

Donald Edward Koelper

ON THE WALL: Panel 1E Line 43

This page Copyright© 1997-2018 www.VirtualWall.org Ltd.

PERSONAL DATA:

Home of Record: Northbrook, IL

Date of birth: 08/21/1931

MILITARY DATA:

Service Branch: United States Marine Corps

Grade at loss: O3

Rank: Posthumous Promotion as indicated

Promotion Note: None

ID No: 060953

MOS: 0302: Infantry Officer

Length Service: 14

Unit: USMC ADV UNIT, NAVAL ADV GROUP, MAAGV

CASUALTY DATA:

Start Tour: Not Recorded

Incident Date: 02/16/1964

Casualty Date: 02/16/1964

Status Date: Not Applicable

Status Change: Not Applicable

Age at Loss: 32

Location: Gia Dinh Province, South Vietnam

Remains: Body recovered

Repatriated: Not Applicable

Identified: Not Applicable

Casualty Type: Hostile, died outright

Casualty Reason: Ground casualty

Casualty Detail: Other explosive device

URL: www.VirtualWall.org/dk/KoelperDE01a.htm

Data accessed: 9/8/2019

THE VIRTUAL WALL ® www.VirtualWall.org

Print This Page

Close This Page

Page template 10/09/2015

Access to Archival Databases (AAD)

[AAD](#) [Series List](#) [Series Description](#) [Fielded Search](#) [Partial Records](#) [Full Records](#)**AAD TOOLS** **FILE UNIT INFORMATION**[Print](#)[Bookmark/Share](#)[Help](#)

Display Full Records

File Unit: Vietnam Conflict Extract Data File, as of April 29, 2008, 6/8/1956 - 5/28/2006**in the Series:** Defense Casualty Analysis System (DCAS) Extract Files, created ca. 2001 - 4/29/2008, documenting the period 6/28/1950 - 5/28/2006. - *Record Group 330* ([info](#)).**Brief Scope:** This series contains records of U.S. military officers and soldiers who died as a result of either a hostile or non-hostile occurrence or who were missing in action or prisoners of war in either the Korean War or the Vietnam Conflict.You may wish to [View the series-level FAQs](#) or [View the file-level FAQs](#).

Field Title	Value	Meaning
SERVICE NUMBER	060953	060953
MEMBER COMPONENT CODE	R	Regular
PERSON TYPE NAME CODE	K	ACTIVE - REGULAR
PERSON TYPE NAME	ACTIVE - REGULAR	ACTIVE - REGULAR
MEMBER NAME	KOELPER DONALD EDWARD	KOELPER DONALD EDWARD
MEMBER SERVICE CODE	M	Marine Corps
MEMBER SERVICE NAME	MARINE CORPS	MARINE CORPS
MEMBER RANK OR RATE	CAPT	CAPTAIN
MEMBER PAYGRADE	O03	OFFICER
MEMBER OCCUPATION CODE	0302	0302
MEMBER OCCUPATION NAME	INFANTRY OFFICER (I)	INFANTRY OFFICER (I)
MEMBER BIRTHDATE	19310821	08/21/1931
MEMBER'S GENDER	M	Male
HOME OF RECORD CITY	NORTHBROOK	NORTHBROOK
HOME OF RECORD COUNTY	COOK	COOK
HOME OF RECORD COUNTRY CODE	US	UNITED STATES
HOME OF RECORD STATE CODE	IL	ILLINOIS
STATE OR PROVINCE NAME	ILLINOIS	ILLINOIS
MARITAL NAME	MARRIED	MARRIED

RELIGION SHORT NAME	PROTESTANT, NO DENOMINATIONAL PREFERENCE	PROTESTANT, NO DENOMINATIONAL PREFERENCE
RELIGION CODE	TN	PROTESTANT, NO DENOMINATIONAL PREFERENCE
RACE NAME	WHITE	WHITE
ETHNIC SHORT NAME	NOT SPECIFIED	NOT SPECIFIED
RACE OMB NAME	WHITE	WHITE
ETHNIC GROUP NAME	UNKNOWN	UNKNOWN
CASUALTY CIRCUMSTANCES		
CASUALTY CITY	GIA DINH	GIA DINH
CASUALTY STATE OR PROVINCE CODE	M3	VIETNAM CONFLICT MILITARY ZONE 3
CASUALTY COUNTRY/OVER WATER CODE	VS	SOUTH VIETNAM
REGION NAME	ASIA	ASIA
COUNTRY/OVER WATER NAME	SOUTH VIETNAM	SOUTH VIETNAM
MEMBER UNIT		
DUTY CODE	Z	UNKNOWN
PROCESS DATE	19640201	02/01/1964
INCIDENT OR DEATH DATE	19640216	02/16/1964
YEAR OF DEATH [OR INCIDENT]	1964	1964
WAR OR CONFLICT CODE	V	Vietnam Conflict
OPERATION INCIDENT TYPE CODE	C	COMBAT
OPERATION/INCIDENT NAME	VIETNAM CONFLICT	VIETNAM CONFLICT
LOCATION NAME	SOUTHEAST ASIA	SOUTHEAST ASIA
CLOSURE DATE	19640216	02/16/1964
AIRCRAFT TYPE		
HOSTILE OR NON-HOSTILE DEATH INDICATOR	H	Hostile Death
CASUALTY TYPE NAME	DECEASED	DECEASED
CASUALTY CATEGORY	KILLED IN ACTION	KILLED IN ACTION
CASUALTY REASON NAME	EXPLOSIVE DEVICE	EXPLOSIVE DEVICE
CASUALTY CAT. SHORT NAME		
REMAINS RECOVERED	Y	Body Remains Recovered
CASUALTY CLOSURE NAME	BURIED - UNKNOWN DISP	BURIED - UNKNOWN DISP
VIETNAM WALL ROW AND PANEL INDICATOR	01E 043	01E 043
INCIDENT CATEGORY		

INCIDENT CASUALTY CATEGORY DATE		
INCIDENT CASUALTY CAT. SHORT NAME		
INCIDENT HOSTILE OR INCIDENT NON-HOSTILE DEATH		
INCIDENT AIRCRAFT TYPE		

The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20740-6001
Telephone: 1-86-NARA-NARA or 1-866-272-6272



* * *

Funeral services for Capt Donald E. Koelper, age 32, of Springfield, will be held this week in Arlington Cemetery. Capt. Koelper was killed while he was trying to save other Americans when a movie theatre in Saigon, Viet Nam, was bombed by a Viet Cong bomb. The bombing occurred on February 16. Capt. Koelper ran into the theatre in an endeavor to warn the audience. He was killed a few seconds later by falling debris.

* * *

THE WALL OF FACES



HONORED ON PANEL 1E, LINE 43 OF THE WALL
DONALD EDWARD KOELPER

WALL NAME
DONALD E KOELPER

PANEL / LINE
1E/43

DATE OF BIRTH
08/21/1931

CASUALTY PROVINCE
GIA DINH

DATE OF CASUALTY
02/16/1964

HOME OF RECORD
NORTHBROOK

COUNTY OF RECORD
Cook County

STATE
IL

BRANCH OF SERVICE
MARINE CORPS

RANK
CAPT

NAVY CROSS

Donald Edward Koelper

Date of birth: 21-Aug-31

Date of death: February 16, 1964

Home of record: Northbrook Illinois

Status: KIA

Captain Donald Koelper was the first Marine to be Killed in Action in Vietnam.

AWARDS AND CITATIONS

Navy Cross

Awarded for actions during the Vietnam War

The President of the United States of America takes pride in presenting the Navy Cross (Posthumously) to Major [then Captain] Donald Edward Koelper (MCSN: 0-60953), United States Marine Corps, for extraordinary heroism in connection with the bombing of the Capital Kinh-Do Theater in Saigon, Republic of Vietnam, on the evening of 16 February 1964, while serving as an Advisor attached to the Fourth Vietnamese Marine Corps Infantry Battalion. Upon becoming aware of a bomb being placed in the lobby of the theater, Major Koelper, who was standing nearby with a companion, unhesitatingly entered the main area of the theater and shouted to the occupants, United States servicemen and their dependents, to take cover. This warning provided the time for numerous unsuspecting individuals to obtain cover by lying between the rows of the seats. Seconds later the bomb exploded, fatally wounding Major Koelper and another person, and injuring approximately fifty others. Through his prompt and courageous actions in warning the theater patrons of the imminent explosion, Major Koelper undoubtedly saved many from serious injury or possible death. His self-sacrificing efforts were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

General Orders: Authority: Navy Department Board of Decorations and Medals

Action Date: 16-Feb-64

Service: Marine Corps

Rank: Major

Company: Advisor (Attached)

Battalion: 4th Vietnamese Marine Corps Infantry Battalion