

# Wall of HONOR

**T**wo Medal of Honor recipients recently paid tribute to their Vietnam War special operations and search and rescue brethren.

Retired Air Force Col. James P. Fleming and retired Col. Joe M. Jackson traveled to the 58th Special Operations Wing, Kirtland AFB, N.M., to formally dedicate the unit's Medal of Honor Wall display featuring seven of these heroes.

This generated great media interest, with a report from the Associated Press reprinted in several news outlets and newspapers.

Fleming is an AFA Life Member from the San Jacinto Chapter in Texas. He told guests at the dedication, "This is humbling."

A Life Member of the Greater Seattle Chapter, Jackson told the crowd he was equally moved.

## DESIGN ELEMENTS

The 58th's new special operations and search and rescue Medal of Honor Wall is located in the front hall of wing headquarters, a place of prominence.

It was Col. Dagvin Anderson, the 58th's commander, who in 2015 came up with the idea: Create a lasting memorial to capture the heritage of the Air Force's Vietnam War Medal of Honor recipients who have ties to special operations and search and rescue.

It took 18 months to work out the details before the new wing commander, AFA Life Member Col. Brenda P. Cartier, dedicated the memorial last fall.

At the top of the display, a 17-foot-long brushed aluminum cap piece is engraved with words that are part of

## The wing created a memorial for seven heroes who served in Vietnam.



Retired Col. James Fleming (left) stands before the Medal of Honor Wall where a painting shows him rescuing a US Army patrol near Duc Co, South Vietnam. Retired Col. Joe Jackson (right) is shown landing under fire to rescue a combat control team at Kham Duc.

Laura Malloy

## MAGNIFICENT SEVEN

The 58th SOW's display wall features paintings of seven special ops and search and rescue airmen who received the Medal of Honor for actions in Vietnam:

- Lt. Col. Joe M. Jackson, 311th Air Commando Squadron
- Lt. Col. William A. Jones III, 602nd Special Operations Squadron
- Maj. Bernard F. Fisher, 1st Air Commando Squadron
- Capt. Gerald O. Young, 37th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron
- 1st Lt. James P. Fleming, 20th Special Operations Squadron
- A1C John L. Levitow, 3rd Special Operations Squadron
- A1C William H. Pitsenbarger, 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron



Medal of Honor citations: "For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty."

A long velvet-lined case below contains the name plates of 59 fallen airmen from the 58th Special Operations Wing (SOW).

## LEATHER BOUND

The last element of the memorial wall is a leather-bound book containing the "Valor" series from *Air Force Magazine*, featuring the story of each

Medal of Honor recipient. The series is at <http://bit.ly/2j7O4KD>. The full list of 60 USAF Medal of Honor recipients appears in the annual Almanac issue.

The 58th SOW created the Medal of Honor Wall because these airmen inspire others and humble us all by their deeds. ★

Laura Malloy is the 58th SOW historian and a member of the Albuquerque Chapter (N.M.). Col. Brenda P. Cartier belongs to the Nation's Capital Chapter in Washington, D.C.