



Mary Feniak

December 28, 1933 - November 17, 2018

With grace and dignity, Mary Allison Feniak (nee Dexter) passed away Saturday, November 17, 2018, at the age of 84.

She lived a full and dedicated life, spending her time to help her community and her family. Born in 1933, she was raised in Ottawa and Winnipeg, and loved her summers spent at the family cottage in the Gatineau area. She followed her heart to earn her diploma in nursing from the Ottawa Civic Hospital in 1956, then a certificate in Nursing Education from UWO in 1958, while working at the Sarnia General Hospital.

In 1962, she married George Feniak, and began to raise her family. Mary brought all of the energy she had used in her career to her family, making clothes and food from scratch, canning and preserving each year from the garden. She took courses in tailoring so she could make suits for her husband, as well as clothes for the kids. Mary learned to quilt, and made numerous quilts for her family. She helped to run a 4H sewing and cooking club, served on the Wyoming Fair board, and much more. Summers were always spent at the cottage, where Mary shared her love of fishing, boating, swimming and Little Whitefish Rummy. No trip was complete without cinnamon buns and English muffins baked by Mary.

Mary eventually re-entered the working world after earning a Bachelor of Nursing in 1987, and a Masters of Education in 1989 from University of Windsor. Mary began working for the Lambton Health Unit, and quickly established herself as seniors' coordinator and helped launch the Lambton Seniors' Association.

Mary had a fighting spirit, especially on behalf of others; she advocated for her son, Andrew, for seniors, and for anyone who needed a helping hand. She gave generously of her time, even after retirement, to her community, but especially to her family. She was a fully engaged grandmother who could be counted on for babysitting, baking cookies, or sewing clothes. She taught her children and grandchildren her secret recipes, and encouraged them to do their best at home and in the world. Mary had a love for classical music and reading, and was a champion knitter, mostly dishcloths, and could be found

watching football, home improvement shows, or murder mysteries on television in later years.

Mary will be lovingly remembered by her husband, George, her children Mark and Alison, her daughter-in-law Serena, and her grandchildren, Katie, Samantha, Marin, Jessica and George. She was the centre of our family as long as we can remember, and we can only hope to live up to her example.

The service will be held on Friday, November 23, 2018 at 11:00 a.m. from the Wyoming United Church, 730 Second St., Wyoming. Interment of cremated remains to follow in Wyoming Cemetery. In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made by cheque to the Lambton Seniors' Association (www.lambtonseniors.com), Lambton County Developmental Services (<https://lcdspetrolia.ca>), or St. Vincent de Paul Society. Arrangements entrusted to Needham-Jay Funeral Home. Memories and condolences may be shared online at www.needhamjay.com.

Cemetery

Wyoming Cemetery

Isabella Street

Wyoming, ON, N0N 1T0

Events

NOV

23

Funeral Service

11:00AM

Wyoming United Church

730 Second Street, Wyoming, ON, CA, N0N 1T0

Comments



“ Just ran across this news today. Mary was my mentor. I remember her for knocking me off my high horse (it really hurt) early in my career so that I understood how important humility would be in my future work with older adults. I still cook with the pots she gave me as a wedding gift in 1996. Those pots lasted much longer than my marriage . It was such a privilege to know and love Mary. There is a feisty outspoken advocate in me thanks to my mentor, Mary Feniak.

Cheryl Miller - June 02 at 07:53 PM



“ George & Family ...
I was saddened to learn of Mary's recent death. My heart goes out to each of you. I will be forever grateful for all the fun, joy, inspiration and encouragement Mary brought to my life throughout the 1970's and '80's.

Mary quietly (and on occasion, not so quietly) championed the rights and welfare of women, youth, children and seniors. I was a recipient of her great knowledge and teachings when she was a 4-H Leader together with my beloved Aunt - Lottie Hennaert. They were an amazing team when it came to teaching us home-making skills ... cooking, baking and sewing.

More importantly, in later years when women (of all ages) gathered in Aunt Lottie's basement with their various quilting projects ... the two women, through their camaraderie, kindness and support were teaching us so much more about life ... even well into their senior years.

Mary and Aunt Lottie worked hard and courageously in the face of many prejudices and resistance of the day to make a better Sarnia-Lambton for especially, young women and seniors. They inspired us ... encouraged us - a new generation of community leaders. They were both trailblazers ahead of their time.

Thinking of you during this difficult time. May the wonderful memories you share always hold a special place in your hearts.

In Sympathy & Friendship
Nancy McCormick - Calgary

Nancy McCormick - November 24, 2018 at 08:39 PM



“ I'm so sorry that Marc & I can't there today to express our condolences in person. Mary was a force of nature! And she will be missed.

Amanda Dexter - November 23, 2018 at 10:59 AM



“ George and Family
So sorry to learn of the passing of Mary. I worked for Mary at the Lambton Seniors Association. She was a very dedicated person and a walking book of knowledge who worked tirelessly for the betterment of the residents of Lambton County.
Donna Nettleton

Donna M. Nettleton - November 23, 2018 at 10:05 AM



“ I wish to send my condolences to Mary's family.

I had the pleasure of working with Mary at the Lambton Health Unit. She was a walking dynamo who set a great example for her peers and was an inspiration to all who met her. She made a significant and lasting contribution to the health and wellbeing of our community. She was instrumental in the formation of the Lambton Seniors Association which started as a community development project led by Mary from within the Health Unit. The seniors association was eventually able to exist independently the ultimate sign of success in community development. Members of the association spurred on by Mary provided the leadership that led to the formation of what is now the Rapids Family health Team in Sarnia.

Mary will be missed but she will be fondly remembered.

Dr Chris Greensmith

Chris Greensmith - November 22, 2018 at 06:01 PM



“ To the Feniak family:
So sorry to hear of Mary's passing. I got to know Mary at Lottie Hennaert's when I was part of the quilting group. She taught me many sewing skills.
God Bless! Wilma Tichenoff

Wilma Tichenoff - November 22, 2018 at 06:00 PM



“ 36 files added to the album LifeTributes



Needham-Jay Funeral Home - November 22, 2018 at 02:21 PM



“ Terri and John Farlinger purchased the Rose Tribute for the family of Mary Feniak.



Terri and John Farlinger - November 21, 2018 at 09:54 PM



“ Thinking of you as you deal with this great loss to your family! I recall how Mary was so welcoming when I spent time in the family home visiting with Alison; and especially that she made the BEST chocolate chip cookies!! Warm thoughts to you all! Xo

Gayle Hlinka De Krieger - November 21, 2018 at 04:56 PM



“ George, Andrew, Mark, and Alison - its been many years since I have seen your family and your Mom but she was a great influence in my life from the 4-H days. She was skilled and she shared her skills so willingly - I know you will miss her cuz she continued to shower her influence into your lives and your children's lives. Hugs and savour all the memories you shared with her.

Sincerely
Mary Jacobs-nee Jackson

Mary JAcobs - November 21, 2018 at 03:02 PM



“ Barbara and Peter purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Mary Feniak.



Barbara and Peter - November 20, 2018 at 08:34 PM



“ Thinking of you all at this most difficult time.

"Death leaves a heartache nothing can heal. Love leaves a memory no one can steal."

Your Friends and Lambton County Developmental Services



Nick Salaris - November 20, 2018 at 01:12 PM



“ Your Friends at LCDS in Petrolia purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Mary Feniak.



Your Friends at LCDS in Petrolia - November 20, 2018 at 01:10 PM



“ Kathy Shortt lit a candle in memory of Mary Feniak



Kathy Shortt - November 20, 2018 at 09:26 AM



“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this difficult time.
Greg & Kathy Shortt and Doreen Helps

Kathy Shortt - November 20, 2018 at 09:27 AM



“ PAUL MARLEY PHARMACY lit a candle in memory of Mary Feniak



PAUL MARLEY PHARMACY - November 20, 2018 at 09:15 AM



“ Pat Van Damme lit a candle in memory of Mary Feniak



Pat Van Damme - November 20, 2018 at 07:59 AM



“ Feniak families

Our thoughts and prayers are with you through this difficult time,
with deepest sympathy

Marty and Joanne Sadoquis and Janet Cary

Joanne & Marty Sadoquis - November 20, 2018 at 07:20 AM



“ Paulette Taylor lit a candle in memory of Mary Feniak



Paulette taylor - November 20, 2018 at 05:58 AM