



John Paul Keeler

April 19, 1927 - November 22, 2015

John Paul Keeler of Claverack, New York, passed away peacefully at his home on Sunday, November 22, 2015 at the age of 88.

John was born in Brooklyn New York on April 19, 1927 to John and Helen (Kennelly) Keeler. He proudly served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. John was married for 58 years to the late Eileen Keeler who was the love of his life.

He began singing in Brooklyn as a child, was a gifted boy soprano, studied opera throughout his youth and sang opera and oratorio until an advanced age. He worked for Prudential for 29 years, until his passion for all things art related resulted in him finding his true calling as an art and music critic. He was an art and classical music aficionado.

John embraced life with great gusto and was blessed with a high intellect, charm, wit, a great sense of humor and a kind loving personality that touched all those who were blessed to know him. As a devout Christian he lived an extremely full life with countless close friends and family to whom he was dedicated. He is survived by his adoring four daughters, Ellen Keeler, Susan Cannatella, Katie Keeler, and Maura Keeler; six grandchildren, Alessandra, Wilson, Wesley, Angela, Trevor, and Dimitrius; two great-grandchildren, Jaylen and Adrina, and many cousins, relatives and again COUNTLESS friends

whom he cherished.

There will be a memorial service in the spring for family and friends to honor this truly amazing one of a kind treasure who will be missed .Donations in lieu of flowers may be sent to The Alzheimer's Association.

Tribute Wall

BB

“ Bruce Bergmann sent a virtual gift in memory of John Paul Keeler



bruce bergmann - August 04, 2016 at 09:56 AM

JM

“ James Mockovciak lit a candle in memory of John Paul Keeler



James Mockovciak - March 03, 2016 at 10:11 AM

JM

I miss my dear, noble friend, John Keeler. John embodied a graciousness, depth, intellectual honesty, fairness, and hope rarely found in one person today. He was a man 'in the world', and positively engaged with it. A lover of an old fashion idea, 'truth', John was never too old or too proud to learn. He loved learning and was delightfully impertinent with all that was banal. Yet he was never 'of' the world. He possessed a fire of imagination not unlike William Blake, intuitively distrusting vanity in all it's many forms. Always keeping popular fancies at arms length John was forever contemplating eternity in a 'grain of sand'. His was a life well lived. I only hope I can do as well. I'll never hear the Messiah without seeing him standing beside me, rapt in it's glory and humility. His life is a part of that grand, mysterious chorus now. He lives forever.

James Mockovciak - March 03, 2016 at 10:31 AM

PM

Many days were spent together with John and Eileen in fellowship when we were immersed in the Holy Spirit in the 70s. We had times of prayer and communion as we discovered our new identity in Christ and the joy to be free of many religious encumbrances. They shared their life with us, bountiful hospitality, and we with them. John was gracious and with loving kindness walked in empathy and patience with us and the fellowship at our small church. We'll be looking for him in Heaven when we get there. Love Paul and Emily

Paul Mockovciak - March 19, 2016 at 12:28 PM

RK

“*To Ellen, Susan, Kate, Maura, and your children, Denise and I mourn the loss of your wonderful father and grandfather and offer our deepest sympathy. He was a monumental figure in all of our lives, and he loved his immediate and extended family with all of his heart. He was kind-hearted, generous and unselfish. He had an amazing intellect and memory. His love of history, literature, and the arts of every genre permeated every fiber of his being, and made his soul glow like burning coal. And then that light was reflected on all of us; his love of the arts inspired us and made each of us a better person. And finally, his sense of humor was unmatched. No one - including John - ever knew what would come out of his mouth next! So while I mourn his loss, I smile with the memories, and am forever grateful he was such an important part in my life. I loved him as a cousin, uncle, mentor, and most of all as a dear friend. Again, please accept my heartfelt condolences and love.*

Your cousin, Robert Keeler



Robert Keeler - December 02, 2015 at 08:23 PM



“Contemplating the death of this most considerate man, I have sent the following message to all involved with Concerts in the Village:

With deep regret I inform you of the unexpected passing of a passionate, generously informed lover of music: John Keeler. John was a good friend to many of us, and an always thoughtful and caring original supporter of Concerts in the Village. I will miss him very much. His Vaughan Williams-like presence at our receptions will not easily be forgotten – not to mention our inevitable “What did John think?” questioning of one another!

In 2010 John attended and, as a writer for the Register-Star (Hudson) reviewed, the very first CITV concert. Although no longer reviewing area concerts, exactly two weeks before his death John was with us yet again, for Alexander’s Feast, which proved to be one of his very last live musical experiences.

John was a true Handelian and one for whom virtually no effort of this master was unknown. Ironically a week or so before our concert he confessed to me two things: 1) that Alexander’s Feast was for him well known, truly a favorite work among his many favorites; and 2) that – remarkably – he had never experienced this great work in live performance! At a time of sincere regret it is therefore possible for us to feel some complementary measure of joy, knowing that on November 8th we had the opportunity to offer John Keeler a very special, if unexpectedly parting gift.

Today I have spoken with John’s family and extended personal and institutional (CITV) sympathy. I have also suggested that, if the family should so desire, on the occasion of any future memorial service many of us might well be willing to offer some musical gift – perhaps even a bit of his beloved Handel?

At this time to recall the following passage from Alexander’s Feast seems to me particularly fitting:

*At last divine Cecilia came, Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiasts from her sacred store, Enlarg'd the former
narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds, With Nature's mother-wit, and
arts unknown before.
[Dryden]*

*David Smith
Artistic Director, Concerts in the Village
Kinderhook*

David Smith - December 02, 2015 at 06:04 PM

NC

“ *To my cousins, relatives, and to those who had the privilege to know
John P, Keeler....Uncle John. I am saddened to hear of his passing.
Fondly remembered for his exuberance and zest for life, his kind
and welcoming spirit. May you take comfort knowing that he's
probably rockin and rollin the heavens in operatic style with my Dad
and Michael. It's that thought that I hope brings a smile to the many
heavy hearts at this time. You are all in my thoughts and prayers. I'll
always remember Uncle John as larger than life and full of joy. I am
so sorry for your loss.*

Nancy Cody

Nancy Cody - November 30, 2015 at 09:33 PM

RM

“ We mourn the loss of John Paul Keeler, a dear, wonderful friend and fellow-musician. He came to many performances we gave at the Windham Chamber Music Festival and the Catskill Mountain Foundation. His learned and insightful reviews of our concerts, as well as that of other organizations helped spread the word about the greatness of classical music and its importance to the upstate New York area. We will miss him dearly.

Robert Manno & Magdalena Golczewski Co-Directors, Windham Chamber Music Festival.

Robert Manno - November 29, 2015 at 08:45 PM

PM

“ John was such a gifted and generous man. My wife and I were so lucky to have him as a friend, to share his love of music, history, the arts -- and the common good. John was a huge supporter when I was on the school board and I will never forget his speeches -- operatic! -- urging us to improve our schools. And most memorable was his constant love for his wife Eileen. We will miss him greatly. - peter meyer

peter meyer - November 29, 2015 at 09:42 AM

BK

“ Barbara Kenton lit a candle in memory of John Paul Keeler



barbara kenton - November 28, 2015 at 08:49 PM

CA

“ I am so sad to hear of the loss of Uncle John. My heart goes out to my cousins, aunts and uncles and everyone who knew this marvelous man. He certainly seemed to live his whole life to the fullest. I'm grateful for the kindness and friendship he offered to my Mom after the back to back losses of my father and brother.

May you all find peace during this difficult time and know that we're praying for you.

*Carol and Dan Brady (Ed and Peg's daughter and son-in-law)
Massachusetts*

Carol - November 28, 2015 at 07:21 PM

MC

“ *Ellen Theresa, Susan, Katie and Maura:*

My condolences, I am so sorry for your loss. I'm going to miss John so much, especially our laughs during his late night phone calls about politics and et cetera.

Margaret (Aunt Peggy) Cody

Margaret Cody - November 28, 2015 at 06:14 PM

RB

“ As someone who spoke to John only a few weeks ago I am shocked and saddened to hear of his passing. As a knowledgeable musician I found him a great colleague. But even more he was a wonderful friend to me since I moved to Columbia County. He never failed to attend concerts where my music was being performed. And he always gave sensitive and positive feedback in his published reviews which I was more than happy to display on my website. The Arts in Columbia County are the poorer for his loss. On a personal level all who knew him will miss his intelligence and warmth.

Robert Baksa

Robert Baksa - November 28, 2015 at 02:28 PM

MG

“ John truly was a good friend and brother in Christ. He so loved his daughters and family.....blood ties and other ties. He will be missed.....along with his Irish humor.

Mary Lou Groll - November 27, 2015 at 04:46 PM

SL

“ Being a fellow music critic, I found John to be an invaluable connection between performers and audiences. He deeply felt that egoism among critics was an evil that deterred the smooth passage of art from performer to public. For John, every live performance had something special to offer and should be cherished in the press. His unselfish enthusiasm and support for the arts will be sorely missed. Being a friend of John for many years, I will miss his company greatly. I was fortunate enough to see him weeks ago at f David Smith's concerts in Kinderhook: Handel was on the menu -- his favorite.

Seth Lachterman.

seth Lachterman - November 27, 2015 at 11:58 AM

EG

“ To the wonderful Keeler girls, Very sorry to hear of your father's passing. He was my great FRIEND and Teacher and I loved him very much. I know that he is singing in the Heavens now.

ed Guenther

Ed Guenther - November 27, 2015 at 08:58 AM

JK

Good night, sweet prince.

Janet Kealy - November 29, 2015 at 09:30 AM

MO

Mr. Keeler came into our photography gallery several times each year over the last six seasons. I always looked forward to his big frame and even bigger voice livening up our space. He was always attentive and kind to the work even when it clearly did not fit his taste. When he found something he liked he asked questions and looked at it in detail. Sometimes he came back and this usually lead to a review in the Register Star. Above all I will miss his occasional appearances in my life. Always filled with energy, charm, wit, and discernment and then, stories.

Mark Orton

Mark Orton - December 05, 2015 at 02:02 PM

VM

“ *I am so sorry to learn of John's passing. What a wonderful gentleman he was. His music reviews were so informative. My condolences to his family.*

Virginia Martin - November 27, 2015 at 08:40 AM

JC

“ To my cousins, aunts and uncles, and all family and friends who knew John:

I was so sorry to hear of your loss. My uncle John was so filled with life, so generous and sweet, and lit up every room he entered.

I have always wished we had been contemporaries in age because I know we would have been great friends. I'm so glad the past few years we were able to bond over our shared love for theater, attending shows together, and his taking the time to review one of my little community theater performances.

John, Godspeed. I know Heaven just got a little happier knowing you are there. And for the way in which you performed your life, we still here on Earth are rising in a standing ovation and cheering for you, "Bravo!" "Marvelous!"

John Cody (Ed and Peg's son)

John Cody - November 27, 2015 at 08:25 AM

 Kim
Kenton

“ Much love to my second family. We loved John very much and he will be missed. May you all have many fun memories of him with my dad at the opera or at many a night at the pool. Love the Chirichella

Kim Kenton - November 27, 2015 at 07:05 AM