



**Dora Dempster**

**August 14, 1945 - December 14, 2019**

**Celebration of Life**

Dora was born August 14, 1945 in Edinburgh, Scotland. She immigrated with her family to Canada in 1950, first to Toronto and then to Saskatoon.

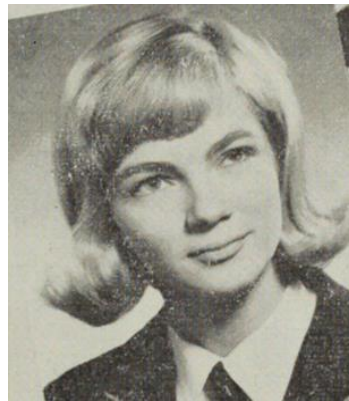


Dora, mother and sister Elspeth  
Toronto - early 1950's



Elspeth and Dora, Saskatoon, 1960's

Dora attended school in Winnipeg at Balmoral Hall girl's school from grade 7 to 12. At Balmoral Hall Dora excelled at sports and student government activities.



Dora attended the University of Saskatchewan from 1962 to 1965 and obtained a BA. She then attended UBC to complete her qualifications in Library Science. Following library studies, Dora moved to Ottawa where she lived for 5 years and worked as a librarian at Carleton University. The rest of her library career was in Toronto. She was a librarian at Ryerson University, where she met her husband John North. Dora was also director of the library at Seneca College and was the Metro Reference Library assistant director before retiring. After retiring Dora and John moved to Victoria to help her mum who was living here at that time.

Photos and information by Elspeth Paulin

## **Dora and the Zonta Club**

By Anita Mathur

Dora joined the Zonta Club attracted to the mission of improving women's lives around the world. She particularly liked one of the scholarship programmes, "Young Women in Public Affairs", available to high school girls. She quickly took on the leadership of the event. Her organizational skills and keen eye for detail took Zonta through several very successful events including one attended by the Lieutenant Governor.



## **Dora and the Monterey Recreation Centre**

by Joanne Donohue

Dora was a cherished member of Monterey Recreation Centre. She held two volunteer positions and interestingly, those that knew her in one capacity might not have had any knowledge of her doing the other. As our Sunday Reception volunteer, Dora's warm, friendly and helpful attitude were enjoyed by members, guests and staff alike. Outside of the Centre, Dora graciously fielded phone calls as she scheduled the volunteers for both the Coffee Express and afternoon Fern Café Helpers. In this role she fostered meaningful relationships with many – all the while demonstrating her creative problem solving capabilities. We all hold many fond memories of Dora and her dedication to the Centre and its members. She was a gem!



**Dora and the  
Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society**

By June Robinson

Dora joined the Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society about 2006. Dora took on VISCDs as her passion and was President of VISCDs for 8 years. In this time she promoted the club and encouraged new-comers to join at every chance. She organized ceilidhs and other dancing events, enticing people of all ages to try Scottish dancing. With this philosophy the membership of VISCDs grew and maintained numbers to being consistently well over 100.

Dora loved to dance and with a bubbly personality and a lively spark she invited others to join her. Dora could often be heard directing traffic on the dance floor. Not always right in the execution of the dance, she would laugh at herself when she made mistakes!

In April 2019 at the AGM, the club awarded Dora a Life Membership. How fortuitous that was. Dora was very surprised to receive the award. It was a small way to thank her for all she did for VISCDs. We have many fond memories of Dora. Let us also remember that Dora made Scottish country dancing fun, sociable and inclusive and a way to connect to others. We miss you Dora.



## Button

By Kathy Stromkin

Sometimes the universe works in mysterious ways. Our lives intertwine, our paths diverge and reconnect, and the unexpected happens. No one knew that Dora's life would end so suddenly and shockingly, with all the sadness and loss that brings and that her kitty, Button, would be left alone.

I first saw June's email about Button's need for a home, followed a couple of days later by another email from a co-worker, also about Button. This was the universe sending me a powerful message that here was a cat that needed me at the same time I needed her.

Button, you have been my family during these last months of frightening changes to everything around us. I love your independence, your playfulness and your take-charge attitude. You are the best! I am so glad you have allowed me to become your new human.



**Dora at Butchart Gardens**

**September, 2012**



This tribute to Dora was compiled by June Robinson with contributions from Elspeth Paulin, Anita Mathur, Joanne Donohue, Kathy Stromkin and Edith Chapman.

## **Dora's Dance**

Due to the circumstances of the pandemic this year, Dora's family has not been able to travel to Victoria since Dora's passing. It is hoped that next year Elspeth and the family will be able come to Victoria and we will have a dance in Dora's honour. In the meantime, here is a list of some of Dora's favorite dances. Start practicing!

Shiftin' Bobbins

Flowers of Edinburgh

Belle of Bon accord

Mari's Wedding

Jennifer's Jig

Cumberland Reel

Fisherman's Reel

Reel for Alice

Balmoral Strathspey

**Dora also appeared in many VISCDS videos taken by John Duffus which may be viewed at:**

[View VISCDS videos](#)

The list of videos was researched by Edith Chapman and includes the following dances:

A Reel for Alice, Dec 2012

Barmkin, Ceilidh, 2011

The Belle of Bon Accord, Dec 2012

The Blue Mess Jacket, July 2011

Bob Campbell, 2013

Deer Friends, 2015

Joe MacDiarmid's Jig, Feb 2016

Mari's Wedding, May 2017

Muirland Willie, Jan 2013

The Twa Meenit Reel, May, 2012