



## Mr. Conor McDowell

March 11, 1995 - May 9, 2019

Hugh Conor McDOWELL, March 11, 1995-May 9, 2019: 1st. Lieutenant United States Marine Corps, Bravo Company Platoon Commander, Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, Camp Pendleton, California.

Conor, beloved child of Susan Marie Flanigan and Michael Hamilton Coulter McDowell, and fiance of Kathleen Isabel Rose Bourque, was killed on Thursday, May 9th at 9 a.m. (Pacific Time) while on manoeuvres, leading his new platoon. His lead light-armored vehicle, containing 6 enlisted Marines, plunged into a concealed depression, completely turning over, and Conor died instantaneously, as a result of the rollover.

Conor saved the gunner in the twin turret on his left, quickly pushing the corporal down into the safety of the heavy armor, but it was too late to save his own life. Conor was loved by his men and as the New Testament says: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

His parents are so proud that Conor put his Marines first.

Conor was due to announce his engagement and marriage to the love of his life, Kathleen, a beautiful, tall, slender, accomplished psychology graduate of Loyola University, Baltimore, headed for an MA and PhD. They were deeply in love, after a whirlwind romance which began in North Carolina in July of last year, and settled into an apartment in Cardiff-By-the-Sea near the ocean outside San Diego, with their three pets. His parents loved Kathleen from the first time they met her and later hosted her with Conor at their home in Chestertown, MD, during Thanksgiving and over Christmas. She is a wonderful warm, steady person, and adored our son, and he adored her. Kathleen's family are originally from the Boston and Indianapolis areas, but make their home in Salisbury, North Carolina.

Conor was a warrior, like Michael's father in the Royal Ulster Rifles in the Western Desert, Sicily, and Italy in World War Two. Sadly, he never met his paternal grandfather, but Conor

felt as if he knew him and he had his grandfather's campaign medals. Conor, since he was a small boy, wanted to be a soldier, and later, a Marine. He excelled. He read broadly, was intellectually curious, and physically outstanding -- slim, fit, six feet plus, and sunny and passionate in personality. He was above all a LEADER and majored in history, minoring in French, at The Citadel, the historic military college in Charleston, South Carolina, established in 1842. Junior Cadets trusted, loved and admired Conor, who, while pushing them to a high standard, supported and encouraged them. Conor protected the vulnerable and stressed, especially young women, and minorities, who relied on Conor's discretion and good judgment. Conor graduated from The Citadel in May, 2017, and was Provost Marshal of 1st Battalion and in Alpha Company. He was commissioned into the US Marine Corps the day before his Citadel graduation. He began his Marine training at Quantico, Virginia, where he also qualified for the highly competitive Infantry Officer Course, and was one of only two young officers in his group, to be selected for Light Armored Reconnaissance, a tip-of-the-spear unit of the Corps.

Hugh Conor McDowell grew up on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, until he was 3, and then moved to Chevy Chase, on the DC side, where he went to Lafayette Elementary, and later Deal Junior High, both public schools. He chose St. John's College High School, near his home, the historic Catholic De La Salle French Christian Brothers school, founded in 1852, specifically because it had a crack Army ROTC unit. Conor, in his senior year, became Command Sergeant Major of the unit. He chose The Citadel because it graduated a huge number of Marine officers and had a rigorous physical and academic regime.

Conor was well travelled. Throughout his childhood the family flew eight times to France on summer holidays, and to visit the McDowell/Orchard families in the UK and Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Germany, and Canada.

Conor is named in honor of the Irish statesman/cabinet minister/politician, Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien, public intellectual, United Nations Special Envoy, biographer of Edmund Burke, visiting professor and fellow at Harvard, Dartmouth, Oxford, the Woodrow Wilson Center, National Humanities Center, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Trinity College, Dublin, writer on literature, history and conflict. Conor McDowell met Dr. Cruise O'Brien several times, when as a baby, a toddler, and small boy. Dr. O'Brien's book on Thomas Jefferson and the French Revolution is dedicated to Hugh Conor McDowell. Dr. O'Brien and was a mentor and close friend of Michael McDowell.

Conor was an acolyte, reader, and church school student at St. John's Episcopal Church, Lafayette Square, "The Church of the Presidents" (1816), opposite the White House,

where his parents were married. He played community soccer with the Stoddert League for many years, and rugby at St. John's College High School.

Conor developed a passion for sign language, music, and animals early in his childhood, and continued to pursue those deep interests throughout his life. From 18 months, to five years old, Conor attended the Child Development Center at Gallaudet University near his home on Capitol Hill, where his mother worked for 26 years, and he developed a life-long love of signing. Conor was an avid drummer and began taking lessons at The Tree House School of Music in Montgomery County, Maryland, when he was in middle school and moved on to teach drumming there to younger children each summer.

Conor's parents instilled in him a love for creatures, big and small, and he grew up with his beloved and large male tabby cat, Tiger, and his female Sharpei-mix dog, Penny. Conor and his fiancée, Kathleen, quickly adopted two cats, Missy and Max, and their female Labrador puppy, Ruthie, when they arrived in California. They often visited the San Diego Zoo, where he was fascinated by the various exotic animals.

There is a massive hole in the hearts of the McDowell, Flanigan, and Bourque families, and their friends. He was his parents' only beloved child, in whom they were well pleased. They pray they will meet their son after they themselves pass on.

Family suggest contributions to be made in Conor's memory to the following:

Tree House School Of Music 12798 Scaggsville Rd Highland, Maryland 20777

The Citadel Foundation 171 Moultrie St Charleston, South Carolina 29409

# Cemetery

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# Events

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**Arlington National Cemetery**

Arlington, VA,

**MAY  
22**

**Visitation**

06:00PM - 08:00PM

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Chestertown Location

130 Speer Road, Chestertown, MD, US, 21620

**MAY  
23**

**Visitation**

03:00PM - 05:00PM

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Chestertown Location

130 Speer Road, Chestertown, MD, US, 21620

**JUL  
17**

**Service**

02:00PM

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Arlington National Cemetery

Arlington, VA, US

# Comments

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“ A tribute video has been added.



Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home - May 23, 2019 at 01:04 PM

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“ With Distinction was purchased for the family of Mr. Conor McDowell.



July 15, 2019 at 08:15 AM

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“ Conor was distant family and although we met only once I knew that you were an incredible young man! Michael and Susan, my mum (Georgie), my dad (Carson), brother (Stephen) and husband (Andrew) send you all our deepest sympathies and can't imagine how hard the last few weeks have been! Our love and prayers are with you and hope you are able to find a moment of peace in the depth of your sadness! We are sorry!

To Conor's Kathleen we never met but you also have our deepest sympathies! We are sorry!!' Xxoo



Victoria Gillman - May 26, 2019 at 08:26 AM

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“ 61 files added to the album LifeTributes



Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home - May 23, 2019 at 10:28 AM

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“ I met Conor only once but he made quite an impression on me. He was a strong, self confident young man. It was hard to believe how confident and competent he was especially for a young man now a days. I am sure he gave you many, many wonderful things to remember about him. My love is with you all.

pam - May 22, 2019 at 02:17 PM

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“ Rose Tribute was purchased for the family of Mr. Conor McDowell.



May 22, 2019 at 10:18 AM

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“ Oluyinka Fakunle lit a candle in memory of Mr. Conor McDowell



Oluyinka Fakunle - May 21, 2019 at 11:53 AM

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“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. Conor McDowell.



May 21, 2019 at 11:36 AM

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“ from all your friends at the Clerc Center purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Mr. Conor McDowell.



from all your friends at the Clerc Center - May 21, 2019 at 09:22 AM

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“ Dear Susan, Michael, and Kathleen ~

It is very heartbreaking this moment! My thought and praying are with you all. Sending you the positive vibes, healing, and comfort. I will be thinking of you all during the funeral.

Warm hugs and love, Sarah Burton Doleac & Doleac family!

Sarah B. Doleac - May 21, 2019 at 09:05 AM

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“ May God hold you and comfort you. Xo



Pam Teat - May 20, 2019 at 11:39 PM

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“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. Conor McDowell.



May 20, 2019 at 04:04 PM

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“ Susan, Michael, and Kathleen ... Thinking of you all as you navigate this heartbreaking journey, and sending love and prayers for strength. Conor was the kind of human every parent wants their child to grow up to be. What beauty he brought to the world in his short time here on Earth. The world is poorer for having lost him. <3

**Cat Valcourt-Pearce** - May 20, 2019 at 03:51 PM