

CPT Harry M. Ravenna III

138th Avn Co, 224th USASA Bn

MIA for 35 years on 15 November 2001

Personal Information

Name: Harry M. Ravenna III

Rank/Branch: O3/US Army

Unit: 138th Aviation Company, 224th USASA Battalion, USASA Group, Vietnam

Date of Birth: 29 September 1937 (Houston TX)

Home City of Record: San Antonio TX

Loss Date: 15 November 1966

Country of Loss: South Vietnam

Loss Coordinates: 162535N 1074619E (ZD150045)

Status (in 1973): Missing In Action

Category: 4

Acft/Vehicle/Ground: U6A

Other Personnel In Incident: John C. Keiper (missing)

SYNOPSIS

Harry Ravenna was born near Houston, Texas and moved to San Antonio while still a youngster. He graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School in 1955 and St. Mary's University in 1960. He enlisted in the Army, attending Officer Training School at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, and was assigned to duty in Vietnam in September 1966.

Ravenna was assigned to the 138th Aviation Company, 224th U.S. Army Security Agency Battalion (Aviation), U.S. Army Security Agency Group, Vietnam. All missions of this agency were highly classified during the war, and secret cover designations (Radio Research Units) were used instead of the actual unit designations on station lists and reports. The 138th was based at Da Nang.

On November 15, 1966, US Army Capt. Harry M. Ravenna, pilot; and US Marine Corps Cpl. John C. Keiper, passenger, were flying a U6A aircraft (serial #541723) on a routine flight from Dong Ha to Da Nang. Keiper was assigned to Helicopter Attack Maintenance Squadron 16, Marine Air Group 16. His role on this mission is unclear from public record.

Ravenna filed a VFR (visual flight rules) flight plan, but ran into poor weather conditions. He radioed Dong Ha and requested radar guidance. At 1430 hours, he passed into Da Nang airfield radar control and radioed, "Lonely Ranger 723, heading 125, 3000 feet, estimating Da Nang at 40, request radar. Presently on instruments."

Having trouble bringing him onto radar screen, Da Nang instructed Ravenna to activate his transponder, but this did not improve radar contact, so they asked his location, which he gave as 45 nautical miles from Dong Ha. Da Nang instructed him to recontact Dong Ha (believing he was out of Da Nang range and still in that of Dong Ha). Ravenna acknowledged the transmission, radio contact was broken, and never resumed.

Ravenna and Keiper were last believed to be in South Vietnam about halfway between Da Nang and the city of Hue. Later investigation concluded that on his present course, had it been followed, Ravenna's aircraft would have impacted with the side of a mountain in that vicinity. The hostile threat in the area prevented extensive search, and all efforts to discover the fate of Ravenna and Keiper have failed.

