

17Apr71 SAR Laos 37th ARRS

Battle Cry 305 A-7E downed 17Apr71 rescued 18Apr71

37th ARRS HH-53 JG 65 15°22'N 107°01'E Laos

Pilot – Capt Walder, Glen W

Co-Pilot – Capt Gemmill, Otto G

FE – TSgt McKinney, Carlos J

PJ - A1C Moreno, Ralph R

PJ – A1C Zonker, Randy L

PJ – A1C Morris, Michael D

Survivor – Lt. Forman, Richard E

Note: Only the Jolly A/C was put in for a medal and he was awarded a DFC

Downed Navy Pilot Pulled Out of Laos

DA NANG (Special) - A U.S. Navy pilot was hauled out of dense Laotian jungle Sunday after spending 15 hours on the ground. Lt. Richard E. Forman, 28, flying from the USS Ranger, was shot down late Saturday about 20 miles into Laos. He was picked up by a crew from the 37th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Sq.

"I was making my third and final pass over the strike target when I was hit by the enemy fire. The aircraft burst into flames and went into uncontrolled flight, so ejected," Forman said.

Forman described the area where he was shot down as having "rolling hills with a road winding through them. I landed in a pretty heavily vegetated area, so it was easy to find cover. Although he did not see any enemy troops in the area, the lieutenant received ground fire while parachuting down. He also said he could hear vehicle traffic on the road some distance away.

"Early in the morning I got quite a scare when I heard some noise in the bushes around me. At first, I thought the enemy was out looking for me. It really startled me when I found out it was just a bunch of wild turkeys," he said.

An Air Force forward air controller (FAC) from the 20th Tactical Air Support Sq., 1st Lt. Richard K. Ottem, 25, was directing the Navy pilot when he was hit, "The bullets ripped all along the belly of the aircraft," Ottem said, "but I saw a good chute and was able to make radio contact with the pilot after he had landed and found out he was all right." Although he was low on fuel, the FAC stayed over the downed pilot until another aircraft came in to relieve him, FACs maintained a constant vigil over the area throughout the night.

Early the next morning Ottem returned to the area to resume the search and rescue effort. "I saw the chute go down and knew right where the man was, so I wanted to be there to help in the rescue effort," he said. "It was a great relief when I heard that he had been picked up."

"Surprisingly, the night seemed to go by pretty rapidly," Forman said, "The first thing in the morning, I saw the FACs accompanied by A-1 Skyraiders in the area, The A-1s, really saturated the area with their bombs." After the area had been saturated by the Skyraiders and jet fighter-bombers, an HH-53 Super Jolly Green Giant rescue helicopter piloted by Capt. Glen W. Walder, 34, went in to make the pickup. Other crewmembers on the rescue helicopter included Capt. Otto G. Gemmill co-pilot, TSgt Carlos J. McKinney flight engineer, and three pararescuemen A1C Ralph R. Moreno, A1C Randy L. Zonker, and A1C Michael D. Morris

SAR List																													
Source	SAR Msn Number	SAR Name	A/C Type	A/C Serial	Downed	Rescued	SAR Unit	SAR A/C	CS	Area	Location 2	Pilot	RankP	Co-Pilot	RankCP	FE	RankFE	PJ1	Rank1	PJ2	Rank2	PJ3	Rank3	Survivor #1	Rank1	Hoist	Saves	Type	Notes
HST	OL1 - 3 - 17 Apr 71	Battle Cry 305	A-7E	157511	4/17/1971	4/18/1971	37 ARRS	HH-53C	JG 65	LAO	1522 10701	Walder, Glen W *	Capt	Gemmill, Otto G Jr	Capt	McKinney, Carlos J II	TSgt	Moreno, Ralph R	A1C	Zonker, Randy L	A1C	Morris, Michael D	A1C	Forman, Richard E Jr	1Lt	-1	1	C	First light effort; DFC for AC

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