



Lieutenant Colonel MICHAEL C. GRIMM
18 February 1947 - 7 October 1981

Mike has been described by the pilots and friends who knew him as a hard charger, a dynamo, a great pilot, and a natural leader. A youthful face, a quick wit and a steady hand, this fine pilot was snatched from our fold at the very inception of our unit's existence. Who was this man, this legend from our Night Stalker past?

Mike came to us with a stellar background. He joined the Army at age 19 and graduated from Infantry Basic in March 1967. He was sent to Vietnam where he firmly established his unquestionable courage and dedication to duty. Michael Grimm was awarded the Nation's second highest award, The Distinguished Service Cross. Mike was a warrior and a hero. He returned home to several command positions, but was searching for another challenge and found it flying.

Mike went to flight school, and was sent back to Vietnam as a pilot with C Troop, 2nd of the 17th CAV, in May of 1971. He flew in combat in Vietnam, and returned home with a Purple Heart, Air Medals, and a Bronze Star w/V Device. Mike was a combat aviator.

There was a softer side to Mike. He was sent to Hawaii in 1975 where he served as the XO of an aviation company. He took command in November 1975. However command was not the only thing waiting for Mike in that Tropical paradise. He met his lovely wife, Karen, in Hawaii, and he returned with her to CONUS in 1978.

Fort Campbell saw his arrival in August 1979 where he joined the 229th Attack Helicopter Battalion. His talents were soon recognized and he quickly earned the command of B Co. 229th AHB. Major Michael Grimm had truly come of age. He was a proven warrior in command of an attack helicopter company. This assignment was what he was apparently made for, yet his destiny lay elsewhere.

Mid 1980 brought to the headlines a specific need within the United States Armed Forces and Mike answered the call for what everyone knew would be a dangerous path. He was selected to organize and command the "Little Birds" which were tasked to fill a very special aviation mission. He accepted with an enthusiasm that soon inspired all who served with him. The training was long, hard, and dangerous. He pushed his aviators to the very limits. His charter was to accept only the best from his pilots, and they performed flawlessly.

Somewhere in that demanding training Mike was tagged with his "Grim Reaper" label. A tough name to live up to, yet he had been destined for this assignment. His standards of aviation performance live on with every Night Stalker to this very day. Whether higher HQ's required it or LTC Grimm established it, the + or - 30 second time on target became a standard for his aviators. He demanded as much from himself. In fact, this became one of his trademarks of command. All who knew him realized that rank meant nothing to him in the cockpit. It was performance that mattered. Our mission could accept nothing less. Every current and former Night Stalker recognizes this daily axiom of the Regiment. LTC Grimm led the way. He was taken from us doing what he was meant to do, "lead." We lost him on 7 October 1981, in the crash of a MH-6, while leading a flight of twenty-two aircraft.

Who was Mike? He was a warrior. He was an aviator. He was as natural a leader as has ever existed. He was a family man. He was a friend to all who knew him well. But most of all, Mike was a Night Stalker! Mike was inducted into the Army Aviation Hall of Fame in March 2004.

He is survived by his wife, Karen and his step-daughter, Michelle.