer for service and sought out duty in Vietnam...stating: "He said if he didn't go, someone else would have to". In keeping with his desire to serve his country in Combat, even though he was a Clerk Typist by specialty, he was an active Volunteer with the scout Platoon. He is fondly remembered by Association Member and former Scout Platoon Member Terry "Goat" Gauthier of Mississippi.

Steve is buried at Forest Lawn Memorial Park, also known as Sunnyside Memorial Park and Mausoleum, 1500 E. San Antonio, Long Beach, Los Angeles County, California.

STEVE OWEN'S AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:



HQ 173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)
GENERAL ORDERS (NUMBER AND DATE UNKNOWN)
1969

SPECIALIST 5 STEVEN OWEN DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF BY OUTSTANDING MERITORIOUS SERVICE IN CONNECTION WITH GROUND OPERATIONS AGAINST A HOSTILE FORCE IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM DURING THE PERIOD FROM JANUARY TO MAY 1969. THROUGH HIS UNTIRING EFFORTS AND PROFESSIONAL ABILITY, HE CONSISTENTLY OBTAINED OUTSTANDING RESULTS. HE WAS QUICK TO GRASP THE IMPLICATIONS OF NEW PROBLEMS WITH WHICH HE WAS FACED AS A RESULT OF THE EVER-CHANGING SITUATIONS INHERENT IN THE COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATION AND TO FIND WAYS AND MEANS TO SOLVE THOSE PROBLEMS. THE ENERGETIC APPLICATION OF THIS EXTENSIVE KNOWLEDGE HAS MATERIALLY CONTRIBUTED TO THE EFFORTS OF THE UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM TO ASSIST THAT COUNTRY IN RIDDING ITSELF OF THE COMMUNIST THREAT TO ITS FREEDOM. SPECIALIST 5 OWEN'S INITIATIVE, ZEAL, SOUND JUDGMENT AND DEVOTION TO DUTY WERE IN THE HIGHEST TRADITION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY AND REFLECTED GREAT CREDIT ON HIM AND ON THE MILITARY SERVICE.



Bronze Star Army Commendation Purple Heart

Good Conduct National Defense Vietnam Service Vietnam Campaign