



*In Memory
of*

**Ruth
Goren**



EULOGY FOR RUTH

SHELLY AND ORIT (David's daughters)

**Normally at happy or sad times,
I like to express myself with a personal rhyme,
I tried really hard to write down all the things I wanted to say,
But nothing came out in exactly the right way.**

**Shel and Orit have managed to do it better,
So now I would like to read their letter,
Please forgive me if I cry,
After hearing their beautiful words you'll all understand why.**

Poem by Adina (Ruth's daughter)

Dear Ruthie,

Even though Orit and I were not able to come and pay our last respects, we are both thinking and hurting with your departure from our family. Nothing prepares us for the loss of a loved one. Someone who has been part of us, one of us.

Ruthie you came into our lives, small in size but with a huge heart. Full of love, both in giving and receiving. With deep blue eyes, a shy smile and a very contagious laugh. Thanks to you our dad found happiness again and proved to us that the second time around can be successful and meaningful to all.

Seeing the both of you take care of each other was in itself magic. Dad being the perfect gentleman and you dear, the perfect lady. Dad made you laugh and those sweet giggles will stay with us forever. You made our dad whole again and he was relaxed and youthful around you. Seeing you both respect one another and enjoying life together gave us "nachat" (peace), knowing that our dad was in good hands.

The first few years were the best! Both you and Dad came to visit us, at least once a year, it was important for you to be there and be part of our biggest and most meaningful events... you saw us get married, bring our children into this world: Adar, Idan and Yair (Shelly's boys) and Maya and Alon (Orit's children). You both saw and treated them as your own grandchildren, and for us there was no question about it... you were their Grandma-Savta!



Even when you were diagnosed with Parkinson's, it didn't slow you down, not straight away. You didn't give it the chance to control you. You continued travelling half way around the world with dad to see us, be part of us and we thank you for that.

With the years it became harder to live with the Parkinson's... harder for you to travel, still we managed to keep in touch via Skype. Even when harder days came you put a smile on for us, so that we wouldn't worry.

A few years back when both you and dad went through a major crisis, it was the first time that both Orit and I came to Australia to help... that is when we saw and understood, the harsh state that you were both in; and that is when we saw how important it is to be part of a small and caring community. The help and unconditional love you both received from your dear friends was priceless and we were yet again moved.

In May of this year you got to visit your two lovely granddaughters, Saskia and Emily, Adina's daughters. It was not easy for you but you got the chance to see them one last time.

The last couple of months were not easy at all for you, you fought like a lioness, you fought until the end but your small fragile body couldn't fight anymore.

Ruthie we want to thank you for being part of our lives and our small family. Rest in Peace our Ruthie and know that you will be missed. Please take care of us from up there and know that you will be missed. Please take care of us from up there. Watch dad from up above and help him be strong.

And to you Abba, Dad remember you have your family, daughters, grandchildren, sister and friends back here in Israel, that love you and want the best for you. We hug you from afar, but are close at heart always.

GRAVESIDE EULOGY

RABBI ALON MELTZER

We stand here today to farewell Ruth Mally Goren, beloved wife of David, mother of Adina and Sjors, Stepmother to Shelly and Orit, loving grandmother to Saskia and Emily. Past President of the ACT Jewish Community, dedicated communal worker, dedicated public servant, a truly beautiful soul.

In this coming week's Torah Portion we read of the history of the Jewish people. My father was an Aramean, he went down to Egypt with few people, and amassed there a great nation, The Egyptians enslaved us, we cried out to the Lord, He rescued us with an outstretched arm, he bought us to this place, the Land of Israel, and now you will dwell there.

The history of the Jewish people is shared with us one final time as we begin the important task of settling the Land of Israel, of putting down our roots, establishing our heritage, toiling for the Lord, and ensuring our future.

These efforts did not come without pain and suffering – we cried out to the Lord, we were in pain and we suffered –yet at the end we saw with clarity what we had achieved.

So too today, we are in pain, we are suffering, we are crying out, for our dear friend, one of our own, one of our family members, one of our loved ones, one of those who toiled so much, who sacrificed greatly, who stood so resolute despite her own frailties towards the end of her life, we are crying out. And while it will take many days, many tears, many pains of anguish, until at some point we will see with clarity the profound impact that Ruth made on so many people, and on this community.

Ruth (Ruthie) Mally Goren was born in Melbourne on 20th of June 1947, the sole daughter of Holocaust survivors from Germany and Poland, Lotte and Aron Blumenfeld.

She went to the kindergarten at Caulfield Shul in Melbourne where her mother was her teacher. Her father ran various shops in Caulfield and St Kilda and Ruth helped with serving the clients.

She went to school at Mt. Scopus where she excelled in her studies and was School Captain. A friend of hers from kindergarten and school days, Jocelyn, remembers her as very bright and friendly, and all who knew her can attest to these attributes.

Ruth did a B.A. program at Melbourne University in conjunction with Mt Scopus and became fluent in Hebrew. Afterwards she taught at Mt Scopus.

Ruth got married to her first husband Ken Holzman (who is here today) in April 1969 and they went to live in Perth where Adina was born. She joined the public service and in 1974 was sent to Darwin to assist in the aftermath of Cyclone Tracy.

After getting divorced she came to Canberra in 1978 and immediately involved herself with the Jewish Community, eventually becoming Head Mistress of the Heder. She and her friend Rhona organised the first of a series of very successful camps at the Warrambui Conference Centre to the north of Canberra. Rhona vividly remembers how she used to lead the children in early morning exercise classes. Ruth had a wonderful rapport with all the children who loved her and used her as a measuring stick, many young people were able to claim that they were taller than Ruth at a very young age.

After passing the role of Head Mistress to Rhona, Ruth helped the late Sue Doobov run the bat mitzvah classes and after Sue made aliyah, Ruth took on the task by herself.

Her involvement with the Jewish Community led her to run and be elected for President in 1986 and again in 1987, the first woman to do so. I might suggest that she could have been the first female president of a Jewish organization in Australia, certainly one that is had a religious congregation.

Her presidency came on the eve of the visit to Australia and Canberra by the President of Israel, Chaim Herzog. Ruth threw herself in the intricate arrangements of this visit and was always very proud of her part in its success. Alan Shroot remembers that her parents attended the official welcome at Fairbairn Airport. When her father saw Prime Minister Hawke, whom he used to serve at his sandwich shop, he cried out to him: "That's my daughter Bob".

The Succah at the ACT Jewish Community is an interesting episode of Ruth's Diplomacy skills. The Mendelsohn Family had offered the donation of a Succah in memory of their daughter Carola. There was debate at every Board meeting as to whether the Succah should go at the front or the back of the building.

There were motions at each Board meeting to change the decision of the previous meeting and after about a year or more of arguing the Board decided to take a final decision. There was a tied vote! Ruth had the casting vote and after some deliberation chose the front (where the Succah stands). Thus, Ruth would always claim that she was responsible for the position of the Succah.

Ruth continued her work in the Public Service, holding positions in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne. She reached the rank of Assistant Secretary in the Senior Executive Service. Her last job before retiring in 1999 was Head of the Office of Disability in the Department of Health.

In 1992 she started dating David Goren from the Israeli Embassy after they both were invited at dinners in the community and at the Embassy. This led to love and on 9th of May 1993 they got married at the Jewish Centre, an event attended by hundreds of invitees from the Jewish Community, the Diplomatic Corps and Department of Foreign Affairs.

A couple of months later she joined David who returned to Israel at the end of his posting to Canberra. During her stay in Israel Ruth worked at Joint, an American Jewish organisation. David's daughters developed a close relationship with her and loved her.

Ruth could not stand the driving in Israel and took to sitting in the back of the car, usually with her eyes closed.

After 2 years David resigned from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and both returned to Australia in 1995. Ruth resumed her work in the Public Service and after retiring in 1999, she went to get advice for what to do in the private field. The company giving the advice finished the interview by

hiring her to participate in the huge job of recruiting the workers for the upcoming GST.

She continued working for a few more years as a scribe in the recruitment process to the Public Service and some private organizations.

In 2003 Ruth was diagnosed with Parkinson's and after a couple of years she had to give up the scribe job. David became her devoted and loyal carer.

During their time together Ruth and David travelled extensively to Israel and Europe. Her beloved daughter Adina, who is a school teacher herself, married Sjors, a Dutchman she met in Melbourne, and now she lives with him in a charming village in The Netherlands. They have two daughters, Saskia and Emily, whom Ruth adored. She last met the family in May this year.

The Parkinson's developed slowly through the years, but Ruth had to take ever increasing doses of medicine to control the symptoms, which had their own side effects. Ruth faced her worsening situation bravely and did not stop going out to friends and functions in the Jewish Community and lunches with old friends from the Public Service. In the last half year the deterioration in her health quickened and in the last 3 months Ruth had to enter Residential Care. She became very thin and frail, but we will always remember her beauty and her indomitable spirit. I visited Ruth in the hospital some weeks ago, and I had heard from several of her friends that she had not been doing well. I walked into the room, where she piped up, Rabbi, why are you here visiting me, there's much more important work to be doing, she then proceeded, in only a way Ruth could do, to carefully inquire about all the family members, all the while trying to ensure that she continued to show a brave face of her own condition.

She passed away on 31st of August at the Woden Hospital, with her loving husband David and good friend Leonie by her side.

We will remember her fondly, he will love her deeply, and we will miss her continually.

The Ethics of our Fathers, Pirkei Avot, 2: 4, states the following:

"Hillel says: Do not separate yourself from the community. Do not believe in yourself until the day of your death. Do not judge your fellow until you come to his place. Do not say something that cannot be heard, for in the end it will be heard."

Ruth was a woman who would not separate herself from the community, any community whether it was her family, her Jewish community, her employment – she was involved and deeply cared for those around her.

Ruth was a woman who had such little ego, she would sacrifice greatly for what and who she believed in. She was devoted and committed, she would have shunned this praise of her in her life, often cracking a pointed joke at her self-perceived misgivings, but in her death such praises are all too deserved.

Ruth was a woman who would welcome everyone and judge no one, she knew life's difficulties and she was always responsive to the needs of others.

Finally, Ruth was a woman who always made sure she was heard, she was a woman who was strong in her ideals, strong in her mindset, and was always willing to take responsibility for her decisions and actions.

She was someone whom we can all look up to, and who we will all miss dearly.