

# Gordon Scott Wilson

Major  
480TH TAC FTR SQDN, 366TH TFW, 7TH AF  
United States Air Force  
03 June 1940 - 04 February 1974  
Hobart, Indiana  
Panel 12E Line 110



2 Sep 2003

Scotty Wilson was the best "stick" in the famous 480th Tac Fighter Squadron. The 480th was famous because in November of 1966 a total of eight Mig-21s had been shot down by anyone anywhere and the 480th had five of them. On November 21, 1966 Scotty was one of the front-seaters in a four-ship formation of F-4Cs hand-picked to fly against two targets chosen by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The targets



were JCS 51.10 and JCS 22. JCS 22 was the Hanoi power plant. But the primary target that would be struck the next day was a large military complex north of but very close to "Bullseye" as Hanoi was referred to.

Scotty was a graduate of the United States Air Force Academy from which he entered USAF pilot training. In those days the F-4C Phantom II was just coming into the Air Force inventory. Official policy was for any newly graduated pilot with an assignment to F-4s to be assigned to the back seat. Scotty was assigned to the 559th TFS at MacDill AFB, part of the 12th TFW, as a "guy in back" before transitioning to the front seat prior to his assignment to the 480th TFS at Danang.

On 22 Nov 66 Dogwood flight launched at 0950 hours for North Vietnam. The flight had been reduced to three due to one airplane that wasn't flyable. Also, due to maintenance problems the flight took off in the order 3, 2 1. Rendezvous was at the KC-135 tanker track over Thailand. Scotty's back seater, 1st Lt. Joe Crecca refueled the Phantom. After drop-off from the tanker the flight of three headed toward the target.

Approaching a nav checkpoint Dogwood Lead turned to the left where a right turn had been expected. Scotty flew the airplane superbly and covered his leader's 6 o'clock. During the turn the leader asked how our navigation system was working. Inside Dogwood 02 Scotty asked his GIB (Guy In Back) if he knew where they were. Joe Crecca replied he could get them to the target if we could punch down through the clouds. Scotty replied to the leader that we had a good nav system to which the reply was, "Dogwood2, you have the lead".

Less than 15 seconds later Scotty's aircraft was hit by a Surface-to-Air missile (SAM) from dead astern. The airplane rolled left and right and then began to pitch up. Scotty yelled on the intercom, "Get out!" and ejected. Joe Crecca in the back seat followed suit.

When Crecca's parachute opened he saw Scotty in his chute less than a half-mile away. Scotty's arms and head were hanging down as though he was unconscious. Hanging in the sky right next to Scotty was the light brown and white cloud of a recently detonated SA-2. Scotty had been hit by fragments of a second missile fired from a different SAM site. At 500 feet above the ground and an angry mob of Vietnamese Crecca saluted and said aloud, "Goodbye, Scotty".

The remains of Gordon Scott Wilson were returned to the USA in April, 1986. He was interred in the cemetery of the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado on 22 Nov 1986 - twenty years to the day after he lost his life in the service of his country.



### **Notes from The Virtual Wall**

**This memorial is sponsored by Joseph Crecca, who as a First Lieutenant was flying "back seat" with 1st Lt Wilson. The "angry mob of Vietnamese" mentioned above captured Crecca when he landed; Crecca then survived 6 years and 3 months as a Prisoner of War. He was released on February 18, 1973. After his release Crecca returned to flying the F-4 Phantom II.**

**Scotty Wilson was carried as Missing in Action, being promoted twice, until the Secretary of the Air Force approved a Finding of Death for him on 04 Feb 1974. His remains were repatriated on 10 April 1986, with positive identification announced on 22 Oct 1986. As noted by Joe Crecca, Major Wilson's remains were interred in Plot 006-A-004, United States Air Force Academy Cemetery.**

**The photograph above dates from his Cadet days and was provided by the United States Air Force Academy Association of Graduates .**