



## Thomas Michael Heffernan

April 9, 2025

Thomas Michael Heffernan, a lifelong entrepreneur and veteran, passed away on April 9, 2025, at Englewood Medical Center, Englewood, New Jersey. Tom was a resident of Teaneck, New Jersey at the time of his death but spent the majority of his adult life as a resident of Ridgefield, New Jersey. He was 92 years old.

Born on November 26, 1932, in Jersey City, New Jersey, to Dennis Dionysus Heffernan and Veronica Giblin. At an early age he was predeceased by two older brothers, Dennis and Douglas and quickly became the big brother to his older sisters, Rita, Margaret, Virginia, Winnie and Betty, all of whom predeceased him.

Tom led a remarkable life defined by resilience, ingenuity, and an unwavering entrepreneurial spirit. As a child of the depression era, he demonstrated a keen sense for business—running a pony ride venture as a young teenager and then purchasing his first Dairy Queen, which required his mother’s signature since Tom only 17 at the time. This early start marked the beginning of a dynamic and varied career that would span decades and industries.

Tom’s professional journey was anything but conventional. His ventures included importing and selling Christmas trees, operating nurseries, managing bars and restaurants including the Jingle Inn in Ridgefield, owning a florist shop, tombstone business and a gas station as well as being a commercial and residential landlord. Each endeavor reflected his adaptability and relentless drive to build something meaningful from the ground up. To

describe Tom simply as a businessman would be an understatement; Tom Heffernan was an entrepreneur in the truest sense of the word—resourceful, bold, and always ready for the next challenge.

In addition to his business pursuits, Tom served his country with honor as a member of the United States Army. At the end of World War II, he was stationed in Europe as a Military Police officer assigned to trains traveling between Germany and France—a critical role during a time of great transition. During his service, he was an instructor at the firing range where he trained hundreds of fellow soldiers in firearm safety and marksmanship. Tom suffered a service-related injury as a result that greatly diminished his hearing later in life. His contributions during this period were marked by discipline. Ever the entrepreneur, he was also known to act as a “personal bank” for his fellow soldiers.

Thomas is survived by his beloved wife of 61 years, Lorraine (Dotson) Heffernan; his son Tom Heffernan and wife, Tammy Heffernan of East Wallingford, Vermont; his grandsons, TJ Heffernan of Burlington, Vermont, Tyler Heffernan and his fiancée Sarah Socia of Burlington, Vermont, Tim Heffernan and his wife Katherine (Bullock) of Durham, NC. Their lives are part of the legacy he leaves behind—a testament to the values he held dear. Tom is also survived by many nieces and nephews and their families, all of whom revered him as a patriarch of the family.

Throughout his life’s many chapters—from soldier to serial entrepreneur—Tom remained steadfastly committed to forging his own path. His story is one of determination and enterprise that will continue to inspire those who knew and loved him. His legacy demonstrated that hard work and determination could overcome often impossible odds.

May his memory bring comfort to those he knew and loved and serve as a lasting tribute to a life lived with purpose and passion.

# Tribute Wall



“ My condolences to Great Aunt Lorraine and all the Heffernans. My children and I were so saddened to hear of Uncle Tom’s passing. Viviana was particularly upset as she truly thought he was so special. I knew Uncle Tom was an amazing man but his obituary was fascinating and so beautifully written. What a man of substance, integrity and intellect. I am proud to have known him. He will be dearly missed by my parents, my aunt and uncles and my children and I. Love, Heather, Scarlett, Viviana and Cameron Conte

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**Heather Conte** - April 14, 2025 at 05:20 PM

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So saddened to hear that Mr Heffernan my landlord since 1998 has passed .He was very helpful in renting me a forklift for free if I allowed him to keep some in storage. 36 years Econo Supply Co 1970-2021

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**Richard Formisano** - February 26 at 07:02 PM

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“ He is dearly missed. A man of many accomplishments.



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**Tim Heffernan** - April 11, 2025 at 10:09 AM