

Peterson and Morris as they parachuted down. This was the last combat lost in the South Vietnam before the cease-fire took effect.

USAF – Rescue Log (1)
27- January- 1973
HC-7 ATTEMPT

DAY/Time/ [Time = ZULU / UTC]

RESCUE CARD: 27/0936/LS Tap Room 113 – 2 persons on board – F-4 – NAVY – Enterprise

Downed by 23-37 mm - Quang Tri - 16-50 N , 107-13 E JACK

OPEN

27/1015/LS Tap Room 113 – Navy – Big Mother moving into area at this time estimated time of arrive 15 minutes into area SDO NX

27/1047/LS Tap Room 113 - SY are in SAR at this time working with Covey FAC

27/1050/LS Tap Room 113 – SY 3, 5, 6 will return to base at this time and SY 1, 2, 4 will remain in SAR area. Possible SY 1 has BDA SY 2 checking

27/1052/LS Tap Room 113 – ALL Sys return to base at this time due to poor WX, darkness, and extremely hostile environment SDO NX

27/1130/LS Tap Room 113 – SY 1 has hole in aileron, and SY 04 escorting. NX NX

27/1145/LS Tap Room 113 – Received from Panama (JG) that SY 01 did pick-up beeper but would not come-up voice and Big Mother on deck of Bone Crusher, at this time. SDO NX

27/1152/LS Tap Room 113 – Nail 42 OSC and request that Carter & Pegtop be placed on QRF but has negative contact with any one at this time / NEG! SDO BSD

27/1235/LS Tap Room 113 – Nail 89 debrief from Covey 115: on T.R. 113 – believes he was hit with either 23 or 37 mm AAA – said he saw 2 chutes – landing was within 100 feet of small village. Thought he heard “113B” Spoken – C/S ? KAC’d positive was decoded as YD 313670

On Nail 89 – Covey 115 said as Nail 89 was moving in as the O.S.C. for T.R. 113 at an altitude of 6,000 feet, an SA-7 was fired at him. C-115 said on guard “SA-7, SA-7, SA-7”. Nail 89 fired in I.R. to draw of the SA-7, but it hit him in the side anyway. 2 good shuts reported. Heard Nail 89 (believed he heard “B”) “GOING TO BE CAPTURED” Positive YD328656) was 4 KMs SE of T.R. 113. Last transmission from Nail 89 was a high pitched “OH NO” BSD/SDO NX

27/1410/LS Tap Room 113 – NAIL 89 - King 27 has been returned to base at this time – NO BEEPER or VOICE contact for over 2 hours SDO (L/C Engle) concurs. JACK NX

CLOSED

USAF – Rescue Log (2)

27- January- 1973

HC-7 ATTEMPT

0920 - From K-21 F-4 DOWN F/W off QT 5 miles 2 chutes

0921 - From Panama position 315/42/69 Covey 15 has 2 chutes

0922 – From K-21 C/S TAPROOM 114 all above info passed JR/SH

0923 – TAPROOM 114 there is a Nail aircraft direct overhead, they are about 5 miles short of feet wet

0928 – NAIL 89 from K-21 took hit – punched out 2 good chutes, hit by SA-7 313/40/69

0930 – Sandys launched this time

0932 – From MOTEL No Big Mother available at this time try to get Dust-Off from DaNang or CH-69

0933 – From K-21 voice contact with NAIL 89 “ABOUT TO BE TAKEN”
0934 – Request Gas for Sandys – passed above to JR/SH
0935 – COVEY 115 has tally on all chutes but not survivors – passed JR/SH
0943 – From BLUEBIRD F-4 crews in water and one Nail has been picked up by enemy, Dust Off available
0945 – Purple Tank for Sandys, passed K-21
0946 – Sandy 1, 2, 3 airborne this time K-21 JR/SH
0949 – Sandy 4, 5, 6 airborne this time K-21 JR/SH
0950 – From BLUEBIRD Dust-Off 503 off +20 enroute JR/SH & K-21
0954 – Checked about possibility of area denial if crews on island.
0957 – WOLF-13 working in area at this time reports chutes are no longer visible From K-21
0959 – From Panama – were beepers earlier none now, no visual on survivors, no voice chutes affirm were on island. FACs in area said they had 5 A-7 standby
1012 – launch K-27 K-21 abort due to loss of pressurization & LOX 060/69/93
1015 – NAVY BIG MOTHER on way +15 – from Panama
1016 – K-21 divert to 93 due to fumes in cargo contact JR/SH/56
1019 – K-21 now going to 125 ETA 1115
1023 – From MOTEL no visual WX PBM TAPROOM went down in middle of village on island and NAIL 89 landed on a peninsula a couple miles from there JR/SH
1026 – CORRECT F-4 callsign is TAPROOM 113
1032 – K-27 airborne this time
1039 – K-27 ETA on station 1220
1045 – From Panama Sandys are in area
1047 – Passed to Panama Have Sandys 1-2-4 remain in area, 3-5-6 return to base
1049 – From Moter pass Sandy 1 took ground fire, Sandy 2 checking him over
1051 – Advise JR/SH having all Sandys return to base and Covey 42 go feet wet, passed to MOTEL
1054 – From Panama Covey 42 & Sandys got word. Big Mother is going to DaNang to pick-up crew of 114 who knows area real well
1056 – From MOTEL BIG MOTHER was going in to make pick-up. Said negative, have him contact COVEY 43 and do only what COVEY 42 tells him JR/SH
1059 – MOTEL BIG MOTHER not going in, going to get fuel JR/SH
1106 – K-21 safe at 125 JR/SH
1115 – From JR/SH Sandys 2-3 are to hit yellow tank and divert CH-107 TAC-E contact CARBON OUTLAW
1134 – From K-27 Sandy 1 has whole in aileron, no assistance
1144 – From K-27 Sandy 2-3 transmit in blind “Return to base 125” no reason given
1147 – From K-27 NAIL 42 is requesting CBU.19/30 & BLU 52 on QRF. NAIL 42 has no contact and feels TAPROOM 113 and NAIL 89 are captured.
1151 – Debrief on COVEY 115 - TAPROOM 113 hit by possibly 23/37mm 2 good chutes, landed in village 100 feet between “A&B”. Possible voice contact with “B” C/S only. NAIL 89 became on-scene commander. C-115 climbed high. NAIL 89 went down to look

at village, during pull up C-115 saw SA-7 launch. C-115 saw possible IR flare launch. C-115 called SA-7 launch. SA-7 impact on right side, putting NAIL 89 out of control in spin, 2 good chutes, landing near each other approx. 4 clicks from TAPROOM 113 Voice contact with one NAIL 89 (B?) repeated "GOING TO BE CAPTURED" 3 times. Last contact was a high pitched "OH NO!" NAIL 89 look at village from 6000 feet. TAPROOM 113 YD 313670, NAIL 89 YD 328655.

1200 – From K-27 NAIL 23 requests ordinance to knock out guns on north side of river. No contact any survivors intermittent beeper. Ordinance will NOT be available.

1225 – FACs requested fast movers with CBU 52s & MK 82

1233 – From JR/SH have NAILS and COVEYs return to base for planning, K-27 stay feet wet & listen No ordinance coming

1235 – BARON 26 heard NAIL 89 report numerous SA-7 in area then "OH SHIT" "MAYDAY" "MAYDAY". Covey 115 saw chutes the "Confirm 89-B you are being captured"

1250 – From K-27 FACs cannot get good cuts on beepers think its GOMERS

HC-7 ATTEMPT

Hey Chief Coleman and Li'l Ron, here is an HC-7 story that has never been told. You're welcome to share it with our Seadevil shipmates.

The date: January 27, 1973

Time: Approximately 1700 hours, Fifteen hours till the end of the Vietnam war at 0800 next morning.

Location: HC-7 Det 110 on board USS America, on Yankee Station, one hundred miles off the coast of North Vietnam

I, Guppy Gaynor, was sitting on a cruise box in our maintenance base, one deck below the flight deck, playing nickel, dime, quarter poker with some of the fifteen or twenty Seadevils who were in the fairly large compartment at that time, when the phone rang. I was nearest, so I picked it up and said, "HC-7." Someone quickly asked, "How soon can you guys have a helo ready to go?" I said, "Here's the Chief. Ask him," and I handed the phone to (ADJC) Chief Ed Coleman.

Everyone was instantly excited. The chief identified himself and listened for a few moments. After giving a short answer, Chief Coleman hung up the phone and turned to us. "Okay!" he hollered, "Everybody upstairs! Somethings going on! Let's get 64 ready to go!"

I'm not sure what anyone else was thinking, but I was elated by the possibility of getting another rescue before the war ended. So, with visions of fame and glory swirling around inside my head, I grabbed my flight gear and joined the rest of shipmates in their rush to reach Big Mother 64 and get her ready for immediate take off. I had SAR duty that day, so I vaulted into the cabin and started getting things ready on the inside while the plane captains and flight deck crew were towing us out to the angle deck.

AE3 Curtis Cady was the second crewman, and he was busy setting up his M-60 and hanging M-16s and bandoleers of ammo on the pilot's seats. Tom Kautzkey was the pilot. Pardon me, I don't remember our copilot's name. (Historian – LTJG FRAZIER) And, to my surprise, Chief Coleman had donned his own flight gear and now he hopped on board with us. I was thinking he might take over as first crewman, RHIP, but, instead, he set up an M-60 in the port side aft gunner's window and got ready to defend that side of the helo with Curtis.

The pilots got us burnin' and turnin' really quick and the ship was turning into the wind. We were sitting there waiting for a green light when LCDR Cavanaugh, the Det 110 OinC, gave us the hold sign and hurried over to the open cargo door. I handed my oxygen mask to the OinC, pushed my mike button and listened in surprise and near terror as he hollered, "Watch your asse's! They're firing SA-7s!

They've fired nine missiles and shot down two aircraft!" I almost jumped out of the helo and went back to the poker game.

I was standing behind the loaded minigun, and when I looked forward at Curtis he looked as scared as I must have. I don't know if Chief Coleman was scared, but he didn't look like it. He had hung a flak blanket on the bulkhead in front of him and was now placing flak jackets around him and his machine gun and the box of ammo sitting next to him. The chief was ready for a fight and I was wondering, "What the hell is he doing on this flight? He ain't even got SAR duty!"

Well, we took off anyway, and we flew southwest towards the DMZ and the mouth of the Cua Viet river. A Navy F-4 Phantom and an Air Force OV-10 Bronco had been shot down. Now we know that the four crewmen had already been killed or captured, but we didn't know it then, and we could see long streams of tracer bullets reaching up into the darkening sky, trying to hit some of the jets that were flying overhead.

One pilot, probably in an A-7 Corsair, dove down to take a look at things on the ground, and somebody said over the radio, "You better get some altitude on that plane, Boy! They're really hosing you down!" "Yeah!" hollered another pilot, "They're really howlin' tonight! This is their last night!"

From a mile off the beach, the five of us were listening to the radio chatter and watching as the North Vietnamese Army celebrated the end of hostilities by filling the sky with hundreds of red and blue and green tracer bullets. The pilots flying overhead were talking things over, and one of them said, "Somebody better do something quick!" I was shaking in my boots and waiting for one of the jet jocks overhead to say "Okay, Big Mother 64. You're clear to proceed inbound to search the area."

Then someone with some authority in his voice called out, "**Don't send that chopper in tonight! Don't send that chopper in!**" Think of me as a coward if you will, but I was damn glad to hear that. There was no radio contact with the downed pilots and just an occasional emergency beeper, and we were low on fuel, so we landed on the DLG Bainbridge and spent a pleasant evening watching the evening movie and eating free popcorn. The next morning, we took off and flew around for a while, but the SAR effort had been called off so we flew back to the America. The war ended the next morning and two days later I was back in Subic Bay.

The whole point of this story is to tell of the courage displayed by Chief Coleman when he fearlessly jumped on board our helo and got ready to do what he could to help save a shipmate's life. He wasn't on SAR duty and didn't have to risk his life like he did, but the chief was a Navy aircrewman, and if there was something going on, he wanted to be part of it. When I got back to The Rufadora I told this story, and we all drank a toast to Chief Coleman.