



IN MEMORY

Specialist Fourth Class Daniel "Dan" Lee Zimmerly



Dan Zimmerly, son of Sam and Helen Zimmerly, was born May 25 1944 in the small SW Washington area known as Ridgefield, Washington. His pioneer family cleared and farmed the land around Ridgefield. He was the sixth of ten children, with four brothers and five sisters. From a young age, as soon as Dan could "brake" and "steer," he helped on the family farm driving tractors and other heavy equipment. He graduated from Ridgefield High School in 1962. After graduation Dan's farming skills served him well as he took on jobs in road construction. He continued to work in road construction until he joined the Army in 1963.



Dan Standing AT Parade Rest

Upon enlisting, Dan received his basic training at Ft. Ord, CA. After basic training he was sent to Ft. Gordon, GA where he trained to become an Avionic Electronics Tech. In September 1964 Dan married his high school sweetheart, Margaret. Immediately, he and Margaret moved to Ft. Lewis, Washington where they remained until he shipped out to Vietnam. Dan was one of the original ten-men team of the 231st Signal Detachment sent to Phu Bai. Among the team with whom he served were those names captured in a story written by James D. Sheets:

“2nd Lt Robert P Covino, Commanding (Bronx NY, NY)
Sp5 George Roberts, TACAN Maintenance (Philadelphia Pa.)
Sp4 Stephen Nogle Communications Maintenance depot (Lewiston Idaho)
Sp4 James D. Sheets, Electronics Maintenance. Crypto (temp supply specialist)
(Rural Iowa)
Sp4 Howard Crawford Communications Maintenance flight line (Panama)
PFC Bruce Wombel Electronics Maintenance depot (Dalhart Texas)
PFC "Butch" Lovell (Eastern Pennsylvania)
PFC Daniel Zimmerly Electronics Maintenance depot (Ridgefield, Washington)
PFC Donald Scrima Electronics Maintenance flight line (Scranton Pennsylvania)

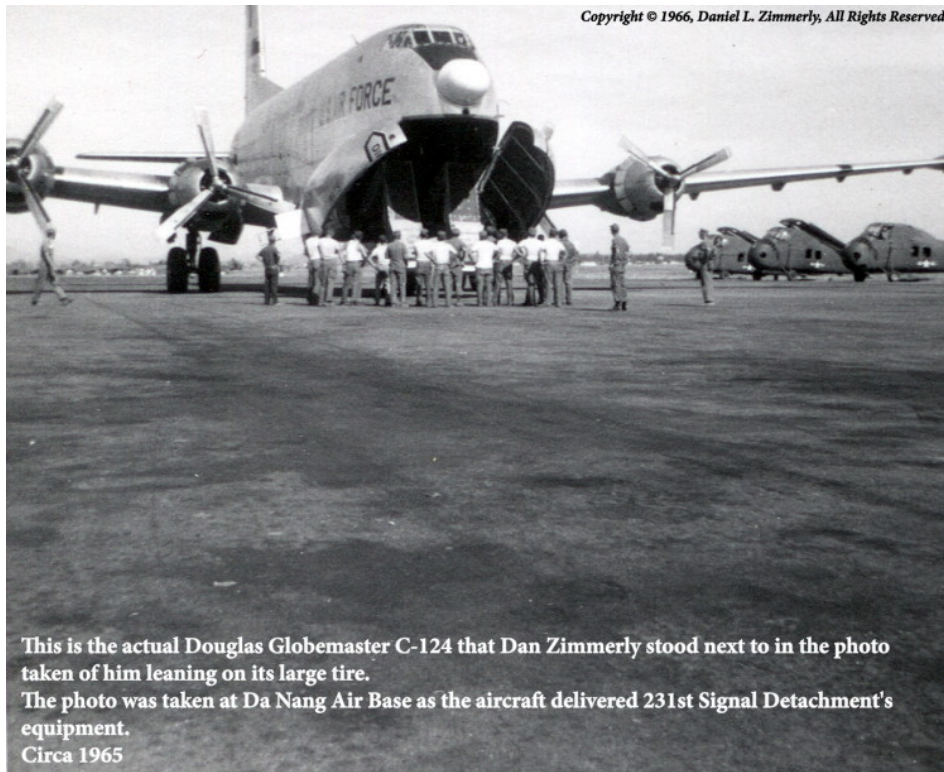
Staff Sergeant Davis arrived after about a month after we were deployed and operational at Phu Bai. about six months into our tour he got amebic dysentery and was evacuated out of country.
Staff Sergeant Carter (Colombia Ga.) arrived to take Sgt. Davis' slot.”

Upon arrival at Fort Lewis, 2nd Lieutenant Bob Covino was told he would assume command of the 231st Signal Detachment, which would be attached to the 220th Aviation Company He was also assigned the role of the 220th's Signal Officer. The units were to be assigned to I Corps to support the 1st and 2nd Vietnamese Divisions and the 3rd US Marine Division. Bob relates the preparation and trip to Vietnam in his story. The 231st was a unit in name only with a brand new TO&E. The personnel and equipment were being assembled from all parts of the United States. Since we were being deployed to a war zone we had a very high priority and as such I was able to do things like take a division commander's command van from him and have it flown to Ft Lewis.

Jim Sheets would recount, “they were busy ordering equipment and getting that equipment to calibration and back and re-packed in the boxes it was shipped in. Steve Nogle and I were Sp-4's and I had the lead ordering and processing. Steve took the lead getting the equipment to calibration and then re-packed. We had to get vehicles to the motor pool for servicing and then ready for shipment. The guys all took tasks as they came up and worked them. When a PFC arrived at the base transportation motor pool to request war priority action for their requests it raised eye brow. I had a senior NCO at the base motor pool tell me that he could not mount workbenches on some #@sp-4's request or authority. I gave him the telephone number and name of the base's G-2 Officer In Charge, a major. He went to see his captain and returned to ask how I wanted the benches mounted? We were very busy doing the above before shipment. Everything was hurry up.

Lt. Covino assigned me to the advanced party to go to Vietnam. We found out our assignment location in Saigon. I don't think that Major Curry knew where we would end up until the advanced party arrived in Saigon. The rest of the unit was transported via C-130 to Vietnam.

The 220th and 231st personnel main bodies left Seattle Tacoma airport for Vietnam on 2 July 1965, on C-130 aircraft, while our equipment was moved from Fort Lewis to the Port of Seattle to go by ship. We only stopped for breakfast at Hickham Field, Hawaii, Guam and Wake

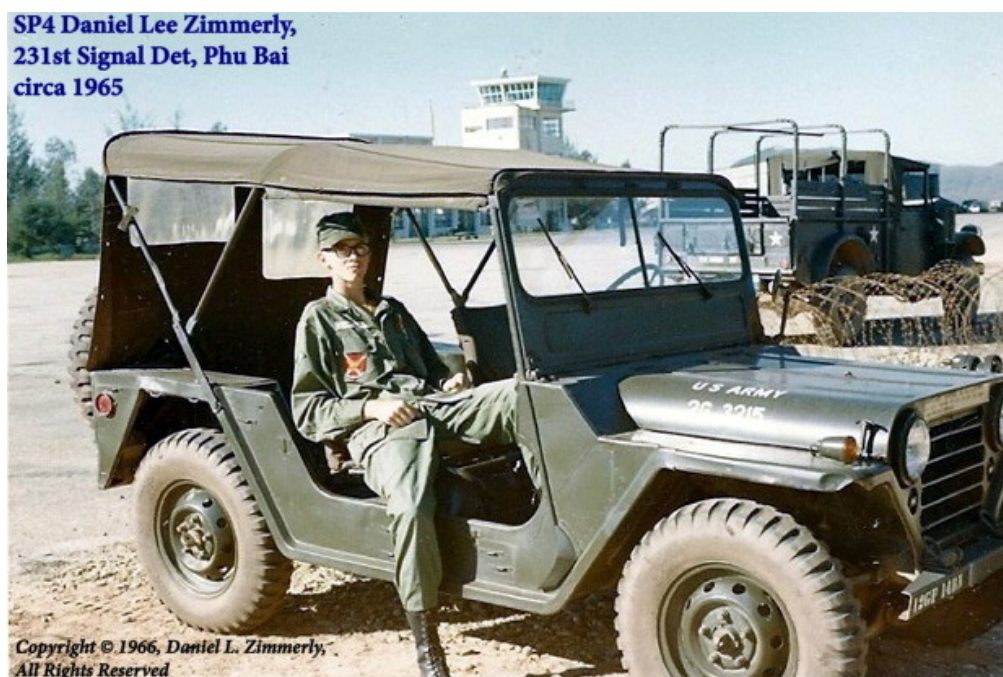


Island while on our trip. Upon arrival at Da Nang, USAF personnel informed us that it was too risky to fly C-130's into Phu Bai, so we were transferred to C-123 aircraft—with our weapons and not much else. When we landed at Phu Bai the C-123's barely stopped to let us off and quickly took off.

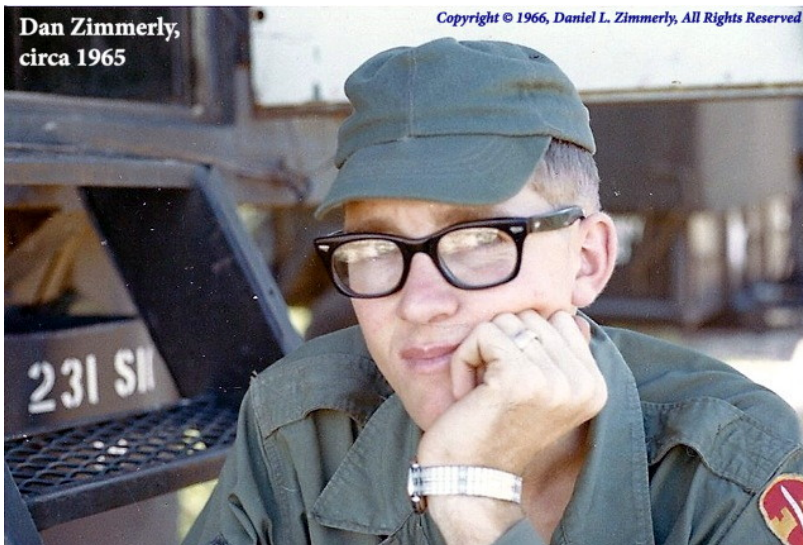
We were briefed on the situation soon after arrival and now understood why the C-123's left so quickly. We were told there were six VC battalions in the hills around Phu Bai and they were expected to attack in the next few weeks. That attack never occurred.

We landed at Phu Bai on the 4th of July and there were plenty of “fireworks” to mark the occasion. The Marine artillery gunners (we had a reinforced Marine Battalion from the 3rd Marine Division providing security for Phu Bai) fired 105s all night in support of a Marine outpost that was under attack in the hills. We could see the hill from our camp and the whole hill was a mass of flame except for the top where the outpost was.

Our equipment was unloaded at Da Nang and we had to convoy it to Phu Bai via highway 1, thankfully an uneventful trip but still a white knuckle one at least for me.”



The 231st was assigned an area next to the tarmac. We set up our vans, connected the generators and were operational in one day. We eventually had a partial hanger constructed between two of our vans so that we could work on aircraft in bad weather and out of the hot sun. Bob Covino recalled convoying the vehicles from Da Nang to Phu Bai, including the vehicles for the 220th aviation unit. Pilots began ferrying the airplanes to Phu Bai, Chu Lai, and Da Nang. We were ready for business almost immediately. The planes were new and all had been checked out before shipment therefore they were easy to maintain at this time. Mr. Benny had the hanger mechanics ready for work immediately.



**Dan Zimmerly,
circa 1965**

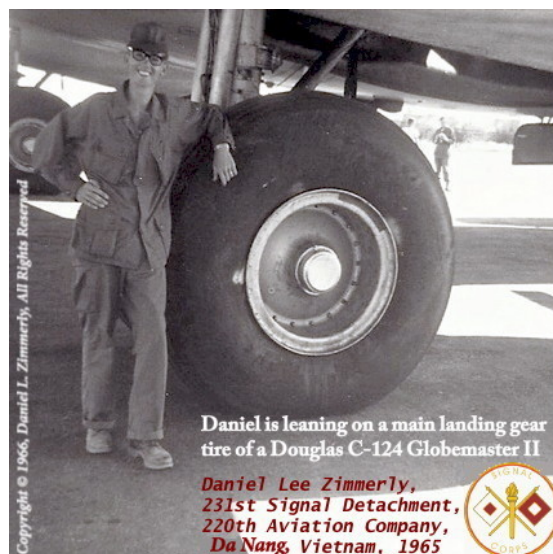
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Dan in a contemplative mood outside of his repair van

Bob Covino recalled, “after we were at Phu Bai for a while Major Curry and his staff took some L-19s to Hue for an intelligence briefing. We were told that the VC and NVA were planning to create another Dien Bien Phu at Phu Bai. We returned to Phu Bai and coordinated defenses with the Marine Battalion. My position with some of the 231st personnel was a 50 Cal machine gun tower. The 8th RRU that was located adjacent to our area commenced burning their classified documents.

Soon after, one of our L-19s was sent up to scout the area on a very overcast day. As a result, an enemy force was spotted approaching the field. This force—I do not remember if it was VC or NVA—was then engaged by the Marines. Marine F4s from Da Nang also took part in the battle, flying in low overcast, at tree top level, and flying directly over us. (to the best of my recollection two of them flew into a mountain on the way back to Da Nang). What also occurred by chance, a Vietnamese Airborne unit ran into an NVA force heading to Phu Bai to join their friends in the attack.

Fortunately the attack was foiled before the enemy units were in position and the airfield was not breached. The Marines beat off the attack but took a number of KIAs and WIAs. The Marine KIAs were laid out in body bags next to Major Curry’s tent and stayed there for a while because it was too overcast to fly them out. “

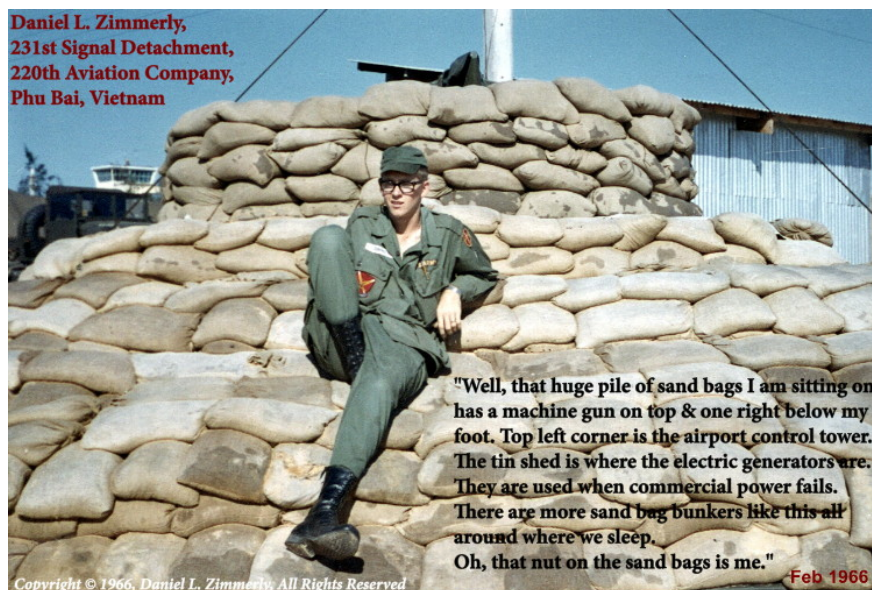


**Daniel is leaning on a main landing gear
tire of a Douglas C-124 Globemaster II**

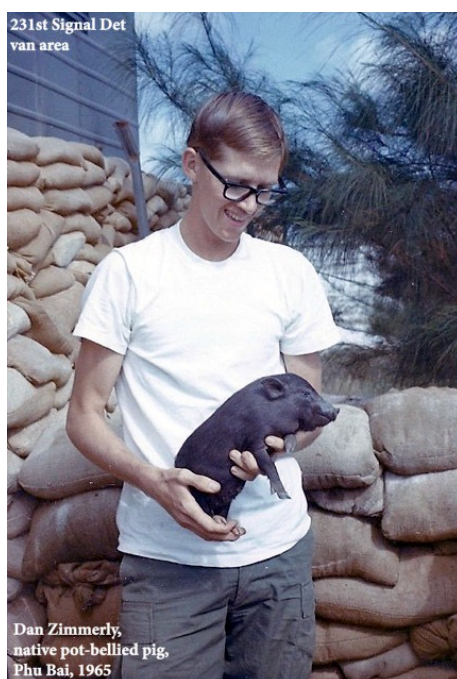
**Daniel Lee Zimmerly,
231st Signal Detachment,
220th Aviation Company,
Da Nang, Vietnam, 1965**



Dan participated in the day-to-day work of the unit. I believe he worked for Steve at this time. He did guard duty like the rest of us, worked on aircraft and did modifications to aircraft. He also worked in the shop fixing radios and cross training like the rest of us did. He got his share of sand bag filling and placement. He got to string barbed wire, concertina wire, and set metal posts as did others. All this fun stuff occurred during July, August, and September 1965, when the shade of our repair vans was greatly appreciated.



Jim Sheets would recall that life for Dan, the others and himself, was not all work and no play. The 220th Aviation Company would become known for its ability to create opportunities to provide diversion from the day-to-day work. Whether it was adopting a local pet pig, engaging the locals or even divulging in a game of chance or two, Dan was always game.



We had been at Phu Bai about two weeks building bunkers and such. We were all gamey and in desperate need of clean laundry. About ten laundry girls were hired and assigned to the tents, one laundry girl per tent. Each tent had about eight guys in it. We got, luck of the draw, and were assigned the prettiest girl in our minds. Her name was Thou, pronounced two. At work someone decided she should be called Sally so that afternoon, after work, we went back to our tent to find clean laundry to change into. Dan boldly called to the laundry girl Sally, and she turned on him and pointed to herself and said Thou, Thou! Letting us know emphatically that her name was Thou. Dan said in pigeon English, "Sally English, same-same Vietnamese Thou." She understood and was taken aback by his answer. Other guys responded, "yes Sally same-same Thou." From then on we all called her Sally and with time she accepted her new name.

However, the gamblers, whom none of us were, was to be indelibly etched in our minds as we undertook a friendly game of poker. So, one Sunday afternoon some of us were playing penny-ante poker and Dan was simply watching for a while, so we invited him to play. We started to explain the rules to him which he suspiciously picked up right away. Dan was more than a quick study as we would learn and he played and won and played and won and this went on for several more hands. He won them all! What a streak of beginners luck he had. After winning a fist full of our money he dropped out. I've seen beginners luck but his luck was over the top. I don't recall him playing again.

One Sunday morning Dan and I decided to play catch with a football. We went to the parking area for airplanes and it being Sunday no aircraft were taking off or coming in. We had a large flat asphalt surface to use. With time we spread out the throws. Dan just missed a long throw by inches and as frequently happens with this situation, he fell forward. Heals of his hands and his cheek and chest were scraped by the asphalt. He went to the Navy medics, who were next door to our camp and returned about two hours later. A doctor had taken the time to pick out every single grain of asphalt from all four areas, indicating that each grain would leave a black mark like a tattoo if not removed and allowed to heal. The damage was all skin deep but painful according to Dan. We never used the aircraft parking area for playing catch again.

We all are a bit superstitious and hold our good luck talisman close to our person. One day Jim asked Dan what the fob was that he always wore on his belt. Dan replied, "that it was a Caterpillar fob and that the Caterpillar was the only kind of equipment that his brother Paul bought for his road construction company." Dan brought the fob home and his family still has it today.

Margaret remembers Dan describing that while at Phu Bai ground forces near Chu Lai requested support from an Avionic Technician, and Dan was selected to go. He spent several weeks near Chu Lai and for this service he received the Vietnam Service Medal [**Editor:** This medal was actually the [Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon Bar for service with the 1st or 3rd Platoons during period 18 to 23 August 1965](http://www.catkillers.org/unit-awards-roster6June1966.pdf)]

<http://www.catkillers.org/unit-awards-roster6June1966.pdf>

In 1966 Dan returned to Ft. Lewis WA and was discharged to civilian life shortly after. Jim Sheets recalled the same incident where Dan was sent to support (avionics) for the platoon at Chu Lai and spent three or four weeks there. Near Our rotation, about a year later, I recall that he received a medal for participating in support of the operation at Chu Lai. I believe (guessing) it was operation Starlite. Lt. Covino would be the authority on this point.



Margaret recalls after the Army, Dan began working for his older brother, Paul, operating heavy equipment for Zimmerly Rock Products. As the Zimmerly Company grew, Dan found himself working into a position as Paul's superintendent for the five rock pits and the many road construction jobs they acquired. In order to adequately oversee a growing business, Paul bought a helicopter to help manage the distance between road jobs and the rock pits; both Dan and Paul became experienced chopper pilots. On a wintry December 17, 1982 day, they were flying the chopper on a business trip when they crashed in the fog near Portland, Oregon. Both were killed in the crash; Dan was 38 years old.

Source: Catkiller Website – History Index

<http://www.catkillers.org/history-covino-1965.html>

<http://www.catkillers.org/James-Sheets-Readers-Digest.pdf>

DAN ZIMMERLY, VIDEO PHOTOGRAPHER, 1965

Dan returned with personally filmed memories and they were placed into a smaller file version and made available by his family for use at the Catkiller web site at this homepage link under:

**SP4 Daniel L. Zimmerly, 231st Signal Detachment, personal video from 1965-66
(uncut): Copyright © 1966, Daniel L. Zimmerly, All Rights Reserved**

<http://www.catkillers.org>

Copter Disappears With Two Local Men

RIDGEFIELD - Searchers flew over Washington and Oregon this morning hoping to find a single engine helicopter that was lost between here and Hillsboro, Oregon. Two Ridgefield men were aboard. Paul Zimmerly, the 46-year old owner of the helicopter, left his home at 6706 N.W. 209th St. at about 5:30 a.m. headed for the Hillsboro Airport, said John Lofgren today. Lofgren is office manager at Paul Zimmerly Rock Products of Battle Ground.

The trip of about 21 air miles should have taken about 20 to 25 minutes. At 10 a.m., the Oregon State Aeronautics Division coordinated a search for the craft, said spokesman Ron Holden. The missing helicopter is a silver Enstrom 5686Z. The 304th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron sent two planes into the air to search at 10:45 a.m., a spokesman said.

Zimmerly's brother, Dan of Ridgefield, also was in the helicopter, and Lofgren did not know which man was the aircraft's pilot. They intended to continue on a business trip from Hillsboro in another aircraft, Lofgren said. He did not know where they were going. Today is Paul's birthday, Lofgren said.

Paul has owned his helicopter for three years, said Lofgren. Paul's wife, Judy, said she was very concerned this morning. She was waiting by the phone hoping for news. The couple's son David, reportedly was in an airplane searching for his father this morning, Lofgren said.

Local Pair Die In Copter Crash

By Pat Moser - The Columbian



Multnomah County Sheriff's Deputy David Pollard stands guard at wreckage of Zimmerly Helicopter Saturday

PORTLAND - The bodies of two prominent Clark County brothers were removed from the scattered wreckage of a helicopter in a remote wooded area of Portland's West Hills Saturday afternoon. Dead are Paul Zimmerly, 46, of 6706 N.W. 2019th St., Ridgefield, and Dan Zimmerly, 38, of 4001 N.W. 127th St. Paul owned Paul Zimmerly Rock Products of Battle Ground, and Dan was his operating superintendant. No one is sure who was the pilot of the flight that left Ridgefield early Friday. It normally takes about 25 minutes to reach Hillsboro.

As air searchers hunted for the Zimmerly brothers Friday, they spotted the wreck of another single engine airplane believed to have been lost since February 9, 1981. It had disappeared on a flight from Clark County Aerodrome near Orchards to Pearson Airpark in Vancouver. Don Rudebaugh, 28, was the pilot and lone occupant. There appeared to be the remains of one body in the wreckage, a Washington County sheriff's spokesman said. Searchers left the crash site because of darkness Saturday. They, with federal Aviation Administration officials, were to return there today, the spokesman said.

The Zimmerly brothers were going to Hillsboro to catch a private jet plane bound for California where they would tour a helicopter factory, family members said. Paul Zimmerly was considering buying himself a helicopter on his birthday, Friday.

FAA investigators Saturday poured over the smashed pieces of the \$135,000 single engine Enstrom helicopter. The parts were strewn over a 50 yard radius after crashing through dense Alder trees on the rugged southern flank of the Cornelius Pass Friday morning. The ridge is in the direct flight from Ridgefield to Hillsboro. Family members said the brothers often flew that route.

Two helicopters of the 304th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron from Portland Air Base plus aircraft from Hillsboro searched the mountain region unsuccessfully most of the day Friday. Around 10 a.m. Saturday, a 304th helicopter crew spotted the wreckage through a hole in the forest canopy that the diving helicopter had sheared onto the slope of the ridge. The twisted wreckage was about a quarter mile east of Skyline Boulevard near Moreland Road in Multnomah County near the Washington County line.

The brothers and Paul's oldest child, David, 20 had learned to fly the Enstrom helicopter soon after Paul bought it three years ago. Dan was the father of Katrina, 8, and Jenell, 6. Besides David, Paul was the father of Annette, 18, Dennis, 13, and Julie, 11.

Crash Victims Found

Spokane Cronicle - December 20, 1982

RANDLE, Wash. (AP) - A wrecked helicopter and the bodies of two men in it were recovered Sunday north of Mt. St. Helens after a letup in the blizzard that prevented recovery following the crash Saturday. The cause of the crash in the rugged Strawberry Mountain area near Ryan Lake is under investigation, said a Skamania County sheriff's deputy.

The victims were identified as David Allen McDougal, 27, Lovelock, Nevada, and Jack G. Ruby, 36, Ketchum, Idaho, who were repossessing the helicopter for a Nevada firm.

Meanwhile, searchers looking for a helicopter in Northwestern Oregon over the weekend found not one downed aircraft but two. The craft - a helicopter missing since it left Ridgefield, Washington, Friday and a single engine plane that disappeared in 1981 - were found 1 ½ miles apart, 15 miles northwest of Portland. The Washington County sheriff's office identified the pilot and sole occupant of the fixed-wing craft as Don Rudebaugh, 28, who disappeared February 9, 1981. The Multnomah County Medical Examiners Office identified the victims of the helicopter crash as Paul Zimmerly, 46, of Ridgefield, Washington and his brother Dan Zimmerly, 38, Vancouver, Washington.

Paul and Dan Zimmerly

RIDGEFIELD – Paul David Zimmerly and Daniel Lee Zimmerly, two brothers who died Friday in a helicopter crash, will be remembered here for their dedication to their work and families, relatives said today. Paul owned and operated Paul Zimmerly Road Construction for 15 years, and affiliated rock products company for six years. Daniel, 38, was the general superintendant of the rock products company. Both men died when a helicopter owned by Paul crashed in a remote, wooded area of Portland's West Hills. The two had left Ridgefield early Friday and were flying to Hillsboro.

A graveside service for both men will be held at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday at the Northwood Park Cemetery, 16407 N.E. Union Road, with the Reverends Arthur Fish and Alvin Gustafson officiating. Daniel was born May 25, 1944, and Paul was born December 17, 1936. Both were born in the Pioneer area. Dan last resided at 4001 N.W. 127th St., and Paul lived at 6706 N.W. 209th St. Both men enjoyed hunting and flying.

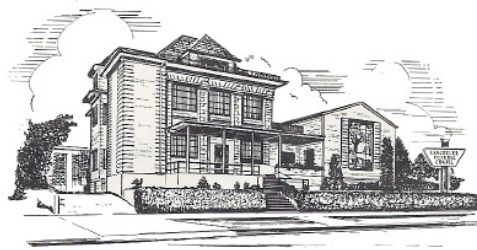
"His work was a big part of his life. He enjoyed it as much as the other things," Judy Zimmerly, widow of Paul, said today. "It was a challenge for him to see what he could do." While Margaret Zimmerly, widow of Daniel, said he "had a special thing for his family. We were number one with him."

In addition to his widow, Paul is survived by two sons, David and Dennis, and two daughters, Annette, and Julie, all at home. Daniel's survivors, in addition to his widow, include two daughters, Katrina and Jenell, both at home. Both men are survived by their parents, Mr. and Mrs. S.D. Zimmerly of Richfield; three brothers, Sam Jr., Roy and Glen, all of Vancouver, and five sisters, Helen Erickson, and Donna Wulf, both of Vancouver, Dorothy Yost of Battle Ground, Mary Lauby of Philomath, Oregon, and Martha Steiger of Ridgefield.

Paul was a member of the Pleasant View Church of the Nazarene in Ridgefield and of the Associated Builders and Contractors. Daniel served with the U.S. Army in Vietnam and was a member of the Vancouver Trap Club and National Rifle Association.

Memorials in Paul's name may be made to the Pleasant View Church of the Nazarene, 801 N.E. 194th St., Richfield, 98642. Memorials in Daniel's name may be made to Children's Village, USA, a home for abused children. The address is P.O. Box 4175, Woodland Hills, California 91365.

Daniel Lee Zimmerly
25 May 1944 – 17 December 1982
IN MEMORY OF OUR BROTHER IN ARMS



In Remembrance

VANCOUVER FUNERAL CHAPEL
Harold M. Stephens Daniel H. Snively
Kenneth L. Ellertson
Kenneth R. Andrews Dick L. Wills
VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON
Parking Twelfth and "C" Sts.

In Memory of
DANIEL LEE ZIMMERLY
Born
May 25, 1944 in Pioneer, Washington
Passed Away
December 17, 1982 in Multnomah Co., Oregon
Graveside Services at
Northwood Park Cemetery
Tuesday, December 21, at one-thirty p.m.

Officiating
The Rev. Arthur Fish
The Rev. Alvin Gustafson
Sharon Bishop, Soloist

Casket Bearers
Art Raz Roy Zimmerly
Walt Yost Glen Zimmerly
John Yost David Zimmerly
Kevin Avery Dennis Zimmerly
Larry Pitzer Sam Zimmerly, Jr.
John Lofgren Vinton Erickson

Final Resting Place
Northwood Park Cemetery
Vancouver, Washington

The Twenty-Third Psalm

*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the
paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death, I will fear no evil:
For thou art with me; thy rod and
thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the
presence of mine enemies:
thou anointest my head with oil;
my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow
me all the days of my life:
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*

FOND AND FAMILIAR MEMORIES OF DAN ZIMMERLY

By Margaret Zimmerly Brookshire

Dan was a good man with great work ethics and well respected by those that knew him. Margaret shared a heartfelt note that was sent to her after Dan's death, receiving it from William Pierce, Construction Assistant WSDOT;

"Dan's work with the Washington Department of Transportation on highway projects was an asset to this State and to the community. He will be sincerely missed." "Dan was an exceptional heavy equipment operator, he had the ability to operate any piece of equipment and do it very well. He operated the 1st Stringline grader on the west coast; it was very high tech for the 70's. We are still driving on portions of two Interstate highways that he graded. Dan was always willing to lend a helping hand to someone in need, from putting in wood for an elderly friend to helping stranded people on the highway."

Dan loved the outdoors! His interests involved hunting, fishing, camping, trap shooting, loud music and fast cars.



The One That Didn't Get Away



Many hours were spent riding in his 1966 red 396 Chevelle SS that he bought while in Vietnam; he loved that car! After Army life, both he and I continued to work and built two homes not far from where he grew up in Ridgefield. After several years of marriage, two beautiful daughters joined our family, further enriching our life together. It was Dan the family man that often said "Taking care of my family is the best job I could have." He would include his family in his daily life as much as possible. After work Dan would come home with a smile and his jacket held open so that his three girls could give him a hug. An especially sweet memory, his girls would recall sitting on a tall stool in Dan's gun room "helping" him reload shells for trap shooting. He took them on many trap shooting meets where he shot well and won more than a few trophies.

Dan enjoyed being in the outdoors, making many clam digging trips to the coast and going camping with friends and family. The slower pace of winter brought more time to spend together as a family. Many winter evenings Dan would turn the music on high and we would dance around the house leaving us all laughing. The Christmas Season was a special time, starting with the hunt for a very tall tree, which had to be at least 12 feet high. The family holiday gatherings at our home were full of food, laughter and gifts. Life was simple but very good. Dan's sense of humor accompanied by his love for family filled our home with laughter and happiness.



Dan's Pride and Joy— —a 1966 **Chevelle**

Dan loved his country and was proud to serve with his brothers in arms. The Catkiller web site would have meant a great deal to him and would have served as a means for him to stay connected with the men with whom he served. As Dan's widow, I am grateful for the added memories that the Catkiller site has brought to our daughters and me.

Margaret Zimmerly Brookshire

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS FROM DAN'S VIETNAM COLLECTION



These three men were friends.





Dan was stationed at the "X" he marked on the map



Walking around during the Monsoon season

On the beach. Not all work and no play



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A touch of ancient times, the timeless pulled rickshaw

Transcribed and arranged by Dennis D. Currie, Assistant Editor, www.catkillers.org