

AUDREY LOEFFLER

May 23, 1927 - July 19, 2023



Audrey Loeffler of O'Hara Twp., beloved wife, mother, and grandmother, crossed into God's Realm on July 19, 2023.

At 96, she was the last of the World War II generation to carry the Loeffler name. Her five children can never repay her for her sacrifice, devotion, and discipline. They take comfort in knowing that she has reunited in heaven with her husband of 59 years, William Loeffler.

They will miss her legendary stubbornness, her dry sense of humor and especially her magnificent singing voice. Audrey was a Contralto-Soprano who could stun audiences with stratospheric, hair-raising renditions of "Ave Maria" and "Panis Angelicus."

"She belted out 'Panis Angelicus' at our wedding and quietly acknowledged the ovation she received at our reception," her son Jim recalls. "Look how humble she is," he remembers his brother Richard saying.

A devoted Catholic, Audrey never lost her faith in God, despite a childhood that was blighted by poverty and the loss of her father when she was not yet six years old. She exemplified the ideals of the Greatest Generation: modesty, duty, and decency.

She upheld these values when her children were growing up in the 1960s, when long hair became a symbol of rebellion, authority was frequently challenged, and the Rolling Stones blared from her sons' bedroom stereos.

"I wouldn't cross the street to see Mick Jagger!" she would say.

A devoted animal lover, Audrey lavished affection on her "sixth child," the family's sable collie named Blaze. And she was a "second mother" to her daughter-in-law, Michelle Haekyung Choo, the wife of her eldest son William. Perhaps Audrey intuitively bonded with another soul who had also endured a painful childhood.

Audrey and Bill never missed a little league game, tennis match or high school play if one of their children were involved. Together, they gave their children something that is all too often taken for granted: a carefree childhood. They fought fiercely to provide their children with a sense of security, regardless of the pressures of marriage and mortgage.

Audrey protected her children any way she had to. Her son Tom recalls an incident from early childhood. He and his brother Bill were playing in their yard when they found themselves under attack by a rampaging French Poodle who had bitten a neighbor girl. Audrey held them close and faced down the animal.

"We knew Mom would have knocked that dog into next week if it came near us," Tom said. "The dog wisely let us alone."

Audrey was prepared to protect her children from God Himself. When meat on Friday was still forbidden under Catholic law, she unthinkingly served her kids chipped ham for lunch. Upon realizing her mistake, she packed Bill, Tom and Richard into the car and drove them to confession at St. Edward Church.

"Tell the priest, 'It's not my fault. My mother made me eat meat,'" she told them.

Yet, Audrey was no friend to her children - she was their mother. She stressed politeness, faith and especially the folly of living beyond one's means.

Audrey's frugality was rooted in fear - she was marked forever by the bleak Dickensian life that she and her widowed mother endured. When she was engaged to Bill and invited to dine at his mother's house, the maid asked her how she would like her roast beef cooked. Audrey did not know what to say. She had never eaten roast beef.

Audrey Edna Foizey was born May 23, 1927, in the Pittsburgh neighborhood of Manchester. She was the only child of Margaretta Kelly, a second-generation immigrant born of Irish parents, and Harry Foizey, a musically inclined laborer whose own parents hailed from the English Channel island of Jersey. Harry and Margaretta wanted their daughter's initials to be the same as the American Expedition Forces.

Following her marriage, Audrey took her mother under her roof and cared for her until her death in 1964. Margaretta's maiden name was given to her granddaughter, Mara Kelly Andrews.

Audrey enjoyed a brief career as a professional singer, taking the stage name Doreen O'Day. She spent two years at Mount Mercy College, which is now known as Carlow University. It was here, while starring in the operetta Naughty Marietta, that she met her husband Bill, a high-spirited self-taught pianist and sailor. Bill was playing the comedic lead.

Throughout their time together, Audrey's hardheaded practicality made her an appropriate foil to Bill's flights of romantic fancy. She was blunt where he was diplomatic, reserved where he was outgoing, pessimistic where he was hopeful.

When Bill took up the cello, Audrey would summon him to dinner by calling "Yo!"

When their daughter Julie asked why, Audrey explained, "When he gets better at the cello, I'll call him Yo Yo (Ma). For now, he only gets one."

Audrey enjoyed playing golf, bargain hunting and anything related to Pittsburgh Sports. In September 1972, she took her children Bill, Tom, and Richard to a Pittsburgh Pirates game at Three Rivers Stadium, where right fielder Roberto Clemente was expected to achieve the historic milestone of his 3,000th career hit. When Clemente blasted a stand-up double, Audrey filmed the action with her super 8 camera.

Later that year, on December 23, the children were playing around the Christmas tree in the family's living room awaiting their parents' return from the Steelers game against the Oakland Raiders. The front door burst open and in came Audrey, raving and shouting like a teenager who had just seen the Beatles. She and Bill had just witnessed the Immaculate Reception.

Audrey is survived by her children William Loeffler (Michelle); Thomas Loeffler (Betsy), Richard Loeffler (Laura), Julie Andrews (Christopher) and Jim Loeffler (Mimi) as well as nine grandchildren: Bryn Jeannette Loeffler, Walker Heyl Loeffler, Mara Kelly Andrews, William Peter Beckmann Andrews and Jane Smith Andrews; Magnus Wilhelm Loeffler, Gunnar Charles Loeffler and Barron Oskar Loeffler; and Liam Albert Parker Loeffler.

There will be no visitation, but Audrey's life will be celebrated with a Catholic mass at 10 a.m. on Saturday, July 29th, at Christ the King Parish, St. Scholastica Church, 309 Brilliant Ave. in Aspinwall. Interment will take place at Calvary Cemetery in Greenfield. Funeral arrangements are by the **WEDDELL-AJAK FUNERAL HOME**, Aspinwall.

In lieu of flowers, her family suggests a donation to Animal Friends at <https://www.thinkingoutsidethecage.org>.

Send condolences [post-gazette.com/gb](https://www.post-gazette.com/gb)