

Dolores Casey 1929 – 2023



Dolores with sons Paul (right) and Raymond (left) and daughter Allison on the R.A. Hoey

Dolores and Ed Casey began their long-time family cottage adventure in July 1965. Never in their wildest imagination would they think that they would spend the next 52 summers there, playing in Georgian Bay, sunbathing in the sheltered path between their cottage and the Upper's, conducting late night raids on neighbouring cottages, boating around the bay and visiting surrounding islands in the PEGRAD C, and simply soaking up all that Christian Island could offer, through every season.

Christian Island was not always the convenient, well-appointed place it is today. In those early days, there was no electricity, no telephone, no TV. Children ran wild, collecting friends along the way; with the Casey cottage at the far west end of the beach and were rarely seen until dark, managing to hold up for lunch at one person's cottage or another. The adults didn't worry: they socialized, made meals and ends meet, with grocery deliveries once a week, (or once a month!), sharing newspapers up and down the beach to stay connected to the outside world. Phone calls were made by plugging into a land line on a wooden pole in the village. Lists of groceries and other needs were communicated to the "busy" husbands at work on the mainland during the week. Mothers and children were there for the summer – only going back when absolutely necessary, to do laundry or in case of an emergency. From the last day of school to the last glimmers of Labour Day, the Caseys stayed.

Dolores was a believer in children playing and having fun. We were not charged with dish duty or cleaning up. The outside footbath was there, but not consistently used. Needless to say, our cottage floor was always sandy – hard to keep clean with four dripping, sandy children, and later 12 grandchildren and nine great grandchildren coming in and out. Children, grandchildren and relatives would stay for extended visits with Dolores during the summer months while Ed went back to work during the week. Indelible memories are forever in our hearts of the times we spent on Christian Island with Dolores and the rest of the clan.



Dolores at the cottage kitchen table with sons Raymond and Gregory and daughter Allison

Fun was never far away. Evenings were spent with neighbours, just sitting and talking, playing games or doing crafts by kerosene lamps and the fire place. Festive themed ladies luncheons were had in the hot afternoons of August to celebrate the many summer birthdays. Dolores was an avid knitter, crochet, needlepoint and embroidery enthusiast, thanks to her lifelong, special friendship of her next door neighbour Greta Upper.



Dolores with Greta Upper knitting on the beach (left) and a civilized game of croquet during a ladies luncheon (right) L to R Dolores, Rosemarie Hackenberg, Greta Upper, Fran Taylor, Chris Casey, Shirley O'Donnell and Trish Dean

In those early days, people depended on one another. If something went wrong, you looked down the beach to see who had their Canadian flying, (as a sign that the cottage was occupied), and either trudged down to ask for a helping hand, or if more urgent - and your car would start - drive down the beach to recruit the necessary manpower. There was no car ferry; "Island" cars were brought over by barge and parked at the cottage. Rarely did these cars start upon first attempt. It was always with bated breath that you sat on the dock, waiting to see the

family's well-past-the-sell-by-date car trundle down the dusty gravel road to retrieve a tired, thirsty and often irritable clan and their provisions, baking in the summer sun on the dock.

Dolores was always up for an adventure. She loved saunas, visiting neighbours, going on impromptu picnics, and even snowmobiling over the ice in the winter, with Ed driving and children in tow on a sled!



Dolores enjoying the snow swing in the driveway of the cottage (left) and going for a toot with Raymond with Alison Upper and Allison looking on in awe (right)

Her life-long friendships were not only with other cottagers. Ed and Dolores made lasting friends with many Islanders. They both are Godparents to Colleen and Ken King's daughter Daisy.

It is always joked, amongst us young folks, that the reason so many cottagers that have been there for years (and are now into their 80's and 90's), is because of the pure air, water and extreme beauty of Christian Island. How lucky are we to have been exposed to this paradise throughout our lifetime. Dolores was always grateful for her time spent on the Island.

May she always be a whisper on the wind and a chorus on the breaking waves of Big Sand Bay!

She will be missed, but will be forever in the hearts of the many she touched at the cottage and throughout her long life.

By: Allison (Casey) Manners with great assistance from Raymond and Ed Casey