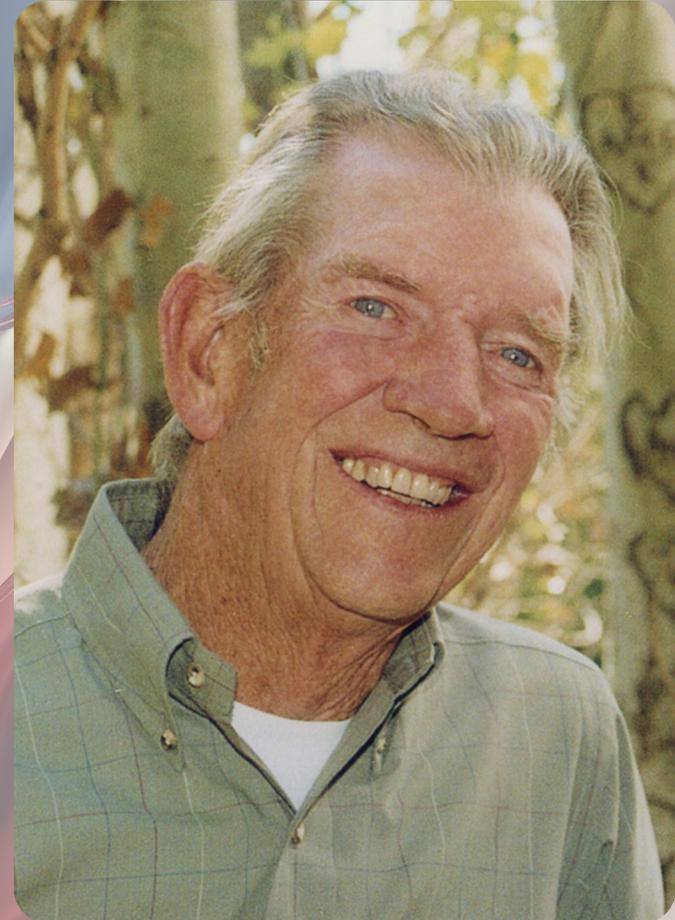




In Remembrance of



High *Flight*

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
of sun-split clouds, - and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of - wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air...

Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or even eagle flew -
And, while the silent lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.

John Gillespie Magee, Jr.

Paul Eugene Gilbert
CMSGT (Retired)

1931 - 2025



KINCANNON
FUNERAL HOME

"Our Family Caring for Your Family"

Paul Eugene Gilbert, was born in Oskaloosa, Iowa on January 8, 1931. He grew up in Chicago, Illinois as the youngest of five boys. Paul began his military service in the Army National Guard entering the Air Force in 1950. He served as an aircraft mechanic before his extensive career as a flight engineer, during which he was assigned to the B-29 Superfortress, C-124 Globemaster II, and the C-141 Starlifter. Paul's 31 years of service took him to all 7 continents. His mission highlights include supporting the Distant Early Warning (DEW) line, humanitarian famine relief to Tanganyika (Tanzania) Africa, 1960 U-2 incident, and Mercury space program. During the Vietnam War he flew numerous missions from 1967-1971. Paul retired from the USAF in 1979 and continued to use his valuable experience to teach Air Force crews as a civilian instructor.

Of all his missions, his luckiest was one that took him north to Canada where Paul met his loving wife of 66 years, Carol. They married on October 27, 1955, in Greenville, South Carolina. He loved being part of this special Canadian family and the family ties remain strong today. Paul and Carol were blessed with four loving daughters while living at numerous duty stations until Altus became home in 1970. Paul was a proud father that greatly enjoyed commanding the girls who he viewed as his "personal troops". Later, his grandchildren got "enlisted" as well. From boyhood, Paul was drawn to the great outdoors and his sense of adventure led him to explore throughout his life. He and his wife traveled extensively in their RV but he also loved coming home and living in his familiar small town of Altus. Paul enjoyed golf, foreign car restoration, all things aviation, and he could fix anything. He was a private pilot with an aviation maintenance license and later developed a love of hot air ballooning. Paul was an active leader in his community and Prince of Peace Catholic Church. Notable projects included personally helping build the original Knights of Columbus Hall in Altus and championing the construction of a memorial to former Knights. He was a lifelong Knight and achieved many honors in the organization. He also continued to be involved in USAF alumni organizations until his death on Sunday, February 2, 2025, at the age of 94.

Paul's legacy is monumental. The center of his world was his family and friends. With an unending desire to share his well-earned wisdom, he modeled values of hard work, patriotism, service, can-do attitude, charity, and loyalty. Although at times known to be gruff, all who knew Paul understood he deeply cared.

Paul was preceded in death by his parents and four brothers. He is survived by daughters, Patricia Webster, Paula McDonel (Cleatus), Penny Miller, and Paige Dempsey (James); grandchildren, Devon Sibley, Kevin McDonel, Justin Miller, Brenden McDonel (Amandalyn), Derek Miller (Sophia Alcantar), Emily Dempsey, and Ryan Dempsey; and great-grandchildren, Addie, Layla, James Davis, and Lillie. He is also survived by a large extended family and countless friends.

Paul Gilbert

Entered Into Life

January 8, 1931
Oskaloosa, Iowa

Entered Into Rest

February 2, 2025
Altus, Oklahoma

Services

3:00 PM
Saturday, February 8, 2025
Kincannon Memorial Chapel
Altus, Oklahoma

Catholic Liturgy

Deacon Eulis Mobley

Celebrant of Life

Celebrant Gina Trent

**MILITARY HONORS WILL BE RENDERED BY THE
BLUE KNIGHTS HONOR GUARD
ALTUS AIR FORCE BASE**

Honorary Pallbearers

Kevin McDonel, Justin Miller, Brenden McDonel
Derek Miller, Ryan Dempsey
Cleatus McDonel, James Dempsey