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**Remembering Nori**

***REMEMBERING***

**Nori**



*September 29, 1942*

—

*January 30, 2019*

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September 29, 1942 - January 30, 2019

# Remembering Nori Born during occupied Amsterdam

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## Geburtsurkunde

Deutsches Amsterdam ----- Nr. 236 -----  
(Standesamt)


----- Nori Rita Spielmann -----  
ist am 29. September 1942 um 4 Uhr 37 Minuten -----  
in Amsterdam, Geulstraat 8 ----- geboren.

Vater: Betriebsleiter Erich Eduard Hans Spielmann,  
evangelisch, wohnhaft in Amsterdam, Geulstraat 8 -----

Mutter: Rita Spielmann geborene Prees, evangelisch,  
früher israelitisch, wohnhaft in Amsterdam, bei ihrem Ehemann.

Änderungen der Eintragung: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Amsterdam, den 30. September 1942.

 deutsche  
Der Standesbeamte  
Callen

(Siegel)  
Gebührenfrei.

A 51

A 51. Geburtsurkunde (jeheliche Geburt).  
Verlag für Staatsverwaltungen G.m.b.H., Berlin SW 6, Gröbner Str. 10, (t. 51) 0745

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## Remembering Nori



Noritje - Hidden Child

Nora's parents moved the family to a new apartment and did not notify the authorities of their move in an attempt to hide their newborn from the Nazis since Rita was Jewish (although on paper she converted to marry) and therefore little Nora was Jewish.

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## Remembering Nori



Shy Child Immigrated in 1953

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## Remembering Nori



Nora always said she was very sad coming to America and giving up everything she knew. It looks like the whole family was sad.

(From left-to-right: Tante Gretel, Tante Wanda, Nora, Rita, a young Hans-Christian Mutti, Hans)

Grew-up in Queens, NY

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## Remembering Nori

Had a Junior High boyfriend named Brian  
Graduated from Forest Hills High School

Attended the College of Wooster in Ohio  
(Ohio was primitive in those days, they didn't know what a  
bagel was)



French Language Major - Graduated 1964

Then on to Vanderbilt University for Masters

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## Remembering Nori

- Met Alice Landt
- Survived her first hangover

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(Got her masters)

Started running the language lab at SUNY Stony Brook

Joined Ward Melville as a French Teacher



Ward Melville Highlights

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## Remembering Nori

- Taught French
  - Trips with Students
    - Quebec
    - France
  - Taught German
  - Became Foreign Language Chair
    - Went back to only teaching
- ~ also involved with student plays ~
- Retired after 32 years teaching

Late 1960s

Nora made a trip to Berlin. Gretel and Hans-Christian at that point were still living in the western side of the divided city.



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## Remembering Nori



I believe it was during this trip that Nora turned into a smuggler. She had crossed over into East Berlin to visit her cousin Fritz Fries (a noted East German author). During the visit he pointed out that he could not get his manuscript out to his western publisher so Nora smuggled it out. You can read "The Road to Oobliadooh."

## 1973

Nora was living in a singles community (North Isle) in  
Coram, NY

One day in winter (Jan/Feb) sees a guy in the club house,

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## Remembering Nori

"Is your name Brian" the guy  
says, "No" and ignores her

March - is at a Saturday Night dance  
Sees same guy

"Would you like to dance?", she asks.  
they dance... exchange numbers

several days later receives a phone call  
"Norma, would you take me to the hospital I'm very sick."  
"Its Nora. I'll be right over" *hospitals play an  
important role in her future*

Next, they see one another in the pool in June chatting  
she mentions seeing Fiddler on the Roof on Bdwy with  
Topol in the lead.

He mentions seeing the musical in Switzerland with Ivan  
Rebroff in the title role.

She is stunned, "You know Ivan Rebroff?"  
(*She loved his singing*)

July - Concert at Islip Speedway starring Chuck Berry

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## Remembering Nori

October Engaged



Married December 29, 1973  
in Southside Hospital

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## Remembering Nori



The Bride

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## Remembering Nori



The Bride And Groom

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## Remembering Nori The Parents



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## Remembering Nori Wedding Party & Friends



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## Remembering Nori



An aside

At the wedding (which was supposed to take place in the

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## Remembering Nori

Spielmann's small condo) a Buffy Sainte Marie song was to be played. It wasn't because the wedding took place at Southside Hospital. The words are particularly poignant.

### Until It's Time for You to Go

You're not a dream  
You're not an angel  
You're a woman  
I'm not a king  
I'm a man  
Take my hand  
We'll make a space  
In the lives that we planned  
And here we'll stay  
Until it's time for you to go  
Yes, we're diff'rent worlds apart  
We're not the same  
We laughed and played  
At the start like in a game  
You could have stayed  
Outside my heart  
But in you came  
And here you'll stay  
Until it's time for you to go  
Don't ask why  
Don't ask how  
Don't ask...

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## **Remembering Nori**

December 1974 - Puerto Rico Honeymoon  
(had many Pina Coladas)



We had planned on a February honeymoon at an island off the coast of Venezuela but we both got quite sick so it wasn't until December '74 that we went to Puerto Rico. We had a great time.

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**Remembering Nori**  
Married Years

December 31, 1976 12:31pm  
A Child is Born



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## Remembering Nori

1977



### The Trips

Summer 1980 (six weeks) - Europe with Renée

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## **Remembering Nori**

Germany with Hans and Rita  
introduce Drew to family  
(Hans Christian & Sabine, Gretel, Katja, Carsten)

Holland  
introduce Drew to childhood friends (Minna, Miep & Dik,  
Arjan, Inga, Weitske)

Belgium (*just drove thru*)

Switzerland introduce  
Nora to family  
(Marie & Ernest, Marie, Paulette, Marie Rose and their  
families)

Paris  
(wine, women, song)  
• wine - hey its France  
• women - Club Lido  
• Song - Oui, oui, oui, over the pont  
(alons enfant de la pomme-frita)

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## Remembering Nori

1991

Belgium stayed  
with Betty

Germany - Gretel, Christian, Gesa

Holland

1995

Germany

(weird wine tasting)

German old guy, "I learned to drink red wine when I was  
a prisoner in France."

Great tour of a wine cellar much to the frustration of the  
owner (thanks Gesa)

"We have no wine from those years as the occupying  
Americans drank it all."

Nora responded, "Well, we won!"

Holland - (always Holland)

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## Remembering Nori

Fateful year

2001

- March - Nora diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease

- May - Last Europe Trip

Germany

Holland

September (no need to explain this obscenity)

2003

- October - Sedona - Shirley Macclaine group meeting

2009

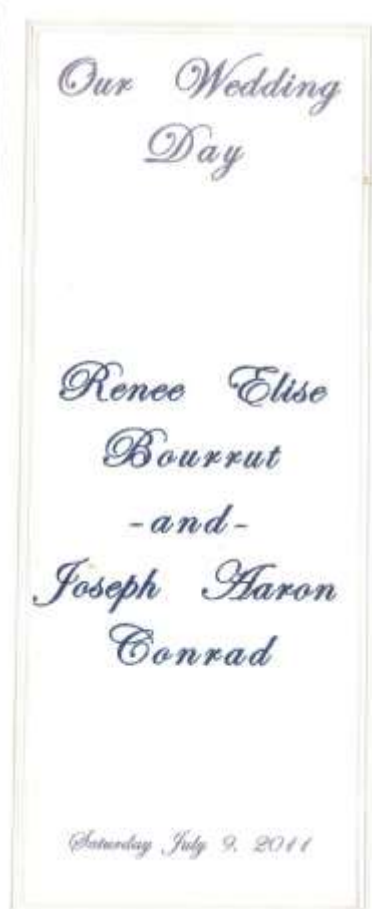
September October - 3 car accidents in 6 weeks

- side of car into rocks at Islip beach
  - rear-end guy's car
- head-on collision with tree in our driveway - car totaled
- Nora stops driving and turns in license

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# Remembering Nori 2011

## Renée and Joe marry



### *Our Wedding Party*

Rev. John V. Weicher ————Officiant  
and family friend of the Bride  
Associate Pastor at Swarthmore Pres., PA

Nora Bourrut ————Mother of the Bride

Maggie Conrad—Mother of the Groom

Harley Lever ————Best Man

Janna Brandon ————Groomswoman

Ken Conrad ————Father of the Groom

Sydney Conrad—Cook—Groomswoman  
and Sister of the Groom

Blaine Conrad ————Groomswoman  
and Sister of the Groom

Erika Lumbrá ————Matron of Honor

Eric Lumbrá ————Usher

Jean Weicher ————Bridesmaid

Daisy Baldwin ————Bridesmaid

Samantha Freeman ————Bridesmaid

Carson Cook ————Ring Bearer,  
Nephew and Godson of the Groom

Kingston Wesley Shillito ————Usher

Gloria Grace Shillito ————Flower Girl

Drew Bourrut ————Father of the Bride

### *Ceremony - Chuppah*

*It's your I Do*—by Fred Rodgers

Procession:

*Mimic in G-Dach, Canon in D-Pachelbel.*

*Baronby Waltz-Brian Evans*

- ◆ Greeting
- ◆ Prayer
- ◆ Declarations of Intent
- ◆ Affirmation of the families
- ◆ Affirmation of the congregation

**Reading**—Kaja Koenig—Cousin of the Bride:  
"Das Ererbe" by Richard Demel 1908

**"Recipe for Marriage"**—Translation from German.

The man of the house, as was understood, was probably the one who wore the pants, but nowadays that's hard to tell, as both are wearing trousers. To keep the marriage going harmoniously, I will give the woman good advice, with caution, be a diplomat. The clever woman, with much thought, keeps an eye out for his hauntem. If there is a thunderstorm on the horizon, you better get out of his way fast. Keep the mystery of a woman and never expose too much. Then his curiosity will prevail and he will keep on fighting for you. Tell her often that you love her, would give your life for her, and do not make her jealous. She will reward you for it. This recipe will come true for whoever will follow it with honor, because a happy harmonious marriage always depends on reciprocity.

**Reading**—Scott Shillito—Friend of the Bride:  
"Love is like owning a dog" by Talor Malt

**Meditation**—Rev. John V. Weicher

- ◆ Blessing of the Hands
- ◆ Vows
- ◆ Exchange of Rings
- ◆ Unity Sand Ceremony

**Breaking of the Glass**

Congregation: *"mazel tov!"*

**Bubbles send off**

Recessional:

*Say Rev. Michael Fanti & Spiritual*

**Special thanks to Grandma Jo, and our parents for their support and love and for making this wedding happen**



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**Remembering Nori**  
2011/2012

Renée is pregnant



Nora loved this picture

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## Remembering Nori

May 12, 2012 - The Boys are born

End of May - Our last plane trip - Seattle to see the boys



Hallucinations

We can't talk about Nora without remembering her terror.

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## Remembering Nori

It started on the day we returned from seeing the infant boys. She went to lie down; I went into the family room and rested in my chair.

Some hours later Nora came in the room saying, "I came to join the party." I asked, "What party?" She responded, "All these people." I said, "There are no people. Just you and me."

Thus began months of terror for Nora and me.

### Highlights

- Nora sees people filling the house
- Nora sees a woman with green hair  
(some years later I realized she was seeing a hanging plant)
- The axe-murderer

One night I luckily woke up as Nora ran (parkies can't run but she did) around the bed and down the hall to the front door. At the front door I tackled her. She collapsed to the floor asking, "Are we dead yet?"

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## Remembering Nori

2013

Pimavanserin

Shortly after the beginning of 2013 Nora was entered into a trial of a new drug to treat Parkinson hallucinations.

Within days they were gone. A few years ago they came back but as long as she took her pills they were mild and she knew that they weren't real and she was no longer afraid.

We can't thank the Acadia company enough for that medicine. Without it she would have lived in terror and have been institutionalized.

Nora and I are introduced to Sandy Hawthorne (Softball Catcher extraordinaire!) and begin a relationship that still continues.

Sandy's help 3 days per week; then four; then five brought much joy to Nora and much help to me (Drew).

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## **Remembering Nori**

Nora is becoming quite bent over she looks like a number

seven **7**

Dr Friedling insists something is wrong and wants Nora to go to another neurologist, Dr. Bruce Mayerson.

After the visit Mayerson speaks with Kreitzman and Nora is tested for Myasthenia-Gravis. Not only is the test positive but within hours of taking the first pills she is upright.

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## Remembering Nori

2014

Nora had started to get very depressed. She hadn't seen her daughter or grandkids for awhile. I looked for a solution knowing she can't fly. The answer: purchase a used motorhome.



We spent an unscheduled week in Rapid City, SD when the transmission died coming down the road from Mt Rushmore after seeing the four wise guys.

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## Remembering Nori

2015

Nora spent a week in the hospital with pneumonia and then 6 weeks in rehab.

2016

Drew has a triple bypass. Nora spends a month in Alexandria, VA living with Renée, Joe, and the boys.

“Mom, please sit down... Mom, please sit down.”

Fun time for Renée

2017

Nora has started to severely decline

2018

May - we travel to Montclair, VA for the boys birthday. Trip down and back not fun as Nora's dementia causes her to do things like trying to open the passenger side door at 70 mi/hr.

July - Nora is no longer walking. We wheel her wherever we go.

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## **Remembering Nori**

December - Nora collapses and is hospitalized for 11 days with pneumonia and blood clots in one lung.

Nora is released from hospital and starts a program of inhouse care via Kindred At Home.

2019

Friday Jan 11 - Nora stops responding. No response Saturday or Sunday.

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> - Sandy brings Nora to consciousness and Nora spends the next days ravenously eating and drinking.

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> - In the evening Nora again lapses into unconsciousness.

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> - Renée walks into the bedroom to say goodnight to Nora and Nora's eyes open. Everyone there is stunned.

Renée calls Katja and says, "Katja, speak German to



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## **Remembering Nori**

Nora." She does and Nora smiles. We spend the evening joyously and the next morning she has passed.

~ ~ ~

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## **Remembering Nori**

The people in Nora's life these last years

Sandy Hawthorne



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## Remembering Nori

That picture says so much. Look how engaged Nora is. Sandy was the one person who could bring Nora out of her dementia shell.

And if you think Nora's time in these last years had no bright spots. Take a look at this picture.



Sandy used to take Nora for rides. Look at Nora's joy.

Sandy we love you

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## **Remembering Nori**

Sandy's approach to Nora was unique. In 2013 I was looking for someone to primarily be a companion to Nora. Sure, there was me but it was not enough.

Nancy Gardella was/is the nurse for Dr. Kreitzman, Nora's Parkinson's specialist. I had mentioned looking for someone to her and she wanted to know if I would consider her niece Sandy.

We tried others and while we had some wonderful people help us:

Moez Azziz - now studying in Albany

Kathy Capuano - down the  
block

Maria - briefly

it was Sandy who was key.

Dr. Kreitzman - neurologist specializing in Parkinsons

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## **Remembering Nori**

Disease. He proved to be instrumental in giving Nora as much quality of life as she could have

Dr. Mayerson - neurologist - instrumental in diagnosing Nora's Myasthenia-Gravis

The people of Acadia and their advertising agencies - (thanks Jessica) - Their Pimavanserin (now sold under the name Nuplazid) for keeping Nora sane when she was having terrible hallucinations

Dr. Steve Friedling - the best doctor anyone could ask for. For keeping Nora on a good path for as long as possible.

Maple Pharmacy - Thank you Nina - for keeping things together when renewals weren't always there or for helping battling the insurance companies.

Friends in no particular order

Kaz - for being a joyful presence in Nora's life. Popping in from time-to-time and for those dinners that got Nora out of the house.

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## **Remembering Nori**

Chris - For being a very old friend although not the oldest.

D and B - for being there year after year until D got trapped recently in Virginia - get better D.

Joel and Susan Brenner - long time friends (the JewBu's) for all they did including putting us up when we needed a place to stay when that hurricane attacked.

Grace - who Nora thought of as Durga. Yoga teacher extraordinaire, but more importantly, friend.

Joe Gardella - when we needed a ramp.

Nancy Gardella - if for nothing else, giving us Sandy. But also for being an encouragement to Nora

The other Hawthornes - for all your support.

The Weichers - putting up with us for many years (Alice Weicher and D are Nora's oldest close friends)

And on and on....

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## Remembering Nori

*Renée and I thank you all for your thoughts and help.*



*Painting by Kasmira Mohanty*

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# Remembering Nori

## Hairball

### INSPIRED BY COME-AGAIN MOON

A poet and song writer whom I met on [www.ShirleyMaclaine.com](http://www.ShirleyMaclaine.com)

"Kghrh- ughn - kgeck - szipfh --"

If we could use a sponge or cloth  
To take a bath each day  
We wouldn't be accused of sloth  
You wouldn't have to spray!

"Kghrh- ughn - kgeck - szipfh --"

And oh, our throats would not constrict  
To purge ourselves each time  
We then could socialize and sit  
Instead of spewing slime!

"Kghrh- ughn - kgeck - szipfh --"

The HAIRBALL is a special scourge  
For cats whose fur is long  
So please excuse this vile urge  
And join us in this song!

"Kghrh- ughn - kgeck - szipfh --"

Nori  
2004



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## **Remembering Nori**

*I hope this helps a bit to remember Nori.*

*Drew*

*(Nori, I miss you so much)*

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