



## REMEMBERING **Sylvia Sigurdson**

June 25, 1921 - October 19, 2015



- Sylvia passed away peacefully on October 19, 2015 at the age of 94. She led a long and productive life, growing up in the Icelandic community of Hecla Island on Lake Winnipeg, establishing the family home with her loving husband Stefan in Riverton, Manitoba for over 45 years and relocating to White Rock, BC in 1992. Following Stefan's passing in May 2012, she spent the final years at the Summerhill Residence in North Vancouver. Sylvia attended United Business College and worked in Winnipeg during the war years. On return home she met Stefan Sigurdson, who had just returned from three years of duty on the North Atlantic with the Royal Canadian Navy. They married in 1946, with common bond of belonging to fishing families, Sylvia's dad Malli one of the iconic Lake Winnipeg fishermen, and Stefan soon to become a partner in the family business, Sigurdson Fisheries. At home on Lake Winnipeg, Sylvia was an active participant in 'Sig Fish', often joining Stefan at their Northern fish stations, soon with three children in tow, family life interwoven with the business. Sylvia and Stefan were the perfect partnership for the many projects they took on, with Sylvia the visionary, and Stefan capable of getting anything done, always with complete confidence in Sylvia's plan. The cottage at Leaside Beach one such example, as was an addition to the family home that became an architectural makeover that was bold for its time, and a ten year adventure with a winter home in Florida shared lovingly with Stefan's sister Lois and her husband Irvin. Relocating their home to White Rock, BC, in close proximity to cherished family and friends old and new, proved to be the perfect retirement for their 67 years together. Sylvia was an active member of the communities in which she lived, in particular in Riverton where she took a leading role in the Women's Institute, the Figure Skating Club and the Lutheran Church. She was proud of her Icelandic heritage, and in 1990 was chosen as Fjallkonan ('Maid of the Mountain') in recognition of her contributions to the Icelandic community. Sylvia was a founding

member of the Descendants and Friends of Hecla Island. She cherished her early years on Hecla Island and recaptured those experiences as the author of two children's books. Although fictional stories about a young woman, 'Thora', who emigrates from Iceland, they mirror her own life experiences growing up in 'New Iceland'. Sylvia later became active in the Icelandic community on the West Coast, delighted to reunite with old friends from her early life in Winnipeg as a member of the Solskin Society. Sylvia was a passionate advocate for education, for her own children and grandchildren and for youth in her community and beyond. She had an abiding interest and faith in young people, especially her beloved grandchildren with whom she maintained a loving connection despite challenges of distance. Sylvia will be greatly missed as loving Mother (and Amma) to son Glenn and his wife Maureen in West Vancouver, their son Paul and daughter-in-law Marjorie and children Scarlett and Stella in North Vancouver, and their daughter Sonja in Playa del Carmen, Mexico; daughter Elaine in Oakville and her daughters Laura and Alys in Toronto; and son Eric and his wife Wendy in St. Louis, their son Stefan and daughter-in-law Mary and son Parker in Los Angeles, and their daughter Elin in Atlanta. Sylvia leaves behind her sister Solveig Riddell, sisters-in-law Val Atkinson, Gladys Peterson, Judy Sigurdson, Alta Sigurdson, and brother-in-law Irvin Olafson. She is predeceased by her parents Marus and Vilborg Brynjolfson, her brother Grimsi and sister-in-law Columbine Brynjolfson, sisters-in-law Lois Olafson and Helga Bjornson and brothers-in-law Norman Riddell, Victor, Gordie and Ralph Sigurdson, Bill Atkinson, Vern Peterson and Bud Bjornson. A Memorial Service will be held on Friday, October 30, 2015 at 1:00 PM at Mount Olive Lutheran Church, 2350-148th Street, Surrey, BC, Pastor Peter Hanson presiding. Together in life, together in peace, interment next summer for Sylvia and Stefan will be at Hecla Island, ancestral home of their families. If so desired, gifts in Memoriam may be made to Descendants & Friends of Hecla Island, Box 76, Riverton, MB, R0C 2R0.

