

Joseph T. Donovan Sr.



Joseph T. Donovan, Sr., age 86, died on Sunday, November 3, 2013, at the Village House Nursing Home. He was born in Newport, on May 9, 1927, son of Thomas J. and Esther (Welch) Donovan.

Joe joined the Navy at the age of 17 and served aboard the Destroyer USS Saufrey during WWII. He was called back to the Navy during the Korean War then serving aboard the Battle Ship USS New Jersey. After discharge from the Navy, he joined the Inactive Navy Reserve.

Joe joined the Carpenters Union, Local 176 working for local contractors and Newport Roofing for 25 years. He joined the Newport Fire Department in 1951 serving the city for 27 years. He was also a self-employed contractor specializing in window and door installation.

Joe was an avid boater until the age of 81. In the summer he could be found on his second love, the Mary D., in Brenton Cove on his mooring Donovan's Reef. Joe was often joined in the cove by his children and grandchildren, in whom he instilled a love of, and respect for the water. He was a font of knowledge with regard to boating skills and could always be counted upon to help with a problem. His children and grandchildren all learned to swim off his boat in the cove, a tradition that has continued with his great-grandchildren.

Joe is survived by his loving wife of 62 years, Mary C. (Martins) Donovan. He also leaves daughter Karen Gallagher and her husband Terry, his son Joseph T. Donovan, Jr. and his wife Mary. Joe was the proud grandfather of Patrick J. Donovan (Liz), Erin Donovan O'Donald (Doug), Katherine Donovan, Ian and Conor Gallagher. He was also great-grandfather to Lily and Maggie Donovan, and Dugan and Sullivan O'Donald. In addition, he will be greatly missed by many nieces, nephews and life-long friends.

He is predeceased by his siblings Thomas W. Donovan, John (Jack) Donovan, and Mary Kelly. Joe was a life-long member of St. Joseph's Church in Newport.

Visiting hours were held on Wednesday, November 6, 2013 in the Memorial Funeral Home, 375 Broadway, Newport.

His funeral was held on Thursday, November 7, 2013, at 9 a.m., from the Memorial Funeral Home, followed by a Mass of Christian burial at 10 a.m. in St. Joseph's Church, Broadway and Mann Avenue, Newport. His burial with military honors will take place at St. Columba Cemetery, Brown's Lane, Middletown.

Donations may be made to the American Parkinson's Disease Association, Rhode Island Chapter, P.O. Box 41659, Providence, RI 02940-1659, the Newport Rescue Wagon Fund, 21 W. Marlborough Street, Newport, RI 02840, or to the Village House Nursing Home, 70 Harrison Avenue, Newport, RI 02840.