

## Plane Wreckage Found in West Canyon

A missing single engine Cherokee Six airplane was found Friday, October 7, in the mountains of northwest Utah County.

Sgt. Dean Kirkham of the Utah County Sheriff's Department said the airplane was discovered at the 8,000 foot level of West Canyon mid-Friday afternoon by Ronald V. Smith of Lehi, and his 13 year old son, Todd, as they were horseback riding in the canyon.

The plane had been missing since Friday, Sept. 30, enroute to Salt Lake City from Houston, Texas. It contained seven occupants, nearly all in their 20's, who were on their way to the LDS General Conference held that weekend.

Since then a four-state air search had failed to turn up any clues to the missing aircraft and its occupants.

Dr. Serge Moore, Utah's medical examiner, said the

occupants all apparently died on impact. The plane was piloted by Robert Butterworth, 25 of Houston. The others, also of Houston, were Terry Way, 30; Carry Holt, 28; Jan Williamson, 25; Maxine Ferguson, 22; Thomas Hunt; 22 and Bob Marsin, in his late 20's.

Mr. Smith said he and his son arrived on the scene of the crash about 3:30 Saturday afternoon. "I had never been up in that section before and wanted to go in to see what it looked like. We were scouting the location for the coming deer season, and I was surveying the terrain with binoculars when I saw something blue in a clump of trees. I thought someone had hung out a shirt. As we got closer I saw something that was white, and I figured it was a tent. When we got within about 50 to 75 yards of the site, I realized it was a plane, but I

didn't think it was the one everybody had been searching for," he said.

He explained they dismantled and investigated the wrecked plane. "I could see three bodies inside the fuselage, there were more but I couldn't see them at that time. We mounted up and hurried back down the mountainside and drove to Lehi where I called the sheriff."

Mr. Smith said because it was getting late, he volunteered to lead the sheriff's mounted posse and jeep patrol back up the mountain to the crash site. "I was afraid it would get dark and they might not be able to find the plane," he said.

Mr. Smith complimented the members of the posse and jeep patrol for the "great job", they did.

Sgt. Kirkham and the rescuers arrived at the plane about 8 p.m. and recovery

efforts began. A helicopter, which brought in a TV newsman, was used to bring the bodies to the base camp. From the crash site, the bodies were taken about 400 feet by horse to the top of a nearby ridge to be transported down.

Interior of the airplane was described as being in "shambles" with seats torn loose and luggage thrown around.

Sgt. Kirkham said the doors of the plane were still closed and it didn't appear as though anyone tried to get out. "I'm sure the impact was so great that they were killed instantly," he said.

He said the plane was intact except for the tip of the wings although the fuselage was badly battered. The tops of several trees had been sheared, it was noted.

All seven bodies were transported to the medical examiner's office in Salt Lake

Clipped By:



mkieffer123

Wed, Aug 29, 2018