



## Thomas Newton Heath

October 23, 1928 - January 7, 2020

Thomas Newton Heath Of Chaska passed away at Auburn Manor on January 7th, 2020, of complications following Heart Valve Replacement. Born on October 23, 1928 and reared in North Carolina Tom graduated from Dover High School and attended the University of North Carolina. He joined the Navy in 1945, and after his 4 year stint was held for an additional year during the Korean War and was stationed in New Orleans at the Naval Supply Center. He moved on living in Norfolk, VA and then Philadelphia where he studied voice while working for the American Baptist Convention in Valley Forge. He sang professionally with the Philadelphia Oratorio Choir and in a Quartet in the Moravian Church where he became a member because he loved the music and traditions of the church so much. He later came to Minnesota, where he went to work in a publishing company, and lived in Prior Lake. The nearest Moravian Church was in Chaska, so he began to attend it. Moravian Friends decided to become Matchmakers intent on connecting him with another member, Marvel Rettman. It worked! They were married on Memorial Day in 1969 and relocated to Northfield, Minnesota, where Marvel was an Assistant Dean at St. Olaf College. Tom was commuting to St. Paul so to shorten that commute they built a home on Bade Lane in Chaska, moving in to the house in 1970. Tom became a Trustee on the Board of the Chaska Moravian Church, later was a member of the Carver County Library Board, Blue Ribbon Winner of the Carver County Arts Consortium Poetry Contest, story teller and self-published author. He loved to cook, bake, share music

and movies with friends, read and write. Lovingly referred to by his former co-workers as “Fig”, he will be joyfully remembered for all that he accomplished in his 91 plus years. Tom was preceded in death by his parents, Clarence Wayne and Lovie Elizabeth (McCain) Heath, 4 Sisters, 1 brother, and his beloved wife Marvel. He is survived by many nieces and nephews, as well as scores of dear friends. Tom will be laid to rest at the Chaska Moravian Cemetery on May 30th, 2020 in a private ceremony. A Memorial Service will later be webcast at [www.washburnmcreavy.com](http://www.washburnmcreavy.com). Memorials preferred to the Moravian Care Foundation, 501 Oak St N, Chaska, MN 55318. Please designate for use in the Chaplaincy Program.

# Cemetery Details

## Hillside Crematory

2610 19th Ave NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55418

# Tribute Wall



“ Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapels created a Thomas Newton Memorial Webcast in memory of Thomas Newton Heath



Washburn-McReavy - May 29, 2020 at 09:45 PM

MA

*Gathering Music prerecorded by Dr. Rev. Jennifer Moran.  
Presiding Minister Chaplain Carol Wachter  
Readings by Rev. Deb Mechley, Mary Bye, and Reflections by Hollis Schwartz.  
Guitar Solo by Gay Mattson.  
Other in Attendance: Lowell Bye, Lori Spalding, Terry Rank. and  
Kolleen Brown.*

Mary - May 30, 2020 at 06:08 PM

MB

“ 12 files added to the album Tom Assortment



Mary Bye - May 26, 2020 at 09:57 AM

CR

“ *Many good years of Tom's being Chaska Moravian choir director, thanks...God rest*

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**Crisman** - May 21, 2020 at 12:32 PM

MB

“ *1 file added to the album*



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**Mary Bye** - May 18, 2020 at 03:30 PM

MB

“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



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**Mary Bye** - May 18, 2020 at 02:10 PM

MB

“ When asked his name Tom would most often reply: “Thomas Newton Heath, like the candy bar”. This long time poet and proof-reader wanted his name recorded correctly but at the same time wanted to have a little fun with whoever he was meeting as he would also occasionally say: “Thomas Newton as in “fig”. He loved it when he could get a smile in response to this clarification of his name.

*My husband, Lowell, and I were friends of the Heaths for almost 40 years, so to us and to his relatives from North Carolina and Florida he was just “Tommy”.*

*After serving in the Navy, and working in Philadelphia for a while this tall southern gentleman landed in Minnesota where he met and married Marvel Rettman Heath.*

*While she was the visionary and doer, Tom was the editor of a lot of what they accomplished as a couple.*

*Tom was so very proud of her, Auburn Homes, and the Marvel Heath Chapel. He would often direct people to the plaque with her name and photo on it that hangs in the hall outside the chapel.*

*We will remember them both with pride and gratitude.*

*Sincerely,*

*Mary & Lowell Bye*

*Chaska, Minnesota*

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**Mary& Lowell Bye** - May 18, 2020 at 02:08 PM

DM

“ Tom Heath, a special man and a friendship that will live on. I met Tom in 2014 when I was the Chaplain for hospice. Tom's beautiful wife Marvel was admitted to hospice care and I was present to offer support and answer questions.



Tom and I spent many hours talking about his life with Marvel and the many adventurous experiences that it brought to them. After Marvel passed, I continued to visit Tom weekly as I had others to attend to on the Auburn campus and it was a great excuse to check in with my friend.

We shared music, movies, jokes, and lots of laughs; Tom loved his jokes. I was honored that Tom was present at my wedding in 2015 and he spoke to me of that day often. It seemed to have meant a great deal to him to share in this day with us.

Throughout the years we shared our ups and downs and great expectations of this space in time we call our world. He was a unique individual and an amazing storyteller. His writing was meticulous as was most of his life. He shared some of his dreams come true as well as his disappointments and a few secrets with me. I feel honored to have been a close friend to him and to have shared our hopes, dreams, and desires of this world in our stories and in our writings. Tom always wanted to "take a look" at what I was working on and he would remind me that he was a "nazi editor". He was and I appreciated his feedback.

I once wrote a passage that I shared with Tom. He suggested I get it published and then he said something heartfelt. He asked me if I would read it at his memorial service when that day came. That day is about to arrive and I am honored to share our unique individualities through this passage that reminds us of who we really are.

*I have felt Tom often over the past months since his transition, and a smile always comes to my lips. Sometimes it is as a gentle nudge when I have writer's block and, sometimes he shows up in the form of a joke. He truly has had an impact on my life and his tender heart will live on and on in mine. Thank you, my friend, for the memories.*

*In love and Light,*

*Debbie Mechley*

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**Debbie Mechley** - May 18, 2020 at 12:18 PM