

CONFIDENTIAL
DECLASSIFIED

TTCZYUW RUSVAGA2424 1111656-CCCC--RUCIEUA.

E. AIRCRAFT BATTLE DAMAGE

Classified by _____
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO
YEAR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED ON 31 DEC 76
AND

[illegible]

NNNN#

Classified by 57 Ane30
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO
YEAR INTERVALS.
DECLASSIFIED ON 51 Dec 76

Individual
Contacted:
Local Area
and Date:

Reproduced 1 crst 21 Apr 70 by ARDDA

CONFIDENTIAL

DECLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DECLASSIFIED

CLASSIFIED

~~B~~ 9 2/21
21 21 1/2
1/FOI 1/3

RUMLJBA/37ARRS DANANG AB RVN

RUMLJBA/VMO 2/MAG 11/DANANG AB RVN

6. KING 4 DIVERTED TO SCENE, SPAD 11/12 JG 42/33 21/0318

11. PANAMA, 20 TASS, 1 DASC, OL-2 3 ARRGP

* ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ *

CLASSIFIED BY 21-10-1
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO
YEAR INTERVALS.
DECLASSIFIED ON 21 Dec 86

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

FLASH

* C O N F I D E N T I A L *

PT 00417

2/3

12. HOSTILE ZULU (WINGMAN) 0315/21 15-25N 107-32E
13. 40 ARRS/HH-53/JUNGLE PENETRATORS/21/0805Z
14. 4/4/2/2/0/0
15. TAKEN UNINJURED TO DANANG AB
16. 4/22.8/HC-130/39 ARRS
7/21.3/HH-3/ 37 ARRS
4/18.8/HH53/ 40 ARRS
6/23.0/A-1/ 56 SOW
26/ 115.7/A-1/56 SOW
17. 0/0/0/0/NOT AVAIL/0/0/0
18. A. JOLLY GREEN 82
AC CAPT D.Y. THOMPSON
CP MAJ R. BLEIR
FE SSGT T.R. HENDRIX

Classified by _____
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO
YEAR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED ON 31 DEC 76

A. JOLLY GREEN 68
AC CAPT W. FIRST
CP MAJOR SCOGGINS
FE MSGT M.F. TASKER

PAGE 4 RUMJBB0143 C O N F I D E N T I A L

PJ SGT G.J. MC DONALD PJ SGT D.L. HORKA
PJ SGT T. CARRERY PJ SGT C. MORROW
B. CAPT JOHN DYE B. MAJOR C.E. WHINERY
56 SOW 56 SOW

19. A. 15-25 N 107-32E 100 PERCENT

B. S/E
C. S/E

D. FOG/LOW LEVEL STRATUS IN VALLEY/HILL TOPS 1500 AND ABOVE CLEAR/
WIND 090/05 START TO BURN OFF AT 0200Z

9. E. S/E

H. 2 ARRS COMBAT AIR FORCE AIRCREW MEMBERS SAVES/BAIR REFUELING/AIR
CRAFT DOWN DUE TO HOSTILE GROUND FIRE/NEG PJ DEPLOYMENTS KING 4 NOTIFIED
THIS RCC AT 21/0317Z THAT HOSTAGE NAN HAD BEEN SHOT DOWN. TWO ALERT
JOLLYS AND TWO SPADS WERE SCRAMBLED. HOSTAGE ZULU REPORTED VOICE CTC
WITH THE TWO SURVIVORS. CALL SIGNS HOSTAGE NAN AND COWPOKE 18. AT ETPZ
JOLLY GREENS 68 AND 77 SANDY'S 01 AND 02 WERE AIR BORNE FROM NAKHON
PHANOM, THAILAND. SANDY'S 03 AND 04 WERE AIR BORNE AT 0400Z. THE AREA
WAS DETERMINED TO BE EXTREMELY HOSTILE BY THE COVEY FAC AND SPAD 11 WHEN
ARRIVING ON SCENE. THE JOLLY GREENS WERE HELD IN A SAFE AREA WHILE FLIGHTS
OF FAST MOVERS WERE CALLED IN TO KNOCK OUT FOUR KNOWN GUN POSITIONS

PAGE 5 RUMJBB0143 C O N F I D E N T I A L

SANDYS AND SPADS WERE USED TO SUPPRESS SMALL ARMS FIRE BEING DIRECTED
AT THE SURVIVORS. THE BUNKERED GUN POSITIONS ABSORBED FLIGHT AFTER
FLIGHT OF HARD ORDNANCE. AT 0722Z SANDY 01 WAS SHOT DOWN. THE PILOT
EJECTED AND CAME DOWN 1/2 MILE EAST OF THE TWO MARINE SURVIVORS IN A
SAFER AREA. AT 0752Z SANDY 03 TOOK A HIT AND TURNED SOUTH TOWARD A SAFE
AREA. A SUCCESSFUL EJECTION WAS ACCOMPLISHED AT 0756Z. JOLLY GREEN 77
AND 68 ATTEMPTED A PICK UP OF SANDY 03 HOWEVER JG77 TOOK GROUND FIRE
WHICH WOUNDED HIS RESCUE SPECIALIST AND HE WAS FORCED TO ABORT THE PICK
UP. JOLLY GREEN 68 THE PICKED UP SANDY 03. JG 68 AND 77 THE FLEW TO
DANANG AIR BASE IN ORDER TO GET MEDICAL ATTENTION FOR THE WOUNDED PJ.
TWO PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN GUN POSITIONS WERE BELIEVED TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR
DOWNING SANDY 01 AND SANDY 03, PLUS INFLECTING BATTLE DAMAGE ON SPAD No. 1
AT 0814Z. ADDITIONAL HARD ORDNANCE WAS CALLED IN TO SILENCE THE

FLASH

* C O N F I D E N T I A L *

CONFIDENTIAL

WAS RECORDED
SEE SUP 24/1246Z
22 APR PROG

FLASH

PT 00417

* ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ *

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

3/3

GUNS. AT 0938Z WHILE MOVING INTO POSITION FOR A PICK UP OF SANDY 01, JOLLY GREEN 83 TOOK A HIT IN A FUEL LINE AND PROCEEDED TO DANANG AIR BASE. ADDITIONAL SAR FORCES WERE SCRAMBLED THROUGHOUT THE AFTERNOON FROM DANANG AND NKP, THAILAND. COVEY FACS CONTINUED TO DIRECT FAST MOVERS STRIKES THROUGHOUT THIS EFFORT. A TOTAL OF 30 A-1 AIR CRAFT WITH VARIOUS ORDINANCE LOADS WERE USED, PLUS AN UNKNOWN LARGE NUMBER OF FAST MOVERS. AT 1025Z A SUCCESSFUL PICKUP OF SANDY 01 WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY

PAGE 6 RUMJBB0143 ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

JOLLY GREEN 82 USING A SMOKE SCREEN FOR A SHIELD. ~~21 AND 33~~ JOLLY GREEN 21 AND 33 ATTEMPTED TO PICK UP THE ORIGINAL SURVIVORS AT 1045Z BUT WERE NOT SUCCESSFUL DUE TO RESTRICTED VISIBILITY AND GROUND FIRE. IMMEDIATELY AFTER ABORTED ATTEMPT JG 21 AND 33 LINKED UP WITH KING 7 FOR AIR REFUELING WHILE JOINING UP KING 7 BEGAN RECEIVING FIRE FROM 37MM AND TOOK EVASIVE ACTION. NO DAMAGE OCCURRED AND THE AIR FUELING WAS COMPLETED IN ANOTHER AREA. AT 1100Z AS DARKNESS APPROACHED A LARGE AMOUNT OF RIOT CONTROL AGENTS WAS DROPPED BY FAST MOVERS. AT 1115Z JOLLY GREEN 07 TOOK SOME GROUND FIRE AT 1119Z. BUT CONTINUED MOVING IN. AT 1125Z JOLLY GREEN 07 TOOK HEAVY FIRE WHICH DISABLED HIS HYDRULIC SYSTEM AND WOUNDED HIS RESCUE SPECIALIST. DARKNESS PREVENTED ANY FURTHER ATTEMPTS AT RESCUING HOSTAGE NAN AND COWPOKE 18. BOTH SURVIVORS WERE IN RADIO CONTACT WITH THE SAR FORCES THROUGHOUT THE DAY AND REPORTED NO INJURIES. A FAC AIRCRAFT WILL REMAIN OVERHEAD ALL NIGHT MONITORING GUARD FREQUENCY. ANOTHER SAR EFFORT IS BEING PLANNED FOR FIRST LIGHT TOMMOROW 22 APRIL. DUE TO THE EXTREME HOSTILITY OF THE AREA IT IS EXPECTED THAT A LARGE AMOUNT OF ORDINANCE WILL BE EXPENDED BY FAST MOVERS, SPADS AND SANDYS. SIX SANDYS FROM NKP, THAILAND ARE REMAINING AT DANANG TONIGHT FOR THE FIRST LIGHT EFFORT. REQUEST FOR FAST MOVERS BE FORWARDED TO 7AF, TAN SON NHUT, AB, AND I DASC ADANANG, RVN.

GP-4.

BT

#0143

NNNN#

1 copy reproduced 21 Apr 70 by ARDDA

FLASH

* ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ *

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Robert LaPointe

From: Robert LaPointe [rlapointe@gci.net]
Sent: Thursday, November 28, 2002 10:24 AM
To: C Hatch
Cc: Corcoran, James
Subject: RE: Cowpoke 18 SAR 1970

21 APR 70 SAR

Glad to hear from you. Any time before the end of the year would work for me. I am presently working on several other stories and will finish them up first. Feel free to coordinate with Jim. I have been sharing everything I plan on putting into vol 2 that has anything to do with him anyways.

Have an enjoyable holiday season.

There are no ex-marines or PJ's. Only marines and PJ's who have moved on to other parts of their lives.

Semper Fi

-----Original Message-----

From: C Hatch [mailto:hatch@telepath.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 27, 2002 1:58 PM
To: Robert LaPointe
Subject: Re: Memories of yesteryear

Mr. LaPointe,

Greetings! Now that we have established lines of communication, I stand ready to assist you anyway I can. Please bear with me as I must collect my thoughts about the mission. I like others have probably forgotten the minute details but will be happy to provide you "my story". If you are not pressed for time, I would like to wait until after the Thanksgiving holidays as my schedule is rather hectic. I will attempt to get material to you between then and Xmas if that is ok with you. Let me know.

Glad you are undertaking this project. I believe that the world needs to know what a great job/mission that you and your comrades performed in Vietnam. Don't know how Jim Corcoran fits into the project, but I would like for him to see any material that I provide. As you are aware, he was the one that hauled my butt out of the jungle and for that I will always be indebted to him.

Trust you and your family have a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday.

Thank you for your kind words regarding my Corps. Though I am now considered a civilian, in my heart I will always be a Marine.

Semper Fi,
 Chuck Hatch

----- Original Message -----

From: Robert LaPointe
To: James Corcoran ; hatch@telepath.com
Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2002 10:13 PM
Subject: RE: Memories of yesteryear

Terry received a copy of the Boxer 22 SAR and had provided me some corrections to the story. I am just now finishing 1968 and 69 and have not yet started on 1970. Cowpoke 18 is still on my short list of probably stories for that year because I have a lot of primary source material. I am always looking for a

11/28/2002

survivors perspective on the SAR. How they egressed, evaded, used survival gear, and how they thought the SAR went. Unfortunately, I have found very few survivors. It is great news that you found Chuck Hatch.

Hi Chuck - I am a 26 year active duty pararescueman who has now become an amateur historian. I was concerned that the history of air rescue in the Vietnam War would not be documented. So I've take up the task to do as best as I am capable. Now that you have the same primary source material as I (it was all collected at the AF Historical Research Agency) you can extrapolate what facts are missing or may be incorrect in the formal documentation. If you could email me the key points of your experience of being one of our customers, I would find that very valuable in writing up the story. I would provide you an advance copy of the draft material when it is written and allow you a great deal of editorial influence on the final story.

You can find out a lot about me and my history project at my website www.pjsinnam.com

I have always believed that if I was on the ground and needed real warriors to fight, I needed marines. Many USAF pararescuemen went to USMC training courses after the Vietnam War. We simply needed to learn from the best. I was fortunate to attend the USMC jungle operations (mud school) in Okinawa to learn how marines patrol and conduct ground operations. The reason was to provide pararescuemen the skills to operate against conventional military patrols and also how to conduct counter ambush actions if we were stupid enough to walk into an ambush. I still have a huge admiration of all marines. They like PJs do not quit when things get tough and they fight to win.

Anyways, if you would like to provide information about your experience as a survivor you do not have to write it in a narrative format. An outline of key points is fine. Short sentences of memories are fine. I can work with almost anything. A photo of you next to or in your OV-10 would be great. You can read some of my work on my website and get an idea of my writing style. I am not Tom Clancy and I use formal historical format in my writing. One reason is that I want to use the final work as my masters thesis.

Thanks for your consideration.

Bob LaPointe

Bob:

I was able to find Cowpoke 18. I spoke with him for a few minutes and sent him a copy of the stuff you sent me. I just now received this email from him. Sounds like he will help you out with a narrative for your second book. Send him an email & introduce yourself and let him know what you would like.

Have a happy thanksgiving!!

Jim

----- Original Message -----

From: C Hatch

To: jcorcoran@ci.livonia.mi.us

Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2002 12:33 PM

Subject: Memories of yesteryear

Jim,

This is to let you know that I received the package several days back and really appreciated you taking the time to put it together. Thank you so much.

11/28/2002

A lot of water has flowed under the bridge since that ill-fated day. Brought back some memories that I had put away. As to be expected after 30 years, Rolfe Hunt's account contained some errors. I did not stop flying after the shootdown. As I recall, the next flight I had was a night extract of a Marine recon team under fire. I was running arty and air strikes and it was DARK. As I recall, the front seat was a pain in the butt and kept interrupting the whole show. Thankfully, we were able to get the recon team out with no casualties. As with you, it was always a good feeling to get anyone out of a tight situation.

I must apologize to you and your crew as well as the Spad people for not trying harder to make personal contact with you guys afterwards. I sent a couple of cases of beer to you but you must not have received them. Bottom line-----I thank you so much for what you did. I will always be indebted to everyone that put their butts on the line for that mission. Prior the this event, I did not have a very high opinion of the Air Force but I have always spoken highly of the men in blue that pulled that mission off. The Spad driver that talked your pilot into the pickup zone (when he was trying to pull off) will always be my hero.

I have not heard from the gentleman authoring the book. Please feel free to forward my E-mail address to him and let him know that I will assist anyway possible.

I continued to fly for several more months until I had the opportunity to command a tank company. I eventually brought the last Marine tank company out of Vietnam.

I have only been to Michigan one time since I married my wife. Guess we are home bodies. She goes back quite often but we operate a cattle ranch in southern Oklahoma and I need to stay close. It sounds like you have a wonderful family and if I ever get up that way, I will try to contact you. Likewise, if for some reason you find yourself in Oklahoma, the welcome mat is always out.

Jan and I would like to extend to you and yours the very best of Thanksgiving holidays. Please keep in touch.

Semper Fi,
Chuck Hatch

11/28/2002

Robert LaPointe

From: Robert LaPointe [rlapointe@gci.net]
Sent: Wednesday, August 21, 2002 10:15 AM
To: James Corcoran
Subject: RE: Cowpoke 18

Last night I pulled the Cowpoke 18 material from my files and put all of the proper declassification markers on it and made sure there were no SSN's listed next to any ones names. I have a written nondisclosure agreement with the AF Historical Research Agency to do this for any material I collected from them and then release into the public arena.

I copied the material this morning and it is ready to mail. Copy costs were \$4.80
 There are 32 pages of primary source material included. After reviewing it, I decided that this story will be included in volume two, Email me your postal address and I'll get it on the way to you.

Priority mail postage will be \$3.85. There is too much material to send via first class letter and it is easier for me to ship priority mail because the post office provides all the shipping materials

I hope that after you read all this material you will be inspired to write the mission story for publication in volume 2. I would really like to have a story in volume 2 that is told from the FE's perspective. If you are uncomfortable with writing it yourself, perhaps you could colaborate with friends to help you out. I would not need your draft story until January 2003.

There was an 8 x 10 black and white original photo in the 40 ARRS unit history and I scanned it at 600 dpi for use in the book. So I do not need another copy of the same photo. Thanks for the offer.

-----Original Message-----

From: James Corcoran [mailto:jcorcoran@ci.livonia.mi.us]
Sent: Wednesday, August 21, 2002 4:39 AM
To: Robert LaPointe
Subject: Re: Cowpoke 18

Bob;

Tell me how much and where to send it. (for the cowpoke 18 material)

Also, do you think you will be able to use the photo's I sent? If you need the originals for any reason I will gladly send them to you. I think that what you are doing is wonderul and anything that I can do to help let me know.

Jim Corcoran

----- Original Message -----

From: Robert LaPointe
To: James Corcoran
Sent: Wednesday, August 21, 2002 2:04 AM
Subject: RE: Cowpoke 18

Attached is the Jolly mission report for the Cowpoke 18 SAR. This is one of the missions I plan to use in volume 2. The reason is that it is a hot mission and I have a lot of primary source material. In addition to

8/21/2002

the Jolly report attached, I have a 5 page Sandy report, 4 pages of the 56 SOW unit history about this mission, 10 pages of King mission reports, an 9 pages of message traffic. There is almost 30 pages of material and it is too much to scan and send as email attachments

I would be glad to copy it all and sent it to you at cost. Kinko's will charge me .15 cents a page and priority mail postage will cost \$4.00

If you are writing all this up there may be no need for me to duplicate your efforts. As you saw in volume 1, a couple of FE's wrote the articles I included in my first book and I cited them as the author's. So If you ever wanted to see your work in print this might be your chance. I would reserve the right to edit your story if required or not use it at all and write my own. It just all depends on your writing skills. Its highly probable that that you writing skills exceed mine and I would use your material as it is written. You could also collaborate with your wife, neighbors, or whom ever.

Let me know what you would like to do.

-----Original Message-----

From: James Corcoran [mailto:jcorcoran@ci.livonia.mi.us]

Sent: Monday, August 19, 2002 9:11 AM

To: rlapointe@gci.net

Subject: Cowpoke 18

Bob:

My name is Jim Corcoran and I was a Flight Engineer with the 40Th. I was the FE on the Lowbird for Cowpoke 18. I have attached a picture(cowpoke.jpg) of the whole crew after the mission.

Standing left to right:

Captain Dennis Sattler-Co-pilot

Lt. Col. Hedgewald-Pilot

Sgt Jim Corcoran-Flight Engineer

Kneeling left to right:

Sgt Kick Pambrun

Sgt Bill Werber

I have been in contact with Dick Pambrun and he said you had the mission report for that mission. Is there any chance I could get a copy of that report?? I have written a short narrative of my memory of that mission and It would help if I could use the jolly numbers and other small details like that . Not to mention that I would like to read the official report of one of my missions. If you want I can forward my draft narrative of Cowpoke 18 mission. If there is a cost for the mission report let me know.

I also ran across a drawing of Udo Fishers and I have included it as an attachment also (commie.jpg).

Hope you can use this stuff.

Jim Corcoran

PS really liked your book and put me down on your customer list for the next one.

8/21/2002

Robert LaPointe

From: James Corcoran [jcorcoran@ci.livonia.mi.us]
Sent: Thursday, August 29, 2002 4:30 AM
To: Robert LaPointe
Subject: Fw: [FACNET] Cowpoke 18 SAR, 22 Apr 70

Bob:

I put out a request for information about Cowpoke 18. Here is the first of two responses.

Jim Corcoran

----- Original Message -----

From: CHARLES E BURIN
To: jcorcoran@ci.livonia.mi.us
Sent: Wednesday, August 28, 2002 10:59 PM
Subject: Fw: [FACNET] Cowpoke 18 SAR, 22 Apr 70

J,

I was a pilot with VMO-2 in Vietnam 6/69-7/70 and was the squadron safety officer from December 69 until I left.

I am not sure where Chuck Hatch is today. I understand he retired from the Marine Corps as a Col. Maybe the HQ USMC locator service could find him.

Here's some of what I know about the loss.

Gene Wheeler joined the squadron from the 1st MAW HQ just prior to the day he was shot down. Chuck Hatch was an Aerial Observer and had been flying with VMO-2 since at least late October 69. My log book shows I flew with him the first time October 27 and at least 7 times prior to the shootdown. I flew an orientation mission with Major Wheeler March 9 and Flight schedule copies show that Major Wheeler was flying missions as Hostage NAN by April 1.

There is a good write-up of the loss of Wheeler and Hatch in Lt. Col. J. M Moriarty's book, Ground Attack Vietnam: The Marines Who Controlled the Skies, pages 133-164. The account has several factual errors but is basically correct.

As to the other aircraft losses they included A-1H 52-135336 Captain J. M. Dyer; A-1J 52-142070 Major C. E. Winery and A-1J 52-142015 Captain D. E. Friestad (second shoot down) An F-4 was also damaged 4/21 as well as a Jolly shot up badly. Aircraft information is from Vietnam Air Losses by Chris Hobson.

They were flying Mission 76 which was a twice daily deep recon that required two aircraft. I had flown the same mission numerous times. This particular mission was deep in western Vietnam very close to the border with Laos. I complained about two weeks earlier when I flew a Msn 76 in the same area and inadvertently crossed into Laos. We were supposed to be looking for some trail or other in the jungle canopy. The weather was not the best and keeping track of where we were was difficult at best even with 4 sets of eyes trying to figure it out. I crossed over a ridgeline and saw what looked like a freeway built of dirt that split and went around a large hill. I headed over the road and realized I was obviously not where I was supposed to be. I added full power and quickly headed back east across the ridge line. All this was at 1000 Feet AGL or less. My wingman

8/29/2002

was probably at 2500 ft. AGL. My complaint to the Air Wing Intell was that we were not briefed about what was in Laos very near where we were doing our visual recon mission. The information would have helped keep us out of harms way. Gene made at least two passes over the same area in much better weather and was hit by a 37mm.

I have talked to one of the Covey FACs who was involved in the rescue. He said it was not a good area to be flying in at a low altitude. He said the area was designated Strike Zone Yankee.

If I can provide any further information please let me know.

Chuck Burin (Hostage IGOR)

Bronco Association Founder, board member and Historian

----- Original Message -----

From: corcoran48154

Sent: Wednesday, August 28, 2002 7:13 AM

To: FACNET@yahoogroups.com

Subject: [FACNET] Cowpoke 18 SAR, 22 Apr 70

I would like to contact a Charles E. Hatch. He was a Captain in 1970. Drove an OV-10 for VMO-2, MAG-11 USMC DaNang 1970. Call sign was Cowpoke 18 during that period. I am helping do some research for a retired Pararescueman who is writing his second book on SEA rescues. The mission took place on April 21 and 22 1970. There was an OV-10 and at least 3 A1E's shot down and several Jolly Greens shot up. Any help would be appreciated. Send me an e-mail at: jcorcoran@ci.livonia.mi.us

8/29/2002

Robert LaPointe

From: James Corcoran [jcorcoran@ci.livonia.mi.us]
Sent: Thursday, August 29, 2002 4:30 AM
To: Robert LaPointe
Subject: Fw: [FACNET] Cowpoke 18 SAR, 22 Apr 70

Bob:

I put out a request for information about Cowpoke 18. Here is the first of two responses.

Jim Corcoran

----- Original Message -----

From: CHARLES E BURIN
To: jcorcoran@ci.livonia.mi.us
Sent: Wednesday, August 28, 2002 10:59 PM
Subject: Fw: [FACNET] Cowpoke 18 SAR, 22 Apr 70

J,

I was a pilot with VMO-2 in Vietnam 6/69-7/70 and was the squadron safety officer from December 69 until I left.

I am not sure where Chuck Hatch is today. I understand he retired from the Marine Corps as a Col. Maybe the HQ USMC locator service could find him.

Here's some of what I know about the loss.

Gene Wheeler joined the squadron from the 1st MAW HQ just prior to the day he was shot down. Chuck Hatch was an Aerial Observer and had been flying with VMO-2 since at least late October 69. My log book shows I flew with him the first time October 27 and at least 7 times prior to the shootdown. I flew an orientation mission with Major Wheeler March 9 and Flight schedule copies show that Major Wheeler was flying missions as Hostage NAN by April 1.

There is a good write-up of the loss of Wheeler and Hatch in Lt. Col. J. M Moriarty's book, Ground Attack Vietnam: The Marines Who Controlled the Skies, pages 133-164. The account has several factual errors but is basically correct.

As to the other aircraft losses they included A-1H 52-135336 Captain J. M. Dyer; A-1J 52-142070 Major C. E. Winery and A-1J 52-142015 Captain D. E. Friestad (second shoot down) An F-4 was also damaged 4/21 as well as a Jolly shot up badly. Aircraft information is from Vietnam Air Losses by Chris Hobson.

They were flying Mission 76 which was a twice daily deep recon that required two aircraft. I had flown the same mission numerous times. This particular mission was deep in western Vietnam very close to the border with Laos. I complained about two weeks earlier when I flew a Msn 76 in the same area and inadvertently crossed into Laos. We were supposed to be looking for some trail or other in the jungle canopy. The weather was not the best and keeping track of where we were was difficult at best even with 4 sets of eyes trying to figure it out. I crossed over a ridgeline and saw what looked like a freeway built of dirt that split and went around a large hill. I headed over the road and realized I was obviously not where I was supposed to be. I added full power and quickly headed back east across the ridge line. All this was at 1000 Feet AGL or less. My wingman

9/1/2002

21 APR 70

Robert LaPointe

From: Robert LaPointe [rlapointe@gci.net]
Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2002 7:14 PM
To: James Corcoran; hatch@telepath.com
Subject: RE: Memories of yesteryear

Terry received a copy of the Boxer 22 SAR and had provided me some corrections to the story. I am just now finishing 1968 and 69 and have not yet started on 1970. Cowpoke 18 is still on my short list of probably stories for that year because I have a lot of primary source material. I am always looking for a survivors perspective on the SAR. How they egressed, evaded, used survival gear, and how they thought the SAR went. Unfortunately, I have found very few survivors. It is great news that you found Chuck Hatch.

Hi Chuck - I am a 26 year active duty pararescueman who has now become an amateur historian. I was concerned that the history of air rescue in the Vietnam War would not be documented. So I've take up the task to do as best as I am capable. Now that you have the same primary source material as I (it was all collected at the AF Historical Research Agency) you can extrapolate what facts are missing or may be incorrect in the formal documentation. If you could email me the key points of your experience of being one of our customers, I would find that very valuable in writing up the story. I would provide you an advance copy of the draft material when it is written and allow you a great deal of editorial influence on the final story.

You can find out a lot about me and my history project at my website www.pjsinnam.com

I have always believed that if I was on the ground and needed real warriors to fight, I needed marines. Many USAF pararescuemen went to USMC training courses after the Vietnam War. We simply needed to learn from the best. I was fortunate to attend the USMC jungle operations (mud school) in Okinawa to learn how marines patrol and conduct ground operations. The reason was to provide pararescuemen the skills to operate against conventional military patrols and also how to conduct counter ambush actions if we were stupid enough to walk into an ambush. I still have a huge admiration of all marines. They like PJs do not quit when things get tough and they fight to win.

Anyways, if you would like to provide information about your experience as a survivor you do not have to write it in a narrative format. An outline of key points is fine. Short sentences of memories are fine. I can work with almost anything. A photo of you next to or in your OV-10 would be great. You can read some of my work on my website and get an idea of my writing style. I am not Tom Clancy and I use formal historical format in my writing. One reason is that I want to use the final work as my masters thesis.

Thanks for your consideration.

Bob LaPointe

Bob:

I was able to find Cowpoke 18. I spoke with him for a few minutes and sent him a copy of the stuff you sent me. I just now received this email from him. Sounds like he will help you out with a narrative for your second book. Send him an email & introduce yourself and let him know what you would like.

Have a happy thanksgiving!!

Jim

----- Original Message -----

From: C Hatch

11/26/2002