



Garrett "Gary" Olds Kirwin St. Age 75, of **Newport, RI and Melbourne Beach, FL**, passed away on Saturday, **January 21, 2023** after a brief illness. Gary is survived by **his wife Susan (Shea) Kirwin, his five children** and their spouses; **James T. Kirwin (Genia), Lizbeth Kirwin Kirby (Kevin), Ryan J. Kirwin (Kelli), Garrett O. Kirwin Jr. (Sarah), Connor J. Kirwin (Kristen), and Dorothy (Podolak) Kirwin**, his first wife and mother of his children. He has **eleven grandchildren: Libby, Patrick, Katie, Amory, Maeve, Elise, Lila, Kendra, Garrett, Benjamin, and Thomas.**

Also surviving are his sister **Elizabeth Kirwin** of Newport, brothers **Peter Kirwin (Jean)** of Portsmouth, **Christopher Kirwin (Cynthia)** of Newport, **Terrence Kirwin (Katherine)** of Newport, and **Stephen Kirwin (Barbara)** of Portsmouth, his sister-in-law **Mary Ellen Kirwin** of Middletown and dozens of nieces, nephews, second and third cousins whom he loved dearly.

Gary was predeceased by his brother **Joseph "Jay" Page Kirwin** and his sister **Patricia "Patty" Ann Kirwin Folliard.**

In 2010 Gary married his high school sweetheart Susan Shea Kirwin in Key West, and they relocated to Melbourne Beach. Gary and Susan loved to travel. Together they enjoyed seeing the United States, traveling abroad, and cruising. The highlight of their travels was heading north to see family and friends. They especially enjoyed working in their Florida home on projects large and small, singing their special Birthday Grams and being Best Friends 'til the end of Time.

Gary was **born on St. Patrick's Day in 1947**, the son of **Joseph Francis and Marcelline Patricia Olds Kirwin**. Gary **graduated from De La Salle Academy in 1965**. After attending **Fairfield University**, he returned to Newport and began his career as a plumber. He worked for the **Macpherson Plumbing** company until he went out on his own and started his plumbing business. He loved to teach, and often hired high school kids and put them to work in the trade. He and his first wife Dorothy, bought and renovated many large homes in Newport, often moving from one to the other. Gary had a great eye for building and design. Later in life he went into business with his son. In 2009 Gary obtained his **Master Plumber Contractor's license in Florida** and was congratulated for being the **oldest person ever to take**

the test and pass the first time! A true family man, Gary was one of eight children and had five of his own. Gary treasured the family's large and frequent gatherings. He organized epic Thanksgivings, Christmases with enormous trees, 4th of July parties with the Kirwin Olympics, and hundreds of other get-togethers at the family home. He was tremendously engaging and entertaining.

Gary loved to play golf. In his youth he was a caddie at Newport Country Club and had the honor of **caddying for John F. Kennedy**, first as a Senator and again as President. As a Newporter, Gary had a love for the ocean. He loved to swim, he loved Gooseberry Beach, and taught all his kids to sail. In his thirties he was an active participant in the weekly Shields series on Narragansett Bay. He was extremely proud of finishing second in the annual regatta ten years in a row. The other boat in the fleet was proud of him as well.

Gary had a life-long passion for the game of Rugby and the **Newport Rugby Club**. He was one of the **club's original players** when it was founded in 1980. He enjoyed playing, touring with the club, and supporting the team every Saturday at Fort Adams. He never missed a game that a brother or son played in. His favorite day of the year was the annual intra-club Young Boy / Old Boy game. Even in his sixties he would feign shock when he wasn't selected first in the player's draft before the game. He was tremendously proud when the Newport Rugby Pitch was named after his closest friend and brother, Jay.

His kids will remember him most fondly for the hundreds of adventures they had with their Dad; short swims or boat trips to Gooseberry Island, longer boat rides to Uncle Chris' house on Prudence Island, camping or woodcutting in Tiverton or skiing and hiking in New Hampshire. His trips were always filled with excitement, follies, hilarity and even a hint of danger. Gary was a kind and generous man, who always flashed a big smile when he greeted you. And oh, those blue eyes! He was loud and gregarious, and never spoke ill of anyone. If he didn't have something nice to say, he said little at all.

He was a proud member of the Dennis E. Collins Div. 1 Ancient Order of Hibernians and embodied the spirit of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity. He is already missed.

A ritual and Celebration of Life / reception will be held at the Hibernian Hall at 2 Wellington Square in Newport, RI at 12 noon on Sunday February 12th. Friends and family are welcome and encouraged to attend to share their memories of Gary.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Gary's honor to the Newport Rugby Football Club, PO Box 217, Newport, RI 02840.