

**"Tail No: 63-09681 Model: CH-3E Date of Loss: 13 Aug 70
Unit: 21st SOS, 56th SOW ,Country of Loss: Thailand, Call
Sign: Skycap 36"**

I saw no mention of the one surviving crew member - a 21st SOS pilot named (Captain) Vic Genez. Vick was the copilot seat (left seat) when the helicopter was hit by ground fire (12.7 mm machine gun) and made the dramatic descent - on fire. After they hit the ground, Vic knocked out the left side window and went out of the helicopter. He ran around the aircraft and saw one of the FEs - William Ripley - come running out through the sliding door on the right side. Sgt Ripley was on fire and Vic extinguished the flames with his hands. Sgt Ripley, unfortunately, died later of his burns. No one else got out of the aircraft. Vic Genez was medevaced immediately and was treated for burns, but survived. I heard that he was decorated for his efforts to save Sgt Ripley.

George Henry was, I believe, a brand new (in the 21st SOS) CH-53 pilot who was (as I was told) in the jump seat for an area familiarization flight while Cheeseman and Genez were in the pilot seats. They were both trying to build time in the CH-3. I believe Cheeseman, who had already past the date of his last required mission, had an assignment to be an instructor at Sheppard. Henry was so new to the unit, I did not even know he had arrived, and had never even met him. The mission had another task - taking some parts or whatever to Ubon.

The aircraft, when hit, was flying south and was approximately 20 nautical miles north of Ubon Air Base at about 1000 feet.

This is what I knew about that event. I was not assigned to a mission that day and first heard about the whole thing back at

the officer's hooch. What a bombshell. We were all very depressed for a long time after that.

Jerry Kibby