

May 25, 1989

Dear Don,

Thank you very much for your letter about the Army Helicopter Pilot and the copy of the Navy Diarie. It means more to me than I can really express. Your thoughtfulness and concern is most certainly appreciated.

Its hard to understand why it has taken so long (20 years) to learn and know the truth. Only one slight problem....Would you believe???? the Navy made some mistakes????

For one thing, On April 16, 1969 Mike made E-5...2nd Class. Also he did receive the Silver Star, posthumously, although it was dated for March 23, 1969. It took me quite a while to convince the Navy that Mike had made 2nd Class, but they finally realized it was true. He had made E-4 on Oct. 16, 1968, and 6 months later he made E-5.

When Mike died, he and his Pilot and Co-* Pilot were not found, and thru the efforts of Hal Castle's parents and Dick Reardon's parents, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis was contacted as she was friendly with Prince Sinouck (excuse spelling) , to see if she could find out just what happened to our boys. I'm enclosing copies of the letters and translation. They claimed they found 3 badly burned bodies, probably Americans, and buried them at the scene. 10 Months later, the United States was given permission to go into Cambodia and dig up the remains and ship them home. They claim (the Navy) that they made positive I.D. by way of teeth and the size of the bones. Mike was the tallest. He arrived home 2 days after his 21st Birthday. In fact we had to buy a plot of ground to bury him in on his Birthday and to make arrangements for the Funeral Home to meet the plane. I've always hated the fact that a plot of ground is a hell of a Birthday present, especially on your 21st Birthday!!!!

We had held a Memorial Service earlier, so actually when they shipped him home we had graveside rites, so we went thru it twice!

As you can see, I've enclosed copies of the letters. It has taken me 20 years to go thru Mikes things, but thanks to you Vets, you have given me the strength and courage to do this. I have put together a large Photograph album of all the pictures Mike had sent home. Some have names on, some don't. I plan to bring this with me in hopes some one will recognize some of the pictures and faces. I also kept all of Mikes letters and reel to reel tapes. I'm wanting to have his tapes put on Cassette tapes as they are getting brittle. I even have 3 rather large maps of Vietnam which are dated 1966 & 1968 which I had laminated, and plan to bring along, so if its alright with you, I'd like to put them on display.

Also I found several issues of Wol@grams which had been sent home to us and I'd like to donate them to the "Seawolves".

I'm getting very anxious to meet all of you . I guess I'm just a silly old woman with alot of wonderful memories. I miss Mike terribly... and yet there has been so many wonderful and good things that have come about from his Death. He touch so many lives in such a good way and I'm very proud of him. I'm proud of all of you!

I have letters from different ones that I know you will be interested in, so we can compare notes when we meet. I already have my reservations made at the NAS Corey Motel (Comfort Inn) on Warrington Rd, in Pensacola. I'm so in hopes that my other Son, Ronnie (who is 3 years younger than Mike) will be able to come with me. We plan to drive thru. He's trying to line up his work so he can come too.

Getting back to the Army Helicopter Pilot, Dennis. He did call me and we met. I was thrilled to say the least. He is a very wonderful person, and he told me he is planning on attending our Reunion! I offered to let him ride over with me, but time-wise he said he needs to fly. Also, awhile back I was contacted...and met Mike Dobson, from Juneau, Alaska. Another wonderful person. He was in Texas on business and looked me up to make sure I knew about the Reunion. *HE ALSO SAID IT WAS OUTLAW 25 NOT 21 THAT MADE*

THE RESCUE!

Also in going thru Mikes' things, I found numerous poems that Mike had written. I'm having them put all together, and hope to have copies with me. In fact on the 29th & 30 of this month, I've been asked to read some of them at 2 different Memorial Services. They are just beautiful!

Last March the "Moving Wall" was at a little town, Pilot Point, Tx. and I volunteered to help for one day. I loved it so much I went back for 5 out of 7 days. I met some Seals who knew all about the Wolves, in fact one of them recognized Mike's picture and said He'll never forget Mike's face as he was "shotgun" on a Helo that helped save his life! Also I met some PBR's guys who remembered the Wolves! What a small World!

I really didn't mean to write a book, but like I said, theres been so much good come out of Mikes death.

I've been trying to locate Chuck Larsen, as I had a home address for him, but they moved. I've called Information, but can't find any listing. I had met his parents years ago. Tell you all about that later!

Thanks again for your information, I'm looking forward to meeting you and the rest of the guys!

Very sincerely,

Dorothy Schafernocker

Some of the Vets have nickednamed me "Moma Nocker" and also their "Udder Mudder". I love it!