

**Eulogy delivered at the funeral of Nikola Boyadjieff (Nov 9 1920 – Oct 8, 2014)  
on October 11, 2014**

Two days after he was admitted to hospital last week, my father told us that he wanted to plan a party. He said that he wanted to invite all of his family and his close friends. He would be so pleased that all of his family and so many of his close friends have gathered to say good bye and remember his life here today at his final party.

My father was born in the village of Smilantsi in Macedonia in 1920. He and my mother were married in 1946. In 1947, while in the army, he escaped from Macedonia and made his way to Canada via Greece and Italy. Although it must have been difficult, he recounted the story of his immigration with many happy memories: the dog he had in Greece, the wonderful pizza in Naples, Italy. In 1949, he finally departed Naples by boat for Canada. Landing in Halifax, he went first to Stratford Ontario, where he worked on a farm for a year, and then made his way to Toronto. My father worked hard all his life and did many different things. When he moved to Toronto in the early 1950s, he helped build the subway, he worked on a mushroom farm, in a glue factory, he drove transport trucks, and finally he went to work at Pilkington Glass, where he worked all his life until his retirement. He made wonderful friends at Pilkington Glass and attended the company's annual summer picnic for retirees all his life. In his last few days of life, he was so happy to have visits from some of the men he worked with at Pilkington.

My father came to Toronto during the first wave of immigration from Macedonia in the late 40s and early 50s. This Macedonian immigrant community settled in the Cabbagetown/Regent Park area, and the centre of their religious and cultural community was St. George's Macedonian-Bulgarian Orthodox Church on Regent Street. Following St. George's, my father was the founding president of Holy Trinity Church. He was devoted to Holy Trinity, working hard as president of the church for many years. He was also a dedicated supporter of the Macedonian Patriotic Organization throughout his life.

After 12 years apart, my mother was finally able to join my father in Canada in 1958. I was born in 1959 and Peter in 1960. He and my mother made sure that we learned about our Macedonian-Bulgarian heritage – my father took us to Bulgarian school every Saturday, we went to church every Sunday and sang in the church choir, and other choirs. He took very good care of his family, here and in Macedonia.

My father was a very strong man. He was physically strong until the very last days of his life. He was also strong in his opinions and beliefs, rarely backing down when he

decided something, which was sometimes difficult for us as young people. As I look back on his life's decisions now, though, it appears that he was usually right.

My father had a full and vigorous life. He loved many things:

- He loved his family – his wife, his children, his grand-daughters, his many nieces and nephews and grand-nieces and nephews.
- He loved Sunday lunch with his family around him.
- He loved Smilantsi, and he was so lucky at the end of his life to be able to see Smilantsi through videos that were taken by our cousins who visited there. He could watch those videos all day. And he was thrilled to hear stories of Smilantsi from people who visited.
- He loved visiting Stratford.
- He loved grocery shopping.
- He loved playing cards.
- He loved his church.
- He loved his home and he never wanted to leave it. Our family is grateful to the wonderful caregivers who made it possible for he and our mother to remain at home, as he wanted.

My father wanted to live forever. In fact, he was chopping wood in the backyard just a few weeks ago, and he just recently had the wood stove cleaned for the winter to come.

He was so happy to see so many of his family members and friends in the week he was in hospital, and during that week we heard many stories of how he helped so many people over the years.

Finally, he died peacefully in his sleep, as he would have wanted.

*Margaret Boyadjieff Leslie*

October 11, 2014