

Norma Irene Bell

March 14, 1927 – February 14, 2010

Passed away peacefully at Victoria Hospice after a feisty 3-year battle with lymphoma. Her positive, determined attitude helped her confound medical prognostications once again and, after fighting the good fight, she left us on her own terms.

Predeceased by newborn daughter in 1966 and husband Jim in 1995. Survived by son James, daughter Margaret (Lloyd), son Gordon (Ronda) and grandchildren Megan and Shaun.

Norma was born in Winnipeg to Ralph and Irene Greene, and grew up in Stony Mountain. She knew from a young age that she would be a nurse and in 1948 graduated from Winnipeg's St. Boniface School of Nursing. Hospitalized with TB in 1949, Norma survived it as well as the mass hospital evacuation to Saskatchewan during the 1950 Winnipeg flood.

Norma met James Bell in Flin Flon while working as an ER nurse and they married in 1954. In 1967 Jim, Norma and their three kids relocated to Winnipeg. After several years nursing, she moved to epidemiology at the Manitoba Cancer Clinic. She enjoyed her work and colleagues but soon found her niche as Patient Care Coordinator, Northern Medical Unit, where she assisted Inuit patients and their families receiving health care or treatments in their remote communities and in Winnipeg. In spite of language gaps, her empathy and warmth made their experience less daunting.

Jim and Norma lived in Kenora for a few years post-retirement, then followed their kids to Vancouver Island, setting up residence in Parksville. Jim died suddenly in 1995 and Norma soon moved to Victoria.

Although Norma lived an average lifespan, she was above average in her ability to enjoy life and friends, while accepting with a smile any troubles life brought her way. Norma was Mom to many more than her three kids and loved to prove that hugs are the true wonder drug. She treasured the

lifelong connections and the many reunions with her St. Boniface nursing classmates.

Volunteering was an important part of her life beginning with knitting in 1941 for the war effort. As an adult she was a member of the Flin Flon Kinettes and Winnipeg Kinettes, volunteered at Parksville Society of Services, and then at Fairfield Seniors Centre in Victoria. She loved to read, listen to music, garden, bake and cook, embroider and sew, and had a good eye for art and design. She faced life honestly, with integrity, and believed in being responsible for one's actions. She viewed us all with anticipation that we'd do our best but loved us anyways when we showed our foibles and quirks.

Service at McCall Bros Floral Chapel, Johnson & Vancouver St, Victoria, on Thursday, February 18 at 11:00 am.

Norma and Jim's ashes will be scattered together near their favourite Vancouver Island walking trail. Flowers gratefully declined. Donations, if desired, to Our Place Society or to Victoria Hospice Foundation.

Fare thee well, Normie. Your love, generosity and indomitable spirit touched many and we shall cherish our memories of you.