



**Frank Stefas (1930– 1951)**

Frank Stefas was born on April 10 1930. His home of record is listed as Chula Vista, CA. His parents were Mr. and Mrs. Samuel E. Stefas of 670 E. Manor Drive, Chula Vista, CA. After graduation from High School in 1949, he joined the United States Air Force and flew as a Flight Engineer. He was a graduate of Chula Vista High School., and worked as an automobile mechanic in Long Beach before being ordered to his present duty. In 1947, he joined the US Naval Reserves and served as a radio gunner at Los Alamitos Naval Air Station.

On 17 September 1951, he flew in “B Flight” as the tail gunner in a B-26-B “Invader” light bomber aircraft assigned to a special daytime reconnaissance flight over areas “CT” and “BU” in South Korea. The tail number of the bomber was 44-34750.

He was last heard from at 1532 Local (3:32 pm) over airfield “KT”. He was assigned to the 729<sup>th</sup> Bomber Squadron, of the 452<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Wing (Light), when his crew was missing. Staff Sergeant (SSGT) Frank Stefas was listed as MIA (Missing in Action).

His status was changed to Killed in Action (KIA) on February 28 1954. His body was never recovered. His crew consisted of Capt David Hearn, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Frederick Pelsar, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt William Lewis, and Capt. Charles F. Wright.

The citation for his air medal reads:

*“In this sustained aerial operation, both adverse weather conditions and enemy opposition were overcome by CPL Stefas, who, flying as a flight maintenance gunner, combined his ability, training, and perseverance to attack repeatedly enemy ground forces, their supply lines, and centers of enemy concentration”*

Staff Sergeant Stefas was awarded the Air Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Purple Heart, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal and the National Defense Service Medal.

