A Tribute to Helen Krumm, by her granddaughter, Emme Hulm

‘Remembering mothers and grandmothers on Mother’s Day’

By Terri Lang

Mother’s Day is a time to appreciate and remember our mothers, our mothers’ mothers... and so on. A woman who lives with love, someone who is strong, kind, and talented. She knew how to give and when it was time to receive. She was a light in the world, a beacon of hope.

But the magic of family being together and being there for one another, is still there. Emme is grateful to her mother, Lisa, for providing that family-oriented lifestyle. Emme’s favorite memory from childhood is of her mother loving and treasuring most.

And I have those eyes.

Grandma Helen’s History

Grandma Helen was born on Nov. 18, 1929, in Ukraine, Russia. On Oct. 31, 1929, her family was deported to Bulgaria (Rohtecker) Feist. Helen mar- ried Eugene Feist in 1945, during World War II, Helen and her family, as well as many others, were displaced from Russia into Poland, and then into Germany. Helen’s husband Eugene, was killed shortly before they were free. After the American forces entered Germany, Helen began receiving care packages from Joseph and Katherine Krumm, Helen’s mother, from the United States.

So, she sat down, and aware that the one way she could express herself was through writing. The writing turned into a five-minute video that she would write for her family. Emme captured first place in the Emerging Filmmakers’ Competition at the Dakota Digital Film Festival in Bismarck.

Emme Hulm (daughter of Andy and Lisa Hulm of Fargo) is a grandson of the late Helen Krumm. In March of 2017, Emme made a video to award her first place in the Emerging Filmmakers’ Competition at the Dakota Digital Film Festival in Bismarck.

Helen Krumm loved gardening in her garden and cultivated an array of vegetables and flowers, especially marigolds. In 1995, Helen holds her granddaughter, Emme Hulm, in her flower garden.

On Oct. 10, 1994, Helen and Marie set sail from Bremerhaven, Germany, and arrived in Holland (the late Gerald Hulm), Ann (Dave Hageman, Hoven, S.D.), Mona (Frank Tank, Casselton), Lisa (Andy Hulm, Hagen) and Catherine. Helen passed away in 1994.

And, the freezer was always full of vegetables. She would have enough time to get all of the vegetables and flowers, especially marigolds. Among her greatest pleasures were being with her family, telling stories about her early years in Russia and Germany, which are also shared by Germans from Russian Heritage.

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Another trait that Emme seems to recall is a beautiful and talented filmmaker, who sat in a chair at family Christmas parties. It’s a trait that Emme inherited from her Grand- mother, a woman who was so good to her family. And she baked the world’s best chocolate chip cookies, handmade in her kitchen.

“Then I just thought, we did something so great that the two of us shared wasn’t one thing inside that house that was ordinary. But— I have eyes— and I’m very, very proud of that. I worry a lot about being strong enough or ambitious enough to know you know, just taking a plunge for better or for worse. In a sad ironic way, I think I’m going to die of my timid heart. But I think I’ll have my grandma, she was always really quiet. We would have this little 30 people family get-together, and there would be 30 people inside her house, kids and wrapping paper and food everywhere, and she would just sit in her rocking chair, reading a book, and just looking. And, I think, in a way, I’m kind of similar. I’m introverted and shy, and constantly pondering like ‘oh, do you think...’ I feel like that’s like that, maybe I’m too quiet or too weak, or don’t have this commanding presence or strength that will make me successful.

And what if I never go on an adventure? What if I am too afraid to do anything nobody ever remembers the quiet ones. But you know, when I think about my grandma, and the life she lead, and her eyes. They’re not shy or weak or tired or anything like that at all. Grandma’s eyes aren’t thoughtful because of any weakness or fainthearted- ness. And they are not silent. They speak of a beautiful and strong woman. A woman who lost her father at the age of 15, and her husband before the birth of our daughter, Daphne, who was diagnosed with the Statue of Liberty on Nov. 3, 1951. On Nov. 5, they arrived in Hague and lived with Joseph and Katherine Krumm, Helen’s mother, in America.

And she said, ‘Yah, that isn’t fair. You have nothing. You can’t get married here. You can’t have anything. You can’t stay here, you’re going to be a maid for the rest of your life. You have no money. You cannot get married here. But, um— I have her eyes— and I have those eyes. That is what I miss most about Grandma. I miss her eyes. I miss the way she would fly everywhere, and she would just sit in her rocking chair, reading a book, and just looking.

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Emme shares the story in that video with us, remembering and honoring her Grand- ma Helen. For Mother’s Day, we dedicate this article to all of those women in our lives who are special to us, and will always be.

My mom says I have my grandma’s eyes. They are not quite the same— they are more of a stormy gray color.

After she passed away, I remember the whole family came to meet together in her house. We kids were allowed to do anything we wanted to remember her by if we wanted. And I looked, but I couldn’t find anything I wanted. Nothing quite fit you know. And, I mean, you won’t find any- thing a person was inside one thing? And that’s my prob- lem. I just want something we had together, something special that the two of us shared. I think wasn’t one thing inside that house that was ordinary.

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In 1944, during World War II, Helen and her family, as well as many others, were displaced from Russia into Poland, and then into Germany. In this photo, Helen was in her early 20s.

And by expanding awareness of professional careers women are pursuing, her stories were admin- istered by Dakota Media Access (DMA) and managed by a volunteer steering com- mittee.

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Helen Krumm was a proud member of St. Mary’s Altar Society and worked at the church’s annual fall supper in the kitchen.

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Emme said.
Lisa tells Emme that she inherited grandma’s eyes—the eyes that tell her own courageous story—the eyes that show her independence, her joyfulness and her kindness.
One can only imagine how proud Grandma Helen would have been when her granddaughter, Emme, crossed the stage on April 29, 2017.
“She would just smile really sweetly, and I’d just know she was proud of me,” Emme said.
To view the video online, type https://vimeo.com/196688729 or go to the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection (GRHC) website, NDSU Libraries, library.ndsu.edu/grhc/links. On Facebook, like GRHC at https://www.facebook.com/ndsugrchc.

The Krumm family gathers every year around July 4 to shoot off a massive fireworks display for the public. They started doing that the year after Cathy Hulm (daughter of the late Joseph and Helen Krumm) was killed in a tragic motorcycle accident.

In her video, Emme talks about the huge Christmas’s at Grandma Helen’s home. “That is what I miss most about grandma, the family gatherings at her home, especially at Christmas time,” Emme said. This photo was from Christmas 1995.

Emme graduated from the University of Mary on Sat., April 29, 2017. Here, she is with her mom, Lisa, after the graduation ceremony. ‘Happy Mother’s Day, mom,’ from Emme.

Emme’s mom, Lisa, always told Emme that she had her Grandma Helen’s eyes. This photo was taken at Christmas time, 2004.