Ruth Mary Haythorne

SEPTEMBER 14, 2025



Our family was sad to have to say good bye to our little sister Ruth who, with her family and her support workers at her side, died in hospital on Sunday September 14. Our mother contracted German measles during her pregnancy with Ruth, which resulted in Ruth having physical and cognitive challenges throughout her life. It meant that for Ruth life was in many ways a challenge that the rest of us could and can only imagine.

Ruth loved music, particularly singing with her older brother, and always asked after acquaintances made long ago. Ruth inherited our mother’s sweet temperament, and our father’s determination, which meant that she touched many that she met. She was a sweet and courageous person. Our parents fought hard to equip Ruth for what they knew would not be an easy road, striving to permit Ruth to have as much independence as her limitations allowed, while never losing faith that she would be taken care of. In addition to other challenges, Ruth was epileptic, having to live with the risk of grand mal seizures, which meant that she had to take medications or run the risk of falling and injury. Identifying the right dosages was a constant challenge. As an example of her spirit and determination, on her own Ruth decided to always wear a hockey helmet when out of the house, to protect herself in the case of a seizure.

Ruth unfortunately had firsthand knowledge of the limitations that group homes and care facilities could offer, but eventually came under the care of knowledgeable and caring organizations, first for many years Pacific Pathways Developments, and then more recently Bethesda. We are so grateful for the care and support the wonderful staff of these organizations gave to Ruth for many years, allowing her finally to be able to live in a home setting.

Ruth did her best to participate in and embrace life, from weekly sessions with horseback riding to being a dog-walker and working for many years in sheltered workshops of all kinds. The challenges of having to work alongside colleagues with such variable mental and physical abilities would challenge any of us. Throughout it all she showed a great spirit to move forward and contribute. We all remember her learning to type and then play the piano with one (her good) hand, her many needlepoints and more recently her poems.

We celebrate Ruth and her life. We do not want to forget her. She didn’t win too many medals or get to stand on the podium very often but for us she wins the blue ribbon for doing her best at what she was given, and for being a part of our family and the community.

Messages of Condolence

Remembering Ruth fondly and was always impressed by her dauntless spirit. So happy for to be embraced by her parents in a new way. Blessings to the family

— Fay richardson

My memories of Ruth are of her as a little girl, when her family and mine were both living in Victoria. I remember her as a sweet, friendly child. But most of all I remember how her family enfolded her with love. She was always included, always a key member of the family. Ruthie, you will be so missed.

— Susan Gage

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