

Joan Marie (Gonnason) Goddard

Joan was born Oct. 10, 1928 in Victoria, BC, Canada and died December 8, 2015 in Victoria, BC, Canada of Alzheimer's disease. She was born to the pioneer Victorian family of Carl Seymour Gonnason, owner of one of the first lumber mills in Victoria, which was begun by his father, Benjamin Gonnason and uncle Aaron Gonnason, and supplied some of the lumber for the building of the Empress Hotel; and to Dora Evelyn Emma (Rolls) Gonnason, the 1923 Victoria May Queen, who was a "career girl" working in a government office before she married, from a Newfoundland family whose father worked for the whaling industry on Vancouver Island and the Queen Charlotte Islands (Haida Gwaii).

Joan grew up on Dallas Road in Victoria in the family home near Beacon Hill Park in James Bay, and attended Beacon Hill School, South Park School, and graduated from Victoria High School in 1946. She was presented as a debutante to Canada's Governor General Viscount Alexander and Lady Alexander, and B.C. Lieutenant Governor Woodward and Mrs. Woodward at Government House in Victoria in 1946, the first such cotillion in 7 years due to the Second World War. She went to the same high school (different years) and lived in the same neighborhood as the artist Emily Carr, whom she greatly appreciated.

She went to University of Victoria when it was a 2-year school, "Victoria College", with classes being held in Craigdarroch Castle; she remembered the classes were crowded because of the many men returning from WWII, giving the classes a more serious and earnest note.

In 1950, Joan earned her Bachelor of Science in Biology from University of British Columbia in Vancouver, BC, specializing in Forest Entomology, and worked in a forest insect station. She was planning graduate studies in biology in England and

was getting ready to depart when she met her future husband and changed plans.

She married Jewel Goddard in 1951 in Christ Church Cathedral in Victoria (where she had been baptised and confirmed) after they met through the foreign student organizations of UBC and UC-Berkeley, where he attended college. After marrying and moving to Berkeley, she worked in San Francisco at the California Academy of Sciences where she kept native tarantulas in a can on her desk (she had a fear of spiders, and their jumping in the can concerned her). They had two children, Ann and James (Jamie, Jim) Goddard. The family moved from the San Francisco Bay Area to Eugene, Oregon, in 1956, where they lived 12 years. They moved to St. Louis Park in the Minneapolis urban area in 1968, then to Portland, Oregon in 1974. They were divorced in 1988 and Joan moved back to Victoria.

Joan studied for American citizenship, enjoying the lessons in civics and history, and became a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1960. She became active in the League of Women Voters in Eugene, Oregon (where she was in a club with Mrs. Kitzhaber, mother of the later Governor of Oregon), and Minneapolis, Minnesota. In 1964, she made sure her family was present in the galleries at the final vote in Congress on the Civil Rights Act. As part of her League of Women Voters work in Minneapolis, she researched and wrote a book on Indians in Minnesota (where she lived with her family in the late 60s and early 70s) and her early involvement in Indian rights issues. She was one of the earliest volunteer teachers at the first Urban Indian Center in the country, begun by and for Natives, in Minneapolis, and befriended many of the early Indian rights advocates, including Gerald Vizenor, Russel Means, Dennis Banks, and Vine Deloria Jr.

While in Minneapolis, Joan got a job proofreading the scientific journal Ecology, which led to her correspondence with scientists all over the world. After moving back to

Oregon, she later was trained and became a real estate agent with Stan Wiley.

In 1989, she moved back to Victoria, BC, to help care for her sister Peggy Gonnason, and remained in Victoria until her death. Because of her US naturalization, she got Canadian status as a "landed immigrant" in 1991. She pursued interests in science, Native rights and history when pursuing family history in B.C. Her mother grew up on whaling stations where her grandfather was manager, stories from which piqued her interest and led to her interviewing dozens of people about the history of maritime B.C., and particularly the relations between the various cultural groups. She travelled widely, speaking on her subject all over the world. She wrote a laymen's book on whales titled "A Window on Whaling in British Columbia". She was actively interested in Aboriginal sovereignty and fishing and hunting rights. She served on the Board of Directors for the Maritime Museum of British Columbia.

Joan was predeceased by her parents, Dora and Carl Gonnason, and her sister, Peggy Gonnason. She is survived by her sister Sharon (Gil) Cordova of Sherwood, Oregon;; her ex-husband Jewel (Kris) Goddard of Olympia, Washington; her children Jim Goddard of Denver, Colorado, and his two children Wyatt and Sawyer Goddard; and Ann Goddard of Seal Rock, Oregon, and her children Jesse (Sara) Goddard-Trenholm of Springfield, Oregon, and their daughter Emma; and Heidi Goddard Trenholm of New York, NY.

Funeral services will be held at Christ Church Cathedral in Victoria on Monday, December 14, at 2 p.m. In lieu of flowers, Joan suggested a donation to a charity of your choice; The Mustard Seed of Victoria was one of her favorite charities. Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Bros. Funeral Home

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