

Notes on Bat 21: The movie is a start.



These three pages are to discuss the movie Bat 21, spend some time with Steve Richie, and then suggest a Web site to see another rescue in the Vietnam war.

1. It has been a while since I saw Bat 21. I forgot how Hollywoodized it was. The way Birddog was flying his Cessna 0-2 was short of being insane – you just don't fly low across a gathering of troops sporting automatic weapons.
2. Four days into the rescue, Bat 21 still has no beard.
3. Delivering napalm, rockets, or strafing, with 20 mike-mike is normally not done in formation with another fighter.

One of the instructors at Webb had flown the EB-66B. Funny, but his name was Eby (David Eby) ops officer of Voodoo Flight – T-38s. On the same page were pilots that had flown F-4s, A-1 Skyraiders (Sandies), B-52s, F-100s, and the engineer on the UAL 232 (DC-10) crash in Sioux City in 1989.

General Steve Richie is the only Vietnam "Ace" having shot down five MiG-21s in 1972 – two of them on the same day July 8th. Jeanne and I were at Nellis AFB in 1997 for the 50th anniversary of the USAF and got to see Richie fly his last F-4 while on Active Duty.

The last item is a short video of Richie discussing how they got Roger Locher out of North Vietnam. There were about 3800 crew members rescued during the war but this one told by Richie is as good as it gets. This is the real reason for this short paper.

[Brig. Gen. Steve Ritchie and the Rescue of Roger Locher - AMAC - The Association of Mature American Citizens](#) (8:43)

The rest of this shows some notes on Bat 21, Richie's F-4D, and his ribbons.



During the last days of the Vietnam War, USAF Lieutenant colonel **Iceal E. "Gene" Hambleton** (Gene Hackman) call sign BAT-21 Bravo, is flying on board an EB-66C electronic warfare aircraft

While still coming down by parachute, Hambleton makes radio contact with Captain Bartholomew "Birddog" Clark (Danny Glover), the pilot of a Cessna O-2 Skymaster, flying a forward air control mission near where the EB-66 was destroyed.

Portions of *Bat*21* were highly dramatized, including the climactic battle. Some characters were composites of real people, while others were created for the film.

The actual rescue took over 11 days, during which a major attack was delayed, resulting in numerous South Vietnamese soldiers being killed and wounded.



Douglas RB-66B Destroyer





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Just one word: *Impressive...*