

Georgianna McGill Clark

May 19th, 1923 - May 31st, 2020

Born in the small farming community of Ruthilda, Saskatchewan in 1923, Georgianna McGill Clark (nee Macklin) was the second eldest of four girls (Isabelle, Georgianna, Shirley and Freda) born to farmers Fred and Maggie Macklin. Through one of the worst eras in Saskatchewan's history, "the Great Depression", she helped with the struggling family farm while attending school. With her passion for learning she did well at her studies, eventually becoming a teacher. She possessed a keen interest in history, world events and local politics, and enjoyed noting that on the first occasion she was able to vote she cast her ballot for an up-and-coming CCF (the party later known as the NDP) firebrand named Tommy Douglas, the key political figure responsible for introducing and eventually passing into law universal medical care for Canadians.

While living and working in Paddockwood, Saskatchewan in the mid-1940's, Georgianna met and married her best friend and kindred spirit, the local Anglican priest, John (Jack) Leslie Clark. Sharing a strong desire to live their faith through serving others, Georgianna and Jack provided an engaged and caring presence in the many parishes they served throughout a long and fulfilling career. Their parish life criss-crossed and zig-zagged across western Canada, encompassing communities ranging from the rural outbacks of Saskatchewan and British Columbia to the urban centres of Alberta and B.C. and even, for 3 months, the northern English town of Ormskirk, Lancashire (the result of a clergy exchange in the summer of 1973).

In these various parishes Georgianna helped to organize and run church youth groups, painted (both walls and canvasses as well as some church stained-glass windows), dabbled in ceramics, led the Anglican Church Women's Auxiliary in their regular church-maintenance and fund-raising activities and even filled-in to play the church organ (without knowing how to read music). For many years and despite an already strained household budget, she also prepared and provided sandwiches and jars of tea and coffee for the many hungry strangers who regularly showed up at the rectory door, hoping for a bite to eat and a kind word.

Sewing was always Georgianna's greatest creative passion, thankfully, since a very tight household budget often brought home the truth of that old adage "necessity is the mother of invention". Her considerable seamstress talents were put to use with such diverse projects as the family's clothing (including many outfits for her growing children as well as men's three-piece suits and her eldest daughter's wedding gown and bridesmaids' dresses) in addition to everything from household curtains to decorative church and parade banners - and Jack's (and other clergy's) vestments. Georgianna even took on the arduous job of

reupholstering the household furniture - not a simple task when, for example, the main living room couch had to be replicated in the most intricate French provincial style. She also cared for several foster children at the same time as raising her own brood of four (not to mention a menagerie of numerous dogs, cats, budgies, exotic fish - and several gerbils).

Upon retirement in 1983 Georgianna and Jack traveled to England and Ireland for a celebratory holiday and to explore ancestral roots. She was fond of noting that there were some notable "characters" in her family tree - including the 18th century Irish playwright and actor Charles Macklin who moonlighted as a boxer (she was likely fond of the implied combination of high art and high-spirited pugnaciousness).

Well into her "sunset years" Georgianna continued to be active in parish life while volunteering in whatever way she felt she could best contribute - sewing toys for fund-raisers, rolling bandages for war-torn 3rd world countries, sending what funds she could to various aid organizations. Georgianna was also a regular and welcoming presence at the morning "coffee table" in the common room of the condo building where she spent her retirement years. She enjoyed catching up with the other residents about everything from world events to each other's everyday lives.

An avid reader, Georgianna always liked to keep herself well-informed about politics, current events and many ever-evolving social issues. In her 80's she leapt at the opportunity to become proficient at her own computer. This enabled her to more easily keep in touch with family and friends as well as to instantly access any news or history that might engage her curiosity.

She also took great pleasure in watching her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren grow and find their way in the world. And her family enjoyed any opportunity to come together with her to laugh and share stories. She is survived by her youngest sister Freda, children Leslie (Andrew), David (Marlyn), Stephen and Elizabeth as well as by grandchildren Rebecca, Anna (Jacob), Phillippa (Nathan) and Jenny (Kevin) and great grandchildren Lily, Evie and Theo.

Georgianna's love of life and people, her endless curiosity and passion for learning about the world, her progressive and ever-evolving ideas, her enduring spiritual faith and strong desire to be helpful to others made her beloved and respected by those of us fortunate enough to call her "family" as well as by those who got to claim her as "friend." She will be missed beyond measure.

**“I sing because I’m happy, I sing because I’m free,
For His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.”**

(from one of Georgianna’s favourite hymns, “His Eye Is On The Sparrow”)



Youtube of “Georgianna ~ a Celebration” is at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFsUnyoAPNw>

**Georgianna’s family would also like to express appreciation for the staff at Ayre Manor in Sooke - for all their efforts in making her last months as pleasant and comfortable as possible.*