

Ralph Albert “Chip” Carney, Jr.

March 10, 1942 — August 14, 2013, age 71

Chip was a member of the UT Grotto in the 1960s, who graduated with a geology degree. He was from Houston. He was in several AMCS and UTG trip reports, and he worked in the Sierra de El Abra in Sótano de Montecillos (Pichijumo) in the 1960s with Don Erickson. We could not find an obituary or death certificate. We heard a rumor that he may have died during field work in Alaska in the 1970s or 80s, but that was not the case.

Frances Fehribach wrote to me recently with this:

“Hello! This is Frances Fehribach. I helped you about 3 years ago with The Hall of Texas and Mexico Cavers, pertaining to Abner J. Totty, the scout who was sadly killed while caving.

Back then you asked me about Chip Carney and I could not get any info without his real name. Well, I got bored and did some research. Based on an address given in an old newsletter, 4817 Malmedy, Houston, I found that his real name was **Ralph Albert Carney, Jr.** His step-mother's obituary refers to him as Ralph “Chip” Carney.

Stepmother's obituary, 2012:

<https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/368988/Lillie-Marty-Carney>

Unfortunately, he died August 14, 2013, at the age of 71. There is no record of his death anywhere, I only found it because his step-brother (legally brother) filed for his estate. No obituary, no social security death index, not even in the Harris County Death Records - yet the affidavits say he died there.

Per the affidavits, Chip never married or had children. There is nothing online about him as far as what he was doing all those years after caving. The Houston Chronicle does not put old papers online because they can't find a way to pay the freelancers they used in the past. If there was anything about him in the papers, it would be on microfilm.

He lived at 4817 Malmedy until he died. He was the executor of his mother's estate in 1989, so apparently he was cognizant then.

He died intestate and probate records say he owned some land, investments, insurance policies and a 2004 Nissan Frontier. Besides the truck, he had about \$2000 of personal effects.

Obviously, he did not die in Alaska in the '70s or '80s. Maybe he had an accident.

So, that's all there is on Chip. I sure do wonder what he was up to all these years. By the way, his date of birth was March 10, 1942.

Frances Fehribach”

Elliott: I am so sorry about Chip. I remember him as a jolly fellow with glasses and a moustache. He sometimes drove a large truck carrying cavers and gear to Mexico. Don and we could not find a clear photo of him.

William R. Elliott, Don Erickson, and Frances Fehribach for TexasCavers, 6 August 2022