

Mary Theresa MacDonald

Mary passed away peacefully at Mount Saint Mary Hospital, Victoria, BC, on September 7, 2020 after a dignified battle with Alzheimer's.

Mary was born in Sydney, Nova Scotia, November 13, 1926, to the late Jobe Tanus and Lily (Khattar) Abbass. She was predeceased by her loving husband of 66 years Malcolm, her infant son Gerard, born 1960, her brothers Joseph, Ferris, George, Rev. Francis and John, and her sister Philomena Hanna. She is survived by her daughters Honora Johannesen (Sigurd) of Victoria, Lillian Szpak (Robert) of Langford, BC, Ann-Marie (Alisa Palmer) of Montreal, her son John-Hugh (Mary Johnston) of Orillia, ON, and nine grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren, as well as brothers Tony of Moncton, NB, and Cyril (Susan) of Toronto, and sisters Annie Hashem, Katherine Huskey and Simone Abbass, all of Sydney NS. Also left to mourn are her many cherished nieces and nephews and relatives.

Mary was a vibrant, lively and creative go-getter with boundless energy who drew others with her radiant empathy, sincerity and joie de vivre. Raised in a large, hard-working Lebanese family on Cape Breton Island during the Great Depression and Second World War, she overcame challenges to become a Registered Nurse at New Waterford General Hospital and a uniformed member of the Red Cross. It was at the dances in Glace Bay that she met her future husband Malcolm, with whom she shared a storybook life filled with love, romance, adventure, world travel and a burgeoning family, accompanying him on RCAF postings to Edmonton, Baden-Baden Germany, Centralia, ON, Hamilton and Kingston, before settling in Ottawa for over 40 years and eventually resettling in Victoria.

Mary was a devoted Catholic who lent her considerable energies to organizing and supporting parishes wherever she lived, including erecting two new churches, and she remained a tour-

de-force in the Catholic Women's League most of her adult life. She worked as an OR nurse at several hospitals during her career, practised private palliative care, and served more than 20 years as the public health nurse at Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation head office where she was cherished and respected for her open door and sincere counsel. She was also active in politics, helping organize successful federal and provincial Liberal campaigns, and together with Malcolm served meals at the Shepherds of Good Hope soup kitchen in Ottawa.

A gracious "hostess with the mostest" who loved cooking, entertaining, reading tea leaves, playing Bridge and Tarbush, singing and dancing, her exuberance spilled over into everything she did and she was sought after for her counsel and support. She made everyone who confided in her feel special, loved and capable of achieving anything. Mary's greatest treasure was her husband and their ever-expanding family. Our beautiful Mum and Sidty instilled in her children, grand and great-grandchildren a sense of limitless potential, plucky resilience, can-do energy and that each was loved thoroughly.

The family wishes to thank the Sisters of St. Ann and the staff of Mount Saint Mary Hospital for their unfailing medical and spiritual care, kindness and love, and Louisa Peters, Mary's faithful and devoted Companion.

A Private Funeral Mass was held at St Patrick's Church, Victoria on Friday, September 11, 2020.

Interment to be announced, at Beechwood Cemetery, Ottawa, at a later date. In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to Mount Saint Mary Hospital, 861 Fairfield Rd, Victoria, BC V8V 5A9. Condolences may be offered to the family below.

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