Violet Imogene Pierce



AUGUST 23, 2024

Violet (Dene) Imogene Pierce (1931 – 2024), age 93 of Langley, BC, died peacefully at her home on Friday, August 23, 2024.

Dene was born in Bowsman, Manitoba on June 29, 1931, to Arthur and Gertrude Durand, as the oldest of four children, and the only daughter.

The family lived in Manitoba and Saskatchewan mill towns (Prairie River, SK; Le Pas, MB,) until they moved west to Parsons, BC in 1940. Dene and her three brothers skated several blocks to school and hung their skates in the hallway of the one-room schoolhouse. After living in Radium, Edgewater, and Athalmer, BC, the family made roots in Kamloops where Dene graduated from Kamloops High School and worked as an operator for BC Telephone. When not at work, she played 3rd base for a competitive softball team, travelling the province and earning a “best batter” title. In 1950 she married John Martin Burris and they soon started a family, and Dene continued to play ball and hit home-runs.

Dene and her girls moved to North Burnaby where she studied education, as a mature student, at SFU, 1966 – 1968, and moved back to Kamloops to teach mostly grade 7’s. Her students knew her for her kindness and dedication, and her family and friends knew her for her ability to empower and encourage others, and her drive to try new things and solve problems. She was a leader in many ways, and

really lived a wonderful full life of travel, learning, and family get-togethers. She was an avid reader, enjoyed knitting, cooking, playing games and sports, and cheering loudly for her Canadian curling and hockey teams especially.

Dene married Albert Pierce in 1969. In Dene’s retirement years, she and Bert settled at the lake, in Sorrento, and later she moved to Langley and Victoria to spend time with her daughters and grandchildren. She returned to Langley where she remained for the rest of her life, near family.

Dene was preceded in death by her parents Gertrude Durand and Arthur Durand, her husband Albert Pierce, former husband John Burris, and grandson Nathan Slater. She is survived by her brothers Eugene (Helen) Durand, Richard (Sharon) Durand and Wilfred (Laurie) Durand, her daughters Dawn (Miles) Dayton, Victoria Whiteley, and Patricia (Marc) Jordanne, seven grandchildren Carissa, Trilleen, Chad, Kevin, Heidi, Robyn, Danic, and eight great-grandchildren Kierra, Summer, Destyni, Nevaya, Levi, Jaxon, Blue, and Jack.

Small family celebrations of life took place in Sorrento, and at Derek Doubleday Arboretum, in Langley, where a lovely Russian Olive Tree (like those she enjoyed in Kamloops and Shuswap) was planted in loving memory of Dene. We miss you mom.
