

Master Sergeant Samuel J. Surtees Jr.

Samuel "Bud" Surtees Jr. was born and raised in Trenton New Jersey and served with distinction with the United States Army in the European Theater of Operation during World War II (35th Infantry Division "Santa Fe" from March 1944 until April 1946). He was awarded the Purple Heart and Combat Infantry Badge for action against the enemy during this time and served with the United States Occupation Forces in Germany after the war.

His Army Reserve unit was called up to active duty in September 1950 and at which time he served with the 2nd Infantry Division, 23rd Infantry Regiment, "L" Company in the conflict in Korea. Sergeant Surtees distinguished himself by heroic achievement on April 11, 1951 near the Hwachon Reservoir, Korea. On that date he was squad leader in a platoon which was assigned the mission of contacting an adjacent unit. As the platoon approached a steep slope it was subjected to intense automatic weapons and rifle fire from both flanks. Sergeant Surtees ordered his squad to fix bayonets and led a charge to the right flank where the enemy was entrenched in log reinforced pill boxes. He personally assaulted one of the positions with grenades killing the crew and destroying the weapon. His actions so inspired the other members of the platoon that they were able to rout the enemy and completed their mission. For this action Sergeant Surtees received the Bronze Star Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster with letter "V" device for heroic achievement in connection with military operations against an enemy of the United States.

Sergeant Surtees again distinguished himself by heroic achievement on May 18, 1951 in the vicinity of Chaun-Ni, Korea. When the position of his company command post became untenable, Sergeant Surtees ordered his drivers to withdraw with their vehicles and organized a defensive line. During the firefight two men were wounded and were lying in an exposed position. With complete disregard for his own safety, Sergeant Surtees crawled to the aid of the men and brought them to safety. For this action Sergeant Surtees was awarded the Bronze Star Medal Second Oak Leaf Cluster with the letter "V" device for heroic achievement.

During his time in service to his country (March 21, 1944 to April 27, 1946; September 9, 1950 to November 30, 1952) Master Sergeant Surtees was awarded the Purple Heart Medal(2); Combat Infantry Badge(2); Bronze Star Medal with Valor (2) with Oak Leaf Cluster; Army Commendation Medal; World War II Europe, Africa and Middle East Medal; World War II American Campaign Medal; Good Conduct Medal; United Nations Medal; Korean War Medal; World War II Victory Medal; Unit Presidential Citation Award and the Korean War Service Medal(awarded by South Korea).

A star has been incised in the memory of Master Sergeant Samuel "Bud" Surtees by his son Sam and daughter Lisa at the American Legion Centennial Memorial, 271 Clarksville Road, West Windsor, New Jersey.

