



Samuel M. Donovan

April 22, 2025

Samuel Michael Donovan, 73, of Alloway, New Jersey, died at home on Tuesday, April 22, 2025, surrounded by the people and pets who meant the most to him.

Born in Woodbury and raised in Washington Township, Sam was truly one of a kind — fiercely principled, sharp with his wit, and never without that twinkle in his eye. He worked harder than just about anyone you've ever met, and the word quit simply wasn't in his vocabulary.

Sam served in the United States Air Force, though he rarely spoke of it — feeling undeserving of recognition because he was never deployed, while close friends were lost to Vietnam. But his service was real, and his sense of loyalty and sacrifice ran deep.

Sam had paint on his hands, clothes, and in his hair for most of the last 45 years. He learned from old-school sign painters — men who hand-lettered truck doors and billboards before computers took over the trade. He moved on from towering liquor ads and Marlboro Men to large-scale, hand-painted murals both indoors and out, creating work across the region that left a lasting impression.

In his later years, he turned his attention to what he loved most: the rural landscapes and farm country he grew up with. Still with paint on his hands and in his thinning hair, he painted for himself — but always hoped others would enjoy it, too.

Sam met his wife Carol in Wildwood, and together they built a life he loved in Alloway — one filled with coffee, time in the woods, and the kind of everyday moments that mattered most. If he wasn't painting, he was bowhunting or fishing — and if he wasn't bowhunting or fishing, he was wishing he was. He is survived by Carol; daughters Becky (Christopher) and Sarah (Brett); grandchildren Liam, Grayson, and Ayla; sisters Debby and Marianne; and his beloved dogs, Jake and Joe.

He was predeceased by his father Granville, his mother Doris, grandmothers Helen and

Priscilla, and his uncle Jordan.

A service and celebration of Sam's life will be held on Saturday, June 28, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. at the Millville Army Air Field Museum, with lunch to follow.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Sam's memory may be made to:

Millville Army Air Field Museum
1 Leddon Street
Millville, NJ 08332

Sam Donovan: fiercely loved, deeply missed, and absolutely irreplaceable.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JUN 28. 11:00 AM (ET)

Millville Army Air Field Museum
1 Leddon Street
Millville, NJ 08332

Tribute Wall

JF

“ *Joanne, Scott, & Zac. Barbara & Frank planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Samuel M. Donovan.*

Joanne, Scott, & Zac. Barbara & Frank - June 26, 2025 at 01:31 PM

JF

“ *Joanne, Scott, & Zac. Barbara & Frank purchased the Days of Sunshine Bouquet for the family of Samuel M. Donovan.*



Joanne, Scott, & Zac. Barbara & Frank - June 26, 2025 at 01:31 PM

DD

“ *3 files added to the album Sam*



Deborah Donovan - May 29, 2025 at 10:44 AM

DD

“ *2 files added to the album Sam*



Deborah Donovan - May 28, 2025 at 11:53 AM

PG

“ *Carol, Becky & Sarah, we are so very sorry for your loss. We are thinking about you and praying for all of you. We met your family many years ago at Aldine United Methodist church. We remember Sam's paintings and think of him every time we go through Millville and see the mural he painted on the building there. Very gifted. Peter and Annette Guy*

Peter & Annette Guy - May 16, 2025 at 08:46 AM



“ *Carol Molinari Monks lit a candle in memory of Samuel Donovan*



Carol Molinari Monks - May 16, 2025 at 07:09 AM



“ *We are so very sorry for your loss. We are thinking about you and will be praying for you.
We met Sam, Carol and the girls at church more than 30 years ago. We loved sitting behind them so we could watch Sam sketching (and listening to of course).
Incredibly talented!*

Dorothy P Lewis - May 15, 2025 at 09:40 AM