

**EULOGY for JOYCE CONSTANCE GOLDFORD Oct. 31, 1928 - Jan.24, 2011**

MANY OF YOU ARE HERE TODAY BECAUSE OF MY BROTHER HOWIE...YOU PROBABLY NEVER KNEW MY MOM THE WAY THAT WE DID BUT SO MUCH OF WHAT HOWIE IS TODAY AND THE CHOICES HE HAS MADE IN LIFE ARE DUE IN LARGE PART TO MY MOM - THE KIND OF PERSON SHE WAS AND THE INCREDIBLE IMPACT SHE HAD ON OUR LIVES.

MOM WAS A **SMALL WOMAN**...IN STATURE...BUT SHE PLAYED A **HUGE PART** IN OUR LIVES AND IN MAKING US THE KIND OF PEOPLE WE ARE TODAY.

IF I CAN TAKE YOU BACK TO SIMPLER TIME; BACK BEFORE SEATBELTS AND BIKE HELMETS; WAY BEFORE AIRPORT SECURITY AND SOCIAL MEDIA - WE THREE KIDS CAME INTO THIS WORLD.

MY DAD HAD BROUGHT A VERY NERVOUS YOUNG WIFE TO ST. CATHARINES ONTARIO - AWAY FROM THE COMFORT AND FAMILIARITY OF HER BIG CITY JEWISH ROOTS. THERE, THEY STARTED A BUSINESS, A FAMILY, MADE FRIENDS, GOT INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY, MADE A FULL AND PROSPEROUS LIFE FOR THEMSELVES.

HOWIE, ELLEN AND I HAD A **TYPICAL IDYLIC BABY BOOMER CHILDHOOD**:

- LOTS OF KIDS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD;
- DAD AT WORK/MOM AT HOME;
- INTACT FAMILIES (JUST IMAGINE!)
- FAMILY VISITS TO AND FROM TORONTO AND MONTREAL;
- PET DOGS, GUINEA PIGS, TURTLES AND FISH;
- WE WALKED TO AND FROM SCHOOL (UNATTENDED)
- MOM CHAUFFERED US TO DANCE LESSONS, HEBREW SCHOOL, BROWNIES AND CUBS, AND MODELLING SCHOOL
- WHEN WE WERE BAD WE GOT OUR MOUTHS WASHED OUT WITH SOAP OR, IN MY CASE...GROUNDED
- MOM AND DAD ATTENDED EVERY EVENT (THE SPECIAL AND NOT SO SPECIAL) WE EVER HAD.

MOM WAS **JUNE CLEAVER, JULIA CHILD, DORIS DAY AND LIZ TAYLOR** ALL ROLLED UP INTO ONE. AND BELIEVE IT OR NOT - HOWIE AND I WERE NOT ANGELS. I TESTED EVERY BOUNDARY EVER SET FOR ME...AND HOWIE WAS PAINFULLY SHY - HARD AS IT IS TO BELIEVE NOW.

MOM AND DAD WERE A 'TEAM'. THEY NEVER FOUGHT IN FRONT OF US. AMAZING... THEY TOOK TROPICAL VACATIONS AND CAME BACK RELAXED AND BRONZED FROM THE SUN. THEY DRESSED UP ON HALLOWE'EN AND CELEBRATED EVERY HOLIDAY - JEWISH AND SECULAR.

MOM WAS A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN. A FLAMING REDHEAD, SHE WAS ALWAYS FASHIONABLY ATTIRED AND RADIATED WARMTH FROM THE INSIDE OUT. PEOPLE BACK HOME STILL COMMENT ABOUT HER IN THIS WAY. I REMEMBER A TIME WHEN, TRYING TO EMULATE HER FASHION SENSE, I THREW ON EVERYTHING THAT WAS IN VOGUE - DESERT BOOTS, MISMATCHED CRANBERRY SKIRT AND SWEATSHIRT TOPPED OFF WITH A SAILOR'S CAP - SHE WAS MORTIFIED THAT I WOULD ACTUALLY LEAVE THE HOUSE IN THAT GET-UP. IMAGINE HER DELIGHT WHEN ELLEN, HER YOUNGEST TURNED OUT TO HAVE NATURALLY ACQUIRED THE FASHION GENE.

AND IN MY SISTER'S LIFE, BECAUSE SHE WAS BORN ALMOST SEVEN YEARS AFTER ME - AND GREW UP AT A TIME WHEN RETAIL WAS 12/7 FOR DAD AND MOM WORKED PART-TIME, SHE ENJOYED A SPECIAL BOND WITH MOM - A CONFIDENCE AND CLOSENESS THAT WAS TO LAST FOR YEARS TO COME.

## **MOM WAS SO MANY THINGS TO SO MANY PEOPLE.**

A **BUSINESSWOMAN** - SHE STARTED OUT IN RETAIL WITH MY DAD BACK IN THE DAYS WHEN SHOE STORE DECOR CONSISTED OF HAVING EVERY BOX OF SHOES LINING THE WALLS; BACK WHEN ONE COULDN'T BUY A PAIR OF SHOES WITHOUT HANDBANG TO MATCH. IN BUSINESS, DAD WAS THE LEFT BRAIN AND MOM - THE RIGHT. SHE BROUGHT FASHION SAVVY AND FLARE. VOGUE SHOES WENT FROM SHOES WITH PURSES TO MATCH - TO SHOES, BAGS, SCARVES, COSTUME JEWELRY, LUGGAGE AND JOYCE. WHEN THEY CLOSED THE BUSINESS AFTER 47 YEARS, MOM LASTED 4 MONTHS IN RETIREMENT WITH DAD AT HOME BEFORE CHOOSING TO GO BACK INTO BUSINESS ON HER OWN AT VOGUE ETC. SHE WAS A VERITABLE FASHION ICON WHO LEFT AN INDELIBLE MARK ON ST. CATHARINES COUTURE.

AN **EXTENDED MOM** TO MORE THAN JUST HOWIE AND ELLEN AND ME. SHE AND DAD OPENED OUR HOME TO OUR PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER - JULIA - TO EXTENDED FAMILY AND FRIENDS - TO SOME PRETTY CUTE AZA BILLETS, AND TO ROTARY EXCHANGE STUDENTS - DEIDRE FROM AUSTRALIA, KAZI FROM JAPAN, ORIETTA FROM BOLIVIA AND FATIMA FROM BRAZIL - AND OF COURSE COUNTLESS POOL PARTIES, BBQS AND SLEEP OVERS.

AN **INCREDIBLE COOK** - MOM MADE THE BEST CHOCOLATE CHIP COFFEE CAKE EVER! THAT ALONG WITH SUPER DELICIOUS MEALS EVERY NIGHT OF THE WEEK (EXCEPT THURSDAY NIGHTS WHEN WITH DAD WAS WORKING, SHE DOWNGRADED TO FISH STICKS AND SALMON PATTIES). WE ATE EVERY BREAKFAST AND DINNER TOGETHER AS A FAMILY AND I RECALL THAT WE WERE FORBIDDEN TO PICK UP A FORK OR KNIFE BEFORE MOM HAD SAT DOWN WITH US AT THE TABLE. IT WAS LESS ABOUT 'RULES' AS IT WAS A **CODE OF HONOUR** THAT DAD INSISTED WE FOLLOW IN DEFERENCE TO MOM'S HARD WORK AND CREATIVE EFFORTS IN THE KITCHEN.

AN **ARTIST** - FOR AWHILE MOM PAINTED AND POTTERED. I THINK IT WAS HER OWN FORM OF ESCAPE - A SPECIAL KIND OF THERAPY - AND SHE WAS PRETTY GOOD AT IT.

A **CARING FRIEND** - MOM WAS ALWAYS THERE FOR HER FRIENDS - COOKING FOR SIMCHAS; PLAYING MAH JONG WITH THE GIRLS; ORGANIZING THE SHUL'S RECOGNITION CALENDAR AND SOCIAL EVENTS; HOSTING AND ATTENDING CELEBRATIONS. SHARING PEOPLE'S TRIUMPHS AND TRIBULATIONS - ALWAYS THERE TO LEND A REASSURING WORD OR A HELPING HAND.

A **LOVING FAMILY MEMBER** - MOM WAS THE OLDEST AND ONLY DAUGHTER OF THREE CHILDREN BORN TO ALEX AND ESSIE SWEIG. IN THE EARLY DAYS, WE VISITED OUR GRANDPARENTS REGULARLY AND ALWAYS CALLED EVERY WEEK - YES, EVEN WITH OUTRAGEOUS LONG DISTANCE CHARGES AND NO INTERNET. WE SPENT QUALITY TIME WITH AUNTS AND UNCLES, AND FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD COUSINS. MOM HAD A LARGE EXTENDED FAMILY WITH SOME VERY STRANGE CHARACTERS AND A BIT OF A CHECKERED PAST. BEING ONE OF THE OLDEST AND MORE NORMAL COUSINS, MOM PLAYED A CENTRAL AND STABILIZING ROLE.

A **FIRST MATE** - MORE THAN ANYTHING IN HER LIFE; MOM WAS A SELFLESS AND LOVING COMPANION TO MY DAD. FOR OVER 60 YEARS, THEIR'S WAS A UNION THAT EMBODIED EVERYTHING TWO PEOPLE COULD EVER WANT - PARTNERSHIP, PASSION, COMMITMENT, ADVENTURE, ROMANCE, COMPASSION, MUTUAL RESPECT AND DEVOTION. THEY WORKED TOGETHER, PLAYED TOGETHER, TRAVELLED, SAILED, SHARED EVERY SINGLE SIGNIFICANT EVENT IN THEIR MARRIED LIVES. TOGETHER THEY HAD US AND FROM THERE - EIGHT BEAUTIFUL, TALENTED AND CARING GRANDCHILDREN AND FOUR GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN (SO FAR) WHO SHOW THE SAME PROMISE AS THEIR INCREDIBLE AUNTS AND UNCLES. **A LEGACY OF LOVE FOR YEARS TO COME.**

IN EVERYTHING SHE DID, MOM DID IT WITH HUMILITY AND KINDNESS - ALWAYS A CONCERN FOR THE UNDERDOG. SHE NEVER HAD A BAD WORD TO SAY ABOUT ANYBODY - SHE PUT EVERYONE AHEAD OF HERSELF; RARELY IF EVER IMPOSING HER OWN NEEDS BEFORE THOSE OF OTHERS.

I ALWAYS SAID THAT 'MY MOTHER'S LIGHT SHONE FROM WITHIN' - A LIGHT THAT TOUCHED SO MANY PEOPLE OVER HER LIFETIME - HER RADIANT SMILE, INFECTIOUS LAUGH, GLOWING PRIDE. SHE WAS A BEACON IN TROUBLED TIMES - A PROFOUND INFLUENCE CASTING A SHINING LIGHT WELL BEYOND HER PETITE AND DEMURE FRAME. FOR DAD, HOWIE, ELLEN AND ME (AND OTHERS WHO KNEW AND LOVED HER) - **THAT LIGHT WILL NEVER BE EXTINGUISHED.**

ON SATURDAY PAST, I WATCHED AS MOM, FRAIL AND WEAK, LOOKED UP INTO MY FATHER'S EYES AS IF TO SAY - "IT'S OKAY GEORGE...IT'S TIME".

YOU WAITED FOR US, EVEN IN YOUR FINAL HOURS, TO BE THERE TO SAY GOOD-BYE.

HOW REMARKABLE YOU WERE MOM...HOW VERY LUCKY WE WERE TO BE A PART OF YOUR LIFE!