

Biography of an Air Force Sentry Dog King-6F61

King was a black/brown male German Shepherd, whelped in Feb 1959. His original owner was Mr. William. E. Ervine, 25085 Randolph Rd., Bedford Heights, Ohio.

On March 1, 1960, at about one year of age, King was acquired by the U. S. Air Force for \$150.00, to be trained as a U. S. Air Force Sentry Dog. He was assigned the brand 6F61. At the time he entered the Air Force he was 25ö tall and weighed 70 pounds.

King was trained as a Sentry Dog at Lackland AFB, Texas. After his formal training he went on to work for nine different K-9 Handlers during his lifetime. His working history is shown in the table below. The information is sourced directly from King's AF Form 323 Military Working Dog Service Record, obtained by Donald Jones.

<u>Handler</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Organization and Location</u>
A1C Fredrick Young	12 Jun 60	Luke AFB, AZ
A2C Jack D. Crowson	1 Jan 63	832 nd APRON, Cannon AFB, NM
A3C Neil D. Ford	20 Jul 63	832 nd APRON, Cannon AFB, NM
A2C Donald A. Cheek	1 Sep 65	832 nd APRON, Cannon AFB, NM
A1C Donald A. Jones	15 Nov 65	832 nd APRON, Cannon AFB, NM
A1C Donald A. Jones	Dec 65	6252 nd APRON, Da Nang Vietnam
A2C Robert W. Barnwell	14 Nov 66	366 th SPS, Da Nang Vietnam
A2C Rudy L. Hicks	23 Oct 67	366 th SPS, Da Nang Vietnam
A1C Henry E. Houston	15 Sep 68	366 th SPS, Da Nang Vietnam
SSgt James R. Gorby	6 Jan 68	366 th SPS, Da Nang Vietnam

The life expectancies of War Dogs assigned to combat duty in Southeast Asian countries was foreshortened by several factors. They include exposure to severe climates and work environments, the dangerous nature of their work, and military regulations in place at the time. Some of those factors still exist today.

It was not until recent years, through the dedication of former and current K-9 Handlers, that military War Dogs have finally been recognized for their contribution to past and present war efforts, and for their contribution to the security of our country.

In February 2000 a War Dog Memorial was dedicated in the Heritage Courtyard of March Field Air Museum, Riverside, CA. Each year at that Memorial a War Dog Remembrance Day ceremony is held on the Sunday before Presidents Day to recognize War Dog contributions to the security our country. In 2007 an engraved clay tile in memory of King 6F61 was placed at the base of the War Dog Memorial in Heritage Court, along side the tiles of other War Dogs that served in past wars in the service of our country. The inscription on King's tile reads *"King 6F61 366 SPS K9 Don Jones '65 Da Nang"*. It lies next to the tile of Eric 218E and good friend Gary Knutson, who also served at Da Nang.

On June 3, 1969, at age 10 years, and after spending 3½ years at Da Nang AB Vietnam, King 6F61 was euthanized at Da Nang AB by the U. S. Air Force due to old age.