

COLLIN COUNTY FALLEN WARRIORS PORTRAIT PROJECT



Charles Jeanes
Navy Cross



Bill Bryan
Navy Cross



Russell Steindam
Medal of Honor



Johnny Craver
Bronze Star



Peter Burks
Bronze Star

American Legion "Bill Bryan Post 110" of McKinney is sponsoring the Collin County Fallen Warriors Portrait Project, which will place on permanent public display at the Collin County Courthouse, portraits of local men who have died in service to our nation. Each of the initial portraits has been created by McKinney artist, Colin Kimball, a United States Air Force veteran who donates his time and talents to the project. The initial induction will include five beautifully framed portraits of heroes whose names are listed on the Wall of Honor at the Collin County Veterans Memorial Park in McKinney. The project will be an on-going process with more portraits to be added annually. Dedication ceremonies at the courthouse are planned for Veterans Day, November 11, 2013, at 11:00 am. Fund raising efforts have begun to cover the costs of mounting, framing and preparing the portraits for display. One-hundred percent of the donations will go to this current induction and further inductions. Donations can be made to American Legion Post 110, PO Box 6755, McKinney, Texas, 75071. For more information contact Ralph French at r.french@McKLegion110.org or RD Foster at ccfreedomfighters@msn.com

The initial honorees are:

Charles O. Jeanes, born in McKinney, raised in Melissa, enlisted in the Marine Corps at the age of 17 in November of 1942. On December 26, 1943, he waded ashore and into combat at Cape Gloucester, New Britain, in the South Pacific, as a rifleman with the 7th Marines, and was killed in action less than two weeks later. At the age of 19, PFC Jeanes was awarded the Navy Cross for valor.

Charles W. "Bill" Bryan, born and raised in McKinney, played center for the McKinney High School Lions, graduated in 1966, and enlisted in the Marine Corps at the age of 18. On January 20, 1968, while leading a seven-man recon team deep in the mountaintop jungles near Khe Sanh, South Vietnam, his team encountered a battalion-size enemy unit. In the ensuing battle, Bill was killed while in the process of trying to save the lives of two of his fellow Marines. Cpl. Bryan was awarded the Navy Cross for valor.

Russell A. Steindam, born in Plano, graduated from Plano High School as a member of the National Honor Society in 1964. He graduated from the University of Texas, where he excelled in ROTC. In Vietnam, Lt. Steindam, served as an Armored Reconnaissance Unit Commander with the 4th Cavalry Regiment. On the night of February 1, 1970, Russell led a fifteen-man squad on a jungle patrol. As the unit worked its way through the thick, dark woods, an enemy ambush was launched, with his men getting hit with small-arms fire and grenades. After taking cover in a bomb crater, a hand grenade landed on the ground in the midst of his men. Russell died that night when he dove onto the enemy hand grenade, absorbing the full impact, in order to save the lives of his men. Lt. Steindam was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions. Only one other Collin County resident has received that honor, Audie Murphy in World War II. The ROTC building at the University of Texas at Austin, "Steindam Hall" is named in Russell's honor.

Johnny K. Craver, from McKinney, after duty as a Ranger instructor in 2006, deployed to Iraq as a 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Army. Serving as a platoon commander with the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, his unit was involved in combat operations in the area south of Bagdad. On October 13, 2006, Johnny was killed when an improvised explosive device exploded near his vehicle. At 37 years of age, Johnny left a wife and three children behind. Lt. Craver was awarded the Bronze Star for heroism.

Peter H. Burks, from Celina, 26, graduated from Texas A&M University and enlisted in the US Army in 2006. On finishing Officer's Candidate School as a 2nd Lieutenant, he deployed to Iraq where he served as Platoon Commander with the Stryker Cavalry Regiment. On November 14, 2007, while commanding a unit near Baghdad, Lt. Burks was killed when his vehicle was hit by an Improvised Explosive Device. Peter was awarded the Bronze Star for heroism.