



## James Bieri

June 13, 1927 - April 18, 2025

James (Jim) Bieri, age 97, died peacefully at home in Austin, TX. By his side was his loving wife and companion of 46 years, Sandra (Sandi) Joseph Bieri. Jim was a retired professor of clinical psychology and literature at the University of Texas at Austin. His crowning life achievement, after decades of research in England and Italy, is his acclaimed biography of the Romantic poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Jim was born June 13, 1927 to Elsie Genther Bieri and Vice Admiral Bernhard H. Bieri in what was then Walter Reed General Hospital in Washington, D.C. The youngest of five brothers (and his mother's last hope for a daughter), Jim excelled at his studies and at playing classical piano, which he kept up his entire life. As the son of a naval officer, Jim spent formative years in Newport, RI; Long Beach, CA; and Washington, D.C.

At age 14, Jim was living in Honolulu with his mother and next-older brother Robert when Japanese planes bombed Pearl Harbor. Fortunately his father was out at sea at the time commanding a Navy ship and was not injured. Jim often recounted his eyewitness memories of this pivotal life event, calling it "the end of innocence."

Jim enlisted in the Navy after graduating from Woodrow Wilson (now Jackson-Reed) High School in Washington, D.C. When the war ended, he attended

Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, on the GI Bill, graduating in 1950, and earned his PhD in psychology at The Ohio State University in 1953. His first teaching job in psychology after leaving Ohio was at Harvard University; he went on to teach at Columbia University, Brooklyn College, and the University of Texas at Austin. Mid-career, Jim spent a year receiving advanced training in psychotherapy at Baylor College of Medicine; he opened a psychotherapy practice in Austin.

Jim Bieri was a thinker, reader, and progressive Democrat. He had a sharp wit and relished a good joke—and his nightly gin cocktail. His children enjoyed his spirit of adventure while camping and hiking on long family road trips, and he imparted his opinions on poetry, politics, fine arts, and fine food with gusto.

Inveterate travelers, Jim and Sandi visited five continents, with many trips to their beloved Italy, the British Isles, and France. In recent years, they traded foreign travels for extended visits to Santa Fe. They spent many years living in the D.C. area, where Sandi served as president of the Woman's National Democratic Club, before returning to Austin to be closer to family.

Jim is predeceased by his four brothers and his former wife, Janet Wood Bieri. In addition to Sandi, Jim is survived by the three children from his first marriage: Eric Bieri (Tammy) of Austin, TX; Ann Bieri (John Fleming) of Seattle, WA; and Lynn Bieri of St. Paul, MN. Jim's grandchildren are: Sarah, Kevin, Ne, Maude, Evan, Brendan, Jana, and Daniel; and great-grandchildren Elsie, Sam, and Tommy.

Jim also embraced the four children from Sandi's first marriage: Jeannie K. Hilsabeck (Guy), Richard Kocurek, Scott Kocurek (Michelle), and Karen Kocurek-Lindner (Edward). Many nieces and nephews and their children also survive Jim; he enjoyed visits in recent years from nieces Nancy and Phyllis. Jim will be greatly missed by many.

Life may change, but it may fly not / Hope may vanish, but can die not / Truth  
be veiled, but still it burneth...

—from Prometheus Unbound, by P.B. Shelley

If you wish to honor Jim's memory, please consider a donation to the Austin  
Classical Guitar Education Fund. <https://austinclassicalguitar.org/support/#make-a-gift>