

Congratulations to Jenny Shariff: 25 Years a BC Notary!

Twenty-five years represents nearly two thirds of her life. It is a significant milestone.

A silver jubilee. An achievement. We are all very proud of her.

I am speaking about the 25 years that my mom Zainab Shariff Gillani—Jenny, as you may know her—has practised as a BC Notary Public, first in an office on Kingsway and more recently in Edgemont Village, North Vancouver.

Jenny was born in Nairobi, Kenya, to Gulamhussein and Shahsultan Ahmed. She and her three brothers grew up in a warm, loving household under two protective parents who showered love and discipline in equal parts to their children.

At age 19, she left the family home to pursue further education in England, then went to France to

learn the French language. She then returned home to Nairobi where she accepted a job with the Belgian airline Sabena, as assistant to the chief executive. In 1971, Jenny married Aminmohamed Shariff in Nairobi and moved to Canada in early 1972. They would be together until his untimely death from cancer on Christmas Day 1997.

I have observed Mom in her workplaces. In my opinion, there is no profession better suited to her talents and interests.

In 1972, the young couple emigrated to Canada in search of adventure and new prosperity. For 9 years, Jenny worked as a legal secretary in Vancouver—first at the firm of Ray, Wolfe and Company, then at Russell and DuMoulin.

Her main area of work was conveyancing, which encouraged her to look into the prospects of becoming a Notary Public. She took the Notary Preparatory Course and obtained her BC Notary Seal in April 1982.

Jenny says, “After my husband died, I focused totally on my business. I moved my office from Kingsway on the East Side of Vancouver—where I had practised for 22 years—to North Vancouver, after obtaining a Notary Seal there.”

I have observed Mom in her workplaces. In my opinion, there is no profession better suited to her talents and interests. She is a people person. I am sure she counts herself lucky to be able to work in a profession where she meets individuals of different backgrounds, cultures, and personalities.

Mom works extremely hard. Clients know they can expect her to be in the office on Saturday mornings to sign papers or catch up on reporting letters. The dedication, work ethic, and overall enjoyment that she gets from the job has made her successful.

The key measure of success in a service profession is repeat business. In my mother’s case, clients keep coming back again and again.

Life is not all about work! Mom is extremely active in the Ismaili community and recently remarried.

Says Jenny, “I met my second husband Dr. Sabs Gillani at a wedding 4 years ago and we became penpals about 2 years ago.”

When he was 18, Gillani moved to Germany from Tanzania, East Africa.



Jenny with her husband Dr. Sabs Gillani at Whistler, BC



Jenny and Sabs before their wedding reception

He completed his PhD, became a veterinarian, and operated a clinic in Frankfurt for 35 years. The happy couple celebrated their first wedding anniversary on March 25, 2007. They reside in North Vancouver.

Sabs is also Ismaili; he and my mother share the same religion and culture.

Jenny is grandmother to my little daughter Mysha, who lives in London.

Free time for Mom is about going to the mosque for morning and

evening prayers; travelling—name a place and she has been there; walks on the West Vancouver seawall; movies (Hollywood and Bollywood); the odd shopping spree; and her family.

Most of the rest of the time, she can be found her in her office in Edgemont Village. If asked, she would respond by saying she would not have it any other way! ▲

Jenny's son, Vancouver-born **Irfan Shariff**, works as an investment banker specializing in mergers and acquisitions for a US bank in London.



Jenny's granddaughter Mysha



Jenny's son Irfan and her daughter-in-law Iram