

## 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 resident 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.

Lance Corporal Merlin Raye Allen, from Bayfield WI, was in Company A, 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Division. On 30 June 1967 LCpl Allen was part of a recon team transported on board a Sea Knight helicopter south of Hue. The recon team was to be inserted into a hotly contested forested, mountainous area where Viet Cong troops were believed to be operating. Their mission was to locate and report enemy activity in that area.

As the helicopter approached the landing zone it came under enemy small arms fire. The aircraft was hit several times, exploded in mid air and crashed. Later, a search and recovery team was inserted into the crash site to search the area for possible survivors and recover the dead. The team found no sign of survivors in or around the area. They examined the helicopter's wreckage and successfully recovered several sets of remains, which were transferred to a military mortuary for examination and identification. Remains of the Sea Knight's co-pilot and crew chief were positively identified along with some members of the reconnaissance team.

No remains were recovered that could be identified as belonging to LCpl Allen. There appears to be little doubt that Merlin Raye Allen died in the crash of the Sea Knight but if he survived, the same Viet Cong that shot down the helicopter would have captured him. His fate remains unaccounted for in Southeast Asia and he is listed as MIA.

The Committee wishes to thank Sam Solberg, past Commander of Portage County, past Commander of Richland-Center Post 13, and Past Commander and member of Plover Post 543 for bringing this story to our attention. 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 !