

souvenirs and momentos.

I was sorry to hear about your mothers death. And I was very upset about how it has upset you.

Good luck on the three books. It has been really good to hear from you. And now I have your phone number, I'll call. I'll also be at the reunion in September. Hopefully I see you there too.

Be good & keep the spirit!

Tom Pope
405.217.8496 (OK Veterans Center)

As a note on Jolly Green 67, the first BUFF shot down in combat, and to clarify some of the above text. Col. George Marrett (Sandy 13 on the JG67 pickup of LTC Lurie Morris, Sandy 02, Tchepone valley 18 January 1969. He saw JG67 shot down and came onto our crash site and laid down some "heavy smoke and pee" and without him and his fellow Sandys, JG67 would be on THE WALL) has a yearly CSAR debriefing. Usually held at Nellis AFB Nevada for the benefit of the USAF, this year he has arranged to debrief at the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson, Dayton Ohio. There will be two debriefs, one of Oyster 02B, Roger Locker, who EnE'd the NVA for two weeks prior to rescue, and CSAR Stormy 02. Between Col. George and myself we have found virtually every person involved EXCEPT MOST OF THE JOLLY CREWS. WHO WAS ON JOLLY GREEN 68 that picked up Lt. James Fegan. We have Jim Fegan, now an MD, but NOT THE CREW OF JOLLY GREEN 68. I have located most of the members of Jolly Green 67 except the FE James R. Purdue. I have Tom Meyer located as deceased as I buried him many years ago BUT THE REST OF THE CREW OF JOLLY GREEN 70 IS A MYSTERY. WHERE IS DAN GALDE??? We have LTC Morris found but not the crew of Jolly Green 70. By the way, who ever was the historian for the BUFF Jolly's did such a crappy job of detailing the missions, he might of well been drunk on his ass for all the good he has done for the teams record of accomplishments.

Both Col. George and I have written books. He has his ready to publish by the Smithsonian Press as, "Sandy to The Rescue," about his year with those dashing young men in their flying Dump Trucks. I have written a novel, "Rescue! Rescue!" and a non-fictional account of my return to Vietnam, "Journey for My Soul: There and Back Again," and am working on my present non-fiction, "Journey for My Spirit: The Rescue of Jolly Green 67 & the Saga of Stormy 02."

Finally, for all of you who have hesitated to stir up the old memories or feelings of fear, I will visit Jim Locker's family in Sydney, Ohio (Jim died 09 June 1968 on a SAR out of DaNang) when I am back at Wright-Patt. I believe it is beneficial for both the family who lost their son and the man who called that son "Brother" because of the union which occurred in combat, that ill-defined yet permanent fixture of connectedness to that man as Brother of The Blood.

If you are interested Col. George Marrett is contacted by:

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Atascadero, CA 93422
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Finally, I WILL RETURN TO LAOS as soon as I get word that the site of JG67 is verified. That is being done as a courtesy to our SAR teams by

the JTFFA out of Fort Smith, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Additionally, I will suggest that the next CSAR debriefing to be Boxer 22, Mu Gia pass December 1969.

Any questions, you know how to tap my shoulder and yell, "Hey Stupid!"

DC Surfer Johnson

17 JAN 69 SAR
POPE WIA

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Robert LaPointe

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Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2000 2:32 PM
Subject: Hello From Tom Pope
Hello Out There,

Thought it was about time to give you all an update. Newman pass this along to Denny. At least I wasn't the last one to get a computer. Com'on Dalmo, join the human race.

I've been painting quite a few landscapes since we got together in Albuquerque in June. Attended a watercolor workshop given by Frank Webb. I've admired his painting style ever since I started painting and he gave me some excellent suggestions, along with some well placed criticism, which I needed. I spend a lot more time in designing the paintings. I get a lot less disasters if I sketch before I paint. What a novel concept! It's also a lot more enjoyable.

Libby (my daughter at the reunion) says 'Hello' and that she really enjoyed meeting all of you. She's hinting that she might want to come to the PJ Association meeting in two years. Where have they decided to hold it, Dee? Let us know. She got a nice little (6'6") boyfriend. I'm surprised that I don't want to strangle the guy who's trying to steal my little girl. She's having a fun Senior year (all A's the first nine weeks), working at the Sonic drive-in (she's the Soda Bitch - her words, not mine. She make the sodas and rushes everyone to "move it, move it, move it". Kinda' like a smaller version of the DI's at Fort Benning.)

It was told to me that a lot of you didn't know that I had lost my leg or how it had happened. So I'll take this time to tell you:

"Now this ain't no shit. It was a hundred and ten in the shade and..."

You'd probably prefer the short version. (I heard that big groan out there.) Jan 18, 1969, I replaced Dee Nelson on Jolly Green run into Laos, west and north of the DMZ. We backed up another Jolly that picked up a downed 105 jock and headed to Savannaket. We were diverted back to a second day effort for a downed sandy (CO if I remember correctly). One Jolly had already been shot out earlier in the day and they had been bombing and strafing for a couple of hours to soften it up.

We went in about 1230, low and fast. There was a lot of gun fire and flak, but when we pulled into a hover over the downed Sandy driver, it eased up, and was sporadic. Off and on mini-gun bursts, and four A1e Skyraiders circling within what seemed like fifty feet of the helicopter, managed to keep the bad guys down for the 2-3 minutes we hovered about 80 feet in the air.

10/12/00

The Sandy driver got on the penetrator by himself, and once he was in the door, we were off, on the treetops, as fast as that helicopter could go. Lots of ground fire and firing back at full throttle, with those four Sandy's still circling fifty feet out, firing and bombing, all this right on the treetops.

Then It was quite. For about ten seconds, I thought we were out Scot free.

Then KABOOM! I was on the ramp gun and it hit the right side of the helicopter, between the floor and the engine exhaust. It was a hole as big as a Volkswagen Beetle. They say it was flak, I think it may have been one of the first shoulder held surface-to-air missiles. Whatever...

I was laying on the deck. I pulled myself up by the mini-gun handles and fell back down. My left leg was laying askew, and I could see that there wasn't much holding it on. D.C. Johnson and the rescued pilot immediately grabbed me and pulled me into the helicopter. It didn't hurt..., until they put the tourniquet on. I'll never forget that. (besides the leg injury, I had about fifty pieces of shrapnel in various parts of my body. I had a crew parachute on and it took most of the blast. Every part of my body that wasn't covered by that parachute and my helmet had metal fragments in it.

We crashed. And guys like Tom Newman, Tommy Myers, Dan Gauldi, Dee Nelson, came to the rescue. They say that our rescue was a real shootin' match, too, but I was in and out of consciousness so I'll let them tell you about. I guess that's how life works out. All I ever wanted was the biggest, bestest rescue mission ever. And I got it. I just didn't know I would be the rescuee.

That's the big story. I tried not to take too much poetic license. I'm just another PJ doing what PJ's do. Any one of you guys would have done the same as I did. Just another day in the life of a PJ.

Time to go nail a crate together for a traveling art show I'm in. They let me be in the show if I promised to fix the crates.

One last thing: Let's think about getting together at the next PJ Association Reunion in two years. It'll probably be in Las Vegas or Albuquerque. Maybe we can get there a day early?

I love you guys. Stay in touch. Bye bye.

Tom Pope
Tom53pj@aol.com

18 Jan 1969 Jolly Green 67

File = PJ23

Left to right FE M. Hilligoss
Copilot B. Libby PJ T Meyer

Pilot P. Darghty

PJ D. Johnson





POPE1.JPK



He dont has link for ~~the~~
Man Tom Hope 18 Jan 67
Bull 67

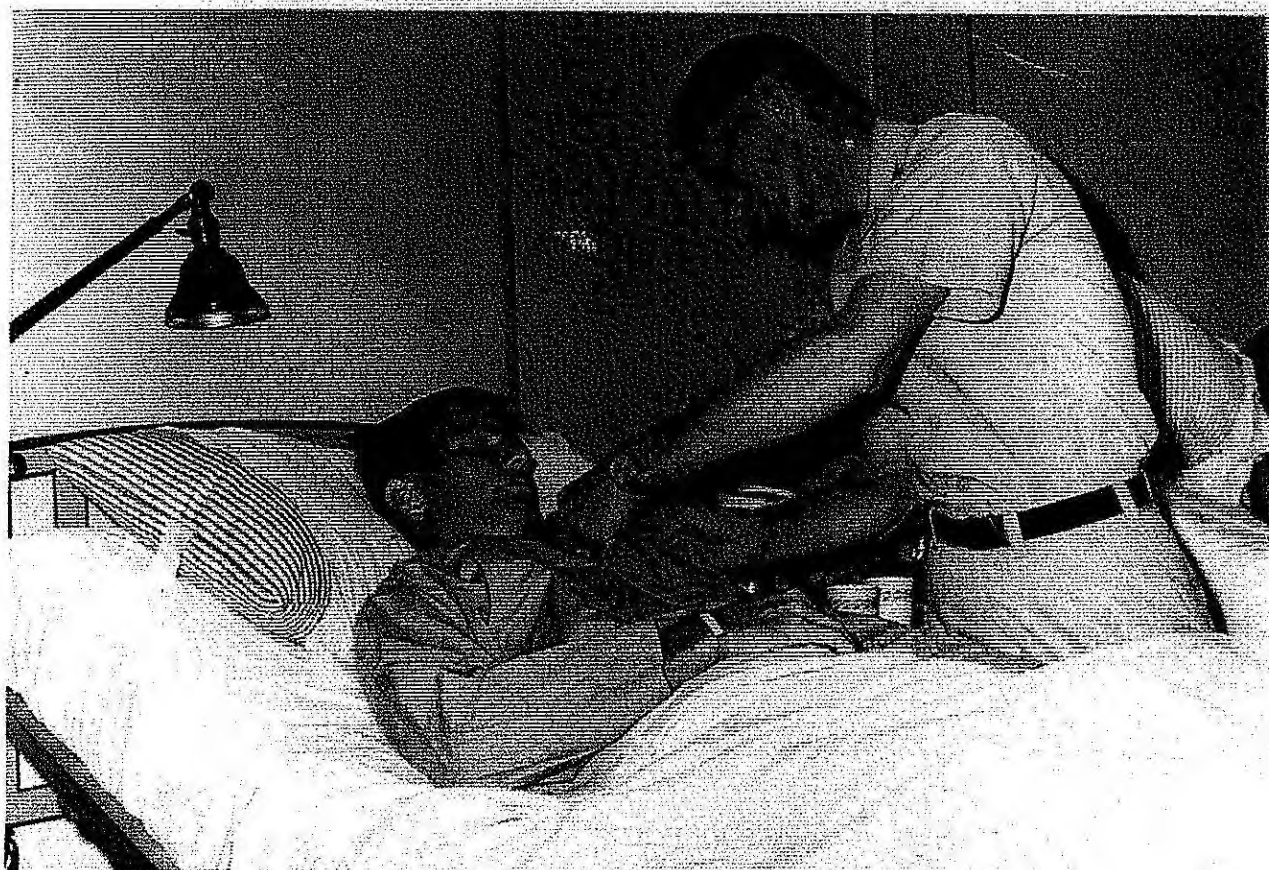
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18 JAN 69



POPE2.JPG

Tom Pope in hospital after leg amputation.
Col Shockley awarding the Purple Heart
WIA 17 Jan 1969 on Stormy SAR



FILE = PJ 4