



My brother, David Robert Kink, was born on November 11, 1949, in Madison, Wisconsin. David went through basic training at Fort Polk, Louisiana and attended flight training at Fort Wolters, Texas and then Hunter-Stewart Airbase, Georgia, graduating on May 20, 1969 from Warrant Officer Rotary Wing Aviation Course (WORWAC) 69-11. He signed on with the First Cavalry Division, 1st Squadron 9th Cavalry Troop C, and arrived in Vietnam on June 18, 1969.

Six weeks later on August 3, 1969, he died of injuries received in a light observation helicopter (LOH 67-16566) crash that took place on July 21, 1969. The aircraft was brought down by a ground explosion from an unexploded 500-pound US bomb that had been camouflaged by the enemy in hopes the Americans would fire on it. It was David's second day in a LOH, having previously flown Huey lift helicopters. He was

getting his "scout eyes." Killed immediately were Aircraft Commander John E. Anderson and Gunner Edward "Mike" Denuff. David was the only survivor. He lived for 12 days before he died in Japan, at the 106th General Hospital, Tokyo. He was 19, and I had turned eight while he was in Vietnam. David was survived by his parents, brother and two sisters.

In 1993 I began searching for people who may have known my brother, in hopes of finding out more about what kind of a person he was and what he did in Vietnam. I am very grateful to the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, Vietnam Helicopter Flight Crew Network, Vietnam Helicopter Crew Members Association, First Cavalry Division Association and Bullwhip Squadron Association. In his last letter home, David wrote, "You're never alone on a mission." That truth has resonated throughout my long search to learn about the brother I barely knew.

David served during his short time in Vietnam under the respected leadership of Col. Pete Booth, 9th Cav Squadron Commander, and Maj. Robert Tredway, C Troop Commander, two men whom I have come to know and love. From what I have been told by those whose paths he crossed, he would have made a good pilot had he lived.