

## Jennie Donaldson (teacher 1969-1981)

DONALDSON, Jennie (nee Crawford, nee Coropka) Who was Mrs. Donaldson to few, Jennie to her dearest friends, Mom and Baba to her nuclear family, and Aunt Jen to everyone else died peacefully in the early morning hours on Wednesday, November 03rd at Victoria General hospital. A woman before her time, Jennie was born in Otthon, Saskatchewan on February 05, 1920. She was the second eldest child in a family with five children three brothers and one older sister. She is predeceased by her husband, Harry and her sons Robert and Mark; her sister Olga (who passed away when very young) and brothers William, Lenard and Wallace. Even at elementary school in North Regina and Scott Collegiate High, her brilliant, inquisitive mind was evident to all around her. At 16, she graduated two years ahead of others of her same age. Being too young for normal school, she went to a secretarial school, where she excelled at everything except typing and shorthand her destiny was elsewhere. At eighteen, she started teaching in rural Saskatchewan: four years in four different places, ending in Wolsely. Jennie's next adventure was as a clerk at the WAR bureau, to verify that farmers were reducing their wheat production as they were being paid to do. At the same time, she took night school courses at Regina College and then enrolled in a four year Lab tech program at the University of Saskatchewan. However, after her first encounter with the lab at the University her destiny was elsewhere. Jennie would have loved to be a doctor and took Pre-Med for two years, but family money could support only one med student brother Wallace and her destiny was elsewhere. A counselor at the University encouraged her to become a dietician. She would graduate with a Degree in Household Sciences from the University of Saskatchewan. Her first household science teaching assignment was in Rossland, BC. where she happily taught for seven years and met her husband to be, Harry Donaldson. Jennie moved from Rossland to Victoria for the remainder of her teaching career. While teaching, Jennie started her Master's Degree in Education through Oregon State University. She developed a Child Care course that she later implemented in Victoria a course that grew from humble beginnings to four full blocks a pleasure for Jennie and the students in it! The invited guest speakers and mock day care centre were a hit for both students and day care children alike. Harry re-entered her life and they were wed in 1956. Their son, Robert was born on 1958 and their daughter, Heather, came into their lives in 1961. They were now a family of four Jennie's destiny did not include completing her Masters degree. With the death of her sister-in-law Janine in 1965, their family grew to five joined by her brother Bill's youngest child of six months old Mark. Shortly thereafter, their family would expand to eight to include Linda, Aleta, and Jeannine Bill's three daughters. Jennie's destiny was to be Aunt Jen to her large family, their friends, as well as the many children in the neighbourhood. To this day, all have fond memories and stories to tell of their Aunt Jen". Jennie's destiny included a ten year hiatus from teaching to bring up this brood. When Robert was 10, she went back to teaching. She would teach until 62. Jennie's destiny was to travel the world with Harry, and with a passion touching more than 30 countries. After each trip, beverages from the last country were served up with slides and stories of the adventure. Jennie continued to travel abroad well into her late eighties, with the last trips to that other Canadian country Newfoundland, and to Mexico with family. Jennie eagerly supported the arts: the symphony, opera, plays, and visual arts. She loved new experiences, new sights, sounds, and tastes. Jennie was an avid reader and hoarder of information inquisitive, bright, and questioning. She loved to dance and she loved her walks particularly late in life in Beacon Hill Park where she would feed the squirrels and look for Henry the heron with Harry the husband. Jennie supported a host of charities and always took care of her family and the family of man. She was strong when needed and playful when she got the chance. Egalitarian, democratic and a believer in social justice, Jennie's destiny was truly to be a woman before her time. Jennie, Mom, Baba and "Aunt Jen " will be deeply missed by all who knew her.



