

Josephine Maria Riss Fang

100th Birthday Celebration



FOREWORD

On April 3, 2022, the Fang family celebrated their mother/grandmother's 100th birthday with a dinner party at Frank's house in Andover. Because of the concerns of Covid, the party was limited to just family. When summer came and the weather was warm enough to be outdoors, another party was held at Paula's house in Belmont. Friends and family were invited to it. Oma also had many people visit her during the year to wish her a Happy 100th Birthday.

I wrote a booklet for Oma's 90th Birthday which included her ancestors and her life in Austria. In a second booklet for Oma's 95th Birthday I included her life in the United States, including the many Fang family houses and her many travels. This booklet contains many photographs of Oma and her family and friends taken in the months since she turned 100.

Jim Crawford
December 20, 2022

www.craw.us/fang



Banquet room at Frank's house on Oma's 100th birthday.

Oma's speech at her 100th Birthday Party in Andover

Dear Family,

Thank you for being here to celebrate my 100th birthday with me. I find it very touching to see you in this intimate circle. The family would seem to be a small group of people, but yet it is quite a number! It seems strange to me that from my late husband and me such a number of members evolved.

But I am happy for this situation.

The Lord has been good to us.

10 wonderful children and some grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and that I have lived so long to enjoy them.

Today is my birthday: 100 years!

Please look at the interesting brochures for my 90th and 95th birthdays, compiled by my son-in-law Jim Crawford, which tell you more about my life.

Thank you for arranging this party and God bless you all for it!





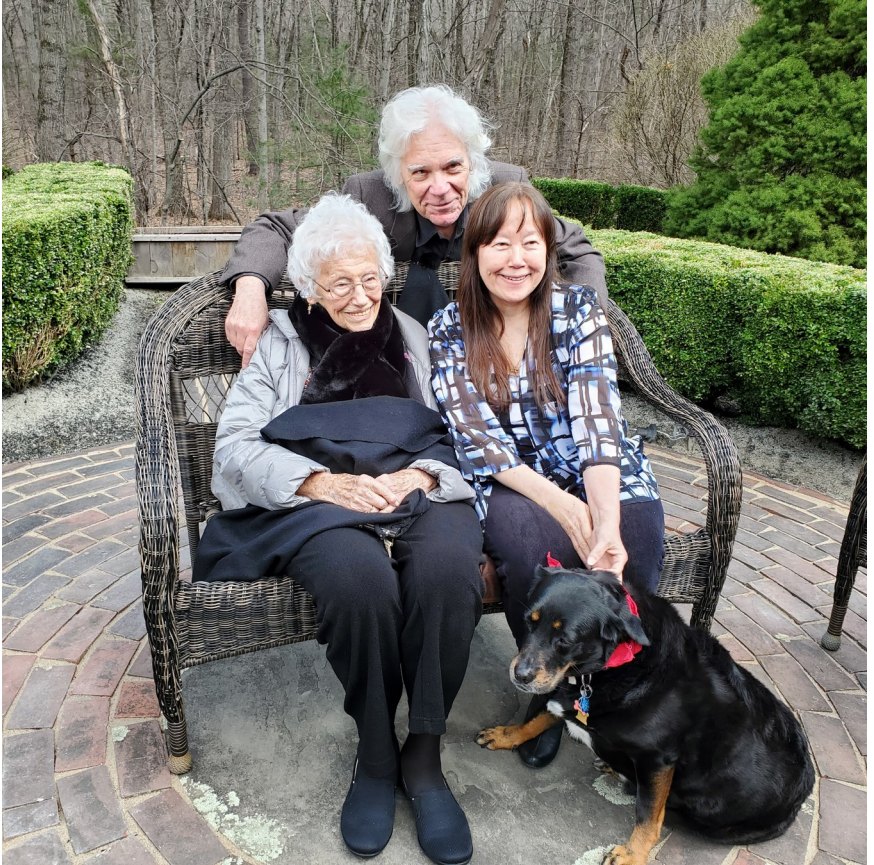
Greg Weisz, Alex, Paula & Ricki



Max shaved his beard for Oma's 100th



Zachary, Carolina, Nance, David, Killian & Ashleigh



Jim Sickels, Maria & Susie



Logan, Jim Crawford, Jamie, Raina & Anna



Jason, Peter, Gloria Smith, Harry Storer, Heather & Shelley



Emily Vogel, Piper, Stephen, Frank, Karen, Christina, Katherine, Brian Callahan, Cecilia, & Maddie



Teresa & Annie



Josephine, Bernadette & Paul Riss



Peter, Chris, David, John, Joe, Frank, Anna, Maria, Mom, Paula & Teresa

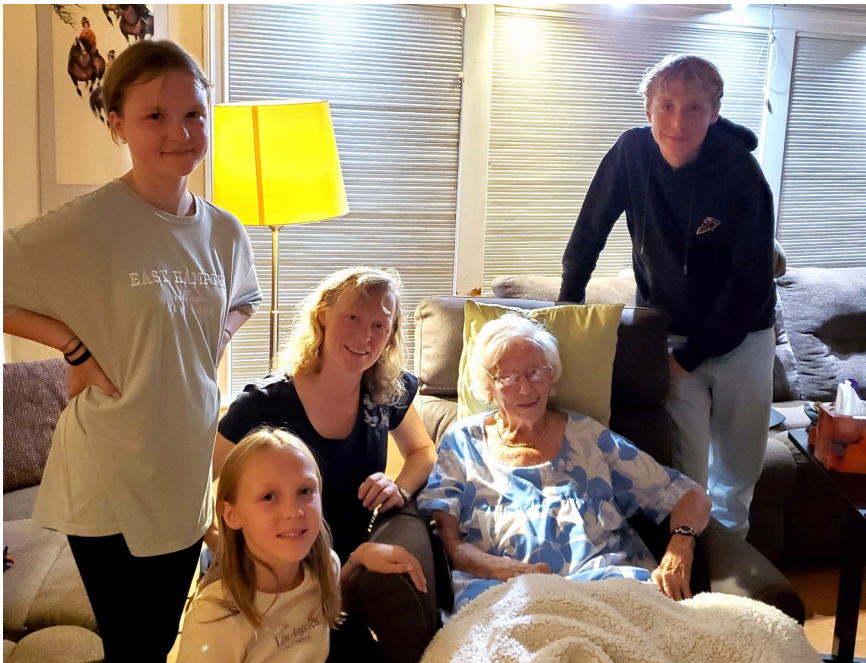


**Zachary, Carolina, Christina, Emily, Stephen, Logan, Ricki, Katherine,
Jamie, Heather, Annie, Alex, Brian, Harry, Jason,
Maddie, Cecilia, Raina, Oma, Shelley, Killian, Ashleigh**

The following pages show Oma with some of the Austrian and German visitors she had, and some of the many bouquets of flowers she received.



Dominik Riss, Tabea, Jonah, Miriam, Timon, Aaron & Josephine



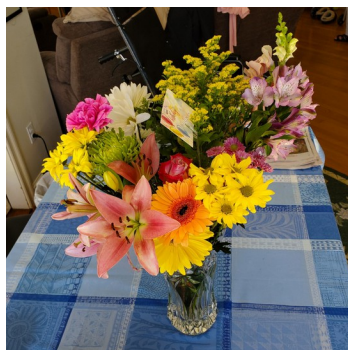
Clara, Tabea, Marit (Paula's German au pair), Josephine, Simon



Christl, Josephine, & Thomas Riss



Marlene, Karin, Josephine, Konsti & Stefan Riss



Speeches at Oma's 100th Birthday Party in Belmont

Greg: What I would like to do is to introduce my daughter, Julia Ricki Fang Weisz, to welcome you and say a few words about her grandmother, or Oma as they say in German.



Thomas, Susanne Lakits & Josephine

Ricki: Hey, everyone, great party today. Wow, this is a lot of people. It's a lot to take in, 100 years, and I'm not even 30 yet, I still have ways to go before I reach that mile mark of so many life-time experiences, and I'm still having a quarter life crisis. Well,



Emily,

Josephine, J.P.,

John,

Derek & Tecky

Oma, Happy Birthday! It's amazing! So I guess I'll start off saying 3 wonderful things I know about you. When I think about Oma, or as you know her as Josephine, she's got decades of experience, meanwhile I'm still learning and growing, living through a crazy world right now, but that doesn't sound too different from what Oma went through at her age or my age.

Honestly, that doesn't make much of a difference where we are currently, 100 and 26, because like I've only known her as Oma for the longest time. I'm sure she would be - I would have loved to meet everyone here at the same age, but it doesn't matter because she and I have a lot in common. In fact, she was there for me all my life.

We used to do exercises together even as Oma like taught me that. I made an effort to see her during that time, helped her keep moving even as things changed but to my surprise she was still active, she was strong in her own way, not even surprised actually. I was doubtful, I didn't push her. She was able to take care of herself. And even when she was tired I still didn't push her, she was still able to keep moving and when I saw that I realized to myself she's strong. She's strong in her own way, no matter the conditions, she's a trouper, and she still tried to be active no matter what the day, time and age. So whenever I think of Oma I think of that diligence, that determination to keep going.



Martha Stasa, Doris Freitag & Josephine

But then I think of another thing when I think of Oma. What follows her closely is her ability to connect with others. I'm sure you all see right now that she has made a lot of good friends and family over the years that maybe if this backyard were bigger, we could have maybe three times as many people but that's not the day today and obviously it's too hot anyway. But actually we have a lot of interests. We both love the arts, we both love animals, and we both have a very sharp sense of humor. But when I'm speaking to her, I'm not just speaking to her. I'm speaking to someone who knows me. Like when we discuss about our interests for example, it's how I express myself to her, how I can open myself to her, and she understands that, she understands it without understanding what I'm trying to say to her. She sees the weight of my interests, the internal emotion, what it means to me, and she recognizes why it is important to me. She sympathizes. And when I talk to her, I hear wisdom, I hear openness, and inspiration. She shares to me her experiences without even telling me why they are important. It just feels like, it feels right, it feels a connection.



Heli & Bill Tomford

When I hear her, she is able to help me figure out for myself what I want to do, not telling me what I should do, and in a way that is comfortable. And every time I come back to see her and speak with her more, I'm energized each time, I just keep

wanting to go back, not just to hear her again, but to maintain that connection, and even when I'm not with her, it's always there, it still stays with me, that passion, that motivation, that enthusiasm, that encouragement, and it's the same kind of encouragement she

imparts with other people, with not only her connections, but her ability to strengthen that connection. She has a love, an empathy, an aura, that she passes on to others without even telling them to do that and she's passed that love to us, not only her family, her kids, her grandkids, every one she interacts with she encourages them to open up. And I know that everyone makes a special effort to reach out to her, but she's also the one to initiate that effort to reach out to them in the first place. She evokes that kind of enthusiasm to care about others, the same thing that my Mom and Dad tried and try again. They are both retired now but they are still trying to look out for each other. And it's such a charitable attitude we couldn't live without that we can be thankful for.



Sherelyn Ogden, Katherine Dibble, Millie O'Connell & Yuko Kuno

But not only that, it encourages me to remember that like, when I think of Oma's empathy, I think of my own values, my own virtues my own compassion for others. It reminds me how powerful it is to share someone who is special to you, who loves you, and that has become a core part of myself to sympathize with others. Not just that, not only Oma's determination though, not only her compassion, those are strengths of hers, but that is not it. Those are not the only two parts of her when I think of Oma.

But perhaps the third and most crucial part that makes up her as a whole, that I don't know what would happen, but honestly, better not think what would happen, because these past few years, I know you are all aware of all the crazy hiccups, raging epidemic, having

people come and go, and we've seen bad stuff happen, a lot of things we can't explain, we can't describe why they happen, and sometimes we feel like blaming ourselves or blaming someone else, because we are so scared and confused and lost, but Oma, every time, she hasn't given in to that, she has remembered to look on the bright side, that no matter how scary things get, she never stops looking up, she never stops looking forward, she always remembers the things that are most important in life, that even when it is hard to believe, never once try to doubt yourself, not try to doubt other things, not even try to say something else and make yourself feel worse about it, but instead take the moment to look at the things that are special in life that you already have, things you have gotten, and yes that things you have lost, but that is what makes it all the more special to remember and right now there are still so many things we can be thankful for. Like we can be thankful for meeting Oma, for knowing Oma, but we can also be thankful for meeting the people Oma knew and making new friendships and new connections because of her. And remember that, no matter how crazy it gets, be thankful for that. Always look on the bright side. Always don't forget to remember that hope. And that there are people out there who love you, who care about you.



J. P.

&

Heather

So let's all take a moment to look back, to be thankful for all of those things. Be thankful the person who made it, who if she hadn't have been around these past 100 years, wouldn't be the same day as it is now. Same beautiful day, same day we can all be together, celebrating. Thank Oma. Let's give her a moment of congratulations. Thanks, Oma, I love you. Happy Birthday.

Greg: First of all, cheers to Ricki for such a nice speech. Nailed it. Actually, I know you are all hanging on my every word, but I did promise somebody they could come up and say a few words. And there he is over there now, you can see him in whatever language you want, but he has been nominated. How about a big round of applause for Christoph Riss.



Christoph Riss & Josephine

Christoph: Are you going to translate if I speak in German? Liebe Tante Sefi, danke. Thanks for being you, for being here. For having been here all your life for us. For making it possible for, even with this big family that you have on your own, to make it possible for the family abroad, for us in Austria, for connecting, even with each other because I saw my cousin Susanne, my other

cousin, we see each other more often coming here than we see each other in Vienna. This is exactly what makes it so special coming here, not just for our interest in the U.S. which comes from you. When I talk with colleagues at work they envy me for having family here because views of the U.S. outside the U.S. vary. I can only repeat what Ricki said: you taught us all to open and not to get out of this envy and live and have something good and have somebody envy you, but share the wealth and the wisdom and generosity you always taught us to, not taught us but just gave it to us with natural, to share it with friends and family. On my own I was able to bring friends to Thanksgiving Day, that's not normal. So it was always great coming here. I always tell to friends, it's like going to - I'm living in Vienna now, it's the capital of Austria and my Mom lives outside in the town sort of like Belmont is to Boston - coming here to Belmont is like going to visit my Mother in Moedling. I just come here - it's a little bit longer ride - I just hang around, it's just family, I feel welcome and it's not just me it's both family and friends just come here, and the greatest things about your family, and that's what you made possible. So thank you for that openness and generosity and for making it possible for all of us. Thank you very much, Tante Sefi.



Rosemarie Scully



Millie O'Connell & Josephine

Greg: Thank you, Christoph. This is, some of you know, is the second 100th birthday party for Tante Sefi or Oma or Josephine.

The first one was, of course, because of Covid we had to limit it in size to be indoors. The only reason she agreed to have that then was if she had a party later in the summer for friends - she said, "but what about my friends?" - and we see the guest list of 65 people, 100 years old with 65 friends, I don't think I have 6 friends come to my birthday party. But anyway, obviously she wanted to have all of you come because she cares deeply about all of you. As Ricki mentioned, well as Ricki and Christoph mentioned, we all know Sefi is a very special person. There is nobody you would rather celebrate good times with, and nobody you would rather have with you when you are going through a difficult time, which unfortunately we are going through a tough time now. You know when you go through a tough time - I know in the past when I have gone through a tough time and I have talked with Sefi, and she said, "you count your blessings", that's how she could get through it, she'd count your blessings, that is what we are counting here. Each and every person here is one of her blessings, one of the people she wanted, she wanted each and every one, so you are all one of her blessings. You are the reason she gets through tough times. Well I am too.



Aiqi & Josephine

When we were planning the other party we did ask her, do you want anybody to give speeches, anybody standing here, and she only had one request. She said to me, "none of your jokes." It's true. But I couldn't, but I do agree with Ricki very much that my

Schwiegermutter has a very sharp and sometime devilish sense of humour. So of course she doesn't want me to tell any jokes, I won't tell any of MY jokes, so I'll tell you one of her jokes. I don't know how I remembered this joke. It was quite a while ago, it was probably in the 80s she told me this joke. She said, forgive me, I've had a little wine and didn't get much sleep last night, got more than I should have, so the joke she said was comparing Heaven and Hell. I don't think she really used that word, but Heaven and ... you know, and she said Heaven is a Chinese cook, a Japanese wife, an English house, and American salary. And the other place is an American wife, a Japanese house, an English cook, and a Chinese salary. (thank you Joe). That was a joke. Now she didn't say anything about the Austrian friend or Austrian mother-in-law or Austrian wife, but I'm sure they were all in the Heaven category. That was her little joke. Now I did happen to relate this to Susan Tang, who is a very dear friend of Paula's family, and she said "you forgot the Filipino maid". So anyway, that was Josephine's joke, so I apologize if I, I think I conformed to the rules. Times were different then, you could get away with more then.



Kimberly Kamborian & Marianne Jacobbi

Anyway, I do want to welcome everybody and thank everybody for coming, because you are truly the light of her life, and therefore

the light of our lives. Nobody could ask for better. Cheers. Now she did want to go last, she has her own remarks but if anybody else wants to say a few words - any volunteers? Going once, sold.

Jim: I just want to remind everybody, please sign the guest book. It's there at one of those tables. It would be nice if everybody who was here today would sign it today. Thank you.



Judy James, Jillie, Catalina

Greg: Let's thank Jim for being the family archivist. Cheers to Jim. Thank you Paula for organizing this and being the love of our life. Without further ado.

Oma: Dear Family and Friends,

Thank you for being here to celebrate my 100th birthday with me. This year is my birthday. 100 years! 10 decades! Every day is a birthday celebration. The Lord has been good to me. Ten wonderful children, numerous grandchildren and even great-grandchildren; and I have lived so long to enjoy them. And so many dear friends are here today to celebrate. I was born in Saalfelden in the province of Salzburg in the Alps, and ever since I have cherished the mountains. Please look at the interesting brochures for my 90th and 95th birthdays, compiled by my son-in-law Jim Crawford, which tell you more about my life. Thank you for arranging this wonderful party and God bless you all for it! Please don't forget to sign my guest book at the table. Also I enjoy talking to you individually so please come and visit me!

I love you all!



**Mary Ann Hale, Christine Reynolds, Laura Walters, Josephine,
Diane Couloupoulos, Katherine Dibble & Anna
WNBA women**



**Laura Walters, Diane Couloupoulos, Doris Freitag, Josephine, Katherine
Dibble, Heli Tomford, Christine Reynolds, Pam Banks**



Back row: Chris, Stephen, Zachary, Christina, David, Jamie, John, Logan, Jim C., Frank, Annie, Harry, Heather, Jason, Brian, Katherine, Bernadette

Front row: Emily, Teresa, Carolina, Nance, Raina, Anna, Alex, Paula, Greg, Ricki, Karen, Shelley, Gloria, Peter, Joe, Maria, Jim S.

Seated: Ashleigh, Killian, Paul, Josephine, Cecilia, Maddie