



Donna Elizabeth Spicer

October 6, 1945 - June 8, 2025

Donna Elizabeth Spicer 6 October 1945 - 8 June 2025 We are saddened to announce the passing of Donna at age 79 from a rare autoimmune disease triggered by a prior cancer from years ago. Donna was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia on October 6, 1945, the only daughter of Roy and Jean Spicer. Donna attended Chebucto School, where she played piano at school gatherings and music festivals, and was a bit of a teachers' pet. She next attended Queen Elizabeth High School before completing a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education at Dalhousie University. During high school and university, Donna worked in the lab at Maple Leaf Dairy, where she cultivated her love of buttermilk. Donna had a long career in the Halifax School System, first as a French teacher, during which she earned her Master's Degree in Guidance and Psychology from Mount Saint Vincent University, and then spent decades helping students as a guidance counsellor. Her excellent style had a positive impact on many students. After retiring from teaching, she couldn't go anywhere without meeting former students, all of whom spoke very highly of her. Many of those she met said that her encouragement helped them throughout their careers and life. She remained in contact with many of her students after her retirement, even into her last years. Her next career was as successful as her first career when she became a tour guide for the cruise ships that called here. She studied her new chosen work meticulously, eventually becoming the local Titanic expert (we used to call her Encyclopedia Titanica). Her knowledge was such that she was interviewed about all things

Titanic on National Public Radio in the US, she was interviewed on a German television show, and she was often requested personally by ships to do their tours, as well as by a prominent British Cabinet Minister who cannot be named. She continued guiding until she was 77, just for the joy of it. The tips she received from tourists reinforced her joy. Donna was active in her church community at St. John's United Church in Halifax, participating in the bell choir for many years, volunteering as a Church Elder, and doing Pastoral Care visits in the community. As well as her enthusiasm and knowledge of Titanic history, Donna was well versed in Nova Scotia and Halifax history. She enjoyed her extensive collection of her prized china and teacups, and she beautified her home with flowers whenever she could. She also was also justifiably proud of her hand-crafted embroidery. Donna adored her family, and all who knew her will know of the special relationship she held with her niece Madeleine and nephew Alexander. Designated their "special aunt" by three year old Madeleine (Alex was too young to even say Aunt Donna then) and Donna lived up to that name with fervour and delight. Aunt Donna helped shape Maddy and Alex into the people they have become, with adoration and encouragement at every step; she was the first phone call after any accomplishment or heartbreak, and their loudest cheerleader. The family has lost in Donna an unwavering pillar of love and support, as well as the family historian, with her knowledge of the Cape Breton and Newfoundland family histories. Donna had a huge circle of friends, both from teaching and then from tour guiding; her kindness connected her with people easily, and she was a loyal and faithful friend. It is fair to say that nobody ever forgot Donna after spending time with her, and those friends remained loyal and in touch, bringing her comfort right into her last days, all functioning as an extended family. She was beloved as Aunt Donna to many of their children. She will be missed by all of them. Donna was predeceased by her father Harold "Roy" Spicer and her mother Donna "Jean" Spicer (née MacDonald). She is survived by her brother Dr. Finlay Spicer, his wife Johanne Gallant, cherished niece Madeleine Donna Spicer, cherished nephew Alexander Finlay Spicer, and

special best friends Theresa Zukauskas, Olive Murwin, Janet Hopewell, Janis Stuthard and Judy Greenwood (her “girls”). We are all grateful for everything that her “girls” and everyone did for her, right up to her last breath. Thanks also go to the incredible nursing and medical staff of the Halifax Infirmary 8.2 who made sure that Donna was comfortable. Donna passed peacefully, surrounded by all the love and beauty that dedicated family, friends, and her care team could offer. Donna loved mayflowers, lilacs and lily-of-the-valley, which gardener Maddy brought to hospital almost daily. She also received numerous gifts of flowers from many people, which cheered her immensely. Donna would have wished that donations in her memory may be made to Souls’ Harbour or St. John’s United Church in Halifax. Donna has been cremated. Her funeral service will be 2pm Friday June 27, 2025 in Hope United Church , 3055 Connaught Avenue, Halifax, the reverend Rhonda Schofield presiding. The service will be live streamed at www.hopeunitedchurch.ca for those unable to attend in person.

Tribute Wall

LS

“ Donna was my guidance councillor and changed my life for the better. So grateful to have met such a wonderful person. My sincerest condolence's

Lucille Stewart - October 11, 2025 at 05:14 PM

DR

“ Donna was an amazing Titanic historian, tour guide, and avid member and supporter of Titanic Society of Atlantic Canada (TSAC). She assisted with tours on behalf of the Society, and was very much missed during our recent Titanic Gathering in Halifax. I will especially miss our conversations, and her advice when planning events. She was a very dear friend to me, and I will cherish my memories always.
On behalf of the Society, I extend deepest condolences to Donna's family and friends (Janis was a TSAC member as well, and accompanies Donna at our meetings and events).

*Deanna (Dee) Ryan-Meister
TSAC President*

Deanna Ryan-Meister - June 27, 2025 at 11:15 AM

RZ

“ Bob and I first met Donna many years ago when we would visit my brother in law Walter and Theresa on our summer vacations. Through Walter and Theresa we enjoyed many visits with Donna and learned how kind and caring she was. We would love listening to Donna's stories, of which she had many, as she was a remarkable story teller. Our hearts go out to ALL her family and friends. May she Rest in Peace...

Bob and Rita Zukauskas

Rita Zukauskas - June 25, 2025 at 05:54 PM

JZ

“ So so sorry to hear that Donna passed away. She was about the best godmother and auntie that a person could have, and she was an important and central part of our family for longer than I've been alive. She was so smart, and dedicated and was with us through all of the big moments of our lives. Love her always, miss her desperately.

- J.P. & Hyo Min

J.P. Zukauskas - June 24, 2025 at 11:41 AM

MC

“ Mike and I first met Donna when they worked together as guidance counsellors. Right from the first time that we met Donna, we realized that she was a kind, loyal and generous friend. Donna shared her needlework talents with our children. She made beautiful Bert and Ernie cross stitch wall hangings that they so loved and which were on display for many years in their rooms. Mike always spoke highly of Donna’s work ethic and professionalism.

It was later that I became professionally involved in Donna’s life when we were both tour guides with Ambassatours. Donna shared her extensive knowledge about the Titanic over the years with me. She also shared those many tips that made her an excellent guide. She did so with generosity and humour. It was always a good day on the waterfront when Donna was there.

Her beautiful obituary certainly showed the many side of Donna’s life as a career woman, friend, aunt and sister. We hope that your happy memories of her will help ease the sadness of today. Mike and Mary Lou Coolen

Mike and Mary Lou Coolen - June 18, 2025 at 06:30 AM

JR

“ You have expressed so beautifully the many people and interests Donna had during her life. She kept us connected to MacDonald clan and always kept up to date with mom. As a younger cousin I remember treats from the dairy!!

Our thoughts are with all of you.
Joany

Joan Richard - June 17, 2025 at 03:42 PM

CD

“*Finlay I was so sorry to hear of Donna's passing. I have not seen her since my retirement but remember so well her enthusiasm for living and her deep care for her family and friends. I learned a lot from her over the years....she was a glass half-full person who seemed to meet whatever life threw her way with grace and strength. My sincere condolences to you and the family.*

Carolyn Drysdale-Buhr

Carolyn Drysdale-Buhr - June 17, 2025 at 02:42 PM

SH

“*I ran into Miss Spicer at the Doctors office about a year ago. She was our guidance counselor at St. Andrew's school. We had chatted about school for over a 1/2 hour. She was a beautiful lady. My sincere condolences to the family.*

Sue Huelin - June 16, 2025 at 06:08 PM

CK

Sending my sincerest sympathies to Donna's family and close friends... I met Donna while guiding with Ambassatours. She was a phenomenal resource and her kindness always shone through...

Claudia Kingston - June 27, 2025 at 12:23 PM

JB

“*Findlay Johanne Maddy Alex I can hardly express my sincere sympathy to you all. Donna was such a kind and lovely person and she touched so many lives with her gift of life and her deep love of her family and friends including mine. She will be greatly missed but never forgotten. I have so many memories of Donna her laugh smile and her generous spirit. My prayers and thoughts are with you in your sorrow. With much love sincerely Janis bowser*

janis bowser - June 16, 2025 at 02:10 PM



“ *Finlay, Maddy and Alex*
My sincerest condolences to you and family
Kent Clarke

Kent Clarke - June 16, 2025 at 08:16 AM