

WALLACE, Gillian Patricia, QC VHS '66

The following tribute was written by Jill's family.



Our beloved Jill passed away peacefully on the morning of March 1, 2011 at Victoria Hospice. She leaves her loving family her mother Lois Wallace and sisters Marilyn McCurrach and Wendy Nielsen, sons Andrew and Geoffrey and their partners Shantona Chaudhury and Sara Conkin, her husband Jack MacDonald, mother in law Florence MacDonald, and cousins, nephews and nieces in Canada and the US. Her father, Lawrie Wallace, and father in law, Ken MacDonald, predeceased her.

Born and raised in Victoria, Jill was a proud graduate of Vic High, the UofT and UBC Law School. After articling in Vancouver and clerking at the Supreme Court of Canada, Jill began her legal career at the Department of Justice in Ottawa. She played a significant role in developing freedom of information and privacy legislation, as well as many other public law issues.

Andrew and Geoffrey were born in Ottawa, and our years there were happy, both at work and with our many friends. The family moved home to Victoria in 1985 where Jill joined the Ministry of Attorney General. After serving in roles of increasing responsibility at MAG, Aboriginal Affairs and Health, she capped her career as Deputy Attorney General.

Jill worked punishing hours, but still found time to manage a busy household and nurture countless friendships. She had a gift for making good friends of her colleagues, and those friendships continued beyond Jill's retirement in 2003. Retirement allowed Jill to devote more time to her many interests. Creating delicious dinners for family and friends, relishing the chance to read widely, to spend more time in her garden, and to indulge her love of sports as an enthusiastic and knowledgeable fan and as a participant. Jill also treasured our many trips, whether to visit friends across Canada, or to discover new sights and experiences in Britain, Europe, the US, Mexico, Tanzania, and China. Since retirement, she also devoted many satisfying hours to working for the Vic High Alumni Association and in the Vic High Archives. Jill refused to allow her cancer diagnosis and surgery in late 2008 to dampen her enthusiasm for living life to the full. Nor did the disease's return prevent a last big trip, to the Yucatan in December, where family gathered to celebrate Geoffrey and Sara's beautiful beach wedding. Jill loved her family and huge network of friends. Her modesty always led her to downplay the qualities everyone else saw so clearly her intelligence, integrity, high standards of ethics and honesty, self-discipline, infectious enthusiasm, outstanding lifelong record of accomplishment, openness to people and ideas, and generosity of spirit. We have no idea how she managed to do so much for each of us, with such grace, apparently effortless ease, and love. She made it the easiest thing in the world to love her back.

The family wishes to thank the outstanding people at the BC Cancer Agency and Victoria Hospice, and to express our particular gratitude to Dr. Rob Sealey and Dr. Catherine Fitzgerald. A memorial service was held in the Lawrie Wallace Auditorium at Victoria High School, 1260 Grant Street in Victoria on Thursday, March 10. Anyone so wishing could make a donation in Jill's name to the Victoria Hospice a wonderful institution facing urgent financial pressures right now or to the Vic High Alumni Association, the BC Cancer Agency, or any charity of your choosing. That is how Jill would want to be remembered by doing something useful.