
Information on Hyde County Veterans



Lt. Col. William Farrow "Billy" Williams
U. S. Air Force (1953-1973)

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William Farrow "Billy" Williams was born 17 January 1929 in Swan Quarter at home. Attended school in Swan Quarter until graduation in 1947. Graduated East Carolina Teacher's College in 1953 with a BS in Music Education and was commissioner 2nd Lieutenant, USAF in May 1953.

Billy was Aircraft Commander on the first Trans-Pacific Helicopter Flight from 15 to 24 August 1970. He flew Sikorsky HH-53C #69-5788 for Air Rescue and Recovery Service, USAF. The HH-53 C's, unofficially nicknamed Super Jolly Green Giants, began the historic flight on Saturday, August 15 from Eglin Air Force Base in Ft. Walton Beach, FLA. The flight shortened the delivery time of the choppers to Vietnam by about 75% and demonstrated the long-range capability of helicopters refueled in the air. The 14-hour, 1,500 mile transpacific leg of the flight was flown from Shemya Air Force Station in Alaska's Aleutian Islands to Misawa Air Base, Japan. The copters were delivered to Da Nang Air Force Base, Vietnam.

He retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in September 1973 while serving as Commander of Detachment 5, 39th ARRS, Tyndall AFB, Panama City, FLA. During his career he earned the Air Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster and the Commendation Medal. After retirement in 1973 he and his family returned to Swan Quarter and built a house on the family farm next to the home of his parents. After retirement from the AF, Billy served as County Commissioner for Hyde, served as a member and then Chairman of Hyde's Board of Elections, worked as Weighmaster for Farm Bureau Hog Market for many years, was Chairman of Eastern Carolina Health Systems Agency, was Chairman of Hyde Rural Health and Contracting Officer for Hyde County on the West-Double-Quarter-Bay Canal Drainage Project.

Billy was approved for membership in The National Society, Sons of the American Revolution, NC Society on August 13, 1990, a descendant of Captain Joseph Gibbs, Jr. (NC Society Number 1912 and National Number 135467).

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Contributed by Ellen A. Williams