



Aurelia Bender

December 18, 2014

Aurelia Caterina Maresca Bender, 93, of Moorestown, NJ, daughter of the late Vincent and Clelia Bandini Maresca, sister of the late Grace Mannillo and the late Vincent Maresca and beloved wife of the late Honorable Henry J. Bender on December 18. She is survived by her 10 devoted children and their families, Henry V. Bender, Ph.D. of Moorestown, NJ; Thomas and Janet Bender of New Monmouth, NJ; Mary and Howard Hoffman of Hamilton, NJ; Robert and Deborah Bender of Philadelphia, PA; Stephen Bender, D.C. and Kathy Manley, D.C. of Ashland, OR; Paul and Karen Bender of Bel Air, MD; Mark and Lorraine Bender of Yardley, PA; Peter and Julie Bender of Moorestown, NJ; Philip Bender and Amy Knight-Bender, M.D. of Catonsville, MD; Ann and Jim Bruggeworth of Haymarket, VA; 21 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

Born and raised in the Queensboro Hill section of Flushing, NY, Aurelia graduated from Newtown High School, Queens, NY in 1938. Fluent in Italian, her parents' native tongue, she was proud of her Italian heritage. A dedicated piano student, at the age of 14 she received a gold medal in a regional competition sponsored by the Music Education League of New York City where she performed at Carnegie Hall. She graduated from Barnard College, NY in 1942 and earned her Masters in Music Education from Teachers College, Columbia University, NY in 1943. Aurelia was a theater accompanist at Smith College, Northampton, MA until her marriage to Henry J. Bender of Union Hill, NJ in May, 1944. They settled in Leonia, NJ where five of their ten children were born. In 1953, they moved to Moorestown, NJ and added five more children to the family. A devoted, loving and loyal wife, Aurelia had her tenth child at the age of 45. Six years later, she tragically lost her husband of 29 years and found herself a single mother with five children still at home. Strengthened by her strong character and her deep faith, she guided and nurtured her children with the selfless love that defined her entire life. A natural poise and grace stemmed from her sincerity which was her inner strength. She saw the good in everyone she met and found beauty in the simplest things. Her gentle and loving kindness was there for anyone who needed it and she was an inspiration to all even through her final days.

A gifted classical pianist and teacher, she generously shared her musical talents with the Moorestown community for over 50 years by volunteering, performing and teaching private lessons in her home to pianists both young and old, many of whom stayed in close touch with her over the years. In 1967 she co-founded the South Jersey Music Teachers Association which thrives to this day. She shared and instilled her love of classical piano with hundreds of students and fellow teachers who benefited from the same warmth and sincerity extended to her own children. A lifelong student, she continued to hone her knowledge and skills by taking courses in piano theory at Temple University and even attended a symposium in Italy when she was 76. Her professionalism and knowledge launched many of her younger students into college scholarships and professional careers. Thriving on her endless desire to give, she regularly shared her musical gift with family members, fellow residents and staff of Grace Assisted Living in Moorestown by performing on her beloved Bechstein piano which has been donated by the family in her name to the Perkins Center for the Arts in Moorestown.

Aurelia will live on as a shining example of the true meaning of selflessness. She will continue to inspire and enrich all those who knew her. May she rest in peace.

Family and friends are welcome for visitation at Lewis Funeral Home, 78 East Main Street, Moorestown, NJ on Tuesday, December 23rd from 10:00 AM to 12 Noon. A funeral Mass will be celebrated at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, 42 West Main Street, Moorestown, NJ at 12:30 PM. Interment will follow at Mount Carmel Cemetery in Moorestown.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests that memorial contributions be made to the South Jersey Music Teachers Association, Attention: Elvira Kipnis, 1653 Blue Jay Lane, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003

Cemetery Details

Mt. Carmel Cemetery

Camden Ave
Moorestown, NJ 08057

Previous Events

Viewing

DEC **23**. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Lewis Funeral Home
78 E Main St
Moorestown, NJ 08057
(856) 235-0009
lewisfh@msn.com
<https://www.lewisfuneralhomemoorestown.com>

Mass of Christian Burial

DEC **23**. 12:30 PM (ET)

Our Lady of Good Counsel
42 West Main Street
Moorestown, NJ 08057
(856) 235-0181
<http://www.olgcnj.org>

Tribute Wall



“ Aurelia Bender

October 09, 2023 at 03:30 AM



“ Aurelia Bender

November 08, 2022 at 08:26 PM



“ She was an instantly likeable, talented, humble, and perfect family role model. Her legacy will live for countless future generations of the Bender family.

Ted Steinmetz - January 05, 2015 at 11:09 AM



“ Today, we said goodbye to an icon of our youth. A mother of 10 children and grandmother of more than double that number and a great grand mother of six. For most people that would've been enough to put her into heaven. However she had a career in music as an accomplished pianist and piano teacher. I just knew her as my best friend's mom. She never bothered with us much. Perhaps it was because we are such good kids :-))but the thing that amazes me the most about this woman was that she went through 41 years of her life without her spouse as he had died earlier and unexpectedly. While this was a real tragedy that hung over these fine young men and women, the mother of 10, the matriarch, willed them to grow up and have successful careers. She raised doctors and lawyers and artists and musicians and teachers and business owners and corporate types and moms and dads. I'm kind of honored to walk among them. But the thing that meant the most to me about this amazing woman was that when I entered high school she was there to meet my mom and show her the ropes. And it took several years for that fact to surface. The lady was one of the first people my mom met at a school so foreign to her but so familiar to my friends mom. After all, she had sent eight boys to the school and that is no small feat. Even her name was special. She grew up in Flushing New York in Italian family. She married the son of German immigrants. She had a few rough days at the end of her life but she was surrounded by family that loved her as much as she loves them. I'm sure you know that I could go on and on and on . But I will end there and wish you again a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Harry Faris - December 24, 2014 at 07:00 AM

SK

“ Sharon Kelly lit a candle in memory of Aurelia Bender



sharon kelly - December 23, 2014 at 10:20 PM

SK

I am very sorry for your loss. What a lovely woman. My thoughts and prayers are with you.

sharon kelly - December 23, 2014 at 10:22 PM

CS

“ My dad sends his condolences and prayers to the family. He has long spoken well of your mother and grandmother. While he is unable to write this himself or join you, know that his sympathies and thoughts are with you. Chuck Slocum for Bruce Slocum

charles slocum - December 23, 2014 at 06:35 PM

CH

“ We are not competing here, but I can safely say that NO ONE has received more selfless love from Aurelia, our Beb, than my father Serge Hughes. She gave this love over many years and with great patience with my father's foibles. She and I and my Dad spent some time together in our family home in Italy, and getting to know her better, I was ever more impressed by her spirit, her carriage. (And her mischief!) My brother Paul, also, will forever cherish the memory of how Beb loved him. "She always called me 'darling' - and she meant it," Paul told me yesterday. It is a privilege for all of us to be reveling in such good memories of this woman!. Thank you Beb for everything, and my condolences to her beautiful family.

Colette Hughes - December 23, 2014 at 10:39 AM

KS

“ Pete, Julie, and family, may the Lord fill your heart with God's peace, strength, love, and hope. You are in our prayers at this sad time.

Ken & Sue Sadler

Ken Sadler - December 23, 2014 at 06:01 AM

JG

“ *Jan Griswold lit a candle in memory of Aurelia Bender*



Jan Griswold - December 22, 2014 at 11:01 PM

JG

“ *Aurelia was a dear friend, a fine musician of the highest caliber and an inspiring teacher. I will always remember her positive attitude and warmth. And, as a colleague, she shared her knowledge with all she met. I remember master classes with Alex Fiorillo at her home in Mt. Laurel and her gracious hospitality. She was kind to pass on some of her classical music collection to me when she moved out of her condo. I will treasure it always as I will treasure her memory and the lasting impression she had on me and on so many other musicians. My sincere condolences to the family and may God grant her eternal light. May she be playing the piano in heaven!!*

Jan Murphy Griswold

Jan Griswold - December 22, 2014 at 11:00 PM

IN

“ *Inna N. purchased the Blue Caribbean Bouquet for the family of Aurelia Bender.*



Inna N. - December 22, 2014 at 07:22 PM

EB

“ *2 files added to the tribute wall*



Edna Hubbell (c/o Julie Bender) - December 22, 2014 at 05:32 PM



“ *Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Aurelia Bender.*



December 22, 2014 at 12:58 PM

PS

“ *Philabundance/Fare & Square purchased the Pink Tribute Spray for the family of Aurelia Bender.*



Philabundance/Fare & Square - December 22, 2014 at 07:56 AM

LK

“ *Pete and family,
My sincere condolences on the loss of your mother. Losing a parent leaves a hole in your life. Thank you for being a friend to dad, Linda Laessle Kemple*

Linda Kemple - December 21, 2014 at 03:00 PM

TR

“ *Ann and family,*

I am very sorry to hear of your mother's passing. May you take comfort in the memories you have, and at the thought of your parents being reunited. I will keep all of you in my prayers.

Tracy Neugold Relle

tracy Relle - December 21, 2014 at 02:33 PM

TM

“ *Mark, Harry,*

I'm sorry for your loss. Your Mom is in my prayers.

Tom McCaffrey, 75

Thomas E McCaffrey - December 20, 2014 at 01:40 PM

JA

“ I will always remember the patience and kindness she unfailingly displayed. I can picture her even now, after so many years, playing her cherished piano.

Godspeed to a woman who positively influenced so many.

Jonathan Arnett - December 20, 2014 at 01:32 PM

PH

“ Aurelia was a gentle and strong feminine respectful presence when I returned home to NJ broken up after a divorce. She was truly an Aunt who received me with great hospitality as her guest in time of great need. I loved her and her laugh, smile, and beautiful voice - along with strong reproof when called for. Paul Hughes

Paul Hughes - December 19, 2014 at 09:48 PM

LM

“ Lee and John Mannillo purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Aurelia Bender.



Lee and John Mannillo - December 19, 2014 at 05:21 PM