



My brother, Mark Clotfelter, was born April 4, 1947 in California. Our family moved to South Florida in 1958 where Mark graduated from Hialeah High school in 1966 and earned a fixed wing rating prior to enlisting in the Army in 1967.

Aviation was not new to our family. Our father, Millard Clotfelter was air crew on a B-24 in the South Pacific during World War 11. Later using the GI Bill, learned to fly, and continued to fly (private aircraft) into his late 60's. Cousin John Donovan was a Flying Tiger, KIA in French Indochina in May 1942, during a strafing of an air field in what would later be called Hanoi.

Mark went through Basic Training at Fort Polk, Louisiana; Flight training included Fort Wolters, Fort Rucker (Class 68-9) and Cobra Hall at Hunter Army Air Field.

As a Warrant Officer, Mark was assigned to the 361st Aviation Company Escort (The Pink Panthers) stationed at Camp Holloway in Pleiku, Vietnam. He arrived in country on September 25, 1968, and soon participated in clandestine missions providing cover for the insertion of the 5th Special Forces across the border into Laos and Cambodia. During his 9 months in Vietnam, Mark was shot down 2 times, received the Distinguished Flying Cross with 2 oak leaf clusters, Bronze Star, Army Commendation Medal, Air Medal, and others. On June 16, 1969 Mark and Michael Mahowald volunteered to fly a different mission. Support was needed for a resupply convoy in a very "hot" area between Dak To and Ben Het. Flying low level they soon received small arms fire from a bunker. After being hit they crashed on top of the bunker killing the very ones firing at them.

Twenty eight years later I was blessed with meeting the men Mark flew with, lived with, laughed with, and who assured me Mark was not forgotten. So many times I have gone to The Wall and wondered if anyone else had touched his name and remembered his short 22 years. I am forever grateful to the men of the 361st for remembering Mark. Also for inviting me into their lives and helping me learn what Mark was like as a man, and as a warrior. I am also grateful to Bikini 29, Kent Harper for flying my brother to safety when Mark had been shot down. He didn't know my brother, but without hesitation risked his own life, flying into smoke and fire to save the lives of others. An act of courage only those returning from combat would understand.

[http://www.specialoperations.com/MACVSOG/Tales\\_from\\_SOG/Secret\\_Wars/Default.htm](http://www.specialoperations.com/MACVSOG/Tales_from_SOG/Secret_Wars/Default.htm)

Mark was survived by his parents Millard and Ina Clotfelter, his sisters Linda Waldron, Redina Miller, Nida Dubel, and Susan Jimison. Mark's ashes were scattered off the coast of South Florida in 1969. His name is forever etched in the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, panel 22 West, line 57.