



# **Until They Are Home: Bringing Back the MIAs from Vietnam, a Personal Memoir (Williams-Ford Texas A&M University Military History Series)**

*Col. Thomas Ty Smith*

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“Our mission continues . . . Until They Are Home!”—Motto of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command At the end of the Vietnam War—or American War, as it is called in Hanoi—2,585 Americans were unaccounted for in Southeast Asia. In 1992, a joint task force was established to continue the work of recovery, and its members became the first U.S. government representatives to return full-time to Vietnam. Army Lt. Col. Thomas (“Ty”) Smith arrived in Hanoi a decade later, in 2003. *Until They Are Home* is both a heartfelt memoir and a fascinating inside look at his tour of duty in Vietnam, “a place of shadows within shadows, secrets within secrets.” Smith takes the reader on an extraordinary personal voyage from the shaded French boulevards of Hanoi to the remotest jungle trails of the border highlands. Written with a keen eye and touches of humor, *Until They Are Home* recounts life in the very heart of the mission to find and return to the families the remains of their loved ones. It offers equal parts historical context, political insight, social commentary, travelogue, and adventure chronicle. From describing everything from his diplomatic negotiations between the Vietnamese and American governments to presenting his view of commanding a remarkably complex mission in an unforgiving environment, Smith draws on memory, e-mails, letters, and journal entries to recreate the story of his mission in Vietnam. Smith and the forces serving under him found the remains of fourteen lost American servicemen—including two graduates of Texas A&M University. The gripping, intensely personal narrative of *Until They Are Home* will fascinate general readers interested in the Vietnam War and its aftermath and will prove helpful to historians seeking primary information. It will also have great appeal to those with continuing involvement in POW/MIA issues and concerns.

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**Jose Miller:**

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