

# David Thomas Dinan III

## F-105 History

---

07-Jun-68

243

The nineteenth F-105 RTU Class 68IR graduated at the 23 TFW, McConnell AFB KS. The class started on 5 Dec 67 with 27 students. Twenty six graduated. The incoming class consisted of 2 Capts and 25 2nd Lts, all recent graduates in the top 10% of the Undergraduate Pilot Training program.

"This class is unique in that it is the first class in which all members are recent graduates of the Undergraduate Pilot Training Program. ... They have no pilot experience other than that received in pilot training. This represented a marked contrast with previous F-105 RTU classes composed of older, more mature and experienced pilots."

To compensate for their inexperience, their course was increased from 92 to 120 flying hours for a total of 78 sorties (RTU course 1111106). On 8 Mar 68, student 2Lt Frank F. Perry III was killed in the crash of F-105D 62-4226 near Raymond KS.

The class deployed for conventional weapons delivery training to George AFB CA between 16 Apr - 9 May 68 with the 563 TFS. The squadron commander was Lt Col Joe W. Pickett. Capt Wyrewood Gowell was Top Student.

On 30 Apr 1968, while at George AFB, instructor pilot Maj Robert V. "Boris" Baird, ejected successfully from F-105D 61-0083 when it developed a flight control problem after takeoff.

The 10 May 1968 edition of The Wichita Eagle reported on the 563 TFS's return to McConnell after their deployment to George. "The 563rd Tactical Fighter Squadron at McConnell Air Force Base returned to Wichita Thursday after 23 days at George AFB, Calif. where it achieved a record 725 successful practice sorties.

"The student fighter squadrons at McConnell are sent to George for special aerial combat training as a routine but this was the first group of F-105 students to contain all recently commissioned second lieutenants.

"None of them are experienced pilots, but they are a good group," said Maj. Robert B. Baird, flight commander. "I experienced the only mishap during the 23-day exercise." Baird was forced to eject from his craft April 30 when it developed flight control difficulty shortly after takeoff from George.

"McConnell is the training center for pilots in the F-105 Thunderchief fighter-bomber prior to assignment in Southeast Asia. Most students up to now had been experienced pilots who were converting from other aircraft to the 105, Baird said.

"This group of students had logged about 90 hours flying time in the Thunderchief during their training here before going to George where they flew about another 20 hours each," Baird said. "They will be required to complete about 10 additional hours flight time here, but they already have overseas orders for mid-June."

"Most practice flights are over Smokey Hill Bombing and Gunnery Range near Salina, Kan.

"But when it comes time to fire on airborne targets, Kansas lacks sufficient air space," Maj. Baird explained, so the squadron retreats to skies over the southern California desert. There they concentrate efforts on air-to-air combat practice and use of the Sidewinder missile.

"After graduation from flight training, the 26 class members will begin water survival training at Homestead AFB, Fla., before going overseas."

The students were:

Capt Wyrewood A. "Goose" Gowell	2Lt Eldon W. Joersz
Capt Kenneth G. Lindell	2Lt Charles A. Kennedy
2Lt Salvatore A. Bonacasa	2Lt Peter J. Linsley
2Lt Donald S. Brown II	2Lt Harvey A. Marshall
2Lt Robert E. Bryan	2Lt Phillip A. Miller
2Lt Gary R. Confer	2Lt Frank F. Perry III

# David Thomas Dinan III

## F-105 History

---

2Lt David Thomas Dinan III	2Lt John C. Pluta
2Lt Preston T. "Pres" Duke	2Lt Cecil L. Snell
2Lt Curtis S. "Scott" Hamme	2Lt Ronald D. Stafford
2Lt James N. Hammond	2Lt Marshall D. Tilley
2Lt Ronald A. Hoffmeyer	2Lt Richard R. Venturi
2Lt Clarence J. "Skip" Holm	2Lt Barry D. Wyttenbach
2Lt David S. Hartman, Jr.	2Lt Robert John Zukowski
2Lt Lynn A. Aikman	

Twelve lieutenants -- Holm, Miller, Bryan, Wyttenbach, Tilley, Confer, Dinan, Hoffmeyer, Hartman, Stafford, Venturi, and Zukowski -- were assigned to the 34 TFS and 469 TFS at Korat. Most arrived in early July 1968. Three of them were shot down: Dinan (twice) (KIA the second time), Zukowski (KIA), and Stafford (Rescued). On 13 July 1968, Confer's plane was hit over NVN and he crash landed at Udorn. He had minor injuries but the plane was destroyed.

*23 TFW History, Jul - Dec 67 & Jan - Jun 68, USAF microfilm MO554 frame 2025.*

### 14-Jul-68

5546

F-105s flew rescap for Maj Robert K. Hanna from the 333 TFS who was downed in RP-1, NVN. One of the pilots was 1Lt David Thomas Dinan III from the 34 TFS.

Dinan "... was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as an F-105 Thunderchief pilot over North Vietnam on July 14, 1968.

"On that date, Lt. Dinan was a member of a flight diverted from a preplanned mission to support the rescue of a fellow pilot downed in a fiercely defended area of North Vietnam.

"In a constant barrage of deadly anti-aircraft fire, Lt. Dinan, without thought of his own personal safety, made repeated passes in close proximity to the survivor, successfully silencing the fire and halting the advance of hostile ground forces attempting to capture the downed airman.

"The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Lt. Dinan reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

"The officer earned his commission in an ROTC program at Stevens Institute of Technology where he majored in physics. He joined the Air Force in 1966.

"After attending St. Mary's grammar school, where he was in the Drum and Bugle Corps, and participated in Little League baseball, he entered Seton Hall Prep School. While at Seton Hall, he participated on the school debating team, wrote for the school newspaper, and found time to letter in track. "

*[http://www.nutleysons.com/v\\_dinan.html](http://www.nutleysons.com/v_dinan.html)*

### 30-Sep-68

1520

#### 469 TFS OPERATIONS OVERVIEW, JULY - SEPTEMBER 1968

"During the period between July 1 and Sept. 30, 1968, the 'World's Finest' flew 1,555 missions against targets in Laos and North Vietnam, flying a total of 3,759 combat hours. The squadron now has a total of 38,796 combat hours and 15,989 combat sorties in the theater.

"Continued bombing restrictions limited activity during this period to operations in Route Package One in North Vietnam and certain areas of Laos. Our main objective during the period as directed by 7th AF was the interdiction of vital lines of communications in Route Pack 1. Under the direction of Lt. Col. Victor R. Hollandsworth, the 469th maintained an outstanding record of superior mission accomplishment.

"This reporting period was accented by the arrival of the first group of new Undergraduate Pilot Training graduates to fly with the 469th Tactical Fighter Squadron in well over a year. The majority of the group were 1st Lieutenants, and although they did not possess extensive flying hours or experience, the quality of their performance left little doubt as to their desire and abilities. They have proven themselves extremely capable as tactical fighter pilots.

# David Thomas Dinan III

## F-105 History

---

"On Aug. 10, 1968, Capt. Peter K. Foley completed his second 100 missions over North Vietnam. In his flight were three other 469th pilots completing their 100th mission, which made it the first 500 mission flight in the history of air operations against North Vietnam. In Capt. Foley's flight were Maj. Bryant Heston, Maj. Ford H. Smart and Capt. Christopher H. Brown. Other 469th pilots completing their 100th missions during the period were Majors James J. Mizner and Donald J. Sisk, Captains William O. Harris III, Nobe R. Koontz, Ronald R. Myers, Harold E. Murk, Thomas H. Platt, Robert L. Riedenauer and David M. Roeder.

"In August and again in September, tragedy struck two members of the 469th. On Aug. 17, 1968, [a pilot] was killed in a freak landing accident at Da Nang Air Force Base in South Vietnam. On Sept. 19, 1968, [a Major] was shot down during a rocket delivery pass just north of the DMZ in North Vietnam. He ejected successfully from his disabled F-105 but was taken captive shortly after. ... Our sympathies go out to these men and to their families.

"The 469th Tactical Fighter Squadron will become an F-4E squadron on November 1968. Present members of the squadron will join the 34th Tactical Fighter Squadron here at Korat [RTAFB, Thailand] and some will transfer to the 355th Tactical Fighter Wing at Takhli. This conversion will mark both the end and beginning of one of the most significant chapters in the history of aerial warfare. The record of the F-105s of the 469th Tactical Fighter Squadron stands by itself. We are confident the new members of the 469th will carry on the outstanding accomplishments of the 469th in the months ahead."

As of 30 September 1968, the 469th had assigned 28 line pilots, two staff pilots, and five attached pilots. The pilots averaged 350.4 flying hours in the F-105. The pilots and their sortie counts were:

Name	Total Missions	Counters
Lt Col Victor R Hollandsworth	61	54 (469 TFS Commander)
Lt Col James H. Broussard	51	45
Lt Col John J. "Jack" Gaudion	15	13 (2nd Tour)
Maj Vandevender	7	2
Maj John F. O'Donnell	72	66
Capt Gene D. Hartman	91	75
Capt Ronald A. Shoemake	93	79
Capt Richard E. Tracey	41	36
Capt Barry G. Swarts	14	14
1Lt Robert John Zukowski	45	41
1Lt Robert Clifton Edmunds	39	35
Maj George C. Avila, Jr.	110	95
Maj Albert E. Oppel	18	15
Capt Jack S. Houser	92	78
1Lt Robert E. Bryan	43	40
1Lt David Thomas Dinan III	49	40
1Lt Barry D. Wyttenbach	45	39
Maj Paul F. Swanson	60	55
Major Aultman Doty	37	35
Capt Douglas R. Young	22	13
Capt Joseph C. Howard	17	16
1Lt Phillip A. Miller	48	41
Maj Will Carroll, Jr.	87	74
Capt Kenneth G. Lindell	46	41
1Lt Clarence J. "Skip" Holm	44	40
1Lt Marshall D. Tilley	47	44
1Lt John W. Crotty	15	14
Col Alen K. McDonald	32	32 (388 TFW/VC)
Col Felix A. "Doc" Blanchard	85	75 (388 TFW Asst DO)
Lt Col Rufus M. "Mike" Monts III	110	99
Maj Sterling H. Wood	97	84
Maj Wicks	4	2

# David Thomas Dinan III

## F-105 History

---

Capt Brown	115	102
Capt Robert L. Riedenauer	114	100
Capt David M. Roeder	115	100

*http://www.wpafb.af.mil/museum/history/vietnam/469th/p36.htm & 388 TFW History, Jul - Sep 68, USAF microfilm NO585, frame 0797 & 388 TFW History, July - Sep 1968, AFHRA microfilm NO585, frames 0274 - 0282.*

### 05-Oct-68

770

"Using 750-pound bombs, ... (F-105 pilots from the 388 TFW) struck a highway segment, 26 miles west of Dong Hoi, (North Vietnam), cutting the road in six places and causing a slide. Four of the pilots were Col Allen K. McDonald, 388 TFW Vice Commander, Capt Jack S. Houser and First Lieutenants Barry D. Wyttenbach and David Thomas Dinan III, all (from) the 469 TFS."

*Sawadee Flyer, Saturday, October 19, 1968, pg 1.*

### 30-Oct-68

4200

During October 1968, twenty-one pilots from the 34 TFS and 469 TFS received medals approved by 7 AF. They were:

Maj Ivor K. Goodrich DFC SO G-3158 23 Oct 68 (8 Mar - 3 Sep 68) and AM (1 - 9 OLC) SO G-3275 23 Oct 68 (8 Mar - 3 Sep 68)

Capt Kenneth G. Lindell DFC SO G-3160 17 Oct 68 (14 Jul 68)

1Lt David T. Dinan III DFC SO G-3161 17 Oct 68 (14 Jul 68)

Capt Richard E. Tracey DFC SO G-3169 17 Oct 68 (15 Jul 68)

Maj Albert F. Oppel AM SO G-3245 23 Oct 68 (25 Aug - 19 Sep 68)

Maj Manford C. Holly, Jr. AM SO G-3246 23 Oct 68 (25 Aug -16 Sep 68)

Capt Barry G. Swarts AM SO G-3250 23 Oct 68 (29 Aug - 21 Sep 68)

Capt John S. Murphy AM (1 - 9 OLC) SO G-3273 23 Oct 68 (3 Mar - 24 Sep 68)

Maj Douglas A. Roysdon AM (10 - 19 OLC) SO G-3278 23 Oct 68 (24 Feb - 2 Oct 68)

Maj Clarence E. Langford AM (1 - 9 OLC) SO G-3281 23 Oct 68 (29 Mar - 26 Sep 68)

Capt Jack D. Brooks AM (1 - 6 OLC) SO G-3284 23 Oct 68 (24 Apr - 5 Sep 68)

Capt Anthony F. Germann AM (1 - 9 OLC) SO G-3286 23 Oct 68 (4 Mar - 1 Oct 68)

Capt Douglas R. Young AM (18 OLC) SO G-3286 23 Oct 68 (26 Aug 15 - Sep 68)

Lt Col Dorwyn D. Shaver AM (22 - 26 OLC) SO G-3289 23 Oct 68 (30 Sep 67 - 14 Aug 68)

Lt Col John J. Gaudion AM (10 OLC) SO G-3291 23 Oct 68 (6 Sep - 23 Sep 68)

Lt Col Isaac M. Glass AM (1 OLC) SO G-3291 23 Oct 68 (25 Aug - 29 Sep 68)

Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr. DFC (4 OLC) SO G-3023 5 Oct 68 (8 Jun 68) downgraded from SS

Capt Lamont H. Pharmer DFC (2 OLC) SO G-3024 5 Oct 68 (9 Jun 68) downgraded from SS

Capt Darrell J. Ahrens AM (1 OLC) SO G-3032 5 Oct 68 (1 Jun 68) downgraded from DFC

Maj Sterling H. Wood AM (1 OLC) SO G-3032 5 Oct 68 (30 May 68)

Capt John E. Hartman AM (1 - 9 OLC) SO G-3092 10 Oct 68 (23 Feb 67 - 5 Feb 68)

*388 TFW History, Oct - Dec 68, USAF microfilm NO585, frames 1767 - 1768.*

### 11-Nov-68

2247

F-105D 58-1152 received major combat damage while assigned to the 34 TFS at the 388 TFW, Korat RTAFB, Thailand. The right wing pylon drop tank and right wing tip were torn off and the right outboard pylon and QRC-pod were missing. The right wing leading edge was broken. One right leading edge flap outer half was missing. The right wing trailing edge was damaged. The aft section had an 18-inch hole through the skin and ribs just below the rudder. The upper speed brake right support canting was broken. The cartridge starter door was missing. The pilot was 1Lt David T. Dinan III from the 34 TFS. An estimated 500 maintenance hours were required for repairs.

*388 TFW History, Oct - Dec 68, USAF microfilm NO585, frames 1208 and 1752.*

### 17-Nov-68

F-105D 610092 34 TFS 388 TFW Korat Operational loss. Lost engine oil pressure after takeoff. Crashed 16 NM SE of Udorn RTAFB, Thailand. 17-21N 102-49E 1Lt David Thomas Dinan III 34 TFS pilot ejected with minor injuries. He was rescued by an HH-43. Call sign: "Gator 2". While en route to the first refueling, twenty-eight minutes after takeoff from Korat RTAFB, Thailand, the aircraft's oil pressure dropped to zero. Subsequently, the engine failed due to lack of oil pressure 20 miles from Udorn RTAFB where the pilot was attempting an emergency

# David Thomas Dinan III

## F-105 History

---

recovery. He successfully ejected using the recently-modified rocket boosted ejection seat and force deployed parachute.

### History of Flight

"On the afternoon of 17 Nov 68, Gator, a flight of four F-105D aircraft, was scheduled for a combat mission. All aircraft were configured with two MK-84 2,000-pound bombs inboard, one 650-gallon center-line fuel tank, and two ECM pods outboard.

"The mission and flight briefings were standard in accordance with all applicable briefing guides and checklist. Lieutenant David T. Dinan III was scheduled to fly as Gator Two and was assigned aircraft F-105D-15RE # 61-0092. Gator was fragged for a 1420L departure.

"Aircraft preflight and engine start were normal. In the arming area, Gator Three aborted due to an oil leak in the ATM. Gator Four became Gator Three at this point and remained same for the duration of this mission. Take-off and level-off were normal and Gator Two's engine instruments were all normal on all checks up to and including level-off.

"Although Gator Two was on the wing, he noticed that his Tacan had broken lock on Korat Channel 125 and he tuned in channel 89 approximately 120 NM northeast of Korat. As Lt. Dinan looked down to verify his new Tacan channel on the console, he noticed the oil pressure gauge reading zero, an 'Oil Lo Press' caution light on the annunciator panel, and the Master Caution light illuminated. Due to the position of the sun over the pilot's right shoulder, the illuminated Master Caution light was difficult to see. Gator Two checked the utility hydraulic pressure gauge and found it normal thereby ruling out an oil pressure/utility pressure fuse failure. Gator Two advised Gator One that he had zero oil pressure. Gator One then directed Gator Two to take the lead and Gator Three to read the emergency procedure to Gator Two on the squadron manual frequency. This was accomplished while Gator One coordinated with the Viking GCI controller for a vector to the nearest suitable emergency field, Udorn RTAFB approximately 80 NM to the north-northwest. Gator Two turned his IFF to emergency at this time. Gator Three suggested that Gator Two engage afterburner to burn down some of the 9500 pounds of fuel on board. This was accomplished with the RPM at 95%, 420 KTS, and partial speed brakes so Gator Three could remain on the wing without using his afterburner. Viking GCI handed Gator Two and Three off to Brigham GCI. Shortly afterwards, Gator Three noticed sparks and flames coming from Gator Two's tail pipe. At this time, Gator Two's engine instruments began to fluctuate and the afterburner was disengaged. At this time, Gator Two's RPM was slowly decreasing through 90% and EGT was 600-degrees C and rising.

"Gator Three asked if the present area was safe to jettison ordnance and Brigham advised that the jettison area was approximately twenty miles west of their position. Gator Three stated that they would be unable to fly to that area and would jettison at their present position. Gator Three told Gator Two to jettison everything on the aircraft, which was accomplished using the external stores jettison button. Airspeed was 270 Knots, altitude approximately 7000 feet MSL, and RPM was 88% with throttle full forward. This left only the two ECM pods on the wings, which cannot be jettisoned.

"Brigham then tried to get Gator Two and Three to change to Udorn GCA frequency but Gator Three requested GCA come up on Brigham's present frequency which was accomplished. However, during this time Gator Two noticed that with the airspeed at 270 Knots, the aircraft would not maintain altitude. Gator Two and Three then went to guard frequency and, as they were passing 3000 feet MSL, Gator Two informed Gator Three of his intention to eject. Gator Three immediately began giving Gator Two pre-ejection procedures. At approximately 1455L, 2000 feet altitude MSL, 3000 - 4000 FPM rate of descent, 245 Knots, gear down, autopilot on, and approximately 18 NM on the 135-degree radial of the Udorn Tacan, Gator Two ejected. The aircraft crashed in an open rice field on the 133-degree radial 16 NM from the Udorn Tacan. The pilot landed approximately one mile south-southwest of the aircraft wreckage, uninjured. A Udorn RTAFB UH-43B rescue helicopter, already airborne, recovered the pilot thirteen minutes after ejection and returned him to a waiting Flight Surgeon at Udorn who accompanied Lt. Dinan to the base dispensary for observation." (AF Form 711 USAF Accident/ Incident Report 68-11-17-1, 10 Dec 68, signed by Maj Leonard A. Morgan, Investigation Officer.)

Lt Dinan was picked up by the crew of an HH-43 from Detachment 5, 38 ARRS, piloted by Maj Gerald L. Petty.

# David Thomas Dinan III

## F-105 History

---

The F-105 engine teardown at the depot (OCAMA, Tinker AFB OK) determined the lost oil pressure was caused by a piece of #2 engine bearing race that found its way into the oil pump, jamming it and shearing the shaft. The primary cause of the accident was personnel error in that the piece of #2 bearing race was not discovered and removed during the last bearing change.

*388 TFW History, Oct - Dec 68, USAF microfilm NO585, frames 1210 and 1757.*

**25-Nov-68**

3676

"Hatchet" flight from the 44 TFS conducted a combat mission into Laos. The flight consisted of:

- 1) Lt Col John J. "Jack" Gaudion
- 2) 1Lt David Thomas Dinan III
- 3) Lt Col Guy J. "Jack" Sherrill with EWO Maj John D. L. "Jack" Thornton flying F-105F 63-8276. This was Col Sherrill's 7th non-counting combat mission.
- 4) Maj Ralph C. Budde flying F-105F 63-8278

Capt Larry B. "Tex" McBride was the flight's spare. The flight took off at 14:00 and refueled at 14,000 feet from their pre-strike tanker, "Peach 37", 25 minutes later. They reached their target area at 15:00 at location 17-11-04N and 106-09-10E. They post-strike refueled from "Cherry 37" at 16,000 feet.

*Mission Cards of Lt Col Guy J. "Jack" Sherrill.*

**20-Jan-69**

2305

During a combat mission from the 388 TFW, Korat RTAFB, Thailand, F-105D 61-0086 was damaged by ordnance from the C/L MER. The right rear portion of the left 450-gallon tank was dented and a tank fin knocked off. The left horizontal slab tip was bent upwards and cracked in several places. The damage required 99 man hours to repair. The aircraft was flown by 1Lt David Thomas Dinan III from the 34 TFS. Two months later, on 17 March 1969, Lt Dinan was killed in action in F-105D 61-0104.

*AFTO Form 95 & 388 TFW History, Jan - Mar 69, USAF microfilm NO585.*

**17-Mar-69**

F-105D 610104 34 TFS 388 TFW Korat Hit by AAA while strafing a target in Laos. Crashed in Laos. 19-23N 103-37E 1Lt David Thomas Dinan III 34 TFS pilot ejected but was KIA. A rescue attempt confirmed his death but did not retrieve his body. Call sign: "Simmer 02". His flight lead was Capt Eben D. Jones. "... First Lieutenant Dinan was the pilot of an F-105, one of two aircraft in a flight on a strike mission over Xieng Khouang Province in northern Laos. On his second strafing run over the target, Lieutenant Dinan radioed he believed he was hit and his cockpit was filling with smoke. He was able to eject from his aircraft and the crewman of another aircraft on the scene reported Lieutenant Dinan had waved to him from his parachute. A forward air controller observed his parachute enter the jungle and heard a beeper but was unable to establish either voice contact or a visual sighting of him once he had landed. Approximately one hour later his parachute was located in tall trees. A pararescue specialist was lowered and reported Lieutenant Dinan was killed; the parachute had shredded when it went into the tall trees on a hillside slope and the pilot's body had been dismembered. Lieutenant Dinan's body could not be recovered due to darkness and the hazardous location of his landing area. In March 1969 Lieutenant Dinan was declared dead/body not recovered. ... "

The PJ who went down to find Lt Dinan was A1C Leland Sorensen. "I began to notice drops of blood here and there," Sorensen said. "I didn't see him until I was right on him." Lt. Dinan was dead. During his descent after ejecting from his F-105, the pilot had landed hard in the trees and tumbled down the hill with his ejection seat pack. Dinan was face-down and wedged into the bottom of a tree with his parachute straps tangled in the foliage above. His leg was snapped with bone showing through his thigh and his flight helmet was missing. Sorensen said he knew it would be a long, arduous task to free Dinan's body from the tangled cords and tree. He radioed his helicopter pilot that the downed jet pilot was dead. Another voice came over Sorensen's radio from the pilot of a Skyraider aircraft flying overhead saying, "Then get the hell out of there." Sorensen scrambled down the hill, hooked himself to the hoist cable and was lifted from the area. ([http://www.idahostatejournal.com/members/seeking-a-man-left-behind-aberdeen-war-hero-enlisted-to/article\\_205d5198-96ea-11e3-9ab3-0019bb2963f4.html#user-comment-area](http://www.idahostatejournal.com/members/seeking-a-man-left-behind-aberdeen-war-hero-enlisted-to/article_205d5198-96ea-11e3-9ab3-0019bb2963f4.html#user-comment-area))

1Lt Dinan was born 26 January 1944. He entered the service from Nutley, New Jersey. His name appears on the Vietnam War Memorial Wall on panel 29W line 62.

*Ed Sykes, e-mail 8 Sept 2010 & Report of the Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs, United States Senate.  
Jan 13, 1993*

# David Thomas Dinan III

## F-105 History

---

25-Jul-12

30-Jul-12

7377

Retired F-105 pilot Col Edward L. Sykes traveled to Laos to try to find the 17 March 1969 crash site of 1Lt David Thomas Dinan III from the 34 TFS. The Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) carried Dinan's MIA case as Reference Number 1408-1-01.

"I began my effort to resolve the recovery of Dave's remains in 2009. I found his closest family, two brothers, John and Charlie in 2010 and began working with DOD folks to get them to investigate the case. They had done some limited investigations in 40 years but had never attempted to visit the site where they thought Dave's body was left. Dave's family had given up on ever having remains returned.

"In 2012 I made my first trip to Laos to bring attention to the case. ...

"In 2013 I returned to Laos to, hopefully, make another attempt to get more information. Lots of problems but the short story is the Laotian Government was not receptive to my efforts and I ended up coming home early without any result."

"In Nov of 2013 we located the PJ (Leland Sorenson) who [had] declared Dave deceased at the site of his ejection. He was still in good health and willing to make a trip to Laos to assist with the search."

The following are excerpts from Ed Sykes' report to DPMO and JPAC of his first trip to Laos in 2012:

I just completed a trip to Laos to see for myself the obstacles that exist in recovering the remains of 1Lt David Dinan (#1408).

Highlights:

On July 25th I met with Al Teel of JPAC in Nongkai (northern Thailand). He provided me with several valuable bits of information concerning 1408 and travel to Xieng Khuang Province. Most notably he gave me the name of Mr. Youy in the village of Xan Noy who might have information concerning the ejection site.

On July 26th I crossed the Friendship Bridge at Nongkai into Laos and traveled to Vientiane by taxi. I stayed at the Mercure Hotel in Vientiane which I would highly recommend. There I met my guide, Mr. Khamphet Keopanyan (Phet). We traveled to the US Embassy and met with Mr. Dustin Roses, the POW/MIA officer at the Embassy. Dustin gave us some more tips on travel to Xieng Khuang Province and did some really neat research for us using Google Earth maps. After we met, he sent the maps to me over the internet and I copied them at my hotel. These maps were very useful.

Phet and I then got tickets on Lao Air to Xieng Khuang Province (Phonsavan is the city where we landed and reserved rooms for two nights in the Phuphadeng Hotel in Phonsavan). I also purchased a GPS with Lao maps.

On July 27th, Phet and I traveled to Phonsavan. There is only one flight in and out of Phonsavan to Vientiane each day. Got to our hotel and hired a driver (Songphong) for our trip to Xan Noy. Phet and I walked the Plaine de Jars for a bit and, upon our return, were told by our driver we needed to visit the Province Tourist Bureau. The Province officials told us the Xan Noy area had not been opened to tourists and that we must hire a police escort if we made the trip. Cost of the escort was 120,000 Kip (\$15). I accepted the deal and was told to be back the next morning to pick up our escort. We were also told we could only be in the area from 9 AM to 5 PM. I called Dustin Roses at the US Embassy after this meeting and asked for his input. He told me it was my call. My biggest concern was that the venture to Xan Noy might adversely affect future recovery efforts and he said that was unlikely.

July 28. Phet, Songphong and I met our police officer (Bua Sone) and began our drive to Xan Noy. Stopped on the way to get some water and beer to put in the iced-down cooler Songhong had provided. We also bought some "sticky rice" and a grilled chicken for our lunch. The last part of our journey was over a very treacherous road--we nearly became stuck on one location. I am sure that the road is closed often because of mud slides. Two hours after leaving Phonsavan we arrived at Xan Noy and went to the village center and asked about Mr. Youy. We were given directions to his house and we spent some time talking to his family. He was out of town and working a construction job in Vientiane and would not be back until Oct. They gave us his phone number (99733530) so we could coordinate with

# David Thomas Dinan III

## F-105 History

---

him on future visits.

We then made our obligatory visit to the home of the Village Chief, Mr Khammergh. We discussed a number of things including the information Mr Youy has. Mr Khammergh said he did not know where the actual site was but did know the general location. Said it was about a five mile walk from Xan Noy. We did not have enough time to walk to the area but we did drive a mile or so up the road and he pointed to the mountain Mr Youy had described. He said the location was on the back side of the mountain as we looked at it.

We then returned to the Chief's house and we supplied the chicken, rice and beer and water for lunch. After a couple of beers the Chief pulled out his bottle of home brew whisky and we ended up doing three shooters. (Phet and Somphong did not partake but our police friend was right there with us.) By the time lunch was over we were best of friends and he invited me back to live in his house while I hiked back to the site. Phet has spent a lot of time hiking and camping in the forest and seemed quite excited about the prospect of coming back with me.

We then returned from Xan Noy to Phonsavan and negotiated the roads with little problem.

On July 29th Phet and I returned to Vientiane and spent a good amount of time downloading photos and analyzing our findings. One item of note that may be useful to JPAC next spring is the phone # of the Village Chief (98921832).

On July 30th I met with Dustin Roses for a debriefing and he later sent me some improved maps of the area. Left later for Bangkok and my return to the US.

Overall, my outlook for the eventual recovery of remains of 1Lt Dinan was enhanced by this journey.

We are coming to get you Dave!

*Ed Sykes e-mail to Jake Shuler, 17 Sep 14.*

**22-Feb-14**

7374

### Idaho War Hero Enlisted to Help Find Remains in Laos

POCATELLO, Idaho (AP) -- It's been 45 years since Aberdeen's Leland Sorensen clung to a thin steel cable as he was lowered into the jungle canopy of Southeast Asia. As a member of the elite U.S. Air Force para-rescue jump team, it was his job to drop from a helicopter into hostile territory to rescue downed pilots during the Vietnam War.

Sorensen's successful rescue efforts in 1968-69 earned him the Silver Star, four Distinguished Flying Crosses - and a return trip to the rugged jungles of Laos later this month.

A surprise email from the Army's Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office last December asked for Sorensen's help in finding the remains of F-105 fighter pilot David T. Dinan III, who was shot down on a Laotian mountainside March 17, 1969. Sorensen was key because he was the last American to ever see Dinan's lifeless body.

"I was the one who went to the ground," Sorensen said about that fateful day nearly 45 years ago. "I was happy to tell what I recalled."

Sorensen will fly to Laos on Feb. 27 and become part of a mission to find the remains of Lt. Dinan. People are counting on his memory of the location and the events of that fateful day.

In fact, the now retired biologist with the University of Idaho Research and Extension Center in Aberdeen will never forget the ground during an extensive search for Lt. Dinan. Sorensen remembers the grassy opening on the hillside that he climbed, the tree lines on both sides and the fear of ambush. It was Sorensen's mother's birthday.

"We hovered into position over a clearing on the hillside below the pilot's location and I climbed onto the jungle seat attached to the hoist cable," Sorensen recalled. "It is difficult to describe the feeling one has in the spinal column at times such as this. I was sure someone was out there waiting to commence firing at me."

Sorensen's anxiety at age 21 was heightened by the fact the rescue mission had been going on for more than three hours.



# David Thomas Dinan III

## F-105 History

---

He had been in the "high bird," a para-rescue team in a "Jolly Green Giant" HH-53 Sikorsky helicopter. A smaller chopper or "low bird" had already attempted to put a para-jumper or PJ on the ground near the downed pilot, but scrubbed the attempt.

``That guy bumped his M-16 against a tree and it fired leading everyone to believe there were hostile forces," Sorensen said.

Sorensen had lost a bunk mate and fellow para-rescue member to an ambush in December. Nonetheless, the young airman with medical training agreed to attempt the rescue.

His bunk mate was on a rescue and had dropped below the canopy of 150-foot trees when the helicopter crew heard shots being fired.

``His last words were that he was hit and they should pull him up," Sorensen said. ``The hoist cable snagged in the trees and snapped in two as the helicopter pulled away."

Just three months later, Sorensen thought about the loss of his friend as he reached the ground, studied the surrounding terrain and headed uphill.

``I began to notice drops of blood here and there," Sorensen said. ``I didn't see him until I was right on him."

Lt. Dinan was dead. During his descent after ejecting from his F-150, the pilot had landed hard in the trees and tumbled down the hill with his ejection seat pack. Dinan was face-down and wedged into the bottom of a tree with his parachute straps tangled in the foliage above. His leg was snapped with bone showing through his thigh and his flight helmet was missing.

Sorensen said he knew it would be a long, arduous task to free Dinan's body from the tangled cords and tree. He radioed his helicopter pilot that the downed jet pilot was dead. Another voice came over Sorensen's radio from the pilot of a Skyraider aircraft flying overhead saying, ``Then get the hell out of there."

Sorensen scrambled down the hill, hooked himself to the hoist cable and was lifted from the area.

``I have often regretted, since that day, that I did not take the time to retrieve the body of that pilot, but considering the circumstances and the fact that he probably didn't care one way or the other, I keep telling myself that I made the correct choice."

Besides, Sorensen had proved his mettle as a PJ on multiple occasions. By the end of his time in Southeast Asia, he had 127 combat rescue missions. He would get the Silver Star for rescuing another downed F-105 pilot who suffered 11 broken bones after ejecting at high speed over a heavily defended target.

"I went down and got him ready to come up the hoist with me," Sorensen said. ``Today he walks with a limp, but he gets around and he's doing OK."

Sorensen was able to meet that rescued pilot, James Fegan, of Maine, during a Vietnam-era search and rescue organization reunion in Ohio in 2001.

"I got to meet James Fegan for the second time," Sorensen said with a smile.

Unknown to Sorensen was that the rescue of Fegan had been captured on black-and-white video by a member of the rescue helicopter crew and it was shown at the reunion.

It was at that reunion that Air Force veterans could joke about close calls and the fact that the F-105 was nicknamed a ``thud" because ``that's the sound it makes when it hits the ground," Sorensen said.

Those who were para-rescue members with maroon berets could share stories about the intensive training that for Sorensen included Army jump school in Georgia, Navy diving school in California, medical training in Texas, Army

# David Thomas Dinan III

## F-105 History

---

Ranger mountain training and jungle-survival training. He graduated at the top of his class in July 1968.

Sorensen put all his experiences in Laos, Thailand and other locations where the American military "really wasn't there" behind him when he left active service in 1971. He returned to college at Brigham Young University and married his wife, Laura. He would get his degree in microbiology and she would get hers in elementary education. Together they reared four girls. The young farm boy from Sterling, who graduated from Aberdeen High School, would spend a career working in agricultural research.

The dangers of the Vietnam War had slipped from his mind until that email came last December. Now he's preparing to return to the past.

"They want me to go back there after 45 years and find the spot where I stood way back then," the now 66-year-old Sorensen said. "I think it's a lot of pressure."

However, as the former maroon beret recalled the hard training and dangerous months he spent in the jungles of Southeast Asia, a look of determination came over his face.

"If the tree line is similar and if they send me to the right hill, I think I can find it again," Sorensen said. "I'm probably the best chance they have."

*February 22, 2014 11:00 am By MICHAEL O'DONNELL Idaho State Journal at  
[http://magicvalley.com/news/local/idaho-war-hero-enlisted-to-help-find-remains-in-laos/article\\_bfa58866-9a6d-11e3-b45d-001a4bcf887a.html](http://magicvalley.com/news/local/idaho-war-hero-enlisted-to-help-find-remains-in-laos/article_bfa58866-9a6d-11e3-b45d-001a4bcf887a.html).*

**20-Mar-14**

7372

The 17 March 1969 crash site in Laos of 1Lt David T. Dinan III, 34 TFS, was discovered by Leland Sorensen, the PJ who had attempted his rescue in 1969. Sorensen had been contacted by Niall Brannigan from the DPMO office who had asked him to help search for Dinan's crash site.

Sorensen returned home to Idaho on 19 March 2014 and a Pocatello TV broadcast told his story.

Imagine trying to find something in a jungle.

"It's hot and it's humid and it's in the jungle and I described it as a death march," says Leland Sorensen.

Three days into the mission, Leland and his team were ready to give up.

"At that time I was feeling like this is going to be a hopeless mission. This is going to be impossible for me to be of any use. I have come all this way and I can't tell one hillside from another," says Sorensen.

The last 30 minutes of the mission, they recognized a tree at the edge of the creek from 30 years ago and said, this is where it is. They then found what appeared to be a pad from a seat kit, parts of a parachute and a faded plastic identification card that belonged to David T. Diamond <sic>, the pilot he tried to rescue 45 years ago.

"I had just come to the conclusion that this was not going to happen. This mission was impossible and it was not going to happen, and to actually hold that ID card in my hands and read it, and this is his. We have found the hillside. What a miracle that was," added Sorensen.

The first phone call Leland made after finding the items was to the fallen pilot's brother and then to his wife Laura.

"When he called, he just said you are not going to believe this, and I didn't at first, it just hit like wow, that really happened? And I knew he was just feeling so happy, so grateful and so amazed," says Laura Sorensen, Leland's wife.

Leland says he now feels a sense of relief from this mission.

"It does give me some closure, because I know now that if there are any remains to be found, that they know where to look now and will be able to find that," concluded Sorensen.

# David Thomas Dinan III

## F-105 History

---

Leland says the next phase is an excavation team will come in and begin digging to try to find the pilot's remains.

---

On May 17, 2014, Leland Sorensen was the Memorial Day keynote speaker at the veterans organization Eagle Field of Honor, in Eagle ID. Their web site gave Sorensen's biography:

Leland H. Sorensen was born on Sunday 7 December 1947 in Pocatello, Idaho, to Alma and Phyllis Sorensen. He was the second of five children - three sons and two daughters. He grew up on a 120-acre farm owned by his grandfather just north of Pocatello. There he learned to milk cows and participate in the growing of several various crops.

In 1964 at the age of 16, he and his family moved west across the Snake River to Sterling, Idaho, to another - though smaller - farm. It was there that he finished his final two years of high school in the Aberdeen School District, graduating in 1966. It was also there that he met Laura Hayes who would later become his bride.

In July 1967, a year after high school graduation, he enlisted in the United States Air Force at the time of the Vietnam War. During basic training he tested and was accepted into Pararescue training. One year later, he was the first in his Pararescue class to be awarded his maroon beret when he graduated as honor student at the top of his class.

After training as an aircrew member on an HH-3E helicopter, he was assigned to the Det 1 40th Rescue and Recovery Squadron (ARRS) at Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base (NKP RTAFB) in northeastern Thailand. During his 12-month assignment there (28 Nov 1968 to 28 Nov 1969), he was assigned TDY (temporary duty) at two different times to Udorn RTAFB to the west of NKP. At Udorn he was trained as an aircrew member on the HH-53 helicopter. He was 4 days into his first TDY assignment when he descended on the hoist of an HH-53 helicopter to retrieve James Fegan, an injured F4 pilot, who was shot down at Tchepone, Laos. For his part in that rescue, Leland was later awarded the Silver Star. In October 1969, Leland graduated from MACV Recondo School in South Vietnam. During his 12-month tour in Thailand, he flew on 127 combat sorties and participated in several other rescue missions for which he was additionally awarded four Distinguished Flying Crosses and six Air Medals.

After Thailand, he was assigned a 15-month tour to the 31st ARRS at Clark Air Base on the Philippine 31st Islands. While there he was an aircrew member on the HC-130. At the conclusion of his tour at Clark Air Base, he was given an early-out, having served for 3 years 7-½ months on his 4-year enlistment. He had attained the rank of Staff Sergeant (E-5), accumulated over 1000 hours of flight time, and made a total of 80 parachute jumps before returning to Idaho and a much simpler life at the end of February 1971.

On 6 August 1971, he was married to Laura Hayes in Idaho Falls, Idaho. They made their home in Provo, Utah, where Laura started her senior year and Leland started his freshman year at Brigham Young University. Leland's major was Medical Technology with a minor in Chemistry. Two daughters, Heather and Shauna, were born to them in Provo. In 1975, he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Microbiology and returned to Idaho where Leland and Laura made their home in Aberdeen.

In 1975 a few months after this move, Leland went to work at the University of Idaho Research and Extension Center in Aberdeen as a Scientific Aide. During that year, he was recruited by the volunteer Aberdeen Fire Department, which also provides the ambulance service for their district, and in 1977 he became a certified Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). Leland retired from the University of Idaho in 2010 but is still an EMT on the Aberdeen Fire Department having served as Training Officer for most of those years.

Leland served two terms on the Aberdeen School Board from 1983 to 1989, and for six and a half years he served as a bishop in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from 1986 to 1992. Two more daughters (Karen and Linda) were born after the return to Idaho following college. Leland and Laura are the proud grandparents of twenty-one grandchildren.

Recently, Leland was asked to return to Laos to help in locating the remains of a pilot who died after ejecting (back in 1969) from the smoke-filled cockpit of his F-105. (<http://www.eaglefieldofhonor.org/2014/05/08/2014-keynote-speaker-leland-h-sorensen/>)

*Niall Brannigan, e-mail 19 Mar 2014 & Vietnam Vet Leland Sorensen Returns from Laos, KPVI News 6 TV -*

---

# David Thomas Dinan III

## F-105 History

---

Pocatello, ID.

02-Apr-14

7376

Leland Sorensen returns after successful trip to Laos.

Leland Sorensen returned from his search for a downed pilot who was left during the Vietnam War 45 years ago. Although the remains weren't found on the trip, they located the area where the pilot went down. They found his military identification card laying on top of the ground.

"As I think about my time in Laos, I sometimes want to ask myself if all of that really happened. Did we really find David T. Dinan's military ID card? Was it really his card just lying there on top of the ground? I didn't just dream it, did I?" Sorensen said.

When Sorensen left Idaho he flew to Honolulu, Hawaii and met with members of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) and they showed him what they do and how they do it. From Honolulu he was to fly to Guam, but they had a typhoon so they were rerouted to Kadena Air Base in Japan. During that flight he lost a day. They took off on Saturday night and landed on Monday because they crossed the International Dateline.

From there they flew to U-Topao Royal Thai Air Force Base in Thailand. He spent the night in the Amari Hotel in Pattaya, Thailand. Pattaya is on the ocean, but they were told to stay out of the water because the ocean is polluted. From there they traveled to Vientiane, the capital of Laos. It sits just over the border of Thailand. Then they flew to Phonsavan, that is called the Plain of Jars. It is one of the few spots in Laos that is relatively flat, Sorensen said. From there a couple of helicopters took them to Kham Muang – the base camp. There are guest houses on the base camp and they stayed in those houses. Outside the door of the guest house was a tent with an armed guard stationed. There were also tents with armed guards stationed around the dried rice patties used as the landing area for the helicopters.

Sorensen said it was hard to get used to the time there. It is a 12 hour difference between Washington D.C. and Laos. There was a satellite phone so he could communicate with home, but because of the time difference he had to get his wife, Laura, up at 5 a.m. Mountain Daylight Time.

There are many restrictions in Laos and it has only been in recent years that JPAC has been allowed in to look for remains. They are only allowed to go in once a year from the first part of March until about mid April. The helicopters cannot start until 7:30 a.m. and they have to be completely stopped by 4:30 p.m. A Laos official has to ride on every trip the helicopters take and, depending on where they go, city officials also ride to the areas where they are excavating.

Sorensen said the JPAC is separated into two different teams - the Investigative Team (IT) and the Recovery Team (RT). He went on excavating trips with the RT for a few days until the IT joined them at the base camp. In the excavating, they took off the topsoil in the areas and put the soil through sieves to find anything that could be remains of bodies, parachutes, planes, etc. The particular site they were excavating was a site where a plane was suppose to have hit the side of a mountain. He had flown under the clouds to drop his bomb and pulled up into the clouds. He was not ever seen again by his wing man, so they figure he hit the side of the mountain.

To do the excavating, they divide the area off into four meter squares called units. One or two units are done at a time, depending on the manpower available. Sorensen said the unit he was working on found a couple of lead ballasts. He was later told sometimes they put lead ballasts into a plane to level out the weight.

On March 11 the IT joined the base camp. They were allowing Sorensen three days to help locate the area where Dinan went down.

On Wednesday, March 12, Sorensen was asked where the best place to look was. He suggested the last new position that was reported of his rescue mission would be a good place to start.

During the war the rescue missions were traced from a few different places and the location could be off by a couple of miles. Those positions changed as the location of the copter changed.

The helicopter flew around that area and Sorensen said there is no way that was the area because there were steep cliffs

## David Thomas Dinan III

### F-105 History

---

and peaks. They then went to the next to the last reported position and that was not it either. Sorensen said he was looking for a grassy slope with tree lines all around it. It was also suppose to be at about 3,500 feet.

Sorensen said the area has changed so much because of the way the Laos people farm. They go into a forested area and burn it all to kill the trees. After the trees are dead they will go in and burn all the trees down to ashes. They use the ashes as fertilizer and make their rice patties and farm that area until the fertilizer is gone. Then they move on to another area. He noted the area could have been burned and farmed two or three times during the past 45 years.

On Thursday, March 13, they went to check out a site where parachute material was found in 1994. Nothing was found at that site. They went back to the first area they checked on the previous day and hiked up the trail. It was very steep and they hiked back down.

On Friday, March 14, they decided they wanted one last look at all the sites. First they went into a village and visited with someone who saw a double ejection in 1967 or 68. They went to look for these two ejections. The person who saw it went to show them where he saw it. They said it was about a two hour hike. It turned out to be about one mile. They started off by jumping the creek as it wound through the area. They then left the creek and hiked up on a ridge line trail. They found nothing so they started down the other side of the ridge through a jungle area that took them down along the stream bed. The witness recognized a tree at the creek so he hiked up the steep hill and found a half buried pad that looked like a floor mat. The jungle around it had grown into it, but the pad had two strips of Velcro on one side and snaps on the other side.

Sorensen stayed where the mat was and the guide and others went a little farther and found some parachute material, a sock, and a locker key. Then they spotted a military ID card on top of the ground. Those up at that site were talking about the name on the ID when Sorensen hollered that was the person he was looking for. When the card was given to him, he could make out the name of David Thomas Dinan III.

Sorensen said everything must have washed down the hill in one of their monsoons or something because the area he landed in 45 years ago didn't have a creek and it wasn't as steep as the area they were in. Sorensen tried to hike farther up the hill, but it was so overgrown with brush he couldn't get very far. He told them when they start excavating the area they need to excavate farther up the hill.

Sorensen said at least now they know where to look. They had only 30 minutes to document everything they found in the area and get back to the base camp. They just barely made it and Sorensen said the blades of the helicopter were just barely moving a little at 4:30 p.m.

He left the next day to head home to Aberdeen. Before leaving he paid 1.58 million kip for his room for 11 days. That comes to about \$198. That price also included laundry service, breakfast and lunch.

He flew to Phonsavan and then Vientiane and stayed overnight in a JPAC detachment three team house. Then he went to Bangkok and spent the night. Then to Tokyo and on to Honolulu again to be debriefed. He landed in Honolulu 12 hours before he took off from Tokyo because he again crossed the International Dateline and gained a day this time.

After Honolulu it was to Denver and home to Idaho Falls and Aberdeen.

Sorensen told of a funny incident in one of the airports. He purchased a silverware set consisting of a knife, fork and spoon in Honolulu because he thought he might need it. At the airport they put the bags through the x-ray machine. In the meantime he walked through the metal detector and the alarm went off. They didn't do anything about it, The alarm went of for many others that were going through the detector, but again they didn't do anything about it. They asked him if he had a knife. He said no he didn't and then he remembered the silverware. He pulled it out of his suitcase and showed them. He thought it was funny they were concerned about a knife in his luggage, but not about the metal detector going off when people walked through.

"At the time I thought the time was going by very slowly. But now that it is over, it was no time at all. The ID card was just a symbol marking the hillside where I was 45 years ago and where a fellow airman lost his life. It has been his final resting place for the past 45 years, and now it is an opportunity to repatriate his remains and bring another hero home. It was a very hallowed event in which I was able to participate and I thank God for that," Sorensen said.

# David Thomas Dinan III

## F-105 History

---

Power County Press and The Aberdeen Times at <http://www.press-times.com/2014/04/02/leland-sorensen-returns-after-successful-trip-to-laos/>

26-Jun-14

7373

Artifacts from the 17 March 1969 crash site of 1Lt David T. Dinan, were found in Laos. He was from Nutley NJ and the local newspaper reported on the discovery.

45 years later, Nutley soldier's belongings recovered.

Lt. David Thomas Dinan III's military identification card was recently found by a rescue team, 45 years after his body was left in Laos during the Vietnam War. "It was just absolutely astounding," John Dinan, David's brother, of Nutley told the Sun. "I never thought they would find anything."

David Dinan, an air force F105D pilot, was killed in action on March 17, 1969, at the age of 25, after his parachute went down in Laos, located near Vietnam during the war. Dinan had been forced to eject from his plane after his jet had been hit by ground fire. He had parachuted into the trees, went crashing down a steep hill and got wrapped in his parachute. Dinan had been a pilot from the 34th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Korat Airbase, Thailand. Forty-five years ago, Father Walsh from St. Mary's Church and members of the Air Force informed the family of David Dinan's death. Last June, the Dinan family met with Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, Gen. Kelly K. McKeague in search of answers relating to David Dinan's body. "We [said], we expected the body to be returned 45 years ago," Dinan recalled. "We waited and waited, [and] as far as we can tell no one sent out someone."

It wasn't until this past March that the family received news that a team of Prisoners of War and Missing in Action members had recovered Dinan's identification card, part of a parachute harness and a notepad, near the site of his death. Dinan had attended St. Mary's School in Nutley, and had received a physics degree from the Stevens Institute of Technology. "He was an extremely bright guy," John Dinan said. He was awarded the Air Medal (Eighth and Ninth Oak Leaf Cluster) for meritorious achievement from Nov. 16 to Jan. 8, 1968. He was also awarded the Air Medal (Tenth Oak Leaf Cluster) for meritorious achievement from Jan. 9 to Feb. 23, 1969.

Forty-five years ago, Leland Sorensen, a pararescueman from Aberdeen, Idaho, stationed at Nakhon Phanom Thai Air Force Base in Thailand, was unable to get hold of David Dinan's body after he spotted it wedged between a tree and mountain. Sorensen said that he and David had been stationed at different bases. "We were never together...I didn't know David at all," he told the Sun. Sorensen, who had been on a high bird helicopter, said that he had been hesitant in recovering the body because he thought it was an enemy trap. He also had assumed that a ground team would come back to recover the body. On March 17, 1969, Sorensen caught sight of Dinan lying face down. He said he noticed he had a broken bone in his thigh that showed through his flight suit. After seeing his body, Sorensen radioed in that he had seen a "dead man." He received a request to get hold of the body and to "get the hell out of there!" However, he later decided that it was not advisable to further risk his life or the lives of the three crewmen, who were onboard the helicopter.

This past December, Sorensen was given a second chance to complete a mission he began 45 years ago. He received an email from historian Niall Brannigan, of the Southeast Asia Division Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office, who had been seeking crew members of Jolly Green 16, to help locate Dinan's remains. "It kind of bothered me over the years, [that] I wasn't able to recover his body," Sorensen said. "Then to find out [that] nobody had ever recovered [it], I had really liked to see an end to this story."

Sorensen flew with the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command team in March. On the third and final day of the investigation, with only a half hour left, Sorensen and the team located a nylon pad from a parachute, 60 feet from where the body had been left back in 1969. The team had also noticed parachute material, pieces of parachute-harness and buckles, a locker key, a sock, and a laminated, military identification card nearly 25 feet away, he said.

Sorensen said that he could not believe that he had been standing in the same spot he had been standing forty-five years ago, with Dinan's identification card in hand. "I had given up hope," he said. "One of the guys was trying to read the signature out loud," he recalled. "[They said] David T. then paused is that Dylan?" The card was then brought over to Sorensen, who read David T. Dinan III. "I said this is the guy I'm looking for," he said. "I looked at that and I could not believe it."

# David Thomas Dinan III

## F-105 History

---

A couple of days after the team left the area; a separate team uncovered a pair of nail clippers and a lighter in the same area.

On June 12 and 13, John Dinan, his brother Charles Dinan and Ed Sykes, a friend of David's, attended the Conference of Families of POW/MIA. During the conference, McKeague informed the family that an excavation for David Dinan's remains would be scheduled in March or June of next year. John Dinan said that the conference "certainly added a sense of urgency to JPAC for a completion of this case."

Johnie Webb, assistant to the commander, who has been with JPAC for 35 years, also informed the family that an excavation would depend upon proper funding. Dinan sent a note of appreciation to Congressman Rep. Rodney Freylinghuysen for General McKeague stating that "this was the first positive finding in forty-five years."

By Hasime Kukaj Staff Writer, Nutley Sun.

---

Niall Brannigan from DPMO described the efforts in locating David Dinan's crash site. "This case had been effectively stymied for the past 45 years, for the twenty-one aircraft involved in the SAR effort reported a bewildering array of ten different loss locations - literally all over the map - spanning three 1:50,000 map sheets.

"In addition to the PJ, Leland Sorensen, the co-pilot of JG16, Lt Col (R) Phil Pfanschmidt, of Chesapeake Beach, MD, was tracked down as well, and in concert with Leland, helped narrow down the field of 10 possible sites to 3 most-likely sites. The Air America pilot (a Bell 205 chopper, call sign 'Foxtrot Golf' flying out of LS20) who had actually located Dave Dinan's chute, and directed the JGs in, Nikki Fillipi, of Seattle, was also located, but unfortunately could not recall the incident (nevertheless, the location he called in on that St. Paddy's Day of '69 turned out to be the closest - 4 kms from where Dave's ID card was found, as opposed to the last, and consequently 'record', loss site being 8 kms away).

"The village where locals led us to the site that yielded Dave's ID card had been visited before, but discounted because they had previously reported on a double ejection seat crash site. Yet there had also been muddled accounts from these villagers of separately finding remnants of a parachute, and so a follow-up visit was in order. The site they took us to, Houay Amerika Tok, translates as "the stream where the American fell".." ( Niall R. Brannigan, e-mail 22 Sep 14)

<http://www.northjersey.com/news/nation/45-years-later-nutley-soldier-s-belongings-recovered-1.1041665?page=all#sthash.woweKfxR.dpuf>

**13-Sep-14**

7378

Charlie Dinan was presented with his brother's ID card during a DPMO-JPAC family update in Pittsburgh. A local newspaper covered the meeting.

Families receive POW updates at Green Tree meeting

By Melissa Daniels

Saturday, Sept. 13, 2014, 10:21 p.m.

Charles Dinan has spent the past 45 years waiting to bury his brother.

In March 1969, enemy fire shot down Air Force Lt. David T. Dinan III and his F-105D over northern Laos. His parachute tangled in the jungle canopy, and the 25-year-old pilot from New Jersey was killed in action. Fellow airmen located his body hours later, but fled amid reports of enemies and left Dinan's body behind.

"We expected the remains to be returned in a couple weeks, and it never happened," said Dinan, who lives in Peters and served in the Marine Corps at the time of his brother's death.

Recovering lost service members' remains and identifying the unknown are the responsibilities of the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office of the Department of Defense, along with the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command. The department hosted one of its monthly family update conferences on Saturday in the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Pittsburgh-Green Tree.

# David Thomas Dinan III

## F-105 History

---

About 200 families from within a 350-mile radius attended. The program included presentations on techniques used for search, recovery and identification of remains and individual updates.

Dinan attended the conference because of encouraging developments in his brother's case. For decades, his family gave up hope, until the past four years when David's friends and family began a "lobbying" push to recover his body.

In March, JPAC conducted a three-day investigation in Laos near the crash site. On the mission was Leland Sorensen, then a 21-year-old pararescue jumper who found Dinan's body the day he died.

On Saturday, Dinan received the results of that search: A once-white and green plastic identification card with a slight crack through the left side, bearing David's loopy, careful signature. With confirmation of the crash site, an excavation is planned for 2015.

"Forty-five years in the jungle," Dinan said, slipping the card back into a plastic bag. "Hopefully, we'll get some remains, and we'll have a burial,"

As of August, 1,641 service members were missing from the Vietnam War, 90 from Pennsylvania. Of the 7,811 unaccounted members from the Korea War, 574 are from Pennsylvania. Nationwide, more than 73,000 service members are missing from World War II.

Mary Megyesi, a forensic anthropologist with JPAC, explained how researchers recover bodies from burial sites in Vietnam and elsewhere. Researchers try to identify the member using dental records, DNA pulled from bone fragments or any nearby personal effects.

James Canick of the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory emphasized why relatives of missing service members should give their DNA to researchers. Extracting DNA from recovered remains has become more efficient in the past 20 years, he said.

"Our problem today is not getting DNA from the remains ... it is finding the match," he said. "That is really the key, 'What do we compare back to?'"

Sgt. Shelia Sledge, spokeswoman for the Department of Defense POW/MIA Office, said the department's goal is to identify every missing service member. But with more than 53,000 lost at sea, full accounting is an ongoing effort.

Sledge said about 80 to 90 service members are identified annually.

Ed Sykes of Rose Hill, Kan., was Lt. David Dinan's roommate at the base. Four years ago, after an annual trip to the Vietnam Memorial, Sykes got in touch with Dinan's relatives, including Charles, to begin pushing to retrieve David's body. Bureaucracy is slow, he said, which is frustrating to a fighter pilot. But Sykes views the ID card discovery and planned excavation as one step closer to the military funeral Dinan deserves.

"He gave up everything at the age of 25," Sykes said. "You don't leave him laying on the ground in the jungle, you get him out of there, and you bring him home, and you bury him properly."

Melissa Daniels is a staff writer for Trib Total Media.

<http://triblive.com/news/allegheeny/6780671-74/dinan-sykes-david#ixzz3E4Wm3H7T>