



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Raymond A. Frank
11 May 1948 - 3 October 1993

CW4 Raymond A. Frank, a pilot, artist and musician, was born in Monrovia, California on 11 May 1948. Enlisting in the Army at the age of 17 in 1966, he served three tours in Vietnam as a ground combatant Soldier and a helicopter door gunner. After attending flight school in 1974, CW4 Frank served in a wide variety of assignments including pilot, instructor pilot, standardization instructor, maintenance officer and operations officer. Assignments following flight school included Fort Bragg, North Carolina, Fort Campbell, Kentucky, Camp Zama, Japan, and Fort Devens, Massachusetts, before ultimately returning to Fort Campbell to the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment in 1990.

CW4 Frank was always a teacher and innovator. He was one of the first pilots to become an instructor in air-to-air tactics and his contributions in the development of future Comanche ACM capabilities continue to shape both hardware and doctrine. During the initial integration of Blackhawks into the Army, specifically to the 2/17th CAV, Fort Campbell, Ray was the first instructor authorized to conduct aircraft transitions outside the confines of Fort Rucker.

His numerous awards and decorations include: the Silver Star, two Purple Hearts, sixteen Air Medals with "V" device for valor, four Meritorious Service Medals, two Army Commendation Medals, two Army Achievement Medals, the Good Conduct Medal, two National Defense Service Medals, the Vietnam Service Medal w/numeral 7, the NCO Professional Development Ribbon, w/numeral 2, the Vietnam Gallantry Cross, the Master Aviator Badge and the Aircrewman's Badge. In 1990 CW4 Frank received a Broken Wing Award as a result of his superb handling of a night mission mechanical failure in an Mh-60 which resulted in grounding and refitting of all Blackhawk aircraft. CW4 Frank was inducted into the Army Aviation Hall of Fame in 1995, recognizing his skill and enthusiasm as a pilot and his indomitable spirit as a patriot.

He was killed in Mogadishu, Somalia on 3 October 1993 during operation Gothic Serpent when his aircraft, #188, was called into a hot landing zone to extract wounded fellow Night Stalkers. On short final, and in the landing zone, they took extremely effective fire and were directed to depart the area.

On departure, they received RPG fire, which ultimately knocked the aircraft down approximately 2,000 meters away. Though he was severely injured, Ray was able to extricate himself from the aircraft and set up perimeter fire before the crash site and all individuals were overrun.

He is survived by his wife, Willi and his mother, Donna.