



## **Brigadier General James Edward (Jim) Shelton, U.S. Army (Retired)**

October 3, 2018

Brigadier General James Edward (Jim) Shelton, U.S. Army (retired) died October 3, 2018, in Venice, Florida. He died the way he lived, full of joy and life-literally dancing at a birthday party. He was 82.

Jim Shelton was born, December 12, 1935, in the zinc-mining town of Franklin, New Jersey, the second of four brothers. He attended the University of Delaware on a football scholarship and joined the U.S. Army ROTC program, earning his commission in the infantry upon graduation in 1957.

During his 27-year Army career, Shelton served in eight different Army divisions and the Berlin Brigade. He commanded rifle companies in the 1st Cavalry Division in Korea and the 82nd Airborne Division at Ft. Bragg, N.C. He was and operations officer of the 2nd Battalion, 28th Infantry in combat in Vietnam with the 1st Infantry Division. He later commanded an Airborne Infantry Battalion in the 82nd Airborne Division, and a mechanized Infantry Brigade in the 24th Infantry Division. In Washington D.C., he served as an Infantry Branch Assignments Officer and as an Operations Officer in the National Military Command Center. As a Brigadier General, he commanded the 4th ROTC Region at Joint Base Lewis McChord, Washington.

Shelton was a graduate of the Armed Forces Staff College, the U.S. Army War College and has a Master of Education degree from American University. He earned the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Master Parachutist Badge, and 16 other awards and decorations. Shelton served for eight years as Honorary Colonel of the 28th Infantry Regiment (Black Lions). He is the author

of *The Beast Was Out There*, a memoir of his experiences with the 28th Infantry at the Battle of Ong Thanh in Vietnam.

Shelton married his college sweetheart, Joan Stephens, on October 5, 1957. They were two days shy of their 61st wedding anniversary on the day he died. Together they had eight children, five daughters and three sons. They also had 14 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren. The Sheltons moved 16 times during their Army life, including three tours to Germany. Upon his retirement from the military in 1983, Shelton returned home to Sussex County, New Jersey, and began working in private industry in the field of total Quality Management training at Ames Rubber Corporation. The Sheltons moved to Florida in 1997.

The past few years had been hard on him as dementia took its toll on his memories and his day-to-day capabilities, but he was still the same curious, adventurous, challenging, friendly man he'd always been. He loved singing and was an avid reader. He loved the arts, sports and travel. He could strike up a conversation with anyone, and usually did. He has been described by those who knew and loved him as "larger than life." He was our lion, our patriarch, and he will be deeply missed.

A Celebration of Life will held at the Windsor of Venice; Friday, October 12, 2018 1:00 PM. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Jim's honor to your favorite veteran's charity. Internment will take place at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date.

# Tribute Wall

DG

“ I first met him when I was a major at TRADOC and he was CoS at Ft Stewart. He'd written GEN Deputy at TRADOC that he had strong reservations about the new "Active Defense" tactical doctrine. I was a member of the team dispatched from Ft Monroe to convince him of the error in his ways. I can't say we brought him around much.

Lo and behold, a year or so later, I was selected for battalion command at Fort Stewart and our paths again crossed. It happens that our son was also in the cast of the play "Bye Bye Birdie" with Colonel Shelton.

He was a totally dedicated soldier and an inspiring leader. May our country always be grateful for his contributions to our defense during difficult times.

I salute you, sir!

*Dick Guthrie, COL Infantry, Ret.*

---

**Dick Guthrie** - July 20, 2019 at 12:32 AM

ES

“ We are so sorry to hear about James. He was our next door neighbor on Fox Hollow Road in Sparta for a number of years. He and his family were so friendly and so very happy to serve our Country. He will be missed, but his amazing memory will last forever.

*Our thoughts and prayers are with the family!*

*Elaine & Steve Salisbury*

---

**Elaine & Steve Salisbury** - November 11, 2018 at 12:00 AM

MW

“ I just found this obituary and am so sorry to learn of Colonel Sheltons death. Thats what we called him when we worked on a production of Bye, Bye Birdie with him at Ft. Stewart. He sang and danced to Whats the Matter with Kids Today with gusto and was always fun to be around. Greetings to his family! And condolences.

---

**Mike and Judy Wellert** - October 23, 2018 at 12:00 AM

CG

Cynthia Guthrie here. Our son Park was the kid, a 5th grader at the time, in Bye, Bye Birdie with Jim Shelton. His daughter was also in the Play. I still have a home movie of Col. Shelton singing "Whats the Matter with Kids Today"

---

**Cynthia Guthrie** - July 21, 2019 at 01:43 PM

JG

“ BG Jim Shelton was a great soldier,commander,and friend. He was the best Battalion Commander that I ever served with or observed in 33 years. My condolences to Joan and the family. He is with Jesus now in his new home and we will see him there.  
Jim Guest

---

**James Guest** - October 16, 2018 at 12:00 AM

PH

“ Jim Shelton was a great soldier, leader and friend, and a passionate brother-in-arms to the men he led in combat and to all veterans. He was a gifted writer and historian whose book, *The Beast was Out There*, details one of the fiercest battles of the Vietnam War. All of us at the First Division Museum at Cantigny Park in Wheaton, Illinois, mourn his passing and extend our heartfelt sympathies to his loved ones. Rest in peace, Jim...thanks for your service, welcome home!

*Paul H. Herbert  
Colonel, US Army (Ret)  
Executive Director*

---

**Paul Herbert** - October 11, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ My condolences go out to the family. May God comfort you during this time and knowing God promises you will see your loved one again John 11:24-26

---

October 11, 2018 at 12:00 AM

SJ

“ The General was such a great man! Larger than life is a perfect description of Jim. I am honored to have known him for many years. My charity for my gift will be Wounded Warriors which we both had been involved with at different times. RIP General.

---

**Stephanie Caruso's Jack** - October 10, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ *Psalm 90:10 says that the days of our years are 70 years, And if because of special mightiness they are 80 years.  
May the memories of the wonderful times you shared together bring a smile and joy in your heart.*

---

October 10, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ *Shelton Family: I want to send my condolences to you all from your other cousin and former FT Bragg neighbor. Your father was like my 2nd dad and often helped me over tough patches and especially when my dad was in Vietnam. Please send me your contact information to my email at [harmonymjf@gmail.com](mailto:harmonymjf@gmail.com)  
Marcus J Fisk (CAPT USN Ret)*

---

**Marcus Fisk** - October 10, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ *General u were a such o amazing person i ll miss your hugs, and to do your laundry! I will miss u a lotRIP OUR GENERAL!*

---

**Paola Baltodano** - October 10, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ *Went to Watch games with my Brother. Condolences to the Shelton Family.*

---

**Joseph Younkens** - October 09, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ *An honor to have met him in these past two years and view his room full of memorabilia.*

---

**Margi Miller** - October 08, 2018 at 12:00 AM