



Mary's roots: With her parents - 1926



Mary in full bloom - 1944



Mary's spirit: Carson Road-1940's



Mary Favell 1925 - 2014



Mary's legacy of love:
Great grandkids - 1992

Mary (Derhousoff Soroka) Favell

When Mary Favell passed away peacefully at Hardy View Lodge on February 7, 2014, surrounded by family, this world lost an extraordinary and radiantly loving soul.

She was born in Pass Creek to William and Polly (nee Savinkoff) Derhousoff, November 10, 1925, the eldest of five children. Her siblings were Peter, John, Anne, and Olga.

In adulthood, she often shared her memories of the Doukhobor villages in the Castlegar area, and she loved the eight-mile trip on Sundays to visit her Savinkoff grandparents. She also spoke with nostalgia of times with the many Popoff relatives, and with reverence of her Derhousoff relations, especially her father, and his siblings, Nick, John, Peter, George and Florence. And she spoke much about her mother Polly's sunny disposition and wonderful singing voice.

In 1940 the family moved to Grand Forks where Mary met and wed William Soroka. They had five children, and lived on military bases across Canada. In 1969, Mary returned with her two youngest sons to Grand Forks where she spent most of the rest of her life. For a while, Mary worked at the Yale Hotel, and also at the Frontier restaurant, where she was valued as an excellent cook.

Mary was born and raised in the Doukhobor community, but after marriage, spent most of her life far from her roots. But her heritage stayed in her heart.

Here are her words from audiotapes and letters:

"It's surprising how deeply engraved some things are in the memory, like the prayer services at the Doukhobor Hall. We walked there while it was still dark. Mom made me a Doukhobor skirt and blouse from some silky print - half silk - with small green flowers to wear at the Sunday Services.

The men would light the gas lamps - I don't know if you ever saw one - they can be dangerous. They'd pump it up quite a bit, then light it with a match and hang it up. It gave off a hissing sound all the while it burned.

"The hissing of the lamps and the darkness and the sound of prayers and hymns - I once thought I had forgotten, but when I began reading the English Bible seriously (I liked Isaiah best), I came to the part where it says, 'You shall have a song, as in the night, when a holy solemnity is kept, and gladness of heart' and all these sounds came back and enveloped me.

"And the Doukhobor aura was always there. It was that feeling of being a part of one whole, and that feeling used to bring me comfort in very difficult times. Even when I went to an English church, in my mind, I would still be back in the Doukhobor prayer hall of my childhood.

"It's still with me. I hear the sound of the hymns and praying voices in my memory. Those voices are long gone now. Many of them were close relatives, and in those days there were

plenty of them who had been at the Burning of the Arms. They helped people to understand and were an inspiration."

In her later years, Mary would often say a Doukhobor prayer before family meals, and although most of us did not speak Russian, her reverence and grace still conveyed to us that inspiration from her youth.

Mary was predeceased by her brother, Peter Derhousoff; her son Victor Soroka; and her sister, Anne (Leonard) Barisoff.

Mary leaves behind four children: Eileen Cole, Tom (Laurie) Soroka, Dave (Nora) Soroka, and Ken (Laureen) Soroka; eight grandchildren: Deirdre, Amelia, Anya, Peter, Stepan, October, Orion, and Tyler; nine great grandchildren: Sabrina, Michael, Katrina, Hannah, Andrew, Megan, Grayson, Reagan and Raini; and three great great grandchildren: Payton, Logan, and Rylee.

She is also survived by her brother John (Lucy) Derhousoff of Castlegar and her sister Olga (Ron) Mix of Grand Forks.

Mary is also fondly remembered by a much larger circle of family and others who basked in her quiet devotion, her selfless generosity, her gentle but penetrating insights, her poetic expressiveness, and her brilliant sense of humor. Mary's life was lived completely for her family, who enjoyed her wonderful cooking - especially borscht, varenniki and pyrahi - in her tiny welcoming house, snuggled under the afghans and wool quilts she made, and wore out many

slippers which she crocheted for everyone. Mary loved to watch hockey with her family, and to send huge bags of sandwiches for river floaters to enjoy on the Granby and Kettle.

Five months before her passing in Hardy View Lodge, Mom murmured this to her daughter. It is one of the most beautiful of her many verbal gifts to her family:

"I wish I could find a way to explain this complex mix of emotions; my joy as I feel myself moving closer to arrival, and my sorrow as I feel myself moving closer to leaving . . . but there are no words . . ."

This beautiful, humble woman led a simple life of work and service, read classic English literature and popular mysteries, loved quiet walks to public libraries, and sang melodically while ironing clothes. She claimed that the swimming waters at Grand Forks City Park were "heavenly", and had an almost musical laugh that echoes forever in our hearts.

A service was held for Mary at the Grand Forks Funeral Home on February 15, 2014 and burial followed at the Doukhobor Cemetery.

Dear Mary, Mashka, Mom, Gran, Baba: thank you for your unique sweetness and your decades of devotion. Your memory will nourish the hearts of your family for all our days.

May you rest in peace.



In Memoriam Vechnaya Pamyat

Preserving the memory of our deceased family members and friends