



Thomas J. King

March 29, 1930 - February 25, 2019

Rye - Thomas Joseph King, 88, of Rye, passed away peacefully on Monday, February 25, 2019 at The Birches of Concord where he had been living since falling ill.

Tom grew up in Lowell, Massachusetts, one of six children raised by Mary (MacKinnon) King. He remained close throughout his life with his brother Neil Everett King, of Tyngsborough, MA, who passed away only 4 days before him. Hopefully they will be making arrangements for lunch dates in heaven soon.

In his early 20s, Tom worked at Mahoney's Lunch in Hampton Beach where he and his friend pretended to be seminary students to assure parents that their daughters were safe in their company. He met Joyce Donigan there in the summer of 1951. They dated for a few years then drifted apart while Tom pursued a dream to become a jazz musician. Tom loved blowing "Harlem Nocturne" on his tenor sax but eventually realized that the life of a professional musician was not for him.

Tom joined the US Navy in 1955, receiving an Honorable Discharge in 1957. Upon arriving home, Tom called Joyce and left a message with her mom. "Tommy King!" Joyce exclaimed when she learned he had called. "He's a jerk!" They were married September 13, 1958, and celebrated 60 anniversaries together.

Tom thrived as a door-to-door salesman in the 1960s while he also attended Merrimack College at night. Tom became the first member of his family to graduate college. After graduating college, Tom went to work in management for New England Electric System, serving as District Manager for Granite State Electric in Salem, NH, for 20 years. Tom helped found the Greater Salem Chamber of Commerce in 1980 and became the organization's first President. When Tom retired from Granite State Electric in 1993, Salem honored him by naming him Businessperson of the Year.

After Tom retired, he often wondered how he ever had time to work. Retirement allowed Tom and Joyce to pay frequent visits to Charlottesville, Virginia, where their son Benjamin was attending law school. Tom would often reflect fondly on a week in the spring of 1995 that the family spent driving all over Virginia exploring historical sites. This was just one of many trips that Tom, Joyce and Benjamin enjoyed together. Tom particularly cherished the frequent ski trips the family took to Jackson, New Hampshire, where they stayed in a cabin that Tom built with his close friend, the late Morris Dion.

Tom also loved the summer days he spent at the Beach Club in Rye with his family. He was proud to serve as the Club's President between 2003 and 2005.

Above all else, Tom was a loving and devoted husband and father. Joyce would delight in notes that Tom left her calling her his "delicate flower." Tom and Ben cherished their father-son nights together, a tradition Tom began in Ben's childhood that continued until recent years. Tom leaves his beloved wife Joyce, his son Benjamin, his sister Lois, many nieces and nephews, and a world that is better for him having been in it.

Graveside services with Navy Honors will be held at 11 AM on Saturday, May

18, 2019 in the Central Cemetery, Rye.

Cemetery Details

Central Cemetery

20 Central Road
Rye, NH

Tribute Wall



“ *Thomas J. King*

September 18, 2022 at 12:49 AM



“ *What a good guy, Tom was always smiling and happy to talk with everyone. I'm sure that if there is a Beach Club in Heaven, Tom will soon be the president. My deepest sympathy. Garry Layman*

garryl ayman - March 01, 2019 at 11:33 AM



So sorry to hear of Tom's passing. My Dad, Tom Keane, worked with Tom with New England Electric in Salem and thought very highly of him. The condolences of the the entire Keane family are with you all now.

Michael Keane - March 04, 2019 at 09:34 AM



Tom will be deeply missed, especially those of us who saw him so many, many days at the Beach Club during the summers. He had a great memory and always asked about family and the latest thing that was happening in the community. He and Joyce were always at the Speaker Series event at the Library---first there and in the front of the audience. We all appreciated his keen interest and friendship and send our deepest condolences to to Joyce and Ben.

Ann Malpass - March 18, 2019 at 09:30 AM