

Frances Blake (nee Barrett)

Blake – Frances (nee Barrett) died peacefully at home in Selkirk Place, Victoria, on November 13, 2012. She was born on July 19, 1923 in Harbour Grace, NL. Frances is deeply mourned by Reginald – husband of 63 years, five children – Christine (Fred) Kathy (Gordon), Margaret, Peter (Jane), and David, four grandchildren – Tina Halle, Fred and Kimmie Acquah, Dexter Dawkins, and Maddie Blake, four great grandchildren, youngest sister Norma Regular, and many, many nieces and nephews.

Frances was the eldest of seven children and, as such, was expected to help manage her childhood household and siblings. Perhaps this is what led her to a teaching career at age 18 years. After her first few years of teaching on the Avalon Peninsula, NL, including a year in a one-room schoolhouse teaching grades 1 through 8, she moved to Grand Falls in 1946. That's where she met Reg, the love of her life. They married in 1949 and soon started a family. Frances was always involved with community and Church work, such as Girl Guides, glee club, church choir, hospital volunteering and guilds. Through a series of Reg's work transfers, they landed in Burlington, ON, in 1979. Each time they moved, Frances ensured they became quickly involved with community and Church activities through which they made enduring friendships. After Reg's retirement in 1987, they moved to Victoria where two of their children were living. Frances made it very clear to Reg that if she didn't like living in Victoria after a year, she'd move back to Burlington! But in her usual fashion, she reached out to her church, community and family, and settled in. By 1989, two more of her children had relocated to Victoria. With four children living close by, there was no question of moving back to Ontario.

There were so many things Frances liked to do. She and Reg spent many years camping, and travelling back and forth across the country. Their trips always involved visits with family

and friends, keeping bonds strong. She was a talented singer, a skilled seamstress, an enthusiastic square dancer, and a good cook. But there were two things she couldn't master, regardless of the number of lessons – speaking French and driving (although she finally earned her driver's licence at age 65).

To Frances, family, faith, friendship, and charity were of utmost importance. This was reflected in everything she did throughout her life. With kindness and caring, she gave freely of her time and energy until she was no longer able. In many ways, Frances was ahead of her time. She was current in political and global issues and could discuss what was right for the country as easily as why the work of Stephen Lewis should be supported. She had strong convictions. She stood up for her beliefs and her sense of what was right and wrong. Her lasting legacy is that she instilled these values into her children so that they, in turn, could pass them on.

Unfortunately, during her last few years, Frances suffered several serious injuries and illnesses. These slowly and progressively robbed her of her strength, independence, and reasoning. However, nothing could rob her of her love for Reg and her family, nor her sense of humour, nor her faith. While we who loved her will miss her profoundly, it is a blessing to know she is now at peace, and with her Lord.

To the staff at Selkirk Place, we, Frances' family, sincerely thank you for the care and affection you provided to her and for the support you gave to us, especially to Reg. We felt so grateful that they were able to be under the same roof and in your good hands these past nineteen trying months.

Frances supported many charities, including Our Place (www.ourplacesociety.com) and the Alzheimer's Society (www.alzheimerbc.org). In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to your charity of choice.

The funeral service will be held at 2:00 p.m on Saturday, November 24th, at the Church of Our Lord, 626 Blanshard Street, Victoria, followed by a tea in the Church Hall. Condolences for the family may be offered below.

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