



Kathleen Nora Hagman

Nov. 26, 1931 – July 26, 2020

Kathleen (Kate) Nora Hagman (nee Spilsted) was born November 26, 1931, in a company hospital located in the largest copper mine in the British Commonwealth at Britannia Mines, located in Howe Sound, B.C., just south of present day Squamish, B.C.

At that time, there was no road or railroad to Britannia Mines. It was serviced twice weekly by C.P.R. and Union Steamships.

Kate's father, John Spilsted, was born in Rye England, and her mother, Catherine (nee Cutler), was born in Tipperary, Ireland. John Spilsted was a carpenter at the mine. He was a veteran of the First World War and was wounded on October 30, 1918, in the last German gas attack before the armistice of November 11, 1918.

The family moved from Britannia Mines in the 1940's to Surrey and White Rock areas, where Kate graduated from high school in 1949 and immediately went in to nursing training at the ten largest and major psychiatric facility in the province, at Essondale in Coquitlam. Kate graduated in 1952 and began her nursing career working in a variety of capacities, including a medical ward and the T.B. ward.

Kathleen was the first female nurse to begin working in an all-male patient ward. She stated that her acceptance with the male patients was excellent. Unfortunately, her presence was not so well accepted by some of the male staff. However, she persevered and co-ed' staffing spread and became eventually accepted as the new norm'.

Kate and I (Robert Hagman) had children from our first marriages and were separated when we met in 1968. We blended our families and married in 1969. Kate became a full time mother and made us a family!

After our children had grown and left home Kate went back to nursing in 1980. We were then living in New Westminster. I commuted to work in downtown Vancouver, and Kate to Valley View hospital in Coquitlam, then the major provincial residential facility for people in cognitive and /or physical decline.

And, yes, then as now, staff and resource shortages were the norm - unfortunately, it must be stated.

Kate and I took early retirement in 1988 and built a retirement home on some waterfront property we had purchased earlier on Texada Island. We stayed there almost 18 years and then decided to 'downsize', and moved to Enderby in 2005 where we now live.

Kate always said that in her nursing career, she enjoyed working the most with the senior's in cognitive and physical decline at Valley View in Coquitlam. She said that although it was challenging it was a privilege to help these people on their final journey in life.

Kathleen has always loved doing crafts, painting in oils, knitting, quilting, crocheting, decorating, and, above all else, gardening. Oh how she loved her gardens!

One may look but one will never find a more sensitive, compassionate, and kind person than my life's companion, Kathleen Hagman.