

**Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC)
Bruce Wallace Donnelly**

81959. Flying Officer.
Royal NZ Air Force.
FAC- attached USAF

NZ Gazette Number date not yet known

CITATION

Flying Officer Donnelly, RNZAF, has completed an operational tour of duty in the Republic of Vietnam on attachment to the 25th United States Infantry Division.

On 7th December 1969 while serving as a Forward Air Control pilot with 2 Brigade, Flying Officer Donnelly distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions above and beyond the normal call of duty.

While on an aerial surveillance mission in the Hobo Woods, a light observation helicopter he was working with made contact with several North Vietnamese soldiers. Flying Officer Donnelly immediately reacted by rolling in on the target and engaging it with machine-gun and rocket fire, which enabled the helicopter to break contact. While the light observation helicopter performed a battle damage assessment and called for artillery, he summoned an air strike. Upon arrival of the fighters, he selectively marked the confirmed enemy locations constantly exposing himself to enemy fire.

Primarily through his exceptional control of the fighters and accuracy in marking and firing on the positions, he was able to neutralise the enemy location. As the airmobile insertion forces which were called earlier, approached the landing zone, they began receiving small arms and automatic weapons fire some 500 metres away from the primary target. Again without regard to his safety, he piloted his aircraft directly towards the position suppressing the enemy and allowing the aircraft and ground force to complete the insertion without sustaining damage or casualties.

Flying Officer Donnelly's determination contributed immeasurably to the success of the mission, he is directly credited with killing one North Vietnamese during the action, and his superb flying skill and rapid assessment of the tactical situation aided significantly in attaining a final North Vietnamese body count of thirteen.

Flying Officer Donnelly's coolness in the face of extreme danger, his willingness to sacrifice all for his mission and his comrades, were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on himself, his unit, the 25th Infantry Division, and the RNZAF.

Notes to Citation:

Born Opotiki 26 July 1946. Served in RNZAF from 12 Jan 1965 to 30 Dec 1974. Flt Lt. Donnelly was based at Cu Chi approx 20 miles west of Saigon. His operational tour was from **27 Oct 1969 to 27 April 1970** and consisted of 180 missions with 500 hours flying time logged.