



## Mary Ellen Rohon

February 14, 2025

Mary Ellen Rohon was a modern day Renaissance woman, known and admired for her many committed friendships, her love of family and her enthusiasm for life long learning. She passed away peacefully at the age of 97 in Englewood, NJ from natural causes on Valentine's Day, February 14, 2025. Mary Ellen was born in the Bronx on July 16, 1927. She received her Bachelor's Degree from Hunter College and her Masters from Columbia University, both in early childhood education. She married Paul Rohon in 1965 and after the birth of their son, Thomas Paul Rohon, moved to Englewood. Mary Ellen began her unprecedented career teaching kindergarten and orchestra at PS 105 in the Bronx for several years, before auditioning in 1958 to host a first of its kind children's daytime television show, Fun at One, at the inception of the Educational Television Network. She was a pioneer; writing, producing, and co-starring with her friend Eppy in the show that received an Emmy nomination and was the precursor to PBS's Sesame Street. Mary Ellen retired from television in 1969, to focus on family and her son Thomas, who became the love of her life. She continued to receive adulation throughout her years from the many devoted fans of the show. Mary Ellen was also was a gifted musician, talented in both voice and with instruments. From age 6, when she first played Beethoven on the piano and realized that she had perfect pitch, to her later years performing in both operas and choruses, music was a constant in her life. She was an alto chorister with the Berkshire Choral Festival in Sheffield, Massachusetts, for 12 years and then seamlessly took up singing operatic works with the Verismo Opera in Englewood, acting, singing and loving all aspects of the theater. She'd probably still have been singing into her 90s had Verismo not disbanded, "just in time," she said, for her "retirement." She continued to bestow her beautiful rendition of Happy Birthday upon family and friends till the end. Her tireless support of her son Thomas and all his activities led her to join the Board of New Concepts for Living, an organization dedicated to enriching the lives of adults with special needs through caring and compassionate support within a nurturing environment and promotes independence, growth and inclusion. Mary Ellen was preceded in death by her husband Paul Rohon and her brother John A. Sulek. She is survived by her son Thomas Paul Rohon, her nieces Ellen R. Sulek, Jacqueline Sulek, Sonka Tostrud, grand nieces Sonia and Nicole, and grand nephew Mikael. She is also survived by lifelong friend and

confidant Charlotte Bennett Schoen along with many dear friends, musicians, and educators. Visitation February 19, 2025 from 9:00-11:30 at Barrett Leber Funeral Home 148 Dean Dr. Tenafly, NJ. Funeral Mass 12:00 at St. Cecilia Church 55 West Demarest Ave. Englewood, NJ. In lieu of flowers please send donations to New Concepts for Living.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

FEB **19**. 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

Barrett Leber Funeral Home

148 Dean Dr

Tenafly, NJ 07670

(201) 568-8043

<https://www.barrettleberfuneralhome.com/>

## Funeral Mass

FEB **19**. 12:00 PM (ET)

St Cecilia Church

55 West Demarest Avenue

Englewood, NJ 07631

# Tribute Wall

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“*Mary Ellen was truly my first love, as she was my Kindergarten teacher in 1958. My mom surprised me with her when I was not wanting to go to school, and I instantly fell in love with this wonderful woman! During 1st grade I used to rush home to have lunch and to watch her on "Fun at One" on channel 13. In recent years we had been in touch again and we shared many stories, music and more. She was truly a beacon of light, and will always be my first love! She was the first to have education on TV, and I was the first to offer music education on audio and then video tape. I have to believe it was her influence. She was, and always will be one of the GREATS OF ALL TIME!*

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**arlen roth** - February 19, 2025 at 07:32 PM

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“*Mrs Rohon was a wonderful person and she was like a second mom to me. I remember she would drive me and Tom to the jcc dances in Tenafly and she will always hold a special place in my heart. Sincerely, Aj Stein*

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**Aj Stein** - February 17, 2025 at 04:04 PM