



Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa

May 5, 1915 - February 6, 2013

Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa, age 97, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, February 6, 2013 at the Charles T. Sitrin Health Care Center with her family at her side.

She was born on May 5, 1915, a daughter of the late Francesco and Victoria (Annese) Gianfrate. She was raised in Utica, receiving her education in local schools. On September 21, 1935 she was united in marriage with Francis R. "Frank" Messa, a blessed union of 53 years; they shared in a fun loving and admirable marriage until his passing on July 29, 1988.

Vita retired from the General Electric Company in 1979 after 30 years of service as an assembler. She was a parishioner of St. Agnes Church. Vita was a social and civic minded woman having been a member of the former Daughters of Columbus, the former East Side Senior Center, the American Italian Heritage Association, the Sts. Cosmo and Damiano Society Chapel on Kossuth Ave., the 39ers Social Club, the Walkers Club at St. Elizabeth's Medical Center, the Democratic Women's Working Group, and she also served as a volunteer at the Heritage Home. She was also involved for many years working side-by-side with her husband in many talent and minstrel shows. She assisted her husband in his photography activities and continued this endeavor after his passing at family and social occasions. She was known for her crafts, knitting, and crocheting projects; all of her afghans were made with love and are heirlooms to family and friends.

Vita is survived by her sons and daughters-in-law, Francis R. "Frank" Jr. and

Tracy Messa of CA, and E.J. and Shirley Messa of Frankfort; her daughter and son-in-law, Diana and Michael Youngs of Frankfort; her grandchildren, Russ Forman, Frank and Corey Ritz, Michelle and Mark Hollingshead, Danan and Lyman Christensen, and Michael Youngs, Jr.; and her great-grandchildren, Amberly Forman, Nicholas and Natalie Hollingshead; Sean, Nevada, Ryan, and Cameron Ritz; and Raina and Neia Christensen. Also surviving is Mary Costello, Vita's great-niece who shared a special and loving relationship with Vita forever and a day; and Frank Ferraro, Vita's nephew, who had a warm and gentle presence in her life; many nieces, nephews, great nieces, great nephews, godchildren, cousins, especially Mary Leo, and Nick Martellotto. Also left to remember her are close friends, Lee and Chuck Paul, and Ray and Toni LaComb. She shared precious time with her Australian Cattle dog, "Jorgee". She was predeceased by her sisters and brothers-in-law, Peggy and Frank Kavanaugh, Mary and Peter Graziano; her brother, Cataldo Gianfrate; and her in-laws, Mary and Carl Ferraro, John and Catherine Messa, and Rose and Charles Sullivan, Sr.

A special thank you is extended from Vita's family to Maureen, Bobbi Jo, April, Ruth, Molly, Dexter, Mike, Dawn, Josephine, Dorothy, Shirley, Gina, Heidi, Kim, Shanice, Cornelia, and Ashlee, and all the compassionate caregivers at the Charles T. Sitrin Aspen House. They are truly exceptional people and the family is grateful for the high standards of which they upheld and their loving care. A Special thank you is offered to Rev. Paul J. Drobin for the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, and Father Flanagan for his special blessing.

Visitation will be held on Wednesday from 4-6 at the Eannace Funeral Home, Inc., 932 South St., corner of Hammond Ave. Vita's funeral service and Celebration of Life will commence on Thursday at 10:00 at the funeral home with Fr. James Cesta officiating the ceremony along with the presence of Msgr. Francis Willenburg. In lieu of flowers, contributions in Vita's name may be made to the Sts. Cosmo & Damiano Chapel on Kossuth Ave., or a charity of the donor's choice; envelopes will be available at the funeral home.

Interment will follow in St. Agnes Cemetery graveside.

Cemetery Details

St. Agnes Cemetery

601 Arthur Street
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 732-8588

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 13. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Eannace Funeral Home, Inc.
932 South Street
corner of Hammond Ave.
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 724-6714
eannacefh@roadrunner.com
<https://www.eannacefuneralhome.com>

Service

FEB 14. 10:00 AM (ET)

Eannace Funeral Home, Inc.
932 South Street
corner of Hammond Ave.
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 724-6714
eannacefh@roadrunner.com
<https://www.eannacefuneralhome.com>

Tribute Wall



“ Eannace Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa



Eannace Funeral Home, Inc. - February 06, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Mykee Youngs lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa



Mykee Youngs - March 02, 2013 at 11:21 AM



I finally could survive coming here and reading all the wonderful things about my grandmother. It's amazing to know how many peoples lives she touched and how much she will be missed. I'm still trying to cope with her loss she was not only my grandma she was my ultimate best friend and I feel so lost without her. I know she's watching me and guiding me in life more than ever now. I love you Vita Rita!!!!!!

Mykee Youngs - March 02, 2013 at 11:26 AM

DL

“ Perhaps they are not the stars, but rather openings in Heaven where the love of our lost ones pours through and shines down upon us to let us know that they are happy. -Author Unknown
God Bless You both Vita and Frank and thank you for all those beautiful moments you shared with my family. Although I found out too late to see you, my love goes with you. Love Always Donald and Frances Leo and Family's.

Don Leo - February 17, 2013 at 09:09 AM

FL

“ Very sorry to hear of Vita's passing. We lived across the street from Vita for over 12 years. She was the kindness woman and always kept an eye on things (and the kids) for me. My daughter loved going over and sitting on the porch with her and talking. She will be missed, but the heavens definitely received a special angel.

Fran Laufer - February 14, 2013 at 08:38 AM

JJ

“ You brought light wherever you went and to all you touched. Your journey continues, your legacy is immortal and we are all elevated for having known you.



Jake, Kathy, Jillian & Catherine Jacobson

Jake Jacobson - February 13, 2013 at 05:51 PM

AD

“ We will cherish always the memories you help create in the Minstrel shows you and 'Uncle' Frank produced and we had the honor of joining you . Love you 'Aunt' Vita .
Addie (Scerbo) Forrester, Frances & Guy Scerbo.

Addie - February 13, 2013 at 02:29 PM

DF

“ Dawn H. Farrar lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa



Dawn H. Farrar - February 13, 2013 at 07:20 AM

DF

“ I love you Vita! Thank you for being such a special part of my life! I will always think of you and your wisdom and kindness. You are such a true blessing.

Dawn H. Farrar - February 13, 2013 at 07:19 AM

DC

“ Danan Christensen lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa



Danan Christensen - February 12, 2013 at 08:57 PM

MM

“ To all the Messa's and Youngs family.....friends we will be forever.....she is safe from harm, she needed to rest....."do what's in your heart" she used to say...I loved all the "shows", and Christmas will never be the same without Frank. She is with him now and they are forever young! Be in peace Vita-you will always be with us.

Maryann

Maryann Moore - February 12, 2013 at 01:25 PM

TR

“ Terry And Francine Roberts lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa



terry and francine roberts - February 12, 2013 at 08:02 AM

JK

“ We will always remember Aunt Vita's vitality, generosity and loving spirit. She brought greatness to the greatest generation. Please accept our deepest condolences. Love, John and Debby Klein

John and Debra Klein - February 11, 2013 at 08:42 PM

JJ

“ Jake Jacobson lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa



Jake Jacobson - February 11, 2013 at 04:17 PM

MC

“ *My Dearest Aunt Vita (my 2nd Mom...Grandmother...Forever Friend)*

What she would want all of us to remember.....

All those who she loved & all those who loved her.....and love her still :

"I give you this one thought to keep~

I am with you still ~ I do not sleep.

I am a thousand winds that blow,

I am the diamond glints on snow,

I am the sunlight on ripened grain,

I am the gentle autumn rain.

When you awaken in the morning's hush,

I am the swift, uplifting rush

of quiet birds in circled flight,

I am the soft stars that shine at night.

Do not think of me as gone ~

I am with you still ~ in each new dawn. "

~ Native American Prayer

Rest in peace our sweet loving Guardian Angel.....I'm sure you are dancing with your love as I write...May God bring His Healing Light to all those hearts who were touch by her love....we are all grateful for whatever you shared with us....for the countless memories we will cherish! Will Love you....."Forever and a day"....."Forever and a day"

????? PEACE & LIGHT & LOVE ?????? , Mary & Ralph Costello

Mary Costello - February 11, 2013 at 09:10 AM

MC

“ *Mary Costello lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa*



Mary Costello - February 11, 2013 at 09:07 AM

MH

“ *Michelle & Mark Hollingshead lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa*



Michelle & Mark Hollingshead - February 10, 2013 at 07:38 PM

FM

“ *Frank Messa lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa*



Frank Messa - February 10, 2013 at 03:15 PM

RN

“ *Raina & Neia lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa*



Raina & Neia - February 10, 2013 at 03:07 PM

DY

“ *Diana Youngs lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa*



Diana Youngs - February 10, 2013 at 02:49 PM

E.

“ *E.J.Messa lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa*



E.J.Messa - February 10, 2013 at 02:35 PM

AT

“ *Angela Paul Tiffany lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa*



Angela Paul Tiffany - February 10, 2013 at 08:37 AM

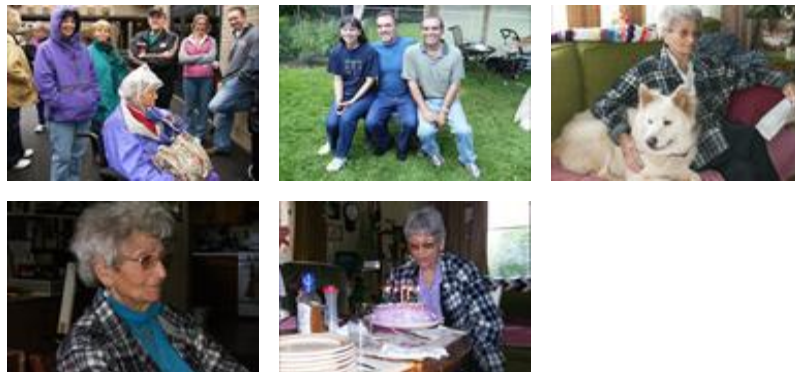
AT

“ *Aunt Vita rest in peace. I will always remember stopping over after classes at MVCC for a visit whenever you were outside! Doug remembers you dancing with him at our wedding for the dollar dance. You didn't want to let anyone else cut in! Give Uncle Frank a kiss for me. Lots of love.....Angela Paul Tiffany*

Angela Paul Tiffany - February 10, 2013 at 08:36 AM

EM

“ 18 files added to the album *New Album Name*



E.J.& Shirley Messa - February 09, 2013 at 05:04 PM

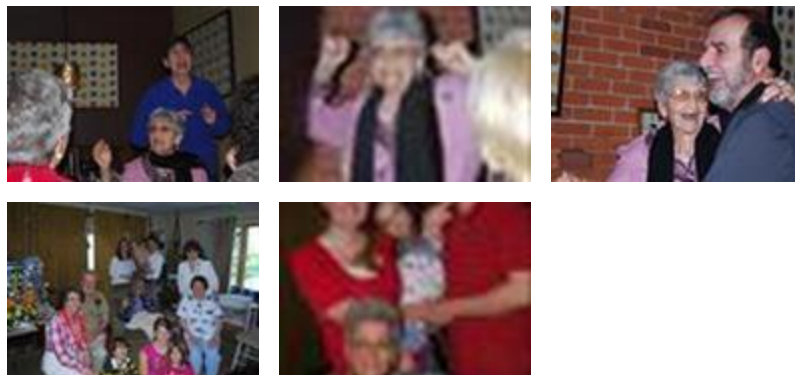
DB

“ *Jim and I will always be grateful for having Vita in our lives - such a wonderful woman so full of love and joy! Love and prayers to Frank, EJ and Diana.*

Donna Martellotto Boyce - February 09, 2013 at 03:24 PM

DB

“ 8 files added to the tribute wall



Donna Martellotto Boyce - February 09, 2013 at 02:50 PM

DO

“ 26 files added to the album *Family*



Donna - February 09, 2013 at 02:43 PM

SJ

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



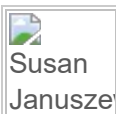
Susan Martellotto Januszewski - February 09, 2013 at 07:35 AM

SJ

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



Susan Martellotto Januszewski - February 09, 2013 at 07:18 AM



Drove from South Dakota to see Vita!

Susan Januszewski - February 09, 2013 at 07:54 AM

FM

“ 14 files added to the album *Family*



Frank Messa - February 09, 2013 at 12:57 AM

DC

“ 6 files added to the album *New Album Name*



Danan M Christensen - February 08, 2013 at 09:49 PM

JL

“ Frank, Earle and Diana, I'm sorry about your Mom. I'm blessed to have called Aunt Vita my Godmother, and we had a very special relationship my whole life. She was my Dad's first cousin, but they were as close as siblings. Our families shared unforgettable family reunions and celebrations, the best ones with lots of singing and laughter. There were fantastic annual Lake Delta Summer reunions, Cousins' Christmas parties, her big birthday parties under her backyard tent and big birthday and retirement parties at places like Chesterfields.

She was a renaissance woman with many talents. Sunday morning visits, I would see her preparing sauce for her family gatherings. And she was always working on a drawing, photography or afghan knitting project.

She also had a knack for raising dogs. In recent years, Aunt Vita enjoyed visits with my dog Jessie, and advised me on how to dog train my first pet.

I was always in awe of her and my Godfather Uncle Frank's dynamic chemistry.

Right now I'm thinking about her and Uncle Frank doing a very entertaining dance across Utica's former Milo's Cabaret in a night out with my parents, brothers and sisters in the 1980s. They were a couple that I admired. And I'm glad they're reunited now, along with my Dad and many other relatives.

I will cherish my countless memories. And I'm wearing slippers she knit me on this snowy Winter night.

-Jerry Leo

Jerry Leo - February 08, 2013 at 08:04 PM

JR

“ Frank, Earle and Diana, I am so very sorry to hear of your mom's passing. She was my mother-in-law for a short time in my life, but I called her friend, for most of my life. I always enjoyed visiting with her, when I went to Utica.

I love you, Vita, and I will miss you!

Joan Ritz

Joan Ritz - February 08, 2013 at 04:29 PM

JM

“ Vita was full of life & love ...she shared herself with so many people, all of whom will miss her dearly. Frank & Vita are probably already in rehearsal for the heavenly variety shows they will be producing for eternity. Thanks for being such an important part of my life...I've been lucky to be a part of her family! My love, prayers, & thoughts go to Frank, EJ, & Diana. My memories will live on....and so will her music....

Janet Martellotto-Streeper

Janet Martellotto-Streeper - February 08, 2013 at 03:48 PM

AH

“ She will truly be missed....I made every effort to visit her on each of my trips to Utica. She made my family always feel welcomed! When you were with her..you KNEW you were family. RIP Vita, love you...

Annette Martellotto Hawkins - February 08, 2013 at 03:23 PM

JP

“ Dear Ones,

Aunt Vita brought joy and love to all. She made me feel special and shared her wisdom on life and love freely. I only wish I spent more time with her and asked her more questions about family history. She had so much to give. She had a long life and we were better for it. My prayers and thoughts are with you all. God Bless You! Jackie Paskert (Klein)

Jackie Paskert - February 08, 2013 at 08:20 AM

HJ

“ Heidi Joynt lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa



Heidi Joynt - February 08, 2013 at 03:57 AM

HJ

“ Our condolences to vitas family at this difficult time...she was a joy to work with and brought many smiles to the faces of the 11 to 7 staff here at Sitrin (Aspen cottage)...she used to call us here angels :) she will be missed but never forgotten. Love Always Heidi (cna), Elly (lpn) & shanice (cna)

Heidi Joynt - February 08, 2013 at 03:56 AM

MC

“ *Maureen & Martin Cohen sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa*



Maureen & Martin Cohen - February 07, 2013 at 08:27 PM

MC

Vita's love for all will always be remembered. Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this time...

Maureen & Martin Cohen - February 07, 2013 at 08:30 PM

DI

“ *Deborah & John Ingersoll lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Vita (Gianfrate) Messa*



deborah & john ingersoll - February 07, 2013 at 08:18 PM

DI

Our thoughts and prayers to aunt Vita's family.

deborah & john ingersoll - February 07, 2013 at 08:20 PM

DI

My memory of your will be remembered always when I look at my slippers. You were a wonderful lady. God Bless Diane Wosczyzna

Diane - February 08, 2013 at 01:14 PM

TR

my memory of you will always be in my heart .you were the best aunt and godmother a girl could ask for. you always treated terry with love. you always called him your honey. we will miss you dearly. say hi uncle frank grandma mary , grandpa carl , mom and alberta for us.

*love always,
terry and francine roberts*

terry and francine roberts - February 12, 2013 at 08:01 AM