

Mary Ellen Drody-Savidant

Aug. 09, 1928 - Oct. 09 2011

by Debbie Sams, of Gaspé.



Last October, Gaspesian music lost one of its most beloved friends, Mary Ellen Drody-Savidant, of Douglastown, Quebec. Mary Ellen was the daughter of Joseph Drody and Pearl Grant and was a sister of Brigid, Anthony, and Joseph Drody. Our guest contributor, Debbie Sams, was Mary Ellen's daughter.

This article has been in the works since November and Debbie has graciously sent me lots of material from Gaspé to use on the blog. She has written a lovely tribute to her mother which we will feature today. As well, we have some great audio clips of Mary Ellen's music and a beautiful slideshow Debbie created to celebrate her mother's life and music which are featured at the bottom.

MaryEllen was born in Douglastown, one of ten children born to proud parents, Pearl Grant & Joseph Drody. When you think of MaryEllen, the first thing that will probably come to mind is her smile and upright stature and then of course her beautiful clear voice.





She had a gracious, calm way about her, and a caring, giving heart. She was probably happiest when she was giving of herself to others. In the early 1980's, she received a prestigious award from the Canadian Red Cross for 30 years of service to 'Community and Society' for her work as a fundraiser and at blood clinics. She was probably one of the first to bring blankets and other goods on behalf of the Red Cross to people who had just been burned out in a fire.

In the year 2000, she received a plaque from CASA for her "Outstanding Volunteerism". A note on the back said "Where there is a fundraiser, the beautiful music of Mary Savidant is there. How many times have we called on this woman to help us organize the music for a talent show? Mary does everything with a calm shy smile and her community wants her to know they are grateful."

I guess her love for music was inborn because we hear of her youth in Douglastown where music took place in the kitchen around the old wood stove nearly every evening and the fiddle was passed around. She began singing publicly at about 12 years old for the St. Patrick's Concerts in Douglastown at the Holy Name Hall and graced the stage for near sixty years. She is most remembered for her rendition of 'Cottage by the Sea'.



MaryEllen married Calvin Savidant, son of Georgina White & Edward Savidant in August 1949 and together they had three children, Deborah, Susan and Perry who met with an early death at age 11, in 1969.



Yes music was her passion and she spread joy wherever she went. She gave of her time with a cheerful heart as she entertained seniors at Monseigneur Ross or at the Golden Age Club, or just visiting a shut-in and sharing a song or two with them. Her guitar was her constant companion.

Her generosity was also evident if you were fortunate enough to grace her dinner table. You would never be able to get away without having seconds. How many times she made a cake to bring someone who needed a little bit of cheering-up?

Yes, she had a zest for life; fishing, hunting with the guys, and of course, entertaining! Those countless parties at the cottage that they built at Haldimand Beach that went on into the wee hours of the morning with fiddles, guitars, accordion.... MaryEllen lived a life rich in love of family and friends and her life was filled with music!

By Debbie Savidant Sams



Hear some of her songs at the following link. Simply copy the link and paste into a browser.

<https://gaspefiddle.blogspot.com/2012/01/life-of-mary-ellen-drody-savidant.html>