

She feels 'pretty lucky' to be 100

BY TOM ZILLICH, SURREY NOW MAY 10, 2011 7:03 AM

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Helen Chapman, who has lived in Surrey for 83 years, turns 100 years old this month.

Photograph by: Tom Zillich, Surrey Now, Surrey Now

It's nearly party time again for Helen Chapman -- and this one will be extra special.

The longtime Surreyite will turn 100 on May 25, with a tea party planned to celebrate the event at Bethany United Church in Newton.

The Humboldt, Saskatchewan-born centenarian arrived by train in Surrey with her family as a 17-year-old, in

1928. She was the oldest child of three sisters and one brother.

Their father came to B.C. and settled in Surrey, where he cleared land to build a family home on 64th Avenue, across from the Bose farm. The family followed months later.

"You had to walk everywhere, because we didn't have bicycles or

anything like that," Chapman told the Now.

"People weren't always friendly here," she added.

In Surrey, Chapman has lived in the Sullivan area -- in only two or three houses over those many years. Today, she lives in the rancher owned by daughter Joy Watkins and her husband, Doug.

Chapman and her husband Bert, a bricklayer, raised two kids. Helen was a housewife, giving up her dream of being a stenographer.

"It wasn't easy to find a job doing that back then," she said. "It was a tough time here in the 1930s."

Bert died in 2006, two years shy of his 100th birthday.

Sewing, crafts and gardening were some of Chapman's hobbies over the decades. These days, she enjoys listening to audio books -- mostly adventure and tales of the Wild West, and even some romance. "Well, there has to be a little spice somewhere," she said.

Chapman has nine grandkids and 15 great-grandchildren.

"I have hardly any friends my age anymore," she said, "but lots of people come to visit me."

Joy is a retired nurse who looks after her mom.

"It's remarkable for a 100-year-old person to still be so independent," Joy said. "She couldn't live alone, of course, but she is pretty independent.... It was one of her goals to live to be 100, especially after dad died."

Chapman is excited about her big day.

"I'm pretty lucky to be this age," she said.

Delta pharmacist makes house calls

Michael Millman makes house calls -- and he's not a doctor.

The popular pharmacist has become one of Fraser Health Authority's go-to pharmacists for in-home patient treatment and consultation.

Millman, who owns and operates Delta Prescription Clinic on Scott Road at 84th Avenue, has been sanctioned by the FHA to administer medication and collaborate with doctors about patients with chronic illnesses.

Millman says he's happy to help people in their homes.

"I tell these people that my job is to relieve their stress and their issues," he said. "Some people just can't give their relatives injections, for whatever reason, and that's where we can step in.... I'm not a doctor and not curing the ills of the world, but we are doing something positive in the management of that patient."

Before Millman makes a house call, forms must be signed by the doctor and patient to allow him to administer meds.

Millman's business recently celebrated its 25th anniversary.

"This new world of pharmacy is about getting out there, being proactive, doing different things, giving injections and doing medication management, which we've been doing forever," he said.

"It's a whole different world than when I was a kid. Back then, a doctor would come to the house, give a shot of penicillin and, OK, have a nice day. That just doesn't happen anymore. But this is a situation where we can pick up some of the slack from home care."

From IT work to 'furoshiki'

Doris Jetz is thrilled by furoshiki, the Japanese art of wrapping gifts in cloth.

The operator of the website hopfrogpond.ca will be at Surrey Museum on Saturday afternoon (May

14) to demonstrate the technique at an Asian Heritage Day event.

The gift wrapping is done without paper, tape or scissors -- the greener way to go, Jetz says.

For some, furoshiki is also used to pack lunches and create makeshift containers.

A former IT industry employee, Jetz discovered furoshiki last year and went into the business of sewing the cloths on her dining room table and selling them online and at craft fairs.

Asian Heritage Day runs Saturday from 1 to 3 p.m. at the museum, 17710 56A Ave. The drop-in, by-donation event also features music, dance, games, films and more. Call 604-592-6956 for more details.

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