



John Gorham

January 27, 2025

John Gorham passed away on January 27, 2025 in Greenville, RI at the age of 92. Born on October 23, 1932 in Providence he was the son of Sayles and Ruth (Campbell) Gorham. He was the brother of the late Bradford Gorham, Esq. and Dr. Nicholas Gorham. He is survived by his sister Desire Palmer of Rehoboth, MA. He was a long time resident of Scituate residing in the town from 1959-2019.

He was married to his late wife, Barbara (Nye) Gorham for 64 years before her passing in 2021. Together they had three children, Timothy N. Gorham and his wife Carolyn of Wakefield, RI; Peter C. Gorham of Greenville, SC; and Rebecca G. Norton and her husband Paul of Norfolk, MA. He leaves five grandchildren, Andrew, Katherine, and Julianne Gorham, Allison and Zachary Norton.

He was a graduate of Hope High School (1950), Brown University (1954) and Harvard Law School (1957). He also served in the United States Army (1957-1958).

An attorney, he was a partner at the law firm of Gorham & Gorham from 1958 until his retirement in 1997. During this time he served as the Town Solicitor of Scituate beginning in 1958. He was a member of the Rhode Island Bar Association, the American Bar Association, the Harvard Law School

Association of Rhode Island, and was a Fellow of the Rhode Island Bar Foundation. He was a former member of the RI Bar Association House of Delegates and the Thomas F. Black, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Committee administered by the RI Bar Foundation.

Upon retiring from the active practice of law, in 1998 he became Chairman of the The Champlin Foundation where he had served as a member of the Distribution Committee since 1975. As Rhode Island's largest private foundation, he was directly involved in the awarding of millions of dollars of grants annually that benefitted non-profit organizations statewide in the areas of education, libraries, youth services, historic preservation, healthcare, social services, arts and culture, animal welfare, and the environment. During his tenure, he was directly involved in literally changing the Rhode Island landscape conserving thousands and thousands of acres of land in a partnership with The Nature Conservancy, the Department of Environmental Management, and other conservation focused organizations and municipalities throughout the state. His other crowning achievement was founding The Champlin Scholars Program at Brown University that supported hundreds of graduates of Rhode Island public high schools with scholarships for both undergraduates and medical school students. Students from virtually every public high school in Rhode Island benefited and he celebrated their success with annual luncheons hosted by the President of Brown.

Throughout his adult life his civic involvement was unending and enduring, especially in his beloved Town of Scituate. He was a member and past President of the Scituate Lions Club; a Trustee and former Chairman of the North Scituate Public Library; a former coach and past President of the Scituate-Foster Little League; an honorary member of the Scituate Art Festival Committee; an honorary member of the Scituate Preservation Society; a member of the North Scituate Baptist Church; a member of the North Scituate Volunteer Fire Department; and a member of Hamilton Lodge#15 F & AM. He

was also a member of the Pilgrim John Howland Society, the Providence Rotary Club, the Narragansett Bay Wheelmen, the Moosup Valley Grange, and the Frederic C. Tanner Memorial Trust.

His family wishes to extend their heartfelt thanks to the wonderful staff at The Village at Waterman Lake for their care, kindness and friendship extended to John. They were indeed his angels.

Above all, he will be remembered for his kindness, humor, enthusiasm and integrity.

In lieu of flowers, he requested that donations in his memory be made to the North Scituate Public Library.

Visiting hours will be held at Winfield & Sons Funeral Home and Crematory, 571 West Greenville Road, North Scituate on Sunday, February 2nd from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. The Funeral will be held on Monday, February 3rd at 11:00 a.m. at North Scituate Baptist Church, 619 West Greenville Road, North Scituate. Burial will be private.

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 2. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Winfield & Sons Funeral Home and Crematory
571 West Greenville Road (Route 116)
Scituate, RI 02857
(401) 647-5421

Funeral Service

FEB 3. 11:00 AM (ET)

North Scituate Baptist Church
619 West Greenville Road
Scituate, RI 02857

Tribute Wall

CS

“ Dear Gorham Family,
Your Dad’s presence on our retirement campus was more than just familiar; it was a beacon of warmth, wisdom, and grace. He always welcomed me into his apartment when I would be showing family and clients around.
I always felt so very honored that we had " The John Gorham" on our campus, and I would mention a bit about his professional accomplishments. But he always brushed his accomplishments aside, and it was his kindness, his unwavering positivity, and the way he touched our hearts that truly defined him.
When I think of the horribly tragic times of Covid, I think of Your Mom and Your Dad. Your Dad faced even that horrific time with resilience and an outlook that inspired us all. Even through his most difficult days, his spirit remained strong, his optimism unshaken—a testament to the extraordinary man he was.
He had a way of making everyone feel seen, heard, and valued. His conversations left you richer, not just in knowledge but in feeling. Your Dad’s impact, his character, and his memory will forever be etched into the fabric of our community.
He will never be forgotten.
Thinking of you all, Christine Sullian and his Village Family

Christine Sullivan - February 03, 2025 at 07:02 PM

DE

“ I loved John and Barbara Gorham
Dot Eccard
Donna Eccard
Manhattan Beach CA

Donna Eccard - February 02, 2025 at 08:55 PM

RE

“ I Know John Gorham, he was a man, that would help Human beings, right away, of course Peter Gorham and Me his middle son, go way back to the University Southern California ((USC), I Corrospoded, with Johh, when my daughter Alexandra went to Smith, but also when I worked in Boston, I went to the Gorham house, on weekends, the Gorham's treated me like Fam. Oldest son Tim and me went to Washington DC, in spite of our Lakers Celtics rivalry, we had a good time. I did go to a Harvard Brown game, it was like 8 degrees, I froze, John Gorham, Amazing tenacious, acted like it was 80 degrees.
I'm really going to miss my Rhode Island friend,
Ronnie Eccard
Palm Springs California

Ronnie Eccard - February 02, 2025 at 07:58 PM

DC

“ Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North,
The birth-place of Valour, the country of Worth;
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands for ever I love.

*My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;
A-chasing the wild-deer, and following the roe,
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.*

*Farewell to the mountains high covered with snow;
Farewell to the straths and green valleys below;
Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods;
Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods.*

*My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;
A-chasing the wild-deer, and following the roe,
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.*

Thank you John for all you have done

David B Campbell - January 31, 2025 at 10:04 AM

JN

“ Knowing Mr Gorham's son Peter for a couple of decades, including in living in London, I heard all sorts of great stories about Mr Gorham. Never met him but his obit really highlights just how active and influential he was. We need more like him in this insane world. Rest well.

Joe Nordgaard - January 30, 2025 at 02:19 PM

DI

“ So sorry to hear this news, the passing of a true gentleman.



Dianne L. Izzo - January 30, 2025 at 09:59 AM