

Press Release

Edgar D. Mitchell, Sc. D.
Apollo 14 Astronaut
September 17, 1930 – February 4, 2016

West Palm Beach, FL. Edgar D. Mitchell, lunar module pilot for Apollo 14 and the sixth human to walk on the moon, died peacefully in his sleep following a short illness. His death on February 4, 2016 coincided with the 45th anniversary of the Apollo 14 flight (January 31 – February 9, 1971). He was 85 years old.

In addition to his career in space exploration, Mitchell is remembered for his contributions to the study of human consciousness. He is also remembered for a playful prank he and Apollo 14 Commander Alan B. Shepard Jr. played during their space flight. Shepard hit a golf ball with a make-shift six iron while Mitchell threw an improvised javelin.

Mitchell first became interested in space exploration while living in Artesia New Mexico, near Roswell, where his family owned a cattle ranch and farm implement business. Mitchell learned to fly airplanes as a teenager, washing planes at a local airfield in return for flying lessons. Dr. Robert Goddard, the father of modern rocketry, conducted experiments near the Mitchell home. The Roswell incident in which a vehicle purportedly carrying extraterrestrials crashed occurred when Mitchell was age 17.

Mitchell attended Carnegie Mellon University from 1947 until 1952, earning a bachelor's degree in industrial management. He married his college sweetheart, Louise Randall, in 1951.

In 1953 Mitchell enlisted in the US Navy and was commissioned as an Ensign and a pilot. He served two tours of duty near the Korean peninsula, flying A3 aircraft in missions from the USS Bon Homme Richard and the USS Ticonderoga.

Upon returning to the US Mitchell furthered his education, earning a bachelor's of science in aeronautical engineering from the US Naval Post Graduate School in 1961 and a doctorate of science in astronautics and aeronautics from MIT in 1964. He completed test pilot training at the Aerospace Research Pilot School at Edwards Air Force Base in 1966, graduating first in his class.

In April 1966 NASA selected Mitchell for the Apollo program. He served on the support crew for Apollo 9 and as the backup lunar module pilot for Apollo 10 before being named the lunar module pilot for Apollo 14.

Apollo 14 lifted off from from the Cape Kennedy Space Center on January 31, 1971 carrying Alan B. Shepard, Stuart A. Roosa and Edgar D. Mitchell. During their 9-day mission the crew traversed half a million miles. On day five Shepard and Mitchell piloted the lunar module

Antares to the lunar surface while Roosa remained aboard the command module Kitty Hawk. During their 33-hour stay Shepard and Mitchell set up scientific equipment, gathered samples and took two extensive moon walks, performing seismic studies along their way. The three astronauts returned to Earth aboard the Kitty Hawk, splashing down in the South Pacific Ocean on February 9, 1971.

Mitchell retired from the Navy and the astronaut program in 1971 and in 1973 founded the Institute of Noetic Sciences (IONS), a foundation to support consciousness research and promote awareness of evolving human consciousness. IONS sponsors academic research projects and facilitates nearly 200 community groups in the US and abroad.

In retirement Mitchell wrote extensively on human consciousness. His book *Psychic Exploration: A Challenge for Science* (1974) became an essential reference for consciousness researchers. Mitchell's *The Way of the Explorer* (1996) offers an autobiographical account of his interest in human consciousness. Additionally, Mitchell authored dozens of articles in professional and popular periodicals. His writings reflect his wonder at the beauty of the universe and his belief in the sanctity of life.

Mitchell became a much sought-after speaker with a knack for inspiring his audiences. He lectured extensively on cosmology, consciousness, sustainability and the implications of scientific discoveries for society. More recently, Mitchell served as the first chairman of Eternea, Inc., a research organization dedicated to understanding consciousness and the convergence of science and spirituality.

Mitchell received numerous honors and awards during his lifetime, among them the Presidential Metal of Freedom in 1970, the US Navy's Distinguished Service Medal and NASA's Distinguished Service Medal. He was a nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005.

Edgar Mitchell is survived by his daughters Karlyn Mitchell and Elizabeth Kendall; his adopted children Kimberly Mitchell, Paul Mitchell and Mary Beth Johnson; nine grandchildren; one great-grandchild; and several nieces and nephews, including nephew Mitchell Harkins and niece Belinda Hardy. Edgar was also preceded in death by his beloved son, Adam B. Mitchell.

"Our father, Edgar Mitchell, possessed extraordinary talents and tremendous fortune. He was a hero in the classical sense. Though he fulfilled his childhood dreams while still a young man, he managed to sustain an aura of excitement by evolving and reinventing himself. He never tired of encouraging others to strive and explore" said Mitchell's oldest daughter Karlyn.

"My brother and sisters consider ourselves so blessed to have had the Dad we did. He was incredibly generous with his heart and his brain, making each of us a better person because we knew him and were shaped by him. The lessons of hard work, integrity, curiosity, as well as a deep understanding that all things are possible, is embedded in each of us," said Kimberly Mitchell, oldest adopted daughter.

Arrangements for a memorial service are pending. In lieu of flowers the family suggests that donations be made to the Astronaut Scholarship Fund (www.astronautscholarship.org), the Institute for Noetic Sciences (<http://www.noetic.org>) or Eternea Inc ([www. Eternea.org](http://www.Eternea.org)). For further details please contact Kimberly Mitchell at 561-685-7093 or kim3969@aol.com.