

Friedel, Hochstadter

Eulogy by Aaron Oshry on August 8th, 2011

Friedel Hochstadter was born in Mannheim Germany on January ~~10~~⁵th 1910, 101 years ago.

Her maiden name was Hamburger.

In the late 1920's and in Mannheim she met Julius Hochstädter. Thanks to the Nazis he emigrated to Johannesburg South Africa and in about 1935 she followed him there and they were soon married.

At first she spoke only German. Can you imagine what it must have been like for her to move to deepest darkest Africa where English was spoken, with no language, different peoples and customs, a new husband and a totally strange life ? From what I have heard not one word of complaint !

Julius flourished in the brick making business and so did the marriage. They were joined in their home by Julius parents, who spoke only German. That by the way is where Jean learnt to speak Deutch.

Friedel's father Simon had perished in a German camp in De Gurs France, to which many German Jews had been transported. At the end of the war her mother went to family in the US where she soon died as a result of the aftereffects of the Camp.

Soon they had a child who died in infancy, followed by another son Stanley, who was killed in 1961 in a motor vehicle accident when he was at medical school in Cape Town South Africa. He was 20 years old. I was at his funeral in 1961, likely with an eye for Jean, and can attest to the tremendous anguish it caused Friedel, Julius, Jean and all concerned.

Friedel's mother in law had died in 1948 , and her father in law died in 1962 a year after Stanley's death, no doubt in part as a result thereof. Again not a word of complaint!

As can be expected Stanley's death had a profound effect on Friedel and on Julius and I believe eventually led to Julius having a heart attack and subsequently passing away in 1979. Friedel soldiered on ! Jean and I had

immigrated to Canada, Friedel was on her own until 1986 when she emigrated yet again this time from South Africa to Canada to be with her only child Jean, and the family. She lived on her own in Victoria Plaza which she maintained herself until a year ago. She loved the condo and was not bothered by the bad winters. Friedel spent many happy hours at the Jewish Seniors Drop- in Center where amongst other things she ruled the front door with an iron fist and made sure that anyone coming in paid what they were obliged to. When she stopped working the front door they had to replace her with 2 people who had trouble coping.

She played bridge at the Centre, made friends participated in activities, and was a regular attendee there until about a year ago. She had lots of experience with seniors ! In South Africa for many years she had been on the Board and an active participant on a daily basis at Our Parents Home, a wonderful and large Seniors Residence originally started by and for German jews in which many older jewish people lived out their last years. The home still exists.

She was a bridge fanatic, loved to travel [and as recently as when she was in her 90's..... no problem] , off she went on her own on a trip to India.

She was a wonderful baker and many will tell you of her speciality, a Pesachdike nut cake . She ground the nuts herself by hand, she made many for all the family at Yomteivim, and she steadfastly had no recipe and refused to share with any one the method of making such a work of art. Friedel was not a shul goer, but was a deeply religious woman and I can attest to seeing her on a Jewish Holiday davening at home alone from a very old Siddur. She was small in stature but big in personality. She was feisty and combatative and unafraid to speak her mind right up to the moment she drew her last breath. She was highly intelligent and ran her own finances until just a few months ago. She was not shy to dispense advice in her German accent, more often than not excellent in nature.

I have spoken of Friedel's hardships and should include that she did have some health problems over the last little while. I should add 2 world wars, hyperinflation in Germany at the end on the WW 1and the hardships

created thereby. HOWEVER I cannot emphasize strongly enough that despite all of the tremendous hardships, AND the massive problems in immigrating not once but twice, not once in the 50 years or so that I knew her, [and I saw her often], did I hear one word of complaint. On the contrary she was happy with her lot in life. In Edmonton she had a busy social life. She had a great condo which she maintained meticulously and spotlessly. She liked to eat a large chocolate a day..true! and she would happily demolish every piece of cake and pastry that was available.

She was surrounded by a loving and caring daughter, grandchildren and great grandchildren who she saw often and whom she loved, and they in return loved her and enjoyed seeing and talking to her in Edmonton and on the many holidays the family spent together. I had a special relationship with her, both of us being somewhat combative.

She passed away at the end peacefully in grace and with dignity. She had the good fortune, no doubt because of her relationship with them, to constantly be surrounded, including during her last hours on Earth, by

her loving and deeply devoted daughter Jean and by her 3 grandchildren, their spouses and her 6 great grand children. They and I will miss her. Of how many people can you say that ?

In conclusion on behalf of our family we would like to thank Dr. Harvey Sternberg for his care and compassion over the decades and especially during the last few weeks, and we also the staff at Canterbury Court, and especially the fantastic nursing staff there for their wonderful care and compassion