

Joan Marie Muir (nee MacDonald), our majestic matriarch, our very own beloved “Queen Mum”, died on September 11, 2023, in Calgary after having lived a full, blessed and adventurous life for 95 years.

Joan was born in Sydney, NS to the late Alphonsus Xystus and Jessie Ann MacDonald (nee Campbell), on December 21, 1927. She was the firstborn, followed by her only sibling, a brother, Reggie (predeceased).



Faith and family meant absolutely everything to Joan and she was steadfast and true to both throughout her entire lifetime. Together she and her late husband, Fraser Alexander Muir, raised five children: Donald (Heather) Toronto, ON, Sheona (John), Quesnel, BC, Ellen (Dan) Rosemere, QC, Sandy (Heather) Calgary, AB, and Brenda (Dalton) St Albert, AB, and ten grandchildren: Heather (Dan), Jennice (Wally), Alex (Christy), Andrew, Jenna, Quinn, Riley, Fraser, Saoirse and Tobias, and four great grandchildren: Carson, Kallie, Lewis and Sadie. “Aunt Joan” also adored her nieces and nephews, Reg (Teresa), Margie (Brian), Vicki (Nelson), and Robert.

Joan’s childhood was filled with fun and frolic near the magnificent Atlantic Ocean with her many cousins, and her pride in being a ‘Cape Bretoner’ never dimmed, no matter all the places she roamed. Joan may have been just a wee lass in stature, but her presence was always grand. She, with a sparkle in her eye, a skip in her step, and a soul with the map of the world upon it ~ and always with that “down home” kindness emanating from her heart, trail blazed her own path. After serving as valedictorian upon graduation from Holy Angels Convent, Joan further demonstrated her brilliance by earning not one, but two degrees

from St Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, NS. Her alma mater was also where she met the love of her life via a snowball on St FX Day, December 3, 1947. Joan was a lifelong learner and educator, beginning her teaching career at the tender age of 20 years old. Her teaching years began in Sydney, but included Halifax, Montreal and then Rosemere, which became “home” for the next 44 years.

Always a spit-fire, a go-getter and a high achiever, Joan decided to complete her master’s degree from McGill University, with a house full of 5 kids and a live-in mother-in-law, no less (plus two dogs, a cat, a guinea pig and a rabbit)! The next chapter in her career allowed for the culmination of all the best of her skills and talents as she imparted wisdom, support, guidance and encouragement to her student population as an admired guidance counsellor. Dear Joan was the epitome of a helpful neighbour and a treasured friend - with one of her longest lasting friendships being 90 years! If you were her friend, it would be forever. Besides being a staple in the community of Rosemere for decades, Wasaga Beach was home for 20 years, as was her snowbird residence at Golden Acres in Dunedin, FL. A wonderful 95th birthday celebration led to her more recent move to Calgary, where she continued to forge new friendships with staff and residents at Trinity Lodge.

Some of Joan’s favourite ways to spend time were chatting over a cup of tea, baking and eating sweets, travelling the world, dancing with Fraser, watching hockey and most other sports, playing bridge, curling, watching the news, reading the newspaper or enjoying a good book. Joan was the ultimate “Memory Master” and we will miss her incredible ability to mentally archive all meaningful moments and family gatherings with precision and accuracy! In addition, her body of knowledge for politics, sports and current events was astounding and we loved to watch her continue to amaze people in her recent twilight years. Like our dad before her, Mom’s (Nana’s/Nanny’s) flight to Heaven was direct, God’s reward for her unwavering faith, her active devotion to the church, Catholic Women’s League, her community and especially, her deeply cherished family. All the ways our incredible mother made the world a better place are infinite and everlasting...indeed, she was small, but mighty! In a word, she was legendary, and so she shall remain. Godspeed, dear Ma.

Funeral Mass was held on Saturday, September 16, 2023 at 11:00 am at Holy Spirit Catholic Church (10827 24 St SW, Calgary, AB). Interment and a Celebration of Life to follow on Saturday, September 30, 2023 at 1:00 pm at Beechwood Cemetery (280 Beechwood Ave., Vanier, ON).

For those attending the Beechwood Ceremony, please meet at the East entrance off St. Laurent no later than 12:45 pm. Reception to follow immediately afterwards at the Beechwood Cemetery Pavilion.

In lieu of flowers, donations made in Joan’s memory to the Teresa Dellar Palliative Care Residence in Kirkland, QC, are welcomed, though an act of kindness in her name would be equally appreciated.

