

# Stella Starr Wakewich Ryder Embleton

FEBRUARY 4, 2023

May 3, 1919 - February 4, 2023

With sadness we announce the death of Stella Starr Wakewich Ryder Embleton on February 4, 2023 at the age of 103. Stella will be dearly missed by her surviving children Gerry

(Jacqueline), Patricia (Nick) and Donald, as well as six grandchildren, two great grandchildren and her extended family and friends in both Ontario and BC. She was predeceased by her daughter Laraine (Bert), son David (Peg), husband Leslie Ryder and husband Earl Embleton.

Stella was born in Port Arthur (now Thunder Bay), Ontario, the first of four children born to Steven and Anne Wakewich (Stechyshyn). Stella's parents, both of Ukrainian descent, immigrated to Canada separately and met in in Fort William, Ontario. Stella spent her elementary school years on her parents' 200-acre farm outside of Fort William and then moved into the city to live with her grandparents to attend secondary school. Growing up, Stella was active in 4-H Club and made many life long friends there.

Stella met schoolteacher Leslie Henry Ryder (1914-1953) when she played the leading role in an amateur play that he directed. They married in 1937 and moved to Blake Township for his teaching job and then to Fort William where Gerry and Patricia were born. After Leslie was discharged from the RCAF in 1945, he and



Stella settled in Geraldton and welcomed three more children: Laraine, David, and Donald.

Stella was a successful entrepreneur in the 1950s when it was uncommon for women to work outside of the home. She was the first Tupperware saleswoman in North Western Ontario, taking the train from Geraldton to nearby communities to host parties and deliver purchases.

After her husband Leslie passed away in 1953, Stella moved her young family to Fort William and then to Niagara Falls a few years later. She established Stamford Florist and balanced running her own business with raising her children. In 1965 Stella married widower Earl Embleton and together they raised their blended family of six children still at home. They travelled internationally and led busy social lives.

Stella lived in Niagara Falls for more than 70 years and was active in her community, as a member of The Niagara Women's Club and the Niagara Chapter of IODE, and as part of the altar guild for St. John's Anglican church in Stamford. Highly organized and reliable in her commitments, she was a regular contributor to the Niagara Boys and Girls Club, Widow's Support Club, the Cyanamid Retirees Club and the Centennial Centre Golden Hour Bridge Club.

Stella continued to pursue business interests well beyond typical retirement age. Her sense of adventure and interpersonal skills were a great fit for her 20-year career as a successful travel consultant. She participated in popular annual trips to the Shakespeare Festival in Stratford and Shaw Festival in Niagara-on-the-Lake. She also both sold and led large bus tours primarily in Europe until finally retiring at the age of 85. She was well-read, an avid gardener, and loved to share her cooking and baking with friends. She also taught continuing education courses in catering and sewing. She maintained strong connections with her family and friends throughout her many years.

Stella enjoyed good physical and mental health throughout her life; she lived independently until past 102. In 2022 Stella moved to BC where she was able to spend her final years near her family.

Stella was interred in the Mountain View Cemetery in Thunder Bay near her deceased parents and siblings, on June 3th, 2023. The celebration was attended by many of her Wakewich nieces and nephews and their partners.

The Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, August 19, 2023 at 2:30pm PDT, at the Italian Cultural Center in Vancouver, BC. Family will be attending the celebration in person with it also being virtually shared via Zoom. Starting at 2:00 pm PDT we will be playing a special video that was made to celebrate Stella's 90th Birthday that reflected on her life and family memories. Please log into the meeting early and enjoy some of our family memories of Stella/Mom/Nana.

The Zoom event information is:

Topic: Stella Starr - Celebration of Life

Time: Aug 19, 2023, 02:00 PM Vancouver

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84114948530?pwd=N3Fib0E2RndUa20zZFFscENra3UvQT09>

Meeting ID: 841 1494 8530

Passcode: 574076

You will also be able to dial in for audio if required. The audio information is available when you log into the meeting.

## Messages of Condolence

They made “only one” of this model, and then destroyed the mold. A unique woman, with courage, determination and the principles to go with it. We had the pleasure of being a part of Stella’s life from our teen years to our retirement. It was our good fortune to experience Stella’s life in so many ways and at different intervals. We grew up in the same neighbourhood with all the Ryder children. We remember the mothers Thelma Kershaw and Stella working extra hours to support Gerry and Tillman with their “trampoline” adventure to help with university expenses. Stella and Wendy had such fun being very creative taking floral arranging classes back in the 1980’s in Hamilton from instructor Kay Yoshitomi. As the years passed we remember fondly our ladies luncheons over 25 years, celebrating birthdays and holidays. The ladies group included Stella, Eileen Young, Ida Pearson, Andrea Young and Wendy Kershaw. We will always remember helping with the move to British Columbia after many, many years trying to decide when to make the “big” move to join her family on the west coast. January 25, 2022 was the day we wished Stella farewell as the limo arrived to pick her up for the airport. She was so looking forward to her next adventure that life had to offer. Interesting that her IT friend Roger whispered to us as she left, she will be the only 103 year old on the plane with her own iPad. How cool is that. Stella has earned a well deserved rest in peace. She had a full life. Our fondest thoughts are with the Ryder family. Tillman and Wendy Kershaw

— **Tillman and Wendy Kershaw**

We were fortunate enough to meet Stella when she was well into her ninth decade. Immediately those eyes of hers told us we would become friends. Stella taught us by her example that life is to be lived and savored. Stella was interested, inquiring and quizitive about those around her and what was going on in the world. The last time we saw Stella was when we were doing a show at her retirement home and she told us she was introducing the Birthday Girl who was joining her Over 100 Club. She was funny and delightful. Stella lived up to the meaning of her name STAR. She is still beaming at us from above. Stella - thank you for your light.

Ronnie and Marie

— **Ronnie and Marie Scott**

Delight, Full of Life (her beaming countenance), Grace, and Love are words that pop to mind for me when I think of my "Fairy Godmother". She had an amazing capacity to delight in every new day and every encounter she had others, and I recall the wonderful delight I always experienced on every encounter we had, either in-person or on the phone. And Grace, that wonderful Grace, she radiated was such a blessing to experience ... peace, acceptance, and affirmation in each minute. I also marvel at the life she led, not an easy one at all times for sure, yet she faced it all with such determination, bravery, faith (her trust in God, such a wonderful gift), and of course, Grace.

She was my 'Fairy Godmother' and I her 'Fairy Godson". I was told that she was my Godmother when I was a small child and there was an immediate connection. I figured since she was my Godmother she much have special qualities as one closely connected to God, and of course she did indeed. So, from that day I considered her as my 'Fairy Godmother' and have every since, and always referred to her as such, even to this day and our phone calls these last many years. She considered me 'one of own' and she told me so and treated me likewise. Her own children were aware of it and embraced it, for which I am deeply grateful. She was truly a 'second mother' to me. The whole world could forget my birthday but not here. She was always on the spot with a card for me each year, on time of course, and that had such a wonderful, affirming impact on me. There is so much more to say about my dear 'Fairy Godmother'. She truly was a marvel. Oh how much we could be blessed by so many more like her! I love you 'Fairy Godmother'. Thank you for who you are!!!

— **Eric Hutchinson**



<https://www.myalternatives.ca/obituaries/embleton-stella-starr-wakewich-ryder>

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