

I'm sorry I can't be with all of you today to celebrate Thea Eleni's life. I wanted to send some thoughts which I am sure others share.

I never heard Thea Eleni say an unkind word about anyone. I never heard her complain. I never heard her express self-pity or feelings that she deserved something better or that she was owed something. She always had a smile for everyone. You always felt that she wished the best for you. She was, as my mother said, "a very nice person."

Although she played the role of a woman of her times, not to express or to even have opinions in public, to serve her children and grandchildren, her reserved smiling persona belied a very keen nature. And she could be very quick on her feet. I remember one time in October 1962, when my mother was in the hospital recovering from her 6th Cesarean, Thea Eleni, Vageli and I were riding up an elevator to the ICU to visit. Kostaki was already there with my father, because he was 13 and you had to be thirteen to visit. I was only 12. But this day we thought I should try to visit; my mother's condition was quite precarious. An orderly who was riding up with us, a big, gruff sort of man, seeing a sign on the wall that read, "No children under 13 years of age allowed to visit", looked at me and asked accusingly, "How old are you?"

"Thirteen," I replied.

The orderly seemed about to challenge me when Thea Eleni, looked at me, looked at the sign and put 2 and 2 together. "Oh, yes," she said. "He's just 8 days older than my son Jim here". End of discussion.

I know we will miss Thea Eleni. But I hope we can take some comfort in remembering the positive wishes she always conveyed to all of us.

Love,

Petro