

The Ring of a Fallen Soldier: Patrick Edward Wynne

Objective/Purpose: To honor the service and memory of Patrick Edward Wynne and to return this personal item to his family.

Background: My name is Herbert G. Schaffner, son of Herbert Joseph Schaffner, a Vietnam vet who resides in Cold Spring, KY. This is my story of how the ring of a fallen American soldier came into my possession. The company I work for, Consortium Companies, Inc. 1438 Cox Ave, Erlanger, KY 41018, Ph: 859-647-9910 began a Joint-Venture operation in Southern China, Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, in 2005. In August of 2007 I relocated to this Southern China office, serving as Director of Information Technology. While there I met and married a wonderful Chinese woman. We recently attended a family gathering at the family home in the very southern part of China. While there her uncle shared a family story he personally remembered and had discussed within their family many times. This is the story my wife translated to me as her uncle told it.

Story from Chinese Family: Our family lived in North Vietnam during the Vietnam War, but we are Chinese citizens. During this time it was too difficult to feed our family as we were farmers. That is the reason we relocated to North Vietnam. During this time the war between South and North Vietnam started, we were all scared. Sometime in late summer 1966 American jets were flying over our area. There was a fire in the distance which we knew must have been a shot down plane. My father went to investigate and found an American pilot badly injured. My family took the injured pilot back to the village where he was cared for. We tried to do all we could to save the pilots life but was not successful. I was only a small boy at this time. Later the North Vietnam military would not allow Chinese to stay in Vietnam. They forced us to march our family back to China. The pilot had a ring on his finger that was kept by my father. We did not know what to do with the ring, but kept it. My father gave me this ring more than 25 years ago. For years I tried to find out that this ring belonged to, but had no means to do so as we could not speak or read English. I found translator to help me find out the name of the person on this ring; the inscription reads: Patrick Edward Wynne. I then took the ring to the US Consulate in Guangzhou where they would not or could not help me locate any family members. When my niece married the American man, I asked him if he was able to help. He was more than happy to do all he could. He quickly identified the ring as an Air Force Academy ring with a 1963 graduation date. He kept this ring in a safe place until he was able to travel back to the United States and that is the end of my story. I wish only the best to the family of Patrick Edward Wynne and hope they find peace and may God Bless them all and the man who helped us get this ring back to his family. Thank you and I have finished my wish.

The Chinese family has asked to remain anonymous.

Ring being returned: I brought the ring home to our company's headquarters in Erlanger, KY. There we researched and found the family of Patrick Edward Wynne. We discovered that Patrick had a brother, Michael Wynne, who also has a long and distinguished military service record. We were able to locate Michael Wynne and were fortunate to be able to speak directly with him on September 23, 2008. He expressed his sincere gratitude for this effort to return such an important personal item of his brothers. He mentioned that a monument was being dedicated to his brother on the Air Force Academy campus in October. Having this ring returned would make a comforting, personal addition to the dedication ceremony planned. We are in the process of determining the best and most practical way to "finish the journey" of this ring, spanning more than the mere 6,000 miles of distance and 42 years of time, and have it delivered to the family of Patrick Edward Wynne.

We all, everyone that has been involved and made aware of this endeavor, take a great deal of pride and consider it an honor to return a personal item of a fallen U.S. soldier.

WYNNE, PATRICK EDWARD

Name: Patrick Edward Wynne
Branch/Rank: United States Air Force/O2
Unit:
Date of Birth: 08 October 1941
Home City of Record: EAU GALLIE FL
Date of Loss: 08 August 1966
Country of Loss: North Vietnam
Loss Coordinates: 213300 North 1064600 East
Status (in 1973): Missing in Action
Category: 2
Aircraft/Vehicle/Ground: F4C #7560
Missions:
Other Personnel in Incident: Lawrence Golberg, remains returned
Refno: 0423
Source: Compiled by P.O.W. NETWORK from one or more of the following: raw data from U.S. Government agency sources, correspondence with POW/MIA families, published sources, interviews and CACCF = Combined Action Combat Casualty File.

REMARKS: 03/18/77 SRV RETURNED REMAINS TO PCOM
CACCF/CRASH/PILOT
Border Ha Bac/Lang Son 25miles SW of China
US Air Force Academy Graduate 1963
No further information available at this time.

Library of Congress files:
Presidential Direction on the Identification of Missing Servicemen
Name: Patrick E. Wynne
Subjects: Remains
Comments: Related message and agenda for 23 Jan 75 PW/MIA Task Group Meeting enclosed

