

Barbara Caroline Devine

Barbara Caroline Devine, beloved mother, daughter, sister, aunt, and friend, passed away on March 26, 2017 after a courageous battle with cancer. She was in the company of her family surrounded by love. This extraordinary woman is survived by her daughters Katie and Courtney, her parents Jack and Dona Devine, her siblings Rick (Barbara), Peter (Laura), Wendy (Brian), Jeff (Sherryl), numerous nieces and nephews, and her partner Mark.

Those who know her, loved her, for she was an utterly vibrant person – a one of a kind – famous for her natural wit and great laugh. Barb will be fondly remembered for being quintessentially young at heart, poised and glamorous in an effortless kind of way, and for having both appreciation and appetite for the very best things in life – most notably friendship, travel, art, music, intellectual conversation and fine wine.

Barbara was born on December 11, 1959 in Edmonton, Alberta. Her father, Jack, was a geological engineer for Imperial Oil (Exxon) which meant that he moved the family to a variety of oil rich centres over the span of his career. Every two years, the Allied moving vans would appear and pack the family up to head to the next destination – Edmonton, Calgary, Dawson Creek, and then off to the Middle East, a place that would change Barb's life direction. Dona packed up all five children and as is fond of saying "landed in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia in the middle of a sandstorm". Barb's experiences there developed a life long passion for Middle Eastern culture.

After a brief return to both Calgary and Edmonton, Jack was headed back to the Middle East – this time to Tripoli, Libya. This latest move provided Barb with one of the happiest experiences in her life – boarding school! She spent one year

in Lugano, Switzerland before moving to Rome to attend St. Stephen's School. There she met people who became her life long friends. One of her happiest times during her illness was when last September, her good friends from St. Stephen's came up to visit. They rented a house, kidnapped her and spent the weekend laughing, reminiscing, eating great food and of course, drinking red wine. That weekend helped to sustain her during the difficult months to come.

When high school ended, Barb extended her multicultural experiences by attending McGill University in Montreal graduating with a degree in Art History. Again, she met many interesting and wonderful people, many of whom she was still in contact with. She had numerous stories of late nights at the library studying and late nights at the clubs partying with a sprinkling of skiing in between! From Montreal, Barb returned to her beloved Italy for a year of study and then off to Halifax to attend Art and Design School.

It was during her time in Halifax that she met Scott Reed who was to become her husband and the father of her children.

They married in Victoria in 1983. Barb and Scott's marriage took them to Calgary, Nanaimo and then finally Victoria where Barb settled and raised her girls. Although the marriage ran its' course, Barb and Scott produced two beautiful daughters – Katherine Caroline and Courtney Elizabeth.

Barb worked at Island Blue Print for many years and also developed a successful career as a graphic design artist. She was incredibly creative and a talented artist in her own right. Barb often told her girls there were three things she would like to do again: live overseas, find a loving partner, and live by the ocean. In what were to be the last years of her life, she was able to do all three. Four years ago, Barb realized one of her dreams and returned to overseas life. One is able to acknowledge her strength of character when reflecting on the fact that she left for Cambodia to work and

teach in a school for underprivileged children in Cambodia.

She didn't know a soul but jumped in with both feet. Living and working in Cambodia refreshed her soul. She loved the chaotic city living, adored the children she taught and again made many interesting and loyal friends. Unfortunately, her illness brought her back to Canada or she would still be there working and traveling.

On summer break in Canada, Barb connected with Mark, a family friend she had known for many years. Although their life together was short, they developed a deep and loving relationship. They were able to travel together in the Far East as well as to Mexico. They had a beautiful condo on the water allowing Barb to spend many hours looking out at the ocean and becoming a passionate bird watcher. It gave her great pleasure to spend hours watching the herons, ducks and especially one quirky little hummingbird.

Katie and Courtney were the light of their mother's life. She was so proud of the wonderful and accomplished young ladies they have become. Nothing made her happier than spending time with her girls, sharing in their many successes. Her home became a comfortable hang out place for Katie and Courtney and their many friends. Both girls have become teachers and she was so happy to see them settled with their careers and wonderful partners.

If the measure of one's life is to look at the people who surround you then Barb's life was a rich and valued one. It has been heartwarming to see all the people whose lives she has touched reach out to share stories, memories, and their grief at the passing of a woman – mother, daughter, sister, partner, aunt, friend who was so special and meant so much to so many. She was a unique, loving, spontaneous, impulsive, hilarious woman who has left us bereft. Her infectious laugh, beautiful smile and big brown eyes will never be forgotten by anyone who knew her.

Barb's family would especially like to recognize her close friends including and not limited to Lorraine, Dolores and Terry for their incredible support during her illness. We would also like to thank the many Doctors, nurses and her physiotherapist Marcia who worked tirelessly to ease her suffering. Her partner Mark was a stalwart support and none of us could have made it through this most challenging time without his unwavering love for Barb. There will forever be a hole in our hearts.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "It is not length of life, but depth of life." and Barb's life although way too short was deep and rich indeed.

A Celebration of Barb's Life will be held on Saturday July 22, 2017, at 1:00pm, in the Sequoia Centre at McCall Gardens, 4665 Falaise Drive, Victoria, BC.

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Gardens

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