



# Elizabeth Pepper

(1929 - )

Elizabeth came into this world on December 1, 1929 as Elizabeth Craig Simpson. She was born in Pasadena, the last of seven children. Her mother passed away in 1935 and little Elizabeth was brought to Vancouver for a hypothetical visit with her widowed aunt, Janie Blair, but never returned to California. Elizabeth was enrolled in Grade One with the last name, Blair. Aunt Janie eventually remarried, providing another name change for Elizabeth. As a young adult, Elizabeth returned to Elizabeth Simpson again, as she required a birth certificate to get a passport. "It was sort of a pretend existence until then, since I didn't really have a legal claim to the names that I'd used. I was back to being a real person with an identity of my own."

After high school graduation from Queen's Hall School for Girls, Elizabeth attended Spratt-Shaw College, and then worked for a few years in Vancouver and California. Aunt Janie's husband became ill, and when his illness became severe, they sent for Elizabeth to come home. She took over the running of their store/post office in Burquitlam. In her eyes it was pay-back time for the life they had given her.

After her uncle's death, the store was sold and Elizabeth along with her aunt moved back to North Vancouver where they bought a house. Elizabeth was out in the back garden digging out rocks, and this person appeared from across the lane, proceeding to tell her what she was doing wrong. They started dating, and eventually got married. Ed was always on Elizabeth's side. If she was ever in a situation of conflict, he was very supportive. She describes herself as a follower rather than a leader, so that made them a good team. They decided to move to the country and start an egg farm. Searching all over the valley, it was in Mission that they found property within their means. Two daughters arrived – Margaret in 1960 and Janet in 1962. Family stability was very important to Elizabeth, because she had moved around so much. When they made the decision to move to the country, she had only one request - that her children would remain throughout their schooling in one area, and not be moving around as she had. "Our daughters have done well, and I'm very proud of them; they are truly mine – I produced them, they are not pretend like part of my life was."

Elizabeth wanted the girls to enjoy whatever it was that made them happy. This shaped a lot of her early community involvement. Soon after moving to Mission, she volunteered in the Anglican Church Sunday School. She helped found one of the first parent groups – at Cedar Valley School, and was later involved with the Hatzic Secondary parent group. She also helped found the Mission Volleyball Club. Her work with the Mission Horse Club and the Mission Artists Association has brought honorary memberships. The Arthritis Society, Mission Arts Council, Lifetime Learning, Oyama-Mission Sister City Committee, and several committees related to seniors are also part of her volunteer life. She and her granddaughter have volunteered together at the Humane Society cat shelter.

Elizabeth says she has been fortunate to have some good influential people throughout her life. She credits the influence of Norma Kenney as a great example of leadership in volunteerism. "Even though I told Norma that I'm not a leader, I took over the presidency of the Arthritis Society so that she could start the Heritage Association. She was my biggest inspiration in volunteer work". "I would like to be remembered for contributing something to the place that I lived. Mission is a wonderful community with community spirit and so many people who care and contribute and I hope I'm considered one of them."

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