

# **Tribute to Grandma from a Grandson**

## ***...for all her Grandchildren***

It was difficult to determine where to start with what I want to say. Today I am adding to our collective memories from my perspective, that of a Grandson, and more generally, all Grandma's Grandchildren.

My first memories of Grandma, and I am sure most of the Grandchildren's, were of school holidays spent at Huskisson. Having had two kids of my own, I did not appreciate then, what I know now. Obviously my Grandmother had balls of steel or was completely crazy! Having all those kids out there, for that length of time, *every* Christmas holidays. In all honesty you would be hard pushed to find any Grandmother, anywhere that would attempt the same feat then, or now!

My brother, David being the eldest of the brood brought with it a unique relationship with "The Grandma", as he was bestowed much of the responsibility of ensuring we all made it back alive. In his words:

*Yes, I got the "Now David make sure..."... I have no idea what I am doing here really... But yeah sure Grandma, I will make sure that no one drowns, gets lost, doesn't throw rocks and so on (there was many more "so ons..."). Yes the lectures were long.*

But after all that Grandma still gave us wings to fly. As we grew up, and went further and further afield, she had the courage to allow us to do so. Although, I am sure she drank heavily and smoked a whole packet while we were gone some days. She would not dare show it when we returned though. She handled so many kids with expertise, grace, kindness and poise we all know she possessed.

Not only did Grandma give us a long leash – which we all loved her for, she handled the daily routine the same way. Morning, lunch and dinner, showers, baths and bed all done with the precision and grace of a ballet dancer and the authority of a sergeant major, no one dared to cross. If you did, you only did it once.

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She would also joke about one more kid in addition to us, as Granddad sat on the sidelines chuckling quietly. Sometimes he encouraged the very things which drove Grandma around the bend. However the sergeant at arms you didn't cross either!

In all this Grandma was forming some of our strongest, most vivid, and fondest childhood memories. We look back on every new experience, each life lesson, all the fun times, and remember it like it was yesterday. For that we are ever grateful, and she leaves a hard act for any of us to follow with our own children and eventual grandchildren.

We grew up knowing Grandma was not only a “Grandma” but a highly respected professional and business woman. We remain proud of that, and she set the bar high for others to follow. This professionalism and dedication flowed through into much of her life and she had high expectations of everyone. Her expectations are something I am more than happy to deliver, and I trust that I and all of us (the “Grandkids”) have made her proud.

I remember that Grandma taught us how to be “proper”. She insisted on the highest of manners at her table and to each other. Some evening meals were high tea at Grandmas house. However, this was all part of who she was, which she felt responsible to pass onto us. She was a wealth of knowledge as to how one should conduct oneself in public. Grandma was also my second “go-to” person when I needed help cooking, after I left home. You could always count on Grandma to help you rescue the Spag Bol or Beef Stroganoff you had botched for some get-together!

Many of the Grandkids, as adults or teenagers had the privilege of being recipients of Grandma’s hospitality and support outside those blissful school holiday rendezvous. I remain ever grateful for her generosity and assistance during those times. It will be a lifelong challenge for us to show the love and compassion for each other that she demonstrated throughout her life to us, and others.

Life while inconvenient a times, was never a huge issue to Grandma, and I will never forget how she handled life's curve-balls with a practical, matter

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of factness. Cut to the fat of the problem, lay it all on the table, deal with what you can and accept the rest. There was no other way with Grandma.

So Grandma, thank you for all that you are, all that you stood for and that which you have left behind. I am proud to be your Grandson and to have been a part of your life. I am privileged to have been so close to you and for the memories we shared.

We celebrate Grandma's life and her legacy, and she would expect us to as well. Please hold each other close and squeeze a little tighter. None of us know the day or the hour and so we should greet the days we have with enthusiasm and purpose. She would want us to accept that which we can not change, encourage us to embrace the life we have, and be thankful for every blessing and opportunity we find. She would be smiling deeply to see us laugh, and cry together, but sad if we allowed ourselves to stay dwelling on her departure. As pragmatic as she was, she would say to pick yourself up and get on with it. But today we are allowed to cry, allowed to hurt and allowed to mourn. Most of all celebrate a wonderful woman, mother, wife, friend, professional, educator, and most of all to me ... Grandma.

Thank you

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