

Bill Waters Bio

William L Waters graduated from High School in Canon City, Colorado in 1955 and entered Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado that Fall. Bill played Varsity Basketball and Baseball for three years at Adams State and graduated in May 1959, with a BA Degree, with majors in Health and Physical Education and Secondary School Education and minors in History and Political Science.

In Sept 1959, Bill entered the United States Marine Corps (USMC) via the 25th Officer Candidate School at Marine Corps Base (MCB), Quantico, VA. Commissioned a Second Lieutenant in Dec 1959, he went on to NAS Pensacola, FL for flight training to become a Marine Aviator in Jan 1960. 2nd Lt. Waters received his Wings of Gold as a Naval Aviator on 23 May 1961, and designation as a Marine Helicopter Pilot. He was transferred to the Third Marine Aircraft Wing (3rdMAW) at MCAS El Toro, CA.

In June 1961, 2nd Lt. Waters checked into Marine Aircraft Group-36 (MAG-36) at MCAF Santa Ana, CA, part of the 3rdMAW, was promoted to the rank of 1st Lt, was assigned to fly the UH-34D Helicopter, designated a Helicopter Aircraft Commander (HAC) in June 1962, and scheduled for his first deployment overseas in July 1962 with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-One Six Three (HMM-163). Upon arrival overseas at MCAS Futenma, Okinawa Japan, with HMM-163, First Lieutenant Waters was furthered assigned to Soc Trang, Republic of Vietnam, 80 miles South of Saigon, and relieved HMM-362, the first USMC Helicopter Squadron to be deployed to RVN in Apr 62. In Oct 62, HMM-163, the second USMC Helicopter Unit in RVN, was moved north to Da Nang Air Base, RVN, about 100 miles south of the DMZ.

In Mar 63, HMM-163 exchanged places with HMM-162 aboard the USS Princeton, LPH-5, as part of the Special Landing Force (SLF). After several operations off the coast of RVN, HMM-163 was rotated back to CONUS and the 3rdMAW at MCAS El Toro in Aug 63. 1stLt Waters was then assigned to HMM-362 at MCAF Santa Ana, where he was a helicopter flight instructor for Marine Fixed Wing Pilots being transitioned into helicopters. Promoted to the rank of Captain in Nov 64, Capt Waters rotated in Aug 65 with HMM-362 back to RVN as part of MAG-36 aboard the LPH-5 USS Princeton. MAG-36 was off loaded at MCAF KY HA, RVN, near MCAS Chu Lai on the beach. After selection for the USMC Amphibious Warfare School (AWS) at MCB Quantico and completion in July 66 of his 2nd tour in RVN, Capt Waters returned to CONUS to attend AWS.

In Aug 66, Capt Waters checked into AWS at Quantico and graduated in Jan 67. Capt Waters was then assigned to Marine Helicopter Squadron One (HMX-1) at MCAF Quantico, VA in Feb 67. He was promoted to the rank of Major in Nov 67 and provided Helicopter Transportation for the Executive Branch of the US government and in Aug 68 was designated a Marine Presidential

Helicopter Pilot, one of five so designated at any one time. During his tour at HMX-1, he flew President Johnson (6 times) and President Nixon (33 Times). In Dec 69, Major Waters completed his tour at HMX-1 and was reassigned to RVN for his third tour.

In Jan 70, Major Waters reported into HMM-364, MAG-16, 1stMAW at MCAS Marble Mountain, RVN. This time he was designated to fly the CH-46 and after 6 months of Combat Flying, Major Waters transferred to the 1stMAW G-3 in June 70, where he served as Helicopter Coordinator for the 1stMAW. In Jan 71, Major Waters transferred back to CONUS, but this time to Headquarters, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific (HQFMFPAC) at MCB Camp Smith, Honolulu, Hawaii. During his 3½ years at FMFPAC, he served as the Aviation Reports Officer, Assistant FMFPAC NATOPS/ AVN Safety Officer and FMFPAC Special Service Officer.

In June 1974, Major Waters transferred to CONUS to MCAS Tustin, CA, where he joined HMM-161 flying the CH-46. In Jan 76, Major Waters assumed Command of Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron One Six (H&MS-16), a 700 Marine Aviation Squadron, that provided Maintenance and Supply support to all the Helicopter Squadrons in MAG-16. In July 77, Major Waters was transferred to the 1stMAW located at MCAS Futenma, Okinawa, Japan. Major Waters was assigned as Admin Officer for MAG-36 during his first 9 months, promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in Apr 78 and in May 78, assumed Command of HMM-164, a CH-46 Helicopter Squadron, consisting of 18 Helicopters, scheduled to become part of the USMC Unit Deployment Program. HMM-164 rotated back to CONUS in Sept 78 and joined MAG-16 at the 3rdMAW at MCAS Tustin, CA. After a year of training new aircrews, in Sept 79, LtCol Waters and HMM-164 deployed back to MAG-36, 1stMAW in MCAS Futenma, Okinawa, where it provided contingency helicopter support to the SLF.

In Feb 80, HMM-164 completed its six month deployment and was rotated back to MAG-16 at MCAS Tustin, CA. In Aug 80, LtCol Waters relinquished Command of HMM-164, after serving as CO for 27 months, and was transferred to the Staff of the Commander, U.S. Naval Air Force, Pacific Fleet, (COMNAVAIRPAC). In Sept 80, LtCol Waters became the Helicopter Control Officer, Code 723, COMNAVAIRPAC, responsible for over 600+ helicopters, 15 different types located west of the Mississippi River to the South Pole and Far East. During his tour as Code 723, LtCol Waters assisted in the Ferry of all USMC CH-46s to the CH-46E Program, helped design the SR&M Program for all H-46s, and introduced to the fleet the C/MH-53E Helicopter and the new Navy SH-60B Anti-Submarine Helicopter.

On 1 Sept 1983, LtCol Waters retired from the USMC, and with his USAR and USMCR time, was credited with 27 years, 8 months and 15 days toward retirement. In his career, LtCol Waters was awarded the Silver Star, Two Bronze Stars, Single Mission Air Medal, 54 Strike Flight Awards, Navy Commendation

Medal and many RVN awards for his three tours of duty in RVN. He also was awarded the Presidential Helicopter Service Badge for his tour in HMX-1 and the Meritorious Service Medal for his tour at COMNAVAIRPAC

After his USMC Career, Bill or "Muddy" as he was known by his Marine brothers, joined tgBauer Associates, Inc, a professional services contractor, to the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIRSYSCOM) in Sept 83 in Washington DC, rising to the position of Executive Vice President. He joined Jorge Scientific Corporation in Dec 96 supporting the F-14 Weapon System. When NAVAIR moved to NAS Patuxent River, MD, Bill also moved and continued supporting NAVAIR until Sept 2000. After a brief five week retirement, he rejoined JSC, this time in Arlington, VA at the Office of Naval Research (ONR), supporting the Naval Research Advisory Committee (NRAC) in a study on Aging Aircraft.

Bill retired in Jan 2002 from JSC and continued to live in Falls Church, VA until March 2005, when he returned to Cañon City, CO

Bill is survived by his former wife Ruth, their three children, Greg, Sue and Cyndee, three grandchildren, and his widow and care partner, Beth, also a native of Colorado who grew up in the Cripple Creek District.

Viewing is scheduled from 2 to 4 PM Friday, December 14th with services Saturday, December 15th at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, Cañon City, Colorado. Burial at Arlington National Cemetery is planned with date to be determined.