Irene Dumka (Nee Zellenskey/Glebow)

Irene passed away December 26, 2025. Irene was born on December 22nd, 1929, in Harbin, China to parents Boris and Valentina Glebow. When she was one year old, her family relocated to Shanghai, where she eventually graduated from Sacred Heart Convent and then Shanghai Business College. Irene's life in Shanghai was dominated by sports at the Soviet Sports Club, with her days spent playing Grass Hockey, Volleyball, Netball and Track and Field. She was the captain of some of those teams. She met the love of her life, George Zellenskey, at the Club on May 4th, 1949. The two were married in November of that year, and 500 people attended the wedding. Irene and George's first daughter, Valentina, was born on Feb 12th, 1951, and two years later, the family immigrated to Canada. Their second daughter, Victoria, was born on November 8th, 1953. George and Irene had a wonderful marriage of 36 years. George worked as a compositor for the Times Colonist and Irene in the insurance business. Sadly, George passed away from lung cancer after a short illness in 1986. Following George's passing, Irene went on a long trip to Australia to visit friends. Upon returning, she decided to volunteer at the Victoria General Hospital gift shop, a position she kept for 35 years. In 1987, Irene met Sam at a widow and widowers' ball, where they danced the night away. Sam proposed to Irene in front of the Fountain of Trevi in Italy, and on December 5th, 1987, they were married. Sam and Irene travelled the world many times over and lived life to the fullest. After 28.5 years of adventures together, Sam passed away in 2016.

Irene enriched the life of anyone around her and smothered her family with unconditional love and affection. She had 4 grandchildren: Andrew, Nicole, Maxwell and Duncan. They referred to her as Baba and thought the world of her. As a

Baba, Irene was impeccable, always being there for her grandchildren in any way she could. Be it family dinners, Christmas gatherings or vacations, she always found any excuse to bring the family together and spend as much time as possible with the ones she loved. In later years, she became a great grandmother to George, Kobe, Kruz, Elodie, Cohen and Turner. It brought her so much joy to have yet another generation to spread her love to, and she spent as much time as she could with each of them.

Irene was diagnosed with throat cancer at 90 but fought it off with radiation treatments and her strong will to have more time with us. She stayed active all the way up until the end, as a member of the CB55 club, playing ping pong, pickleball and going for regular walks. Her throat cancer returned at age 95. On December 22nd, 2025, she dressed in her wedding dress, had her makeup done by her granddaughter Nikki, and attended her 96th birthday party with the family, determined to celebrate one last time, as the life of the party. A few days later, on Boxing Day, she left us, just as bravely as she lived each day of her life and surrounded by all the people she loved most.

Irene’s final words were: “I love you all so much, more than you will ever know.”

But we know Baba, we know.

Irene is survived by her daughters Tina (Walt) and Vicky, grandchildren Andy, Nicole (Ryan), Max (Ali), Duncan (Alexis), and her great grandchildren George, Kobe, Kruz, Elodie, Cohen and Turner.

We will have a family Celebration of Life.

In Lieu of donations please buy flowers for someone you love, in honour of Irene!

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Gardens
www.mccallgardens.com

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