

Written + delivered  
by her son, Gary  
(11-2-12)

## FINAL WORDS FOR VIRGINIA PATRICIA MCGARRY WILL

My mother, nicknamed "Jen", was born on January 16, 1914 on the west side of Syracuse. She acquired the genes of the McGarry and O'Brien clans. Her mother passed away when Jen was an infant. Her Irish heritage and catholic religion meant a lot to her. She was Irish from the word go. She had three brothers, Frank who died at 11 months, Clem the oldest and Bob the youngest. All are deceased now. She also had a sister Margaret whom she loved dearly and was nearly heart broken when she passed away a few years ago. She grew up in a unique time of American history. She lived through the Great Depression, WWI and II, the Roosevelt and Kennedy eras, Valentino, Babe Ruth, Garbo, men on the moon, the Four Horsemen of Notre Dame, the advent of TV and so much more. Indeed, she was part of Tom Brokaw's book, "The Greatest Generation". Her upbringing included a rather strict household, which was ruled by a single parent. Her respect and admiration for her father was undeniable.

She was a high school basketball player and cross country runner. Upon graduating from Vocational High School she immediately found a job at NYC Freight, however was not fond of it. This was followed by employment at B.F. Goodrich as a typist. She moved onto Rudolph's Jewelers and in fact helped start a store in Watertown. Her modeling career commenced about the age of 21 when she was asked to wear a rather famous piece of jewelry, the Yonker diamond necklace. She was attracted to clothes which led her to the Addis Co., an upscale department store. She worked at this store as well as the one in Dewitt for nearly 50 years. During this time and for about 18 years she was a top model on the local TV show called, "Fashions at Luncheon". She was a hard worker and traveled to New York City to find and acquire the newest fashions for women in the Syracuse area. She was 80 when she retired. She was a conscientious worker and often brought work home. I remember this because she taught me how to add the figures on her cost/sell and profit margin sheets. Calculators had not been invented and in the early 1980's thought it unnecessary to have a computer ring up a sale. But she was a quick learner and at the same time gave the IT department at Addis's a run for their money. At the outset of WWII she met a guy, Bernard Will, who served at Pine Camp, now called Fort Drum. They fell in love, could only marry after the war, according to her father, did, and later had one son. Like other middle class parents in the '40's, '50's and '60's they worked and didn't have much time for recreation. Their love for each other was very apparent, consuming and unconditional. She inherited and later passed on to me her love of the outdoors. First and foremost was her fascination for flowers. Gardening was a passion and the residences on Candee Ave and Bryn Mawr fueled this intense interest. Mom and Dad loved to entertain friends whether it be cookouts in the back yard and at Onondaga Park with Jess and George Bushnell or a fancy Sunday dinner with my aunt, uncle and cousin. She often reflected on these occasions.

When not outside she enjoyed a little TV, especially the Lawrence Welk show and sports. She loved SU football and basketball. She was thrilled when watching Tyler, her grandson, play a championship football game at the Dome. Speaking of sports and being Irish, she enjoyed betting and watching the horses at Saratoga as well as Vernon Downes. Usually, it was the dollar wagers with family and friends that caught her interest. A couple of years ago she won our bet on the Super Bowl. She reminded me of this when Tyler and I made a visit. She demonstrated her Irish generosity by instructing me to hand Tyler the dollar bill. While at Van Duyn she developed an addiction--- bingo! She loved to win and hated to loose. Sound like anyone you know? And Eddie, need any more stuff dogs?

Mom's lack of patience was probably the only negative thing she gave me. Along with being 51% Irish, according to her, all my poorer qualities were blamed on my English, Dutch and French lineage on dad's side of the genetic chart. Mom never gave up on me. She constantly helped me with homework. My studies at CBA did not come easy for her or me. She was the one responsible for me attending the College of Forestry. Dean Harrison Payne, at SUNY ESF would never forget her. Mom didn't like the word "No". So when Dean Payne said I don't think he's qualified she began to cry and protest. After 10 minutes of this suffering I was given a chance to attend ESF. Eddie Downes can also attest to mom's persuasive advice as it pertained to education.