



Melanie Louise Bradley

November 12, 1965 - July 28, 2022

Melanie Latzko Bradley passed away peacefully at home the morning of July 28, 2022, at the age of 56. She had her beloved family with her for her final goodbye. She was born on November 12, 1965, in Goshen, N.Y., a day earlier than her due date of November 13th. Her mother, Marjorie Latzko did not want her daughter to have a birthday on a Friday the 13th so she was induced on the 12th to avoid any future bad luck.

Melanie grew up in Blooming Grove, New York with her parents, Walter (who predeceased her) and Marjorie, and her two older brothers, Jeff, and Curtis. She developed her passion for music from her parents. Walter was a world-renowned barbershop music arranger and Marjorie is a member of The Chordettes. Melanie inherited her father's gift of perfect pitch. She played the oboe, piano, and organ in high school. She spent a lot of her childhood collaborating with her father where they played a lot of music together. Walter's years of being a church organist inspired Melanie to get her first church organist job at the age of 16. She received many awards in school including the Orange County Music Educators award and the John Philip Sousa Award. Melanie attended Ithaca College where she earned her bachelor's degree in Chamber Music. Throughout her college life she played at surrounding churches in addition to her recital and accompaniment work. Melanie won The Ithaca College School of Music Concerto Competition. After graduation in 1988, she moved to Maryland to attend the University of Maryland and obtain a Master of Music degree. It was there that she met her future husband, Jason Bradley.

Melanie and Jason began their romance as coworkers at TGI Fridays in Greenbelt MD. He was her manager, and she was a hostess. Soon after they started dating, she was really the boss. While pursuing her education and working various jobs including cosmetic sales and retail management, she also began as organist at Twinbrook Baptist Church in Rockville, MD where she worked until she moved to Delaware. Jason and Melanie were married in June of 1993 and began their married life in Laurel, MD. Jason began working with Outback Steakhouse in 1994 and a year later Melanie also joined Outback, working in the office. In 1995, Jason lost both of his parents and Melanie lost her maternal grandfather and her closest aunt. That year Melanie and Jason were able to support each

other's sorrow and help each other live on. They found a middle ground blending their respective faiths together. They celebrated the Jewish holidays exchanging gifts for 8 "themed gift" nights for Hanukah and Melanie trying gefilte fish and Matzah at Passover. Jason got his first ever Easter basket and decorated his first Christmas tree with her stringing together cranberries and popcorn to make a garland for the tree which their Shetland sheepdog destroyed overnight by gently eating the popcorn off the string without breaking it. Their son Aaron was born in 1997 and their son Ryan was born in 2000, both at Shady Grove Hospital in Rockville, MD. This was the job Melanie had been waiting for her entire life, she was a mom of a young family. She and her boys were inseparable. Aaron often accompanied her to work and would be in a playpen in her office as Ryan did a few years later. Melanie and Jason spent a great deal of time with friends that also had young children around the same age. Life was pretty great.

In 2001, Melanie and Jason had the opportunity to move to Delaware to open the new Outback in Rehoboth. While Jason worked long hours hiring staff and working with the construction firm, Melanie was often alone with her boys and ventured out in the community to start this next chapter of their lives. Later that year a mutual friend introduced her to Jerry Birl, who needed an accompanist for a recital at the Milford Senior Center. That's when Melanie's Delaware music career was launched. A member of the Lewes Presbyterian Church saw her at the recital and in 2002, she became the organist there. Melanie later became the praise band leader, choir director and Music Director for the church playing 3 services every Sunday and having mid-week rehearsals as well as many special events and functions. It was a common sight to see people touch Melanie's shoulder when walking past her seated at the organ, many stopping for a quick hug or an "I love you". A while later, a parishioner at her church recruited her to be the Music Director for the Milton Theater's production of The Fantasticks. This led to her being recruited to work with Clear Space Theatre's production of Tintypes as an on-stage musician. She quickly became 1 of the music directors at the theater. In addition to the church and Clear Space, Melanie's musical influence flowed throughout Sussex County. She played with multiple school choruses and for high school plays. She taught piano out of her Lewes home. She played at local bars and eateries with friends. She did a number of shows as music director with Possum Point Players and Second Street Players. She coached The Cadbury Chorus at The Moorings. Melanie eventually became the full time Music Director at Clear Space working with singers of all ages from the youngest beginning with Broadway Bound, then on to Spotlight on Young Performers, main stage musical shows, and seniors in the Legends of Broadway program. Melanie worked with a lot of high school musicians at Clear Space including her son Ryan on drums with his 2 best friends on bass and guitar. She nicknamed the quartet Mama's Boys.

Coffee runs were always time she would catch up with the gang. Melanie always had a hug for everyone she saw and was always encouraging people to do their very best. Many younger folks she encountered credit her with helping them through rough patches in their lives, being a second mom, and helping influence their lives. I've been told that "Mama Mel" was a mom to all and a mother of 2. Her "I love you" was a common phrase she would tell everyone. She was love. Whether she knew you her whole life or just bumped into you at Marshall's, she found something she loved about you and she would certainly tell you. This was her magic touch in forging lifelong friendships. She was friends with local baristas, shop owners, and restaurateurs. The running joke she and Jason had was that she was the honorary mayor of Lewes and Rehoboth. "Mayoring" was a term they coined as Melanie personally greeted people throughout her day.

In 2012, Melanie found out that she had Ovarian Cancer and underwent surgery at Christiana Hospital to have it removed. She began chemotherapy a few weeks later and after 6 months of treatment was officially in remission. She remained in remission for two years. Then the cancer reemerged, and Melanie went back into treatment. Over the next 8 years she remained very active in her work and personal life, not slowing down or complaining about her situation. She learned to live with cancer. She was very grateful to her doctors and nurses at Tunnel Cancer Center for the personalized care she received. They made the trauma of cancer less frightening with their encouragement and support. She was in their care until she passed.

Melanie's gracious nature, quick wit, enchanting smile and intelligence throughout her life made her a unique individual that people gravitated to. If Facebook is any measure of someone's likeability, her 1700+ friends are proof positive that people want to be friends with her. She personally made every single one of those friendships in addition to more folks not through social media. We have all lost a talented, beautiful soul when we lost Melanie. She is most likely collaborating with her father again in heaven making more beautiful music together. Above all, Melanie was a wonderful and nurturing wife, mother, and friend. Loved by many, she will be deeply and genuinely missed by all who had the good fortune to know her.

A visitation will be held on Friday, September 16, 2022, from 6:00 PM until 9:00 PM, at Lewes Presbyterian Church, 133 Kings Highway, Lewes, DE, where a memorial will be held the following day, Saturday, September 17, 2022, from 2:00 PM until 3:00 PM at Lewes Presbyterian Church.

A celebration of life will take place on Sunday, September 18, 2022, from 4:00 PM until 5:00 PM, at Clear Space Theatre Company, 20 Baltimore Ave., Rehoboth Beach, DE.

Please sign the virtual guestbook located on the tribute page.

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 16. 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM (EAST)

Lewes Presbyterian Church
133 Kings Highway
Lewes, DE

Memorial Service

SEP 17. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (EAST)

Lewes Presbyterian Church
133 Kings Highway
Lewes, DE

Celebration of Life

SEP 18. 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM (EAST)

Clear Space Theatre Company
20 Baltimore Ave,
Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971

Tribute Wall

BH

“ I am grateful for the privilege of serving with Melanie for the last 16 years of my pastorate at Lewes Presbyterian Church. In addition to her extraordinary musical skills, I appreciated her versatility and enjoyment in playing and leading in both traditional and contemporary styles of worship, and her ability to direct both the choir and the praise band. I and the congregation were also blessed by her positive attitude, her gracious, loving and caring personality, her sense of humor and her team spirit. I enjoyed doing ministry with her and singing in her choir. Most of all, I appreciated her spirituality--her love for God and for people, her growth in faith, and the many ways that her relationship with Christ informed and impacted her music ministry and the faithful witness of her life in the church and the community. I admired the great courage, endurance and the positive spirit that she showed throughout her long battle with cancer, and I pray that the peace of God will uphold her loving family as they grieve her loss.

Buz Hughes - September 15 at 06:50 PM

BA

“ Melanie was one of the most special Artist, Mother, and Friend one could ever have. She was a wonderful friend and influence to my Granddaughter Hannah!

Bronwen Adams - September 12 at 08:25 AM

TF

“ Tracy L Fennell lit a candle in memory of Melanie Louise Bradley



Tracy L Fennell - September 12 at 12:34 AM

NG

“ I am hoping to attend one of the memorial gatherings but will probably be out of town. I had the great privilege of working with Melanie when she was the music director/pianist for Possum Point Players production of Ragtime. It was pure joy! Whenever I saw her after that it was always delightful - hugs and caring. I saw her once in awhile at Seaside Jewish as well and that was also special. The world has lost a great soul and talented person, but her spirit will live on in everyone she has touched.

Nina Galerstein, Sept 10, 2022

Nina Galerstein - September 10 at 01:21 PM

DM

“ Thank you for the music Mel. and for all the joy you shared.
Deb Mengert



Debra Mengert - September 09 at 01:47 PM

TT

“ Melanie was an awesome musician and piano player, and we absolutely loved her when she worked with us in the Legends of Broadway group at Clear Space. We will miss her SOOO much!!!

Trudie Thompson - August 16 at 05:25 PM

LL

I am so saddened to hear the news of Melanie's passing. She fought a valiant fight.

linda lamontagne - September 09 at 08:17 AM

PO

“ We had the pleasure of knowing Melanie when she was just a young girl in Washingtonville High School and was a dear friend to our sons. We always knew that her music would lead her to do great things. Although it was much too short Mel certainly had a life well lived. Our sympathy and prayers go out to her family and friends. Her passing will leave a hole in the hearts of everyone who knew and loved this kind, beautiful talented lady.



Peter & Madelyn Ortel - August 11 at 03:32 PM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Melanie Louise Bradley.



August 10 at 03:34 PM



“ I had the pleasure to work with both Jason and Melanie at the Bowie MD Outback and Melanie was one of my favorite people to work with. She was hard working, fastidious on the job, respectful to everyone, and just an amazing person! Thoughts, prayers, and reflection today as I appreciate the opportunity to have had this time with an unforgettable women!

Kasey Ingram - August 10 at 09:28 AM

JP

“ Melanie was a treasured friend in my school years at Washingtonville. We had a tight-knit band family and had tons of fun on our annual band tours. I never fully appreciated her talent until the day she was my NYSSMA accompanist, sight-reading, with ease, the pieces I spent countless hours rehearsing. She made me sound better! Melanie was cute, loveable and funny. Although I know you, her family, are grieving, I also know how very blessed you are to have had her in your lives. May your many, many, happy memories lift you up in difficult times. -Jennie Sebald Peters

Jennie Sebald Peters - August 09 at 11:16 PM

GA

“ From She Loves Me with David at 2nd Street to the many productions at Clear Space & Les Miz with Kenney at Possums, it was always such a joy & work of love to have Mel on lead Keyboard as the facilitator of each show. Her enthusiasm, encouragement & musical clarity made it so easy to follow the score & each show. What a dame! We will sorely miss her and thank Jason, Aaron, Ryan & Marjorie for sharing her with all of us. Love & thanks, Ginger Angstadt

Ginger Angstadt - August 09 at 07:59 PM

AS

“ My prayers and thoughts and my sincere condolences to the family. Melanie was one of a kind. Her smile was infectious, her manner and humor were her trademarks. As a volunteer for 15 yrs and a cancer survivor, I was privileged to meet and know her when she came into Tunnell. Her talent was unbelievable and she was most happy sitting at the piano. We will all miss her and all that she did for the community. May she Rest In Peace and keep smiling down on those who loved her. May God keep her family in the palm of his hands and grant you peace.

arline simpson - August 09 at 07:11 PM

LS

“ I had the honor of being in the same piano studio as Melanie in college, and I believe we also took Class Voice together! I will always remember her energy, her support and encouragement, and her incredible work ethic. She was a phenomenal musician and a terrific friend. Her presence here on earth with us will be sorely missed, but we can all rejoice in the fact that her pain and suffering is no more, and she now rests comfortably in God’s presence. To Jason and family, may God’s grace, peace, comfort and love surround you, envelop you and hold you. Rest easy, Melanie, and God bless you.

Lee Stowe - August 09 at 06:01 PM

TF

“ Teresa Figgs lit a candle in memory of Melanie Louise Bradley



Teresa Figgs - August 09 at 04:06 PM

DP

“ Dr. Doris Person lit a candle in memory of Melanie Louise Bradley



Dr. Doris Person - August 09 at 03:59 PM

“ Hi - I'm Alex Marrero, and here are my fondest memories of Melanie.

Melanie and I had the same private piano teacher in the early 1980's. His name was Morris Borenstein, and he lived in Middletown in Orange County in New York State.

When Melanie was working on her Bachelor of Music Degree from Ithaca College, she studied solo piano performance with Mary Ann Covert, and collaborative piano performance with Karl Paulnack.

Melanie had a full-length one-hour solo piano recital on October 31st in 1987 at Ithaca College. Her program featured the J.S. Bach French Suite # 5 in G Major, the Franz Joseph Haydn Variations in f minor, the 4 Impromptus, Op. 90 of Franz Schubert, and the 3 Argentinian Dances of Alberto Ginster.

Out of the 100 + solo piano recitals I observed in my life, hers was my favorite program. She had a fluid sense of legato, based on all of the vocalists she listened to. Everything she performed that had a slur under or over it on printed sheet music was cantabile and lyrical. However, she could perform staccato passages with maximum accuracy and velocity as well.

You can bet that the foundational work that she did with her Mom, Marjorie Latzko, her late Dad Walter Latzko, the late Morris Borenstein, the late Mary Ann Covert, and the great Karl Paulnack helped her classical technique to perform in a wide variety of styles, contexts, and combinations in working with vocal and instrumental musicians.

Melanie's sense of absolute pitch was better than mine.

I predict that she will be missed by all who knew her.

To quote Gustav Holst, composer of "The Planets" -

"Heaven is a place where angels sing and keep on singing".

I am sure that she is singing in her own unique voice and playing her favorite keyboard instrument for her Father in heaven right now.

With great hope,

*Alex Marrero, Member
Committee on Cultural Inclusion
College Music Society*

312 East Pine Street
Missoula, Montana 59802

Alex Marrero
Private Teacher
Classical Piano Lessons
Post Office Box 206
Blooming Grove, New York 10914

Alex Marrero - August 09 at 02:53 PM

BS

Thank you for sharing a glimpse into her life of love and music .

bob seda - August 09 at 05:00 PM

RW

“ *I met Melanie at Ithaca College and we instantly became friends. We shared a love for music and pop culture trivia. She had a wonderful sense of humor. Over the years we would sporadically text each other about silly things. Whether it was our shared love of Yankees’ announcers John and Suzyn, or her needling me about a piece of trivia I got wrong decades earlier. I will miss Mel greatly. I already do. That being said, I can’t help but smile when I think of her.*

Rob Wrate - August 09 at 11:17 AM

GD

Mel and I met at Ithaca College. We were both great fans of The Odd Couple. We would quote that show to each other over the next 35 years. Whenever I needed a lift, I would call Mel and she would always make me laugh and smile (no matter what she was dealing with in her personal life). I cannot wrap my head around the fact that she is no longer here. My thoughts and prayers are with Jason and the boys, Marjorie, and Mel’s brothers.

I miss you, Mel. I am sure you have reunited with your father and are both adding a lovely musical touch to Heaven.

Glenn DeCicco - August 09 at 12:40 PM

BH

“ I met Melanie and Jason through business, it was an immediate friendship for the three of us. Melanie was ALWAYS positive, polite and genuine. We would all chat and over the years we laughed many times and cried a few times as well. Melanie always put people first and that is what made her so genuine. During her fight with cancer, she was one of the bravest people I have ever known. The whole Bradley family kept their spirits up with Melanie leading the way. She had a HUGE impact on many people in this area, including this friend who admired her courage. I was amazed by her positive outlook and her way with people. She will be missed. My prayers go out to her family. She will be forever in our hearts and minds.

Bryan Hecksher - August 08 at 04:37 PM

JI

“ Jason,
I am so sorry to hear of the loss of your wife Melanie. It sounds like she lived a full and active life. We will keep you and your family in our thoughts and prayers.

John W. Dean II
Milton, Delaware
USA

John W. Dean II - August 08 at 02:26 PM

SS

“ My dear Margie, Jason, Aaron and Ryan,
Melanie was such a remarkable child of God. Her generous heart and Spirit-blessed music touched so many and will on in our hearts forever. I'm so thankful to have had her in my life.

Sheila Shreck - August 08 at 01:33 PM

AC

“ Jason, Aaron, Ryan and Marge,

Melanie was one of the brightest lights God brought here to bring joy to so many people. All of us are blessed by Melanie's presence in our lives.

All Because of Him...
Allison Culpepper

Allison Culpepper - August 04 at 03:57 PM

TD

“ Jason, Aaron and Ryan I am so sorry for your loss. Melanie was an amazing person. Always with a smile. Please know you are in our thoughts and prayers!



Trish Dickerson - August 01 at 12:06 PM

TP

Hoping you all find strength in the memories of the love shared between you. My deepest sympathy.

Tony Parisi - August 02 at 01:03 PM

DA

You will be missed by many. You where loved by many. R.I.P. lovely lady.

Diane aka Adelaide - August 09 at 06:26 PM