



THE CITY OF BRUNSWICK MARYLAND

1 WEST POTOMAC STREET · BRUNSWICK, MARYLAND 21716 · (301) 834-7500

Distinguished Citizen biography for:

Thomas George “Tommy” Thompson

1929-1977

Honored as a Distinguished Citizen in 2026

It seemed unlikely that little Tommy Thompson would eventually grow up to become Police Chief in Brunswick, Maryland. He was born in Brunswick on September 11, 1929, to Charles F. Thompson, a carman on the railroad, and his wife, Nora V. Oden Thompson, when they were in their mid-40's. Tommy had a sister Mabel who was 16 years older, and when she got married three years later to John Harley Catlett, Tommy was left to be raised as an only child. He was described by one of his peers as a “spoiled Mama’s boy.” Every day, his mother walked him to school, picked him up to take him to Mrs. Himes’ Restaurant for lunch, and walked him back home after school.



As a youth, he attended the First Baptist Church. Doris Barker, who knew him from church, described him as “having a great personality” and being “delightful, jolly, fun, handsome -- a joy to be around.”

When Tommy was 12 years old, the family moved from their home on Delaware Avenue to 717 West Potomac Street, a 2-story house on the west end of town next to where the Acme Supermarket would be built 15 years later. Tommy would live here for the rest of his life.

Upon completion of his schooling, Tommy joined the military and served honorably in the Korean War. Following the war, he became interested in electronics and obtained an amateur radio operator’s license. He also took flying lessons in Frederick and obtained his pilot’s license, and he was a member of the Moose and Eagles Lodges in town. When his parents died (in 1963 and 1968), Tommy stayed in the family home. He married Mary Virginia “Ginny” Burger later in life. They had no children.

It was as a police officer that Tommy left his biggest mark on Brunswick. He joined the Brunswick Police Department as Assistant Chief in 1967, and six years later was appointed Chief, serving under the watchful eye of Mayor Jess Orndorff. Among his accomplishments as Chief was the modernization of communications between police headquarters, the police cars, and other city locations. His concern for youth was described by the Brunswick Citizen at the time of his death: “As police chief, he was much involved in work with juveniles; he personally saw to it that several young men were housed and cared for until longer term arrangements could be made.”



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Tommy's later years, unfortunately, were marked by poor health. In fact, he was not able to tend to his duties as Police Chief the last six months of his career. He finally retired in January 1977, and died ten months later, on November 30, 1977. His widow survived him and continued living in their home until she died 25 years later. They are both buried in the Pleasant View Cemetery in Burkittsville.

The Mayor and Council and the Brunswick History Commission are proud to honor Tommy Thompson as a Distinguished Citizen of Brunswick, Maryland.