



One of my earlier memories of my mom Milly was a holiday at the Banff Springs hotel when I was five or six. She was poised on the diving board and , in one fluid motion, she dove into the water in a perfect swan dive. Her broad shoulders, narrow waist and slim hips were made for diving. She had the natural grace of a born athlete and she dazzled me.

That same natural ability was evident on the golf course. Taught by her two adored older brothers, Danny and Freddie, Milly played the game with ease, winning the Jr. Alberta Championship at the age of sixteen. She continued to play throughout her life adding other titles and trophies until her macular degeneration forced her to

quit in her late seventies.

What really defined mom was her love of and devotion to her darling Henry. He was the love of her life. As simple as that. If Henry was the centre around whom we all moved, mom was his steadying partner, the one who made it all possible. She raised four children, cooking, driving and prodding us to do our homework, to be the best we could be and to move into the world with confidence, knowing we had her unstinting love and support. She was nonjudgmental and endlessly supportive.

Mildred Podersky was born January 21st 1922. Her dad , Louis, ran Podersky Furniture and her mother, Anne ran the house and the community. Millie's childhood was a happy one, spent tagging along with her two adored older brothers, Danny and Freddie. She attended Oliver and Garneau schools.

And then, at 18, Millie travelled to New York to study as an interior designer but three months later she came home because she missed Henry who had been courting her despite her parents' concerns (he was not only older but a Jazz musician!) Millie and

Henry were married March 2nd, 1941. I was born a year later. When Henry joined the Air force, Millie ran a children's store, the Trudy Gay Shop. Henry came home and shortly after, I was joined by Danny, Fred and Trig.

The joy of Millie's early years when, as she joked, she played Kate Hepburn to Henry's Spencer Tracy, were happy times, raising the kids, working in the community and travelling the world. Our home was filled with parties, celebrities who found their way to Dad's store, friends of all of us kids and spontaneous dinners for anyone who was there as dinner time rolled around.

These joyful times gave way to the darker days that marked the second chapter of mom's life.

In 1980, at the too- young age of 68, dad died and mom was left rudderless and achingly alone. She fled to her beloved golf course, often remarking that it saved her life in those early days after dad's death.

She was just learning to move into the world again, traveling to the far east on cruises with her friend Linda Hardy and again with her brother Danny and his wife Lil. She visited her grandchildren and spent happy winters in Hawaii.

Then the second blow befell Millie. She developed Macular Degeneration, robbing her of the ability to drive and to read. Gradually, she stopped going to large social gatherings because she couldn't recognize people. Her world was shrinking.

One of the saddest things mom ever said to me was " first I lost my Henry and then I lost myself."

In spite of her diminished eyesight, mom remained fiercely, stubbornly, wonderfully independent. She had her helper Theresa, who gradually assumed more and more responsibility until she became her main caregiver, friend and confidante in her last years. I can honestly say that , through sheer will and a firm belief in mom's innate strength of character and determination, Theresa kept mom alive longer than we imagined possible. Theresa we owe you an enormous debt of thanks. Her final months were made comfortable and happy by her amazing and dedicated caregivers, Theresa, Nancy, Melissa, Mel, Ashley and Desiree. Thank you all.

Life won't be the same for our family with mom gone. She maintained deep, caring and supportive relationships,with each child and grandchild. Each of us will miss her dearly. Tisha summed up our feelings most perfectly when she said " we have all lost our best fan!"

When I used to go with mom to Hawaii each year to help her set up for the season, we would go out on her balcony overlooking the ocean and look up at the stars. " I know it's silly" she'd say, " but one of those stars is Henry".

And now, when I look up at the stars on a clear crisp night, we can see another star. And Millie is finally with her Henry.