

Lilian Churchill

Lilian May Churchill
May 14, 1918 – August 1, 2009



Born in Rama, Saskatchewan, Lilian entered into eternal rest at Lisard House, Cambridge, ON on August 1, 2009 in her 92nd year. She moved to Ontario in 1948 and to Kitchener in 1951 where she was employed by Uniroyal for many years.

In Kitchener, Lilian's home became a place of prayer and was open to people from many nations. She became a spiritual mentor to many. She will be remembered for her commitment to and involvement with: **Highland Baptist Church** as a life deacon, Sunday school teacher, nursery caregiver and a beloved "grandma" to Carmichael school children at the Breakfast Club; **Central Park Lodge** where she conducted a weekly Bible study for many years and accompanied the hymn singing with her autoharp. Lilian received a number of awards for her years of volunteer service at the Lodge; **Catholic Charismatic Group** in home Bible Study and Prayer groups.

Lilian is predeceased by her parents, George and Nora (Moore), brothers George (Edith), William (Helen), Winston and Tom and sisters Dorothy, Margaret and Nora and brother-in-law Edwin Ashdown. She is survived by her sisters Rosalie Ashdown, Penicton, BC, Miriam Miller, Nanton AB, Mabel Johnson, Kelowna, BC and 2 sisters-in-law, Rae, Edmonton, AB and Dora, Toronto, ON. She was loved and respected by numerous nieces, nephews, great and great-great nieces and nephews. Lilian will be fondly remembered by cousins in Canada and England.

A memorial service will be held at Henry Walsler Funeral Home, 507 Frederick St., Kitchener on **Friday, August 14, 2009 at 2 p.m.** In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Open Doors with Brother Andrew, Inc., 8-19 Brownridge Road, Halton Hills, ON, L7G 0C6, The Lisard House, 990 Speedsville Road, Cambridge, ON, N3H 4R6, or a charity of your choice.
Visit www.henrywalsler.com for Lilian's memorial.

1918 - 2009



REMEMBERING LILIAN MAY CHURCHILL -- 14 MAY 1918-- 1 AUGUST 2009

Lilian Churchill was a unique person. She would not appreciate being extolled if she were here today, but rather would want all glory going to God for anything He has done through her. I am always amazed when attending a funeral or Memorial service at the number of lives one person touches in a lifetime--this is no exception with Lilian.

In spite of not having a great deal of formal education and leaving home at the age of 16 to go out and earn a living, Lilian learned from the world of books. Treasured books filled her bookshelves, but none was more precious to her than her Bible. She memorized many verses and claimed God's promises for her life. This was not just simply head knowledge, for she cherished them in her heart and experienced them in her life.

Lilian loved writing. Besides writing some poetry, many letters and notes of encouragement, she daily wrote down the gist of her telephone conversations filling many notebooks. In addition, she had many prayer journals where she wrote down the names of those for whom she prayed as well as requests for prayer that she received. I am certain that most of you who are here today have been in Lilian's prayers to her God who hears and answers prayer. I found a letter tucked in an address book which she had received from a prison inmate who stated that he was 48 yrs. old, and had been incarcerated for 29 years, and Lilian's card had been the only one he had received that Christmas. This is just an example of how widespread were her notes of encouragement.

Her home, to which she felt God had directed her, became a house of prayer. She was a great listener. People from many ethnic backgrounds found their way to her home. I've met some of them--Spanish, Portuguese, German, Romanian, Slovakian, French and even English. There was no advertising campaign--just 'word-of-mouth' as friend brought friend. She felt God sent the people to her door or her telephone, where all were welcomed. She listened to, prayed for and mentored many in the Christian faith.

Although Lilian remained single all of her 91 years, she had a large family of relatives and friends. Growing up on a farm for her first twelve years,

she was especially close to her brothers George and Bill and her sister Rosalie. Rosalie has expressed that closeness to her sister has remained to this day. Our sister, Mabel, who lived in Montreal for nearly 30 years, viewed Lilian as her 2nd Mom. Lilian loved children as demonstrated by teaching Sunday School, assisting in the church nursery at Highland Baptist church, and furthermore, volunteering in her 80's to help with the 'Breakfast Club' where she sat in a rocking chair with her knitting, loving and praying for the children. Amazingly, this was a 7 a.m. commitment! Her nieces and nephews, including the 'grands' were dearly loved. I have heard her affectionately called, 'Grandma', 'My Canadian mother', 'Aunt' and even 'St. Lilian.' My sister, Mabel, says she was her 2nd Mom. Older people did not escape her notice. Holding a simple service at 'Central Park Lodge' on a Saturday morning for 25 years attests to her love and concern for these folks as well. *✗ Insert (see below)*

Lilian had a special message for her family, which she asked me to give to you. "Love one another; forgive each other for any hurts or wrongs. Let there be no ill feelings among you toward one another."

Where is Lilian now? She looked forward to being with her Saviour whom she loved. She exclaimed many times during her last days, "I'm going to be walking and leaping and praising God" and that is how I picture her...just enjoying the delights of heaven. "We sorrow not as those who have no hope", but rather rejoice in that eternal life made available to us and freely offered to us through Jesus Christ." Jesus promised, "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

Thank you God for Lilian's life and influence! May God bless and comfort each of you with His eternal hope.

* I can attest to the loving concern demonstrated to Lilian in the time of her illness, by the ~~many~~ many, many phone calls, visits, cards, and notes of encouragement that were received. Each morning, even when she hardly had enough strength to hold her head up, her first words were, "Who called? ... so I went through ~~the~~ my list. She knew her visitors right to the end. I want to thank all of you for the great love and respect shown to her and especially for the many prayers offered on her behalf.

Meditation

Lilian Churchill

August 14, 2009

“Tell out My Soul, the Greatness of the Lord . . . ” So begins a hymn of Timothy Dudley-Smith written last century. Dudley-Smith wrote this hymn out of his reflection on Mary’s song which we have entitled *The Magnificat*, found in Luke chapter 1. Her song reads: *My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant . . . the Mighty One has done great things for me and holy is his name.*

Just as Mary was overwhelmed by God’s love and grace so, too, was Lilian Churchill. In her illness, knowing that her death was imminent, she discussed with her sister, Miriam, the details of this service. And above all of the things that she had thought about, her overriding concern was that “He be lifted up”. Yes, I see some of you recognize her simple gestures of praise. One of the attendants at Lisaard House, who of course didn’t know Lilian before she became ill, asked Miriam about this lifting of her arms – did this have some meaning? Miriam assured her that it did indeed have meaning – it was Lilian’s way of continuing to praise God even while confined to bed.

You can see how the hymns that we’re singing and the scripture that John read, carry the theme that was the bedrock of Lilian’s life: God is great and greatly to be praised!

The Psalms were very dear to Lilian. Those of you who visited her lately were likely asked to read a Psalm or two for her. I think the reason the Psalms resonated with Lilian and with almost everyone else, is that they express the deep joys, fears,

desires and hopes of all humankind. They take us from the awe and worship of a mighty God to the depths of despair and longing lurking in the human heart.

Here are some more passages from the Psalms that Lilian delighted in – *Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God. (43:1-3)* And another, *I love the Lord, because he has heard my voice and my supplication. Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live. (116:1-2)* And again, *O Lord, I am your servant, the child of your serving girl. You have loosed my bonds. I will offer to you a thanksgiving sacrifice and call on the name of the Lord. (116:16-17)* Some of those verses are from Psalm 116. Also found in that Psalm are these words: *precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful ones.*(v 15) Lilian was certainly a faithful one and these verses reflect Lilian's faith in and relationship with God.

Those of us who were around Lilian in her last weeks knew that she was waiting to go home; waiting to see Jesus. One time when Das Sydney, our senior pastor visited her she was napping. He gently called her name and touched her shoulder. She opened her eyes and said in a rather disappointed tone, "Oh, it's Das. I thought I might have a nap and just wake up over there."

As I visited and prayed for her during the weeks of her illness the words of another hymn came to mind –

When my life work is ended, and I cross the swelling tide,
When the bright and glorious morning I shall see;
I shall know my Redeemer when I reach the other side,
And His smile will be the first to welcome me.

Refrain

***I shall know Him, I shall know Him,
And redeemed by His side I shall stand,
I shall know Him, I shall know Him,
By the print of the nails in His hand.***

I told her this hymn made me think of her. She then proceeded to tell me the story of Fanny Crosby who wrote it. As some of you may know, Fanny Crosby was blind. Being blind, she was concerned about being able to “see” Jesus when she would arrive “home”. This hymn expresses her confidence that despite her blindness she would know Jesus by touching his hands. Perhaps Fanny had overlooked the fact that her blindness would vanish when she got home; just as Lilian’s frailty has also vanished as she enjoys God’s presence in ways that are beyond our knowing.

As with Fanny Crosby, death held no fear for Lilian. She was peaceful in death. Those of us who visited her knew she was at peace. As she told many, she was just waiting to go home. She was peaceful in her approaching death – because she was peaceful in life. And she was peaceful in life because God was at the centre of her entire being. You could not be in her presence very long without knowing that. Being peaceful in life doesn’t mean that one is immune to troubles and trials. Lilian would be the first one to tell you that. She had her share, but through them all, she knew that she was kept safe in God’s hands.

The God who Lilian had come to know intimately, and in whose hands she placed her life, offers that same relationship to each of us. You, too, can have the joy of a peaceful life and look forward to a peaceful future with God. If Lilian could speak to us just one more time, I know she would speak of the greatness of God and his love shown to us in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ – the one who is the resurrection

and the life. And I know that she would invite you to put your faith in him just as she did.

The words of another hymn help us understand Lilian's hope in her home going.

When with the ransomed in glory, his face I at last shall see;

'Twill be my joy through the ages, to sing of his love for me.

Oh how marvellous, oh how wonderful and my song shall ever be;

Oh how marvellous, oh how wonderful, is my Saviour's love for me.

Psalms and hymns help us reflect on Lilian's life and faith. They also hold out for each of us the hope, grounded in God's love and promises, that while we say "goodbye" to our dear Lilian, her death is not the final word. For those who share her commitment to the one who is the resurrection and the life, there is the sure conviction that we will see her again as we, too, stand redeemed by his side, and know him by the prints of the nails in his hands.

BENEDICTION

May God's love surround you
May Christ's grace attend you
And may the Holy Spirit keep you
Now and forever more.

AMEN

Lilian's family would like you all to stay for the reception which will be held in the room just along the hall. During that time, there will be an open microphone and anyone who wishes can share their remembrances of Lilian.