

Crossville Chronicle Obituaries



Jesse Thomas Mitchell

May 13, 1928 - November 29, 2017

Jesse Tom Mitchell, son of the late Jesse T. Mitchell and Emma Childres Mitchell, was born in Livingston, TN, on May 13, 1928. He was preceded in death by one sister, Lucy Mitchell McCorkle.

Tom attended primary school in Livingston and Fountain City and graduated from Central High School in Knoxville, TN.

Tom adhered to the Protestant religion and was baptized as a teenager in an evening ceremony in which his father was also baptized.

On graduation from high school, Tom joined the U.S. Army. After basic infantry training, he was sent to Japan as part of the occupation force. Following an honorable discharge from the Army in 1948, Tom chose to retain ready reserve status while in pre-dental school at the University of Tennessee. He graduated with honors from U.T. College of Dentistry in 1952. He practiced general dentistry in Crossville for four years while retraining on Army Reserve Commission with rank of captain. While in Crossville, Tom applied for a four-year training program in oral surgery at U.T. Hospital, the University of Pennsylvania and Duke Medical Center. Prior to completing the Duke program, he received a Regular Army Commission as captain.

He was assigned as chief of oral surgery of the U.S. Army Hospital Okinawa. After that, he was assigned as assistant chief oral surgeon of Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, DC. His next assignment was chief oral surgeon at the hospital in Fort Leonard Wood, MO.

In 1969, with the Vietnam War escalating, Tom volunteered for duty in that conflict. He was awarded the Bronze Star and a second Meritorious Service Medal.

After Tom attended Advanced Medical Service School for one year at Fort Sam in Houston, TX, his next assignment was Nuremberg Germany where he met, and later married, his beloved Erika, who would be his soulmate for life.

From Nuremberg, he was assigned to Fort Lee Virginia Army Hospital, where he commanded medical detachments. His next assignment was in Augsburg Germany. During this assignment, Tom and Erika were married in Fürth, Germany, and Tom was elevated to the status of step-father to Erika's beautiful young daughter Sybille, adding more joy to the marriage.

Tom rejoined the Society of Oral Surgeons in Europe (which he helped form) and was elected president of the International Group.

Tom's choice assignments were Fort Campbell, Kentucky, where Tom was promoted to the rank of full colonel, and Fort Benning, Georgia, where Tom and his family retired from the Army. On retirement, Tom was awarded the Legion of Merit. He retired Sept. 1, 1979, after serving 28 years, 9 months and 17 days.

Tom's favorite quotation: "I have given the best years of my life to the U.S. Army, and they Army gave them back to me."

Funeral services with full military honors were held at Bilbrey Funeral Home on Saturday, Dec. 2, 2017, at 3 p.m. with Pastor Andrew J. Abraham officiating. Interment in East Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery on Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2017, at 2 p.m. EST.



Bilbrey Funeral Home

(<http://www.bilbreyfh.com>)