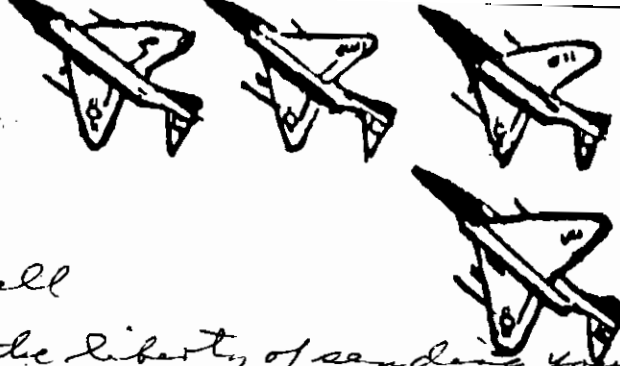




Friday May 13, 1994
Big Bear Lake, CA

Mr. Bill Bell

I am taking the liberty of sending you some data that concern our oldest boy, LtCDR Harry Stevens, whom we believe to still be alive in captivity in SE Asia.

The first two enclosures are what I term as the long & short biographies. #3 is a copy of our 1993 Christmas letter, followed by a copy of Harry's shoot down incident report.

Item 5 is a copy of Harry in the 3-man photo alongside a photo of Harry's brother, Danny, which we feel shows a striking resemblance of the two men.

The photo of the man in the ~~igod~~ blue shirt has been identified by four reputable forensic scientists to positively be Harry Stevens. Three of these identifications are in writing & one is verbal.

The last enclosures are 2 copies of the supposed letter from Harry sent to us by Mr. Tam Nguyen, along with a copy of our translation of the letter. Because the original copy was oversize, I ran 2 copies to overlap so you can read the entire message & to include the fingerprints.

I enclose our translation because the letter was very difficult to decipher & I want you to make out what we deciphered.

The comment "Therefore, this is last time I write to answer your questions" is especially significant, because we have been told that a list of questions we furnished to a private source was forwarded to people who supposedly had contact with Harry.

Two more bits of information about Harry. Harry was 5 feet 9 inches tall & he is now 51 years old, born Dec 17, 1942.

Thank you for talking to us & we wish you success in your efforts to aid our POW's & MIA's & their families.

Sincerely, for Gladys & me.

Jack Fleckenstein

My dear mom dad

I've lived far from home & relatives for 27 years. Also I've always thought about the country & family, so I've prayed to live & meet again my family & relatives. Now my dream becomes true. I've already received your news but why didn't you write clearly & completely in your letter? Do you know yours reminds me of happy memories 20 years ago? I wonder who you are and why can't you write to me yourself if you were my wife? You only sent me a small piece of paper. Don't you believe I'm still alive? I can't write too much because of time & my situation and I couldn't reply by your paper since it's very small. Therefore, this is last time I write to answer your questions. If you were my wife, please forgive your unfortunate husband generously receiving this letter, you can imagine how I've lived here in a long time like that. Please help me to come back again as soon as possible. I long to return that place! I look forward to hear from you.

Please send my best to all the family

THE COMMANDER LARRY STEVENS

- FULL NAME THE COMEN DERTSIE VENS
- PLACE OF BIRTH LANG BEACH - BC

90973

11

DATE OF BIRTH AUGIL 13th 1931

SEX (MALE)

PROFES SION - CAPTAIN

SERIALS NUM BET - USA RVV - 54826-34-5341-117

DATE OF CAPTURE - MATEIC 15th 1971

THE COM MEMBER S STE VENS

THE COM MEN DER LARRY S STEVENS

My dear ma and

I've lived in your home and be happy for
27 years. Also, I was always thought about the
country and family, so I've prayed to live and meet
again my family and relatives. Now my dream
becomes true, I've already received your news. But
Why didn't you write clearly and completely in
your letter? Do you know your reminds me of
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my wife? You only sent me a
small piece of paper. Don't you believe I'm still
alive? I can't write too much because of time
and my situation. and I couldn't reply by your
paper since it's very small. Therefore, this is
last time I write to answer your questions. If
you have my wife, please forgive your unfortunate
husband generously. Receiving this letter, you
can imagine how I've lived here for a long time
like that. please help me to come back again as
soon as possible. I long to return that place. I look
forward to hear from you.

please send my best to all the family

THE COM MEN DER LARRY S STEVENS

Dennis Ray
Stevens
Brother
of
Vern Harry
James Stevens



Vern Harry
James
Stevens
←

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Report of MIA Status of LTJG Larry J. STEVENS

1. (U) What: SAR Incident concerning A-4C aircraft bureau number 149529 lost. Aircraft call sign Diamond Back 607.
2. (U) Who: Pilot - LTJG Larry J. STEVENS, USNR, 719361/1315 - MIA.
3. Where: Combat zone, S.E. Asia (Laos) 16-38-30N, 106-18-40E.
4. (U) When: 2156H, 14 FEB 1969. *Night*
5. Mission: Air strike against North Vietnamese lines of supply in Laos.
6. Units directly involved: "Nail 12" an O-2 forward air controller; "Viceroy 412" an A-6 AMTI aircraft; and Diamond Back 601, the A-4 element leader.
automatic moving target indicator *Lead Meehan*
7. (U) Weather Conditions: In the area of last contact, sky was 5000' scattered, visibility 5 miles, haze to 10,000 feet, temperature 84°, dew point 72, wind 160° at 5 knots, altimeter 29.78.
8. Circumstances: A flight of two A-4C's pouncer aircraft piloted by LCDR J. F. MEEHAN and LTJG L. J. STEVENS in a flight with "Viceroy 412" the AMTI aircraft, observed themselves being fired upon by an AAA site while on AMTI run heading 280° at 10,000 feet, 300 KIAS. At that time the flight commenced a port climbing turn in search of the airborne FAC. Upon completion of a wide 360° turn, the section was back over the target area at 14,000 feet, 260 KIAS. The lead aircraft piloted by LCDR MEEHAN with lights on dim, rolled out on a 280° heading and continued for approximately 40 seconds when a tremendous double explosion was heard and felt, with an accompanying white flash, from the port quarter of his aircraft. LCDR MEEHAN's aircraft was gusted up and to starboard. Following partial recovery, LCDR MEEHAN ejected over water and was recovered. The wingman, LTJG STEVENS, was flying close formation when the flash and explosions were experienced by LCDR MEEHAN. No transmissions were heard from him at this time and no further voice contact was established with him. Approximately one minute later, his aircraft was observed, by the FAC and the pilot and crewman of the A-6 aircraft, to impact on the ground. The possibility of a mid-air collision exists, however, the preponderance of information available and the tactical situation indicate that there is a higher probability of loss due to direct enemy action. It is suspected that both aircraft sustained hits from a AAA site.

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Group 4
Downgraded at 3 year intervals
Declassified after 12 years

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9. Search and Rescue: "Crown 7" and "Nail 12" conducted electronic search throughout the night with negative results. Visual search for "Diamond Back 607" was initiated by "Misty 86 and 91", "Nail 12" and "Spad 1 and 2" at first light and in addition CORAL SEA photo and strike aircraft searched the area. Results were negative. The Air Force search was suspended at 151005Z FEB 69 and the Navy terminated SAR efforts 17 FEB 69. Electronic search continued until 21 FEB 69 by aircraft transiting the area and no contact was ever established with LTJG STEVENS.

10. Statements of survivors/witnesses:

The following is an excerpt from the eyewitness statement by LCDR Frank PETERS, Attack Squadron 52, pilot of Viceroy 412, the AMTI A/C. . . . "Nail 12" had called going 'Christmas Tree' and I started rolling the wings looking for his lights still on a NW heading. Very shortly thereafter I noticed some white flashes in the canopy on my left side aft. The haze was pretty bad but you could see stars and down satisfactory and the haze seemed to transmit the light of the flashes. At the time I thought that we were taking some flak bursts behind me or something was blowing up on the deck behind me. About this time (2156) Pouncer 1 (DB601) said 'Hold it a minute, I think we're in trouble, I think I've either taken a hit or I've run into something.' For some reason I had the impression that the Pouncers were at my left so I started a left turn. Pouncer 1 came up again and said 'This is Pouncer 1 and I've got big trouble, I may have to leave this thing, I'm having bad control problems.' Thirty seconds or so had elapsed and I told Nail 12 to get ready to start SAR procedures. After this transmission there was a large explosion on the ground just to the left and aft of my position. The fireball was very large and debris came flying out of the fireball in a westerly direction. The flash was bright enough and of sufficient duration to see that the crash site was in rolling type hills with no trees visible and that the impact was at the bottom, between two low rolling hills. It was also southwest of the fires previously mentioned and no river was visible or seen. I then directed Nail 12 to commence the SAR procedures, make the Mayday call and to remain at the crash site as the 'On scene commander' and that I was heading east to locate and join up with Pouncer 1. Pouncer 1 then said, 'I got control of this thing now and I'm heading eastbound for the water but I've still got bad control problems, I don't know if I can land it, I've got to hold in full forward stick to keep control.' Nail 12 then started his Mayday call on Guard. I somehow got my aircraft completely turned around and was on an easterly heading when I passed directly over the crash site, who's fire was almost out and marked the computer position and turned on the IFF-emergency. The computer position was 16-35N, 106-22E with a known 2.5 mile eastward error. This plotted out to be near XD 400 400 and Nail 12 concurred with this plot of the crash site. The tacan on channel 72 was unlocked. As I started to ask Pouncer 1 his position and heading, I and my B/N heard a beeper for about 5 to 10 seconds in duration. This time was about 2-3 minutes after the crash and approximately 2200 hours. I then told Nail 12 that I had heard a short beeper and that I was proceeding eastbound to locate Pouncer 1."

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The following is an excerpt from the eyewitness statement by LTJG R. E. WILKES, Attack Squadron 52, Bomadier/Navigator of Viceroy 412, the AMTI A/C "I observed two bright flashes reflected off the canopy shortly after which Diamond Back 601 called out, 'I'm in trouble. I've either taken a hit or have run into something.' At this time we started a turn to the left to join up on the pouncers. Within a minute of his previous call, 601 stated 'I'm in deep trouble. I may have to eject.' Just after this transmission, I observed a brilliant explosion as Diamond Back 607 impacted the ground below and to the left of us. On impact, burning particles appeared to be hurled in a westerly direction. As we flew over the wreckage, I noted the coordinates (16-35; 106-22). We told Nail 12 to be On Scene Commander and to transmit maydays as we were going to join up on Diamond Back 601. About two minutes after the impact of 607 a beeper of about a 10 second duration was heard by both the pilot and myself. A DF cut was attempted but to no avail".

The following is a statement by LCDR J. F. MEEHAN, Attack Squadron 216, pilot of Diamond Back 601, the Pouncer 1 A/C "I heard Viceroy 412 tell Nail 12 that he had no targets, and ask if Nail 12 had any. Nail 12 said that he had 4 to 5 trucks moving south. Nail 12 passed rendezvous position to flight. I waited until Viceroy 412 said he was turning south off the AMTI track. About 45 seconds later I commenced a climbing turn south and at this time I turned my wing lights and fuselage on dim and steady. I leveled at 14,000' MSL in a shallow port turn with the idea of keeping Viceroy 412 and Nail 12 to my left. At this time I noticed my wingman (DB 607) flying a close wing position. On passing a heading of east I saw Viceroy 412 heading west at my 10:30 position. At this time Nail 12 said that he was going Christmas Tree. Diamond Back 607 stated that he had the FAC at the 7:30 position. I concurred the position. I steadied up on a heading of 280° MAG. Diamond Back 607 asked me if I would turn my fuselage light off and tail on. After I did that he said "that's it". About 40 seconds later I experienced a simultaneous bright flash, double explosion and the A/C was gusted up and to the right. After I got the wings in a level position I noticed a faint burning light pass my left wing towards the earth. At this time my A/C started toward the ground in a steep nose down attitude. I was preparing for ejection at this time when the nose started coming up. I called that I thought I had been hit or run into something, and that I was having control problems and might have to eject. I was finally able to gain limited control of the A/C and was able to guide the A/C to 'feet wet' and eject.

11. Commanding Officer recommendation: It can only be recommended that LTJG STEVENS continue to be listed in a Missing in Action Status. The exact circumstances surrounding his loss cannot be determined but LCDR MEEHAN's insistence that there was no mid air collision, the explosions and flash observed by at least 4 persons, the known enemy anti-aircraft artillery opposition in the area and LTJG STEVENS' demonstrated skill as an above average Naval Aviator tend to indicate that the aircraft

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in question were probably hit by enemy ground fire. In any case, LTJG STEVENS disappeared over enemy territory and the aircraft he was flying was observed impacting the ground. I consider the probability of his safe escape from the aircraft to be very good and if so he was unable to contact rescue forces for some unknown reason. The emergency beeper signal heard by the pilot and crewman of the A-6 aircraft are encouraging although no further contact was ever made.

If LTJG STEVENS survived he is probably a prisoner of the enemy at this time and we cannot determine if he perished since numerous visual searches failed to locate his aircraft.

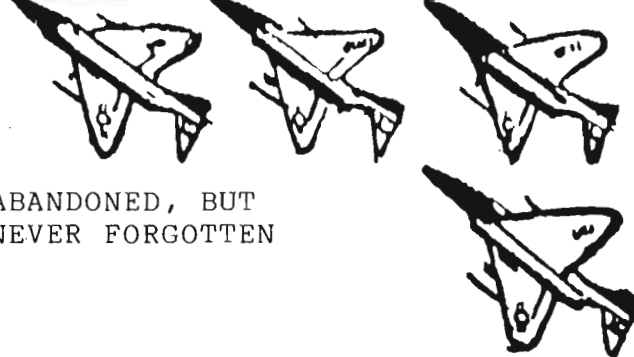
In view of all the facts and realizing the implications of such action, I recommend that LTJG STEVENS be continued in a Missing in Action Status until such time as evidence to the contrary is forthcoming.

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Enclosure (1)



ABANDONED, BUT
NEVER FORGOTTEN



Christmas, 1993
BIG BEAR LAKE,
CALIFORNIA

We extend warm greetings and best wishes to all our friends and family members. Especially since we did not send out Christmas greetings last year. Somehow the 1992 holidays overwhelmed us and we were unable to respond properly to the holiday season. Please accept our apologies.

This year, physically, Gladys and I are well. Illness to Gladys' mother and aunt are forcing us to some extraordinary decisions. But these are balanced by the boys, Garry and Denny, and their families: 4 grandsons and a lovely granddaughter; a brand new granddaughter-in-law; 2 great grandsons plus our first great granddaughter (one year old Jan. 2, 1994). The joys we experience in being with these young people give us a powerful uplifting feeling.

Concerning our oldest boy, L/CDR Larry Stevens, we KNOW he is alive. In addition to his appearance in the "3-man" photo, a private group in 1991 smuggled out of SE Asia a photo of a caucasian man. We submitted this photo along with other pre-shutdown pictures of Larry to several internationally renowned forensic experts for evaluation. In reply we received 3 written, plus one verbal, statements declaring not "this man looks like Larry Stevens" but "The man in the photo IS Larry Stevens".

This positive identification by four world recognized forensic analysts, plus the approximately 4 inch thick government furnished file reporting on Larry by name, is reinforced by reports from private sources which conclusively prove that Larry and a group of other Americans are still alive, await their freedom.

Despite continuous USG attempts to downplay the possibility of LIVE POW's, we are constantly encouraged by the activities of thousands of POW activists and the many families who are still actively campaigning for the release and accounting of our heroic men. We especially are grateful for the support of our Vietnam veterans. The American Legion and several other patriotic fraternal organizations continue to be vocal on this issue. The American Legion, in particular, continues to attack and question the bureaucrats from the president on down, for their cowardice and failure to resolve this explosive issue.

So, despite the powerful bureaucratic enemy we face and oppose, there are many effective, devoted, smart, dedicated, caring, willing Americans who believe American heroes and the blood they have shed are more important than the dollars and private designs of bureaucratic and corporate America. These greedy men are willing to forget the heroes who answered their country's call to duty, put their lives on the line and are now victims of a cowardly abandonment policy.

We are grateful for the many letters, cards and calls we have received, expressing love, care and concern for us and, more importantly, for our missing, unaccounted for men. The support you offer has been a source of strength from which we continue to draw. We can only express our gratitude, indebtedness and appreciation to all of you and we pledge that we will carry on the fight until our live POW's are home and we have the fullest possible accounting of our missing men.

Please accept our full and sincere appreciation and gratitude for the many kindnesses you have extended to us.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year, and a grand Holiday Season.

You are always in our minds, hearts and prayers, as are our unaccounted ^{for} men and their families who have suffered so long. We pray for a speedy and complete resolution for this tragic issue.

We are and will be forever grateful to you.

Sincerely, with love,

Jack & Gladys

Jack and Gladys Fleckenstein

Box 3508

Big Bear Lake, CA 92315

L/CDR LARRY JAMES STEVENS, USNR

L/CDR Larry James Stevens, a US Navy pilot, was shot down near Tchepone, Laos on Valentine's Day, 1969. Flying an A-4C Skyhawk and operating from the carrier USS Coral Sea, Larry was wingman in a 2-plane flight. The flight was assigned a ground target; a group of trucks carrying ammunition and supplies to North Vietnam forces fighting in South Vietnam. While in their bombing run, both planes were hit by anti-aircraft fire from ground batteries. The flight leader managed to regain control of his damaged plane, flew out to sea, ejected safely and was picked up by helicopter.

Larry's plane was seen to impact the ground by air crews of two other planes in the vicinity. Larry made no radio transmission after his plane was hit, nor was there any sighting of a parachute. However, a few minutes after Larry's plane crashed, a five to ten second beeper signal was picked up by the other planes and was assumed to come from Larry. Subsequent visual and electronic sweeps of the area failed to pick up any sign of Larry or his plane. The strong possibility was advanced by Larry's squadron commander in his official report of the incident that Larry could well have survived the crash, in which case he would almost certainly have been taken prisoner. No further word of Larry has been received by his family.

Larry was born and reared in Southern California, attending schools in the area. As a Boy Scout he was awarded the Order of the Arrow. He attended Cleveland High School in Reseda, California. He was a good student. He served as co-editor of the school paper. He represented Cleveland as a member of Boys' State. An excellent athlete, he competed in football, baseball and track. At one time he was considered one of the finer hurdlers in Southern California, but recurring leg injuries prevented his further athletic development.

He loved to fly and joined the Navy because he felt the Navy's training was the best. Official Navy efficiency reports indicate Larry was an excellent pilot, and possessed superior leadership qualities.

In addition to his parents, Larry has two brothers, both of whom live in Southern California. He has four nephews and aniece, only one of which he ever saw. His fate, like that of the 2,483 unaccounted for in Southeast Asia, remains unknown.

LARRY JAMES STEVENS, USNR

L/CDR Larry James Stevens, a United States Navy pilot operating from the carrier USS Coral Sea, was shot down on Valentine's Day 1969 near Tchepone, Laos. Flying as wingman in a two plane flight of A-4C Skyhawks on a night mission, Larry's unit was assigned a target; a group of trucks carrying ammunition and supplies to the North Vietnamese forces fighting in South Vietnam. While the planes were in their bombing run they came under fire from anti-aircraft batteries. Both planes were hit. The flight leader was able to regain control of his aircraft, fly out to sea, eject, and was picked up by helicopter.

Larry's plane was seen to impact the ground in a sizeable burst of flame. The aircraft debris was seen to scatter in a generally southwest direction. Crew members of two other aircraft in the vicinity observed the crash and both agreed on the coordinates of the crash site. No radio transmission was received from Larry's aircraft. However, a few minutes after Larry's plane struck, a short five to ten second beeper signal was picked up by the crewmen of the two other aircraft near the site, and was assumed to come from Larry or his plane. Subsequent visual and electronic sweeps of the area failed to pick up any sign of Larry or of his downed aircraft. The possibility exists that because the action occurred shortly after 10 PM on a dark night, Larry could have parachuted safely to the ground, where he would most certainly have been taken prisoner. Such a possibility was advanced in the official report submitted by Larry's squadron commander.

Larry was born in Hawthorne, California. He grew up in Southern California, attending schools in the area. As a member of the Boy Scouts he was awarded the Order of the Arrow. He attended Cleveland High School in Reseda, California. He was a good student. He served as co-editor of the school paper. He represented Cleveland High as a member of Boys' State. An excellent athlete, he lettered in football, baseball and track. At one time he was considered one of the finer nurdlers in the Southern California area, but recurring leg injuries prevented his further athletic activity.

He loved to fly and joined the US Navy because he felt the Navy's training was superior. Official Navy efficiency reports indicate that Larry was an excellent pilot and was considered to possess superior leadership qualities. Several of his superiors suggested he make the Navy his permanent occupation, with an assurance of gaining high rank.

Larry was married for approximately 10 months before his downing, but had no children. He has two brothers, both living in Southern California. He has four nephews and a niece, only one of whom he ever saw.

Larry's parents are Gladys and Jack Fleckenstein, residents of Big Bear Lake, California. Both have been extremely active in POW/MIA involvement, Gladys especially so. She has been to Sacramento four times, and to Washington, DC on nine occasions. In 1972 she was present in a group of some 170 family members who flew to Geneva, Switzerland, where she consulted the Red Cross records which listed Larry as MIA. From Geneva, the group flew to Paris, where they demonstrated all of one day across the street from the Building where the Paris Peace Accords were being worked out. The European news agencies gave considerable coverage to the event.

In 1973, Gladys, accompanied by one other lady, flew to Bangkok, Thailand and thence to Vientiane, Laos. While flying from Bangkok to Vientiane, Gladys witnessed the flashes of artillery fire and the impact of shell bursts of the ground fighting going on below near Phnom Pehn. In Vientiane she met several times with Ambassador Whitehouse, and was briefed in great

detail by a Colonel Henry, the military attache to the Ambassador. She succeeded in gaining a personal meeting with General Giap, at that time the number four member of North Vietnam leaders.

Currently, both Gladys and Jack continue writing officials and news agencies, and speaking to citizen and service groups, in an attempt to spread public awareness of the tragic plight of our POW/MIA's. The three major points they emphasize are:

- 1--Return of all live American POW's as soon as possible.
- 2--Return of all remains for honorable interment in their own land, for which they fought and died.
- 3--A complete accounting of the 2,441 who remain unaccounted for