



# Myrna Matthews

(1937 - )

"I am proud to be judged by the company I keep!"

The youngest of three girls, Myrna was born and raised in Edmonton, Alberta. She married Ray in 1958, and came to Mission in 1990, by a rather circuitous route due to Ray's employment with CN Rail. They first lived in Jasper, where they raised their two children, Karen & John, for 13 years. After that, they were on the move for almost 20 years: Burnaby, Smithers, Biggar (Sask), Edmonton, North Delta, Montreal and Edmonton again. This past summer, Myrna & Ray celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with an Afternoon Tea at the Highland Golf Club in Edmonton, where their wedding reception was held.

Myrna first learned to weave when she was living in Smithers, and weaving became her connection each time they moved to a new community. She would join the local weaving guild in order to meet people. She found that, especially moving around so much, volunteering was something that would improve her credibility. If she belonged to a group and said she'd do something, she made sure to follow through to the best of her ability. While in North Delta, she joined the Vancouver Guild and produced their newsletter, as well as being on the executive. She was president of the guild in Montreal.

A founding member of the re-activated Mission Weavers' and Spinners' Guild, Myrna introduced the idea of designing a tartan for Mission, and the Guild formed a design committee. The official Mission Tartan is now listed in the Scottish Tartans World Register.

Myrna has been active in many Mission groups that are representative of encouraging civic pride through community awareness. Seeing a need for the Weavers' and Spinners' Guild to have its own space, she joined the Mission Arts Council. As Chair of the Arts Centre Committee, she was instrumental in finding a home for the Arts Council, which was shared by the Guild, as well as the Mission Folk Festival and the Mission Artists Association. Also, she has filled various roles on the board, including president, and has chaired committees for Arts Alive Studio Tours, two Mystery Nights, Concerts in the Gallery and the Banner Festival. As president, Myrna felt it was important to reach out to the community, and so she joined the Valley Women's Network, the Chamber of Commerce, the Tourism Committee and Communities in Bloom, which she has co-chaired since its inception. In this capacity, she helped to organize the naming of Mission's official flower, the Caitlin Rhododendron.

As a member of the Oyama Sister City Committee, Myrna travelled to Japan with a group from Mission. She previously served on the District of Mission Heritage Commission and Official Community Plan Updating Committee, and is currently involved with the Harbour Revitalization Committee, which is rebuilding Harbour Park. She is excited about her participation in the new Cultural Resources Commission, as they work together to establish their roll in the community.

When asked what it is about volunteerism that draws her, Myrna says, "It's seeing a need...and giving back to the community. It's so satisfying for me."

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