As many of will know, my grandma was one of the best speech makers - whether at some important board of deputies meeting or high holy day at shul or a small family gathering, we have all been moved and influenced by her poignant words. She always managed to find the right tone and just the right amount of wit and humor. So to speak at her funeral as her eldest granddaughter is quite a daunting task. But I’ll do my best, nana.

I believe I can speak for all of Renee’s grandchildren here, that in the simplest terms, nana was everything a nana should be and more.

She took time to carve out a loving, meaningful and individual relationship with each and every one of us. We all had our time with nana, to play together, discover new things with her and to listen and soak up her wisdom, her wit and her endearing quirks.

Nana always talked about herself as being plain and ordinary. But there was nothing ordinary about nana. She was special and above all lots of fun.

As a child, she would often delight me with a dinner menu when I would come over after school. It would read something like this:

Bubble and squeak

Egg with soldiers

And Nana’s Mush (she could never get her meatballs to hold their shape).

Nana didn’t believe in toys, yet she had a knack for effortlessly turning everything into a fun game. We’d build tents from bed sheets, play table tennis on her dining room table, collect sticks and stones and worms which we’d keep on her balcony. It wasn’t uncommon for nana to say to us, ‘come on, put your coat on, we’re going outside to run and scream’. And we’d do exactly that.

Nana always had her grandchildren at the fore of her heart and mind. She would collect odds and ends for what she called the modelling cupboard. This was an entire cupboard in Nana’s kitchen devoted to stashing old cartons, egg boxes, toilet rolls and scraps of paper and card which my brother and i would use to fashion into all kinds of models.

She would keep stale bread in her freezer for us to feed the ducks with and stash odd buttons in a jar for that special time that she would first teach us how to use buttons (instead of money) to play blackjack. Nana was always very proud about teaching her grandchildren how to gamble. She said you can learn an important life lesson from gambling which is to accept the cards that life hands you. And at the very least you’ll learn how to add up to 21.

Nana taught me so many things; how to read music, how to sew, how to knit and how to play scrabble and even golf. She took me to my first ballet, my first pantomime, my first art gallery and so much more. While my parents were busy setting up our new life here in England, nana was an integral part of what was probably a huge transition for myself and my brother at the time. Moving to a new country, starting a new school, making new friends etc. I don’t remember too much of that time of my life, yet I vividly and fondly remember the experiences I had with nana. The creativity and sense of fun she imparted and the love and devotion she has given each and every one of her grandchildren remain within each one of us.

As adults, we all continued to enjoy her company, enjoying art and theatre together, playing scrabble, watching the football, the golf, the snooker, the tennis and even the boxing, often while eating nana's favorite - fish and chips. With nana, we all felt at home. Understood. And accepted. Even if I’m sure at times it’s debatable as to whether she really accepted our life choices, we all felt her unconditional love. And for that I’ll be eternally grateful.

I’m especially thankful that my 3 children got to know and spend time with nana. They always knew a visit to nana would include an open invitation to the biscuit tin and a chance to make a mess without reprimand. In fact, after arriving home from my last visit to my grandma at whipps this week, my 3 year old who hasn’t seen her since April asked ‘did she give you a biscuit?’

There is a lot more I could say about my grandma, especially her devotion to her grandchildren and her family in general, but I think I’ll end with a quote that she herself often used.

Imagine for a moment a stone being gently dropped into a still pond, sending ripples outward in all directions. Similarly, when a person dies their spirit has the power to create a ripple effect that extends far beyond, touching every aspect of our lives.

Nana, I’m sure I can speak for every person standing here today, that the ripples you have created in your life will continue to reach far and wide for many years to come.

Thank you for everything nana. Nobody does nana better than you. We love you and will miss you dearly.