



Thomas O'Rourke

May 25, 1922 - May 18, 2013

Obituary of Thomas O'Rourke Thomas O'Rourke, 90, passed away on Saturday, May 18, 2013, at Legacy Hospice House, in Ocala, Florida. He was born in Fort Wayne, Indiana, May 25, 1922, to parents Edward and Mildred Bowser O'Rourke. Tom learned to fly prior to joining the United States Air Force, then experiencing the joy of serving his country in the USAF while living the excitement and drama of overseas deployment. He flew the P51 Mustang in the service, and this experience became the core of his later memories. Stationed at Wright Patterson AF Base in Dayton, Ohio, in 1956 he and wife, Bobbye entered and won the wildly popular television quiz show, "\$64,000 Question." He retired after nearly 23 years of active duty and settled with his young family in Naples, Florida. He and Bobbye formed Talisman, a company producing fiberglass panels and designer artifacts. Real estate sales in Florida became his forte in this second career, selling homes and sites from Marco Island and Naples to Quail Creek and Bonita Bay. He retired in 1990 and with his wife Elizabeth, moved to Golden Hills Golf and Country Club in Ocala, Florida, where golf and its social life together with his love for model railroads were embraced with enthusiasm. Creative writing showcased his ability to weave stories with great imagination and imagery as only a man of Irish ancestry can do. Tom's gregariousness made him popular with the men, and his charisma charmed the women. Some thought him a little outrageous and others enjoyed his honest friendship and love of life. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth A. Ross O'Rourke, and children, Robin Petersen (David),

Naples, FL and Big Canoe, GA; Michael E. O'Rourke (Ann), Stone Mountain, GA; Susan O'Rourke, Naples, FL; Cynthia A. Frost, New Smyrna Beach, FL; Deborah L. Williams (Terry C.), Deland, FL; and Gary D. Ross (Shirley), Longwood, FL; grandchildren, Joshua L. Bell (Christa), Belleview, FL; Melanie B. Chakor (Mounir), Tampa, FL; Michael T. O'Rourke, Lawrenceville, GA; April D. Frost, New Smyrna Beach, FL; Matthew Frost, New Smyrna Beach, FL; Rebecca Mackenzie (Bradley), Ponte Vedra Beach, FL; Tera Barz (Michael), Ponte Vedra Beach, FL; Ross Williams, Orlando, FL; Melissa Ross and Jonathan Ross, Longwood, FL; seven much loved great grandchildren, Aurora Frost, Austin, TX; Luke Warnock, New Smyrna Beach, FL; Griffin and Phoenix Meza-Frost, Houston, TX; Leighton Mackenzie, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL; Taylor Barz, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL; and Caleb Bell, Belleview, FL; and Best Brother-in-law, Ernest Gudridge, Fort Myers, FL. He was preceded in death by wife, Bobbye, brother Edward O'Rourke III, and sister, Sara Kaltenmark. Those who wish may make contributions in Tom's name to Hospice of Marion County, Legacy House, Ocala, Florida

Tribute Wall



“ *Thomas O'Rourke*

June 20, 2014 at 12:00 AM



“ *I had the privilege of flying with Tom when he flew his flight with Air Combat USA. It was readily apparent by the number of family members that were there to witness him charge off into the wild blue yonder that he was my kind of guy. He loved his family and he loved flying. With his passing we have lost another hero from the "Greatest Generation". John (Pigmy) Paganelli*

John Paganelli (Pigmy) - July 01, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ *We are sorry for your loss Liz. Tom and I talked about the USAF together as my Dad was a Colonel! Brad is too! Sincere Sympathy,*

Brad and Linda Arthur - June 03, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ *Mr. O was an important part of my life- a good friend who gave me sage advice over the years. Lis and I will remember him fondly always! Liz- you and all the "kids" are in our thoughts and prayers. Jeff Wilson*

Jeff - May 30, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ *A final salute to our founder of the Walking Wounded. Harry, Randy, Harry, Joe & Gary*

Gar A. DeWyer - May 29, 2013 at 12:00 AM

HW

“ Tom was right. The Walking Wounded group lasted about a year after he stopped attending.

Harry Whelan - May 27, 2013 at 12:00 AM

MI

“ Papa Tom Was a great man. They certainly don't make them like that anymore. A man of means, By no means, King of the road. I'll Miss you Scrappy Leader. Lil Mike

Michael - May 26, 2013 at 12:00 AM

SO

“ Happy Birthday Dad! I have reached for the phone so many times with something to share with you and then I remember I don't need the phone to talk to you anymore, you are with me always! I love you Dad!

Susie O'Rourke - May 25, 2013 at 12:00 AM

GJ

“ Papa Tom, we will miss you more than you know. Happy Birthday in heaven! It was such an honor to know you and to be a part of your life. We love you!

Gary, Shirley, Melissa, Jonathan - May 25, 2013 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ I am so sorry for you and your family's loss. If there is anything I can do, please call. I didn't know your dad, but I do know he had to be a wonderful man to have such a wonderful daughter. Smile, when you remember him, for he will be smiling down on you.

Julie Chambers - May 25, 2013 at 12:00 AM

RP

“ Our Father kept a garden. A garden of the heart. He planted all the good things. That gave our lives their start. He turned us to the sunshine. And encouraged us to dream. Fostering and nurturing. The seeds of self-esteem. And when the winds and rain came, He protected us enough. But not too much because he knew. We would stand up strong and tough. His constant good example. Always taught us right from wrong. Markers for our pathway that will last a lifetime long. We are our Fathers garden. We are his legacy. Author Unknown Happy Birthday Dad, I am proud to be your daughter, and will miss your words of encouragement. I will always remember you saying that if I believe in myself, I can do anything that I set my mind to do...and I have. I love you, Dad. Robin

Robin O'Rourke Petersen - May 25, 2013 at 12:00 AM

EG

“ The older we get the better we used to be, and you were the betterest, Tom. We will miss your wit and charm and outrageous humor. Godspeed, old friend and brother-in-law.

Ernie Gudridge - May 23, 2013 at 12:00 AM

TM

“ On behalf of our staff at Roberts Funeral Homes, I would like to extend my deepest condolences to the entire family during this difficult time.

Todd McBride - May 20, 2013 at 12:00 AM