



**DR. LYNN FROM (nee FREDERICKS), FRCPC**

November 6, 1938 – April 19, 2020

*A world renowned Dermatopathologist, pioneer and force of nature, Lynn died peacefully at home from Progressive Supranuclear Palsy. Lynn was preceded by her son, Stephen and husband, George, brother, William Fredericks and parents, Roy "Spike" and Isobel Fredericks. She leaves her sister, Gail Macdonald (Dave), sister-in-law, Gloria Fredericks (Nick LoPresti), daughter, Kathryn (Shawn Thompson), and sons, Eric (Beth Popple) and Jeremy. She will be greatly missed by her grandchildren, Logan and Josephine Thompson and Cameron and Leo From.*

*Lynn led a full, joyous, and awesome life surrounded by loving family, friends and colleagues, and the scores of people she helped throughout her long career as a dermatologist, pathologist, a leading authority on melanoma, and teacher. She was a tireless public health advocate and made countless appearances in the media to remind us to wear our sunscreen. She*

wore big necklaces and bright lipstick, and her sense of humour and laugh were legendary.

Lynn “Freddie” Fredericks, the eldest of three, was born in Toronto. She attended Lawrence Park High School, then Trinity College at the University of Toronto before enrolling in medicine at U of T.

As a young med student, Lynn was faced with killing a guinea pig while working at the Best Institute. Unable to land the fatal blow with the iron bar she was given (ironic considering her prowess with a baseball bat), she sought out an older student rumored to have built an efficient and humane guillotine. George From beheaded the guinea pig and they were married before Lynn graduated in 1963.

Lynn completed her residency at the Wellesley Hospital. When George landed a research post in England, Lynn got her first job in dermatology at London’s St. John’s Hospital for Diseases of the Skin. She went on to be the



melanoma fellow at the Massachusetts General Hospital at Harvard Medical School, and later continued her training at several Toronto hospitals including the Toronto General and Toronto Western.

Despite her year-and-a-half fellowship at Harvard Medical School and two articles published in the

prestigious *New England Journal of Medicine*, when she returned to Toronto she was rejected for positions in dermatology because they needed men to fill the many teaching positions coming available. At the time, women were expected to stay home and take care of their children and the young couple had three. In Boston, she sampled that existence, but George insisted she get back to work before her catatonic state became terminal. She adored her work, and so she persevered in defiance of any obstacle thrown in her path.

Lynn became a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Canada in dermatology in 1971 and in anatomical pathology in 1972. She started lecturing at the University of Toronto in 1972. She was appointed Associate Professor in both Medicine and Pathology in 1984, and later was appointed Professor. She was on staff at Sunnybrook Medical Centre, working in dermatology and pathology from 1972-1981. In 1981 she joined the staff of Women's College Hospital, where she was appointed Chief of Pathology, a position she held until 1992. She followed that up as the Head of Dermatology at Women's College from 1993-2000. Throughout her career Lynn authored textbook chapters, conducted research studies and gave many lectures around the world, mostly on the topic of melanoma.

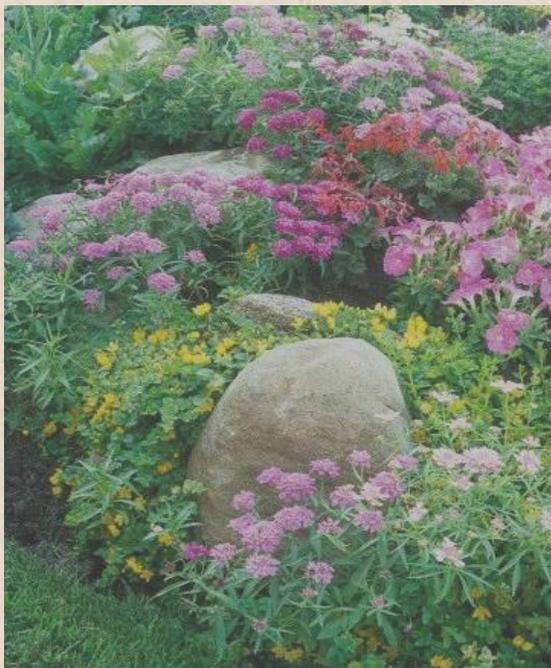
She served on the Women's College Hospital Board of Directors, the Women's College Hospital Foundation Board of Directors, and as the President of the Women's College Hospital Medical Staff Association during the amalgamation of Sunnybrook and Women's College Hospitals. Lynn was the President of the Canadian Dermatology Association in 2000-2001 and in 2006, she was presented the Award of Merit from the Canadian Dermatology

*Association in recognition of her excellence in leadership, dermatology education, and public health.*

*Lynn's greatest joy in medicine came from teaching. The doctors who Lynn helped to guide into their own careers will remember her vigorous energy and enthusiasm, her wit and intellect, her huge smile, and the joy of the laugh that filled the hallways of Women's College.*

*Lynn raised four kids with George – Kathryn, Stephen, Eric, and Jeremy. Stephen's tragic death in 1986 affected her for the rest of her life and her other children never doubted the depth and strength of her love for them.*

*Lynn's family will remember her passion for all things gardening: Flowers! Plants! Composting! Vases! Even, for a while, dried flowers! And drying flowers! They'll remember forgetting to water her plants when Lynn was away, and crushing her perennial garden underfoot during high school parties in the backyard, and being forgiven (almost) immediately. They will*



*remember that Lynn enthusiastically helped them with their own gardens even if those gardens were doomed to fail as soon as she packed away her leather gloves and trundled off in her Subaru.*

*Lynn was seldom without a book and in the '80s there was a time when that, somehow, meant romance novels – bought used, by the pound – from a*

man named Cliff. Cardboard boxes and repurposed grocery bags overflowed with the tattered Harlequins she shuttled to the cottage and back and then traded in for more. "I think I've read this damn book before!" she'd announce while starting a final chapter. Thankfully, it was only a brief phase. Her taste in books ran the gamut, but she was extremely well-read and a passionate member of her book club.

After George died, too soon, in 1999, Lynn was told unequivocally that her future happiness would require her to find a new husband first and foremost. But Lynn wasn't interested in a life with some "smelly old man" who expected a traditional wife. She wanted to travel the globe with her friends. She hit every continent except Antarctica. She cruised the rivers of Europe, snorkeled the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, walked the Great Wall of China, hiked the Camino trail in Spain, whale watched in Patagonia, safaried in Africa, and white water rafted the Nahanni river with the help of a little Dramamine.

She was an avid theatre goer, enjoying regular nights out with friends and annual pilgrimages to her favourite out-of-town festivals. Lynn had been something of a performer in med school, her sweet spot being comedic



monologues. One review from the day called her "a younger Carol Burnett." She never lost her love of the arts and could not refuse a film. Her wide exposure to all of humanity through the arts and her work contributed to her character as an accepting, unprejudiced, and non-judgmental person. It

also meant that she could appreciate an edgy story or a dirty joke without being offended.

Lynn will be remembered for the unusual games she bought to play with her grandchildren, like “Bird Bingo” and “Bug Bingo” (which were huge hits if you can believe that). She had a staggering ineptitude for foreign languages,



but an insane ability to make herself understood with her waving hands. An avid walker, she completed many 10Ks, half marathons and a marathon. Some of her happiest times were spent at her beloved cottage on Wymbolwood Beach with family and dear friends, watching spectacular sunsets with a glass of wine in hand.

Lynn tried – she really did try – to learn to play bridge, but she never seemed to get comfortable with it. Her frustration was finally explained by the discovery of the insidious disease that had been silently ravaging her brain. It pilfered her executive function, communication and motor skills on its relentless march to end her beautiful life. Still, she remained “with it” until the end.

Lynn’s eldest son, Stephen, and her husband, George were both taken from her well before their time, and that wasn’t fair. It wasn’t fair that the last three years of her life were spent under the shadow of her illness. But ultimately, Lynn lived the best life that she could. With joy. With gusto. A life that was beyond full. And while no one would call it long enough, 81 big

*years is still pretty darn good. Lynn touched countless lives with her sharp mind, great humour, generosity, honesty, kindness, love, and her glorious smile. We will miss her terribly.*

*We would like to extend our deepest appreciation to the wonderful team at the Temmy Latner Centre for Palliative Care, and to the extraordinary caregivers who enabled Lynn to remain in her home until the end, including Cindy, Grace, Myrna, Folasade, Cherry, Sharon and Bettina.*

When possible, we will hold a proper memorial and send off to this exceptional, larger than life woman who touched so many. Please email your interest to [drlynnfromsendoff@gmail.com](mailto:drlynnfromsendoff@gmail.com). In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Women's College Hospital Foundation.

*Our most sincere sympathies to the family and friends of Dr Lynn From. - The Humphrey Funeral Home*



All original text of this obituary is available from:

<https://necrocanada.com/obituaries-2020/dr-lynnfrom-1938-2020>

