



Helen Elizabeth DiGiacomo

July 5, 2021

Helen Elizabeth DiGiacomo (Nee Bastien)

October 17, 1934 – July 5, 2021

Helen Elizabeth DiGiacomo passed peacefully at home on July 5, 2021 after a long illness. Helen is survived by siblings Robert and Janet, children Carla, Marla, Andrew, Todd and Francine and her many grandchildren and one great grandchild.

It is hard to imagine an infant named Helen; it is such a mature name.

But in the case of our Mother, Helen Elizabeth Bastien, it was an apt name,

Thrust at an early age into the role of mothering her siblings, whom she adored and lovingly cared for, never complaining. Even after she had married our Father, her siblings continued to live with our family, and eventually her Mother, Ellen lived with us.

Growing up in Cabbagetown the friendships formed were tight and everlasting. Our Mothers best friends were the McLaughlin sisters. The McLaughlin family provided a safe and loving haven where Helen could be a child. Of the four sisters, her best friend was Ellen, the tiniest and mightiest of the group. The bond with the McLaughlin's has lasted their lifetimes.

Helen loved music and dancing. She grew up in a musical family. Her three brothers were musicians and she was too, the Hawaiian guitar her instrument. Those traditions remained with her always. Childhood kitchen parties were the norm in our house.

Her brothers and our Italian uncles dazzled us with their talents and endless repertoire. Our father, who wasn't a musician, made himself a washtub bass, which he pulled out at every party and played until his fingers bled. Those parties often ended with a fry up at dawn.

With the onset of Alzheimer's, Helen's pleasures were simple. She enjoyed time spent with her daughters Carla and Marla. Her love of music continued to bring her great joy. Even in the late stages of the disease the lyrics to songs by her favourite artists, Fats Domino and Patsy Cline still rolled easily off her tongue. Her illness robbed her of her beautiful voice but not her passion for belting out a tune. So powerful was her connection to music that even in the later stages of the disease she learned the lyrics to songs by her new favourite artists, Rufus Wainwright, kd Lang and Amy Winehouse.

Helen was happiest outdoors immersed in nature. She loved visiting the gardens of Toronto. Rosetta McClain was her favourite. There she spent hours in astonishment of the beauty surrounding her. The squirrels and birds were her friends.

Helen had the posture and carriage of royalty it belied her humble beginnings. Her nature was the antithesis of a royal. She was a woman of simple pleasures. Her genuine, compassionate, generous nature will live on in all who she touched.

A celebration of life will take place at a yet to be determined date.

Comments



“ So many great memories.. thank you for welcoming me into your home & treating me as your own.
Love you, dear Helen, RIP.

Tamsin

Tamsin - September 08 at 07:25 PM



“ Rest In Peace Helen. You always welcomed me in your home and treated me like one of your own. So many memories to be thankful for.
Until we meet again. Love Tom

tom rosa - August 09 at 08:59 AM



“ Rest In Peace Helen. You were a remarkable woman. So poisoned, kind, funny and loving. Marla and Carla my prayers and thoughts are with you. Much love faith

Faith Feingold - July 25 at 01:57 PM



“ Thank you Faith. My Mother loved you.

Certainly you meant 'poised' and not 'poison' in your message. The joys of auto spell. xo

marla - August 01 at 05:26 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Andrea Digiacomokirby - July 12 at 03:00 PM



“ I can honestly say that without Helen and Andy in my life I'm not sure where I would have ended up. From the time I was 9 years old until my late teens you would find me spending my weekends (and some week nights) sleeping over at the Digiacommo home. I was always welcomed, taken care and believe me treated like one of their own. If Marla got grounded so did I. I was loved and cared for and was taught so many life lessons that I still use now. Andy even gave me his secret meatball recipe which he didn't share with many. Not a day goes by I don't thank the heavens for both of them being in my life. The first time I didn't show up on Friday night with my over night bag in tow Helen didn't call my house, she called the cops to put in a missing person report. I was 16 and out on a date but I didn't tell them. Boy was I told in not uncertain terms not to do that again. I'll always remember sitting on the stairs watching them dancing and singing at one of their great parties they would throw. Helen had a great laugh that just made you laugh along with her. I'll miss them dearly and always think fondly of the time they allowed me to spend with them both.
RIP Luv ya!!!!!!
Marlene Tremblay

Marlene Tremblay - July 12 at 11:43 AM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Andrea Digiacommo-kirby - July 12 at 11:32 AM



“ auntie helen...always smiling...there was always good times when you were with her... 1198 gerrard was like a second home for me...she always welcomed me as one of her own... always felt love...rest easy auntie helen, i love you...

Andrea - July 12 at 11:40 AM



“ Auntie Helen loved you Andrea as she did every child that walked through her door. xo
marla - August 01 at 05:27 PM



“ Well said. Helen and my Mom are back together again xoxo

Shelley - July 10 at 12:29 AM



“ Yes. Warms the heart to think of them togetherness again. xo

Marla DiGiacomo - July 11 at 07:47 AM



“ Our Aunt Helen was one of those women who could do most anything. The never ending projects of sewing, kitting, gardening, restoring furniture; in addition to taking care of her household and family. Whom ever came through her door was welcomed. We have many memories of the parties/gatherings that were had on Gerrard Street hosted by her and Andy of course. Helen would lay out the food with her elegance that every woman was in awe of. To watch her; she made it look effortless. She had a regal statue about her that was immeasurable. She will be sadly missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing her. Rest in Peace Aunt Helen.

Cathy and Laura

Laura Georgieff & Catherine Georgieff - July 09 at 09:40 AM



“ Auntie Helen loved you girls like her own, as she did all of her nieces and nephews.
xo

Marla DiGiacomo - July 11 at 07:49 AM



“ You didn't come through that door without being welcomed forced to eat something LOL and have a good laugh rest in peace Mama , I'm sure you're up there singing a show tune with Auntie Ellen and dancing and laughing with Dad I miss you and love you forever and ever 😊

Franny Digiacomo - July 14 at 01:23 PM