



Valerie Elizabeth Clark nee Temple

May 26, 2024

1948 October 16 - 2024 May 26

Sadly, Valerie passed away after a heroic fight against dementia, never complaining, while still caring about others to the end, especially her husband of over 50 years, James Clark.

She is survived by her 3 brothers, Victor Temple, Walley Temple, and Kenneth Temple and their spouses Carol(deceased), Doreen Farley, and Christine Temple, as well as 7 nieces and 2 nephews, 14 cousins and many beloved friends.

Valerie grew up in Winnipeg and was in one of the first nursing classes at the University of Manitoba. She graduated with a Bachelor of Nursing degree in 1970. She started her career nursing in a remote Indigenous reservation in northern Manitoba. A year later she and James moved to Toronto where she worked as a public health nurse until her retirement. She loved her job and loved visiting her patients, always travelling by bicycle. After retirement, she ran a very successful business with her husband selling antique posters. This was a very exciting endeavour as they had to travel all over Europe, mostly Switzerland, France, Italy, England and Spain looking for these posters which were often found in attics or warehouses and forgotten by their owners. Beyond being a talented nurse and entrepreneur, what distinguishes her life was that she had a wonderful heart and was truly one of the friendliest people on Earth. Whether she was travelling overseas, waiting in a grocery line up, or riding in an elevator, she would strike up a conversation and a long-lasting

friendship was born. She was always helping her friends. One her friends wrote she was not one in a million but one in a billion. It was all because she cared for them.

She loved gardening, helping her condo maintain their flower gardens, and most spectacularly created a forest in her small flat with Norwegian pines that reached the ceiling. What space was not filled by plants, was full of a large aquarium with fish, birds in bird cages, and her beloved cats from the SPCA. Somehow there was still enough room for her poster business, her friends and her husband.

She loved the outdoors, frequently walking through the parks around Toronto, exploring the flower gardens and watching the birds. In the summer her passion was to take the train with her bike and get off about 50 kilometers east of Toronto. She would cycle back along the lakeshore enjoying nature and stopping in her favorite spot for a picnic.

She was always optimistic despite living most of her life with severe vision loss - an inspiration for those with disabilities and for all of us when we think we have troubles. Yes, she made the world a better place with her gifts, and she will be sorely missed.

A Celebration of Life will be held later this summer. In honor of Valerie, donations can be donations to your SPCA or to a charity of your choice. Thank you in advance.

Tribute Wall

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“ It was just under 10 years ago that I was fortunate enough to meet Valerie. I was finally taking the time to decorate my home, and had arranged to come to Valerie & Jim’s place to take a look at some posters I was interested in purchasing. It was an exciting time; my long distance partner was coming from France to visit me in Toronto for the first time, and Valerie was thrilled to help give my place some character. She and Jim were so kind; it was like I’d known them my whole life. From then on, we’d get together for coffee, or dinner - once they even came to see my friend’s band with me! Just over a year later, I moved to Paris, and Valerie and Jim came to my going away party, and of course mingled with everyone without a moment’s hesitation. Valerie was ageless...always with a genuine curiosity to get to know new people, or hear new music, or bike a new path.

Just before moving abroad I visited them at their apartment, and they gave me a really special gift to take with me: a candle. In their place, they had a wine bottle that was covered in a massive colourful mound of melted candle wax. They told me that wine bottle was from one of their first dates, on a picnic I think, and since then (for over 50 years) it had been their sacred candle holder. That candle they gave me was to share in their romantic tradition, and of course I did the same; it melted in our first date wine bottle, and is on a shelf in

Paris.

Valerie loved Jim, so much. They were just so beautiful together. She was endlessly and effortlessly thoughtful, generous, creative, inspired, active, loving. Valerie made this world much brighter. In her memory, I aspire to be as positive and curious as she was. I’ll never forget her.

- Amanda Holmes

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