



Sylvia Fairbank

February 4, 1943 - November 22, 2017

Sylvia Jean Fairbank passed away suddenly in her sleep at home in Petrolia on Wednesday, November 22, 2017 at the age of 74. She was a well-loved vital force in her fiercely loved community for decades. She was an extremely active key volunteer in Petrolia Community Theatre, Christ Church Anglican, the Syrian Refugee Program, Art in the Park, the Victoria Hall Art Committee and a long list of other endeavours. She dedicated her boundless energy to a wide range of causes and committees since returning to her birth town in 1981 to raise her family. Organizer extraordinaire, there was no job that was too onerous or too small for her talents. Sylvia opened her house and her heart to actors, international students, kids of all ages, family and friends. She was blessed with many gifts which she shared with everyone - a wonderful hostess and cook, a beautiful singer, actor, seamstress, and church bell ringer. An intrepid traveller who worked in New Zealand and in Switzerland in her twenties, Sylvia journeyed to many countries over the decades. Sylvia had a fabulous hearty laugh. She radiated a true warmth, with a definite gift for friendship. When attending Bishop Strachan in Toronto in high school she forged lifelong friends. After obtaining her degree from the University of Toronto where she trained as a physiotherapist, she worked in Winnipeg, London and Hamilton before returning to Petrolia with her then husband Bob Henry and their new family. She travelled to countless homes in the county for many years and was always ready to treat any friend who walked through her door. She was “a rock” who many would turn to when in sorrow or difficulty and was a great help when her mother was ailing. She is survived by her children Caitlin MacGregor, (Neil) of Waterloo; Michael Charles Henry of Toronto, Rob Henry (Kelly) of Chicago and Devin Henry (Christina) of London, Ontario and her well-loved brother Charlie Fairbank (Pat McGee) of Oil Springs. She was the loving grandmother to August, Fletcher, Grace, Avery, Ella, Nathan, Evelyn and Jackson. She was the adored aunt to Young Charlie and Alex; and terrific cousin to Eve Harwood (Mark), Joe Harwood (Gisella) and Gord Graham (Bev). Sylvia will be greatly missed by multitudes. Visitation will be at Needham-Jay Funeral Home, 4059 Petrolia Line, Petrolia, on Friday, November 24 from 7-9 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 25 from 2 to 5 p.m. The funeral is Sunday Nov. 26, at Christ Church Anglican at 2 p.m.. Donations may be made to Charlotte Eleanor Englehart Hospital (<http://www.ceehf.ca>) or Petrolia Community Theatr

e. Memories and Condolences may be shared online at <http://www.needhamjay.com>, where a live-stream funeral link of Sylvia's service will be found on Sunday.

RECORDED MEMORIAL SERVICE LINK: CLICK BELOW

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NzoPjYV21eI>

Cemetery

Hillsdale Cemetery

3725 Petrolia Line

Petrolia, ON, N0N 1R0

Events

NOV **Visitation** 07:00PM - 09:00PM

24

Needham-Jay Funeral Home

4059 Petrolia Line, Petrolia, ON, CA, N0N 1R0

NOV **Visitation** 02:00PM - 05:00PM

25

Needham-Jay Funeral Home

4059 Petrolia Line, Petrolia, ON, CA, N0N 1R0

NOV **Memorial Service** 02:00PM

26

Christ Church Anglican

414 Oil St., Petrolia, ON, CA, N0N 1R0

Comments



“ Petrolia will never be the same without you Syl.....I will never be the same without you in my life.....My deepest condolences to her family...

Bonnie Harris - December 04, 2017 at 01:22 PM



“ I am so sorry to hear of Sylvia's passing. I was looking forward to seeing her again and getting to know her more. I just met her this past summer and fell in love with her energy and love of life. How sad she is gone. My deepest condolences to her family and friends. What a loss!! Xo

Sandy Wabegijig - November 30, 2017 at 11:46 PM



“ I first met Sylvia - Sam, as I knew her - on board the Oriana, an ocean liner sailing from Vancouver to the South Pacific. Sam was headed for New Zealand; I was going to Australia. This was in the fall of 1972. We became fast friends on board-ship; and stayed in touch for a number of years - using an old fashioned method of communicating - letter writing. (A few years ago, I came across those letters in the far reaches of my cottage and re-read them, enjoying old memories.) After Sam returned to Canada, I visited her a couple of times in Petrolia, the first time was when I was returning from a trip to Europe. The next time was the year she moved to Winnipeg to further her studies. We drove back together. During her time in Winnipeg, I saw her a bit more often. After she left Winnipeg, our lives headed off in different directions. We probably wrote another letter or two. I never saw her again. I will remember her as a great person and a great and enjoyable friend. I was very saddened to read of her death. My most sincere condolences to her family.

Terry Sargeant, Winnipeg

Terry Sargeant - November 29, 2017 at 05:05 PM



“ Oh Syl, what has happened that you have left us behind? So many memories of our time at U of T - Mary writing out her grocery list and you and I dutifully going up to the grocery store on Dupont Ave. to get what she required; taking a break for a ciggy-boo; living in the nurses' residence while interning in North Bay, you breaking your neck (of all things) in Manitoba and, more recently, kayaking on Golden Lake and then returning to the cottage to eat the bread you had just made. Ernie and I were shocked and saddened to hear of your passing.

Our sincere and heartfelt condolences to Charlie and Pat and to Michael, Caitlin, Rob and Devin.

Sandy Bies



Sandra Bies - November 29, 2017 at 01:50 PM



“ My dear sister Sam. We adopted each other as sibs back in 1965 when I was scrounging meals while courting your room mate Sandy,(to whom I am still married).We shared an irreverent sense of humour and challenged "normal" but we did have fun. It was so good to see you at our cottage and to visit you in Petrolia and we were looking forward to your return visit this summer. We will just sit on the dock and drink that bottle of wine with you in spirit but how are we going to light up the room now without your smile? Lot's of love big Sis. Condolences to Charlie and the family.

Ernie and Sandy Bies , Ottawa



Ernie Bies - November 29, 2017 at 12:50 AM



“ I graduated with Sylvia from UofT in P&OT in 1966. It took us 50 years to reconnect at our reunion. It was so good to catch up. However she didn't tell all the amazing things she has done and achieved over her life. What an incredible woman. My thoughts and prayers are with all of her family and friends.
Faye McCracken

Faye McCracken - November 27, 2017 at 07:15 PM



“ Mark And Carol Drope lit a candle in memory of Sylvia Fairbank



Mark and Carol Drope - November 27, 2017 at 07:15 PM



“ Sylvia was a wonderful member of our class at U of T (Class of 66) in Physical and Occupational Therapy and her energy , warmth and ability shone through. She will be well remember and missed. May sweet memories succour the pain

karen goldenberg - November 27, 2017 at 05:51 PM



“ Please accept my most sincere condolences. I enjoyed so much Sylvia's warm heart and all her enthusiasm when I had the chance to do some music with her. I know she will be missed by many. All my best to Charlie and Pat.

Bernie Gilmore

Bernie Gilmore - November 26, 2017 at 07:53 PM



“ Please accept my deepest sympathies on the death of your mother. Sylvia and I went to school together in Petrolia, we were in Girl Guides, the choir and also the Church young people's. Christmas morning we visited each other's homes to see what gifts we had received. Life was good for us growing up in a small town where we were able to go sledding, skating and where we were not afraid to be out after dark. Your mother's birthday was Feb. 4th which was 12 days after mine and so I was fortunate enough to be in and out of your grandparents home on many occasions. We moved away and I hadn't seen your mother in many years but never forgot her laugh. Her service today with the comments made showed me that she must have had a remarkable life & family and that she left this world a better place.
Memories from an old friend

Diann(Honsinger) Rice
St Thomas, On

Diann (Honsinger) Rice - November 26, 2017 at 03:29 PM



“ Please accept our deepest condolences on the sad news of your mother's passing. Sylvia was a wonderful neighbour to our parents for several years after they both retired and moved to Petrolia. Upon both my parents passing she was instrumental in helping to secure and manage my parents property from a distance. We will forever be grateful for her welcoming smile, words of encouragement and generous spirit, and willingness to help out.
Barb & Paul van der Voort

barb van der voort - November 26, 2017 at 01:58 PM



“ To the Henry Family;I was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of a truly great and wonderful lovely young friend of mine from so many years ago.I was born with Cerebral Palsy in Perth,Ontario,on June 27,1953,at great War Memorial hospital in this town where my mom came from and my dad came from Smiths Falls,Ontario in Eastern Ontario.i was in stell leg braces the first 14 years of my young life,at which time I was given a choice by Dr,Jack Kennedy ,a renowned Orthopedic Surgeon here in London,Ontario ,if I was willing and confident to dispense with the braces,and live a very worthwhile life minus my leg braces.as a young man of 14 years ,I said yes to his proposal,and consequently was in a body cast from approximately November 12,1967-April 1968,at which time I underwent extensiveRehabilitation Therapy under the watchful eye of Sylvia Fairbank,and Pamela Valentire,director of the physiotherapy department at the crippled Childrens treatment Centre at that time located at 385 Hill Street in London,Ontario joined to the original Victoria and Childrens Hospital on South Strreet back 50 years ago.Even back then as I recall miss Fairbaank had a genuine true love for not only her career aspirations per se ,but a genuine love towards helping her fellow Canadian Citizens and many friends young and old to ultimately not only achieve their personal goals in life ,but also their ultimate career aspirations whichever pathways they would follow long into their future.I for one owe her a debt of gratitude for helping me with my total therapy program in 1968,and being able to complete my schooling at Kensal Park Public School,Westminster High School,and Fanshawe College,graduating in May 1975 with my Honours Business Administration Diploma,and being a Customer service representative at St.Joesephs-Parkwood Institute the past 31 years and 3 months finishing up March 16,2017.my tuoughts and prayers are with you all as you move forward to brighter and beter days ahead in your perspective chosen carees and lives under Gods Guidance.Yours Sincerely Brian Cross London,Ontario

BRIAN CROSS-FRIEND - November 26, 2017 at 11:51 AM



“ We are sorry to hear of Sylvia’s, passing. She was a wonderful neighbour, always willing to help. As long time neighbours, we shared lots of visits, the odd glass of wine, lively conversation, and some good laughs. She will be dearly missed.
Jerry Ritchie
Shelley Ritchie-Boyce

Geri Ritchie - November 26, 2017 at 11:18 AM



“ I met Sylvia Fairbank when I too moved back to my hometown of Petrolia after years away. We met at Christ Church Anglican and through our involvement in VPP. She was fun and friendly, warm and welcoming, accepting and multitalented. Like many others in town I was fortunate to know her and she will forever hold a place in my heart. Thank you Sylvia, with Love, Heather Bourne

Heather Bourne - November 26, 2017 at 08:46 AM



“ You will be sadly missed, but I am so happy to have known you and called you my dear friend. 'Til we meet again xo

Charlene Mumberson - November 26, 2017 at 02:01 AM



“ Ken And Darlene Melton lit a candle in memory of Sylvia Fairbank



Ken and Darlene Melton - November 25, 2017 at 08:27 PM



“ To the Fairbank / Henry Families

Our Hearts and Prayers are with you all .
Silva was the most wonderful lady , we have ever met.
She was a great help to Ross when he needed it.
Silva's compassion is beyond words.

Ross and Karen Ringwood.



Karen and Ross Ringwood - November 25, 2017 at 07:37 PM



“ Condolences to Sylvia 's Family ! I knew Sylvia many years ago when I lived in Petrolia .
She was the best friend of my Sister Diann Honsinger ! She was a wonderful person and will be deeply missed by her Family and Friends ! Peace Be With You !
Hugs and Prayers

Donna Lea (Honsinger) Caers

Donna Lea Honsinger Caers - November 25, 2017 at 06:55 PM



“ Fairbank / Henry Families...
"Those we have held in our arms for a little while ,
We hold in our Hearts Forever"
May all the fabulous Memories that are being shared over these last few days
lessen the pain your Hearts !!!
Sylvia... Safe Journey!!!
~Bob & Annie Green

annie green - November 25, 2017 at 03:24 PM



“ As we were painting sets for the latest production for PCT, Syliva shared that one of her favorite pieces of music was the aria duo of The Flower. It is a beautiful and suits her beautiful spirit perfectly.

Danna Andrade - November 25, 2017 at 12:50 PM



“ She was a magnificent lady. Lived her life to the fullest and enjoyed every minute of it. She is truly going to be missed by all of Petrolia's Hard Oilers. Rest in peace.

Pauline Mitchell - November 25, 2017 at 07:42 AM



“ Summer's Light Bouquet was purchased for the family of Sylvia Fairbank.



November 24, 2017 at 10:21 PM



“ To say it was a shock only brings home the loss we are feeling at hearing about Sylvia. During these past 4 years we’ve gotten reacquainted. Sylvia was such a sincere, vivacious, compassionate and thoughtful soul. She inspired us with her tireless work and commitment to her family, friends and community. We’re so pleased she was able to revisit Manitoulin with us in September – a trip down memory lane.

Thinking of “It’s a Wonderful Life” we only hope Sylvia knew how many lives she touched.

Our thoughts and deepest sympathies are with you Charlie & Pat, Caitlin, Michael, Rob and Devin and your families....and Laika.

Alison and Jane Edward



jane - November 24, 2017 at 06:42 PM



“ 272 files added to the album LifeTributes



Needham-Jay Funeral Home - November 24, 2017 at 04:26 PM



“ Janet Hodgson lit a candle in memory of Sylvia Fairbank



Janet hodgson - November 24, 2017 at 04:18 PM



“ Caitlin and Michael

My thoughts and prayers are with you at this very difficult time. Your mother will be greatly missed.

Diana Bell



Diana Bell - November 24, 2017 at 03:50 PM



“ Teresa Ingles lit a candle in memory of Sylvia Fairbank



Teresa Ingles - November 24, 2017 at 03:33 PM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Evelyn Ward de Roo - November 24, 2017 at 03:08 PM



“ Stu & Sharon McGregor lit a candle in memory of Sylvia Fairbank



Stu & Sharon McGregor - November 24, 2017 at 03:03 PM



“ Goodbye dear, dear friend. Your heart was wide and strong showing everyone how to live the Gospel and actually be the hands and feet of The Christ in our midst. Thank you for catching me and Bert up in your net and allowing us to be part of the whirling dervish dance you spun. Our sorrow is profound yet our hearts are glad to have loved you and been loved by you.



Evelyn Ward de Roo - November 24, 2017 at 03:02 PM



“ Carol Watt lit a candle in memory of Sylvia Fairbank



Carol Watt - November 24, 2017 at 02:04 PM



“ I did not know Sylvia personally rather as a bright light at every encounter. I would see her at the Market, at Art in the Park, the Theater, the Hillside Walking Tour or just around town she was always friendly and helpful. She will be missed.

Carol Watt - November 24, 2017 at 02:14 PM



“ Bill And Sharon Stonehouse lit a candle in memory of Sylvia Fairbank



Bill and Sharon Stonehouse - November 24, 2017 at 01:43 PM



“ When I first moved to Petrolia 14 years ago, the very first social activity Sara and I did was to go to Sylvia's house for a play reading party. She was SO VERY welcoming. I quickly learned that She was a very active person in the community, As a non-Hard Oiler, I leaned on her to help me navigate Church and community. I treasured her friendship, guidance, laughter and lightness. I should have expressed that to Her in words, but I take comfort in knowing that She must have felt it. The last thing I did in October, as I headed for my new home in London, was to drop by Sylvia's house. I had some vintage dresses to give her, as I knew She would put them to good use. Her garage door was up, as it was often so, which meant Sylvia was out in the community doing something for the greater good. I was disappointed not to have connected with Her and had to leave them on the porch. The dresses weren't all that important, as I could have given them to any number of PCT members. The real motivation was that I left Petrolia saying; 'so long and see you soon', to the person that continually opened up Her community to me. Her legacy will resonate up to Heaven.

Sylvia, you are forever in my heart and I am a better person for having been blessed with your friendship.

Carrolleigh Cecile - November 24, 2017 at 01:18 PM



“ Such a wonderful woman, inside and out! She will be sorely missed by all.

Sylvia was an integral part of DNTM - a group of vibrant women who shared a love of music. We met weekly to sing but also to share thoughts and ideas. Sometimes we talked more than we sang but I think we all learned valuable lessons from each other both in the singing and the talking. One year we all enjoyed a martini party at our house. It was grand fun ... an evening my husband and I will never forget. Sylvia (among others) was totally hilarious!

Rest peacefully, beautiful friend! I'm pretty sure heaven will be even brighter with your presence and your talents.

xo Dan and Lyn

Lyn Dennis - November 24, 2017 at 12:52 PM



“ Those were wonderful years together.

Evelyn Ward de Roo - November 24, 2017 at 03:21 PM



“ My sincerest and deepest of sympathy to the family of this beloved lady.

I am heartbroken to hear of her passing. She was a gift to all of us, and we loved her so much!

May all of you take comfort in your cherished memories of her. Her legacy will live on, in community and spirit.

I will never forget her.

Christine Peck
Corunna Ontario

Christine Peck - November 24, 2017 at 09:50 AM



“ I was saddened to hear about Sylvia's passing. She was a lovely lady and will be very sorely missed by all.

Tara McIntosh - November 24, 2017 at 09:48 AM



“ To the Fairbank Family,

So sorry to hear of the passing of Sylvia. We are thinking of you at this difficult time.

Doug and Judy Krall - November 24, 2017 at 09:41 AM



“ Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Sylvia Fairbank.



November 24, 2017 at 08:10 AM



“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Peter Ryde - November 24, 2017 at 08:07 AM



“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Peter Ryde - November 24, 2017 at 08:06 AM



“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Peter Ryde - November 24, 2017 at 07:58 AM



“ To the Fairbank Family. We are all very sorry to hear of your loss of Sylvia. These condolences are being sent from all the Hibbert Family.

Nancy Hibbert - November 24, 2017 at 07:46 AM



“ So sorry to hear about the passing of Sylvia. She was such a wonderful lady and was into so much in Petrolia helping out so many. She will be missed by everyone. Thinking of all the Fairbanks Families. Ron and Maureen Bailey from Oil Springs !!

Maureen Bailey - November 24, 2017 at 05:00 AM



“ Caitlin and Michael,
So very sorry to read about the passing of your mother. Our thoughts are with you at this very difficult time. May pleasant memories eventually bring you peace.
Michael and Cathy

Michael and Cathy Martin - November 24, 2017 at 12:13 AM



“ Charlie, Pat, Charlie, and Alex,
So very sorry to read about the passing of your dear sister/sister-in-law/aunt, Sylvia. Our thoughts are with you at this sad time. May pleasant memories bring you peace. Unfortunately, we will not be able to attend the visitation as we are away right now.
Michael and Cathy

Michael and Cathy Martin - November 24, 2017 at 12:10 AM



“ Funeral Liturgy will be live-streamed on Sunday at 2PM EST at this link...
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7ZGIVPfZtnnr0Ur6OlzBg>

Evelyn Ward de Roo - November 24, 2017 at 03:20 PM



“ I have known Sylvia for so many years but really became close just 2 years ago when she agreed to accompany me to Paris to celebrate my son, Ben's, art exhibit there. The four of us had a wonderful week exploring the city and getting to know each other. Sylvia's zest for life and interest in everything was so much fun and made us all so much more adventurous.

Thank you, my friend, for showing me how to live bigger and be more open to the world out there. I will try to continue to live my life with more gusto the way you showed me.

God Bless You. He blessed all of us by giving you to us for the short time you were here with us.

Julie Skinner Leslie

Julia Leslie - November 24, 2017 at 12:02 AM



“ Our most favorite memory with Sylvia was when we PCT did Blithe Spirit and Sylvia was cast as the flamboyant medium Madame Arcati. On opening night a packed house erupted into thunderous applause which brought the stage crew running in panic thinking a scene had ended and they were late for a scene change. But no it was for Madame Arcati who had just exited the stage leaving the audience roaring with laughter and applauding her performance. We all have laughed over this with Sylvia many times and now it's one of so many cherished memories
George and Patci Stephen

Patci Stephen - November 23, 2017 at 11:23 PM



“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Patci Stephen - November 23, 2017 at 11:02 PM



“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Patci Stephen - November 23, 2017 at 10:59 PM



“ "On behalf of the Harwood family I would like to extend our condolences on Sylvia's passing. The family tree finally came together at a reunion in Petrolia in 2000. Many times our paths crossed while working in Petrolia and I found Sylvia to be caring, knowledgeable and had a great sense of humour. It was a pleasure "Cuz"."
Pat Harwood

Pat Harwood - November 23, 2017 at 10:24 PM



“ Rest in peace Sylvia
Thanks for being a wonderful neighbour to my mother
Rob and Helen Ritchie

rob ritchie - November 23, 2017 at 09:36 PM



“ It was always a treat to walk through Sylvia's door to meet her family, friends and pets. Ever the supreme hostess, she excelled at making guests feel relaxed and welcome. The community has lost a devoted ambassador of heritage and place, but Sylvia will be watching every step of the way.

Robert & Sharon Tremain

Robert Tremain - November 23, 2017 at 09:30 PM



“ Gail Salts lit a candle in memory of Sylvia Fairbank



Gail Salts - November 23, 2017 at 09:06 PM



“ Sylvia will be greatly missed specially by El Ahmad's family. She was the second mother of Ezz El Deen, his wife Nahed, and his children. May God blesses her soul, and gives her family all the support and patience.

Najah Shuqair - November 23, 2017 at 08:04 PM



“ My sincerest condolences.

Shawna Sitter - November 23, 2017 at 07:37 PM



“ The Fairbank family and friends have lost a strong and lively person in Sylvia who will be dearly missed from their daily lives. We personally didn't know Sylvia well, but had many Petrolia and area persons speak very highly of her and her commitment to the community. We are sorry for ALL with this loss.

John-Paul, Midge and Doug Swayze

JUohn-Paul, Midge and Doug Swayze - November 23, 2017 at 07:18 PM



“ We have just purchased the house next door to Sylvia.. she was encouraging from the minute we met her, our first day.. it's quite an undertaking but she kept saying " don't give up on it!" she had me over for tea and roasted pumpkin seeds and opened the doors to her home for a needed functioning washroom facility break, some encouragement or just to see what else we needed. we spoke with her tuesday night this week and she again told us " don't give up on it.. i'll have to peek my head in again sometime soon!" so excited to see us restore it to a beautiful home again.

for the short time we knew Sylvia we were blessed to call her our new neighbour. so heartbroken by the news of her passing.

Heather Sharpe - November 23, 2017 at 05:51 PM



“ Paulette Taylor lit a candle in memory of Sylvia Fairbank



Paulette Taylor - November 23, 2017 at 05:49 PM



“ My sincerest condolences.

Shawna Sitter - November 23, 2017 at 07:34 PM



“ Our condolences to all of Sylvia's family. She is truly unforgettable in so many ways.
Bill & Dorothy Knight

Bill Knight - November 23, 2017 at 05:06 PM



“ Sincerest Condolences to the Fairbank Family, Petrolia just became a very different place without Sylvia, she was a dear friend, great neighbor and relentless contributor to the Town with her time and ideas, she will be greatly missed! Martin & Dorothy Dillon

Martin & Dorothy Dillon - November 23, 2017 at 04:44 PM



“ There are no words to justly describe what Sylvia meant to the Town of Petrolia, and all those she encountered as a tireless volunteer, supporter and resident of our community.

Not only has she left a lasting imprint on our staff and Council, who regularly worked along side her at a committee level, she has left a lasting imprint on our whole community, and for that we are ever grateful and will never forget.

Our sincerest sympathies to Charlie & Pat, Caitlin, Michael, Rob, Devin and families.

Mayor McCharles, Council & Staff
of the Town of Petrolia

Town of Petrolia - November 23, 2017 at 04:24 PM



“ well said.

Evelyn Ward de Roo - November 24, 2017 at 03:07 PM



“ Caitlin , Michael and family we are so sorry for your loss. Sylvia was a wonderful, loving and giving lady and we will miss her...hugs to you all...

April Freer and Family - November 23, 2017 at 04:06 PM



“ Scott Dillon lit a candle in memory of Sylvia Fairbank



Scott Dillon - November 23, 2017 at 02:59 PM