



REMEMBERING
Patrica Burke Thornton

June 25, 1924 - June 20, 2023



Patricia died peacefully, surrounded by three generations of her family, five days before her 99th birthday.

The youngest of three children born to a pioneer prairie merchant family, Mum recalled riding in a horse-drawn cart alongside her father while he delivered coal and ice to his Swift Current customers. She described an idyllic childhood, despite being a child during the Great Depression and the 'Dirty 30s.' She rode horses, learned to shoot a rifle, cross-country skied and skated on frozen ponds. Mum made lifelong friends in Swift Current, and upon graduating Grade 12, she attended the University of Saskatchewan, where she obtained a bachelor's degree in Chemistry. It was also here, on her first day of classes, where she met her sweetheart Lou. Dad left university to enlist in the army in 1943, thus beginning their lengthy long-distance romance. In addition to her studies, Mum played goal for the U of S Huskiettes women's ice hockey team, starting the family tradition of goaltending, which all 3 of her sons continued.

After Pat graduated, she moved to Minneapolis, MN, becoming certified as a laboratory technician. She returned to Swift Current to work in the hospital, becoming fast friends with the head nurse, Violet, who, among other attributes, could drink a bottle of beer while standing on her head! Impressed with this gravity-defying feat, Mum brought Violet home and introduced her to her family. Her brother Douglas was also impressed, and Violet became, in due course, Mum's sister-in-law.

In 1947, Mum and Dad married, starting their lives together in Saskatoon, where

Anne, Burke and Michael were born. In 1957. they moved to St. Boniface, Manitoba, and in 1960 Douglas was born. The family moved to Pine Falls, Manitoba, for a few years and then back to Winnipeg in 1964. Mum began working outside the home — unusual for the times — as a lab tech for the Winnipeg School Division. She enjoyed a fulfilling and satisfying career, putting her knowledge of chemistry to work.

In 1978 Pat and Lou built their dream home in Mill Bay, where they devoted their time and talents to community service. Dad's ministry took him in many directions — parish priest of St John the Baptist Anglican Church in Cobble Hill, Brentwood College Chaplain and Padre to several armed forces cadet camps and the Malahat Legion 134. Mum fully supported Dad's activities while managing to pursue her interests. A passionate learner and reader, she founded a still active local book club, joined the ACW, expanded the Mill Bay Food Bank and joined a curling league at Kerry Park. Mom and Dad received the Paul Harris fellowship award from Rotary International for their exemplary community service. Our parents continued their remarkable breadth of community service well into their 90s.

Retired for over four decades, the couple from Saskatchewan travelled extensively — visiting Europe, Australia, Hong Kong, China, The Philippines, Singapore, several US states and many trips back to their beloved Prairies. Mum and Dad's door was always open to those visiting from near and far, and everyone was welcomed. If guests arrived as visitors, they left as friends.

Pat is survived by her children Anne(Glenn), Burke, and Douglas (Anne Marie) and her daughter-in-law Rene; her grandchildren Matthew (Christina), Cameron (Maria), Patrick (Sydney), Marika (Chris), Alexandra (Cole) Luke (Tara) Matthew (Candice) and Leah; great-grandchildren Taylor, Carly, Jaxson, Madisen, Adrianna, Luke and Bo; as well as many beloved nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her sweetheart and husband of 73 years, Lou, her son Michael and her grandson Michael Jones; her brother Douglas and his wife Violet; her sister Nancy; many beloved friends and her dogs Shea and Sally.

Mum was a poet and amateur carpenter, a sharpshooter and an athlete, a loving and loyal companion, a fierce protector, intellectually curious, courageous and always adventurous. She was, as many have commented, a force of nature. We will miss her forever as we remain grateful for her example of living life to the fullest, remaining curious, loving, genuine and optimistic.

A Celebration of Life will be held Saturday, August 26th at 2:00, St. John the Baptist Anglican Church, 3295 Cobble Hill Rd.

Thanks for everything, Mum. 143

