

# Geraldine Eleanor Mae Garside (Nee Smith)

*In loving memory of our beloved Geraldine Eleanor Mae Garside.*

It is with heavy hearts and deep sadness that we announce the passing of Geraldine Garside, nee Smith, who passed peacefully on November 29th, 2023, surrounded by the love and comfort of her husband Ray, children Brad and Shawn, and son-in-law Colin. Geraldine (usually referred to as Gerry, although she recently told us that she preferred to be called Geraldine!) was deeply loved by her family and close friends. She touched the lives of all those who had the privilege of knowing her.

A third generation Victorian, Geraldine cherished her strong roots in Victoria, growing up in James Bay and Fairfield and attending St. Ann's Academy. She was pre-deceased by her parents, Stuart and Mae (Mary) Smith, and by her younger sister, Marilyn Duzik.

Geraldine was married to her devoted husband, Ray, for more than sixty years, having wed at Christ Church Cathedral in April, 1959. Their union was, and remains, one of unwavering commitment, deep connection, and profound love. Ray and Gerry were, and remain even now, as one.

Together, Geraldine and Ray built a foundation of love and support which fostered a strong and close-knit family. In all aspects of their lives together, whether it be raising their children, building and developing their home, running their business, helping to raise their grandchildren, enjoying their lives so closely together day-to-day, enjoying dinner parties with close friends, and lots of travel, they enjoyed life together. Geraldine and Ray have been as fine an example of a close marriage as one can imagine. Gerry and Ray's incredible bond is a legacy that will be honoured and carried on by her

surviving husband and family.

Geraldine was a loving mother to her children, Brad and Shawn, and a doting grandmother to her grandchildren, Fraser and Victoria. She deeply loved her son-in-law, Colin. Her family was the centre of her world, and she dedicated herself to their happiness and well-being. Her quiet and selfless kindness made her a source of strength for her loved ones; always offering a listening ear, wise advice, and unwavering support, within reason, in whatever they wanted to pursue. Despite her own fears of small planes, horses and deep water, Geraldine supported her family to pursue flying, horseback riding, and fishing!

Geraldine taught us to appreciate the finer things in life – art, music, literature, and good manners...how to use a knife and fork properly in polite company! Gerry was a stickler for good behaviour, hard-work, and solid values and morals. She held a strong sense of duty and responsibility to oneself and to others. She instilled in us a firm belief in ourselves and in our abilities.

Professionally, Geraldine excelled as a financial manager for the family business, Garside Displays. She was a full partner with Ray in growing and running their second-generation family business. Her skills in managing the finances helped to ensure the success of the company. Geraldine also “got down in the trenches” and helped with the hard, physical work when needed. In spite of her elegant and refined nature, Ray often described Gerry as “a farmer’s daughter,” never afraid to get her hands dirty working with Ray in the business. How many years did Geraldine spend late nights with a staple gun in hand, putting the finishing details on the City of Victoria floats before the May Day Parade? Gerry helped Ray with house renovations, dug and planted with Ray in the garden, and even braided the tail of Shawn’s pony when she was too little to do it herself.

One of Geraldine's greatest joys in life was travel with Ray, whether it be their many driving trips to see Marilyn and Ed in California, trips to Europe with their kids and by themselves, exploring family history in Northern Ireland, travels to Central America to see her childhood friend Vicky in El Salvador, trips to Mexico with family and grandkids, and many cruises with dear friends all over this world. She was an adventurous traveller, enjoying explorations off the beaten path. She rode camels and let snake charmers adorn her. Geraldine and Ray made the decision to retire early so that they could travel the world and enjoy their lives together, and these memories have been cherished. They had such fun!

Another hallmark of Geraldine's life has been her influence as a grandmother. In fact, when Fraser was just a toddler, he confidently told a stranger that his grampa and grandma had retired "so they could be my grandparents." This was not untrue. Geraldine sewed skating dresses for Victoria and overcame her fear to cheer for Fraser at diving competitions.

Above all, Geraldine was a giving person with a heart full of love. She had a twinkle in her eye, a creative spirit, and a remarkable ability to brighten the lives of others through her kindness, compassion, and generosity. Her acts of kindness were often done quietly, selflessly and modestly, without seeking recognition.

We remember Geraldine as a beacon of deep love, quiet strength, and profound kindness. A constant support. Her legacy lives on through Ray, her family, and the many lives she touched. We are grateful for her long, beautiful and fortunate life. We find solace in knowing that she is reunited with loved ones who have gone before her, and we take comfort in the knowledge that her spirit will continue to guide and watch over us.

Our family is so thankful for the tremendous support and care that Geraldine, and our entire family, received from the

community at Sunrise of Victoria, the care home where she had such dignified and loving care during her last year of life.

To honour Geraldine's wishes, there will be no service. Donations in memory of Geraldine may be made to your charity of choice.

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Gardens

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