



Tom O'Loughlin

January 18, 1925 - June 6, 2019

Tom O'Loughlin, 94, passed away on the 75th anniversary of D-Day, a fitting tribute to long life of service to his country and his fellow man. Born in an Irish-Catholic community in Bayonne, New Jersey, O'Loughlin placed his roots in Mississippi, courtesy of the U.S. Army, for training at Camp Shelby. He deployed to the European Theater where in January of 1944 he was captured by the Axis forces and held as prisoner of war for more than a year before liberation. Following the war, he served as a guard during the Nuremberg Trials of Nazi war criminals. One of the prisoners in his charge was Deputy Fuhrer Rudolf Hess. Following the Nuremberg Trials, Tom continued serving his country in the armed forces, eventually once again in war serving with the 811th Engineer Aviation Battalion assigned to the Fifth Air Force in Korea. He returned to civilian life in 1952, eventually making his way back to Mississippi. Despite years in the south, Tom retained his Jersey accent and Irish sparkle, which he used to charm a southerner, the former Rachel Pitts, into marrying him. Beyond his military service, Tom served his community for more than 60 years as a sponsor for those facing addiction; in fact, Tom had broken free from the reins of alcoholism and sought to provide hope and guidance to others facing similar struggles. Prior to his passing, Tom was honored by U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde Smith who had a United State flag flown of the Capitol in honor of his record of service.

He was preceded in death by his son, Thomas O'Loughlin.

Tom is survived by multiple generations of family, including his wife, Rachel, whose favorite term of endearment was “damn Yankee,”; his stout dog, Sarah; his daughter-by-marriage and primary caretaker, Kay Staples and her husband, Sam, who prayed often with him; a daughter-in-law, Patty O'Loughlin; by his grandchildren, Jonathan and Hope Staples, and Rebekah Staples, whom Tom called “The Kid” and she called “Tom Cat”; and by his great grandchildren, Jon Caleb and the baby girl on the way.

Tom will be forever remembered not only for his selfless military service and dedication to fighting addiction, but also for his strong personality, his pressed slacks and aversion to wearing jeans, his gold cross necklace and bracelet, his usage of Irish slang, his not-from-around-here accent, and his love of writing postcards to The Kid.

Rest in Peace, Tom Cat.

Services will be held Sunday, June 9, 2019 at Memory Chapel. Visitation will begin at 1 p.m. with the service following at 3 p.m. Interment will be at Myrick Cemetery. Bro. Brian Beech will officiate.

To sign the online guest book, visit www.memorychapellaurel.com.

Cemetery Details

Myrick Cemetery

1490 Lower Myrick Road
Laurel, MS 39443

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 9. 1:00 PM (CT)

Memory Chapel Funeral Home
3100 Audubon Drive
P. O. Box 674
Laurel, MS 39440
(601) 428-5235
memorychapel@comcast.net
<https://www.memorychapellaurel.com/>

Service

JUN 9. 3:00 PM (CT)

Memory Chapel Funeral Home
3100 Audubon Drive
P. O. Box 674
Laurel, MS 39440
(601) 428-5235
memorychapel@comcast.net
<https://www.memorychapellaurel.com/>

Tribute Wall

LP

“ Love, Dean, Catherine, and Sadie Claire Parker purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Tom O'Loughlin.



Love, Dean, Catherine, and Sadie Claire Parker - June 09, 2019 at 12:50 PM

BF

“ Tom was a great friend and mentor to me in my spiritual program of recovery. I will always remember his mantra of “keep it simple,” as I and my fellow travelers “trudge the road of happy destiny,” unfortunately without Tom’s guiding presence. He will be missed.
Bill Fizell

Bill Fizell - June 09, 2019 at 08:55 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Tom O'Loughlin.



June 07, 2019 at 03:22 PM