

**THE FINAL MAKEOVER, DEINDIVIDUALIZATION OF WOMEN  
IN CONTEMPORARY DEATH NOTICES**

**A Thesis to the Committee on Graduate Studies  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts  
in the Faculty of Arts and Science**

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## Abstract

The Final Makeover, Deindividualization of Women in Contemporary Death Notices

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As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, print death notices have increased in number, length, and deviations, often as the only form of public recognition for the deceased. This thesis provides close readings through feminist and anti-ageist lenses of ninety print death notices, published in *The Peterborough Examiner* and *Peterborough This Week* between October 2019 and October 2021. These readings inform and illustrate the deindividualization of older women in death notices as the product not only of the limitations of language and format, but of a community that panders to regional public interests and traditional ageist tropes of femininity to create worthy public subjects. An exploration of ambiguities, contradictions, and overdeterminations that break with conventions of death notices reveals unintentional makeovers, deindividualization, and the sidelining of older women as subjects of their own memorials and photos in an extension of the systemic and internalized gendered ageism older women experience in life.

**Keywords:** Death Notices, Deindividualization, Feminism, Older Women, Gendered Stereotypes, Aging, Ageism, Good Death, COVID-19, Peterborough-Kawartha, Coded Language, Infantilization, Age-inaccurate Photos, Margaret Laurence, Carol Shields

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## **Introduction: Deindividualization,<sup>1</sup> Aging and Death in Peterborough-Kawartha**

Almost a month after Martha Smith died, at one-hundred-and-four years old, her life was commemorated in a death notice (see app., fig. 1) printed in *The Peterborough Examiner* (*PE*) in January 2021.<sup>2</sup> The survivors of Martha Smith, perhaps encouraged by the funeral director and the fact that *The Examiner* permits writers to incorporate a subtitle under the deceased's name, situate the relevance of her birth and death, according to literary scholar Laurie McNeill in "Writing Lives in Death: Canadian Death Notices as Auto/Biography," by "delineating how readers will interpret the subsequent biographical details" (191). Martha Smith is presented and subtitled as Born: 1917; Died: 2021. "Martha," as the author of the death notice states, "survived the influenza pandemic of 1918 as an infant, and lived life well for the next full century and a little bit more before succumbing to the COVID-19 virus in 2021" (*PE* 2 Feb. 2021, A7).<sup>3</sup> The years of Martha Smith's birth and death are positioned in the historical context of the Spanish flu and current novel

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<sup>1</sup> Hannah Arendt uses the term "deindividualization" in *The Human Condition*. She states that "compared with the reality which comes from being seen and heard, even the greatest forces of intimate life—the passions of the heart, the thoughts of the mind, the delights of the senses—lead an uncertain, shadowy kind of existence unless and until they are transformed, deprivatized and deindividualized, as it were, into a shape to fit them for public appearance" (50).

<sup>2</sup> Out of respect for the deceased and the family who wrote each death notice referenced in my thesis, names of the decedents, family members, and some other identifying markers have been changed. Quotation marks will not be used as an indication of anonymizing in the body of my thesis. Quotation marks around names on the Works Cited page and Appendix indicate pseudonyms that match names used in my thesis. (In Chapter 3, I use one decedent's real first name. The name is significant to the analysis and use of the original is noted in a footnote.) The exact days of decedents' deaths are changed or omitted to achieve anonymity.

<sup>3</sup> Quotations from all death notices are copied exactly as published; "[sic]" is not used to point out errors in death notices. Some "errors" may be style choices and/or acceptable in the newspaper.

coronavirus pandemics, which occur more than a century apart. In “Generic Subjects: Reading Canadian Death Notices as Life Writing,” McNeill states that “once written up and published in this forum [of a death notice], the life and death of a loved one is no longer just a private or individual affair but also a matter of public interest” (152). The particulars of Martha Smith’s “well lived life” are eclipsed, however, in favour of topical headlines and the neatness with which her life is framed by the two pandemics.

Focusing on Canadian death notices as “life writing” (McNeill, “Generic Subjects” 151) and “auto/biography” (McNeill, “Writing Lives” 187) that writes the private into the public sphere, McNeill is the most prominent Canadian scholar who has published on this genre. She posits that “the death notice is not a genre that draws much popular or critical attention, in part because aberrations are so rare” (“Generic Subjects” 165). My thesis builds on the universally recognizable, rigid form, replicated over and over with minimal variations during the past century to assess the extent to which older women’s private lives are made over after death or re/written in ways considered worthy enough to be commemorated in the public sphere. McNeill notes that death notices conform to the expectations of their reading public and that the authors write themselves into the lives of the deceased. Not to be confused with *obituaries* written by professional journalists about famous people, death notices authored and paid for by grieving and well-meaning family survivors reflect generations of private families and public readerships that share similar cultural ideals (“Generic Subjects” 155). Death notices must also comply with the interests of various patriarchal publics: the business of funeral homes<sup>4</sup> and newspapers. As part of death rituals in Canada, death notices need to satisfy

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<sup>4</sup> Based on phone inquiries made on December 6, 2021 to all the funeral homes listed in the on-line yellow pages in Peterborough and area, only two funeral homes out of nine—

the demands of tradition and death etiquette, pushing authors to rely heavily on established models based in linguistic, generic, and social codes, which limit the possibilities for both the subjects and the narratives (152). As such they inform the community of acceptable standards of womanhood, decedents deindividualized after death in favour of ingrained traditional generic tropes in ageist<sup>5</sup> gendered roles that may not necessarily reflect the subject's position. In some cases, the women are so well made over in death notices they nearly disappear or vanish altogether. Aberrations, or what appear to be aberrations, require critical scrutiny as even minor changes to the form and script resist the “cultural practices and subjectivities” in a genre that “showcases and generates [...] a low-level but persistent and pervasive conservative effect on how society sees itself and its citizens” (165). Repetition of the basic form can bury aberrations in the sheer number of similar iterations.

Death notices critiqued in this thesis, between October 2019 and October 2021, are a subset of the full sample of decedents whose authors presented them as women<sup>6</sup>

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Duffus in Peterborough and Mill Valley in Millbrook—do not employ at least one funeral director who identifies as a woman. Except for Highland Park Funeral Home, whose President and CEO is a woman, the other funeral homes appear to be owned by men, based on the websites and phone inquiries. Ownership is not explicitly stated on all websites and some funeral home personnel would not provide information over the phone.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Butler, American gerontologist, coined the term “ageism” in 1968. Butler defines “ageism” in his seminal book, *Why Survive? Being Old in America* (1975) when he states that “ageism can be seen as a process of systematic stereotyping of and discrimination against people because they are old, just as racism and sexism accomplish this with skin color and gender. Old people are categorized as senile, rigid in thought and manner, old-fashioned in morality and skills. . . . Ageism allows the younger generation to see older people as different from themselves; thus they subtly cease to identify with their elders as human beings” (12).

<sup>6</sup> Identifying markers were the name, photo, and use of feminine pronouns.

seventy-five to one-hundred-and-seven years old.<sup>7</sup> This group represents the largest demographic in death notices in print media in Peterborough- Kawartha. Although every effort was made to include representations of older adults from a variety of backgrounds, decedents in my sample, with the exception of a half dozen, are represented as cisgender, heterosexual, white, settler, middle-class women,<sup>8</sup> keeping in mind that no group of people is homogeneous and my analysis is incumbent on individual narratives that emerge, to varying degrees, within the cohort in my sample.

Exploring the extent to which older women's<sup>9</sup> narratives are truncated is essential to understanding the multiple identities enacted throughout women's lives, including their roles in widowhood and in older life. According to Paul Yachnin, professor of Shakespeare Studies at McGill University, "The narratives that make us whole begin with birth and end with the death that is born with us when we begin" (18). Although Yachnin does not specifically refer to older women's stories in death notices, his reference point is the intersection of empathy for the older King Lear and his young contemporary

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<sup>7</sup> The age of the decedent was determined by one of three ways—the age was explicitly stated, the birth and dated dates were explicitly stated, or other dates and facts support age determination.

<sup>8</sup> It is important to note that the authors/family of the deceased create the final image of the person. It is possible some of the decedents did not identify as heterosexual or 'all white.' The family authors adhere to the image they believe will match the community's values.

<sup>9</sup> "Older" will be the term employed to indicate women over 75 years old in my thesis based on Sally Chivers's rationale in *From Old Woman to Older Women* (2003) which states that "the individualization of old age invites thinking of aging within a community of women located closer to one end of an age continuum ("older women") rather than maintaining a broader, singular concept of aging ("old women") as a symbol of late life" (xi). Age activist and journalist Ashton Applewhite calls the term "older people" (sometimes shortened to "olders") the "only unobjectionable term" and uses it as a noun, to eliminate the "old/young" divide, stating that "we're always older than some people and younger than others," and that the term is "clear and value-neutral, and it emphasizes that age is a continuum" (10).

undergrads; he posits there is something altogether “wise” about seeing “how we can become whole and help others toward wholeness by taking on the full weight of the stories we play out together in the light and then in the dark” (18-19). But what if the story is not complete or made over? Martha Smith is made over to be the embodiment of natural forces in the summative line of her death notice—a “force of nature [who] will be missed” (*PE* 2 Feb. 2021, A7). According to a short 2018 article in *Peterborough This Week*, featuring “Martha Smith, the centenarian,” Martha attributes her longevity to ““good genes,”” rather than something for which she can take credit (Sobanski, par. 38). Noting that Martha Smith “wrote and self-published her memoirs [...] when she was 90” (*PE* 2 Feb. 2021, A7) affords the author of the death notice opportunities to individualize the deceased based on her own merit. According to the 2018 article, Martha Smith says the account of her life up to ninety was for family, private perhaps, but important enough to ensure its longevity in print. The interviewer discovers an up-coming release is a sequel in which Martha Smith “recount[s] her last decade”: ninety to one hundred years old (Sobanski, par. 32); however, the second memoir and latter decade are not mentioned in the death notice. The lived experiences and memories of a single woman in deepest older age seem to be less engaging to the author and the reading public, leaving the portrait of her oldest older years to be censored by the author.

It is not my intent or business to make up new stories for the decedents. The goal is to inform and illustrate the many ways in which older women are written out of and sidelined in their own death notices. Such overwriting often happens unintentionally or unconsciously as traditional roles of womanhood, particularly motherhood, are embedded in the culture and accepted as the norm. Women are commemorated and praised for domestic servitude through public expressions of gratitude, especially for performing

their assigned role without complaint. Bestowing truckloads of love on dead older women, living women not so much,<sup>10</sup> and generic expressions of praise in death notices provide a distraction from the omission of individualizing the women's narratives. Death notices, based on hyperbolic clichés of niceness, reaffirm the same outdated values that limited the women's choices and trivialized their contributions in the first place and sanction the exploitation of the next generation of women.

Claudia Barron's death, at one-hundred-and-one years old in July 2020, is publicly commemorated in *The Peterborough Examiner* (see app., fig. 2) over three days in two seemingly similar notices of almost equal length. The first seems to have been written by one or some of her three children, as it includes a comprehensive list of relations and eulogizes their father, her first husband of forty-eight years (*PE* 8 July 2021, A10). The second notice (see app., fig. 2b) was published in *The Examiner* over the next two days. The same photo of a white-haired older woman used in the previous notice is paired with a headshot of an equally white-haired younger version of Claudia, in an embrace with her second husband with a vacation vista in the background (*PE* 9 July 2021, B2). The width of the photo diptych necessitates a square format on the page, resulting in more contemporary styling in the second iteration compared to the first notice's traditional thin rectangular column. At first glance it appears the family has rethought the previous notice and is moving towards a more inclusive and personalized commemoration to complete the later years of her story. Upon closer inspection, however, the content of the second one has added the names of Claudia's stepdaughter

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<sup>10</sup> This sentence is a play on the title and line in Dara Horn's book, *People Love Dead Jews: Reports from a Haunted Present* (2021). In the first line of Chapter 1, Horn states in uppercase letters that "PEOPLE LOVE DEAD JEWS. LIVING JEWS, NOT SO MUCH."

and step grandson, who were omitted from the first version's "survived by" group of mourners. It recaps "50 happy years with her dear husband," acknowledging her previous half century marriage (adding two more years) and lists the three children "of her own" and their names while omitting specific names and other relations by summarizing: "also their spouses, and grandchildren." Although it appears to be the more inclusive of the two, Claudia's current husband, perhaps with input from stepchildren, has written himself into the death notice: "*we* were planning ahead for our 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary along with her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday" (italics added) in January 2022.

Life stories include other people; however, the division and competing factions within the family publicly sideline Claudia's individual century-long narrative and death. Both announcements state she was an "artist and loved poetry"; this is as close as it gets to individualizing what Claudia did, as opposed to noting her relationships to others. The second notice hints at other interests but privileges Claudia's second husband, the other half of "we" in the vacation photo, who was looking forward to their shared anniversary. He is also included in his own inconsistent use of third-person and first-person narrator: "Claudia and *Ken* enjoyed playing bridge both socially and for many years duplicate bridge which took *us* around the USA and Canada in our motor home" (italics added). Unfortunately, as it is written, something or someone other than her own free will "took" or led her around. The dynamic social engagement of Claudia in deep older age, travelling, playing cards, and looking forward to milestone celebrations is not typical; most often a widow's story ends with her husband's death, the point at which she no longer has a male partner with whom to participate in all the social opportunities of the heterosexual coupling. Claudia is survived by two family camps who appear to sincerely mourn her passing, plus "all" included in the catchall cliché phrase "all who knew her."



The irony is that Claudia has two differently crafted death notices, which provide twice as much opportunity for individualization of her very long life; yet her accomplishments are overlooked in both notices and privilege her more recent twenty-five-year marriage in the second death notice and the apparent lack of communication between her children and her newer family of a quarter century.

Interestingly, even the collective concern for COVID-19 in the month leading up to Claudia's death, as in the case of sister-centenarian Martha Smith, is omitted in favour of highlighting family relations. As is the case for others in her cohort, a public funeral for this cherished woman is forgone and her death notice may be her only public tribute. In Claudia's case the reading public can only wonder if the funeral is overshadowed by the tension between the two-family factions. Her "survived by" husband proclaims that "service arrangements will be private." It is unclear if this is a public declaration that the funeral "arrangements" will be kept private from "her own" older adult children, or if he means her funeral is a private affair for family only, with who counts as "family" remaining ambiguous (*PE* 9 July 2021, B2). The factions gain *public* recognition for *publicly* commemorating Claudia, although the author of the second notice possibly writes in response to the author of the first notice. The rigid form of the genre is not to blame for Claudia's individual achievements being "kept private." Her public legacy is that of a "beloved" mother and stepmother whose second marriage at seventy-five years old seems to be the source of fragmented family friction, made public, and the family dynamics overshadow Claudia in her own death notices.

My approach relies on close readings, through a feminist and anti-ageist lens, to assess to what degree and in what ways older "ordinary" women, like Martha and Claudia, are overwritten/deindividualized in ninety print death notices in Peterborough

and the Kawarthas. The investigation begins by establishing the context of death notices published in the two print newspapers in Peterborough over a two-year span from October 2019 to October 2021 during which the COVID-19 pandemic began. The thesis is divided into three chapters, based on common elements of death notices: Chapter 1, Structure and Language; Chapter 2, Photographs; and Chapter 3, The “Good Death.” I connect my analysis of these “real” women with two well-known fictional women in Canadian literature: eighty-year-old Daisy Goodwill Flett in Carol Shields’s *The Stone Diaries* (1993) and ninety-year-old Hagar Shipley Currie in Margaret Laurence’s *The Stone Angel* (1964). The two differing approaches to older protagonists whose aging bodies and shrinking worlds are central in the novels, offer opportunities to represent a range of responses and behaviours, some genuine and others feigned, to comply with conventional expectations of feminine behaviour, older women, infirmity, and representations of the “good death.” Yachnin notes that “the narratives that make us whole begin with birth and end with the death that is born with us when we begin” (18). This “wholistic” narrative, offered in *The Stone Angel* and *The Stone Diaries*, is death notice narrative. Martha Smith’s death notice is worthy of investigation throughout the thesis because it both mimics and simultaneously rejects the rigid patterns. The cause of death specified in Martha Smith’s notice might be considered a mark of individuality, not only because COVID-19 garners public sympathy normally reserved for younger decedents, whose death comes after a “long” or “short” or “courageous” battle with cancer but also because Martha Smith’s announcement works in defiance of the anonymized, communal, daily “COVID DEATH COUNT.” The public needs to take note of pre-existing systemic problems whereby more than eighty-five percent of COVID-related deaths in Canada have occurred in the population over the age of eighty

(Coronavirus Disease Epidemiology Update), some dying without palliative care, dehumanized, and alone (Picard 6). My research aims to untangle the complexity in this nuanced micro-script, whereby the author's intention may be to individualize the woman, as is the case with Martha Smith, yet they erase her individuality to appeal to gendered narratives, ageist clichés, and fear of aging and death in the reading public.

“Ordinary” decedents represented in death notices die in character at the centre of their own life story, contributing to the community's collective narrative. Yachnin points out that “the fact of death” in Homer's epic, *The Iliad*, “gives Hector's story its shape and confers a dignity on him that surpasses the limitless power and amazing deathlessness of the gods.” Although Hector honours the gods, Yachnin posits that paradoxically “the gods are poorer than the doomed Hector, their stories directionless and even frivolous, because they do not die” (16). It is important to remember that the fact of death is the impetus for the epic genre. Perhaps equally important in Greek classical sources that individualize death in each person's story is Aeschylus's play *Prometheus Bound*; not only is Prometheus chained to a rock as punishment for giving humans fire, but he also makes it impossible for mortals to foresee their own deaths. According to Dr. Nicholas Christakis, a hospice physician and author of *Apollo's Arrow: The Profound and Enduring Impact of Coronavirus on The Way We Live*, “this ignorance and uncertainty [about death] tends to make [humans] miserable” (324). In *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt calls bodily pain “the most private and least communicable [...] unable to transform into a shape fit for public appearance” (50-51), but in an extensive footnote she suggests, “unlike pain, there is one aspect of death in which it is as though death appeared among the living, and that is old age” (51n43). She professes “for the living, death is primarily dis-appearance” and she cites Goethe's comment on growing old as “gradually receding from appearance”

(Goethe qtd. in Arendt 51n43). Neither Goethe nor Arendt notes that women begin disappearing before old age and what is left of them by the time they die is made over to make them worthy of “appearing” in a public death notice after their own deaths. By way of illustrating the tangible process of disappearing, Arendt refers to the old-age self-portraits of the “great masters”—Rembrandt, Leonardo—in which “the intensity of the eyes seems to illuminate and preside over the receding flesh” (51n43). Susan Sontag addresses the stigma of older women, a decade and a half after Arendt, in “The Double Standard of Aging.” In contrast to the self-portraits of aging men cited by Arendt, Sontag notes that “a man doesn’t need to tamper with his face. A woman’s face is the canvas on which she paints a revised portrait of herself” in “the corrupting effort to defeat nature” (34, 35). Martha Smith’s photo presents her in the prime of life and conforms to the public’s veneration of youth and disdain for old women’s faces (Sontag “Double Standard” 29-30).

Although, as Christakis points out, we may not be able to foresee our own deaths, “we still know that we can suffer and die (because we observe others doing so)” (324). Images of the most vulnerable, decrepit, and dying older men and women, normally invisible in contemporary times, taboo in many Western cultures,<sup>11</sup> smashed into our collective consciousness during the current pandemic. Increased public sympathy for older adults has not eliminated disdain for older bodies; instead of inspiring understanding, the sympathy separates youngers from the “other” and inspires fear of old age, suffering, and death. In *From Old Woman to Older Woman* (2003), literature and

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<sup>11</sup> For a discussion of death as a cultural construction, see Kate de Medeiros’s book, *The Short Guide to Aging and Gerontology*, Chapter Six: “Death, grief, loss and loneliness,” pp. 123-142.

aging studies scholar Sally Chivers, noting that “old age is too frequently thought of as tantamount to death,” argues that “late life is by no means necessarily depressing or gloomy, nor is its study” (xi-xii). Yachnin concurs with Chivers arguing that “death is not some toxin in [older adults’] bodies that over time escapes from its containment. It is the soul of their life stories whose emergence both ends their lives and makes them whole” (18). The need to hide old age, equated with suffering and death, out of public sight contributes to makeovers, photos from youth, and writing older women out of their own life stories.

My research, which is limited to print death notices, is topical in that it takes place when readership and the production of material newspapers is waning due to environmental concerns and the massive global shift to digital news and social media with immediate feeds on smart phones in the pockets of people of all ages. Death notices published in *The Peterborough Examiner*, the only print daily newspaper in the city,<sup>12</sup> and *Peterborough This Week*, a non-subscription weekly publication,<sup>13</sup> convey a community’s attitudes towards aging and gender, as nowhere is the association of age and death more prevalent than in the “Lifenews,” “Obituaries” or “Death Notices” sections in newspapers. Here ordinary citizens can be mourned publicly as arranged by families who can afford and value public notices in print media. The growing shift to on-line and digital commemorations does not seem to have affected the formal elements of the genre, which is usually identical to that which is published in print. Death notices published in

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<sup>12</sup> *The Peterborough Examiner*, established in 1847, has a circulation of about 12,500 weekdays and higher on Saturdays according to the official website: [thepeterboroughexaminer.com](http://thepeterboroughexaminer.com).

<sup>13</sup> *Peterborough This Week*, established in 1989, has distribution to 48,000 homes each Thursday according to the official website: [MyKawartha.com](http://MyKawartha.com).

newspapers contextualize deaths alongside 100<sup>th</sup> birthdays, anniversaries, and graduation notices and in some cases are incongruously placed beside estate sales. The practice of decontextualizing them by cutting them out and storing them until yellow and brittle in family Bibles or scrapbooks for future family reference is being replaced by ephemeral digital family archives,<sup>14</sup> which includes scanning the newspaper notice and emailing it to those who live elsewhere and storing photos in digital albums with no material counterpart or forwarding the notice on the funeral home site.<sup>15</sup>

My research also reflects an opportunity to investigate print death notices in real time and in the context of the sensory aspects associated with reading daily death announcements, as black ink stains the reader's hands through intimate contact with the material, such as smoothing out notices that are buckled at the centre fold. Sometimes when picked up from the porch the newspaper is still cold and sometimes still warm to the touch based on the changing seasons and time of day. On a few occasions the newspaper is wet and faces of the decedents are warped on crinkly pages or ink scorches unintentionally distort a centenarian's black and white photo of her adolescent face, with water wrinkles and inky age spots. The coincidental pairing of the death of a baby with a ninety-year-old can set up unintended ageist narratives, and the odd day when no death notices appear, the formatted page stands as a stark reminder that this is an anomaly in the cycle of life and death; checking back tomorrow will probably bring what is missing that day. Sometimes the deceased is a familiar face; each death is a jolt because the reader

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<sup>14</sup> Aspects of this research may provide useful to researchers in the future who track changes in public funeral memorials as they move from print to ephemeral on-line sites.

<sup>15</sup> According to one Peterborough funeral director, who wanted to remain anonymous, the death notice that appears in the paper is the same as the one on-line unless a correction is made to a name, date, or other detail published in error (phone contact, December 6, 2021).

knew them at some other point in both their life stories. Death notices are part of the grieving process in mainstream Canadian civil society to announce a death and allow the community to send sympathies and condolences to the survivors. Those who are marginalized or without family at the end of life are typically not represented in death notices in print. Notices are automatically published on a funeral home's website for no "additional charge,"<sup>16</sup> which is a democratizing feature of on-line death notices, yet those left to mourn can still opt to pay to have the notice published in local print media.<sup>17</sup>

My research sample is based on the conflation of two significant factors—Peterborough as the second oldest population of any city in Canada,<sup>18</sup> and one of the last

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<sup>16</sup> The cost is absorbed in the funeral fee. The cost of the consultation and uploading is an "invisible fee." It appears to be free, but the cost is included in the price of the funeral fee package. The cost to publish the death notice in print media is represented as an additional fee based on a sliding scale.

<sup>17</sup> Both *The Peterborough Examiner* and *Peterborough This Week* are owned by Metroland Media Corp. Publishing in both papers is based on the same pricing scale. According to a phone conversation with a "qualified classified consultant" at Metroland on September 27, 2021, death notices start at \$70 a day which includes one photo (black and white or colour), and ten lines of text. Subtitles are included in the line count. Each line after ten results in an additional charge of \$2.25. If the death notice includes two photos the initial fee is \$90. The average death notice in Peterborough ranges between thirty and forty lines. The average cost per death notice for one day in one paper is between \$120 and \$150 including taxes. According to a classified consultant with Metroland contacted on December 6, 2021, if the client chooses to place the same death notice in both *The Examiner* and *Peterborough This Week* the price is discounted. The consultant added that the most popular days for death notices are Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, with Saturdays garnering the widest readership, as "*The Saturday Examiner* is [their] best seller." Since the starting package price includes ten lines of text plus a picture, photographs in contemporary death notices in Peterborough-Kawartha are a standard element, which explains why most death notices include one. A notable exception applies to death notices for Roman Catholic nuns who have substantially longer than average death notices, reflecting typically very long lives, and detailing specific aspects of their public service (see app., figs. 76a and 76b).

<sup>18</sup> According to the 2016 Canadian census.

remaining bellwether ridings in Canada (Sheinin qtd. in Davis, par. 4).<sup>19</sup> David Sheinin, history professor and political analyst at Trent University, calls Peterborough the “great predictor.” Since 1965, a candidate elected in Peterborough-Kawartha has been a member of the party that has formed the federal government, except for 1980 (Davis, par. 2) and 2021. Not only has the unforeseen pandemic framed the representation of older women in local death notices, so too has the political climate, more precisely the intersection of the pandemic and political responses to it. The precarious future of print media is heightened by the massive shift on-line almost overnight when the world’s shelter-in-place order took effect in March 2020. Paranoia surrounding suspicion of the COVID virus on surfaces including newspapers also took hold. Yet print death notices continued, increased in fact,<sup>20</sup> as the only material public memorial for most decedents. Martha Smith (see app. fig. 1) died during the city lockdown on public gatherings, including funerals and memorial services. Her paid announcement might stand in for a formal in-person service, perhaps providing the only public tribute outside of virtual space. The reader is told cremation has occurred and internment in the family plot is imminent (*PE* 2 Feb. 2021, A7). In addition to the pandemic influencing the sample, these notices are also bookended by two federal elections, September 2019 and September 2021, which resulted in public attention being paid to Peterborough’s bellwether status, both locally and nationally, as the riding to watch.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> David Sheinin, professor and political analyst at Trent University, and Elwood Jones professor emeritus of history at Trent University.

<sup>20</sup> Based on phone conversations with classified consultants at Metroland Media Corp.

<sup>21</sup> See app., fig. 55: “Susan Delaney” in which the family of the decedent who died of COVID-19, makes political statements about the disease in the death notice.



Most of the decedents in my sample are over eighty years old and increasingly centenarians are commemorated at least weekly or more often. “Our population is aging much faster than most ridings in Canada,” notes Sheinin (qtd. in Davis, par. 11). It is equally important to note that in response to the federal election in September 2021, Sheinin cautions that “the riding today doesn’t necessarily reflect Canada as a whole as it once did, since demographics are shifting” (qtd. in Davis, par. 9).<sup>22</sup> He goes on to cite the 2016 census in which only 5.5 % of the population of Peterborough was recognized as a visible minority (qtd. in Davis, par. 10), compared to the national average of 22.3%.<sup>23</sup> The Peterborough-Kawartha’s incumbent cabinet minister, Maryam Monsef, whose most recent portfolio was Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Rural and Economic Development, a woman of colour, lost her seat in the new minority Liberal government. Although the First Nations communities of Curve Lake and Hiawatha to the west and east of the city, respectively, have a growing presence and voice in Peterborough,<sup>24</sup> Peterborough has not diversified racially or ethnically as fast as some other ridings (Sheinin qtd. in Davis, par. 11).

The older population results in a high number of deaths, and the city’s population of 82,000 (Statistics Canada, 2016 Census) plus the surrounding area supports nine funeral homes, including two servicing the villages of Millbrook and Lakefield.<sup>25</sup> There are numerous non-medical retirement residences, long term care facilities, nursing homes,

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<sup>22</sup> See Frederick Edwards’s article in *Maclean’s*, August 1941 for a detailed overview of all aspects of Peterborough’s evolution and place in Canada as it was viewed on the cusp of WWII, which contribute to its present-day status.

<sup>23</sup> Based on the 2016 Canadian census.

<sup>24</sup> Three death notices for decedents identified as Indigenous by the authors of the notice are explored in Chapter 3.

<sup>25</sup> Hendren Funeral Home in Lakefield also owns two other homes in Norwood and Bobcaygeon. These two were not included in the total of nine in the area.

Hospices, and other forms of public and private care inside and outside the city, yet demand is high, and waitlists are long. Although predominantly white and English speaking, Peterborough is a uniquely balanced combination of urban-rural dwellers, located between Toronto, Kingston, and Ottawa. Sheinin says Peterborough has been “representative of Canada” for decades. “It has an urban component, a rural component; it has had an industrial component, a farming component” (qtd. in Davis, par. 8). Sheinin puts less emphasis on the historical religious composition of the city than does Elwood Jones, professor emeritus at Trent University, who posits Peterborough has historically been a bellwether town due to its historical religious composition and workforce (Jones qtd. in Corrigan, par. 9). During the last century, major Christian denominations were evenly distributed in Peterborough, which matched the country overall, in contrast to some cities that were predominantly one denomination driving voting patterns and values, according to Jones (qtd. in Corrigan, par. 9). As “industry became less significant, [Peterborough] also reflected many parts of Canada as well” (Sheinin qtd. in Davis, par. 8). Today street drugs and a lack of affordable housing have secured more attention for Peterborough in the national media. The rising opioid crisis<sup>26</sup> also reflects the nation at large and was represented in key issues in the 2021 federal election, including COVID-19 recovery and affordable housing (Sheinin qtd. in Davis, par. 9). Despite the fact that Peterborough has become an affordable bedroom community for Toronto, sprawling outward and swallowing some farmlands for new housing developments, the outskirts of the city are still made up of rural family farms (Raj, pars. 6-7).

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<sup>26</sup> For more information, see Global News TV on-line “26 death linked to opioid crisis in 2019”: <https://globalnews.ca/video/6012570/26-deaths-linked-to-opioid-crisis-in-peterborough-in-2019>.

As recently as 2018, *The New York Times* situated Peterborough as the city that “manufactured much of what Canada bought or used,” from alarm clocks to boat motors and refrigerators (Austen, par. 3). During the manufacturing phase,<sup>27</sup> household brands such as General Electric, Outboard Marine, and Westclox were dominant Peterborough employers; ties to household brand-names are cultural capital in subtitles and biographical details in local death notices: “Retired from Quaker Oats”,<sup>28</sup> “General Electric Engineer”; “Worked at Outboard Marine”; “33-year Employee at Westclox.”<sup>29</sup> Fewer women are given subtitles in death notices for what they did in terms of paid work.<sup>30</sup> During the era Peterborough was “considered a microcosm of the country” (Raj, par. 8), most of the older adults in the current death notices were young adults or in middle age, living and working in Peterborough. Today, the government and service sector, with some high-tech start-ups and increased tourism, have filled in employment gaps caused by the dwindling manufacturing sector.<sup>31</sup> Peterborough Regional Health Centre is the largest employer in the city, followed by Trent University (Corrigan, par. 14). Not only is the commercial city of Peterborough represented in death notices, so too

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<sup>27</sup> See Frederick Edwards’s article in *Maclean’s*, August 1941 for an historical review of the extent of manufacturing in Peterborough. Some industries are still household names globally and the original industries are landmark buildings in the city today.

<sup>28</sup> Quaker Oats Company, acquired by PepsiCo in 2001 is still known as “Quaker Oats.” It remains a physical landmark in the city and a significant employer.

<sup>29</sup> These are all subtitles taken from death notices between October 2019 and October 2021.

<sup>30</sup> Westclox is the most referenced employer for women in death notices in Peterborough in the manufacturing sector. The most common professions for women are teachers and nurses.

<sup>31</sup> See the article, “But many in this city of 82,000 see the end of G.E. in Peterborough as just the latest disappointment delivered by free trade” (Austen, par. 5).

is the natural landscape. Renowned as a sportsman's paradise,<sup>32</sup> Peterborough is the entry point to the treasured Kawartha Lakes cottage country and wildlife district accessed by a variety of users: permanent residents, recreational day users, and a range of seasonal cottage owners from working class to the wealthiest elite.<sup>33</sup>

While Martha Smith's death notice places her in an historical context built on a circular story arc headlining her birth and death during two pandemics a century apart, other death notices focus on specific issues that have surfaced due to the pandemic, tragedies that typically propel older Canadians into national headlines which politicize death notices at the expense of the decedent's story. André Picard notes when care for older adults is in the headlines, "it's news of the worst kind" (1); thus begins the journalist's observations and pleas in his 2021 book, *Neglected No More: The Urgent Need to Improve the Lives of Canada's Elders in the Wake of a Pandemic*. Peterborough and the Kawarthas are no exception, making national headlines of the worst kind: "COVID-19: 2<sup>nd</sup> Death at Empress Gardens Retirement residence in Peterborough, 11 New Cases in Region" (Davis, *Global News* On-line).

The death notice for Bernadette Abraham (see app., fig. 3), who died at the end of August 2021, at the age of one hundred years old, like Martha Smith's notice, panders to

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<sup>32</sup> Peterborough has always been a recreational centre and a sports town, particularly known for the development of men in the OHL as a steady supplier of players drafted from the Peterborough Petes to the NHL. Peterborough decedents' affiliations with Laker's Lacrosse is also social capital in local death notices; both sports privilege men, even very old men's athletic prowess compared to women's athletic accomplishments and abilities. Also, see Frederick Edwards's article, "Peterborough" in the August 1941 issue of *Maclean's*, pp. 21 and 24, for an historical perspective on the range of sports, both recreational and competitive, that were well established in Peterborough prior to WWII.

<sup>33</sup> According to the RE/MAX 2021 RECREATIONAL PROPERTY REPORT sales between 2019 to 2021 of recreational waterfront property in Peterborough and the Kawarthas have increased by as much as seventy percent and non-waterfront properties fifty-five percent.

another headline of the corona virus pandemic, which is isolation, a well-publicized crisis for older adults, magnified by the pandemic (*PE* 2 Sept. 2021, A8). The isolation decentres the deceased in her own death notice: “[Bernadette] survived the isolation from her family for 10 months during Covid-19. Those were tough times,” remarks the author of her death notice, “and her survival demonstrated the strength of will she had, and the belief she had, that she would see us again.” Like many death notices, contradictions abound as the author walks the fine line of the decedent’s own “will.”<sup>34</sup> The writer notes the ten months of isolation, but the official regulation had only been in place at that point for five months, unless there had been earlier isolation orders in this particular residence due to flu.

The last words of Bernadette’s death notice focus on the effects of COVID-19 and not the subject of the death notice: “Due to COVID concerns there will not be a service at this time.” The cause of death is not disclosed, but since so much of the notice is given over to a discussion of COVID-19, it is unlikely Bernadette died of the disease. The family’s overdetermination to reassure the reading public that Bernadette rallied after being isolated reads as a public justification and defence of any sense that they played a role in her loneliness. The notice declares her to be supported by her substitute “Fairhaven family” when “she celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday with her Fairhaven family, as COVID limitations were still in place.” Although some COVID restrictions applied during the fourth wave of the pandemic in Peterborough and area, at the time of Bernadette’s death in September 2021 it seems COVID concerns provided an acceptable

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<sup>34</sup> One of the only reasons for Metroland Media to edit a death notice includes explicitly blaming someone or an organization for the death.

excuse for the reading public to postpone or cancel a funeral “service at this time.”<sup>35</sup> The print death notice may serve as the only public acknowledgement of Bernadette’s century-long life which is notably contrasted to a short life with the inclusion of the exact date of her grandson’s death, August 6, 2021, only a few weeks before her own (*PE* 2 Sept. 2021, A8). Although other details are not included in Bernadette’s death notice, the age difference does one of two things: creates sympathy for the older woman having spent the last month of her life grieving or transfers greater sympathy to her grandson whose life was half as long as hers.

Death notices have the capacity, McNeill says, to “focus on the deceased’s individuality instead of explicitly making her conform to received models of identity for women of [the oldest] generation” (McNeill, “Generic Subjects” 161). The death notice designed to set Martha Smith apart positions her within a framework that denies her individuality, probably captured in her two self-published memoirs, and unintentionally forefronts her most significant accomplishment as her death. Allowances must be made for individual style, grief, communal authorship, and even co-planning the text with the deceased to commemorate her passing for a public that often does not include her contemporaries.

This research, based in close readings of death notices, is not intended to dishonor the decedents or their families. The representations of the older women—some of the oldest—in Peterborough and the Kawarthas enter public discussion in this thesis, and it is

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<sup>35</sup> By September 2021, restrictions on public funerals had been lifted. Many COVID-19 protocols were still in place, including limitations of attendees, as outlined in the last paragraph of death notices that announced up-coming visitations and funeral services.

my hope that through this discussion Martha Smith, published memoirist and beloved centenarian, along with all the other women represented here, are re-individualized.

## Chapter 1:

### Traditional Form and Eulogizing Language in Death Notices

A week after Colleen Hiltz died at ninety-four years old in early September 2021 (see app., fig. 4), a succinct death notice was published in *The Peterborough Examiner* (PE 18 Sept. 2021, A11). Because Colleen’s tribute is framed by the standard thin border, within the section titled, “OBITUARIES: REMEMBERING THE LIVES OF THOSE IN OUR COMMUNITY,” the reader already knows *why* each notification is officially entered in the public record, followed by *who*, in bold, last name first, format. Below a sepia-tinged photo of a very young woman, twenty-four lines provide bare facts about Colleen. The summary lead of the announcement answers the questions *when* and *where* her death occurred: Colleen “passed away on Sunday, September 10, 2021, at the Peterborough Regional Health Centre, at the age of 94.” Her age is the only personal detail added in the lead, as her birthdate is not mentioned in the opening or in a subtitle. Cause of death is not stated outright. *How* Colleen died may be inferred by association to the charity suggested for donations in her name: “If desired, donations may be made [...] to the Alzheimer Society of Canada,” but this is based on conjecture.

Once situational facts are established, Colleen is placed in relation to family: “predeceased by her loving husband—,” “cherished mother of—,” “proud Grandma of—,” and “great-grandma of—,” “survived by” siblings, and “predeceased by siblings and parents.” No partners or last names, inserted parenthetically, clutter the announcement. The traditional formula includes euphemisms such as “passed away” and eulogized clichéd adjectives of the deceased and her deceased husband: “*cherished* mother,” “*proud*



Grandma,” and, “predeceased by her *loving* husband” (italics added). Colleen’s death warrants notification in the community’s public record because she “will be *dearly missed* by family and friends” (*PE* 18 Sept. 2021, A11; italics added).

Colleen’s death notice adheres to the basic structure and elements of the genre, whereby the structure determines the function, in this case, to inform the community of the fact of Colleen’s death. Recognizing that death notices are not all the same length and elements do not always appear in the same order, for the most part they adhere to “recurring characteristics” serving the function to announce a death, list survivors, state occupation and interests, thank medical staff and paid care workers, and outline funeral arrangements or entrustments, “performing their role as a community notice” (McNeill, “Writing Lives” 191). Families still choose the status quo and sanctioned safe templates to maintain the “appearance of stability” and protection from the fear of being “misread for dishonouring the dead” (“Writing Lives” 203-204). This pared down notice is the structural backbone of the traditional death notice. Paradoxically this style is an aberration in the Peterborough-Kawartha sample. Many contemporary notices opt for a more narrative style listing accomplishments, interests, and character traits of the decedent in addition to elements in the basic form. According to McNeill this is consistent with “generic hybridity” (McNeill, “Generic Subjects” 153). Most death notices go beyond the obligatory elements supplying “capsule biographies” of the deceased, “reminding the community who they were and why they were important.” Outside of her private roles of wife, mother, and grandmother, nothing Colleen did in her long life is included in this public announcement. If the names and dates were changed Colleen Hiltz’s death notice could commemorate any older woman. Strictly adhering to

the rigid formula, linguistic, and generic social codes limits the possibilities for both the subject and the narrative (“Generic Subjects” 153, 152).

Colleen’s announcement requires no action on the part of the reading community unless they desire to donate to a charity in her name. The event of Colleen’s death is past: “Private arrangements have been made.” In September 2021 funerals, memorial services, and celebrations of life were permissible with protocols in place.<sup>36</sup> It appears, in this case, the death notice may be the only public commemoration for Colleen. COVID-19 protocols for bans or limits on public gatherings at various points in the current pandemic have affected the function of death notices providing information on funeral arrangements. Many funerals were forgone, private, or postponed. Greg Turkstra, the head of classifieds at Torstar, which publishes the *Toronto Star* and is the parent company of Metroland Media, the publisher of both Peterborough papers, told journalist Jennifer Ferreira of CTV News.ca, May 19, 2020, that “people used to rush to get the death notice in the paper to communicate funeral arrangements” (Turkstra qtd. in Ferreira). Turkstra notes that during the on-going pandemic more people are opting to publish in the *Saturday Star*, rather than during the week. Turkstra points out the job of the paper is “to inform as many people [as possible] of the passing of someone in the community” and the *Saturday Star* gets the broadest distribution of the content (qtd. in Ferreira). The postponement of the notice by a few days or weeks from the actual death may give the family time to reflect, which could account for the trend towards longer notices and input from multiple family members. In cases where funerals or memorials are scheduled to

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<sup>36</sup> Refer to the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) for guidance regarding how COVID-19 regulations, requirements and proof of vaccination apply to the bereavement sector throughout the pandemic at <https://thebao.ca/covid-19-faq-for-bereavement-licensees-and-grieving-families/>.

happen within a few days, some COVID-19 protocols account for nearly as many lines in the notice as details about the deceased.<sup>37</sup> Twenty-three of fifty-five lines in Arlene Murray's death notice in *The Peterborough Examiner* on August 2020 (see app., fig. 5) are devoted to COVID-19 protocols for the Funeral Mass and Committal Service for the "proud grandma of 15 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren" (*PE* 24 Aug. 2020, A8). Pandemic protocols have co-opted nearly half of the space and socially distanced Arlene out of her own death notice.

The uncertainty caused by future variant waves of COVID-19 and shifting regulations has resulted in the addition of another recurring generic phrase in death notices during the pandemic, stating that a celebration of life will take place later. Whether or not these events happen, and how they are communicated to the public prior to the event is unknown unless a second notice is published announcing the follow-up event. Even announcements that indicate the specifics of a future celebration of life in the death notice are subject to pandemic hesitancy. Lynda-Anne Donald's announcement, published for the seventy-five-year-old in *Peterborough This Week* in April 2021 (see app., fig. 6a), concludes with a public invitation to the future event: "A celebration of life is currently being planned" for August 2021 (*PTW* 15 Apr. 2021, 58). The proposed venue and time are included, which forewarns the community to 'save the date.' In the August 12, 2021 edition of *Peterborough This Week*, "All family and friends" are invited to "Lyn's" celebration of life on the date printed in the death announcement (see app., fig.

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<sup>37</sup> Based on a phone conversation on September 27, 2021, with a classified consultant from Metroland serving the two Peterborough papers, COVID-19 regulations in death notices count as lines in death notices. The consultant stated that some funeral homes either absorb the cost of these lines or split the cost with the family. There is no consistent formula.

6b), but the venue and time are changed from those stated in the August death notice (*PTW* 12 Aug. 2021, 43).<sup>38</sup> A similar, but different photo is used with only nine lines of text including the headstone-style subtitle with “Lyn’s” birth and death date, in bold, beneath the short form of her name. The celebration of life is an opportunity for individualization of the deceased, keeping in mind the woman at the centre of the celebration is absent. The intention to hold celebrations of life may account for adherence to formulaic death notices that omit individualized commentary.

Lynda-Anne’s forty-seven-line death notice conforms to the traditional formula and “flirts with non-conformity” (McNeill, “Generic Subjects” 164) at the same time it includes individualized informal expressions, which might be ‘Lynda-Anne-isms’ or reflect the author’s style, and it positions Lynda-Anne within the rural community and local history of Warsaw. Noting Lynda-Anne’s marriage at eighteen to a man from Nephton<sup>39</sup> is significant to locals who lived in Nephton before it became a ghost town, and to former and current employees who still work at the “Nephton mine” near Havelock.<sup>40</sup> Acknowledging rural communities is an important part of this notice, going so far as to distinguish between the two smaller local communities, Ennismore and Havelock, where the two daughters reside. The author points out that after marriage, Lynda-Anne “settled in the greater Warsaw *metropolitan area*” (italics added), mocking the hamlet surrounded by farmland. According to the author, this is where the “proud

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<sup>38</sup> The base rate for a short celebration of life announcement is \$40 and jumps to approximately \$70 for the photo, not including taxes, according to a classified consultant at Metroland Media Corp., on September 27, 2021.

<sup>39</sup> The town of Nephton was vacated years ago and all the buildings were removed. The nepheline syenite mining operation NE of Stoney Lake was set to close multiple times, most recently in 2020, but is still operational under the name Unimin Canada.

<sup>40</sup> Nothing currently exists of the former town of Nephton, but a couple of grown-over roads.

*Domestic Engineer*,” resided. Here the author appears to be extolling Lynda-Anne’s role as a “proud” stay-at-home mother and housewife, yet the inflated title derides the role. The notice ends with “a huge *shout out* to 6<sup>th</sup> floor nurses of—” (*PTW* 15 Apr. 2021, 58; italics added). The wide-open-mouthed smile on the deceased in the photo implies Lynda-Anne (“Lyn” in the celebration of life notice) is complicit in the light-hearted gentle humour, which is possibly based on inside family jokes. The deceased is celebrated rather than mourned. The clichés are self-deprecating and suggest Lyn or the author is responding to perceived snobbery and a hierarchy directed at stay-at-home mothers and specific regions of the county outside Peterborough. Lynda-Anne’s death notice published in *Peterborough This Week* places her story among a wider readership, including the city of Peterborough. Perhaps the author believes some readers may look down on Lyn’s rural roots and traditional role. While ostensibly praising Lynda-Anne’s accomplishments as a stay-at-home rural wife and mother working within “eulogistic motivations” (McNeill, “Generic Subjects” 164), the language meant to honour her work is problematic, undermined by the defensive tone.

Rearranging elements within the death notice can intentionally establish hierarchies of place for social capital in Peterborough and the Kawarthas. Judith Jean Reynolds’s death notice in *Peterborough This Week* in July 2020 breaks with convention (see app., fig. 7). The author positions her in a specific local community in the opening sentence: “Forever remembered by her Stoney Lake community, the legendary Judith Jean entered into immortality on the evening of [...], too soon for her feisty age of 89” (*PTW* 30 July 2020, 49). The author forefronts Judith by association with “her” Stoney Lake community; however, it is ambiguous whether she will gain “immortality” by association with this

group or within this group.<sup>41</sup> The death announcement is directed at cottage owners on Upper Stoney Lake and everyone else who aspires to belong to the elite cottage community.<sup>42</sup> As owner of the Log Cabin Store and Snack Bar for “half a century,” Judith was not a member of the social class of the cottagers who have come to be associated with the area. Judith is part of the local colour, one of the permanent residents who served generations of privileged cottagers.<sup>43</sup> According to the author of the notice, “Judith was such a nice lady to area kids, becoming a staple of their childhood. Many grew up with her and continued to stop at the Log Cabin well into middle age.” Judith is situated as a pivotal point around which others flourished. References to the specific physical location are embedded in nearly every statement the author writes about Judith. “Mrs. Reynolds was always there. She was the nucleus of their summers. Some couldn’t imagine a world without an ice cream run to Mrs. Reynolds’s.” Judith is the beginning of “weekend[s] at the cottage [that] always started out at the Log Cabin.” Mrs. Reynolds is made over into an immortal “icon” of nostalgic summers for privileged cottagers on Stoney Lake, while the reason for the memorial is to announce the material mortality of the real Judith Reynolds. McNeill notes that “the authors write themselves into the stories they choose to tell” (“Generic Subjects” 155); however, rather than recreating the deceased in their own

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<sup>41</sup> There is no mention of Judith in *The Bulletin* published by the Upper Stoney Lake Association in articles or paid death notices from 2019 to 2020.

<sup>42</sup> See *A Timeless Place: The Ontario Cottage* by Julia Harrison in which she states, “Stoney and Clear Lakes in the Kawartha [...] has cottages as expensive and elegant as any found in Muskoka” (30). Also, according to MLA listings on December 29, 2021, the average asking price for a home in the Stoney Lake—\$1, 242,725.

<sup>43</sup> According to Global News January 10, 2019, Judith and her husband bought the business in 1968.

image, the author has recreated an ideal version of Judith, possibly based on their own distant ideal childhood memories of summers in the Stoney Lake area.<sup>44</sup>

Death notices avoid critical comment, according to McNeill (“Writing Lives” 195), or life events that may hint at human frailty. The death notice provides an opportunity to write the person back into the community through commemoration (198). According to *KawarthaNow*, eighty-seven-year-old Judith Reynolds “of Nephton”<sup>45</sup> had no family and had “run out of funds to operate her convenience store and gas bar [...] unable to stock shelves or fill the gas tanks” (*KawarthaNow*). Her story was featured on *CHEX Global News Peterborough* on January 10, 2019. In the news video, the older Mrs. Reynolds, aided by a walker, moves about her familiar but sparsely stocked store, supported by neighbours who started a GoFundMe campaign, with a goal to raise \$250,000 in cash. They also “encourage[ed] local businesses or contractors to help support Mrs. Reynolds” (*KawarthaNow*). In the end \$11,000, was raised, a substantial amount in donations, but not consistent with the wealth of Stoney Lake cottagers. Although Judith is not mentioned in any of the official publications of Upper Stoney Lake Association’s “The Bulletin” during her hard times or after her death,<sup>46</sup> some cottagers commented on the Upper Stoney Lake Facebook page with encouraging messages and declarations of support.

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<sup>44</sup> See Julia Harrison’s *A Timeless Place: The Ontario Cottage* in which she notes that “the candies and cold drinks [...] cottagers] bought likely tasted better due to the effort exerted in getting to the store on a hot summer afternoon, and all the sensorial indulgences stimulated in the process” and Harrison adds that “many cottagers told [her] about stops at their favourite store to purchase locally produced ice cream, often a ritualized part of the journey home from the cottage” (136).

<sup>45</sup> According to locals from Havelock, The Log Cabin is considered part of what was the community of Nephton.

<sup>46</sup> There is no indication that pleas to support Judith were included in *The Bulletin*, published by the Upper Stoney Lake Association Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer, Volume 64, Issues 1 and 2.

Colleen Stonehouse's January 11, 2019 Facebook post may have been a source of inspiration for the author of Judith Reynolds's death notice:

[Colleen Stonehouse](#)

Judith an amazing Lady. She always is caring and helpful with a big smile when my daughter and I went into her store. She welcome us to the Stoney Lake area 20 plus years ago. She was there with gas for our boats and cars and anything else we needed for our cottage needs. Always had time to talk to my daughter, very thoughtful. Thank you Judith and we are here to support you.<sup>47</sup>

Stonehouse uses some of the same language that appears in the death notice seven months later, including Judith's caring nature, big smile, welcoming attitude, attention to children, and the claim that she was always available to serve cottagers' needs. Although CHEX Global News states Judith had no family, it is likely that her nephew from Florida is the author of the notice. He is the only living relative named in the death notice as part of her "Florida family." Judith is made over to reflect an era that did not exist for her in older age. It is not a surprise there is no mention of hard times in later life in the death notice; maintaining the appearance of a well-lived life that is "edifying as well as engaging" is the function of a death notice. The author of Judith's death notice appears to know the prestige associated with the Upper Stoney Lake cottage community and imagines readers will "*correctly* interpret coded references" (McNeill, "Writing Lives" 192, 200; italics added) by associating Judith with the community of cottagers.<sup>48</sup>

Although the author of Judith Reynolds's death notice says, "she was one in a million," she is categorized, like nearly every other older woman, as "kind," "nice,"

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<sup>47</sup> Editorial errors in the post were in the original. Refer to comments posted on the Stoney Lake Facebook Group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/45386095235/posts/10156631027085236>

<sup>48</sup> See Chapter 3 of this thesis for an exploration of cottagers in death notices.



“generous,” “dedicated,” “hard working,” and “devoted.” Judith and her husband had no children of their own, so she is made over to fulfill the role of surrogate mother by nurturing everyone else’s children for fifty years in service to the community of Stoney Lake. The associative qualities of ice cream sold to the summer traffic of children is transferred to the woman through her generous servitude and kindness to them. This endears Judith to her readership by complying with well-established norms for mothers, grandmothers, and great grandmothers over the generations of children who “grew up with her and continued to stop at the Log Cabin well into middle-age.”

Judith’s makeover is contradictory and deindividualizes her on two fronts. On the one hand, she is an “immortalized icon” like a logo on a sign, reduced to a vintage stylized childlike caricature for ice cream and nostalgic summers at the cottage. There is no way to determine the exact age of Judith in the photo which accompanies her death notice, but she appears to be more girl than woman. On the other hand, “Mrs. Reynolds” sidelines “Judith” for her associative married title connoting wife and potential motherhood. What appears to be praise for a kind woman is overshadowed by the overdetermination of her niceness which is represented by her selling ice cream to children over qualities of tenacity or business sense. Regardless of her skills, she lacks biological children, and the void must be replaced with surrogates, generations of Stoney Lake children. She must be infused with nurturing qualities to be worthy of public commemoration. As McNeill points out, writers of death notices assume that “the deceased temporarily lose individualized identity and take on social roles that are seen as universal,” imagining the audience also conceives of and values these roles in similar ways (“Writing Lives” 195). In this scenario Judith is made over into an immortal superhero or fairy tale character,

perpetually kind and nice with an endless stream of children to tend to; as some children age, others take their place.

The author of the death notice inserts a quotation near the end, which appears to be copied directly from the on-line CHEX *Global News* video interview. Judith says, “This is my life and I sit and watch the world go by” (Reynolds qtd. in Nyznik). The celebration of Judith who aspires to nothing other than “watching the world go by,” while serving others and taking care of children with kindness and generosity is no different from celebrations of loving and devoted mothers. In the description of Judith as “a dedicated, hard-working lady, with devoted commitment to her store” (*PTW* 30 July 2020, 49) the words, *community* and *store* could be replaced with *family* or *children*. Judith is made over to be more like a housewife, mother, and eccentric than a businesswoman.

Since death notices are not grouped by social class, hierarchy is established in other ways through variations in structure. Content often contained in the extra expense of a lengthy death notice,<sup>49</sup> and the subtle, or not so subtle, arrangement of elements within the structure operate to make the subject worthy, and their family worthy of public recognition (McNeill, “Writing Lives” 193). The author of the announcement for Ruby Astrom (see app., fig. 8), who died at ninety-seven years old, lists her personal accomplishments as a teacher, athlete, and coach in the second column of her death notice,<sup>50</sup> where they are subtly overshadowed by offspring, descendants, and in-laws with the designation of medical doctor in the “survived by” section in the first column (*PE* 4

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<sup>49</sup> According to a Metroland Media classified consultant on September 27, 2021, the basic cost of a death notice is \$70 for the first 10 lines, including a black and white or colour photo. Each additional line costs \$2.25.

<sup>50</sup> The death notice is split into two columns if it runs over 71 lines, according to a classified consultant at Metroland Media on Sept 27, 2021.

Jan. 2020, A8). Ruby's eighty-five-line announcement is a substantial length for a woman her age,<sup>51</sup> yet the "survived by" section is exhaustive and dominates the notice in twenty-four lines. It includes six people with the title of "Dr.," two women and four men (*PE* 4 Jan. 2020, A8). It could be interpreted by some that Ruby is deemed to be a more worthy public subject for producing doctors, some of whom married doctors. The titles also privilege the doctors in the family over others of equal relationship to the deceased. Perhaps the author of the death notice is responding to Ruby's sense of pride in the accomplishments of her daughter, grandchildren, and other relations. Perhaps the author intend to imply Ruby was well-cared for by doctors in the family. Clearly members of the family recognize doctors as cultural capital, and they believe Ruby's status is elevated by associative transfer. Regardless, the use of the title represents traditional codes for "conservation of existing dominant hierarchies of power, value and voice" (McNeill, "Writing Lives" 192-193).

Patriarchal structures find their way into local death notices because they are also a legacy of Canada's colonial past and Peterborough's regional history. The largely white Eurocentric population is reinforced in subtitles that declare countries of birth, primarily in the UK, and particularly Scotland in my sample. "Mrs. Kay 'Bessie' Cameron" died early in September 2021 just "5 days before her 107<sup>th</sup> birthday" (*PE* 13, Sept. 2021, A8). Kay's death notice in the *The Peterborough Examiner* (see app., fig. 9) states, "she was born in Glasgow Scotland" in 1914 and "immigrated to Canada in June of 1953 with her husband and 2 sons." Framing the decedent as an "immigrant" situates the woman in many shared mainstream communities over the past centuries, highlighting a contrast to

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<sup>51</sup> According to a classified consultant at Metroland Media on September 27, 2021, the average death notice is between 30 and 40 lines.

current national narratives of immigrants from non-white, non-European, and non-English speaking countries.

The author of Bertha “Bertie” Kary’s death notice published in the *Peterborough This Week*, August 2021 (see app., fig. 10), reaches farther back in history to position Bertie in colonial white settler hierarchical history. Bertha, who died at one-hundred-and-two years old was known as “Bertie” (*PTW* 5 Aug. 2021, 51); a masculine nickname and her lineage are connected. The subtitle parenthetically states Bertie’s maiden name, “(Phillips),” which is not an uncommon element, but less likely for a centenarian with few living contemporaries. It is followed by the Loyalist designation U.E.<sup>52</sup> The surname is not intended to place her among living descendants in the area, but to situate her in an historical context with two men who lived generations before she was born. “Bertie had deep roots in Southwestern Ontario,” writes the author, “and was a descendant of Loyalist John Phillips and Mayflower pilgrim Thomas Rogers.” The women’s line is not included in the notice, but this may be because women were recorded under their husbands’ names or the men arrived in their new country as single men. McNeill posits that since death notices are created in the present and celebrate the past “they construct and disseminate” Canadian history on both the macro and micro-levels (“Writing Lives” 199). There may also be another reason for clearly stating Bertie’s ancestor was a Loyalist. The website, which outlines how to obtain U.E.L. certificates and the privilege of the title and official designation U.E., states that one way to prove a direct link is to provide a “dated newspaper article that gives family connections.”<sup>53</sup> The death notice may be an act of

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<sup>52</sup> Refer to the official website: <https://uel.ca/united-empire-loyalists/obtaining-uel-certificates/>, which outlines how to obtain a U.E.L. certification.

<sup>53</sup> #6 on list: “Dated newspaper article that gives family connections.”

generativity on Bertie's part or a clever maneuver on the part of the author to embed a starting point for future generations to lay claim to Loyalist roots in Canada. Whether viewed as imperialistic, colonial, or elitist by some in a contemporary audience, the fact remains that Bertie's paternal birthright frames her life and her legacy over anything that Bertie accomplished during the last century. The emphasis on the patriarchal remembrance and legacy is carried over into the more recent past and the future again when the author—her son, daughter (or both)—assumes Bertie would prefer to honour her deceased husband, their “dad,” through preferred charitable donations:

“Remembering Dad, Mom would have wished for donations to be directed to the Alzheimer Society or a charity of your choice” (*PTW* 5 Aug. 2021, 51). Bertie's death is made over into a vehicle to keep ancient colonial history alive in the family and to share it with a community in Peterborough, many of whom share a common history or collective national identity.<sup>54</sup>

Colonial patriarchal elements are reflected in the rigid stone-like structure of the traditional death notice; however, the preponderance of older women who are identified as “gardeners” in death notices works against that metaphor and provides potential for a feminine form and metaphor to emerge. Qualifying as a “gardener” can have a variety of

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<sup>54</sup> See Frederick Edwards's article “Peterborough” in *Macleans* in 1941. Edwards states Peterborough had “a population of better than ninety percent British-Canadian stock, descended from English, Scottish, Irish and Welsh pioneers” (19). Edwards goes on to state that “there is a firmly stabilized citizenry, descended for the most part from sturdy, pertinacious British forebears. Even the spectacular growth of the past quarter century has not changed this basic actuality, perhaps because the city's location is away from the more familiar routes followed by non-British immigration” (19). More importantly, Edwards also notes that “Peterborough folks claim that theirs is a more completely British community than any city of comparable size in Ontario” (19-20). The fact that “Peterborough folks” make the claim, and Edwards notes it alongside ethnic population numbers illustrates the unabashed pride in colonial heritage into which most decedents in my sample were born and raised.

meanings and is subjective on the part of the author of the death notice; however, structure determines function for many women who come from a range of backgrounds and call themselves gardeners. On one hand it can be seen as one more way in which women nurture and “tend to,” just as they are supposed to tend to and nurture children. Carol Shield’s fictional Daisy shows gardening itself is not problematic. In fact, gardening materially and metaphorically holds the potential to support women in breaking free of conventions. The limiting factor, as illustrated by Daisy, occurs when women’s skills collide with patriarchal authority and ego. Daisy’s material garden is a structure that functions as paid work when she is a garden columnist. It also operates as the novel’s structure, the structure of a woman’s body, and the metaphor for Daisy’s life story: “The garden of Mrs. Flett’s is lush, [like her mother’s flesh] grand, and intimate – English in its charm, French in its orderliness, Japanese in its economy – but there is something, too, in the sinuous path, the curved beds, the grinning garden dwarf carved from Indiana limestone [...] full of grave intelligence [...] a kind of wit” (195). Daisy’s garden functions as a metaphor for the variety of older women found in death notices before they are made over to comply with traditional norms. Qualities of “curved,” “intelligent,” and “witty” along with “lush,” “grand” and “imitate” styles defy the makeover. Here, Daisy’s garden functions within colonial expectations for youthful feminine “charm” and “orderliness,” but it also functions to undercut that defined role with masculine elements, as a private joke with a “grinning garden dwarf carved from Indiana limestone.” Daisy’s garden, like the dual role of wild and domestic plants and namesake, holds the paradoxically lasting serious qualities associated with men, “grave intelligence” and “wit.”

The fact that Daisy gets the job writing about gardening only after her husband dies (204), and Daisy as “*Mrs. Greenthumb*” (204; italics added) is removed from the position by a jealous man (223), accentuates the control with which systemic patriarchy controls women. It does not mean the structure or function is inherently masculine; in fact, it proves the opposite. Daisy’s boss uses his patriarchal power to make over Daisy because she is far superior to him in ability and relatable to other women reading the column. Daisy is individualized and actualized when “suddenly” she becomes “a different person, a person who worked” (237). Her threat to the patriarchal regime has to end; she has to be replaced with male expertise, with the replacement functioning as the death of the individual, Daisy. The makeover is complete when she is made over into a housewife and mother again.<sup>55</sup> Daisy’s depression that follows marks the loss of her own public life, even though she did her writing “under her own roof” and mailed the column into the paper (237). Her depression is representational of the loss of women’s work “outside the home” (237). Even amid Shields’s lush and feminine structure, the masculine stone garden dwarf is a reminder of the grinning omniscient power of patriarchy.

Similarly, a garden metaphor designed to individualize Monika Dreher, who died at seventy-seven years old in July 2021 (see app., fig. 11), undermines her as the expert gardener and forefronts and privileges her deceased husband as the expert. Breaking with the rigid form from the outset, the notice is structured with a garden metaphor for earthly death and spiritual immortality: “Monika has watered the last plant and if there is an Eden she will be gardening again with Bill” (*PTW* 5 Aug. 2021, 52). The author is inserted into

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<sup>55</sup> For over four decades, Ed Lawrence has been “Ontario Today’s” resident “expert gardener” on CBC’s radio phone-in show *ONTARIO TODAY*, currently airing on Mondays at noon. Lawrence is presented as “the *man* with answers to all your gardening problems,” according to host Rita Celli.

the notice at the start with their uncertainty about the afterlife by questioning “if there is an Eden.” Gardening is established as a shared experience with Bill, but Bill’s gardening skills dominate Monika’s on earth and in the afterlife, if there is one. Unlike Monika, Daisy does not share gardening with her second husband, Barker Flett, who cannot understand what Daisy did during her nine years of widowhood, prior to their marriage. He recognizes her hobbies and events and asks, “But what did [you] *do*?” When Daisy responds, “I looked after the garden” (154), gardening is elevated by Daisy from a hobby to a profession—it is what Daisy does—and Daisy is raised from an amateur to an expert. Barker Flett purchases a house on a triple lot with a garden that requires Daisy’s skills to reclaim its better days (154). Barker’s gesture appears genuine, yet the reading is ambiguous. In this instance the garden is a man’s investment in his wife’s “hobby,” which is conveniently located on the domestic grounds. His wife’s unpaid work brings the garden to life and nurtures it like bearing and raising children. It is only after and because of Barker’s death that Daisy’s “hobby garden” pays off in the form of her gardening column and her work is valued because it earns money.

“[Monika] shared her love of gardening with her much adored loved and missed husband Bill—, who sadly left her much too soon, in July 2016.” Not only is Bill given four descriptors as Monika’s “much adored,” “loved,” “missed,” and “sadly left her much too soon” husband, he is also given credit for Monika’s passion for and skill in gardening. Again, with her husband Bill, Monika “rebuil[t] a home and create[ed] a park like garden. Bill grew the vegetables, Monika the flowers.” If there is a gendered bifurcation within gardening, the production of food with its association to farming is masculine, and flower gardening might be considered feminine. This is consistent with Daisy’s death notice which begins the last chapter of *The Stone Diaries*. Her gardening prowess and her



success as a gardening columnist are notably absent, yet the author of her death notice state Daisy is “predeceased by her husband, Barker Flett, a respected Canadian authority on hybrid grains” (343). Her husband’s work is individualized in place of hers. Shields’s intentional construction reflects the intersection of “respect” given to men with “authority” in the serious business of food production and research as gardeners. In fairness to the author of Monika’s commemoration, her solo accomplishments as a “press and wedding photographer and photography teacher” along with her interests in knitting, crocheting, reading, classical music, opera, and photography are listed as well. It is also noted that Monika “opened a flower store and worked in garden centres.” However, Monika’s business sense and foray into gardening is minimized as a fallback after she was “unable to pick up the trade [photography] again after her move to Peterborough in 1986” (*PTW* 5 Aug. 2021, 52). Referring to photography and teaching as “trades” rather than professions further diminishes Monika’s individual accomplishments. The author’s intention to individualize Monika’s death notice accomplishes one goal. The death notice breaks with the traditional rigid structure by framing it within a garden metaphor; however, it fails in its function to fully individualize Monika.

Another gardener, Marilyn Piper, who died at ninety-two years old in September 2021 (see app., fig. 12), is remembered for many aspects of her public life as a teacher, multi-term Trustee with the Peterborough County Board of Education, and thirty years of service with Telecare Peterborough (*PTW* 23 Sept. 2021, 51). Marilyn’s love of gardening is framed as a generative gift to family and friends along with her knowledge of “birds, animals, insects and flowers.” The author states that Marilyn “was never happier than when she was working in her flower beds. No visit to her home was complete without a tour of her spectacular gardens, and if you mentioned you would like

a piece of a particular plant, she would send you home with a trunk full.” Marilyn is framed as immortal by the author when it is proclaimed Marilyn “will live on in the gardens of the many people with whom she shared her plants.” These specific examples of Marilyn’s generosity and generativity hold the seeds of individualizing Marilyn, more so than the inherited “U.E. and Mayflower” legacy of Bertie Kary, the Garden of “Eden” metaphor of Monika Dreher, or the “iconic” Judith Reynolds. Marilyn’s memory comes from what Marilyn “did” in life, sharing the fruits of her work in her garden with those who stood in it with her in life. All the elements of the traditional death notice are present in Marilyn’s announcement, in the order they typically appear, including eulogized adjectives and a quotation from Robert Frost. Gratitude for Palliative Care workers, donations to her favourite charity, and funeral arrangements are also noted (*PTW* 23 Sept. 2021, 51). The author of Marilyn’s death notice, like Shields’s who authors the fictitious death notice for Daisy, requests “in lieu of flowers—,” and “flowers gratefully declined,” respectively as if to imply ambiguously that cut flower arrangements are made over and less authentic than plants from gardens and to reject the association of flower arrangements with death. There is an assumption on the part of the authors of both notices that it is the intent of mourners to send flowers to “women” identified as gardeners.

The sales pitch for “Silverthreads Nursing Home” in Margaret Laurence’s *The Stone Angel* reads like a prequel to a death notice and picks up structural elements of the genre in the present-tense narration. Chivers posits “the Silverthreads nursing home visit [...] is the central conflict of the novel’s frame” (22). The newspaper ad read by Hagar prior to the visit signals a universal gendered ageist design which supports Chivers’s view of the novel as “the conduit [...] of extreme old age” through the “narration by nonagenarian Hagar” (23). The glorification of mothers has much in common with the representation

and commodification of older women, who are generically and homogeneously referred to as “mothers” in the classified section of the newspaper ad, aimed at families of prospective clients (Laurence 53). Hagar sees through this. Agency is placed in the hands of the buyer; older mothers are the product. The “Silverthreads Nursing Home” classified ad reads like a death notice, but with a more liberal use of full uppercase letters on the words *MOTHER* and *SILVERTHREADS*, where the two are synonymous and equal in value. The use of uppercase also places the ad more in-line with an overdetermined sales pitch: “Only the Best Will Do for MOTHER” (53) is intended to hook the reader with the love and admiration for mothers. Consistent with the public demonstration, the brochure poses a rhetorical question to elicit engagement with the audience: “Do you find it impossible to give Mother the specialized care she needs in her declining years?” (53). If the implied answer is “yes,” then “SILVERTHREADS Nursing Home provides skilled care [...] a pleasant cozy atmosphere [...] companionship [...] comfort and convenience” (53). Most importantly, the last line appeals to nostalgia, respect, and guilt in family members who find it impossible to care for mother: “Remember the Loving Care she lavished upon you, and give Mother the care she deserves, NOW” (54). Similarly, death notices can read like advertisements and justifications for care for older relatives. The overdetermination of “goodness” associated with the nursing home suggests nursing homes are a moral choice by the family that requires justification for not providing care in a family home. Hagar Shipley sees right through the eulogizing language, referring to the scripted language as “dreadful words” (53). Death notices, ads for nursing homes, and products marketed to women all flatter the women and convince them the home and the kitchen are the best places for them to be until their declining years when they are no longer productive or safe, and younger people, primarily women, will take care of them.

Most older adults will not live or die in nursing homes;<sup>56</sup> like Hagar they will die before they ever get there.

Three weeks into January 2021, Grace Jonson died at ninety-two years old in a “manor” during the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic and post-Christmas lockdown (see app., fig. 13). Grace’s death notice stands out among the others in the sample for its length. At one hundred and forty lines, with a diptych photo, it is one of the longest death notices for a woman of this age in the sample. Aside from length, the rigid structure is evident beneath the thin skin of the overdetermined narrative in which Grace is characterized as a “wonderful and loving grandmother,” “a loving and devoted wife, a wonderful and caring mother, a fantastic grandmother and lovely great-grandmother” (*PE* 21 Jan. 2021, A8). Repetition may be a result of combining ideas from more than one author. Adopting a communal voice, notes McNeill, avoids privileging any one survivor’s perspective and shows unity, even if all the mourners do not necessarily share, celebrate, or practice the traditional roles they extol for their mother (“Generic Subjects” 154). Repetition may also be the author’s way to prove to the reading public that Grace was “simply the best.” Grace was a “stellar example of love, partnership, hard work, [and] dedication to family and community.” The author’s goal is to prove that Grace, above all others, deserves the adjectives and descriptors liberally applied in death notices, and that as a result of being a mother to five children who “knew [they] were the center of her universe,” Grace “lived a happy and full life.” The author notes that Grace was “truly devoted for 66 years” to “the man of her dreams” with whom she ran a dairy farm until

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<sup>56</sup> See André Picard’s *Neglected No More: The Urgent Need to Improve the Lives of Canada’s Elders in the Wake of a Pandemic* (2021) pp. 167-175 for a discussion about numbers, cost, and quality of care in Canadian Long-Term-Care Homes versus investing in care at home.

the “loss of [Grace’s] true love,” who predeceased her by two and a half years. Grace was a “gracious hostess,” her “door was always open to visitors.”

Grace’s claim to public commemoration lies in her compliance with received models of femininity “appropriately contained in her solid service as a mother and wife” (McNeill, “Writing Lives” 194). Grace “always found time to welcome and care for family, friends, and neighbours – frequently in her kitchen, preparing meals for everyone as well as caring for her family and working with [her husband] on the farm, [...] in her church, with the Norwood Fair [...] school dances [...] travel[ing]” and singing in two different choirs. The last line of the notice focuses on Grace and directly speaks to the decedent, “‘Thanks a million’ for everything mom, before it pivots in the same paragraph to third person: “Grace’s family would like to express our heartfelt appreciation of the doctors, nurses and staff” at two different care homes “for their wonderful, compassionate and loving care of Mom.” Like the classified ad for “SILVERTHREADS,” many of the same overdetermined extolling terms used by the author to describe their mother are also applied to the staff at a manor and retirement home where their mother spent the last years of her life. The staff’s “dedication to Moms care was incredible and truly appreciated. We are so grateful for everything you did for Mom.” Grace’s children, like the author of Judith Reynolds’s death notice, hyperbolically praise women for a life of devotion and service to the care of others, proclaiming, as Grace’s children do, that “Mom lived a happy and full life” because of it. Perhaps Grace’s children need to believe this, so they prove it by taking out an advertisement, not unlike “SILVERTHREADS” to show, as they say, that their mother was a “role model” for themselves and others.

Grace’s faith is also a major component of her life story. “She sang with the Salvation Army Songsters and the Trinity United Church choir in Hastings for many years.” The

author situates Grace in two faith-based communities, which acknowledges Grace's participation outside the home in alternative roles, but notably in roles that reinforce her devotion and service to faith, family, and community. In one of Hagar's memory flashbacks in *The Stone Angel*, she recalls the importance of how one appears in public. Hagar tells her son John, "In a place where everyone knows everyone else, [...] "you have to avoid not only evil but the appearance of evil" (238). McNeill calls these real-life trials and tribulations "whispers of evil" ("Writing Lives" 195). Grace's notice is mired in the hard sell for the traditional farmwife and suggests these qualities are rare and belong to a better past. In *The Stone Diaries*, Daisy challenges this notion asserting that "those who went before us were every bit as wayward and unaccountable and unsteady in their longings as people are today" (91). Clearly, Grace was a "deeply loved" woman who will be "dearly missed." The death notice is an overdetermined makeover of the good wife, mother, and grandmother reminiscent of the motif Margaret Laurence establishes in the first paragraph of her novel, referring to the stone angel her father erects in the cemetery to commemorate her dead mother. Hagar says her "father bought [the angel] in pride to mark her [mother's] bones and proclaim his dynasty" because it was "the largest, and certainly the costliest" (3). Women are used as ads and commodities in life and after death. Overdetermination and a hard sell is not a result of the length of Grace's death notice; many death notices for younger decedents and for men are as long as Grace's owing to public accomplishments (McNeill, "Writing Lives" 193). Grace's long detailed notice reflects the social conditions a year into the Coronavirus pandemic, during the second wave lockdown; thus, her family states, "Services for Grace will be planned at a later date when it is safe to do so" (*PE* 21 Jan. 2021, A8). This notice served as Grace's immediate public memorial.

Carol Shields also tackles the intersection of issues associated with grand memorials for ordinary women through the construction of Cuyler Goodwill's stone tower to commemorate his dead wife, and Daisy's mother. By 1916, excursions from Winnipeg to Tyndall were "exceedingly popular" (69) to see the tower and the grief-stricken husband-sculptor. Although his work begins nobly, the influx of public "visitors have distracted him to the extent that lately he has forgotten the impulse that launched the tower" (73). Similarly, death notices are written to conform to public norms. Like all public monuments and memorials, they are subject to temporal interpretation by the public. Mercy is made over in her own story, albeit unintentionally, by Cuyler's grand gesture. As visitors approached the tower, "the most knowledgeable person in the party [would] recount the history of the tower" (71), a made-over version with "a beautiful young wife, dead of childbirth, and a handsome young husband, stunned by grief" (71). At no point does Mercy's real material body or anything she did factor into the story. She is made over into an idealized young dutiful wife who died fulfilling her duty to bear a child. The "most knowledgeable" are the authors of death notices who write with authority to create an idealized narrative. The story takes on a life of its own, and the subject, Mercy Stone Goodwill, is lost in Cuyler's memorial mania. He understands that "a person starts a piece of work and the work takes over" (73). The subject, a young woman in this case, is "Mercy – her grave so sunken and grown over – he cannot recollect the look of her face or the outline of her body" (73). The real person who was Mercy, marginalized by her poverty and unusually large size, is forgotten, made over, and immortalized in an image worthy of a tragically romantic heroine. Shields's novel shows the deindividualizing process of women's lives in *The Stone Diaries* which begins before birth and continues long after death.

Rearranging the elements in the structure of the death notice can transfer overdetermined praise for the subject of the death notice to caregivers, especially in the wake of COVID-19 campaigns to recognize frontline workers. Whether such gestures are an illustration of the decedent's selflessness or a political statement on the part of the author is difficult to determine. Either way the memorial for a recently deceased woman is initially sidelined to celebrate and appreciate the living. The death notice for Sherry Jones, who died in her eightieth year, published in *The Peterborough Examiner* in mid-January 2021 (see app., fig. 14), for example, begins with "deep gratitude to her caring physician Dr. Read, her excellent team at PRHC led by Dr. Ball and Tania Sanderson who provided love and care" (*PE* 13 Jan. 2021, A7). Six lines out of thirty-two are devoted to gratitude for her health care professionals. Except for being referred to as a "loving wife," cliché adjectives are omitted in favour of a few lines directly intended to individualize Sherry: "Sherry tried to make a big difference in people's lives, including strangers, championing the underdog through everyday gestures, and will be remembered as a sassy young unconventional spirit by many. When you see purple, think of her." The author's compliment also subtly suggests Sherry met with resistance, frustration, or failure in her bid to do good; she "tried" to make a "big difference." It is unclear if she accomplished her goals; however, the ambiguity may be a factor of the writing style more than of what Sherry did or did not do. Regardless, she seems to have lived in opposition to the mainstream. McNeill calls it the "subject's fringe position" ("Generic Subjects" 162). Although Sherry is in her eightieth year at the time of her death, the author of her death notice represents Sherry's off-beat style to address multiple communities beyond her family and intimate friends who share her attitude ("Generic Subjects" 163) as a "sassy young unconventional spirit." The association of *unconventional* with *young*



implies Sherry must be made over, differentiated from other eighty-year-old women who are not typically associated with the word *unconventional*. The word *sassy*<sup>57</sup> is also problematic because it is both gendered and racialized. The use of it unintentionally undermines championing the underdog and making a difference; however, this is the author's word choice and not Sherry's.

The author of the death notice seems to have carefully selected the colour photo in which Sherry sports a purple tank top, black top hat,<sup>58</sup> and purple and white streaks in her hair (*PE* 13 Jan. 2021, A7) to reinforce her unconventional spirit and preference for purple. Although the notice does not state so directly, it leaves the reader wondering if purple was Sherry's favourite colour, a reference to mental health purple ribbon initiatives, or a reference to Jenny Joseph's famous poem, "When I Am An Old Woman I Shall Wear Purple."<sup>59</sup> Jenny Joseph's poem may be an intertext rather than a deliberate allusion, dependent upon the reader's response rather than the writer's intention. It is unknown whether the decedent chose the photo and would describe herself in these terms or if it is a construction by the author. The length of the death notice is the only thing average about it.

An aberration and counter piece that proves the death notice genre has the potential to be more than an overdetermined cliché is found in seventy-nine-year-old Elizabeth

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<sup>57</sup> Refer to Azizi Powell's "The Changing Meanings of Being Sassy," 3 Sept. 2011 at "pancocojams" <http://pancocojams.blogspot.com/2011/09/changing-meanings-of-being-sassy.html> for a detailed summary exploring the sexist and racist connotations of "sassy."

<sup>58</sup> See Chapter 3 of this thesis for a detailed exploration of non-normative characteristics of women who are pictured wearing hats in death notice photos.

<sup>59</sup> Refer to *When I Am An Old Woman I Shall Wear Purple*, 1987, edited by Sandra Martz with a forward by Jenny Joseph. The book includes the poem, "Warning" (1), which is the official title of the poem more commonly known by the first line, "When I Am An Old Woman I Shall Wear Purple."

Kramer's announcement published in *The Peterborough Examiner*, in late January 2020 (see app., fig. 15). The fifty-one-line notice is divided into two short columns with a professional black and white studio headshot beneath her current name, her name at birth, and birth and death years. It stands out in stark contrast to the other two narrow columned death notices on either side of it. Breaking with tradition, it begins with Elizabeth's education: "Studied drawing and painting at the Ontario College of Art and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago [...]" (*PE* 23 Jan. 2020, A9). Her "extensive career" as a painter, illustrator, and fine arts teacher reads like a professional artist's statement generating a hybrid genre. Only the final dozen lines remind the reader it is a death announcement, and Elizabeth is mourned by a husband, sister, and brother. No funeral plans or celebration of life are announced; she will be honoured with a "retrospective showing of [her] work" in the spring of 2020. Her work as an artist is privileged in the death notice. It is impossible to separate the artist from her work, but here the author individualizes the person without overshadowing the work or her family. There are some factors that might account for the variation in this notice. Kramer is a professional artist with a public career. She died prior to the COVID-19 lockdown. She is younger than many other women in my sample, in her eightieth year and she does not appear to have had any children. Elizabeth and her work are clearly at the forefront in the death notice, with only one brief deviation when the author lists the names of "her sister Kerry Stopes and brother *the architect* Alex Addison" (italics added) among the survivors. Like Ruby Armstrong's association with a legacy of doctors, perhaps the author of the notice believes Elizabeth's public worth is increased by association with a name-brand male sibling. There is only one cliché line in the second to last line of the announcement, almost as an afterthought in case someone was missed, stating that Elizabeth "will be

sadly missed by [family] and all who knew her” (*PE* 23 Jan. 2020, A9). A copy of this notice was also published in the *Toronto Star*, which suggests Elizabeth Kramer is more than an ordinary citizen based in Peterborough-Kawartha; she is a well-known artist. The layout, structure, absence of clichés and eulogized language elevates it to a work of art.<sup>60</sup> Deindividualized death notices are not a product of length, long or short, or even aspects of convention. The pared down version of traditional elements noted in Colleen Hiltz’s death notice, explored first in this chapter, does not provide enough individualizing details to know what Colleen did. The minimalist narrative style employed in Elizabeth Kramer’s announcement keeps the focus on the subject, without recycled platitudes and the community’s expectations for norms of motherhood and wifedom.

According to McNeill, the obituary form experienced a “major revival” in the 1990s in dailies and magazines. “Entertainment value” extended to ordinary citizens based on the temporary community of shared experience, age, or values (“Writing Lives” 187). Three decades later renewed interest in death narratives can be linked to the coronavirus crisis. In May 2020, Phillip Crawley, publisher and CEO of the *Globe and Mail*, Canada’s largest national newspaper, noted that *The Globe* had “not seen a volume of death notices like this before” (qtd. in Ferreira). Typically, the Saturday issue would run four or five pages of death notices, but by spring 2020, it had increased to seven and eight pages. He added *The Globe* cannot be sure all the death notices are coronavirus related, as cause of death is not required and often left out, but he believes the increase is “driven by the coronavirus crisis” (qtd. in Ferreira). Crawley surmises people read death notices because “they think it’s a reflection of the story of Canada” (qtd. in Ferreira). Consistent with

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<sup>60</sup> I recognize calling Elizabeth Kramer’s death notice “a work of art” is somewhat subjective on my part and a matter of taste; however, it stands out in the sample.

other national and community newspapers referred to in the article, Crawley posits the “coronavirus crisis” is responsible for the increased length of notices. The average number of lines for a death notice in *The Globe* rose fifty percent by May 2020 compared to notices from the previous year at the same time (Ferreira).

In the same article, Teresa De Luca, manager of classified sales at Metroland Media Group, confirms seeing an increase in the length of notices circulating in its papers, including the Peterborough papers, stating that “community papers are publishing larger notices, with more written about the deceased” (De Luca qtd. in Ferreira). Not even a week after Ferreira’s article, the Sunday, May 24, 2020, edition of *The New York Times* devoted the entire front page to the names and one individualizing fact, taken from obituaries and death notices of primarily ordinary people who died of COVID-19. The headline was “U.S. DEATHS NEAR 100,000, AN INCALCULABLE LOSS” (Grippe).<sup>61</sup> Death notices about regular citizens were front page news in one of the most iconic newspapers in North America. The political overtones may have been directed at the failure of the president and other government officials who badly mismanaged the crisis, but not since the downing of the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001, has my generation and those younger, witnessed such a proliferation of written memorials for ordinary citizens. In this instance the importance of the genre in private, community, and national grieving is confirmed.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> For a closer look at the impetus for this project see John Grippe’s article, “The Project Behind a Front Page Full of Names.” *The New York Times: Times Insider*, 23 May 2020 <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/23/reader-center/coronavirus-new-york-times-front-page.html>.

<sup>62</sup> The renewed interest in death notices and obituary narrative in print is highlighted in Canada through the ‘They Were Loved’ project. Four hundred journalism students across the country are writing obituaries for Canadian COVID-19 victims for *Maclean’s* magazine. Carleton University fellow, writer and editor, Katherine Laidlaw, states, the

## Infantilization of Older Women

Among the many adjectives intended to eulogize and compliment Judith Reynolds of Stoney Lake, the term “feisty” stands out, as it is also found in several other death notices for older women in the sample: “Judith Jean Reynolds entered immortality [...] too soon for her feisty age of 89 years” (*PTW* 30 July 2020, 49). The author does not only imply Judith is “feisty,” they imply all eighty-nine-year-olds are “feisty.” The word is both agist and sexist in this context. Referring to an older woman as *feisty* is “a slight in the guise of a compliment,” says Katha Pollitt, American poet, essayist, columnist for the *Nation*, and author of “Feisty,” one of a series of essays about words that undermine women included in *Pretty Bitches* (2020), edited by Lizzie Skurnick.<sup>63</sup> “*Feisty* is incompatible with heroism, nobility, grandeur, and tragedy. It belongs to comedy,” says Pollitt (260). I return here to Achilles and King Lear, discussed in the Introduction of my thesis. Pollitt suggests that Achilles’s qualities, such as “energetic, passionate, and pugnacious,” might be considered synonymous with *feisty*, yet she draws our attention to the first line of *The Iliad* “whose subject is the ‘wrath’ of Achilles and its consequences” (260). *Feisty* was never going to be his “Homeric epithet.” King Lear is not “feisty” either, notes Pollitt. He remains “every inch a King” even though he is “vain and hot-tempered and crazy”

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“lesson lies in how to live a good life” (Maclean’s). The process of aspiring professional journalists writing about ordinary strangers with the express intention to publish in a national magazine blurs the lines between the death notice and obituary. The products are obituaries. Nevertheless, *Maclean’s* own editorial on February 1, 2020, opens by stating obituaries in general provide “gleaming details of telling acts, of ways to live” (*Maclean’s*). While the article focusses on the merits of budding journalists, as young as seventeen years old, learning empathy through obituary writing as public memorials for ordinary citizens, it is important to critically assess which gleaming details of examples of ways to live are assigned to women, especially older women. This work is outside the scope of this thesis. Important scholarship remains to be done on this topic.

<sup>63</sup> See individual essays in *Pretty Bitches* referring to specific words: “ambitious,” “disciplined,” “small,” “sweet,” “nurturing,” “good,” and others.

(260).<sup>64</sup> While Pollitt does not delve deeper into any of these three terms also applied to women derogatorily, she explains that *feisty* is usually reserved for small, old, seemingly inconsequential women who surprise men with “the flicker of fury that escapes from self-suppression” (262).

*Feisty* is not the only word “cutified,” according to journalist Melissa Mohr in “The Subtle Sexism Behind Words Such as ‘Feisty,’” published in *The Christian Monitor* in 2020. Mohr notes the “Women’s Media Center” encourages journalists not to use gendered terms such as *feisty*, *spirited*, or *opinionated* unless their outlet would also use them to describe men (Mohr).<sup>65</sup> Death notices are not bound by rules of professional journalism. Nearly twenty years ago, Carol Shields devoted more than a page in the chapter, “Illness and Decline, 1985” in *The Stone Diaries* to convey her disdain for the word *feisty* as applied to Daisy, as a woman, an octogenarian, and infirmed (327). Daisy picks up on the conversations by medical staff following her heart surgery and explores the word in the following conversation with her daughter Alice.

‘What was the word again? What the nurse said?’ [asks Daisy.]

‘Feisty.’

‘It sounds like slang. Is it in the dictionary?’

‘I don’t think so. It could be.’

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<sup>64</sup> Pollitt does not explore the offensive nature of these words in this essay, clearly she employs them as sarcasm.

<sup>65</sup> As recently as October 3, 2021, during an interview with Piya Chattopadhyay on Sunday Magazine on CBC Radio, retired CBC journalist and icon Peter Mansbridge stated that the most difficult interview of his career was with Margaret Thatcher because she was in a “feisty mood, a bad mood” and accused him of not having read her book before the interview.

‘It sounds so terribly – I can’t think of the word, it’s on the tip of my tongue, it sounds –’

‘Nasty?’

‘No. More like superior.’

‘Condescending?’

‘Yes, That’s it. Condescending.’

‘You’re right, you know. It is condescending. It’s reductive. Insolent, as a matter of fact.’

‘Yes.’

‘We pretend to admire feistiness in others,’ Alice muses, ‘but we’d hate like hell to be feisty ourselves. To have someone call us that.’

‘It’s got a bad smell.’

‘A bad what?’

‘Overripe. Like strawberries past their prime.’

‘Exactly.’ (329)

Men are rarely considered “feisty,” unless they too are “past their prime” (Mohr). According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, *feisty* is US slang meaning “aggressive, excitable, touchy” (*OED*). Pollitt draws attention to the definition and etymology of *feisty* in the *Merriam Webster Dictionary* to consider the origins of the word, from Middle English meaning “fart” (263). By the early nineteenth century it came to mean a “small dog.” According to Pollitt, older women kept lapdogs as an excuse for “breaking wind” (263). When older women are referred to as *feisty*, it harkens back to yappy dogs and farts. Perhaps this is the “bad smell” to which Daisy refers.

Margaret Laurence's Hagar shares similar disdain for infantilization of older women through patronizing language. Like the contradictory representations of Judith Reynolds in her death notice, Hagar's nurse's acknowledgements of her womanhood when she refers to her long dead husband's name by marriage and title, "Mrs.—Mrs. Shipley, is it?" (255), draws attention to her identity as a wife. In the same scene ninety-year-old Hagar is reduced to a nameless child: "Come on, there's a good girl—" (256) says the nurse, clearly intending to encourage the older woman. Hagar's response to the nurse, whether spoken aloud or in her head, is a futile attempt to resist the makeover from the indomitable Hagar into a docile well-mannered older woman. Hagar says, "I'd stab her to the very heart, if I had a weapon and the strength to do it. I'd good-girl her, the impudent creature" (256). It is Hagar, daunted by age, who is stabbed in the heart. It is Hagar who is "creature" rather than woman or human being. It is Hagar who is powerless against the perpetual attempts to make over all women into girls who will return to impossible notions of niceness. Hagar interprets *good girl* the same way that Daisy interprets *feisty*, as it is applied in this situation to mean "condescending," "reductive," and "insolent." Hagar, like Daisy, objects, but does not have the "weapon and the strength" to resist the final makeover. When they are dead the makeover is complete. In *The Stone Diaries* "nurses [are] always saying how good natured [Daisy] was" (350). She hears the staff praise her for being, "a real honey," and it keeps her "busy during her hospital stay being an old sweetie-pie, a fighter, a real lady, a non-complainer, brave, [... and] stoic" (322). This is the nexus where the final makeover begins for older women before death. Daisy and Hagar are two fictitious women, but Daisy and Hagar are as real as those represented in death notices. Overlapping narratives compete for what they think



is being said, what they hear, what is real, and what is constructed. Perspectives and ages merge (Shields 314). The women become compliant in their own makeovers.

Ironically, compliments and other verbal rewards for complicit behaviour reinforce “sweetie-pie” behaviour and suppress “feistiness.” Many decedents and the authors of the death notices read Laurence in 1964, and Shields, nearly thirty years later in 1993, yet these patronizing terms still appear in death notices almost two decades later.<sup>66</sup> Ordinary readers are similar to the critics Chivers addresses for avoiding old age, particularly extreme older age, as a subject position and a lens through which to examine the role of Hagar in the novel. Chivers notes that “Laurence offers the entire fabula from the perspective of a particular, extremely old woman” (22-23). Similarly, the narratives in death notices for older women should be read through the dual lenses of gender and age.

Words are powerful because words insidiously seep into the consciousness of the community which passes them off as compliments and they become embedded in the structures that determine function to keep good older women down. In the end, Daisy’s death notice, which begins the last chapter of the novel titled “Death,” conforms to the generic skeletal structure as much as Colleen Hiltz’s. Daisy’s makeover is complete “after a long illness patiently borne” (343). Her reward for “patience” is in keeping with convention as she earns the title of “adored grandmother,” and “loving great-grandmother” (343). Perhaps the author of Judith Reynolds’s death notice was partially correct. Judith is not one *in* a million, she is one *of* a million others made over to

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<sup>66</sup> See the death notice for Maureen McLeod, (app., fig. 21b). The author of the notice concludes the notice with special thanks to a doctor “and the nurses at Fairhaven for the years of care and palliative compassion shown to ‘Miss Maureen’ our feisty gal.”

perpetuate traditional norms of womanhood at the end of life when they do not have weapons or strength to resist, and after death when they have no voice.

## Chapter 2:

### Photos Included in Death Notices

The bifurcation of “aliveness” and “deadness” shares liminal space in death notices as the deceased is entered into the public sphere for the first time in past tense. Laurie McNeill notes this is complicated by the choice of photographs in death notices which represent an “idealized vision of the deceased for the public” and frame ways in which the decedent should be remembered (“Writing Lives” 191). The family of Jean-Lillian O’Brien (see app., fig. 16), who died at the age of ninety-eight in October 2019, presents the deceased in the rare image of deep older age and in a state of decline (*PE* 22 Oct. 2019, A8) compared to many other death notices that represent much younger and healthier versions of the deceased. Anomalies in death notice photos are revealing because they resist ageist and gendered tropes, yet still meet the standard for acceptable expressions of old age and senescence. The old-fashioned oval shape of the photo draws attention to Jean-Lillian’s death notice where the focus is on her head and shoulders. If the photo had not already been shaped for an album or scrapbook, it might have been cropped to remove personal or medical paraphernalia in the background. Jean-Lillian’s colour photograph represents an older woman with thin white hair, glasses, a half open-mouth, and a drooping smile, suggesting the effects of a stroke, which is also hinted at in the suggestion of the “Heart & Stroke Foundation” as a charity for those who wish to donate. Jean-Lillian’s head rests a little to her right and she is propped up or cushioned by a pillow, backrest, and neck support. She is sitting or reclining beneath the loose folds of a neutral-tone fern patterned blouse buttoned up to the throat. Flashes of hot pink on either side of her head are out of

place and distracting. They frame her face as if she is wearing a child's pair of fuzzy earmuffs which undermine the dignity the photograph otherwise holds. It is impossible to know for sure how closely the photo was taken prior to Jean-Lillian's death and if she participated in choosing it; regardless, a close-up representation of an older woman with non-normative facial features is uncommon in death notice photos.

Overall, Jean-Lillian's photo is no less dignified for its authentic portrayal of the later stages of deep older age experienced by some older adults. The thirty-one-line death notice, on the short end of the average length, has no individualizing narrative, save two intriguing details: the reference to Jean-Lillian as a "dear friend of the late Douglas H. Carr—," which suggests that she had a partner in later life, and the subtle inclusion of a nickname in the requests for donations "in memory of Lil" (*PE* 22 Oct. 2019, A8), appealing to those who knew her by her less formal name. The representation of Jean-Lillian chosen for the public announcement implies her family honours and remembers her long-life course including the end of it and that she is not made over after death. The inclusion of mobility aids is also an aberration; most photos represent able bodies and omit devices required to support physical disabilities, generally cropping devices out of the frame or covering them up with a blanket.<sup>67</sup> Western society's fear of aging, disability, and mortality (McNeill, "Writing Lives" 192) is a motivator to create the appearance of healthy-aging or at least represent a time in the decedent's older life when it was so. In contemporary times people live longer and healthier lives, which is reflected in healthy-looking photographs.

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<sup>67</sup> The small size, discoloration, and quality of the photos often make it impossible to determine if the decedent is sitting in a wheelchair or lying in a bed. Most photos are intended to be headshots and backgrounds are cropped out of the frame.

Two other photographs in the sample show older women in wheelchairs; however, given the size of photos in death notices, ranging from about 2.5 cm to 5 cm, a close-up shot of the decedent's face is sacrificed to include the body and background in the frame. Trixie Fairhold (see app., fig. 17) died at an undisclosed age in December 2020. It is impossible to know the exact age of Trixie in *The Peterborough Examiner* photo, but she clearly falls within the range of my sample (*PE* 2 Jan. 2021, A8). Trixie's upper torso and head are supported and framed by a black wheelchair. It is a candid shot as Trixie looks left and a crocheted snowman figure on her lap looks right. Had she not died three days before Christmas, the red-capped character would be considered an infantile prop, but in this context, it ignites common sentiments in the reader for the family whose mother did not make it to Christmas.<sup>68</sup> The small bulletin board with schedules on the wall in the background indicates Trixie is in hospital or a long-term care facility. Here she wears a purple-patterned loosely fitting dressy blouse, open at the throat, and a grey stylish haircut. A slight smile is not forced; candor and authenticity are conveyed. The sixteen lines of text break with convention, as they make up less than half the length of an average death notice: they state when and where Trixie died, that a private burial will take place in the future, and list the preferred charities (*PE* 2 Jan. 2021, A8). Without the photo, Trixie's announcement functions simply as a notice of death. As with Jean-Lillian's family, Trixie's author focusses the narrative during the last stage of older life, in a wheelchair, in a facility during the current holiday season, or one in the recent past.

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<sup>68</sup> It is a common sentiment that losing a loved one before or during the Christmas holidays or other marked occasions is worse for the family. Christmas celebrations are sometimes held early to mark the occasion to include the dying family member. "Time left," is often spoken of in terms of "one's last Christmas" or "making it to Christmas."

Neither notice balances the image of physical decline with details of what the women did during their lives, besides being mothers and grandmothers.

The author of 102-year-old Bertha Kay's death notice introduced in Chapter 1 (see app., fig. 10) distances the viewer even farther away from the subject's face while including more of the body than is typically visible in small death notice photographs. Bertha sits relaxed with her forearms resting on the arms of the wheelchair, wrists bent and limp. Her full body, except her feet, cropped from the photo in the foreground, appear in the frame. An arrangement of gifts and cards is included on a table in the background. She wears a sophisticated loosely fitting black pantsuit, corsage, and a party necklace that reads "100<sup>th</sup> Birthday" (*PTW* 5 Aug. 2021, 51). This notice is one of the few that provides evidence of the exact age of the decedent in the photo. Bertha's death notice privileges her ancestry as a descendant of a "Mayflower pilgrim" and "Loyalist," and this photograph is an extension of the family's ancestral pride. Bertha's hundredth birthday photo is the priority over the individualizing close-up of the centenarian and her own achievements. The emphasis is removed from her face to represent Bertha in a powerful, yet relaxed pose, arranged regally like a portrait painting from a past era. The distance allows the "survived by" group to be included in the photo, represented in the gifts and cards in the background (*PTW* 5 Aug. 2021, 51). Although "Bertie" is made over into a matriarchal figure whose greatest accomplishments are facts of accidental ancestry and the genes of longevity, the wheelchair is integrated into the scene without being intrusive and this lasting public image is both stately and authoritative.

### **Age-accurate and Age-inaccurate Photos**

Researchers Shirley Ogletree, Patricia Figueroa, and Daniella Pena found “some evidence for a double standard even in death” based on obituaries, death notices, and memorials collected from *The Austin American Statesman* daily newspaper in Austin, Texas, mid-January to mid-February 2004 (341). They conclude photos were more likely to be included in male than female obituaries, and there was a greater discrepancy in actual age compared to estimated age<sup>69</sup> in women’s pictures, compared to men’s pictures, “portraying [women] significantly younger than their actual age at death” (341). The findings of Ogletree *et al.* were not only confirmed but shown to increase over time according to Keith Anderson and Jina Han’s 2009 more extensive quantitative examination of ageism and sexism in 400 obituary photographs from 1967-1997 in *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*. Anderson and Han’s well-known study reveals an upward trend in age-inaccurate<sup>70</sup> photos over time, particularly in the case of older women (335). Photographs for women in death notices and for those who died at an older age are “significantly more likely to be age-inaccurate” than those submitted for men (341). Ogletree *et al.* suggest that while women are pressured to “appear” youthful in life, the pressure to have a younger appearance “may be present even after death” (341). Researchers point out it is not known whether the decedent or the family chose the photo (341).<sup>71</sup> Scholarship exposing the double standard of aging is not new. Half a century ago,

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<sup>69</sup> “Estimated age” is not an exact science. Quality of photos vary. The gender, race, class, and age of the researchers can bias determinations of “estimated age” of decedents in photographs.

<sup>70</sup> According to Anderson and Han, photographs were “visually inspected” and those “conclusively determined to be at least 15 years below the actual age at the time of death were recorded age-inaccurate” (338).

<sup>71</sup> Samuel K. Bonsu, who conducted qualitative research on obituary photography in Ghana, West Africa (2007), also depicted the decedent at a much younger age than at the

when most of the decedents in my sample were in their forties, Susan Sontag famously noted that the “perfectly natural process” of aging was regarded as a “humiliating defeat” for women, while society finds nothing “remarkably unattractive in the equivalent physical changes in men” (“Double Standard” 291). The double standard devalues the social worth of women, particularly older women’s faces and bodies.

Based on the double standard for aging, women and their families employ age-inaccurate photos to gain social value in death notices because young women are prized for their sexual attractiveness and older women are invisible or hyper visible. Sontag argues that “beauty, women’s business in this society, is the theatre of their enslavement” (291) with “only one standard of female beauty [...] sanctioned: the *girl*” (35).<sup>72</sup> Sontag defines the ‘feminine’ by these standards as “smooth, rounded, hairless, unlined, soft, unmuscled,” and she calls it “the look of the very young” and adds these are the characteristics of “the weak, of the vulnerable” a short-lived and “fragile kind of beauty” (291). Vanessa Cecil *et al.* confirm in their 2021 study “Gendered Ageism and Gray Hair: Must Older Women Choose Between Feeling Authentic and Looking Competent?” that social invisibility is a “recurrent theme in aging literature” and it factors into many accounts of older women’s lives, “including when discussing hair” (1). Decedents and the authors of their death notices are products of the same ageist community that has turned on them. McNeill posits that death notices conform to and uphold institutions and public mores, and they “maintain certain social boundaries” by ignoring deviant behaviour

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time of death and dressed in their best clothes. Bonsu concluded that “by showing such pictures, the bereaved are better able to communicate a strong sense of beauty and appeal to the reading community” (207). Anderson and Han suggest these findings are indicative of ageism and with a “bias toward youth as a better representation of beauty” (337).

<sup>72</sup> Sontag does not account for cultural and ethnic differences. She is primarily referring to the youthfulness of facial features and firm bodies.



(“Writing Lives” 195). Consequently, the more death notices represent an older decedent at a younger age, the more likely the culture is to internalize and perpetuate the notion that younger is good, and older is bad. For study purposes, dating faces, at any age, without first-hand information is not an exact science and women in the same birth cohort do not age homogeneously. The task is made even more challenging today because anti-aging cosmetics such as makeup and hair colour can alter looks considerably in real life and in photos. Wigs, clothing, and hats can also obscure the features of older faces and bodies. As Sontag points out, what makes women “seem beautiful to us is precisely that they do not look their real age” (292). Applying filters and altering photographs digitally are commonplace and somewhat expected in today’s need for perfection.

The notion that some people prefer to remember the deceased either the way “they were” and not how they are as older adults is implied in this form of ageist inaccuracy. The healthy well-aged older face is acceptable, but clearly not one that shows the marks of decline, which is why Jean-Lillian O’Brien’s photograph stands out. It is also expected that most people would like to look their best regardless of age in a photo, and particularly in a photo made public. When the decedent is presented as decades younger than her age at death, there is no attempt to deceive the viewer. The decedent pictured as older, but not too old, may be intended to show respect for the older decedent; however, the impact of this practice reinforces the message that the oldest olders are not attractive enough to be seen in public, which contributes to *intergenerational* and *intragenerational* ageism and establishes unrealistic expectations for the appearance of aging well.

The photo of Jennifer Steering (*PE* 14 Nov. 2019, A8), who died in November 2019 at age ninety-five appears to have been taken in the 1970s or early 1980s. Jennifer is represented looking directly at the viewers with her light red hair in an up-do. Her photo

stands out on the page, surrounded by six other decedents who are all men at various ages (see app., fig. 18a). Jennifer's photo is large, slightly over 5 cm by 5 cm like three others on the page, but her photo draws attention because it is on the top right quadrant of the page with a long text. A death notice for a deceased man situated beside her is a bit longer, and although it is formatted differently, they are comparable. Jennifer is one of the few women in my sample with a death notice over a hundred lines in pre-pandemic times.<sup>73</sup> Jennifer's bright red and white outfit enhances her light red hair and side curls that frame her face (see app., fig. 18b). From top to bottom the viewer reads red hair, red lips, red jacket. McNeill posits that dated styles in photos "alert other members of that generation to read the notice" ("Writing Lives" 192). It is impossible to tell the exact year the photo was taken, but it presents a stylish woman in middle age who is decades younger than the ninety-five-year-old at the time of her death. Her striking red hair may be a family feature, not visible in a very old black and white photo or in an age-accurate photograph. Jennifer's hair is an individualizing detail, whether it is natural or dyed, in contrast to other older women with more common short thin white hair. Given her age, most of Jennifer's contemporaries were dead at the time of her death, so it is unlikely the choice to include an age-inaccurate photo is motivated by making her recognizable to former colleagues and peers. The older woman has been replaced with a young image in the family's and the public's memory.

Tracey Gendron *et al.* do not specifically refer to death notices or age-inaccurate photos in their 2015 paper, "The Language of Ageism; Why We Need to Use Words

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<sup>73</sup> The format for longer death notices changed in January 2021 in *The Peterborough Examiner*. Longer death notices are formatted into columns; thus, lines are of equal length and comparisons based on number of lines are more accurate.

Carefully,” but age-inaccurate photos are a form of internalized ageism. Older adults marginalize and discriminate against other older people as if they are “denying commonality with others within [their] own group” (998). Sontag warns that women too share in feeling repulsed by older women’s faces, noting that “oppressors, as a rule, deny oppressed people their own ‘native’ standards of beauty. And the oppressed end up being convinced that they *are* ugly” (“Double Standard” 292). Within this framework, age-inaccurate photos could be considered an example of “going to extreme measures to look younger” (998), as some death notice photos convert the deceased into a youthful state more appealing to the survivors and community. Gendron *et al.* notes language-based age discrimination in the form of “implicit bias and microaggression is difficult to identify due to cultural acceptability, lack of operational definitions regarding age bias language, and lack of appropriate measurement tools” (999). The visual language of death notice photographs has as much in common with microaggressions in language as it does other forms of gendered ageist visual representations.

Internalizing negative beliefs about old age across the lifespan, and about oneself as an older person, women often attempt to conceal the stigmatizing signs of aging (Cecil *et al.* 3) in a youth-obsessed popular culture. Dyeing grey hair, which is a hyper visible marker of old age and renders women socially invisible at the same time, is a common strategy to hold on to social status that comes from the appearance of youth (3). When specific aspects of women’s beauty fade, such as Jennifer Steering’s red hair, they are resurrected after death in age-denial photographs. Cecil *et al.* also reflect on the paradox for older women, who are expected to retain social status by maintaining a young and attractive appearance, but simultaneously “age gracefully,” which deems attempts to look young undignified and “implies that older women should gradually fade from view” (4).

Jennifer Steering “worked for John Robert Modelling Agency for 10 years, doing some modelling, [and] trained in New York.” Jennifer was no stranger to the anti-aging beauty industry and gendered ageism, later working for a “cosmetic company” before she “retired at age 50” (*PE* 14 Nov. 2019, A8). Most other women with longer narrative texts in pre-pandemic notices are also career women, most often nurses or teachers. According to feminist fashion and age scholar Julia Twigg in her article “The Body, Gender and Age” (2004), “the shame attached to looking old and failing to keep up the appearance of youthfulness, even after death, contributes to “age denial” (61).<sup>74</sup> Jennifer can regain her status through the creation of her permanently youthful image after death, when the real ninety-five-year-old no longer exists.

The death notice for Irene North (see app., fig. 19a) was published in *The Peterborough Examiner* in early November 2019, the week before Jennifer Steering’s announcement. It was one of five published that day, only four of which were accompanied by photos. Irene’s age-inaccurate photo is dated by her hair style, clothing, and the quality of photo. It may be of the same era, and she may be the same age as Jennifer Steering in her photo. Irene’s big curls, white bobble-style earrings with a matching necklace contrast with her hot pink shiny blouse. These elements situate the photo in the early 1980s (*PE* 8 Nov. 2019, B2). No dates of birth or death, and no age at death are provided,<sup>75</sup> but the announcement states Irene was married “for 68 wonderful years” and is “fondly remembered by many generations of nieces and nephews” (*PE* 8 Nov. 2019, B2); thus, she was probably over eighty-five when she died. Irene’s photo

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<sup>74</sup> Also see Sontag, “Double Standard” 289.

<sup>75</sup> Omitting Irene’s age falls in line with Sontag’s premise that “for a woman to be obliged to state her age, after ‘a certain age,’ is always a miniature ordeal” (“Double Standard” 285).

stands out in coincidental juxtaposition to three other women whose death notices were published in *The Peterborough Examiner* beside her on the same day (see app., fig. 19b).

Beside Irene's death notice, three older women look remarkably alike: Mona Eagleson, eighty-three; Marie-Claire Davidson, ninety-six; and Ivy Martin, ninety. All three heads are gently tilted to the right. They all have short whitish grey hair, glasses, grins, deeply wrinkled aged faces, and neutral toned clothing. All three women are widows; Ivy Martin is twice widowed. They are all grandmothers and great grandmothers (*PE* 8 Nov. 2019, B2). Mona, Marie-Claire and Ivy at eighty-three, ninety and ninety-six respectively represent the progression from older age to deepest older age, signaling an appreciation for older faces in close-ups, but healthy representations of older age. Ninety-year-old Ivy Martin may be back-dated as much as a decade, but clearly the photos place the women at some point in older age.<sup>76</sup>

Two of the three similar looking women's notices are approximately the same length, with one significantly shorter. Irene's death notice is the longest on the page, but she is not the woman with the longest life. In my sample, women with the longest death notices most often include age-inaccurate photos.<sup>77</sup> The publication of public photographs of elderly women's faces is important to normalize the natural process of aging in the socially invisible. In this instance, the three older looking women are made blatantly visible in juxtaposition to ninety-five-year-old Irene in her shiny pink top. On the far right

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<sup>76</sup> Anderson and Han (2009) also mention it is difficult to determine the age of someone in photos, especially if the photo is fewer than fifteen years younger than the subject. Interviews would need to be conducted to determine the exact age of the decedents in the photos.

<sup>77</sup> Except for Catholic nuns, there are no lengthy death announcements in my sample without photographs (see app., figs. 76a and 76b).

on the page, Irene faces in the opposite direction, looking left, turned away from the other three older looking faces as if she has turned her back on them, distancing her younger self from the older women and her own older iteration. Irene's death notice is also different from the other three women beside her because in place of children in the "survived by" section the author of Irene's death notice lists in-laws. Irene did not have children, and she was not a grandmother. As represented in the death notice, Irene's life story is more aligned with the nearly invisible fifth woman's death notice on the newspaper page. The author of Mary Jane Valley's twenty-seven-line announcement (see app., fig. 19c) filled the photograph space with three subtitles that individualize the ninety-two-year-old's life course: "Lifelong Westclox Employee, Member of Royal Canadian Legion Branch 52, Member of the Eastern Star" (*PE* 8 Nov. 2019, B2). Neither woman had children and Irene too "was a long-time employee of Westclox"; however, Mary Jane is not made over into a substitute mother. Her work and her social activities constitute a rewarding life.

Like the author of Judith Reynolds's death notice in Chapter 1 (see app. fig. 7), who transforms her into a surrogate mother figure to the cottagers' children on Stoney Lake, the author of Irene North's notice writes Irene and her husband into the community of grandmothers and grandfathers, justifying the absence of biological children by claiming that "though Jack and Irene were not blessed with children," as were the three grey-white haired women that share her page in *The Examiner*, "they loved and supported the little ones in their family as if they were their own." The choice to represent Irene in an age-inaccurate photograph signals that the "survived by" group does not identify her in the role of a grandmother or nurturer; she was a career woman, intimating that the two are mutually exclusive. Irene is made over twice, reflecting the much younger version of

herself and paradoxically a grandmother-trope which the photo discredits. Like Judith Reynolds's notice, Irene's makeover includes an explanation for why she does not have biological children, reinforcing the idea that it needs justification, and the author writes her into the role anyway. Here, the author blames powers beyond their control, as Irene and Jack "were not *blessed*" (italics added) with children, and the author assigns nurturing traits to Irene and her husband by providing substitutes for them to "[love] and [support] [...] as if they were their own" (PE 8 Nov. 2019, B2). The indirect connection to children using the conditional hinge words "as if" unintentionally reinforces the point that Irene and her husband were not biological parents. Intention is irrelevant; clearly, the author of the death notice sees childlessness as a state to be pitied, as it threatens a woman's worth, reducing Irene and other women who do not bear children to their reproductive status.

The family of the deceased has no control over how a death notice will be received once contextualized in relation to other notices in the obituary section of the newspaper. The layout editor, on the other hand, has the power to frame the narrative for the readers and to decide "grandmothers" go together, and a young face is privileged looking away from older faces, while the woman with no face is all but invisible, even though her announcement is longer than the one above hers. Although separated by individual borders, the layout frames the reading of the death notices and invites the inevitability of comparisons based on appearance. Privileging the appearance of beauty may motivate some families to ensure the deceased will reflect well on herself and by association on them,<sup>78</sup> normalizing and perpetuating the trope that women's value is commodified in their youthful beauty.

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<sup>78</sup> Erving Goffman's theory of courtesy stigma is explored in Chapter 3; see *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, pp. 30-31.

### **Colour and Clothing in Photos**

Even before the actual youth of their faces is clearly in focus, the reader's eye is initially drawn to Irene North's pink blouse and Jennifer Steering's red jacket. The proliferation of elderly women dressed in variations of pink and red, whether deliberate or unintentional, is noteworthy and goes beyond the fact that red stands out in print against the black ink and white paper. Many women who are not wearing red are holding a bouquet of red flowers are positioned in front of a fuchsia or maroon background. Whether by design or by accident, variations of red and pink are popular choices for clothing, props, and background colours in photos of older women in my sample. Alec Beall and Jessica Tracy's 2013 study based on the evidence that men are sexually attracted to women wearing red or pink showed women are more than three times likely to wear red or pink during periods at high conception risk than at low conception risk, "even in the absence of any desire to attract men" (1838). Although no one in Beall and Tracy's study was over the age of forty (1840n1) and all the women in my sample are over seventy-five years old, the proliferation of red may reflect a time in the decedent's life when the women appear in their prime and are more likely to have had their photos taken. When photos were being selected by the "survived by" group perhaps these photos surfaced as appealing because of the "red effect." Chelsea Sullivan, Algy Kazlaucius, and James T. Guthrie's 2019 study of colour appeal confirms that when men were asked to choose clothes for their date, they followed the "red effect" and women reported that they "felt more attractive in red, more sexually receptive, and felt they had a higher status" when wearing red (371). The authors also point out gender-stereotyped colours play a role in



colour preference.<sup>79</sup> Even though society has assigned pink to girls and blue to boys, which can influence colour choices (371), Sullivan *et al.* note there is a global shift toward gender fluidity and gender equality in contemporary society (371). The authors of the study suggest “fashion has become a way of expressing individualism, and specific color associations no longer exist” (372). This may be a trend in contemporary culture, but for the generation represented in my sample, traditional rules of colour apply. The “red-effect” might explain the preponderance of red in age-inaccurate colour photographs, but it does not necessarily account for the quantity of age-accurate photos in death notices in my sample in which the oldest older women are represented in red and pink clothing.

Colour is only one aspect studied by Julia Twigg in “Clothing, Age and the Body: A Critical Review” (2007) in which she demonstrates how clothing is an arena for the expression of identity and agency and she assesses how far older people can use clothing to resist or redefine the dominant meanings of age, particularly in the case of older women. She notes that clothing is embedded in “moral prescriptions that act to police their bodies and entrench the micro-social order” (286) and focuses on how clothes operate within a system of age-ordering and challenge or subvert cultural meanings. Clothes are expressions of identity (291), according to Twigg and there are no specific clothes for older people and no single point in the life-course or in terms of chronological age when differences emerge; people adopt “older” styles at different ages (292). Older people’s clothing tends to be longer and more shapeless, muted, of dull soft colours like beige, grey, lilac, and navy-blue which signals ““toning down”” and becoming less visible

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<sup>79</sup> Also see *The Language of Clothes* by Alison Lurie, Chapter VII, pp. 212-229.

(293). Twigg also notes that black, as a colour, suggests the dual meaning of mourning and widowhood and the drama of black sexualized fashion (293), while bright colours like red, popular in my sample, are generally considered “unflattering and unsuitable for older women based on moral and social referents” (294). The counter option noted by Twigg is to resist arbitrary norms by wearing bold colours and patterns, the same features Alison Lurie identifies in *The Language of Clothes* (1981) adopted by some older people, particularly Americans, referred to as “leisure dress,” which looks like children’s play clothes—childish and asexual (58-59).

The families of Joanna Hart, eighty-two years old; Brenda Morrow, ninety-three years old; and Tina LaFarge also ninety-three years old (see app., fig. 20a) headline the top of the page of five death notices and two memorials in *The Peterborough Examiner* in early June 2021 (*PE* 3 June 2021, A8). Like the three older looking women depicted beside Irene North, situated beside each other on the page, the trio of women here also look remarkably similar. They are smiling, white haired with glasses. The backgrounds are neutral residential settings, two in domestic homes, and one perhaps in residential care. All three women wear hot pink crewneck tops. Although the death notices do not mention breast cancer as the cause of death for any of the women, the wearing of pink may be a subconscious or indirect way to show support for women living with breast cancer and for breast cancer research. The three women in their vibrant pink tops resist the neutral tones of the women in the November 8, 2019 issue of *The Examiner* (see app., fig. 19b). The families of each decedent could not know two other women would also appear in the same issue wearing the same individualizing colour to form a grouping. It is difficult to determine the exact age of each woman, but all three are represented in healthy older age. They are all widows and great grandmothers. The contrasting photo on

this page is situated below Joanna's. The photo included in the notice for Myrtle Noble who died "one week short of her 101<sup>st</sup> birthday" (see app., fig. 20b) is similar in some ways to the three in pink; she is wearing several pink plastic party favour HAPPY BIRTHDAY necklaces (*PE* 3 June 2021, A8). Even with her healthy-looking face and demeanor, Myrtle is notably older in the picture, suggesting the other three photos may represent women younger than they were at the time of their deaths. The woman on the page with the longest life and oldest looking face is situated below the horizontal mid-fold and out of the group of younger older faces. In Irene North's case, her young face is "turned away" from the three older looking women in neutral tones and grey-white hair. Here Myrtle Noble is "put away" beneath the younger looking older faces associated with bright pink. In both instances the layouts and readings are based on socially constructed gendered and ageist attitudes about acceptable degrees for representations of older women for public consumption.

Women in red dresses possibly support a similar ageist bias to project youth, even after death. The families of Maureen McLeod who died at ninety and Carol Herringstone who died at eighty-six years old (see app., fig. 21a) stand out on the obituary page of eight death notices of five women and three men. One man and one woman are younger and not included in my sample. Maureen's larger photograph (3 cm x 4 cm) is centred on the page and spans the horizontal fold (*PE* 11 Aug. 2021, A7). Her photo is obviously age-inaccurate. In the vintage photo (see app., fig. 21b), Maureen wears 1980s-style glasses, a bright red dress and corsage and is seated at a banquet table, most of which has been cropped, but remnants remain. "Maureen had a longtime career in hairdressing" and many other hobbies and "passion[s]" are listed. Carol's photograph is smaller than Maureen's (2 cm x 4 cm) and more tightly cropped at the sides (see app., fig. 21c). The

photograph appears to be age-accurate. Carol is featured in a bright red dress holding a Christmas cactus or thistle plant with a bright pink wrapping around the pot. The plant may be a reference to her “longtime member[ship] of the Canadian Scottish Club” and “her many relatives in Scotland” (*PE* 11 Aug. 2021, A7). As noted earlier in this chapter, the younger-looking woman is placed in a privileged position on the obituary page and the age-accurate woman, in an otherwise very similarly styled photograph, is relegated to a less privileged position on the page. In both cases, the oldest looking face, though not necessarily the oldest decedent, is marginalized, even though their red outfits and white hair simultaneously send ambiguous messages of being younger and older at the same time. Death notices have a role to play in advancing the anti-ageist agenda. They are a common daily source of public interaction with images of some of the oldest older adults. Older age forces one to engage with physiology because of the undeniability and eventuality of death (Twig, “Body Gender Age” 63), but most families who choose the photos for the paper are more concerned with how older faces and bodies will be received by the viewing public. The desired image for older decedents is the prime of their lives when they were very young or in mid-life.

### **Personalized Objects and Actions in Photos**

Aside from the colour of clothing which may or may not have been conscious decisions on the part of the authors of death notices, highly personalized objects in the photographs can individualize the decedents. A similar dynamic is at work when photographs are included on gravestones. Ester Hallam and Jenny Hockey argue in their book, *Death, Memory and Culture* (2001), that “displaying a living likeness at the grave [also] sustains a public visible face that has been selected as the preferred memory for the mourners

(147). Gravesite collections function as highly personalized living and growing memorials (147), whereas objects in photographs hold a liminal space frozen in time and usually point to past relationships and continue the social lines after the death (173-74). Some of the props seen in death notice photographs from my sample are the same as “everyday mundane objects” noted by the researchers at gravesites—potted plants, flowers, cards, and toys—which recreate the “appearance of a domestic space” to reflect hobbies and the personalities of the deceased (147). Photographs that include personalized objects typically reveal more of the decedent’s body and have the potential to individualize the decedent and frame the narrative.

Hats as one of most popular props can be divided into those that are part of a uniform and those that appear to be a chosen accessory by the decedent. Nursing graduation photographs make up the most common grouping in death notices, combining black and white studio photographs with a uniform, including formerly worn nursing caps. According to the Canadian Museum of History’s “Symbol of a Profession” on-line exhibition, today nursing caps are regarded as symbols of servitude, originally a modified form of the nun’s coif with many design variations. Doctors who were mostly men during the cap-wearing era positioned those nurses subservient to patriarchal power. Male nurses have never worn caps. Nursing caps began to disappear in the 1970s with the professionalization of nurses from hospital schools to universities and colleges. Many long-retired nurses’ death notices include their nursing graduation photograph including the cap as part of the official uniform.<sup>80</sup> In my sample most photos are black and white,

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<sup>80</sup> See the Canadian Museum of History’s on-line exhibition called “Symbol of a Profession: One Hundred Years of Nurses’ Caps,” <https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmc/exhibitions/hist/infirm/inevo01e.html>

but some of the decedents in the younger end of my sample are represented in colour graduation photographs. The uniform draws immediate status in the community. The coloured bands on the nursing cap which indicated level of training, read like military stripes, and make associations with war veterans. Inclusion of the graduation photos renders the women visible again, in the same way McNeill notes that older veterans are written back into the community and honoured for their prized service in the distant past (“Writing Lives” 201). My sample includes nursing graduation photographs prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic the proliferation of nursing graduation photos may reflect the family’s desire to capitalize on the recent glorification of front-line workers as an opportunity for the deceased to earn long overdue credit.

The traditional roles of nurses and other women’s roles coded in symbolic dress are particularly evident on the “Community Update” page in the September 15, 2021 issue of *The Examiner* (see app., fig. 22a), which includes Ruby-Ann Conway, who died at eighty-three-years-old and who is represented in a colour nursing graduation candid photo in which she holds a bouquet of red roses (see app., fig. 22b). It contrasts with the black and white studio picture of Irma Towns’s graduation in the “Peterborough Civic Hospital class of 56” (see app., fig. 22c). The same page features a black and white photo of a bride (see app., fig. 22d) celebrating sixty-five years married (in the same year Irma graduated from nursing), a young Queen’s University graduate, and a tenth anniversary death memorial for a ninety-three-year-old woman. The four women are frozen in time in uniforms that represent transition points traditionally in the lives of younger women. The close association of the bride in her white dress and head piece with a bouquet of flowers and the two nursing graduates, also in white with red roses, represents the public and private traditional life options for women in Ruby and Irma’s generation. Ruby and Irma

were both wives and mothers. The author of Ruby's death notice states she was "filled with kindness and compassion and would go back to work on her days off to make a special visit to a patient," and Irma "spent her life supporting people either as a nurse, friend, parent or grandparent." The couple celebrating their anniversary are also thanked by their family for "all of the things [they] have done to enrich all of [their] lives" and for their "unconditional love and support" (*PE* 15 Sept. 2021, A8). Although the vintage nursing photos individualize the women by framing them in public lives with careers, the notices are almost interchangeable with the anniversary announcement and others about women who were career homemakers. Both life paths ambiguously glorify and normalize the sacrificial role of women's careers and unpaid work, inside and outside the home. Sontag calls the jobs women hold such as nurses, teachers, secretaries, and social workers "public transcriptions of the servicing and nurturing roles that women have in the family" and claims that "all outstanding work by women in this society is voluntary" (286). Since Sontag's arguments were written about the era in which most decedents worked, death notices also provide opportunities to inform the community of the contribution women made in the past, both paid and unpaid, to move the profession forward.

The family of Violet Mann (see app., fig. 23), who died in 2020 at the age of ninety-five, traces her immigration to Canada from Scotland with her family as a baby "on the ship *Montcalm* in 1926" to her "graduat[ion] as a RN from Grace General Hospital, Winnipeg in 1948" (*PE* 21 Mar. 2020, A7). By chronicling Violet's diaspora and listing all the places she worked, the authors expand her audience and draw attention to a trend. Nursing provided many single younger women with an opportunity to travel to a variety of countries, cities, and towns before settling in Peterborough. Later many moved to Peterborough when their husbands were relocated for work. Flora Swanson's

notice takes up three long columns displacing two men with colour photos in shorter columns (see app., fig. 24). The family of Flora, who died in August 2021 at the age of eighty-nine “following an extensive stroke” (*PE* 27 Aug. 2021, B2), tells the history of her own path that led to graduating with the “Class of ’54 of Calgary General Hospital.” Like Violet, Flora was “married in Calgary” and “began married life in Peterborough, where [her husband] worked at CGE, and Flora stayed home to care for their daughters.” Unlike Ruby, Irma and Violet, Flora never returned to nursing. She only nursed professionally for two years, yet she has the one of the longest death notices for a nurse, and her photo suggests otherwise. Presenting the decedent as a nurse is considered cultural capital by the family. Also, “Flora continued to lead a vibrant life, centered around her family and her commitment to the Peterborough Community.” The author of the death notice connects each detail back to nursing, even quoting the diminutive comment from Flora’s nursing yearbook referring to her as ““a small dynamo,” which the author obviously views as a compliment. The family considers Flora to have been the “neighborhood nurse,” pushing her role as caregiver outside the family into a broader, but limited, context. “Flora also volunteered at PRHC in various areas, including Emerg, and the information desk as well as coordinating the knitting volunteers. She became president of the Auxiliary. She then served on the Provincial Auxiliary Association receiving a life membership in 1989. Her service to PRHC spanned 35 years” (*PE* 27 Aug. 2021, B2). The overdetermination of Flora Swanson’s claim to membership in the community of nurses without working as a nurse serves to justify the selection of the photo. Perhaps the family is determined to make the connection because she sacrificed a paid career to raise a family. At the same time Flora’s role in the hospital Auxiliary is more than a volunteer position; it is a substantial role and it is nursing by proxy without



pay. Either way, Flora's long notice is recognition for a lifetime of service donated by women volunteers in hospitals, yet the nursing photo sets Flora above the other volunteers who cannot claim association to the community of nurses. It individualizes Flora on one level and undercuts her with overdetermined justification. It glorifies her role as a volunteer and that of other women on the auxiliary and privileges her in the community of volunteers at the same time.

At times two photographs appear together in one death notice, a younger image of the decedent and one closer to the age at the time of death. McNeill theorizes that diptychs “give a nod toward the multiple identities the deceased has occupied” (“Writing Lives” 192) and reflect different ways the survivors have known the deceased.<sup>81</sup> The family of Maud Fallis (see app., fig. 25a), who died in July 2020 at the age of eighty-three, places the deceased both in relation to and outside her career. The diptych provides the information that she is a nurse. The older woman represented in the second photo may be age-accurate. The only nursing detail in the text is that she will be remembered by “her nursing colleagues and classmates” (*PE* 6 July 2020, A8). Both photos hold a similar tilt of the head to the right and a gentle smile of equal degree. The phrase that stands out in the announcement is mirrored in the picture's neutral background and Maud's calm demeanor conveyed in both photos — “Maud was a woman of grace and humour” (*PE* 6 July 2020, A8). The two images encompass their roles in differing communities. The

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<sup>81</sup> The pandemic is not only influencing the length of death notices it is also influencing the number of photos included in death notices. Since January 2022, death notices for older women have appeared in the Peterborough print media with multiple photos for one woman. No women's notices included more than two photos in my sample, although there are a few examples of men's notices with more than two photos. For an example of three photos (see app., fig. 25b) refer to the death notice for Janis Pelliborn (*PE*, 8 Jan. 2022, A9).

choice to include a nursing graduation photo suggests it holds importance to both the deceased and the survivors and they wish to remember the deceased in this role, while the decision to pair the images allows readers to identify her as she was seen by her children and grandchildren later in life. Although the notice is only thirty-four lines, it is divided into two columns to accommodate the diptych pairing and sets it apart. The emphasis in the photos is on Maud's face. She appears clever, kind, and confident in both photographs. The pictures have clearly been chosen to flatter the subject without emphasizing dramatic differences between her younger and older features or highlighting the effects of aging on a woman's face.

Cropping photos to keep an object in or cut it out can “focus on the deceased's individuality instead of explicitly making her conform to received models of identity for women of her generation” (McNeill, “Generic Subjects” 161). Ironically, many of the women featured in the mid-century black and white photos represent very young women in their prime, before their children knew them and reflect more than the traditional narrative of wives and mothers. Sometimes snapshots capture a more charismatic side of the decedent than colour photographs, age-accurate or inaccurate.<sup>82</sup> Photos from a past time can also allow the author of the death notice to reconstruct a story based on memory and family stories, weaving past and present into the narrative.

The death notice for Alice Pritchardson (see app., fig. 26) who died at eighty-nine-years-old in November 2020 (*PE* 28 Nov. 2020, A9), was published in *The Peterborough*

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<sup>82</sup> See the black and white photography of Thelma Pepper, who began her career as a photographer at sixty years old and photographed hundreds of ordinary people in long-term care homes and nursing homes. For a brief overview of her life refer to her obituary in the *Saskatoon Funeral Home* website, 1 Dec. 2020.

*Examiner* on the second page of death notices, beside the gutter. Alice's notice appears on a rare second page, precipitated by the publication of another notice that was four columns wide that day. The young woman looks directly into the camera with her hands clasped below her chin and elbows resting on a table forming a classic triangle that leads the viewers' eye to her broadly smiling face and Alice's squinting eyes under an old-fashioned tissue paper crown, the kind that comes out of a Christmas cracker. She invites the reader to smile back as if they are facing from the other side of the celebration table. Alice died in Toronto, but the author stresses that "Alice grew up in Peterborough and at Chemong Lake." Her father and mother fill the space normally reserved by the husband in the opening. There is no mention of a husband dead or alive, just two sons, one still living who was at her deathbed. Alice is the "last of five daughters" including her "twin sister." She is framed in the outdoors—"gardening and skiing at Devil's Elbow and Osler Bluff [which] kept her fit and ready for lunch." Although it is implied that Alice had the privilege of leisure time and could afford to ski, the author rejects norms representing her in the role of passivity and servitude by representing Alice making lunch for the skiers. Here Alice is represented on the slopes actively working up an appetite. A departure from the norm continues to the final paragraph in which the author explicitly shares that "Alice left instructions for there to be a party in her honour." At this point Alice's elbows and smile take on the powerful stance of someone telling the viewer how it is going to be, even in her absence. The author shifts to first person, stating, "We will do our utmost to ensure it is the best possible party. The date of which will be informally announced when we have a venue and COVID clearance" (*PE* 28 Nov. 2020, A9). It is not clear if the final comment is directed at Alice, the readers, or both. Alice's individualization is built on the absence of clichés and eulogizing hyperbolic praise. This announcement is a sendoff

combined with a notification of death, and an invitation to a party for which she is not the host.

Marjorie Hernden died mid-May 2020 (*PE* 21 May 2020, A8) at the age of eighty-nine (see app., fig. 27) and her death notice is one of the longest in the sample. Like Alice Pritchardson, Marjorie is wearing a plastic party hat mimicking a man's fedora and like Alice, she defies the "elbows off the table" rule, as she too leans forward with elbows firmly planted on her kitchen table like up-right goal posts. The background consists of a cluttered fridge door on one side and a counter with dishes and a wine bottle on the other. The death notice is steeped in personal details that frame Marjorie's kitchen as a social hub for playing cards. A partial deck of cards is stacked on the table in front of her implying a game is in progress and the rest of the deck has been dealt out to others around the table. Either intentionally or unintentionally, the picture is cropped to include the viewers in the game, seated around the table, facing Marjorie. The author of her notice has framed the announcement around Marjorie's love of cards by listing her favourite games from Euchre to Go Fish, an intergenerational community of card parties. Sitting down at a kitchen table is not reserved for eating meals laid out by Marjorie: "the thing Marjorie liked best, like her mother before her, was sitting down to a good game of cards [...] there was nothing more fun." Except for a "five day stay" in hospital, Marjorie "fulfilled her wish to stay in her own home as long as she possibly could." Like the representation of Alice Pritchardson, elbows on the table represents resistance to social norms at the dinner table; similarly, the structure of Marjorie's announcement resists the rigid formula of the death notice. It begins with a biography of her life and ends with the long "survived by" group, as Marjorie was born last, "the youngest of a blended family of twelve. The break in the traditional order of elements positions Marjorie first and the long

list of relations come “after” her story is told. The author of the announcement notes Marjorie “tried her hand at a number of things” in her public working life. This phrase is repeated, “*again*, she tried her hand at a variety of work,” (italics added) listing many jobs, until she “found her calling helping older folk by working in nursing homes.” Both Marjorie’s successes and implied setbacks, not typically mentioned are celebrated. Although Marjorie’s life course is atypical for a death notice, it mirrors the reality of some women’s attempts to enter the workforce in her generation. She “returned to college in her mid-fifties,” and she “retired from Riverview Manor when she was 65.” After her first husband died, she met another man and “started a new adventure” (*PE* 21 May 2020, A8). Marjorie is not eulogized as much as she is admired for maintaining her sense of adventure and resilience. She had agency over her own life by sampling a variety of jobs until she found work that supported her financially and fulfilled her. It could be argued working in a nursing home is a typical career for a woman, serving others; however, in Marjorie’s case her job is not overdetermined. The focus remains on the many roles Marjorie performed throughout her life course.

Photos in which the decedent is wearing a hat, which is not part of a uniform or cultural dress, as in the photos of Alice and Marjorie, signals the woman resisted invisibility and that the author chose a photo with a hat, either consciously or unconsciously, to represent individuality. The family of Kim Murphy who died at seventy-eight in June 2020 (see app., fig. 28) presents Kim in a white hat and fluffy hot pink boa (*PE* 11 June 2020, A8). She is situated at a social gathering, dancing. The author of the death notice states Kim will be remembered by relatives “and her many friends that she shared good times with” (*PE* 11 June 2020, A8). Anne Whitehead, who died at the age of eighty-three (see app., fig. 29), is represented as an age-accurate woman in an

outdoor setting wearing a practical wide brimmed floppy blue sunhat and big smile with an aged hand holding up one cheek (*PE* 28 Jan. 2021, A7). The broad brim of the hat frames Anne's face, but also leaves it dappled in shadows like the patches of ambiguity in her narrative. Anne was also an immigrant from Scotland, like many other women of her age in the area, beginning her Canadian life in Barrie before moving to Peterborough, where she worked "most of her adult life," later retiring "from Peterborough Paper Converters." To compensate for Anne's working life, the author of her death notice writes Anne back into the community of good mothers, stating Anne "considered her real life's work and greatest joy to be her family." The author of Anne's death notice notes she "had a contagious laugh [and] wonderful sense of humour" (*PE* 28 Jan. 2021, A7), qualities that peak out from underneath the broad brimmed hat.

Although Sandra Marrick (see app., fig. 30), who died at age eighty-five in January 2021, is not wearing a hat in her photograph, sunglasses pushed up in the greyish-white hair on her tilted head serves a similar function (*PE* 20 Jan. 2021, A7). Sandra's sporty white golf shirt and glasses frame her as youthful, athletic, and social. Twenty-eight lines represent a shorter than average death announcement, but the basics are covered; Sandra died "with family at her side." She was a "loving wife" and "beloved mom." The bulk of the notice succinctly focuses on her activities, "travelling with her family and spending time at the beach." Consistent with the image in her photo, the author states Sandra was "a dedicated sports fan, cheering for the Blue Jays and Montreal Canadiens. She was an avid golfer and loved to ski with her family" (*PE* 20 Jan. 2020, A7). No career is stated but "family" is mentioned three times, with reference to shared activities, vacations, and sports. Like the other white middle-class women pictured in hats in the sample, Sandra is situated in an active role outside the traditional kitchen and

outside the home. Her family functions as a partner with common interests in shared activities rather than as the beneficiaries of her sacrifice and servitude.

Old photographs in death notices can operate at many levels, ambiguously appearing to situate the decedent in a traditional domestic role, while at the same time subverting the obvious narrative. Vivian Shaw, who died in February 2021 at eighty-seven years old (*PE* 23 Feb. 2021, A8), is pictured in a mid-twentieth century black and white photograph (see app., fig. 31). Vivian is seated in a corner reading chair in a polka dot dress, with her legs crossed, and one foot hidden behind a footstool. She is buried under layers of dark and white crinolines and wears a classic strand of pearls. She responds with laughter to someone off camera or to the book in her lap.<sup>83</sup> The sixty-two-line death notice begins by declaring Vivian was a “rare spirit – a realist and optimist” who raised six children. The author of her notice says Vivian was “determined to live a vibrant, creative and independent life,” suggesting this could not happen as a homemaker, wife, and mother of six. Vivian’s June Cleaver-like attire is more ironic than ambiguous. Like a mess of books crammed onto a bookshelf behind her, Vivian’s crinolines are not contained under her dress as she resists norms for lady-like sitting and surrounds herself with a well-used disarray of inspiration. The foot stool is covered in a pile of discarded newspapers. The photograph represents the multiple identities and roles of Vivian. She was a “gifted artist, she earned her BFA degree in her 50s and went on to teach.” Vivian’s long-life course is represented in the text well beyond the walls of her house. Like many of the women in death notices, Vivian’s story conforms to talking about the “love of her life,” and the author combines gratitude to both parents because “*together* they created the

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<sup>83</sup> I confirmed my interpretation of the details on-line via the digital photo which is clearer and can be enlarged.

big, somewhat boisterous family Vivian treasured more than anything” (italics added). Although a devoted mother, Vivian is not situated in the kitchen or in a role of perpetually catering to the family. She is not June Cleaver. The author is proud to declare Vivian “pursued her Grade 10 conservatory piano in her 70s”; however, the final decade of her life is not explored other than to generally note “she valued education and the life of the imagination” (*PE* 23 Feb. 2021, A8). The photo in Vivian’s death notice sits “alongside the treasured memories” which are the product of “deliberate memory-making” (Hallam and Hockey 120). Although the photo points to the past, it proves even vintage age-inaccurate photographs can resist norms and establish a framework to individualize older women who have fulfilled many roles in their life course.

The family of Roxy Budd who died at eighty-eight years old in June 2021 (see app., fig. 32) also chooses a black and white photograph in which Roxy is a girl on the verge of womanhood, looking sporting in a man’s leather letter jacket. It presumably belongs to “the love of her life” whom she married in 1954 and with whom she had a “67-year journey” (*PE* 18 June 2021, B2). The word “journey” frames the approach the family has taken to individualizing Roxy’s life, beginning with the photograph which conveys motion rather than stasis. Roxy squats sideways torquing her body and her head back to perform for the camera. Like Vivian, Roxy is frozen in a candid moment, reacting to someone outside of the frame, in this case on a riverbank. The sun reflects off the sheen of the leather jacket, the moving water, and Roxy’s young face. Roxy is one of the few women in the sample who was not widowed at the time of her death. Her husband may have written the death announcement or at least contributed to it. The notice and the photo explore her independence. Like Vivian Shaw, Roxy was the mother of a large family, eight children, plus “her ‘adopted’ son.” The author of the notice reaches back to



Roxy's roots and connects her to roles as wife and mother, sliding forwards and backwards between resistant and traditional roles. When Roxy was single, she "mov[ed] to Belleville with her lifelong friend [...] to become 'Bell girls,'" Bell telephone operators. Roxy is remembered both as a carefree girl and a mature mother and wife. As in Vivian Shaw's notice, Roxy's memorial refers to her husband as "her anchor."

Although the notice intends to praise Roxy in her role as a working mother, her husband gets the glory through the emphasis placed on the way "he spoke often of [Roxy's] deep capacity for caring and her hard work as a full-time mother and then as an employee at ElectroLab." He is privileged for acknowledging her hard work, more than she is for her work, suggesting the author believes the father's resistance of the norm for men is more newsworthy, which also illustrates the gendered nature of praise. Later, Roxy is remembered for more traditional elements of family life such as "hospitality towards anyone who showed up at 84 Purdy Street" and her "eagerness to host gatherings."

According to the author, Roxy transitioned easily from "full-time mother [to] an employee at ElectroLab." At the same time, she "grounded her family in rituals: meals at the dinner table with homemade desserts, Sunday picnics followed by the traditional dinner of roast beef and Yorkshire pudding." Although the descriptions of meals place Roxy back in the kitchen, in this case hosting is countered with examples of her "adventurous spirit" renewed through cottage vacations, "annual anniversary jaunts," and visiting grown children "at home and abroad" (*PE* 18 June 2021, B2).

Yvette Kym's black and white studio photograph reflects the mid-last century as well. Yvette Klym, who died at eighty-eight in October 2020 (see app., fig. 33), is called a "loving wife" and "deeply loved" by her son and daughter; however, Yvette's life and death are staged around her first love—figure skating. Yvette, in a skating costume and

both hands cupped over a pair of figure skates from the distant past, looks to the left (*PE* 19 Oct. 2020, A8). The lengthy notice begins somewhat traditionally then it quickly transitions into a biography of Yvette, beginning “as a child prodigy figure skater.” Although the author ends the notice by stating Yvette’s “love of skating was only surpassed by her love for her family,” Yvette’s public, private, professional, and family life in the notice revolve around her skating and coaching. The author is not only familiar with Yvette’s biographical details such as the “financial constraints” that forced her to “turn professional at the early age of 16 and start her 50 plus year coaching career,” but is most likely a skater and understands the world of “figures,” “free skate,” “double axels,” and the significance of the capacity to restructure recreational programs into competitive clubs. The notice is directed to an audience with knowledge of and interest in figure skating. Rather than shy away from the details of a sport dominated by women, the author of Yvette’s death notice capitalizes on the opportunity to securely situate Yvette in the history and record books of Canadian figure skating, both for her own accomplishments and within the context of high-ranking local skaters coached by Yvette. The author of the death notice gives Yvette her due, listing her personal accomplishments as the “youngest skater to ever get her gold medal for figures and free skate” and the “first woman to complete a double axel in competition.”<sup>84</sup> The author lists specific skating clubs to which Yvette “travel[ed] 600 miles a week coaching” with two children at home (*PE* 19 Oct. 2020, A8). The authors, her children, show they are knowledgeable and proud of their mother’s career, but Yvette has been made over into a woman with one identity. Ironically, the vintage photograph presenting Yvette in an old-fashioned skating dress and

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<sup>84</sup> I could not locate a record of this accomplishment on-line; however, there are many references to her as a coach in high level skaters in the Peterborough Hall of Fame.

antique skates in the foreground is static, contradicting the sport to which Yvette dedicated her life. At the same time, the photographer has caught the precise moment at which Yvette is turning to grab her skates and go. The professionally staged photo, unlike the candid photos of Vivian or Roxy, is choreographed like a skating routine as is the death notice, right down to the final bow directed at Yvette: “May you be skating your favourite program high above us Mom!”

Yvette’s singularly themed death notice is the exception to most in which the photograph is paired with clues to the woman’s individual identity. More often decedents are posed with favourite pets. Noreen Quinlan, who died at eighty-four years old in December 2019 (see app., fig. 34a), is pictured with her dog surrounded by green lawn (*PE* 6 Jan. 2020, A9). If pets are mentioned in the body of the death notice they often appear, as is the case in Noreen’s notice, at the end of the “survived by” list. In Noreen’s average length notice consisting of thirty-six lines, “her fur baby Honey who was by her side” is included following the names of her great grandchildren, implying Noreen was not alone when she died “suddenly and unexpectedly at home.” Noreen’s story may be read as the lonely widow who has replaced her family with a perpetual “baby” substitute, but in this case, it may be more of a reflection of the need to ensure Noreen did not die alone without family by her side.<sup>85</sup> Noreen had other interests beyond her dog. She worked outside the home, she bowled “in her youth,” and was “an avid knitter and sewer” (*PE* 6 Jan. 2020, A9). Even though Noreen’s notice is only half the length required to be split into two columns, the photo shared with the dog takes centre stage on the page

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<sup>85</sup> Dying surrounded by family is one element of “The Good Death” explored in Chapter 3.

among eight obituaries published that day; it too garners attention at the top of the page in apposition to two women in red clothing below the fold (see app., fig. 34b).

Worthy of note are the only two photos of elderly decedents pictured knitting in their death notice photographs. Given the number of notices which list knitting, crocheting, and sewing as hobbies in my sample, this modest number might reflect the association of knitting with ageist stereotypes of grandmothers in rocking chairs, the same way in which older women pictured with cats may be regarded as a confession of loneliness and senility. Both Maxine Trapper who died at eighty-four years old (see app., fig. 35a) (*PE* 3 Sept. 2020, A7) and Ida Harman who died at ninety-one years old (see app., fig. 36) (*PE* 12 June 2021, A10) wear neutral-toned handknit sweaters and are pictured actively knitting in the photographs in their death notices. Maxine looks like she could be knitting the sweater she is wearing, based on the similar color and weight of the wool. She pauses, looks to her left, aware of the camera. Ida continues knitting while she looks up to smile for the camera. Both women's sweatered torsos fill the photo frame. Maxine's possibly age-accurate photo situates her as a knitter with no other personal details to build on in the body of the notice, just a patchwork quilt behind her. Maxine's identity as a knitter extends into the future, as the same photo appears one year later, September 2, 2021, in the "In Memoriam" section of *Peterborough This Week* (see app., fig. 35b) remembering Maxine. Ida's age-inaccurate notice includes some individualizing details. She was "prolific and beautiful [at] sewing and knitting." After Ida "raised her family" she and her husband were owners of "Seweze Sales, a popular sewing store where she also taught lessons" (*PE* 12 June 2021, A10) and donated finished projects to charities. Like the singular identity ascribed to Yvette Klym the skater, Ida is made over to have one identity in both the photo and text of the announcement. The author of Ida's

notice ambiguously embraces associations with traditional women's handiwork, including an old-fashioned doily on the back of her chair, yet she is represented in an age-inaccurate photograph.

Most hands in death notice photos hold up chins, but others are animated and communicate some aspect of the decedent's identity to the viewer. Arla Bookman who died in May 2021 at the age of ninety-nine (see app., fig. 37) is represented in a red and white outfit, smiling with one hand slightly blurred in a wave to her family and the readers (*PE* 15 May 2021, A11). She is an older woman with dark hair in a stylishly cut, but the image is age-inaccurate. The author lists Arla's typical talents as "master cook and baker," a "painter and knitter," plus a "master weaver." Arla is represented as more skilled than the typical portrayal of a woman her age who was also "dedicated to raising her children." The author allows Arla to be an individual when it is noted she was "an arena mom watching her son Randy's hockey and a Brownie and Girl Guide leader for Cindy and Wendy." Her role as spectator is also expanded beyond her immediate family: "she loved horse racing and the casino, and she was a dedicated fan of the Toronto Blue Jays" (*PE* 15 May 2021, A11). Coupled with the photo, Arla's identity shifts from a passive fan to an active woman whose participation may not be in the centre ring, but she is certainly actively engaged in the event. Arla's waving hand, signifying 'I am here. Look at me looking at you' allows her to be written into all the events she attended. Some families, like Arla's, set out to individualize the decedent through hand gestures or objects in their hands. More than one older woman holds a cocktail in a farewell toasting gesture.<sup>86</sup> Sissy Giles died in April 2021 at the age of seventy-six (see app., fig. 38b).

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<sup>86</sup> See an example of a red cocktail toast in the death notice photo for Lisanne Capichou (app., fig. 38a).

Sissy's death notice stands out because there is no mention of a husband or any children. Like other childfree women in the sample, she is assigned to a surrogate role. Sissy is the "special 'Nana'" to her great grandniece; however, it is not overdetermined. Sissy's identity is not made over to be a pitied nurturer; her death notice centres on friendships. "Sissy built up a lot of friendships during her years of working in nursing, as doctors' receptionist and real estate. She also had friends through her curling" (*PTW* 15 April 2021, 58). Sissy's photo stands out as an age-accurate grey-haired woman celebrating, perhaps toasting in the photograph. A purple jacket covers her shoulders like a shawl. The photo is clearly cropped to include the toast and privilege her social identity among friends, rather than make her over into a "mother" figure.

Dominique Lawson (*PE* 1 June 2021, A7) who died at the end of May 2021, at the age of eighty-five, is presented in the death notice photo wearing an oversized men's Toronto Maple Leafs jersey. She is slouching back in a seated pose, left hand folded over her right fist (see app., fig. 39), so her hands appear disproportionately large on her lap. On closer inspection the background looks like the hallway in a hospital or nursing home. A blanket covers most of Dominique's chair, but the features of a wheelchair poke through and her head with short brown hair is supported by the headrest. The author uses upper case letters to distinguish the names of her opponent diseases, "Breast Cancer and Dementia," like sports teams against whom she has put up a "valiant fight." Dominique's photograph stands out because support for sports teams through hats, jerseys, cheers, and subtitles is more common in death notices for men than women in Peterborough-Kawartha as seen in the photo of the man on the same page pictured in a Blue Jay's ball cap.

The notice begins with a traditional structure stating the facts of Dominique's death followed by the "survived by" section. References to the Toronto Maple Leafs in the Stanley Cup playoffs in June 2021 create a break in the form to the extent that hockey is privileged over Dominique, and the author uses Dominique's death notice to publicly cheer on the team and as an omen that the Leafs will win the cup. The author says, "Dominique loved her Toronto Maple Leafs, they gave her many happy years of cheering them on with our dad," who died in 2006. Since the author notes that Dominique was living with "dementia," it is unclear if she still cheered on the Leafs and knew they were in cup contention; it is irrelevant if the family is honouring her personhood and making an effort to include Dominique in past pleasures. Speaking directly to the decedent, the narrator speculates: "Maybe this year will be the year Mom and the Leafs will win the Stanley Cup." The ambiguity in this line may be the result of an inexperienced writer. Perhaps the author means, "Maybe this will be the year Mom, [...] the Leafs will win the Stanley Cup." The author transfers their desire for the Leafs to win to Dominique. When the author tells their mother, "You and Dad can watch [the Leafs] from above and cheer, louder 'Go Leafs Go,'" it becomes clear Dominique's photograph is meant to be read as if she is watching the game from the afterlife. Here, the author's overdetermination of Leafs fandom co-opts their mother's death notice to literally cheer on the Leafs.

Clearly the author of Dominique's notice has set out to commemorate their mother but does so by pairing her with her husband as a team; "they raised four children in a loving home on Bethune Street," and their "parents made sure [they] always knew [they] were loved." "You" in this death notice refers to both their mother and their father, who died fifteen years earlier. Here, as in other examples, "the couple" is privileged over the last fifteen years while Dominique was a widow. The notice, the only public memorial for

Dominique, is long at eighty-five lines. The author explains that “due to Covid-19 restrictions, a celebration of Dom’s Life will be held in the individual hearts of family and friends”; however, in June 2021, restrictions on funerals and gatherings would have facilitated a public service. The author goes on to state that “In keeping with Mom’s wishes, cremation has taken place.” Both statements that preclude a funeral for Dominique are clarified or justified as being out of the family’s control. The author suggests that “the next time [you] get to dine out, Smile at your waitress/server, leave your tip and say this is in memory of ‘Dom’ our favourite waitress from the Churchill and Empress Restaurants” (*PE* 1 June 2021, A7). This closing remark is the first indication that Dominique worked outside the home and had multiple identities. According to Lurie, oversized men’s clothes on a woman, like Dominique’s oversized jersey, send a “double message” (228-229) that the woman is a “good sport, a pal [...], ready-for-anything [...], almost like one of the guys.” Lurie also notes that oversized men’s clothes on a woman sends an “ironic antifeminist message,” that she is a child dressed up in men’s clothes. This representation of Dominique is one of “helpless cuteness, not one of authority”; it is infantile, and Lurie posits wearing men’s clothing “invites the man to take charge” (229). Dominique was not the mother they remember at the end, so she is “re-embodied” or made over into a mascot for the Toronto Maple Leafs.

Citizens of Peterborough have passed an expression around and down through the generations that sums up a heteronormative and ageist attitude. They say, “Peterborough is mostly made up of people about to be wed, or about to be dead.”<sup>87</sup> When it comes to

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<sup>87</sup> The ageist expression “about to be wed or about to be dead” is common in the Peterborough area. It means Peterborough is not a good place for singles because half the population is attached, either taken by being “about to be wed” and then raising a family, and the other half of the population is “about to be dead” because they are older, and in



public representation of older women, some families would prefer to have their loved ones remembered as they looked “about to be wed” rather than “about to be dead”; it seems for others, elderly healthy faces and bodies are acceptable for public representation, but less so if they show signs of decline. Clearly, younger faces and bodies are favoured over older faces and bodies. Although the popular expression is loaded with ageism on both ends, pairing death with old age shows the ageist view that the community has held historically and still holds for its oldest older adults. It operates as a binary, where the expected option for younger adults is to marry and for older adults is to get out of sight and hurry up and die.

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this context old means death is near. I have never heard this expression outside of Peterborough, but it represents the ageist view that older people are as good as dead, valueless.

### Chapter 3:

#### The “Good Death” as Represented in Death Notices

Whereas the authors of death notices often choose age-inaccurate photographs for older women to disassociate decedents from the stigma of the white-haired cohort, they simultaneously write the women into the privileged group within that cohort—those who achieve the “good death.” She who “passes peacefully” into that good night is prized over one who rages, perpetuating traditionally feminine norms of “niceness” with a death that is neat and tidy. She is a “sweetie pie” to the end, like Hagar Currie Shipley and Daisy Goodwill Flett, compliant and deserving of praise—Good girl! Good death! According to Herbert Northcott and Donna Wilson in *Dying and Death in Canada* (2017), “dying peacefully in one’s sleep in old age [...] tends to be considered a good death” because “there is only death—no lengthy dying, no pain, no suffering, no need for coping, and no test of character. It is an ideal death because it is an easy one” (127), easy for the dying and the family. Ultimately people faced with the prospect of death have “little fear of death itself but [are] more concerned about how they might die” (126) and the circumstances that surround their death. In their article, “Expanded definitions of the ‘good death’? Race, Ethnicity and Medical Aid in Dying,” Cindy Cain and Sara McClesky measure attitudes towards medical aid in dying (MAID) (1175). They posit that defining deaths as “good” or “bad” reflects larger societal expectations common to Western ideals that are well documented for the “good death,” which also include the following: acceptance, mending of familial and other important relationships, and not

being a burden to others (1176). The elements and euphemistic language of the normative “good death” represented by authors of death notices are prevalent in my sample.

Elements of the “good death” are not equally weighted. A woman in deepest older age who is not a burden is privileged above all others. Typically, this means she resists senescence longer than expectations for her cohort and lives independently nearly to the end of a long life, beyond widowhood but does not outshine her dead husband or their coupled life experiences. Continuing to live independently in one’s own home in older age overrides all other expressions of the “good death” achieving the “best death” for the decedent and the “survived by” group.

When the normative “good death” cannot be reported there is a tendency to present a “spectacular death,” which panders to pity and the reading public’s fear and fascination with victimized and medicalized deaths associated with such dreaded diseases as Alzheimer’s, dementia, cancer, and COVID-19, sometimes followed by efforts to frame the narrative to claim a “good death” when the “battle” is over and the “suffering” ended. Women in my sample are often represented as deriding the “bad death” through participation in communities of other women, either lifelong organizations or end-of-life support groups associated with the disease that “took” them. A few women are “granted” agency over their own deaths, which is uncharacteristically welcomed and celebrated by the family if adhering to the woman’s “wishes,” in this final instance, speeds up the dying process and absolves the family of the responsibility for making tough decisions. The price to pay is that a woman is often subtly characterised as stubborn for knowing her own mind and the author goes on public record stating they were following the desires of the deceased, especially if her choices could be perceived as reflecting badly on the author or the “survived by” group.

Besides the ways in which women are made over to reflect the normative “good death,” the presence of regional markers specific to the outdoors in the Kawarthas in my sample, including experiences as cottagers, functions as substitutes for missing normative elements. The juxtaposition of congregate care settings, loneliness, and isolation at end of life are juxtaposed with natural settings, both domestic and wild, and earlier social experiences in the vast Kawartha landscape and cottage lake communities. Although the landscape holds ample room to explore alternative roles held by women, women continue to be represented as wonderful “hosts” or divine beings—Mother Nature. Representations of older women within particular landscapes and as cottagers unintentionally expose regional expressions of patriarchy, elitism, sexism, racism, and ageism. Reimaginings in the landscape of the afterlife, also intended to balance “loss” in the material world, write decedents back into a social community, more cultural than Christian, matching the deceased’s prime-of-life death notice photos in the imaged scenarios. The outcome of the community’s need to publicly report the “good death,” designed to assuage fear of aging and death, results in death notices that are contradictory, ambiguous, and more concerned with appearances than the authenticity of completing the presentation of the woman’s life and death narrative.

### **Elements of the “Good Death”**

The family of Sadie Littleton, who died in December 2019 (see app. fig. 40), presents 102-year-old Sadie in a head and shoulders healthy close-up, smiling, age-accurate photograph (*PE* 3 Dec. 2019, A8). The author of the short twenty-eight-line death notice, relative to Sadie’s very long life, begins with the precise language and expectations of the “good death.” Sadie, “passed peacefully [...] in her Chemong Lake home with her family

by her side, in her 102nd year.” Sadie’s death notice includes the decedent passing away peacefully, at home, of an undisclosed illness, surrounded by family, at a very old age. Although Northcott and Wilson do not address aspects of place beyond “dying at home,” references to specific sites within or near the natural landscape in the Kawartha Lakes are abundant in my sample. Sadie’s home is situated on “Chemong Lake” in the Kawarthas with the image of the approaching winter on the frozen lake. Sadie died “December 1, 2019” (*PE* 3 Dec. 2019, A8), which does not support the best “good death” scenario. Summer deaths in Peterborough-Kawartha provide opportunities for the deceased to “pass” in idyllic nature or at least to experience summer through the open window or in the backyard. Louanne Robbins (see app., fig. 41) “died suddenly,” which, at ninety years old, supports a “quick” death. The family represents her death as a “good death,” because Louanne died “doing something she loved, gardening in her backyard” (*PE* 22 Apr. 2021, A11). She had the agility to be working outdoors at her own home.<sup>88</sup> Isabelle LaVallee (see app., fig. 42) died in November 2020, at the age of ninety. Although November is typically bleak in Ontario, the author of the notice represents the unusually beautiful day to set the tone and establish the “good death”—“the day was unseasonably warm, the sky was azure blue and in the early morning hour of November 8, Isabelle left us” (*PE* 14 Nov. 2020, A8) at the “Gilmour Lodge Seniors Home” after having been an “involved woman” both professionally and as a volunteer. Here the sublimity of the “unseasonably

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<sup>88</sup> According to Applewhite, internalized ageism, on the part of both the older person and the society, contributes to ageist assumptions about how age is performed, even though as people age, they become more different from each other. Applewhite states, “Line up a random bunch of seventy-year-olds it’ll be hard to believe they share the same birth year. Since we age at very different rates, it makes a certain sense to reject identifying with our chronological age” (41). At the same time, Dr. Atul Gawande says, “Experts say they can gauge a person’s age to within five years from the examination of a single tooth—if the person has any teeth left to examine” (29).

warm day” allows Isabelle to be written into the “good death” without any details concerning the specific circumstances of her death.

Independent living and dying in one’s home are privileged in death notices, which explains why the age at which the decedent’s senescence may necessitate a move to congregate care is often noted in the death notice. The conventional list pattern typical of the “survived by” section in death notices is transferred to the paragraph that itemizes a long list of Martha Smith’s independent physical accomplishments (see app., fig. 1): Martha “gave up driving at 92, and lived independently until she was a month short of 102” (*PE* 2 Feb. 2021, A7); physical accomplishments are clearly bench-marked against normalized expectations for the older olders. Considerable senescence in the form of physical fragility is usually clear in the growing demographic, occurring “by the age of 85 or increasingly by the age of 90” (Northcott and Wilson 40). According to Aston Applewhite, American journalist and author of *This Chair Rocks: A Manifesto Against Ageism* (2016), women like Sadie, Louanne, and Martha who are held up as beacons of successful aging, reinforce and perpetuate the “supergeezer” script (45), which is not attainable by many of the oldest old and the “frail elderly” (Northcott and Wilson 40). Their accomplishments also include stated mental acuity, largely outside their control. The author of Martha’s death notice notes that she “was completely mentally competent until the very last day, and never stopped learning,” implying most older adults are “mentally *incompetent*” and “*incapable of learning*” (*PE* 2 Feb. 2021, A7). Physical ability, mental acuity, and independent living into older age signify successful aging and support the normative “good death” regardless of circumstances of the process of dying at the expense of the cohort.

Mental acuity is represented in a variety of ways to qualify the decedent for the “good death.” Edwina Kappa (see app., fig. 43) “passed away peacefully at the age of 95, at Peterborough Health Centre” in April 2021 (*PTW* 29 Apr. 2021, 90), and the author of her death notice draws attention to her keen long-term memory. Although Edwina lived “over the past 15 years” at Royal Gardens, “she frequently participated in activities and *could somehow remember* the poems and songs of her youth, long after her *memory* started to fade” (italics added). The author claims Edwina’s long-term memory is an individualizing marker, but not necessarily the memories themselves. Ambiguously, Edwina’s family privileges short-term working memory that fades first as it supports independence, while Edwina’s long-term memories are presented as juvenile entertainment, rooted in her childhood and youth. The notice also implies that Edwina was active on social media and using technology to keep in touch with her family until the end as “above all else, she [...] cherished every visit, phone call, letter, card, email, and Facebook message that she received” (*PTW* 29 Apr. 2021, 90). The author of the death notice uses the public announcement and the catalogue of modes of communication in a self-congratulatory manner to itemize the number and variety of ways the family connected with Edwina. The flood of communication (breaking stereotypes that older adults are not on-line) directed at Edwina, particularly during the isolation of the pandemic, represents being “surrounded by family,” although not physically, as a significant element of the “good death.”

The family of Pauline Hemotte mourn her “sudden passing” at eighty-nine years old in June 2021 (see app., fig. 44a). Pauline’s apparent mobility and independence are emphasized when the author states that Pauline was an “avid tennis, shuffleboard and card player,” activities she could have participated in before her “sudden passing.” The

author also situates Pauline as “having weekly coffee dates with friends and long walks at Jackson Park where she could sit and enjoy nature” (*PTW* 1 July 2021, 49). In this instance Pauline both actively “walks” in nature and passively “sits” to enjoy the natural scenery. Although socially engaged with “friends,” it appears Pauline takes “long walks” alone, as the author uses the singular pronoun “she,” when they describe that “*she* could sit and enjoy nature” (italics added), which implies she was able-bodied and independent. It also suggests that Pauline visited Jackson Park in the summertime because “she especially loved spending winters in Florida” (*PTW* 1 July 2021, 49). The winter season rarely factors into death notices in my sample except to reveal where the decedent wintered in a warmer climate.<sup>89</sup> The winter months force many older Canadians indoors which results in lockdowns in care homes to curb fatal flu outbreaks and contributes to isolation and loneliness. Health reporter for the *Globe and Mail*, André Picard notes the fatal effect on older citizens “especially frail seniors living in congregate settings [who] are sitting ducks for pathogens, especially respiratory viruses” (5). Picard notes that “outbreaks rarely generate much media attention,” with the exception of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003 (4) and the Coronavirus pandemic which only recently “exposed the fault lines in [Canadian] institutions” year-round.<sup>90</sup> The lack of

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<sup>89</sup> See the death notice for Evie Switzer (app. fig. 44b). The author states that Evie “enjoyed many happy memories at Stoney Lake and their winter home in Largo Florida” (PE 6 June 2020, A8).

<sup>90</sup> Picard notes “no sector has been more brutally unmasked than eldercare, the hodgepodge of long-term care homes, home care and affordable housing for seniors that lurks on the margins of health and welfare systems,” in which Canadians have “long deluded [them]selves into thinking [their] elders were well cared for” (4).



interest in the older cohort who die silently and invisibly indoors each winter has been challenged by the high profile of the Coronavirus pandemic.<sup>91</sup>

Elaine Briton died at ninety-six years old in March 2001 (see app. fig. 45). Her family exploits the challenges of Ontario winters to support the claim that Elaine is a “force of nature” (*PE* 23 Mar. 2021, A7), which is intended to sum up her “strength of character” as she resisted norms as a young single mother and later as an older woman. While working as a physiotherapist, Elaine’s “life-long love of music” is exemplified when “she drove from Peterborough to Toronto even in the depths of winter to attend concerts by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra at Massey Hall.” Driving “even in” winter illustrates Elaine’s passion for music, but it undercuts the intended representation of Elaine as a feminist, whose “favourite reference books” include “‘You Don’t Need a Man to Fix It.’” The author breaks some of the “good death” conventions in the opening lines by employing the harsher word “*died*,” ambiguously stating the cause of death as “natural causes,” and locating the place of death as a congregate “manor”: Elaine “died of natural causes [...] at Albright Manor, Beamsville.” Rejection of the coded language parallels Elaine’s unconventional story, in which she is called “a feminist before her time [...] determined] to raise her sons alone” after “mov[ing] to Canada in 1956” from the UK. Later in the notice, the author reverts to the conventional use of the euphemism “passed” as an expression of the “good death,” while simultaneously representing an uncommon death scene. Elaine “was singing in bed shortly before she *passed*” (*PE* 23 Mar. 2021, A7; italics added). In this instance, through the representation of a long unconventional

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<sup>91</sup>See Bill Hodgins’s front page article “City’s Aging Population Vulnerable to COVID Death; Peterborough death rate ‘now steadily higher than the provincial average,’” in *The Peterborough Examiner* on January 22, 2022.

life course and death, Elaine is represented as having achieved the “best,” if not “extraordinary death.” In *Being Mortal* (2014), Dr. Atul Gawande frames dying individuals’ agency in terms of having the opportunity to keep writing their own stories to the end. People “ask only to be permitted, insofar as possible,” says Gawande, “to keep shaping the story of their life in the world—to make choices and sustain connections to others according to their own priorities” (147). Elaine Briton died peacefully soothing herself with her own singing, listening to her own voice right to the end, and her story is represented in the death notice.

Ironically, the family of Doctor Jean Bunderson (see app., fig. 46) reports that she “passed away peacefully of old age in her 95 year” (*PE* 20 Feb. 2021, A8), even though people die from a medical cause *in* old age rather than *of* old age. Although Jean is survived by children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, it is her older sister who is mentioned first in the second sentence in her announcement—“Jean is survived by her elder sister Mary Knox”—which not only celebrates her sister’s older age but marks the longest family relationship. The importance of sibling connections is notably absent in death notices, even though the bonds between sisters, and other siblings can be significant. “Jean’s medical career included a long period with Trent University Health Services,” and many other roles enacted over “long period[s] of time” individualize Jean’s career and life course. At the same time, Jean’s generative gift, the donation of “her 100 acre Selwyn Township property, now known as the Dance Sanctuary, to the Kawartha Land Trust to preserve land for future generations” stretches Jean’s role in the community infinitely into the future. The author of the death notice notes that “Jean lived independently until illness necessitated a move to a retirement residence in late 2018.” A celebration of healthy old age is the central theme in the notice through the stated cause of

death, reference to her sister's older age, an age-accurate photo, and an emphasis on living independently until "*late* in 2018" (italics added). Jean died in *early* 2021. Here every day of independence in older age is counted and privileged, perhaps even over her accomplishments as a doctor, who, as a woman, "graduated from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto in the class of '49" (*PE* 20 Feb. 2021, A8), shortly after men returned from the second world war at a time when most other women in the sample were getting married and returning to the home. The "good death" is represented here in the woman who lived independently nearly all her life, and who exercised agency her entire life as a doctor, a landowner, and an environmentalist with concern for the future of the landscape in the Kawarthas.

Ireena Hapstead died in October 2021 (see app., fig. 47) "peacefully at home [... at] age 95 years" (*PE* 6 Oct. 2021, A7). The author of the notice notes that Ireena "continue[d]" to travel "with family and friends," after her late husband's "passing" in 1999. At the time Ireena would have been seventy-three years old. The comment reveals Ireena's independence is not considered to be the norm or the expectation for older women, perhaps because she was newly widowed. The final personalized comment about Ireena in the notice ends with an exclamation mark. The author writes that "Ireena was very proud of her gardens which she continued to maintain this year!" (*PE* 6 Oct. 2021, A7). Ireena is proud of her gardens and the author is proud of her aberrant physical health. According to the author, Ireena's "good death" is a factor of her recent non-normative ability to be gardening outdoors at her own home, similar to Louanne Robbins, gardening within the year of her death at ninety-five, (see app., fig. 41). The longer the lifespan, the more precise and incredulously the tally of independent markers are represented. Willa Boyer, who "passed away peacefully" also at the age of ninety-five

(see app., fig. 48) in July 2020 at Royal Gardens in Peterborough,” is celebrated by her family because “even after [her husband’s] death in 1985, Willa remained an active part of [the Bethany] community until she moved into retirement residences in Peterborough” (PE 23 July 2020, A8). The specific use of the expression “even after,” intended to compliment Willa is ambiguous, similar to the representation of Elaine Briton who drove to Toronto “even” in winter. The author may be referring to Willa’s resilience to carrying on in the aftermath of her husband’s death or the comment, unconsciously reveals the gendered and low expectations the family had for their mother to carry on independent of her husband. Willa was *only* sixty years old when her husband, a “respected teacher and VP at LDSS for many years” (PE 23 July 2020, A8), died after having retired in 1978. Willa’s death notice is co-opted as an “in memoriam” for her publicly accredited husband who died young, too young to qualify for the “good death” at the time. The “good death” is achieved by combining Willa’s long life with her association to her husband’s valued work from more than four decades earlier.

Most women in the sample are widows and while travel is often listed as a hobby it is typically with reference to their husbands, who predeceased them by many years, most often decades. Like elements of Willa’s notice, the representation of Martha Smith (see app., fig. 1) also combines the gendered and unconventional inclusion of her predeceased husband: “*They* travelled the world over...but her “*most fondly remembered* adventure was touring North America in a motorhome” (PE 2 Feb. 2021, A7; italics added). The antecedent of “they” refers to the first paragraph where Martha Smith’s story begins with marriage to her “beloved husband” and [she] was in love with him until his passing in 1991, and beyond” (PE 2 Feb. 2021, A7). Stock phrases, usually applied to the subject of the death notice, are transferred to her “*beloved* husband” and then “most

*fondly remembered*’ adventure, presumably *with* her husband (italics added). Here the author’s use of the conventional language of the genre unintentionally backgrounds Martha Smith in her own death notice and situates her in relation to her husband, who, like Willa’s husband, is assigned a dominant role in the marriage unit. The fact that widows, past middle age, travelled and remained publicly active is most often expressed as non-normative and newsworthy behaviour, ignoring what the women accomplished and contributed. Since most women in the sample are widows, they earn “good deaths” by continuing to serve the family in a traditional heteronormative role and living independently into deep older age.

The family of Mary Edwards (see app., fig. 49) wrote one of the longest death notices in the sample, one hundred and eighty-eight lines, accompanied by a colour head-and-shoulders age-accurate photo for the one-hundred-and-one year old. The announcement begins with Mary’s own words and it stays centred on her voice; “during the celebration for her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, Mary Edwards was asked to suggest the secret to her longevity, which was ‘To not give up’” (PE 20 May 2020, A8). There is no “peaceful passing”; Mary “died [...] just five days shy of her 101<sup>st</sup> birthday.” The cause and circumstances of her death are not privileged in the announcement. Mary’s long, extraordinary life of ‘onlys’ and ‘lasts’ is the focus and is associated with the merits of the long lives of older adults. She was the “*last* surviving member of a family of 13 children,” and the “*only one* of her siblings born in a hospital” to Alderville First Nation Chief and his wife. “She was the *oldest* citizen of Alderville First Nation, and the *only* member of any of the seven Williams Treaty First Nations who was alive when the treaty came into effect in 1923, and still living when a settlement was finally negotiated in 2018” (italics added). Here, the expressions: *only one*, *still living*, and *finally negotiated* use the

colonizer's language and public death notice genre to illustrate over a hundred years of colonization before "finally" some steps are taken towards reconciliation. Like the author of Martha Smith's death notice, the writer of this notice includes the intersection of national historical facts with Mary's own family life, the choices she made, and local jobs she held as a single mother to support her *only* child. The notice individualizes Mary through her indigenous heritage intersecting with her life in Lakefield "after her parents left the reserve near Cobourg." The author honours Mary's more recent years and connects them to themes in her youth, without sacrificing one for the other. At points this occurs in a non-linear fashion, when they note, for example, that Mary "volunteered to read and spend time with patients in a private hospital in [Lakefield], just as she had with wounded veterans in Toronto's Sunnybrook Hospital following World War II." The notice concludes that due to COVID restrictions "the family wishes to forgo visitations and services" with "a celebration of her life for family and friends [...] tentatively planned for [the] coming fall." Although Mary's death precipitated the death announcement, it is a celebration of the many roles she played in her long life, not her death. Mary died either in hospital or her retirement residence, not at home, yet she achieved the "good death" as the author notes that Mary's "elderly years were made more comfortable by the care and kindness she received from all the staff and friends at Peterborough Retirement Residence." Also, according to the author, Mary's "elderly years" did not start until she was about ninety; until then Mary is presented in "supergeezer" script (Applewhite 45), revealing the author's ageist expectations for most older adults in Mary's age cohort. Until she was ninety, Mary was volunteering and playing euchre in Lakefield (*PE* 20 May 2020, A8). Like other women who lived long healthy lives, Mary's age-defying norms are celebrated rather than mourned in the

storytelling because they come later than expected, which suggests an “even better death” for prolonging senescence in older age.

### **Alzheimer’s Disease, Cancer, and COVID**

In comparison to the prescribed “good death,” every other death scenario falls short as a worthy public narrative. Although the elements of death appear to be unalterable facts, decedents are shoehorned into the ideal framework as if reporting that a loved one achieved the “good death,” or at least some elements of it, implies they led a “good life.” If attempts to comply with the good death seem impossible, reporting resorts to images of pitiful decline or the spectacle at the end-of-life pandering to a public who is greedy for sensational “reality.” Adherence to the “good death” is an extension of traditional images, already explored in Chapter 1 of this thesis, in which mothers and grandmothers are made over into models of domestic femininity and dutiful saints. Daisy Goodwill Flett’s daughter, Alice, for example, does not want her mother to chat with Reverend Rick because “Alice, from her middle-age perspective, believes her mother to have a soul already spotless – spotless enough anyway – and is outraged to see the spectre of sin visited upon one so old and ill and vulnerable” (Shields 332). The family of Clara Fremlin who died in May 2021 (see app., fig. 50) celebrates her for her “gift of hospitality [...] a master creator of pies and butter tarts. Many were welcome to meals at her home” (*PE* 22 May 2021, A11). Clara is represented in her photo with overlapping hands, resting slightly to the left over her heart, and with her head tilted to her right. The light source streams down from above creating a halo effect at the top of her grey-white hair. The notice leads with the standard phrase and elements of the “good death.” Clara “passed away peacefully at Fairhaven [...] in her 92<sup>nd</sup> year.” Although Clara did not die at home

surrounded by family, the angelic pose in the photo and overdetermination that “she loved to entertain” emphasizes her generosity and expands her goodness, which is exemplified in acts of charity whereby “if someone was shut in she was sure to be bringing food offerings to their door.” Clara’s representation of saintly goodness extends beyond her life and the material world. The author of the notice declares that “Heaven got a Kick Butt Angel and [Clara] is sure to be organizing great High in the Sky parties” (*PE* 22 May 2021, A11). Unintentionally, the informal tone mocks the saint-like image and the afterlife, creating ambiguity in the text and a reimagining of the angelic pose in the photo as a caricature.

Just as an angelic decedent reflects well on the “survived by” group and the author of the notice by association, disassociation from a decedent whose cause of death is stigmatized is a motivation to make over the representation of the decedent. Applewhite declares “ageism marginalizes those with dementia: worse than old is very old, and worst of all is very old and incurably ill” (64). Generally, the decedents who fall into Applewhite’s “worst of all” category receive the most extensive makeover to fit an acceptable degree of the “good death.” After the decedent dies, the author of the death notice uses the opportunity to de-stigmatize and disassociate themselves from the decedent. In *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* (1963), sociologist Erving Goffman defines stigma as an “attribute that is deeply discrediting” and that reduces the bearer “from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one” (3) so that the person with a stigma is “not quite human” (5). Northcott and Wilson point out “people who are not dead but are merely associated with death may be negatively evaluated” (99), consistent with Goffman’s concept of “courtesy stigma”: a person is stigmatized because of a stigma attached to someone else with whom they are associated



(Goffman 30-31). “Because death is stigmatized,” according to Northcott and Wilson, “almost anyone and anything else associated with death is also stigmatized,” including widows and older adults who are viewed as harbingers and reminders of death (99). Diseases like Alzheimer’s Disease, cancer, and COVID-19 can have devastating effects on “self-esteem and social life and [are] typically accompanied by feelings of anxiety, depression, shame, and humiliation” (Applewhite 64), extending to the family as courtesy stigma, and as a “death” of the person they once knew. According to Peter J. Whitehouse, author of *The Myth of Alzheimer’s* (2008), most death notices that explicitly mention dementia represent the person “lost” to an incurable disease. Whitehouse posits the person is still present in various ways with human needs for affection, connection, and modes of self-expression (Whitehouse 25). Applewhite calls the fear of dementia and Alzheimer’s Disease “out of proportion to the threat” as people are diagnosed at older and older ages; she blames the fear on the modern “information society,” which values mental acuity and considers the brain as the location of the self (Applewhite 63).

Doreen Towns (see app., fig. 51) died at ninety-one years old in May 2020. Her family dispensed with the traditional “passed peacefully” opening to represent their “sweet mom [who] lived life with the pedal to the medal, until Alzheimer’s dealt her a plot twist none of [them] ever expected” (*PE* 12 May 2021, A8). The metaphor of the “plot twist” is consistent with the opinion of Whitehouse, who calls on the person and the family to see Alzheimer’s “not as a loss of self wrought by disease, but as a *change in self*” (25). Whitehouse notes that the “distancing, reductionist language” associated with Alzheimer’s Disease “divides persons with [and without] Alzheimer’s [...] into separate categories of ‘us’ and ‘them’” (31). Applewhite puts the onus on the family and support team to “change [the] expectations [...] to reassess what activities qualify as meaningful,”

especially when they see these activities as “pathetic, or [...] dismiss them because they’re not things [they] remember the person doing” (67). The decision to adjust expectations provides the necessary empathy to achieve Gawande’s metaphor of the person as author of their own life story to the end, including stories with unexpected “plot twists.”

The opening lines to Doreen’s death notice establish that “this obituary is for a very loved mom, step-mom, grandmother, wife, sister, aunt, and friend.” The structure honours Doreen’s individual contribution to each relationship group to the extent that only her two husbands who predeceased her are mentioned by name. Doreen is placed in the spotlight, overshadowing her “survived by” group, her disease, and the circumstances of her death. By the second paragraph the family celebrates Doreen for having been “a woman before her time. A working mom in the 1950s.” Doreen’s family also respects that “she was never shy about giving you her opinion and loved a good ‘bun throwing row’ about politics at the dinner table.” Doreen’s family appears to be unapologetic for this individualizing character trait because they “always knew where [they] stood with her, and it was this fierce love of [them], and of right and wrong, that cemented [their] devotion to her,” notably not phrased as *her* devotion to *them*. At the same time, the fact that Doreen’s family finds it noteworthy that their mother was “not shy about giving her opinion” or that she had opinions about politics supports the gendered notion that it is not common, acceptable, or natural for a woman to have and share opinions, especially about politics. Later, bordering on an apology, her aberrant assertive behaviour is justified because it resulted in admirable character traits in her children. Neither the disease she lived with, nor her death are given priority over Doreen. Rather the focus uncharacteristically is shifted to her last years when “she was tenderly cared for with love

and compassion by the staff at Extendicare Lakefield,” who collectively are praised for the same traits Doreen is credited with bestowing upon her own children. Their mother raised them to be “independent, courageous,” and most notably “compassionate.” The family also expresses ideas that support Applewhite’s point that “dementia is often worse to witness than to experience” (65) as they note that they are “eternally grateful” to the staff at Extendicare Lakefield “for the comfort and kindness [they] bestowed to her family, in the final days, [which] will never be forgotten” (*PE* 12 May 2021, A8). At the same time, the family states it is also grateful “for all the stories of [Doreen’s] wit and sense of humour” reported to them. Stories of their mother’s “wit” and “humour,” not conventionally feminine traits, parallel descriptions of Doreen before living with Alzheimer’s disease. In later life Doreen’s unconventional behaviours are encouraged, and she is not represented as “lost.” If anything, she has found her voice. Her wit and humour remain individualizing markers throughout her life and part of her narrative to the end as second-hand stories, but Doreen’s stories nevertheless, which constitutes the “good death” or at least a “not so bad death.”

Similarly, the family of eighty-two-year-old Henrietta Drysdale who died in April 2020 (see app., fig. 52) focusses on her “full life of experiences” (*PTW* 30 Apr. 2020, 29) and says her life “ended at Lakefield Extendicare following a few years of enduring the ravages of Alzheimer’s.” The remainder of the death notice attempts to situate Henrietta in the spotlight in resistance to her own “quiet confidence and competence that outshone her reluctance to be in the spotlight” (*PTW* 30 Apr. 2020, 29); however, sensationalizing the effects of Alzheimer’s on Henrietta frames her as a victim of the disease and prioritizes it over her life story, which is a double deindividualization of the woman. Whitehouse notes that “even in death, a loved one still retains their vitality through the

stories we tell in their memory” (32). Yet, in Henrietta’s notice when the author forefronts the “ravages” of Alzheimer’s the message is ambiguous, reflective of conflicting reactions within and among the family members to the disease’s effect on their mother, and panders to the broader community’s fear of Alzheimer’s disease. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *ravages* as “an instance of destruction or devastation caused by a person or animal, or by disease, time, the weather” (*OED*). Paradoxically, Henrietta is celebrated for her “full life of experiences,” which includes her final stage as a woman living with Alzheimer’s disease and “Henrietta” is simultaneously considered to have been “destroyed.” Whitehouse cautions that familiar military metaphors<sup>92</sup> including the “War on Alzheimer’s” (98) dominate our relationship with those labeled with the disease; the people become “Alzheimer victims,’ diseased, demented, and stigmatized” (101). The description elicits pity for the deceased, and thus the “good death” is unattainable by virtue of the diagnosis. Henrietta’s family is “devastated” in the last “few years enduring the ravages of Alzheimer’s,” which suggests the “ravages” of the disease apply as much to the family as to Henrietta.

The memorial for Dorothy Jones, who died at ninety-eight years old (see app., fig. 53), begins with gratitude on the part of the author that their “momma [...] is finally free from the suffering and indignity of dementia” (*PE* 23 Sept. 2021, A9). Noting Dorothy’s careers working for the British Government, the courts, and the Federal Government of Canada and later providing “care for her grandchildren” emphasizes her acuity, intentionally contrasting her earlier intellectual ability with the “indignity of dementia.” Dorothy’s important work individualizes her, while simultaneously bifurcates her into

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<sup>92</sup> See Susan Sontag’s *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and Its Metaphors*, Picador, 1977.

“Dorothy before” and “Dorothy after” the disease. She is made over into an object of pity, defined by the triple threat to the “good death”— suffering, indignities, and dementia. Even though they are part of her past, Dorothy’s accomplishments are read as a great loss in the present, during which she is unable to remember or cognitively function in those roles. Those with public recognition for their mental acuity have lost the most by this line of reasoning. At the same time the author of the notice includes “caring for her grandchildren” on an equal footing in the list of past professional accomplishments and multiple identities that have been “lost.” For the author of the notice, only death could “free” Dorothy, and more importantly, the “survived by” group to “live [their] lives” (*PE* 23 Sept. 2021, A9). It is implied both Dorothy and her family existed beyond “loss,” in a non-living state while Dorothy was a woman living with “dementia.” Even though Dorothy led a “good life,” dementia, according to her family, prevented her from experiencing a “good death.” In this case, death is good because it freed Dorothy from her perceived suffering.

The death notice for Leigh Ophir who died in June 2020 (see app., fig. 54) begins with resistant images, hyperbolized heroic, and euphemized language to resist images of the “good death.” Leigh’s family describes the spectacle of Leigh’s death in the final scene in medicalized detail: “Following a long painful struggle with metastasized breast cancer; disguised as sciatica, Leigh left us in the wee hours [...] at PRHC surrounded by doctors, nurses, and machines at PRHC with her husband at her side” (*PE* 30 June 2020, A8). Personifying Leigh’s cancer with the nefarious intention to disguise itself as something innocuous reads like a warning to all women to beware of “metastasized breast cancer *disguised* as sciatica” (italics added). The repetition of the acronym for the hospital, PRHC, might be passed off as an oversight on the part of the grieving author,

but more likely it intentionally resists all the generic aspects of the “good death.” Leigh did not pass peacefully at home surrounded by family. After a long painful ordeal, she “left” her husband, surrounded by medical strangers and cold machines, representing the same group, human and machine, who were duped by the cancer’s disguise. Allan Kellehear, a British public health sociologist and end-of-life-care scholar, notes that the description and reporting of death scenes, whether they are “good deaths” or not, include the witness’s personal response to an event, adding that nowadays, “exposure [to death] is uncommon,” so much so that people in their fifties and sixties, who have seen a dead body, or sat with somebody who is dying is still the exception (“A Short History” 17:53-18:23). The author begins the notice with a focus on the elements of the “worst death,” sidelining the subject’s accomplishments prior to her death. Even when the author shifts to list Leigh’s roles in life, they draw on Leigh’s identity and associations with breast cancer, focussing on the community of “Wonderful Ladies formerly known as The Peterborough Breast Cancer Support Group-sometimes referenced (at home) the Dragon Boat farm team.” The community of “survivors” work in opposition to the medical team in the opening scene to support the “good death.” The author also notes Leigh will be interred in Little Lake Cemetery [...] where she will have a riverside view.” It is implied Leigh will have a front row seat at the well-known annual Dragon Boat Festival races on Little Lake, continuing in her role as “an avid member and longtime leading supporter of Wonderful Ladies.” In this case Leigh, whose age is not provided in the notice, is not made over after death, but continues in her former role, metaphorically, as a spectator-supporter of Wonderful Ladies who are associated with supporting the “good death.” Although the author mentions friends from Leigh’s work outside the home earlier in her life at the “call centre” and “as a popcorn maker at the old Peterborough Drive-in, [and] a

hair dresser” (*PE* 30 June 2020, A8), they privilege the Breast Cancer support groups. The author also frames Leigh’s life in two landmark Peterborough public locations, in role reversals, suggesting that even places can be disguised. Here the hospital is a site of mourning and the worst death, while Little Lake Cemetery, exclusively set aside for death, insists, through the positive optimism of dragon boat races and eternal membership in the breast cancer community of women, on the “good death.” In the end the author of Leigh’s death notice uses her death to both resist and reinforce precepts of the “good death” in response to present day attitudes of fear of the spectacle of the medicalized death in a hospital and the value of membership in survivor support groups whose mandate is to ensure a “good death.”

Alzheimer’s disease and cancer have a long history of being named as causes of death in notices, unlike COVID-19 which appeared only recently in the population and in death announcements. The community’s representation and language used in death notices of COVID-19 is emerging. Unlike dementia and cancer, COVID-19’s transmissibility heightens the fear of becoming infected and the stigma associated with some of those who contract it. COVID-19 poses an immediate threat to the whole population, but more particularly to vulnerable persons, older adults, and the unvaccinated. During the pandemic, every local death by COVID-19 is a newsworthy death, reports at times borrowing metaphors of war to convey scenes of suffering and medicalized interventions in hospitals or lonely deaths in understaffed nursing homes. Susan Delaney died of COVID-19 at eighty-one-years old (see app., fig. 55). Her notice serves as an announcement of her death, a tribute to Susan, the individual, who was “featured in a documentary film *DISH: Women, Waitressing and the Art of Service*” (*PTW* 6 May 2021, 51), and as a public service announcement for the prevention of

COVID-19. There are three COVID related themes in the notice. First, Susan “courageously fought the COVID virus and passed away with family by her side.” Using the popular war metaphor against any disease is less common in older decedents in my sample; however, the world was at war against COVID-19, so the “good death” in this case is replaced with the “good fight” against a common enemy. Secondly, “a Celebration of Life will be held at a later date when COVID regulations permit group gatherings.” The author notes that most families of decedents who die from COVID-19 were unable to celebrate the deceased with public normative gatherings. Thirdly, a reference to COVID-19 appears at the end of the notice, when the family requests, that “in honour of [their] beautiful Mother, Grandmother, Great-Grandmother, Daughter, Sister, Aunt and friend we ask that you fight COVID-19 by being socially distant, wearing a mask and getting a vaccine as soon as you are able” (*PTW* 6 May 2021 51). Susan’s death is framed in the broader context of the world-wide pandemic and politicized campaign to convince people to follow protocols for the prevention of the spread of the virus. The notice stops short of explicitly blaming individuals or institutions for breaching prevention protocols but uses Susan’s death as a promotional tool to support measures against the highly publicized trepidation about vaccines in the spring of 2021. Susan’s death is seen as preventable and attempts to individualize one number in the COVID daily death count. Paradoxically, the only public memorial to Susan at that time, the death notice, is headlined by the disease. Just as she represented women servers in the documentary *DISH*, Susan is made over as the unmasked face of COVID-19 prevention.



### **Agency in Designing the “Good Death”**

Resisting what might be deemed the “bad death” is expressed when women exercise agency. Growing in number, but still less common, are death notices in which the families explicitly state the decedent exercised control over the circumstances of their dying and death, by accepting death and making peaceful passage plans, such as terminating treatments to hasten death or arranging medical assistance in dying (MAID). Regardless, the representations of the woman who exercises agency at the end of life is still narrated through the perspective of the author or group of authors of the notice, usually revealing gendered biases when women’s wishes are expressed and honoured. Donelda Jasper died in March 2021, following a neck injury after a fall three weeks prior (see app., fig. 56). The family centres her death notice on a detailed description of the “good death,” fulfilling her desire to “die at home with family at her side” (*PTW* 25 Mar. 2021, 49). The only particular detail about Donelda as an individual is that she was a gardener, and this fact is buried in the last sentence of the notice. Since Donelda died in March, her “celebration of life will be held at the family home around the beginning of June when Donelda’s gardens come to life.” The last three weeks of her life overshadow all the years prior. The focus is not on Donelda’s birth, lifespan, and death; the only dates provided in the notice bookend the exact date she fell and the date she died. Everything Donelda did before February 26, 2021, including twenty-seven years of marriage to the author of the notice, pictured behind her in the photo, is eclipsed to represent how the “good death” was achieved through the recounting of elaborate procedural details, naming specific doctors involved, and providing facts about the air transportation. The author of the notice prioritizes interest in the particulars of executing the journey home over individualizing the life of the woman in the “Ornge Ambulance” (*PTW* 25 Mar.

2021, 49), and also proves that the normative “good death” is an unattainable goal for most older adults. The spectacle of the journey, clearly of interest to the author, even overshadows the motif intended to sustain the notice which is centred on “home.” In the end Donelda achieved the “good death” because she accepted her imminent death and died at home with her family as she desired; the family home is the site of her Celebration of Life and home to her perennial flower gardens.

Drawing on a number of studies and researchers, Cain and McClesky argue that from the perspective of healthcare providers, normative “good deaths” typically refrain from unnecessary treatments that cause “iatrogenic suffering, are timely, and do not involve conflict with family members” (1176); however, the “good death” also “de-individualises the experience of death and disregards diversity within definitions of what is good” (1176). The researchers note, for example, that while a dominant message in palliative care academic literature is about acceptance of death, some persons at the end of life see it as their moral responsibility to fight death to the end, especially as fighting death is seen to benefit family (1176). In her final stay in the hospital, Shields’s Daisy Goodwill Flett is referred to as “a fighter, but not a complainer, thank God” (322) by one of her nurses. Even Hagar Currie Shipley, the fighter pushed into the ring by the first two lines of Dylan Thomas’s poem, “Do not go gentle into that good night, / Rage, rage against the dying of the light,” in the epigraph at the start of *The Stone Angel* (Laurence 1), becomes complacent in the end. Hagar thinks, “Very well. I’ll behave myself. I’ll be what they desire” (290). In Hagar’s case and Daisy’s, they are referring to the hospital staff, their family, and even the unwanted clergymen. A lifetime of being trained to exhibit good behaviour can be misread as “acceptance.” Cain and McClesky note the Western hospice and palliative care movement is largely based on definitions of the

“good death” which as cultural constructions do not reflect any inherently good or bad qualities of dying. In fact, the ideals of the “good death,” while helpful for defining alternatives to medicalised, institutionalised deaths, can be a form of “social control that seeks to discipline patients and their family members” (Hart et al., 2010 qtd. in Cain and McClesky 1176).

Coral O’Sheay’s notice begins like a traditional death notice for an eighty-three-year-old widow, mother, Nanny, and great-grandmother (see app., fig. 57). She was involved in many social activities in the Apsley community and the author of the announcement states that “Mom said she would never have changed anything in her life” (*PTW* 28 May 2020, 43). The fact that Coral “remained ‘sharp as a tack’ right to the end – able to make all her own decisions” centres the locus of control for decision-making with Coral. The notice also celebrates cognitive agility and implies older adults are not expected to be as “sharp” as Coral at “the end.” When the family says that “she did it ‘her way’ and in that we are finding some comfort,” the vague line suggests “it” refers to exercising her rights or her control over her own treatment: her choice to suspend interventions or her choice to employ assistance to hasten death. In any case, the author of the notice implies Coral’s agency is respected but not necessarily consistent with the family’s desires, especially since ‘her way’ is set apart from the text with single quotation marks. The ambiguity in the expression “her way” is problematic. Although it most likely means the family respects Coral’s wishes, the negative connotation of one “getting their own way” implies conflict born of stubbornness. By stating the undisclosed plan respects Coral’s wishes, the family publicly absolves themselves of critical judgement. The family continues to note, “Mom was okay with saying ‘so long’ and reassured us we will all be together again.” “Mom” may have been “okay” with her decisions, likely to dispense with

further treatments, and the family complies, but it is unclear if the author agrees with their mother's choices. The cause of death and details of Coral's final wishes are left out of the notice. Privacy is respected and sensationalism is omitted to allow the notice to highlight Coral's extensive list of past activities including "camping with friends and family, music jams, playing cards and shuffleboard, dancing and writing poetry" and her membership and leadership in the "Apsley Legion," ladies groups, and with "many friends she made over the years" (*PTW* 28 May 2020, 43). Although her life course is prioritized over the disease and the death itself, unanswered questions are distracting and open to interpretation. Both Donelda and Coral achieve "good deaths" because their families follow their wishes; however, while Coral's full life course and her many roles are also represented, Donelda is defined by the sensational circumstances leading up to her death.

Northcott and Wilson, along with Kellehear, recognize the "various pathways to a 'good' death" (Northcott and Wilson 127) and point out that the dominant definition upon which many interventions are meant to improve "end of life" does not resonate with all members of society equally. One challenge of meeting multiple definitions of the good death may be that providers come to accept the "good enough" death, according to Cain and McClesky, which prioritises alleviation of physical suffering and the marginalisation of all other types of suffering (1188). "Suffering" itself is also open to interpretation, as Northcott and Wilson note that "dying is not simply a biological process; it is also a process with psychological, social, moral, spiritual, and occasionally [...] political dimensions" (127). According to Kellehear, today suicide in affluent countries is associated with the cultural categories of mental illness or depression but he notes that suicide is still highly influenced by religious ideals and "most cultures throughout history have respected suicide with reason." Although Christians have been "fairly anti-suicide,"

he maintains that there has always been room, even in Christian traditions, for “altruistic suicide” (48:03-49:11). Kellehear also acknowledges the “tendency today to speak about assisted suicide and people want euthanasia.” Kellehear argues, “That is not any different from suicide”; “because we’re middle class we’re used to having assistance [...] so when you come to die well, we’re still saying can you give me a hand please, this is a lifelong habit” (47:20-48:03).

The family of Minnie Swoboda, who died in January 2021 at eighty-eight (see app., fig. 58), uses her death notice as a platform to advocate for “individuals, citizens, and members of society” as she herself did as a social worker, university professor, and social activist (*PTW* 4 Feb. 2021, 50). The notice explicitly announces the “death [...] supported by medical assistance in dying.” Kellehear would call Minnie’s choice a death by suicide. The author of Minnie’s death notice intentionally forefronts the method of dying over an underlying undisclosed disease. Minnie’s academic work, her many interests and hobbies, and her “survived by” group situate her as a social activist advocating for “the hungry, the dispossessed and those oppressed around the world.” She is also placed in an historical context, “as a young child [...whose] family escaped Poland during World War II using transit visas by Chiune Sugihara, [...] which allowed them to reach Japan and eventually Canada.”<sup>93</sup> According to the author, “Minnie’s expressed wish was that friends and family never forget this man, his moral courage, and his heroic actions.” The death notice incorporates biographical details about Sugihara: “In defiance of his government, Sugihara saved over 6,000 Jews fleeing Nazi-occupied Europe” (*PTW* 4 Feb. 2021, 50). The author of Minnie’s death notice demonstrates the power of resisting

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<sup>93</sup> See the film, *Persona Non Grata: The Chiune Sugihara Story*, 2015.

end-of-life norms by declaring at the start of the notice Minnie's personal decision to die with medical assistance and ending the notice within the broader context of one man's decision to resist norms on a grand scale, positioning Minnie as one of the lives he saved. Both examples celebrate the power of free will and suggest Sugihara's actions are the source of Minnie's life's work and choice to exercise control over her own death. As a result, Minnie is individualized as she is in control of her own story until the end and even beyond her material end through her didactic death notice. Northcott and Wilson remind us that stories are designed to "move others emotionally and provide moral inspiration" (127).

Northcott and Wilson also note that death comes to each person in turn through culturally constructed diverse channels that include denial and awareness, fear and fascination, detachment, and morbid obsession (81). Their own exploration of Laurence's *The Stone Angel* in their Canadian textbook on death and dying reads like a death notice, as they focus on the historical social commentary about death and its representation in fiction in the first half of the twentieth century. Northcott and Wilson begin their commentary with the "predeceased group" rather than the "survived by" group for ninety-year-old Hagar. The point they make is that Hagar has experienced deaths long before she confronts her own and these experiences impact her own behaviour as she approaches death. Northcott and Wilson note that when the minister asks if she has many friends, she observes that most of them are dead, along with her parents who are long dead, as are her two brothers. Her husband and one of her two sons are dead as well. Northcott and Wilson draw attention to the fact that Hagar also knows that others, in her "survived by" group, her remaining son, Marvin, her daughter-in-law Doris, her doctor, and the nursing staff at the hospital where she is spending her final days, are all waiting, anticipating, and

expecting her demise (Northcott and Wilson 83). Though no one speaks directly to Hagar of her impending death, she guesses the meaning of whispered conversations and “all at once [she] understand[s]” (Laurence 295). Playing along with the charade, Hagar makes amends in her own way by lying to Marvin, telling him he’s “been good to [her], always. A better son than John” and Marvin “believes [her] (Laurence 304). Hagar is complicit in the makeover and achieves “not the worst death” by modern standards. She dies relatively pain free, in hospital after having made amends at an old age (308). What might be represented as acceptance and elements of the “good death” are really “compromised ideals,” constrained by reality (Northcott and Wilson 107).

### **Indirect Language, Codes, and Euphemisms in “Good Death” Narratives**

*The Stone Angel* and *The Stone Diaries* are about the culture and experience of life and death in small towns and rural settings in the first half of the twentieth century, but according to Northcott and Wilson the urban experience of death in the second half of the twentieth century and in the early twenty-first century involves a greater degree of denial than in earlier eras. Death can be a messy, unpredictable, and sometimes painful affair; death notices often erase or hide the mess under generic codes to appease a community of fearful readers. Although death cannot be denied, language “convention[s] can distance us from it” (85). Indirect language, coded diction, and euphemisms are considered less insensitive and evade the realities of death. This is the case in the death notice for Doris McMorley (see app., fig. 59), who died in April 2021 at the age of one hundred (*PTW* 22 Apr. 2021, 50). The notice begins with the adverb, “peacefully,” and although the notice does not say so, the words “passed” or “died” are implied. The author employs the language of life throughout the notice, beginning with where and when Doris was “born,”

and announcing a “Celebration of *Life* will be held at a later date” (italics added). There is no mention of her death in the notice in reference to the cause, the location of St Joseph’s at Fleming, or the circumstances. The only mention of death is euphemized in the word “late” as an adjective to describe her “late parents,” “late husband,” and her friendship with “the late Harold—” (PTW 22 Apr. 2021 50).

Although researcher F. Richard Ferraro concludes in 2019 that in death notices, “males tend to die and females tend to pass away” (666), based on his sample from a local paper, *The Grand Forks Herald* in Grand Forks North Dakota, most death notices for both men and women in my Peterborough-Kawartha sample begin with the phrasal verb and adverb “passed away peacefully” or the short form “passed peacefully” and defy Ferraro’s conclusion, which is based on a more diverse age group of decedents than my sample. The death notices for four older men represented in the top portion of the obituary page in *The Peterborough Examiner* on July 30, 2020 (see app., fig. 60) begin with the same phrase “passed away,” and three of the four complete the phrase with the adverb “peacefully” (PE 30 July 2020 A8). Similarly, the obituary page in *The Peterborough Examiner* on October 14, 2020 (see app., fig. 61) displays three obituaries for two older women and one man beginning with “passed away,” but only two are qualified with “peacefully,” with the third replacing “peacefully” with the phrase “after a brief illness” (PE 14 Oct. 2020, A7). The “good death” in Peterborough-Kawartha does not distinguish between genders in this instance,<sup>94</sup> suggesting overall most older adults have a “peaceful passing” in this community, and as death notices are built on conformity to form and repetition of language most will continue to do so.

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<sup>94</sup> Ferraro’s research could be extended to parse out specific age groups and genders to determine if gender or age is the factor.



The family of Nettie Rains (see app., fig. 62) who “passed away suddenly at her home with family by her side” at the age of eighty-seven (*PE* 1 Oct. 2020 A7) in September 2020, begins with three elements of the normative “good death” and resists it at the same time. The ambiguously coded word *suddenly*, as with some others noted in this thesis, rejects the homogeneity ascribed to older people and the notion that the death of an eighty-seven-year-old might be characterized as sudden.<sup>95</sup> According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, *suddenly* means “without warning or preparation, all at once, all of a sudden”; “quick rapid”; “after a comparatively short time” (*OED*). Although Nettie’s death was “without warning” and the family had little time to prepare for her death, representations in the notice suggest it is a “good death.” Nettie was surrounded by her family, in older age, and it was a “quick” death, based on the definition of the word, even though the cause of death is undisclosed. Ambiguity also surrounds the word *suddenly* in death notices, especially with connotations to death by suicide, which invites speculation by the reader. Nettie’s notice is short, but the notice states that “a Celebration of Life will take place at the Hiawatha First Nation United Church” (*PE* 1 Oct. 2020 A7) in the coming days. Unlike most funerals during the pandemic and more specifically celebrations of life which were postponed or tentatively scheduled, Nettie’s Celebration of Life occurs “after a comparatively short time” (*OED*), suddenly, like her death. Nettie’s Indigenous culture might have more to do with resistance to hegemonic norms and the unusual use of the word *sudden*.

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<sup>95</sup> In conversation with one funeral home director by phone, November 11, 2019, *suddenly* is typically reserved for younger decedents who die by “tragic accident” or for someone who dies by suicide. Each funeral home codes *suddenly* differently.

The family of Elsie Ashe (see app., fig. 63) begins the notice with an inverted sentence that starts with the familiar phrase; Elsie “passed away peacefully at her home [...] lovingly surrounded by her family, [...] of Curve Lake in her 84<sup>th</sup> year” (*PE* 27 Feb. 2020 A8). Elsie was a leader and teacher of Native First Language Programs in First Nation communities, the local Public Schools, and at Trent University, Elsie’s individualized passion for language is integrated into the notice by incorporating the Nishnaabe word for candy apple “ziizzbaaktowaabmin” into an individualizing anecdote in which Elsie not only “created a Halloween tradition of handing out candy apples for over three generations,” but made the language part of everyday use. The “good death” crosses cultures in this case. The authors of Elsie’s notice also extend the parameters of the “good death” to bestow individualized gratitude to specific caregivers beyond the cursory group “thank you.” Here, “the family wishes to thank the nurses from St. Elizabeth Health Care, especially Nurse Nicole, and Carrick, Karan from Hospice Peterborough, Joanne from Life Labs, the staff from Central East LHIN, Dr. Mallory and his staff and everybody who was involved in providing Elsie with exceptional and loving care.” The women who cared for Elsie are named and honoured. Before and as Elsie “passed away peacefully,” she was supported by a medical community of care; such interventions do not preclude the “good death.” Community celebrations, even during COVID-19 restrictions, begin “at the family home” in Curve Lake; move the next day to “the Curve Lake Church”; followed on the third day by the funeral at the Church, interment at the Curve Lake Cemetery, and a reception (*PE* 27 Feb. 2020 A8). The “good death” in the Curve Lake community comes full circle, beginning with Elsie’s community that will mourn at the site of the “good death” which has been achieved with the support of many professional and caring communities.

Christian minister and scholar of theology, William B. Bradshaw, claims the change from the common usage of “died” to “passed away” began in the early 1970s and was standard language in funeral homes by the 1980s, then moved to print media (par. 4). Northcott and Wilson note that even printed programs for visitations and funerals often omit the words *dead*, *death*, and *died*, suggesting that “people are born, but do not die”; they “simply pass away” (85). Substituting the word *passing* for *dying* seems “more gentle, not so harsh,” says Bradshaw, noting that nowadays “people in general tend to prolong facing up to the hard facts of difficult situations as long as possible” (Bradshaw, par. 6). As a clergyman, Bradshaw points out Christian clergy never say, “Jesus passed away on the cross.” The New Testament teaches that to achieve eternal spiritual life, people must experience a physical death; Christ’s death and subsequent resurrection is the path to eternal life (par. 8). He notes that for practicing Christians, death should not be dreaded; dying frees one from suffering the trials of this life. Death must occur for a Christian to inherit a new form of existence with a new body (par. 10). Although not everyone in the sample identifies as Christian, many death announcements in the sample combine opening lines that explicitly suggest that at least culturally, the author, decedent, or both, hold a belief in a resurrection in the afterlife. According to Bradshaw, the term *passed away* does not imply the complete or final death required to achieve a Christian eternal life (Bradshaw, par. 11), which suggests the social construction of the “good death” and the metaphor take precedence over a strict adherence to, concern for, or even understanding of Christianity.

Many references to Christian precepts in my sample are ambiguous or contradictory, suggesting the author of the notice may not know or share the same spiritual views as the decedent. Hagar Shipley would say it is an ageist notion that older

adults are “religious,” meaning Christian in this reference. Hagar’s daughter-in-law, Doris, encourages Hagar to allow the minister Mr. Troy to call on her. Hagar claims flippantly that Doris is really thinking “that age increases natural piety, like a kind of insurance policy falling due” (Laurence 38). Death and religion, primarily Christianity, have a longstanding cultural and social history for the settler culture in Peterborough-Kawartha, dating back to early conflicts between Catholic and Protestant settlers with rural areas still dominated by residents of one of these Christian denominations today.<sup>96</sup> The author of Martha Smith’s death notice (see app., fig. 1) combines expectations of faith with mental acuity, noting that she “declared herself to be at peace on the day she passed from life and did not request the presence of clergy” (*PE* 2 Feb. 2021, A7), suggesting Martha did not need the support or intercession of clergy. However, the anonymous author, most likely present at her deathbed, seems to believe in a hereafter, or at least they think the reading public does. Martha’s memorial is sidelined again, this time to account for the absence of one deemed to hold authority in the business of death. In the end, by declaring Martha to be of sound mind, the writer ensures that Martha’s agency is honoured and officially written into the public record like a legal document to justify the absence of clergy.

Although rare in my sample, pastors are still an element in the “good death” for some women. The family of Corrine Laddiser (see app., fig. 64) declares she “passed unexpectedly and peacefully at the PHRC” (*PTW* 18 June 2020, 43) at an undisclosed

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<sup>96</sup> Past conflict based on religion is reflected in the historically protestant population located in the Cavan area with the formation of the Cavan Blazers. Trouble was directed against the largely Irish Catholic community historically living in Ennismore. Although many pioneer families still live in the area, new residents have moved into both areas in recent times and diluted the animosity based on religious tensions.

age, then the author fades into the background to situate Corrine within foregrounded feminine communities. The author of the death notice witnessed the bedside scene and respects the role of Pastor Samantha as a member of Corrine's "greatest love of all, [...] her church community of All Saints Anglican." Corrine's announcement specifically addresses her church community, and it is one of the rare examples to name a clergy person in its offer of "a special thank you to pastor Samantha Caravan for her generous time spend with Corrine over the past year and at her bedside reading hymns during her last moments." Corrine's pastor is a woman, while the pastor in Hagar's encounter is a man. What sets Corrine's involvement in communities apart from the involvement of some in notices is that she was "an active member" of these groups prior to her illness, and her participation was not intended to be associated with her disease or her impending death. Corrine was also "an active member of the Peterborough Hand Weavers and Spinners Guild," and the author notes that Corrine "enjoyed being immersed in the loving atmosphere of these creative women where her talents truly shone." The author's use of the stock phrase "she will be missed by so many" extends to specify "her congregation, friends, fellow weavers, and her many volunteer organizations" (PTW 18 June 2020, 43). This notice not only represents Corrine as an individual, but it also presents her as a long-standing integral member of several communities that supported the "good death."

It occurs to Daisy Goodwill Flett, barely "still alive inside her failing body" that "the moment of death occurs while we're still alive" (Shields 342). Perhaps this "transparently simple" observation explains the use of *passed* or *passed away* instead of *died* to represent the transition from life to death. Daisy posits that "life marches right up to the wall of that final darkness, one extreme state of being butting up against the other" (342). She describes the bifurcation of life and death, searching for the micro milli-

moment at which one passes from life to death, light to darkness, in which “not even a breath separates them. Not even a blink of an eye. A person can go on and on tuned in to the daily music of food and work and weather and speech” (342). Daisy suggests that every death in which dying is a process joining life and death rather than separating them is potentially a “good death.” Although the last years and stages of life are often omitted from death notices, Applewhite posits that “repelled by physical decline, anchored in our point in the life course, focused on loss, we tend to grossly underestimate the quality of life of the very old” (205). According to the family, Jo-Ellen Rossee (see app., fig. 65) did not “pass” at all, but “peacefully [...] slowly slipped away while listening to classical music at 91 years of age.” The “good death” is sustained in the notice, even in the second to last paragraph which states, “dementia robbed [Jo-Ellen] of her memory, but her loving kindness prevailed” (*PE* 14 Aug. 2020, A8). This detail is slipped in at the end like a footnote rather than the privileged headline. “Slipping away” into death overlaps with normative descriptions of slipping into living with dementia. According to the author of the announcement, Jo-Ellen has been “robbed” of her memory, but not the qualities that make her human, such as “loving kindness,” traditionally feminine traits. Since “Jo-Ellen” as an individual does not only reside in her “memory,” she continues to be “Jo-Ellen” even when her memory slowly slipped away. The family shares Daisy’s belief that life marches “right up to the last minute, so that not a single thing gets lost,” for the dying or the family, as they create the conditions for the “good death,” playing classical music, rather than manufacture one after the fact. The notice does not explicitly state the family was at Jo-Ellen’s side when she died in August 2020 (*PE* 14 Aug. 2020, A8), but reporting the detail at the start of the announcement makes it appear so. Including the

detail that she was still “tuned in” at the end humanizes Jo-Ellen and individualizes the women “living” with neurodiversity rather than focusing on what was “lost.”

### **Ways of Being in the Kawartha Wilderness and the “Good Death”**

Peterborough-Kawartha is intrinsically connected to landscape, especially settings associated with the Kawartha Lakes. Karen Wilson Baptist, Professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of Winnipeg, writes in “Diaspora: Death without a Landscape” that “regardless of the means by which we die, all human remains are returned, in some form, to landscape” (294). Landscape represents contrasts between indoors and outdoors, stasis and movement, shrinking spaces and infinite vistas, and urban and rural. Although landscape embodied in wilderness, water, rocks, and sky does not need to include humanmade structures, elements of the “good death” in Ontario are often embodied in the cottage through emotional and nostalgic associations with generations of family, primarily summers, and freedom. Julia Harrison, Trent Professor Emerita of anthropology and author of *A Timeless Place: The Ontario Cottage*, who examined attitudes towards the Ontario cottage based on years of interviews with cottagers in the Haliburton cottage area, posits that the “cottage aesthetic” is an intangible, yet powerful essence that emanates from a special or even sacred place. The “cottage aesthetic,” as seen by Harrison, is comparable to the “good death,” in that both are grounded in the simple, the mundane, the everyday lived dimensions of life, along with the larger, the awe-inspiring, and ultimately what are taken to be the sublime dimensions of the experience (40-41). In my sample, cottages are either personified and take on the role of a “survived by” grieving member of the family or grieved as well if the cottage has also “passed” or “slipped away” from the family’s ownership (37). Cottages

figure in the representation of the “good life” and “good death” as Harrison notes “the cottage body was undoubtedly understood to be an able body” (144), enjoying mindfulness, rejuvenation, good health. The cottage is not the place for the sick, dying, older or dead bodies. Cottages are a long way from urban noise and congestion, and they are also a greater distance from medical facilities (144). The representation of women in landscape and as cottagers intersects with representations of the “good death” and holds possibilities to explore women’s relationships with non-normative sites with the potential to enact alternative roles outside the primary home and daily routine of family life. How they fall short in representations reveals the genesis of regional biases and prejudices.

Patricia MacNamara (see app., fig. 66) “died peacefully on the evening of December 6, [2019] at almost ninety-years old, sitting beside Keith, her husband of 66 years, while watching the TV news” (*PE* 11 Dec. 2019, A8). Her family presents her death as a “best death,” even though “what was to be the celebration of her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday [...] on Saturday [was] changed into a celebration of her life” at “the retirement home in Peterborough” where she and her husband lived at the time of her death. The pivot from birthday party to Celebration of Life by the family shows their intention to centre the death notice and public commemorations on Patricia as subject. In contrast to the opening scene of the moment of death, the author of the death notice notes that prior to moving to the retirement home, Patricia and her husband “lived for 24 years on a farm with the airstrip where they landed their small plane.” The property was located “just a kilometer from Stoney Lake, Ontario where they had maintained the family cottage ‘Match Point’ for 45 years. Patricia loved that cottage, hosting the wildly popular Davis Island Cup tennis party every year. [...] They made many enduring friendships on Stoney Lake.” The author of Patricia’s notice is precise in situating both the farm and the cottage in the posh



Stoney Lake community. The cottage, personified and named “Match Point,” takes on the greater significance of the two holdings because the couple “maintained it” almost twice as long as the farm. The name illustrates and references Patricia’s association with tennis. She hosted “the wildly popular Davis Island Cup tennis party every year” at the cottage. The author of the notice attempts to individualize Patricia, positioning her in dual roles: as the traditional “host” and as the not so traditional “wild side” entertainer. Patricia’s association with the cottage as a party site contrasts with the initial image of Patricia in the death notice indoors, in front of the television, in a retirement home. It embodies the legacies shared by the family, the Stoney Lake community, and fellow cottagers in general. At her second home in the Kawarthas, Patricia was able to play out a non-traditional second role. The author of Patricia MacNamara’s death notice implies the cottage was also a source for “spiritual connectedness” through traditional Christian worship at “St. Peter’s on the Rock on Stoney Lake” (*PE* 11 Dec. 2019, A8). Harrison observes that the cottage links cottagers “to the past, [holds] them secure in the present, and ideally promise[s] much for the future,” which represents physical, emotional, and spiritual interconnectedness (40), even for former cottagers and members of the family who are deceased.

The role of colonial ownership, indigenous land claims, and the use of land and lakes still hunted and fished by neighbouring Indigenous peoples does not factor into the depictions of cottages in my sample.<sup>97</sup> The Stoney Lake cottage described in Patricia MacNamara’s death notice is a site of privilege with a wide social circle befitting a family who owns a farm with an air strip on which to land their own plane. Whether Patricia was

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<sup>97</sup> For an excellent depiction of the conflict between cottagers and local Indigenous people on Rice Lake see Drew Hayden Taylor’s stage play, *Cottagers and Indians*.

the pilot or the passenger is not stated, but the pride the author shows for other gender non-conforming accomplishments such as “winning the 100 yard dash” and being called “the fastest woman in [southern Ontario schools]” suggests that if she were the pilot it would be noted. According to the author of the death notice, Patricia was a home economics teacher “until she became a full-time mother,” then when her four daughters were “far enough along in school,” like many other women in the sample, she went to work outside the home. Patricia “started two businesses which both succeeded because of her leadership and boundless energy.” There are no details about her role as a successful businesswoman but a lengthy description of Patricia when she “accompanied” her husband on his volunteer projects for his jobs. The author notes Patricia’s individual roles on “his” projects as an “English as a Second Language” teacher in various countries where “she took art lessons, and it was discovered she was a talented artist.” The author views the spread of English as an example of “extend[ing] Canadian goodwill” on the international stage and one of Patricia’s personal accomplishments, while remaining unaware of the colonial implications and connotations. Similarly, when “it was discovered” Patricia was a talented artist, the reference is written in the language of exploitation with overtones of colonial “discovery” and capitalism. Patricia is a privileged outsider, and she is “othered” as a woman, reliant on an outside entity to discover her talent as a creative being. The author also notes Patricia “was one of that rare breed” because she “never made an enemy during her entire life” (*PE* 11 Dec. 2019, A8). Labelling Patricia a “rare breed,” a term normally used in reference to animals and reproductive properties, undercuts the intended compliment and dehumanizes Patricia. Harrison quotes from a cottager who reveals ““everyone likes you up here [at the cottage],”” noting that the cottage community “presume[s] a certain ideological and

cultural coherence [...] white values” (160), especially in the twentieth century. The author’s overdetermination to represent Patricia as likeable and “rare” makes her over into the epitome of every heteronormative Canadian with white privilege who remains ignorant of the effects of historical and current colonialism. Such representations stigmatize the subject through the racist, colonial, and capitalist lens of the author.

The ambiguity of women’s own legacy of ownership of the family cottage on the Kawartha Lakes is illustrated by the author of Marlena Forest’s death notice (see app., fig. 67). Marlena “passed away [...] at Fairhaven Long-term Care after a long struggle with Alzheimer’s Disease” at eighty years old (*PE* 2 May 2020, A9). According to the author of the notice, Marlena had two traditional careers, first as a city secondary school teacher, then as a nurse in Peterborough. She is written into the local community as a “resident of Peterborough since 1972 and a cottager on Stoney Lake since joining the Forest family in 1963.” Since Marlena is survived by her husband “of more than 56 years” (*PE* 2 May 2020, A9), he could be the author of her death notice, or at least he could have provided input. The Forest family’s claim to the property on Stoney Lake illustrates the importance of family lineage and ownership of cottage property in the Kawarthas. Marlena’s membership in the Stoney Lake community came via taking her husband’s surname when they married. If she had any claim to the cottage on Stoney Lake, her death notice sets the public record straight—it is the Forest property. Although death notices are not legal documents, in the same sentence Marlena is written into the community only by association to her husband and his family and written out of her claim to the cottage. The property will endure in the Forest family as ownership belongs to her surviving husband and his family. Death notices that explicitly situate the decedent within the ownership of a cottage context in my sample, including Patricia’s, are typically not

widows at the time of their deaths. Since most women in my sample are widows, sometimes twice over, this trend is significant. Harrison notes, “the place in cottage country to which cottagers felt they belonged was most often a very specific one” (66) and it extends beyond the sensuous qualities of the “cottage aesthetic” identified as a “masculine space” by Harrison (202-205) to one of notions of normative capitalism (240). The importance of owning a cottage in the Kawarthas for the authors of the notice, who may very well be the surviving husband, co-ops their deceased wife’s memorial to promote the good life, as they see it, in the Kawarthas as an element of the “good death.” Most death notices that include references to cottages intentionally situate the decedent within a specific Kawartha Lake community, individualizing the subject within the natural and constructed landscape.

The author of Bonnie Williamson’s death notice intentionally replaces the word *cottage* with the word *retreat*, overwriting the representation of a women in the wilderness and elements of the “good death” (see app., fig. 68). In June 2021, at the age of eighty-four, Bonnie “passed away peacefully at home with her loving husband and boys by her side” (*PTW* 17 June 2021, 57). Bonnie’s family of men focus her notice on two interconnected passions, school teaching and Scouting (notably not Girl Guides), stating that Bonnie “was always excited and prepared for camping excursions with family and friends and quality time spent at Timberlanes, the family wilderness retreat.” What distinguishes Bonnie’s cottage experience from others is that it is not framed as a social class marker; however, the word *retreat* is arbitrary and may have been chosen to resist the growing stereotype of elite cottagers on the Kawartha Lakes. Regardless, the author classifies it as a *wilderness retreat* which integrates and individualizes Bonnie physically and mentally within the landscape, consistent with serving with “Scouts Canadian

Peterborough/Kawartha Waterways for 65 years” and with her “spark for adventure” and “spontaneity for travel [...] around the globe and across Canada [...] with her family many times.” In addition, Bonnie was inducted into the Peterborough Pathway of Fame for “community betterment” (*PTW* 17 June 2021, 57), partly for sharing her love of the Kawarthas through Scouting which supports all socio-economic classes. Timberlanes “retreat” remains private. The location is not identified by naming the lake or the social events exclusive to the lake community. Telling less about Bonnie’s time spent at Timberlanes individualizes her and honours the retreat experience, and intentionally distances her from the normative notions of cottagers in the Kawarthas.

The difference in the representations of Bonnie’s “Timberlanes,” and Patricia’s “Match Point” is found in the names themselves and in their locations in cottage country.<sup>98</sup> Harrison notes that cottage names reflect the “emotional, sentimental, and nostalgic attachment that people invested in such places” (110). Bonnie’s “Timberlanes” and Patricia’s “Match Point” both represent ownership of second homes and the potential for acting out alternative roles. *Timberlanes* is ambiguous. It implies co-existing with nature; however, *timber* refers to human destruction of forests to obtain commercial “wood used for building houses and ships” (*OED*) and points to Peterborough’s historical roots as a timber town.<sup>99</sup> A *lane* is “a narrow street or passage” (*OED*), in effect formed by trees being cut down to create entry into the private property retreat. The two words are combined to suggest human contact with the natural environment, joining images of

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<sup>98</sup> According to the *OED* *cottage country* is a Canadian term referring to “a rural area with holiday homes.”

<sup>99</sup> In 1941, Frederick Edwards, wrote in *Maclean’s* that Peterborough was “once a lumber camp, then a market town and now a mecca of big-time industry, [...] a bustling city set in a natural playground that teems with fish and game and tourists” (19).

masculine timber to feminine forms. *Match Point* is a term used in tennis. It is “a point [that], if won, will win the match” (*OED*). Referencing a competitive sport associated with the upper class reinforces the colonial overtones of wealth and elitism, for an overall masculine association. Possibly two different areas of the Kawarthas and lifestyles are represented: Patricia on Stoney Lake and Bonnie in an undisclosed location. The “cottage” and “retreat” experiences, just like the multiple variations of the “good death,” can individualize women’s roles outside the primary home and reinforce Harrison’s observations that there are different ways of being at the cottage, not all of which are necessarily compatible or considered legitimate by neighbouring cottagers (47), just as some versions of the “good death” may not be considered moral options by some.

### **Journeying to the “Good Death”**

Harrison’s description of the journey to the cottage in a small, enclosed space packed with one’s essentials (142-147) parallels the journey towards death. Arriving at the cottage, typically smaller than the primary home, one finds a vast landscape “imagined to be free” (7) just as dying has been described as freedom from sufferings and confinements of the journey. The metaphor of the journey optimistically reflects eternal life and heavenly reunions. For the family of Daniella Dunford (see app., fig. 69), who died at the age of ninety-six, “it is with great sadness but the comfort of fond memories that [they...] announce her death” (*PE* 16 July 2020, A8). The typical elements of the “good death” are not apparent at the start, but neither are images of a painful death. Later in the announcement, the metaphor of the journey to a better place takes over and builds into an extended metaphor: “Daniella is now with her best friend and husband Jack for another trip together. She will also join other dear departed friends for some wine, laughs

and bridge. What fun they must be having!” (*PE* 16 July 2020, A8). The journey is complete and the ways of “being” in Harrison’s terms with family and friends are what the author imagines for the decedent in an afterlife reminiscent of the Harrison’s “cottage aesthetic.”<sup>100</sup> The decedents are reunited in the afterlife without barriers between the living and the dead, like an “after party” following the event of death. The dead are reunited with their social and family group in the same roles they played on earth. The dead look down on the living, but the living can only imagine the scene. The contrast between the material world and the ephemeral afterlife implies the deceased was isolated in life but through death has been written back into a social community in the image of their age-inaccurate photo with other younger iterations of the “predeceased group.”

When Hager is admitted to the hospital at the end of *The Stone Angel* and she sees “what’s going to happen can’t be delayed indefinitely” (Laurence 254), she immediately responds to the hospital ward, thinking “Lord, how the world has shrunk” (254). The final chapter of Hagar’s journey begins in her semi-private room with two beds and Hagar thinking, “the world is even smaller now. It’s shrinking so quickly.” At the same time the geography of Hagar’s material body is expanding, bloating under the sheet, her “belly like a hill of gelatine under the covers” (255). The next room will be the smallest of all, she continues thinking, adding aloud, “the smallest of the lot” (282) and later notes, it will be “just enough space for me” (282),<sup>101</sup> referencing her grave plot or coffin. Daisy’s daughter, Alice, uses the same word, “shrinkage” when she “happened to look into the

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<sup>100</sup> For some women the journey is represented as an eternity of more hosting. The author of Clara Fremlin’s death notice (see app., fig. 50) explored earlier in this chapter, views Clara’s role in heaven to be one of “organizing High in the Sky parties.”

<sup>101</sup> Perhaps this is an allusion to Tolstoy’s famous short story, “How Much Land Does a Man Need?” (1886). In answer to the question in the title, enough land for a burial plot.

drawer of her mother's bedside table at Canary Palms," where Daisy is reduced to a few personal items "jumbled there [...] by the modest dimensions of a little steel drawer" (Shields 323) like a metal table in a morgue. The shrinkage represents what is left of Daisy's journey from "that three-story house in Ottawa [that] has been emptied out, and [...] the commodious Florida condo. How is it possible, so much shrinkage?" (323). Both fictional women's final expressions of the journey from larger to smaller homes parallel the shrinkage or packing up of their world for the journey, reduced to the hospital bed in which each woman dies. In the novels the women die in institutions, in tiny rooms, in single beds surrounded by a few intimate possessions. "Shrinkage" also describes the contrast between what Patricia MacNamara experienced when she lived on the farm and at "Match Point" and how she lived in the retirement residence in which she died. The contrast between these fictional and real indoor living spaces and the sublimity of the infinite Kawartha countryside reinforces and perpetuates representations of cottage life and natural beauty to stand in for missing elements of the "good death."

The sublime and the mundane are both celebrated in the "cottage aesthetic" and in the "good death." Traditional cottagers favour the repetition of the ordinariness in the "everyday." Such "everydayness" is captured in the simplicity, honesty, and authenticity at the cottage (Harrison 7). Similar expressions of the ordinary are celebrated in death notices. Representations of woman content in their "ordinariness" are intended to celebrate women who embrace traditional roles of servitude. The authors of such death notices, some of which have already been explored, hold these women up as model women.<sup>102</sup> Sheila Hermiston (see app., fig. 70) who "passed away in her 99<sup>th</sup> year from

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<sup>102</sup> See Grace Jonson in Chapter 1, pp. 43-45 (app. fig. 13).



cancer” in April 2020 is described as living an “exemplary life of productive routine and simple pleasure” (*PE* 2 May 2020, A9). She did not shape world events, but she was “greatly shaped by world events” such as the Great Depression and World War II, in which she served in the navy. The family assumes her lack of complaining is confirmation of contentment, holding up her lack of resistance as “exemplary” feminine behaviour followed by examples of her “loyalty, duty and service to others.” Sheila’s crisp naval uniform signifies public service, challenging the author’s authority to declare “she *always* found contentment in daily life with never a complaint” (italics added). Similarly in fiction, the head nurse calls Daisy “a fighter, but not a complainer” and adds “thank God” (322). Expressing her unspoken feelings and opinions would revoke Daisy’s status as “a sweetheart, a pet” and “a real lady”; thus, the compliant “Mrs. Flett forgets about the existence of Daisy Goodwill from moment to moment, even from day to day” (322). Like Sheila Hermiston, “Daisy Goodwill [... is] kept so busy during her hospital stay being [...] a real lady, a non-complainer [...] stoic on the telephone with her children,” (322) that “she’s a wonder” according to Alice and “a real inspiration” (323).

Undoubtedly, the cottage was a rewarding experience for men and children (Harrison 219), but according to Harrison, the cottage was only “inadvertently a place where [women] themselves grew and developed” (218). Harrison notes women still did “most of the packing, grocery shopping, cooking, and cleaning the cottage,” but under “less convenient and more stressful conditions” (219). Her research supports feminist notions that cottages were “just another form of domestic labour... another fridge to fill ... another toilet to clean,” at least for those who had flush toilets (220); whereas for men, their labour was considered a healthy change from regular jobs in the city (223). Notably absent though is the overdetermination of domesticity that was glorified in the

primary residence. Women's "work" in the cottage setting is intrinsically linked with their desire to host social events, as if such activity is considered more leisure than work, where the word *host* is code for domestic chores at the cottage, even in the case of Patricia MacNamara. Like Daisy's children, the family of Sheila Hermiston concludes by declaring that Sheila's "family and life in the Kawarthas were her world," citing examples of "*hosting* her children's wedding receptions at home [...] and spearheading a family reunion" (italics added). Sheila had a good life according to the author of her death notice; at least her family that benefited from her service claim she was content while they profited from her free labour and compliant behaviour. Even the first line of her death notice is given over to another as it begins: "predeceased by her husband Herbert" (PE 2 May 2020, A9). Sheila's name follows his in her own death notice. Celebrating women for their acceptance of the ordinary represents the invisible repetitive domestic labour done by women. Both Sheila and Daisy Goodwill Flett make themselves over for the family who puts on the final touches after the women are dead. No other women can match these exemplary inspirations because they are false. The family of Adalyne Green who died at the age of ninety-six in April 2020 (see app., fig. 71) praises the fact that Adalyne "never wanted to be a burden to those around her and genuinely cared for the welfare of others" (PE 4 Apr. 2020, A7). The Lakefield native "enjoyed spending time with her family and being on the Trent River near Healey Falls where she was raised" (PE 4 Apr. 2020, A7). Adalyne's death is called a "peaceful passing" at the Peterborough Regional Health Centre, which suggests she had a "good death" or at least good enough to convince her two sons, one in British Columbia and the other in Connecticut, that she did not want to be a burden to them.

Sylvia<sup>103</sup> Gjos died at the end of April 2021 (see app., fig. 72). In her lengthy death notice, Sylvia's family, possibly her husband, says, "Sylvia was a talented artist and painter and she loved the natural world" (*PE* 1 May 2021, A12). The author of the notice individualizes and elevates Sylvia's connection to nature from situating her in nature to making her embody nature. He points out that "her name means "of the woods" and she always knew where to find pussy willows in the spring and bittersweet in the fall." Sylvia is represented in the transitional seasons of birth and death. Simon Schama, in *The New Yorker* article "A Patch of Earth," posits human beings "seem wired to grieve with greenery. Allowing the dead to dissolve into the earth, to become part of the cycle of the seasons, has, for millennia, held the promise of cheating mortality" (Schama, par. 2). Similarly, Baptist notes, that the "earth, water, the sky receive the remains of [the] dead, be it flesh and bone, ashes, or memories. In some instances, the places of the dead become sacred ground" (295). Metaphorically, Sylvia is represented as one with nature, who "instilled in her offspring a deep love of birds and wildflowers and taught them to see the miraculous in ordinary things" (*PE* 1 May 2021, A12). Unlike other decedents, Sylvia is not ordinary, she is made over to represent Mother Nature, the mother of "offspring" like the birds she admires, and simultaneously the embodiment of the Kawartha wilderness.

The arbitrariness of ordinary things, of ordinary women, of ordinary words like "peacefully" comes from the juxtaposition of Daisy Goodwill Flett's final death notice and her final thoughts. Daisy's death notice begins with the adverb, *peacefully* (Shields

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<sup>103</sup> "Sylvia" is the real first name of the decedent. It is used in this case because "Sylvia" the author of the death notice draws attention to the individual meaning and symbolism of the name.

343). *Passed* or *passed away* is replaced with the title of the final chapter, “Death,” and by the combination of prepositional and adverbial phrases, “after a long illness patiently borne” (343). Shields shows the reader how ordinary it is for everyday women to be made over after death. In a direct quotation on the last page of the novel, Shields leaves the reader with “Daisy Goodwill’s final (unspoken) declaration, “I am not at peace”” (361). The omniscient narrator has allowed Daisy to remain the author of her own story (Gawande 140) even after death (Whitehouse 32). Daisy’s last thought is the opposite of the first word of her death notice, “peacefully.” Only an omniscient narrator could possibly expose the final thoughts of the decedent, which highlights the makeover after the “good death,” thereby revealing that representations of older women published as fact in the newspaper may indeed be fiction.

## **Conclusion:**

### **Essence of a Woman's Life**

The author of the death notice for Geraldine Grisdale, who “passed away in Peterborough” in March 2021 at the age of eighty-two years old (see app., fig. 73a), draws the reader in by posing a rhetorical question: “How do you capture the essence of a person within the words of a paragraph” (*PTW* 1 Apr. 2021, 49). An attempt to “capture” and represent Geraldine’s essence—her “most important indispensable quality” (*OED*)—implies that each person embodies a “constituent element” (*OED*) that makes them an individual with a “specific difference” (*OED*) worthy of public memorialization. The author of Geraldine’s death notice deviates from the standard formula at the start to blame their inability to individualize Geraldine on the rigidity of the genre and inadequate language. Ultimately the author goes on to convey, through a narrative style which includes the traditional elements of the death notice, the “essence” of Geraldine through individualizing traits with multiple identities. The author states that Geraldine was an entertaining “story teller.” She was “a strong, independent woman that loved exploring new places and experiencing new things.” Geraldine was a “loving” wife, mother, grandmother, step-grandmother, and great grandmother and she also had a “deep love of animals.” Close readings of print death notices through anti-ageist and feminist lenses show the deindividualization of older women in Peterborough-Kawartha is the product not only of the limitations of language and format, but of a community that panders to public interests and traditional ageist tropes of femininity to create worthy public subjects.

Systemic and internalized ageism contributes to ageist representations of older women in relation to others: husbands, often deceased for decades with public careers, and the younger “survived by” group, which often accounts for the largest word count of the notice, privileging traditional heteronormative couplings and their offspring. Altering traditional elements of the form and tropes, however minimal, prove it is possible to resist the overdetermined clichés and allow women to be repositioned from passivity under male authority and in relation to domestic roles into fully realized human beings.

Authentic representations of older women have been included and explored in my thesis, even if too often, the unintended ambiguities found in contemporary death notices that appear to resist the genre and stereotypes still deindividualize the subject by unconsciously repeating sexist and ageist prejudices and language. Unconventionally, the author of Martha Smith’s death notice (see app., fig. 1) catalogues three generations of descendants by first names only, without partners, or the usual stock adjectives (*PE* 2 Feb. 2021, A7). The author resists the rigid convention yet inserts the family’s interest in a predestined fertility chain in which each generation produces “one of each” in a lineage of masculine/feminine pairs that panders to the twenty-first century’s fascination with coincidence and gender reveals. The author often forefronts the family’s interests over the subject’s narrative. Similarly, ageist narratives in death notices often catalogue and celebrate non-normative physiological capabilities, over which the subject has little or no control, as the women’s individual accomplishments, celebrating them as the most important element of the “good death.”

Most of the loss of individualized identity, particularly for mothers, resides in the overdetermination of extoling goodness, highlighting contentment with the mundane, and valuing servitude to family. My arguments are illustrated by fictional protagonists, Hagar

ShIPLEY Currie and Daisy Goodwill Flett, compliant in their own makeovers as older women dying in hospital, powerless against the perpetual attempts to make them over into women who feign impossible notions of niceness. In fiction the truth is revealed through conversations, internal monologues, and omniscient narrators. Readers of death notices, which are authored by non-omniscient mourners, must account for the author's individual style and grief, while keeping in mind that the decedents and authors are products of the same ageist community that sanctions age-denial and age-inaccuracy as a means of distancing the decedent and themselves from associations with olders and death, the same community that perpetuates the exploitation of the next generation of women, some of whom are the authors of the death notices. Ingrained ageism and gender biases do not necessarily reflect the decedent's beliefs or the social and political awareness of all the family members. Even within the privileged community of those who can afford to publish death notices in print, some representations may not reflect the broader community's values.

Death notice photos have the potential to reject the double standard that affects the representation of older women, rendering them invisible or hyper visible, with images that privilege youth and sexual attractiveness. Few death notices include the oldest older years. Acceptable expressions of old age and decline are presented as healthy older adults, while age-inaccuracy and age-denial in photos complement "supergeezer" scripts as the preferred narrative. Geraldine is situated, in her death notice photo, in healthy older age with a pageboy cut and dyed red hair (see fig. 1 below; app., fig. 73b). The two tabby kittens, sitting on her knees are sheltered under the side-flaps of her open rust-coloured coat. Her head tilts to the right counterbalanced by one kitten's head leaning to the left and the other reaching forward. The composition is reminiscent of images of the

*Madonna della Misericordia* (“Madonna of Mercy”) popular in Italian Christian art in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, particularly Duccio’s *Madonna of the Franciscans*, ca. 1300 (see fig. 2 below; app., fig. 74). The photo mirrors the iconic younger Mary, here seated, sheltering small-scale adults and children under the folds of her open cloak while holding her active infant son.<sup>104</sup> Geraldine’s open jacket and the open purse in the background suggest charity as an extension of the devotional icon for the Franciscan Order. Although



Fig. 1: Geraldine Grisdale  
(Enlarged dead notice photo)  
Source: *Kawartha Region News* On-line



Fig. 2: *The Madonna of the Franciscans*  
Duccio de Buoninsegna, ca. 1300  
Source: wikimedia.org

the photo may have been selected inadvertently or unconsciously, and the intertext is dependent upon the reader’s association with paintings and sculpture depicting the *Misericordia*, the author’s representation of Geraldine as one who is nurturing, charitable, and protective can be conveyed on its own. The representation of Geraldine as one who

<sup>104</sup> The most famous example of a *Madonna della Misericordia* by Piero della Francesca, polyptych of the *Misericordia*, 1445-1462, (see app. fig. 75).



held interest in the family's "individual journeys" in her "warm, loving heart" is consistent with depictions of other women in my sample and across centuries. Similarly, warm earth tones in the photo and the devotional painting invite the viewer to enter into the narrative and to be inspired to perform acts of charity, possibly to donate in Geraldine's name to the "Heart and Stroke or Alzheimer Society." The composition and details in the modern photo serve the dual function for a mother who is not only nurturing and "incredibly proud of her family," but who also "spent her life travelling." Here Geraldine is also in the process of coming or going, in life or death. Although she "loved nothing more than to watch the miles of the road go by through the window of a bus, train or motor vehicle," Geraldine is not content to watch the world go by, as some death notices claim, as a justification of a state of stasis in the subject.<sup>105</sup> The photo also resists stereotypes of the "old lady with cats," too old to manage rambunctious kittens. Close readings of death notice photos are essential as ambiguities and contradictions also support alternative narratives outside childbearing, cooking, and caring for the family and home often left out of the author's narrative.

Print death notices provide a rich source for further research beyond my sample of twenty-four months, between October 2019 and October 2021, which spans almost two years of the novel coronavirus pandemic. Two decades ago, Laurie McNeill noted that changes in the genre are inevitable, even if they take place at "glacial speed," as "each new iteration [...] introduces some small degree of variation," but change would "occur across time, as definitions of a 'worthy' Canadian life evolve to reflect society's beliefs and practices" ("Generic Subjects" 165). Today, as a result of COVID-19, death notices

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<sup>105</sup> Refer to the discussion of Judith Reynolds's death notice in Chapter 1, p. 33 (app., fig. 7); Sheila Hermiston's death notice in Chapter 3, pp. 143-145 (app., fig. 70).

have increased in number, length, and deviations, as the only form of public recognition for the deceased available to many families. Changes being made to the rigid formula do not mean sexist and ageist representations of older women will disappear or that death notices in Peterborough will represent a more diverse population beyond the primarily Euro-settler middleclass women represented in my sample. These recent changes in language and form, however, do draw increased public attention to the genre of the death notice and afford increased possibilities to focus on the “essence” of the subject.

Martha Smith, Geraldine Grisdale, and the other “ordinary” women discussed in my sample spent a long time as older women, living as the heroes of their own stories shared in intimate circles. Yet their oldest years remain out of public sight, and other stages receive makeovers. The variety of ways in which Martha Smith is unintentionally written out of her own life story, along with the abundance of ambiguous references in her notice, is representative of all the women whose notices were chosen to be critiqued in my thesis; each announcement includes some form of an aberration that holds promise for individualization of the decedent, even though narratives are told through the perspective of the author of the notice. I have been hard on the amateur authors of death notices in my thesis because an exploration of the representations of some of the oldest older women is essential in the broader context, both locally and possibly nationally, based on Peterborough’s averageness, aging population, and patriarchal structures representing Canada’s colonial past. At the very least the deindividualization of older women is significant because nowhere else other than on the pages of the obituary sections of local newspapers are older women’s faces and stories more accessible to the community. The only way to re-individualize Martha Smith and make her story whole is to forefront her as the hero of her own death notice and expose the absence of “essence”

that exists between 1917 and 2021. The individualization of older women's lived experiences will never be worthy of public representation until society's beliefs and practices evolve to see that older woman, including the oldest older women, are worthy of public memorialization without a final makeover.

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## Appendix

Born: [REDACTED] July 1917, [REDACTED]  
 Died: [REDACTED] January 2021, [REDACTED]



They travelled the world extensively, but her most fondly remembered adventure was the two years they spent touring North America in a motorhome.

She wrote and self published her memoirs, aptly entitled "What A Life" when she was 90. She gave up driving at 92, and lived independently until she was a month short of 102. She was completely mentally competent until the very last day, and never stopped learning. She declared herself to be at peace on the day she passed from life and did not request the presence of clergy.

Her remains have been cremated and will be interred with husband [REDACTED] in the [REDACTED] family plot at Ayr, Ontario. She was a force of nature and will be missed.

[REDACTED] survived the influenza pandemic of 1918 as an infant, and lived life well for the next full century and a little bit more before succumbing to the Covid virus in 2021. She married her beloved husband [REDACTED] in 1938 mere months after their first meeting, and was in love with him until his passing in 1991, and beyond.

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had two children, Sharon and David, two grandchildren, Matthew and Laurena, and two great grandchildren, Max and Bella.

[REDACTED]

Introduction

Figure 1: "Martha Smith"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 2 Feb. 2021, A7



## Introduction

Figure 2a: “Claudia Barron” (First Version)

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 8 July 2021, A10

It is with great sadness that we announce the recent passing of [REDACTED] Campbell Memorial Hospital. Karla was born Denmark January [REDACTED] 1922 and we were planning ahead for our 25th wedding anniversary along with her 100th birthday. [REDACTED] will be so missed by her husband [REDACTED] her many friends, she had a positive effect on all who knew her. An artist of talent and a lover of poetry in which he she took such enjoyment. [REDACTED] enjoyed playing bridge both socially and for many years duplicate bridge which took us around USA and Canada in our motor home. Sorely missed by step-daughter [REDACTED] and her step-grandson [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was previously married and lived 50 happy years with her dear husband [REDACTED] she will be much missed by her own children [REDACTED] also their spouses and grandchildren. Service arrangements will be private.

Introduction

Figure 2b: “Claudia Barron” (Second Version)

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 9 July 2021, B2



██████████, 1921 Glasgow, Scotland -  
 ██████████, 2021 Peterborough, Ontario



Calgary. ██████████ was a devoted mom and grandma; her family meant the world to her. Nothing made her happier than spending time with them. She was loving, gentle, kind, and she was strong. She survived the isolation from her family for 10 months during Covid-19; those were tough times, and her survival demonstrated the strength of will she had, and the belief she had, that she would see us again.

██████████ a veteran of WWII passed away peacefully with her daughter by her side. ██████████ was predeceased by her husband ██████████ (██████████ 2015) and grandson ██████████ (August ██████████ 2021). She leaves behind her children ██████████ (John) and ██████████ (Thom). Also left to mourn are, her granddaughter ██████████ and her great-grandchildren ██████████ and ██████████ and their mother ██████████.

██████████ was a war bride who left Scotland with her young son in June 1946 to join her husband in Calgary. It was a long journey on the Queen Mary from Southampton, England to Halifax, Nova Scotia and then by train to

Fairhaven family, as COVID restrictions were still in place. Thank you, Fairhaven family. Our special thanks to Dr. Shannon, Dr. Spink, and the kind and caring staff of Fairhaven. She loved her home at Fairhaven, and you helped to make her final years happy and comfortable ones. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her and cared for her. "██████████" is now reunited with her beloved husband ██████████, and her cherished grandson, ██████████. We love you and will miss you forever mom. Due to COVID concerns there will not be a service at this time.

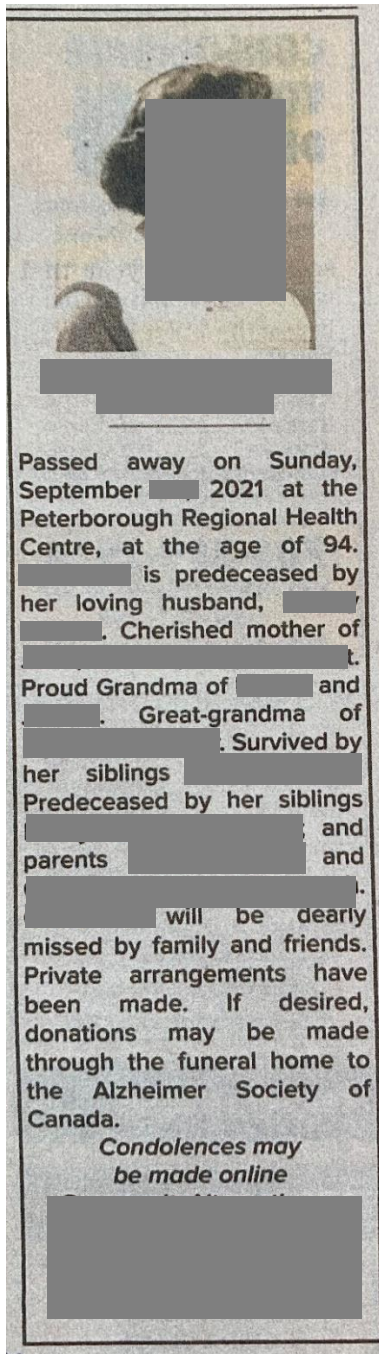


Introduction

Figure 3: "Bernadette Abraham"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 2 Sept. 2021, A8

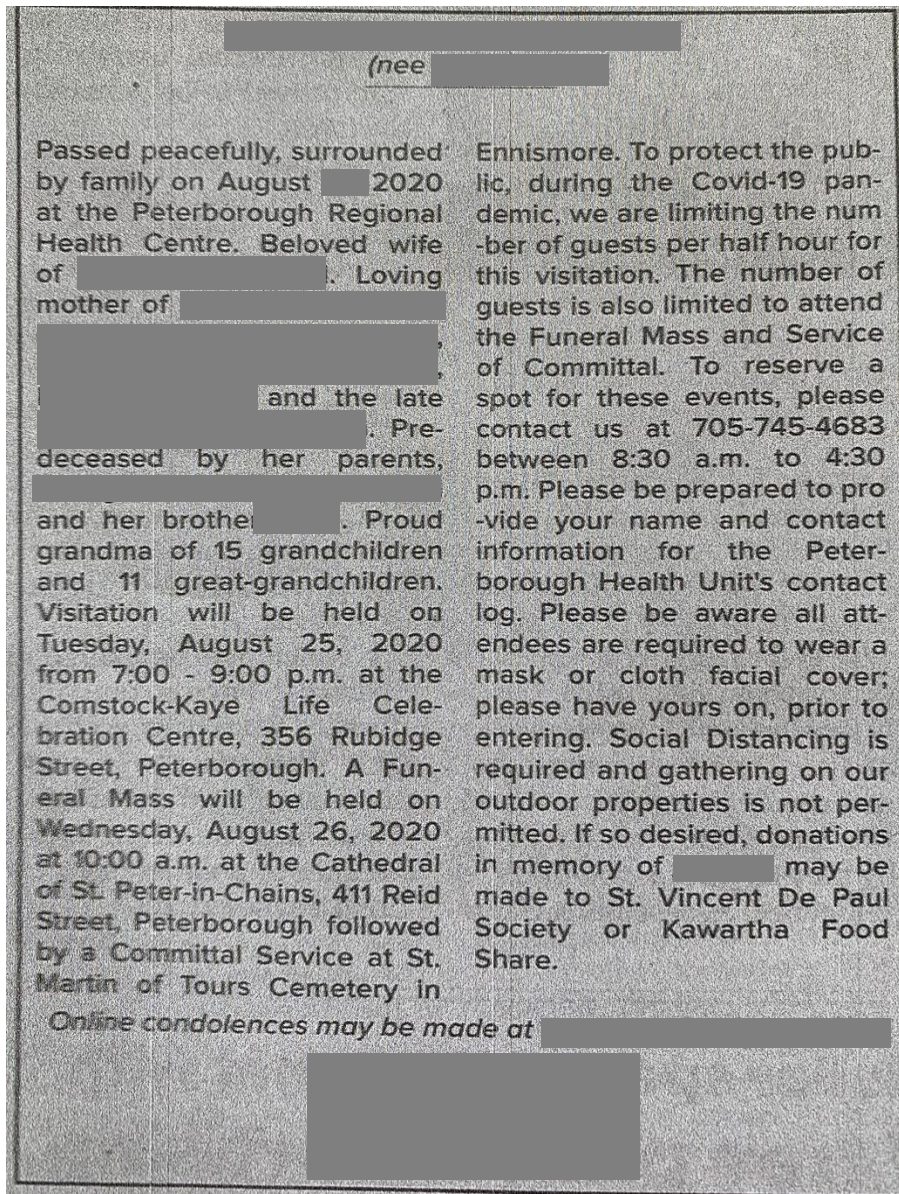




Chapter 1

Figure 4: “Colleen Hiltz”

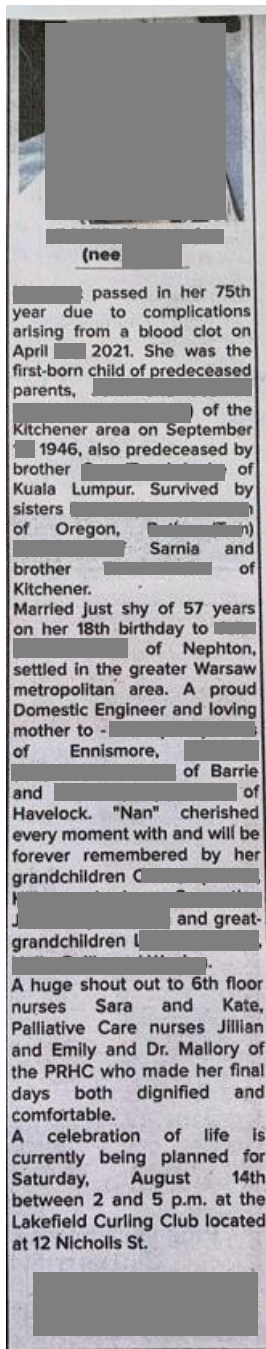
Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 18 Sept. 2021, A11



Chapter 1

Figure 5: "Arlene Murray"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 24 Aug. 2020, A8




## Chapter 1

Figure 6a: "Lynda-Anne Donald"

Source: *Peterborough This Week*, 15, April 2021, 58





**September [redacted] 1946**  
**- April [redacted] 2021**

A Celebration of Life will be held in Warsaw at the Town Hall located at 894 South Street between 1 and 4 p.m. on Saturday, August 14th. All friends and family are welcome.

(nee )



Forever remembered by her Stoney Lake community, the legendary entered into immortality on the evening of July 2020, too soon for her feisty age of 89 years. A native of Hamilton, Ontario, enjoyed being a Bell Telephone switchboard operator for the first 20 years of her working life. One sunny day, on a trip to the Kawartha's, discovered that the Log Cabin Snack Bar was for sale and the rest is history. was an icon. Proprietor of the Log Cabin Store & Snack Bar, often referred to as Mrs.'s store for half a century, was integral; a cornerstone of her community. Always a kind word, with a great sense of humour, was a dedicated, hard-working lady, with devoted commitment to her store. A heart of gold, she

always had your back, willing to lend a hand, run customer tabs when needed and offered cash to those in need. was such a nice lady to area kids, becoming a staple of their childhood. Many grew with her and continued to stop at the Log Cabin well into middle-age. Mrs. was always there. She was the nucleus of their summers. Some couldn't imagine a world without an ice cream run to Mrs.'s. For many, every road trip, snowmobile trip, or weekend at the cottage always started out at the Log Cabin. Stony Lake will never be the same without, she will be sorely missed by her community. She was one in a million. Of her life, commented: "This is my life and I sit and watch the world go by." will be missed by her nephew, and his Florida family. Predeceased by her husband in 2004, mother and sisters: A celebration of life will be held outdoors on the lawn of the Log Cabin Snack Bar in late August. Details to be announced at a later date. Donations in memory of may be made to the Lakefield Animal Welfare Society.

*Online condolences can be expressed at*

[Redacted]

*'The Owl of Minerva Flies at Dusk' Hegel*

[Redacted]


Chapter 1

Figure 7: "Judith Reynolds"

Source: *Peterborough This Week*, 30 July 2020, 49



(nee [redacted])



She is the beloved aunt to many nieces and nephews and dear friend of [redacted]

[redacted] began her teaching career in a one room schoolhouse (Aultsville) and then, after returning from the University of Toronto, she taught at Nepean High School (Ottawa), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Sydenham High School (Sydenham) and South Grenville District High School (Prescott). She taught English and Physical Education and was a respected coach of Badminton, Basketball, Volleyball and Cheerleading. [redacted] was an amazingly kind, optimistic and patient lady of faith and is confident to be welcomed home by her Lord and Saviour where she is joined by her husband and her family in heaven.

Passed away peacefully, surrounded by the love of family, on January [redacted] 2020 at St. Lawrence Lodge Brockville at the age of 97. She was predeceased by her husband of over 62 years, [redacted] (2011). She was a cherished and admired mother of Dr. [redacted] and her husband Dr. [redacted] of [redacted] and [redacted] and her husband [redacted] of [redacted]. Nanny will be missed by her grandchildren [redacted] (of [redacted]), Dr. [redacted] of [redacted] Dr. [redacted] (Dr. [redacted]) of [redacted], [redacted], Dr. [redacted] of [redacted], and [redacted] of [redacted]. She was the much-loved Great-Nanny of [redacted] and [redacted]. [redacted] was the youngest child of [redacted] (1953) [redacted] (1946) of Cornwall. She was the last surviving member of her nine siblings.

Family and friends are invited to pay their respects at the Irvine Funeral Home, 4 James St. E., Brockville on Monday, January 6, 2020 from 5-8 p.m. A service in honour and celebration of [redacted]'s life will be held at the Parish of St. Lawrence Anglican Church, 80 Pine St., Brockville on Tuesday, January 7, 2020 at 1 p.m. Interment will take place at the Blue Church Cemetery in the Spring. As expressions of sympathy, donations to the Brockville and District Association for Community Involvement, Special Olympics Canada or St. Lawrence Anglican Church will be gratefully acknowledged by the family.

**Condolences and donations may be placed online at**  
[redacted]


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Chapter 1

Figure 8: “Ruby Astrom”

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 4 Jan. 2020, A8

[REDACTED] "[REDACTED]"  
(nee [REDACTED])



[REDACTED], [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Sadly missed by her 18 great-grandchildren and 1 great great grandchild. She will be sadly missed by her friends F [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Due to Covid-19 restrictions there will be a private graveside service held, and a Public Celebration of Life will be held at a later date at [REDACTED] CE [REDACTED] Peterborough. In memory of [REDACTED] donations to the Five Counties Children Centre, the Peterborough Humane Society or the charity of your choice would be appreciated by the family.

Passed away peacefully at Fairhaven Long-Term Care Facility on Thursday, September [REDACTED] 2021, 5 days before her 107th birthday. She was born in Glasgow Scotland on September [REDACTED] 1914 and immigrated to Canada in June of 1953 with her husband and 2 sons. [REDACTED] was the beloved wife of the late [REDACTED] (1996). Loving mother of [REDACTED] his wife [REDACTED] and the late [REDACTED] and his wife [REDACTED] (surviving). Cherished grandmother of [REDACTED]

*Online condolences may be made at*  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Chapter 1

Figure 9: "Kay Cameron"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 13 Sept. 2021, A8



## Chapter 1

Figure 10: “Bertha ‘Bertie’ Kary”

Source: *Peterborough This Week*, 5 Aug. 2021, 51



[REDACTED] ([REDACTED])  
 April [REDACTED] 1944 (Riesa, Germany) -  
 July [REDACTED] 2021 (Peterborough, Ontario)



[REDACTED] has watered the last plant and if there is an Eden she will be gardening again with [REDACTED]. She shared her love of gardening with her much adored, loved and missed husband [REDACTED], who sadly left her much too soon, in July 2016. [REDACTED] grew up in Cologne, Germany and came to Canada in 1967. With determination she adapted and loved Canada as her new home. She was a press and wedding photographer and photography teacher in North Bay. Unable to pick up the trade again after her move to Peterborough in 1986, she opened a flower store and worked in garden centres. The love of gardening brought her to Apsley where she and [REDACTED] lived 20 happy years, rebuilding a home and creating a park like garden. [REDACTED] grew the vegetables, [REDACTED] the flowers. In the winter she kept her hands busy knitting and crocheting. She was an avid reader and loved classical music and opera. Her children [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] were her pride and joy. She shared her love with [REDACTED] children [REDACTED] and the late [REDACTED] (2004). The grandchildren were loved and much photographed, [REDACTED] the late [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was the daughter of E [REDACTED] and the late [REDACTED] (1977) [REDACTED]. Her younger sister [REDACTED] predeceased her in 1999. A celebration of [REDACTED]'s life will be held at Ashburnham Funeral Home & Reception Centre on Saturday, August 14 at 11 am, with visiting one hour prior (10-11 a.m.) and a reception to follow in the Legacy Room. Reservations are required so please register at [REDACTED]. As expressions of sympathy, donation to the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre would be appreciated.

Online condolences may be left at [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]


## Chapter 1

Figure 11: "Monika Dreher"

Source: *Peterborough This Week*, 5 Aug. 2021, 52



(née [REDACTED])  
September 2021



Our beloved Mother passed away at Peterborough Regional Health Centre Palliative Care unit on September [REDACTED] after a lengthy decline, at the age of 92. Predeceased by her husband of 67 years, [REDACTED]. Loving Mother to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Cherished Grandma to [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) and [REDACTED], and beloved Nannah to [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]), [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]), and [REDACTED]. Adoring great-grandmother to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Predeceased by her brother [REDACTED] and sister [REDACTED], both of Kelowna.

[REDACTED] grew up on a fruit ranch in the Okanagan Valley, British Columbia, and always considered Oyama, B.C. her home. She was a teacher in various B.C. schools until she came east to marry Al in 1950.

She continued teaching in Ontario until she became a mother.

She gave back to her community and was elected to serve multiple terms as Trustee on the Peterborough County Board of Education. She was a dedicated volunteer, and together with [REDACTED] she was inducted into the Peterborough Walk of Fame in recognition of over 30 years of service as a member of Telecare Peterborough.

Her family was of utmost importance to her, and she passed on to each of us her love of birds, animals, insects and flowers.

She loved music, poetry, and square dancing, but she was never happier than when she was working in her flower beds. No visit to her home was complete without a tour of her spectacular gardens, and if you mentioned you would like a piece of a particular plant, she would send you home with a trunk full. She will live on in the gardens of the many people with whom she shared her plants.

"I was ever a fighter, so - one last fight more, The best and the last!"  
From Prospice  
by Robert Browning

The family would like to

express their gratitude to the paramedics, PRHC Emergency Room and Palliative Care teams who took outstanding care of [REDACTED] and her family in her final days, as well as all the Community Care workers who made it possible for her remain in her home almost until the end. Your continuing dedication and compassion while working under pandemic protocols is recognized and appreciated.

In lieu of flowers, please consider honouring [REDACTED]'s memory by donating, through the funeral, home to Telecare Distress Centre of Peterborough, a local call center offering a non-judgmental, confidential listening ear to anyone in need.

Visitation will be held on Thursday, September 23 from 6 - 8 p.m. at [REDACTED] Funeral Home [REDACTED] Road, Peterborough). DUE TO COVID 19 REGULATIONS, REGISTRATION FOR VISITATION IS REQUIRED. A private family service will be held on Friday, September 24th at 11 a.m. at the funeral home. Friends and family are invited to view [REDACTED]'s Memorial Service. Registration and the livestream link can be found on [REDACTED]'s obituary page through the funeral home at [www.AshburnhamFuneral.ca](http://www.AshburnhamFuneral.ca).

Chapter 1

Figure 12: "Marilyn Piper"

Source: *Peterborough This Week*, 23 Sept. 2021, 51



On January [REDACTED] 2021, Mom quietly slipped free of her earthly bonds back into the warm embrace of the love of her life, [REDACTED] (d. [REDACTED], 2015).

Mom was born in Hoards Station, Ontario, on May [REDACTED] 1929, to [REDACTED]. Mom frequently told us tales of her fond childhood memories of living in Birdsalls Station with her siblings, [REDACTED] of Bridgenorth, [REDACTED] of Peterborough, [REDACTED].

On September 17, 1949, Mom married the man of her dreams. Dad and Mom remained truly devoted to each other for 66 years. Together, they raised their children [REDACTED] of Norwood, T [REDACTED] of Melbourne, Australia, [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) of Hastings, [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) of Norwood and [REDACTED] of Baden. Mom's childhood wish to become a grandmother came true with the arrival of her nine beautiful [REDACTED] grandchildren, [REDACTED].

What a wonderful wish to have come true again. Mom always delighted in spoiling her grandchildren and great-grandchildren and they created many smiles for her. Dad and Mom worked side by side all their lives on their dairy farm south of Norwood as a stellar example of love, partnership, hard work, dedication to family and community. They retired to their 'dream home' on the 10th Line until failing health necessitated a move to Maple View Retirement Residence. Soon after the loss of her true love, Mom moved to Pleasant Meadow Manor for the next 2.5 years of her life.

Mom was a loving and devoted wife, a wonderful and caring mother, a fantastic grandmother and a lovely great-grandmother. She was incredibly proud of her family and we knew we were the center of her universe. She always found time to welcome and care for family, friends and neighbours - frequently in her kitchen preparing meals for everyone. As well as caring for her family and working with Dad on the farm, she found time to work in her church, with the Norwood Fair Board and the Donegal school dances where she and Dad

loved to meet friends and dance the night away. She and Dad traveled during their retirement to Australia, the east coast, the west coast, the Yukon and Florida. As a gracious hostess, her door was always open to visitors. Mom's faith in her Lord was deep and her guiding beacon. She sang with the Salvation Army Songsters and the Trinity United Church choir in Hastings for many years. Whether she was known as [REDACTED] daughter, daughter-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, Mom, Granny, Great Granny, friend or neighbour, Mom was deeply loved and will be dearly missed by so many. Her love will always live on in our hearts. Mom lived a happy and full life. Rest in peace now. 'Thanks a million' for everything, Mom.

[REDACTED]'s family would like to express our heart-felt appreciation to all of the doctors, nurses and staff at PMM as well as at Maple View Retirement Home, for their wonderful, compassionate and loving care of Mom. Their dedication to Mom's care was incredible and truly appreciated. We are so grateful for everything you did for Mom.

In memory of [REDACTED] and in lieu of flowers, donations to the Alzheimer's Society, Pleasant Meadow Manor or the charity of your choice would be appreciated. Services for [REDACTED] will be planned at a later date when it is safe to do so. Arrangements have been [REDACTED].

*Memorial donations and condolences may be arranged at*  
[REDACTED]

## Chapter 1

Figure 13: "Grace Jonson"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 21 Jan. 2021, A8




Chapter 1

Figure 14: “Sherry Jones”

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 13 Jan. 2021, A7



[REDACTED]  
(nee [REDACTED])  
1941-2020



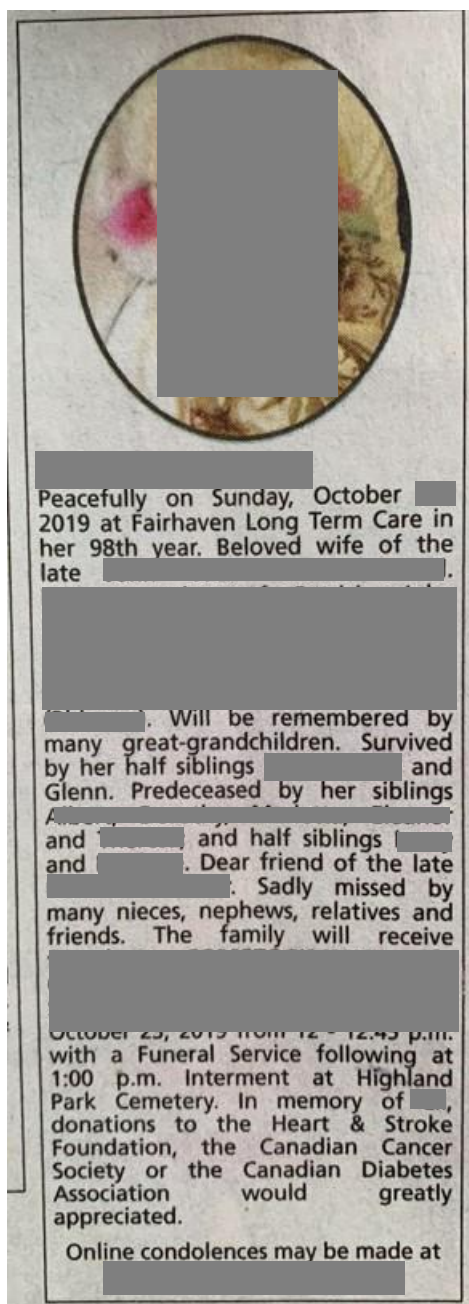
Montcrest schools in Toronto. Since moving to Westwood Ontario (near Peterborough) in 2006, the new surroundings inspired a large series of drawings and paintings of the local landscape. She has worked as a board member and chair of the Asphodel-Norwood Public Library which included the preservation of the building which housed the library, and as well from 1987 with her husband [REDACTED], founding member of the renowned Orford String Quartet, on the restoration-renovation of the award winning 1840's Westwood Mill. She is survived by her husband, their children; [REDACTED], families, and by her sister [REDACTED] and brother the architect [REDACTED]. She will be sadly missed by them and all who knew her. There will be a retrospective showing of [REDACTED]'s work in the gallery space in the Westwood Mill this spring.

Studied drawing and painting at the Ontario College of Art and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, graduating from the latter school in 1964. Her work as a painter is in collections in Canada, United States and Great Britain with professional representation first by Nancy Poole Gallery of Toronto and subsequently across Canada by the Loch Galleries. She has as well had an extensive career as an illustrator of primarily poetry and children's books, all the while teaching children's art both at Havergal College and

Chapter 1

Figure 15: "Elizabeth Kramer"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 23 Jan. 2020, A9



Chapter 2

Figure 16: “Jean-Lillian O’Brien”

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 22 Oct. 2019, A8



Chapter 2

Figure 17: “Trixie Fairhold”

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 2 Jan. 2021, A8





( )  
 Passed away on November 2019 at the age of 95, born in Peterborough, 1924. Married and had 28 years of a loving and happy life, camping, singing with barbershop, playing music. played base and played guitar. They have two sons, the late and as many knew him, passed away in 1972 from heart failure. Loving grandmother of and Great-grandmother of and Great-great-grandmother of worked for John Robert Modeling Agency for 10 years, doing some modeling, trained in New York. Later joined cosmetic company, Germai-Montiel as regional manager, and retired at the age of 50. married in 1990 and loved him dearly. They had a very happy life, travelling, doing crafts together and both took up painting. She enjoyed dancing, shuffleboard, and golf, and played a lot of card games. and spent 20 winters in Tucson and Arizona. There, started playing and singing at the Cat Mountain social center and had many jams at their home. She also was a lifetime member of the Az. Fiddlers Club, doing back-up for the fiddlers. was her roadie and loved the music. When marrying, 's family grew to being a step-mother of . Step-grandmother of . Step-great-grandmother of many grandchildren. joined 's band when they moved to Lindsay. The band is Tunes Of The Past, and played at senior citizens' homes. had a full life with many friends and family. is the dear sister of the late and the late . will be remembered by many nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, extended family and friends.

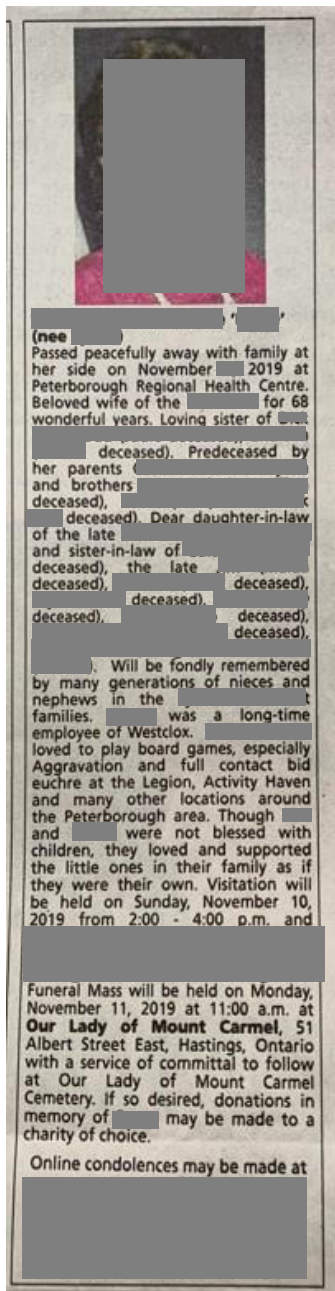
take place at celebrations, or simply greet friends on Saturday, 16th at 11:00 a.m. Interment will take place at Fenelon Falls Cemetery. If desired, a memorial donation to the Heart and Stroke Foundation would be appreciated by the family. Online donations and condolences can be made at [www.mackeys.ca](http://www.mackeys.ca)

"Goodbye family and dear friends. God Bless."

## Chapter 2

Figure 18b: "Jennifer Steering"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 14 Nov. 2019, A8



(nee [redacted])  
 Passed peacefully away with family at her side on November [redacted] 2019 at Peterborough Regional Health Centre. Beloved wife of the [redacted] for 68 wonderful years. Loving sister of [redacted] (deceased). Predeceased by her parents [redacted] and brothers [redacted] (deceased), [redacted] (deceased). Dear daughter-in-law of the late [redacted] and sister-in-law of [redacted] (deceased), the late [redacted] (deceased), [redacted] (deceased), [redacted] (deceased), [redacted] (deceased), [redacted] (deceased), [redacted] (deceased).

[redacted]. Will be fondly remembered by many generations of nieces and nephews in the [redacted] families. [redacted] was a long-time employee of Westclox. [redacted] loved to play board games, especially Aggravation and full contact bid euchre at the Legion, Activity Haven and many other locations around the Peterborough area. Though [redacted] and [redacted] were not blessed with children, they loved and supported the little ones in their family as if they were their own. Visitation will be held on Sunday, November 10, 2019 from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. and [redacted]

Funeral Mass will be held on Monday, November 11, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. at **Our Lady of Mount Carmel**, 51 Albert Street East, Hastings, Ontario with a service of committal to follow at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cemetery. If so desired, donations in memory of [redacted] may be made to a charity of choice.

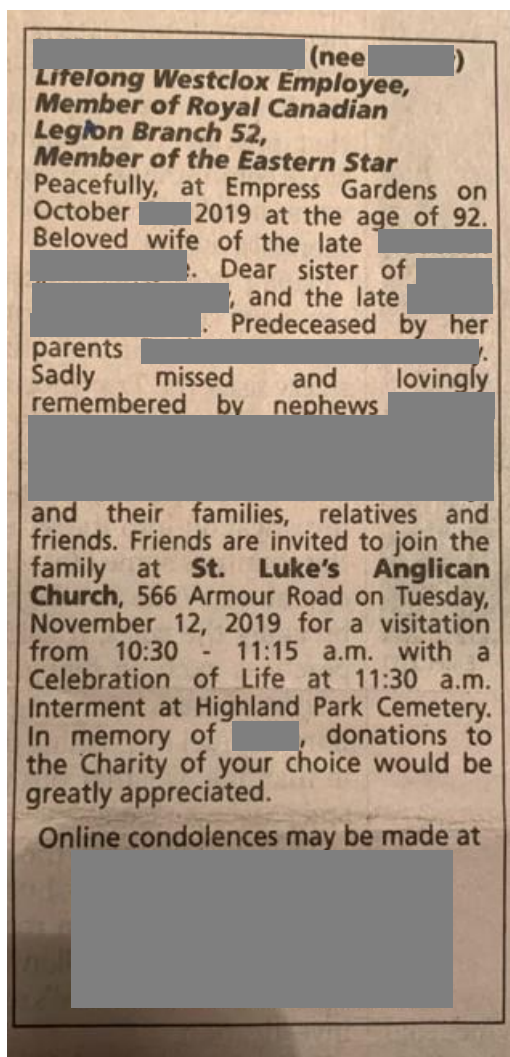
Online condolences may be made at [redacted]

## Chapter 2

### Figure 19a: “Irene North”

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 8 Nov. 2019, B2





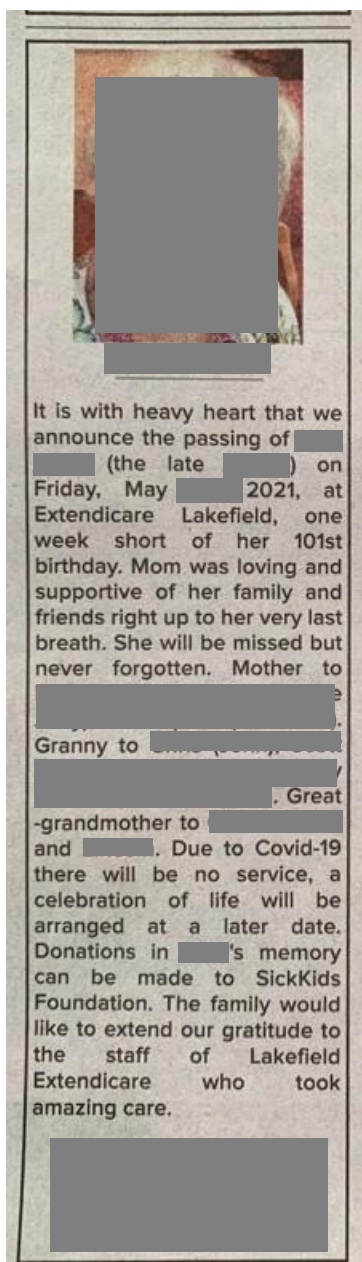
Chapter 2

Figure 19c: "Mary Jane Valley"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 8 Nov. 2019, B2








## Chapter 2

### Figure 20b: “Myrtle Noble”

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 3 June 2021, A8



" " "  
(nee )  
"Always in our Hearts"



Peacefully at Fairhaven Long Term Care Home on Monday, August 2021 in her 90th year. had a longtime career in hairdressing and was a member of the Catholic Women's League. She also had a passion for music and dancing as well as being an avid gardener and collector of antiques. was the beloved wife of the late (deceased 2011). Loving mother of

Fondly remembered by many nieces and nephews. Friends are invited to call at the

7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Funeral Mass in the Cathedral of St. Peter-in-Chains on Friday, August 13th at 10:00 a.m. Interment St. Peter's Cemetery. In loving memory of , donations can be made to the Alzheimer Society of Canada. Online condolences may be expressed at [www.highlandparkfuneral-centre.com](http://www.highlandparkfuneral-centre.com). Special thanks for the loving care given by Dr. Spink and the nurses at Fairhaven for the years of care and palliative compassion shown to 'Miss ' our feisty gal.

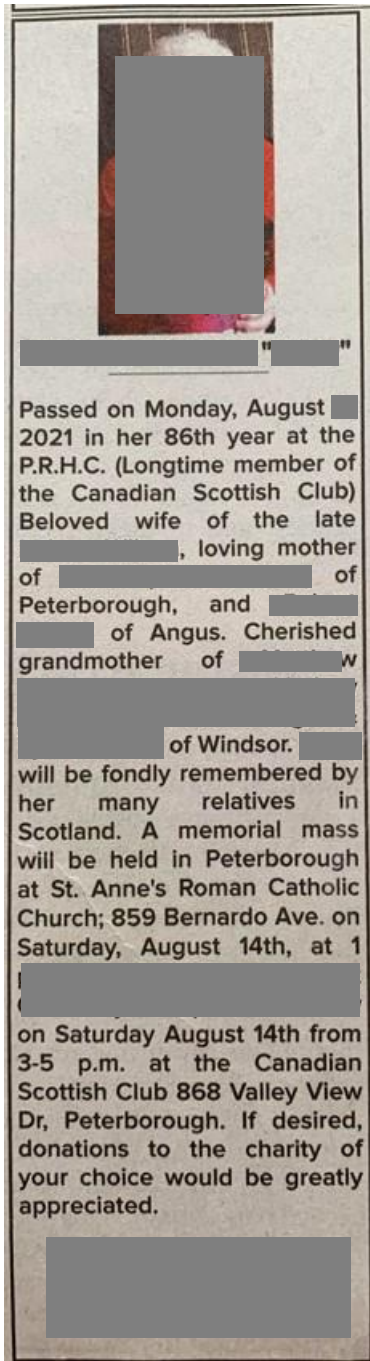
of  
Kemptville. Beloved to

## Chapter 2

Figure 21b: "Maureen McLeod"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 11 Aug. 2021, A7





Chapter 2

Figure 21c: "Carol Herrington"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 11 Aug. 2021, A7

## OBITUARIES

**OBITUARIES**



Friends, Agnes Mickelson, Nancy Richardson and Sylvia and Bruce Buckley. Sue was a registered nurse at Extendicare in Peterborough until her retirement in 2006. She truly found her calling as a nurse. Sue was filled with kindness and compassion, and often times would go back to work on her days off to make a special visit to a patient who was going through a difficult time. During retirement she enjoyed improving her golf game and travelling. Sue's children would like to thank her neighbours for their warm-hearted support, as well as the nursing staff on C2 at the Peterborough Regional Health Centre for the care and comfort that they provided. At Sue's request there will not be a service, but a family celebration of her life will be held. Cremation has taken place.

Passed away peacefully surrounded by her family. Devoted and beloved mother of Terry Lee, William McGregor (Greg and Patti) and Gordon Bradley (Brid). Proud grand mother of Jessica Amanda Sue and Austin McGregor. Great grandmother of Zoey Teresa Lavigne. Survived by her loving first cousins, Jim and Maria Frost, Bob and Jet Merritt, Diane and Art Kilck, Lynn Merritt and Carol Sue Kinsey. Sue will be fondly remembered by her lifelong

**IN MEMORIAM**



Peacefully at P.R.H.C. on Thursday, September 2, 2021. Beloved wife of Graham Lewis (1970). Loving mother of Cathy, Karen, and Rennie (Adrian). Devoted grandmother of Grace, Avery, Graham, and Margan. Predeceased by parents Gordon H and Kathleen (nee Rennie) and her sister Jean Anne Rennie (1942). Special friend of Jay Hays (2014) and his children Brenda (Bob), Robert (Anita), and Eli (1983) and grandchildren, Shirley was a graduate of Peterborough Civic Hospital class of 56. And a graduate of the University of Toronto Community Health Program. She retired from Peterborough County City Health Unit in 1998. Shirley spent her life supporting people either as a nurse, friend, parent, or grandparent, and will be missed by all who knew her.

A loving person, so gentle and kind, what a wonderful memory you will be.

\*Offer valid until September 30, 2021  
\*Some restrictions apply

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**ANNIVERSARIES**



You were joined in matrimony 65 years ago, and soon after that our family began to grow. Now wherever we look we think of all of the things you have done to enrich all of our lives. We thank you so much for your endless unconditional love and support. Happy 65th Anniversary Mom and Dad.

All our love forever: Karen, Chris, Greg, Chris, Nothar, Corla, Dayana, Marley, Husky, Kristin, Tom, Evelyn, Joshua, Jesse, Shaun, Mitchell

**GRADUATIONS**



Congratulations to

Mary and Jim Heron are thrilled to announce the graduation of their granddaughter, Caedmon Heron, from Queen's University. Caedmon earned a Bachelor of Arts, with a Certificate in Law, while achieving Dean's List standing throughout her studies. Caedmon is continuing her studies at The Schulich School of Law at Oshawa University. Congratulations Caedmon, we are so very proud of you!

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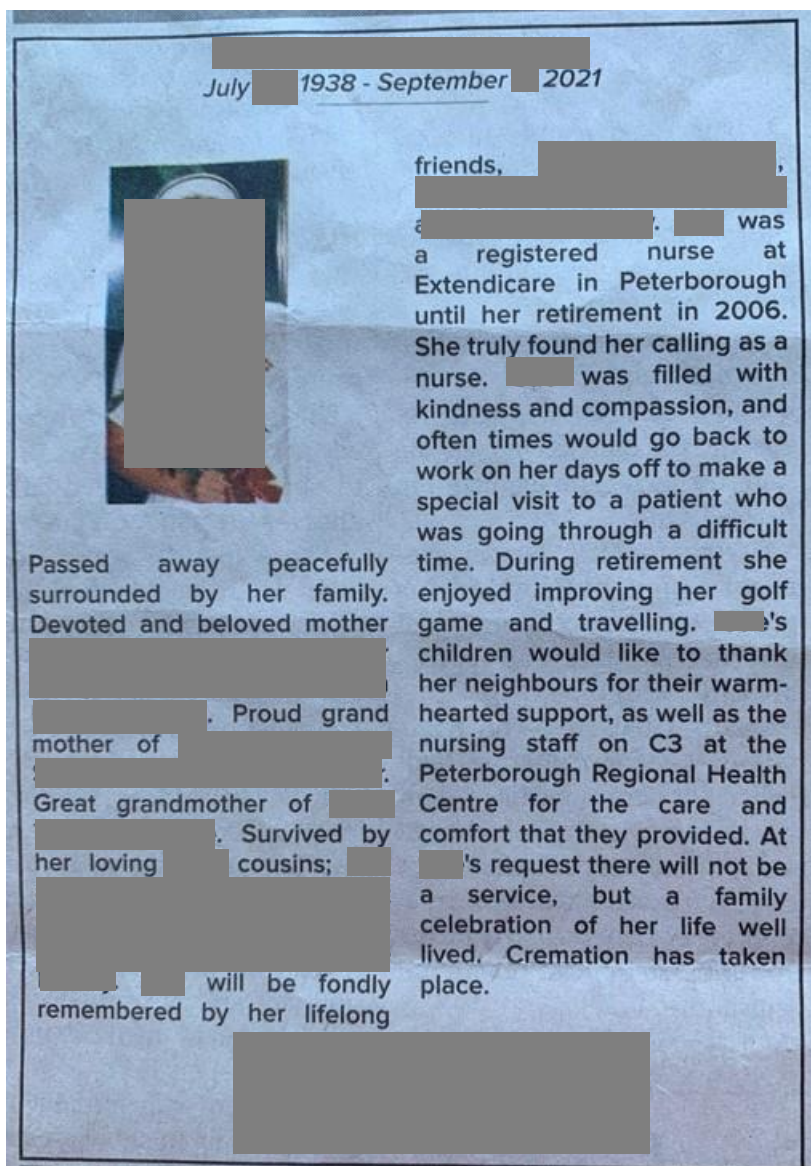
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Chapter 2

Figure 22a: “Ruby-Ann Conway,” “Irma Towns” contextualized on page

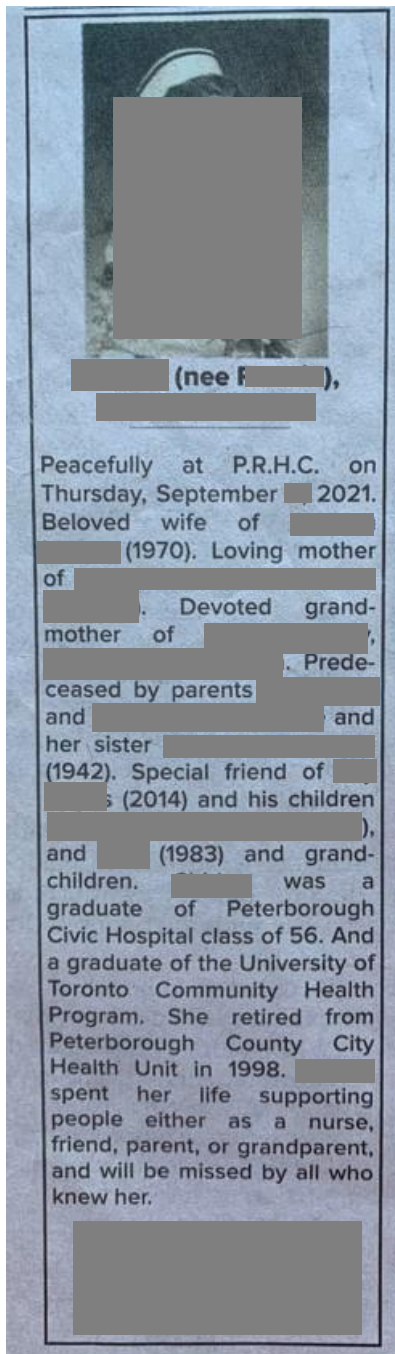
Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 15 Sept. 2021, A8



## Chapter 2

Figure 22b: "Ruby-Ann Conway"

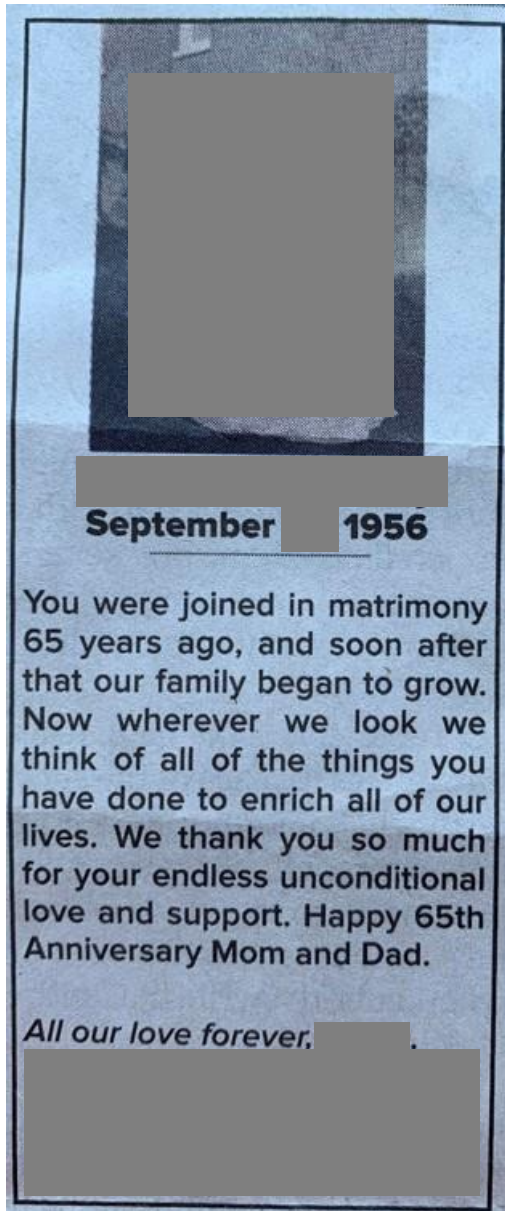
Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 15 Sept. 2021, A8



Chapter 2

Figure 22c: “Irma Towns”

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 15 Sept. 2021, A8



Chapter 2

Figure 22d: Wedding Anniversary Photo

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 15 Sept. 2021, A8





## Chapter 2

Figure 23: "Violet Mann"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 21 Mar. 2020, A7

(nee )



died peacefully at the age of 89 in Peterborough Hospice on August 2021 following an extensive stroke. Deeply missed by her husband and daughters

was born in Calgary on May 23, 1932 to Scottish parents and . She grew up with her siblings (predeceased) and . Her mother died of cancer when was 11. attended Crescent Heights High School. Memories of visiting her mother in hospital at the age of 8, and admiring the nurses in their "starched bibs and aprons" led to becoming a proud graduate of the Class of '54 of Calgary General Hospital. She enjoyed working in the "preemie" nursery. came to visit the 's while on a Mond

Nickel fellowship and was invited to return for Christmas. saved her "pennies" and decided to visit her family in the U.K. met her at the dock in Liverpool. They were married in Calgary in 1956, and remained side by side for 65 years. They began married life in Peterborough, where worked at CGE, and stayed home to care for their daughters.

Described as a "small dynamo" in her nursing yearbook, continued to lead a vibrant life, centered around her family and her commitment to the Peterborough community. When the girls were young, found time to study French, nutrition, needlework and dressmaking, and acted as the "neighbourhood nurse". Later, she became involved with the YWCA: volunteering at Y's Buys, serving on committees, and becoming a Board member. also volunteered at PRHC in various areas, including Emerg, and the information desk as well as coordinating the knitting volunteers. She became President of the Auxiliary. She then served on the Provincial Auxiliary Association receiving a life membership in 1989. Her service to PRHC spanned 35 years!

enjoyed an active social life. She enjoyed book club and arthritis aquasizers. and enjoyed Community Concerts, where also served on the Board. Over the years they travelled extensively, across Canada,

through Europe, to Russia, and on river cruises, where they enjoyed making new friends. loved taking in the view of the Otonabee River from her favourite bench, listening to classical music (without "screeching" violins), enjoying a well written book, and most of all, . We will miss the Scottish shortbread she lovingly made every Christmas, her famous facial expressions, and her classic sense of style. Our heartfelt thanks to the staff and residents of Princess Gardens who often referred to as family, and who took especially good care of during Covid. Deepest thanks to all the staff at Peterborough Hospice who were so gentle and compassionate to us all in 's final days. Thanks also to Dr Richard and his staff who cared for over many years.

The family will receive friends at the Comstock-Kaye Life Celebration Centre, 356 Rubidge Street, Peterborough on Sunday, August 29 from 2:00-3:30 p.m. In half hour segments. Those who wish to attend must register at <https://signup.com/go/UOmoOnA>. Attendees must wear a mask and socially distance. A memorial Meeting at Wooler Friends Meeting House after the manner of Friends (Quakers) will take place at a later date. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Hospice Peterborough or Medecins Sans Frontieres.

## Chapter 2

Figure 24: "Flora Swanson"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 27 Aug. 2021, B2



Chapter 2

Figure 25a: “Maud Fallis”

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 6 July 2020, A8

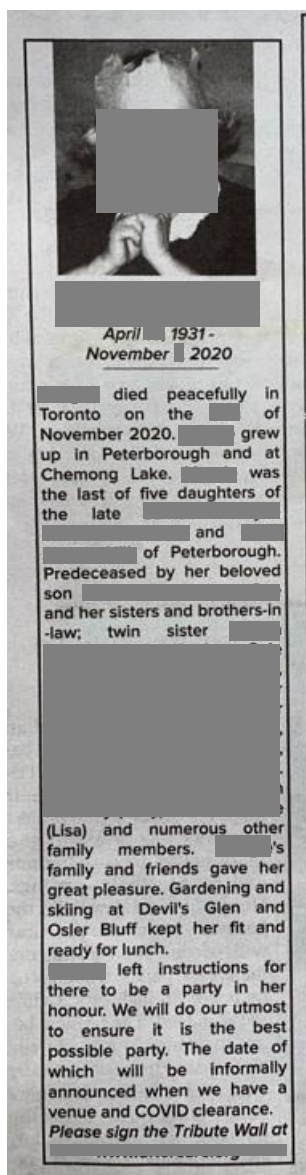




Chapter 2, Footnote #81

Figure 25b: "Janis Pelliborn"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 8 Jan. 2022, A9

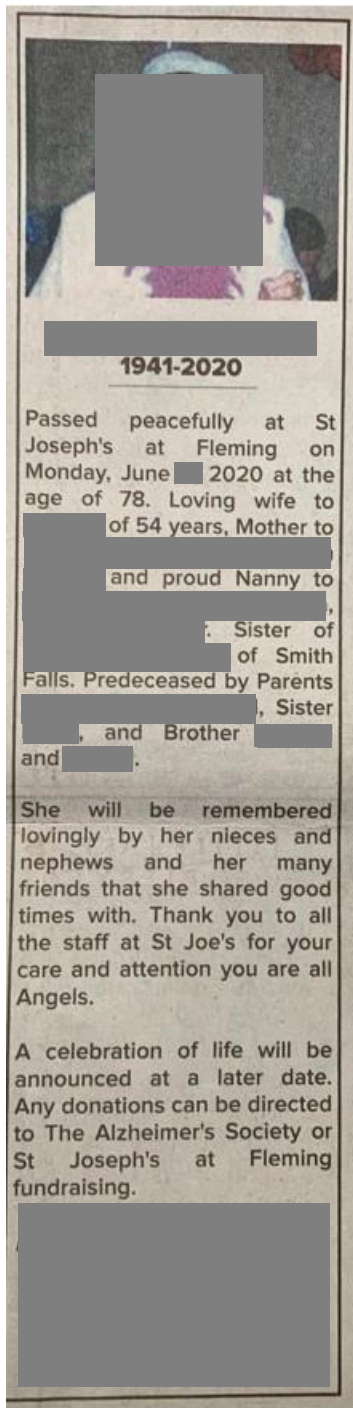


## Chapter 2

Figure 26: "Alice Pritchardson"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 28 Nov. 2020, A9

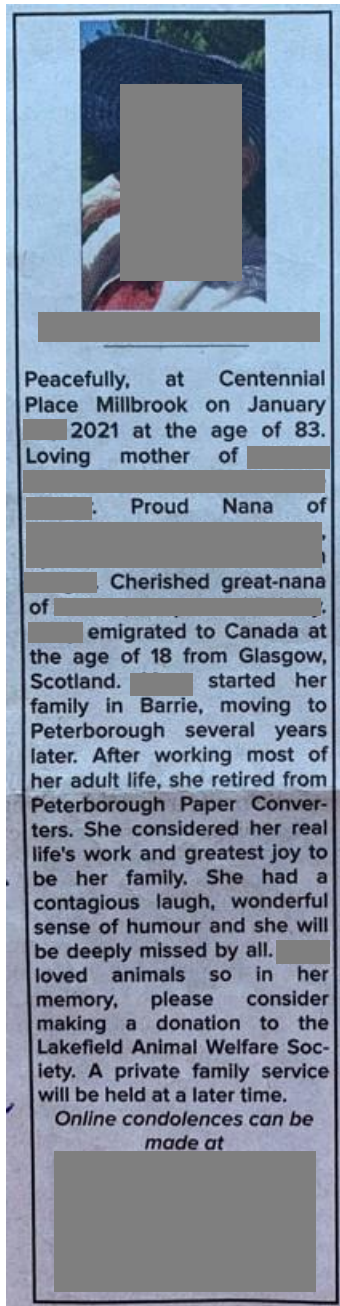




Chapter 2

Figure 28: "Kim Murphy"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 11 June 2020, A8



Chapter 2

Figure 29: “Anne Whitehead”

Source: Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 28 Jan. 2021, A7



## Chapter 2

Figure 30: “Sandra Marrick”

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 20 Jan. 2021, A7





## Chapter 2

Figure 31: "Vivian Shaw"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 23 Feb. 2021, A8

December 1933 to June 2021



foundations of family values.

had an adventurous spirit, ever ready and willing to visit her children at home and abroad, travelling within Canada and to Europe, Japan, Thailand, Australia and New Zealand.

And she was "mom" to others beyond her own large family. will forever live in our hearts. What we once cherished we can never lose. Love leaves memories eternal.

'Leapin' ' will always be remembered for her hospitality towards anyone who showed up at . She was always eager to host gatherings for friends and family. Her anchor was and he spoke often of her deep capacity for caring and her hard work as a full-time mother and then as an employee at ElectroLab. She grounded her family in rituals: meals at the dinner table with homemade desserts, Sunday picnics followed by the traditional dinner of roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, summer cottage vacations, Christmas traditions, family picnics with the extended family, and annual anniversary jaunts. These memories we hold dear, strengthening our

exhaled her final breath on June with by her side. Born to the late on December 1933 in Bancroft, Ontario, attended high school in Colborne before moving to Belleville with her lifelong friend become "Bell girls" (Bell telephone operators).

met the love of her life, they married on 1954 to begin their 67-year journey together.

was predeceased by her son , October 2017. She is survived by her husband, , and her

Funeral arrangements are being finalized through Highland Park Funeral Centre, Peterborough.

will rest peacefully from her niche overlooking the water at Little Lake Cemetery in Peterborough. and family will host a "Celebration of Life" at a later date in Belleville.

and family extend a sincere thank you to the staff of Peterborough Retirement Residence for their kindness and exceptional care and support. respectfully requests donations be made to the Heart & Stroke Foundation in 's memory.

## Chapter 2

Figure 32: "Roxy Budd"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 18 June 2021, B2



[REDACTED] (nee [REDACTED])



[REDACTED], peacefully passed in her 88th year surrounded by love, on Monday, October [REDACTED] 2020, at the Trenton Memorial Hospital. Daughter of the late [REDACTED]. Loving wife to the late [REDACTED], with whom she spent 63 happy years. Loved deeply by her son [REDACTED], and daughter [REDACTED]. Proud Gramma of [REDACTED]. Great Gramma (GG) to her pride and joy, [REDACTED]! [REDACTED], as she was known, was a child prodigy figure skater, born in Copper Cliff, Ontario in 1933. At the age of 7 she was invited to skate at the Toronto Cricket Skating Club, considered quite an honour at the time. She moved away from home and was coached by Albert and Sadie Enders. When her coaches moved to British Columbia to coach, so did 10-year-old [REDACTED]. She was the youngest skater to ever get her gold medal for figures and free skate. She was the first woman to complete a double axel in competition. Due to financial constraints, Ann had to turn professional at the early age of 16 and start her 50 plus year coaching career in Owen Sound. Here is

where she met the love of her life, [REDACTED], and had her two children. She travelled 600 miles a week, coaching in places such as Mildmay, Paisley, Owen Sound, Walkerton, and Meaford, just to name a few. In 1962, the [REDACTED] family moved to Peterborough where [REDACTED] took over the reigns as Senior Coach. She had many successes with athletes she coached going to Canadians in various disciplines. She was a highly sought-after coach, with an eagle technical eye. She loved her skaters and they loved her in return. She changed the Lindsay Figure Skating Club from a recreational club to a competitive club. Once again having great success with skaters going on to high level competitions and being successful. In May of 1992, [REDACTED] was named the Eastern Ontario Coach of the Year, from Skate Canada. [REDACTED] retired from full-time coaching shortly after that but continued to assist her former skaters, who had now become coaches themselves, when asked. Her love for the sport of figure skating was only surpassed by her love for her family. She will be so very missed! Arrangements [REDACTED] place. [REDACTED]'s family would like to acknowledge with great appreciation the excellent and compassionate care provided by the entire staff of the second floor inpatient unit of Trent Memorial Hospital. A small private family celebration will be held in the future.

*"May you be skating your favourite program  
high above us Mom!"*

## Chapter 2

### Figure 33: "Yvette Klym"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 19 Oct. 2020, A8

[REDACTED] " [REDACTED] "  
 (nee [REDACTED])  
 December [REDACTED], 2019



great-grandchildren, her  
 siblings [REDACTED],  
 [REDACTED] and her fur  
 baby Honey who was by her  
 side. [REDACTED] was an employee  
 at Dominion grocery stores  
 for many years. She enjoyed  
 bowling in her youth and was  
 an avid knitter and sewer.  
 Her greatest joy was to see  
 her grandchildren and great  
 grandchildren. Dad would say  
 to her "look what we started"  
 and they would smile. A  
 Celebration of Life will be held  
 on Friday, January 10th from  
 [REDACTED]

Suddenly and unexpectedly at  
 home on December [REDACTED] 2019  
 at the age of 84. [REDACTED]  
 dearly beloved wife of [REDACTED]  
 (predeceased [REDACTED]  
 2018) for 65 years. Loving  
 mother to [REDACTED],  
 [REDACTED] (deceased 2006) and  
 [REDACTED]. Dear Nanny to  
 [REDACTED],  
 [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] will  
 be greatly missed by her 13

*Online condolences can be expressed at*  
 [REDACTED]

Chapter 2

Figure 34a: "Noreen Quinlan"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 6 Jan. 2020, A9

Peacefully surrounded by her loving family at Peterborough Regional Health Centre on Saturday, January 25th, 2020 in her 82nd year. Louise received visits at 60 years by Jean (Lulu) both at Lachine, Quebec. Loving and devoted mother of Christine, Susan, Michele, Graham (Donnie), Rose, Susan (Susan), and predeceased by her son Andre. Chartered grandmother of Andrew, Stefan, Adam, Claire, Chantel, Rosalind, Andrew, Grace, Colin, and Genevieve Louise - one of seven daughters of Ernest and Bernadette Lefebvre. Louise survived by her sister Raymond, Wilan of Trois-Rivières. The Aquin family thanks the exceptional medical team and staff at PRHC, especially Dr. Matt Moore and Dr. John Beaudry for their support and care. Visitation will be held at the Cathedral of St. Peter in Chimo, Peterborough on Thursday, January 28th from 9:00 to 10:00 am followed by a Memorial Mass at 10:00 am. Interment, St. Peter's Cemetery in memory of Louise and in the flowers donations to The Society of St. Vincent de Paul would be appreciated by the family. Online condolences may be expressed at [www.highlandparkfunerals.com](http://www.highlandparkfunerals.com)

**HIGHLAND PARK FUNERAL CENTRE**

great grandchildren. Her siblings, Andre, Ivak, Melva, Edna, Lawrence (Pete), Yvonne (Barry) and her late baby Nancy who was by her side. Beulah was an employee at Dominion grocery stores for many years. She enjoyed bowling in her youth and with an avid reader and spent her greatest joy to see her grandchildren and great grandchildren. Did not want to let her "book" what we started and they would come. A Celebration of Life will be held on Friday, January 28th from 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. at the HIGHLAND PARK FUNERAL CENTRE, 2510 Bensford Road, Peterborough. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Peterborough Humane Society.

While surrounded by her loving family, Ken passed away peacefully at WakeUp Retirement on Sunday, December 22, 2019 at the age of 82. Beloved husband of Cherie Henry (nee McGraw) (predeceased September 2003). Loving and devoted father of Ken (Anna), Terry (Viv), Wayne, Karen McLeish (Doug) and Gary. Proud grandfather of Christopher, Kevan.

Expressions of condolence may be made at [www.highlandparkfunerals.com](http://www.highlandparkfunerals.com)

**HIGHLAND PARK FUNERAL CENTRE**

At PRHC on Thursday, January 2, 2020 with his family present. Bill was a retired carver of Midway Transport, previous member of Healds, Transport and a member of various antique car clubs in the Peterborough area. Beloved husband of Phyllis for 64 years. Dear father of Jay Heald (Keri) and Mark Heald (Kris). Predeceased by Thomas Heald. Chartered grandpa to Kaitlyn, Kaitlyn, Sydney and Colin. Son of the late Mary and Harold Heald and stepson of the late Walter Middlebrooks. Predeceased by Robert Middlebrooks and Bruce Dugan. The late Bill Heald will be resting at the Ashburnham Funeral Home, 840 Armour Road, Peterborough, Ontario, on Tuesday, January 7, 2020 from 1:00 - 2:30 pm followed by a Memorial Service in the Chapel at 2:30 pm. If desired, condolences to the PRHC may be made at [www.AshburnhamFuneral.ca](http://www.AshburnhamFuneral.ca) or by calling 705-408-0444.

**ASHBURNHAM Funeral Home**

Passed away peacefully at home on Monday, December 22, 2019. James, of Peterborough, formerly of Toronto and Belfast was 87 years of age. Beloved husband of the late Dolores (Lucky). Loving father of David Finlay (Sharon) and the late Christopher Finlay. Dear grandfather of Caitlyn and Erin. Beloved brother of Arnelia Murphy (Bobby), Elizabeth "Liz" Murphy (Pete) and Margaret "Maggie" (Lorette) (Henry). Jimmy was loved and remembered by many other relatives, friends and neighbors in Canada and Northern Ireland. Retired from Eaton in Toronto. James was an avid football fan. Jimmy loved spending days with his grandchildren, going to the park or beach, and having friends over and riding on the back patio with the barbecue. A funeral service will be held at the ASHBURNHAM FUNERAL HOME & RECEPTION CENTRE, 840 Armour Road, on Tuesday, January 7, 2020, at 12 noon, with visiting two hours prior (10 am - 12 pm). Interment will follow at Pine Hill Cemetery, 425 Southmount Road, Scarborough at 2:30 pm. If desired, donations in James' memory may be made to the Peterborough Red Cross or a charity of your choice. Condolence notes at [www.AshburnhamFuneral.ca](http://www.AshburnhamFuneral.ca). Please sign the Tribute Wall at [www.AshburnhamFuneral.ca](http://www.AshburnhamFuneral.ca)

**ASHBURNHAM Funeral Home**

On Friday, January 3, 2020, Peggy passed away peacefully at Riverview Manor in her 100th year. Beloved wife of Edward "Ted" Patterson. Loving mother of Ted Patterson. Proud grandmother of Ken Patterson. Chartered sister of Betty Woods (CPH) and sister-in-law of Douglas Patterson (Sandra). Predeceased by parents, James and Vera (Coo) McKinney, brother Bill McKinney, brother-in-law Kenneth Patterson, and sisters-in-law Vera Somner (Russell), Earle Winette (Albert), Audrey Stinson (Maxwell) and Helen Rodgett (Wallace). Dear aunt to many nieces and nephews. Peggy retired as an assembler at Westclox and later became a headress. She will be fondly remembered for her love of cats and reading. In keeping with Peggy's wishes, cremation has taken place. There will be a private interment at Little Lake Cemetery at a later date. If desired, memorial contributions to the Peterborough Humane Society would be greatly appreciated. Expressions of condolence may be made at [www.highlandparkfunerals.com](http://www.highlandparkfunerals.com)

**HIGHLAND PARK FUNERAL CENTRE**

(Dore), Ian (Tracy), Nicole, Graci (Jay), Doug (Janice) and Evan. Adoring great grandfather of Owen, Olivia, Connor and Martin. Dear brother to Darryl, Henry (Luby) and uncle to many nieces and nephews. Ken is predeceased by his siblings Don Henry, Gary Henry, Helen, Neilward, Anna Pearson and Paul Akon. In keeping with Ken's wishes, cremation has taken place. A celebration of life reception will be held at the HIGHLAND PARK FUNERAL CENTRE, 2510 Bensford Road on Saturday, January 11, 2020 from 2:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M. A private family interment at Highland Park Cemetery will be held at a later date. If desired, memorial contributions to the Hospital for Sick Children would be appreciated.

Expressions of condolence may be made at [www.highlandparkfunerals.com](http://www.highlandparkfunerals.com)

**HIGHLAND PARK FUNERAL CENTRE**

**OBITUARIES**

**IN MEMORIAM**

Passed away peacefully at Peterborough Regional Health Centre on January 1, 2020 in her 96th year. Beloved wife of the late Robert Quinn. Chartered mother of Peter and Andrew (Barrette) Gill, and the late Pamela Gill. Proud grandmother of Brennan, Jennifer, Alexandra and Scott. Predeceased by her parents, Ernie and May Reed and sisters Audrey and Erica. Norma was born in England and served in the Women's Land Army. She met and married her first husband, John Gill, in England, and emigrated to Canada in the late 1940s, while raising her young family in Canada, she pursued a career in Bookkeeping. In her spare time, she enjoyed gardening, reading a good book and playing cards and board games. A private family service will take place at a later date. Arrangements entrusted to the Corntock-Loye Life Celebration Centre, 356 Rutledge Street, Peterborough. If so desired, donations in memory of Norma may be made to Five Counties Children's Centre. Online condolences may be made at [www.corntockloye.com](http://www.corntockloye.com)

In loving memory of Murray who passed away seven years ago on January 6, 2013. The world changes when a loved one passes but never will the one I love. You, memory goes on. Until we meet again.

—Forever loved—  
Mama, Aileen & Jack,  
Justin, Brian & Lenora,  
Abbey and Kyle

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is it your Anniversary?

Chapter 2

Figure 34b: "Noreen Quinlan" in context on the page of obituaries

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 6 Jan. 2020, A9



[REDACTED] " [REDACTED] "



Passed away at Peterborough Regional Health Centre on Tuesday, September [REDACTED] 2020 with family by her side. [REDACTED] of Lakehurst in her 84th year. Survived by her husband of 61+ years [REDACTED], 4 children, 10 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren. [REDACTED] is missed by her sister [REDACTED] and many nieces and nephews. Predeceased by her parents [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and siblings [REDACTED]. Family and friends are called to THE [REDACTED]

on Friday September 4, 2020 from 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. A graveside service will follow at the Sandy Lake Cemetery, Lakehurst, at 3:00 p.m. Due to COVID restrictions, only a specific number of visitors are allowed in the funeral home at one time. TO SECURE A DESIGNATED TIME TO PAY YOUR RESPECTS, PLEASE BOOK ONLINE at [www.hendrenfuneralhome.com](http://www.hendrenfuneralhome.com). Please wait in your vehicle and only come to the front door of the funeral home at your designated time. Everyone must wear a mask. A celebration of [REDACTED]'s life will take place at a later date.

*As expressions of sympathy, memorial donations may be made*

[REDACTED]

Chapter 2

Figure 35a: "Maxine Trapper"


Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 3 Sept. 2020, A7



## Chapter 2

Figure 35b: “Maxine Trapper” In Memoriam

Source: *Peterborough This Week*, 2 Sept. 2021, 52



" [redacted] "  
(nee [redacted])

Born July [redacted] 1930 in Zevenbergen, the Netherlands. She passed away peacefully on June [redacted] 2021 in her 91st year, at the Peterborough Regional Health Centre. [redacted] was one of 11 children, four remaining. She was the wife of the late [redacted] and is survived by her three children, [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] great-grandchildren.

[redacted] came to Canada in 1958. She was renowned all her life for her prolific and beautiful sewing and knitting. After she raised her family, [redacted] and [redacted] became the owners of Seweze Sales, a popular sewing store where she also taught lessons.

Over her lifetime, she donated many knitted works to charities, schools, and churches for raffles, and created displays that are popular at the dialysis clinic and the retirement home where she lived.

There will be no funeral. In lieu of flowers, donations to the Kidney Foundation of Canada would be appreciated by the family.

Online condolences may be expressed at [redacted]

## Chapter 2

Figure 36: "Ida Harman"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 12 June 2021, A10



Passed away peacefully in her 99th year on May [REDACTED] 2021. Loving wife for over 67 years to the late [REDACTED]. Sadly missed by her children [REDACTED].

Beloved Grandmother to [REDACTED].

Grandmother to [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] was a master cook and baker, a creative painter and knitter and dedicated her life to raising her children. She was an arena mom watching her son [REDACTED]'s hockey and a Brownie and Girl Guide leader for [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. She loved horse racing and the casino and she was a dedicated fan of the Toronto Blue Jays.

The family wishes to thank the staff of Springdale Country Manor for the exceptional care and compassion they showed [REDACTED]. In keeping with [REDACTED]'s wishes cremation has taken place and there will be no service. In [REDACTED]'s honour, a donation to the charity of your choice would be appreciated. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] can now cheer together for the Toronto Blue Jays and the Maple Leafs! We love you Mom. Till we meet again!

Online condolences can be made at [REDACTED]

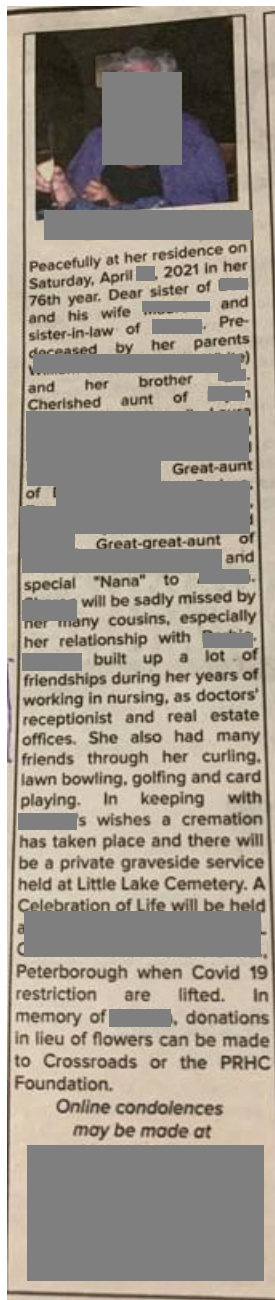
## Chapter 2

Figure 37: “Arla Bookman”

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 15 May 2021, A11








Chapter 2

Figure 38b: "Sissy Giles"

Source: *Peterborough This Week*, 15 Apr. 2021, 58

(nee )



It is with great sadness that the family of announces her passing after a valiant fight with Breast Cancer and Dementia, on May 2021 in her 85th year at Peterborough Extencicare. was the beloved wife of the late (September 2006). "Now their love will always be together". will be lovingly remembered by her children

She was adored by her five grandchildren

loved her Toronto Maple Leafs, they gave her many happy years of cheering them on with our dad. Maybe this year will be the year Mom and the Leafs will win the Stanley Cup. You and Dad can watch them from above and cheer, louder "Go Leafs Go". Mom loved her life in Peterborough, having moved here from Port aux Basque, Nfld. She met and

married our Dad in 1955 and together they raised four children in a loving home on Bethune Street. We were blessed to have great neighbours, friends and family thru the years. Our parents made sure we always knew we were loved. Thank you Mom and Dad for always putting your children and then your grandchildren first. We know that you would have spoiled your great-grandchildren and . The family of would like to extend their heartfelt Thank you to all the wonderful staff at Peterborough Extencicare for the dedication and the love they gave Mom during her battle with Breast Cancer and Dementia. Peterborough Extencicare rose above and beyond themselves in providing comfort and care for her. With all of the Covid -19 protocols, keeping everyone safe, healthy and secure was always their #1 goal. We will always be grateful. "You never know how strong you are until you have no choice But to be Strong" Due to Covid -19 restrictions, a celebration of 's Life will held in the individual hearts of family and friends. In keeping with Mom's wishes, cremation has taken place. Donations in memory of Vie and in lieu of flowers, can be made to the charity of your choice, or the next time we get to dine out, Smile at your waitress/server, leave your tip and say this is in memory of our favorite waitress from the Churchill and Empress Restaurants. God Bless us all.

## Chapter 2

### Figure 39: "Dominique Lawson"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 1 June 2021, A7



### Chapter 3

Figure 40: “Sadie Littleton”

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 3 Dec. 2019, A8

(nee [redacted])  
February [redacted] 1931 - April [redacted] 2021



who knew her marveled at her loving spirit, joy of life and her strong faith. Having survived separation from her parents when she was 8 years old at the beginning of WW II, and then deportation to Siberia, her determination and strong will never left her. She always finished the story saying her mother wrote numerous letters to Stalin to get her back to Poland. Public visitation with social distancing and masks by reservation only will be held in 30 minute intervals beginning at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, April 23, 2021 at [redacted]


Sophie died suddenly, doing something she loved, gardening in her backyard. She was predeceased by her beloved husband [redacted] who provided her her cherished home and ready-made family shortly after [redacted] left communist Poland in 1966. She is survived by her children [redacted] and [redacted], and grandchildren [redacted] and [redacted] and her best friend/sister and soul mate [redacted]. She will be missed by her cousins [redacted] cousins, nieces and nephews in Poland. Predeceased by her parents, [redacted]

Please reserve a visitation space at:  
<https://signup.com/go/BZjJdPx>  
A Private Funeral Mass will be held at St. Anne's Catholic Church, Peterborough at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 24, 2021. Relatives and friends are invited to view through livestream at:  
[redacted]  
(Scroll down to the service information for [redacted] and click Join Livestream button 5 minutes prior to the service time). If so desired, donations may be made to Saint Anne's Parish, 859 Barnardo Avenue, Peterborough On K9H 5W2

## Chapter 3

Figure 41: "Louanne Robbins"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 22 Apr. 2021, A11



The day was unseasonably warm, the sky was azure blue and in the early morning hours of November [redacted] left us.

[redacted] was born on February [redacted] 1930 in Bowmanville Ontario. She is predeceased by her husband of 65 years [redacted] (November 7, 2017). Survived by son [redacted] of Crystal Beach ON, grandchildren [redacted] of Chilliwack, BC, and great grandchildren [redacted]. Brother-in-law [redacted] of Burlington, sister in law [redacted] and many nieces and nephews. [redacted] will also be greatly missed by her second family in Peterborough, [redacted] and [redacted]. After finishing high school, [redacted] attended business college and took a position with General Motors in what would be called logistics today. She met [redacted] and was married in 1952. [redacted]'s career with A&P took them to Port Hope, Lindsay and Peterborough finally settling in Warsaw Ontario. During the many years of residence in the south end of Peterborough, [redacted] would often find the basement family room full of Kenner students whom all seem to have survived their teen years and moved on to careers and raising family's of their own. [redacted] enjoyed swimming and cross-country skiing, however her passion was curling. She was a member of the board of the Peterborough Curling Club and past president of the Lakefield Club. She competed at the Provincial level for many years and accumulated a vast collection of ribbons and trophies. She was a high level competitor. The broom was always at the back door ready to go. In the working world, [redacted] was a consummate administrator - she got things done. She held positions as executive assistant for many private companies in Peterborough, Ontario Housing Corp and finished her working career at Lakefield High. [redacted] enjoyed her lunches with the ladies of the Red Hat Society. She was very involved with her community and an active volunteer with the Warsaw Community Group, the Jolly Seniors and the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 511 (past president) to name a few. She was an involved woman. [redacted] enjoyed travelling as well, visiting many destinations in the Caribbean, Great Britain and Europe. Socially [redacted] did enjoy her glass of wine (or two). [redacted] had a full life and lived it well. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her. Deepest thanks to the staff at Gilmore Lodge Seniors Home in Fort Erie, where [redacted] spent her final days. The level of genuine compassion and care she experienced was beyond compare. Cremation has [redacted]

Celebration of Life to be arranged post Covid, details will be announced at a later time.

[redacted]

www.peterborough.com

### Chapter 3

Figure 42: “Isabelle LaVallee”

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 14 Nov. 2020, A8



Peterborough This Week | Th



one of her former students and finding out what they had been up to.

loved picking berries, fishing, playing euchre, bird-watching, baking, making quilts, crocheting hand towels, yard sales, peanut butter, reading, traveling, and being physically active. At Royal Gardens, she frequently participated in activities and could somehow remember the poems and songs of her youth, long after her memory started to fade. Above all else, she loved her large extended family and cherished every visit, phone call, letter, card, email, and Facebook message that she received.

passed away peacefully, at the age of 95, at Peterborough Regional Health Centre on Sunday, April 2021.

is survived by her daughter

was born on July 1925 in Chatham, Ontario, but spent most of her childhood in the Apsley area. Life was not always easy growing up, but always persevered and tried to make the best of every situation. Whether she was helping her father deliver groceries as a child, working to earn her room and board in Lakefield so that she could attend high school, or inspecting wire for the Inspection Board during WW2, never shied away from hard work.

her grandchildren

is preceded in death by her parents

nine great-grandchildren; her sister; her sister-in-

In 1946, answered an ad in the newspaper and accepted her first teaching job at the one-room schoolhouse in Owenbrook. She would later earn her teaching qualifications by taking summer courses at the Toronto Normal School. She taught at two more one-room schoolhouses in Clydesdale and Cottlesoe before settling into teaching junior grades at Warsaw Public School and Parkhill Public School. was a creative and innovative educator whose special talent was making connections with struggling students. She particularly enjoyed the years that she spent teaching speech therapy and reading intervention. Nothing delighted more than running into

The family would like to thank the staff of Royal Gardens, who took such good care of over the past 15 years, and the staff of PRHC, who helped make her final days more comfortable. Due to COVID-19, a private family interment will take place. A Celebration of Life will be planned at a later date, when circumstances allow.

*In lieu of flowers, a donation to Food For Kids Peterborough would be appreciated.*

mykawartha.com

### Chapter 3

Figure 43: “Edwina Kappa”

Source: *Peterborough This Week*, 29 Apr. 2021, 90

June [redacted] 1932 - June [redacted] 2021

With great sadness we mourn [redacted] sudden passing as she reunites with her late husband [redacted] (2011) and son [redacted] (2020). Cherished mother of [redacted]

[redacted] was an avid tennis, shuffleboard and card player. She enjoyed having weekly coffee dates with friends and long walks at Jackson Park where she could sit and enjoy nature. She especially loved spending winters in Florida. [redacted] was dedicated to her family and took great joy in watching her grandchildren flourish, always offering the best health advice. Special thanks to the ICU staff at PRHC. A private family celebration of the life will be held at a later date. If desired, donations to Hospice Peterborough can be made online or through the funeral home.



*Condolences to the family can be made online through the funeral home.*

[redacted]

### Chapter 3

Figure 44a: “Pauline Hemotte”

Source: *Peterborough This Week*. 1 July 2021, 49





[Redacted]  
 (nee [Redacted])

Peacefully at her residence in her 88th year, surrounded by her family on Monday May [Redacted] 2020. Beloved wife of [Redacted] for 65 years. Pre-deceased by her parents [Redacted] and [Redacted]. Loving mother of [Redacted].

as well as her extended family and friends. A graduate of Guelph University's Dietician Program [Redacted] loved her family and enjoyed many happy memories at Stoney Lake and their winter home in Largo Florida. In keeping with her wishes a private family Funeral service was held at the [Redacted] HOME 600 Monaghan Road. Interment Rosemount Memorial Gardens. Memorial donations may be made to Juvenile Diabetes.

*Online condolences to the family may be given at*  
 [Redacted]

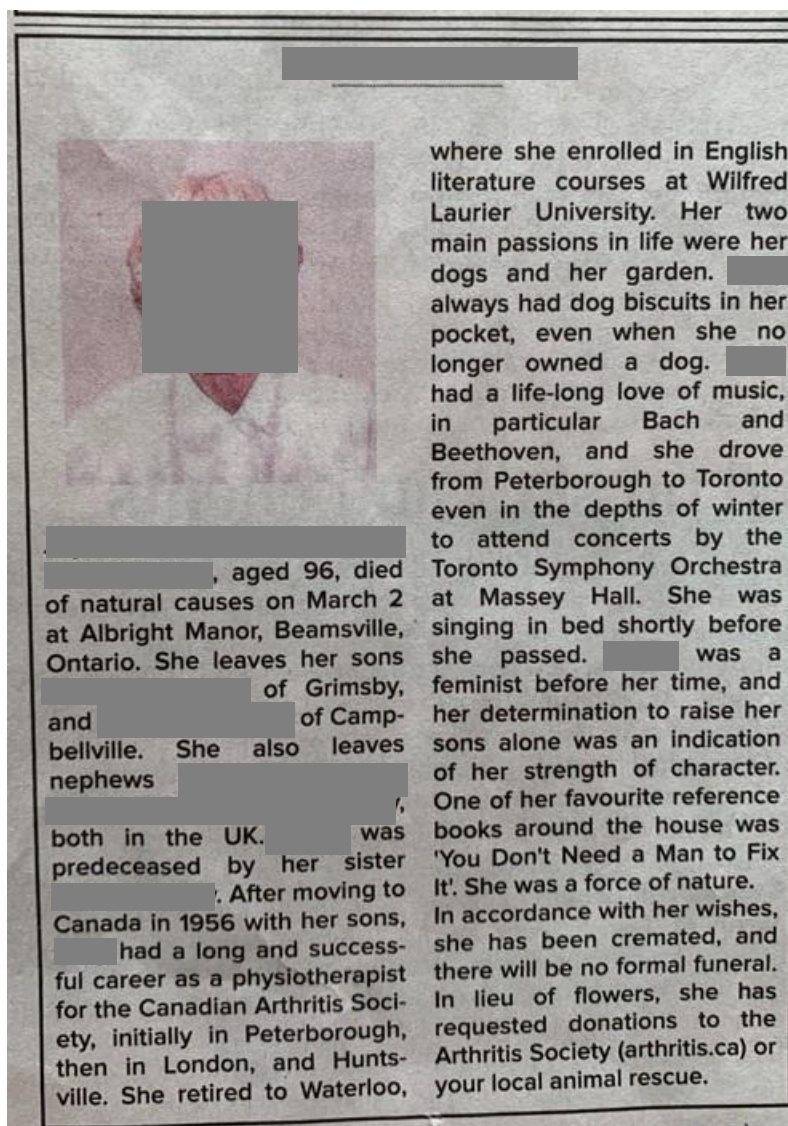


Chapter 3

Figure 44b: "Evie Switzer"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 6 June 2020, A8

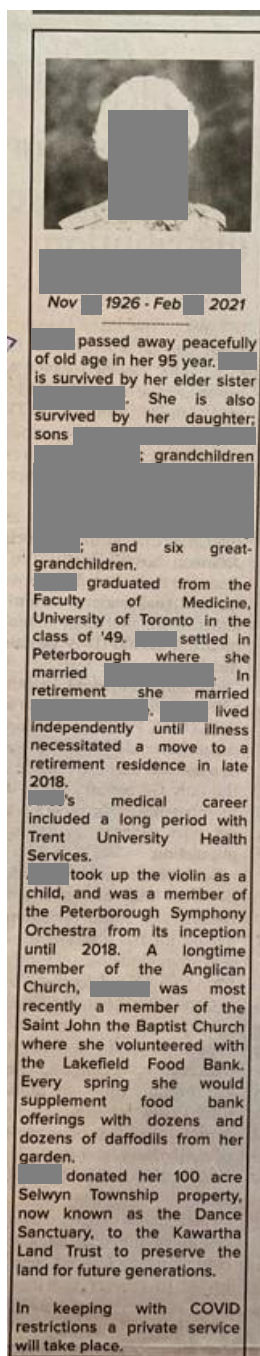




## Chapter 3

Figure 45: "Elaine Briton"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 23 Mar. 2021, A7




### Chapter 3

Figure 46: “Jean Bunderson”

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 20 Feb. 2021, A8

[REDACTED]



Peacefully at home on Friday, October [REDACTED] 2021. [REDACTED] age 95 years, of Elmira, formerly of Normanby Township. Beloved wife of the late [REDACTED] (1999). Dear mother of [REDACTED] (the late [REDACTED] 2017) of Pennsylvania, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] of Melbourne, [REDACTED] of Bracebridge. Fondly remembered by her grandchildren [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] grandchildren. Predeceased by her parents [REDACTED] will be remembered for her dedication to Trinity

Lutheran church, the family farm and gardens in Normanby Township. After moving to Elmira in 1973, became a very active member of St. James Lutheran Church and Elmira Seniors. She loved bowling, golf and playing cards. [REDACTED] loved to travel and enjoyed many trips and tours together. After [REDACTED]'s passing, [REDACTED] continued to do so with family and friends. [REDACTED]'s door was always open to visitors. She loved nothing better than a good visit on the back deck with family and friends, and her exceptionally kind neighbours and their families. [REDACTED] was very proud of her gardens which she continued to maintain this year! The family will receive friends and relatives on Friday, October 8, 2021 from 2 - 4 and 6 - 8 p.m. at the Dreisinger Funeral Home, 62 Arthur St. S., Elmira. Masks are mandatory, please call the funeral home at 519-669-2207 to register your attendance. A private family service will take place on Saturday, October 9, 2021 at St. James Lutheran Church, 60 Arthur St. S., Elmira. Public interment to follow at 1 p.m. at Mount Pleasant Cemetery, 102164 6th Concession, Normanby Township. Donations to St. James Lutheran Church or Woolwich Community Services - Food Bank would be appreciated by the family, and may be made through the funeral home.

[REDACTED]

Chapter 3

Figure 47: "Ireena Hapstead"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 6 Oct. 2021, A7

[REDACTED]  
(nee [REDACTED])



returned to Manvers Township near Bethany. Even after [REDACTED]'s death in 1985, Vi remained an active part of that community until she moved into retirement residences in Peterborough. [REDACTED] is predeceased by her sister, [REDACTED].

She is survived by her brother-in-law and his wife, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] will be deeply missed by her children, [REDACTED].

Passed away peacefully on Wednesday July [REDACTED] at Royal Gardens, Peterborough, in her 95th year. Born in Manvers Township, [REDACTED] grew up on a dairy farm on the outskirts of Peterborough during the depression, the daughter of [REDACTED].

After completing high school at PCVS and working as a bank teller in Peterborough, [REDACTED] married [REDACTED] in 1949. They soon moved to Lakefield where [REDACTED] became a respected teacher and VP at LDSS for many years. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] enjoyed many years participating in the Lakefield Community, while also raising their four children there. After [REDACTED]'s retirement in 1978, they

[REDACTED]. She cherished her role as Grandma to [REDACTED]. [REDACTED], as Great-Grandma to [REDACTED], and as "[REDACTED]" to her many nieces and nephews. A special thank you to the staff at Royal Gardens and to Drs. Dickie and Turner. A private family ceremony and interment will be held at St. Mary's Cemetery, Lifford, officiated by Rev. Rob Ross of St. Thomas Church, Millbrook. Memorial donations would be appreciated to help support St. Mary's Chapel, Lifford.


### Chapter 3

Figure 48: "Willa Boyer"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 23 July 2020, A8



(1919-2020)



During the celebrations for her 100th birthday, [redacted] was asked to suggest the secret to her longevity. "To not give up," came the firm reply. "To not start something and quit." The surviving member of a family of 13 children died May [redacted], just five days shy of her 101st birthday, and no-one who met her at any point in her long life would ever characterize her as being a quitter. [redacted] was the youngest child born to former Alderville First Nation Chief [redacted] and [redacted], and the only one of her siblings born in a hospital. She grew up in Lakefield after her parents left the reserve near Cobourg, and remained in the area most of her life, including the last nine years as a resident of Peterborough Retirement Residence, formerly Peterborough Manor. She was the oldest citizen of Alderville First Nation, and the only member of any of the seven Williams Treaty First Nations who was alive when the treaty came into effect in 1923, and still living when a settlement was finally negotiated in 2018. From her earliest job working as a babysitter for an Anglican minister in Lakefield, she was a wage-earner for the next 50 years, including stints as a seamstress in a garment factory in Toronto, where she married [redacted] and gave birth to [redacted], her only child. When she returned from Toronto as a single mother, she got a job measuring draperies for Cherney's furniture store in downtown Peterborough, and working on production lines in the former Peterborough plants of Outboard Marine Corporation and the Canadian General Electric Company. She and [redacted] lived with her parents in a pebbled fieldstone home built by her father on the east side of Lakefield. There was no central heating, running water, or indoor plumbing. She recalled giving her parents \$5 of her \$12 weekly earnings for room and board, and paying another \$3 for weekly bus fare to work. [redacted]'s birth certificate listed only one given name, but she took it upon herself to add the middle name "[redacted]" to some documents after fellow high school students teased her about not having one. She acquired a new last name after marrying [redacted], a Royal Navy veteran of World War II whom she had met while still in Toronto, and with whom she lived happily for over 30 years before he died of heart failure in the kitchen of the modest two-storey house they bought and remodelled on Fitzgerald St. near Lakefield's fairgrounds. Over their years together, that home was the scene of many happy gatherings of family and friends, but after [redacted]'s death [redacted] decided that she no longer wanted to worry about replacing shingles or repairing doors. She moved to a seniors' apartment on the other side of the village, located on the grounds that had previously been occupied by the elementary school that she and her son had both attended, and where both had been taught by the same Grade One teacher, Miss Elsie Kidd. Royal Canadian Legion Branch 77 in Lakefield conferred an honorary lifetime membership on her in recognition of hundreds of hours of volunteer work, and she was still playing in cribbage and euchre tournaments as she approached 90. She also volunteered to read and spend time with patients in a private hospital in the village, just as she had with wounded veterans in Toronto's Sunnybrook Hospital following World War II. During her last few months, [redacted] frequently reminisced about her parents, fondly giving credit to a strict but kind father, and a mother who was 43 when she brought her into the world, and who nursed her through a bout of life-threatening childhood diphtheria. While not a churchgoer, she practised a personal creed of "being kind to other people, and helping others whenever possible." "We don't need to have religion to love anyone," she was fond of saying. She doted on her offspring, and made many personal sacrifices for the benefit of son [redacted], North Bay, and grandson Capt. [redacted]. Nothing pleased her more than visits from great-granddaughter [redacted] ([redacted]), Trenton, and great-grandson Capt. [redacted] ([redacted]), Colorado Springs. Due to visiting restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, [redacted] never got to hold her great-granddaughter [redacted] born in January to [redacted] and [redacted], but seeing photos brought broad smiles to her face. [redacted] enjoyed regular visits from nephew [redacted] and nieces [redacted] and [redacted] - all of Lakefield - and niece [redacted], of Peterborough. In addition to her parents, [redacted] and husband [redacted], [redacted] was predeceased by [redacted].

elderly years were made more comfortable by the care and kindness she received from all the staff and friends at Peterborough Retirement Residence. Funeral arrangements were provided by The Hendren Funeral Homes, Lakefield Chapel, who honoured family wishes to forego visitations and services due to the COVID pandemic. [redacted] will rest beside her beloved Art at Rosemount Memorial Gardens in Peterborough. A celebration of her life for family and friends is tentatively planned for this coming fall. Memorial donations, if desired, may be made to an animal rescue of one's choosing and can be made by visiting [redacted].

## Chapter 3

### Figure 49: "Mary Edwards"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 20 May 2020, A8

**KILLINGBECK, Elsie (Cox)**  
 [REDACTED]



grands, [REDACTED]  
 Also survived by many nieces and nephews and will be missed by dear friends [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Mom had the gift of hospitality and she loved to entertain. She was a master creator of pies and butter tarts. Many were welcomed to meals at her home and if someone was shut in she was sure to be bringing food offerings to their door. Heaven got a Kick Butt Angel and she is sure to be organizing great High in the Sky parties. A celebration of life will be held at a later date. If desired, donations can be made to the Fairhaven Foundation or LAWS. The family wants to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of the staff at Fairhaven especially the wonderful staff on WV4 for all of the excellent and compassionate care.

Peacefully passed away at Fairhaven on Wednesday, May [REDACTED] 2021 in her 92nd year. Loving wife, for 68 years, to the late [REDACTED]. She [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED], grandchildren [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED] and great-



Chapter 3

Figure 50: "Clara Fremlin"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 22 May 2021, A11

March [REDACTED] 1930 - May [REDACTED] 2021



Any event that she hosted had lively music and dancing, dancing, dancing. She would have made a great dance partner to Fred Astaire.

Our sweet mom lived life with the pedal to the medal, until Alzheimer's dealt her a plot twist none of us ever expected. She was tenderly cared for with love and compassion by the staff at Extendicare Lakefield, Stoney Wing. We are eternally grateful to them, and for all the stories of her wit and sense of humour. The comfort and kindness you bestowed to her family, in her final days, will never be forgotten.

This obituary is for a very loved mom, step-mom, grandmother, great-grandmother, wife, sister, aunt, and friend. A lover of life, travel, good wine, and great food. [REDACTED] was pre-deceased by two devoted husbands, [REDACTED] (1977) and [REDACTED] (2013).

She was a woman before her time. A working mom in the 1950s, our mom raised us to be independent, courageous, and compassionate. She was never shy about giving you her opinion, and loved a good "bun throwing row" about politics at the dinner table. We always knew where we stood with her, and it was this fierce love of us, and of right and wrong, that cemented our devotion to her.

Her grandchildren have fond memories of crazy road trips, high teas and dress up parties.

She will be greatly missed by her family, surviving sisters and friends. We take comfort in knowing she is gathered around the picnic table on the beach, a glass of fine wine in hand, with all who have passed before her.

Aquamation entrusted to [REDACTED] e. A private family burial will take place at Rosemount Memorial Gardens in Peterborough at a later date. If you wish, a memorial donation to Lakefield Extendicare Resident Council in [REDACTED]'s name would be greatly appreciated.

*"A mom's hug lasts long after she lets go."*

[REDACTED]


### Chapter 3

Figure 51: "Doreen Towns"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 12 May 2021, A8



May [redacted] 1938 - April [redacted] 2020



[redacted] graduated from Humber College and started a twenty year career as a registered nurse in Toronto Hospitals, in a clinic and as a St Elizabeth visiting nurse. [redacted] was the loving, devoted and supportive wife of [redacted] for sixty years. She was an exceptional mother and justifiably proud of her children

[redacted] s full life of experiences, loving and being loved, and caring for others ended at Lakefield Extendicare following a few years of enduring the ravages of Alzheimer's. [redacted] was born in Peterborough, the daughter of [redacted]. She attended Queen Mary PS, PCVS, KGH School of Nursing and Peterborough Teachers' College. After a brief career as a teacher at Confederation PS she moved with her husband to Guelph where they started their family. Moving to Toronto, as an adult she realized her dream,

[redacted] adored her amazing grandchildren [redacted]

[redacted] missed by her nieces and nephews. [redacted] had a rich life, surrounded and loved by family and many friends. Patient, kind, tolerant, giving and supportive, she had the talents of the nurse and

teacher that she was trained as and the attitude, personality and style that endeared her to everyone. She exuded quiet confidence and competence that outshone her reluctance to be in the spotlight. She delivered Meals on Wheels, gave freely of her time and talents, and was active in her church where she sang in choirs, baked, and was a life member of the UCW at St Andrew's United. She enjoyed sixty years of family cottaging at Lake Kasshabog, extensive travel with her husband, even living in Australia for a year. The family appreciates the great care given to [redacted] by the staff of Lakefield Extendicare. Arrangements have been [redacted]

celebration of life will be held at a future date. Donations to the church of your choice in [redacted]'s name would be appreciated if you wish.

### Chapter 3

Figure 52: "Henrietta Drysdale"

Source: *Peterborough This Week*, 30 Apr. 2020, 29





and [REDACTED]: Missing her hugs, snuggles and love are her beloved great-grandchildren, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

Momma, you were an amazing presence and have left a huge void in our lives. Rest, rest, rest in peace.

A Memorial Funeral Mass will be celebrated at the Cathedral of St. Peter-In-Chains, 411 Reid Street, Peterborough on Tuesday, September 28, 2021, at 1:30 p.m. (by reservation only - Contact [REDACTED] at 705-745-4683 or go to <https://signup.com/go/ktAypRT>). Those wishing to view the service are welcome to join the livestream, through the [REDACTED] webpage. In light of the pandemic there will be no reception following the service.

Inurnment to take place at the Holy Cross Cemetery, 8361 Yonge Street, Thornhill on Wednesday, September 29, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. (by reservation only - Contact Comstock-Kaye at 705-745-4683 or go to <https://signup.com/go/JRvRHwa>). Online condolences may be made at [www.comstockkaye.com](http://www.comstockkaye.com)

Thank you to Dr. Grieve, who treated [REDACTED] as if she were his mother, PSWs Bonnie, Carol and Nina who looked after mother to the end with love and Joanne who was with mother until Covid began. Thank you also to Dr. Beamish and the St. Elizabeth Palliative Care personnel who guided us through the final stages of [REDACTED]'s life, especially Emmanuel and Samantha.

Momma you are finally free from the suffering and indignity of dementia, but now we must live our lives without you in it.

[REDACTED] was born in Montserrat, W.I. in 1923 and lived on the island of Antigua until coming to Canada in 1958.

Independent and intelligent, [REDACTED] tutored English and worked for the British Government as a principal court stenographer for 14 years. After coming to Canada, she settled in with the Federal Government, where she worked for 33 years. Upon retiring, she moved to Peterborough to help care for her grandchildren, and while healthy, she indulged her love of cooking, by pampering her family with handmade pasta, homemade challah and french bread. No recipe was too daunting, and no ethnic food was off limits. [REDACTED] loved to attend Mass at St. Peter's Cathedral and lived by the Golden Rule; her faith was her life.


Left to mourn her is daughter, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] adored [REDACTED] grandchildren, [REDACTED]

### Chapter 3

Figure 53: "Dorothy Jones"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 23 Sept. 2021, A9

[REDACTED] ([REDACTED])  
[REDACTED]



children [REDACTED] and their families; and her many cousins. She also leaves behind many dear friends made over the years from as a popcorn maker at the old Peterborough Drive-In, a hair dresser, mom; and, the girls from the call centre.

[REDACTED] was most proud of being of an avid member and longtime leading supporter of Wonderful Ladies formerly known as The Peterborough Breast Cancer Support Group - sometimes referenced (at home) the Dragon Boat farm team because of the close ties between these groups.

Following a long painful struggle with metastasized breast cancer; disguised as sciatica, [REDACTED] left us in the wee hours of Wednesday, June [REDACTED] 2020 at PRHC surrounded by doctors, nurses, and machines at PRHC with her husband at her side.

Beloved wife of [REDACTED], loving mother of [REDACTED]; and grandmother to [REDACTED]. Predeceased by her parents [REDACTED] and mother [REDACTED]; and infant brothers [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] also leaves behind her loving brother [REDACTED]; his

A celebration of life will be scheduled in the near future to honour and remember [REDACTED]. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to Hospice Peterborough in [REDACTED]'s memory. In keeping with [REDACTED]'s wishes she will be interred in Little Lake Cemetery close to her parents where she will have a riverside view.

[REDACTED]

### Chapter 3

Figure 54: "Leigh Ophir"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 30 June 2020, A8

(nee [redacted]), [redacted]  
August [redacted] 1940 - April [redacted] 2021



parents [redacted] and [redacted] and her sister [redacted] and her brother [redacted]. She spent her lifetime devoted to raising her children at a young age, and spent years mastering the art of service, eventually being featured in a documentary film DISH: Women, Waitressing and the Art of Service. Working until the age of 72, she retired to spend time with family, friends, her daily gym workouts, and daily walks. In keeping with her wishes, a cremation will take place and a private family service will be held at Nisbett Funeral Home, Peterborough. Inurnment at Rosemount Memorial Gardens. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date when COVID regulations permit group gatherings. Memorial Donations may be made in [redacted]'s name to Multiple Myeloma Canada, at <https://myeloma.ca> or Myeloma Canada, 1255 TransCanada, Suite 160, Dorval, QC H9P 2V4. The family wishes to extend a special thank you to the staff at Peterborough Regional Hospital Centre, units B2, B3 and D2, for their care and compassion in difficult circumstances. In honor of our beautiful Mother, Grandmother, Great-Grandmother, Daughter, Sister, Aunt and friend we ask that you fight COVID by being socially distant, wearing a mask and getting a vaccine as soon as you are able.

It is with deep sorrow and much love that we mourn the passing of [redacted] of Peterborough, ON on April [redacted] 2021 in her 81st year. She courageously fought the COVID virus and passed away with family by her side. She will be lovingly remembered by her six children:

[redacted]

She was a loving grandmother to [redacted]

[redacted] and great-grandmother (GG) to 15 great-grandchildren with three more on the way. Loving sister of [redacted] and a great friend to many. She was predeceased by her [redacted]

Online condolences to the family may be shared at [redacted]

### Chapter 3

Figure 55: "Susan Delaney"

Source: *Peterborough This Week*, 6 May 2021, 51



It is with heavy heart that my lovely wife of 27 years, [REDACTED] passed away at home with family, friends and pets by her side on March [REDACTED] 2021. A fall February 26, 2021 caused a neck injury that she could not recover from. She wished to die at home with family at her side, which the staff of KGH arranged. Dr. Sibby, Dr. Tisher and many nurses allowed her to make the journey home in comfort to fulfill her wishes. Thank you to the wonderful staff at Kingston General Hospital, Campbellford Hospital and Ornge Ambulance for the care given to allow the time to be with her the last three weeks. She leaves to mourn her beloved husband [REDACTED], brothers [REDACTED] [REDACTED] well as many nieces and nephews that will miss her immensely. Predeceased by her parents [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and brother [REDACTED]. A celebration of life will be held at the family home around the beginning of June when [REDACTED]'s gardens come to life.


Online condolences may be made at [REDACTED]

### Chapter 3

Figure 56: “Donelda Jasper”

Source: *Peterborough This Week*, 25 Mar. 2021, 49

[REDACTED]  
(nee [REDACTED])  
October [REDACTED] 1937 - May [REDACTED] 2020



with friends and family, music jams, playing cards and shuffleboard, dancing and writing poetry. She was a proud member of the Apsley Legion, marching with the Colour Party and serving as Secretary and Poppy Chairman for many years. Mom said she would never have changed anything in her life and was so appreciative of her nieces and nephews, lifelong friend [REDACTED], Legion pals, Spruce Corner's "ladies" and staff, and the many friends she made over the years. Mom remained strong and "sharp as a tack" right to the end - able to make all her own decisions. She did it "her way" and in that we are finding some comfort. Mom was okay with saying "so long" and reassured us we will all be together again. Arrangements are entrusted to [REDACTED]

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of our Mom and best friend, [REDACTED], of Apsley. Predeceased by our Dad - [REDACTED], special partner, [REDACTED], parents, [REDACTED], and big brothers [REDACTED]. Best Mom to [REDACTED] (Lenny - 2015) and [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]). Adored Nanny to [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and their mates. Special great-grandmother to [REDACTED]. Mom was the epitome of strength and love. She was sweet, selfless, smart, giving, supportive, and funny. Also the "life of the party" and "small but mighty". She found great enjoyment in camping

Ontario. A celebration of life will be held at the Apsley Legion Branch 381 at a later date. Donations to the Apsley Legion - Branch 381 may be made in her memory.

*Online condolences and memories may be shared through [REDACTED]*

### Chapter 3

Figure 57: "Coral O'Sheay"

Source: *Peterborough This Week*, 28 May 2020, 43





### Chapter 3

#### Figure 58: “Minnie Swoboda”

Source: *Peterborough This Week*, 4 Feb. 2021, 50





Passed away peacefully at his home with his loving family on [redacted] 9th [redacted]

Beloved husband of Lynn (nee McGrayne). Proud father of Bill (Tara), Jaclyn (Rob), Nick (Krystal), Kelly (Adam), Kerry (Shawn), and Kirk. Grandpa to Michael, Nathan, Samantha, Andrew, Vellna, Meghan, Marissa, Andrew, Chase, Bally, Austin, Charlotte and Nevaeh and great grandson Nathan. Bob will be sadly missed by his siblings Jim (JoAnn), Diane (Danny), Peter, the late Joe and sister in law Marilyn. Private Funeral Prayers will be held at the HIGHLAND PARK FUNERAL CENTRE, Interment Trent Valley Cemetery, Hastings. Donations in memory of Bob can be made to: the Canadian Cancer Society or the Lakefield Animal Welfare Society. Online condolences can be expressed at [www.highlandparkfuneralcentre.com](http://www.highlandparkfuneralcentre.com)

**HIGHLAND PARK FUNERAL CENTRE**



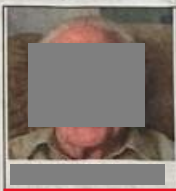
Passed away at his residence [redacted] 9th [redacted] Predeceased by his parents Edward and Doris Shewen, his partner Shirley Ethel Dell and by his brother Claude Mansel Shewen. Uncle of Carolyn Shewen-Kuz, Philip, Edward and Stephen Shewen. A private graveside service will be held at Little Lake Cemetery on Friday, July 31, 2020. In memory of Ron, donations to LAWS would be appreciated. A heartfelt thank you to the GAIN team at PRHC -NP Helen Kroecker, Donna Hickey, Stella Griffin, Lisa Hatfield and Lydia Ireland as well as Janet Lock of One on One Care. The genuine concern and care these people bring to their job is amazing to behold. Kirby Park and Tom of CBI were also a wonderful support for Ron over the years. Finally the Palliative Team at PRHC were a great help during Ron's final days. Ron was in good hands. Arrangements entrusted to the Comstock-Kaye Life Celebration Centre, 356 Rubidge Street. Online condolences may be made at [www.comstockkaye.com](http://www.comstockkaye.com)

**COMSTOCK-KAYE LIFE CELEBRATION CENTRE**  
Dignity  
LIFE WILL CELEBRATE™



Passed away at the Ross Memorial Hospital, Lindsay on [redacted] 2020. 78th year. Loved and missed by his wife of 28 years, Juanita Kemp and daughter Samantha Kemp (Alex Meyers) of B.C. Survived by his brother Robert Brewer (Jill) of B.C., brother-in-law Stuart Wellington of London and several nieces and nephews. Predeceased by his parents Frederick "Tod" Brewer and Dorothy (McHattie) and sister Brenda Wellington. Cremation has taken place. A private family gathering will be held at a later date. Memorial donations may be made to the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 381, Apsley, as expressions of sympathy and may be made by contacting THE HENDREN FUNERAL HOMES, LAKEFIELD CHAPEL, 66 Queen Street, Lakefield at [www.hendrenfuneralhome.com](http://www.hendrenfuneralhome.com) or by calling 705-652-3355. A special thank you to the staff at Carissant Care Nursing Home, Lindsay and Ross Memorial Hospital for your loving care. Please sign the Tribute Wall at [www.hendrenfuneralhome.com](http://www.hendrenfuneralhome.com)

**Duffus Funeral Home**




Passed away peacefully at Extencare Peterborough on [redacted] 95th year. Husband of the late Josephine Docherty. Loving father of Wendy Docherty. Loving grandfather of Joshua (Victoria), Joseph and Tyler. Dear great-grandfather of Sophia and Selena. Dear brother of May Gravelle. Loving uncle of Michael Gravelle and his nieces and nephews. Predeceased by his parents Joseph Docherty and Mary Anne Hanson, and sisters Isabelle Rice and Margaret Braeseur. Private Family Funeral Prayers were held in the DUFFUS CHAPEL, Peterborough on Wednesday, July 29, 2020. Interment at Little Lake Cemetery. Donations to the Canadian Cancer Society would be appreciated. Online condolences may be made at [www.duffusfuneralhome.com](http://www.duffusfuneralhome.com)

**Duffus Funeral Home**



A genuine, kind, loving and forgiving human being. Has given so much, sought so little. Always remembered, never to be forgotten. Love always; Clare, Shawn, Tina, Scott and Lynne.

*The rolling stream of life rolls on,  
But still the vacant chair  
reads the love, the voice, the smile  
of the one who once sat there.*



A wonderful person,  
friend and aide, one who was better  
God never made.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### SPECIAL OCCASIONS

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2020, in his 78th year. Dear brother of Terry Kennedy of Cambridge, Pamela MacLeod (John) of Peterborough. He will be missed by Karen McLean, Johnnie Kimberley and many nieces and nephews. He is predeceased by his brothers Jimmy and Tom Kennedy and parents Howard and Margaret Kennedy. Private family arrangements have been made with Comstock-Kaye Life Celebration Centre, 356 Rubidge Street. In memory of Mr. Kennedy, donations may be made to the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario.

**COMSTOCK-KAYE LIFE CELEBRATION CENTRE**  
Dignity  
LIFE WILL CELEBRATE™

There is a link death cannot sever,  
love and remembrance last forever.



Always so good,  
unselfish and kind, none on this earth your equal I find.  
Honourable and true in all your ways, loving and faithful to the end of your days,  
honest and liberal, ever upright, just in your judgment, always right,  
loved by your friends and all whom you knew,  
one is a million, that person was you.

Chapter 3

Figure 60: "Passed away peacefully"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 30 July 2020, A8



**OBITUARIES**



Joan Ireland passed away peacefully with family by her side at Campbellford Memorial Hospital on [redacted], in her 85th year. Joan is loved and will be missed by her sons Earl Ireland (Stacey) of Norwood and Jim Ireland of Calgary. She was a loving and very proud grandmother to Kooper Ireland. The family has said their personal good-byes and cremation has taken place.

Although Joan was a tell-it-like-it-is type of person, she did enjoy her daily visits to Coffee Time to catch up on the local gossip and even though she was unable to get there this last year I know she missed that special time with staff and friends.

The family wishes to thank the many people who were there throughout the years to assist, listen, give advice, and just be a friend. They would also like to especially thank the staff and friends at Mapleview Retirement Home in Norwood for their love and care as well as Peterborough Regional Health Centre staff for their support for her many visits over the years and the staff at Campbellford Memorial Hospital for their compassion and support in Joan's last moments.

Memorial donations may be made to Mapleview Retirement Residence in Norwood as expressions of sympathy and may be made by contacting THE HENDREN FUNERAL HOMES, NORWOOD CHAPEL at hendrenfuneralhome.com or by calling 705-639-5322.



Passed away after a brief illness at Peterborough Regional Health Centre, on Wednesday, [redacted] in her 89th year. Beloved wife of the late Norman Cranley d. December 8, 1999. Loving mother of Richard Cranley and wife Debbie and Terry Cranley and wife Gale, all of Peterborough, Kevin Cranley and wife Kim of Port Hope, and Shelley Goselin and husband Mark of Omemee. Dear grandmother of Chad (Laura), Daniel, Kendra (Andrew), Mike (Kristy), Michelle (Anthony), Bob (Miranda), Billy (Jessalyn), Katie (Tyler) and Jake of Kenora. Dear great-grandmother of Will, Amy, Mary, Violet, Delia, Quintin, Spencer, Carson, Jaxson and Lennon. Dear sister-in-law of Barb Turney and Ray Cranley. Predeceased by her sister Marie and brother Art. Private Family Visitation and Funeral Service were held followed by interment at St. Peter's Cemetery. In memory of Shirley, donations to the Heart and Stroke Foundation would be appreciated by the family.

Online condolences may be made at [www.duffusfuneralhome.com](http://www.duffusfuneralhome.com)





Passed away peacefully on Saturday, [redacted] at the Bridge Hospice in Warkworth, Ontario, after a short illness. He is survived by his children (Gord Mullins), Allan Hulsman, Kimberly Hulsman and his two older sisters Martha Byrnes and Margeurite Finnegan. Loving husband of the late Marie Hulsman and the son of the late Joseph and Louisa Hulsmans. Ken touched many lives and will be remembered by family and dear friends. He was an active Rotarian, Paul Harris Fellow, entrepreneur, past president of Campbellford Minor Hockey and restaurateur (Striders Dining Lounge). Due to circumstances around Covid19 a Celebration of Life will be postponed to a later date. In lieu of flowers the family asks that donations be made to the Campbellford Memorial Hospital Foundation and, or The Bridge Hospice in Warkworth.

R.I.P. Kenneth Laurent  
Charles Hulsman  
May 31, 1932 -  
October 10, 2020

Online condolences can be made at [quintecremationservices.com](http://quintecremationservices.com)

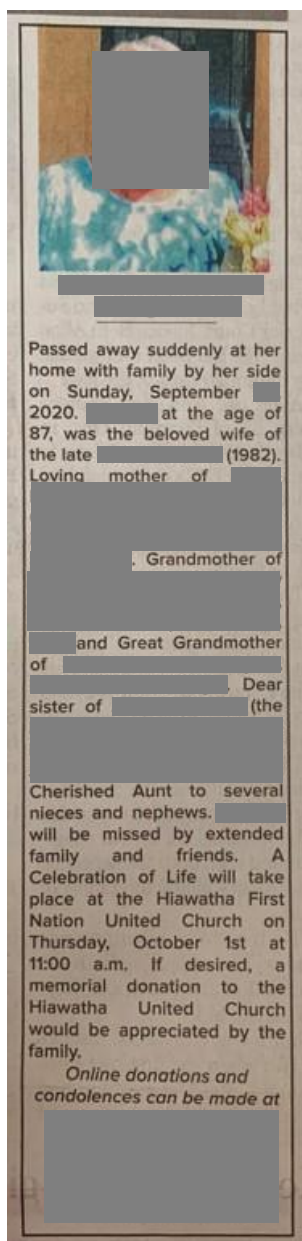
What would I give to clean your hand,  
your happy face to see.

Heavy are our hearts today, memory brings you back once more,  
to the time when you were with us, to the happy days of yore.

Chapter 3

Figure 61: "Passed away"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 14 Oct. 2020, A7




### Chapter 3

Figure 62: “Nettie Rains”

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 1 Oct. 2020, A7

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED] and great granddaughter [REDACTED]. Survived by her sisters [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], sisters-in-law [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and many cousins, nieces and nephews. Predeceased by her parents [REDACTED] sisters [REDACTED] and brothers [REDACTED].

Passed away peacefully at her home on Monday, February [REDACTED], 2020, lovingly surrounded by her family. [REDACTED] of Curve Lake in her 84th year. Beloved wife of [REDACTED] for 62 years. [REDACTED] was one of the first Day Care assistants when Curve Lake became the first Canadian First Nation Day Care 48 years ago. She was one of the first graduates of the Native Language Teacher Program at Lakehead University and through her love of teaching, she excelled as a Nishnaabe Language Teacher for the Lakefield Public Schools, Alderville First Nation and Trent University for many years. [REDACTED] was also a dedicated member and Sunday School Teacher at Curve Lake United Church. She created a Halloween tradition of handing out candy apples for over three generations. Trick or treaters learned the Nishnaabe word for candy apple "ziizbaaktowaabmin". Loving mother of [REDACTED].


Dear grandmother of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Friends and relatives may call at the family home, 45 Chemong Street South, Curve Lake on Thursday, February 27, 2020 from 2:00 PM onward, and at the Curve Lake Church on Friday, February 28, 2020 from 2:00 PM onward. A funeral service will take place at the Curve Lake Church on Saturday, February 29, 2020 at 11:00 AM. Interment to follow at Curve Lake Cemetery. Reception at the Curve Lake Community Centre. As expressions of sympathy, memorial donations may be made to Chief Keith Knott Bursary (Trent University), Canadian Blood Services or Canadian Cancer Society, and may be made by contacting THE [REDACTED] by calling (705) 652-3355. The family wishes to thank the nurses from St. Elizabeth Health Care, especially Nurse Nicole and Carrick, Karan from Hospice Peterborough, Joanne from Life Labs, the staff from Central East LHIN, Dr. Mallory and his staff and everybody who was involved in providing [REDACTED] with exceptional and loving care.

### Chapter 3

Figure 63: "Elsie Ashe"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 27 Feb. 2020, A8



June 2020, we lost an Angel. passed unexpectedly and peacefully at the PHRC. She is survived by a brother, two daughters, two grandsons and a great-grandson. She is predeceased by her mother and husband. will miss the close friendship shared with, and their conversations over a great meal. was born in Berlin but raised in Toronto. She attended the Ontario College of Art where she started her career in architecture. Later she attended the University of Victoria where she started her second career as a teacher. When she married, they ventured off to many places throughout Canada, Vermont and New Hampshire. loved this time of her life. She soon discovered her talent for fabric arts, cresting, producing and selling different items at craft fairs and bazaars. was an active member of the Peterborough Hand Weavers and Spinners Guild. She so enjoyed being immersed in the loving atmosphere of these creative women where her talents truly shone. was a very active member of her community as a volunteer with One Roof, The Canoe Museum and her greatest love of all was her church community of All Saints Anglican. A special thank you to pastor Samantha Caravan for her generous time spent with over the past year and at her bedside reading hymns during her last moments. was deeply involved in helping run many events and programs at the church. She will be missed by so many of her congregation, friends, fellow weavers and her many volunteer organisations. Our community has lost a great light and gift. A Celebration of Life will be held at All Saints Anglican Church at a later date. In memory of, donations to One Roof Community Centre would be appreciated by the family.

*Online condolences may be expressed at*

wv


## Chapter 3

Figure 64: "Corrine Laddiser"

Source: *Peterborough This Week*, 18 June 2020, 43



[REDACTED]  
(nee [REDACTED])



Mom was a beautiful sweet generous soul. [REDACTED]'s mission in life was to raise her children and spend time with her grandchildren. She was thrilled to become a great-grandmother. Mom was an avid reader, loved to crochet, travel, be outdoors, make holiday dinners for her family & friends, blueberry pancakes for her grandchildren and especially loved to listen to music of many different genres. She loved reading the news daily and could argue politics well into her mid 80's with her grandsons. All of our friends and extended families that met her, fell in love with her too.

Peacefully on August [REDACTED] our cherished mother slowly slipped away while listening to classical music at 91 years of age. [REDACTED] was the beloved wife of the late [REDACTED] (d. 2003). Adored mother of [REDACTED] (Mike). Much loved Nanny to [REDACTED]

Our sincere gratitude to the Riverside 4 nursing station at Fairhaven, they loved her just as her family did. Dementia robbed her of her memory, but her loving kindness prevailed.

Former Mother in Law of [REDACTED] A private family service will be [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]'s memory to the Fairhaven Foundation would be appreciated by the family.

[REDACTED] was also loved by many nieces & nephews.


*Online condolences may be expressed at*

[REDACTED]

## Chapter 3

Figure 65: "Jo-Ellen Rossee"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 14 Aug. 2020, A8



(nee [redacted])  
 Of Peterborough, Ontario died peacefully on the evening of December [redacted] while sitting beside [redacted], her husband of 66 years, while watching the TV news. Born on a farm near Ridgetown, Ontario on December 14, 1929 she went to the high school there after attending a one room school house across from the farm. Excelling in both academics and sport she was embarrassed at a school assembly after winning the 100-yard dash in a meet of southern Ontario schools when the Principal called her "the fastest woman in our area". [redacted] in Ridgetown, Ontario in 1946, and they married in 1953 following their graduation from Western University. [redacted] went on to the College of Education in Toronto, earning her High School Teaching Certificate. After teaching Home Economics for a few years, she became a full-time mother, raising four daughters:

[redacted] was the daughter of [redacted] and she was predeceased by sisters [redacted]. When her children were far enough along in school she started two businesses which both succeeded because of her leadership and boundless energy. [redacted] could never see too much of her daughters or her grandchildren.

[redacted] step-grandchildren [redacted]. She loved them all passionately and unreservedly. Sadly, she never saw her twin great granddaughters, [redacted]. Prior to moving to a retirement home in Peterborough, [redacted] lived for 24 years on a farm with the airstrip where they landed their small plane. It was just a kilometer from Stoney Lake, Ontario where they had maintained the family cottage "Match Point" for 45 years. [redacted] loved that cottage, hosting the wildly popular Davis Island Cup tennis party every year. She was an active member of St. Peter's on the Rock on Stoney Lake and St. John the Baptist in Lakefield. They made many enduring friendships on Stoney Lake. At Western, [redacted] was a member of Pi Beta Phi, and remained actively in contact with members living in Toronto. For over 65 years they have gotten together for lunch several times a year, naming themselves The Bridge Club, even though they didn't finish the third rubber in the first 10 years. [redacted] joined Keith on volunteer projects with the Canadian Executive Service Organization where she extended Canadian goodwill by teaching English as a Second Language. She accompanied him on projects in Peru, Bolivia, St. Lucia, Russia and the Philippines. It was in the Philippines where [redacted] took art lessons, and it was discovered that she was a talented artist. [redacted] her children and grandchildren cherish the many paintings she did for them. Not many people can say they never made an enemy during their entire life, but [redacted] was one of that rare breed. She was a kind and loving mother and wife, a dear friend to many, and a compassionate, empathetic volunteer. She will be missed by all who knew her. What was to be the celebration of her 90th birthday on Saturday, December [redacted] has been changed into a celebration of her life, to be held in the Fireside Lounge at Princess Gardens, 100 Charlotte Street in Peterborough, Ontario. It will run from 1:00-3:00 p.m., with memories being shared at 2:00 p.m. For those wishing to do something in [redacted]'s memory, donations can be made to the Peterborough Regional Health Centre Foundation.


Expressions of sympathy and donations may be made by contacting the [redacted]

### Chapter 3

Figure 66: "Patricia MacNamara"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 11 Dec. 2019, A8

[REDACTED]  
(nee [REDACTED])



before having a family and later worked as a nurse at the Nicholl's building at Peterborough Civic Hospital. She was a resident of Peterborough since 1972 and a cottager on Stoney Lake since joining the [REDACTED] family in 1963. Survived by husband of more than 56 years, [REDACTED], children [REDACTED].

Passed away on Tuesday, April 28th at Fairhaven Long-term Care after a long struggle with Alzheimer's Disease. Born August [REDACTED], 1940 in Westport, Ontario, to [REDACTED], a casualty of WWII, and [REDACTED]. Graduate of Queen's University Phys-Ed (1962) and Sir Sanford Fleming Nursing (1988), [REDACTED] taught in Mississauga and at PCVS [REDACTED]. Sister of the late [REDACTED] of Westport, sister in law to the late [REDACTED] of Montreal and [REDACTED] of Huntsville. The family would like to thank the staff at Fairhaven for almost four years of support and care. A memorial and celebration of [REDACTED]'s life will be held at a later date.


Online [REDACTED]

Chapter 3

Figure 67: "Marlena Forest"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 2 May 2020, A9

March 20, 1937 - June 11, 2021



Peterborough/Kawartha Waterways for 65 years. [redacted] also served as a teacher in Peterborough for 35 years where she taught grades K-13 as well as serving as Academic Director at Auburn Vocational and Professor at Teachers College. [redacted] has touched so many lives throughout Peterborough and abroad with her generous heart, courageous spirit, and spark for adventure. Her spontaneity for travel has taken [redacted] around the globe and across Canada, coast to coast, with her family many times. She was always excited and prepared for camping excursions with family and friends and quality time spent at Timberlanes, the family wilderness retreat. There are also so many lifelong friends to mention, whose support and fond memories will live on with the family. Hugs to you all. A special family thank you to the Saint Elizabeth Health Care team of doctors, nurses, and PSWs, who provided such dignified and gentle care of Lenore. A private family ceremony will be held at Little Lake Cemetery with Reverend Samantha Caravan officiating. In honour and memory of [redacted], donations may be made to the Alzheimer Society or to the Saint Elizabeth Foundation - End of Life Care and can be made through the links below or through the [redacted]

(Father [redacted]  
Mother [redacted]  
1982). Born and raised in Peterborough, [redacted] Veteran Scouter/Teacher, [redacted] has 'Gone Home' in her 84th year. She passed away peacefully at home with her loving husband and boys by her side. [redacted] lived life to its fullest and was full of vitality, patience, and joy for helping others and making sure everyone was safe and well cared for. Beloved wife of [redacted] for 54 years of marriage and Mother to [redacted] Sister of [redacted] Aunt to [redacted] Proud and loving Grandmother to [redacted] loved life, teaching others, Scouting, working with the All Saints Church, and giving back to the community through volunteering with many organizations in Peterborough. [redacted] and [redacted] were inducted into the Peterborough Pathway of Fame for Community Betterment in 2009. Both served with Scouts Canada in [redacted]

[https://on.alz.to/site/Donation273068.donation=form1&df\\_id=3068&mfc\\_pref=T](https://on.alz.to/site/Donation273068.donation=form1&df_id=3068&mfc_pref=T)  
<https://donate.sehc.com/donation-3/end-of-life-care>

Online condolences may be made at [redacted]


### Chapter 3

Figure 68: "Bonnie Williamson"

Source: *Peterborough This Week*, 17 June 2021, 57



[REDACTED]  
(nee [REDACTED])



daughter [REDACTED] of Ottawa, and her nieces and nephews living across Canada. She was predeceased by her husband Dr. [REDACTED] (d. [REDACTED], 1993). She was a gracious hostess, a wonderful cook, and a loving mother with a passion for travel and life. [REDACTED] is now with her best friend and husband [REDACTED] for another trip together. She will also join other dear departed friends for some wine, laughs and bridge. What fun they must be having!

After [REDACTED] were in grade school [REDACTED] joined the Peterborough County School Board as a consultant for teaching French in public schools. School age kids knew her as "Madam [REDACTED]." [REDACTED] demonstrated the power of volunteering throughout her life. She cheerfully gave of her time to the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Canadian Cancer Society, Meals on Wheels, Showplace Peterborough, and her parish St. Alphonsus Church among others. We want to extend a sincere thank you to the wonderful staff at Princess Gardens in Peterborough who made our mother's last year's so warm and comfortable. Due to the current Covid-19 situation, there was no visitation and only a small private family service. Cremation has taken place. However, there will be a celebration of [REDACTED]'s life held at a later date. In memory of [REDACTED], donations to the Heart and Stroke Foundation or to a charity significant to you would be appreciated by the family.

It is with great sadness but the comfort of fond memories that the family of [REDACTED] announce her death on July 16, 2020 in Peterborough. She was born in the Eastern Townships of Quebec in December, 1924. [REDACTED] is survived by her son [REDACTED] of Maple Ontario, daughter [REDACTED] Sooke, B.C., grand-


Online condolence [REDACTED]

Chapter 3

Figure 69: "Daniella Dunford"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 16 July 2020, A8

[REDACTED] (nee [REDACTED])  
 January 1922 - April 2020



optimism and her adventurous role in the Navy in WW2 fostered loyalty, duty and service to others and country. Raising three children and helping out with the family business, she always found contentment in daily life with never a complaint. In her later years, her enduring love and dedication to family was evidenced by welcoming relatives anytime, hosting her children's wedding receptions at home in Bobcaygeon, and spearheading a family reunion just a few years ago. Her family and life in the Kawarthas were her world. Many thanks to Canterbury Gardens for her last 10 great years and to Dr. Natalie Whiting, for her wonderful palliative care. There will be a private family gathering at Little Lake Cemetery. In memory of [REDACTED], please consider making a donation to The Boyd Museum, Bobcaygeon, or Hospice Peterborough.

Predeceased by her husband, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] passed away in her 99th year from cancer. The family will miss her greatly. Dear mother of Peter [REDACTED], grandmother to [REDACTED], great-grandmother to [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] lived a full, exemplary life of productive routine and simple pleasures. Her long life and character was greatly shaped by world events. The Great Depression formed her indomitable positive, practical

[REDACTED]

Chapter 3

Figure 70: "Sheila Hermiston"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 2 May 2020, A9

[REDACTED] (nee [REDACTED])  
July [REDACTED] 1923 - April [REDACTED] 2020



loved playing cards and would often play bridge with her friends. She is loved and will be forever missed by her sons [REDACTED] of British Columbia, and [REDACTED] of Connecticut, and her two grandsons [REDACTED] who adored her. She is predeceased by her parents, [REDACTED], loving husband [REDACTED], son [REDACTED].

It is with great sadness that we announce the peaceful passing of [REDACTED] at Peterborough Regional Health Centre on Thursday, April [REDACTED] 2020 at the age of 96. [REDACTED] was a beloved community member in Lakefield where she attended and volunteered at the United Church. She loved cooking for her family and friends and had a talent for baking. She would often bake bread on Mondays and treat her children to maple chiffon cake on their birthdays. She enjoyed spending time with her family and being on the water, especially on the Trent River near Healey Falls where she was raised. She

[REDACTED] left an indelible mark in our lives. Her traits of strength, determination and kindness were admired by all those who knew her. She never wanted to be a burden to those around her and genuinely cared for the welfare of others. She was an amazing woman who lived a life full of gratitude. We are thankful for the loving care [REDACTED] received at P.R.H.C. and the kindness and compassion of the staff at The Regency of Lakefield.

Arrangements entrusted to [REDACTED]. A memorial service and family inurnment will take place later in the summer.

*"Perhaps they are not stars, but rather openings in heaven where the love of our lost ones pours through and shines down upon us to let us know they are happy."*

Condolences may be made by visiting  
[REDACTED]

### Chapter 3

Figure 71: "Adalyne Green"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 4 Apr. 2020, A7



Sylvia  
December 1937 - April 2021



We are heartbroken to announce that Sylvia passed away at her home after a long illness. Predeceased by her parents Sylvia will be profoundly missed by her beloved husband of 60 years, and by her daughters, as well as her treasured grandchildren, her cherished sister, and her beloved aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews as well as her many dear friends from church, work and community. Sylvia came into the world ahead of schedule, born many weeks prematurely - and family often joked that it was the only time in her life she was ever early for anything. She quickly mastered the art of speech and talked so much in public school that one of her teachers asked her if she'd been vaccinated using a gramophone needle. At the tender age of seventeen, she enrolled in the Peterborough Civic Hospital School of Nursing. Nursing was her vocation and her dedication to it infused every pore of her being. She worked as a nurse for many years, and she happily nursed community members who needed care at home when she was not at work - sometimes bringing her daughters along for the visit. This as well as her tender care of her children growing up when they were ill taught them, although they didn't know it at the time, that nursing is made up of acts infused with love and compassion and both daughters followed in her footsteps into the profession. It should be noted though that it was next to impossible to fake being sick to get out of anything as Mom never fell for any of it. Her love story with was one for the ages. Although he loved to tell the story of asking her out for their first date on a Tuesday, rather than a Saturday, thinking he would have a better chance of success, Sylvia knew right away that he was the one. She absolutely adored him and was in his corner every single moment of every day for more than sixty years. After retired they were inseparable - a bond which only strengthened as the years have gone by. Dedicated to her faith, she joined the Bridgenorth United Church family after she married. She was intimately involved in church life - organizing church dinners and teas, teaching Sunday school, belonging to the United Church Women's group, lending her beautiful alto voice to the choir, and performing lay visiting in homes and hospital. She never forgot her Anglican roots, attending Anglican Christmas Eve services for many years. Sylvia was a talented artist and painter and she loved the natural world. Her name means "of the woods" and she always knew where to find pussy willows in the spring and bittersweet vine in the fall. She instilled in her offspring a deep love of birds and wildflowers and taught them to see the miraculous in ordinary things. She was the glue that held family together for decades, hosting countless gatherings for all the holidays and sometimes for no reason at all. Her Canada Day parties in particular became legendary. If anyone wishes to make a memorial donation in Sylvia's memory, she would have appreciated donations to Bridgenorth United Church <http://www.bridgenorthuc.com/> or to Telecare Peterborough <http://www.telecarepeterborough.org/> Sylvia, we shall profoundly miss your love, compassion and wisdom, and your seemingly endless optimism. Although our hearts are broken, we are immensely grateful for your bountiful gifts which helped shape us into the humans we have become. Due to the pandemic, a private service will be held. Friends are invited to join a live stream of the service on Wednesday, May 5th at 1:30 p.m. through the Celebration Centre webpage (from Sylvia's obituary, scroll down to service and click join livestream).

Live Stream and online con

### Chapter 3

#### Figure 72: "Sylvia Gjos"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 1 May 2021, A12



predeceased by brothers [redacted].

She was incredibly proud of her family and loved to hear how everyone was doing on their individual journeys. Blessed with wonderful long time friends who she loved like family and whom she always kept in touch with through phone and visits. She was fortunate to always be surrounded by people who helped to make life worth living. Both through the good times and struggles. Having a deep love of animals and living her life in a way that showed her warm, loving heart. A story teller who entertained while helping spread smiles to those around her. She will be deeply missed by all that knew her.

Our sincerest thanks to the Otonabee Township First Responders for their many visits the last six months and for showing such compassion, professionalism and understanding. And to the staff on the B2 ward of Peterborough Regional Hospital who looked after her in her last days with kindness and compassion during a difficult time, thank you. In lieu of flowers donations to the Heart and Stroke or Alzheimer Society are welcome. Graveside service to be arranged at a later date in Toronto. Donations and condolences may be made through the [redacted]

How do you capture the essence of a person within the words of a paragraph. Especially a person that was full of as much character and sass as [redacted].

[redacted] January 13th, 1939 - March 24th, 2021. She passed away in Peterborough. Loving wife to the late [redacted], daughter to [redacted].

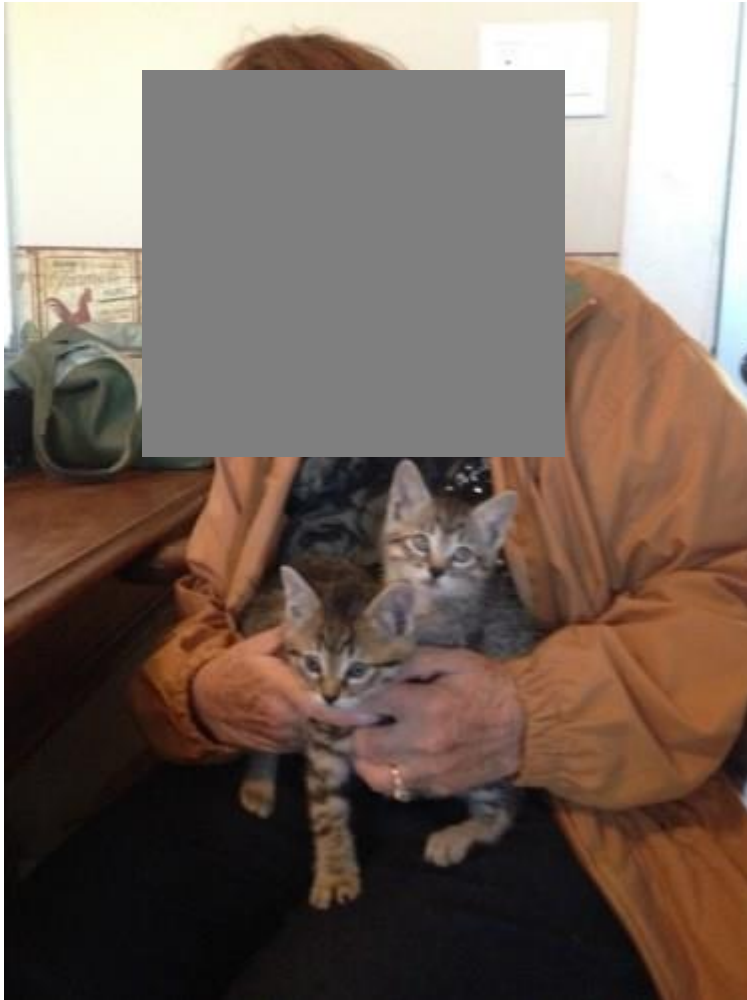
[redacted]. Was born in Toronto, Ontario Canada. Though she moved away from the city her heart never left the place where she was born. [redacted] was a strong, independent woman that loved exploring new places and experiencing new things. She spent her life traveling and loved nothing more than to watch the miles of the road go by through the window of a bus, train or motor vehicle. Loving mother to her three kids, [redacted].

[redacted]. Grandmother to six grandchildren, 5 step-grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Sister to two surviving brothers [redacted] and [redacted].

## Conclusion

Figure 73a: “Geraldine Grisdale”

Source: *Peterborough This Week*, 1 Apr. 2021, 49



Conclusion

Figure 73b: “Geraldine Grisdale”

(Enlarged death notice photo)

Source: *Kawartha Region News* On-line



### Conclusion

Figure 74: *The Madonna of the Franciscans* by Duccio di Buoninsegna, circa 1300

Source: [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5a/Duccio\\_di\\_Buoninsegna\\_-\\_Madonna\\_of\\_the\\_Franciscans\\_-\\_WGA06714.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5a/Duccio_di_Buoninsegna_-_Madonna_of_the_Franciscans_-_WGA06714.jpg)





### Conclusion

Figure 75: *Madonna della Misericordia*, from the *Polyptych of Misericordia*, by Piero della Francesca, 1460-1462

Source:

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Piero\\_della\\_francesca,\\_madonna\\_della\\_misericordia.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Piero_della_francesca,_madonna_della_misericordia.jpg)



**(SISTER ST. VINCENT)**

The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada announces the death of Sister [REDACTED], Mount St. Joseph, Peterborough, on January 27, 2021, in the 62nd year of her religious life.

Sister Mary was the daughter of the late Vincent Zilinski and Stasia Mataitis of Ottawa. She was predeceased by her parents and her brother Victor. She is survived by her sister-in-law Beverley, niece Susan and cousins Melanie and Norman Morris.

She is lovingly remembered by the members of her religious community, the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada. Mary entered the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peterborough in 1959.

Sister Mary's entire life of ministry was devoted to teaching music, a career in which she and her students have been very successful.

"A person should feel passionate for what they are doing to be successful."

She taught in Ottawa, Peterborough, St. Andrew's West, and Lindsay. Annually her students participated in the Kiwanis Music Festival and often placed first. As an ORMTA President of the Peterborough Branch, Sister Mary has served on the Kiwanis Festival Board involved in the music selection committee.

Sister Mary is remembered for her gentle spirit, sense of humour and devotion to her students. She was an exacting but patient teacher who will be fondly remembered with gratitude by her many students.

Expressions of sympathy in memory of Sister Mary Zilinski can be made at [www.csjcanada.org](http://www.csjcanada.org) - <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/m/49627/donation>

Respecting the guidelines for Covid -19 a Private service will be held at Mount St. Joseph, Peterborough. Burial will be at Highland Park Cemetery, Peterborough.

Online condolences can be made at [www.comstockkaye.com](http://www.comstockkaye.com)

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Introduction, Footnote #17; Chapter 2, Footnote #77

Figure 76a: "Sister Maria Zarowski"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 29 Jan. 2021, B2

[REDACTED]  
(Sister Immaculata) CSJ

The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada announces the death of Sister [REDACTED] at Mount St. Joseph, Peterborough, on December 27, 2020. Sister June was in her 67th year of religious life.

Sister June is predeceased by her parents Wilfred and Kathleen (O'Byrne) Nash. She is survived by her brother Robert and sister-in-law Dr. Janet Veinot-Nash and her nephews Christopher, Michael and Jonathan Nash all of Halifax.

Sister June is lovingly remembered by the members of her religious community, the Sisters of St. Joseph, her family, many cousins and friends she made during her years of service to others. She lived a life dedicated to health care which included Nursing, Supervisor of Pediatrics and Surgery, Operating Room, Obstetrics, Surgery - CSR Emergency, Assistant Director of Nursing, Director of Nursing and Public Health Nurse. Sister June worked at St. Joseph's Hospital Peterborough, Marycrest at Inglewood-Peterborough and at St. Joseph's Hospital-Estevan Sask.

After more than 20 years in healthcare Sister made a change in ministry when she earned a Masters in Pastoral Studies and went on to become a Chaplain and Pastoral Counsellor for 12 years at St. Peter's Secondary School in Peterborough. She also provided EAP Family Counselling.

Sister June was a member of the Board of Directors for Peterborough Access Centre, St. Joseph's Care Foundation and St. Joseph's at Fleming Foundation.

She was a Volunteer for the Peterborough Regional Hospital in Palliative Care, Renal Dialysis, Information Desk, Hospice, Marycrest at Inglewood.

Sister June was involved in St. Anne's Parish, Parish Council, and Women's Group. She facilitated parish and private retreats, and remained very active in her parish, and in her civic and religious community.

Expressions of sympathy in memory of Sister June Nash can be made at [www.csjcanada.org](http://www.csjcanada.org) - <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/m/49627/donation>

Respecting the guidelines for Covid -19 a Private service will be held at Mount St. Joseph, Peterborough. Burial will be at a later date at St. Peter's Cemetery, Peterborough.

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Introduction, Footnote #17; Chapter 2, Footnote #77

Figure 76b: "Sister May Naight"

Source: *The Peterborough Examiner*, 29 Dec. 2020, A8