

Maria (Ria) Bos

A WILD, WEIRD, WONDERFUL WOMAN LIVES HERE! Those words were on a sign by Mom's front door.

On April 8, 2025, Ria Bos (née Maria Goring) passed away peacefully at the age of 90, in Victoria, BC.

Ria is predeceased by her first husband, Adrian van den Broek, and second husband, Theodore Bos.

She is survived by her 4 children, Marge (George), Jude (Randy), Walter (Monika), Rudi (Debbie) and 3 grandchildren, Michael (Mandy), William and Lily. She is also survived by 1 great-grandchild, Alexander, and daughter-in-law Janet.

Ria (Mom) was born on January 26, 1935, to Dina and Joseph Goring in the Netherlands. She was the 4th of 7 children: Theo, Joanne, Betty, Ria, Lucy, John and Liz. Theo died in 1944 when a bomb in a local park exploded. Betty (there was a real threat that she would not be able to walk again) and John (whose hands were disfigured) survived.

Dina (Oma) and Joseph (Opa) managed to feed the family despite limited rations during the German occupation of The Netherlands. Opa on more than one occasion avoided capture by a Nazi raid while searching for food for the family. In 1951, the family together with Joseph's sister Tante Bertha, emigrated to Canada in 1951 aboard the SS Volendam. Sponsored by Gerry, Opa's brother, they arrived in Québec City on June 24, boarded a train to Winnipeg, and eventually to St. Alphonse. Mom, along with Joanne, Betty and Lucy, went off to work.

In 1954 Mom married Adrian van den Broek (Dad), a Royal Netherlands Air Force Officer-Navigator on exchange with the RCAF (stationed in Gimli), in Winnipeg. Shortly after they married, they returned to the Netherlands. Marge, Jude and

Walt were born there between 1955 and 1959.

However, Mom was very homesick and Dad had attended night school (trained as a draftsman in architecture) so the young family flew back to Canada in September 1959, then settled in Winnipeg, where Rudi was born in 1963. One 12 foot snowdrift against the front door too many (so the story goes) and the whole family boarded the train in 1965, landing in Vancouver, and then on to Victoria. Of all things, when the family arrived in Victoria at the end of March, it snowed.

Both Mom and Dad were great dancers, people cleared a space for them to watch and admire when the two of them got out on the dance floor.

Mom and Dad parted company in 1972 and Mom married Theodore (Dick) Bos in 1979.

Mom was very independent, energetic, creative, and found the world a fascinating place. From early days, Mom expressed her creativity, from (inexpensively!) decorating her family's home, to feeding (and dressing) her young family. She'd learn the techniques and tools, and get it all done somehow, and then take on more.

Mom was playful and young at heart, and always made time to help her children, at any age, and when grandchildren came into her life, her heart lit up. She adored her grandchildren above all.

Mom always had a verdant garden (10 green fingers), loved flowers above all in both gardens and art. While she had a family to feed, there would be a vegetable patch, and fruit trees. Summers were at the beach, or camping up-Island, or in the Okanagan. The kids would be put to work harvesting fruit and vegetables, canning and freezing. Due to the lack of food during the war, Mom didn't like food to go to waste and was most content when the freezer was brimming, and the kitchen pantry was full. One of her greatest joys was to have family

and friends over, and share a meal around her big table.

Never idle, Mom got involved in the art scene in Victoria, joining the Fibre Arts Society. She was creative and artistic, and loved working with fabrics, wools, feathers, bones and all the things that come from nature. Her fabric art is displayed in homes in the Netherlands, Phoenix, many parts of Canada, and has also been shown in galleries in and around Victoria, and at the Victoria International Airport.

Because of her gifts of creativity, design, and 'green fingers' mom decided to start her own landscaping business, and worked that, supporting herself, for approximately 20 years until she turned 65.

Even while raising a young family she made time to help others. Long before she was a senior herself, she volunteered at Silver Threads. With her keen interest in growing things and the environment, she joined like-minded organizations including the Victoria Raging Grannies which was the very first Grannies group. That group found some of its members, including Ria, convicted of trespassing as they were peacefully protesting clear-cut practices near Clayoquot Sound. Many, including Mom, were hauled off to jail. Mom was proud of her action as this protest received worldwide mass media attention, creating national support for the environmental movement in BC.

She was involved in many causes. One dear to her was African Aids Angels, a non-profit organization that makes decorative angel decorations to raise funds for AIDS – related projects. Many a guest would spend time with Mom in her small studio as she worked away on her angels (and would find a glue gun in their hands to join in the creating). Mom believed in making the world a better place and was always doing something to that end. She was a champion for the underdog throughout her life. Her empathy was the common thread in all things that she did.

A celebration of Ria's life will be held in the summer of 2025. Details to follow via Social Media.

In lieu of flowers, donations to your favourite charity in her name would be appreciated.

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Gardens

www.mccallgardens.com

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