



Gerald Frissell

May 6, 1939 - January 5, 2021

Gerald S. Frissell, a native Floridian, was born at Tampa General Hospital on May 6, 1939. On January 5, 2021, he passed away—or, as he would quote from his favorite poem, High Flight, he “slipped the surly bonds of earth...and touched the face of God.” This poem was so meaningful to Jerry because he had a life-long dream of learning to fly, and he made this dream come true. With his private pilot license and instrument rating, he achieved his goal of flying, roundtrip, from Chicago to Tampa.

Jerry would recall stories from his youth when open fields spread north of Hillsborough Avenue, and he would hunt rabbits with his Uncle Dan. He enjoyed fishing from Gandy Bridge and on Ballast Point. When he was 16, he made deliveries for Leader Electronics. He remembers driving north on US 19, seeing nothing but pine trees and smoke-watch towers from Route 60 to Tarpon Boulevard—which was the only stoplight on the whole route. When driving west on Route 60, the road was lined with royal palms. He often questioned using the word “progress” to describe all the changes that have occurred since then.

In 1956, his junior year at Plant High School, Jerry joined the U. S. Navy Reserve and after graduation served two years active duty on the USS New, experiencing his first of four Mediterranean cruises. After discharge, and a short stint at St. Petersburg Junior College, he reenlisted for four more years in the U. S. Navy. He served aboard the USS Manley and the USS Leahy, working in the Combat Information Center and was honorably discharged as a Petty Officer 2nd class in 1964.

In the summer of 1962, Jerry was on leave to attend his cousin Cliff’s wedding and met his future wife, Jacquie Van Hecke, who was on vacation in Florida with three friends from Chicago. The couple were married in May of 1963. After Jerry’s discharge, he and Jacquie settled up north. In 1970, the family, now with two beautiful daughters and a third on the way, moved into their first home in Oak Park, Illinois. In this community, they discovered life-long friends, rather than simply neighbors.

In the Chicago area, Jerry pursued a career in advertising and marketing. But, as Jerry put it, after standing for nearly twenty years on icy winter mornings waiting for el trains to take him into the city for work, he asked himself: "What is a Florida Cracker like me doing here?" The next thing Jacquie knew, they were living in Florida where Jerry started his own business, Total Graphics, from which he retired in 2010.

Jerry is survived by his wife, Jacquie; his daughters Madeleine Kuderick, Carolyn Schiffner, and Nicole Hewitt; his "magnificent seven" grandchildren: Brad, Ali, Matt, Ben, Jacquie, Tim, and Maddy; and his sister, Jeanne Davis, and brothers, Doug and Chris Frissell. He will be missed and remembered by all, especially when the sound of a plane is heard overhead.

Due to Covid-19, services at Espiritu Santo and Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell will be private. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Suncoast Hospice, the American Lung Association, or Crohn's and Colitis Foundation.

Comments



“ Just wanted to send our love to all Jerry's family. He was always a kind and gentle man and we know he rests in the arms of Jesus now. He was so blessed to have an awesome family and wife Jacquie to love and take good care of him. We love and pray for the Frissell family. Scott and Anne Davis

Anne davis - January 26 at 10:37 AM



“ 1 file added to the album The Cousins



Sharyn Freant - January 10 at 11:24 AM



“ 2 files added to the album Some Great Pics of Jerry & Jacquie



Sharyn Freant - January 10 at 11:06 AM



“ A fond childhood memory of mine about dad is when he would take me to work with him. We would ride the el train downtown and walk to his building on Michigan Avenue. It was very exciting for a little kid from the burbs to see all the skyscrapers and be amidst all the hustle and bustle of a big city. At his office he would let me sit at the front desk and pretend I was the receptionist, although I usually just colored or lost myself in imagination immersed in the wall mural of "A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte" by Georges Seurat. At lunch we would walk across the bridge that wobbled a bit when busses passed by and made me a little nervous, but I knew it was worth it with McDonald's waiting for us on the other side of the river. Dad and I would eat outside so that I could feed the pigeons some of my french fries. They were simple yet treasured moments. Dad will be dearly missed.

Nicole Hewitt - January 09 at 03:18 PM



“ One of my favorite memories is watching Jerry and Jacquie dance at my nieces wedding to celebrate their 50 th wedding anniversary. Everyone had such a wonderful time together

Lindsay And Ben Johnson - January 09 at 01:01 PM



“ Wonderful memories of Jerry that Dusty and I hold close to our hearts. RIP dear friend

Debbie Hoffman - January 09 at 12:02 PM



“ One of my favorite childhood memories of Uncle Jerry was when he flew Carolyn and me to Milwaukee in the 1970s. He had some business there--picking something up? dropping something off? --and decided to fly. The plane was tied down with a rope on each side when it was parked, and Carolyn and I had races to tie down each side.

I was glad to get to know Jerry again when my mother started spending winters in Palm Harbor. One of the last times I saw him was New Year's Eve, 2019. He and Jacquie came over to my mother's while we were videochatting with family in Spain. In Spain, everyone has a champagne glass with 12 grapes in it. At midnight, you eat a grape with each strike of the clock in order to have good fortune in the coming year. Afterwards, you fill the same glass with champagne/brut and have a toast. Although it was 6 p.m. in Florida, we celebrated with Spain, and Jerry was game for a new tradition. Afterwards, we made personal pizzas and played cards, and had a lovely evening.

Much love to everyone who will miss Jerry.

Kalyn Wulatin - January 08 at 05:56 PM



“ Jerry was my brother-in-law. Initially, he was reluctant to join our pinochle games because he recalled men in the Navy losing entire paychecks to the game. But Jerry, I said, pinochle doesn't involve betting! Apparently the sailors found ways to wager. Finally we convinced him to learn how to play, and Jerry became my pinochle partner in games with Jacquie and my husband, Greg. We had a lot of fun and laughter during those games which we sometimes played by the pool and in John Chesnut Park.

I also remember an unasked for kindness that Jerry showed me. I was about to take a long highway drive with a container fastened on top of my car. I had misgivings myself about how secure that container was, but I was newly divorced and in my Helen Reddy “I am woman, I can do anything” phase, and didn't want to seek help. Early on the morning of my trip, I found Jerry in my garage, using all his Navy knowledge of ropes and knots to make sure that the container was secure and that I would be safe. Fond memories that will keep Jerry in my mind and heart.

Madeleine Van Hecke - January 08 at 10:02 AM



“ I have great childhood memories of my older cousin Jerry! We would come down to Tampa from Jacksonville to spend time with my Aunt, Uncles and cousins. Jerry , Jeanne, and my brother Jim were a few years older. I recall us younger cousins being in awe of our teen age heroes. So much laughter, love, and shenanigans. I adored him. He was very cool and very handsome!! In these later years ,we reconnected at a family reunion and then through Facebook and enjoyed supporting each others ideas of how to save the world. He remained one of my heroes. A great husband, father, grandfather....just a great human!! What a legacy!! I will miss him so much!!

Sharyn - January 10 at 11:21 AM



“ This photo is from my wedding, when parents often impart impactful and life-changing words of wisdom to their children. What I remember most is that Dad was tasked with telling me that the reason our reception seating was delayed was because my cake had fallen over back in the kitchen.

It makes me realize that our greatest memories are made up of a tapestry of the most ordinary moments in life. Those moments happened at piano recitals, badminton tournaments, neighborhood block parties, and summer jobs downtown. They are remembered as hand-cartooned birthday wrapping paper, a warm ride home from the Trap room, the scent of rubber cement and the taste of apples and cheese. These small, but significant bits of time, set one life apart from another and create the lasting recollections that will never fade.



Carolyn - January 08 at 09:34 AM



“ Precious times with Jerry and our many friends at Key West. Rest in peace Jerry.

Pat and Bill - January 08 at 09:30 AM



“ With sincere sympathy we say good-bye to Jerry our next door neighbor of 21 years. Always willing to help in many ways especially his years of service on our communities Board Of Directors. All his hard work on many issues was truly appreciated!
To his wife Jacquie and his wonderful family our thoughts & prayers are with you at this difficult time.
Sincerely, Linda & Dick Raymer.

Linda Raymer - January 08 at 09:03 AM



“ I will always remember how dad enjoyed our laid back family vacations on Anna Maria Island - fishing with the kids on the Historic City Pier, dinners at Sandbar Restaurant and the Waterfront, playing card games, ping pong and pool, enjoying Two Scoops and the simple joy of being with family.



Madeleine Kuderick - January 07 at 08:01 PM



“ Gerry and I were together at Jesuit for two years, in 1954 & 55, High Flight was introduced to us 9th graders by Fr. Richard Hartnett, who was able to drive a love of English into our thick skulls of mush. Gerry and I discussed "flight" many times, I was as fascinated as Gerry with flight, and wanted to join the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) as a "spotter," accompanying private pilots and their light planes as on overwater searches. My Dad would not sign the release and insisted I join the Navy and learn to fly right. That never happened, but Gerry was able to reach his dreams and fly high, and I am proud and pleased to learn of his success.

Gerry was a true friend to all, and we were all stunned when he (and Nelson) left Jesuit for Plant, but they did well. I was able to catch up with Gerry through FB and we corresponded probably once a week for the last 5 years or so,

Rest in eternal peace, Gerry. I know you have not gone, but have only gone ahead. We'll all get there eventually, see you soon, buddy. RIP.

Rex - January 09 at 03:34 AM



“ So very sorry to hear that. Jerry faced this with grace, good humor and courage and I'm grateful to have had some good phone time with him so recently. We go back to the Fall of 1954 as sophomore classmates at Jesuit High School, Tampa, and have kept in close touch for many years. Lots of wonderful memories as teenage buddies and sharing life stories as the years passed. There's a short poem, passed on to me by a Jesuit teacher years ago that seems especially appropriate.

It is not the end this sleeping
Beneath the green mended sod.
I will find him and keep him forever,
So help me God.
When the bugles rouse for reunion
We'll meet where the old teams play.
In heaven, in football weather
Carissime

Rest in peace old friend.

Joe

Joe Breen - January 07 at 06:43 PM



“ 4 files added to the album Some Great Pics of Jerry & Jacquie



Julie Frissell - January 06 at 04:32 PM



“ We will remember Jerry as a wonderful friend with a beautiful family. May he Rest In Peace
Amen

Linda and Gregg Oreste - January 06 at 03:10 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Gerald Frissell.



January 06 at 02:14 PM