

Chief Thomas E. Mentrup (1935-2024)



Tom was born September 11, 1935 in Cincinnati, the first of two children born to Felix E. and Mildred C. (Murphy) Mentrup of Price Hill. He attended St. Gregory Seminary, graduating in 1952, then Mount Saint Mary (Athenaeum of Ohio) College, graduating in 1956. He also attended Xavier University, eventually earning a master's degree in psychology.

In 1957 he took a position as agent for the areawide control of sales of reservations in the Management Trainee Program for American Airlines.

Tom was drafted into the United States Army in 1958. He went to Armor School at Fort Knox in 1959. He served most of his tour in Germany where he worked on tanks, armored personnel carriers, and took the time to learn the language. Specialist 4/c Mentrup was honorably discharged in 1960 and returned to American Airlines.

On August 1, 1961, Tom joined the Amberly Village Police/Fire Department, one of two such combined entities in the state of Ohio. In April 1963, he completed the Cincinnati Police Academy, finishing second in the class. Still early in his career, he completed the prestigious University of Cincinnati Homicide Seminar. After finishing first on a promotional examination, he was promoted to Sergeant on September 16, 1964. In 1967, Sergeant Mentrup was a member of the interagency Task Force Burglary Investigation Team, graduated from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's 79th National Academy, and was promoted to Lieutenant. During his Amberly career, he was elected to several officer positions in the Hamilton County Police Association, including Trustee, Secretary, Treasurer, and Second Vice President; served as an instructor for the Ohio Peace Officer's Training Council in Criminal Law and Police Computer Technology; was a founding member of the Police Intelligence Coordinating Agency (PICA); and was elected Secretary of the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 74.

On January 17, 1977, Lieutenant Mentrup was named Police Chief of the Greater Cincinnati Airport Police. By 1990, he transitioned to Security Administrator. He retired from there with more than three decades of service to the country, Amberly Village, and the airport.



After retiring, Chief Mentrup remained deeply involved in the law enforcement community, volunteering at the Greater Cincinnati Police Museum every Saturday, helping the Historian with his vast knowledge of regional law enforcement history, researching genealogical records of officers killed in the line of duty, and translating century-old German newspaper articles.

For over 40 years, Chief Mentrup was a devoted member of the choir at St. Pius X Church in Erlanger, where his love of music and faith were integral parts of his life.

Just before Thanksgiving 2024, Chief Mentrup was diagnosed with Stage IV, inoperable lung cancer. He sorrowfully informed the Museum that he would need to resign his position there. Chief Mentrup died a month later, surrounded by family, on Christmas Day, at the age of 89.

He was predeceased by his grandsons, J.T. Gilreath and Ryan Nolan. Chief Mentrup is survived by his wife, Janet Marie Mentrup; daughters, Tracy Ann (Gary) Bamberger, Ellen Marie (Jack) Gilreath, and Karen Leigh (Tom) Nolan; grandchildren, Sara Cahill, Daniel Gilreath, Michael Gilreath, Erin Hoskins, Amanda Huth, and Kati Nolan; great-grandchildren, Miller Cahill, Carter Cahill, Molly Gilreath, Priscilla Hoskins, Ryleigh Huth, and Kinley Huth; and sister, Mary Ellen Steffen.

A visitation will be held 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Thursday, January 2, 2024 at St. Pius X Church at 348 Dudley Pike in Edgewood. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11 a.m. A private burial will take place the following day at Gate of Heaven Cemetery.

Memorial contributions can be made to the [Greater Cincinnati Police Museum](#), 308 Reading Road, Suite 201, Cincinnati, OH 45202.