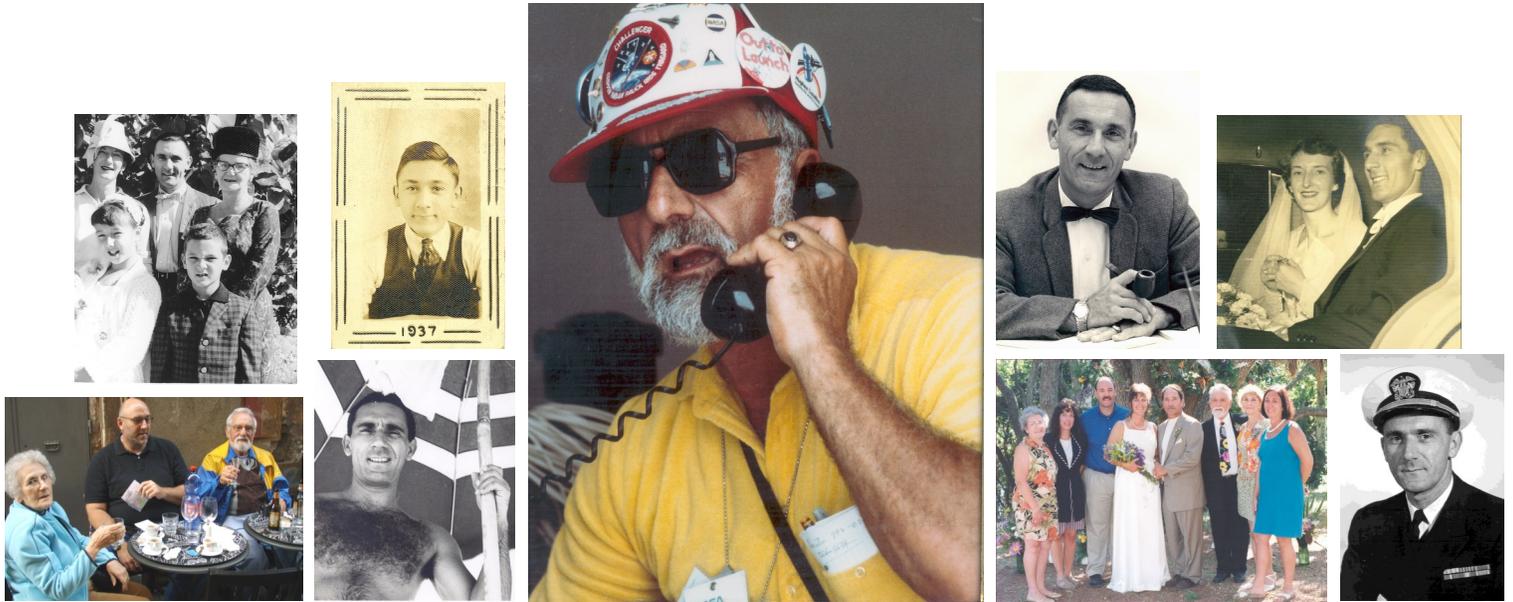


In Loving Memory of
Angelo John Taiani

August 28, 1923 – August 16, 2018



Angelo John Taiani, better known as Ang or Honkie, passed away at his home in Cocoa Beach on August 16, 2018, just 12 days from his 95th birthday. He was born in Salerno, Italy in 1923 to Giovannina and Raffaele Taiani. With his parents, he immigrated to the United States in 1924. After his father's early death, Angelo helped support his mother and four younger siblings by delivering three paper routes. He overcame poverty and with the aid of Benedictine monks was able to attend Saint Vincent College in Latrobe, PA. His college study, which began in 1942, was interrupted by World War II, during which, he served in the Pacific as a U.S. Navy officer from 1943 to 1946. He received a B.S. degree in chemistry in 1948. He was president of his graduating class and helped organize almost every class reunion thereafter.

Ang worked at a number of positions from 1949 to 1957, including synthetic fuels researcher at the Department of the Interior, naval officer during the Korean War, and explosive safety engineer at the Department of the Navy in Washington, D.C. In 1957 on a trip to Patrick Naval Air Station, he met the team testing the Polaris weapon system. He decided to join the team and soon moved his family to Cocoa Beach. In 1960, he transferred to the new National Air and Space Agency, where he became one of the pioneers of the nation's race to space. Ang worked on numerous projects as a general space engineer at the Kennedy Space Center—the Thunderstorm research program, 91 Polaris missile shots, and over 250 manned and unmanned NASA launches.

He and his wife Isabelle resided in Cocoa Beach and raised three children. The family enjoyed the beach life style and close-knit NASA community. He was a charter member of Our Saviour's Catholic Church. Although he retired from the space agency in 1984, he continued to work as a NASA guest/news media operations team volunteer, participating in almost all of the STS space shuttle launches. He was one of the primary escorts to hundreds of space photographers, reporters, and dignitaries for more than two decades at the Kennedy Space Center.

Ang loved all things space related and developed an extensive hobby creating and selling first day launch covers, other space philatelic items, and space souvenirs. Ang sold items all over the world and had many customers at the European Space Agency, as well as collectors in Europe. He was also a long-standing president of the KSC Philatelic Society and operated his own space cover business, Space Coast Philately, from the mid-1980s until recent.

Retirement also brought endless travels around the world as a modern globe trotter and explorer, visiting places such as the Galapagos, Antarctica, Peru, Argentina, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, East Africa, and Europe. Later in life, Ang enjoyed revisiting his journeys through his numerous photo albums.

In 2009 Angelo returned to his parent's home in Vietri sul Mare, Italy with all his American family where he was honored by the tourism office and cultural foundation for his achievements as an Italian emigrant. In 2011 Angelo made a gift to his alma mater to bring recognition of the nation's space program. The Angelo J. Taiani Planetarium and Astronaut Exhibit at St. Vincent College named in his honor provides the latest in digital technology and has introduced thousands of students to the night sky, solar system and beyond.

Angelo is predeceased by his wife Isabelle, son Chris, and brothers Joseph and Frank. He is survived by his daughter Brigid (Mike Reed), son Mark, daughter-in-law Leslie, grandson Kelsey Carr, sister Mary Ann Jones, brother Tony (Alberta), and loving nieces and nephews and their families.

A funeral mass will be held at Our Saviour's Catholic Church in Cocoa Beach on Friday, September 21, at 10:30 am, followed by a reception at the church. Angelo will be interred at the Cape Canaveral National Cemetery in Mims on Monday, September 24, at 10:30 am. Contributions can be made in his name to the Angelo J. Taiani Planetarium, St. Vincent College, 300 Fraser Purchase Road, Latrobe, PA 15650.

And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens give light upon the earth." And it was so.

Genesis 1:14-15

