



PORTARO

January 10, 2021

Armando passed on January 9, 2021.

Devoted husband of Edda (nee Pupo). Beloved father of Theresa (Pietro) D'Abbraccio, Mary Louise (Salvatore) Mele, Vincenzo (Annette) Portaro. Grandfather of Marco (Jennifer) D'Abbraccio, Sabrina (Peter) Vasquez, Elana (Mark) Kachhi, and Gianna D'Abbraccio (Fiancé Matt Grilli). Great grandfather of Isabella D'Abbraccio, Matteo D'Abbraccio, Alessandra Kachhi, Emanuela Vasquez. Brother of Loretta (late Bruno) Mirarchi.

Brother-in-law of Guiseppina (the late Vincenzo) Lomanto, Ralph (Arlene) Pupo, Pasquale (the late Diane) Pupo, Janet Pupo, the late Rose (the late Saverio) Miriello and the late Anthony Pupo. Also survived by many nieces and nephews and his beloved Grand-dog Tessa.

Armando Marziale Portaro was born in Isca Sullo Ionio, Italy, a quaint seaside town in the Calabria region on February 18, 1932. His father had already traveled to America to work in the coal mines of the Anthracite region of Pennsylvania sending money back to his family in Italy. Due to the start of WWII, travel was restricted to Italy and Armando spent years not seeing his father. In 1949, he boarded the SS Saturnia in Naples, Italy and set off on a journey across the Atlantic Ocean to realize a dream of moving to the United States of America for better opportunities and to rejoin his father in Kulpmont,

Pennsylvania. His mother and his sister with her family would join him a couple of years later. Armando eventually moved to South Philadelphia where he met the love of his life and his future wife, Edda who was from Armando's hometown in Italy. Armando and Edda were married in 1956 and remained happily married for nearly 65 years until his passing. Armando and Edda had 3 children, 4 grandchildren, and 4 great-grandchildren.

In Philadelphia, Armando worked for several decades for a contractor that built underground substations for the Philadelphia Electric Company. He started out performing hard manual labor. He began taking night classes to learn the English language and worked his way up to Foreman leading his own team in building challenging and complex structures. Armando was the consummate pro and treated his crew well and lived by the principle that whatever you do in life to do it the right way. He retired in 1995 and was able to enjoy more well-deserved quality time with his family, extended family, friends, and new acquaintances. Although he was born and raised in Italy, Armando loved America and was extremely proud to be an American citizen. He loved baseball and football, a cold beer, muscle cars, and old western movies. He had many nicknames including: "Baba", "Sam", "Sammy", and "Bada Bing". Up until his final days, Armando was still the life of the party, usually hanging with the younger crowd and leading everyone's "Happy Birthday" song like a maestro would direct an orchestra.

In 2009, Armando returned to Italy for the first time since leaving for America. Armando spoke fondly about this trip for the rest of his life. He traveled first class with his son Vincent, and his son-in-law Salvatore to Rome, and back to his hometown in Calabria. It had been 60 years since he had left Isca Sullo Ionia and there were those still in the town who remembered him at first sight as the precocious, loving and handsome boy. He was also able to bask under the Calabrian sun and swim in the blue waters of the Ionian Sea that he spoke so fondly of for years.

Armando loved and was loved by his family and friends. Ask anyone who met him and from the moment he gave you his most incredible smile, you immediately felt enswathed in his warmth. Armando's number one joy in life was family and friends. This is because he believed these relationships were the path to true happiness. He was a fixture in his grandchildren's lives, picking them up from school, and attending all their functions. He was happiest when his family and friends were all together. For himself, it was of the utmost importance to be a good man. Someone who provided opportunity, safety and love for his family. Generosity was not a virtue, but a given. He helped so many people over the years to start a business or buy a first home or a first car and provided jobs for so many who were looking for their first opportunity when reaching the shores of America.

Armando arrived on American soil with little money, a strong work ethic, and a heart of gold. This ultimately took him very far. He leaves behind three generations of family who have a better life because of the sacrifices he made and the examples he set, and he always did things the right way until his last day.

Friends and relatives are invited to his viewing Saturday January 16, 2021, 9:00am at St. Monica Church 17th and Ritner Sts. Funeral Mass 10:00am. Ent. Calvary Cemetery in Cherry Hill, NJ.

In lieu of flowers, donations will be donated to the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Tribute Wall

NM

“ Dearest Theresa., Louise and all of your family,

I am so saddened to hear of your father's passing. I truly understand what a difficult time this is for all of you.

Please accept my deepest condolences and also my prayers for all of you!

Nancy

Nancy Macrina - January 14, 2021 at 10:50 AM

AG

“ Theresa and family, I am so sorry to hear of your Dad's passing. I know how difficult this is. You and your family are in my thoughts and prayers.

Anne Marie Gaynor - January 13, 2021 at 03:46 PM

JT

“ Justin Troccoli and family, we are going to miss arman very much, he knew me and my brothers as kids and would always come out and yell as us if we hit his awning, with a football, but then he would just come over and tell us about the weather or something, through the years we talked a lot and wen I was married and with children he loved out family, even though he could never remember there names , he would hug and kiss them and then always give them a dollar ,my kids loved him back and we will miss him so much , I have so many great stories but I can't share on here lol but we are Gona miss him so much rip Armon

Justin troccoli - January 12, 2021 at 02:03 AM

SM

“ Grandpop I will love you always and always. Thank you for your life example, your love, your laighs and most of all your company. I will never ever forget you and I will always talk about you to the little ones so that they know you will always be their guardian angels.

Sabrina Mele - January 12, 2021 at 01:16 AM