



## Melvin Craig

June 14, 1932 - December 23, 2022

Melvin G. Craig (“Mel”), age 90, of St. John Township, Crown Point, peacefully passed away on December 23, 2022, surrounded by his loving family. On June 14, 1948, at the age of 16, Mel received his private pilot’s license at Triangle Airport in Dyer. At that time, Mel was believed to be the youngest Chicago-Calumet area pilot. He began his flight training at the Triangle Airport at age 14, in exchange for doing odd jobs around the airport. He had to wait until he turned 16 to achieve his pilot’s license, because the aeronautic regulations ban solo flights under the age of 16. Mel was a 1950 graduate of St. John Township High School of Dyer. In December of 1952, Mel was drafted into the Army where he served during the Korean War as an airline mechanic, until November of 1954. On January 23, 1965, he married Carol Jeanne Gettler. Mel was a member of the Mason Lodge. He was also a commercial airline pilot, achieving ratings of Airline Transport Pilot, Airplane Single Engine Land and Airplane Multiengine Land. After flying for 50 years and logging more than 30,000 hours piloting a plane, Mel was awarded the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award from the Federal Aviation Administration in 2006. At the time Mel received The Wright Brothers award it had only been awarded to 560 other pilots worldwide. In order to be nominated for The Wright Brothers award, he had to fulfill 50 consecutive years of flying, obtain 3 letters of recommendation from holders of FAA pilot certificates, as well as have a clean safety history. After 33 years, he retired from his job as a commercial airplane pilot, where he had worked for Flying Tiger, North Central

Airlines, Republic Airlines, and Northwest Airlines. Mel also loved to restore airplanes, including an AT-6, BT-13, and his pride and joy, a red Beechcraft Staggerwing, which was shown at the Rockford Air Show. Mel was on the emergency response “go-team” where he would investigate crash scenes involving airplanes for North Central Airlines, Republic Airlines, and Northwest Airlines. He also flew as a personal pilot for Scheffer Corp. Mel had forgotten more about flying than most will ever know or ever learn. He loved to share his knowledge of airplanes and flying with anyone who was interested. Mel inspired many to become airline pilots due his love of flying.

Mel was preceded in death by his parents, Mathew and Jean Craig. Mel is survived by his loving wife, Carol J. Craig, his son, John (Megan) Craig, and grandchildren Madison, Kate & William.

Visitation will be held on Thursday, December 29, 2022, from 3 - 7 p.m. at Burns Funeral Home, 10101 Broadway, Crown Point, Indiana. A service will be held at 10:00 on Friday, December 30, 2022, at Burns Funeral Home, immediately followed by a gravesite service at Graceland Cemetery in Valparaiso, Indiana.

# Cemetery Details

## Graceland Cemetery

Valparaiso, IN

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC **29**. 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Burns Funeral Home & Crematory - Crown Point  
10101 Broadway  
Crown Point, IN 46307  
(219) 769-0044  
info@burnsfuneral.com  
<https://www.burnsfuneral.com/>

## funeral

DEC **30**. 10:00 AM (CT)

Burns Funeral Home & Crematory - Crown Point  
10101 Broadway  
Crown Point, IN 46307  
(219) 769-0044  
info@burnsfuneral.com  
<https://www.burnsfuneral.com/>

# Tribute Wall

SK

“ *Mel was always so sweet and friendly every time I saw him. The world has lost a beautiful soul.* ”

Susan koehn - December 30, 2022 at 11:24 AM



“ *Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Melvin Craig.* ”



December 29, 2022 at 12:42 PM

NQ

“ *What a wonderful man and wonderful life Mel has had and the memories that he left behind for his loved ones and his many friends are many. Mel never met a stranger and was always so pleasant to me and my family thru the many years that we have known him and I cherish his stories and shared his love of all things airplane. Carol was always the most classy lady in the horse world to me and our friendship goes way back in time so my heart is breaking for her and her family during this most stressful time. My heart is heavy for the family and I am praying for their peace and comfort in their loss. RIP Mel you have certainly earned it!* ”

Norma Quisenberry - December 29, 2022 at 11:26 AM

DL

*It was a privilege to know Mel and his wonderful wife Carol. RIP you deserve it.  
God Bless*

Dennis L. Lorenz - December 29, 2022 at 03:33 PM



*What a wonderful man! I was so shocked to hear of Mel's passing. My deepest condolences to his wife Carol, son John and family. RIP Mel.*

*Ron & Barb Larson*

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**Barbara Wood Larson** - January 16, 2023 at 03:55 PM

GM

*Although I only met Mel a couple of times as a child, I heard Dad talk about him often throughout his life. Dad (Al) flew with him at the long gone Harlem Ave. Airport in Chicago. Thoughts and prayers for the family.  
Gary Metelak*

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**Gary Metelak** - April 15, 2023 at 08:59 AM

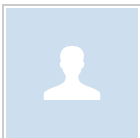


“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Melvin Craig.*



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December 29, 2022 at 11:26 AM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Melvin Craig.*



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December 29, 2022 at 11:01 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Melvin Craig.*



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December 28, 2022 at 11:54 AM



“ *Carol and family- what a wonderful photo of Mel and what a beautiful life he led. I am so glad I got to see him this past Thanksgiving to chat a bit with him and reconnect. It was beyond a blessing to see the both of you. Love , Suzi Tennant*

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**Suzanne Tennant** - December 28, 2022 at 11:30 AM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Melvin Craig.*



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December 28, 2022 at 10:07 AM



“ *Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Melvin Craig.*



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December 27, 2022 at 09:14 PM

DU

“ Dear Carol - I am sorry and deeply saddened by your family's tremendous loss of your dear Mel. Please know each of you is being held close in thought and prayer during this painfully difficult time. Sending my heartfelt condolences and many hugs for all.



Debra Jo Endres-Ard | Lizton, IN USA - December 27, 2022 at 07:10 PM

CC

Thank You sooo much, Debra...Your kind words and support are appreciated!

Carol Craig - January 20, 2023 at 01:49 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Melvin Craig.



December 27, 2022 at 04:16 PM

EV

“ Carol, do sorry for your loss, I haven't seen either of you for many years since I was young and boarded my horse at your barn, but I have found memories ! Beth Villarreal

Elizabeth Villarreal - December 27, 2022 at 01:36 PM

RG

“ *To the family and friends, so sorry for your loss.*

*Rest Easy Hero*

*Randy Gumkowski (INPGR)*



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**Randy Gumkowski** - December 27, 2022 at 06:34 AM