

Lois Rae Newsham (nee Brown)

Born 1 Aug 1919 Montreal, Quebec

Died 25 May 2009 Victoria, BC

Lois was born in Montreal, Quebec, the fourth of five children born to Edwin and Agnes Brown. After being educated in Montreal, she entered McGill's MacDonald College where she qualified as an elementary school teacher. For several years she taught children in various schools administered by the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal.

Lois was blessed with a beautiful singing voice, which was further developed from training under the renowned Madam Donalda. Lois sang as both a choral singer and a soloist for many years.

In 1946, Lois began working as an exchange teacher in Vancouver; shortly after she met her future husband, Lloyd Newsham, who was at the time a graduate student in physics at McGill University. Their relationship continued to grow fonder in the subsequent years and the warmth of their mutual attachment led to their engagement on Christmas Day, 1949. Six months later, on June 28th, 1950, they were married in Westmount, Quebec.

Shortly after their marriage, Lois and Lloyd left on the ill-fated Franconia for London to attend a Radiological Congress meeting. Soon after leaving Quebec, the ship ran into trouble and eventually ran aground on the Ile d'Orleans. Passengers had to be rescued by other vessels and spent nearly two weeks in the Hotel Frontenac.

During their nearly 59 years of marriage, Lois and Lloyd made their home in Halifax, Montreal, Edmonton and for the last 19 years, Victoria. They also enjoyed two year long sabbaticals to Cambridge and Guildford in the United Kingdom. These moves gave Lois the chance to expand her circle of friends.

“Bubbles”, as she was known as by her son-in-law Bob, always enjoyed being around others and never hesitated to start up a conversation, regardless of who the person was. Sunday dinners spent out at restaurants would often result in Lois finding out the life story of the server. It was in Lois’ nature to make sure everyone around her was included and in a good mood, which was quite easy when Lois was around.

Lois will be remembered for her contagious smile, her love for her family, her ability to always find the positive in any situation and her incredibly social nature. She will be greatly missed by her loving husband, Lloyd, her children, Joan (Bob) and Helen (Steve), her grandchildren, Daniel, Kevin, Averil, Katy, Lucy and Tory, as well as countless other family members and friends.

Anyone who knew Lois could speak of her incredible charisma and her heart of gold. She was always quick to pick up on the good in people and would, without fail, be able to give valuable advice to anyone who needed it.

Those who had the pleasure of meeting Lois and being a part of her life will surely agree; their life is better for her being in it.

A service to remember Lois will take place at 2 PM Monday, June 1, at Cordova Bay United Church, 813 Claremont Avenue, Cordova Bay, V8Y 1J9. In Lois’ memory, donations can be made to Doctors Without Borders or to the charity of one’s choice.