



Shirley Anne Hilton

(1936 -)

Shirley's philosophy on life is: "Treat people kind and helpful. That's it. You can't go wrong with any of this. And have a sense of humor."

Born in 1936 just outside of Edmonton Alberta, Shirley Anne Hilton (nee Puff) was the oldest girl of nine siblings. She fondly remembers growing up with everyone pitching in and helping each other. She assisted her mother and father with the cooking, cleaning, gardening, and taking care of her younger siblings. "We didn't look at it like work, we looked at it as helping Mom and Dad." Her family relocated to Mission in 1948, just after the flood.

During grade eight, Shirley made the decision to leave school so she could support herself and her family. However, she became a life-long learner, eventually earning a grade 12 equivalent diploma and continuing her education by attending in-person classes until the 1990s.

In 1951, Shirley met her future husband John (Whatley) Hilton at a Dewdney Hall dance. Three years later, they were married in Kamloops using the money they'd saved from their earnings. They had four children, Cheryl, Greg, Andra, and Pamela and remained together until John's passing in December 2020.

In 1956, Shirley and John started their own business called Coast Plastering which rolled into Coast Construction LTD and Whatley Estates a decade later. Working with her husband, she was often tasked with going into Vancouver to attend contract bids and get construction supplies and materials as well as do the secretarial work. Shirley also always found ways to learn on the job, gaining new skills. She was known to pour concrete, tear down walls, and drive gravel trucks. She recalls doing whatever was needed of her and lending a helping hand while taking care of her children and running their busy household.

Once their children left home, Shirley and John began travelling extensively all over the world. Whatever the destination, she tried to learn as much about different cultures as possible. Some of the most memorable places Shirley recalls visiting include Hawaii, Greece, Mexico and the Netherlands.

Since her retirement ten years ago, Shirley spends most of her time with family which now includes five grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. She also spends her time gardening, especially maintaining her rhododendrons and hostas.

She emphasizes the importance of keeping herself busy, physically and mentally, as she thinks it is the key to staying lively and young. When asked what her biggest accomplishment was, Shirley stated that it is being a mother and having plenty of grandchildren and great grandchildren, keeping her days full of activity and love.

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