

Fort Taber Flag To Honor New Bedford's Corporal Tiago Reis, Vietnam Veteran Killed In Action

During the month of September, the 48th Lights for Peace flag to fly at the Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Military Museum honors the memory of Tiago Reis of New Bedford who was killed in action while serving with the Marine Corps during the Vietnam War.

Reis was born on February 15, 1947 in St. Michael, the Azores, the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Luis Reis. He lived on Rivet Street in New Bedford, MA. Reis enlisted in the United States Marine Corps on December 15, 1965, at the age of 18, and began his active duty career on February 8, 1966.

Corporal Reis was killed in action on September 21, 1967, at the age of 20, while serving in the Vietnam War. According to a letter written by Second Lieutenant, U.S. Marine Corps, Assistant to Head, Casualty Section from the Department of the Navy, CPL Reis died "in the vicinity of Quang Tri, Republic of Vietnam as the result of fragmentation wounds sustained from a hostile mortar while participating in an operation against hostile forces."

"The Vietnam War was a long, costly and divisive conflict that pitted the communist government of North Vietnam against South Vietnam and its principal ally, the United States," according to history.com. "The conflict was intensified by the ongoing Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. More than 3 million people (including over 58,000 Americans) were killed in the Vietnam War, and more than half of the dead were Vietnamese civilians."

According to the website marines.mil, "As 1967 began, the 3d Marine Div. was fighting two wars: a conventional one along with DMZ, where division confronted division, and a counter guerrilla war in the rest of Quan Tri and Thua Thien province. Although committed to both campaigns, the situation forced the division to give priority to the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone)."

Quang Tri province, where corporal Reis was killed, was part of the DMZ. According to Wikipedia, "The Vietnamese Demilitarized Zone was a demilitarized zone at the 17th parallel in Quang Tri province that was established as the dividing line between the two countries i.e. North Vietnam and South Vietnam from 22 July 1954 to 2 July 1976 when Vietnam was officially divided into the two military gathering areas, which was intended to be sustained in the short term after the First Indochina War.

Corporal Tiago Reis served honorably in the United States Marine Corps and paid the ultimate sacrifice for his country.

Linda Ferreira, of Empire Ford of New Bedford, researches the life histories of area residents. American flags are provided by Empire Ford of New Bedford. Flags are raised by the staff at Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Military Museum. Those who would like to honor a local veteran in the future can contact Ferreira at lferreira@buyempireautogroup.com.