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Eulogy for Louise Meretsky
April 12, 2014
By Arend D. Lubbers

David invited me to say a few words at this service celebrating Louise's life. I am not so qualified as her family and dearest friends to reflect on the impact of her life long capacity to give love and understanding, her even-tempered, strong character, or all of her joys and sorrows. I had a small window of time to see Louise; to come to conclusions about her. Her death requires me to think about those conclusions and translate for you what they are and the feelings they evoke.

Nancy and I first met Louise when Dick was still living. David organized a three day trip to the Shaw Festival in Niagara on the Lake. We attended plays together and dined together. We proved an unusually compatible group. Though we knew David and Joyce, how would we connect with Dick and Louise? It was a natural fit. We acted and felt like longtime friends. I attribute that to Dick and Louise's comfort with themselves and therefore they had the ability to relate easily to others.

The next year when we attended the Shaw Festival Dick was missing. The lack of his presence was felt and discussed. Peter Turner and Jean Enright joined the group and the chemistry remained positive.

That year, too, I asked Louise if she wanted to join me in a whiskey before we began drinking David's expertly selected wines. She smiled and said she'd like that. From then on she had scotch and I had Canadian; our own pre-dinner ritual.

One of Louise's great social talents was her interest in asking and sharing, never taking over the conversation, but actively being a part of it. When you talked with Louise you

couldn't miss the intelligence. You respected her view and on occasion appreciated her humor accompanied by an engaging smile.

I don't remember the number of times we were together at Niagara on the Lake, but on one of them we learned about Norman. Louise and Norman were filling voids in their lives by being together; it seemed in a positive, fulfilling way. Our group and personal conversations did not dwell entirely on personal matters, but at appropriate times they included them. You see, we came to know each other quite well in doses of highly concentrated, yet infrequent times.

Often Nancy and I speak of Louise as a friend in terms usually reserved for friends of long standing and frequent contact. Why is that? Of course, we were together with her in highly compressed time intervals, but I believe it was Louise herself, her openness with us, revealing all the sensibilities and sensitivities that invest friendship. Louise became our long term friend in a short period of time.

We are deeply saddened by her passing. How do we cope, those of us in the stage of life when family and friends in significant numbers slip away? We resort to memory. It is not the perfect antidote to sadness, but it alleviates it. Good memories of those no longer living reside not only in my mind, but somewhere deep within me I feel them. For me that is where Louise will always be. Memories give us all comfort.