

Connie Scrogie

MARCH 19, 2016

Hilda Constance Collins has been known as Connie since she was born. Her father was William Frederick Collins. His Irish parents came from County Cork and owned a flower business outside Victoria station, London. As a young man he worked in the Battersea Dog's Home and as such cared for the dogs at a 'grand house' where Connie's mum was a parlour maid, they were married in 1910.



Connie was the 5th child, youngest of three girls in a family of seven. She attended a Wesleyan Sunday school. At the age of 5 her mother became 'born again' at a George Jeffery's revival meeting, then the family started attending the Elim Pentecostal church. Sunday afternoons were spent inviting friends for Sunday tea, before returning to church for the evening service. This established a tradition which has lasted through two generations. Connie remembered that her mother would only play or sing religious music after her conversion. But her dad, a bus driver, continued to entertain the family with popular comic songs on family evenings.

The family was loving and encouraging, with lots of laughter and joking, despite several different personalities. Often they would play table games together, read, and ball games in the garden. Dennis, who was two years older than her would take the part of the minister when they played 'Sunday Meetings' in the parlour, and pretend baptisms. Connie fondly remembered her mother's voice, the comfort of her lap, the way she put her cot next to their big bed, and how beautifully she

sang while she lit the fire. Her eldest brother, Bill, a swimming champion and later a fireman, was always her protector, even in the early war years when he became the patriarch of the family. Her eldest sister Lily, would write plays for the children to act. Each summer holiday they looked forward to several day trips to the seaside, picnics, or to London with its big museums and parks.

At Christmas time the whole family decorated the tree and house with fresh holly and paper chains. The children received one present each and a stocking full of nuts, sweets and tangerines wrapped in silver paper on Christmas morning. They ate turkey and a bone of beef. Boxing day was the day the children entertained their parents with one of Lily's plays. On Good Friday a bakery trip was made for traditional Hot Cross Buns. The family pets were Pansy, a Pomeranian, Tibby, a tabby cat and several guinea pigs, and one unfortunate black cat who got stepped on in the middle of the night, causing great sorrow for the family.

As she grew Connie's responsibilities extended to caring for her two younger brothers, one of whom is Daniel, her last surviving sibling. They have maintained a very close relationship throughout the years, speaking every week to encourage each other and reminisce. Connie assisted with wash days, doing much of the ironing, and did lots of the cooking, at which she excelled. By today's standards her parents were very strict, increasing their chores for misbehaving or spanking if very bad. She was a tender soul who used to get very upset at the punishments, given to her older brother, who was famous for misbehaving. However, a penny a week was rewarded for good behaviour, and Connie also earned a little by escorting a couple of neighbour children to school. She would spend some on 'day-old' bakery goods which she then shared with friends. Each child was given an area in the garden for their own use and Connie would grow as many flowers as possible. Not a surprise to you who knew her love of nature. As a young girl she designed and made dresses for her doll, a talent which continued throughout her life and she was even offered a place at a design school in London.

At age nine she attended an evening service at the Salvation Army corps with her sister, when an appeal was offered she went forward and gave her heart to Jesus, because she loved him, and accepted Him into her life. At age 14 she met Albert, passing on their way to their respective churches.

She was allowed to go out with her two little brothers on a Sunday evening so, she soon started attending the Salvation Army with them and meeting with Albert. He was 19, and had no idea she was so young, until her parents found out and informed him! But by then they had grown fond of each other so were allowed to continue the relationship with two little chaperones in tow. She became a senior soldier at 16 then taught Sunday School while Albert played the cornet in the band.

She left home at age 16 after an unfortunate misunderstanding with her mother. She worked as a companion helper and so was able to have her first, small home. Thankfully the wounds healed and she continued to have a very close relationship with her mother and family.

Seven days after the outbreak of WWII, Connie and Albert got married by special license, hoping to spend as much time together as possible as the future was unknown. Albert enlisted in the RAF. At first she stayed in London while he was doing his training, but after going through the Blitz alone, she decided to follow him, finding accommodation and work wherever he was transferred. She mostly worked in the Civil Service. When he was posted overseas she went to Coventry to live with her oldest sister. She suffered a serious illness whilst there which had repercussions for the rest of her life. One of Connie's proudest accomplishments was that she trained as an aero-engine inspector, working mostly on the Rolls Royce. When she retired she was treated to a farewell gift of a flight in a mosquito fighter /bomber.

After the war Connie and Albert settled in Coventry and attending the Coventry SA Corps. Their daughter Norma was born in 1948. She has by now met her other 4 children who were too fragile for this world. Connie dedicated her life to raising her daughter and caring for her husband, while doing occasional bouts of office work. After moving house, Connie had a visitation ministry with the local Methodist church. The family enjoyed many holidays travelling around Britain. Connie continued with her dress makings skills as she sewed dancing costumes for Norma. She was a very cautious and protective mother who could always see the danger in things, very loving and more lenient than her parents. She would sing to the radio whilst doing the housework, which the neighbours enjoyed. There was a variety of cats, budgies and one very large dog who proved too much for her. She kept an immaculate house and was insistent on doing things 'the proper way'.

In 1964 the family left England to go to California where Connie's sister and family lived. There she became actively involved with the Campus-Career and Women's ministry groups at church and made many good Christian friends. Norma trained as a nurse and was married there. While Southern California has its charms, after visiting BC in 1972, each member of the family decided to move here. Norma and her husband Michael, moved in 1975, Connie and Albert in 1976. They settled in Ladner. It was here that they were blest with three grandchildren and once more made many friends. Connie has led a full life as `Nanny` to her grandchildren, being involved in all aspects of their lives and having a very close relationship with Thomas and Nathanael and, especially Amanda as she had great sympathy for her illness, spending hours and hours comforting her. Later she found great joy as Nathanael married Sarah and gave her a delightful, dynamic great-grandchild, Olivia, and Thomas married Kristy this past September.

Connie thoroughly enjoyed the beauties of nature, and took many trips, to the Maritimes, the Rockies, and about 8 times to Hawaii. Sadly, as Albert developed Alzheimer`s, their days of traveling and eating out were over and began a painful

time of adjustment. She sold their home and bought a house with Norma and Michael. This worked well as she had their support and company, but had her own suite, which she imbued with her own classic style, and lots of flowers too.

She might seem old fashioned to some, but as a friend said " walking through her door was like going back to a kinder, gentler time, and always left us wanting to linger on". Most people described her as being compassionate, with a lovely sweet smile and genuine interest in their lives. She would often 'hold her tongue' rather than have an unpleasant argument. Since she became a Christian at such a young age, she couldn't imagine life without Jesus. She would always unburden her heart and mind to God and found Him a great comfort in times of need, even though she didn't always understand His purpose. Connie had many health problems and struggled a lot in her last months, often questioning why God had allowed her to live so long and searched for something meaningful that God wished her to do in her final years. She was feeling lost and confused, but then felt led to be baptized. So just before last Christmas there was a small gathering at her house and she recommitted her life to the Lord in baptism. She just 'glowed' and said she felt happy and 'complete'. We are joyful that she is finally home and free of worldly trials, but miss her terribly and look forward to our great reunion, in the glory of God's presence.

You are invited to leave a personal message of condolence for the family.



Alternatives
FUNERAL & CREMATION SERVICES

<https://www.myalternatives.ca/obituaries/scrogie-connie>

Printed on June 3, 2026