



## REMEMBERING

# Wendy Porteous

June 20, 1937 - March 25, 2017



Wendy Elizabeth Porteous (née Farris) died peacefully on March 25, 2017 at Cowichan Regional Hospital in Duncan, BC, age 79, of cancer.

Wendy was born on June 20, 1937 in Vancouver, BC to Betty (Bacone) and Ralph Farris. She attended Crofton House School, the University of British Columbia (BA, Political Science & International Relations and Graduate Teachers' Diploma), the Sorbonne in Paris, the Free University of Berlin, and McGill (MA, Political Science). Wendy was fluent in English, French, and German.

After a brief first marriage, she met Timothy Porteous in Montreal where they married in 1968 (divorced 1985) and moved to Ottawa. Their only daughter, Vanessa Bell Porteous, was born in 1970. A lifelong civil servant for the Government of Canada, from 1968-2000 Wendy worked in many areas of public service, including the Treasury Board, the Royal Commission on the restructuring of government in the Northwest Territories, Labour Canada, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, the Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future (the "Spicer Commission"), General Police and Security, Indian Affairs and Northern Development and as Chief Federal Negotiator for the Federal Treaty Negotiation Office in British Columbia, where she moved in 1995.

After retirement in 2000, Wendy moved to a beautiful area just outside Duncan on Vancouver Island, where she pursued many lifelong interests, always with a dog at her side; these included gardening (on a grand scale), singing in choirs, painting and pastels, and bridge. She read deeply and widely, subscribing to the Times Literary Supplement, Harper's Magazine, the New Yorker, and Lewis Lapham's Quarterly, and attended many theatre and music performances. Wendy involved herself in politics and community affairs and travelled extensively to England, Italy, France, Austria, the Czech Republic, New York City, and across Canada. Her numerous friendships, old and new, were spread across the country and beyond. An active member of the Parish of St Peter's, Quamichan, she was greatly involved in charitable works.

In 2012, Wendy's beloved grandson, Alexander ("Sasha") Lauchlan Porteous Weir was born.

Over the years, through her daughter's partner Bruce, Wendy grew close to the Weir family of Edmonton: Betty-Lou, her son Doug, partner Debbie Chaba, and their sons Noah and Colin; and second son, Rob, wife Karla Tremblay (Toronto), and their son Malcolm (Montreal). They became like family, and Wendy spent several happy Christmases with them, including her last. She spoke of feeling buoyed up by their loving generosity.

When Wendy learned that no treatment would be effective for her cancer, she approached her end of life with the dynamism that defined her. She read theoretical physics and Celtic spirituality; she planned the hymns and lessons for her own memorial service; she organized her affairs, and she never stopped hauling in the wood for her Franklin stove. Though she was growing weak near the end, until her last few days Wendy remained vital and engaged with life. She had friends over for tea three days before she was taken into hospital. The final stage was quick. She was in hospital less than twelve hours. She went peacefully and gently, shortly after receiving a blessing from her Parish Minister.

Wendy is survived by her loving daughter Vanessa Bell Porteous, Vanessa's partner Bruce Weir, and their son, Sasha, (Calgary); her sisters Gretchen Creery (Vancouver) and Jennifer Bernius (Ottawa); many beloved relatives; a wide and much-cherished circle of friends; and her Norwegian Elkhound, Liv, who has found a new home with a dear fellow dog-lover.

Those who knew Wendy will cherish her curiosity, humour and intelligence; her depth of feeling; her love of beauty in nature and art; her sense of family and history; her faith; her adventurousness, and her strong-headedness. Above all, we will remember Wendy's irrepressible appetite for life.

A Memorial Service will be held on Friday May 19, 1:00 pm, at St Peter Quamichan, 5800 Church Road, Duncan BC. In lieu of flowers, a donation to St Peter Quamichan would be most appreciated.

