

Vincent J. Arnold - (August 14, 1930 - April 14, 2014)



Vincent J. Arnold, 83, of Middletown, passed away peacefully at Newport Hospital on **April 14, 2014** following a period of declining health. He was born August 14, 1930 in Schenectady, N.Y. to the late William G. and Marie (Murphy) Arnold, and grew up in Scotia, N.Y. and Fitchburg, Mass.

After graduating from Notre Dame University where he received a degree in mechanical engineering, he served in the U.S. Army for two years during the Korean Conflict.

In June, 1953, he married **Joan Christman**, his childhood “backyard neighbor” from Scotia, to whom he was married for 57 years and who predeceased him in February, 2011.

Following his army service, Mr. Arnold began his career as a mechanical engineer with General Electric, worked for several other manufacturing firms, and then was employed by Raytheon in Portsmouth, R.I. from 1966 until his retirement in 1991.

He received his MBA from Bryant College in 1976. He had been a resident of Middletown since 1965, when he and his wife moved there from Huntington, Long Island with their six young children.

Vince Arnold and his wife were long-time parishioners of St. Lucy’s Church, Middletown.

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He was a member and past president of the **Ancient Order of Hibernians**, Division #1, Newport, a past AOH Rhode Island state president, and a board member of the **Newport Irish Heritage Association**.

Vince's deep interest in Irish history and culture stemmed from his mother's side of the family. His grandmother, Bridget McDonough, was born in Clifden, County Galway, and his great-grandfather, Patrick Murphy, emigrated from Ireland in 1856.

This passion for Irish history inspired the founding of the **Museum of Newport Irish History**, which was established in 1996 and whose members now total over 500. Vince was elected Museum president in 1996 and under his leadership the organization's board and countless other volunteers restored the historic Irish cemetery at the corner of Barney and Mount Vernon Streets in Newport in 1999, and developed and opened an Interpretive Center in June 2011.

The Center, which tells the story of Irish immigration to Newport County, is located at 648 Lower Thames and is open to the public seasonally. He was also instrumental in establishing the Museum's popular "**Michael F. Crowley Lecture Series**," which offers five to six talks per year on a wide variety of Irish history and culture topics. He served as Museum president from the organization's founding until his death.

Vince was elected AOH Newport "**Hibernian of the Year**" in 1995, and was the Newport Irish Heritage Association "**Fenian of the Year**" award winner for 2011.

In addition to activities related to Irish heritage and history, Mr. Arnold was active in numerous other civic activities over the years. When his children were young, he was a leader of Boy Scout Troop 3 Newport and a Middletown Little League coach.

He and his wife, Joan, were Meals on Wheels volunteers, active members of the **Navy League of Newport**, and long-time sponsors of the **International Program for the U.S. Naval War College**. In that capacity, the Arnolds were a local host family for dozens of naval officers from around the world during their courses of study at the War College. Vince was also a member of the **Council for International Visitors**, Newport Chapter, and a former board member of **Serra Providence**.

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Mr. Arnold is survived by his three sons and three daughters and their spouses:

- **William** of Ashby, Mass
- **James** (Karen) of Portsmouth
- **David** (Julie) of Monument Beach, Mass
- **Kathleen** (Carl) Gallagher of Tiverton
- **Ann Arnold** (Timothy May) of Newport, and
- **Karen** (Steve) Ellsworth of Oxford, N.Y.

He is also survived by **twelve grandchildren**: Timothy Arnold, Jamie (Arnold) DiPietro, Alise Arnold, Audrey Arnold, Erin Fisher, Michele Fryer, Robert Gallagher, Elizabeth Gallagher, Kimberly (Gallagher) Navins, Richard Ellsworth, Noah Ellsworth and Patrick May.

He also leaves **two great-grandchildren**, Joy DiPietro and Banyan Fisher, and his sisters-in-law, Anne Christman of Scotia, N.Y. and Helen Arnold of Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Ireland.

Vince was brother of the late Hugh Arnold of Andover Mass, and the late Lawrence Arnold of Blackrock, Co. Dublin, and the foster father of the late Kathleen Fryer. He is also survived by several nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Calling hours will be held on **Easter Monday, April 21, from 4:00-7:00 p.m. at O'Neill-Hayes Funeral Home**, 465 Spring Street, Newport.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11:00 a.m. on **Tuesday, April 22 at St. Lucy's Church, Middletown, R.I.** Burial will be in St. Columba Cemetery in Middletown.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory to the Museum of Newport Irish History would be most appreciated: PO Box 1378, Newport, R.I. 02840 or www.NewportIrishHistory.org