



## Herman "Buzz" B. Gibson Jr.

January 16, 1931 - May 31, 2023

"Buzz" Herman Busbee Gibson Jr, passed away on Wednesday, May 31, 2023, at his home in Orlando Florida, at the age of 92.

Buzz was born on January 16, 1931, in Nicholls, Georgia, the first child of Herman and Grace Gibson. They gave him a little sister, named Janine, about two years later. He had nicknames growing up – "Sonny" and "Herman Junior". Later, as a young Airman, someone remarked that he was always "buzzing" around, and from that, his nickname for life became "Buzz". Almost everyone knew him as Buzz as an adult. He grew up in Nicholls, as the son of the pharmacist and general store owner in the middle of the small town – the Gibson Drug Store.

His mother's sister had a farm outside of town, where he'd go to play with cousins. Mother admonished him to not get wet but he'd come home soaked from playing in the creek. A man came to town to talk about how Nicholls should start a Boy Scout troop. Without an adult leader, the boys found a Scout Handbook and started their own troop, sometimes accompanied by Herman Senior, especially on canoe trips on the Satilla River, or "troop" bike rides to the Okefenokee swamp near Waycross. He and his daddy would go out in the woods on Sunday afternoons and hunt for arrowheads – he was interested in everything. A man in town, Mr. Ledford, took Herman Junior into his darkroom, and showed him how to make pictures, and lent him a camera.

He gave the grownups a fright when he climbed the water tower to get some aerial shots of the town – I've seen the photos – they were pretty good. Mr. Ledford also taught him a lot about carpentry. As a teenager, he built his own travel trailer out of plywood and an old car chassis. The Gibson's of Nicholls Georgia were a very patriotic family. His sister Janine, had a beautiful singing voice. Later in life, she told the story of when he was in the bathroom at church, and she stood outside the door and sang the Star-Spangled Banner as loud as she could, to force him to stand up. It was reported that he didn't appreciate that at all. When asked about that story, Buzz denied that it ever happened. Janine smiled.

After High school, Herman tried a few colleges on for size. Mother pulled some strings to get him into Mercer University, but it wasn't to his liking, and he came home before long. He then attended South Georgia State, closer to home in Douglas. After finishing there, he attended University of Georgia in Athens, where he joined his fraternity Kappa Sigma. He had lots of stories about his days living in the fraternity house. His hazing saw him driven around at night, blindfolded, and dropped off in the woods somewhere, alone. He found a barn, took a long nap, and slowly made his way back to school a few days later. He gave them quite a fright, as they thought they'd lost him for good. He had a good time at UGA. After that, in 1951, he joined the Air Force where he found his calling – electronics. He was trained, and found himself near Boston, stationed on Cape Cod, working on radar systems. Radar and computers were just beginning to be connected to each other, and he was in on that new combining of those technologies. He built a good reputation in his job, and never lacked for enthusiasm and curiosity. He made friends with someone who ran a junkyard & mechanic shop and built himself a hotrod.

Somewhere during this time in his life on Cape Cod, he met a girl, who he married. The boys were out in a cafe' and they met some girls from New York city there, and Buzz and Sonia were together for good. Buzz finished his Air

Force career late in 1955, and he and Sonia were married about a year later. They started their family in Atlanta where Buzz found work at Bell Labs doing what he was good at. They had a boy a year after they married, and a girl about 18 months after that; Mike & Grace "Gigi". Buzz found different jobs, ending up at Martin Marietta in Orlando in the early 60's, where he worked on missile and guidance systems for nearly a decade. He and Sonia continued to grow their family, adding Jeff and Herman III to their clan, and settling into the home they would live in for the rest of their lives. Buzz doubled the size of that home, doing most of the work himself, with a little help from his boys. He went to night school and finally received his bachelor's degree from Rollins College in 1968.

He was invited to help in a startup that intended to build computer-based training systems, what we think of now as simulators. Buzz ascended to Director of Engineering over R&D, of a company that employed nearly a thousand people at its peak. In his plant, there was nearly every kind of modern manufacturing in progress, producing all the hardware and software needed to simulate most any educational challenge the military threw at them. The company name changed several times; for a long time it was Educational Computer Corporation, then shortened to ECC International. Buzz loved going to work, solving the challenges, working with people to get things built. He has many friends from those years, some that go back to his Martin days.

Herman "Buzz" B. Gibson, left us to be with the Lord on May 31, 2023. He was born on January 16, 1931, in Nicholls, GA. He was predeceased by his wife of nearly 64 years, Zenovia "Sonia" in 2020; Survived by his 4 children, Michael, Grace Mihanovic, Jeffrey and Herman III; 8 grandchildren: Bridget, Eva, Anna, Lisa, Katie, Megan, Joshua and Ivan; and 9 great-grandchildren: Carley, Sam, Dylan, Beatrix, Porter, Henry, Magnus, Cameron and Oakley.

He was a member of First Baptist Church of Pine Castle in Orlando, Florida.

In lieu of flowers or other gifts in memory of Buzz, please consider donating to Gentiva Hospice Care: <https://www.gentivahs.com/about/donate/> They were a great comfort in his last months with us.

# Cemetery Details

## Greenwood Cemetery

1603 Greenwood Street  
Orlando, FL 32801

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUN 8. 10:00 AM (ET)

First Baptist Church of Pine Castle  
1001 Hoffner Ave.  
orlando, FL 32809

## Service

JUN 8. 10:30 AM (ET)

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