

Colonel Lloyd L. Burke, U.S. Army

First Lieutenant Lloyd L. "Scooter" Burke received his Medal of Honor citation for Service in the Korean War:

"First Lt. Burke distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and outstanding courage above and beyond the call of duty in action against the enemy. Intense enemy fire had pinned down leading elements of his company committed to secure commanding ground when 1st Lt. Burke left the command post to rally and urge the men to follow him toward three bunkers impeding the advance. Dashing to an exposed vantage point he threw several grenades at the bunkers, then, returning for an M1 rifle and adapter, he made a lone assault, wiping out the position and killing the crew. Closing on the center bunker he lobbed grenades through the opening and, with his pistol, killed three of its occupants attempting to surround him. Ordering his men forward he charged the third emplacement, catching several grenades in midair and hurling them back at the enemy. Inspired by his display of valor his men stormed forward, overran the hostile position, but were again pinned down by increased fire. Securing a light machine gun and three boxes of ammunition, 1st Lt. Burke dashed through the impact area to an open knoll, set up his gun, and poured a crippling fire into the ranks of the enemy, killing approximately 75. Although wounded, he ordered more ammunition, reloading and destroying two mortar emplacements and a machine-gun position with his accurate fire. Cradling the weapon in his arms he then led his men forward, killing some 25 more of the retreating enemy and securing the objective. First Lt. Burke's heroic action and daring exploits inspired his small force of 35 troops. His unflinching courage and outstanding leadership reflect the highest credit upon himself, the infantry, and the U.S. Army."

Biography: Colonel Burke was born in Tichnor, Arkansas on 29 September 1924. He graduated from Henderson State University. Colonel Burke served in three wars over 35 years—in Italy during World War II, in Korea during the Korean War, and in Vietnam as an infantry battalion commander during the Vietnam War. He was severely wounded during that war. He lived in the Washington D.C. area off and on from 1963 to 1988, when he moved to Alabama.

Lt. Burke received the Medal of Honor for an assault on three North Korean bunkers near the Imjin River in October 1951. He led his 35-man company under intense fire, killing more than 100 North Koreans himself and suffering wounds in return. He then made lone charges on two of the bunkers and killed the crews. He threw grenades at the third bunker and then tossed back several of the grenades that were hurled at him. His men then overran the position but were pinned down by fire. Lt. Burke set up a gun, wiped out 75 North Koreans and destroyed two mortar emplacements. He led his men forward and killed 25 of the retreating soldiers. None of his men were killed. Lt. Burke's wartime exploits in Korea were featured in an episode of the A&E television series "Heroes."

Colonel Burke also served in Germany and retired in 1978 as Chief Army liaison to the House of Representatives. After he retired, he was lobbyist for the American Trial Lawyers Association and Sperry Rand Corp. Later he worked to establish the Korean War Veterans Memorial and participated in the dedication on the Mall. He was National President of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, a director of Messiah United Methodist Church in Springfield, and a member of the Retired Officers Association, First Division Association, Democratic Club, Army Navy Club, and Army Navy Country Club.

His marriage to Virginia Fletcher Burke ended in divorce. His second wife, Maxine Hardin Burke, died in the early 1990s. Survivors include three children from his first marriage, John, Leslie, and Lloyd, all of Springfield; three sisters; and five grandchildren. Colonel Burke died on 1 June 1999

Military Awards: Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Service Medal, Silver Star, four Army Commendation Medals, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, two Purple Hearts and three Bronze Stars.

Masonic History: Mason and National Sojourner