



Michael Gerard McGunnigle

November 18, 2023

Michael Gerard McGunnigle passed away peacefully on November 18, 2023, at his home in Grove City, OH, at the age of 79. He was surrounded by his loving family. Michael is survived by his wife of 57 years, Joan (Pelkey) McGunnigle, brother George McGunnigle of Plymouth, MN, daughters and sons-in-law Nora McGunnigle and Tom Warin of Austin, TX, Katherine (McGunnigle) and Michael Berry of Columbus, OH, and grand-children, Sean, Erin, and Ryan Berry, and his nieces and nephews and their families. Michael was predeceased by his parents, George and Mary (Curran) McGunnigle of West Hartford, CT and brother, Timothy McGunnigle of Tampa, FL. Born in Rochester, NY, Michael and his family moved to Hartford, CT when he was 4 years old. He graduated from Fairfield Preparatory School and studied English at Boston College, where he met his beloved Joanie. Mike and Joan moved to Chicago where he pursued his doctorate at Northwestern University. After returning to Connecticut, they made their home in Hartford and then Vernon, filling their welcoming house with their two daughters and their friends, music, laughter, books, and cats. Michael was a professor of English, specializing in medieval English literature, at Manchester Community College and the University of Connecticut. Michael had a passion for Irish music, playing guitar and bodhran, with a beautiful tenor voice. He and Joan hosted their “Hoo Hah” party every summer, for many years – a backyard mini-festival celebrating Irish music and dance, and the McGunnigles’ signature hospitality, where there were no strangers, only friends they had not yet met. After retirement,

Mike and Joan moved to Columbus, OH to be closer to their daughter, son-in-law, and grandchildren. A gathering of family and friends will be held on Thursday, December 28th from 11:00 a.m- 1:00pm at Molloy Funeral Home, 906 Farmington Ave., West Hartford. Online expressions of sympathy may be may at www.molloyfuneralhome.com

Previous Events

Calling Hours

DEC **28**. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Molloy Funeral Home
906 Farmington Avenue
West Hartford, CT 06119
(860) 232-1322

Tribute Wall

MG

“ Mike was part of a vibrant crew of train riders that included, in addition to the McGunnigles, the Vuolos, Gannons, Cossettes, and various others looking for a strong Jesuit education. Mike was a bright but quiet member, as I recall it, making his mark in the classroom with "Lefty" Welch and other great teachers. I'm sure he was a great teacher also, with the preparation he had invested in. Mike was at the 50th Prep reunion, my last vision of this wonderful Irish gentleman. He leaves a powerful legacy for family and friends.

Michael Gannon - January 03, 2024 at 08:38 AM

JH

“ I have many happy memories of Mike from our Prep days, coming all the way from Hartford, often not returning home until well after 7PM. It was nice to reminisce with Mike and Joan years later at our Reunion. Family and friends meant everything to Mike. Jerry H.

Jerry Hemenway - January 02, 2024 at 09:17 PM

LW

“ Dearest Joan, George, Nora, Kate & the McGunnigle family.

Craig and I send our deepest sympathy to you during this most difficult time with the passing of Michael. Wow! Michael was a fighter over the years. He met each physical challenge with amazing strength. I admired Michael during those times and I am convinced it was his good Irish blood that helped him through..

Michael visited me while living in CT. when I was having a difficult time. He shared his thoughts and concerns to me in a most loving way. I treasured his visit more than he ever knew. He passed on a bit of his Irish strength to me that day. I'll always remember, and appreciate his kindness, thoughtfulness, and inspiration.

Sadly, due to the long distances between us and your family, we missed out on many reunions. I will always hold on to the memories of our younger days when we shared many Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations. They were always a fun and memorable occasion with all the "The Merry McG's".

Our thoughts and prayers are with you and may the memories that you have shared with Michael bring you comfort and peace.

With much love and sympathy,

Liz (Curran) and Craig Wickenkamp

Liz (Curran) and Craig Wickenkamp - November 30, 2023 at 05:21 PM

TC

“ On behalf of Dorrie and myself, our deepest condolences go out to the McGunnigle family especially to Joan, George, Nora and Kate. On a personal note, I knew my dear cousin Michael going back to when we were just young lads & living in the Hartford area. I always learned newfound knowledge and advice from Mike going back to our days as both newspaper carriers for The Hartford Times or our shared experiences shagging golf bags at Wampanoag C.C. Mike was a very smart learned fella from Day 1. I recall in visits to the McG home on Cumberland Ave HTFD. I would sometimes ask Mike if he could possibly find me a vintage months old section from the Sunday New York Times. Within a few minutes, he returned with it in hand keeping in mind too that the entire right side of his staircase...all stacked nicely and orderly with many issues of the Times. In later years, Mike would call me annually and just before St Patrick’s Day. He would remind me that it was time again as Michael aptly coined it...for us to do “The Stations of the Cross”. This was Mike’s holy interpretation of doing an all-day pub crawl of various Hartford Irish pubs & beginning with the Shamrock Gate on Capital Ave in Hartford. Always a joy also to participate in the annual McG “Hoo Haa” festivities in Vernon. I remember too Michael wanting to celebrate his 40th birthday in a special way... traveling to the Berkshire Mtns in Tolland MA & in the chilly month of February. Together with the wives, we donned our rented snowshoes for an energetic brisk walk-in nature. I have maybe a picture still of Mike looking like “Grizzly Adams” that day with snow and icicles dangling on his beard and cap. One of the last things that we did together as a cousin event was to travel to Fenway Park to celebrate Mike’s new appointment as the residing PhD Medievalist instructor at UCONN Storrs campus. Kudos to you Mike...you touched a lot of lives while you were on the earth.

Tim & Dorrie Curran

Tim Curran - November 27, 2023 at 08:12 PM

TT

“ Tom and I are saddened to learn of Mike’s passing. We were Colleagues and friends for many years at Manchester and we enjoyed knowing him. Our thoughts are with your family at this difficult time.

Toby Tamarkin and Tom Dowd.

Toby Tamarkin - November 27, 2023 at 03:07 PM

JB

“ I had the extreme pleasure of having Professor McGunnigle as an English professor at MCC. Being a older student and not one that was particularly fond of English I must shared that he brought literature and English back into my life. I loved his class and am honored that I had the opportunity to learn form him. May he rest in peace. My condolences to his family and friends.

John Boerner-Mercier - November 26, 2023 at 10:51 AM

KB

John- thank you for sharing this. He would have wanted to hear exactly this from a former student.

Kate McGunnigle Berry - November 26, 2023 at 05:46 PM

GB

“ Dear Joan, George and the McGunnigle family, Lucia and I wish to express our sincere condolences upon the death of Mike...such devastating news as conveyed to us by my good friend, Tim Curran. As I mentioned to Tim and Dorrie today , I shall always remember caddying with Mike, George and Tim at Wampanoag CC in the late 50's & early 60's... great fun and greater friendships! Mike was highly intelligent and talented... and blessed with an even more finely honed sense of humor! In addition, I was blessed with being in Mike's (& the Currans') company for many years before he & Joan moved to Ohio. Thankfully, Tim, Dorrie, Lucia & I still get together in Hilton Head, Singer Island or Stuart at least a few times each year. So, Joan and George, Lucia & I want you to know that we are keeping Mike in our daily thoughts and prayers. With love and best wishes, Lucia and Gerard (Gerry) Bryson, Bluffton, SC

Gerry Bryson - November 21, 2023 at 03:51 PM

KB

Thank you, Gerry. We appreciate you sharing your memories of Dad/Michael.

Kate McGunnigle Berry - November 26, 2023 at 05:48 PM

JW

Our classmates were together om 12/14 for the "Latin Scholars Lunch" not even three weeks after losing our friend who was one of the few kids who had a crew cut, I was one. We talked about our times together at FP. Mike was not there but now he remains in our memories and all the good times we had on North Benson Rd. We will always be able to have those memories and will be able to share them with Mike's family who meant so much to him. John Walshe

JOHN WALSH - January 02, 2024 at 10:22 PM