

THEY SERVED IN SILENCE



The Story of a Cryptologic Hero TSGT Frederick Theodore Sebers



A Story of Cryptologic Service and Sacrifice

STech Sergeant Frederick Theodore Sebers was born in the city of Everett, Washington on October 26, 1926. Everett is located near Puget Sound, and is part of the Seattle metropolitan area. He attended the local schools, but in December of 1941, like millions of other young men at the time, was intent on joining the U.S. military. Sebers was not yet 18, but like many others, he somehow managed to enlist in the United States Navy and begin a wide and varied military career characterized by bravery, dedication and versatility.

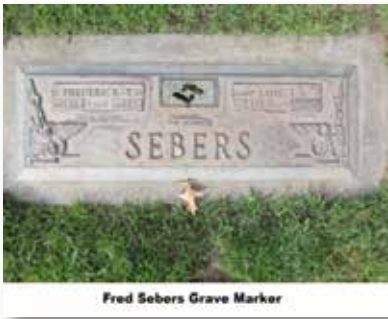
His naval career soon placed him in the thick of the action in the Pacific. At the age of 16, he manned a 50-caliber machine gun on a landing craft at Okinawa. After the war he was mustered out, but rejoined the Sea Service in 1949. By 1953, however, Sebers was ready for a new challenge, and transferred to the fledgling United States Air Force. As an airman he devoted himself to becoming an expert parachute rigger and stunt jumper.

In 1959, Sebers decided to move on from the rewarding but increasingly perilous world of airborne operations, and cross trained with the aim of becoming a communications analyst. His newfound intelligence career took him back to Okinawa, then to Taiwan and in 1964 to Good fellow Air Force Base where he was assigned to the 6948th Security Squadron. In the summer of 1967 he deployed with the DET 1 6994th unit to Naha Tran Air Base, along the southern coast of the Republic of Vietnam.

In the early days of the conflict, one of the major challenges for U.S. tactical units was to pinpoint the location of both Viet Cong and North Vietnamese radio transmitters. Ground-based efforts to find them had proved unsatisfactory. In an effort to solve the problem, the U.S. Air Force began a robust program of Airborne Radio Direction Finding (ARDF) missions, which utilized specially outfitted EC-47 aircraft over South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Over time, these missions proved indispensable due largely to their ability to transfer critical information to the ground where friendly units used it to gain an advantage in battle and save lives. Despite the many challenges of learning a new and demanding job, Sebers became an experienced airborne analyst.

As the day drew to a close on September 1967, Sebers took time out from his demanding schedule to visit the base's NCO club. Unbeknownst to him at the time, subversive elements had planted a claymore mine in the dining area, and shortly after entering, the device detonated, severely injuring him. Despite bearing the brunt of the blast, he survived the attack, and soon after was airlifted to the States for treatment and rehabilitation. Fred hung on for weeks, but the trauma he had endured proved to be too much. He died at Madigan Army Hospital in his home state on November 7, 1967, and was interred in the Mountain View Cemetery in nearby Tacoma, Washington. In addition, appropriately, his name is engraved on the Vietnam Veteran Memorial Wall.





Fred Sebers Grave Marker

Sebers was remembered by many as someone who was always willing to give younger servicemen the benefit of his experience. A former classmate noted that "I am forever grateful to have known Fred. May he R.I.P. He was a good Man." His rich legacy of service was not forgotten. In September of 2006, Good fellow Air Force Base appropriately named one of its buildings "Fred Sebers Hall" to honor his memory.

His awards and decorations include the Purple Heart, Air Medal, National Defense Service Medal (w/BSS), the World War II Victory Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, American Campaign Medal, Army of Occupation Medal with Germany Clasp, Navy Occupation Service Medal, Navy Good Conduct Medal, Air Force Good Conduct Medal (w/3 Bronze loops), and the Vietnam Service Medal (w/BSS).



Dedication Plaque for Fred Sebers Hall



Fred Sebers display inside Sebers Hall, GAFB

