

CARLSON, Mary Elizabeth

August 8, 1953 – May 29, 2024

With sadness we announce the passing of Mary Carlson (nee Stilwell) at age 70 after battling cancer. Survived by loving husband Brian Carlson, sister Jean Stilwell and brother William (Kathryn) Stilwell plus nieces and nephews. Predeceased by parents Walter and Elizabeth Stilwell and sister Nancy Stilwell (Weeks).



Mary was born in Victoria, British Columbia. Shortly after, her parents returned to Calgary where Mary was schooled and found initial employment. With her parents retiring to the Vancouver area, Mary in the late 1970's followed them, looking to enjoy the West Coast lifestyle. While working for the Federal Civil Service she met her husband to be. Married in 1985, the couple eventually settled in the Lynn Valley area of North Vancouver where Mary enjoyed socializing with friends and neighbours, notably hosting elaborate dinner parties.

Mary was defined by her love of dogs. Growing up with the long-lived family dog 'Pepper' was a precursor to her later life. In the latter part of the 1990's she became a tele-worker which allowed her to rekindle her canine companionship. Mary subsequently rehomed four Bichon Frise (curly lap dog) rescues over a period of three decades. (Ricci Boy Junior – Toddles – Tucker – Murphy) These dogs, often in pairs, were a regular sight in the neighbourhood and led to wonderful interactions with so many neighbours and dog-companions. Murphy was a comfort in her passing.

Mary's interests expanded into the world of the Ford Model A (1928 – 1931) automobile. She was an accomplished driver of these era Fords, including her 1930 Ford Model A Town Sedan. To complement this interest, Mary became involved with period fashions of the Model A era. She attained a Master Fashion Judge certification and authored technical articles on fashion topics. Building upon this, she was eventually appointed the chair of the Era Fashion Committee. Mary's personal wardrobe of period clothing, amassed over many years, met with the highest standards combined with a marked diversity of outfits and accessories. This resulted in her earning fashion awards over the years; she walked the fashion show runway or judged entrants many times throughout North America.

By mid-life Mary discovered another passion: the world of cruising. Enjoying countless adventures with her husband over many days at sea she visited North, Central & South America, Europe, Australia and Antarctica. Always up for a social occasion, this travel resulted in meeting so many wonderful people, some of whom became life-long friends.

Mary rounded out her interests with an enthusiasm for Arts Club plays, the Vancouver Symphony, her kitchen, gardening and the pursuit of a good book. Overall, it was her many friendships that contributed so much to her enjoyment of life.

Thank you to the staff at the North Shore Hospice for the gentle care Mary enjoyed.

A celebration of life will be held on Tuesday – July 9th at the Burnaby Central Railway station situated at 120 Willingdon Avenue North – Burnaby BC from 1:00 PM to 3:30 PM.