

Margaret E. Parker

Predeceased by her partner, Frank Lewis (1932-2013), parents Richard and Ada (Newell) Little, and husband Ian Parker (1935-1982) with whom she had her four children: Neil (Helena Krivan), Sharon (Rob) Taylor, Douglas (Jennifer Elliott), and Alison (Tim Lavallee). She leaves a brother, Brian (Susan) Little, beloved cousin Loretta (Art) Dodsworth, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews and friends who were as dear as family. Herself to the end, she enjoyed long life and short obituaries ...

Margaret Parker was, in each and every way, a teacher. By profession, naturally enough, she taught at several junior and senior high schools in the Victoria region. And then, following a mid-career change, she took her newly minted MBA and began working contracts for CESO around the world: China, Bolivia, Sri Lanka, Malaysia.

For her children, she modelled that balance of remaining true to herself even as she refashioned her career. From teaching number theory (Charlie running along the number line) to computer programming (the venerable languages of WATFOR, WATFIV, and FORTRAN among others), she also taught people; as a guidance counselor, vice principal, and mentor for other students.

She was often the smartest person in the room, but never let anybody feel that they were not equally the smartest in the room. She drew people out with patience and high expectations. She suffered fools, gladly, because they were not fools to her.

Her marriage with Ian Parker, who predeceased her in 1982, produced four children in a space of five years: Neil (Helena Krivan), Sharon (Rob) Taylor, Douglas (Jennifer Elliott), and Alison (Tim Lavallee).. While that would raise some eyebrows,

Margaret always said that her family was impeccably planned: boy, girl, boy, girl, with the minimum number necessary so that each would have at least a brother and a sister. And a family who could easily be divided by 2, 3, and 6 for field trips or rationing hot dogs on camping trips.

She often commented that “she was a terrible mother”, usually when describing adventures that she had allowed and encouraged in her children. She was a mother who deeply invested in each child, and yet found each to be a fascinating stranger with whom she was delighted to spend time. She was equally delighted when any of her children, connections, grandchildren, and their assorted networks showed up to spend time with her.

She maintained connections with many interlinked communities, of fellow students, former students, the circle of the Philanthropic Educational Organization (PEO) in support of the advancement of women, colleagues, and life-long friends and family. She leaves a brother, Brian (Susan) Little, beloved cousin Loretta (Art) Dodsworth, eleven grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and well-loved nieces and nephews. With her second life partner, Frank Lewis, she explored the world of art and the logistics of an art career.

As a teacher, she was also a story-teller. In her most recent years, she collected and created family stories, published some, shared many. Her reading of “Dick and the Yule Log” will remain ever in our hearts, as she shared it at our hilarious Virtual Boxing Day this year. Hot times at Empress – Victoria Times Colonist

At the time of her death, the room was genuinely filled with love – we named all the people with us in spirit, and then the people we could feel coming to meet her. She was not alone. She will be missed, but with thanksgiving and celebration for all she was to all she loved.

Margaret celebrated both conventional and unconventional spirituality. So, it seems appropriate to close off with a verse from a Christian hymn that seemed to describe her in breathtaking detail:

*Strong mother God, working night and day,
planning all the wonders of creation,
setting each equation, genius at play:
hail and hosanna, strong mother God!*

("Bring Many Names" by Brian Wren)

A Service of Remembrance will be held in July in Victoria, BC. Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Gardens

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