

Rita Jean Stevenson (nee Stead)

Rita passed peacefully at Broadmead Veterans Memorial Care Home in Victoria with family by her side. Rita was predeceased by her loving husband Denis George Stevenson (Steve) in 2010. Rita is survived by her children, Teresa Thiessen (Jake, deceased), Michael Stevenson (Linda) and Ray Stevenson (Olympia), grandchildren Katrina and Whitney Cote (David) and three great grandchildren, Milos, Nico and Theo Cote. She also leaves behind brother-in-law Michael Stevenson (Joanne) and sister-in-law Paula Francis (Ted deceased) as well as many dear nephews, nieces and friends.

Rita was born in Leytonstone, Essex, England and raised in Buckhurst Hill, Essex. She is the daughter of Albert and Margaret Stead. During her time in England, Rita worked as a bookkeeper in her family's haberdashery millinery business and then in a military convalescent hospital during WWII which was a 13-mile cycle ride from her home with, often times, shrapnel falling around her. It was during this time that she met and married Denis Stevenson (1944) who was stationed with the Canadian Armed Forces in England. Following the war, Rita boarded a ship as a war bride and was off to her new home in West Vancouver, B.C., Canada.

By 1948 Rita and Denis' family had grown to include 3 children. Through this period up to 1954, the family moved from West Vancouver to Prince Rupert, Burns Lake, West Tahtsa Lake, Brentwood Bay and then settling in Kitimat, which she loved. Rita was active with sewing, gardening, playing chess by mail, badminton, judo, fencing, teaching aerobics and fitness, social golf and hiking local mountains.

In 1982, following Denis' retirement from Rio Tinto, they moved to Qualicum Beach to be closer to family. This is where

Rita decided it was time to get her drivers license, grow vegetables hydroponically in her greenhouse, earn her brown belt in karate and pursue her love of playing and coaching tennis. Rita was an avid reader with a special interest in health, gardening, tennis and fitness.

Rita took great pride in whatever she became involved in and was always very modest about her accomplishments.

Rita will be fondly remembered for her gentle nature, her friendliness, her smile and witty sense of humor. She was an amazing mother who was always there for her children. Whenever family or friends visited, she would soon be serving them a cup of English tea and cookies.

Yes, Rita came to Canada as an English War Bride but she became a true British Columbia pioneer, loved and respected by everyone fortunate enough to have met her.

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

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