

A DOCUMENTARY IN DEVELOPMENT

591 DAYS

Tranquility Bay
Steven's Story

He was living one story.
The outside world was recording another.

Working title. Working dates: Jan. 7, 2002-Aug. 20, 2003, inclusive. Departure records sought.



Supplied historical photograph; date and photographer unconfirmed.

THE STORY

One life. Two timelines.

At thirteen, Steven Ortmann was sent to Tranquility Bay in Jamaica. More than two decades later, he reopens the papers he kept.

THEN

A child learning
the rules of leaving.

NOW

An adult examining
what the record
shows.

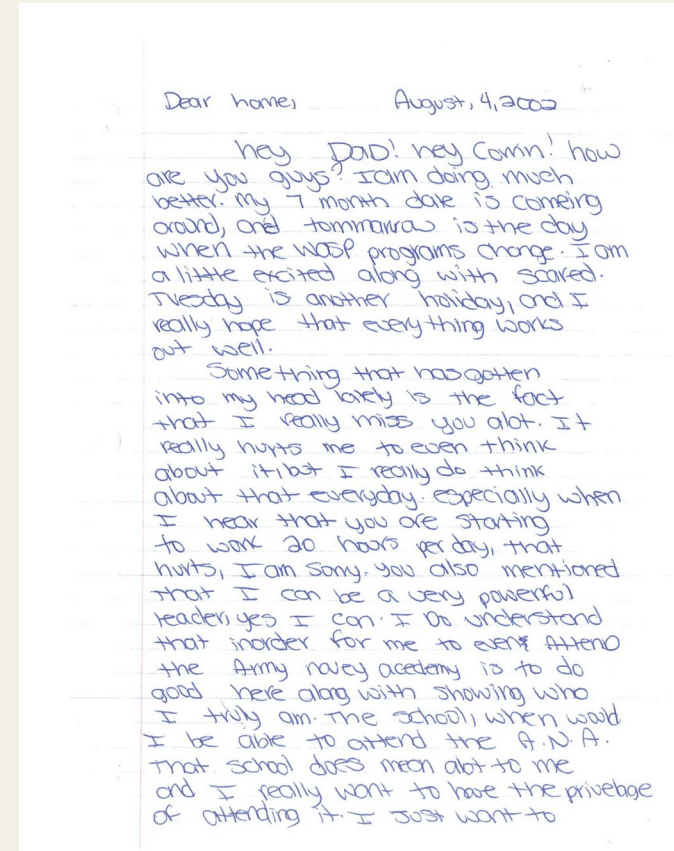
THE ARCHIVE

The past has a physical presence.

322

SCANNED PAGES

Letters, reflections, advancement records and seminar materials. Selected pages have received close review.

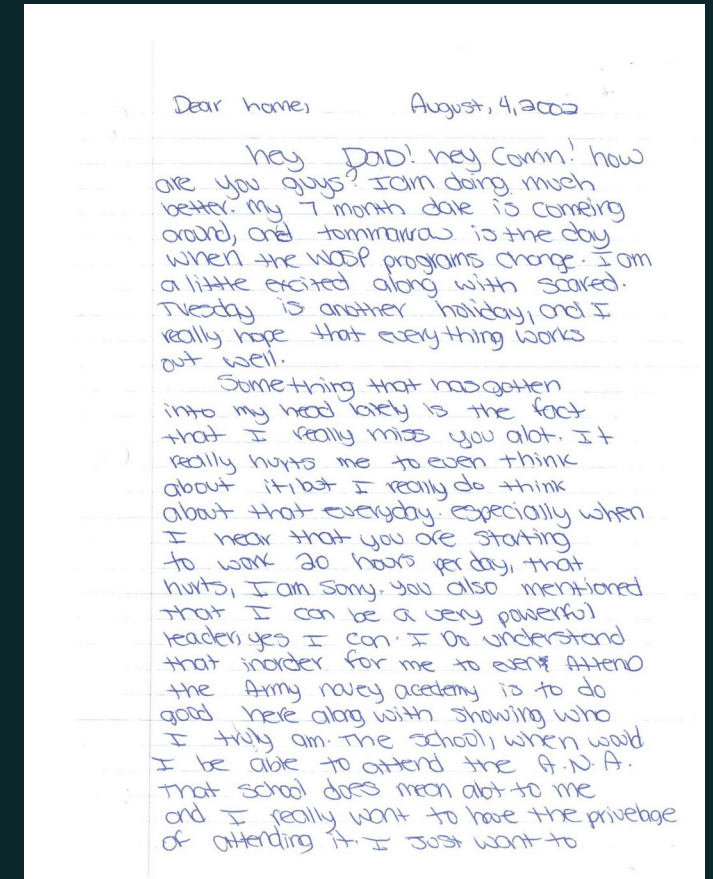


AUGUST 4, 2002 / A REAL PAGE

“I am a little excited along with scared.”

The letter anticipates a change the following day.

What could progress promise?
What did it mean to him?



Dear home, August, 4, 2002

hey Dad! hey Comin! how are you guys? I am doing much better. My 7 month date is coming around, and tomorrow is the day when the WOSP programs change. I am a little excited along with scared. Tuesday is another holiday, and I really hope that everything works out well.

Something that has gotten into my head lately is the fact that I really miss you alot. It really hurts me to even think about it, but I really do think about that everyday. Especially when I hear that you are starting to work 20 hours per day, that hurts, I am sorry. You also mentioned that I can be a very powerful leader, yes I can. I do understand that in order for me to even attend the Army navy academy is to do good here along with showing who I truly am. The school, when would I be able to attend the A.N.A. That school does mean alot to me and I really want to have the privelege of attending it. I just want to

APRIL 2003 / A PUBLIC VERSION

His name appeared in print
while he was still inside.

“Missed Opportunities
of 2002”

Article attributed to Steven Ortmann
The Source Online

What did he write?
What did others read?
What does he hear now?

Typeset reference. No alteration of this particular article has been established.

THE FORMAT

Three episodes. A feature alternative.

01

Sent Away

The trip, the rules and the first account of progress.

02

The Words That Left

Family communication and the version that reached home.

03

Beyond the Gates

Outside scrutiny, departure and the adult's inquiry.

3 × 45-55 MINUTES / FEATURE ALTERNATIVE: 90-110 MINUTES

Proposed format. Final length follows scene strength, access and production development.

PART 01

Sent Away

How does a child understand what it will take to get home?

Steven opens the binder today. Early letters introduce the levels and the adults interpreting his progress.



THE BINDER / BEFORE THE ISLAND
THE TRIP / FIRST WEEKLY UPDATE

PART 02

The Words That Left

What happens when the record of progress
and the memory of survival sound different?

August anticipation. Family updates. A level request.
A published article under his name.

TOMORROW CHANGES / CALLS AND SILENCE
PUBLISHED UNDER HIS NAME / THE CRISIS ELSEWHERE

PART 03

Beyond the Gates

What can the adult establish
about what others knew?

Contemporary reporting expands the frame. Steven seeks the underlying records and confronts what departure did, and did not, resolve.

OUTSIDE SCRUTINY / RESPONSIBILITY AND RECORDS / LEAVING / CHOOSING WHAT TO SHARE

TWO CHRONOLOGICAL TRACKS

His pages meet the outside record.

JAN 2002	Arrival account and early family letters	Personal record
AUG-NOV 2002	Anticipated change; Level 2-to-3 request	Personal record
JAN-APR 2003	Family reports Level 4; article under his name	Personal / publication
MAY-JUN 2003	Legal dispute; Dundee Ranch; public reporting	Separate outside sources

THE PLACE IN THE SUPPLIED PHOTOGRAPHS



Real source files restore the visual record.
They do not establish when a particular event occurred.

A PROPOSED OPENING

Begin with a choice.

- 01 Steven chooses a page.
Present-day filming.
- 02 His actual words enter the frame.
The dated letter, with context.
- 03 The outside record asks a new question.
A source-specific reference.

POSITIONING

A specific story within a known subject.

The proposed distinction is Steven's 2002–03 Jamaica chronology, the changing meaning of his correspondence and the inquiry he can pursue today.

The audience follows a person making sense of a record.
The investigation earns its wider frame through those pages.

THE CURRENT STAGE

A developed project.
A clear next stage.

AVAILABLE

Steven's participation
Original archive files
Treatment and visual deck
Source and development register

TO DEVELOP

Producer and director partnership
Additional voluntary access
Authentication and permissions
Filmed test, budget and financing

THE DEVELOPMENT CONVERSATION

What a partner can help build.

Shape the strongest scenes with Steven.
Scope the archive and legal work.
Test the approach in a short filmed piece.
Choose the right format and production plan.

INVITATION

The boy's words remain.
The adult has questions.

Seeking an experienced nonfiction partner
for a documentary development conversation.

Reply to the sender to arrange a conversation.
The full treatment and selected source records are available for further review.