



## Mary G. (O'Connell) Flaherty

May 28, 1935 - February 15, 2014

FLAHERTY, Mary G. (O'Connell)

Mary Gerard (O'Connell) Flaherty of West Hartford and Bonita Springs, FL died on February 15, 2014 at Saint Francis Hospital, in Hartford, CT. She leaves her husband of 57 years James F. Flaherty, Jr. and family. Mary was born on May 28, 1935 at Saint Francis Hospital. Her parents were the late Daniel J. O'Connell and Julia (McCarthy) O'Connell of West Hartford.

Mary's ancestors' emigration from Ireland was of historical importance in their lives and to Mary as well. Their courage and single-mindedness in leaving their families and homeland endowed Mary with strength and self-confidence. At an early age, Mary experienced a never to be forgotten event. On July 6, 1944, Mary's parents took Mary and her friend Nancy Snow to the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus performance in Hartford. Tragically, it was the day of the Circus Fire. Mary, Nancy and Mary's parents were among the lucky ones, able to vacate the burning tent with only horrific memories. A few years later, Mary and her father went to Fenway Park in Boston. The Red Sox were behind for most of the game then rallied in the late innings to pull out a victory. Mary became a lifelong fan of the Bosox.

During summer vacations from high school, Mary worked in the Cheer Cupboard at Saint Francis Hospital where she first met her future husband, Jim, who had a summer job at the hospital driving the nuns. Mary graduated from Mount Saint Joseph Academy, in West Hartford, as a member of the

Class of 1952. She received a Bachelor of Science Degree (Child Studies) in 1956 and a Master of Arts Degree (Early Childhood Education) in 1978 from Saint Joseph College, in West Hartford. Mary was selected to appear in the 1955-1956 edition of "Who's Who Among Students" in American Universities and Colleges. Mary and Jim were married on June 23, 1956 at Saint Thomas the Apostle Church in West Hartford. During Jim's time in the U. S. Navy they lived in Maryland and Florida. In 1958, after Jim's release from active duty, they purchased a home in Rocky Hill, CT. Four years later, as the family grew in numbers, they moved to West Hartford, CT where they have been residents for 52 years.

Nothing was more important to Mary than her deep faith, and the health and happiness of her family. She counseled her children to "always do right, fear not". Mary passed on to her children and grandchildren her love of literature, music and the arts. When her children were young, Mary was a docent at The Mark Twain House in Hartford. Her children attended many of her tours there and gained a keen appreciation of her interest in literature and history. She inspired them by living a life of service to others, honesty, integrity and compassion. Mary enriched others with her wonderful sense of humor, passion for the arts, and education. She was an extraordinary hostess, creating special memories for family and friends who cherished her quick wit and steadfast loyalty. In her spare time, Mary was an avid reader, enthusiastic swimmer, tennis player and gardener. She relished long walks with friends in The Reservoir.

The formative pre-k years of raising her six children proved to be a valuable experience. In 1971, when her children were in school, Mary became a Teacher in The School for Young Children at Saint Joseph College. It was a position which she thoroughly enjoyed for 11 years. She also taught undergraduate level classes during this time. In 1982, Mary and two neighbors formed a partnership Conn-Etiquette - a "State of Good Manners" which they taught to young children in a variety of venues, including G. Fox and Company stores. Their work was the subject of an article in The New York

Times on October 30, 1983. When her partners and their husbands moved out-of-state, Mary became a real estate sales agent. She joined Westledge Associates in 1985 and later became associated with The T. R. Preston Co. in West Hartford where she was assigned sales duties at the Balbrae Condominium Development in Bloomfield.

Mary and Jim enjoyed touring European countries and visiting Islands in the Caribbean during their retirement years. In 1999, they purchased a condominium in Florida where they welcomed family and friends during the winter months. Mary was a "People Person" always eager to associate and work with children in the classroom or adults in business and social gatherings. She was a dedicated and involved community leader. Mary became a Corporator of Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center in 1992 and was a co-chair for the 1998 Miracles IX fund raising event. In 2003 Mary was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Saint Francis Foundation where she served on its Annual Giving Committee. She also was a Volunteer Patient Advocate at the hospital and a member of The Auxiliary at SFHMC.

Mary loved music and playing the piano. She looked forward to trips into New York City to view Broadway Shows. Mary and Jim were longtime members of The Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, CT and The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts in Hartford where they attended numerous musical productions over the years. In 1995, Mary was elected to the Board of Overseers at The Bushnell and spent time on its Community Involvement Committee. She also served as a co-chair for the 1997 Connecticut Arts Gala to benefit the Partners Program at The Bushnell. Mary was a former member of The Town and County Club in Hartford and a current member of the Bonita Bay Club in Bonita Springs, FL. Mary leaves a legacy of devotion and enduring love. She will be missed by all who were fortunate to know her.

Mary's survivors include her six children and their spouses - -James F. (Jay) Flaherty III and Mary H. Flaherty, Los Angeles, CA; Laura F. Palmer and Steven K. Palmer, Darien, CT; Mary G. (Meg) Flaherty, West Hartford, CT; Ann

Louise F. Steinle and Thomas D. Steinle, West Hartford, CT; Susan E. Flaherty, St. Louis, MO; Julie F. Livingstone and John T. Livingstone, West Hartford, CT.

Mary was known as "Mere-Mere" to her 17 grandchildren - - James P. Flaherty, Mary Catherine F. Unis and husband Joseph, Maureen K. Flaherty, Wilson E. Palmer, Russell G. Palmer, Sloane K. Palmer, Caitlin B. Clarke, Daniel P. Clarke, Courtney M. Clarke, Sarah C. Steinle, T. Miller Steinle, Peter J. Steinle, Peter F. Myers, Madeline H. Myers, John D. Livingstone II, Maren E. Livingstone, and James F. Livingstone.

The family would like to thank the staff, medical providers and CNAs at Duncaster in Bloomfield for the excellent care that Mary received during her stay at their Caleb Hitchcock Health Center. The family is also grateful for the professional services Mary received from the doctors, nurses and aides during her recent admission to Saint Francis Hospital.

Calling hours will be from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM on Friday, February 21 at The Church of Saint Peter Claver, 47 Pleasant Street, West Hartford, CT. A Mass of Christian Burial, celebrating Mary's life, is scheduled for 10:00 AM on Saturday, February 22nd at the Church of Saint Peter Claver. Interment will follow in the family plot at Fairview Cemetery across from the church. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests a gift in Mary's memory to an organization of the donor's choice. Online remembrances may be made at [www.molloyfuneralhome](http://www.molloyfuneralhome)

# Cemetery Details

## Fairview Cemetery West Hartford

200 Whitman Ave.  
West Hartford, CT

# Previous Events

## Calling Hours

FEB 21. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

St. Peter Claver Church  
47 Pleasant Street  
West Hartford, CT

## Mass of Christian Burial

FEB 22. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Peter Claver Church  
47 Pleasant St  
West Hartford, CT

# Tribute Wall

MW

“ Don and I just learned of Mary's passing and regret that we are not in town this weekend. We would very much like to express our deep sympathy to all of you in person. Mary was among the first people to welcome us to Uplands Drive back in 1988, and she always had a smile and a pleasant word when we met. She was truly a beautiful woman, inside and out. As her obituary said so well, she was a force for good in the world, and she will be missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with you, Jim, and your lovely family.

*Marilyn Walsh*

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**Marilyn Walsh** - February 21, 2014 at 04:03 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Mary G. (O'Connell) Flaherty.



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February 21, 2014 at 11:03 AM



“ Loving Lilies and Roses Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mary G. (O'Connell) Flaherty.



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February 20, 2014 at 12:14 PM

SL

“ To Jim and the entire Flaherty family,

*Much love to all of you at this difficult time. Mary was a wonderful lady, and aunt. Please know you are all in my thoughts and prayers.*

*-Sarah*

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**Sarah Lusignan** - February 20, 2014 at 10:41 AM



“ *Heavenly and Harmony was purchased for the family of Mary G. (O'Connell) Flaherty.*



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February 19, 2014 at 07:37 PM



“ *Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mary G. (O'Connell) Flaherty.*



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February 19, 2014 at 07:30 PM

PC

“ *Pat Carnevale purchased the Dreams From the Heart Bouquet for the family of Mary G. (O'Connell) Flaherty.*



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**Pat Carnevale** - February 19, 2014 at 07:30 PM

JR

“ To Jim and his and Mary’s family, we share your sorrow. We know Mary’s life was lived in service to God, family and her community for which her reward will be great. We are blessed to have known her. God bless Mary. We send our love to all.

-Barbara and John Moran - Denver

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**jrmoran20@comcast.net** - February 19, 2014 at 05:03 PM

PW

“ My sincere condolences to the entire Flaherty family. I was fortunate enough to be in Mrs. Flaherty's nursery school class at St. Joseph's, and in the many years since, whenever I saw her at many social events with my parents, I always felt a great happiness in speaking with her. Her kindness was unparalleled. To this day I won't kill spiders out of concern that it will cause it to rain the next day, as she taught me way back then. She will be missed.

-Peter Walker

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**Peter Walker** - February 18, 2014 at 07:33 PM

CM

“ To Mr. Flaherty and the entire Flaherty family,

*Please accept my deepest condolences for your loss. Mrs. Flaherty was such a beautiful and kind woman. She will continue be in my thoughts and prayers.*

Carey O'Brien McGlynn

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**Carey O'Brien McGlynn** - February 18, 2014 at 10:36 AM

UO

“ *To Mr. Flaherty, the Flaherty children and grandchildren,  
Please accept our heartfelt condolences at the loss of your wife,  
mother, and grandmother.*

*Office of Alumni Relations  
University of Saint Joseph*

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**USJ Alumni Office** - February 18, 2014 at 06:55 AM

LB

*It was a true gift to know Mrs. Flaherty. My prayers are with her loving  
family. God Bless. Linda Barnard*

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**Linda Barnard** - February 18, 2014 at 08:33 AM