



Mr. William "Bill" A. Godfrey, Jr.

October 13, 1927 - September 11, 2020

William Arthur Godfrey, Jr., known as Bill, a longtime resident of Pittsfield, MA, passed away peacefully in his sleep on Friday, September 11, 2020, at the age of 92. Since May this year, Bill has been happily living in Princeton, NJ with his son, William and his family while quarantining during the pandemic. Bill was born in Hartford, CT, on October 13, 1927. The son of the late William A. and Blanche (Connors) Godfrey. On November 24, 1956, he married Jane Barbara Callaghan at St. Mary's Church. They raised three sons, William, Patrick and Mark and two daughters, Kerry and Leslie.

Bill graduated from Bulkeley high school in 1945 and from North Adams State College in 1971 with his Bachelor of Science in Physics (doing so while he was married and raising his 5 children and working at General Electric.)

At the age of nearly 18, Bill joined the Navy Sept 14, 1945, just at the tail end of World War II where he was assigned to "Radar School" as a Radioman II Class petty officer called RD2. He was posted throughout the U.S. and ultimately Beijing "Peking", China. He was honorably discharged after three years and 1 month in 1948 and was hired by Philco as a field engineer. He actually had one day of eligibility remaining with the Navy and was drafted back to serve in the Korean War Conflict in 1951 as an aircraft electrician assigned to the 19 Air Rescue Squad. Bill was transferred to St. John's Newfoundland, then onto Naval Air Station Keflavik (Iceland) and Thule Air Base (Greenland) ultimately ending up in Panama as part of Ground Control Approach until 1954. Bill is entitled to wear The World War Victory medal, the

America Area medal, Good Conduct medal and the Chinese Liberation Ribbon. After his military time, he moved to Massachusetts and worked as an engineer at General Electric until his retirement in 1989. It was there he met his beloved wife, Jane who was also working at G.E.

Bill was a man of broad interests with a deep commitment to family, friends, his catholic faith and community. Bill was a force. At 6'1" with a mop of black hair, sparkly blue eyes and a booming voice; he could stop most in their tracks with his charm. But it was his commitment to 'integrity' and 'honor' where he grounded his values; predominantly driven by him growing up during the Great Depression and his parents.

He loved living in the Berkshires and embraced all that it had to offer. He lived in Lenox, MA when he first arrived in the Berkshires. Here he lived with a gang of G.E. guys who often went (barefoot) water skiing on Stockbridge Bowl. An accomplished athlete he played football in high school and was coined the nickname "Brune." While at GE he played softball and was the catcher. They nicknamed him "High Fly" because he hit a long ball. He loved being catcher because he was part of every play. He loved a good bike ride too, often coordinating 20+ mile rides with friends paying it off with a group barbeque "pig roast". You would see him riding around various towns with Jane or at times with his kids for a big "bike hike." Embracing downhill skiing, he took his young family to Greylock Glen in the 70s and worked at Brodie and Bousquet (to source ski passes for the family!). He knew all the hot spots from the majestic landscapes, historic venues and was well tuned into the red-hot art scene like MOCA, The Clark and the Berkshire Museum often frequenting them and priding himself on sharing these places with friends and family over the years. As an engineer everything was "doable" and projects were as varied as fixing watches, tearing down a motorcycle, learning to upholster, fixing cars and remodeling homes. An artistic side led him to working with stained-glass creations and later in life to his enjoyment of painting. Always a person to help others in need he was active in the community providing rides to those in need, volunteering with hospice care,

“Meals on Wheels’, recording books for the blind at the Berkshire Chapter of “Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic” and volunteering as a handyman amongst other efforts. Proud of his Irish heritage he was an active member of the Irish American Club and received the “Irishman of the Year” in 2007 for his community giving.

He would take on any project with zeal and eventually started an informal handyman business, “Reasonable, Reliable, Renovations” (RRR) helping people out in Pittsfield with small projects. Bill loved projects and never stopped moving and connecting with people and his community. Bill was a do-er. During retirement, he was engaged with neighbors and friends. If it was a nice day, you would always find Bill out on his front porch connecting with the passersby and neighbors. His voice was loud, he laughed so easily, and he had such a great smile. He loved his M-F, 8am (retiree) coffee crew; he so enjoyed talking to his gang about politics, the stock market and everyone’s life. At 92, Bill’s mind was as sharp as a tack. He was blessed to be gifted with medical miracles, having endured nearly 30 surgeries over his lifetime, some small and some rather intense. Innovations in medicine enabled him to live a full life enjoying family, friends and his community. He loved to learn and continued to pour through books, magazines and newspapers (reading about 7 hours a day.) His last read was *The Good Rain* and he just loved it! Never one to mince words, he often had strong opinions on the subject matter or quality of writing and continued to write down words he wasn’t familiar with so he could look them up later. He loved to hear a story and loved to tell them -- vividly recalling details from his childhood like his times at the beach in Black Point, CT, growing up at 485 Hillside Avenue in Hartford and/or how he and everyone else lived during wartime. Surprisingly, his favorite movie was *The Notebook*, likely moved by the romance and love that mirrored his own feelings for his late wife, Jane. Bill was a tough guy, no doubt about it, but his demeanor was mixed with a super sensitive and compassionate side. In the months before his passing, Bill started to paint again in Princeton. A lifetime

hobby that had waned for a few years. His last paintings were that of his beloved wife and Mother. He was quite proud of what he captured of them; as were we.

A man of charm and presence Bill enjoyed nothing more than gathering with his family and friends and holding court, if you will. His curiosity, love of learning, humor, commitment to family and service to others will be missed but has provided a wonderful legacy to his children and grandchildren.

Bill was predeceased by his dear wife of nearly 43 years. Bill will be lovingly remembered by his sons and their spouses, William A. Godfrey III, (Christine), Princeton, NJ; Patrick A. Godfrey (Linda), Mashpee, MA; and Mark E. Godfrey (Linda) Cheshire, CT; as well as his two daughters, Kerry Godfrey Scroggins (Willy), Portland, OR; and Leslie Godfrey Schutte (Scott) Dover, MA. As a loving grandfather ("Fa"), he will also be missed by his 11 grandchildren: Conor, Sara, Taylor, Ryan, Wm. Tucker, Taitum, Wm. Beckan, Luke, Grayson, Aidan and Callaghan and one great-grandson, Cason, let alone numerous nieces and nephews plus his sister-in-law, Elizabeth (Jane's twin sister) and her husband Robert Bova and sister-in-law Joanne (Duff) Callaghan. Besides his wife, Bill was also predeceased by his parents William A. and Blanche (Connors) Godfrey and sister, Patricia (Godfrey) Lukas. Including brother and sister-in-law's: John Lukas, Jack and Eileen (Callaghan) Forrest, Edward and Margaret (Callaghan) Saunders, John and Justine (Cooney) Callaghan and George Callaghan.

Funeral services for Bill will be Friday, September 18, 2020 with a Liturgy of Christian Burial at 11 a.m. at Sacred Heart Catholic Church celebrated by the Rev. Frank Lawlor. To view a live webcast of the service, please visit <http://www.dwyerfuneral.com/obituaries/permalink/9645140/LTWebcast>. Burial will follow at St. Joseph Cemetery for immediate family only. A celebration of life for extended family and friends will be announced at a later date. In lieu of flowers, remembrances can be made to the Mass Audubon Society or to the Fund for Nature, Mass Audubon 208 South Great Road, Lincoln, A 01773 -- the same organization that was near and dear to Jane's heart, in care of the

Dwyer Funeral Home, 776 North Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201.

Cemetery Details

St. Joseph Cemetery

222 Peck's Rd.
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Previous Events

Service

SEP **18**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Sacred Heart Church
191 Elm St.
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Tribute Wall



“ *Dwyer Funeral Home Inc. created a Webcast in memory of Mr. William "Bill" A. Godfrey, Jr.*



Dwyer Funeral Home Inc. - September 17, 2020 at 10:15 AM

KC

*What a beautiful service. Pat and I are so happy that you streamed it, since we weren't able to come!!!!!! Leslie did an incredible Eulogy, that is so hard to do!
It was wonderful to see the servicemen fold the flag and the Irish song was just perfect.
We feel for all of you, another part of the Dynasty gone, but never forgotten!*

Love, Karen and Pat Callaghan

Karen Callaghan - September 18, 2020 at 12:01 PM



Thank you for allowing your cousins from afar to share this Mass. Love and peace to my cousins, and may perpetual light shine upon Uncle Bill.

Sally Huguley - September 18, 2020 at 12:57 PM

JC

“*Uncle Bill was amazing! He was a craftsman and a scholar. I admired him most for his compassion and genuineness. I will remember his kind blue eyes and warm smile. He was a masterful host and made each guest feel like the most special attendee. There are so many wonderful memories of spending time with Aunt Jane & Uncle Bill and the Godfrey cousins. There was always a lot of laughter and love. Aunt Jane & Uncle Bill were the brightest of lights and so proud of their children. You and your families are a tribute to them.*

You can be sure there is a party going on above as our angels welcome dear Uncle Bill.

Our thoughts, Our prayers and Our hearts are with All of you.

Love.

Judy & Jerry Concannon

judith E Concannon - September 19, 2020 at 04:54 PM

 Jenny
Conti

Beautifully said, Judy.

Jenny Conti - September 19, 2020 at 10:14 PM

KM

“ To the family of Bill Godfrey. I knew Bill in his later years as I jogged by his house in Pittsfield. He would sit on his front porch with his pleasant smile and greeting, behind his flower boxes. He was delightful to chat with, a knowledgeable and kind man, always interested in the welfare and activities of others. He was a modest man, and until I read his obituary, I never knew the extent of his knowledge and brilliance and service for the welfare of others. Bill is definitely UP There In Heaven, sharing his kind smile and anecdotes in back of his Heavenly Flower Boxes! Lords Blessings and Comfort to all. Kris Mackey, The Old Lady Jogger, Pittsfield, MA

Kristin Mackey - September 18, 2020 at 12:38 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. William "Bill" A. Godfrey, Jr..



September 17, 2020 at 01:59 PM

SH

“ Aunt Jane was my beloved Godmother and Uncle Bill my honorary Godfather. I truly loved them both, as well as all my Godfrey cousins. Displayed in my home is a picture of the four Callaghan girls sitting on the sofa at Uncle Bill and Aunt Jane's home. It reminds me of the family dinners we had there. How lucky I am to be one of the Callaghan cousins.
Peace and love,
Sally

Sally Huguley - September 16, 2020 at 02:39 PM

PC

“ *Bill was not only my uncle, but also my Godfather (see photo!). But most importantly, he was a grand fellow and left a fine mark on this world.*

Bill and Jane's spirits live on in their wonderful family, Bill, Pat, Mark, Kerry and Leslie and the grandchildren. Love you all!

*Pat & Karen Callaghan
South Portland, Maine*



Pat Callaghan - September 16, 2020 at 12:39 PM

BS

“ *Bill, Pat, Mark, Kerry & Leslie,
My heart goes out to all of you. Your father was a “larger than life”
uncle to me growing up. I would call him periodically over the years
and he was always so engaging; truly caring how I was and wanting
to know about my family. Uncle Bill made my summer trips as a
youth so memorable with the great cookouts we would have on
Sampson with extended family. The laughter of all of our parents
and cousins I can still hear. He was a gracious legend to me. May
all of you have peace having been raised by two wonderful parents.
Much Love,
Brian & Karen Saunders
Athens, GA*

Brian Saunders - September 15, 2020 at 12:02 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. William "Bill" A. Godfrey, Jr..*



September 15, 2020 at 09:46 AM