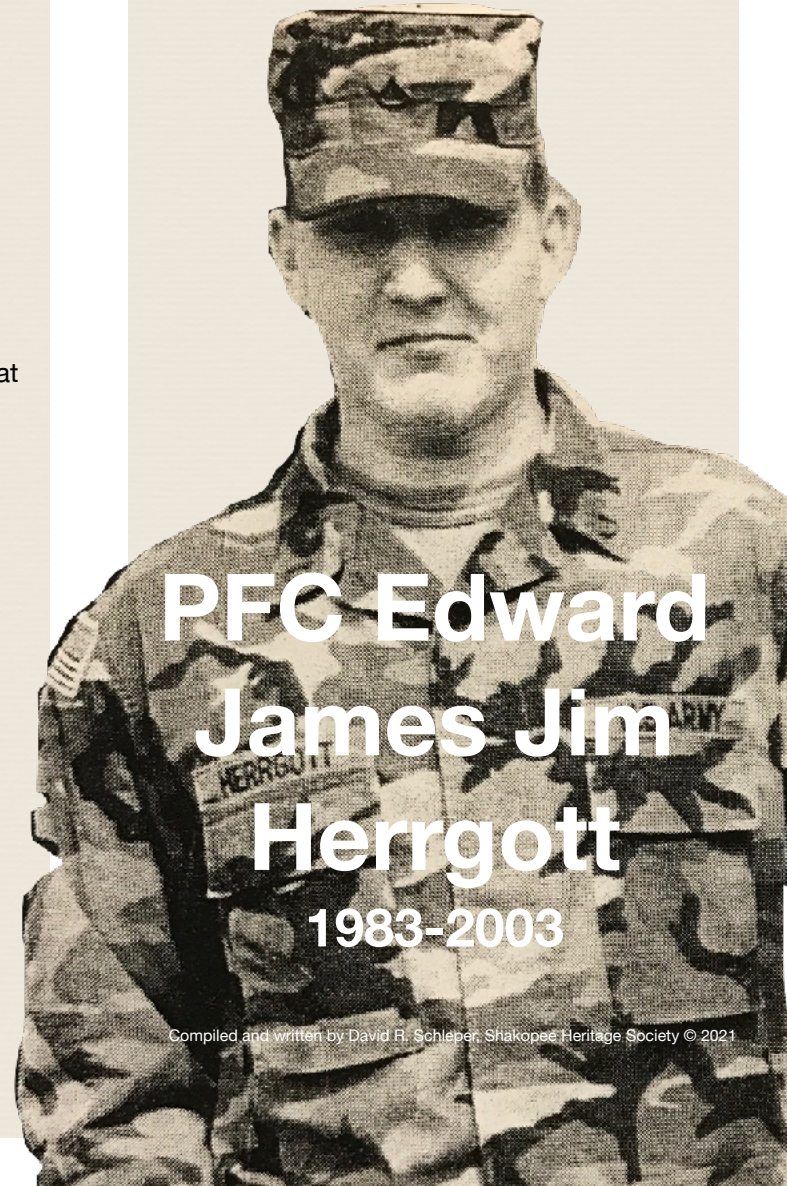




PFC Edward James Jim Herrgott was buried at Valley Cemetery in Shakopee.



# SHAKOPEE HERITAGE SOCIETY



**PFC Edward  
James Jim  
Herrgott  
1983-2003**

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PFC Edward James Jim Herrgott was the first Minnesotan to die in the war with Iraq. He was just 20 years old. Jim was buried at Valley Cemetery in the family plot at 1639-1851 4th Avenue East in Shakopee.



Edward James Herrgott, known as Jim, was born on June 9, 1983 in Shakopee, Minnesota, the son of Edward Alvin and Marcia Kae Kewatt Herrgott. Jim was a fun loving, adventurous, respectful, but not always someone who followed all the rules, according to Bob von Sternberg from the **Minnesota Star Tribune**. He enjoyed NASCAR racing and hanging out with friends.

Jim graduated from Shakopee High School in 2001. He was a quiet man. The following January, Jim joined the Army. He thought it would bring some discipline to what had occasionally been a wild life. He wanted to use the service as a financial springboard to college, where Jim wanted to study to become a police officer.

Army Pfc. Herrgott was assigned to the 1-36th Infantry Regiment, 1st Armored Division in Wiesbaden, Germany. Jim was outside the National Museum in Baghdad, Iraq, in his Bradley tank doing his watch as a guard duty on July 3, 2003. He had taken the place of a soldier who had been wounded.

Jim had slid up into the gunner's seat—the gunner's hatch—and a sniper shot him in the neck. He was rushed to the hospital, but they were unable to keep him alive.

Reverend Gerold Sevig of St. John's Lutheran Church noted that Jim was "willing to put his life on the line for the well-being of others. He was killed while sharing his life, seeking peace for a troubled people."

Jim knew the dangers. "Twenty-four hours before Jim was killed, we knew that the area he was going to was extremely bad," said Mary Kewatt in an article by Mark Zdechlik from the *Minnesota Public Radio*. "They needed him, and he was going, and that's what he told him mom. 'They need me over there, there's 12 other guys that got wounded, so this is what I am doing.' And the last thing that was said just keep your head down and keep it in that tank so you're safe," said Jim's aunt, Mary.

"We have some issues with the fact that President Bush declared combat over on May 1. Combat is not over. We don't even know who's firing at us right now and all of our soldiers great risk of being picked off as Jim was. And that's a shame. And then President Bush made a comment a week ago and said 'bring it on.' Well, they brought it on and now my nephew is dead," said Mary Kewatt.

Jim Herrgott was the first Minnesotan to die in Iraq. He was honored in full honors at Valley Cemetery, in the family plot, near the headstone belonging to his paternal grandparents. He posthumously was awarded a Bronze Star for "meritorious service on Iraq from 19 March to 2 July," and a Purple Heart for his fatal wound. Herrgott was buried among the pine and ash trees twelve days after he was killed.

In May 2013 during a Memorial Day ceremony, Scott County Road 21 was renamed "Herrgott Memorial Drive" after PFC Edward James Jim Herrgott, the first Minnesota to die in the Iraq War. According to mayor Brad Tabke, "I am very pleased that we are recognizing...all those who have given their lives to a cause much larger than themselves. When we honor one soldier, we honor them all."

