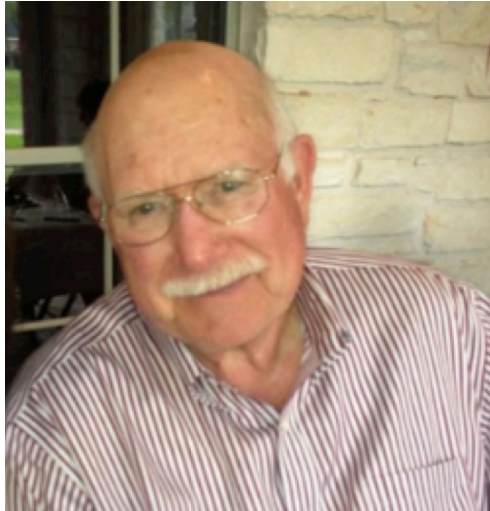


## *OBITUARY*

### **Paul Homer Smith**

*February 2, 1939 – May 10, 2024*



#### **Cook-Walden/Capital Parks Funeral Home & Cemetery**

Paul Homer Smith, CW4/Major US Army (Retired), passed away peacefully at age 85 on May 10, 2024, at Ascension Seton Hospital in Round Rock, Texas, following a bout with cancer.

Paul was born in the "Cow Country" of Wyoming and raised by loving parents in Lander. Siblings included an older brother, and two older sisters. His fascination with aviation and subsequent determination to take to the air began when an Army Air Force B-17 Flying Fortress was forced to land on a road near the family ranch. Paul's father worked with the Aircraft Commander and used a large road maintainer to pull the aircraft off the road and into a field, allowing military maintenance personnel from Hill Air Base at Ogden, Utah, to replace the aircraft's failed engine.

Paul graduated from high school in 1957 and almost immediately enlisted in the Air Force, beginning a 4-year active duty tour in 1958. One set of orders was a yearlong assignment to Greenland.

In 1962, Paul took a full-time Civil Servant position with the Colorado Air National Guard. By 1964, Paul had earned his Commercial, Instrument, and Multi-Engine FAA flight ratings through a United Airlines flight training program. Following his training, Paul accepted a Pilot-In-Command position flying a Beechcraft Baron, and later served as an Aircraft Dispatcher. Paul also got married in 1964.

In 1968, Paul transferred to the Army's Warrant Officer Program. In 1970, following intensive rotary and fixed-wing test pilot school training, he found himself in I Corps, South Vietnam. There Paul served as a Forward Air Controller 220th Aviation "Catkillers" Company flying the legendary L-19/O-1 Bird Dog for 13 months. The Bird Dog was so mission-critical that it was utilized by all three Services (Army, Marines, and Air Force) in a combat role that supported military units on the ground of all types and from many countries.

In 1971, Paul was assigned to Fort Sheridan, Chicago, Illinois, where he flew the General Staff.

In 1977, Paul received his BS in Aeronautics as well as an Associate's Degree in Aviation Management from Embry-Riddle Daytona Beach, Florida. He was subsequently assigned to Elmendorf AFB in Alaska, again selected and tasked with flying the General Staff.

In 1983, Paul was assigned to the Military District of Columbia in Washington, D.C., as the designated pilot for the Secretary of the Army.

In 1985 Paul retired from the US Military with 27-1/2 years of distinguished service. Among the awards Paul received were The Legion of Merit, two Distinguished Flying Crosses, the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, Army Commendation Medal, and numerous other Air Medals and awards.

With one career behind him, Paul began another. In 1985, he accepted a position with the Airline Owners & Pilots Association (AOPA). In 1986, he was recruited to improve aviation safety and standardization practices at Embry-Riddle University in Prescott, Arizona. Then in 1987, he took a position with the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) as the Director of Air Space, Air Traffic, and Infrastructure.

In 1987, Paul's 23-year marriage had been dissolved. But, in 1992, Paul met Myrna O. Cardwell in Washington, D.C. In 1994, they were married at the home of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John Shalikashvili, in D.C.

In 1999, Paul was selected by the NBAA as their Regional Representative, responsible for 12 States, and he and Myrna moved to Georgetown, Texas.

In 2007, Paul retired from NBAA after 20 years of service to the commercial aviation world. However, he soon formed his own aviation company and continued to fly as a contract pilot and flight instructor. He was also an active member of the Quiet Birdmen and Order of Daedalians aviation organizations. Through these organizations and his community involvement, Paul contributed greatly to the aviation infrastructure and promotion of future aviators.

In 2016, Paul received the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award. The Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award Program (MPA) recognizes only pilots who have conducted 50 or more years of safe flight operations. Recipients must not only meet stringent aviation safety and performance standards throughout their careers, but they must also be nominated by their peers.

Paul is survived by his wife, Myrna Cardwell-Smith; daughter Debra Graham and her husband Scott; sons Douglas Smith and his wife Sally, Quint Cardwell and his wife Pam, Kendall Cardwell, and Jason Cardwell; Grandchildren Danielle Rule-Wright and Josh Wright, Shelbi Cardwell, Cameron Cardwell and wife Shannon, Harrison Cardwell, Ashley Cardwell, and Logan Cardwell; Great Grandchildren Cadence and Cole Wright and Cooper Quint Cardwell.

Family and friends are invited to gather for a visitation to be held on Wednesday, June 5, 2024 from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. at Cook-Walden/Capital Parks Funeral Home in Pflugerville. A celebration of Paul's life will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 6, 2024 in the Walden Room of Cook-Walden/Capital Parks Funeral Home.

Source: <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/pflugerville-tx/paul-smith-11814815>