



John Edward McDonough

January 21, 2021

John Edward McDonough passed away from natural causes at his home in Bloomfield on January 21, 2021, his 67th birthday. He was born in Hartford, Connecticut to Estelle (McCullough) and George F. McDonough. He completed his local schooling at Northwest Catholic High School where he began his acting career brilliantly playing Puck in *Midsummer Night's Dream* and Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*. He went on to perform at the College of Holy Cross under Ken Happe while majoring in English literature.

In his junior year, he studied in Ireland at University College Dublin, staying in a working man's Rooming House which became the source for many stories later on. After graduation, he returned to his home in Bloomfield and was recruited by The Plum Cake Players Children's Theater with whom he toured Connecticut schools, as well as the Mystic Marine life Aquarium, where he was featured in two productions for four species.

While perusing his acting career, he started the Weatogue Fossil Fuel Company delivering coal. While on the Hough bucket loader, he would often recite Shakespeare or lines from his newest play.

As a member of the Shivram Shinola Memorial Clown Troupe, he was instrumental in the presentation of a "Feast of Fools" alternative liturgy at the St. John's Episcopal Church, as well as other events.

He was co-founder of the Amelia Earhart Memorial Men's Club, a kind of Algonquin Round Table of artists and other professionals that met at the Marble Pillar Restaurant in Hartford. There they planned the Annual Arts

Turkey of the Year Award Gala, with send-ups of Hartford Cultural Institutions and personalities, presented at the Hartford State House and Wadsworth Athenaeum Theater.

He was a member of the Hartford Stage Company and co-founder of Company One Theater. With Sidewalk, Inc. he performed in "Thursday is a Work of Art", doing avant-garde street performance at lunchtime in Downtown Hartford.

A marvelous Storyteller, with a rich voice, he was featured as the Narrator in concerts with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra. He was a frequent guest of Garrison Keillor's Prairie Home Companion. He recorded hundreds of Audio Books and was a favorite narrator of Jan Karon's books, creating different voices for the many characters.

For several Christmases he appeared as the Good King Wenceslas at the St. John the Divine's Boar's Head Festivals. In recent years he was the Reader of passages he selected at the Christmas Angelicus concerts in Connecticut Churches, always ending with "Touch Hands" by William Henry Harrison Murray.

When Hollywood wanted to revive the Captain Kangaroo television show, they held a nationwide search and chose John who entertained families for several years. He also appeared in several of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parades as the Captain, once surviving a harrowing experience with a heavy rain storm while in a boat high in the air with water sloshing around him.

An avid crossword maven, he solved the New York Times puzzles every day in (sometimes) record time. John loved life. He had a joyous spirit and a ready wit. He loved being around family and friends, cooking food, raising bees, singing, and reciting verse or stories. His favorite companion was Nora, a border collie who was rescued from a pound in Galway by friends Richard Johnston and Chris Hanley.

He is survived by his sister Martha O'Brien of Pawcatuck, brother William McDonough of Bloomfield, nieces Marita Coombs (Bob) of Somerville, MA, Marsina Stearns (Marc) of Hadden Heights, NJ, and nephews William

McDonough (Marycate) of West Chester, PA, Colin McDonough of Bozrah, CT, Timothy O'Brien (Abby) of Pawcatuck, CT, and Brendan O'Brien (Jennifer) of Ledyard, Connecticut along with several grandnieces and nephews. He is predeceased by his sister Trudy McDonough and brother-in-law John O'Brien. A private live streaming mass of Christian Burial will be held on Saturday, January 30th, 2021 at 10:00 am at St. Timothy's Church in West Hartford, CT followed by burial in Mount Saint Benedict Cemetery in Bloomfield, CT. Donations can be made in his honor to Chorus Angelicus, PO Box 1051, Torrington, CT 06790 or the charity of your choice. There will be a celebration of John's life in the fall when we are COVID free. John's family has entrusted the Molloy Funeral Home, West Hartford, with the arrangements. A link to the streaming will be available at www.molloyfuneralhome.com.

“So until next time, be kind to each other, know that you can be anything you want to be, and remember—you'll always have friends at the treasure house.”

Please use this link for streaming

https://youtu.be/F-6xF-nP_JI

Tribute Wall



“ *Molloy Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of John Edward McDonough*



Molloy Funeral Home - January 26, 2021 at 12:25 PM

VV

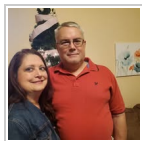
I've been listening—again—to my Mitford Series of books written by Jan Karon and narrated by John McDonough. I just love his voice, and looked him up to see his face. Low and behold: He has passed on. So very sorry! His voice has brought me many hours of pleasure, comfort, and humor. May he Rest In Peace.

Vicki Vergeldt - May 26, 2021 at 09:24 PM

SW

Thank you Mr. McDonough (from a 70 year old black guy). I enjoyed your narrations immensely, especially the reading of Harold Bloom's "How To Read and Why." Afterward I searched out books on Audible that you read. God bless you! May you rest in God's peace and love.

Steven Wynn - April 29 at 01:36 PM



“ *I know you through the Mitford characters. You make them come to life. ❤️*

Angie Renee - February 13 at 12:03 PM

DR

“ This very kind man was part of my childhood in 97 as Captain Kangaroo. Thank you John for the awesome childhood memories. You're now at the real "treasure house" in heaven. I'll see you up there.

Darrell Ramsey - March 20, 2025 at 04:12 PM

CM

“ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_4YsPR5rXg&t=45s

Tribute to John from Joyful Noise

Chris Molloy - February 03, 2021 at 02:07 PM

AL

“ <https://youtu.be/O4xNrTR1Pks>

UJ / Uncle John will be missed. Here is a family tribute to him.

Abby OBrien (UJ niece-in law) - January 30, 2021 at 05:41 PM

SG

“ "Everyone can master a grief but he that has it." John was my friend and neighbor since we were young scamps in the green fields of Bloomfield. Farewell my dear friend. You are deeply missed, Stephen Grannis

Stephen Grannis - January 30, 2021 at 12:45 AM

BA

“ I am honored that I was able to spend as much time as I had with John, and call him a friend. Tapeworks will always have tea and lemons on hand for you sir! We miss you Captain.

Bill Ahearn - January 29, 2021 at 05:36 AM

MH

“ I went to NWC and Holy Cross with John. He was always a character. There is a great picture of him in our HC yearbook on the sideline at a varsity basketball game dressed as Santa Claus. I happened to run into him at Bishop’s Corner in West Hartford the day I got my acceptance letter to law school. When I shared my news with him, he seemed happier than me. I’ve never forgotten his reaction. Great guy.

Mark Hagarty, NWC ‘72, HC ‘76.

Mark Hagarty - January 27, 2021 at 12:31 PM

BG

“ I always enjoyed the concerts I played in that featured John's stories and narrations, delivered with that marvelous voice!

Bob Groff - January 25, 2021 at 03:55 PM



“ John is a special part of our family lore---a memory from the days of Captain Kangaroo. His smile, his charm and his genuine care for all of us associated with the show will not be forgotten. In honor of his wonderful life, my spouse has retrieved many of the keepsakes she had collected from the show and placed them prominently in our home.

R. Patrick Hill - January 25, 2021 at 12:49 PM

ME

“ Oh my, what a loss! John was in my class at NWC and I played piano in the pit for his memorable performances in "Oliver!"(Artful Dodger), "The Fantasticks" (El Gallo), and "Fiddler on the Roof" (Tevya). Sending healing thoughts to his family and friends.

Marcella Esler - January 25, 2021 at 08:30 AM



“ Hello

You do not know me but this man's voice helped me and my mother as we underwent cancer treatment. And then as she lay dying his voice soothed her. What a gift he gave so many of us. I am heartbroken that his voice has been silenced... well on this side of heaven... I imagine his voice is filling heaven now.

Gina Kamwithi - January 24, 2021 at 09:36 PM

LH

“ TO McDonough family:

prayers that God may comfort your hearts at this difficult time.

Linda Head, Indiana

linda head - January 24, 2021 at 03:58 PM

ST

“ *My condolences to the McDonough family. What a treasure John was! That voice-that Celtic love of words! He will be missed, but happily reunited with his mother, my friend, and Trudy. RIP John.*
Suzanne Shay Travers

Suzanne Travers - January 24, 2021 at 01:37 PM

ES

“ I am so sorry to see this. I had the privilege of going to high school and college with John. I enjoyed his wit-his smile-and happy nature-always a kind smile and hug. It was always a pleasure to see him at church and functions over the years. May he Rest In Peace-and I am sure he and Trudy are happy to be reunited-

Thank you for your friendship and memories on and off the stage.

Fondly Ellen McKone-Stafford-RIP my friend

Ellen McKone Stafford - January 23, 2021 at 01:30 PM