

## Doug Barnitz

Bill Clark, Ellen Isaly Clark, and I had an emotional few minutes at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC in April 2005. We searched for and found Doug Barnitz's name on the black wall on the National Mall in front of the Lincoln Memorial. As we stood there we thought retrospectively about who Doug was, his absence, and the sacrifice he made for our country. We remarked to each other how few of Upper Arlington's sons had died in Vietnam. How fortunate our community was to have had so many of our sons safe.

We searched for and found Doug vividly in our memories. He came from a big family and lived in a big house with various brothers and sisters. He lived a short but fulfilling life on Grenoble Road. We played kick ball together, threw snow balls at each other, played baseball with the neighborhood kids. Frustrated by his college experience at Ohio State and ready for some adventure and character building, Doug interrupted his progress in college and joined the army. Unlike many at this time of social unrest and protest against the war, he was not drafted but had the courage to go willingly. He was a college student transformed into a player on a military stage. I am sure that he brought his enthusiasm to his new role. Less than a year into his new career he and other members of the night patrol he led just south of North Vietnam were killed. It all happened so fast. Suddenly the conflict that was playing out painfully on the other side of the world and on television came home to Upper Arlington.

I remember going over to his house on the day the terrible news of his death arrived in the summer of 1969. He came from a military family that knew the risks of military service—especially in war time. This did not make his death any less painful to his family. I remember the shock on his parent's faces—the sky had fallen to the earth. The best years of his life were ahead of him. I think about the marriage he never got to have, the children he never got to be the father of, the Spring seasons he missed, and other wonderful things about the life he never got to live.

Thirty six years later his country remembers him and honors him in this stark but beautiful memorial. His friends miss him—our playmate and friend. His family still loves him. We will not forget him. He gave his life so that our country could further its values. He is and will continue to be our hero.

Patrick Dynes