



Michael Adrian Downes

May 9, 1945 - October 26, 2025

Michael Adrian Downes was born May 9, 1945, in Los Angeles, California, and passed on October 26, 2025 having built a life rooted in integrity, service, and love. He and his wife, Barbara J. Downes, shared 59 devoted years together. Their children—Angela M. Downes (James A. LaBarba), Robert P. Downes (Heather Downes), James M. Downes (Maddalen Downes), Zachary A. Downes, and the late Daniel A. Downes—carry forward his legacy. He also leaves behind grandchildren Ross, Ryan, Robby, Andrew, Christopher, Elizabeth, Catherine, Samuel, Henry, and Aspen; great-grandson Conrad; and brother Robert A. Downes (Barbara A. Downes). He was preceded in death by his sisters, Christina and Patricia, and his beloved pet dog, Lilly.

Michael's professional life was marked by ambition and craftsmanship. He founded Independence Mechanical Company, a commercial mechanical contracting firm focused on plumbing, heating, and air-conditioning systems for large buildings. Under his leadership, his firm was selected for landmark Dallas developments such as—Reunion Tower, the Dallas Convention Center, Thanksgiving Square, the Dallas Naval Air Station, Old Red Courthouse expansion, UTA Health Science Center, Hockaday School, and the Galleria University Club. His expertise also earned him the trust of notable Dallas figures, including Stanley Marcus, the longtime president and chairman of Neiman Marcus who helped shape Dallas into a fashion and civic center, and Mariano Martinez, the celebrated restaurateur who invented the frozen

margarita machine, now housed in the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. During his apprenticeship, he worked on the Athena Towers and he was the superintendent for the Dallas City Hall project where he found part of a woolly mammoth tooth.

Earlier in his career, Michael worked at the Dallas Zoo, assisting veterinarians Frank and Jack Brundrett, who were among the early pioneers of zoological veterinary care in Dallas. That role instilled in him an attentiveness to systems, care, and complexity that would echo throughout his later work. After his years building and running his company, Michael turned toward consulting—applying his deep knowledge of mechanical and process piping systems to computer fabrication plants, pharmaceutical facilities, and breweries. His expertise was sought across the United States and around the world, with projects that carried him throughout Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, including work in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Sweden, Singapore, and Dubai.

Michael was deeply proud of his Irish-Scottish heritage and drew strength from his Catholic faith. He also pursued many interests of his own—he was a licensed pilot, an accomplished scuba diving instructor, and at one point served as a police officer. But above all, he was a foundation to his family: steady, inventive, and generous. His influence lives on in every person he taught, project he shaped, and community he uplifted.

A rosary will be held at 10:30am, Wednesday, October 29 at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church in Pilot Point, TX, with a Mass of Christian Burial beginning at 11:00am. Burial will follow at the St. Thomas Catholic Cemetery in Pilot Point, TX.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Michael Downes memory may be made to the American Lung Association.

Online condolences may be shared at www.slaymemorialfuneralhome.com.

Arrangements are under the direction of Terri Slay and Slay Memorial Funeral Center.

Cemetery Details

St. Thomas Cemetery

St. James St. and Washington St.
Pilot Point, TX 76258

Previous Events

Rosary

OCT **29**. 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church
400 St. Thomas Aquinas Avenue
Pilot Point, TX 76258
<http://www.stthomaspilotpoint.org>

Mass of Christian Burial

OCT **29**. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church
400 St. Thomas Aquinas Avenue
Pilot Point, TX 76258
<http://www.stthomaspilotpoint.org>

Burial

OCT **29** (CT)

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church
400 St. Thomas Aquinas Avenue
Pilot Point, TX 76258
<http://www.stthomaspilotpoint.org>

Following the Mass of Christian Burial

Tribute Wall

KF

“ I had the great pleasure of working with Mike for over 25 years on many high tech projects in the US and Ireland. He was such a special person and friend. Godspeed my friend
KF

Kevin Fitzsimons - October 29, 2025 at 04:40 PM

KA

“ Our hearts goes out to you during this difficult time. Wishing you comfort, peace, and strength. Losing a parent is never easy. We hope you find comfort in the love and memories you shared with your dad.



Kathleen and Dale Arceneaux - October 28, 2025 at 08:26 PM

SR

“ Suzanne N Robertson lit a candle in memory of Michael Adrian Downes



Suzanne N Robertson - October 28, 2025 at 05:02 PM

DE

“ A wonderful tribute to a life well lived for sure! We did not have the pleasure of knowing him but we do know Angela and she is very dear to us. Our prayers are with Angela and her family during this time.

All our love,
David and Diana Ezzell

Diana Ezzell - October 28, 2025 at 02:03 PM

BA

“ Mike was one of the finest people I ever had the honor to know. The world was better because he was here.

Ben Ablon - October 28, 2025 at 02:02 PM

NA

“ What an accomplished and colorful life Mike led! He's probably the one person that I know that truly couldn't say "I wish I would have...". I consider myself fortunate to have known him for the few years that I did. My only regret is not talking to him more about his diverse background... particularly scuba diving!! Prayers and hugs to you all!



Nicole Blase Arnold - October 28, 2025 at 11:47 AM

BD

“ Barbara A. Downes lit a candle in memory of Michael Adrian Downes



Barbara A. Downes - October 27, 2025 at 08:22 PM