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3d ARRGp Hist, Oct-Dec 66

i. (U) In the late afternoon of 18 October 1966, Crown Bravo (HU-16, SN 517145) on orbit mission (Det 1-3-78-18 Oct) over the Gulf of Tonkin failed to return to home base at Danang. Control agency became aware of possible emergency because of lack of operations normal reports from Crown Bravo at 1700L and 1730L. Organized search began that evening and continued until 1820L on 25 October 66 with no sightings or findings reported. Aircraft was assigned to 37 ARRSq and had a total of seven crewmen aboard. Loss of the HU-16 amphibian was reported as missing due to hostile action.

j. (U) On 20 October Jolly Green 02 (SN 65-12778) on an ACR mission (Det 2-3-117-20 Oct) was disabled by suspected enemy ground fire. Oil pressure was lost and the HH-3E helicopter was forced to land in a hostile area. The crew and a recently recovered survivor were quickly taken aboard the other HH-3E (high bird) and they departed the area. RESCORT (A-1Es) destroyed the disabled Jolly Green to prevent it from falling into unfriendly hands.

k. (U) On 28 October Pedro 42 (HH-43F, SN 62-4511) on an Army Med Evac mission (Det 9-38-31-28 Oct) near Pleiku was shot down and burned. Three evacuees and the Flight Mechanic in the rear of the helicopter were killed. Army troops and the Pararescueman (PJ) on the ground helped get the Pilot and Copilot out of the burning wreckage under enemy fire. The PJ, Pilot and Copilot were flown out the next morning by another Pedro helicopter. The Copilot subsequently died from injuries received in the shooting down and crash of the helicopter.

l. (U) In the afternoon of 29 Oct Pedro 56 (SN-62-4525) flying in support of the mission (Det 9-38-31-28 Oct) in which Pedro 42 was lost, received a volley of groundfire and had to make a forced landing at Army LZ 3-Hotel, near Pleiku. Crew sustained only minor injuries and was returned to Pleiku that afternoon. HH-43 (Pedro 56) was repaired locally and is back in operation.

m. (U) On 15 November, Detachment 11, 38 ARRSq located at Tuy Hoa AB, SVN became operational. Tuy Hoa is situated approximately 50 miles north of Nha Trang on the Vietnam coast. One HH-43B is presently assigned; however, a second HH-43 will be placed there when resources permit.

n. (C)(GP-4) Jolly Green 52 (SN 64-14229) lost transmission oil pressure (15 Nov) shortly after launch on an ACR mission and made a forced landing. Parts were dispatched and maintenance performed in the field. On return, severe transmission problems developed after short flight and Jolly Green 52 was forced to land. Due to uncertain reception by local populace, crew was evacuated and friendly forces supplied to protect aircraft until repairs could be made. Aircraft subsequently repaired at landing site and flown to secure base.

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70-1627	15 May 75	21st SOS	Cambodia	Knife 22	Terry D. Ohlemeier	David W. Greer	Michael C. Wilson	Norman A. Paul		Marines into the western b run into the beach. the air caused a fuel lead. Unable attempted to return to its s was forced to make an em
70-1628	24 Jan 75	21st SOS		Knife	Gary C. Hall	Bryan A. Rye	James K. Hurley	Garry W. Hermanson		

Rescue HU-16 SEA Losses

Tail Number	Date	Unit	Location	Call Sign	Pilot	CoPilot	Navigator	Flight Engineer	Flight Engineer	Radio Operator	Pararescue	
51-058	3 Jul 65		NVN									Not in USAF listing, Grid kilometers off the coast of N information
51-5287	19 Jun 65											Not is USAF Listing, No Gr
51-0071	14 Mar 66	33rd ARRS, Tan Son Nhut AB	NVN	Crown Bravo	Westenbar	W.E. Hall	D.S. Price	C. Jackson		Robert L. Hilton	James E. Pleiman	Aircraft lost while flying re 64-0740, Maj J. Peerson, pil both recovered. The aircraft survivors, was hit by enemy abandoned the aircraft and i crewmembers and the crew U.S. Navy helicopter, it is a individuals went down with the crewmembers reportedly and were buried by the Nort be the buried remains were 1988. These remains were i March 1989.
51-7145	18 Oct 66	37th ARRS, Danang	NVN	Crown Bravo	Ralph H. Angstadt	John Henry S. Long	Inzar W. Rackley Jr.	Robert L. Hill	John R. Shoneck	Lawrence (NMT) Clark	Steven H. Adams	The aircraft was on a SAR to a Navy ship he was retur This was the last contact wi aircraft or crew was ever fo

Rescue HH-43 SEA Losses

Combat Loss of Personnel

Mission 1-3-78-18 October 1966. It began in a routine manner as so many others had for Major Angstadt and his crew of the HU-16B, 51-7145. The Major was scheduled to fly a precautionary orbit over the Gulf of Tonkin to aid fighter pilots who might require assistance.

The fear that all was not well with 7145 was born when one of those "Operation Normal" reports was not received. A search, which was begun immediately and was suspended on 26 March, never revealed any information on the fate of 7145 or the seven Rescuemen aboard.

A list of the crewmen who are missing follows:²⁵

<u>Crewmen</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Unit</u>
Angstadt, Ralph H., Maj	RCC	37th ARRSq
Long, John H. S., 1st Lt	Copilot	37th ARRSq
Rackley, Inzar W., Jr., Capt	Nav	37th ARRSq
Hill, Robert L., TSgt	7 FM	37th ARRSq
Clark, Lawrence (NMI), SSgt) RO	37th ARRSq
Adams, Steven H., A2C	3 PJ	33rd ARRSq
Shoneck, John R., SSgt	3 FM	Det 7, 38th ARRSq

Mission 9-38-31-29 October 1966. This was a helicopter mission for the medical evacuation of wounded

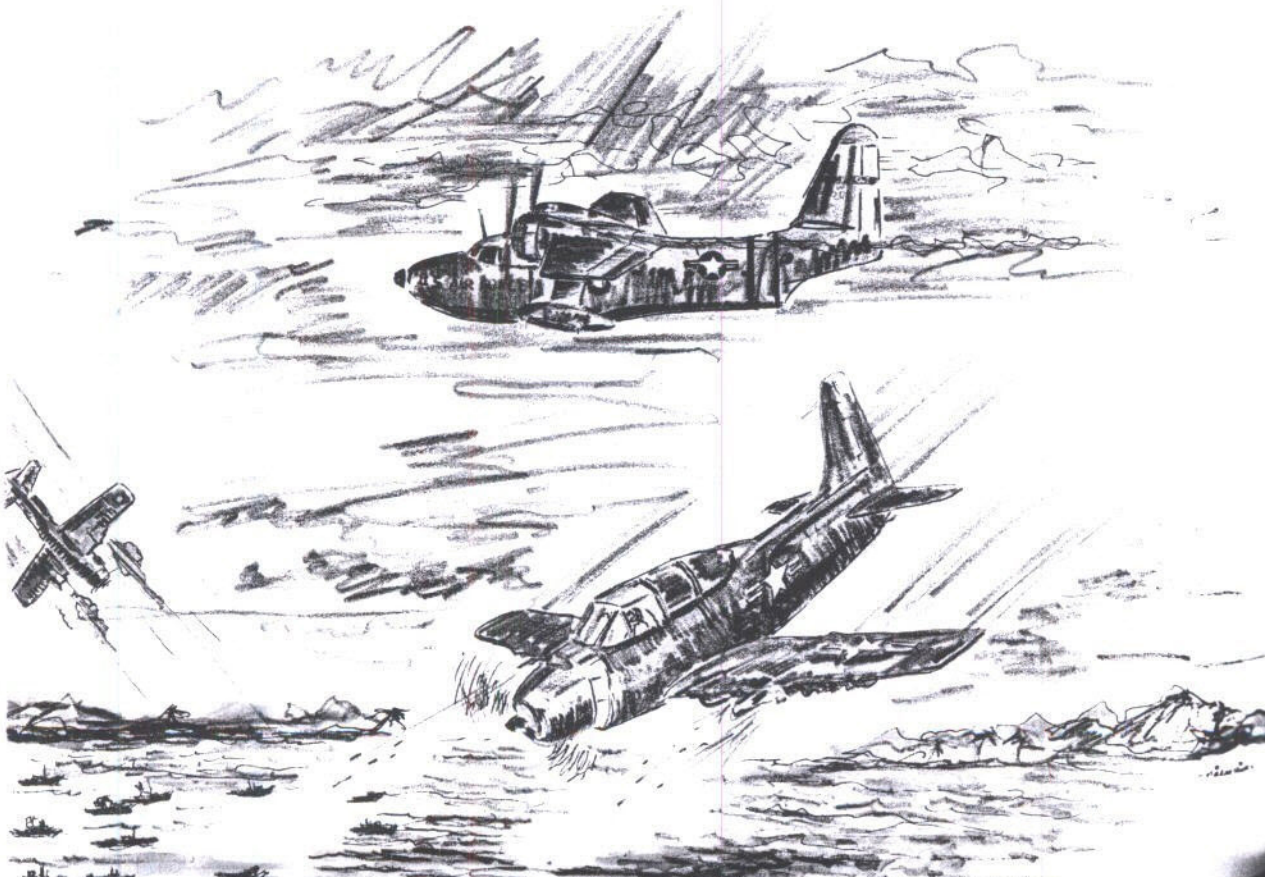
25. TSgt Philip N. McKinnon, ARPCB.

This article represents the opinions, thoughts, and experiences of the author in relating his former assignment as a Rescue Crew Commander to his present one as a Strategic Air Command bomber pilot. Its contents do not necessarily represent policy or practice of the Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service, Strategic Air Command or the Department of the Air Force.

WATER RESCUE

The Arabs dove seaward, their guns hot, stitching the waters with .50 caliber slugs, chopping the little gray boats to kindling wood.

MAJOR DANIEL J. BIGELOW
51st Bomb Sq.,
Seymour Johnson AFB



ALBERT was dozing slugg
R-1820's was pulled
providing a gentle hum tha
tion. He'd been worked har
orbit missions, there'd bee
for a C-130 and then that t

It was late and the day
Two Navy A-1E's, Arab O
themselves flaking old pain
float tanks with their whirlin
going smoothly and Albert
rest. The crew was hungry;
salty dogs and charcoaled st
more than eight hours orbit
waiting, listening, watch
... "Mayday! Mayday! M
wingman just took a bad
coordinates..."

This is what Albert ar
would not happen; but no
they sprang into action. P
with a groan Albert shook
the task he knew so well.

The Arabs dove seawar
hot! On scene, the two F-4
two and one half miles from
smoke and sea dye. To the
motorized sampans were als
survivors. The Arabs were a
waters white with .50 caliber
grey boats to kindling wo
many and more coming fast
to be made quickly and with

A call on "guard" went
aircraft and the nearby de
quick sea evaluation, fuel di
the seaplane kissed the wave
spray of salt water. The par
out the rear hatch and an
exploding geysers of water s
side of the downed pilot.
heartbeats quickened as th
flashed. The flight engineer
with a rope to pull the p.j. e
The radio operator, firing hi
the nav looked up into blaz
boats. As he bent for his rifle
world went black.

Albert had barely flinch
tattoo of machine gun fire
now an explosion ripped th
felt the pain of fire. "Fire! F
pilots looked back to a solid
gushing from a ruptured ta
overhead hatches. As the na
world turned grey and then
remained black for the radio
floor and for the p.j., floatin
Through the smoke, the Nav
without a life preserver or ra
to the hatch. Reaching to ho
was seared by a sudden flash
stored JATO units exploded
into the sea did he realize
from shrapnel in the heat

ALBERT was dozing sluggishly as the power on the R-1820's was pulled back another 50 RPM providing a gentle hum that invited complete relaxation. He'd been worked hard lately. Besides the daily orbit missions, there'd been an extra week's search for a C-130 and then that trip to Saigon — Oh Well!

It was late and the day's work was nearly done. Two Navy A-1E's, Arab 06 and 10, were amusing themselves flaking old paint from the rescue plane's float tanks with their whirling propellers. Things were going smoothly and Albert was looking forward to a rest. The crew was hungry; they were talking about salty dogs and charcoaled steak. They'd already spent more than eight hours orbiting the Gulf of Tonkin — waiting, listening, watching, hoping, praying... "Mayday! Mayday! Mayday! Pluto Three, my wingman just took a bad hit and is ejecting at coordinates..."

This is what Albert and his crew had prayed would not happen; but now that the call was out, they sprang into action. Power was advanced and with a groan Albert shook himself and prepared for the task he knew so well.

The Arabs dove seaward and set their guns up hot! On scene, the two F-4C survivors were sighted two and one half miles from shore and marked with smoke and sea dye. To the crew's dismay, 25 enemy motorized sampans were also sighted closing on the survivors. The Arabs were already stitching the blue waters white with .50 caliber slugs, chopping the little grey boats to kindling wood. But there were too many and more coming fast. The rescue would have to be made quickly and with precision.

A call on "guard" went out for additional strike aircraft and the nearby destroyer's helicopters. A quick sea evaluation, fuel drop tanks jettisoned, and the seaplane kissed the waves and slid to a stop in a spray of salt water. The pararescueman (p.j.) flipped out the rear hatch and amid spewing bullets and exploding geysers of water stroked powerfully to the side of the downed pilot. Inside the amphibian, heartbeats quickened as the sea rolled and guns flashed. The flight engineer and navigator struggled with a rope to pull the p.j. and survivor to the craft. The radio operator, firing his M-16 madly, yelled and the nav looked up into blazing guns from oncoming boats. As he bent for his rifle, a large shell hit and the world went black.

Albert had barely flinched when he first felt the tattoo of machine gun fire along his right side, but now an explosion ripped through his bowels and he felt the pain of fire. "Fire! Fire! We're on fire!" The pilots looked back to a solid wall of flame fed by fuel gushing from a ruptured tank and dove from the overhead hatches. As the navigator stirred, his black world turned grey and then to bluish smoke. But it remained black for the radio operator, lifeless on the floor and for the p.j., floating face down in the water. Through the smoke, the Nav spotted an F-4C survivor without a life preserver or raft, in the water clinging to the hatch. Reaching to hoist him aboard, the Nav was seared by a sudden flash of heat as the aircraft's JATO units exploded. Not until he splashed into the sea did he realize he was badly wounded from shrapnel in the head, back and buttocks.



The radio operator fired his M-16 madly— Suddenly his world went black!

Disregarding the pain, he directed the exhausted survivor to hold to his back and swam laboriously away from the flaming sea plane. The flight engineer became conscious in an inferno of heat, flame and exploding JATO bottles. Rolling into the sea, he discovered his left arm nearly severed and called for help. The copilot, swimming through burning fuel, came and fixed a touniquet. Amidst showers of bullets from oncoming sampans and the roar of guns and engines from planes above, two Navy helicopters arrived and plucked the survivors from the sea one by one until only the navigator remained.

As the chopper maneuvered the "horse collar" over him, a large projectile landed 10 yards in front and another 30 yards to the right. The concussion raised the navigator waist high in the water. Appalled, he watched the helicopter retreat, streaming fuel and hydraulic fluid. Swimming to a raft, the nav pulled himself in and lay horrified as he watched the sampans racing towards him. Desperately, he tried his URC-10 radio. No soap! He reached into his survival vest for a Mark 13 flare. No good! He was in enough trouble without marking himself for the enemy. As he lay watching the RESCAP strafe sampans, shock hit him. "It was a feeling of complete helplessness, hopelessness, dismay, despair, anxiety, fear, panic and shock, all rolled into one... I began to shake violently all over... I called RESCAP, but they did not answer. I called for anyone..." Then miraculously, a chopper swung in from the east and swept him safely out to sea.

Alone, Albert drifted slowly in the slight breeze, trailing fuel, flame and smoke. His control surfaces ablaze, the albatross was rent with explosions as the remaining fuel tanks burst. Then as the tail began to melt, the aft section filled with water and the faithful HU-16 Albatross dipped very slowly forward and slipped silently beneath the still burning sea above. Part of the crew would get their steak, but Albert and two others had found rest.

WATER RESCUE

The navigator, severely wounded, lay horrified, in shock, as he watched the Sampans racing towards him. Miraculously, a chopper swung in from the east and swept him safely out to sea.



"Nice war story but so what?" you ask. Well, so what if you're the fellow in the sea in the next war story? Are you physically and mentally prepared for the ordeal of a water rescue mission? Are you aware of the hazards and difficulties facing the rescue crew that sometimes make it impossible to effect a water rescue? Do you know what to expect during the actual rescue attempt? Do you know what type of equipment will be used to effect your rescue and how to make use of this equipment? Finally, do you know what you can do to improve your chances for a successful pick-up?

As SAC crewmembers, I don't believe we are exposed enough to this information. Whether we fly overwater Arc Light and Young Tiger missions in the combat zone or just routine overwater flights where an emergency may necessitate a bailout, we should be able to answer these questions in the affirmative. If you can do this, file away the war story for bar talk and stop reading — If you can't, read on — and using the expression of the day, I'll attempt to tell it like it is!

First, here are some common sense facts to mull over. Records have demonstrated that life expectancy for injured survivors decreases as much as 80% during the first 24 hours following an accident and, after three days, rapidly diminishes for uninjured survivors. Although individual incidents vary with local conditions, terrain, climate, ability and endurance of survivors and the emergency equipment available, keep in mind that if after three days of favorable search conditions all avenues of search have been explored with negative sightings, the rescue mission will probably be terminated very shortly. Forces will be employed during these three days for maximum

coverage and all reasonable action will be taken to locate you, but prolonged Search and Rescue (SAR) operations after all chances for survival have been exhausted are uneconomical and not warranted. The decision to conduct such operations must be based on the probability of finding survivors. So if you're still splashing around on the fourth day, you'd better seriously start remembering your survival training.

At this point you ask, "What makes it so tough for the Rescue troops to find a fellow floating around in open water?" I'll never forget the first time we threw a one-man raft in the calm waters of a bay near Eglin AFB, took off in the Albatross and flew around the pattern to make a water landing and raft approach. I couldn't sight the raft from 500 feet until it was pointed out to me. But I'm getting ahead of my story — let's look at some factors affecting the location and identification of a survivor that may help answer the question.

The first step in any rescue attempt is to pin down the target search area. It helps if a buddy flying cover can give your exact location or you have time to do it yourself; but, this isn't always possible. Even when it is, the information is sometimes inaccurate. In either case, the first factor the rescue crew must consider is the *initial error in position*. Even when the reported position of a distress incident is based on an accurate navigational fix or aid, the matter of probable error must be considered and is assumed to be 10 miles in any direction. If neither position or time of the incident is known, the area of probable position is estimated by dead reckoning from the last known position (LKP) and centered along the intended track of the craft involved. This area becomes progressively larger as the search moves farther away

from the LKP and in distance from the miles from LKP the track.

Next, consider aircraft. Because conducted at low altitudes, electronic navigation or nonreceivable electronic navigational accuracy of the pilot and the navigator's obtaining winds by magnitude of navigation the same formula, the search insurance coverage.

After detection begun and the velocity must be considered parachute opening wind will place the out fix; whereas, 10 knots of wind, you

Now that you've and crawled in, we Although this is not it becomes a matter There are a lot of factors local surface winds tude of leeway, but 10 knot wind can c day.

By now you're the problems facing the search area. More value of giving accurate heading and pilot in circumstances permit in locating the dist factors affecting your flying right over you

During one SAR out right over DaN water about four emergency beeper g recovered by Pedro looked like an easy still had five air offshore for the s control terminated search when they drift, the other man Later, after the sur just five miles from highly experienced overflowed the sur only 500 feet. How trained crew to be t distress? I'll answer detection factors at lock in the sea.



from the LKP and is assumed to be 10 per cent of the distance from the LKP. Thus, if you're down 200 miles from LKP there's a 10 mile error either side of track.

Next, consider the *navigation error* of the search aircraft. Because search patterns are usually conducted at low altitudes and often far from land, electronic navigational aids are sometimes unreliable or nonreceivable during overwater missions. Thus, navigational accuracy is directly proportional to the ability of the pilot to maintain heading and airspeed, and the navigator's dead reckoning ability and skill in obtaining winds by direct observation of the sea. The magnitude of navigational error is determined using the same formula for figuring initial error. Consequently, the search area must again be expanded to insure coverage.

After detection, the height from which descent is begun and the velocity and direction of the wind must be considered to determine *parachute drift*. A parachute opening at 30,000 feet with 70 knots of wind will place the survivor 21 miles from the bail out fix; whereas, even at 10,000 feet with only 33 knots of wind, you will drift five miles.

Now that you've hit the water, inflated your raft and crawled in, we have to consider *life raft drift*. Although this is not of great importance immediately, it becomes a matter of concern with passage of time. There are a lot of formulas to determine the effect of local surface winds, average sea currents and magnitude of leeway, but what it boils down to is this — a 10 knot wind can drift you as much as 20 miles per day.

By now you're probably beginning to appreciate the problems facing the Rescue crew in locating the search area. More important, you should realize the value of giving accurate position, altitude, airspeed, heading and pilot intention information if time and circumstances permit. Now that we've covered errors in locating the distress area, let's take a look at the factors affecting your detection with a search plane flying right over your head.

During one SAR mission, two F-4C pilots bailed out right over DaNang AB. One pilot landed in the water about four miles east of the base with his emergency beeper going strong and was immediately recovered by Pedro, the locally based HH-43. It looked like an easy mission; but six hours later, we still had five airplanes combing this small area offshore for the second pilot. Eventually, mission control terminated the overwater portion of the search when they decided that, due to parachute drift, the other man must have gone down over land. Later, after the survivor was rescued from the water about five miles from shore, it was determined that a highly experienced amphibian crew had probably overflown the survivor twice at an altitude of only 500 feet. How is it possible for a professionally trained crew to be that close and not sight a person in distress? I'll answer this question by presenting some detection factors and then relating them to our wet work in the sea.

The *type of target* is the first consideration. Much depends upon the size and shape of the target, its color contrast with the surrounding medium, the amount of freeboard and whether or not the target is moving. Small targets such as life rafts are very difficult to see, as I pointed out during the experience with my first raft approach. But of more concern, a man in the open sea without some type of visual aid is an almost hopeless target.

Color of the target is important because it aids detection due to its contrast with surrounding or background colors. A small target with great contrast may more easily be seen than a large target blending into the background. However, small targets can only be seen for a limited distance regardless of color contrast. For color to be effective, the eye must look directly at the target. The color receptors of the eye are concentrated in the center of the retina; thus, objects usually spotted out of the corner of the eye will not be seen due to color contrast alone. Yellow, red or orange provide good contrast against water, but yellow and white are not easily seen when white caps exist. Under these conditions red appears to be the optimum color. Many times, while flying over the Gulf of Tonkin, we dove several thousand feet to investigate an item of interest only to find it was a one or two square foot piece of florescent red-colored styrofoam.

Detection is greatly influenced by the amount of freeboard of the search objective. Large targets with little freeboard may not be seen up sun by surface vessels or low flying aircraft, whereas a small target with high freeboard may be easily detected. Additionally, objects with high freeboard are more easily painted by radar.

Lastly, a moving target is more easily spotted due to the disturbance of water created by movement. Any target movement by an object in light seas is likely to attract attention. Porpoise and small fish breaking water and sharks moving rapidly under the surface were seen daily in the "Gulf".

Sea condition. Here is another significant factor that may stymie a rescue attempt. It is not necessarily the height of the sea nor existing swell systems but the amount of white caps and breaking seas that proved detrimental. Even with a 300 foot swell, a small object on a smooth sea will attract the eye, but add a few white caps and foam streaks and the chances of spotting a small object are reduced drastically. In heavy breaking seas even very large objects are difficult to detect and small objects next to impossible. The high winds accompanying rough seas render visual aids ineffective. Dye marker disappears rapidly, smoke signals cling close to the surface and both look similar to foam streaks. Rough seas also hamper radar detection because there is a large amount of sea return on the scope and small targets are hidden in the deep troughs. Also, the reflection of the sun from whitecaps and breaking seas dulls the rescue scanners' perception, and wind-driven salt spray obscures visibility.

(Continued on Page 26)



Position of the sun. Objects can be seen furthest and most easily when looking down sun. The sea is a darker color, there is no glare, the haze is more transparent and colored objects show up well against their background. On the other hand, looking up sun is most difficult. The sun causes reflections on the water, color contrast is lost and small objects, such as a raft, blend in with the confused pattern of glaring light and shadow. Bright sunlight is especially detrimental if haze is present due to the diffusion of light. It also causes scanners to lose visual acuity if they are forced to look into direct sunlight. Thus, they may easily fail to detect a search object. On a clear day with a bright sun the most optimum search conditions occur between mid-morning and mid-afternoon.

So much for bright sunny days. Let's next consider a bad day; one socked in by rain, snow or fog. Besides reducing visual detection and search effectiveness, these *obscurations to visibility* require the pilots to concentrate more on their instruments and thus detract from their value as scanners. Darkness also hampers visual search capability and limits detection to sightings of pyrotechnic aids and lights.

A very important consideration is the altitude at which search patterns are flown. It is impossible to prescribe an optimum *search altitude* to cover all circumstances. At night, an altitude of 300 feet is considered suitable to search for pyrotechnics and lights. Under average day VFR conditions, large rafts are best detected between the altitudes of 1000 and 2000 feet, small rafts between 800 and 1000 feet, and swimmers or persons floating in life preservers, 400 to 500 feet. However, flying at these low altitudes has certain disadvantages such as the rapidity with which the object passes the field of

vision, the more acute angle presented by a low freeboard object (the sighting may be missed behind a swell), and again the tendency for the pilots to have their heads in the cockpit to keep the bird right side up. Then too, with a lower altitude you have less scanning coverage. Consequently, the search pattern spacing must be closer and time to search a given area takes longer.

Next is the human element; the man doing the searching. The *effectiveness of lookouts* is dependent on many things: their number, their state of training, alertness, physical condition, incentive, dark adaptation at night, and the suitability of positions. Speed of the search unit also has a direct relationship to their search effectiveness. The slower the speed, the more effective the scanning.

So if you're the next guy sitting in the raft in the next war story, add to all of the above a few *miscellaneous factors* that affect sightings such as shadows cast by clouds, isolated rain showers, patches of seaweed, oil slicks and floating debris which confuse and distract the eye and you realize that "Old Lady Luck" must be there too. A scanner looks at the right place at the right time and you're on your way home to champagne and steak. However, sad but true, even with ideal conditions and a highly trained, strongly motivated rescue crew, a lookout's eyes will become fatigued after a couple of hours of keen searching. And those very few seconds he closes and rubs his eyes may be when you pass by.

How was it possible to miss our F-4 jock in the sea by DaNang? Let's reflect back. He had bailed out at a high altitude in a strong wind; the position given was inaccurate and his parachute drift was great. During ejection he lost his survival vest including his radio and raft. Once in the water, he had only his LPU preserver and rode low with little or no

freeboard among white wind and surrounded by from the shipping lane before the concentrated glare from a low bright west, while the 500 foot pilots to divide their searching. I don't know same time, but Lady Luck by.

What can you do you? The answer is to sleeve, but in your pocket this F-4 jock drank champagne from a mirror could have but he'd lost his mirror fished a spare strobe light the first ship west. I impression on me that mirror and water bag second, and a small light we've looked at some your successful recovery with some actual rescue

Upon notification immediately launch sea most bases, Rescue air minutes alert. In the intensified operations of these aircraft are already precautionary orbits. picked up in a matter of recovery attempt will helicopter, the initial search Rescue HC-130, HU-19 wing aircraft from flying Primary Rescue aircraft homing devices that will from 50 to 100 miles operating properly. He object of an extended search Rescue Crew Command overall SAR effort as O primary Rescue aircraft patterns, and altitudes.

Having already talked altitudes, I will briefly patterns most frequent ations.

Route Search. This search action taken as are down on, or adjacent also must be assumed discernible or possess desire to search along your destination and expand a maximum distance or that the number and distance and time will parallel *Parallel Search.* This parallel rectangular areas where be somewhere between track due to navigation Paralleled search is most

freeboard among white caps whipped by an 18 knot wind and surrounded by varying amounts of debris from the shipping lane nearby. It was late in the day before the concentrated search effort began and the glare from a low bright sun blinded observers looking west, while the 500 foot search altitude required the pilots to divide their attention between flying and searching. I don't know if everyone blinked at the same time, but Lady Luck dozed as the jock passed by.

What can you do to prevent this happening to you? The answer is to have an ace — not up your sleeve, but in your pocket. And that's exactly why this F-4 jock drank champagne that night. One flash from a mirror could have brought him instant rescue, but he'd lost his mirror. However, late that night he fished a spare strobe light from his pocket and hailed the first ship west. This incident made such an impression on me that I never fly without an extra mirror and water bag in one pocket, a knife in a second, and a small light in yet another. Now that we've looked at some of the difficulties affecting your successful recovery, I'd like to familiarize you with some actual rescue equipment and procedures.

Upon notification of a SAR incident, Rescue will immediately launch search aircraft to the scene. On most bases, Rescue aircraft are on five to thirty minutes alert. In the combat zone or during intensified operations over long stretches of ocean, these aircraft are already airborne on "Duck butt" precautionary orbits. Thus, some jocks are being picked up in a matter of minutes. Although the actual recovery attempt will probably be performed by a helicopter, the initial search may be conducted by a Rescue HC-130, HU-16 amphibian or other fixed wing aircraft from flying units helping in the search. Primary Rescue aircraft are equipped with electronic homing devices that will pinpoint your exact location from 50 to 100 miles if your survival radio is operating properly. However, if you become the object of an extended search effort, a highly qualified Rescue Crew Commander (RCC) will direct the overall SAR effort as On-Scene Commander from the primary Rescue aircraft by assigning search areas, patterns, and altitudes.

Having already talked about search areas and altitudes, I will briefly describe the four search patterns most frequently used in overwater operations.

Route Search. This pattern is usually the first search action taken as it must be assumed that you are down on, or adjacent to, your intended track. It also must be assumed that you will be easily discernible or possess detection aids. The procedure is to search along your route from LKP to intended destination and expand the search with parallel tracks a maximum distance on both sides of intended track that the number and range of search aircraft, route distance and time will permit.

Parallel Search. This pattern is used to cover large rectangular areas where the objective is expected to be somewhere between two points and possibly off track due to navigational error, and/or surface drift. Paralleled search is most commonly employed simul-

aneously with, or immediately upon completion of the route search. This search is a series of paralleled tracks advancing from one side of the area to the other. (FIG. NO. 1. PAGE 28)

Expanding Square Search. For concentrated searches of small areas where the location of a sighting has been reported, this pattern is employed. (FIG. NO. 2) If error in position is expected, or if the object was moving, the pattern may be modified to an expanding rectangle with the long legs running in the direction of the search objective's reported or probable movement.

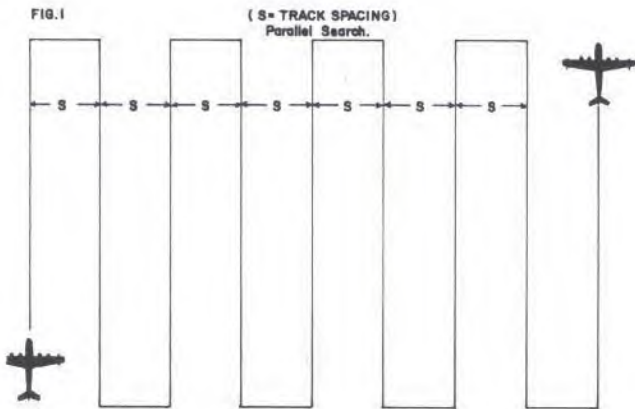
Sector Search. Another pattern used when the position of distress is known to be in a small area and within close limits, is the sector search. It provides greater navigational accuracy and is more flexible than the expanding square search. Moreover, the track spacing is small near the center (datum point), resulting in increased probability of detection near the center of the search area where the target is most likely to be located. (FIG. NO. 3)

Let us now assume you are down in the water, Old Lady Luck has smiled upon you and all the efforts of the Rescue troops have been exactly successful in locating your position. What are the procedures and equipment that might be employed to effect your eventual recovery?

In all likelihood, the first piece of rescue equipment you would encounter during the rescue attempt would be a *smoke bomb marker*. Before rocking his wings, flashing his landing lights or giving you a low buzz job to signal they have sighted you, the Rescue crew will probably throw out a smoke bomb which ignites after contact with the water. This smoke serves two purposes. First, it marks the sighting and aids in relocating any suspected target. Secondly, it aids the pilot of a helicopter to estimate wind direction and drift, giving him a reference upon which to establish his hover. If the Rescue craft is an amphibian, the smoke enables the pilot to make a sea evaluation to determine direction, speed, and height of swells and wind in order to select a landing heading. If the sea is calm or if you are in a hostile environment situation where smoke would reveal or jeopardize your location, the search aircraft may release sea dye to mark you.

Depending upon circumstances, a variety of equipment can be dropped by a fixed wing aircraft unable to complete a recovery or by an amphibian unable to land because of hazardous sea conditions, enemy actions, or aircraft malfunction. This equipment may range from a single UHF radio (to determine condition or extent of injuries of the survivor) to deployment of a *MA-1 Sea Rescue Kit*. This five piece kit contains two six-man life rafts located in bundles No. 1 and No. 5 and a varied amount of survival equipment located in bundles No. 2, No. 3 and No. 4. (Attach No. 4) The bundles are tied together and dropped in sequence, freefall and in trail from the aircraft during a crosswind pass over the target. Static lines attached from the aircraft to a CO² inflation cable initiate life raft inflation after clearing the aircraft. Once deployed in the water, successful raft survivor contact is largely dependent

AFTER RESCUE



upon drift characteristics of the deployed kit and the targets. Tides and currents cause the MA-1 kit and the target to drift a like amount; consequently, they may be ignored. However, wind effect varies depending upon the amount of freeboard exposed to the wind. The two rafts with their high freeboard begin to drift downwind in direct proportion to wind velocity until the supply containers, which act as sea anchors, partially retard this drifting. Thus, the wind causes the kit to form a "U," partially encircling more slowly drifting targets such as a survivor in a life preserver or a one-man dinghy. These drops would naturally be made up-wind of the target. In the case of targets with high freeboard such as a 20-man raft, the drop would be made down-wind so the target could overtake the kit. In most cases, the MA-1 kit will be dropped from an altitude of 300 feet.

If it is determined that you are injured or otherwise incapacitated and landing is not feasible or possible for the type aircraft, the RCC may deploy pararescuemen. These highly qualified medics deploy via parachute fully equipped with underwater SCUBA gear, compass, watch, knife, signal flares, and snorkel. In addition, they carry a raft and accessory kit containing a radio, tools, medical supplies, flashlight, and any other equipment required for the mission.

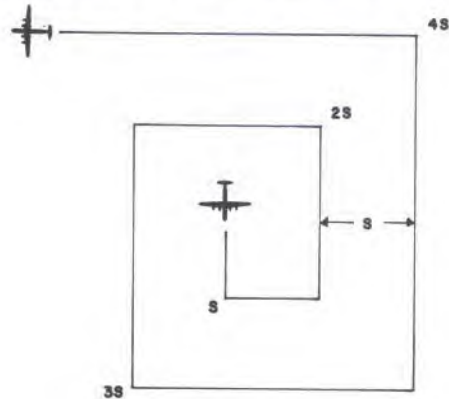
At night, during adverse weather conditions or when a rescue aircraft is forced to leave the distress scene before actual recovery can be initiated, it is possible that the rescue crew may deploy an electronic device which will stay afloat and drift with you while transmitting a strong signal for 24 hours.

Now, let us look at the procedures and equipment that will be used during an actual recovery. Since use of the helicopter is the most effective method for recovery of downed personnel, you can anticipate this as your recovery vehicle. The helicopter crew will use one of three devices to pick you up; the sling (horse collar); rescue seat (hook); or rescue basket. Each of these devices must be entered in the proper manner or you will not be hoisted to the aircraft. If you are unable to help yourself, a man will be lowered to assist you.

If your recovery is accomplished by the HU-16 amphibian (many are still used by the Navy, Coast Guard, and Air Force Reserve units), the aircraft will

FIG. 2 (S= TRACK SPACING) Expanding Square Search

EFFECTIVE FOR SINGLE A/C SEARCH WHEN DISTRESS COORDINATES ARE KNOWN



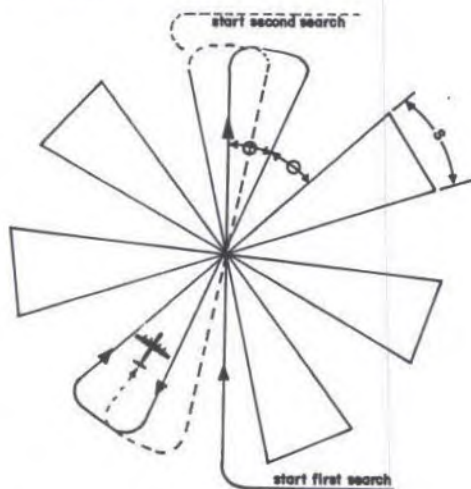
mark your position with smoke, establish a pattern, land and taxi into position to bring you aboard through the left rear hatch. This will require no effort on your part. Don't panic by grabbing the float tank when the RCC taxis the aircraft past you. He must do this in order to establish a raft approach, whereby he places the aircraft directly upwind and then slowly, with engines in idle reverse, drifts back to you. This prevents your passing under the wing near the propeller. For information sake, the amount of clearance between the propeller and water is four feet, thus you can't sit tall enough to get whacked under average sea conditions.

Finally, no discussion of our modern day Aerospace Rescue and Recovery operations would be complete without mentioning the Fulton Recovery System as effected by the HC-130 aircraft. Basically the system involves the deployment (similar to the MA-1 kit delivery) of two inflation gas containers and three equipment bags. Carefully following the instructions supplied with the system, you don a harness suit, inflate and release a balloon to which you are attached. Then sit in the bottom of the down-wind end of your raft, back to the wind, and signal the aircraft that you are ready for rescue. Using a "V" shaped engagement device on the nose, the HC-130 will lock onto the balloon line between two lights located near the top. You will rise slowly, perhaps moving down-wind five to ten feet, and then go very high. With your back to the wind, there is no difficulty breathing and spreading your legs stabilizes your flight. Just keep calm and you will be winched into the airplane within a few minutes.

Well, this brings us back to the question — What can I do to improve my chances for a successful water rescue? First, condition yourself for the possibility of going down in the water. Then if you become "temporarily suspended," keep calm, remember what you've learned and when you hit that salt water — Act!

There are several things you should do to condition yourself, both mentally and physically, for water survival and rescue. Realize that it can and may happen to you! Prepare yourself by reading "war stories," POW narratives and studying Rescue procedures and techniques. Know what to expect. Know

FIG. 3 (S=TRACK SPACING) SECTOR SEARCH PATTERN



what you're going to do. Study your survival manual, stay alive until help comes.

Next, know your personal equipment, understand its use and be able to operate it in any situation. Don't be like the jock who said, "I remembered the pen flares in my leg pocket and pulled them out. I had been briefed on the simple use of the pen flare, but since I had never fired one, and since it was night, I was unable to read the instructions. So I put them back." Check your equipment frequently, make sure your radio and strobe light batteries are good. Keep your hand gun cleaned and oiled so you can fire a tracer signal. Attach "lizard" lines to all of the important items in your survival vest. Then, if you drop your radio or mirror in the water, it won't become lost. Don't forget a couple of "aces" for the pocket: an extra signal mirror for day, a pen gun flare for night, maybe a few rounds of tracer ammo or a spare battery for your radio. Don't stake your life on your primary survival kit. You may have to leave your seat kit and bail out manually in a hurry or you may lose it during egress. If you carry a spare personal survival kit in a pocket, make sure the pocket is double stitched so the weight of the kit won't rip it loose.

Above all, wear your equipment! How many times have you bomber jocks eased out over the coast to fire out the guns or run a low level leg across the Great Lakes without slipping on your LPU? How many of you tanker boys have been guilty of the same while over-flying the Okefenokee? Said one survivor, "Water wings should be attached to the parachute. We had plenty of time to put them on but one would unstrap long enough from his ejection seat." There is a fun bar game in SEA that involves clipping off the survival knife pocket from the flying suit — great sport so long as you don't need the knife that should be in that pocket to cut loose from a chute that's entangled and dragging you under.

"O.K., I'm conditioned for the ordeal and I'm not splashing in. What do I do now until Rescue arrives?" The first step is to stay calm — others have been rescued under worse conditions than yours. Don't carry any items that may puncture your raft and pin yourself in. Make a calm estimate of your situation and plan your course of action. Use your

Contents of MA-1 Raft Survival Kit: Containers 1 and 5 contain 1 6-man raft each. Contents of container 2 and container 4 are the same.

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Sea Anchor | 2 Blankets | 1 Bailing Bucket |
| 3 Cans of water | 1 Paulin | 1 Oar |
| 1 Distillation Kit | 1 Match Box | 2 Can Openers |
| 2 Chapsticks | 2 De-salter Kits | 2 Food Packets |
| 1 Hand Pump | 1 Pr Glove Inserts | 1 Pr Gloves |
| 1 Sponge | 40 Matches | 1 Mirror |
| 2 Raincoats | 1 Repair Kit | 3 Mk 13 Mado Flares |
| 3 Goggles | 2 Sun Burn Prevent. | 1 Pr Pliers |
| | | 1 First Aid Kit |

Contents of container 3:

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------------|
| 1 Sea Anchor | 1 Battery-Urch | 1 AFM 64-5 "Survival |
| 2 Can Openers | 1 URC 11 Radio | 3 Mk 13 Mado Flares |
| 1 Lamp Assembly | 1 Chapstick | 2 Raincoats |
| 1 Medical Kit | 2 Blankets | *1 Message Container |

*Message container is in a pocket on the outside of the No. 3 container.

radio as the situation warrants. If you find yourself down at night, the success of the search will depend almost entirely upon your ability to indicate your position with lights or flares. On a clear day, there is nothing more effective than a signal mirror. Never assume you have been located. Even if you have, it's extremely difficult to keep you in sight. Keep flashing. Conserve your flares and radio. When the search aircraft approaches you, use smoke or pen gun flares. If an MA-1 Sea Survival Kit is deployed, check the message pocket in the center bundle of the kit for instructions from the rescue crew.

If a chopper enters the pattern for the pickup, stay in your raft and hold onto it. If they lower a sling, it is imperative that you put it on correctly. Enter so the collar supports your back and you face the tie-in. Wrap your arms around the front of the sling or if you're still wearing your parachute harness, reach down over the collar and grasp your leg straps. To use the rescue seat, sit on one of the prongs with your legs over the other two prongs. Wrap your arms around the center shaft of the seat. As you are hoisted into the helicopter, you will tilt back. Hang onto the center of the hook. If a rescue basket is lowered, climb in and sit down. Hold onto the bars across the top until the basket is inside the helicopter. Remember, never attempt to help yourself into the chopper! The hoist operator knows his job, trust him. Many persons have been lost during this final critical step. Just hold onto the recovery device.

Here are some final tips on what *not* to do. DO NOT panic. DO NOT use smoke flares in a hostile environment, the enemy will spot you soon enough. DO NOT block "guard" with needless transmissions, you will only hamper the mission. DO NOT leave radios in your raft. They may confuse further rescue efforts or may be found by the enemy. DO NOT grab the float tanks on the amphibian. DO NOT help yourself into the helicopter. DO NOT give up hope!

In closing, I hope I've answered the question — So What? — for those of you who have been unfamiliar with Rescue operations and procedures. You will never find a more dedicated group of men than those in Rescue because there is no greater reward than that of saving another's life. If you find that two or three of these thoughts have aided you, pass them on so "That Others May Live!"

REMEMBERING STEVE

He Went to War and Never Came Home

by CMSgt. Vickie M. Graham
photos courtesy of Cindy Barnard and Bruce Adams

On Aug. 5, 1988, 21 years after her fighter-pilot husband was killed on a mission over North Vietnam, Vickie Stephensen laid to rest the remains of the only man she ever loved. "This is it," she thought to herself as Col. Mark Stephensen's casket slowly descended into the grave. "It's finally over. This is the period at the end of the sentence."

*For Cindy Barnard and Bruce Adams, there is no period. Their brother, MSgt. Steve Adams, disappeared over North Vietnam on a rescue mission **Oct. 18, 1966**. Today, he is one of 2,264 Americans still unaccounted for in Southeast Asia.*

Like all those whose fate is unknown, Steve is more than a name etched in granite on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. He was a fun-loving kid from the Iowa Corn Belt who strapped on manhood and headed off to war.

He's still gone, but not forgotten by the younger brother and sister who still wait. Although they realize Steve may not have survived, their memories do.

This is how they remember him. . . .

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Steve as a high-school student in Spencer, Iowa.

We lived in Spencer, Iowa, which is somewhere between the middle of nowhere and the middle of everything," said Cindy, 41, an elementary-school music teacher and the middle child in the Adams family. "Steve was six years older than I was, but if he ever complained about his little sister tagging along, I never knew it. He was very protective and took care of me when the older kids got a little rough. He'd show me off to his friends and did the same with Bruce."

Steve was 9 years old when Bruce was born and like most big brothers, showed his little brother the ropes of Midwestern childhood. "He got a kick out of teaching me how to sneak into the fairgrounds through a hole in the fence," said Bruce, 38, a dentist. "And it was Steve who introduced me to Playboy."

Born to Jean Chamberlain Adams and Gale Ernest Adams at 11:15 a.m. on Sept. 25, 1944, Steven Harold Adams weighed in at a hefty 9 pounds, 8 ounces and was 24 inches long. World War II captured the day's headlines, and "Going My Way" grabbed four major academy awards that year, including best picture.

Steve took his first steps at 10-and-a-half months, according to an entry in his baby book. "You have pretty teeth, but suck your thumb," his mother wrote.

Then Grandma Ruth Adams died when he was only three, and Jean scribbled, "It was quite a shock, even to a little boy. You thought God was mean to take her, and also you thought the airplanes would bump into her up in heaven."

Gale, the town's Wonder Bread man, delivered bakery goods on a route so familiar he could've driven it blindfolded. At day's end, he'd bring home a doughnut or Twinkie for each of his children, saying the corner grocer had somehow "forgotten" them on the truck. Jean, a homemaker, happily flung open the doors at 613 W. 11th St. to the entire gaggle of neighborhood ragamuffins.

"Our parents were wonderful role models for us," Cindy recalled. "We didn't have a lot, but we were comfortable. If there were any money problems, we were never told. That's just the way it was. We enjoyed a stress-free childhood where Midwestern values of church, family and respect for others were the foundation of our lives."

The family lived in a small, white Cape Cod-style home on a tree-lined street where Dennis the Menace could've wreaked his unending mischief on poor Mr. Wilson. A basketball hoop above the single-car garage provided hours of hotly contested games of H-O-R-S-E,



Steve at 2 1/2 years old with his dad, Gale, who was not only the Wonder Bread man, but a wonderful father.

and a small pine tree on the front lawn — now more than 80 feet tall — suffered collisions with out-of-control bikes and trikes boring down on it at breakneck speed.

The back yard boasted a large enclosure where Steve raised and bred fantail pigeons, which he showed at the county fair with moderate success. Aquariums containing tropical fish — which he also bred and raised to show at the fair — were stationed at strategic points throughout the house. Beyond the back yard, acres and acres of cornfields, which later gave way to grazing land for cattle, served as fertile playgrounds for inventive games of hide-and-seek.

“Whenever a tree fell, we’d make forts and huts out of it,” Cindy recalled from her choir room at Davis Middle School in Evanston, Wyo. “We’d play outside until dark, when Mom would call us into the house for supper.”

Tucked into the northwestern corner of Iowa where the Little Sioux and Ocheyedan Rivers meet, Spencer’s townfolk didn’t worry much about kidnapers, drug dealers and drive-by shootings in the ’50s and ’60s. Heck, there were only about 10,000 people, and everybody knew everybody else. At Halloween, the kids didn’t even have to check their treats for nasty things like razor blades or straight pins.

Gangs? Well, they weren’t like the gangs you see in the news today. The most trouble any kid from Spencer ever got into was soaping the post office windows, T.P.-ing the trees at the high school or tipping over some farmer’s outhouse.

“My fondest memories were our vacations at Arnolds Park on Spirit Lake,” Cindy said. “It was only 17 miles from Spencer and right on the Iowa-Minnesota border, but people from all over the country would spend the entire summer there.”

So did the Adams family. They’d hitch up the camping trailer and tow it to their favorite campsite shortly after school let out for the year.

Gale drove his bread route during the day while the kids swam and played. Steve, ever the protector, assumed the role of lifeguard and arbitrator in his father’s absence. After work, Gale returned to the lake, where potluck dinner with the other campers became an almost everyday routine.

Little League offered an outlet for Steve’s athletic prowess, and at 10 he’d already decided on a career. He wanted to be a scientist.

But academics didn’t interest him much as a youngster. Teachers said the oldest Adams boy didn’t pay attention in class and spent most of his classroom hours day-dreaming. It wasn’t until years later that doctors discovered Steve had suffered a slight hearing loss as an infant — thought to be congenital — which could explain his seeming inattentiveness in class.

“Even so, he was an average student, preferring the social side of school rather than its academic program,” Bruce said, chuckling as he read a high-school yearbook “award” for Steve’s apparent ability to “make out continually until 1999.”

“He was a popular, outgoing, carefree spirit, and I idolized him,” Bruce added. “He loved animals, and I can still picture the day he called me up to his room, excitement ringing in his voice. When I walked in, he was lying on his back in bed with a big grin on his face. Our tabby cat had delivered its litter right on his belly!”

The two brothers spent hours in the garage, tinkering

with engines and making homemade go-karts. On one daring dash down Spencer's open streets, Bruce broke his leg at the wheel of Steve's little wonder machine. Not long after, they stopped their racing escapades, as Steve shifted his interests to more mature endeavors. Like playing baritone in the band and acting in whatever play Gordon Liggett, the high-school speech teacher, directed.

"When Steve walked on stage, he virtually became the person he was portraying," Cindy said. "He could play comedy or drama, but I remember best his role as Happy in 'Death of a Salesman.'"

Sometime during Steve's sophomore year, his dad began suffering from complications of diabetes. Trips to the lake sapped his strength, and the following summer, Steve got a job pumping gas and fixing flats at Marv's Conoco. In taking on more responsibility, he spent less and less time at the lake and continued working after school and on weekends to help with the family finances.

In 1962, at age 37, his father died. Steve, a high-school junior, became the man of the house. Jean returned to school, eventually becoming a licensed practical nurse.

He dated Cindy Dalby, Janeen Berge, Patty Lake and Mary Hallaeur, the latter being his on-and-off steady. "Mary was a spontaneous, carefree spirit just like Steve," Cindy said. "She was a ski bum of sorts, wore very little makeup and when Steve left, she vowed to wait for him. To this day, she has never married."

Following graduation, Steve headed for Still River, Mass., to live with his Uncle Harley. "He'd saved up enough money to buy his pride and joy, a 1958 baby blue Chevy convertible," Cindy said, pointing to a picture of it in her family album. "He took a couple of college courses, but found no interest in school. Steve would be the first to admit he 'ditzed' around in school, but he was no dummy."

Vietnam was quickly becoming a household word, and in 1965, he enlisted. "I guess it's no surprise he volunteered for pararescue training," Cindy said. "He always enjoyed protecting people."

And surprising people. On a short break between training classes, Steve unexpectedly walked into the house and swore Cindy to secrecy saying, "Shhhh! Don't tell Mom I'm home." She was upstairs drying her hair

and didn't hear her son burst through the door.

"He loved doing things like that," Cindy said. "He had a mischievous bent and got a big kick out of it."

On another occasion, the baby-faced young man asked for some help with his macho appearance. "He couldn't even grow a healthy stubble," Cindy recalled. "So he asked if I could put some mascara on his upper lip to fill in his mustache!"

When he'd earned the coveted maroon beret of a pararescueman, he supported a few Apollo moon missions, standing by in case of an emergency. On Mother's Day 1966, he said goodbye to his family and headed for Okinawa as part of the rescue backup for yet another moon launch. It was during that assignment he was tasked for a temporary duty assignment, flying search and rescue missions. In Vietnam.

On Oct. 18, he departed Da Nang AB aboard an HU-16 Albatross. His mission: pick up a downed pilot about 80 miles off the China coast in the northern sector of the Gulf of Tonkin.

Two A1-E Skyhawks escorted the rescue plane, returning to base only after the pilot was safely on board the Albatross. The last radio transmission with Steve's



The Adams' kids (from left): Steve, Cindy and Bruce. They grew up in northwestern Iowa in the '50s and '60s where the worst "crimes" were soaping windows and turning over outhouses.



plane occurred at 5:45 p.m. Although flying in marginal weather, the seven-member crew gave no indication of trouble.

They were never heard from again.

"I can remember what I was wearing and what I was doing the day I learned he was missing," Cindy said. "I was walking home with my boyfriend, Ron Johnson, when Bruce rode up on his bike, screeched to a halt and shouted, 'Get home — NOW!' I told him to bug off — a typical response to a little brother."

When she walked into the house, her mother was in tears. "She had remarried during the time Steve left, and she and my step-father told us what had happened," Cindy said. "Worst of all, we were told by the government not to tell anyone because Steve was on a highly classified mission. We couldn't share our shock or grief with anyone — not even relatives. Thinking back on it, that was more than anyone should ask of another human being."

Why Steve Adams?

When POW/MIA bracelets first hit the runway in the late '60s, I looked specifically for one engraved with the name of an enlisted airman. It wasn't easy. Most of the names belonged to pilots shot down on missions over North Vietnam.

But near the bottom of the box containing dozens of silver bracelets, lay a single silver band etched with the words:

S/Sgt. Steven Adams

10-18-66

I'd found "my man." Like many who purchased the metal bands, I never removed it from my wrist, thinking something bad would happen to Steve if I did. It finally irritated my skin to the point where I was forced to coat the inside with clear nail polish — a small sacrifice compared to what Steve was experiencing. If he was still alive.

When Operation Homecoming kicked off at Clark AB in the Philippines, I hoped to see Steve step off one of the C-141s that brought our POWs their first taste of freedom. Assigned to the base at the time, I was determined to meet him and return his bracelet. If he was still alive.

But his name never appeared on the list of returning POWs. I'd often wondered what Steve looked like, where he grew up and what he was like. Then, this summer, I noticed a newspaper article containing his name. It also mentioned a brother, Bruce, who lived in Laramie, Wyo. I quickly called the information operator, hoping he was listed. My heart

beat faster as I dialed the number, silently thanking God that Bruce didn't live in New York City. But no matter, I'd have called every Adams in New York to find him.

I learned Steve also had a younger sister, Cindy, and worried they might not want to relive their grief by telling a complete stranger who Steve was and what he was like. A few weeks later, I visited them in Wyoming, looked at old scrapbooks, laughed at the stories from their childhood, held one of Steve's baby teeth in my hand and, yes, even shed a few tears with them.

In that regard, I consider myself lucky. Because unlike the thousands who wore POW bracelets and whose "men" never returned, I got to know the man on my wrist. I considered giving my bracelet to Bruce or Cindy, but decided to keep it. Steve's bracelet is safely tucked away now, waiting for him to come home and claim it. If he's still alive. . . .

— CMSgt. Vickie M. Graham



About a year later, the family received a call from an American Red Cross worker who had attended a closed-door meeting in which Steve's name was mentioned. "He's alive, well and presumed to be in a hospital in Southeast Asia," the caller said. "Upon exiting the aircraft, his left side was severely injured."

Within a few days, two Air Force casualty officers cautioned the family "not to listen to outsiders," Bruce said. "They told us that only a government source could be trusted. Now, I'm not so sure."

Ignoring their advice in an attempt to learn what had happened to her son, Jean notified a friend in the intelligence community who spoke with the caller and confirmed the information given to the family. She died from breast cancer in 1980 at age 56, never knowing the fate of her first-born son.

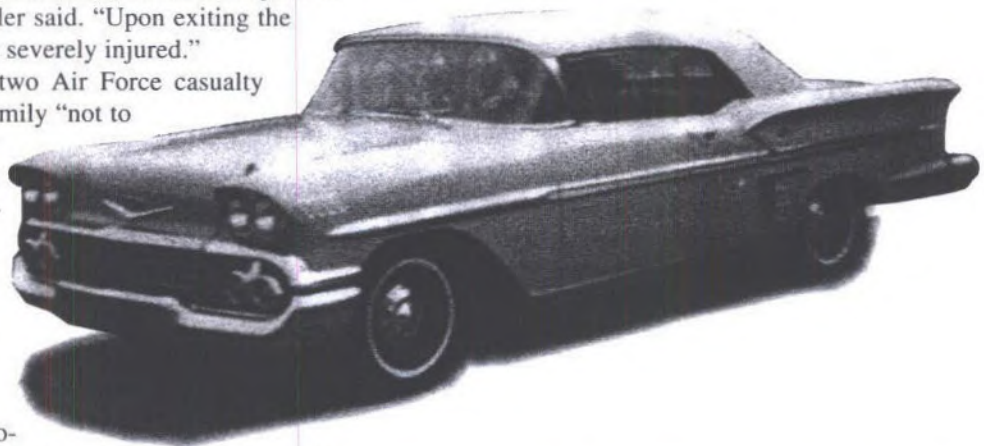
"My grandmother died of the same thing," Cindy said. "But I'll always believe the stress surrounding Steve's disappearance speeded up the disease. Looking back, with my parents dying so young and Steve missing when I was still in school, you know, Bruce and I were robbed. By the time I was 30, I had no parents and only one brother instead of two."

It's been 27 years since Cindy or Bruce saw their brother. And no one knows when they'll find out what happened to him. They're frustrated and bitter, wanting only to know the truth.

"I wish more than anything that Steve would walk through that door right now," Cindy said. "But I realize that's probably not going to happen. I wonder how long it will be before we find out what really happened. If we ever do."

Until then the questions remain. Because of that, for Cindy and Bruce, and especially for Steve, there is no period at the end of this sentence ❖

Steve (upper left) played baritone in the school band. That's him standing on the left. Like most young men, Steve's pride and joy was his car (top), a baby blue Chevy convertible. Steve as a two-striper (right) wearing his hard-earned maroon beret.



A2C Steven H Adams
18 Oct 66

File = PJ12

