

Jean Ball

Jean Campbell Ball took her leave on the 24th of February, 2024. Jean lived her full, long life with purpose and generosity. Never short of a big idea, a mischievous prank or a plan to make someone's life brighter, Jean lived a big picture with kindness as her calling card.

Born to Charlotte (Lottie) Vickers Graham and Alexander Maxwell (Max) Campbell on May 17th, 1926, the youngest of six children, Jean lived her early years near Manitou Lake on the Saskatchewan prairie. Attending one room Cliffe School with her siblings and cousins, life was full of adventure. The economic cauldron of the 1930's made for tough times and Jean's father was active in the United Farmers Party and then the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, working with others to find solutions. This was not lost on Jean.

Jean was a key member of Max's team. She travelled by train to Ottawa with her parents when Max took up his duties as Member of Parliament for The Battlefords. Jean attended secretarial school on Sparks Street in Ottawa, but Ottawa couldn't keep her. In November, 1946 Jean married Delmer (Del) Ball and the two set up house in Neilburg where Del and his father farmed and ran an equipment dealership.

The years that followed were busy ones. Building a house, raising children, farming, gardening and together with Del, contributing actively to the dynamic, collaborative culture that people living in Neilburg were part of.

Jean's forward thinking sparked an idea that became the first Seniors Home in the Province. With donated land, labour – Dr. Shauna Makaroff tended community medical needs while Dr. Bob Makaroff led the construction crew – and leadership, the Crescent Apartments opened its doors in the late 1950's. "The Project" housed seniors who had broken sod on the Prairie;

thriving in their youth, but with advancing age, struggled for comfort and safety in their unheated, un-serviced and often remote housing. The province was rapidly electrifying, but had yet to reach many farms.

A gifted horse woman, musician, gardener and mischief maker – many a farmer found himself clad in a dress on stage in a community skit – Jean made everyone around her feel special. Jean would not see anyone unfairly treated and she did her best to support vulnerable people, address inequities and make everyone feel included – on a large policy scale and a small personal one too. Business woman (the Prairie Flower Patch), nurse, board member, band member and joyful optimist, Jean lived in by a strong set of ethics, focused on the needs of others for all of her 97 years.

Jean spent her last ten years in Victoria, near three of her children, bringing her spark to the Cridge Centre for the Family. Jean leaves Pat Gordon (Fraser), Max (Valerie Bandas), Charley Beresford (Chris), Murray (Joan Makaroff) their children Tim Gordon (Adrianna Caros Cruz), Huntly Gordon, Dr. Katherine Ball, Paul Bandas, James Beresford (Brian Horswill), Bryony Beresford, Kathrine Makaroff (Chris Lowe), Misha Makaroff, Nikolai Makaroff (Andrea Sinclair), great grandchildren Ruby Gordon, Ava Gordon, Elliott Lowe, Avery Lowe along with a legendary number of nieces, nephews and good friends.

While Jean's tangible contributions to her community are many, her determination to bring joy and elation to all may be, after all, her greatest contribution.

Donations in memory of Jean may be made to The Cridge Centre for the Family in Victoria <https://cridge.org/> or the social justice organization of your choice.

Condolences may be sent to Jean's family at ChiefMischiefMakerMJB@gmail.com or www.mccallgardens.com