

**Mae Blair**, born as Mae Emmaline Gallmoyer and known by most as Flip Blair, died of natural causes at the age of 98 on Mother's Day, May 14, 2023. She was a well-loved mother, grandmother and great grandmother with loving interest in her family until the very end. She was born in Topton, Pennsylvania on July 8, 1924, to Robert Gallmoyer and Carrie Herring Gallmoyer as the youngest of three children. She spoke of her delight as a young child visiting her grandfather's candy store and later her skill dancing the jitterbug. After high school she attended secretarial school, common for young women in her era. She was adventurous and enlisted in the Navy, serving in air transport during World War II. Her brothers, Lee and George Gallmoyer were also enlisted. Lee, a fighter pilot, was tragically killed in North Africa during the war. Flip remained interested in air transport and became a stewardess during the pioneering days of commercial aviation. She initially worked for the corporate aviation division of Aramco, soon after for American Airlines, and then American Export Lines. After a merger she flew with Pan American Airways into the 1950's. During her Pan American days, she met Charles F. Blair, Jr., a senior Pan American pilot and an aviator famous for many achievements including the first solo flight across the North Pole in a single engine aircraft. Charlie and Flip married, began living in Connecticut and had two sons, Charles Lee and Stephen Wallace. They eventually moved to St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Following a divorce after ten years of marriage Flip returned to Connecticut where she lived for the rest of her life. While raising her two children she worked for a boutique travel agency in Westport, Connecticut and later for Lindblad Travel and Tauck Tours, arranging travel for many prominent and famous clients. In 1978, she was a passenger on an Antilles Air Boats seaplane en route from St. Croix to St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands when the aircraft crashed killing both pilots. She and the other passengers, including a close friend, drifted in the Caribbean Sea off the coast of St. Thomas for many hours until a heroic and improbable rescue as dusk approached. Flip traveled throughout the world during her days in air transport and the travel business. She collected letters from many passengers, clients and admirers and had many stories, some of them hilarious, of adventures and misadventures during transatlantic flights in classic aircraft including a favorite, the Boeing Stratocruiser. She was an avid tennis player. She had many close friends, some of them lifelong. She had a wonderful sense of humor. She was a lover of artichokes, curried pecans, oyster pate and made a mean mac 'n' cheese brought to every Thanksgiving celebration. She is survived by her two sons, a daughter-in-law Ellen Weiss Blair, a stepson, Christopher Noel Blair, three grandchildren, Eric Charles Blair (married to Joan Camillo), Melanie Blair Thies (married to Evan Thies), Hayley Grace Blair (married to Ryan Hubert), and two great grandchildren, John Charles Thies and Lucy Pearl Blair. She was predeceased by her two brothers and a stepdaughter, Suzanne Blair Thorndike. Arrangements are being made for the interment of her cremated remains at Arlington National Cemetery.