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## Lois Elizabeth (Epp) Schroeder



Aug. 8, 1939 - Sept. 7, 2022

Lois Elizabeth (Epp) Schroeder passed away at home on Sept. 7, 2022 after a two and a half year long battle with pancreatic cancer. Lois was born on a settler farm in Laird, Saskatchewan, Canada on Aug. 8, 1939 and moved to Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada when she was a little girl. After graduating from high school at the age of 16, she worked in a local bank for a few years since as the youngest child in a Mennonite family, she felt her role was to stay home and take care of her father. Fortunately her older brother began to randomly leave college brochures around the house to try to convince Lois, who was stubborn to her core and could not be talked into doing anything that was not her idea, to leave home. Thank goodness that this had the desired effect - Lois enrolled in Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas when she was 19, majoring in English, and met Duane Schroeder when he was an 18-year-old freshman. It was destiny for these two; they married in 1961 at 20 and 21.

After finishing college, Lois and Duane moved their family to the Bay Area, eventually settling in Orinda in 1972 with their three children. Lois found jobs quickly, volunteering in the children's schools when they were young and then working for the Orinda Union School District in the district office for the rest of her career. She retired in the late-'90s when she was the Personnel Coordinator for the district.

Even while working, Lois had many adventures both with and without Duane. She enjoyed traveling all over the world - climbing Ayer's rock in Australia, walking Hadrian's wall in England, and even enduring the breast cancer three day walk in California TWICE to raise money for cancer research, to name just a few. She and Duane visited 49 countries in all! As further evidence of her courageous spirit, 20 plus years ago, she decided that she wanted to live in England for a bit which was natural growing up a Canadian and a royal subject. After much research, and fully supported by Duane, she ended up booking a room for two months, sight unseen, in a little village called Lee on the coast of Devon. The people of this town welcomed her with open arms and it became her summer home away from home that she shared with many of her friends and family over the years. She subsequently mixed in yearly summer classes at Oxford (OUSSA), continuing her education with her ever-curious mind and creating life-long friendships with her classmates over English literature, popcorn, and glasses of Prosecco.

When home, through an exchange program called Mennonite Your Way, Lois and Duane hosted many Mennonite tourists as they traveled through California. This voluntary sharing of their home with strangers was indicative of their generosity and heart. Lois made friends wherever she went and was amazing at cultivating those friendships all over the world. She was a force of nature and will be sorely missed by everyone who knew and loved her.

Lois is survived by her husband of 61 years, Duane; daughter Kirsten Rogers (Peter); son Darren (Sonya); daughter Allison Hennessy (Sean); 11 grandchildren (Laura Hackford (Toby), Kyle, Matt, and Jon Rogers; Nicholas, Zachary, and Natalie Schroeder; Shannon, Kacie, Aimee, and Tyler Hennessy) and two great-grandsons (Luka and Ollie Hackford), plus numerous nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, please continue her legacy: give what you can to help others, make friends wherever you go, and strive to make the world a better place.

Reach the reporter at: [info@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:info@lamorindaweekly.com)

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