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ELEANOR AZINE ABRAM

Eleanor Azine Abram passed peacefully last month in her long time home in Van Nuys, Calif.

Born in Duluth in 1928, she was the youngest child of Ida and Morton Azine. Her sister, Shirley, died at 19 and Ellie felt that loss greatly, but her brother, Harold, remained very close in her life until his death on Sept. 11, 2001.



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Her mother, Ida, born in Lithuania in 1898, moved to Los Angeles in the early 1950s (after her husband's death), to help with the grandchildren. She lived near and with her daughter Eleanor until her death at 79.

Eleanor attended Duluth Central High School class of '45 and married Mickey Gilberstadt in 1946, when she was 18 years old. Moving to Los Angeles, they gave birth to their son Mark in 1948. Within two years they were divorced, somewhat scandalously for that time, but she soon married William Ellis Abram, also of Duluth, (though they were first introduced by her brother in Los Angeles), in 1951. That marriage stuck until Will's death in 1994.

She said, soon before her death, that she felt she had 'won the lottery' in her life and that there were only few things she regretted, not having a daughter (she tried after two sons to have a daughter...and gave birth to twin boys...ironic, but it

did not make her unhappy), not living in New York (which she tried for a short time), not making a splash on Broadway, and, of course, not winning the Nobel Peace Prize. It was enough, she mused, to have been a good mother to her four boys, Mark, Garth, and twins Mike and Hal (she thought the latter two her greatest accomplishments), to have been happily married to a great man for over 43 years, to have worked for Steve Allen, the musician, comedian and host of the original "Tonight Show" for over 16 years, to have gone back to school at age 60 and to graduate summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Science degree in Deaf Studies from the California State University, Northridge, (though she would have preferred William Holden to have fallen for her, or to receive the 'Oscar' for best actress in a musical comedy). "But I didn't have time for that nonsense" she said, "Forever doesn't seem as long as it used to."

As often as there was time, she loved to travel, three times to Europe, once to Japan, China, several times to Hawaii, Mexico, the Caribbean and the Middle East. She was planning a trip to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, extending into the Amazon rain forest, when her final diagnosis made that trip impossible.

Especially with her husband, Bill, but even after he had died, she loved playing bridge and made many friends in that most sociable of all games. Her diagnosis of Macular Degeneration in 2002 curtailed that and yet, with amazing determination, she did not let that stop her from living independently, fully. She just found bigger magnifying glasses, and joined a Brandeis University Group, 'As Time Goes By'.

There was that warm Autumn day in 1992, when her son Garth brought his new motorcycle by his parent's house to show it off. (After telling him, of course, how dangerous and uncomfortable motorcycles are, and a silly thing on which to waste his money), Eleanor, (making sure her husband wasn't watching), asked Garth to take her for a ride and he will never ever forget her perched on the back seat, her arms wrapped around him tightly, whispering in his ear, "Give 'er the gun, Garth. Let's see what this baby's got!" Away they went, winding up a

mountain road, and the sheer glee in her deep voice...laughing, rebels without a cause, laughing, at the thrill, at the freedom.

She loved a good joke and don't we all. But, when something struck her as really funny, she'd literally fall off her chair and roll in the aisles. When we think of her, Eleanor Azine Abram, we know that she laughed all of her laughter.

She is survived by her four children, Mark, Garth, Michael and Harold; daughters-in-law Carol, Victoria, and Dana Abram; and her five grandchildren, Stephanie, Howard, Lillian, Claire and little Amelia. She leaves behind a legacy of life-long friendships, cherished memories, great love and good cooking.

Eleanor is buried beside her husband, brother and mother at Eden Memorial Park, Mission Hills, Calif. The family requests that all donations be made in her name to the Braille Institute of America, 741 N. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90029.



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