



## Joan Eileen Bradner

May 10, 1929 - November 14, 2015

Joan Eileen Dougherty Bradner passed away on November 14, 2015. Joan was born in Galion, Ohio on May 10, 1929. She showed early musical talent and began playing the organ in her parish church at age eleven.

Joan's desire to study music prompted her to audition at Mary Manse College in Toledo, where she was awarded a scholarship. While a student, she collaborated with a classmate to compose the Mary Manse Alma Mater. She was awarded a Bachelor of Music degree with honors in 1953. She had a long career as a pianist, choir director and organist at parishes throughout Toledo and hosted musical and cultural gatherings in her home well into her senior years.

Joan married Robert Bradner in 1954 and composed their wedding marches, which have been published and performed at the weddings of their children, grandchildren, and classmates.

Joan was active in her community, serving as President of the Mary Manse Alumni Association and editor of the Alumni News. She was an officer in the Toledo Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and served on the Board of the Toledo Botanical Garden.

In addition to her passion for music, Joan had a successful second career as a licensed realtor. She enjoyed politics and was a frequent contributor to The Toledo Blade Readers Forum, Catholic Chronicle and other periodicals. She was proud of her Irish heritage and seemingly always organizing some type of celebration for family, friends and classmates.

Joan was preceded in death by her parents, Daniel and Esther Dougherty, and three sisters, Jean Hook, Jane McCartney and June Jones. She is survived by her loving husband of 61 years, Robert; five children, Kathleen Penske, Houston, TX; Karen Rolandelli, Greensboro, NC; Eileen Bradner, Arlington, VA; Elizabeth Kunkel (Jeff), Chicago, IL; and Gerard Bradner, Mansfield, Ohio; nine grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

A Mass celebrating her life will be held at Little Flower Catholic Parish on Wednesday, November 18 at 11 am. Visitation will be held immediately prior at Little Flower at 10 am. Coyle Funeral Home is assisting the family with arrangements.

Memorial contributions may be made to the following: Ursuline Sisters, Toledo, OH; Corpus Christi University Parish, Toledo, OH; or Little Flower Life Teen, the high school ministry at Little Flower Catholic Parish. Please leave a condolence message for the family at [CoyleFuneralHome.com](http://CoyleFuneralHome.com).

### Reminiscences of a Rich and Full Life by Joan Eileen Dougherty Bradner

Growing up in the southern part of the Toledo Diocese (Galion-Mansfield Deanery) made it difficult to familiarize oneself with Toledo and its many attributes. The mileage was over 100 miles one-way on a two-lane country road via Fremont, before the last 40 miles into Toledo.

Things changed in the summer of 1949 when The Catholic Chronicle published a special edition highlighting Mary Manse College, its fine faculty, courses of study, and degrees available. The article inspired me to contact Sr. Mary Lawrence, asking for an interview. Shortly after, my mother and I made the awesome trip to Toledo where we met with some Ursuline faculty and had an audition with the famed pianist Emma Andres Kountz. When the afternoon

was coming to an end, I was delighted to learn I would be given a tuition scholarship which allowed me to graduate from Mary Manse in 1953 with a Bachelor of Music degree.

My first year of music teaching was at Maumee Valley Country Day School. I attended many alumnae activities at Mary Manse and it was there I met Robert Bradner, a Notre Dame graduate, World War II veteran and local CPA. Our friendship led to our marriage on August 21, 1954. We were blessed with five gifted children who grew up, graduated from college, and went on to fulfilling professional careers in sales, pharmacy, law, and teaching. In due time, there were nine grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

During this time I kept busy as an organist in several Toledo churches and the Ursuline Convent. One day, Sister Georgiana invited me to join the Ursuline Associates and that allowed me to assist at special convent Masses and programs. The duties enriched my life and hopefully helped the Sisters in their work.

Now, age and health issues have slowed me down and prevented me from an active participation in Associate activities, but my interest in their work is still very much alive!

Postscript: Joan spent the last seven months of her life as a resident of the Ursuline Center, living as an Associate among the nuns and priests she worked with throughout her life. Just days before her passing, she entertained residents and guests at her husband Robert's 90th birthday party by playing the Steinway grand piano in the Ursuline Center library, the same piano that had belonged to her beloved piano teacher at Mary Manse College, Emma Andres Kountz. Her musical selections included the Mary Manse alma mater which she had composed as a student many decades ago. Circle of life!



# Previous Events

## Visitation

NOV **18**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Little Flower Catholic Parish  
5522 Dorr St.  
Toledo, OH 43615

## Memorial Service

NOV **18**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Little Flower Catholic Parish  
5522 Dorr St.  
Toledo, OH 43615

# Tribute Wall

JP

“ Thoughts and prayers to you and yours at this time.  
Many fond memories of Joan during her time as the music director  
at Little Flower  
May God bless...John Pasek

John Pasek - November 19, 2015 at 08:16 AM

EB

Thank you John. Her work with the organ and choir meant a lot to her.

Eileen Bradner - November 23, 2015 at 05:57 PM

BB

“ Barbara, Catie, and Nowell Boardman purchased  
the Fruits and Blooms Basket for the family of  
Joan Eileen Bradner.



Barbara, Catie, and Nowell Boardman - November 18, 2015 at  
09:58 AM

PM

“ On behalf of the Monaghan Family, our prayers go out to one and  
all. Pete Monaghan Dublin

Pete Monaghan - November 18, 2015 at 08:04 AM

KR

Thank you for thinking of us, Pete. She was a special lady.

Karen Rolandelli - November 19, 2015 at 07:42 PM

MM

“ Hi Eileen, I am praying for your family and you and sharing the loss of your beloved mother in prayer. She looks so much like you and seems like she was the go-getter that you are! She sounds like a wonderful woman and I understand the depths of this loss but I know she is in a wonderful place now, next to Christ! Love, Maura

Maura McKenna - November 17, 2015 at 10:49 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Joan Eileen Bradner.



November 17, 2015 at 09:04 PM

BL

“ Beth Ludwig purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Joan Eileen Bradner.



Beth Ludwig - November 17, 2015 at 05:18 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Joan Eileen Bradner.



November 17, 2015 at 11:25 AM

“ *Joan E. Bradner (1929 - 2015)*

*(News story) Joan E. Bradner, a longtime music teacher, organist, and choir director at Catholic parishes in Toledo, died Saturday in ProMedica Ebeid Hospice Residence in Sylvania. She was 86. Mrs. Bradner of West Toledo died from cancer, said her daughter, Elizabeth Kunkel.*

*She was an organist, pianist, and choir director at St. Charles Borromeo Church and later at St. Patrick of Heatherdowns, and also taught music to youngsters in the grade schools at both parishes. She also was music director and church organist at Little Flower Church.*

*Mrs. Kunkel said her mother prepared the music for weekend services at parishes and directed weekly choir practices in advance of Sunday liturgies. In addition to Sunday Masses, she played the organ for weddings and funerals.*

*She was born on May 10, 1929, to Esther and Daniel Daugherty in Galion, Ohio. She began playing the organ at her parish, St. Joseph Church, at age 11. An audition during high school resulted in her being awarded a scholarship to attend Mary Manse College. She and another student composed the Mary Manse Alma Mater while studying at the school.*

*After earning a bachelor of music degree in 1953, she took her first teaching position at Maumee Valley Country Day School.*

*Mrs. Kunkel said her mother had told her that she enjoyed all her students, but teaching the fourth grade was the most satisfying.*

*"Fourth grade was her favorite. They were the most well-behaved ones that lit up your day," she said.*

*She married Robert Bradner on Aug. 21, 1954.*

*A former resident of Old Orchard, Mrs. Bradner occasionally played for services at Gesu Church. She was an officer in the Toledo Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.*

*In the 1970s, she obtained her real estate license and sold houses for several agencies, including Danberry Co.*

*Mrs. Kunkel said she found her niche in the first-time homebuyer market.*

*"She wasn't flashy. She loved to help people find their first house,"*

*she said. "She had a lot of return clients"*  
*Mrs. Bradner was a past president of the Mary Manse Alumni Association and former editor of the organization's Alumni News. Surviving are her husband, Robert; daughters, Kathleen Penske, Karen Rolandelli, Eileen Bradner, and Elizabeth Kunkel; son, Gerard Bradner; nine grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. Visitation will begin at 10 a.m. Wednesday in Little Flower Church followed by the funeral Mass at 11 a.m. Coyle Funeral Home is handling arrangements. The family suggests tributes to the Ursuline Sisters, Corpus Christi University Parish, Little Flower Life Teen, or the high school ministry at Little Flower Church.*  
*This is a news story written by the Toledo Blade.*

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**Blade** - November 17, 2015 at 08:36 AM

PG

“*Eileen, I'm so sorry about the loss of your mother. She sounds like a fascinating person.*”

*Patty Gibson*

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**Patty Gibson** - November 17, 2015 at 07:17 AM

MP

“ To the entire Bradner family...my heartfelt and deepest sympathy on Joan's passing. She was such a fixture in the life of the Phillips family due to her long and enduring sister-like friendship with my mom. To say that she left her mark on life, church, family, friends, work, activities and so much else, is an understatement! Joan will be missed...

*I have many memories of Joan but the one that will always make me smile, is the fact that she christened me with the nickname "Tootsie." Can't you just hear her saying that now?*

*I know she has her hands on a heavenly keyboard at this moment, playing to an appreciative audience. Love and peace to you all...Merre Phillips [aka Tootsie]*

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**Merre Phillips** - November 16, 2015 at 12:48 PM

EB

*Thank you Merre! Your Mom was such a good friend to my Mom up to the very end. Their daily phone conversations meant so much to my mother in her last years. Peace.*

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**Eileen Bradner** - November 16, 2015 at 11:57 PM

KR

*That is so sweet Merre. Our Moms had a special bond that will last forever.*

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**Karen Rolandelli** - November 19, 2015 at 07:39 PM