



REMEMBERING
Mary Ella Read

May 29, 1939 - May 26, 2012



It is with deepest sorrow we announce the passing of a remarkable spirit, whose relish for life and graciousness inspired all who knew her. Mary Ella died peacefully at her home at Cherry Point Fold after a long and determined battle with cancer, fought with the same calm tenaciousness that marked her life.

Born in Bermuda, Mary Ella attended Warwick Academy and traveled to Montreal for business school where she enchanted a spirited young geologist from Nova Scotia, Wayland Read. She loved his curly hair. He promised to take her canoeing.

The two were married in Bermuda in 1958 beginning a loving journey of 53 years. Their grand adventures began in a VW Beetle from Bear River, N.S. to Wayland's work in mining camps in Elliot Lake, Ont. and the Yukon. In a tundra house at the end of a hopelessly muddy summer road, close to the Arctic Circle Mary Ella immersed herself in the lonely but joy-filled task of nurturing two toddlers.

They'd earned a spell of luxury when they moved to West Van's Sentinel Hill in 1964, Mary Ella carefree; driving her Mercedes with top down, wind in her hair. In 1972 she determined the family should do "Europe on \$5 a Day", and the four set off; traveling light they tramped through every museum and castle from Land's End to Pompeii for two months, a trip that would instill a fearless love of travel in them all. Trips to China, India, Africa, Mexico and Around the World followed.

A chance finding of waterfront acreage on Vancouver Island became first their summer retreat, then their home and lifelong project in 1973. Together they created an Eden, full with the bounty of fruits and vegetables and flowers. "I never married a farmer!" she complained when Wayland invested in Highland cattle, pigs and chickens, but this too she took on with ease and grace, gumboots her new wardrobe, chickens clucking along behind her in the garden plot.

A visit to Mary Ella's was a magical adventure for young and old alike; it was a place of warm welcome and loaded down farewells. Children were praised, encouraged to lift every rock, search every tidal pool, name every bird and thrill at the warmth of a freshly laid egg. Pockets were meant for treasures to later be turned into crafts.

Mary Ella's business training was put to good use as Court Reporter for Magistrates' Court in Elliot Lake, secretary for the Cowichan District Teachers' Association and for many years as secretary for the family business. Her love of learning drove her to achieve a Bachelor of Fine Arts with Honors from UVIC in 1990, majoring in Creative Writing, a gift that made the tales of her life vibrant with images shared in poetry, stories and letters.

Mary Ella treated life as a grand celebration that all who knew her were blessed to attend. Silver, candlesticks and flowers, made every shared meal divine whether in the dining room or at the picnic table on the beach. She thrilled to kayaking by moonlight, daily beachcombing, playing duplicate bridge, sighting winter wrens at her feeder, spring's first frogsong and every newborn's cry.

In May 2011 on Quadra Island Wayland finally took her canoeing.

She will be eternally missed by husband Wayland, daughter Jennifer (Phil) Butterworth of Crofton, son Steven (Andrea) Read of Richmond, sister Rose (Jim) Whitaker of Squamish, brother Matthew Morgado of Victoria, grandsons David, Michael and Christopher Butterworth, Jeremy, Brock and Brian Read, Aunt Senhorina Morgado of Vancouver and numerous nieces, nephews and myriad devoted friends and members of St. John's Anglican Church where her contribution was constant.

Funeral services to be held on Saturday June 9th at St. John's Anglican Church, 3295 Cobble Hill Road, Cobble Hill, B.C., Canada at 3:00 pm.; reception immediately following in the Church Hall.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Canadian Cancer Society or the Cowichan District Hospital would be greatly appreciated.

