

Enlisted Hero Walk Lackland AFB



Sergeant Thomas J. Bateson

No photo available

Silver Star

Vietnam

Sergeant Thomas J. Bateson distinguished himself by gallantry in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force on Koh Tang Island in the Gulf of Thailand on 15 May 1975. On that date, Sergeant Bateson was the Pararescue Specialist of a helicopter crew which on two separate missions delivered a contingent of United States Marines to the island in spite of heavy and constant hostile ground fire.

Later on the same day while attempting to remove an isolated Marine force, the aircraft received additional damage, was forced to withdraw and make a single engine landing on the aircraft carrier USS Coral Sea. After emergency repairs were accomplished, the aircraft returned to the island and still facing intensive ground fire and with the added hazard of total darkness made a successful removal of ground crew forces. This courageous action aided in the recovery of the SS Mayaguez and its crew. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Sergeant Bateson has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.