



## Selma Baskin

May 2, 1920 - December 30, 2017

Selma Baskin left this world peacefully on December 30, 2017 at the age of 97. Her father Harry was a Jewish immigrant from Austria-Hungary. He was a tailor, and built his own business and shop in Irvington, New Jersey. Her mother, Shoshona, an immigrant from Belarus, first met Harry when she came to work for him as a seamstress. With her help, Harry's business thrived and he became a local hero when he foiled a kidnapping event while unarmed with his bare hands. Selma often worked in the family business, arranging deliveries and pickups. Her mother died when she was only 8, and she was raised by her father and her loving older brother Jack.

She met Norman, her husband of 62 years and the love of her life, when she was a child. Norman actually saved her from drowning when she was 10 years old. They were married in 1939, when Selma was 19. When World War II arrived, Norman enlisted, and he and Selma moved around the US during the war years as Norman was assigned to duty in a number of different cities stateside. During that period of time, she worked in various jobs including as an administrative assistant for Heinz Company. Wherever she went, she quickly established a home and a circle of friends, many who remained friends for life. She returned home to Hoboken when Norman shipped out overseas and waited with love and anxiety for his return. Norman returned home alive but ill and weak after a bout of meningitis. After recovering with the help of her loving care, Norman started a career in the

restaurant business.

The couple moved to Lake Hopatcong, a large and beautiful lake in northern New Jersey that was pristine and undeveloped. Norman worked in a variety of restaurant jobs, and two of them bought their own restaurant called the Shore Hills Inn, a lakeside dining facility. There they had their first and only child, David, and soon thereafter sold the restaurant. To make ends meet, Norman took a job as a maitre'd at a hotel in Patterson. Selma landed a job as an executive administrator with top secret clearance at a government weapons facility called Picatinny Arsenal, where she was involved in a program of research and development of advanced conventional weapon systems and ammunition that continues today.

When Norman was promoted to a maitre'd at a renowned restaurant in Short Hills, Selma was able to retire from her job, and devoted her time to raising their child. They spent many happy years in Lake Hopatcong together, moving to a house on the lake and enjoyed extensive gardening and the beautiful changes of seasons on the lake. They remained in that house until Norman retired.

David went to medical school followed by a six year residency, and during that time, Selma and Norman visited frequently and were always there for love and support. David then established a neurosurgical practice in Houston in 1984 at Houston Methodist Hospital. After his wife Juli had their first daughter, Selma and Norman moved to Houston in 1991, where they stayed for the remainder of their lives. They enjoyed being with each other and their son and daughter-in-law, and their three beautiful granddaughters. When Norman passed in 2001, Selma remained in their Houston home until the end.

Selma was a kind and motivated woman, who always had a twinkle in her eye. She had an infectious positive personality, full of love and life. She was

very proud of her son and daughter-in-law and the work they were doing in the medical community. She loved her family deeply and always went the extra mile to entertain and receive guests in her home, including the preparation of 10 to 12 course meals with Norman. Many family and friends remember fondly the very special times they spent with her and Norman at their New Jersey home which they affectionately named the "Villa Tranquilla." The "Villa" epitomized Selma, and was a place where one could go to have a hot cup of tea, plenty of food, and a place to talk and re-energize one's soul. A number of poor and downtrodden employees at the restaurants that Norman worked in benefitted from the love and care of Selma.

She is survived by her son David and daughter-in-law Juli, and her three beautiful and loving granddaughters, Danielle, Alexandra, and Brianna. Private services were held at Emanu El Park, where she was laid to rest alongside the one true love of her life, Norman.

Donations in lieu of flowers or other gifts can be made in her honor to the Neurological Research Foundation and sent to the Foundation at 1656 North Blvd, Houston, Texas 77006.