

**History  
of the  
174th Assault Helicopter Company**

*Dolphins Sharks*

**1966-1971**

**Republic of South Vietnam**

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**174th Assault Helicopter Company  
Dolphins and Sharks  
Viet Nam Service 1966 to 1971**

***In Memory of those lost in Viet Nam and Laos***

**NARRATIVE**

**CPT Arthur P Wright**

**17 May 66 Texas**

**07E78**

CPT Wright came on the boat to Vietnam as a member of the 174th. He was transferred to the 161st AHC and was on an orientation flight in that company, when he was killed by a single bullet that came through the door and passed by the sliding armor plate.

Nick Saunders Sep 1994

**LTC Henry W. Rust Jr.**

**30 Mar 29**

**27 Nov 66 Batesville AR**

**12E125**

Rust was one of the 23 majors in the 174th. Between 1965 and 1968, aviation units in Vietnam had a high number of field grade officers assigned, due to the increasing requirements for aviators and the shortage of aviators available. Many had short turnarounds between tours. Rust died of a heart attack in Nha Trang, as he was enroute to Cam Rahn to DEROS. He was a newly promoted lieutenant colonel

Source: Dick Overhamm, May 1993

**CPT Aaron L. Bram**

**19 Jun 36**

**17 Dec 66 Chicago IL**

**13E49**

**SP5 William L. Seastrom**

**6 Jun 38**

**17 Dec 66 Los Angeles CA**

**13E56**

Bram was an IP giving a checkride to a Korean lieutenant in a UH-1D # 65-09605 on 17 Dec 66, Seastrom was the crew chief. Bram was on his second tour, assigned to the 452d Signal Detachment that was attached to the 174th AHC. The aircraft was in Lane Army Heliport's alternate traffic pattern, that was used for test flights and checkrides. Dolphin 605 was at 500 feet on downwind, when a damper bracket broke, causing the damper to separate and hit a pitch change link. The advancing blade dove into the cockpit, which hit Bram killing him immediately. Seastrom was thrown from the aircraft. The Korean lieutenant was killed when the aircraft incredibly nosed over and dove into the opening of a well. The accident was in full view of many of the 174th and 161st personnel that were working on the flight line. Emergency personnel were on the scene immediately but there was little they could do. Bram had been assigned to the 101st Avn Bn in 61-62. Seastrom was a former member of the Special Forces.

**Source:** Fred Thompson May 1993, from Marty Heuer



SP4 Larry R. Guentzel

28 Nov 47      24 Jun 67      Georgetown, TX      22E57

SP4 Thomas M. Dickinson

10 Nov 42      24 Jun 67      Memphis TN      22E57

Guentzel and Dickinson, members of the 409 TC detachment, died during a mortar attack that hit the 174th area at Duc Pho on 24 Jun 67. 35 total were injured. Jim McDaniel has pictures of the tents filled with shrapnel holes. Unit was still living in tents and more permanent facilities were being built.

**Source:** Fred Thompson June 1992, 14th CAB unit history for 1971 (Sloniker) July 1992

WO1 Dennis G. Blackmon

30 Jan 44      19 Oct 67      Alberta, AL      28E39

Died in an aircraft crash west of Duc Pho enroute LZ OD; not hostile fire. He was flying with WO1 Alexander who survived the crash, but was thrown out of the aircraft still in his seat.

**Source:** Jim McDaniel. Occurred while McDaniel was in Saigon (second hand) May 1989

SP5 Carl T. McCoy

01 Aug 50      31 May 68      Memphis TN      63W10

Killed by a direct hit on his quarters. 100 rounds landed in the company area. **Source:** Fred Thompson. June 1991

WO1 James D. Carter

13 Mar 47      13 Jun 68      Clarkston TX      57W10

WO1 Jerry H. Johnson

16 Feb 47      13 Jun 68      Hampton VA      57W10

SP4 Gary A. Milton

20 Mar 47      13 Jun 68      Hartley TX      57W11

PFC Allan R. Weamer

31 Dec 48      13 Jun 68      Tacoma WA      57W15

On 13 Jun 68, UH-1D #66-1018 was dispatched from Duc Pho to fly command and control for the 4th Bn 3d Inf, 11th Light Inf Bde. The aircraft landed at Landing Zone Dottie (VIC BS 622 885) to pickup LTC Barker, Cpt Michles, and 1LT Phillips, 4/3 Inf. The aircraft departed at 0730 to fly a visual reconnaissance in the area of BS 722 818, where a unit from 4/3 INF had reported light contact.

At 0745 hours, the 174th AHC operations center at Duc Pho received a report that WO1 Carter's aircraft was involved in a midair collision at 1000 feet AGL with a USAF 02. The UH-1D crashed at BS 718 802 and burst into flames. The 02 crashed at BS 714 799. Another helicopter crew in the area observed WO1 Carters aircraft impact with the ground and stated they did not see anyone escape from the crash. An element from A-4/3 Inf was airlifted to both crash sites. They could find no survivors at either crash site. A maintenance aircraft arrived at the UH-1D crash site and assisted in the removal of the five bodies from

the surrounding area. The remains of the O2 pilot, MAJ Brenner were recovered. One additional body, (believed to be WO1 Carter) was still in the wreckage and could not be recovered due to the massive mutilation and burning. The maintenance crew reported no survivors in the area and that helicopter SN 66-1016 was completely destroyed. On subsequent searches on 13, 14, and 15 Jun 68, only portions of mutilated bodies were recovered and evacuated. Of these, none could be identified as the remains of WO1 Carter. On 13 and 14 Jun the Chu Lai Graves Registration shipped a total of six remains involved with the incident to the Danang US Army mortuary. WO1 Carter is carried in the status of dead, body not recovered (BNR).

**Source:** Defense Intelligence Agency Reference note 1203

**SP5 Wayne A. Tice      03 Apr 48 18 Nov 68      Gallup NM      38W13**

On 18 November, while reconning an area where a USMC F-4 had been shot down and the pilots were still missing, Dolphin 428 came under enemy fire. The ship took more than 15 hits. Although critically wounded, SP5 Tice, the crewchief, returned fire until the aircraft was out of the area. Tice was medevaced to Chu Lai, but later died of wounds. In recognition of gallantry, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, posthumously. John O'Sullivan was the aircraft commander and the copilot was "Smokey" Grykin.

**Source:** 174th historical document for Operation Vernon Lake II, 1 November 1968 to 31 Dec 1968 provided to Fred Thompson by John O' Sullivan (May 1991).

**CW2 Henry J. Tews**

**11 Apr 48 29 Dec 68**

**Shosone ID**

**35W07**

CW2 Tews was a maintenance officer who had gone to recover an UH-1D that had made a precautionary landing west of Ba To at the Special Forces camp at Gia Vuc. The UH-1D's crew had landed the aircraft because of noises from the transmission area. CW2 Tews inspected the aircraft and determined the aircraft could make a one time 30 minute flight to Duc Pho.

CW2 Tews flew alone in the aircraft. Enroute, the transmission seized, and the aircraft crashed.

**Source:** Jim McDaniel after a phone conversation with Russ Doersam, Jan 90.

**MAJ Richard K. Zimmerman**

**24 Jun 37 20 Jan 69**

**St Clairsville OH**

**34W46**

Former member of the 174th. Was transferred to the 1st Cav Div to command troop in the 1/9 Cav and was killed while in command as troop commander.

**Source:** Fred Thompson May 1991

WO1 Ray R. Davis		
06 Jun 47 01 Mar 69	Oakland CA	30W01
WO1 Edward L. Harris		
26 Jul 43 01 Mar 69	Mankato MN	30W03
SP4 Donn P. Zarina		
19 Jul 47 01 Mar 69	Boulder CO	30W09
SP4 David E. Schulze		
02 Jun 48 01 Mar 69	Elmhurst IL	30W07

Aircraft crashed on a pinnacle, crew of four and five infantrymen were lost:

James A. Kraft	11B10
David E. Lovegren	11B10
Thomas L. Gaines III	11B10
Rodney M. Goode	11B20
Jimmy R. Gross	11B20

**Source:** Jim Towle told Fred Thompson about the crash. The DIA PW/MIA office provided the names. (June 1991)

CPT Charles D. Rogers		
25 Mar 39 11 Mar 69	Monroe NC	29W14
MAJ Richard A. Brown		
23 Jul 34 17 Mar 69	Lakewood CA	29W59

A French 75MM pack howitzer was fired by the NVA into the company area and hit the commanders hooch. Cpt Rogers, who had been in the company 2 days and was going to be the XO was killed immediately. The new company commander, Maj Brown, died of wounds on the 17th. The outgoing company commander, Maj Schmidt was wounded and evacuated.

**Sources:** Jim Towle, Fred Thompson, John O'Sullivan, and Jim McDaniel May and June 1991

SGT Lawrence R. Shepard		
22 Jul 49 12 May 69	Napa CA	25W84
PFC James E. Isaac JR		
04 Nov 49 12 May 69	Daleville AL	25W72

Enlisted crewmen lost on Russ Doersam's UH-1C Shark aircraft (64-13663) that was shot down near OD lake.

**Source:** Jim McDaniel to Russ Doersam conversation on June 7, 1991 provided the date. The two names listed are the only two aviation MOS' listed as killed on May 12, 19969



**SP4 Donald A. Contarino**

30 Aug 49 14 Aug 69      Beverly Farms MA      19W37

WO1 Bob Buchanan AC, 1LT McGue CP, SP4 Donald Contarino, and Gnr UNK, were assigned a MACV support, starting at the MACV compound at Quang Ngai, that flew resupply and some command and control missions. Just before 1400, they landed at Special Forces camp at Tra Bong, and shut down. On approach to Tra Bong the Dolphin aircraft took fire near the ridge to the southeast. After the aircraft was shutdown, everyone but the gunner, went into the Special Forces compound to eat, when they were caught in a mortar attack on the camp. All were hit by shrapnel, Contarino died of his wounds, Buchanan and McGue were wounded and medevaced. The gunner and the aircraft were untouched. The passenger, a major who was a MACV advisor, also died of wounds.  
**Source:** Bob Buchanan Jul 92 VHPA reunion.

**WO1 Robert H. Shields II**

19 Jun 43 15 Aug 69      Kensington MD      19W47

**WO1 John M. Bozinski**

14 Jul 47 15 Aug 69      Superior WI      19W43

**SP4 Sanchez A. Del Valle**

02 Nov 48 15 Aug 69      Baya Mon PR      19W44

**PFC Johnnie Graham Jr.**

03 Dec 49 15 Aug 69      New York, NY      19W44

The aircraft was trail flying in 515 valley in a combat assault when hit by a heavy caliber anti-aircraft gun. The fire was intense and concentrated; so concentrated that it cut off the tail boom, causing mast bumping and main rotor separation. The helicopter hit on a side of a hill and burned. Besides the crew of four, there were 6 infantrymen on board.

**Source:** Ben Kennedy, June 1991

**WO1 Adam Wilson**

01 May 48 15 Nov 69      San Diego CA      16W82

**WO1 Ricardo W. Regaldo**

01 Dec 49 15 Nov 69      Everett WA      16W81

**SP4 Ronald L. Ducommun**

02 Jan 50 15 Nov 69      San Francisco CA      16W78

**SP4 Forest C. Hodgkin**

12 Oct 47 15 Nov 69      Lewison ME      16W80

Aircraft was resupplying artillery fire bases on a very windy day. Due to wind conditions and aircraft cargo, the crew had to make their approach in the same direction, four times in a row. On the fifth approach, the aircraft was shot down with all souls lost; the crew of four and a single artilleryman from the S-4 section.

**Source:** Beetle Bailey to Fred Thompson-May 90, Ben Kennedy June 92



**SP4 Donald A. Selkey Jr.**

02 Jul 50 22 Dec 69                      Mt Clemens MI                      15W84

He worked in vehicle maintenance as the vehicle dispatcher. He died one year after the death of his girlfriend. They were in an automobile accident, where she was the only fatality.

**Source:** Fred Thompson May 91, Rick Diamond Jun 91, Bob Jansen Jul 91

**CPT John M. Gibbons**

16 Feb 46 12 Feb 70                      Sayville NY                      14W131

Cpt Gibbons was killed by hostile fire as aircraft commander of a UH-1H inserting troops in a hot LZ. Died of head wound; no other injuries in the aircraft. Was very well liked.

**Source:** Rick Diamond, May 90 and Jack Dotterer Jun 91

**WO1 Richard A. Henke**

29 Apr 51 13 May 70                      Clare IL                      10W33

**WO1 Frederick W. Sheffield**

27 Mar 48 13 May 70                      Cantonment FL                      10W36

**SP4 Sidney W. Jarrell**

15 May 51 13 May 70                      Albany GA                      10W34

**SP4 Ernest L. Johns**

25 Aug 44 13 May 70                      Brandon FL                      10W34

**PFC Derek W. Patrick**

13 May 70

Entire crew lost in UH-1C #66-0662 south of FSB 411 near Quang Ngai. Aircraft crashed after having hydraulics failure and hardover (Sugar Bear Gambrill identified the remains) Jack Dotterer remembers the aircraft crashed because of the a materiel failure at the collective collar.

**Source:** Rick Diamond Jun 89, Fred Thompson Jan 90 and Jack Dotterer Jun 91

**WO1 Lenton E. Mizer**

10 Feb 50 15 Jul 70                      Eldorado KS                      08W20

**SP5 Harrison Bell**

07 Dec 47 15 Jul 70                      Bonwier TX                      08W19

**SP5 Fred G. Vandiver**

25 Feb 47 15 Jul 70                      Riverside CA                      08W21

WO1 Mizer, who had been in-country for just 6 weeks, was on the controls of Shark, UH-1C #66-00646, which was flying up a steep ravine, low level. The aircraft experienced a loss of power and Mizer attempted to turn down the ravine to regain rpm. The aircraft continued to loose power and fall. Lt. Joseph R.Brandt (Newton IA), the AC and the only survivor, tried to regain control of the aircraft, but it struck the ground, rolled and exploded at BS 546724.

**Source:** Fred Thompson Jul 89 and Jan 90

**CW2 Peter R. Goodnight**

**01 Jan 50 11 Oct 70**

**Pacoima CA**

**07W125**

CW2 Goodnight was flying with AC CW2 Dave Rosenthal on a combat assault in the horseshoe area of Quang Ngai. An aircraft in the flight, on the approach to the LZ had a complete engine failure and successfully autorated to safety. One of the infantrymen on that aircraft panicked and jumped from approximately 30-50 feet and sustained compound fractures to one of his legs. The Goodnight/Rosenthal aircraft, being trail, dropped troops, picked up the downed crew and the injured infantryman. They flew to Hill 422 where the aid station there advised them to reload the injured and transport him to the hospital at Chu Lai. While shuffling the wounded/the crew / and the weapons, one of the downed crews M-60's, that was leaning against the back of Goodnight's seat was pulled. The butterfly rod caught on the map case, firing two or three rounds in Pete's neck and back.

**Source:** Fred Thompson Sep 89, updated Jul 91 and Jack Dotterer Jun 91. Goodnight had a premonition of impending death and wrote a poem about the subject that was read at his memorial service by Maj Searcy. Pete had just returned from his brother's stateside funeral and had brought back a lot of the latest music.

**CW2 Charles F. Creamer III**

**25 Mar 46 28 Nov 70**

**South Bend IN**

**06W87**

**1LT David C. Jauregui**

**03 Mar 44 28 Nov 70**

**Flagstaff AZ**

**06W87**

**SP4 James Powell**

**25 May 50 28 Nov 70**

**New Castle IN**

**06W88**

**PFC Gary D. Field**

**14 Nov 50 28 Nov 70**

**Columbia NY**

**06W87**

The crew was flying a flare mission and did not return at the end of mission. Aircraft was found crashed on the side of a mountain.

**Source:** Fred Thompson June 89.

**CW2 Robert D. Black**

**30 Jun 45**

**11 Jan 71**

**Tallahassee FL 05W39**

"Reverend Mr" Black was a Primo pilot from the 11th Inf Bde, who was lost after dropping off a passenger near the Quang Ngai river, between Quang Ngai and FB 411. Aircraft crashed in the water without being seen by witnesses. Aircraft was found the same day; Mr Black was found the following day downstream.

**Source:** Fred Thompson and Art Magee Jul 89