

To any SP5B Crewmember: My name is Joseph B. "Bernie" Daugherty and I served in VP-40 1960-1962 at Sangley Point, R.P. At the time I was the 1st Julie and electrician on QE-1 when we got lost and hit the side of a mountain while returning to Sangley from a night anti submarine excercise. I was the only survivor when they finally found me three days following the crash. Contrary to the U.S. Navy accident report and other printed matter on the crash there was one other survivor after initial impact besides myself. >From the details contained in the accident report the positions of the rest of the crew members support that one other person survived the initial crash. He finally died on the second day from loss of blood from a missing arm. As for myself I had two broken arms, a broken cheek and jaw, teeth knocked out 1st., 2nd. & 3rd degree burns over 1/3 of my body and a hugh cut on the back of my left leg that is about three feet long and 3-4 inches deep and wide. I have been trying for over 30 years to get the Navy to talk to me so that the real reason of the accident could be told, and it was not due to pilot and/or navigator error that we crashed into the mountain side. Wheather anyone choses to believe me or not the cause of the accident was a lightening strike which fried almost all of our instruments plus putting a hugh hole in the nose of the aircraft. Over the thirty odd years that I have thought about the accident on a daily basis I can say that the lightening strike, and loss of instruments were the main cause of the accident, if anyone remembers the accident and the preflight investigation we already had a known malfunctioning radar altimeter. For anyone that is interested the Ordanceman and myself asked for permission to unstrap to tie down some smokes that had been thrown out of the smoke bin before they ignited, everyone else was strapped in with chest pack chutes on. Our plan, I should say Cdr. Vegeland's ,was to climb to altitude and jump because we knew we were lost and was very low on fuel. We were in the processof climbing to altitude when the initial hit occurred. When the ordanceman and my self was trying to tie down the smokes we hit the top of the trees, the skipper tublocked the throttles and pulled the nose of the plane up very sharply so we initially hit on our tail by the hydrofoils which split the plan open leaving a large tail section intact. When this happened it threw myself and the ordanceman out of the aircraft onto the ground. As it was the raining season we did not die from dehidration and the mud sealed most of our cuts and covered our burns. There are some graphic details that I remember about myself and the other survivor and would not like to have to tell any of his family that might be still alive because it is not a pretty story, but it is a true one. No way was it pilot and or navigator error that caused the crash of QE-1. I hope someday to set the record straight not for myself but for the rest of the crew and Cdr. Vegeland's son Pete Vegeland who writes to me once in awhile. Bernie Daugherty, ex AE-1 . Even after all these years I still have some fond memories of the squadronand the personnel who served in it with me. What I do not miss was that x@31lvcjn Sunstrand that the electricians always had to change, almost every flight. If anyone wishes to correspond with me my e-mail is Daugherty@charter.net and I live in Granite City, Illinois just across the river from St. Louis, Missouri. Thanks for listening to my story...Joseph B. "Bernie" Daugherty daugherty@charter.net..." [14NOV2002]