



John William Massey

December 5, 1937 - December 4, 2025

John William Massey, age 87, of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, died peacefully on December 4th, 2025, at MyMichigan Medical Center in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan surrounded by his family. He was born on December 5th, 1937, in Sault Ste. Marie, he was the son of Albert Joseph and Jane Isobel (O'Neil) Massey. John was immensely proud of his parents and his American Indian descent. He is preceded in death by his parents Albert and Jane Massey, daughter Lisa Kay Massey, brothers, Albert, Franklin, and Robert Massey. Sisters Mary Formalo, Kathleen Allen, Verna Lawerance and Evelyn Heldt.

John attended St. Mary's grade School and later graduated the class of 1956 from Sault High School. He enlisted in the United States Coast Guard on October 16th, 1956. He attended numerous Engineer Schools earning an associate's degree in marine engineering. During his service career, he sailed on four of the seven oceans and served on five of the seven continents. He served on the Cutter Sundew of Charlevoix, Michigan, and was on board for the search of the sinking ship, Carl D. Bradley, in 1958 in Lake Michigan. John was the watch stander aboard the United States Coast Guard Cutter EOW of the ice breaker Mackinaw in 1961, the watch stander aboard the United States Coast Guard Cutter Sundew in Charlevoix and watch stander aboard the United States Coast Guard Cutter in Duluth, Minnesota. In 1964, while serving in Alaska, he experienced the Good Friday Earthquake,

John was promoted to Warrant Officer W-4 in 1974 and was then transferred to the United States Coast Guard Cutter Valiant as 2nd Engineer, where he was responsible for searching for drug boats. John was instrumental in locating a vessel that contained 1250 kilos of raw cocaine on the vessel named the "Snowflake" out of Columbia, South America.

John also served as an engineer in Cape Coral, Florida, and Juneau, Alaska, and was second engineer of the Medium Endurance Cutter Valiant in Galveston, Texas, as well as the second engineer aboard the WHEC 721 Gallatin of Governor's Island, New York. While at sea on the Gallatin, he witnessed a Russian Nuclear Submarine explode south of Iceland in the North Atlantic Ocean. He was at sea for eighty-four days on the Gallatin.

John served as the engineer of Long Island Sound New Haven, Connecticut. In 1976, John was selected to go to Saudi Arabia to evaluate their Coast Guard Engineering Department. He spent a year helping to implement the Saudi Arabia Coast Guard,

In 1978, John was promoted to full Lieutenant and was transferred to United States Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast. The Steadfast was a 210-foot ship stationed in St. Petersburg, Florida. John served as the Engineer Officer and always spoke highly of his engineering crew and the people who worked for him.

John spent his off-duty time traveling in the middle east visiting the Pyramids in Egypt, Athens Greece and the Vatican in Rome and Germany's Black Forest.

John retired from the service in 1985 and returned to Sault Ste. Marie where he worked for Wellington Towing Company. and was an engineer on the tug

the Chippewa. Seven years later, he worked for the Corp of Engineers on the Soo Locks until 1993.

John loved country music and was a guitar player for The Country Gentlemen band for over twenty years. During these years John became a successful country music song writer.

John is survived by his children, Christina Marie Carbone (Michael) of Clayton, North Carolina, Linda Lee Carbone of Hamden, Connecticut, John Anthony (Valeria) of Largo, Florida, Daniel Thomas (Lori) of Westland, Michigan, and Andrew Patrick of St. Petersburg, Florida; grandchildren, Jennifer Carbone, Stephanie (Steven) Bolyard, Alyssa (Heather) Carbone, Nicholas (Stephanie) Massey, Jacob (Jasmine) Massey, Shae Massey, Eric (Savanna) Massey, and Maxwell Massey; and five great grandchildren.

Visitation will be held on Wednesday, December 10, 2025, from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM, at St. Mary's Catholic Church, 377 Maple St., Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783. A Mass of Christian burial will follow immediately after at 11:00 AM.

Final Resting Place will be at Oaklawn Chapel Gardens, in Bruce Township, Michigan.

Family Life Funeral Homes – Sault Ste. Marie assisted the family with arrangements. Condolences may be given to the family at www.familylifefh.com.

Cemetery Details

Oaklawn Chapel Gardens

15264 South M-129
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 10. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Holy Name of Mary Catholic Church
320 East Portage Avenue , Sault Ste.
Marie, Michigan 49783

Mass of Christian Burial

DEC 10. 11:00 AM (ET)

Holy Name of Mary Catholic Church
320 East Portage Avenue , Sault Ste.
Marie, Michigan 49783

Tribute Wall

SR

“ I served with John on the Cutter Steadfast as a MK3 home-ported in St. Petersburg Florida. He worked us hard, but was elbow deep with his engineering crew during many long days preparing the vessel for the next patrol. Often, his crew would be greeted with cold beverages at the end of the brow late in the evening, himself in greasy coveralls. I recall having Thanksgiving at his home along with the other single crew-members. He took care of his guys and kept me off the wardroom carpet numerous times during my tour on the STEADFAST! John certainly knew how to get things done during our Curtis Bay Yard Period as well as meeting REFTRA requirements while in Norfolk. John was one of the better engineering officers that I had during my career and I appreciate having served with him.

Steven Snell, MKCS, USCG Ret. - April 29 at 12:12 AM

PB

“ I met Mr. Massey at my first duty station; I was a young Seaman Apprentice. Mr. Massey ran the Group Long Island Engineering Department, he was the first Warrant Officer that I knew personally, admired, and looked up to for guidance. He was a great leader of Coast Guard enlisted personnel. He never forgot where he started in the Coast Guard. After his retirement, I was serving at Group Sault Ste. Marie, and we met again and have been great friends in retirement. Mr. Massey visited me at my camp outside Sault Ste. Marie every time he could for the last 15 years. I will miss LT John Massey.

Phillip Burgard - December 29, 2025 at 12:28 PM

TT

“ Daniel,
I am very sorry for your loss.

Tim Trahan

Timothy J. Trahan - December 15, 2025 at 11:53 AM

NC

“ My deepest sympathy and prayers for the Massey Family on the loss of such an amazing man. I met him many years ago when we both worked out at the Big Bear. He was always so kind and always had a smile and a hello. We became church buddies while we both attended St Isaac's Church until our beloved pastor Brother John passed away and he moved on to St Mary's. We kept in touch and I would always see him when he came to the clinic. My heart is broken and I will miss him deeply. I just know he and Brother John are catching up on old times! 💔💔

Norma Castro - December 11, 2025 at 12:01 AM

LR

“ I have had the extreme privilege and pleasure to have served with John three times. An amazing man, shipmate that I consider my beloved brother. He is extremely missed. We had great and fun times working together and my learning from John. Always a smile as he solved one unique engineering problem after another. There have been two great men in my past, the first I lost years ago. I miss my daily video chats with John, my brother God bless you with Fair Winds and Following Seas.



LCDR Bob Camuccio USCG Retired - December 09, 2025 at 05:32 PM

KS

“ Our hearts go out to the Massey family and those who have been touched by John. He was not my Uncle but in all his correspondence with me he would sign it Uncle John. Uncle John faithfully checked on me and how my husband was doing all the way back to 2007 when he was deployed to Iraq. Either emails, texts or cards with masses to be said in his honor continued through the years. He always kept track and let us know he was praying for us especially when my husband was very sick. His continued prayers and thoughts of concerns and greetings was very inspiring. I know he has gone home and is resting in the arms of our Lord.

Kim & Frank Senko - December 08, 2025 at 02:17 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of John William Massey.



December 08, 2025 at 06:52 AM