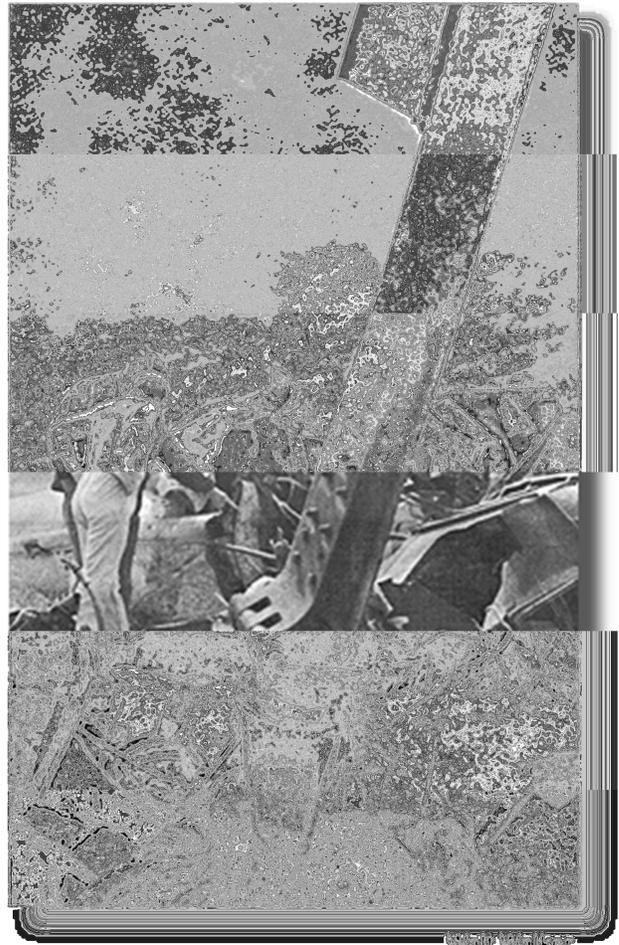


## Missing Medivac helicopter

**May 30, 1981**  
**San Timeteo Canyon**  
**1981-017**

At a little after 0700 hrs. Saturday, RMRU member Walt Walker received a call from Ray Canova, Captain of the Banning Sheriffs' office. He informed Walt that the Loma Linda Medivac helicopter was missing in heavy ground fog between the Banning Pass Hospital and San Bernardino General Hospital. The last communication from the chopper carrying a premature infant, two doctors, a respiratory therapist, a nurse, and the pilot was received at a little after midnight. The Captain requested our Direction-Finding equipment and four of our members, two for each D.F. receiver. Walt called Rick Pohlers and asked him to contact Joe Erickson and the two of them responded with the No. 2 van to the Colony Kitchen in Beaumont. Walt then called son Kevin Walker and they rolled in the No. 1 van. Walt and Kevin reached Beaumont first. Upon turning on the D.R. unit, they got a signal from an Emergency Location Transmitter (ELT). From there they drove up to nearby Mt. Davis, a high point looking over the Beaumont area. Again they got a signal, but now were able to get a bearing. Walt radioed the direction to the command post. The Civil Air Patrol also turned in a compass heading. With the two bearings the command post was able to triangulate the location on a map, which put the signal near the end of San Timeteo Canyon. With the ground fog starting to clear the San Bernardino Sheriff helicopter was able to fly one of the compass headings to where the other bearing came across. It was not long after that, that a grim message came into



**CRASH SCENE** - The large green and white helicopter had broken into three major pieces of wreckage. The turbine engine (not shown), the transmission and main rotor assembly (foreground) and the fuselage were strewn across an old grain field. Riverside County Sheriff's Captain Ray Canova points out to Deputy Assistant Coroner Carl Smith one of the bodies that was trapped in the main wreckage of the helicopter.

base. The crash site had been located and that there were six fatalities.

All vehicles and equipment were moved to San Timeteo Canyon. The crash was only several hundred yards off the highway. Our four members were asked to stay and help in the extrication of the bodies from the wreckage. Before doing so, the coroner, FAA, and the National Safety Transportation Board had to be contacted. Once all were present the sad task began. Once all the bodies were moved back to the road, our job was done.

Air crashes are never easy, and something a rescuer never gets use to, but sadly enough, are sometimes part of our job. We of RMRU would like to express our sympathy to the families and friends for the loss of a very valuable team of emergency personnel.

RMRU is a volunteer search and rescue team that covers Riverside County and assists other teams with search and rescue efforts in other counties. Each member purchases their own equipment and takes time off work, without compensation, to participate in search and rescue missions. Team equipment is purchased from contributions from the community. We are a non-profit organization and are funded by [donations](#) from people like you.