

In Memory of Adinah Dorfman z"l

Adinah was born in 1921. Her mother contracted a degenerative disease, was hospitalized following childbirth and died six years later. Her father gave her up to an orphanage at the age of two and visited her on weekends. The orphanage was managed by an elderly couple and a few years later they closed the facility, but took Adina and her father to live with them so they could continue to care for Adina, who was the youngest of the children. At the age of eight Adina moved to live with an uncle, a brother of her father's, for two years until her father remarried. When she returned to her father's home, her stepmother treated her in a way familiar to any reader of fairytales.

Adinah found refuge at HaShomer HaTzair in Milwaukee, where she joined as a teenager out of an ideology of Zionism and Socialism. Typically for her, Adina gave herself entirely to the movement, gave up on college studies and took leading roles upon herself. At the movement she met Yaacov Dorfman and they fell in love while hitchhiking from the summer camp in New York to Canada and back.

Due to Adina's illness, she and Yaacov didn't make aliyah with their core group which founded Kibbutz Ein Dor, but stayed in New York and started a family. After 15 wonderful years as a couple, Yaacov passed away and left Adina alone with three daughters, aged 9, 6 and 3. Adina felt that now was the time to make her old dream come true and finally join her core group at Ein Dor, and she made aliyah with her three daughters. But it was more difficult than she thought to integrate into a Kibbutz in the early Sixties. There was still group sleeping for children and she still needed to enter the dining hall alone each night and find everyone else sitting in pairs.

Adina says she would have left for the city but had no way to earn a living, and so when her sisterr-in-law wrote to her, saying she had found her an apartment in Brooklyn, she packed her belongings and her three daughters and returned to the United States. En route, she insisted on a tour of Europe – Rome, Paris and London in a single week, with her three little girls in tow.

Upon returning to Brooklyn without two cents to rub together she took stock of her situation: She had no secondary education or special skills or experience. But instead of trying merely to survive, Adina decided to actually live and decided to acquire a trade, as a librarian (which in the U.S. is a graduate-level degree.) At age 43 she began her undergraduate studies in anthropology at Brooklyn College. She found everything she studied exciting. We particularly recall conversations about the social structure on the island of Bali, descriptions of different ways of life than ours and the roles of men and women in distant lands. While she studied full-time we lived off social security and student loans, which certainly wasn't easy, but we recall a childhood full of ballet and violin lessons, visits to museums, concerts and Shakespeare in the Park. Although Adina often began studying only at 11 at night, having first cooked dinner, helped the girls with their homework and found time to listen to the troubles of three adolescent girls before bedtime, she finished her undergrad studies with honors and was admitted to Columbia University with a full scholarship for graduate studies.

Upon receiving a degree in librarianship, Adina once again turned her sights upon the homeland and made aliyah, settling this time in Jerusalem where she found work as a librarian at the law school library at Hebrew University on Mt. Scopus. Adina worked there for 12 years until reaching retirement age. The first thing she did was travel to China and Japan, which was the start of her world-spanning traveling period. When she met Joe she found a traveling partner and together they journeyed around the globe – Thailand, Bali, Spain, Moscow, the Arctic, Morocco, Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, Kenya, France, Greece, Egypt, and Jordan. The world was their oyster.

Between trips Adina volunteered for 18 years, twice a week at the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, building an exemplary civil rights library for the organization. She also found time to spend with her grandchildren. At age 73 she would play soccer and baseball with her grandchildren in Sacher Park. When

her daughter Ilana gave birth to twins, and she herself was 66, she went to Boston for four months to lend a hand. She would take Kobi and Noam for walks each morning so that Ilana could sleep and then she would cook, fold laundry, put the house in order and then ask "Well, what else is there to do?" Years later, when her youngest grandchildren Erez and Oren were born, she still had the patience to sit on the floor and play with them.

Four years ago, Adina and Joe moved to Dor Tivon. It wasn't long before she found new friends. In the past two years Adina has bravely battled against recurring inflammations of the urinary tract. Adina was no stranger to hospitals. She had undergone 7 surgical procedures including a total colectomy surgery at age 25, 3 C-section deliveries and an open heart surgery after losing her husband. Despite all this, we always thought of her as a healthy woman. She was hospitalized 13 times over the past two years, and after each time she lost the ability to walk. But each time, as soon as she got home, she once again resumed physiotherapy and training so that she could walk again, first with a walker and then alone. Even at her last stay at the hospital she proudly told how she successfully rehabilitates every time she leaves the hospital. Two days before passing away, even as she laid weak and exhausted, she wanted her grandchildren to help her get up so she could walk around.

Mother, you never gave up or let yourself quit or even take a break. We hope you now found rest.