

Christine Lamb grew up in the farming communities of Alberta. Farm Life was hard but her family was close. In 1943 the family moved to Surrey, BC where she attended Queen Elizabeth High School followed by two years of commercial college. She married her first husband in 1950 at the age of 19. Their first son Gordon was born in 1952, followed by Robert who was born in early 1954. Nothing in these early years prepared Chris for the years ahead.

The young family lived in a small house in Bridgeview, Surrey, for several years. Chris' mother and father-in-law, her husband and she attended a church which did not celebrate Christmas. Chris' brother Don would pick up the boys and take them to Chris' mother's house for Christmas. Don and Chris' mother also bought clothes for the boys. Chris' husband and his dad operated a small road construction operation, but both were alcoholics who always had liquor in their trucks. Because of this, the family lived a sparse existence.

At some point in the late fifties Chris' husband talked her into moving to Sulphurous Lake in the Cariboo. Initially he left Chris and the two boys in Surrey and went to establish himself as a fishing and hunting guide. The family owned a 1956 Buick which, because of her husband's drinking, was registered in Chris' name. Because Chris and the boys had no support, her brother bought the Buick from Chris and she took his 1952 Chevy in trade. She used the money to feed the boys and herself. In 1959, they sold the house in Bridgeview and moved to Sulphurous Lake. The property there had a small lodge and half a dozen small cabins. At the beginning, Chris' husband seemed not to be drinking.

In the summer of 1963, Don got a call from Chris. She was at her sister Jeanette's home in Kamloops with the two boys. She was upset and asked Don to come and get them and take them back to Vancouver. When he arrived in Kamloops, she told him that her husband had resumed drinking. He would often go to Williams Lake for supplies; sometimes he would be gone for several days and usually arrived home drunk. On this occasion he had come back very drunk with several companions. He knew Chris had some money which he demanded. When she refused to give it to him, he knocked her out and left her lying on the bed. That was the final straw for Chris. She got some help from a neighbour who drove her and the boys to Kamloops with just their clothes.

The boys were very unkempt and poorly dressed so Don took them out and got their hair cut and bought them some clothes. He then brought Chris and the boys to Vancouver and helped her rent and furnish a suite in an old house on West 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. Chris got the boys into a local school then got a job in the office of an insurance company. Later she got a job in the office of Ellett Manufacturing. On her own time she acquired her Purchasing Agent designation through a two-year correspondence course and became the Purchasing Agent for Elletts. It was there she met George Lamb and they were married in August 1966. Shortly thereafter George adopted the two boys and they moved to Matsqui.

Chris obtained a position with Abbotsford Community Services where she worked for the rest of her career. She came to care very much for the community she lived in. She was always active as a long term volunteer on the MSA Hospital Board, the Abbotsford Community Foundation, Soroptimists International, Bradner Community Club, the MSA Museum Society, Operation Red Nose, the Abbotsford Genealogical Society and Probus. She was a talented writer of both prose and poetry and was a woman who was renowned for hard work, integrity, humility, determination and fearlessness.

In 1975 she became the first and only woman to be elected to Matsqui Council where she served three terms. In June of 2010 she was presented with the Order of Abbotsford and in July of 2010 she was

named Abbotsford Citizen of the Year. Throughout her working career it was Chris' motto and practice to encourage her junior colleagues, particularly young women to have confidence to step out and trust in their abilities to succeed, to learn new skills, to broaden their horizons and to reach for the top.

We believe that Chris' life story will provide inspiration for the women who find a home in the Christine Lamb Residence over the years ahead and with this in mind we are proud to dedicate this building to her memory.

**The Board of Directors,**

**Women's Resource Society of the Fraser Valley**

**April 14, 2011**