Doris Ward

It is with much love and heavy hearts that we say a final thank you to Doris Ward (nee Chivers) – known fondly as Mom, Doris or Mrs. Ward to some, and Nana to all – for bringing us together for one final goodbye. Nana was the nucleus of many family gatherings, and it would bring her immense joy to know that she was uniting us all again. She has cemented a bond between her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren that will long survive her passing.
Doris passed away peacefully, surrounded by her family, at the age of 99. She almost made it to 100 years to receive the coveted Royal Letter (though we all know she would have been disappointed to receive the letter from King Charles rather than from Queen Elizabeth who shared her birth year). Doris is fondly remembered by her three children, Mike (Jacqueline), Susan and Paul (Dianne); sister, Beverly; nieces and nephews, Daryl, Kevin, Linda and Marilyn; seven grandchildren, Sabrina, Katrina, Karen, Christopher, Natalie, Steven, and Sam; and her twelve (almost thirteen) great-grandchildren, Daniel, Madison, Antonio, Katelyn, Manny, Kendal, Jason, Sonnen, Remy, Ainsley, Raphael, and Benjamin. Doris was predeceased by her parents, Charles, and Jean Chivers (nee McMillan); her loving husband, Robert; brother, Fred; sister, Arleigh; two sister-in-laws, Margaret and Pat; and her brother-in-law, Charlie.

Doris was proud to have been born and raised on Forbes Street in Victoria. She would drive by in her later years with family members and point out the front room of the house where she was born a century ago. Today, an enormous chestnut tree shades the backyard, grown from a chestnut that Doris planted there almost a hundred years ago. We can picture the girl Nana was; the youngest and smallest child in the classroom but one with a tough spirit; being chased out of the kitchen by her Scottish spatula wielding mother;

and being doted on by her English father. She took after her father – a staunch unionist and pacifist – standing her ground, speaking up for what she believed to be right, never backing down from a position that was important to her. From her mother, she got the fire of not being afraid to be herself and to share her opinions, often saying "if only I was in charge, we would see a blessed change!"

Doris would play in the fields with the neighborhood kids, walking on her hands and climbing trees, once stepping into a hole full of garter snakes (and hating them forever more). She loved and cared for her sister, Bev, when she was just a little girl, as well as babysat many family and friends' children. She always loved and found a tremendous amount of joy in being surrounded by children.
After graduating from Victoria High School, Doris worked as a secretary in the Victoria Parliament Buildings, forming a special lifelong connection with Doreen Cochrane and Dorita Grant. The three D's (Doris, Doreen and Dorita) enjoyed many adventures together, including hitchhiking to a dude ranch in the interior of BC, watching their first loaf of "sliced" bread scatter across the road behind them while biking down a hill, and screaming in horror while accidently riding through a patch of migrating frogs. They even rode their one-speed bicycles to Seattle to purchase the precious glass doorknobs which were such a novelty at that time, and which still adorn the doors of the family home today.

Doris met her life partner, Robert, during their childhoods. She was drawn to his gentle spirit and kind nature, and the two became friends and later fell in love. Throughout their young lives, the sweethearts rode their bikes together through the fields and streets of Victoria, ran up and down Mt Tolmie, rode to Thetis Lake to swim, and picked berries and daffodils together. As their commitment to each other grew, they spent many evenings sitting together at the Victoria breakwater, sharing their life

dreams.

The pair endured a long separation during the Second World War, when Rob enlisted in the Canadian Military and worked as a bridge-building engineer for the Allied Forces. During this time, the pair remained devoted to each other and wrote many letters back and forth, letters which Doris has kept throughout her life.

Doris and Rob were reunited post war, and on March 1st, 1947, they were married. They married in the Chivers' family home on Moss Street, which Doris' father had built, and where the family lived during Doris' teenage years and into her young adulthood.

Rob and his brother, Charlie, and his wife, Pat, purchased plots and built houses beside each other on Davie Street, which at that time was more field and oak forest than development. Together, during their evenings and weekends, they built their homes with loving attention to detail and expert craftmanship. Doris remembered fondly the late nights she and Rob spent straightening tins of bent nails salvaged from job sites to be used in their home's construction. Doris and Rob soon welcomed their three children, Michael, Susan, and Paul, into their lives, who they lovingly raised in the home they had built.

Doris found immense fulfillment and joy in being a wife and a mother. She was fiercely proud and protective of her children. She struggled through some humorous moments while learning to cook and bake with more than one disaster in the kitchen, while lamenting the fact that her mother, an excellent cook and baker, had not passed on her skills. She made sure her home was cleaned to perfection (the spiders in Oak Bay may breathe easier now that she has passed) and even took the time to iron underwear, sheets, and cloth diapers. Doris loved to have music in the house and encouraged her children to take up musical interests. She

enjoyed social engagements, including square dancing with Robert and even did some "Do-Si-Doing" in Penticton's annual Dancing in the Water event.

Robert and Doris had many rich annual family traditions including summers spent road tripping to, and camping in, Penticton with family friends, Alice and Jack Court. She and Rob also had a love for the outdoors, and camped annually at their favorite campsite, "Old Faithful," at Little Qualicum Falls year after year with their children and grandchildren (a tradition that her grandchildren continue with their own children to this day). Nana particularly loved playing on the beach and swimming with her children, and later, grandchildren, at Parksville beach and Cameron Lake.
When her husband, Robert, fell ill at an early age and had to give up his work, Doris returned to secretarial work, joining the Greater Victoria School District, and becoming the breadwinner of the family. As a school secretary, accounts clerk, and then switchboard operator, she earned the respect of her colleagues for her dedication to her profession. She brought to her work the organizational, managerial, attention to detail and people skills that her job required. She worked there for 30 years, retiring at age 72, and was celebrated by all who knew her in that role.

Doris' home was a respite and refuge for many. It did not matter what the reason, nor the length of time, all were welcome. Her brother, Fred, lived with the family for many years, and her sister, Beverly, was welcomed with her four children, Linda, Marilyn, Daryl and Kevin. Doris never stopped loving and kept a place in her heart for her nieces and nephews even after they were no longer able to remain in contact with the family. Nana's grandchildren, and out of province boarders attending UVic, also had a place to call home with her. She made lifelong friends with these students and took exceptional care by preparing them their favorite foods and creating opportunities for them to have

special adventures and to experience the area. She particularly enjoyed boarders from Quebec because she could help them with "proper" English pronunciation and grammar.

Doris also cared for many elderly as they aged or otherwise faced hardship. She diligently visited and ensured that friends, neighbours, and family were cared for and in good company as they declined. She provided palliative care around the clock in her home for Rob's mother, her own mother (Grannie Jean), and another dear friend, Mrs. Simms. It was beautiful and fitting therefore that Nana in turn, received the same love and support from her family, when her own body started to wear out.
Doris enjoyed reading the Times Colonist newspaper from cover to cover each day, and the head office could expect a quick phone call if her paper was late. She kept her mind sharp doing the weekly crossword and having a jigsaw puzzle on the go. A major source of joy for Doris was her garden. She loved to see freshly turned soil, brightly colored flowers, hummingbirds, and squirrels. She had a life-long friendly battle with the acorns and leaves from her beloved oak trees, the weeds, the moss, and the neighborhood cats (who had to dodge golf balls if they entered the yard). This beautiful, well-tended, and gnome-filled garden was enjoyed by friends and family alike.
Doris took on the role of grandmother wholeheartedly. The cousins fondly remember having adventures around the city with her, playing together in her basement, sleepovers at her home, and all the ice cream stops and treats she was so apt to give.

Doris will always be remembered as a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, great grandmother, daughter, sister, aunt, niece, and friend. So many of the people that have been a part of her life received her unwavering support and kindness in challenging times. Doris was forever willing to help any family member that was in need. She was "Nana" to us all and will forever remain so, in our memory.

A special thank you to the family, gardeners, neighbours

and medical staff who gave Doris their time week after week, so that she was able to remain in the home that held the memories of so many small and meaningful events and relationships, until the end of her days. Together, Nana's caregivers satisfied her desire to have the walls, carpets, and windows clean and the bathroom sparkling, and the yard and gardens as tidy and beautiful as those at Butchart's. Her helpers prepared her meals but most importantly, gave her the love and companionship she treasured more than anything else, over cups of teas and sweets, puzzles, shared episodes of Jeopardy and long talks and phone calls. Also, a particular thank you to the people that were able to be with her in the end – and give her the dignity and the incredible love that she so deserved in her final days. Thank you, Nana, for the care you gave to others and to each of us who knew you, for your willingness to live humbly and give generously, and for fostering the relationship between all of us who knew you as family and friend. You will be missed.



Condolences may be offered to the family below.

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