Rosemary Irene Hunter (nee Lund)

Rosemary Irene Hunter passed away on August 20th, 2024, in Victoria, British Columbia, after a brief illness and surrounded by family.

She was born in Mafeking, South Africa, the daughter of Rev John Proctor and Gladys Lund (nee Rogers), youngest sister of Jean, Raymond, Howard and Elaine, wife of George Hunter, and former wife of Ron Attwell.

Rosemary is survived by her children David, Diane, Andrew, and Robert; daughters and son-in-law Clare, Irwin, Kristen and Cynthia; and her nine grandchildren: Maximilian, Erin, Adam, Rebekah, Benjamin, Emma, Peter, Jonathan and Christian; her sister, Elaine Simon, sister-in-law, Jess; her Hunter stepchildren and many nieces and nephews and their families around the globe.

Rosemary always said she did not enjoy school until she studied nursing. She trained as a nurse and midwife in Johannesburg, South Africa, where she achieved academic excellence. She then served as a midwife, hospital nurse, and public health nurse in many communities, including Queenstown in South Africa, and a year in the UK.

In 1964, she married Ron Attwell, and within four years, they were blessed with four children. Rosemary continued to work as a nurse as the family moved from Johannesburg to Sasolburg, then Potchefstroom following Ron’s Methodist Church appointments. She thrived in her role as a minister’s wife and loving mother to their energetic children.

Rosemary’s work as a public health nurse in the townships and Ron’s involvement with black colleagues in the Methodist

Church deepened their awareness of the injustices of apartheid. Their efforts to combat these inequities eventually led to the difficult decision to leave South Africa. In 1977, guided by their principles of faith and justice, Rosemary and Ron immigrated to Canada, sacrificing proximity to their extended family to build a better future. Although the distance was painful, they nurtured the family bonds across the oceans, which remain strong today. We are forever grateful for their sacrifice.

The family settled in the Mill Bay-Shawnigan Lake community. Ron served as a United Church Minister, and Rosemary was an operating room and emergency department nurse at the Cowichan District Hospital. They quickly became integral members of the local community, church, and medical fields, forging lifelong connections with friends like the Kennedy and Rogers families.

In 1985, after the family relocated to Victoria, Rosemary and Ron divorced, a change that deeply saddened her. Rosemary found work in the Medical and Surgical Daycare units at the Victoria General Hospital. She developed strong and lasting friendships in Victoria through work and community involvement at St. Michael’s and All Angels, Meals on Wheels, and the Rainbow Kitchen.

To supplement her income, Rosemary began hosting international homestay students at her home on Blenkinsop Road. What started as a financial necessity quickly became a source of immense fulfillment. Over the years, Rosemary hosted more than 40 students, many of whom became cherished family members, such as Keiko Uehera, Juan Carlos Durand, Liliana Avila, Kindie Abebe, and Jeff Chiang. The bonds formed with these students endure, and they remain connected to the family today.

Rosemary found joy in meeting George Hunter at Church. They married in 2000 and shared life and love until George’s passing in 2007. Rosemary was welcomed into the Hunter family, and the bond between the families has continued. Rosemary

enjoyed regular contact with the Hunter family, including numerous visits from Chris and Daintrie and their families.

Rosemary was known for her faith, service to others, love of family, and a joyful spirit that touched many lives. She was a wonderful cook, and her South African recipes, fairy cakes, trifle, scones and homemade jams were family favourites. She loved her pets and home and was passionate about her beautiful garden that always had blooms. She derived great pleasure from working with her hands, gardening, sewing, knitting, smocking, drawing, painting, and calligraphy, and sharing these skills with her family. She had an uncanny ability to make something out of nothing, whether food or fabric.

Above all, Rosemary built a close-knit, multigenerational family that adored her and visited frequently. She was immensely proud of her children and the lives they built in Canada. Her grandchildren, each of whom held a special place in her heart, brought her boundless joy. She will forever be proud of their achievements and the people they've become. A sign at the front door read: "*Children always welcome. Parents by invitation*"

Rosemary's legacy will be her dedication to her faith and family, her work as a nurse, and the love she spread to those around her. She taught her family about faith, service, community, hard work, excellence, determination, frugality, integrity, and, above all, laughter. Her wry sense of humour, zest for life and joy were a welcome spark in many conversations.

Rest in peace Mom – you will go with us everywhere and every day.

A celebration of life will be held on Friday, October 4th, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. Pacific Time, at St. Michael's and All Angels Anglican Church, 4733 West Saanich Road, Victoria, BC, V8Z 3G9.

We are grateful for the many people who helped Rosemary through her last years, offering rides, friendship, and community, especially her church families of St Michael's and Saanich Peninsula Presbyterian Church. To the many home support workers who passed through her home in the last year, many of whom loved their visits with her, and to all the physicians and nurses who worked so hard to make her life better, Thank You!

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Rosemary's memory to St. Michael's and All Angels Parish (https://www.stmikevictoria.ca/giving) or the Rainbow Kitchen (https://rainbowkitchen.ca/donate/).

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Gardens
www.mccallgardens.com