

JUDITH STAINSBY

June 2, 1937 – April 30, 2009



In 2003 Judith wrote A Paddler's Haiku

breathe, stroke, breathe, stroke

rain, wind, silent sea

a watching seal

absolute bliss

Judith, treated in 2001-2, heard about Abreast In A Boat in 2002 and thought it might be fun to join. Along with 10 other Barnet novices in 2003, she enjoyed one of the rainiest seasons ever on Burrard Inlet. In 2004, she looked after a housemate and her cat shelter out in the Fraser Valley, so she didn't paddle. She moved back in 2005, joined the Wednesday night False Creek crew, and created the International Flags for the 10 Years Abreast Celebration. Now living in Port Moody, she rejoined Barnet in 2006 and travelled with them to Portland that year.

Judith became an alumna in 2007 because of her health and was the manager for Barnet – walking up and down the shoreline, carefully watching out for the Dorian and ocean going tug boats throughout each practice. To prepare for paddling in the 2008 season, she took up Nordic Pole Walking, an activity she thoroughly enjoyed. Despite a diagnosis of leukemia, she paddled throughout the season and had great fun at the Nanaimo and Harrison regattas.

Judith has made a huge contribution to the Abreast In A Boat Society as our Treasurer since late 2006. Although she didn't paddle this year, she worked hard to leave the AIAB finances in 'penny perfect' shape.

Her daughter Meg has described Judith as a tenacious, unsentimental and unpredictable woman. Living with her children Eric, Leif and Meg in Vancouver's downtown eastside, the poverty and social inequity spurred her into activism. She took in all strays and orphans – human and animal alike.

As a single parent she took 10 years to complete her CGA qualifications. This shows us her perseverance and tenacity! After she retired from accounting in 1997 she and her dog, Jesse, travelled across Canada for two years in a Ford Econoline van, making longer stops in Nova Scotia and Quebec.

As Meg wrote: Judith was often irreverent and rude, funny and always fiercely smart – a Mensa member and puzzle-player, an avid reader, an accountant who kept re-tallying until every penny was found. She was also in many ways a puzzle herself – a loner and an

introvert, a depressive, a wanderer, famously uncomfortable with telephones and crowds, yet a crusader for victims and the weak. To Judith, death was another challenge and experience. She died on her own terms but at the end, she was not alone.

Judith will be missed and remembered by her children, three stepchildren, seven grandchildren, many cousins and friends and by all of us with AIAB who had the honour of knowing her.

Rest in Peace, Jude.

- Dorothy Fenning