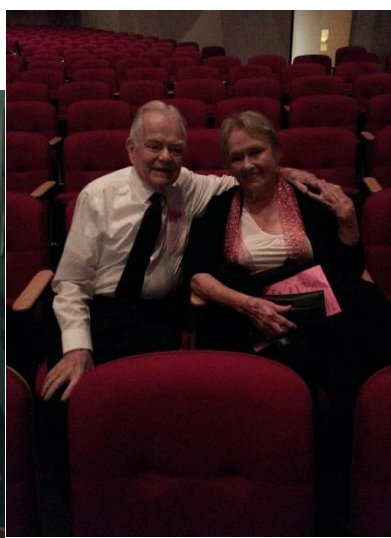


FLOWN WEST

TOM MITCHELL JR.

04/23/1919 ~ 06/30/2016



Thomas M. Mitchell passed away peacefully on Thursday, June 30, 2016 in Sebring, Florida, his home town since 1921. He was born in Arcadia, Florida in 1919. He was 97 years old on April 23, 2016. He had two hobbies: music and printing. Tom started both in the third grade. His folks purchased a clarinet and a small printing press for selling magazines. Completing high school in 1937, one year as a post graduate at Bolles Military School in Jacksonville, FL, before completing two years at Florida Southern College in Lakeland, FL, where he got his private pilot license in a CPT course. War clouds were forming...and he became a flying cadet and completed his flying training in the Army Air Corp. Upon completion of his training Tom was assigned to the Ferrying Command in Long Beach, California, where he flew most all of the Air Force planes, delivering them to all parts of the world. His last assignment was with the "Crossroads Project" flying DC4s to Kwajalein in the Pacific for the atom bomb tests. After the Air Force, Tom tried to start a color printing plant in his home town with a new five color printing press. He was unable to get enough skilled help in the Sebring area and unfortunately the business failed. In 1949 he successfully started a frozen food plant at the old Sebring Air Terminal turning out frozen grapefruit sections for restaurants in the North. At the fruit season's end he moved to California to start a printing plant there but the Korean War started, so he decided to go to work for the Flying Tiger Line as a pilot. He liked the job and stayed for almost 30 years, retiring on his 60th birthday as a Senior Captain and moved back to his home town of Sebring, Florida. After

retirement, Tom played the clarinet in the Highlands County Concert Band. In March 2016 he was designated as the only lifetime “active” member after 35 years of playing. Tom also played in numerous musical groups: a big dance band, a German band, a five piece dance band and finally a two piece dance duo. In the early 1980’s he started the Sebring High School Joint Class Reunion (held every two years) and headed it thru 1998. The Sebring Historical Society included a birthday party in their quarterly meeting for his 97th Birthday, April 23, 2016. Tom is survived by one son, Thomas M. Mitchell, III and his wife, Robin, and their two teenage children, Ben and Erica of Louisville, KY; step-children, Jack Chandler, Jill Bollen and Lynne Proffitt. Also survived by his sister, Sophy Mae Mitchell, Jr. Tom was preceded in death by his wife of 33 years, Nancy, his step-daughter, Joni Gallo and three brothers, Joseph Alexander Mitchell; Henry Chesterfield Mitchell and Charles Robert “Bob” Mitchell. Tom was an active member of the Sebring Historical Society, Highlands County Concert Band, South Florida State College Sponsors of Cultural Programs, and Military Officers Association of America. Tom hopes all will enjoy their retirement as much as he did. There will be a memorial service on Saturday, August 6, 2016, 12:00pm, at Stephenson-Nelson Funeral Home of Sebring with Reverend Luke Willitz officiating. The family will receive friends beginning at 11:30am. Graveside service with Military Honor’s at City of Sebring’s Pinecrest Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to Tom’s sister’s Dog and Cat Rescue Service: Adopt Me! Dog Rescue, 1423 Crescent Drive, Sebring, FL 33870.