

In Memoriam - Isabel Joy Dickson-Clark

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To: DAL-ANNOUNCEMENT@LISTS.DAL.CA <DAL-ANNOUNCEMENT@LISTS.DAL.CA>

ISABEL JOY DICKSON-CLARK, B.Sc., B.A., M.A., Ph.D. 1931-2012 on February 22, 2012, from a fall, after a prolonged period of illness borne with remarkable courage and determination.

Beloved soul-mate and spouse of Howard C. Clark for 58 years, much loved mother of Carolynn Clark (Cameron Smillie) and Kristin Wilkie (Rob), proud grandmother of John and Kiri Wilkie. She leaves behind her in New Zealand, sister Raewyn Ferkins (Roly), nephew Christopher Ferkins, and nieces Adrienne Croad, Lesley Ferkins and their families.

Joy was born and educated in New Zealand. Although she became a Canadian citizen, she remained a proud New Zealander throughout her life. Joy was a B.Sc. graduate in Chemistry and Botany of Auckland University College, NZ (1953), and spent several years as a qualified secondary school teacher. A staunch feminist, she subsequently earned a B.A. in Botany (1957) and an M.A. (1964) from Cambridge University, UK, being among the first group of married women to be accepted as undergraduates at Cambridge. While married and raising a family, she later obtained a Ph.D. degree (1988) from the University of Western Ontario, uniquely working on a part-time basis in the Biochemistry Department. Working independently, with indomitable perseverance and against prevailing gender prejudices, she conducted highly original research concerning the flowering processes of plants. She published several scientific papers, had her work recognized at international scientific conferences, and took part in scientific delegations to Russia and China. Subsequently, she was Associate to the President at Dalhousie University, Halifax, where she was a significant contributor to alumni relations, and was responsible for many University functions. She may well have been the first spouse of a Canadian university president to be recognized formally by the institution for her contributions.

Beginning in 2001, she faced a continuing series of illnesses. Despite three and a half years in a long term care facility, she utterly refused to accept anything other than a return to her rural home. With enormous determination and effort, in 2007, she returned to live in her beloved home, and did so again in 2010, following a stroke. In her last years, the trees, flowers and birds surrounding her home were a constant source of joy to her. She encouraged her daughters to become "well rounded" in their interests and abilities, her own life being an example. In her youth she was an accomplished athlete (netball, basketball, swimming, lifesaving) and a competitive tennis player. A gifted young pianist, her university studies included music and in subsequent years she took great delight in introducing her daughters to dance, opera and symphony performances. Elegant and classic in style, her sense of decorum was ever present. Joy loved the broader perspective travel offered. She enjoyed sharing stories of her extensive world travels and bringing home fond reminders of the many countries she visited. Intellectually curious to the end, she was remarkably well-read in subjects as diverse as medicine, cosmology, botany, theology and particle physics. For many years, she was an active member of Dublin Street United Church, serving on Council and

other committees, and participating quietly and effectively in pastoral work. Joy was a deeply loving and principled person. Over the years she provided quiet support to many and espoused the values of equality, justice and love. Her indomitable courage and determination, grounded in a deep and abiding faith, steered the course of her life. She will be sorely missed by her spouse and family, and the memory of her undaunted spirit and constant love will sustain them into the future.

Following cremation, funeral services will be held at Dublin Street United Church, Guelph, ON, at 1:30 pm on Thursday, March 1, 2012, reception to follow. For those who wish, memorial donations marked in her name for an award for women pursuing graduate studies in Science may be made to The Roberts Research Institute, room 2260, Western University, London, ON, N6A 5K8 (<https://secure2.convio.net/uwo/site/Donation2?dfid=3260&3260.donation=form1>) or Dublin Street United Church, Guelph, ON. Arrangements entrusted to the WALL-CUSTANCE FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL, 519-822-0051 or www.wallcustance.com.