



Archie J. Clapp, Colonel, USMC (Ret)
 "Archie"

Date of Designation: 5 July 1943

Dates of Active Duty: 26 August 1940-1 August 1969

Total Flight Hours: 5,224

Carrier/Ship Landings: Fixed wing: 271 Helo 59

Approximate Flight Hours:

Jet: 117 Prop: 3,492 VF/VA: 1,639 VR:1,323
 HR:1,612 VT: 650

Combat Tours:

WW II: 01/45-/06/45, *USS Bennington* in Central Pacific, (F4U) 52 Missions, 3 1/2 Air Combat Victories.

Korean war: 10/52-3/53, (HRS), 45 Missions.
 4/53-6/53, (AD), 15 Missions.

Vietnam: 4/62-8/62, (HUS), 79 Combat Missions.

Aviation Commands:

CO, HqSqn, Aug 1953 - Jun 1954.

CO, HMM 362, Jul 1960 - Aug 1962.

Combat Awards:

2 Legions of Merit (One with V for valor).

3 DFCs

9 Air Medals

Duty Assignment Chronology

8/43-1/44 MCAS Santa Barbara, Student (TBF), (TBM).
 2/44-12/44 VMF-123, MCAS Santa Barbara (F4U).
 1/45-6/45 VMF-123, *USS Bennington*, Sqd. Pilot (F4U).
 1/46-4/46 VMF-114, Cherry Point, Sqd. Pilot, (F4U).
 5/46-9/46 VMF-114, *USS Salerno Bay*, Sqd, Pilot (F4U).
 10/46-3/47 VMF-114, Cherry Point, Sqd. Pilot (F4U).
 4/47-8/48 Fighter Training Unit, Instructor, (F4U).
 9/47-6/48 Amphious Warfare School, Student, (SNJ).
 7/49-2/51 VMF-224, Sqd. Pilot, (F4Uto F2H).



3/51-9/52 HMX, Quantico VA. Student, Instructor, Proj. Officer, (HTL), (HRP), (HO4S), (HRS).
 10/52-3/53 HMR-161 Adjutant, (HRS).
 3/53-6/53 VMCJ-1, Operations Officer, (AD).
 7/53-6/54 CO HqSqd., MCAS Miami, (SNB), (HO5S).
 7/54-10/56 Marine Corps Development Center, Quantico, VA. Helicopter Project Officer, (SNB)
 11/56-8/59 HQMC, Ass't Sec'y of Gen Staff.(SNB), (SNJ).
 9/59-6/60 Univ. Md. College Park, Student.(SNB).
 7/60-7/61 MCAF Santa, Okinawa, *USS Princeton*, Soc Trang, South Vietnam, Commanding Officer (HUS).
 9/62-5/64 MARTD, Minneapolis, MN., Executive Officer, (HSS/(HUS), (R4-Q-2 (C-119).
 6/64-6/65 US Army War College, Carlisle PA. Student (U-6A-DeHavilland Otter).
 7/65-6/66 HQMC, Head of Officer Personnel Procurement, (T-28), (U-11- Piper Aztec).
 7/66-8/69 JCS, J-5 Division, Strategic Planner, (T-28), (U-11).

Summary of Significant Career Events

Archie Clapp was born in Greensboro, North Carolina on August 30, 1923. When he was still an infant his family moved to Miami, Florida for his father to become involved in the 1920's building boom there. That was where he subsequently spent his childhood.

Clapp earned his Naval Aviator wings and Marine second lieutenant bars in 1943 through U. S. Naval Flight Training at Pensacola, Florida.

He holds a BS degree from the University of Maryland and MS degree in International Affairs from the George Washington University. He also graduated from Marine Amphibious Warfare School in Quantico, Virginia; School of Naval Justice in Newport, Rhode Island and U. S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

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Summary of Significant Career Events continued

During World War II Clapp was a pilot in VMF-123 (Marine Fighter Squadron 123) flying from the deck of *USS Bennington* (CV- 20). In that capacity, he participated in the first aircraft carrier strikes against the Japanese homeland, as well as taking part in the Iwo Jima and Okinawa campaigns. He downed 3 1/2 enemy aircraft during that time.

In 1949, Clapp became one of the earliest Marine jet fighter pilots. He then also became one of the initial Marine helicopter pilots in 1951. Upon receiving his helicopter pilot designation, he was assigned to HMX-1 (Marine Experimental Helicopter Squadron One), where he engaged in development work for the emerging helicopter component of Marine Corps aviation.

During the Korean War, he flew transport helicopters for half his tour, which was the first use of transport helicopters in a combat environment. He then flew fixed-wing electronic counter-measures missions during the other half of his tour.

Clapp commanded the first Marine operational unit committed to what grew into the Vietnam War. In 1962, the transport helicopter squadron Clapp was commanding (HMM-362) was aboard *USS Princeton* (LPH-5) as the air component of the 7th Fleet Ready Group. The mission of that group was to stand ready to land the embarked Marine Air/Ground Team anywhere in the Far East, if and when needed, to protect American lives or other interests.

It was at that time the decision was made to deploy a Marine helicopter unit to South Vietnam to assist that government in its counter-guerrilla struggle with the communist Viet Cong. HMM-362 was selected for that task. As a result, this deployment turned out to be the initial Marine Corps' commitment to its long-term engagement in that country.

Many of the tactical procedures developed and recorded by Clapp and his squadron (which the media referred to as ("Archie's Angels")) provided the basis of tactical doctrine for the helicopter units which followed them into Vietnam. Some of the procedures are still in use today.

Clapp held a number of command and staff billets during his Marine Corps career, the last being on the staff of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the Pentagon. He served as a planner in the Strategic Plans & Policies Directorate before retiring from the Marine Corps in 1969 in the rank of Colonel.

Besides receiving unit commendations and campaign medals for his service in three wars, Clapp was individually awarded the Legion of Merit twice (one with "V" for valor attached), the Distinguished Flying Cross three times and nine Air Medals. Upon his retirement from the Marine Corps, Archie Clapp immediately began a second career in the trade association management field. For the first six years of this new career he served on the staff of the American Ordnance Association (later renamed the American Defense

Preparedness Association). The mission of that organization is to provide a focal point between the U. S. Defense Establishment and the major Defense contractors.

Then, in 1975, another national trade association was seeking a new CEO through an executive personnel procurement operation. Clapp was selected for that position from a field of candidates. The organization which he then led for the next 23 years was the Wholesale Florists and Florist Suppliers of America (WF&FSA).

WF&FSA is the trade association serving the needs of wholesale distributors., plus the suppliers to those wholesalers, in the floral industry throughout North America. During his tenure, the number of members reached about 1300 companies. Clapp was instrumental in expanding the membership to companies overseas, as well as throughout North America.

Clapp also headed the association's wholly-owned subsidiary, WF&FSA Corporation. The major activity of the latter was to annually conduct one of the largest trade shows in the United States (it covered a space about the size of nine football fields laid side by side).

When all segments of the U. S. floral industry (retailers, growers, wholesalers and hardgoods suppliers) decided to launch a national advertising campaign, Clapp was asked to administer it during start-up, along with his WF&FSA duties.

While with WF&FSA, Archie Clapp was also the United States delegate to Union Fleurs, the Europe-based association of national wholesale floral organizations. Considerable travel was involved, because meetings took place in the various member countries.

Following his retirement from WF&FSA, he moved from the Washington, DC area to Virginia Beach. It was there that he met and married his wife Shirley in 2001. He has five children six grandchildren and one great-grandchild by his previous marriage.