

DAVID RODDY SLAGLE

Roy Spencer Vietnam Veteran-Air Force Pilot
Crew of Heroes

An AC-119K being flown by Captain Slagle died when his aircraft crashed five miles from An Loc during seige of An Loc during a gun run. Survivors provided the details of the last moments of life of this brave airman. 'On May 2, 1972, we were assigned to one of the dreaded daylight missions. Our mission orders were to destroy some ammunition that a C-130 cargo aircraft had dropped too close to the enemy at An Loc...On the way to the aircraft everyone was nervous because of the unusual daylight mission. We all knew that other Stingers flying daylight missions over the same area had encountered considerable problems avoiding the AAA...Crew 13 was on board 'Stinger' gunship, tail number 826, with a call sign of Stinger 41. We had a normal takeoff, and immediately flew to an area close by to sight our guns not knowing that those would be the last rounds fired by Stinger 41.. Once we were cleared into the target area we joined up with an O-2 spotter aircraft that would help us locate our target. We came into the target area at 4700 feet but the weather forced us down to a dangerously low 3500 feet. We had made about two orbits when SSgt Brown said, 'I can't see it but 37mm AAA is popping as it goes by, it's exploding above us.' Capt Courtney ordered a climb to 4500 feet, and asked Ken to see if he could spot where the AAA was coming from. I ran back to look over Ken's shoulder to see if I could help spot the gun. Antiaircraft fire came up a second time and Ken spotted the location. Courtney then had Lt. Larry Barbee run back to have Ken point out the gun position to him. The enemy site opened fire on us a third time while the NOS was giving the location to the pilot and the Navigator. The lack of reference points made pinpointing the target difficult. As I was standing looking over Ken's shoulder the persistent North Vietnamese gunner fired on us a fourth time, he was getting closer with each pass we made. It was then that I alerted the crew another AAA gun was shooting at us....Captain Courtney said he would make one more orbit and if we couldn't find our target we would exit the area. On what was to be our final orbit, the persistent gun finally found its target as we were hit in the right wing by three or four rounds of 37mm AAA. Ken yelled, 'We're hit! We're on fire!' The whole wing, from the right reciprocating engine to the jet engine, was in flames. Flames that were trailing all the way back to rear crew entrance door, the door we would have to use if we bailed out. The flames were so bright I could see them reflecting off the inside cabin's dark zinc chromate paint finish. The right main wheel well was blown open and both right engines lost all power. I put on my parachute preparing for the worst. With only the two left engines running, and the aircraft still on fire, the plane was fast becoming uncontrollable. Capt Courtney had full left rudder and full left aileron control trying to keep the old ship flying. In a very short amount of time we lost quite a bit of altitude as Capt David Slagle called MAYDAY and provided a safe bailout heading. Then the pilot yelled the words no one wanted to hear 'Abandon aircraft! Abandon aircraft!' I remember looking aft and seeing Ken Brown acting as jump master checking everyone over. It was his job to ensure everyone was properly cinched up in their chute as they abandoned the aircraft. His crew position was normally the last, along with the pilot, to exit the aircraft.' The rest of the narrative describes A1C Corbett's experiences after leaving the aircraft. Of the crew of ten, Capt Courtney, Navigator David Slagle and SSgt Ken Brown apparently never made it off the aircraft.

May 2, 2012

Garnet Jenkins
garijen@bresnan.net Grand Junction Co
~ In Humble Gratitude, For Your Sacrifice ~



In Honor of your Service & with So Much Gratitude for your Courage & Dedication to our Country and for Freedom. Rest in Peace, Capt David Roddy Slagle & know that you will NEVER BE FORGOTTEN. I am the sister of Sgt. David Dickinson, who also made the Supreme Sacrifice in Vietnam in 1967..... 'I HAVE FOUGHT A GOOD FIGHT, I HAVE FINISHED MY COURSE, I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH'

~ Timothy 2:4:7 ~ May 2, 2009

Malcolm Kirby USAF Veteran - 191st photo recon.
mlkdrk@earthlink.net
Vietnam Veterans of America - Chapter 785
Rest in Peace, my Brother. You will not be forgotten...
Apr 4, 2009

Bob Hammack Childhood Friend
seahorse6768@aol.com
3417 Brown Road St. John MO 63114 USA
A Bright Light
Although I had lost track of you, you were not forgotten. Mutual friends recalled you to memory and I it is one that reflects the smiling-faced kid I knew so many years ago. I now smile back at you from behind a veil of tears.
Jan 27, 2009

Bill Gallenstein USAF Veteran
Zephyrhills FL 33541 USA
A very proud cold war USAF veteran remembers you on this day. My God bless you and your family always. I salute you, Thank you
Jun 13, 2007

manny Fellow Veteran 69-70 An Khe
Union Gap, WA. 98903
"You are Remembered"
Peace and condolence, to the family and friends. "He which hath no stomach to this fight let him depart. But we in it shall be remembered. We few, we happy few, we band of brothers!! For he today, that sheds his blood with me, shall always be my brother." Rest in peace brave soldier, you have not been forgotten. (W.Shakespeare) May God Bless You for your Sacrifice!!!
May 2, 2007

Hardy Pottinger College Buddy
hardyp3_at_yahoo.com Rolla MO
Rod, I will never forget that day you stopped by the house on your way to flight school. How excited you were! I will never forget the good times we had at good old UMR either old buddy.

Craig Corbett Fellow Crew Member
A Real Leader
A REAL HERO, an Officer, Gentleman, and crew mate. You and what you did for Stinger Crew 13 will never be forgotten. I shall always remember! Stinger 41 India
Sunday, May 30, 1999