



James P. Kelly

September 28, 1940 - April 1, 2023

Albany, NY-James P. (Ironman) Kelly passed away peacefully surrounded by his loving family on April 1, 2023.

James was born 9/28/40 in Manhattan, N.Y., son of Ralph and Theresa Kelly. He was the second of five children. Ralph (Mary), Kevin (Phyllis), Theresa (John), and predeceased by Brendan (Sheila).

He is survived by his wife Anna Mary (Leonard), his four children Anna Mary Kelly, Maura Bruda (Bob), Denis, James Jr., his five grandchildren, Cyrus Rivet (Erin), Celia Rivet, Joseph Juliano Jr., Niamh and Shane Kelly and great grandson Arthur Rivet.

He was the senior-most member of AOH Father Henry Tansey Division 5 Albany and a 2nd degree Life Member of the Knights Of Columbus.

James met his wife of almost 60 years in his family's Irish resort "Kelly's Brookside" in East Durham, N.Y. They married and moved to Albany, N.Y. where he worked at Schaefer Brewery until they closed, eventually retiring from Albany County Sewer District in 2002.

James was leader of the well-known Irish American band "The Galway Blazers" which was handed down from his father Ralph Kelly in 1966. The

band members consisted of his brother-in-law Mike Leonard, Jimmy and Michael Mangan, John Joe Callanan and Chris Naughton. James was the last surviving member.

In his nearly 70 years of performing, he shared stages with many champion Irish musicians and even performed at Lincoln Center.

One of his most treasured musical memories was when he was asked to tour with his idols “The Tulla Ceili Band” when they toured America.

James went on to teach scores of young musicians who went on to win competitions in the U.S. and Ireland.

In 2000, he was inducted into the Irish Traditional Music Hall Of Fame and acclaimed “the finest Ceili drummer in America.”

He was also always happy to play his second instrument, the two-row button accordion at many gatherings.

James and his wife Ann, always known for their hospitality, hosted many concerts in their home which came to be known as “Kelly’s Basement Concert Series” featuring world class Irish musicians.

His faith was very important to him. He was always carrying rosary beads. He was a big supporter of Father Peyton’s Family Rosary and was instrumental in collecting one million rosaries for them to be distributed worldwide.

James will be remembered for his appreciation of the little things, his quick wit, puns, making people feel comfortable, his work ethic, his love of music, but especially for his love for his wife and family.

The Kelly Family would like to formally thank the Albany Fire Department (D Platoon), Engine 11 and the wonderful staff at St. Peter's Hospital.

Relatives and friends are invited to visit with James's family Tuesday, April 11, 2023 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm, and then 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm at the Parish of Mater Christi, 40 Hopewell Street, Albany, NY 12208. Please enter the church from the parking lot entrance only.

Funeral services Wednesday, April 12, 2023 at 11:00 am at the Parish of Mater Christi, Albany, NY where his Funeral Mass will be celebrated.

The Rite of Committal will be held at St. Agnes Cemetery, Menands, NY immediately following the Funeral Mass.

To leave a message for the family please visit www.McveighFuneralHome.com

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to "Holy Cross Family Ministries."
518 Washington St., North Easton, M.A. 02356

Cemetery Details

St. Agnes Cemetery

48 Cemetery Ave
Menands, NY

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 11. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Parish of Mater Christi
40 Hopewell St
Albany, NY 12208-1505
(518) 489-3204

Visitation

APR 11. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Parish of Mater Christi
40 Hopewell St
Albany, NY 12208-1505
(518) 489-3204

Service

APR **12**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Parish of Mater Christi
40 Hopewell St
Albany, NY 12208-1505
(518) 489-3204

Tribute Wall



“ *McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. created a Tribute Video in memory of James P. Kelly*



McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. - April 11, 2023 at 09:55 AM



“ *James P. Kelly*

October 08, 2023 at 09:24 PM



“ *My Sympathy to Mister Kelly's family. I met Mister Kelly about 40 years ago, and heard him play his accordion with joy at one of his events. I have not seen Mister Kelly in many years, he left a lasting memory.*

His family is a fine legacy of his life.

May Mister Kelly Rest in Peace.

Sincerely,



JOHN CARDAZZI - April 13, 2023 at 11:08 AM

GW

“ You never forget the sound of a great drummer, at least I don't. First encountered Jimmy and the Galway Blazers many years ago when we followed them (who could?) at some event in Schenectady at what is now MiSci. Never imagined then what a delight, inspiration and - yes - education Kelly's Basement would be years later. Never imagined the warmth and the welcome. Jimmy made a lot of his time on this Earth. Love to Ann and to all the family.

George Ward - April 11, 2023 at 07:18 PM

JB

“ Anna Mary and family - I was so sad to hear of big Jimmy's passing. Just know that anytime he comes to mind it will be accompanied by a big smile!

Jodi (Kelly) Burick

Jodi Burick - April 11, 2023 at 01:54 PM

DO

“ Annie & the entire Kelly family, we were very saddened to hear of Jimmy's passing. He, and all of you, have been great friends throughout the years. We're very glad we got to see him at the Nolan wedding last October. He definitely will be missed. Sadly, some long-standing appointments prevent us from being there with you in person. Please know his strong and happy personality will be in our memories forever. Take care.

- Denis & Maggie O'Driscoll

Denis O'Driscoll - April 11, 2023 at 11:10 AM

JE

“ My condolences to the Kelly family...first met Jimmy working at Schaefer Brewery we're a group of young guys just starting out making a good salary and having a fine time....he was a true gentlemen and a great musician

Joe Early - April 10, 2023 at 10:55 PM



“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of James P. Kelly.



April 10, 2023 at 09:15 PM



“ 58 files added to the album Life Tributes



McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. - April 10, 2023 at 02:59 PM

KF

“ Jimmy, John and I were so sorry to hear about your dad, our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family, 🙏🙏

Kathleen, John Flynn - April 06, 2023 at 11:08 AM

JG

Maura, I am so sorry for your loss. My condolences go out to your entire family.

John gillette - April 07, 2023 at 05:22 AM

MM

“ *Ann and Family: I am very sorry for your loss.*

Mike McNulty - April 06, 2023 at 10:01 AM

MC

“ *Dear Ann and Family my thoughts and prayers are with you. My fun memory for you Catskills Game Farm 1960, Jimmy, you and me we stood together and made a live TOTEM POLE. Hope it put a smile on your face. Jim rest in peace. Love always, Mary Lou*

Mary Caplis - April 06, 2023 at 09:05 AM



“ *Divine Light was purchased for the family of James P. Kelly.*



April 06, 2023 at 12:10 AM

MS

“ To all of the Kelly Family, Joe and I send you our most sincere condolences and love. So much we could say but I think we need to allow room for others. Jim was a very special person and we're grateful for the friendship, the laughter, the kindness and the wonderful memories we have to cherish. May Christ give you all the strength to carry on and your faith remind you of His promises. Rest in peace Jim, you are home!



Maureen & Joe Smith - April 05, 2023 at 10:47 PM

GM

“ Having spent many summers of my childhood and adolescence across the road from Kelly's Brookside, I often fell asleep to his music. I can even remember how he looked behind the drums - his head slightly bent to the side - funny the things you remember. A testament to what a great family man he was is how often I have seen his children posting on Facebook about wonderful times with him. So many people will miss him. Blessings to his family - Geri Moran

Geri Moran - April 05, 2023 at 10:47 PM

MB

“ Dear Annie,
There really are no words, but Jimmy will be missed by many, and I will miss seeing him in Florida. You can be sure that when the great are counted Jimmy will be there! Love you and sending a huge hug with John to give to you. God Bless all of you.

Marlene Brustle - April 05, 2023 at 09:55 PM

AF

“ *Mark and I are so sorry for your loss. I have so many wonderful memories from high school days at your house. So blessed that you and Anna were in our wedding and your beautiful parents were there. We send you love and prayers. Love you all, Annie and Mark Fitzgerald*



Anne Fitzgerald - April 05, 2023 at 08:01 PM

MI

“ *We will not see another so grand, so beautiful and so caring. May God grant Anna, the girls and boys and all the family peace and grace to deal with this loss. All our love, Mike and Katie Conners*

Michael F Conners II - April 05, 2023 at 08:00 PM

TC

“ *Theresa Cipollari lit a candle in memory of James P. Kelly*



Theresa Cipollari - April 05, 2023 at 07:15 PM

TC

*Maura & the Kelly family,
I am so sorry to hear about the loss of Mr. Kelly. He was a legend. You are in my thoughts & prayers. Love, Theresa Cipollari*

Theresa Cipollari - April 05, 2023 at 07:16 PM

YF

“ *My Deepest Sympathy to Jimmy’s Beloved Wife Anna & his Family & Friends at this sad time . A True Gentleman Love and Respected by all . Sending Love and Prayers . R.I.P. JIM . Yvonne Crowley Furlong Boynton Beach Fl.*



Yvonne Crowley Furlong - April 05, 2023 at 05:39 PM

CM

“ *My deepest condolences. My prayers are with your family. My dad and Jimmy Kelly were the inspiration for my desire to get involved in music. Used to see them play in the Catskills and other places. I have great memories of the Galway Blazers. Rest in peace Jimmy. May the Lord hold you until we see you again. Christopher Mangan*

Christopher Mangan - April 05, 2023 at 04:59 PM

BB

Only happy, happy memories of dancing to Jimmy and his Galway Blazers ! My favorite Irish Band, My deepest sympathy to Anna Mary and family. Proud to call him friend. May he rest in peace and be united with all his loved ones enjoying his beloved Irish music.

Betty Bott - April 05, 2023 at 10:54 PM

RH

Anna May - very sorry for your loss. You had a great life with Jimmy. Warm regards, Dick Hayes

RICHARD J HAYES - April 08, 2023 at 03:00 PM

LC

Anna and all - I am so sorry to see that Jimmy has passed, and in doing so another legend in New York's Irish American community and musical Hall of Fame has left us far too soon. He was who he was, a character, a musician, a comic but most importantly a Husband, Father, Grandfather and friend to oh so many who like each of you loved him for him. I am sorry that I cannot make his services but know I am there always for each of you. God Bless and Rest in Peace Jimmy.

Lenny Crouch - April 11, 2023 at 04:20 PM