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From: [REDACTED] (Richard Green) | [Block address](#)

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To: "Rhonda Oates" <[REDACTED]>

CC: "Detra Dick" <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: Jay Aston

Date: Tue, 21 Dec 1999 11:53:45 -0500

Thanks for passing this on... I have "entered" the information and written to Alan...

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
Richard

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

From: Rhonda Oates <[REDACTED]>
To: [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, December 21, 1999 10:02 AM
Subject: Jay Aston

>>From: [REDACTED]
>>Date: Mon, 20 Dec 1999 20:13:33 EST
>>Subject: Jay Aston
>>To: [REDACTED]
>>X-Info: InterCity Oz: Your port to the world!
>>
>>Hi Dick-
>>
>>I flew with Jay Aston from May 1971 til the day he was shot down, July 18, 1971. He took me under his wing since iI was a new guy. I generally had CCN missions with him. Jay was an excellent pilot who would do anything to help a person.
>>
>>On the 18th of July, my roommate made AC and I choose to fly with him instead of Jay. Jay's mission was to lead several aircraft on a combat assault near the Laotian border. The company commander was in a C&C ship. They inserted the troops in the morning to return in the p.m. for pickup. The commander choose to remove the troops from the same LZ. This was not SOP.
>>
>>They returned in the afternoon. Jay was lead aircraft. As he

Sincerely,
Alan V. McCulloch

Blackwidow 25
Class 71-5

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Jay Steven Aston

Jay S. Aston, a hero, died July 18, 1971. Jay was a quiet, competent officer. He was young (weren't we all); however, he matured quickly as a helicopter pilot assigned to Company C, 101st Aviation Battalion, 101st Airborne Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. He was smart, and an outstanding pilot. And he seemed to know his ultimate fate.

Jay entered adulthood as a leader. Like few of his peers, he exceeded the necessary qualifications and became a U.S. Army helicopter pilot. Ultimately, he was assigned to C/101, the Black Widows. The area of operation was tough and a pilot's missions ranged from "ash and trash" (resupply) to "straight leg" operations (combat assaults). It also included classified 75th Ranger, Command and Control North (CCN) operations. The latter were assigned to only the best pilots. And Jay was one of the best.

Jay was tapped early in his Viet Nam tour as one of C/101's aircraft commanders. In this capacity, he mentored less experienced officers on how to fly in combat. He was also often selected as the officer of choice to fly lead on combat assaults.

Although I never became close friends with Jay, in June 1971, we were temporarily assigned to CCN Headquarters, Marble Mountain, Danang, in support of SOG operations. During our short tour of duty together, he talked about how proud he was to be a helicopter pilot. He also spoke of his concern about not returning home.

On July 18, 1971, Jay and the crews of supporting AH-1G and UH-1H aircraft were awakened in the early morning to insert 75th Rangers into enemy territory. He attended the morning briefings and later that day, the helicopters departed Phu Bai, Viet Nam, to join with the OV-10 spotter aircraft. Jay was lead. Knowing the LZ, he made his approach flawlessly. He landed and the four Rangers started to exit. The next words from Jay were, "It's an ambush." He initiated a take off. However, it was too late. Jay received lethal wounds to his head. The helicopter turned abruptly and crashed. Prior to impact, one of the door gunners was thrown from the helicopter and impaled through the hip by a wooden stake. The commandos, copilot, and second door gunner were shaken; however, they survived the crash. Immediately, they valiantly tried to free Jay from his seat. Unfortunately, Jay was twisted within the wreckage. Faced with the possibility of being killed or captured themselves, they left the aircraft and set up their defensive position. Cobras directed protective fire around their position and eventually the remaining "slicks" on station extracted the casualties, less Jay. Jay's body was never recovered.

EPILOGUE

Several days after Jay's death, there was a funeral with full military honors.

Jay received a purple heart posthumously.

The door gunner impaled by the stake returned to his duties after his wounds healed.

The copilot retired his wings to the commanding officer -- never to fly combat missions again.

I flew over the crashed helicopter several weeks later to observe NVA soldiers on and around the aircraft. The request for a "roll in" was denied. We were on another classified mission.

Jay's name is placed on "The Wall". When we left Viet Nam, Jay was still listed as MIA.

Apparently, this was changed to KIA.

I will always wonder why we never retrieved his body.

We will never forget him. He was our friend, our trusted "wing man" and colleague, who paid the ultimate sacrifice for his countrymen and his nation.

Dudley C. Latimer
Black Widow 51
May 71 - February 72

Mr. Dudley C. Latimer
Arlington, VA

---Original Message---From Richard Green to D.Kinzly..

LOL... his e-mail address might work if you put in all the letters!! I guess that's why he was the "6"... *Smile*
Hopefully he will have some more information on the loss of Jay Aston.
Richard Green

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

From: D Kinzly <[REDACTED]>

To: Richard Green <[REDACTED]>

Date: Wednesday, November 24, 1999 6:01 PM

Subject: Re: News Letter Jay Aston

I should have known that Richard "A" Pack would not have a workable address..... he was "6" at the time... I look at the list and the 70-72 era folks ... nothing..... Keith was my chief Thanks .. Jay was not recovered..... We could not get him out... Wedged in the pedals We confirmed KIA.... but bureaucratic stuff listed him different
Later BW 12

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

From: Richard Green

To: D Kinzly ; [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, November 23, 1999 8:43 PM

Subject: Re: News Letter Jay Aston

What Richard A was in charge?? It was way after my time (I'm a Richard A also) but would like to get whatever information possible for the unit history, and just because we ought to know...
Hopefully the newsletter mentioned below is the BW newsletter that was mailed recently.... with roster...
Richard

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

From: D Kinzly <[REDACTED]>

To: [REDACTED]

Date: Tuesday, November 23, 1999 7:30 PM

Subject: Re: News Letter Jay Aston

To All - As I remember is below..... Richard A was in charge and may shed some light.... Many years and foggy memories... We looked for that crew & bird! Jay's watch was found on a NVA agent....captured by the CCN folks out of the Marbles... We lost few and all that we lost hurt..... Richard-- pinocchio? You name the stakes
BW12

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

From: EXT-Hendricks, Keith A To: 'D Kinzly'

Sent: Monday, November 22, 1999 5:26 PM

Subject: RE: News Letter

Yea, Custer sounds about right. I'm trying to remember who was crew chief...maybe Charlie Radosavich? Gunner's name escapes me completely. About the only other thing that I remember was that the A/C was dragged a short distance and the skid marks disappeared.
What newsletter? VHPA?

> From: D Kinzly[SMTP: [REDACTED]]

> Sent: Monday, November 22, 1999 3:08 PM > To: Keith Hendricks

> Subject: News Letter

>> Hey

> I got the newsletter today and inside there was an article asking

> about Jay Aston... Wasn't the Co-pilot's name Custer? I remember that we

> were doing a CCN mission, he was lead and they took him out & the LZ was

> blocked.... Next day we went back and the ship and everything was

> gone..... Tell me more... Dan

This one not related to the others above. Except they are all talking about Jay Aston's death... not really much info here...

>From: "David Frost" <[REDACTED]>

>To: <[REDACTED]>

>Subject: Jay Aston

>X-Info: InterCity Oz: Your port to the world!

>

> Howdy Pal - well, I received my Black Widow newsletter and a certain name
> struck me hard, Jay Aston. Yep, I was acquainted with Jay. You see, I was
> a newbie and my very first flight in Viet Nam was with Jay. He was killed
> shortly afterward and I was Duty Officer that night. The right seater was a
> Warrant named Custer, we affectionately nicknamed him "General Custer" of
> course. I was known as "Mr. Frosty" but my platoon Capt. didn't approve so
> the fellas would try and call me Mr. Frost but occasionally they slipped
> up. There was a lot of mutual respect between us and it went far beyond the
> stripes, bars and titles. Seems I was in trouble more than not and I really
> didn't do anything more than work "with" our crews, I've always been a team
> player and wasn't very good at dictating. We had a few others I barely
> remember their names but I didn't see them on the roster. Capt Wetzell,
> Capt DiPadova, CW2 Gregory (safety officer), WO 1 Hood (classmate). I'm
> sorry, I don't know that I can be of much help, I really don't remember a
> lot of people, things - guess it's just a way of dealing with Viet Nam
> matters. I can give you more info about Jay if you'd like, but there are
> probably others who I hope come forward and will be better sources of info
> I didn't really know Jay personally, I hadn't been there long enough. I got
> in company a couple of weeks before it happened. Best to you and Happy
> Thanksgiving. I know better than anyone else how thankful I am to be here,
> have a wonderful wife and two great kids, a son and a daughter who I love
> all very much.

>David Frost: "Frosty"

>Boise, ID

>

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>

Rhonda Oates

Vice President, InterCity Oz
[REDACTED]