Doreen Sheaves



MAY 26, 2025

Note the passing of Doreen Sheaves (Johnston) this week.

By the numbers, one of 2 children with brother Jack to Ed and Ruby Johnston. Family of 4 children, 7 grandchildren, 9 great grandchildren, 9 or 10 nieces and nephews, many cousins and many more friends. For every family member an equal loyalty to all the partners too. If you're reading this, you know who you are.

Born in August of 1931 in the small northern Ontario village of Hymers. As the first of many grandchildren, she thrived under loving attention at her grandparent's village store. As the family moved to the west, she grew up in Burnaby and attended South Burnaby High. Married young she had her first son Ken before landing in North Surrey. With two more sons, Paul and Ronald, she was briefly a single parent before finding the love of her life Ron Sheaves and the daughter Connie she always wanted.

The family would live on River Road in North Delta overlooking the river, trains, freighters and airplanes for the next 40 years. A brief move to Princeton and final years in Langley with Ron and Pat.

Doreen was amazingly social. She was the hub that centered all of us. She wanted to be a nurse but adapted to become a nurse aid in several institutions before a twenty-year career at Riverview / Essondale working with persons living with mental illness. Her curiosity and thirst for learning led to many diverse friendships

and late night debates on philosophy, politics and human rights.

In 1973 she transitioned to join her husband in the Fishing Industry and would spend the next 25 years as fisher along the BC Coast. Whether trawling or gillnetting the two of them experienced our coast in all its beauty and was friend to all she met. Her personality leant itself to embrace local families and she was welcomed as an ally to Indigenous peoples wherever she stopped.

Retirement saw Snow Bird trips to Arizona and more time for friends and family. Doreen loved introducing children and grandchildren to music and the arts. And always time for a string of Boston Terriers.

Doreen was a life coach before the term was ever known. With pragmatic support and endless optimism, she encouraged all around her to challenge themselves.

Borrowing from the poem Immortality…

You’ll not find Doreen in any single place.

Look around and you will see her picking wildflowers on the banks of The Whitefish, watching the falls at Kakabeka. She’ll be cutting Lilacs or roses by the brick wall on River Road. Casting a line in the Silver Skagit and sightseeing where the Similkameen and Tulameen meet. Coffee and conversation in Steelhead or a beer at the Legion in Princeton. You’ll find her travelling the coastal inlets of BC in tandem with wildlife. Eating fish and chips in Steveston, Chinese food at Port Hardy and Sushi with family in Langley.

Doreen lives with those gone before her on the mountain ridges, in the lakes and oceans themselves and on the edge of the wind that sings in the rigging and cedar

boughs. Look around and you will find her still.

Messages of Condolence

Forever in our hearts, Granny.

— Denise

Thank you to everyone for visiting and taking time in these last years to see mom. She truly loved the conversation and sharing our lives. I’m in awe of how she always had time for family and strangers.

— Paul

Alternatives
FUNERAL & CREMATION SERVICES

https://www.myalternatives.ca/obituaries/doreen-sheaves

Printed on November 1, 2026