

~~SECRET~~

MIG CAP

Garfish 501, Flight (Navy)
Battleery 310, Flight (F-4)
Pageboy Flight (Navy)
Gunfighter 51 (F-4)

Sundown 101, Flight (Navy)
Eagle 313, Flight
Papa Flight (F-4)

STRIKE AIRCRAFT

Fealer 49, Flight (Expend)

Wolfpack 31, Flight (Expend) (F-4)

The following aircraft did not expend.

Battleery 304, Flight (F-4)
Bennett Flight (F-4)
Gunfighter 40 Flight (F-4)
Gunfighter 42 Flight (F-4)
Maynard 469 Flight (F-4)
Electron 500 Flight (A-6)
Battleery 311 Flight (F-4)
Cobra 05 Flight (F-4)

DECLASSIFIED

Wolfpack 21 Flight (F-4)
Battle cry 302 Flight (F-4)
Canasta 405 Flight (A-7)
Banyan 01 Flight (F-4)
Peller 32 Flight
Miller 02 Flight (F-4)

Robert A. DeLorenzo

ROBERT A. DELORENZO, Major, USAF
Aircraft Commander/Airborne Mission Commander

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57

GROUP-4

Declassify at 5 year intervals,
unless indicated otherwise.

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15 Feb 71

DATE: 4 Feb 71

MISSION NUMBER: 3-004-2 Feb 71

AIRCRAFT DESIGNATION: King 21

DISTRESSED AIRCRAFT: Bigot 02

LOCATION: 092/86/89

SAVES: None

(S) A first light SAR effort was conducted on the third day to rescue Bigot 02B. Nail 45 was the first aircraft to arrive on scene at 1230Z and he was appointed as On Scene Commander (OSC). Nail 45 made a first light weather evaluation and the area was reported completely overcast. There was no ceiling as the clouds were observed to go to the surface at some points and the tops over Bigot 02B was 4800 ft. Sandy 01 arrived on scene at 1300Z and he took over as OSC. Wolf 01 was also in the area to assist the Sandy's and Nail FAC's. At 0010Z, Bigot 02B stated that he was okay and had water and 3 flares. He was using his second radio. Bravo stated at 0156Z there were troops to the south of him and that the clouds were at the tops of the trees. There were breaks starting to appear south east and south west of the SAR scene. By 0245Z the tops of the clouds over Bravo were down to 4200 ft. At 0305Z, Bravo stated that he had moved from Kansas City to Omaha. The weather continued the same with breaks appearing in the overcast. Sandy 07 was appointed OSC at 0310Z. At 1405Z, Bigot 02B sounded like he was whispering on the radio. No definite message was received at this time as it was unintelligible. This was the last positive radio contact made with Bigot 02B. The weather continued the same for the next two hours with no further progress made. Sandy 09 reported ground fire in the area but no one took any hits. Continuous attempts were made to get either voice contact or a beeper from Bravo. Sandy 07 made repeated attempts to get under the overcast. He was unable to remain under the overcast and reach the area of the survivor. At 0625Z, Sandy 09 was appointed as OSC. Attempts were made on all SAR frequencies to contact the Bravo man. The weather started to break overhead the SAR scene at 0638Z. The aircraft on the scene at the time were unable to make any visual sighting of the survivor. At approximately 0655Z, a noise, beeper, voice was heard on 243.0. None of the aircraft monitoring were able to distinguish what was said or who had said it. The weather had started to move back into the area again. A beeper was heard at 0721Z and again at 0725Z. King 21 advised Sandy 09 to try to get a chimney from Bravo.

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GROUP-4

Declassify at 3 year intervals,
Declassify at 12 years.

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No shiney observed from the area. Sandy 09 reported 37 MM fire from the area. At 0800Z clouds started to move back into the area. Authenticators were requested from Jack at 0805Z. By 0812Z, the entire area was overcast again. An 85 MM gun had begun to fire at 0812Z. At 0850Z the 85 MM had fired a second time. At this time we began receiving Bandit calls from Squid and Crab. The SAR forces were moved to the west. At 1000Z, all SAR forces were directed to RTB. The last positive voice contact made with Bigot 02B was at 0325Z when he stated that he was all right. He had sounded calm and confident on all voice contact up to that time.

KING 21 Crewmembers

AG/AMC Major Jones
CP Major Regels
CP 1Lt Bedwell
N Capt Moore
RO SSgt Hunt
FE TSgt Wilson, E
LN TSgt Simmons

SAR Forces

King 23
Sandys 01, 02, 03, 04, 05,
06, 07, 08, 09, 10, 11, 12,
13, and 14
Jelly Green 61, 62, 60, 56
Mail 45, 39, 47, 23
Wolf 01, 02, 03, 04

DECLASSIFIED


ROBERT E. JONES, Major, USAF
Aircraft Commander/Airborne Mission Commander

~~SECRET~~

69

GROUP-4

Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification at 12 months.

~~SECRET~~

DATE: 3 Feb 71

9 Feb 71

MISSION NUMBER: B-3-004-3 Feb 71

AIRCRAFT DESIGNATION: King 21

DISTRESSED AIRCRAFT: Night 02 Bravo

LOCATION: 17-18-30N 106-09-30E

SAVES: None

(S) King 21 Airborne from CM 70 at 2210Z -- on scene at 2240Z. King 21 orbit 12D/16-40/CH 89. At 2240Z I contacted Nail 68 who was orbiting over the reported survivors position but did not have radio contact. He reported several clicks (carrier waves) on Guard in response to his calls but no pattern, voice or beeper. The weather in the area was reported as overcast, tops 4000 to 4500 with a broken layer 7000 to 8000 MSL. At 2330Z Nail 63 arrived and relieved Nail 68. Numerous attempts were made to contact Night 02-B on Guard and Emergency Delta Frequencies. Several times during the morning clicks could be heard on Guard and at one time a 15 second hold down was heard. Sandy 1 and 2 arrived at 0640Z and Sandy 1 was appointed on scene commander. At 0130Z Night 02 was advised to turn off his radio for 3 hours to conserve the battery. At 0430Z further attempts to make contact were futile with the exception of a few noise clicks. The weather in the area remained the same throughout the day -- bases of 2000 to 2500 ft MSL with clouds touching treetops and rain in the area of the survivor. All SAR forces remained on the ground and a radio watch was maintained but no positive response. King 21 departed the orbit at 1100Z, landing at CH70 at 1140Z.

Night coverage had been arranged for by Jack and instructions were relayed to Nail 33 to maintain listening watch -- if contact was established, have survivor attempt to move Northwest and conserve his radio until the weather improved.

~~SECRET~~

70

COPIES

70 COPIES 3 year intervals.
70 COPIES 12 year intervals.

~~SECRET~~
~~SECRET~~

KING 21 Crewmembers

AC/AMC Major DeLorenzo
P Major Benson
CP Capt Gealta
N Major McGill
RO Sgt Schuatz
FE TSgt Wigginton
LM MGt Patterson

Resources

Nail 68 (OSC until 0040Z)
Sandy 1 (OSC 0040Z until 0435Z)
Nail 23 (OSC 0435Z until 0535Z)
Nail 41 (OSC 0535Z until 0840Z)
Nail 33 (OSC 0840Z until relieved)
Sandy 01, 02 (A-1)
Nail 68, 63, 23, 41, 33 (OV-10)
Wolf 05 (RF-4)

Robert A. DeLorenzo

ROBERT A. DELORENZO, Major, USAF
Airborne Mission Commander

DECLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

GROUP-4
Intervals.
of the 1st S.S.

GOTNER, NORBERT ANTHONY

Name: Norbert Anthony Gotner
Rank/Branch: O4/USAF
Unit: 25th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Ubon Airfield, Thailand
Date of Birth:
Home City of Record: Kansas City, KS
Date of Loss: 03 February 1971
Country of Loss: Laos
Loss Coordinates: 171700N 1061030E (XE230120 or XD258926)
Status (in 1973): Released POW
Category:
Acft/Vehicle/Ground: F4D
Refno: 1698
Other Personnel in Incident: Robert L. Standerwick (missing)

REMARKS: 730329 RELSD BY PL

Source: Compiled from one or more of the following: raw data from U.S. Government agency sources, correspondence with POW/MIA families, published sources, interviews. Updated by the P.O.W. NETWORK in 1998.

SYNOPSIS: When North Vietnam began to increase their military strength in South Vietnam, NVA and Viet Cong troops again intruded on neutral Laos for sanctuary, as the Viet Minh had done during the war with the French some years before. The border road, termed the "Ho Chi Minh Trail" was used for transporting weapons, supplies and troops. Hundreds of American pilots were shot down trying to stop this communist traffic to South Vietnam. Fortunately, search and rescue teams in Vietnam were extremely successful and the recovery rate was high. Still there were nearly 600 lost in Laos who were not rescued. Many of them went down along the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

During his Air Force career, Col. Robert L. Standerwick, Sr. flew a variety of aircraft. At Omaha, Nebraska, he was selected to fly SAC's "Looking Glass" missions. He was among the first of his friends to be selected to fly the Phantom F4 fighter/bomber. After Thanksgiving 1970, Standerwick left Omaha and shipped out to Vietnam, to be stationed at Ubon Airfield, Thailand, with the 25th Tactical Fighter Squadron. To his four children, it seemed like just another long period Dad would be away.

On February 3, 1971, Standerwick was assigned a mission over the Ho Chi Minh Trail along the eastern border of Laos. Standerwick's backseater was Maj. Norbert A. Gotner, from Kansas City, Kansas. Their aircraft was the D model F4.

The D model of the Phantom F4 aircraft had arrived at Ubon in 1967. This model was improved with the installation of a central air data computer for bombing and navigation. The computer automatically determined the weapon release point for all bombing modes. This version also launched Walleye television-guided missiles and laser-guided bombs. Combined with the aircraft's max level speed of over Mach 2 and its tremendous maneuverability, the aircraft was considered one of the "hottest" high-tech aircraft of the day.

Standerwick and Gotner's mission on February 3 was not a bombing mission, however, but a "sensor drop" - dropping strategically placed sensors to help monitor truck and troop movement along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The Trail was heavily defended and heavily trafficked.

During the mission, Standerwick and Gotner's F4 was shot down, and both men

ejected as the aircraft crashed. Radio contact was made with both Col. Standerwick and Maj. Gotner, who reported that they were alive and uninjured on the ground. The two were close enough to talk with each other. Rescue could not be made due to darkness and weather.

A later radio message from Standerwick reported that he was surrounded and had been hit by gunfire. Some first hand accounts report that Standerwick yelled or screamed. Soon after, contact with Gotner and Standerwick was lost, and the Air Force declared both men Missing in Action.

An immediate intelligence report was received by the U.S. describing two Americans being moved through Mahaxay Village in southern Khammouane Province, Laos (about 8 miles northeast of the point the F4D was downed). This report, although not felt to be specific enough to be a definite identification, was thought to relate to Standerwick and Gotner. No further word was heard of either man.

Unknown to U.S. intelligence and the Air Force, Maj. Gotner had been captured by North Vietnamese troops. He was moved immediately to North Vietnam, where he and a handful of other men captured in Laos were held in the same prisons as men captured in North and South Vietnam. Gotner and the other few captured in Laos and moved to Hanoi were held incommunicado from other American POWs for the next two years.

When peace agreements were signed in Paris in January 1973, the Vietnamese agreed to release all American Prisoners of War in their hands. The list they provided the U.S. did not include any of the men lost in Laos. A subsequent list of eleven individuals was provided at the last minute, and it was known for the first time that Norbert Gotner was a Prisoner of War and would be returning home. The eleven had all been held in North Vietnam, apart from other Americans. Bob Standerwick's name appeared on no list. He was not returned home with the 591 Americans who were released from North Vietnam.

Families of men lost in Laos were horrified that none of the over 100 men they knew had been alive were released. The Pathet Lao had repeatedly stated that they held "tens of tens" of Americans, yet no negotiations had occurred that would secure their freedom. A series of assurances were made over a period of years that these men had not been forgotten, and that negotiations would occur to free them. None of the assurances brought a single man home. These nearly 600 abandoned Americans were seemingly forgotten.

In 1980, the Standerwick family was told by a non-government source that Bob Standerwick's name had been on a report prepared for Presidential review. The source described the report as detailing two groups of about 2 dozen Americans each. On one group, the source stated, there was only sketchy information; on the second group, there were more details. The source stated the report gave very current and specific information about Bob Standerwick, listing his location at that time, identifying the group that held him, and describing the menial labor job he was being forced to do in northern Laos. The source identified the author of the report, the number of pages it contained, the number of copies that had been made and where they were located. The Standerwick family has never been able to substantiate this report, and U.S. Government sources deny the existence of the report. All copies of the report, according to the source, are under U.S. Government control.

When Norbert Gotner was released, he provided little further information about his pilot. He did state that shortly before his own release he was asked by his Vietnamese captors, "What do you know about Col. Standerwick?"

VIETNAM WAR AIRCRAFT LOSSES

1350	13 Nov 1970	RF-4C	NVN	Wright D. I.	Maj	KIA		Bancroft W. W. Jr	1Lt	KIA
1351	20 Nov 1970	F-105G	LAOS	Kilgus D. W.	Maj	Rescued	USAF HH53	Lowry C. T.	Capt	Rescued
1352	23 Nov 1970	OV-10A	CMB	Brooks D. L.	Maj	Rescued	u Helo	Bellefeuille G. B.	SSgt	Rescued
1353	1 Dec 1970	F-4E	LAOS	Robinson J. R.	Capt	Rescued		Boulet D. A. II	1Lt	Rescued
1354	12 Dec 1970	O-2A	LAOS	Duckett T. A.	1Lt	MIA		Skinner O. G.	Maj	MIA
1355	12 Dec 1970	B-57	LAOS	u	u	Rescued		u	u	Rescued
1356	12 Dec 1970	F-100D	CMB	u	u	Rescued				
1357	19 Dec 1970	F-4D	LAOS	Rotz D. H.	Capt	Rescued		Louis W. K.	1Lt	Rescued
1358	21 Dec 1970	RF-4C	LAOS	Nullis M. M.	1Lt	Rescued	USAF Helo	Rush A. F.	Maj	Rescued
1359	24 Dec 1970	A-1E	LAOS	Lundy A. L.	Maj	KIA				
1360	28 Dec 1970	OV-10A	LAOS	Smith J. L.	Capt	KIA		u	Sgt	KIA
1361	2 Jan 1971	F-4E	LAOS	Wier H. D.	Capt	Rescued	USAF Helo	Brown R. K.	1Lt	Rescued
1362	3 Jan 1971	F-4E	LAOS	Ayres J. H.	Maj	KIA		Stratton C. W.	Capt	MIA
1363	17 Jan 1971	F-4E	Sea	Mirrer R. H.	Maj	KIA		Siderius J. D.	Maj	Rescued
1364	20 Jan 1971	F-4E	SVN	Warner D. A.	Capt	Rescued	USAF	Kiefer H. E.	Maj	Rescued
1365	27 Jan 1971	F-100D	CMB	Neil J. M.	Capt	KIA				
1366	28 Jan 1971	OV-10A	CMB	Lineberger H. B.	Maj	MIA				
1367	31 Jan 1971	O-2A	SVN	Hoenninger	1Lt	Rescued	Army Helo	Platt P. R.	1Lt	Rescued
1368	1 Feb 1971	A-37	CMB	Harris J. C.	1Lt	KIA				
1369	3 Feb 1971	F-4D	LAOS	Standerwick R. L.	LtCol	MIA		Gotner N. A.	Maj	POW (retur
1370	11 Feb 1971	F-4D	SVN	Ford M. W. Jr	Capt	Rescued	Army	Eisenbeisz R. A.	1Lt	KIA
1371	16 Feb 1971	F-4D	LAOS	Cox W. R.	LtCol	Rescued	USAF	Allen W. C.	Maj	Rescued
1372	16 Feb 1971	F-4D	LAOS	Pattillo R. N.	Maj	MIA		Hoskins C. L.	Capt	KIA
1373	19 Feb 1971	O-2A	LAOS	Hull J. L.	1Lt	KIA		Fernandez W. M.	Sgt	KIA
1374	20 Feb 1971	O-1F	SVN	Peacock P.	1Lt	Rescued	USAF Helo			
1375	25 Feb 1971	F-4D	SVN	Somers R. K.	Maj	KIA		Talley J. S.	Capt	Rescued
1376	25 Feb 1971	F-4D	LAOS	Hedditch	Capt	Rescued	USAF Helo	McLaughlin	1Lt	Rescued

TRY AS HARD AS YOU MIGHT, YOU
SOMETIMES FAIL

KNOWING YOU DID YOUR BEST DID NOT
HELP YOU SLEEP BETTER

WHAT IF! YOU THINK

SAR FORCES DESPISED FAILURE