Betty Get Ho Okada

FEBRUARY 15, 2014

The Life of Betty Okada

Betty was born in Panyu, China, in 1951 to James and Helen Yip. She was the first born child and eldest daughter.

She spent a great deal of time with her paternal grandmother whom she called Poh visiting places, eating and just enjoying life.

After a couple of years with southern China now becoming under Communist control, dad left China and went to Hong Kong to ask for refugee status. He was given refugee status and had his wife, mother and father and Betty join him there.

While in Hong Kong he told Larry that he applied for status in 7 countries and Canada was the first to accept him. However, he had to come to Canada and have about $15,000 saved as proof that he could support his family. He told Larry that unfortunately this only was for his wife and they had to save another $15,000 for his parents and Betty.

Shortly after arrival in Canada dad bought a plot of land in Burnaby where the family lived and ran a garden farm. Betty grew up on the farm and was required to help with farming duties, often before and after school. She told Larry that in the beginning her school marks were not good as her English was poor but she said her marks improved annually.

She attended various elementary schools and graduated from Burnaby South High School in 1969. She said she especially enjoyed band and hanging out with her

high school friends.

In 1969 she enrolled at UBC and was the first member of the family to attend university. She majored in Education.

In 1970 shortly after her 19th birthday she met Larry who was invited for coffee at the apartment she shared with her girlfriend Arlene. Arlene had invited a number of people for coffee and she and Larry got to speaking about things. After a few dates Betty said she knew this was going to be her husband and that she felt they could grow old together.

They became inseparable from 1971 on and decided to marry in 1973 after Betty graduated from UBC. They were married on September 1, 1974.

Unable to find an apartment in Burnaby they finally located an apartment in Surrey and commenced to save money for a home. They finally acquired a home in 1975 in Bear Creek area of Surrey. As the Bear Creek area started to deteriorate they moved to a bigger home on Falkirk drive.

During this time she firstly worked at the Post Office in Vancouver sending stamps to small locales in BC like Tulameen, Canoe Flats, and Enderby. She became a geographic expert on small towns in BC. Later she worked at the Woodlands School for Handicapped Kids as a teacher.

In 1978 she became pregnant and left Woodlands to become a full time mom. Ryan, the eldest son, was born and she immersed herself in becoming a full time mom and wife. In 1980 Shannon was born and shortly thereafter Kevin was born in 1981.

In 1985 she wanted to have a bigger home for her children and found, what she said was perfect, in Boundary Park and actually got to design the home to her specifications. The children basically grew up in this house.

She truly enjoyed her role as a mother and teacher and spent countless hours at the elementary school where the children went. She also was a very active participant in the children's activities, be it music, sports or other. Her favorite activity became watching her children participate in music, dance, hockey, soccer, baseball or lacrosse.

In 2000 as the children were more or less self sufficient she opened a flower shop in Langley and for 5 years she spent countless hours "enjoying the colours and smells" which were a treat every day. By 2000 her children were at post secondary schools and life took a different view. She truly missed the activities during the children's early years.

After she sold the flower shop she helped Larry at his CA practise on a part time basis. During this time she started to travel. She went to London, Jakarta, Hong Kong, Japan, Hawaii, Australia, all over the US, the Maritimes, and to Paris, Athens and West Africa. She hated the thought of going but once there Larry said she enjoyed herself more than Larry.

2007 was a dark year as she had breast cancer and by 2012 she recovered. Life was good and she enjoyed her children and especially Shannon's marriage and her first grandchild Caitlin's birth.

In 2013 she started getting health problems and despite going for treatments in various locales she got weaker and weaker and passed suddenly in February 2014.

What was she like? (As recollected by her family – random thoughts from husband, son, daughter, son, sister, etc.) A bit rambling but will be difficult to determine whose thoughts are whose so please just read and let it seep in.

"Larry"

Betty was the most important person and wife to me. She was a beautiful spirit who helped me smooth my rough edges. A very charming lady who made everyone she met feel comfortable, even those she met for the first time.

She gave everything for her family – she sacrificed a career so she could be mom, teacher, confidant, disciplinarian, and a shining example to her children as well as a loving unbelievable wife to her husband. Family was the first most important part of her life as she would do anything to help her family.

She wanted all her children to become good human beings and was so gratified that they did. She wanted grandchildren and she got Caitlin, who always would bring a huge smile to her face.

She even became a bit of a techie and learned how to use the computer well and taught Larry how to use internet banking, how to hook up the new TV and how to sync his cell phone to the car. I often said what a great wife who can do things I don't have to worry about. What a wife – caring, sacrificing and always giving. Sometimes I wondered what I had done to deserve such as gracious woman!

"Shannon"

Cece said to me the other day that a family was like a tree. If there is an obstacle in the way, the tree changes shape and grows around the obstacle. If this is an obstacle that our family is facing, then I believe that in the middle of our tree is a large, bright and beautiful hole in the shape of my mom. She is the center of our world, of our family and our lives and she will always remain at the heart of our tree.

My mom was one of the most amazing and strongest people that I will ever know. I sit here now thankful for all the times in the past few years when I chose not to go out with my friends, but spend the weekend evenings with my parents and my niece. Every time I walk by the front steps of their house I remember her and I

drinking coffee outside in the warmth of the summer air and watching Catie bouncing around the front yard.

I remember her smile. I remember her warmth. I remember how her hands felt as I held them when I was a child and how eerily they felt so much the same when she passed. I remember being a teenager and so embarrassed by the way she would talk to anyone and everyone at the grocery store, only to later realize that it was strangers who talked to her and not the other way around. They must have seen or sensed her warmth. They must have known what a good person she was. I'm only sorry that it took a few years of rebellion and a large ocean to separate us before I too realized this. Yet I am so thankful that I realized it before it was too late and that she at least knew how much I loved her.

Everyone keeps telling me that I'm strong like her, but I don't think that they realize that she was my strength. She was my rock. She was my best friend and the most amazing mother anyone could ever wish for. She was the one that would always pick me up when I fell down. She would wipe away my tears when I cried and tell me to toughen up and get a thicker skin. She always held me when she knew that I couldn't fight the sadness away. She made sure I had everything that I could ever want or need…material or otherwise.

"Ryan"

My mother always told me that no one ever wrote a book on parenting. She always seemed to have a solution to my problems, questions or concerns. She supported me in everything I did, even though going to school and choosing employment away from home saddened her, she put on her bravest face, followed her motherly instincts and helped me develop my wings so that I could fly on my own.

Like any teenage boy, there was a point in time where I was "too cool" to hang out with my mother as every teenage boy has this stage. Moving out on my own to PG,

I became closer to my mother as she helped me learn to become self sufficient. I remember her visits and meeting all my friends up in Prince George. I was talking to my good friend Mark the other day once I found out the terrible news. He told me that I have to try and remember all the good times we had with mom and that it was a fabulous 35 years spent with her. The memories never leave you.

I remember travelling together and her stressing the importance of family. We had numerous family trips and some of the highlights were Disneyland as children. I remembered when we were buying stuffed animals at the store she told us to pick one. I choose Mickey, Shannon chose Minnie and Kevin wanted both Chip and Dale and actually got them both because he was taking so long and mom got impatient. Boy, were Shannon and I mad. In 1995 we took our first cruise to Alaska. Kevin and I wanted to go salmon fishing so bad and thought dad would take us as he grew up fishing. Turns out him and Shannon were more interested in the glaciers and mom was on the charter witnessing Kevin and me catching our first ocean salmon. Then in 1997 we travelled to Disneyworld in Florida. We got her all the way to the top of the space mountain ride and just as she was about to get on she chickened out and had to walk back down the line exclaiming she had a heart condition. The next few trips seemed to focus on wineries as we spent a month in Australia, South America and then the Maritimes. It was always good my mom kept the family close.

After graduating University, mom was so excited. Then bad news hit her. I would not be moving back to the lower mainland and had chosen Alberta as my next place of residence. Again, with her bravest face her, dad and Kevin travelled up to PG and helped me move my stuff down to Calgary. It’s been 10 plus years in Calgary now and I always counted on yearly or bi-yearly visits. She brought every family member around to the house and even my Poh.

She always told me she would like me to move home but that she and dad were so proud of me with my career in Calgary. It felt good that I got to teach her a few things over the years whether it be a new recipe, or something techie with phones, computers etc…

I could not have asked for or received a more caring and perfect mother. She and Dad gave me everything throughout my childhood even though I probably added to her stress levels. She was the anchor of the Okada family. She kept everyone in line, made sure we were always fair and generous to our family and close friends. She made sure we were hard working, honest folks and to get rid of the chips on our shoulders and to treat everyone how you'd like to be treated. She was loved by me and all my friends.

Someone told me one day that a man could love his girlfriend for months, his wife for years but his mother forever!

Mom played many roles throughout her life as she was a devoted wife and mother, the absolute best Grandma possible, a cherished older sister, a favorite auntie, and a best friend to us all. I would like to spend a few moments reflecting on her role as our mom. So much of how we turned out today is a mirror reflection of my Mom and her personality. She was amazingly kind to everyone. She taught us never, ever under any circumstances to take for granted what we have been given in life.

"Kevin"

My mom was the glue that held this whole family together, and she was always the one to be there whenever you needed. She was truly the most important cog in the family that kept everyone close and running smoothly. She was the most generous, loving, supportive and unselfish woman who always put other people before herself. She was charitable, giving, considerate and kind. She was so warm and positive, that it was very rare to ever see her without a big smile on her face.

Nothing in this world will be able to replace the hole in our hearts that was left when she passed, I find myself thinking of her every day, hour, minute, and second that goes by. But I know she would have wanted us stop moping around and get back to enjoying life. That was just the way she was, even in her final days with us, she was still always pushing you in a positive way and never showing how much pain she was really in. She was such strong inspirational woman and loving mother who I miss so much and will always be in my thoughts and prayers.

“Janet”

You could never have asked for a better big sister – being the oldest she was always the leader of the Yip pack. In the early years she got Larry to agree having us little kids along on their dates at the drive-in—go figure huh? She had some pretty serious pull with him. Bets was good with sage, sober advice when needed. During my first year in Toronto I was so homesick and lonely I was crying to her on the phone saying I should move back to Vancouver. She cut through the sturm and drang, telling me to tough it out for a year before making a decision. I was glad she was there for me. Over the last few years we’ve been bonding while Larry was on his business trips in Toronto – those memories will stay with me forever.

“Mike”

Aunty B was one of my favourite people in the whole world. Truly an inspiration and always will be. I had the privilege to live so close to her while growing up. She was so warm-hearted and thoughtful. Always treating me, like one of her own children. I remember when I had the chicken pox she was there taking care of me. Every day I would be at her house after school. She made sure I was fed and kept out of trouble. When I left to go home she always made me call when I arrived to make sure I got home safely. Watching my cousin’s hockey and lacrosse games with her, she was always the loudest in the crowd encouraging them. I very quickly joined in calling them “boneheads” and “dummies”. Her cheerful personality, the

way she loved her family and her big smile I will never forget. I want to thank you for helping my mom be the person she is today. I see so many of your qualities in her as well. You will be truly missed but never forgotten.

“Margaret”

Bets: from getting mom to buy stylish clothes for us when we were small, to keeping us all in line, that was big sis. She would always go for car rides and she would include me whether it was out to to UBC, for coffee, up to the Okanagan or even back in the day, to drive-in movies with Larry – he didn't have a choice!

I almost didn't make it to my Grade 12 Grad if it wasn't for her. She persuaded mom to let me go.

She always had a grin on her face, and that weird chuckle. She made one feel at ease. She didn’t care what people thought of her, and she would roll her eyes at me when once again I informed her that I had booked a hair appointment for her.

Family was her No. 1 priority. She made sure her kids had the best – they were well taken care of. She was so proud of them. We always joked when she asked or told Larry to do something – it was always “yes dear, whatever you say dear...”

She was like my best friend who gave me advice or just listened to me while I rambled on about something. There are so many great memories – I miss her dearly...

“Janine”

It is with a heavy heart that I say goodbye to my dearest Aunty today. I feel blessed to have had such a great person like Aunty B in my life. I will miss her gracious heart, light-hearted spirit and her contagious cheerfulness.

I was lucky enough to grow up having her living just a few blocks up the street. As a child, I spent many days at her house after school where she and my cousins

would care for my brother and me. One of my fondest memories and favorite time spent with her was when she would braid my hair. It was such a treat for me and I felt so special.

Looking back, a lot of family gatherings occurred at Aunty's house. She would often have us all over for Birthdays, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Food was never an issue as she would always cook up a storm and bake multiple desserts! She would spend most of the time in the kitchen, where everyone seemed to gravitate, covered in evidence of a hard day's work in the kitchen.

Aunty B had a great sense of humor; and she would have to considering all the jokesters we have in our family! She displayed this along with her carefree, laid back and PATIENT nature by allowing Shannon and I to dress her up, attempt to put makeup on her and give her the wackiest hairdos without resistance.

Though you are no longer with us physically Aunty B, I know your bright, smiling, shining spirit will continue to live on in your children, grandchildren and in all of us. You will always hold a special place in my heart and I will forever love and miss you greatly. Love, your "Beano".

You are invited to leave a personal message of condolence for the family.

Messages of Condolence

To Larry and Family,

We are very sad to hear of the passing of Betty. We have many fond memories of times spent with you and Betty when I coached Ryan in hockey. On behalf of the Higo family, we sent our deepest condolences to you and your family.

Gordon and Shiori

— Gordon & Shiori Higo

Dear Larry, Shannon, Ryan & Kevin & Family...

We are so very sorry to hear about Betty's passing. Our love and condolences to you and your family.

Sincerely, Lori, Scott, Emiko

Mike & Sharon

Holly, Tim, Brody & Lauren

— THE ISHIKAWA FAMILY

Dear Ryan and family,

We are so very sorry to hear of the passing of your dear mother, wife,grandmother,daughter,auntie, mother-in-law, sister and friend. We are sad that we did not get to meet Betty, but we feel that we do know her....through all Ryan's stories and descriptions of such a fun, kind, and loving mother. This sort of woman is never forgotten. Her character lives on, passed down in a thousand ways... in the character of her children and grandchildren, memories, the goodness she taught, the love she implanted right into people's hearts, and in ways you will never know...people she influenced and touched through her generous and love-filled life. May memories of fun and loving moments offer you comfort in this time of sorrow, and in the years ahead.

Jaqui and Brent Anderson (parents of Ryan's friend/colleague Kristin) Calgary

— Jaqui and Brent Anderson

Dear Larry, Kevin, Shannon, Ryan & Family. We are hugely saddened to hear about Betty’s passing. For years growing up in my early elementary days then throughout high school you were all like a second family and Betty was truly like a second Mom. Betty always had a positive outlook and I have many fond memories ‘growing up’ in Boundary Park. We are honored to have known such a wonderful, patient, caring, genuine and generous mother who will truly be missed but never forgotten. Our love and condolences to you and your family.

— Rob & Katrina Wilson

I had the fortune of meeting Betty through Shannon & Tyler. Betty had such an amazing presence. She was always smiling, laughing, talking and making others feel welcome. Every time I saw her I found myself having a great time. She was so supportive of others; I remember at the end of the first half of the ride to conquer cancer a few years ago seeing Betty at the finish line with a beaming smile waving at me and cheering me on. She even supported me with school and career choices too!

Quite simply Betty was an awesome person who will be dearly missed but never forgotten.

— Alex Briede

Dear Shannon, Larry, Ryan and Kevin: I am so deeply saddened by your loss. I feel truly blessed to have known Betty, who was, to me, the sweetest, most welcoming soul in all of Canada. I loved every minute I ever had with her, particularly our early morning chats when Shannon was still sleeping. I loved her sense of humor and her teasing manner. Her warmth and kindness always made me feel at home when I came to visit. She leaves behind a legacy of compassion, generosity, strength, tenacity, and above all a love for life - a remarkable package of goodness that will be missed, but never forgotten. Please take comfort in knowing that she has inspired many and will continue to live on in our memories.

— Brenda

Mrs. Okada always had something delicious in the kitchen, and a cup of tea was never far away. From childhood birthday parties, through high school years and beyond, Mrs. Okada always had a moment to listen to the ideas, stories, thoughts and dreams of anyone trying to find their way through life. Betty had the best laugh and would often tell us how crazy we were, with a sideways glance and a grin that said, "just you wait until you hit the real world!" She seemed to always be doing something for someone else, making sure everyone was taken care of, and that everyone's needs were met. She wasn't afraid of being silly with Shannon and her friends, even through our most awkward teenage years, which I think is what was most endearing about her - everyone was treated like family (and got teased like family!) It was such a pleasure to have grown up around someone so influential in ways I'm sure I still have yet to discover. To the Okada family, you are in my thoughts and I send you all my love and deepest condolences.

— Kirsten Sheppard

Dear Shannon and the Okada Family,
We were deeply saddened by the news of Betty's passing. We send our heart felt condolences to you and your family. Remember that we love and care about you and the family.Our thoughts and prayers are with you!
We will miss Betty's Laugh and love, but our memories are forever kept in our hearts of momma Betty

— Grace and Ritchie Rivera

Such a special lady , such a big loss. I was honored to share a very special time with Betty -the marriage of our children. Her humor and love for her family was so apparent and will be so missed by them. Taken far to soon
Sending you all our love and support

— Paula and Earl Enge

It is always fun and special to meet your friend's family. It is a chance to learn where they got their physical traits and personality. Meeting Betty was no excpetion - both fun and special. The first thing I noticed was her delightful sense of humour; mirroring that of Ryan's. A quick wit that wasn't mean or sarcastic, just quick and clever. We spent the weekend helping in Ryan's yard. Like she had done all week, she was there to be a helping hand and wise confidant - not to take over. I remember her being so easy to spend time with and feeling like I had been part of the circle of friends for decades. The last time I saw Betty was this past fall when she stopped by with Ryan after they had gathered supplies for his guy's fishing trip. She was so warm and patient as I proudly showed off my yard. What a wonderful mother. Always interested in her children's lives. The people that were important to them were, by default, important to her. Always there to help. Always setting a good example. I'm sad I never took Ryan up on the offer of her hospitality in Vancouver. I'm sure it would have been a first class experience. Keep smiling Betty!

— Kristin Plosz

I was truly saddened when I heard the news of your mom’s passing. I’ve always thought of your mom like a 2nd mom to me. She was obviously an important and well respected mom, aunt, wife, grandmother and doggie mom to Otis. My deepest condolences go our to your and your family during these difficult times.

When I think of Betty Okada or “Momma Oak” as I re-call from Ryan having the nickname Oak. I remember her as a loving mom who could tolerate her boy playing a rough sport like lacrosse and being a very supportive fan who attended and enjoyed watching many games with Larry as well. I used to tell her she didn’t have to worry about Ryan getting hurt, as he was more likely to put hurt on others. She was very supportive when you moved away to school and later to Calgary. Something I think most Mom's would have a tough time accepting. I know mine did during my brief time in Calgary. Betty was always a pleasure to talk to and joke with each time I saw or spoke with her. I felt she got to know me quite well over the years and always had an interest in what I was up to. She got to meet Gino when he was a baby around the same time I got to meet Otis. We were both excited to show off and share our new experiences with each other. Your mom will always be your mom in this world or the next, she will always be the correct choice and voice on your shoulder(s). Take comfort knowing how proud she is of you (Ryan), Kevin and Shannon. All her friends and family are thinking of her and loved her very much. She will forever be remembered.

— Travis & Nicole Long & Family

Dear Betty Okada,

We met decades ago, when your son invited us over to lose a match at Nintendo.. By then, you had already invited us for dinner after ensuring our stay was most enjoyable. Many years went by, by the time I had realized you were always one step ahead of us. What I miss most, is the thought of you knowing what had happened before we even got home! Did we ever fool you??

You are an amazing person – And, I truly regret life pulled us apart in your final years.

I believe our universe is a holographic image, and that our thoughts are all intertwined. You had taught me this with our interaction throughout the years. You have an amazing sense of well- being, and love for others. And I cannot think of one time you were not there for me.

Anyone can say you were like a mother figure to them, and this says a lot.

Betty, to this day, I think of you while I have tea in the evening.

Who we are, is summed up in everything we have said, done and felt. And it is all wrapped up in one unique tread. This being the fabric of our reality.

To: Larry, Kevin, Shannon and Ryan – my most hear felt condolences. Words cannot describe the loss you are going through.

Betty would want us all to smile, and to live and sincere life.

“Don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened.”
Pete Wilson

— Pete Wilson

Larry

Your friends at Revett are thinking of you and your family at this time. We know that you were very close and that you are an incredibly proud husband and father. We will be there for you in the coming weeks and months, it's just what people do when they hold someone in such high regard.
From everyone at the Revett Mining Company

— John Shanahan

Dear Ryan and family,
We were truly saddened to learn of your mother's passing. Although I never got to spend much time with her I have fond memories of her being genuinely excited for the company that Ryan would bring by. I remember coming to your home and thinking that she must have spent $400 on groceries to feed us boys! She loved every second of cooking for us and welcomed us with open arms. I admired her witty sense of humour and true love for her family. Please know that we are thinking of you all at this difficult time.
Russ and Andrea Stalker

— Russ and Andrea Stalker

I'm happy that I had the pleasure of meeting Betty when I became friends with Shannon. Whenever I visited the Okada home, Betty was always smiling and welcoming. I remember her teasing Shannon or someone else in the family. She was so quick-witted and no-nonsense. On many occasions I told Shanny "I love your mom she's so funny/cool." My heartfelt condolences goes to the Okada and Yip family. Betty left us much too soon but will always be in our hearts, smiling.

— Nichole

Dear Larry and family, I was saddened to learn from the NVC grapevine about the passing of Betty. Kats Tabata read about it in the JCCA news -- he then contacted Ron Araki, who then contactted Ted Nakatasu in Calgary, Eugene and Arlene Miyoshi in Penticton, the Tamaki clan in Kelowna and me in Ottawa. That all goes to show how Betty was so dear to us all.

When I went to UBC, Betty (and Arlene) were like big sisters to us all. Their sense of humour, their liveliness made university life so much fun and enjoyable. Their apartment served as a home away from home for many of us. (Larry also was a great friend --- he was part and parcel of what wove us all together).

In recent years, I had the pleasure of seeing Betty from time to time on my annual pilgrimages to BC. We also kept in touch by playing "Words with Friends" (like Scrabble) via the internet.

I will miss my "sister" who, from the various comments above, was also a great wife, mother,grandmother, sister and friend.

— Shig Uyeyama

Dear Larry and Family, we are deeply saddened to hear of Betty's passing, please accept our most heartfelt condolences. Getting to know Betty these past few years has been truly wonderful and her smile, laugh and sense of humour are undeniable. We will never forget our trip to Rio with Larry, Betty, Chris and Maureen. Sandra and I don't consider ourselves travellers by any means and you guys truly did make that our most enjoyable trip thus far. We are also so very happy that you got to meet our newest addition to the family, Kosta. Reading Larry's, your children's and your extended families comments above, I see the importance of teaching Kosta that family comes first and I will do my best to make sure he understands that. You were a great lady and human being and our thoughts and prayers go out to the entire Okada Family. Love - Nick, Sandra and Kosta.

— Nick, Sandra and Kosta Corea

Dear Larry and Family:

What a terrible loss for all of us. She was a bright and beautiful star, albeit in the heavens above. She will be missed and never forgotten. Her ready laugh and brave nature will always make her a person to be looked up to. Please accept our sincerest condolences and our prayers that her soul rest in eternal peace, Ameen.

Love

Nargis and Mehboob Bhaloo and Family

— Nargis and Meb Bhaloo

Betty was a kind woman, generous, loving and strong. I never had the pleasure of meeting her in person, but I felt like I got to know her through conversations with her son, Ryan. In the 14 years that I've known Ryan, it would be rare to have a catch-up conversation without also getting a family update. I remember smiling to myself many a time to hear the caring and respect in Ryan's voice as he would tell me about his mom and his latest visit home. My heart breaks for the Okada family to have to experience such a devastating event.

“We will never be the same as we were before this loss,
but are ever so much better
for having had something so great to lose.” - anonymous

Thinking of you,
Christi Horne

— Christi

Dear Larry, Tracey and I cannot express how saddened we were to hear of Betty's passing. She is such a wonderful and kind lady and we remember sitting and chatting with her at Staley functions or when she came by the office and always enjoyed her company when we had the opportunity to visit with her. Our most sincerest and heartfelt condolences go out to you, Ryan, Kevin, Shannon and the rest of your family. You all are in our thoughts and prayers.

— Rob and Tracey Anderson

To Larry, Ryan, Shannon, Kevin and family. Our deepest condolences go out to you all during this very difficult time. We have many fond memories of Betty that will never be forgotten, especially spending Japanese New Years together at mom amd dad's house. Her vibrant personality and infectious laugh will be in our hearts forever.

— Roy, Janet, Chris and Stacy

Dear Larry and family,

We are so sorry to hear of the passing of Betty. Our thoughts and prayers are with you, Betty and family during these very difficult times.

— Peter W. and Kazuko

Ryan and family, we are so saddened to hear about Betty’s passing. While I only met Betty a few times, she and I shared the same initials. While it may seem trivial, over the last decade of catching up with Ryan on the phone, I would often ask, “how’s BO doing?” then I’d listen to a story about Betty and the family. We were fellow BO’s, yet she was an original.

Another fond memory is from university days in Prince George. Ryan and I live in a ‘bachelor pad’ with a few other guys in college. I remember one day Ryan came back from visiting his family and had a pack of BBQ pork that Betty got us in gas town and sent up with Ryan. While the house menu generally consisted of moose steaks and potatoes, I can honestly say the BBQ pork, fried up with oyster sauce, tofu and rice was the most memorable meal in 2 years on Lorne Cres. After moving apart, I recall asking Ryan many times to get BO to send some more BBQ up pork to PG. Betty was ever thoughtful and beyond generous – she will be truly missed.

I was always amazed at how connected your family is. As people move away, it can be difficult to meet up, but the Okada’s have an amazing ability to get together, go somewhere fun, and just be there for each other. I cannot imagine how difficult this time is, but I am confident you will all be there for each other. You are all in our thoughts.

Brian and Barb Oke

— Brian & Barb Oke

Dear Larry. It was with great shock and sadness that I heard of Betty's passing. My deepest condolences go out to you and your family. I will always cherish our many laughs and conversations together at the dental office. Betty was a very kind individual and will be sorely missed.

— Colly

To Ryan and Family. I did not know your mom well. In fact, I only met her once. However, that one time left a lasting impression on me. Betty's smile was warm and sincere and her pride in Ryan was clear. After one supper together I felt welcomed and understood where much of her sons character came from. I wish we had the opportunity to enjoy a few more meals together and to get to know each other a bit more. She seemed like a wonderful lady. I am really sorry for the loss of your mother Ryan.

— Brian Salisbury

Betty was a kind and wise lady that was always a pleasure to be around. Her wit kept you on your toes. We will always remember how special she made our kids feel when we were in Washington on a course and she spent time with them. They described it as a magical experience and we concur. We will miss her.

— Dean and Jennifer Larocque

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