

Hazel Rosemary Murray

Hazel Rosemary Murray (Gardner) passed into eternity at the age of 95 on March 22, 2026, with her family by her side. Mother, grandmother, sister, auntie, spinner-weaver-knitter, gardener, first mate, garage saler and friend to many, she was born on January 24th, 1931 near Weymouth, Dorset, England to Commander Henry Horace Gardner and mother Gladys May (Angy) Gardner (Sibbick).

Hazel moved homes numerous times in her childhood years due to Royal Navy postings but mostly resided in Hampshire, England or wherever her father Henry was taking or teaching courses. From 1935-39 she lived in Finchdean, Hampshire, England, sharing a governess (not Mary Poppins) with five or six other children while Henry was away peacekeeping in China. She started school in Havant, Hampshire, then over the next 9 years attended schools in Scotland, Trinidad, Portland Oregon, West Vancouver, Kensington UK and finally South Burnaby where she graduated at age 16 in 1947. She attended Victoria College 1948-49 and later UVic as a mature student in the 1980s. She also took Master Weaver courses at Olds College in Alberta and attended many other courses in the fibre arts.

Hazel met her husband Ramsay Murray on a work party in 1952, and they married the next year on April 25 in Metchosin. Since her husband was a bridge engineer she lived near various bridge sites throughout Canada while raising their 4 children (Marian-Victoria, Sheila-Nelson, David-Hope and Thomas-Ottawa). In 1965 they returned to Victoria where they stayed for the remainder of their 68-year marriage, except when they set off on several globetrotting adventures.

Hazel was an accomplished seamstress, spinner, weaver and knitter and joined the Victoria Handweavers & Spinners Guild in 1973. After holding several positions on the executive, she became a life member. From a massive studio loaded with

spinning and weaving supplies, she welcomed members as The Victorian Spinster, selling spinning wheels and holding weekly “spinning therapy” sessions with her many colleagues and friends (and granddaughters) known collectively as “The Spinny Ladies”. Her handiwork was exceptional, filled with intricate detail, and knitted or woven from her own hand dyed handspun yarn. She was a regular fixture at the Saanich Fair as a demonstrator with the Weavers Guild, often participating in sheep to shawl competitions where a team started with a fleece and ended up with a knitted shawl.

It’s no surprise that Hazel Gardner was an avid gardener throughout her life. Fruit trees, flowers and vegetables were always bountiful in her gardens and widely shared. She loved to swim and swam several times a week into her early 90s. She also liked to entertain and would prepare large dinner parties for family, Royal Victoria Yacht Club (70 year+ member) and Rotary friends as well as Ramsay’s business clients.

She enjoyed volunteering for many causes, including the Victoria Operatic Society costume department, Victoria Hospice, and the Commonwealth Games in 1994.

Hazel was a garage sale queen and thrift shopper and filled her crawlspace on Hibbens Close with treasures, some of which were eventually returned back to the thrift shop from where they came when she moved into independent living at The Victorian in May 2023.

Stoic Brit that she was, Hazel displayed a classic sarcastic-pun sense of humour which she passed along to her children. She had a fondness for limericks and naughty puns. Hazel was known to be forthright and sometimes blunt, however, she had a knack for establishing relationships with young people, as witnessed by the closeness to her grandchildren and most recently, the caregivers who became devoted to her.

Hazel will be deeply missed by her brother Richard and sister

Caroline, daughter Sheila and sons David and Thomas, grandchildren Jennifer, Andrew, Kate, Stewart and Ben, and many extended family and friends. She was pre-deceased by her daughter Marian and husband Ramsay. The family wishes to thank the staff and caregivers at the Victorian and her doctor who looked after her so well over the past 2 years. Special thanks to the medical team at the Royal Jubilee Hospital, 4th Floor South.

A Celebration of Life will be held at the Royal Victoria Yacht Club on Wednesday, April 15, 2 – 4pm.

Donations in her memory can be made to Victoria Hospice.

The Spinner weaves the daily thread,
Through light, through shadow, through the dead;
Each loop a breath, each turn a sigh,
Until the shears of Heaven draw nigh.

-Emily Dickinson

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Gardens

www.mccallgardens.com

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