



*HARRISON
MARILYN
ANN*

Marilyn Ann Harrison (previously Maginley, nee Hill), born in Sydney, Nova Scotia, peacefully passed away at the Parkland Shannex in Antigonish surrounded by her loving family on Saturday, July 24, 2021. She was predeceased by her brothers, Bill and Brian Hill, her first former husband and our father, Charles Douglas Maginley, and her second former husband Robin Harrison. She is survived by her brother Greg (Betty) Hill; five children, Rachel, Rob (Valerie), David (Erika), Christopher and Amanda Maginley; her 5 grandchildren, Suzanne, Ryan, Derek, Megan and Emma, as well as numerous extended family members.

She was a Piano Teacher, Producer, and had her ATCL (Trinity College of Music) 1969, and LTCL (Trinity) 1975. Raised in Nova Scotia, she traveled the world and lived in many places. She married the first time in 1957 and again in 1978. She taught piano privately for many years in Sydney, Halifax, Victoria and Saskatoon. There she produced and directed for the Saskatoon Opera Association and was a founder and its general manager from 1978-94. She also adjudicated at music festivals across Canada and gave workshops. The book *Piano Pedagogy and Performance Principles*, which she edited, was published in 1992. Retiring to Margaree, Cape Breton in 1994, Marilyn continued to teach privately and to adjudicate as well as run the Harrison Hill Bed and Breakfast. She founded a community-based theatre group and also restarted the Margaree Area Development Association (MADA). She was a music and drama critic for the CBC and various newspapers, and a board member of Theatre Nova Scotia and the University College of Cape Breton. Marilyn received the Lescarbot Award for Cultural Contributions in Music and Drama, and the Saskatoon Rotary Award for Education in the Arts. Her contribution to the music and theater world is immeasurable. Funeral arrangements by the Sunset Funeral home and service to be held at Calvin United Church TBA.

In our mother's opinion, every piece of music has a story that's being told through melody. She used to ask her students to imagine what is happening in the piece to evoke an emotional response. They use that emotion when they play the piece to bring it to life. Some of it was dark and tragic, some light and airy. Sometimes it was angry, and sometimes it was full of humour. Many pieces were an expression of love. The point is it was written to tell a story and it was important to her that you find a way to connect to that story.

Our mother loved stories, obviously! She could read a book in a day. If you were willing, she could tell a tale that was so engaging, you'd most likely find yourself laughing and shaking your head with the absurdity of the tale. There was always so much love and delight in her re-enactment. One of her great gifts to all of her children was "how to be an orator"

As her children, we never lacked any kind of support from her. If there was a need for something, she found a way. If we were having difficulties in our lives, she was always there to help us "walk through the fire." If we had a dream to create something or start a new venture, write a book, delve deep into a collection, or have a passion about anything, she always supported us. In fact, passion was the key. In her view, when she saw you had that "passion fever" that meant it was going to evolve into a reality...and it usually did.

If you were going to be a part of her world, you were welcomed in as if you have always been a part of it and feeding you was one of her ways she let you know that. The parties

and dinners she gave were unforgettable. The more people, the merrier the gathering. In the earlier days, it didn't matter what time of day or night the party started. I personally remember gatherings starting at 3 in the morning after striking the set of some theatre production and going all day. Our house growing up was always full and our door was always open. If you were going through a hard time and needed some love and a sense of safety and security, you came to our home. Everyone was a family member and as a result, she is called "Mom" by many more people than her children.

We have lost track of the number of people she has had an impact on. Through her teaching, theatre productions, schools, organizations, adjudications, friendships, board meetings, community organizations...the list is so long, and reaches all over the world. And she was literally just a small-town girl from Cape Breton. An important take away from her is that there is a limitless impact one person can make when you give yourself in service to others with love and compassion. People will jump on board with your ideas and ride the wave too. That's how she got things done. When it didn't go the way she hoped, and sometimes that happened, she would say "Carry on, McDuff!" and move on. She had great faith everything would work itself out.

She loved to travel. She loved history, education, people, and animals. She loved music, theatre, creating events and food. She loved giving. She essentially loved all the time. There was no end to it.

As her family we all loved her, even though there were times we were like "Mom? What are you doing now!?!"

It was a crazy ride Mom. We are so grateful we rode it along with you. You handled this last wholly unfair illness with grace and dignity and still managed to express love for others right up until the end. It is worthy of a standing ovation. We are thankful you went peacefully. We've never seen someone look so beautiful while dying. Ageless in so many ways.

We will miss you, but you are so much a part of who we are as individuals and as a family, extending to all facets of what a "family" definition is. We will honour you daily by doing our best to serve others in the essence of love, kindness, and as much humour as we can find. Life is not easy, but it is meant to be an experience in this vessel. You filled it up. You were passionate. You loved loudly. You had fun.

Tiamo Momma  Enjoy the afterlife...word is there is a lot of music!

A heartfelt thank you to the Sisters and staff, particularly in Mary's Court, at the Parkland Shannex, Antigonish for their extraordinary care of Mom. She loved you too!

Funeral service will be held at Calvin United Church, date to be announced later.

Donations in her memory to L'arche Art House, Antigonish or to the Nova Scotia Music Teachers Association would be appreciated. Funeral arrangements by the Sunset Funeral Co-op. Online condolences: www.sunsetfuneralco-op.com