

Dr. Truda Rosenberg on her 90th Birthday
Ottawa
17 June 2012

Shalom, dear friends of Truda,

I have the challenge of being the first tonight to say something about our hostess to friends who know her so well and love her dearly.

Yesterday, I understand that Rabbi Charles Popke told his congregation that Truda would be ninety today. This provoked some shouts to the effect that she does not look that age. Never one-upped, as we all know, Truda announced that the protesters were simply not Jewish enough. Why? Because, as she said, “In a Jewish phrase, ‘fools do not grow old’.”

Let me read from Carleton Arts and Sciences Dean John Osborne’s Foreword to her book, *Unmasked*:

...Truda represents—more than anyone else I know—the quiet triumph of the human spirit in the face of unimaginable adversity and unfathomable evil...Like a Beethoven symphony, (her story) transcends the specifics of times and places, a hymn to the power of goodness, a celebration of that spark of divine creation that we call so simply “life”...I shall hope that all readers of this book will pause...and give thanks that some eighty-six years ago, the world witnessed the birth of Gertruda Osterman, who has been bearing witness to the human condition ever since.

We are all grateful as well to Annie Elliott, who persuaded Truda to write *Unmasked*, typed the manuscript and virtually sat on Truda until it was completed.

The Polish language book about her life will be out soon in Poland.

What is Truda doing these days? Well in the past week, she was hosted at a birthday event by the chair of the psychology department at the U of Ottawa. On Friday, she hosted at her office a meeting of a new group, seeking to improve the situation of immigrant women to Ottawa. In short, as you all know, she never rests.

Only today, she received a recently-published book from the Benedictine Priory in western Vermont. It speaks in part about the contribution of Truda’s late husband, Imre, and Truda to bringing faith communities together.

In short, Truda’s astonishing saga must continue.

A toast to our dear friend as she begins her next decade: