



Michael J. Sheehan, Jr.

October 15, 1925 - November 20, 2020

Albany - Our beloved father, Michael J. Sheehan, Jr, 95, died at home November 20, 2020. He was born at home in Albany in 1925, the son of the late Michael J. Sheehan (Cork, Ireland) and Helen Thomson Sheehan. A graduate of the former Vincentian Institute, he received a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute after serving in the US Army during World War II. At RPI he was elected to Chi Epsilon, Tau Beta Pi, and Sigma Xi honorary fraternities. He received a Master of Public Administration from the Maxwell School of Syracuse University.

Michael joined the Army and was accepted into the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) in 1943. After almost completing basic training at the Infantry School in Fort Benning, GA, the ASTP was cancelled to facilitate the planned invasion of Europe. He was assigned to the 100th Infantry Division and then to a newly-formed Group Artillery Organization (212th), which entered combat in Europe during the Battle of the Ruhr Pocket under US 9th Army General Simpson. He was then transferred to the 90th Infantry Division (Texas and Oklahoma) under US 3rd Army General Patton and finally to the US Army 116th General Hospital in Nurnberg, Germany. He was honorably discharged as Staff Sgt. in June 1946.

Michael was licensed as a Professional Engineer and retired in 1987 as Principal Engineer after 37 ½ years with the NYS Department of Transportation Structures and Railroad Divisions. He served as project manager for many million-dollar projects to separate highway-railroad crossings, including several projects on Long Island that introduced innovative railroad construction techniques into the USA.

Michael's beloved wife for 66 years, Frieda Pankratz Sheehan, his European war bride, predeceased him and he hopes now to join her in Heaven "für immer und ewig". He was predeceased by his only sister, Helen Marie Sheehan Thayer.

He loved his family, devoting his life to caring for them and enjoying their progress through life to have careers and families of their own. As a Dad, he was generous in all ways, a role model sharing advice and life stories and planned great Cape Cod vacations. In his later life, his memory was astonishing and only the unwise would challenge his facts. As Opa, he was famous for his story-telling of classics like the 7 Servants and Bobby Benson, playing board games, and cartoon drawings in the many personal letters he sent to mark everyone's special occasions. With his grandson Matt, he was the proud founder and member of the Mushroom Club.

He loved Frieda's German cooking and all things chocolate, doing cryptoquip puzzles and was an avid book club member. He was the family historian having researched and created a genealogy binder for each family. Affectionately known as the Town Crier, he shared family news and his opinions, with anyone kind enough to stop and listen. Our thanks to all those who did.

In later years, he and Frieda traveled to Europe to visit family and friends and to sightsee with their friends Dick and Ruth Wiita. Michael said that Frieda enriched his life by exploring European Old-World culture and charm. On the streets of Albany, they were a frequent sight walking hand in hand, and when Frieda's health began to fail, he devoted himself to her every need. We would like to thank Karen Urbanski, retired principal of Rensselaer High School; Jennifer Ward, retired librarian at the John Bach Albany Public Library; neighbor and beekeeper Linda Houlihan; and his many work friends especially Fred Eckel for their many kindnesses to our father over the last few years. His son-in-law Jerry Towle was kind and helpful and always willing to listen to one more story.

And as Michael wrote, "I must give my special thanks to my daughter Angela for the help she has given to me since my wife Frieda (her mother) died in 2013. I could not have survived without her. I call her 'Saint' Angela."

Survivors include daughters, Karin Rickards (John) of Storrs, CT; Michele Danish (Jerry) of Barrington, RI; Angela Sheehan (Franklin Laufer) of Delmar, NY; and Colleen Towle (Jerry) of Albany, NY; and sons, Peter Sheehan (Angela) of Annapolis MD, and Stephen Sheehan (Peggy) of Old Saybrook, CT. He was the proud Opa to 17 grandchildren: Kristine, Claire, Susanne, Caroline, Matthew, Alison, Rachel, Bradley, Justin, Meghan, Caitlin, Tara, Conor, Kevin, Michael, Kelly and Maria, and 16 great-grandchildren.

A Funeral Mass will be held at Mater Christi Church, 40 Hopewell St., Albany,

NY at 11:00 am on Monday, November 30, 2020.

Please enter the church from the parking lot doorway; masks and social distancing are required; church ambassadors will help with seating; and please arrive before 10:45 am.

The Funeral Mass will be live streamed at www.youtube.com/c/parishofmaterchristi.

Burial will be immediately following the Funeral Mass at St. Agnes Cemetery, Menands, NY.

A memorial celebration to be held in 2021 will be announced at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to his favorite charity, the Capital City Rescue Mission, PO Box 1999, Albany NY 12201.

To leave Michael's family a message on their guestbook, light a candle, obtain directions, or view other helpful services, please visit www.mcveighfuneralhome.com

Cemetery Details

St. Agnes Cemetery

48 Cemetery Ave
Menands, NY

Tribute Wall



“ *McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. created a Tribute Video in memory of Michael J. Sheehan, Jr.*



McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. - November 27, 2020 at 04:09 PM



“ *Michael J. Sheehan, Jr.*

October 08, 2023 at 09:24 PM



“ *From family in Germany:*

"We are very, very sorry to have heard that Michael has passed away...I have such fond childhood memories of Michael and Frieda visiting us as well as meeting them when I visited the United States. Michael had such a wonderful sense of humour and was so resilient and strong, he was always an outstanding example for us...My family has asked me to let you know that we will keep him in our prayers and that we think of you. Lots of love to you all!"



Rachel Laufer - December 07, 2020 at 07:03 PM

MP

“ Dear Angela and family,
Joe and I will fondly remember your Dad at the 4 o'clock Mass. He always welcomed my Dad and us with a big smile and a chat. It's tough not having him here, but as time passes it's comforting to remember the wonderful Christian life he lived and shared with family and all he knew. You were blessed to have your Dad for this long, as I was with mine. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all.

Marilyn Pusatere - December 01, 2020 at 10:15 PM

RC

“ Richard Clements lit a candle in memory of
Michael J. Sheehan, Jr.



richard clements - December 01, 2020 at 09:56 PM

TD

“ *Michael Sheehan - A definite legend in his time. Many awesome memories of Michael for so many years in his presence.*

His Stories - We could have listened forever - Such a great story teller.

His undying love of his grandchildren with so many countless ways he connected and showed his love for them

His Humor

His compassion and sensitive spirit.

His accomplishments in his life. We so impressed reading them. He was so humble not to mention.

Just having Michael present in our lives enriched ours and we thank God for him

Our deepest condolences to his family for am amazing human.

Tom and Barbara Donovan - December 01, 2020 at 07:00 AM

DB

“ *Dear Karin,
Although as you know I did not know your father that well but I did know about his engineering accomplishments and his sense of humor prior to reading the obituary.*

My condolences to you and John please be aware both your father and your mother were very special people to me. I hope to see you soon maybe at the next VI reunion.

Dave Burke

Dave Burke - November 30, 2020 at 03:34 PM

LH

“ *To the Sheehan Family,
I just saw the obituary Nancy Burke posted on FB. I had the privilege of knowing all of you through my friendship with Michelle, going to St. Theresa's and Maryrose with her. I have wonderful memories of Mr. Sheehan and your mother. He was always affable and funny, and I remember him at 9:00am mass on Sundays. He was a big presence whenever I visited your home, where there were pajama parties and other fun events. I knew I was going to have fun at the Sheehan's' and swooned whenever Mrs. Sheehan made blueberry kuchen! I am so fortunate to have grown up knowing your family and am so very sorry that you are experiencing the loss for your patriarch.
I called my mother, Joan Bailey, as soon as I saw the obituary, and she said, "He was a great man, a sweet man, a family man." I couldn't agree more.*

Lynda Hartman - November 30, 2020 at 02:19 PM

WA

“ *Beautiful Memorial Video. Wonderful family. Enjoy Heaven with Frieda. The most important thing you ever did was marry Frieda and the most important thing I ever did was marry Mary Louise. Rest In Peace. Warren G. Alexander*

Warren G. Alexander - November 30, 2020 at 11:09 AM

EC

“ Our heart felt condolences to the Sheehan family on the passing of your father . Even though we had met your dad not long ago he definitely left a lasting impression on us . His wit and story telling will be deeply missed . He was quite the character entertaining us with his wartime stories and knowledge. I feel we knew his whole family even though we only met Angela ,for he frequently spoke of them with a great sense of pride and love . And thank God my husband is not a jealous man (Angel) because he was quite the flirt . We well miss him here at Tool's on Sundays ,but I do have his memory with me always as we have a picture together ,his great smile lighting up the room .

Lisa ,Angel ,Katie and the whole Tool's restaurant family

Elisabeth Chajon - November 30, 2020 at 09:27 AM

NO

“ To the entire Sheehan Family, please let me offer my sincere condolences on the death of your father. I was driving down So Main a month or so ago and he was just coming back from an outing with Angela. He looked just like I remembered him. I pulled over to the curb and yelled out "Mr Sheehan, I'm Nancy Burke!" He immediately broke into the same smile as in the picture in the TU. We had a lovely chat about old times, old friends and updated info for both families! He made a lovely statement about how Angela was his "guardian angel" and what great care she took of him. We chatted for about 15 minutes reminiscing about St Teresa's, Maryrose, who was doing whatever. I promised him I would stop by again before the snow flies, but unfortunately, I didn't get the opportunity to get back over there. I remember having great fun in the Sheehan household. Packed to the gills in kids and always something baking in the oven. Mrs. Sheehan was my idol with her baking! Michele, I know in some way, how you are feeling right now, but your father lived the life he wanted to and was able to be at home until the end. Angela, it was obvious how much your Dad relied on you and how much he appreciated all you did for him. I'm so sorry to have to miss Mr. Sheehan's funeral Mass, but my middle son is having Stage 3 cancer surgery on Tuesday and we have to travel to Buffalo to be with him right now. I have wonderful memories of spending time at your home as a young person and will always treasure those memories. Your father had a lot to be proud of with all of you. You all are a tribute to both you your parents. And you will all be in my thoughts and prayers.
Nancy Burke O'Hara

Nancy Burke O'Hara - November 29, 2020 at 02:23 PM

PH

“ Angela I think of your father’s smiling face as he entered church for mass and greeted all his friends. He seemed to know everyone . I am sure you will miss him greatly. My condolences to you and your family.

Paula Hemmings - November 29, 2020 at 11:27 AM

ET

“ I had the privilege of meeting Michael when I started attending the Non-Fiction Book Group at the library. He said that he was glad when I attended because he could hear what I had to say! I was so impressed with his knowledge of literally everything, including everything that was going on currently. And, he always finished the book, which I have to admit I sometimes didn't. He spoke so highly of his whole family, children and grandchildren and especially of his dear wife. He was a role model for aging with grace and humor and I will really miss him.

Esther Thornton - November 28, 2020 at 02:04 PM

ET

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Esther Thornton - November 28, 2020 at 01:54 PM

JW

These folks are Esther and Michael, best buds at nonfiction book group!

Jennifer Ward - November 29, 2020 at 06:50 PM

RS

“ Mike will be on my prayer list as a very special person in my life. In 1955, both Mike and Bob Keating persuaded me to leave my job as a draftsman with NYS to attend RPI, which I did on the GI Bill. I went on to enjoy a career as an engineer, starting and managing my own engineering company. My thanks always to Mike, and to Bob, for their contribution to my life.
Robert J. Styczynski

Robert Styczynski - November 28, 2020 at 12:48 PM

JA

“ Michael wss one of the most charming and Interesting ww2 veteran and neighbor that I have known. He always had something interesting to tell you...and Airways with a smile. Unfortunately the Pandemic cut short our meetings along New Scotland Ave. and at Mater Christi Church. We had alot in common. He will be missed but he is now in a better place. God bless his soul. Joe Allegretti

Joseph Allegretti - November 28, 2020 at 12:39 PM

HB

“ I worked with Michael at the Department of Transportation in the Rail Section for many years. He was always a help with anything you needed, both professionally and personal. As the NYSATE retiree representative, I would always mail him our newsletter and other information regarding our organization. I know he was a fan of Maglev trains.

Harry Bartik - November 28, 2020 at 12:17 PM

“ 50 files added to the album Life Tributes



McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. - November 27, 2020 at 04:07 PM