



William James Brashear (1934 – 1969)

Major William James Brashear, USAF was born on March 1, 1934. His home of record was listed as Chula Vista, CA. His Social Security Number was 547-46-1207 and it was issued in the state of California. His father was a retired Naval Officer and lived in Chula Vista. Major Brashear went to Chula Vista Junior High School, Chula Vista High School, and graduated from San Diego State University.

On May 8, 1969, Major Brashear was stationed at Cam Ranh Bay, Airbase in South Vietnam and assigned to the 12th Tactical Fighter Wing, 559th Tactical Fighter Squadron. His mission that day was to conduct a “road seeding” mission by dropping motion sensor devices and mines via his F-4C Phantom II aircraft to detect and destroy enemy movement in the designated area. He was the number two aircraft in a flight of four. His co-pilot, Lt Henry G. Mundt and Major Brashear took off, refueled in the air and did not return from the mission. Their target was along Highway 165 near Chavanne Airfield in Attapeu Province, Laos.

What is known of this flight is that the Phantom aircraft did deliver its ordnance, and that the aircraft sustained damage during the pull-up from the weapons drop. Both were seen to eject from the aircraft at an altitude of approximately 7500 ft, and one parachute opened normally, but the other was a “streamer”.

Both officers were listed as Missing in Action. Search and Recovery was unsuccessful due to heavy ground fire. His last known location was near a small village called Tonghe Gnai located at position N15 20 00/E107 05 00. To date, no further information has become available regarding his status. His body was not recovered, and he was officially listed as “died” on 8 January 1974 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel (O5). He was survived by his wife, Elizabeth, and two sons, Troy and Todd.

His name appears on the Vietnam Wall in Washington D.C. at Panel 25 West, Row 21. A street in the Sunbow community in Chula Vista honors his name. It is the entrance to an elementary school in the neighborhood. His name appears on the San Diego Peace Memorial plaques in Balboa Park and his name was also added to the Stardust Spacecraft in a NASA microchip as an outreach program. His Further information can be found at: <http://stardust.jpl.nasa.gov/overview/microchip/faq.html>



