



Lawrence Thomas Dries
Specialist 5 U.S. Army
1970 – 1 August 1975

Lawrence was born on 20 April 1951 in Allentown, Pennsylvania, while his family was living in Emmaus, Pennsylvania. He attended Emmaus High School and, prior to entering the Service, he worked with his father as a Mason. He enlisted in the Army as a Private in 1970, and subsequently received basic training at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and advanced training as a Vehicle Mechanic at Fort Rucker, Alabama. He was then assigned to the 803rd Maintenance Battalion in Stuttgart, Germany, for six months before he was ordered to Vietnam where he was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) as a Generator Mechanic, Small Arms Repairman, and Light Vehicle Mechanic. He served with the 101st Division from 1 September 1970 to 1 September 1971. While Lawrence was in Vietnam, the Division was located at Thua Thien, where they participated in Civil Operations designed to bolster the South Vietnamese Government Forces. Lawrence and another soldier developed a contact team mission, repairing faulty weapons or servicing new weapons if needed. The Division also established a series of fire and patrol bases and conducted several operations that prevented the enemy from re-entering Thua Thien. In addition, they provided technical training to the South Vietnamese Forces and supported several South Vietnamese operations into Laos to cut off enemy supply and infiltration lines into Vietnam. These operations were designed to allow the South Vietnamese Army to operate on their own and to turn the fighting over to them, which came to be known as “Vietnamization.” In late 1971, the 101st Airborne Division began returning to the States to Fort Campbell and was the last Army Division to leave South Vietnam. Lawrence then served in the Army Reserves until 1 August 1975. Lawrence was awarded the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, and Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal. After his discharge on that date, he returned to Emmaus and went to work as a Mason for E. D. Dries and Son Bricklaying Company until 2004. From 1984 to 1989, Lawrence served as a volunteer Fireman for the Wescosville, Pennsylvania, Fire Company. In 2004, Lawrence went to work for the Lower Macungie Township Public Works Department, where he is still employed today. Lawrence married **Cynthia Ann Beitler** (9 September 1956 – 5 April 2007) on 19 November 1983 in her house in East Texas, Pennsylvania. Initially, they lived in East Texas, later moved to Slatington, Pennsylvania, for about five years, and then settled back in East Texas in 1992. Lawrence remarried on 24 January 2009 to **Joette Sebesta** (born 18 May 1958) and continues to live there with Joette. Lawrence is a member of Macungie VFW Post 9264 where he serves on the honor guard. Lawrence’s parents were **Elmer D. Dries** (10 Nov 1929 – 13 Oct 2003) and **Elizabeth Hodges** (born 18 September 1930).