

William A Collins



Mr. William Anthony Collins, 78, of Middletown and Juno Beach, Florida passed away peacefully at home on October 7, 2010.

Mr. Collins was raised in Newport, RI the son of John J. "Fido" and Anna (O'Neill) Collins. He was the beloved husband of Anne (Buckley) Collins and the former husband of the late Anne (Deacon) Collins.

He graduated from Rogers High School in 1950 and Bryant College in 1958. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1951 to 1954. He was the only Newporter on board the Aircraft Carrier USS Bennington when it had an explosion off the coast of Rhode Island May 26, 1954. To honor the crewmen who perished, he was responsible for erecting the USS Bennington Memorial at Fort Adams State Park, Newport, RI. He hosted the USS Bennington reunion in Newport in 2007.

While residing in Florida and Warwick, Mr. Collins worked for Equifax, formerly Retail Credit Co., for 33 years as an insurance investigator until retirement in 1991. In retirement, he and Anne traveled extensively visiting New Zealand, China, Egypt, Hawaii, Europe and especially his relatives in Ireland. He was an avid gardener and a faithful Red Sox, Patriots and NASCAR fan. He was a member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Dennis E. Collins Division, a communicant of St. Lucy's Church in Middletown, and a member of the USS Bennington Association, Redwood Library, and Middletown Democratic Party.

Besides his wife, Anne, he is survived by four children and five step-children, John F. Collins of Tampa, FL, Diane Leher of Harbor City, CA, Eileen Heckert of Warren, RI, Michael T. Collins of Warren, RI, Michael J. Brennan of Mary Ester, FL, Stephen P. Brennan of Bridgewater, MA, Kevin Brennan of Sudbury, MA, Susan Beard of West Bridgewater, MA, and Christopher Brennan of Cumberland, RI. He is also survived by seven grandchildren and eight step-grandchildren. His sister Anita Alger precedes him in death.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Saturday, October 9, 2010 at St. Lucy's Church, 909 W. Main Rd, Middletown. Burial at St. Columba Cemetery, Brown's Ln, Middletown. Visiting hours were held on Friday, October 8 from 4-7pm in the

O'Neill-Hayes Funeral Home, 465 Spring St., Newport. Donations may be made to the Visiting Nurse Services of Newport and Bristol Counties-Hospice Care, PO Box 690, Portsmouth, RI, 02871.