



Specialist Four Timothy Hensley
16 October 1960 - 4 November 1980

Specialist Four Timothy Hensley was born on 16 October 1960. He always made friends easily and others naturally followed his lead. He volunteered for service in the U.S. Army in 1978, right out of high school. He wanted to fly helicopters but opted to work on them, instead. He was good with his hands and had an almost uncanny ability to understand anything mechanical. He did so well in Advanced Individual Training, that his instructors had hoped he would remain and become an instructor as well - it all depended on what assignment orders came through first. His orders to do overseas duty in Korea, near the DMZ, came through first. He was a fan of M*A*S*H and had always wanted to go to Korea.

After Korea, SP4 Hensley was stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, as a Founding Night Stalker and Crew Chief. He was adventurous and often volunteered for other duties - he even considered becoming an Army Ranger. He died on 4 November 1980 at Eglin AFB, Florida. He was participating in a training exercise in which he played the role of the "downed pilot." A hovering helicopter, OH-6 Little Bird #168, dropped a cable and harness assembly for SP4 Hensley to attach to himself. The carabiner hook rotated so that, unknown to him and the observers, his weight was on the "gate". When the helicopter lifted him and began to fly away, the carabiner hook failed and he was dropped in the trees at the end of the airfield. He received critical head and internal injuries that resulted in his death at the base hospital a few hours later.

SP4 Hensley gave his life practicing procedures that are used to save his flying brothers-in-arms, should they find themselves downed in need of rescue, and in a situation where a rescue helicopter can't land.

SP4 Hensley is survived by his mother, Dixie and his sister, Carla. He is laid to rest in Red Bluff, California, at Oak Hill Cemetery.