



REMEMBERING
Kathleen Rodgers
June 2, 1947 - July 17, 2020



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While still a young child, Kathleen and her 3 siblings were sitting around the kitchen table with her dad Tom, a chemistry professor at University of California at Davis. Tom looked around and said, "Since you are all growing up, I'm now going to have to rely on my wit and intellect to keep you in line." Without missing a beat, little Kathleen said, "Now you really are in trouble!".

Kathleen was born in 1947, shortly after her father returned from WW2 as a submarine vet. The oldest of 4 kids, she grew up with California's orchards, vineyards, and camping in the Sierra Nevada. This fostered in her later years a love for great wine, Boysenberry pie, mountains, and writing Remembrance Day stories featuring the experiences of war veterans.

A lover of prose and wit, while in elementary school Kathleen developed the unique habit of reading while riding her bike, and by age 13 was quoting Shakespeare to friends while on family camping trips. She was so impatient to escape what she described as "hell on earth" (High School), that she skipped two grades to enter her hometown University of California at Davis at the age of 16 (passing on an acceptance into Harvard), where she majored in English Literature. A Vietnam War protester, she moved to Canada in 1968 with her first husband Russell S. Rodgers, where they joined a travelling commune. They were a colorful lot of framers, who lived on boats, farms, and saw a lot of far flung corners of British Columbia. Kathleen loved to tell the tales of this action-packed period of grand adventure.

Kathleen finally felt "home" when she arrived in the Kootenays and settled in Nelson. Kathleen relished her job as a reporter for the Nelson Daily News (1979-90), and enjoyed immensely the opportunities to develop a unique and wide perspective on life. Her first story was covering the Sons of Freedom when they

disrobed in the courthouse after they were charged with arson. It was exciting time in Nelson, and she covered extensively Nelson's historic revitalization, the Street Car 23 and the Capitol Theatre restorations, local Doukhobor and Freedomite activity, and the local history of Japanese internment camps. Always ready to "fight the good fight", Kathleen jumped into the fray as a union shop steward at the paper.

For the years Kathleen was married to her second husband Gerald Roterling, she was a savvy and knowledgeable advisor, while he worked as Nelson's mayor. Kathleen could see right through all the muddle and point out exactly what was going on, every time. "It is not what you say, it is how you say it," she would often underline.

Kathleen could tell a story like no one else, and over boisterous dinners that lasted late into the night, she would regale tales of adventure with great gusto and panache. A wizard of the English language, she gave colorful advice that no else would- if you were working too hard - she would tell you to get in touch with your inner donkey (if you give a donkey too heavy of a pack, they sit down and make you lighten the load). When she felt like you were being too good, she exhorted you to get in touch with your inner pirate.

For facing an adversary or extremely challenging situation, she would say things like "don't let them get your gun hand shakey" or "go get'em tiger!" When a drunken thief stole the saddle bags off the motorbike, Kathleen accosted him on the street with "you have made a terrible mistake, those are my saddlebags", before seizing them and marching off.

Kathleen was a huge fan of the Nelson Library, and one wonders how they kept up with her voracious appetite for books. She also delighted in her rose garden, brioche from Au Soleil Levant, chardonnay, thrifting at Share, soup at the Outer Clove, and taking her dogs Emma and Kelly for ambling trips to the dog walk. Impromptu rose garden tours started with Kathleen's own impressive garden and continued throughout Uphill.

Kathleen lived for her kids and grandchildren, and would light up the room whenever she saw us. To be on the receiving end was to know total, unreserved love. Whatever up or down we had, we always knew she was in our corner. She was our mama bear, fierce and fearless for her progeny. How we will miss that sun-like warmth.

Kathleen passed away after a short battle with cancer, and for the last two weeks was surrounded by her loving family, enjoying looking at the ospreys outside the window. She is survived by her daughter Dawn Rodgers, sons Russell J. and his wife Jill, and Keith and his wife Naoko; six wonderful grandchildren who knew her as "Nana": Lila Taylor & her husband Cameron Dunsmore, Zaria, Rohan, Ali, Saya and Laika Rodgers; siblings Tim and Jacqui; and many cousins, nephews, nieces and extended family. Kathleen had a big heart, and warmly welcomed into her inner family circle Sarah Roterling, Margaret Rose, A.B. Norris, and others. She is predeceased by her parents Tom and Patricia Allen, and younger brother Keith Allen. No doubt they are all enjoying a glass of Zinfandel and some robust conversation right now.

For all of you who gave her kindness and love over the years, the Family thanks

you from the bottom of our hearts. Mom cherished her friendships dearly. Instead of flowers, Kathleen would ask that you do a warm act of kindness for someone around you who is in need. When you see an osprey, please think of Kathleen. She loved hugs and heart-to-hearts, so a memorial service to honor Kathleen will be deferred until sunnier skies in Summer, 2021, when folks can gather easily and with open arms.

