



Thomas J. Garvey

NOV 14, 1929 - SEP 3, 2020



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John Breen Memorial
FUNERAL HOME, INC.
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T H O M A S J . G A R V E Y

Irish Historian and beloved member of the Irish Community of Andover, Lawrence and Boston, Thomas J. Garvey passed away at Bear Mountain @ Andover on September 3, 2020. He was born in Andover on November 14, 1929, the son of Patrick J. Garvey and Mary M. (Lynch) who immigrated to the U.S. from Counties Cavan & Leitrim, Ireland. He was educated at St. Augustine Grammar School in Andover and graduated from Central Catholic High School in 1948.

Tom was an accomplished, “self taught” musician on piano, organ and button accordion. He played in many bands in circa 1950’s in the Boston area including the Tara Ceili Band and also had his own band in the 1960’s. He entertained as a pianist at many house parties and functions over the years and also was a fill in organist at many local Catholic Churches. Tom was a radio host for 31 years on WCCM’s traditional “Irish Music Tribute” that aired annually on St. Patrick’s Day. He was the accompanist piano player for St. Michael’s Minstrel Show for many years and a contributor to Boston College’s Irish Music Archives.

He was a communicant of St. Augustine’s Church in Andover and a very devout Catholic. Tom had a marvelous sense of humor, an amazing memory and was quite the storyteller.

An Army Veteran of the Korean War Tom served as a medic in the Mash Unit. He was honored with a Combat Medical Badge and Bronze Star. He was promoted to Sergeant First Class E-6 while in Korea. Tom retired from Wang Laboratories in Lowell.

His survivors include nephews, Christopher Garvey and wife Diana & their sons of South Carolina & Kevin Garvey of Texas. Special cousins Peggy (Moran) & her husband Jack Fitzgerald, Patsy Garvey, Richard Garvey & wife Maryann, Carmel O’Sullivan (Dublin), Phyllis Doughty (London) & other cherished relatives & friends in the U.S., Ireland, England & Australia. In



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addition to his parents, he was pre-deceased by his brother John Garvey & sister-in-law, Mary Garvey & their daughter Mary Ellen & several cousins.

Calling hours will be held on Tuesday, September 8 from 3:00-7:00pm at the John Breen Memorial Funeral Home, Inc., 35 Merrimack Street, No. Andover. A funeral mass will be celebrated on Wednesday, September 9 @10:30a.m at St. Augustine's Church, 43 Essex Street, Andover, MA. Burial with military honors will follow at the Spring Grove Cemetery in Andover, Mass., in the Veterans' Section of the cemetery.

For online condolences and other information please visit us at www.breenfuneralhome.com.



Events

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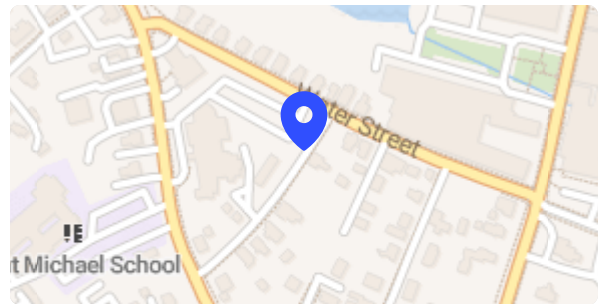
Visitation

Tuesday, September 8, 2020

3:00 PM - 7:00 PM ET

John Breen Memorial Funeral Home, Inc. - North Andover

35 Merrimack St., North Andover MA 01845

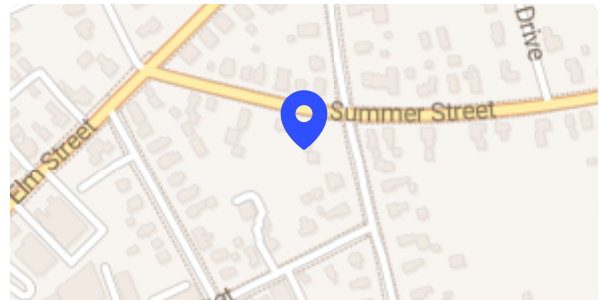


Funeral Mass

Wednesday, September 9, 2020

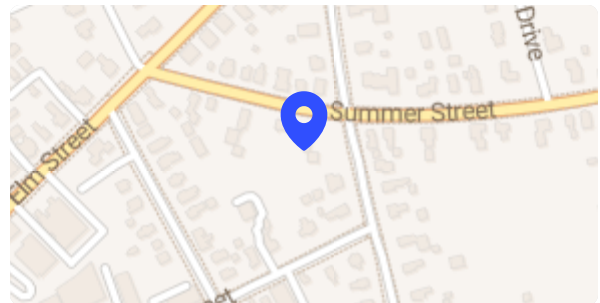
10:30 AM ET

Saint Augustine Church
Andover MA



Cemetery Details

Spring Grove Cemetery
Andover MA





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Christine Barraford posted:

Mr. Garvey, Tom, Tommy.....these names describe the development of a wonderful friendship. As Assistant in the Andover Veterans Office, I first met Mr. Garvey seven years ago. Although not "like at first sight", he soon became Tom, delighting with everything I ever wanted to know about Ireland but was afraid to ask and a reconnection with my own lost Irish heritage and bygone days. We shared love of music and a common deep faith. My affection for Tommy grew in his later years with visits to Wingate and a whole new community of weaving life's stories. Rest in peace dear friend as you lead the choir of angels in the great AMEN!

September 10 at 6:13 AM



Peggy Fitzgerald September 13 at 6:34 AM

Christine, that was beautifully written. You were a very kind and loving friend of Tommy's.



Anne Brady posted:

So sorry to hear of Toms passing and glad we got to visit him a few years ago in Andover. He took us everywhere and got up early to bake Irish soda bread for us before our visit. I will miss his emails. Rest in peace Tommy. Anne & Noel Brady Dublin

September 9 at 7:28 AM



Peggy Fitzgerald September 13 at 6:35 AM

That visit was so special to Tommy and me. I have not put out that large Irish flag since then!



Jack Winters posted:

I started first grade at St. Augustine's with Tom. I think he was one of the biggest kids and I was one of the smallest. We stayed together through CCHS class of '48. We were not close friends but we shared lots of memories, especially the St. Patrick's Day plays that the Nuns presented each year with the help of Miss ... (now if Tom were here, he'd remember her name). I reconnected with him via email and at reunions the past 20 years and had a lot of fun with him bringing me up to date on current happenings and reminiscing about bygone days. His memory for names and events was uncanny. He will be missed by us left behind but he'll be striking up the band behind the gates of Paradise. Jack Winters

September 8 at 7:16 PM



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NB

Noel Barron posted:

So sorry to hear of Tommys passing, he was such a charricter with a great sense of humour. He had a great love for irish music and loved listening to Ceili House on the radio. Over the years I would give him a call on his radio show on St Patricks Day , he loved playing the old comaillies. 🎵 🎵

🎵 🎵 🎵 🎵 May he Rest in Peace.Noel Barron and family.Donegal, Ireland..

September 8 at 2:14 PM

MM

Mary Machado posted:

Dear Pat and Family, I was saddened to read of Tom's passing. He was a true legend to the community. May warm cherished memories shared with Him help ease your loss.

September 8 at 3:49 AM

JD

John Doherty posted:

I knew Tom for probably thirty years and yet every time I talked with him I discovered something I hadn't known about Andover and I'm a Townie from way back. He had a wry sense of humor I found entrancing and he knew where all the bodies were buried- literally and figuratively. He had a positively encyclopedic knowledge of all things Andover- from who sat next to your great aunt when she made her first communion to who your uncle fooled around with in his late 50s. His military record was most impressive but his finest hour came when he was presented with the Combat Medical Badge by the Amy for his life-saving service in the Korean War. I'll miss him greatly- they just don't make them like Tom Garvey any more.

September 7 at 8:24 AM

PF

Peggy Fitzgerald September 13 at 6:25 AM

John, that was a perfect description of Tom. Thank you for your kind words.

PH

Percy Harman posted:

I first met Tommy back in Carrick-on-Shannon (Ireland) when he was visiting the McGreevy family. I was working with the Irish Press newspaper in Dublin but am from Carrick. He travelled back with me to Dublin and stayed with me and Breda overnight. we have kept in touch ever since by Email. He used to refer to himself as "The Knacker". A very funny man. May he rest in peace.

September 7 at 5:30 AM



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PL

Patrick O'Leary posted:

I'm very sorry to hear of Tom's passing. He was a talented and a living history of the Irish music scene through the years. He was kind enough to drive me around Andover to show me the houses where my mother worked when she first came over from Ireland. His father and my uncle both worked at Phillip's Academy. He would invite me to where he lived and would encourage me to play Irish trad music on my tin whistle and he would play the piano. I was always amazed that he played such beautiful music all my ear. He was a good man and I always enjoyed his company and his stories of all the different venues he played in through the years. The Irish traditional music community has lost a great man. May he Rest In Peace.

September 6 at 10:55 AM

RM

Ronan McGreevy posted:

I lived with Tommy and his father for two-and-a-half years in Lawrence. They brought me over in July 1961 and I stayed with them until December 1963. They were so kind to me. Tommy always brought me to the Irish dances. He was great fun. If there was a piano anywhere, he would belt out reels and jigs for everybody. I had a very pleasant stay and was showed great kindness by them. We looked forward to his visits to Ireland. He was always full of fun. He loved his auntie (my mother Bridget McGreevy) in Carrick-on-Shannon and the rest of the family of the McGreevys and the Lynchs. He made great efforts to go and visit people in the west of Ireland whose relatives were living in Boston. Carmel O'Sullivan (Dublin).

September 6 at 10:51 AM

PF

Peggy Fitzgerald September 13 at 6:31 AM

Carmel, Tommy treasured you as a very special cousin and he loved your very much!

PC

Pat Curran sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Garvey family.

September 6 at 8:17 AM





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Jim And Deb Blanchard posted:

We are so sorry, and want to express our deepest condolences to the family of Tom Garvey. We got to share some special memories with Tom while he was at Bear Mountain, with our Mom, and we will treasure those moments forever. He was such a very unique and special person, and his knowledge that he shared about the Merrimack Valley was quite amazing. We love that man! Sad he had to leave us. But he left us with quite a legacy!!! We were blessed to know you Tom!!!! XO Jim and Deb Blanchard

September 5 at 7:22 PM



Peggy Fitzgerald lit a candle in honor of Thomas.

Your legacy and memories will always live on in our hearts. So many wonderful memories of happy times spent together. May you always rest in peace. I have no doubt if there is a piano up there in Heaven that you have located it! Love, Peggy & Jack Fitzgerald



September 5 at 6:01 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Thomas by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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