

Jean Elizabeth Thompson (Nee Otter)

It is with great sadness that our family mourns the death of our beloved mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. Jean passed away peacefully in her sleep at the age of 96. Jean was predeceased three years ago by her husband of almost 69 years, Dudley Talbot Thompson of Victoria and is survived by her four children – Dudley (Eleanor) and sons Andrew and Matthew (Amanda) and Miley of Winnipeg; Rodger (Jan) of New Westminster; Julie Forster (Peter) and son Nathan (Samantha



and great-grandson Nash and great-granddaughter Nessa) of Victoria and daughter Kirsten (Rich) of Calgary (and granddaughter Emiko); and Mary Gagnon (Gogs) of Victoria and children Stacey, Alex and Jennifer. Jean was predeceased by her parents Edward Otter and Harriett Anne (Gregory) of Toronto, Ontario and brother

George Otter of Montreal and sisters Lucy Pettit of Toronto and Dorothy Leonard of Glencoe, Ontario.



Jean had a wonderful life. She was born in Toronto and lived on Millwood Road for her entire childhood where she attended Davisville Public School and North Toronto Collegiate. She was the youngest of four children and had many fond memories of growing up in the 20's listening to the new radio as a family every evening, hikes to Sunnybrook farm, taking her Dad's collars to

the corner laundry to be starched, listening to her Dad's voice singing loudly to Saturday afternoon operas, head rubs by her dad during long church sermons, carrot sticks after school prepared by a nutrition-conscious mother and quiet

storytimes on her dad's knee. But the most favourite of all were summers at Geneva Park on Lake Couchiching. The trunk was ready on the last day of school in June and off they went to 'Couch'.... "the delights of aqua waters, wind in the birches, sunsets across the waters, the musty smell of straw mattresses, trilliums in the woods, the heady smell of wood fires, swimming $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles the summer she was eight" (she was an Otter).

After high school, mom took a secretarial course and worked in Toronto for nine months. She joined the Women's Division of the R.C.A.F. and went overseas in August 1942 with three girlfriends in the first contingent of W.D.'s and became a commissioned officer in December in Code and Cypher. During her time in London, she had a chance meeting with a young Canadian Army Officer. It's a storybook tale told to us many times in our family history – she was on her way to Westminster Abbey on Easter Sunday when the young Officer met her on Westminster Bridge and asked the time of the service. Little did she know at that time that this man would become her husband, and our dad. That Easter Sunday started a war-time romance in England of tea dances at Grosvenor House, Kew Gardens rambles, afternoon tea times, motorcycle dates, theatre evenings, leaves in Cornwall and daily letters to Dad during his long journey throughout Europe at the front.

After the war, Jean returned to Canada and married Dudley on June 15, 1946. Dad worked for Woolworths in Toronto and then in 1954 was asked to join the new retail company Simpsons-Sears and so began the cross-Canada journey of our family. The four kids started arriving at various stops – Dudley Jr. and Rodger in Toronto; Julie and Mary in Guelph with several stops in Calgary and Kingston in between. Winnipeg on Montrose and Waterloo Streets was home during the formative years of the family in the 60's. As the 70's arrived, the Sears train headed to the west coast and glorious years for most of the family in Vancouver and finally Victoria. Throughout the 20+

houses and moves, mom was the caregiver left behind to organize the kids, say goodbye to friends and schools, pack the boxes (again), develop the travel plans and then help with the adjustment to new schools and friends. Throughout the many years of change was the constancy of Geneva Park summers for the young family and Victoria Beach in Manitoba in the later years as well as several trips to England as a family to explore mom and dad's love for the country that formed them in the wartime years.

The last phase of her long life was spent in Victoria where she and Dad enjoyed their life on Lochhaven Drive, in the Wedgewood Estates condo, then at Parkwood Place and Parkwood Court. Many thanks to the caring staff at Parkwood and especially to the nurses, caregivers and the recreational team.

Mom was a gracious and loving person. She learned deep respect and love for people (and animals) through her caring mother and father, her early life in the Methodist Church and through her dad's work in the YMCA. Her mother's motto, 'others before self', underpinned mom's life. She was forever caring for her kids, and putting other's needs first, which often didn't leave much time for her needs. She had the soul of a poet and the eye of an artist. Throughout the years, in the cracks of time left over after all other needs were met, she wrote many sensitive poems and painted and sculpted the life around her in watercolours and clay. As an artist, Mom was forever marvelling at cloud formations for her watercolours and the bone structure or jaw formation for a sculpture. Her other passions included live theatre, scrabble and crossword puzzles that kept her fully engaged until a few days before her passing. She was a beauty, and all her kids and grandkids inherited and learned from mom what it is to be fully human. Thanks be to God for her life among us.

A Service will be held **Tuesday, April 10 at 2:00 pm** at St. Luke's Anglican Church. Contributions can be made in her

memory to St. Luke's Anglican Church, 3821 Cedar Hill Cross
Road, Victoria, V8P 2M6.