

Sgt Wilburn Leland Baxter

Born: 12/14/1923
Washington, IN
Died: 6/5/2005
Island

Period of Service: WW II,
Korea, Viet Nam
Cemetery 276 S
Sources: Wife Shirley, Carol
O'Neill

Entered the Army from Indiana in 1946.

Discharged November 22, 1947.

Reenlisted June, 1948

Retired May 31, 1967 after 20 years service. He was offered a promotion to reenlist at the end but it would have required another tour in Viet Nam so he opted to retire.

He worked mainly in the Quartermaster Corps, and also at refueling stations. One of his duties during the Viet Nam War was driving prisoners from one destination to another.

Wilburn enlisted in the Army during WW II but did not leave the US before his discharge in 1947. On reenlistment in 1948 he spent 8 weeks in training and was sent to Okinawa for two years, then two years in Korea, and then from 1952 to 1954 in France. After marrying Shirley whom he had met in Milwaukee, he did a second two year tour in Korea. Later, he spent three years in Germany 1961 -64. Germany was the only station that allowed his family to be with him; they had good housing and the food was cheap. After that his next overseas assignment was back in Viet Nam from 1965-66. His last posting was Ft Carson, Colorado, from which he was released in 1967.

His various postings during his service included Ft. McCallen, AL; the Philippines; Ft Knox, KY; Camp Lee, VA; Okinawa; Ft Bellvoir, VA; Korea; Ft Reilly, KS; Ft Carson, CO; France; Ft Sheridan IL; Ft Leonard Wood, MO; Korea; Ft Leonard Wood again; Ft Carson again; Germany; Ft Leonard Wood a third time; Viet Nam; Ft Carson once more for his discharge.

On August 27, 1955, he married Shirley Johnson who was the daughter of Lilly and Thorvald Johnson, at Trinity Church. They had four children, Lee, who works for the Town of Washington Island, Charles who had a naval career, and Betty and Edna. He originally came from southern Indiana.

After discharge, he worked for McCord's, a factory manufacturing car parts, but there were frequent layoffs, so he went to work for the Department of Highways in Indiana until his retirement.

After spending summers on Washington Island whenever possible, they planned to become permanent residents. However, before they could settle in Wilburn had to make several trips to Milwaukee for treatment of cancer he had developed from exposure to the Agent Orange used in Viet Nam. Wilburn mentioned that the vehicles they used were so covered with Agent Orange that the vehicles had turned orange. He died of cancer in 2005. The Army sent a plaque for the gravesite stating that Wilburn had served his country during three wars: WW II, Korea, and Viet Nam.

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