

18 JUL 71
OWL SAR F-4
Robert LaPointe

From: "Ed Stevens" <stevens-ed@home.com>
To: "Robert LaPointe" <rlapointe@gci.net>
Sent: Saturday, August 11, 2001 6:51 PM
Subject: Re: Shipping confirmation
Robert (or do you go by Bob?),

Sorry I took so long to get back to you. My wife has been sick the past week and taking care of her has kept me busy.

Should I have received the book by now? It's Aug 11th and it hasn't arrived yet. Can you trace it? And just to verify the address--it should be headed to 8412 Cedar Street, Silver Spring MD 20910.

To clarify the name issue--my full name is William Edward Stevens. While I've always gone by Ed, anything official usually refers to William.

Reference the 18 July 1972 mission you mentioned, I'm the Stevens noted in the log. I have some notes and a DFC citation about the mission and pickup that I'll send you once I find the box they're stashed in.

You've done a tremendous amount of research! You mention two upcoming trips--AFHRA and PACAF. Who are you visiting at PACAF? If it is only the HO, I'd try to make sure that they have unique material that isn't already at AFHRA. I know from visits to PACAF/HO that they have an extensive archive collection but I don't know whether they'd have any unique Rescue documents. As to other locations to research, I need to make some phone calls to check out some stories I've heard over the years about HQ Rescue Service records. I'll let you know if I turn up any leads.

I would be thrilled to assist you in this project in anyway possible. I'm afraid your information about me being a college professor is incorrect. I've attended college full time since retiring in March 2000 and just graduated in May with a BS in Information Systems Management (includes some training in Web Site design and development). However, I retrained into History in 1976 and worked as a writing historian at the wing, division, and numbered air force level until 1992 except for a 4-year tour as a PME instructor in the mid-1980s. From 1992 till retirement, I was an Assistant to the Air Force Historian at HQ USAF where I handled career field management, manpower, and war planning issues for the program. While in the trenches, I authored over 30 unit histories and evaluated several hundred more. I'd be thrilled to use these skills to help out with your quest.

Finally, another possibility for mass publication aside from the two you mentioned is the Air Force History and Museum Program. The Air Force History Support Office (located in DC and connected to the Office of the Air Force Historian) has access to official Air Force Publication channels and it might be possible to get the manuscript published that way.

Well, its time to shut up and go to bed. Please let me know what I can do to be of assistance.

Take care, Ed

8/12/01

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

From: Robert LaPointe

To: Ed Stevens

Sent: Thursday, August 02, 2001 12:53 AM

Subject: Re: Shipping confirmation

Thanks for contacting me. I clearly remember you now but did not recall your name or find any primary source material with your name on in during my research. Hence, your name is not listed (yet) in the appendix that lists PJs that served in the war. I am printing the books in batches of 500 until I get to 2000. So far I have only printed the first 1000. Prior to printing the next batch, I will update the appendix and include your name. I already corrected it tonight in the master document.

I have some very sketch data on a mission you may have flown. It was on an F-4, **callsign Owl**. The mission was flown on **18 July 71** and the two PJ's on the mission were Kimball and Stevens. No first names are listed. The data was excerpted from a handwritten SAR log kept up by the ops NCO each day at the 37th. Are you the Stevens who flew this mission? I have extrapolated that it was Larry Kimball because I have several other occasions weher his full name was provided.

One goal is to identify every known mission and put it in an appendix in the back of the book. When you get your book you will see what I have discovered so far. The vast majority of the material is from mission reports and unit histories that I collected from the USAF Historical Research Center. I now have more than 8000 pages of these reports and will collect several thousand more when I begin research for volume 2. So, any material you have on missions that you flew would be helpful in developing an accurate history of this period. Most of my primary source material has come from AFHRA and the AF Museum. About 5% has come from PJs that served in the war and kept diaries or other documents from their tour. Sounds like you have a background in USAF history. I plan on heading back to Maxwell (AFHRA) in September and then on to HQ PACAF and in December. Any suggestions on other locations where I might find primary source material?

I also have a web site for this project at <http://home.gci.net/~rlapointe/> It is in the process of a major upgrade. Prior to fall, I am going to add considerable more content and photographs. The ISP I presently use restricts me to 20mb of space. I just purchased my own server and will be able to load up to 40gb of data. I hope that I will be able to use it as a research tool to collect additional data.

8/12/01

This was my first attempt at writing a book.. I did all the research, typing, layout, photo editing and design work. This allowed me to keep costs down. I transferred the final product on to a CD ROM that I gave a local printer and here it is. It is far from perfect and I hope to improve it considerable prior to printing a second edition. I have heard that you are a college professor. If you have any suggestions, I would seriously consider them. I am aware that I need to standardize the citations in the back of the book. Other than that, I need help finding errors. After seeing the text so often, I am unlikely to find my own mistakes.

My motivation was simple. After getting out of the AF in 1995 I went to the University of Alaska for 4 years where I majored in history. I was aware that a comprehensive history of Air Rescue in Vietnam had yet to be written. Tilford's book was OK but not very detailed. No one else seemed to be stepping up to the plate, so I decided to give it a try.

My end plan is to complete volume 2 for release on Memorial Day 2003. Then I will use all of my research to accomplish an analytical assessment of what Air Rescue did correct and wrong during the Vietnam War. Then I plan to take the lessons learned and try to identify how this data can be used for successful combat SAR in the 21st century. I will combine Volume 1, 2 and the assessment into one product and use it for my Masters Thesis. I also plan to submit the completed work to the Air University Press for consideration for publication by them. My primary goal has always been to ensure that this part of AF history is not forgotten. If I can get the UA Press or the Naval Institute Press to publish this work in thousands of copies, I will have reached this goal.

Anyways this has been a long e-mail. You should receive your book tomorrow or Friday. Hope you enjoy it.

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

From: Ed Stevens

To: Robert LaPointe

Sent: Wednesday, August 01, 2001 10:58 AM

Subject: Re: Shipping confirmation

Bob,

Thanks for the confirmation. Looking forward to reading your book. I served with you for a few short months in the summer of 1972 at Da Nang. I was TDY out of Korea. I recently read your article about the closing of Da Nang and it certainly bought back a flood of memories.

Although I left ParaRescue in 1973, I never forgot what a great bunch of people made up that program. I always missed the tremendous camaraderie among PJs and never found the same spirit any where else.

I retired in March 2000 after 30 years spent mostly in the USAF History and Museums

8/12/01

Program. One of my former colleagues recently ask me to review a manuscript for a pamphlet on Air Rescue in the Korean War. When I started checking some source material, I was amazed at how little has been written about Air Rescue in general and ParaRescue specially. I ran across your book while I was doing Web searches.

When do you expect to start pre-publication sales for Volume II?

Regards,
William 'Ed' Stevens

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

From: Robert LaPointe

To: Stevens, William ; Martin, Steven ; Sinon, Pat ; Saunders, Ralph ; Rosler, Mike ; Flournoy, John ; Beranek, Tom ; Brown, Bill

Sent: Saturday, July 28, 2001 11:09 PM

Subject: Shipping confirmation

Thank you for your order for the book "PJs in Vietnam - The Story of Air Rescue in Vietnam as Seen Through the Eyes of Pararescuemen."

Your book was shipped at 7 a.m. on Saturday 28 July.

8/12/01