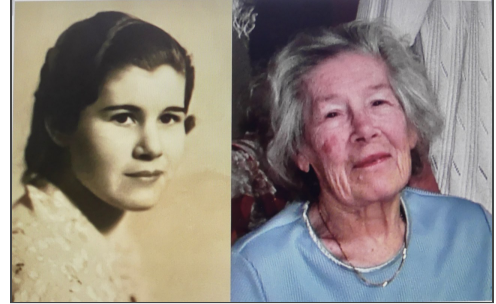


France Marie Louise Mouat

MARCH 20, 2022



The family of France Marie Louise Mouat (nee Brun) is sad to announce Fran's passing on March 20, 2022. Born on Feb. 14, 1918, more than 104 years ago, she had a long and full life. Her grandparents and parents moved from London and Paris to a farm between Alliance and Castor, in rural Alberta, where France was born. Fran's grandmother, the Baroness de Grandcourt, and her family found life on the farm rather different than what they had known at their home in London. No more boarding school in France or attending Royal Military Academy Sandhurst for the children. After a few years on the farm, most of the extended family moved to Edmonton and later to Vancouver. Their housing in Vancouver was initially on Alberni Street near Georgia. France would relate stories of playing baseball on Georgia Street and sneaking down to Coal Harbour, which was strictly out-of-bounds. She fondly remembered the horse drawn carts delivering everything from milk to Hudson's Bay goods. And the original Vancouver Hotel was apparently even nicer than the current one.

After a while, the Baroness had a house designed and built at the corner of Blanca Street and Drummond Drive on Vancouver's west side. Fran's family lived in the house with her grandparents. She said the view in those days was totally unobstructed, although the number of city lights would have been just a fraction of today's blaze. As a child, she played in many of the houses in the Point Grey neighbourhood north of 4th avenue, from Aberthau to Fannin Avenue. She would recall the dairy in what is now Pacific Spirit Park, the houses along the Spanish Banks' waterfront, and the First Nations' houses on Coal Harbour and in Stanley Park.

But the Crash of '29 and the Depression were also part of her life. The money was gone, and she saw the other side of the street. Her father died young at 42 of ill health. Her mother became a working, single mother of two children, with modest accommodation. Fran became a strong proponent of socialized medicine and the social safety net, having lived through a time when they didn't exist. She had empathy for anyone down on their luck or struggling for most any reason. A break came for her and her mother Celesta when Mrs. Vilstrup lent Celesta \$1000 to open a store. This kindness was never forgotten. A small fortune at the time, this money allowed Celesta and Fran to create the Celesta Shop, a women's lingerie store, on West 10th Avenue. The shop was a great success and fun as well. A cup of tea, a chat, and a pair of stockings please.

France married her Point Grey neighbourhood boyfriend, Thomas Mouat, in 1941 in Toronto, during World War II. Tom was working for the Royal Canadian Navy and National Research Council on technical aspects of the war effort. They spent a number of years in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes. Fran would warmly reminisce about the many family members, friends and acquaintances that stayed with them in Ottawa, while passing through during the war. She spoke less fondly of cleaning diapers in the Ottawa winter, before the time of washing machines or dryers. But 70 years later she could still recall the beautiful fields of Spring wildflowers on the Isle of Orleans, and the lovely landlady that assured Fran that her maternity dress would still be in fashion next year. The Eastern Canadian weather, and especially the winters, were not to her liking. With a growing family they moved back to Vancouver where their close relatives on both sides lived.

Tom had a job in the Physics Department at the University of British Columbia (thank you Gordon Shrum). UBC had army barracks that were turned into housing

for the rapidly growing UBC faculty. Fran, Tom, and children moved into Wesbrook Camp on the university campus. Fran spoke of this period as one of the happiest times of her life. So many families living in tiny quarters, right beside each other. Lots of kids and socializing. Kids and socializing were such a strength for Fran. Tom died in 2001 at 88, after 59 years of happy marriage. As Fran passes, her six children: Louise (Keith Grant), Dianne (Terry Clement), Thomas (Anna), Robert (Susan), Michael, and Elizabeth (Duane Anderson): twelve grandchildren Keith (Monica), Lawrence, Philip (Tina), Mia, Maureen, William, Melissa (Will), Emily (Trevor), Matthew, Richard (Becky), Rachel (Mitch), and Elliott: eleven great grandchildren Eric, Brandon, Brendan, Katy, Justine, Alex, Samantha, Rosalind, Felicity, Sylvia, Wesley, (with two more on the way) are mourning her departure.

France loved her family. All her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren were precious to her. She loved to know where they were and what they were doing. In the last few years, she would often talk about Christmas celebrations, Birthday parties, and family trips to Disneyland and the interior. She also mentioned the many summers that the family enjoyed at Salt Spring especially the kids playing on the beach. She loved to talk about the challenges of building the cabin at Whistler. Husband, Thomas, was the master of everything, but the rest of us really did not know what we were doing. Good times and good memories were had by all.

She lived for more than seventy years in the house she and Tom built in the University Endowment Lands, beside the University of British Columbia. She died in that house, in her bed, after a long and loving life. While her earlier life was busy in the UEL, she also had time to spend at the family cabin on Welbury Bay, Salt Spring Island, and in Alpine Meadows at Whistler, where she and Tom built a cabin in the early days of Whistler. The time spent at Salt Spring Island was

particularly cherished. Her in-laws retired there and many of Tom's relatives lived there since the family homesteaded on St. Mary's Lake in the 1880s. They had originally come from Scotland's Shetland Islands. She loved the relatives, the cabin and beach at Welbury Bay, the village of Ganges, their large garden, and Island Time.

Fran would want to thank many people for their support and kindness over the years. While we are likely to forget names and there is not room for them all, some come quickly to mind. None more than Casimira (Myra) Talosig, Fran's caregiver for almost twelve years. Myra has been wonderful.

Nikki James was Fran's doctor for decades and is held in high esteem. Thanks also go to Lana Turban who more recently became Fran's doctor and helped through the last few years. Chris, Mario and their team at University Pharmacy have been a great support for a long time. Recently, nurses (Anna, Jack, Michelle, Savi, Jacqui, Johnson, Olivia, ...) from Vancouver Coastal Health's Pacific Spirit Health Unit have provided an amazing level of in-home support. For a number of years before the pandemic, the Ladies from Bayshore Home Support came to assist Fran. Most recently, Vivian and Ida helped, earlier Evelyn, Jeanette, Lillia, Loveleen and others, and in the earlier days Shirley and still others. Charles Borton and his assistant Vicki went above and beyond in providing dental care for Fran.

Fran was one of the founding members of St. Anselm's Church and members of the parish kindly kept in touch when she could no longer attend. Thank you to you all. The family knows Fran would have also wanted to thank the many, although nameless, first responders and hospital staff that helped her and Tom in their senior years. Fran felt lucky to have these dedicated, talented, caring people that come to our rescue at all hours of the day and night! Bravo Canada.

Fran was a warm and loving daughter, sister, wife, mother, and neighbour. She was hard working but seemed to have modest expectations. Along life's path she

learned that love is more valuable than money. While the friends and relatives of her vintage are all gone, she remembered them and often spoke warmly of their friendships and the fun times they had. They were not forgotten. She was very much aware how lucky she was living in Vancouver. What a journey, rest in peace France.

There will be a service at St. Anselm's Anglican Church, 5210 University Blvd, Vancouver, on Saturday, April 23, 2022, at 1:00 PM. Reception to follow at the UBC Golf Club. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to Operation Eyesight Universal, Foundation Fighting Blindness, or a charity of your choice.



<https://www.myalternatives.ca/obituaries/mouat-france-marie-louise>

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