Hog’s Exit
Jerry Daniels, the Hmong, and the CIA
Gayle L. Morrison

IT JUST DIDN’T SIT RIGHT. Not with his friends, not with his coworkers, not
with his hunting and fishing buddies, and certainly not with his family. The
American Embassy in Bangkok had reported the accidental death of Jerry “Hog”
Daniels by carbon monoxide poisoning. Three decades later, his family and most
of his friends remain unconvinced that the U.S. government told them the truth
about his death.

As a former CIA case officer to legendary Hmong leader General Vang Pao
during the “secret war” in Laos, Jerry Daniels was experienced, smart, and careful.
those who knew him well said he wasn’t the type to die as reported. Raising even
more doubts, his casket was “Permanently Sealed” by the U.S. State
Department before being shipped home to Missoula, Montana, where
he was honored with a three-day funeral ceremony organized by his
former comrades-in-arms, the Hmong hilltribe warriors from Laos.

This book examines the unique personality and reported death
of a man who was a pivotal agent in U.S./Hmong history. Friends
and family share their memories of Daniels growing up in Montana,
cheating death in Laos, and carousing in the bars and brothels of
Thailand. First-person accounts from Americans and Hmong, ranchers and
refugees, State Department officials, and smokejumpers capture both human and
historical stories about the life of this dedicated and irreverent individual and offer
speculation on the unsettling circumstances of his death. Equally important, Hog’s
Exit is the first complete account in English to document the drama and beauty of
the Hmong funeral process.

Hog’s Exit provides a fascinating view of a man and the two very different
cultures in which he lived.

Hog’s Exit instantly vaults into the top five books on the CIA’s covert war in Laos and
its long, long aftermath. It’s a wonderful work of storytelling and scholarship, and it
opens up the spiritual world of the Hmong tribe as few have done before. —ROGER
WARNER, author of Shooting at the Moon: The Story of America’s Clandestine War in
Laos

In Hog’s Exit, the poetry of the hills of Montana and of Laos speaks to us through the
memories of those who knew him, leaving all the questions and explanations and
memories to follow in a stream. Jerry Daniels the CIA officer becomes Jerry Daniels the
human being, someone we can understand. —REBECCA WELDON, anthropologist

GAYLE L. MORRISON has worked with the Hmong community
since 1977 in education, refugee services, private enterprise,
and as an oral historian, researcher, and writer. Her first book
was Sky Is Falling: An Oral History of the CIA’s Evacuation of the
Hmong from Laos (1999). Based on the quality of her oral history
research, she received a fellowship from the National Endowment
for the Humanities (NEH) in 2003-2004. She lives in Santa Ana,
California, and Missoula, Montana.