



Elisa Yago Sarte

May 2, 1925 - January 19, 2014

Elisa and her twin sister Flora was born on May 2, 1925. The 10th child of her Mother Alipia Viti Natividad and the fifth child for her father Damaso Ibara Yago. Her early childhood was spent in their hometown of Hawi on the big island of Hawaii. After her parents separated, Damaso took Elisa, and her younger siblings Magdalena and Melicio to relocate on Oahu. Soon after their arrival they attended Waipahu High School, but times were difficult and eventually had to drop out and to work cutting sugar cane, laundry and ironing to make ends meet. It was not until she went to high school when she obtained her birth certificate than her name was not 'Alice'. Throughout her childhood her parents called her Alice.

While working for the sugar company in 1940, a field worker, Mena Salgado Sarte saw interest in her. As time went by he made numerous attempts to court her. Finally Mena asked Damaso if he could take his daughter on a Sunday outing and anywhere she would like to go.

Mom chuckles as she would tell me where she went on her first date. That Sunday afternoon she wanted to get some flowers and visit her Godmother. The only catch was that she laid in her grave. So their first date was to a cemetery.

On August 8, 1941 they married. On December 2, of that same year, she gave birth to their first child, a son Jaime, at The South Shore Hospital (later renamed Leeward Hospital) in Aiea. While still in the hospital, the start of WWII began as she witness the bombing of Pearl Harbor from the maternity ward window that early Sunday morning on December 7. Bullets had even rebbitted the roof of the hospital. The wide plantation style veranda laid the dead and wounded that afternoon. Her husband Mena was at work in the cane field and experienced planes that shot rounds at them. When they saw dirt flying up on the road, they ran for cover and scattered into the fields.

Three years later on November 5, 1944 a second son, Francisco Franklin arrived and a daughter, Andrea on January 23, 1946. Residing at the HSPA Waipo Experimental Sub Station Camp (currently the site of New Waipahu High School) in Waipahu, she took on laundering and ironing the laborers clothes to earn extra money while caring for the children. On January 29, 1950, a fourth child, Jovann (John) was born.

In 1954, the family moved to Halawa Heights in Aiea and that same year on April 13 a

daughter, Florence was born. With a mortgage, five children and three attending St Joseph Catholic School she went to work at CPC Pineapple Company picking pineapple in the fields. Later she grabbed an opening to work in the cannery as a trimmer which was less strenuous. Later she got a position with Hawaiian Aeronautics who was contracted for custodial of the old Airport on Lagoon Dr. for the night shift crew and still kept her position at the cannery for several seasons. After Hawaii Statehood, the State Department took over and converted the employees to State Workers.

In 1965, a position at St Francis Hospital Housekeeping department was offered to her. A decision she had to make because it was a full time day position. She was already working full time at night. She went for it and had to adjust her daily routine. Working 10:00pm to 6:00am at the airport and go directly to St Francis to start at 7:00am to 4:00pm, then fight the traffic to get home just before 5:00, have dinner and a bath and eyes shut by 6:00pm for three hours and back up at 9:00pm. This routine began Sunday night through Friday Afternoon. This has gone on for over thirty hard working years. Elisa did not take the weekends for any time for relaxation. After work on Fridays, at times she would drive to Waipahu to pick up her four grandchildren, drive them back to Halawa Heights and have dinner prepared by Grandpa Mena. If they did not have a bath yet she would make sure they do so. She would then get them back in the car at sunset and head down to Kam Drive Inn for a night at the movies. Who could still do this after working 16 hours for five consecutive days. She utilized her day offs to help friends and family and bring care packages to help them out.

In 1975, she got a chance to take her first long vacation with Mena. They went to Europe on the Fatima Pilgrimage Tour for six weeks through 14 countries. It was a memorable vacation, with just the two of them on their first honeymoon.

Throughout the years, she would frequent the mainland with visits to her family since four of them resided there.

Her energy on weekends was still strong and for a while sold soft drinks at the chicken fights at Uncle Merong's (Casimero Yadao) Filipino Food concession. Her oldest granddaughter, Jadolyn would be with Elisa and her job was to clip the bag of chips on the display rack and keep it full. Mom loved selling soda because as many of you know, she was the aluminum can lady. Weekends she would drive all over to different homes and pickup bags of cans. Many times you could see mounds of bags stacked high in our yard. In turn, she would give donators household supplies for their home. Swap meet was a specialty on weekends. She'd come home which looks like big bags of bargains, but no, it's bags of aluminum cans. Constantly helping others was one of her trademarks.

In 1989, she finally retired from the state with 30 years of service.

In July 1991 Mena suffered a stroke. Just three weeks short of their 50th Golden Anniversary. We all were going to California and have a celebration at Jaime's home in Somis.

In 1993, she retired from St Francis Hospital. I celebrated her retirement at our home with a party. That was the one and only time Dad was let out of the care home for one night. Although he laid upstairs in the bedroom, family and guests got to visit him throughout the early evening.

In 1995, after a vacation to the Philippines, that Memorial Day Mena passed away at 88 years old. For four years she did her ritual of going every day to feed him. Mondays I would go with Mom and bring Dad on an outing to Ala Moana Shopping Center. We would push him in his wheelchair to various stores, have lunch and the handivan would pick up the patients at Noon. If Mom could not be there to feed him, her sister Mary Dilag would go for her since she lived nearby the Care Home.

Throughout the years she continued to check in on family and friends always willing to help, going to swap meets and faithfully looking for aluminum cans to trade in. Her excuse is that it was her vacation trip money. If anyone she knew had passed, she faithfully went to pay her respects. Living with her, Jovann would know when she has attended a funeral. For dinner there would be a plate of Marion's catering food sitting on the counter. At times a plate would be there, two sometimes three times in one week.

In 2005, we celebrated her 80th birthday at a reception of 450 family and guests. During that week our first family reunion in remembrance of her Mother Alipia took place. Families from the outer islands and the mainland attended the five day event.

After living at her Lalawai Dr residence up Halawa Heights for 53 years, she sold it and relocated closeby in lower Aiea directly behind the old C&H sugar refinery property. After climbing all those steps at the old house, this new residence was much safer with level grounds and mostly cemented area. A smaller planting area for her to putter with less maintenance than her Lalawai Dr. property.

For Jovann being disabled and Elisa with a bad knee from surgery, they both roll around with walkers. It is a home which they are able to move about with ease. In the back yard a little sitting area just for two was situated under the mango tree where at times they would have a lunch break during their day in the yard and debate where to plant the banana tree. Being unable to drive did not stop her to go where she needs to be. She would always find a ride and if no one's available, her last resort is the handi van which she always complains, 'too bumpy' of a the ride.

As age takes its toll, Elisa suffered a stroke on January 15, 2013. It left paralyzed on her left side and remained bedridden for one year. During that time, Florence and Jovann cared for her until she fell weaker and started to refuse to eat. She was taken to Kuakini Hospital for lack of oxygen, on the second day she was transferred to a hospice nearby. We spent that Saturday and through the evening. On Sunday January 19, 2014, around 2:30pm Jovann and Florence arrived and within a half hour Elisa left peacefully. With both being there may have given her the security of peacefulness to let go.

Elisa always had that sense of humor, caregiving, willing to help, a workaholic but most of

all, a daughter, sister, aunt, wife, mother, grand, great, great great grandmother, cousin also a friend, fellow worker or just an acquaintance that she loved sharing herself with. Elisa went to heaven at the age of 88. Her loving husband Mena met his Maker 19 years before her at the same age of 88. They both were married on August 8, 8/08. For my memories of my two best friends and parents it will be infinity, the symbol of an eight. Her legacy leaves behind four generations (see family tree) to pursue and venture the world.

Her visitation will be held 8:45-9:30a.m Thursday February 13, 2014 at St. Elizabeth's Catholic Church; Eulogy will begin at 9:30 with Mass at 10:00a.m.; burial to follow 12noon at Valley of the Temples Memorial Park; In lieu of flowers please donations to Hurricane Victims of the Philippines; family requesting aloha attire to be worn.

Burial Information: Haven of Peace 3 - 681 - C -3

Cemetery

Valley of the Temples Memorial Park & Crematory

47-200 Kahekili Highway

Kaneohe, HI, 96744

Events

FEB **Visitation** 08:45AM

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St. Elizabeth Church

99-312 Moanalua Road, Aiea, HI, US,
96701

FEB **Mass** 10:00AM

13

St. Elizabeth Church

99-312 Moanalua Road, Aiea, HI, US,
96701

FEB **Interment** 12:00PM

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Valley of the Temples Memorial Park &
Crematory

47-200 Kahekili Highway, Kaneohe, HI,
US, 96744