



## Jackie Earl Gilbert

October 8, 1936 - June 26, 2019

Jackie Earl Gilbert, Knoxville native passed away June 26, 2019 after a long and adventurous life. He was 82 years old, born October 8, 1936, Jack lived the majority of his life along the banks of the French Broad River in East Knox County. After service with the 101st Airborne at Fort Campbell, he became well-known in amateur boxing circles in the early 1960's. He won the Golden Gloves welter weight and middle weight titles and then enjoyed a stint as a professional boxer engaging in more than 50 matches mostly in Miami, FL and Texas. He always defended the underdog, so bullies could find him to be rather outspoken at times. Jack earned his pilot's license and became an accomplished instructional pilot and crop duster, ending his career after logging more than twenty-thousand hours in the air while flying Piper Cubs, DC-3's, Grumman Ag Cats, Ag Tractors and Kruk aircraft. Jack's workplace was a cockpit- flying under and around utility lines was a regular day at the office. Knoxville residents might have noticed one of his occasional trips beneath the Tennessee River Bridge. He survived some amazing emergency landings that demonstrated both his incredible skill and daring. He married the love of his life, Mary Evelyn Welch, a Riverdale girl, on June 14, 1955. They recently celebrated 64 years of marriage. Jack was preceded in death by his mother Sarah Valentine Gilbert and father Ralph Gilbert. Jack is survived by his wife, Mary, daughter Karen (Todd) Rader, granddaughter Leslie (Andy) Henry, brothers Ken (Carole) Gilbert and Larry (Carolyn) Gilbert. Jack was fortunate to have several devoted nieces and nephews: Tommy (Alisha) Gilbert, Jeff (Amy) Gilbert, Laura (James) Gilbert-Shuford, and Cheyenne Rodgers Albright. Simply put, Jack was a friend to all who knew him. He and Mary opened their home to many friends, family and those in need of compassion, generosity, and amazing stories. The family members want to express their appreciation to the many caring friends and relatives and especially thank the diligent and compassionate staff at UT Hospital. Jack would want us to remember, most importantly, that he loves his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and now rejoices in His presence. The family will receive friends from 3:00 pm until 5:00 pm Sunday June 30, 2019, at ROSE MORTUARY BROADWAY CHAPEL. The family and friends will gather at East Tennessee Veterans Cemetery (John Sevier Highway) at 1:45 pm Monday July 1, 2019, for a 2:00 pm graveside service with military honors presented by East Tennessee Veterans Honor Guard. Online obituary may be

viewed and condolences extended at [www.rosemortuary.com](http://www.rosemortuary.com).

# Events

---

**JUN** **Visitation** 03:00PM - 05:00PM

**30**

---

Rose Mortuary Broadway Chapel  
1421 N. Broadway, Knoxville, TN, US

**JUL** **Graveside Service** 02:00PM

**1**

---

East Tennessee State Veterans; Cemetery  
2200 E. Gov. John Sevier Hwy 168, Knoxville, TN, US

# Comments

---



“ A tribute video has been added.



**Rose Mortuary** - June 29 at 11:45 AM



“ Jack Gilbert, in 1936 God placed a Soul into Jackie and told him to go forth and Live, & Live he did. It's clear he didn't fear life but Lived it to its fullest as it was given to him to do. I'll miss you my friend cause there isnt another Jackie, but know I'll see you again in Our Father's House for he Cleared you to His Final Approach.

**Joseph Elkins** - June 30 at 10:21 AM

---



“ Great memories of Jackie especially one scary one when I was riding along when he was teaching Phil Clapp how to fly, RIP Jackie. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family. Dooney Nicley

**Dooney Nicley** - June 30 at 03:38 PM

---



“ Dan And Cindy Krawczyk lit a candle in memory of Jackie Earl Gilbert



**Dan and Cindy Krawczyk** - June 30 at 02:29 PM



“ Mary and Family so sorry for your loss

**Dan and Cindy Krawczyk** - June 30 at 02:30 PM

---



“ Mary and family we were so sorry to hear of Jacks passing. We had kept with his health issue thru Blake. He was widely known and respected in out community, from the church he attended while he was here crop dusting to the farmers,.doctors lawyer, children and fellow pilots he got acquainted with during the season .He was

like family to all of us here at my house.He was such a good influence in my son Blake life. Charles & Linda Dukes

charles dukes - June 29 at 10:57 PM

---



“ 7 files added to the album LifeTributes



Rose Mortuary - June 29 at 12:50 PM

---



“ Katie Russell sent a virtual gift in memory of Jackie Earl Gilbert



Katie Russell - June 29 at 10:41 AM

---



“ A sympathy card was purchased for the family of Jackie Earl Gilbert.



June 29 at 10:40 AM

---



“ 72 files added to the album LifeTributes



Rose Mortuary - June 29 at 10:36 AM

---



“ I was saddened to learn of Jack's death. He and my husband Bill Broady were good boxing friends and Jack spent many hours in our basement sparring.  
Carolyn Broady

Carolyn Broady - June 29 at 09:27 AM

---



“ One of the most awesome guys I ever knew! Always thought of Jack as a real life action hero. Truly and amazing guy!!! I am blessed to have known him and flown with him! Praying for the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ to be with the family. Jack brother, we will meet again in our father's house. See ya then Bro!

Quentin Elkins

Quentin Elkins - June 28 at 06:01 PM

---



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Jackie Earl Gilbert.



June 28 at 01:54 PM

---



“ So sorry to hear about jack Gilbert passing.He was my first cousin I loved to visit with him talk about when we were kids growing up.I will sure miss seeing him when I visit my sister in Clinton, Tn.Judy Purkey.We cousins were close to each other. God bless his family . JACK RIP. WILLIAM VERNON LEA

WILLIAM V. LEA - June 28 at 01:28 PM



“ James "Jamie" Haun lit a candle in memory of Jackie Earl Gilbert



James "Jamie" Haun - June 28 at 09:58 AM

---



“ Jack was one of the most genuine persons I've ever known. There was nothing phony about him. What you saw was what you got. His toughness and courage was unbelievable. He was a boxing champion and I saw him ride the wall of death on a motorcycle at the Knoxville Fair. He was a hero to me. His wife Mary was the sweetest person ever. My heartfelt thoughts and prayers are with his family. Dr. Farris Jordan

Dr. Farris Jordan - June 28 at 09:12 AM



“ My life was blessed by knowing Jack Gilbert. A privilege to have been his pastor.

chris burns - June 28 at 08:26 PM

---



“ Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Jackie Earl Gilbert.



June 28 at 07:48 AM

---



“ Jack and Mary came to our house many Sunday afternoons when I was growing up and in my teen years. One day he took my brother up in his plane, told us to watch for them, and as he came over our house, he flipped the plane upside down, scaring my brother but he laughed about it. We saw him occasionally and that smile was always there, always glad to see his old friends. We will always remember Jack and his famous Harley Davidson riding around Tuckahoe. God Bless Mary, Karen and all the family. You are special to us.

Katie Woodby Russell and husband Joe Russell

Joe & Katie Russell - June 28 at 01:20 AM

---



“ Jackie help Me lay the Block for my house,He stopped Said,I am not going on till You Box with Me!—Jackie you know Better,Alright then We'll Trade licks You go First!—I HIT HIM WITH EVERYTHING I HAD, ROCK HIM—OK MY TURN,When Jackie HIT ME I THOUGHT MY STOMACH WAS COMING OUT MY MOUTH—I COULD NOT BREATH!!!Jackie said,“OK LETS GET BACK TO WORK”I put up a lot of Hay for MISS GILBERT ALSO—I will Miss Him!!!

Joe Miller - June 27 at 09:47 PM

---



“ Dad told me tonight he heard someone hollering outside and Jack had parachuted and was hung in a tree behind Bea and Dubes house...they had to help him out of the tree!!...he was a daredevil..thinking of you Mary..love u

Angie Wilson - June 27 at 07:27 PM

---



“ I remember growing up and Jack coming to our home. He was a wonderful and kind person and a very good friend to my daddy, Bob. They loved flying together and that was there connection. It was my daddy's happy place and Jack was a part of that for him. I am sure those two are flying high! Prayers to his sweet family. Love The Keeton Family!

Cindy Werner - June 27 at 04:28 PM

---



“ I remember we would be outside at mama's house and he be flying over. He cut the engines off and would holler down and say,“What you doing down there. Wade my brother turn them engine in Jackie. He took Wade and Paul on flying one day. They had a ball. And I will never forget my motorcycle ride. Lord I have never seen the ground so close we were flying low. Asked me when we got back to Wade's how I like. I said never again. He was a great friend to my family. We all loved him dearly. Go rest high on that Mountain your work here is done. Sissy love and prayers.



**Nancy&Paul Leek** - June 27 at 03:47 PM



“ Fly high old friend

**jimmy cloninger ( CLINGER )** - June 27 at 08:21 PM



“ I don't think I have ever known, or heard about, anybody who lived a more colorful life than did Jackie Gilbert. His whole life seems like a checked off bucket list, right down to the end; go to heaven and meet the Lord, check! His life is book worthy, and I only knew him of late at church. My loss.

**Clayton Cate** - June 28 at 10:07 AM



“ Condolences to the Jack Gilbert Family ,he was a good friend to all Ag pilots that he came in contact with in Arkansas he always came to visit when he was in Arkansas.Jack will get to spray some cotton rows in Heaven maybe a mile long another good friend gone West, Rest In Peace my friend.

**Kenneth** - June 29 at 04:33 PM