



### **COYLE PATRIARCH OF FORTY ON COUNTING SUCCUMBS TO COVID – 19**

Bernard H Coyle, a proud member of the “*Greatest Generation*,” passed peacefully on the morning of April 25, 2020, at Spring House Estates Lower Gwynedd, PA, from complications of COVID-19 having gallantly fought various other afflictions for decades. COVID – 19 is the first pandemic viral outbreak since the Spanish Flu of 1918 that killed his mother’s sister (Sarah).

Bernard was born in Philadelphia, PA, on September 5, 1926, and was raised in the Irish Section of the Mount Airy neighborhood within Philadelphia. He was the third child of John Coyle and Mary Jane (nee Kelly) of Carrigart Donegal, Ireland, located on the isthmus between Mulroy and Sheephaven Bays on the Irish Sea.

He is preceded in death by his parents; siblings Julia Mailey/Woltemate (nee Coyle), James, and Joseph; as well as his wife of 62 years Teresita C Coyle (nee Cush); son-in-law Andrew Liebel; and great-grandson Benjamin. Bernard and Teresita had 5 children {Bernard H Coyle, Jr, (Mary), James J Coyle (Cigdem), Thomas G Coyle (Karen) Richard J Coyle (Denise), Teresita M Liebel (Andrew)}; 17 grandchildren {Brian Coyle (Kerriann), Sean Coyle (Maria), Keith Coyle (Brittany), Colin Coyle (Paulina), Glenn Coyle, Casey Coyle (Brittney), Brittany Altmann (Michael), James Coyle (Andrea), Kristen Hoffman (Nicholas), Melissa Coyle, Kathleen Haurin (Robert), Thomas Coyle, Jr., Christina Coyle, Brendan Coyle, Jeremy Coyle, Teresita C Liebel, Stephanie Liebel} as well as 19 great children and counting.

Bernard was a product of 30’s era depression and the war years having graduated from Little Flower Parish Elementary School in Mount Airy (1940), Northeast Catholic High School for Boys (1944) {author of the salutatory address}, and LaSalle College (1950) {BS in history education}. He enlisted in the US Navy on August 1944, assigned to Great Lakes Naval Station for boot camp, and entered service on October 5, 1944. His next assignment was to Naval Training School (Radio) in Madison, WI graduating in June 1945 as a Radio Operator. This was then followed by appointment to Treasure Island California Naval Station to await transport by USS Fillmore (APA-83) to USN Base 3964 Tacloban, Leyte, Philippines Islands.

Much like those of “*The Greatest Generation*,” Bernard seldom spoke of his experiences, or, his contributions as a true Navy-Man. Therefore we have pieced together the following salute to his service to our country through personal memories, and personal correspondence found in our family home as following:

- Bernard’s first assigned ship was the Fillmore, which departed CA on July-12, 1945, arriving in the Philippines on August 4, 1945. With no escort throughout the journey, a zig-zag pattern was used in the final days of the voyage. (he noted in an interview in 2005 that this was most probably in response to ship receiving word that the Battleship Indianapolis had gone missing in the area).
- He was then assigned to the USN Base 3964 and then to USS Ocelot (IX 110) anchored in San Pedro Bay, Leyte, in Philippine Islands. The Ocelot served as the Commanders Flagship for Service Quatrain X.
- On September 9, 1945, the Ocelot departed San Pedro Bay for Buckner Bay, Okinawa, arriving on September 14, 1945.
- On arriving, the Ocelot suffered significant damage due to strikes from 7 vessels, including an ammunition vessel & merchant ship SS *Victor H. Oulanhan* on September 19, 1945, during typhoon Ida in Buckner Bay.
- The crew formed bucket brigades for over 6 hours, trying to save the ship aground on a reef before having to abandon the vessel. After spending 6 hours in life preserver floating in the sea with sea bag attached until being retrieved, he spent time on a barracks barge before assignment on October 2, 1945, to USS Cowie (DD632 renumber DMS 39).
- On October 7, 1945, the Cowie departed Buckner Bay for Eniwetok atoll in the Marshall Islands to outrun typhoon Louise that struck Buckner Bay on October 9, 1945, causing significant damage to vessels in the harbor (Including the refloated Ocelot leading to its final demise).
- On October 11, 1945, the Cowie returned to Buckner Bay before departing to the Yellow Sea on October 17, 1945. The vessel arrived on October 19, 1945, in the minefield to begin sweeping duties in the Yellow Sea off Kobe and Wakayama, Japan. The vessel anchored at night within the minefields and harbored for shore leaves at various Japanese ports.
- In Tokyo, a memorable picture of Bernard with several fellow sailors in front of the Emperor’s Palace became a means to salute him by his family. Over the subsequent decades, two sons (Bernard & Richard), as well as three grandchildren (Brian, Sean, & Christina), have recreated the picture while in Japan for business.
- On March 25, 1945, the Cowie departed Japanese waters for mainland US via Eniwetok to Pearl Harbor (7th) onto San Francisco, CA, on April 11, 1946.
- The Navy then transferred him back to Treasure Island and then Bainbridge Naval Station, MD, to receive his honorable separation on July 20, 1946, as Seaman First Class with Pacific Theater Ribbon (One Star), American Theater Ribbon, and Victory Medal in Bainbridge.
- While in the Navy he survived Scarlet Fever in Wisconsin (1944), vessel loss (1945), and dysentery. In addition, he required after his discharge in 1947 spinal surgery at US Naval Hospital, Philadelphia (currently site of Philadelphia Eagles Training Facility) to remove cysts formed during 4 hours on/off stints as a radio operator. The lumbar chair support inflicted the damage while being lashed to the chair during high sea events.

After honorably leaving the Navy, Bernard turned his focus toward building his future, and successfully gained his degree from La Salle College in Philadelphia via GI Bill. Once graduated, he embarked on an almost 6-decade successful career in business. Initially for two decades in John Coyle and Sons with his father and two fraternal siblings, followed by nearly 4 decades as a precious metals scrap dealer.

Bernard continued his dedication to serving since 1956 as a lifelong member of the Knights of Columbus (Achieving the title Sir Knight as a Fourth Degree & recently emeritus status Flaherty Council 3128 Glenside). Through this membership, his children fondly remember looking forward to the annual Christmas Party. He continued his connection to the military through 74 years continuous membership in the American Legion (Henry H Houston 2<sup>nd</sup> Post #3 of Roxborough neighborhood in Philadelphia, PA). In addition, he also belonged (since the '50s) to St Luke the Evangelist Roman Catholic Parish Glenside, PA holding several roles including Saturday evening 5:00 mass usher and Sunday afternoon collection counter.

Due to COVID-19 related government constraints, there is a small invitation-only mass of Christian Burial on Saturday, May 2, followed by increment alongside his wife Teresita, at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery Montgomery County, PA.

Bernard will be remembered for his strong faith, his Irish wit, and his dedication to his family. Ironically, he rarely spoke of his critical formative depression or war years. The family requests, in lieu of flowers, donations to be made to his parish at:

St Luke the Evangelist  
2316 Fairhill Avenue  
Glenside, PA 19038  
Attention: Father Brandt

Bernard left behind a proud legacy, including a family and friends who loved him dearly and feel honored to have known him. He served as an example for all of us to live our lives. We can only hope to achieve a portion of his accomplishments while he was among us. ***May we all hoist a wee bit of the creature in his honor after reading this legacy of his time on earth!***

Please see a more detail photo essay in the below Celebration of Life



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkZBvlyxll0&feature=youtu.be>