



## Mrs. Gwendolyn Alice Sheppard

July 27, 2016

Gwendolyn Alice Sheppard (née Falls)  
April 10, 1923-July 27, 2016

Gwen, our beloved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, auntie, passed away peacefully, at the age of 93, in the presence of her loving family.

Predeceased by her parents, Harry and Doris Falls (née Hilborn) of St. Thomas and her adoring younger brother, Admiral Robert (Bob) Hilborn Falls of Ottawa. Survived by her devoted husband of nearly 70 years, Commander Donald John Sheppard, who resides at Sunnybrook Veterans Hospital in Toronto, her brother Howard (Muriel) of London and sister-in-law Isabelle Falls of Ottawa.

Loving mother of Christine Robinson (Peter), Nancy White (David), Susan Sheppard (Barry), Bob Sheppard (Irene) and Michael Sheppard (Shoko). She will also be missed and remembered by her grandchildren, Rachel (Zvi), Adam (Isabelle), Samantha (Ben), Kenneth (Chika), Marcus and Izumi, along with great-grandchildren Oscar, Sidney, Zikora, Felix and Raffi. Many nieces and nephews will cherish memories of good times at the farm and the cottage with Auntie Gwen.

Gwen was born in Stevensville Ontario. During her high school years in

Chatham she excelled in music and academic studies. She graduated in physiotherapy from the University of Toronto in 1946. She was working in Montreal later that year when her brother Bob Falls, who was living in Nova Scotia, introduced her to a handsome naval officer who was a fellow pilot.

Don and Gwen were married in 1947 and began life as a military family in Dartmouth, N.S. There were long periods over the next 30 years when Gwen looked after her growing family while her husband was away on duty. She accomplished this with great strength and skill, managing all aspects of a busy household in their far-flung postings with no nearby family support.

After crisscrossing the country from coast to coast with kids and dogs in tow, Gwen's favourite postings were their last: Rome, London and Brussels. She reveled in the art, music, history, architecture, food and wines of Europe. She overcame her natural introversion to become an accomplished diplomatic hostess, welcoming a diversity of guests from across the NATO community.

When Don retired from the Navy, Gwen became a farmer's wife in Bridgetown, N.S. She tackled this new role with her characteristic intelligence, common sense and creative talent. She rolled up her sleeves for renovations, planted a superb farm garden, sewed drapes, restored antique furniture, hooked rugs, made pickles, preserved her harvested fruits and vegetables, made granola and the best chocolate chip cookies ever.

During this time, in the mid-70's, she wrote a paper for an early women's studies course at Acadia University. This essay revealed her wonderful insight into women's history and the movement that she felt had come a little late for her. She was a life-long learner, a voracious reader and was always part of the winning team in Trivial Pursuit or Scrabble. She did the Globe and Mail cryptic crossword in ink every morning.

Don and Gwen finally retired to Aurora where they lived well for many years, close to their beloved cottage on Lake Simcoe. Here Gwen began to explore her passion for painting as her mother Doris had done before her. She was a prolific watercolour artist for more than 30 years. Gwen was happiest when painting or travelling with her group of artist friends. Over the years, this band of spunky seniors visited many beautiful Ontario destinations. These adventures inspired and informed Gwen's art while nurturing her soul.

Over the past year, Gwen was hospitalized several times and her health declined. Her loss of independence challenged her indomitable spirit. She was determined to live only as long as she could live well. She died with courage and dignity as she had lived her life. Special thanks to palliative care physicians Drs. Kendal and Shapiro. Thanks also to the kindly 8th floor staff at Briton House in Toronto where she spent her final months.

Cremation has taken place and her ashes will be interred at the National Military Cemetery in Ottawa at a future date.

Tea and remembrances of Gwen will be shared on August 21, 2016 from 2PM to 4PM at the home of her niece, Debbie Robertson, 11 Darlingbrook Crescent, Etobicoke, ON M9A 3H4.

Gwen's love, quiet intelligence, and good counsel will be sorely missed.

# Tribute Wall

ST

“ Stephen and I were very saddened to read of the passing of our dear neighbour Gwen. We wish to extend our deepest sympathy to Don and her family. She will be sadly missed by many. She and Don had lived across the street from our home in Aurora for approximately 25 years. When I think of Gwen I remember her quiet nature and warm smile. In the years before she moved she was very determined to exercise and took frequent walks around the street. I was so impressed with the talent she demonstrated in her beautiful paintings. Gwen was so humble when complimented though saying it was just a hobby! We often think of her when we look across the street. Stephen and I will always remember Gwen with fondness.

*With sincerest sympathy,  
Stephen and Gabriele Thompson*

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**Stephen and Gabriele Thompson** - August 07, 2016 at 08:34 PM

GW

“ My parents, Dorothy and Bill Trimble, got to know the Sheppards when they moved to Aurora almost 30 years ago. They discovered that they shared many interests, and my mom and Dad spoke very highly of both Gwen and Don. I am very grateful for good times they shared and for the friendship that meant so much to my parents in their later years.

*I send condolences on behalf of my parents.*

*Ginny Walsh*

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**Ginny Walsh** - August 03, 2016 at 08:15 PM



“ Thank you Gwen for teaching me how to make scrambled eggs properly with just one comment. - Mark

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**Mark Robertson** - August 01, 2016 at 06:51 PM



*"Leave them alone"?*

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**Bob Sheppard** - August 02, 2016 at 01:54 PM