

IN MEMORY OF  
**JUDITH**  
**"JUDI"**  
**WITT**  
**(BENNETT)**

**Obituary for Judith "Judi" Witt (Bennett)**

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Judith Norma Witt RN

Peacefully passed away at the Deep River and District Hospital, with her family at her side, on Sunday January 15, 2023 at the age of 74 years. Judi Witt (nee Bennett) of Pembroke, beloved wife of Frank Witt for 54 years. Loved and cherished mother of Michael Witt (Karen), London ON. and Matthew Witt (Sara) Zurich, Switzerland. Loving grandmother to Cole and Claire, Liam and Amelie.

Dear sister of Gwen Bennett (Lorne Nimmons), Harry Bennett (Lorie), the late Stewart Bennett (Mary) and the late Donna Bucholtz (late Ferny). Sister-in-law to Ken Witt (Mandy), Sheryl Parr (John Wilson) (late Chuck) and Donna Liddle (Roger). Daughter of the late Delmer and Norma (nee Gillan) Bennett. Daughter-in-law of Myra (nee Scheuneman) and the late Walter Witt. Judi will be sadly missed by all her nieces and nephews.

Judi was a Registered Nurse (RN) at the Pembroke General (Regional) Hospital for many years. She spent much of her career as a nurse in the operating room. Along with Frank, they owned and operated a dairy farm outside of Pembroke, until 2005. Judi was also an active member of her church.

Friends are invited to share their memories and stories of Judi with her family during visitation at the Murphy Funeral Home, 296 Isabella Street, Pembroke on Friday, January 27th from 2:00 to 5:30 pm and on Saturday, January 28th at St. John's Lutheran Church 357 Miller Street, Pembroke from 12:00 pm until time of Service at 2:00 pm.

In memory and honour of Judi, the family requests donations to the Canadian Cancer Society, the Pembroke Regional Hospital Foundation, or the Delmer Bennett Memorial Fund.

## Eulogy for Judith Witt

Judy and I have been great friends of Frank and Judi for many years. I am helping my wife Judy with this tribute as she is very emotional at this time due to the loss of her very close, and dearest friend for the past 45 years. On behalf of Judy and myself, I want to thank Frank, Michael and Mathew for giving us the honour of paying tribute to a cherished wife and much loved mother.

Everyone in this room probably has a favourite memory or story about Judi. It is somewhat ironic that at some point up here I will shed tears of sorrow over the loss of such a close friend who many times made me shed tears because she had me laughing so hard that it would hurt. Speaking of laughing I have to share this story with all of you. Some of you may be aware of Judi and Judy's nicknames. They were affectionately known as Dumb and Dumber. Now we all know that these two very bright and intelligent ladies are anything but dumb and I will share with you how the nicknames came to be. (insert story about Ian's cast).

We began to compose these remarks about Judi thinking of her many qualities. An innately kind, intelligent, generous woman. Quick witted, full of fun, a great mimic. Dignified, classy and unexpectedly a talented sports woman..... -and versatile, we forgot versatile- Permit us to describe a typical day in the life of our Judi. Off to work in the O.R. by 6:30 home after 3 – throw in a wash and get something on the go for supper and then out to the barn – feed calves and milk cows, then back into the house to get supper on the table- throw in a wash- drive someone somewhere, perhaps phone a friend or neighbour who needed someone to talk to or just to call and make them smile, or make a casserole or cake for someone or some occasion , possibly have a glass of wine with a friend- throw in a wash- host a dinner party for 6 and off to bed and maybe read for a bit (she loved to read) and finally say a prayer or two. Repeat

Let's explore some of the other qualities we mention. Anyone who knew Jude saw her intelligence, in another era she could have been a physician. I personally think she would have been a great standup comedian - a combination of Jim Carey and Carol Burnett. She was keenly observant, nothing got past her. Ask Michael and Mathew and especially Frank, about that quality or try throwing her a surprise party.

Jude's quick wit and abilities as a mimic leads to an O.R. story that has to be shared. In a busy O.R. of course multi-tasking is a part of the job but one day an especially demanding anesthesiologist pushed it too far. I wish Jude could be here to do her imitation but I will try: Judeee hang blood on the patient – Judeee what is the blood pressure- Judeee turn up the oxygen Judeee keep pressure on the blood gas draw-

Judeee Judeee Judeee after several minutes of unending requests Jude calmly turned to the Doc and queried “and would you like me to put a broom up my butt and sweep the floor as well?”

Jude's innate kindness came forth in her work as a nurse and love and care for her family.

We all remember her fondness for wearing leopard print- she wore it classily all the way.

Generous to a fault Judi was never a guest anywhere that she didn't arrive loaded down with food and drink and treats, more than enough for everyone.

We all remember how full of fun Jude was. She so enjoyed her grand children. Cole, Claire, Liam, and Amelie. Judi loved to have time to play with them teach them and see them learn. She also was an exuberant participant in many fun filled Bennett reunions, water melon weekend and the blue berry Olympics. Only Jude could look dignified with a watermelon on her head.

Some of you may have been surprised to hear Judi described as a sports woman, but remember, she was the champion dog paddler across her pool – Judi was the only person we ever saw jump in their pool and do her famous dog paddle and never got a strand of hair wet! For folks here who have ever been golfing know that golf can bring out certain characteristics of your personality best left on the golf course and If you have ever had the experience of golfing with Jude you would have seen a different side of her – I don't believe we ever saw those golf clubs again- she despised golf.

Jude's truly finest moment as a sportswoman came when competing in a Horseshoe tournament down at Judy's family cottage in Midland. As was the custom Frank and Judi made the journey to Midland and joined the family for our Watermelon weekend. A neighbour invited us over for a big neighbourhood party. Judi was hesitant to enter the tournament but being a great sport she joined in. Her first throw was interesting but her second.....remarkable..... She took aim at the post 40 feet dead ahead, About 30 of us stood breathlessly and watched as the horseshoe flew threw the air - at a 90 degree angle, 2 backyards over, narrowly missing the neighbors dog and got a ringer on their gate post.....we

all , including Judi laughed till we cried that was the beginning of the end of Jude's sporting career. That was over 25 years ago and the folks in Midland still talk about that amazing toss.

It is very difficult to end this tribute to such a beautiful soul. Wife, mother, mother in law,,grandmother and sister. Everyone here is so fortunate to have had Jude in their lives. In concluding when we think of Judy four words come to mind; fun Judi was always making us laugh, faith in God as she would often would draw strength from her faith. Friend(friendly – insert how she was friendly, even with strangers) and family. . She would often tell us what was happening with folks in the Bennett clan or the Witt family. Judi loved her family with every ounce of her being and any time we got together she would mention her family. With great pride she updated us on what was happening in the lives of Michael and Karen, Mathew and Sara, There was always a picture, or a video clip on her phone, or a voice message from her much loved grandchildren Cole, Claire, Liam and Amelie. Of course I could fill another 30 minutes plus with her stories about the love of her life, Frank. Fun, faith, friend and family

I know she is with us and smiling at the beautiful memories all of us will be sharing today. From my Judy to Judi – Thank you my best friend.

My friend Judi or better still, my friend Superwoman.

A loving and devoted wife and partner to Frank, a loving and devoted mother to Michael and Matt, Karen and Sarah, proud and doting grandmother to Cole, Clair, Liam and Amélie, loving sister and sister-in law, and loving aunt to many nieces and nephews. She was an amazing friend and never hesitated to say that Judi G was her best friend. We were good friends for 57 years.

Michael and Matt, she was so proud of your success and accomplishments. She was so happy with your choices of your partners. She felt that she gained two beautiful daughters. Cole, your grandma admired your hockey skills “ she bragged about you a little. She loved going to your hockey games when she and grampa were in London. Clair, you amazed her by your diving and swimming abilities. She also liked that you are a little like her because you like jewelry and fashion. Liam she was very proud that you play the cello and you like money. Amélie, she loved all your stories you told her. You look a little bit like grama Judi.Frank, all I can say is that she sure was your soul mate.

I'm going to take you back to the year of 1965. In the spring of that year, a group of 30 or so young women gathered at the then Lorrain School of nursing (situated at the back of the hospital) to write an entrance exam in order to become nurses. A smiling young lady with blond hair (very much in style) wearing a navy blue dress trimmed with a white neckline along with white shoes. She was passing the exam papers. Her mesmerizing smile touched everyone who met her and it never changed. My friend Corinne said to me after the exam "Did you see that beautiful blond?" I replied "ya, I sure did and wasn't she cute?" The group gathered again in September of 1965 to begin our 3 year nursing program. As most of you know back then we all lived in residence at LSN. I learned shortly after arriving that the sweet young blond was 16 yr old Judi Bennett from Foresters Falls who soon became known as Ben.

One of the hot spots we liked to patronize was the Chez Charles in Quebec for its live bands. One night at the "Chez" Judi saw this very good looking, pleasant, dark haired debonair young man called Frank Witt. He asked her to dance and that was it..It was love at first sight for our Judi. And probably for Frank as well. Of course it was hard to keep secrets with 30 curious young women at LSN. We followed that love affair for those 3 years and that love affair never faltered for 57 yrs. It just kept on blossoming through the years.

My friend was one of the most intelligent persons I've known. She never missed an opportunity to make you smile or a laugh and sometimes embarrass you with a certain look, a word, a joke or a pinch on the butt when you were not expecting it. No one could tell a story like Judi especially when she got into character and mimicked the accent of the subject of the story or the joke.

Judi and I worked together at PGH for 27 years between the maternity ward and the operating rooms. As the cliché goes, there was never a dull day when Judi was working. The wheels in her head were always in full motion. She always had a comeback when someone said something she didn't quite agree with. Most of you here probably remember Dr McLuskey, a big tall fellow and at the age where the balding process was beginning. He always liked to say things to the nurses to get a reaction or even shock a little. One day he was working with Judi and stated that "I don't have a vain bone in my body". The topic was on vanity. "Oh" said Judi. "Is that why you comb your hair from the back to the front?" He looked at her and shook hi head and said "oh missy." He knew what Judi was like.

One winter Judi and I took skiing lessons together on the icy slopes of the Alice ski hill. We slipped and fell during our 10 lessons but at the end we felt we could ski. The family day holiday was coming up and I said to Judi "hey how about going skiing at Mt Saint-Marie?" Judi says" ya ok." It took us a about 3 hours

hours to get there as there were no GPS or google maps. When we saw those hills we were shocked. They were mountains. We stood and watched people for a while and studied the 4 man chairlift. Remember Alice had a palm lift.

Eventually we decided do it..We were seated with 2 nice elderly gentlemen. As we got closer to the end of our ride I could see what appeared to be some kind of wall of hay bales. I said to Judi “ Ask the men what we do to get off the chair lift” and so she did. They told us just to lower our skis and go to the left. Well that seemed easy enough. So the men got off, then Judi, and she made it, I was so proud of her. Then my turn. I went straight into the bales of hay. Skis and hay everywhere. I looked at Judi. She was laughing so hard, all I could see were tears all over her face. She said to me “ Hang on I’m coming to help you Gert.” (a nick name I had). She came over to me, grabbed my arm and didn’t she fall on me. We laughed and laughed and eventually we managed to get up. Before descending the mountain, I said to Judi “if I make it down this mountain, I’m going on the bunny trail.

For about 15 years, Frank and Judi, myself and my husband Jim, and another couple took a trip at the end of August. You can just imagine the laughter in our hotel room at night especially after one or 2 glasses of wine. Judi would tell jokes and stories and bring us all to tears. Frank would then add to the stories causing more laughter. For some 11 or so years Jim and I would join Frank and Judi in Florida. We loved, loved, loved shopping in the malls especially the American prices. Our evening and nights were spent the same way laughing at Judi’s and Frank’s stories. Jim and I would laugh so hard we were almost rolling on the floor.

At the beginning of my eulogy I said Judi was a superwoman and I’m going to tell you why. Judi was the hardest working woman I’ve ever known. She was a mentor to new nurses. An excellent nurse with impeccable work ethics. She inspired everyone to be the best they could be. She also inspired us all by her great sense of fashion. She always looked her best. I told her so many times “You look like a million dollars”.

Now a work day in the life of Judi. Our shift at the hospital was from 7 to 3. Judi arrived at 6:45 looking like she was ready for a photo shoot and looked just as good when she left at 3 o’clock with no evidence that she wore hat all day. At home she made dinner for her family as well as for one, two or three hired hands. Then to the barn to feed her calves and help with other chores. Back to the house, clean up and set the table and make breakfast and lunch for the next day. Of course there was also a week of call we had to take. Very often she was called in during the night for emergency surgery and back to work in the morning. When the boys were in university she would make them care packages. Perhaps there would be a new shirt or other items she would pick up and always her homemade

cookies. I think she baked in her sleep. On one occasion I asked her what her plans were for her 2 weeks vacation. She told me friends were coming from Holland for 2 weeks. I asked her “Judi when will you get some rest?” “oh, I’ll be fine.” You can just imagine the meals she prepared and don’t forget the hired hands there for hay season.

I was so happy for Frank and Judi when they retired, sold their farm and bought a beautiful house on the Ottawa River with a million dollar view. They were finally free to travel, visit their family and friends and spend months at a time in Florida. I wanted to share with you today how I saw my friend and why I loved her and why she was a superwoman to me. A kind, warm, generous , fun loving person who never hesitated to invite you for lunch or dinner should you stop in for a coffee. As the cliché goes “she would give you the shirt off her back”.

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