
Donald Croke



Donald A. Croke, 76

SOUTHBRIDGE - Donald Alderic Croke, 76, went home to be with the Lord on Saturday, March 15th, surrounded by his loving family. Music was Don's passion and his family sang him on to his new place of rest. He was a writer of stories and songs, known especially for his incredible yodeling talent, but Don's greatest achievement was the wonderful children and grandchildren that he and his wife, Lorraine, nurtured together. They were his true "music".

He was born and raised in Southbridge, the son of Walter and Leah (Prunier) Croke.

He leaves behind his wife of 56 years, Lorraine (Binnette) Croke; his two sons: Gerald Croke and his wife Elizabeth of Southbridge, and David Croke and his wife Kimberly of Sturbridge. He leaves three daughters: Theresa Thompson and her husband Charles of Sturbridge, Linda Croke of Southbridge, and Mary Cloutier and her husband John of Southbridge; his precious grandkids: Jesse, Nate, Danny, Mel Joy, Josh, Jamie, Tim, Hannah, Bethany, and Nick. He is also survived by a brother, Raymond Croke and his wife Alice; a sister Marion Bonin, of Southbridge; along with many extended family members and dear friends, especially Gerry Bertrand, whose many visits brought him so much comfort. Don was predeceased by his parents and two sisters, Constance Croke and Sylvia Jolin.

Don's life was one of service, song and laughter. He graduated from Wells High School, Class of '55, where he achieved honors, starred in plays, and was part of a quartet known as "The Royalties". He joined the **US Air Force** and served his country for four years, including time overseas in Japan, working as a radar man. While in the service, Don married his sweetheart, Lorraine Binnette. After that, he worked at various jobs including Mosaics/Galileo, Deary Bros., and for over 30 years at American Optical in the Research and Development department, retiring in 2004. After his retirement, he worked for a short time as a pallbearer for the Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home.

Donald taught generosity to his family by serving in his church and community. He was involved in St. Mary's Church in nearly every capacity possible, from Bingo worker, to CCD teacher, to lector, to Renew leader, to choir member, to food pantry volunteer. He was also an active member of the St. Mary's School Parents Association and headed up or took part in many events there. Later he did the same at Marianhill High School. He sang in the Sacred Heart Music Makers group and delighted in being part of the comic relief between songs. He and three close friends created an Irish quartet named "The John B Singers." He served for several years as a Scout Leader for Troop #140 and was a positive influence and role model for many boys. Don enjoyed collecting jokes and inspirational stories to share with others he met as he went about his day. He was known to give out \$1 gold coins to anyone who he heard did an act of service, achieved a goal, or extended an extra act of kindness towards another. Donald took his voice and guitar to a wide variety of community events, including Concerts on the Common, the Relay for Life, Festival of Trees, and nursing homes and senior centers, most often donating his time. He wrote many original songs over the years, often for specific individuals he knew and loved, and also about God whom he loved.

A memorial Mass will be held to celebrate the life of Donald on Saturday, March 22nd, 12:00pm, in St. Mary's Church, 263Hamilton St., Southbridge. There are no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the St. Vincent De Paul Food Pantry or to Blessed John Paul II Parish, 279 Hamilton St., Southbridge, MA 01550.

Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., is directing arrangements.

www.morrillfuneralhome.com

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