



AIRMEN MEMORIAL MUSEUM

James D. Staton

Chairman, Board of Trustees

Board of Trustees

CMSAF (Ret.) Paul W. Airey

Former Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

CMSgt. Gary R. Akin

Director, USAF Enlisted Heritage Research Institute

CMSAF (Ret.) Thomas N. Barnes

Former Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

CMSAF Eric W. Benken

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

CMSAF (Ret.) James C. Binnicker

Former Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

James M. Hitt

Regional Vice President, The GEICO Companies

General (USAF, Ret.) Robert T. Marsh

Former Commander, USAF Systems Command

Colonel (USAF, Ret.) Daniel H. McGrath

MSgt. (Ret.) Steve Norberg

AFSA International President

CMSAF (Ret.) Sam E. Parish

Former Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

CMSAF (Ret.) Gary R. Pfingston

Former Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

CMSgt. William E. Stevens

Historian, USAF Headquarters

CMSgt. Sandra Williams

Vice Commandant, College for Enlisted PME

To Whom It May Concern,

In the Summer of 1997 the Museum commenced an initiative to document the military career and accomplishments of the third enlisted Air Force Cross recipient, William H. Pitsenbarger.

Since his combat death on April 11, 1966, tales of Pitsenbarger's heroic actions in Vietnam have been passed down by friends, fellow veterans, admirers, and aspiring historians. Young men and women throughout the Air Force recognize the name Pitsenbarger, the story of his valor acquiring the character of myth.

With methodical research the Airmen Memorial Museum endeavored to separate historical fact from popular fiction. Enclosed in this package you will find our publication, *William H. Pitsenbarger, Air Force Enlisted Hero*. The text provides a topical and objective overview of Pitsenbarger's Pararescue training, military career and climactic final hours.

Although the research performed to complement the biography dispels some misconceptions about Pitsenbarger's actions, irrefutable evidence was uncovered revealing the magnitude of his courage. Unfortunately, the short narrative cannot fully articulate the meaning of this man's sacrifice for his country and fellow members of the military.

AMM publications aim to educate the military community and larger public by exploring enlisted Air Force history and the contributions of countless enlisted heroes and pioneers.

Every Airmen Leadership School, NCO and Senior NCO Academy in the U.S. Air Force received a copy of the Pitsenbarger biography at no charge.

In early 1998, The AMM staff was tasked with the primary responsibility for research and collection of records pertaining to Pitsenbarger's service. This information, if sufficient, was to be drawn upon as the foundation for requesting the upgrade of the Medal of Honor for William H. Pitsenbarger.

Museum researchers gathered written statements and documentary evidence from more than one dozen U.S. Air Force and Army veterans who were witness to Pitsenbarger's actions, knew him personally, or had first-hand knowledge of the events in question. This package of information includes those statements Also included is a letter from two officers in Pitsenbarger's chain of command endorsing the upgrade to Medal of Honor.

Through the cooperation of these veterans, the Piqua Museum, the Air Force Historical Research Agency, the National Archives, and other organizations, the Airmen Memorial Museum has established an unprecedented wealth of information relative to William Pitsenbarger's life. Reproduced in this binder are several items from the AMM's Pitsenbarger Archives.

Whether written by historians analyzing the Vietnam War or by fellow veterans unearthing their most difficult memories, words cannot overstate the bravery of William H. Pitsenbarger. His sacrifice speaks for itself in a simple, clear voice. It tells us exactly how much he valued the lives of others and to what ends he would go for his fellow servicemen. It is foolish to try to convey the limits of his courage. There are no adequate words and there were no limits. William H. Pitsenbarger's sacrifice was ultimate. In retrospect, our only course of action is to acknowledge what his actions represent to our country. The Medal of Honor symbolizes what words fail to capture. The extent of his intrepidity under enemy fire is befitting of our nation's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "W. Parker Hayes, Jr.", with a stylized, cursive script.

W. Parker Hayes, Jr.
Curator and Director of Operations

MISSIONS PITS FLEW ON AS LOW BIRD

ID	MISREP	SAR Name	A/C Type	Downed	Rescued	SAR A/C	SAR Location	Survivor A	PJ Out	Med	Night	Hoist	Notes
236	Yes	VNAF	H-34	9/17/65	9/17/65	HH-43F	SVN	Cao Van, Lt	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	1 save

ID	MISREP	SAR Name	A/C Type	Downed	Rescued	Unit	SAR A/C	SAR Location	Survivor A	PJ Out	Hoist	Notes
1157	Yes		F-100	9/24/65	9/24/65	Det 6 38 ARS	HH-43F	SVN	Barbena, Martin W Maj	No	Yes	1 save

ID	MISREP	SAR Name	A/C Type	Downed	Rescued	Survivor A	PJ Out	Med	Hoist	Notes
1159	Yes	Medevac	TIC	10/9/65	10/9/65	unknown USA	No	Yes	Yes	2 saves

ID	MISREP	SAR Name	A/C Type	Downed	Rescued	Survivor A	PJ Out	Med	Hoist	Notes
240	Yes	Medevac	TIC	10/9/65	10/9/65	USA x 3	No	Yes	Yes	3 saves

ID	MISREP	SAR Name	A/C Type	Downed	Rescued	Survivor A	Survivor B	PJ Out	Med	Night	Hoist	Notes
1163	Yes	Medevac	TIC	11/6/65	11/6/65	Mclvor, A.J. Sgt	Woodward, Glen B PVT	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2 saves Australian Army

ID	MISREP	SAR Name	A/C Type	Downed	Rescued	Survivor A	PJ Out	Med	Night	Hoist	Notes
1176	Yes	Medevac	TIC	2/12/66	2/12/66	USA x 4	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	4 saves

ID	MISREP	SAR Name	A/C Type	Downed	Rescued	SAR A/C	SAR Location	Survivor A	PJ Out	Med	Hoist	Notes
1181	Yes	Medevac	TIC	3/14/66	3/14/66	HH-43F	SVN	USA x 4	No	Yes	Yes	4 saves

ID	MISREP	SAR Name	A/C Type	Downed	Rescued	SAR Location	Survivor A	PJ Out	Med	Hoist	Notes
1180	Yes		O-1F	3/14/66	3/14/66	SVN	Schneider, 1Lt USA	Yes	No	Yes	1 save

ID	MISREP	SAR Name	A/C Type	Downed	Rescued	Survivor A	PJ Out	Med	Hoist	Notes
1191	Yes	Medevac	TIC	4/11/66	4/11/66	USA x 2	Yes	Yes	Yes	2 saves - PJ KIA

1

ID	MISREP	SAR Name	A/C Type	Downed	Rescued					Survivor A			Hoist	Notes
1167	Yes	Medevac	TIC	12/19/65	12/19/65					Hunt, James SP,4			Yes	1 save

ID	MISREP	SAR Name	A/C Type	Downed	Rescued						Survivor A		PJ Out	Hoist	Notes
1158	Yes	Medevac		9/9/65	9/9/65						Williams, Ralph E-4		Yes	Yes	1 save

ID	MISREP	SAR Name	A/C Type	Downed	Rescued						Survivor A			Hoist	Notes
1174	Yes	Medevac	TIC	2/12/66	2/12/66						Hall, PVT			Yes	1 save

[illegible]