



REMEMBERING
Christine Woolcott

July 21, 1940 - August 28, 2020



Our beloved sister and friend, Christine, took her last breath on Friday, August 28, at Evergreen Extended Care. Christine embraced all of life with unbridled passion, an infectious curiosity and boundless delight. As much as Chris revered the beauty she perceived in all things wild, at the same time, she deeply valued sociability, and was never happier than when she was in the company of family and friends. Chris was born in North Yorkshire, England, during the war years. When she was 12 years old, her mother died, leaving Chris and her five siblings to be raised by their father. Through that experience of familial dependence on each other, the Woolcott children developed strong and loving lifelong bonds. During her school years, Chris was renowned for her excellence in English composition as well as athletics. After high school graduation, she went off to the University of Reading to gain certification as a teacher. Her first teaching stint was in Reading where she stayed for four years working with primary students. Chris then travelled overseas to Canada, where she taught school for 33 years, first in northern Alberta at a Mennonite school, then in Hobbema, Alberta, now known as Maskwacis, at the Ermineskin Indian School. In 1974, Chris successfully applied for a teaching position on Texada Island and arrived on the dock at Blubber Bay with her beloved golden retriever, Maggie, that summer. Chris purchased a piece of land on the west side of Texada, a bluff with a stunning view of the Pacific Ocean and the mountains of Vancouver Island in the distance. There, she built her own house, planted gardens and chopped wood for her winter heat. Chris became an active member of the community. She joined the local theatre troupe, the Rock Island Players, and helped start up a local rag, Texada Island Lines . She was also a founding member of the Texada Island Heritage Society and the Texada Artist's Coop and Gallery. Taking landscape photos was one of Chris's favourite pastimes. She took hundreds of photographs of the wildlife she encountered as she roamed the woodlands and shoreline of her island habitat. Many of her photos she made into cards and sold

under the name of 'Seldom Scene.' In the early 1980s, Chris fulfilled a long held dream of providing a dwelling on her land that would serve as a retreat, a place for others to come together in peaceful surroundings. She named it the Olive Branch, honouring her mother's name. Chris left Texada in the early 90s and relocated to Powell River, where she taught at Edgehill Elementary School, her last teaching post before her retirement in 1997. An energetic retiree, she filled every day with some kind of activity, playing tennis and pickleball, hiking, cycling and paddling, among a myriad other things. Chris became involved with the Malaspina Naturalists, the Sierra Club, Powell River Chorus, and Malaspina Writer's Group. She became a student again, delving with her typical gusto into sketching, painting and calligraphy, memoir and journal writing, and for a short while, even tap dancing and drumming. In all the places she lived, Chris always grew exuberant gardens, bursting with riotous colourful blooms and sprawling vines, evocative of her English country roots. Chris had an irresistible impish charm, where mischief lurked just below the surface. Ever gregarious, she had a knack for bringing diverse groups of friends together. Chris loved a costume party, and to dress up, the more outlandish the better, and to flounce around amidst gales of laughter. On Friday nights, she hosted what she called a 'soirée' and invited one and all to come to her house to eat, drink and be merry. Chris had a way of drawing others in, welcoming them with wide open arms, and celebrating their uniqueness, no matter their age. She especially enjoyed her connections with children, not only those she taught, but also the children and grandchildren of her family and friends, expressing her genuine interest and affection for them. For over 10 years Chris lived with a Parkinson's like-condition. Throughout this time she maintained her enthusiasm and her insatiable appetite for life. Always a keen supporter of local arts, music and culture, and an ardent environmentalist, she continued to attend and to take part in as many events as she could. An intrepid Scrabble player and a cryptic crossword genius, Chris kept busy with indoor games. Many rounds of Dominoes and Upwords were played at her kitchen table, meanwhile there was always a tennis match on the telly to watch. Sunday mornings were a special time when she would join friends in group meditation and spiritual readings. Chris never gave in to her illness, never allowed it to diminish her spirit, her verve, her ongoing quest for connection with all living things. She once said she wished for her epitaph to say: 'She tried.' Many admired and loved Chris deeply. She will be missed by us all. For their excellent and loving care of Chris, her family and friends extend their most gracious thanks to staff at both the Kiwanis Garden Manor and Evergreen Extended Care. An afternoon remembrance of Chris to be announced at a later date.

