

# Tonkin Bay Angels Home for Christmas

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The angels of Tonkin Bay who made Christmas possible for 16 downed airmen whirred into Ream Field yesterday for their own gift of the season — home with their families and friends.

Manned by 30 pilots and 30 crewmembers, 15 twin-jet SH3A Sea Knight helicopters from Helicopter Squadron 6 came over the field in a tight formation from the carrier Kearsarge, 225 miles at sea. Experienced Welcome

The remaining 200 squadron members had their welcome home this morning. They arrived on the Kearsarge at North Island Naval Air Station at 7:15 a.m. The Long Beach-based carrier made a short stop here to unload the men and equipment.

Among the first to meet the welcome home crowd yesterday at Ream Field was Tom Goen, 27, an aviation sonarman first class. Last year he jumped into the sea from his helicopter to rescue a downed jet pilot a few hundred yards off the North Vietnam coast. Greeted Husband

His wife, Glynda, broke from the gathering of about 100 persons and dashed to meet her hero husband on the concrete apron. A long embrace followed. Then their children, Charles 2, and Leslie, 3, came forward to meet daddy after a six-month absence.

Goen of , 1022 Woodlawn Ave., Chula Vista, was awarded the nation's third highest award — the Silver Star — for gallantry in action.

Squadron members brought back a large bundle of medals for their heroism in Vietnam — six Silver Stars, eight Distinguished Flying Crosses and 90 Air Medals. Several more decorations, including two Navy Crosses are pending.

Goen, a 10-year Navy veteran, took time from the reunion with his family to discuss his actions last July.

"I could see the A4 driver (Skyhawk pilot) was hurt," Goen said. "He needed help so I jumped in."

## Hail of Bullets

The rescue drew a hail of fire from enemy shore guns but jets overhead quieted some of the North Vietnamese shore batteries.

The rescued pilot had been shot down by a patrol boat during a low-level night attack mission at Haiphong Harbor. He had dislocated his hip on impact.

The squadron's skipper, Cdr. Warren H. Lockwood of 620 Coronado Ave., Coronado, flew the chopper in the rescue. He earned the Distinguished Flying Cross. Just Doing Job

"We're not heroes," he said. "We were just doing our job." After dropping off Goen, Lockwood took evasive action

with the copter, then sat it down awash in the sea. He explained that he saw Goen struggling with the downed pilot. By putting the helicopter in the water, he said, Goen was able to bring the pilot on board with less difficulty.

Lockwood led his helicopters to Ream Field and was the first to land. He was met by his wife and their four children.

## Earns Promotion

William E, Runyon of 3934 Haines St., who was copilot on the rescue, also earned the DFC and a promotion. His flight jacket still showed ensign, but he was made a lieutenant junior grade about a month ago, he said.

The squadron's deepest overland rescue was conducted by Ltjg. William Waechter of 266 Daisy Ave., Imperial Beach, and his crew.

"We had to go 70 miles inland to pick up a downed F8 (Crusader) pilot," Waechter said. "The first 20 miles were pure hell.

## Destroyed Foes Guns

"Harley Olsen, who volunteered for the hop, destroyed a gun emplacement along the way.

"We flew in at about 1000 feet, then the pilot talked us down to his position. We didn't see him until the last moment. He was deep in the jungle.

Olsen is an Aviation Machinists Mate Second Class.