

# Edward L. Sykes

## F-105 History

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09-Dec-68

253

The twenty-third F-105 RTU Class 69CR graduated at McConnell AFB KS. The class started on 24 June 1968 with 22 students. Sixteen graduated: one Capt and 15 1Lts. The class deployed 20 F-105s for conventional weapons delivery training to George AFB CA between 22 Oct - 5 Nov 68 with the 4519 CCTS. The squadron commander was Lt Col Harry W. Schurr. The Outstanding Graduate was 1Lt Stanley E. Boyd.

Two members of the class died in F-105 accidents. The student pilots were:

Capt Gerald E. Zoehler, Jr. at Smokey Hill range on 13 August 1968.

Capt Wayne Wright in F-105D 60-0416 at Smokey Hill range on 18 October 1968.

2Lt Hugh W. Gill III successfully ejected from F-105D 60-0515 when he ran out of fuel three miles west of Hutchinson KS on 6 August 1968. He was eliminated from F-105 training.

During their eight days of flying at George, the class flew 298 sorties and 265.2 flying hours. "The deployment mission was very effective in that all the flights completed a low-level navigation mission and bomb drop on Leach Lake Tactical Range (Missile Complex) prior to landing at George. This permitted the students some local area orientation prior to their first scheduled flights at George AFB. Since eighteen aircraft were deployed with the SUU-21, extremely effective GAT missions were possible at George. The flying profile consisted of low level (200' - 1500'), not possible at McConnell, Road Recce (5000'), and random multiple attacks on the Leach Lake Tactical Range. Students led these missions and upon reaching the range complex the IP acted as airborne FAC and directed realistic attacks using Southeast Asia tactics. The airborne FAC procedure was also used for a GAT mission when the dart target failed to launch properly.

"... Two in-flight emergencies occurred, one for 'gear indicators' and one 'no flap' landing. The squadron experienced zero drag chute failures, no blown tires, and only one landing graded as dangerous. ... Without exception, all assigned instructor pilots have combat experience in SEA and 100 missions over North Vietnam. Every effort is expended to insure that all of the latest SEA information and tactics are incorporated in the training syllabus."

Capt Jack Phillips was an IP for this class. "I only had 1 assigned student, Sid Wise, since I was the scheduling guy. I was also the IP when Zoehler flew into the ground on a rocket pass. Think I got check rides every day for about 2 weeks, but they determined I had briefed the flight correctly and he just watched the rockets too long. Not the first guy who ever did that and not the last either. Otherwise, that was a very good class with some great guys.(Jack Phillips, e-mail 3 Aug 14)

The graduating pilots were:

Capt Jerome M. Modolo

1Lt Raymond M. "Mike" Bennert

1Lt Stanley E. Boyd

1Lt David A. Bruns

1Lt Randal D. Carlson

1Lt James L. DeVoss

1Lt Bobby L. Efferson

1Lt Bruce D. Gillett

1Lt Craig H. Gutchow

1Lt Frank T. Hayman IV

1Lt Paul D. O'Connell

1Lt Daniel P. Seals

1Lt Edward L. Sykes

1Lt Joseph W. Widhalm

1Lt Sidney J. Wise

1Lt Jerry A. Wrucha

Lt Widhalm flew the F-105 for the first time on 1 July 1968. After training at Nellis he arrived at Korat in January 1969 and was assigned to the 34 TFS.

*23 TFW History, Jul - Dec 68, USAF microfilm MO555, frames 0173 - 0175 & Ed Sykes, telephone interview*

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12 Sept 2010 & Joe Widhalm, e-mail 7 May 12.

**10-Oct-69**

415

F-105s of the 44 TFS transferred from the 388 TFW, Korat RTAFB, Thailand, where it had flown Wild Weasel missions, to the 355 TFW, Takhli RTAFB. For the first time since its organization at Korat on 8 April 1966 the 388 TFW had no assigned F-105s. The 388th wing commander was Col John A. Nelson. The squadron commander was Lt Col Herbert L. Sherrill who was replaced on this date by Lt Col Harley N. Wills.

The 44 TFS's twenty-one F-105s (11 F-105Fs and 10 F-105Ds) were launched from Korat on 10 October 1969 with some fraggged for combat missions that recovered at Takhli. Others flew local sorties to Takhli. The advance party moved in two elements, the first on 25 September 1969 and the second on 3 and 5 October 1969.

The relocation involved 459 personnel and used twenty C-130 sorties to move over 400 people and 156,108 pounds of cargo. The official transfer date of the squadron was 15 October 1969.

Maj William R. McDaniel, Capt Clayton Bane Lyle III, and 1Lt Joseph W. Widhalm were three of the pilots in the 44th who moved to Takhli with the squadron. Joe Widhalm recalled that, "... I didn't fly any missions from Takhli after the move because some of us were sent TDY to Korea to pull Command Post duty until December 1969. ... I went to Osan with Ed Sykes and Paul O'Connell I think. Once we got there, we were sent on to Taegu AB where we spent the two months. Others from Takhli may have been involved in this, too. My understanding is that due to the decreasing F-105 sortie requirements in late 1969 the squadrons were over manned, so PACAF decided to use some of us in manning assistance programs elsewhere in the theater. ... I left Osan in late December 1969 to become a T-38 IP at Webb AFB."

Lt Widhalm last flew the F-105 on a combat mission on 6 October 1969 from Korat by which time he had accumulated 403.1 hours in the aircraft. (Joe Widhalm e-mail 8 May 2012 & F-105 Flying Hour Report, dated 18 Nov 1985 provided by USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma.)

*388 TFW History, Jul - Sep, Vol III, USAF microfilm NO587 &  
<http://www.afhra.af.mil/factsheets/factsheet.asp?id=10609> & Bane Lyle, e-mail 20 Aug 2010 & Joe Widhalm, e-mails 7 and 8 May 2012 and 5 Apr 2013.*

**17-Oct-69**

7240

Maj William R. McDaniel from the 44 TFS completed his combat tour flying the F-105 from Korat and Takhli. He was presented a certificate acknowledging his 127 combat missions between 7 December 1968 when he joined the 44 TFS and 17 October 1969. The certificate was signed by the 44th squadron commander Lt Col Harley N. "Chilly" Wills.

Other signatures on the certificate were:

Capt William M. "Mike" Chynoweth  
Maj Richard E. "Bud" Kennedy  
Maj John W. Sims, Jr. (EWO)  
Maj Jerry W. "Red" Hagis (EWO)  
???  
Capt Eben D. Jones  
Maj Fred S. "Sid" Hudson  
Lt Col Edward D. Moriarty  
Maj Joseph Reynes  
\*Vincent D. Vampire  
Capt Charles J. Ferrari

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Capt Gilbert L. Henry  
Maj William W. "Bill" Rowley, Jr.  
Capt Robert L. "Bob" Nesbitt  
Ed Johnson  
Capt Gerald J. "Jerry" Stiles (EWO)  
Capt Donald S. Brown II  
Rick Morgan  
Maj Rowland G. "Gene" Lucas  
\*Barbara Beaver  
Maj Raymond Gene Schwartz

Maj William Hansen "Bill" Talley  
Maj Larry W. Crotts  
Capt Thomas J. Doubek  
Capt Edward L. "Ed" Sykes  
Maj Thomas J. "Tom" Dodd  
1Lt Joseph W. Widhalm  
Capt Eugene G. Lamothe  
Maj Gordon E. Lewis

\*Two names on the list were not real people. Bane Lyle explained: "Tom Doubek made up a fake pilot, Maj Vincent D. Vampire, with a SSN that was in Batavia, Maryland and included him on our roster. He logged a combat mission every time one of the Combat Martins flew. When he had 20 missions O-1Bs (Laos Missions) he was submitted for an Air Medal. A real order was published by HQ with his name along with several real crewmembers included on it. The squadron had it framed and hung it in ops. When we moved to Takhli, VD was still on the roster and was issued a room. I remember there was some confusion by the billeting office over where was Maj Vampire. As far as Betty Beaver, she did not exist and someone in the squadron would always include her. It looks like probably Chuck Ferrari did it on Bob McDaniel's certificate." (Bane Lyle, e-mail 7 Apr 2013.)

Maj McDaniel last flew the F-105 on 5 October 1969. He had accumulated 400.9 hours in the airplane. His next assignment was to Otis AFB to fly the F-101 in ADC.

*Certificate scan provided by W. Paul Waits, Bob McDaniel's neighbor and friend, e-mail 4 Apr 2013 & F-105 Pilot Flying Hour report dated 18 Nov 85 provided by the USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma & Bane Lyle e-mail 5 Apr 2013.*

### 24-Feb-84

2135

On a cold, snowy, overcast weekend in February 1984, over 200 former F-105 pilots and maintenance crews gathered at Hill AFB in Utah to celebrate the final farewell to the Thunderchief. The affair was called "The Thud Out" and the gathering was hosted by the Air Force Reserve's 419 TFW, the last unit to operate the F-105. A couple of months before the event, an announcement letter from the 419th's Project Officer, Major Tom "Waldo" King, circulated throughout the Air Force and units of the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve. Maj. King invited everyone. "If you (or your unit) were ever associated with the F-105, you should be here." He had carefully planned the festivities that included sorties by the last three flyable F-105s, all two-seat F-105Fs, a memorial dedication for all F-105 pilots killed while flying the Thunderchief, and a sit-down steak dinner for all.

The Thud Out started Friday morning with arriving guests registering and encountering people they had known during their F-105 days. On Friday evening they gathered in the officer's club for drinks and the telling of favorite Thud stories. MSgt John Coon, a former F-105 maintenance troop who made it to the Thud Out, remembered, "that evening at the Officers Club was another gathering of

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old friends, many of whom had not seen each other for some time. The atmosphere was social and convivial with everyone exchanging remembrances and 'war stories'." Vendors in hallway booths exhibited Thunderchief memorabilia and sold pins, T-shirts, and made-to-order hand-carved models. A popular item was a plastic F-105 model on an arrowhead base that sold for \$45.00. The party lasted until well after midnight and prepared the group for the next day's more formal activities.

Among the 306 attendees listed in the sign up roster were former Wild Weasel pilot Francis A. "Frosty" Sheridan and former POW Col Robert B. "Percy" Purcell. Col Ray H. Bryant, who flew 100 missions with the 469 TFS in 1966 - 1967 also attended. Lt Col Edward L. Sykes, who flew with the 34 TFS in 1969 at Korat, was on the attendance roster as was Robert V. "Boris" Baird who had flown missions with the 67 TFS in 1965. Benjamin W. Bowthorpe, who had flown 100 missions with the 354 TFS in January 1966, was registered for the Thud Out.

Lt Col Bruce A. Brandt, an F-16 pilot from the Reserve's 466 TFS at Hill, attended. He had previously flown the F-105. His last F-105 flight was in November 1983. He had accumulated 1,459.2 hours in the airplane. "It will always be my favorite aircraft and I've flown the F-16 for several years. ..."

*Thud-Out Program Handout & Thud Out attendee, Victor Vizcarra, e-mail, 4 Jan 01, & Thud Out List of "Known Attendees" & Bruce Brandt letter dated 18 Jan 88 to Bauke Jan Douma.*

**25-Feb-84**

4168

The Thud Out at Hill AFB, Utah, displayed a long computer printout around the hanger walls listing the names and F-105 flying hours of all pilots who had flown the plane. There were also placards displaying the twenty F-105 pilots who had flown the plane the most number of hours. These top 20 F-105 pilots were:

| Order | Name                            | F-105<br>Flying Hours | Date Last<br>Flew F-105 |
|-------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1.    | Col Raymond F. Kingston         | 3709.6                | 23 Aug 73.              |
| 2.    | Maj James A. Caldwell           | 3691.6                | 18 Nov 83.              |
| 3.    | BG Roger P. Scheer              | 3493.3                | 26 Feb 82.              |
| 4.    | Maj Joe T. Short                | 3045.1                | 12 Oct 79.              |
| 5.    | Lt Col James K. Webster         | 3012.5                | 28 Feb 84.              |
| 6.    | Lt Col Clayton B. Lyle III      | 3010.5                | 17 Oct 83.              |
| 7.    | Maj Carl L. Womack              | 2962.0                | 17 Oct 83.              |
| 8.    | Lt Col Roger L Prather          | 2906.1                | 20 Oct 78.              |
| 9.    | Col Donald R. Yates             | 2831.0                | 2 Nov 76.               |
| 10.   | Lt Col Russell R. Schoonover    | 2795.9                | 29 Apr 81.              |
| 11.   | Col Leonard C. "Lucky" Ekman    | 2791.6                | 21 Jul 78.              |
| 12.   | Col Harrison W. Matthews        | 2737.7                | 21 Mar 80.              |
| 13.   | Lt Col Frank E. Peck            | 2725.5                | 26 May 81.              |
| 14.   | Lt Col Edward L. Sykes          | 2703.7                | 13 Mar 80.              |
| 15.   | Lt Col Richard W. Simons        | 2702.5                | 6 Sep 78.               |
| 16.   | Lt Col Jimmy L. Boyd            | 2564.1                | 7 Oct 80.               |
| 17.   | Col Richard E. Moser            | 2558.1                | 23 Jun 73.              |
| 18.   | Lt Col Robert N. "Bob" Johnston | 2516.7                | 13 Jun 75.              |
| 19.   | Lt Col James J. Butler, Jr.     | 2515.1                | 14 Dec 79.              |
| 20.   | Col Arthur E. Martone           | 2500.5                | 30 Jun 80.              |

Not noted on the display, but an indication of the hazards of flying the Thud, nine of the 20 high-time pilots had ejected from an F-105, all but one due to accidents.

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Col Moser contracted lung cancer that was cured by an operation that removed one lung. He died on 14 June 2004 in Atlanta, Georgia, of pneumonia in his remaining lung.

*John Coon letter and photos of Thud Out displays & Rick Moser, e-mail, 24 Jan 05.*

**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 (Sonphong) for our trip to Xan Noy. Phet

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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 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.*

**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.

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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

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III. "I said this is the guy I'm looking for," he said. "I looked at that and I could not believe it."

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.

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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

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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.

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

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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/alleggheny/6780671-74/dinan-sykes-david#ixzz3E4Wm3H7T>