



PHOTO MEMORIES FROM THE FILES OF CWO CHARLES W. MORRIS, Catkiller Pilot, 1966-67ⁱ

Charles Morris' grandson, William Robert Flesher, son of Ceresa Belle Rodwell, contacted our Catkiller Webmaster to report his grandfather was deceased and offered to provide documents and photographs. The following are unorganized and mostly unlabeled photos and documents, some with little or no identifying information. Contributions in the form of comments are from men who knew and served Charles Morris:



**Charles William Morris Sr.
August 10, 1935 - November 6, 2014
Obituary**

Charles William Morris, Sr., 79 of Fredericksburg passed away at his residence on Thursday, November 6, 2014. He was a retired US Army veteran of the Vietnam War and a retired pilot of the US Forest Service. He also had a 27-year career in the Army National Guard in which he retired as a CW4. He was a member of Hulls Memorial Baptist Church.

He is survived by his son, Charles William Morris II; four daughters: Ceresa Belle Rodwell, Carla Nell Smith, Cindi Dell Horne, and Connie Zell Federspill; two brothers, Gene and Buff Morris; and four grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

A celebration of life will be held at Hulls Memorial Baptist Church on Saturday, 29 November 2014 from 10AM-12:00PM, with burial to follow in the church cemetery.

Online condolences may be sent at www.mullinsthompsonfredericksburg.com

In the first email regarding Charles, his grandson stated, "My name is William Flesher. My grandfather, Charlie Morris, recently past away, and he used to tell me stories of when he flew the Birddog. I was wondering if you knew anyone who knew him that would be willing to share some stories of him. Attached are a few photos. I miss having him around and would just like to hear the stories again." Later, William, or Robert as he often signs his name, received this email from Ray Cayl, Catkiller Historian:

William:

This unexpected and most welcome e mail once again proves just how small the world of Army Aviation is. I did not know that Charlie was a Catkiller even though I worked with him as a US Forest Service pilot in Region Eight for over three years. He had been a full time Reservist at Dobbins AFB in Marietta, GA when he was hired just a few months before I was as a Forest Service pilot. He was assigned to Roanoke, VA while I was assigned to the regional office in Atlanta.

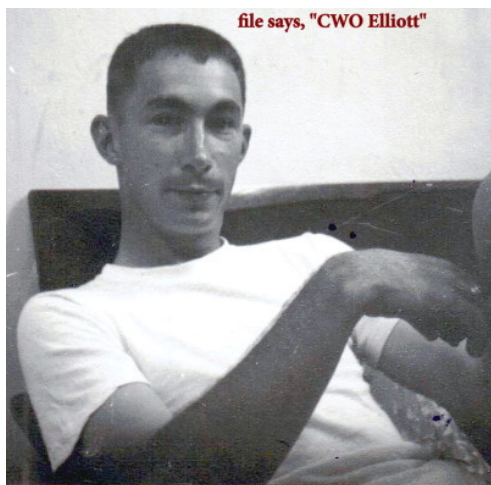
Charlie never mentioned that he had flown Birddogs and I just assumed that he had flown Hueys in Vietnam. We rarely saw each other during the three plus years that I was in Atlanta, but every now and then we would find ourselves at the same place for a day or two. He had a beautiful, country boy sense of humor and I still tell one of the jokes that I first heard from him—the one asking, "What happens when you cross a donkey with an onion?" If he hasn't told you THAT one, I will repeat it, but only in closed company.

Charlie never rushed into anything. He had a good eye for the hazards of flight and some of his stories helped me learn to not just look straight ahead when flying, but to use past experiences to help you "look around corners" for danger that might lie ahead.

The Charlie Morris that I knew was a good pilot with a generous heart.

Ray Caryl

OFFICER PHOTOGRAPHS FROM CHARLES:

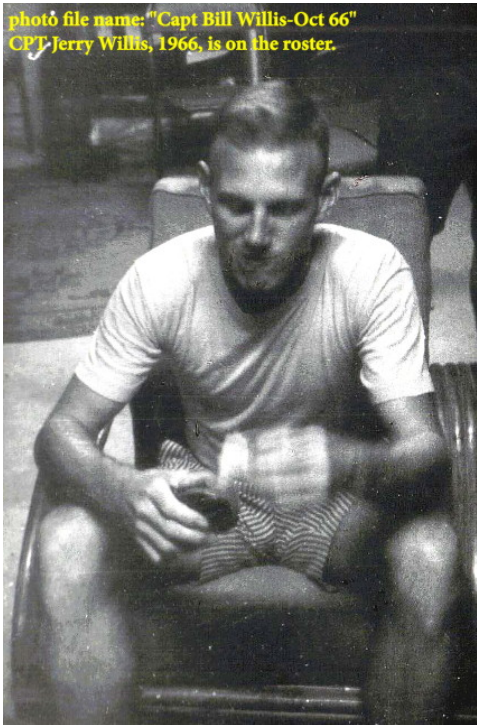


They look alike but are not the3 same person. The one on the right is Charles, for sure, and he wears a Catkiller patch on his right pocket. The following photo is most likely the required full-length photo for overseas deployment and one of WO1 Charles W. Morris just before Vietnam.

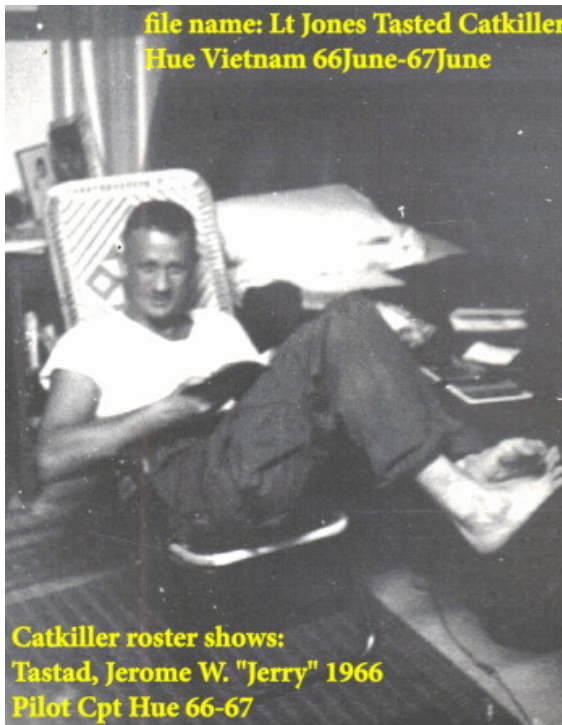


WO1 Charles William Morris

photo file name: "Capt Bill Willis-Oct 66"
CPT Jerry Willis, 1966, is on the roster.



file name: Lt Jones Tasted Catkiller
Hue Vietnam 66 June-67 June



Catkiller roster shows:
Tastad, Jerome W. "Jerry" 1966
Pilot Cpt Hue 66-67

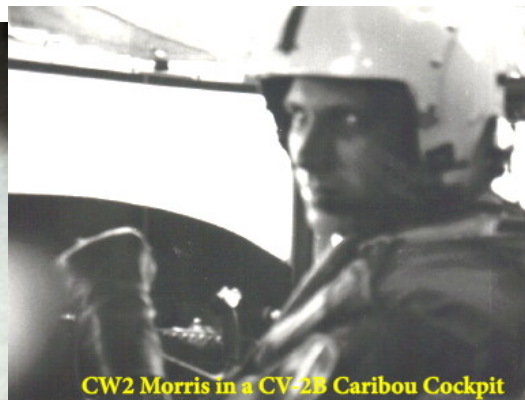
OFFERING THE FINEST IN F.W.D. AIR CONTROL, TARGET ACQUISITION,
ARTILLERY ADJUSTMENT, & VISUAL RECONNAISSANCE. AIR TARGETS
MARKED FREE OF CHARGE IF SELECTED BY OUR EXPERTS, RELIABLE
BODY COUNTS GUARENTEED.

WE OBSERVE
S.E. ASIAN COMBAT PILOT'S ASSOCIATION, LTD.
CATKILLER CHAPTER.

CAPT. C.H. EVANS
LT. D.L. JOHNSON

YOUR AUTHORIZED
REPRESENTATIVES

CWO Morris



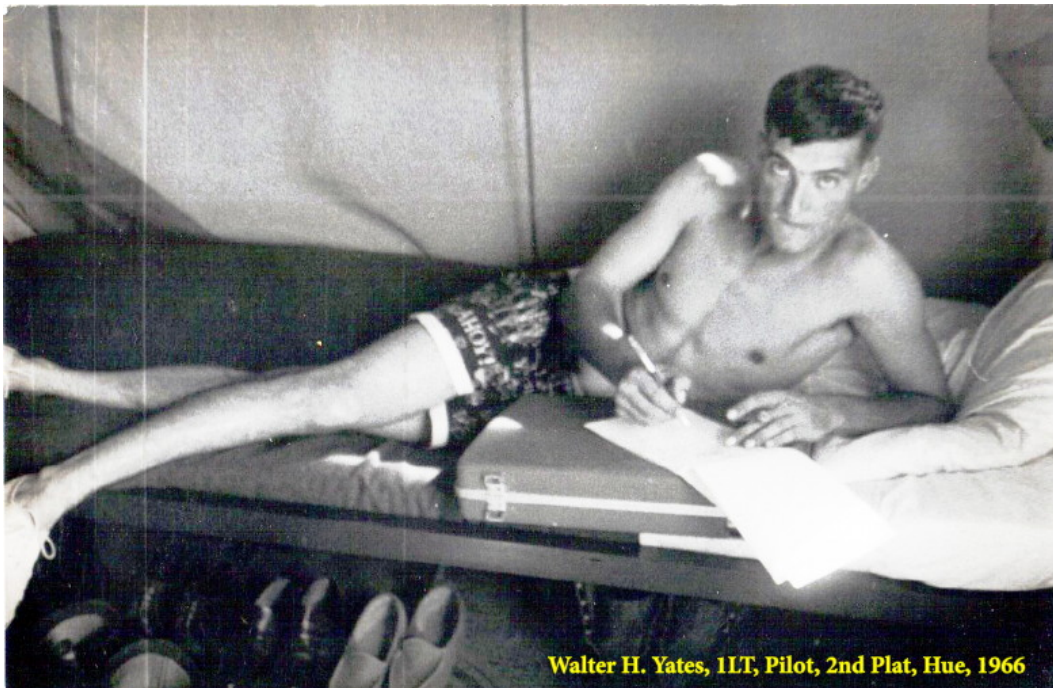
CW2 Morris in a CV-2B Caribou Cockpit

CW2 Ira W. "Mike" Misenheimer,
Catkiller Mike, 2nd Plat, Hue





CW2 Charles W. Morris, probably at Hue Airfield



Walter H. Yates, 1LT, Pilot, 2nd Plat, Hue, 1966



CWO Ronald W. Schweikert, 1966, Pilot, 1st Platoon, Quang Ngai

HISTORICAL COMMENTS FROM THOSE WHO SERVED WITH THESE MEN:

"I met Ron Schweikert at Ft Meade, Maryland, in the fall of 1965 following my graduation from FW training at Ft Rucker (WOWAC 65-9). We were both assigned to the 11th Air Cavalry Regiment (ACR), which had recently returned from Germany.

EDITOR: See the history file regarding SP4 Harry I. Kee, who also passed through Fort Meade and served in the 11th ACR: <http://www.catkillers.org/history-harry-kee68.html>

The 11th was undergoing reorganization and complete (armor/ mechanical/ rotor wing) re-equipage enroute to Vietnam. Ron had arrived earlier as he'd graduated from Rucker in the fixed-wing qualification course class prior to mine. We kept ourselves

occupied and current that winter, flying local trips in the regiment's few remaining O-1's and U6's. We also participated in a two month long assignment ferrying O-1's from the east coast to the Sacramento Army Depot in California, where they were being overhauled before trans-shipment to RVN.

Early in the spring of 1966 most of the fixed wing WO1's in the troop started receiving orders back to Rucker for multi-engine rating's and additional FW transitions. Ron and I both ended up in a CV-2 class together. He actually appears in a photo-collage currently hanging on my office wall. He's standing next to a Caribou on the flight line at Ft Benning, where we all did our training, in photograph taken by another member of our CV-2 class, WO1 Ronald Allen. He was a close friend of Ron Schweikert and likewise hailed from California, where they had both been inducted. Since our class was half full with AF pilots, it was clear the Army's Caribou days were numbered.

Once I arrived 'In Country' following my transition, I was assigned to a platoon of the 220th Aviation Company (O-1), at Da Nang Marble Mountain (Ron Schweikert wasn't in that platoon while I was there.)

A month later I was reassigned to a platoon of the 92nd Avn Co. (CV-2) at Nha Trang. That's where I once again ran into WO1 Ron Allen. We stayed together during two additional moves, first to a platoon of the 135th Aviation Company (CV2) at Pleiku, and finally to a platoon of the 183rd Aviation Company (O-1) at Phan Thiet.

My guess is that we may have spent roughly six months in each category aircraft before we rotated back to the US in 1967. By that time the CV-2's were entirely operated by the AF (C-7).

During my first tour, I don't believe I ran into Ron S. again, although Ron A. was in contact with him and said that he was flying O-1's and perhaps U-6's somewhere. I'm reasonably certain that he wasn't with the 11th ACR again, because they were equipped entirely with helicopters. I was never again in the 11th ACR once I left Ft. Meade.

I believe (??) it was Ron Allen who informed me of Ron Schweikert's passing, many years later (that's a little fuzzy). I last saw him (Ron S.) at Ft Benning in 1966, and he was married and had a daughter. I'm not sure where he ended up once he left the military.

I'm going to forward your email and my response to Ron Allen and Daniel Lindsey, another (WOFWAC 65-9) classmate of mine. Dan was also with us in the 11th ACR at Ft. Meade and went on to fly U-8's in Vietnam. Both he and Ron A. are retired from the airlines. Hopefully one or both of these gentlemen may have something further to add to this conversation.

Just a quick addendum to my last correspondence:

I had a brief conversation with Ron Allen and he seemed to have a slightly different (albeit fuzzy) take on a couple of points (age and altered states seem to coexist with each other, but I digress). As Ron A. remembers it, We (Ron Allen, Ron Schweikert and yours truly) all arrived at the 220th at the same time. Ron Schweikert was sent to the platoon in Quang Ngai, and Ron Allen and I were assigned to Da Nang.

A week later, Ron Allen was pulled from Da Nang and sent to Hue (Phu Bai ?). About three to four weeks after that, all three of us were sent down to the 92nd Aviation Company (CV-2) in Qui Nhon. Ron Allen and I went to the platoon at Nha Trang, while it's unclear in to which platoon Ron Schweikert eventually ended up (there were four or five platoons throughout the Corps AO).

According to Ron A, Ron Schweikert went along with us both to the 135th Aviation Company (CV-2) a few months later. Of course, once the Caribou units were fully staffed by AF personnel in late Dec. 66, all three of us were reassigned to Birdog units to finish our tours. Ron Allen and I went to the 183rd. We're both still a little hazy about Ron Schweikert after that [*Editor: Ron Schweikert also served in the 183rd Aviation Company.*]

Ron Allen currently works for the FAA in California and is 'on the road' extensively. He will try to send along a written update about all this when he gets a little down-time.

Patrick Feeley (Catkiller/CAC)"

"Ron Schweikert, two other warrant officers (WOs) and I caught a C-123 out of Tan San Nhut late one afternoon in early June 1966 bound for Nha Trang. We spent the night as guests of 17th Aviation Group (Prov), flew to Qui Nhon the next afternoon and were trucked to the Hq 14th Aviation Battalion in the Phu Tai Valley. After breakfast the next morning we met LTC "Black Sam" Kalagon and all four of us were personally assigned to MAJ Bill Schmale and the 220th Aviation Company.

All three WO's had just completed CV-2 "Caribou" transition and I had completed U-8 transition at Fort Rucker. After a few choice words of 'advice' —that we would not be flying any multi- engine airplane for at least six months, and not to expect many DFCs or Silver Stars since Bird dogs did not land in LZs—so much for our welcome to Vietnam. Since I already had most of my time in Bird dogs, I almost said, "So throw me into the briar patch!!!"

That afternoon we flew into Da Nang (Main), were met by SSG Roger Putnam, and were trucked to Marble Mountain where we spent the night with the 3rd Platoon. The next day we finally arrived in Phu Bai. Ron was assigned to the 3rd Platoon at Da Nang and I believe later volunteered for a transfer to the 183rd in a DEROS 'shuffle'. If I can remember anything else, I will make some notes.

Gene Wilson, Catkiller 05/03"

ENLISTED MEN PHOTOGRAPHS FROM CHARLES:





SP4 Paul Abbott

SP4 Kirk Marshall

OFFICIAL RECORDS:

A copy of CW3 Charles Morris' DD 214 obtained from William Flesher shows two periods of service in Vietnam:

- 2 February 1966—23 December 1966
- 14 September 1968—13 September 1969

16. TERMINAL DATE OF RESERVE/UMTS OBLIGATION			17. CURRENT ACTIVE SERVICE OTHER THAN BY INDUCTION			18. TERM OF SERVICE (Years)		19. DATE OF ENTRY			
a. SOURCE OF ENTRY:			b. ENLISTED (First Enlistment)			c. ENLISTED (Prior Service)		d. REENLISTED		e. DATE OF ENTRY	
DAY MONTH YEAR			DAY MONTH YEAR			DAY MONTH YEAR		DAY MONTH YEAR		DAY MONTH YEAR	
NA			NA			NA		16		Feb 65	
18. PRIOR REGULAR ENLISTMENTS			19. GRADE, RATE OR RANK AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO CURRENT ACTIVE SVC			20. PLACE OF ENTRY INTO CURRENT ACTIVE SERVICE (City and State)					
NA			NA			Rialto, California					
21. HOME OF RECORD AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE (Street, RFD, City, County, State and ZIP Code)			22. STATEMENT OF SERVICE			YEARS		MONTHS		DAYS	
Rialto, California			a. CREDITABLE FOR BASIC PAY PURPOSES			7		7		21	
23a. SPECIALTY NUMBER & TITLE			b. RELATED CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND D.O.T. NUMBER			12		1		28	
101CO (1 Apr 69)			196.283 Airplane			19		9		19	
FW Pilot, Multi			Pilot, Commercial			9		0		9	
Engine						3		5		4	
24. DECORATIONS, MEDALS, BADGES, COMMENDATIONS, CITATIONS AND CAMPAIGN RIBBONS AWARDED OR AUTHORIZED			Army Aviator Badge, Vietnam Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Air Medal w/22 Oak Leaf Cluster, Meritorious Unit Citation, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry w/Palm, Senior Army Aviator Badge, 3 Oversea Service Bars								
25. EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMPLETED			USA Infantry Center - 6 Weeks - CV 2 Transition Course USA Aviation School - 4 Weeks - U-21AT Course USA Aviation School - 12 Weeks - Rotary Wing Qualification Course USA Aviation School - 23 Weeks - Aviation Warrant Officer Intermediate Career Course USA Transportation School - 13 Weeks - AMO Course USA Security Agency Training School - 2 Weeks - Airborne Radio Detection Finder Course								

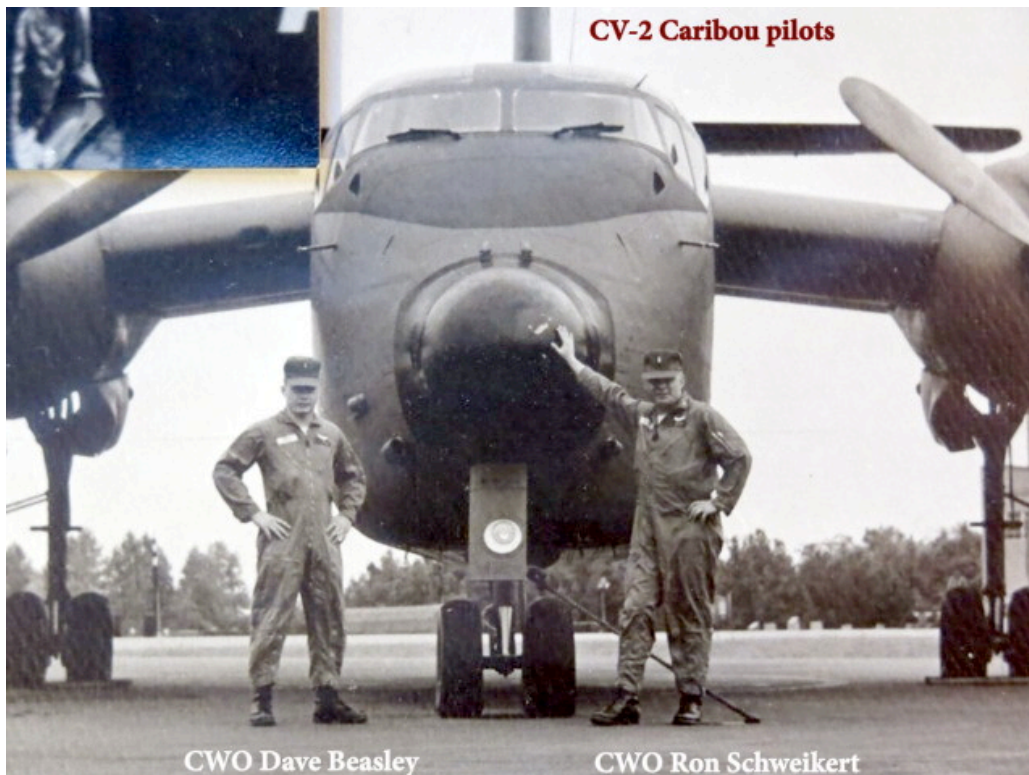


Charlie's

Catkiller

(The original "We Observe") patch

PHOTOS FROM CONTEMPORARIES WHO SERVED WITH CHARLES:



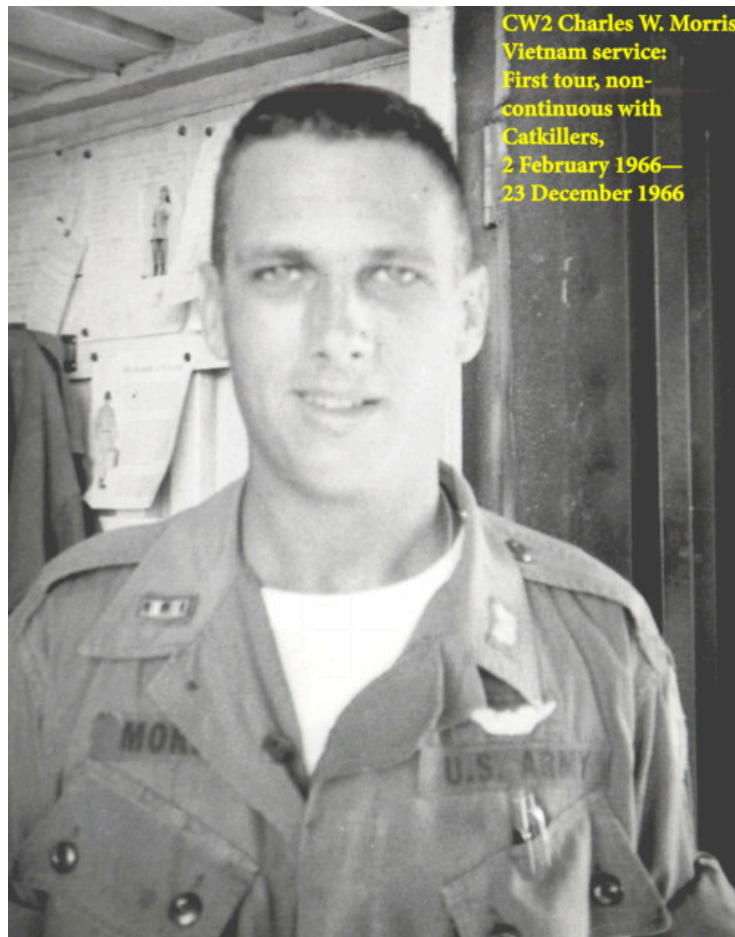
CV-2 Caribou pilots

CWO Dave Beasley

CWO Ron Schweikert



WO Pat Feeley also served in the 220th Aviation Company



COMMENTS:

I want to thank you on the wonderful job in putting together the photo memories of my grandfather. I would have replied sooner but due to weather and time of year our call volume has been ridiculous. The first draft you sent was spot on, and I had no doubt the finished product would be great. He was my hero growing up and I always did my best to make him proud—he would have been proud to read this. To this day I think back to all his jokes and stories, I still think it is funny how he could embellish a story. He talked a lot about flying the caribou, even wrote a few poems during that time. Stories of running resupply and the bars he went to, the food, etc. He even would talk a lot about being in radio research or his time in Germany after Vietnam and even working as a flight instructor between tours. I think his time flying Birddogs was what he enjoyed the most those stories were few and far between and subdued compared to the others. In fact it wasn't until a few years ago did he really open up as to what he did. I want to thank you for your time in writing and the research you did, I would also like to thank all the ones that contacted me and/or contributed. Thank you Mr. Caryl, Mr. Feeley, and Mr. Wilson. If I forgot anyone, I apologies.

Again thank y'all for your service and dedication; I was talking with My Uncle (my grandfathers brother) who served in Vietnam with " the sneaky petes" during the same time periods. He told stories how you guys would volunteer to save their lives. Be it finding away to secure rations to deliver or just keeping them informed on the bad guys. He told me "you have got to think how much a pilot must age, you may have 900 hours flying, but that is 900 hours of worry for you and your crew, your aircraft, not to mention the effects of the different altitudes or forces exerted on you by the aircraft".

I will continue to look through his pics, if I come across any more pics, names, or dates I will send them your way. If for no other reason to keep the CatKillers strong and well and/or help some other grandson celebrate their grandfather's life.

William Robert Flesher
Firefighter II / Paramedic

ⁱ Published by Donald M. Ricks, Webmaster, www.catkillers.org, 220th Aviation Company "Catkillers," from original materials received from William Robert Flesher, and Patrick Feeley. Copyright © 2015, All rights reserved.