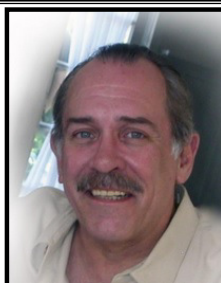


Thomas M. "Thom" Steinbeck, **SP4, USA**



SP4 Thom Steinbeck was assigned to AFVN as a Newscaster at the Key Station in Saigon and then in Tuy Hoa in 1968.

The following is from an on-line obituary.

Born: Aug 2, 1944
Died: Aug 11, 2016

NEW YORK, Aug 13 Thomas Steinbeck, the eldest son of novelist John Steinbeck and, later in life, a fiction writer who fought bitterly in a family dispute over his father's estate, died Thursday at his home in Santa Barbara, California. He was 72.

The cause was chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, his wife, Gail Knight Steinbeck, said.


John Steinbeck, the author of *East of Eden*, *The Grapes of Wrath* and other works, was one of the most prominent 20th-century American writers, receiving the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1962.

Thomas Steinbeck, who bore a striking resemblance to his father, was approaching 60 when he published his first fiction, a collection of stories called *Down to a Soundless Sea*, in 2002. Steinbeck said that many of the stories, about settlers on the California coast in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, were derived from folk tales and legends he heard growing up.

He later published two novels, *The Silver Lotus* and *In the Shadow of the Cypress*, which also took place on the Northern California coast near Monterey, the setting for his father's novels *Cannery Row* and *Tortilla Flat*.

Steinbeck gained perhaps his widest attention in 2004, when he and a granddaughter of John Steinbeck began a lengthy battle for intellectual property





rights to Steinbeck's written works that they said rightfully belonged to the author's direct descendants.

The fight arose from Steinbeck's will, written shortly before his death in 1968, in which he left most of his estate of more than US\$1 million (RM4 million) to his third wife, Elaine, with whom he had no children. He left his sons US\$50,000 each and directed that future profits from his works go to his wife and a lawyer. The will did not mention copyrights.

Elaine Steinbeck, who had a daughter from a previous marriage, died in 2003 and left her estate, including the Steinbeck copyrights, to her daughter as well as two sisters and grandchildren.

In 2004 Thomas Steinbeck and the granddaughter, Blake Smyle, filed suit against Elaine Steinbeck's estate and a literary agency seeking millions of dollars in damages. Smyle is the daughter of Thomas Steinbeck's younger brother, John Steinbeck IV, who died at 44 in 1991.

In 2006 a federal judge in New York granted the blood heirs the book-publishing and movie rights to some of John Steinbeck's major works. That decision was reversed by a federal appeals court in Manhattan in 2008. The US Supreme Court refused to hear a further appeal.


Thomas Steinbeck also argued in articles in The New York Times that a house in Sag Harbor, New York, where his father wrote some of his best-known books, rightfully belonged to his side of the family.

In an interview with The Times in 2004, Jackson J. Benson, who wrote the biography *The True Adventures of John Steinbeck, Writer*, speculated about the elder Steinbeck's intentions when he drew up his will.

"I think he wanted to leave them enough so they wouldn't starve, but not so much so they wouldn't have to make lives for themselves," Benson said. "The main thing was he didn't want to screw up the boys' lives by leaving them all that money. Well, the irony is, the boys did go after it."

Thomas Myles Steinbeck was born in Manhattan on August 2, 1944. His mother was John Steinbeck's second wife, the former Gwyndolyn Conger, a singer-composer. The couple divorced several years later, and Thomas spent much of his childhood in East Coast boarding schools.

He studied film at the University of California, Los Angeles, then served during the Vietnam War, first as a helicopter gunman and then as a producer with the American Forces Vietnam Network.



After returning to the United States, according to his website, he worked on films and in television and wrote screenplays, including adaptations of some of his father's work.

Steinbeck struggled for years with alcoholism, which he attributed in part to his mother's heavy drinking. She taught him to love the visual arts, he said, and turning to drawing, sculpting and painting helped him give up alcohol.

His wife is his only immediate survivor. The New York Times

The following photo was with the article.



コメントの追加 [JW1]:

The following are messages received after the above was posted to the AFVN Group.

From: Frank Segreto
Dated: August 15, 2016
Subject: Regret to Inform You....re AFVNER Thomas Steinbeck
I had the opportunity to work with Thomas at AFVN Saigon filling in on the news set. He was the most amazing director I ever worked with in the AFRTS system or as a civilian broadcaster. RIP brother.



From: Morrie Beitch
Dated: August 15, 2016
Subject: Regret to Inform You....re AFVNER Thomas Steinbeck
Tom and I were sent to Tuy Hoa together in Feb 1969; he was there less than a week and then sent home to take care of a copyright issue on one his father's books (his father had just died 2 months before). He was one of the people I hoped would someday attend an AFVN reunion

From: Dick Ellis
Dated: August 15, 2016
Subject: Regret to Inform You....re AFVNER Thomas Steinbeck
Thom was my replacement at AFVN in 1968. He was a nice guy and we crossed over for about three weeks. Strangely enough I replaced his younger brother John in July of 1967. Last time I spoke with Thom was before our San Diego reunion when I was trying to write Sajak a letter inviting him. Thom said his wife was a good friend of Vannahs and she would call her if we wanted. He was a first class guy! Dickie

