Loretta Myrtle Mary Whitelaw



JULY 12, 2022

It is with great sadness that the family of Loretta Myrtle Mary (nee: Mathews) Whitelaw announces her passing on Tuesday, 12 July 2022, at Delta View Campus, in her 93rd year. Predeceased by her husband Glen of 56 years, parents Lucille Mathews & Gordon Mathews, sister Freda and brother-in-law John Crossley, stepmother Elizabeth Mathews, 19 brother/sisters-in-law and spouses.

Survived by her daughters Glenda & Bob Wey, June Menzies and Lorraine & Roy Speers, grandchildren, great grandchildren, sister-in-law Ellen Whitelaw and many nieces and nephews.

Loretta was born Saturday, 16 Nov 1929 at Phillips Nursing home, Kamloops, B.C. to Lucille Perry and Gordon Mathews, she was the younger sister to Freda.
In her early years her father's job as a CNR Engineer saw the family relocated to Edson, Alberta where they lived before permanently moving to Vancouver in 1934.

Mom had fond memories of her early life in Edson, and many times told of the neighbour Mr. MacDonald, pretending to pluck freckles from his arms and place them onto hers.
As a child she was sure that's how the freckles appeared on her arms!

The family lived in a number of different houses in East Vancouver until settling into their home at Broadway & Fraser, which was luckily in the neighbourhood of her maternal grandfather, Richard Perry.
She enjoyed many hours with her only grandparent, listening to his stories and helping him in his huge gardens.
She attended Florence Nightingale and Mount Pleasant Schools, before studying at The Academy of Domestic Arts downtown Vancouver where she became a skilled Seamstress.
Many people were outfitted with mom's well constructed garments over the years, as she sewed for her family and would also work on commissioned pieces for friends.

In 1943 a young Merchant Marine, Glen Whitelaw along with his buddy Ian Cormie arrived at the boarding house of Lucille Mathews to shelter while ashore in Vancouver.
Over the years friendships grew between all the young people who boarded here and friendships bloomed into love, which culminated in Glen and Loretta marrying in 1948.

In 1949, Glen went to work in a sawmill in Port Alberni while Loretta stayed in Vancouver awaiting the birth of their first child, daughter, Glenda. Soon afterwards Loretta and Glenda
joined Glen on the island, where the little family worked hard at saving for a down payment to purchase their own home in Vancouver. In 1950 their goal was achieved, and they purchased their first home at 338 East 38th.
In 1953 Loretta gave birth to their second daughter, June, after a rather speedy drive around Little Mountain to the delivery room at Grace Hospital. They got there in just the knick of time!
The family of four became a family of five with the birth of their third daughter,

Lorraine in 1957 and their family was now complete.

Mom was a busy homemaker raising her three girls, caring for her husband and home, as well as a multitude of cats, dogs, bunnies, and birds. She also spent some time working outside the home as a short order cook, and at Canada Post during the Christmas rush.
She also helped in the school cafeteria, serving up Shepherds Pie, Hot Dogs or Macaroni at Van Horne Elementary, and at Daniel Woodward Elementary Hot Dog Day. It was always so exciting to see our beautiful mom help out at the school, we were very proud.

In 1966 Glen and Loretta bought a brand new home on Williams Rd in Richmond, a home they were very proud to own and the one where she lived for 53 years, before moving to Delta View Campus.
Besides being a great seamstress, mom was also an avid gardener who was extremely knowledgeable regarding plant species, care and propagating. This hobby was very apparent by the hundreds of plants that decorated her beautiful gardens. This love of plants was shared by her grandfather, and her father who studied botany before immigrating to Canada from Wales.
Through the years mom took great interest in other hobbies as well such as fishing, camping, canning fruits, bread making, birdwatching, as well as tomato growing and soup making challenges with dad. Mom loved murder mysteries, whether it be magazines or tv documentaries on the subject.

The years rolled by, her daughters married and started families of their own which brought her great pride. Glenda married Bob Wey which made her an instant grandmother of three with step grandchildren, Brian (Terry), Kevin (Leslie) and Marjorie (Jason Dudlets).
June married Randy Cowpar and they blessed her with twins, Clinton, and Dustin

(Rainbow Kennedy). June remarried Sam Menzies and presented her with a granddaughter Laura (Steve Shultz), and two step grands Kelly & Danny
Lorraine married Roy Speers and not to be outdone by her sisters added their three, Holly (Cameron Ballard), Sean (Ciara Castor) and Ian (Jess Sia), plus two step grands Tricia (Sean Gorsuch) and Jason (Christine) giving her a total of thirteen grandchildren.
As time went on much to mom's delight, the grandchildren started providing her with great grandchildren, Taylor, Gabby, Jacey, Sierra, Braedyn, Samantha, Alex, Daisha, Valerie, Miley, Thyme, Sage, Ty, Taya and Cole.

In 2003 Glen was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer and through mom's steadfast devotion and constant care she nursed him at home until he passed in 2004.
She was a strong and fearless warrior. Her fortitude was a shining example of unconditional love.

Mom remained alone in their family home doing what she liked to do, hosting special dinners, gardening, caring for her fur buddies, enjoying a cold beer and a smoke after a hard day's work, until 2019 when she had some issues with mini strokes and macular degeneration.
As fiercely independent as she was, it was time to move to Delta View to ensure she had help when needed. As usual she tried to make the best of things and set up gardening in the large windows of her suite, which her green thumb had amazing success.
She loved the monthly BINGO games where she was very lucky at winning full sized chocolate bars!
Covid 19 came with a vengeance and visitors weren't permitted into Delta View, so balcony visits were conducted by cell phone and waving from the parking lot.
Over time visits were permitted in a private room although at a distance until

eventually Covid was under control, and we could once again embrace dear mom. The youngest great grandchild Cole was born two weeks after mom's 91st Birthday and what joy he brought into her life. She enjoyed having him visit and showing him off to the other residents and care aids.

The last few weeks mom grew tired and as usual, she played out her life on her terms and she gently slipped away.
She was a great lady who asked very little in life but to be loved and respected by her family.
Forever tucked safely in our hearts - rest well Dear Mom, Grandma and Great Grandma.

The family would like to thank mom's caregivers at Delta View Campus who assisted in her care Feb 2019 - July 2022.
A special acknowledgment of gratitude to caregivers Mandeep Bains, Mylin, Miranda and Stephanie. Mom appreciated your consideration and care.

A Celebration of Life will soon be announced for later in August.

Messages of Condolence

In the arms of the angels. Rest gently sweet lady. I shall forever cherish the summer nights in the backyard, and the gatherings around your dining room table. I love you and Uncle Glen so, so much! It is said that the first thing that goes is the ability to remember the sound of someone's voice. I can hear, and always will remember the quirky laughter of Uncle Glen and you! Tender thoughts to my cousin's Glenda, June and Lorraine, and all the babies!

— Celia

So sorry for the loss of your mother.. She sounded remarkable in all she did.. I know she will be sadly missed. Hugs..□ □

— Sharon Bowles

My Condolences to all of my Aunts Family. What beautiful words, I loved reading about her life and learning a few things I did not know. Her life sounds very well lived and she will be missed but very much remembered. Love to you all Cousin Heather

— Heather Fletcher

Always in my heart Loretta. Love Linda (Ian's daughter) xxx

— Linda Eather

To Lorraine & Family
Our sincere condolences to you all for the loss of Loretta Myrtle Mary Whitelaw ♥ May you all be comforted by having had her as the Matriarch of the family. She was truly loved. It’s obvious she loved you all. May she Rest In Peace.
Hugs

— Nancy Messere

Your Moms passing is a loss on so many levels. I never forgot both your Mom and Dad and the kindness they showed me when we were kids. My condolences Lorraine.

— Rd MacRae

Glenda, June & Lorraine,

Sorry to hear about the loss of your mother.

Ken & Joanne

— Ken Whitelaw

Alternatives
FUNERAL & CREMATION SERVICES

https://www.myalternatives.ca/obituaries/whitelaw-loretta-myrtle-mary

Printed on November 2, 2026