

John Connell



John J. "Okie" Connell, 82, of Connection St., Newport, died Thursday, October 22, 2009 at home. He was the husband of Jane M. (Anderson) Connell. Born in Newport on June 26, 1927, he was a son of the late William and Mary (Malone) Connell.

Okie was a graduate of De La Salle Academy, class of 1945, and Salve Regina University. He had been employed by the Newport Police Department for 28 years, retiring in the 1980's with the rank of Detective. For 25 years he had been the caretaker of Gooseberry Island and was head of security at the former Edgehill Rehabilitation Center from 1980 until it's closing.

A parishioner of St. Augustin's Church, he was also a member of the De La Salle Father's Group, Ancient Order of Hibernians, and the Democratic City Committee; a past president and board member of the Gooseberry Beach Association; a board member of the Newport Police Relief Fund Association; a volunteer for Meals on Wheels; and a committee member for the Christmas Basket for FOP and the Newport Police Parades, including the original committee for the organization of the 1st parade.

Besides his wife, he leaves his children John "Foxy" Connell and his wife Nancy, Cindy Macioci and her husband Bill, all of Middletown, Jane Full and her husband Tom, and Michael Connell, all of Newport, Linda Closter and her husband Bob of Block Island, Patty Bestoso and her husband Paul, Mimi Cheever and her husband Jim, all of Warren, Christine Connell of Annapolis, MD, and Dennis Connell of Virginia Beach, VA; 18 grandchildren, 9 great grandchildren; his brother Philip Connell, and many nieces and nephews. He was the brother of the late Frank, George, and Mary "Betty" Connell.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Monday, October 26, 2009, in St. Augustin's Church, Carroll Ave, Newport. Burial at St. Columba Cemetery, Brown's

Ln, Middletown followed. Visiting hours were held on Sunday in the O'Neill-Hayes Funeral Home, 465 Spring St., Newport, RI.

Donations in Okie's name may be made to the Newport Police Relief Fund Association, Police Headquarters Broadway, Newport, RI, 02840 or to St. Augustin's Church, 2 Eastnor Rd, Newport, RI, 02840.