

6 April 1972

A-7E 157590 VA-22, USN, USS *Coral Sea*
Cdr Thomas Earl Dunlop (KIA)

About 50 minutes later yet another Corsair was shot down, only this time the pilot did not escape and the pilot was the *Coral Sea's* CAG or commander of Air Wing 15. The aircraft (call sign Beefeater 300) was on a road reconnaissance mission about seven miles south of Dong Hoi when it was also hit by a SAM. The section of two A-7s had approached from the sea under broken cloud and poor visibility and ran into intense ground fire. Soon after starting their reconnaissance the wingman saw Cdr Dunlop's aircraft take a direct hit from a SAM. The Corsair exploded and hit the ground and no parachute was seen to indicate that the pilot had been able to eject. Cdr Dunlop was the sixth and last CAG to be lost during the war. Five of them were shot down while the sixth was killed in the *Oriskany* fire.