

**House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee**  
**69<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session**  
**Representative Schauer-Chair**

Chairman Schauer and House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee,

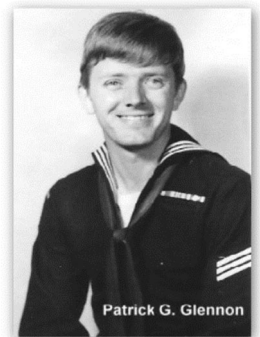
Please accept this testimony in support of HCR 3005.

Intent of this bill...

- Encourage 119<sup>th</sup> Congress, US Secretary of the Interior, and the President to take action and approve the names of the Lost 74 to be included on the Vietnam Memorial Wall located at the National Mall in Washington DC.

Need for bill...

- The crew of the U.S.S. Frank E. Evans Served in the Vietnam War prior to being ordered to participate in the Exercise outside the boundaries of the Vietnam War which resulted in this tragic collision.
  - Basically, they were “out of bounds” when the accident happened.
- The families of the Lost 74 deserve to have their loved one’s sacrifice remembered along side their brothers and sisters in arms on the national memorial wall.
- North Dakota is home to two members of the Lost 74
  - BM3 Patrick G. Glennon of Fessenden ND.
  - BTFA Robert J. Searle of Grand forks ND.
- It has been 57 years.



This bill may not affect many but for those that it does affect it will mean a lot and hopefully bring closure.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lonnie Wangen Commissioner-NDDVA

At around 0300 on 3 June 1969, *Frank E. Evans* was operating in darkness in the [South China Sea](#) between Vietnam and [Spratly Island](#) in a formation with ships of the [Royal Navy](#), [Royal Australian Navy](#), and [Royal New Zealand Navy](#). All ships in the formation were running without lights. The Royal Australian Navy [aircraft carrier](#) *Melbourne* was in the process of going to flying stations and radioed *Frank E. Evans*, then to [port](#) of her, to take up station as the rescue destroyer. This required *Frank E. Evans* to reduce speed and take up station on *Melbourne's* port quarter. The [commanding officer](#) of *Frank E. Evans* was asleep in his quarters, having left instructions to be awakened if there were to be any changes in the formation. Neither the [officer of the deck](#) nor the junior officer of the deck notified him when the station change was ordered. The [bridge](#) crew also did not contact the [combat information center](#) to request clarification of the positions and movements of the surrounding ships.<sup>[10]</sup>

The conning officer on *Frank E. Evans* misunderstood the formation's base course and believed *Frank E. Evans* was to [starboard](#) of *Melbourne*. *Frank E. Evans* therefore turned to starboard, cutting across *Melbourne's* [bow](#) twice in the process. *Melbourne* struck *Frank E. Evans* at a point about 92 feet (28 m) from her bow on her port side and cut her in two

at [8°59.2'N 110°47.7'E](#)Coordinates: [8°59.2'N 110°47.7'E](#).<sup>[11]</sup> After the collision, *Frank E. Evans's* bow drifted off to the port side of *Melbourne* and sank in less than five minutes, taking 73 of her crew with it. One body was recovered from the water, making a total of 74 dead.<sup>[12]</sup> Her stern scraped along the starboard side of *Melbourne*, and *Melbourne's* crew attached lines to it. It remained afloat. Around 60 to 100 men were rescued from the water.



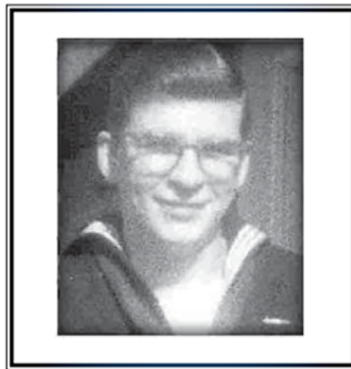
Sailors inspect damage to the U.S. Navy destroyer Frank E. Evans after it was cut in half in a collision with the light aircraft carrier Melbourne of the Royal Australian Navy in the South China Sea, 650 miles southwest of Manila, June 3, 1969. (AP)



**Patrick Gene Glennon**

Born..... 22 Aug 1945, Philadelphia, PA  
 Parent ..... Joyce Rudel  
 Siblings ..... Three Brothers, Two Sisters  
 Education ..... Fessenden High School  
 Enlisted ..... Fargo, ND  
 Boot Camp ..... NTC San Diego  
 Rating ..... Boatswain Mate 3rd Class

Patrick was born in Philadelphia. His family moved to Fessenden, North Dakota when he was young. He joined the Navy 10 May 1966. After boot camp he was assigned to USS GRIDLEY (DLG 21) where he was a Boatswain Mate striker. He remained there until 10 Sep 1968. He was received for duty on board USS FRANK E. EVANS (DD 754) 3 Oct 1968. He was promoted to BM3 on April 16, 1969. BM3 Glennon was asleep in 1st Division at the time of the collision.



**Robert James Searle**

Born ..... 22 May 1948, Grand Forks, ND  
 Parents ..... James & Arlete Searle  
 Education ..... Great Falls High School  
 Enlisted ..... Great Falls, MT  
 Boot Camp ..... NTC San Diego  
 Rating ..... Boiler Tender FN  
 Spouse..... Thelma Ruth Jones  
 Children..... Terry & Jerry (twins)

Robert enlisted in the Navy Reserves in 1967, graduated from boot camp, then Basic Propulsion & Engineering "A" School. He reported on board USS FRANK E. EVANS (DD 754) 11 May 1968. On 30 Dec 1968, he married Thelma and they lived in Torrance, CA. BTFN Searle was on watch in the Forward Fire Room with three other men when the collision occurred; there were no survivors. His twin boys were four months old.