

**Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC)  
William Bevil Flanagan**

39875. Captain.  
Royal NZ Armoured Corps  
161 Recce Flight

NZ Gazette Number 56 dated 17 September 1970

**CITATION**

Captain Flanagan enlisted in the New Zealand Army on 29th January 1962. After attendance at the Officer Cadet School, Portsea he was commissioned on 15th June 1963, and subsequently qualified as an army pilot.

He arrived in South Vietnam **on 19th March 1969.**

On 16th November 1969, Captain Flanagan located an occupied enemy bunker system. Except when relieved briefly on one occasion to refuel his aircraft, he maintained for a period of six hours a continuous and close surveillance of the enemy whilst being continuously engaged by fire. Flying at tree-top height he skilfully manoeuvred his aircraft, accurately adjusting artillery on to the bunkers. In addition, he controlled three air strikes onto the position. By his flying skill and complete disregard for his own safety he was able to continue to bring fire to bear onto the bunkers until all enemy opposition ceased.

On the night of 3rd December 1969, after one of his unit aircraft had been shot down by enemy ground fire; Captain Flanagan volunteered to search for survivors. With aerial flares to provide illumination he located the crashed aircraft. He then hovered his aircraft only feet above the ground in an area known to be occupied by the enemy until he was able to locate and establish the fate of the missing crew members.

On each occasion Captain Flanagan displayed a high degree of flying skill, determination and courage. His complete disregard for his own safety was an inspiration to the members of his unit.