

## POW / MIA PROFILES

The purpose of the State POW/MIA Committee is to “provide increased awareness of POW / MIAs, to organize the Department and Posts’ POW / MIA activities and to provide education to the public”. To realize this duty, a profile of a WI Veteran who is or has been classified as POW / MIA will be presented each month for your reflection. It is with great respect that we present this month’s Profile.

Captain Edwin J Fickler, Pilot, United States Marine Corps was declared MIA on 22 JAN 1969. His hometown of record is Kewaskum, WI.

Captain Fickler was an A6 Intruder pilot with Unit HAMS 11 MAG 11 (Marine Air Group) operating out of Da Nang Airbase, Republic of Vietnam. The A6 Intruder was a twin-engine, mid-wing, all-weather attack aircraft designed by Grunman Aerospace and saw service from 1963 – 1997.

On the evening of 17 JAN 69, Capt. Fickler and his Bombardier/Navigator Major Robert Kuhlman(Richmond IN), departed Da Nang Airbase at 2043 hours. Their mission was to conduct direct air support/armed reconnaissance near the A Shau Valley in South Vietnam. This valley is located approximately 30 miles southwest of the City of Hue. Upon arriving in the area, Major Kuhlman contacted a Forward Air Controller (FAC) for assignment of missions. At 2125 hours, a target appeared in the northern portion of the valley and the FAC relayed this information to Major Kuhlman. At 2145 hours, the Controller attempted to contact the A6 to assign another target but this attempt was met with negative results. Further attempts resulted in the same.

At 2225 hours, search operations were initiated and continued throughout the night. The following day, visual, electronic, and photographic searches were conducted until 1230 hours on 22 JAN 69. All searches failed to locate any sign of the aircraft. The possibility that the aircraft crashed in the target area can only be presumed. The airborne controller did observe what appeared to be an explosion, which he assumed at that time was a bomb cluster followed by a secondary explosion. It was known that the enemy possessed anti-aircraft weapons in the vicinity of the A Shau Valley.

On 4 FEB 78, the Secretary of the Navy changed the status of Capt. Fickler from MIA to Presumptive Findings of Death. The same status was given to Major Kuhlman on 16 JUN 78.

The POW/ MIA Committee wishes to thank [www.pownetwork.org](http://www.pownetwork.org) for their permission to use the information in this profile. The Committee welcomes any information that any Legionnaire may have on one of our WI Veterans who are or have been POW/MIA from any

conflict. Please contact Tom Ingram, Chairman, State POW/MIA Committee at [tingram5@wi.rr.com](mailto:tingram5@wi.rr.com) or Robert Miller, Vice Chairman at [bmillerplake@charter.net](mailto:bmillerplake@charter.net), 262-279-6429 if you have any information to help our endeavor. Thank you !