

C. Miriam Thorn (née Fyson)

Miriam was born Friday, the 13th of November, 1925 in Hawera, a farming town on New Zealand's North Island. She died in Victoria October 1st, 2023, after a brief time in hospital and just a few weeks from her 98th birthday. Miriam grew up in a busy household, the second of five children born to Clarice (Dickie) and Kembal Fyson. There was family time and seaside exploring, there were music lessons and semesters at boarding school, but Miriam's fondest childhood memories may have been simply disappearing into her "fairy world" at the bottom of the garden. After establishing her career as art teacher, she left for England, where she worked first in schools, then landed a job creating art projects with children at the British Museum of Natural History. There she met Erik, a "polite, hardworking Canadian with nice legs".

After some time, and romantic persuasion on his part, Miriam and Erik finally decided to get married, becoming lifelong partners. They soon found themselves in Ottawa where Miriam gave birth to two sons, Steve and Martin. In 1965 the family moved to Victoria, and Oak Bay has been home ever since. Miriam taught at Camosun College and Glenlyon School, and then they opened an art studio at their home on St. Patrick Street. There she worked, and welcomed students of all ages, friends, and colleagues to share her love of form and colour and to develop skills in drawing, printmaking, woodcuts, and painting. Her favourite subjects were water and plants, and when she and Erik went hiking, camping, and travelling, Miriam would spend hours capturing inspiration on slides from nature, which she used in her classes.

Miriam's love of music was lifelong, and she enjoyed being with people who were creating it. She joined a number of choral groups over the years, but really wanted to host one at home: What started as carolling parties in the neighbourhood each December grew into weekly choir practices in the living

room with a pianist and professional conductor. So the Mardi Minstrels was born, and in various forms continued for over two decades.

Always busy, Miram will be remembered in many contexts: loving wife, Mum, and grandmother, sensitive artist, dedicated teacher, passionate gardener, language lover, energetic and fun-loving friend. She was such a big presence in many of our lives; we just won't be the same without her.

To celebrate Miriam's life, her family welcomes friends and acquaintances to share her stories at the Monterey Recreation Centre, 1442 Monterey Avenue, on Sunday, November 12, 2023, from 2:00 to 4:00 PM.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests making a donation to local art education, such as the Thorn Fund of the Victoria Visual Arts Legacy Fund.

Condolences may be offered to the family at:

www.mccallgardens.com