

Agnes Schatteles

Highlights of her life



Agnes is remembered as a loving, caring and loyal wife, mother, sister, aunt and friend. Her zest for life, for arts and literature was extraordinary. She was generous with her time and energy and loved helping and caring for others.
Zichrono livracha - May her memory be for a blessing!

Birth: Timisoara, Romania – region of Transylvania (formerly Austria -Hungary)

Date: Dec 31, 1932- Dec. 18, 2020 (she died 2 weeks short of her 88th birthday)

Family: Borgida – co-owners of a well-known bookstore in the city – the Morawetz Bookstore.

3 years later, in 1936, George her brother was born.

1938-1944 the family like all other Jewish families was subjected to the Nazi racial laws. Agnes at 7 years old was asked to leave the Girl Guides Movement because she was Jewish. Her family also survived bombings and evacuations.

From an early age Agnes showed an extraordinary talent for languages. She ended up mastering 8 languages. She also showed great interest in literature and reading literary works turned into a lifetime passion.

Agnes like many other Jewish youth, followed the courses of the Israelite Academy in her city, a school of very high reputation. During her high school years Agnes met Otto (Schegerin) whom she married at the age of 18. Four years later their daughter Vera was born (1954).

Agnes worked in Romania first as a language teacher for high school and later as a translator of medical texts at the Faculty of Medicine in Timisoara. She held the position until 1973 when she emigrated to Canada.

In 1968 Otto, her first husband passed, leaving Agnes (36) a widow with a 14-year-old daughter. One year after Otto's passing, Tibor appeared as a suitor. Agnes and Tibor kept their relationship discreet, in view of Agnes' plans to emigrate to Canada.

In September 1973 Agnes and Vera arrived in Montreal, where George was already waiting for them. In the same year Tibor managed to obtain a visitor's passport for Israel. After a brief stay in Israel and 6 months in Rome, Tibor joined Agnes, Vera and George in Montreal in 1974. Agnes and Tibor married the same year in Montreal.

In 1975 Tibor got a senior position at StatsCan which prompted the couple to move to Ottawa.

Agnes worked in Ottawa in the capacity of Cataloguer and Indexer, the latest job being at IDRC (International Development Research Centre) until her retirement 1992. During her tenure at this organization, Agnes was sent to Ethiopia as a consultant. She also spent many years as a freelance court-interpreter, sometimes using multiple languages simultaneously. After an early retirement at IDRC, Agnes worked as a freelance indexer at the library of the Canadian international development agency for several years. She also spent countless hours proofreading and editing her husband Tibor's publications.

Agnes was also generous with her time in helping others. She volunteered as librarian at the Hillel Lodge for 26 years. For her volunteering work she got the THELMA STEINMAN DIRECT SERVICE AWARD. She also helped numerous newcomers to Canada, whom she guided in their first steps, in finding a job or setting up a household.

But perhaps the greatest thing about Agnes was her extraordinary capacity to make and retain friends. She kept in touch with her childhood friends from Timisoara, now all in their late 80's, scattered all over the world. She remained friends with her coworkers from the Medical Faculty in Timisoara. She acquired new friends in Canada both Jewish and Gentile. She remained in touch with her coworkers from IDRC who became very close friends. She became friends with members of her synagogue Adath Shalom. Agnes was a superb hostess and cook, skills which fed her lively social circle. She had great talent for improvisation in the kitchen.

Agnes and Tibor enjoyed world travel in pursuit of art galleries, opera, theater and fine cuisine.

Last but not least: a dedicated wife, mother, sister, aunt, and friend.

Survived by Vera and Joseph Varadi, George Borgida; nephews/nieces: Miki and Delia Kecskemeti, Gaby and Peter Cole, Sandi and Mirella Widder, Leslie and John Gorog

Agnes will be greatly missed and will always be remembered with love.

May her memory be a blessing!