

# *From Lost to Found*



## *The May Gutteridge Story*

**by Douglas P. Welbanks**

# The May Gutteridge Story

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## **INTRODUCTION TO THE THIRD EDITION**

It's been six years since I took a look at the first hard copy publication of *The May Gutteridge Story* in 2011. The second edition that quickly followed in the e-book format of a PDF added the May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011 celebration of her life without any other revisions.

Today, the world is a much different place. An all-pervasive technology touches the quality of human life with advances that literally change the face of the earth. Our culture, our political perspectives, news and fake news, the Internet, webinars, email, texting, Instagram, Snapchatting, video clips, and YouTube combined with medical breakthroughs and artificial intelligence, all help to create a brave and sometimes overwhelming new world.

Language has been subjected to an extreme makeover during these snap-of-a-finger six years as the reduced number of characters and words capable of transmission in the most popular devices, such as Twitter and smartphone texting, influence how we think and communicate. Email, in many respects, has eliminated the traditional lengthy handwritten letters which contained important biographical details and valuable, honest personal insights. Our written exchanges are now mostly boiled down to residues of a few paragraphs scribbled in haste.

Equipped with the dialect of modern trends and culture, I have sprinkled several tasteful edits over many chapters of *From Lost to Found - The May Gutteridge Story* to upgrade historical references and modernize perspectives. Each chapter has been examined with words and sentences being tweaked and fine-tuned.

The Epilogue now features a full-length depiction of the 2011 celebration of May's life with photos and new memories that include those of Father Gordon Gardiner and Father Lloyd Wright.

Douglas P. Welbanks  
October, 2017

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## **Foreword**

For more than thirty years from 1960 onwards, May Gutteridge devoted herself to the service of Vancouver's poor and downtrodden in what used to be called Skid Row, but now is notorious as the most deprived postal code in Canada, the Downtown Eastside. Her abundant courage and resourceful energy built up a whole series of programmes designed to tackle the needs of the inhabitants of those cruel alleys and suffering streets.

As a faithful member of St James' Parish, she was first asked to run a Pensioners Club in the church basement. But she soon recognized the wider problems faced by many of those who turned to her for help. So she energetically mobilized resources to alleviate the human pain so evident in the church's neighbourhood.

Her vision, like her sympathy for those in need, was boundless. From this motivation stemmed a variety of enterprises, beginning with a shelter for women called the East Ender's Society in 1965 and a government sponsored scheme to administer social service cheques in 1968 for those afflicted by one or other form of addiction, who so often immediately squandered their monthly allowance on drink or drugs. This led on to the organization of the Gastown Workshop to provide employment and to a Home Help program with workers looking after the sick or elderly. Then Mrs. G, as she was first called by Janette Andrew, one of the first residents of the East Ender's sanctuary for woman, developed imaginative projects such as a shelter for battered women fleeing from abusive relationships, (Powell Place) a residence for the mentally-challenged appropriately named Victory House, a family resource centre to teach family skills and nutrition to untrained mothers, (Family Agape) and finally no less than two hospices for the terminally-ill (May's Place and Cottage Hospice)

Douglas Welbanks was a student assistant in the early days the St James' Community Service Society. Now, eight years after Mrs Gutteridge's death, he has written this vibrant tribute, which successfully recaptures the dedicated and affectionate service May Gutteridge gave to those who needed her help. He rightly shows how her ministry was always a personal one, listening to the clients' problems, suggesting remedies and often herself ensuring that these were carried out. She tirelessly challenged the heartlessness of bureaucrats, and sought, prayerfully, to oppose the inflexibility of governments. The projects she initiated and built up have now become indispensable.

Welbanks' lively account of Mrs G's success in undertaking all these challenging ventures, when she had neither money nor any official position, is a heart-warming story of how this remarkable woman acted as the voice of the voiceless for the down-town east side, and indeed, over the years, became a legend for her compassionate and devoted care of Vancouver's least fortunate people.\*

Professor John Conway  
March 2011

\* This article was published in the February 2011 issue of *The Topic* and is printed with permission.

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## **Preface**

In July 2008 I began looking for May Gutteridge on the internet. What compelled me to go to the Internet and Google her name is still a mystery. Six years had passed since her death. We had not been in contact since 2000. *I really missed her.*

I was a bit shocked to find how little information existed about her amazing life. The best public acknowledgement of her work came from the *Vancouver Sun* in a one-page obituary by Douglas Todd. A few other highlights appeared in a one-page summary I found on the St. James' Social Service Society website. Still, these footnotes hardly captured the magnitude of her contribution or the depth of her dedication that spanned over three active decades of direct involvement.

I sat at my computer screen, stunned with disbelief. I tried searching "East Enders Society" and struck gold. Finally some documentation. As I read line by line, I learned about the society's early days in the Downtown Eastside, but there was no mention of May Gutteridge. Nothing. Not a word, even though she was the founder and first president of the society. How could this be?

May's conspicuous absence from BC history gave new meaning to the famous biblical phrase "from lost to found." To me, May Gutteridge and her incredible story of triumph had been "lost," but deserved to be better known. I became determined to resurrect the faded memories of a very important Canadian—a warm and devout leader who waded into the cold, cold waters of drug addiction and poverty to help thousands of British Columbians at a time, the 1950s and 60s, when it was not politically correct to do so. There is little doubt that May's early pioneer work influenced governments at all levels to respond to her cry for compassion and funding that finally came in the 1970s.

To make this story come alive, I have used scenes and conversations based on real clients and events, interviews and meeting minutes in a manner that allows the reader to see her laughing, crying, speaking, listening, and taking the hands of those who needed her most. It was through May that many experienced, often for the very first time, true dignity and acceptance

Client names have been changed to protect their privacy.

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I would like to thank the following co-workers and colleagues for this look into the rear-view mirror and for sharing their special version of the May Gutteridge story: Helmut Boehm, Benny Chin, Ken Christie, Loreena Gagnon, Father Gordon Gardiner, Michael Gillette, Cynthia Green, Philip Green, Lyndon Grove, Archbishop Douglas Hambidge, Monica Hogg, Bill Hustler, Father Alwyn Hyndman, Tyleen Katz, Maureen Lange, Father Harold Nahabedian, Herb Roberts, Janette Roberts, Kathy Swain, Father Mathew Tate, David Trigueiro, Wes Wagner, Lisa Welbanks, Father Don Willis and Ron Yuen. Their assistance in this massive reconstruction of events, people, and dates, and their enthusiasm for May Gutteridge have been enormous.

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Tyleen Katz deserves special recognition for hiring Robin Fowler and taping several interviews in 1997–98 with May, at her own expense. This leaves valuable biographical detail that would otherwise have been forever lost.

I am grateful to Lance Gutteridge, May's youngest son, for his immediate support for this tribute to his mother.

A big hug is dedicated to Naomi Pauls (Paper Trail Publishing) and Tamara Letkeman for their skilful editing and artistic fine-tuning.

I further thank the many readers who looked at earlier drafts and helped sculpt the script from infancy to maturity: Chris Beresford, Helmut Boehm, Mary Brown, Ann and John Conway, Father Don Dodman, Philip Green, Father Mark Greenaway-Robbins, Lyndon Grove, Loreena Gulbransen, Archbishop Douglas Hambidge, Father Al Hyndman, Tyleen Katz, Maureen Lange, Mary MacDougall, Grace McCarthy, Carol Matusicky, Janette and Herbie Roberts, Kathy Swain, Father Vincent Travers, David Trigueiro, and Wes Wagner.

Finally, I would like to formally acknowledge the financial assistance that has allowed this very important story to come back to life and be recorded in a published form, for present and future generations. Such assistance came from Ann and John Conway, Father Harold Nahabedian, the St. James' (Anglican) Church's Outreach Committee, St. Mary Magdalene's Parish (Toronto), and my wife, Angela Zheng.

**“To recall May Gutteridge at work, and to see all that has since come from her leadership and example, is to be reminded of her belief that every single one of us is a child of God, and her insistence that every individual be treated as such.**

**The Church calls us to see Christ in all others. Not an easy task. But looking back over my own long life I cannot recall anyone who has more successfully translated the challenge into reality than May. It's tempting to speculate on how many of the problems and divisions that currently exist in our frequently judgemental society would disappear if her example were more widely followed.**

**I am privileged to have known May as a parishioner, a co-worker and a friend. May the work she inspired long go on.”**

**—Father Don Willis**

Honorary Assistant Priest, St. James' Church 1992-2005

Director, St. James' Community Service Society 2002-2005

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## **Chapter 1**

### **sally goes to church**

Early one misty September morning in 1960, May and Arthur Gutteridge hurried to their favourite seat at St. James' Anglican Church in downtown Vancouver. Why they travelled all the way to the oldest and poorest part of the city to attend church mystified everyone. They could have attended a service much closer to their west side home. Instead, something compelled them to undertake this long trek to worship inside a royal-looking concrete structure, dripping in ivy and reaching for the stars with a castle's cone.

Located on the north side of the 300 block of East Cordova Street, the parish recorded a distinctive history as one first established in 1881 that upheld a distinguished reputation of community involvement and helping their neighbours in need.

They parked their car. May noticed two church volunteers ushering an uncooperative woman out through the middle door of the church. They forced her down a row of concrete steps and abruptly released her. May immediately went over to the woman and said, "What seems to be the trouble here?"

Surprised that anyone would care, the woman said, "Who are you? Are you a cop?"

"Oh, no. I'm a regular at St. James'. I just look a bit official. Did something happen inside?"

"I don't know. They don't want me in their church. I just want to pray." She began to cry.

"What's your name?"

She wiped her eyes with her sleeve and said, "It's Sally."

"Don't worry about them, Sally. Take my hand. You're coming with me."

She smiled with a big grin and took May's hand. With her yellow rubber boots and pink coat, Arthur in his traditional grey business suit and May in her blue outfit with a matching blue beret on her head, they boldly marched up the steps and in through a massive doorway into the holy chamber like they were just another family coming to Sunday Mass.

The two ushers saw them pass by, but made no attempt to intervene. The three arrivals emerged into a bright open area full of contiguous rows of pews with a curious congregation looking their way. They stopped near the front of the church and slid into a vacant section and sat beneath the gigantic ceiling towering high above. At the back of an elevated platform, a distinctive Altar reflected well the purpose of the day with a pipe organ in the background soothing hearts and minds.

A few moments later the soft, reflective ambience surrendered to thunder crashing through the air from high intensity organ chords and a deep bass that shook the walls like an earthquake. The parishioners were completely awakened to their special day of worship. Full-bodied harmonies from the choir joined the

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priest and his ensemble as they appeared from both sides of the Altar. After a short ceremony, they proceeded to their assigned places facing the Altar and not the congregation that sat behind them. After a few moments, the priest and his entourage turned to face the parishioners. The music stopped. Silence wiped away all distractions. Sally no longer felt like an outcast.

When the Mass concluded, the Gutteridges invited Sally to join them for tea. Again, she was surprised but, with some hesitation, consented. They stood up and moved to the centre aisle. They could now see the choir and the classically trained organist, who continued the celebration of the Sabbath with divine melodies. Sally was truly amazed.

Rather than follow the congregation out through the main entrance, May clutched Sally's hand and tugged her in the opposite direction. While passing through the centre of the church, bright rays of sunlight danced through the lingering haze of incense from the Mass. "What's that smell?" Sally asked. "It's kinda like spices mixed with smoke."

"You know, that's a superb description," May said with a smile. "That fragrance, my dear, is called incense, and it's been used throughout the ages. It cleans the air, the mind, and the soul. Do you like it?"

"Sure beats cigarette smoke."

They proceeded past a few pole-like columns to a walkway and at the end, a closed door. Arthur opened it and waved May and Sally in. Into a room full of laughing voices where well-dressed people talked, smiled, and lined up for coffee, tea and biscuits, the Gutteridge party moved slowly.

They walked on a shiny hardwood floor that resembled a classical ballroom. An old-time stage with velvet curtains opened a window to a theatrical past at the front of the cheerful room. All heads turned to meet and greet May's periwinkle eyes. Sally and Arthur trailed behind as she glided across the floor and headed directly for the priest. Just before she arrived, he abruptly excused himself from a conversation with another parishioner and turned to her to say with obvious ebullience, "Good morning to you and your lovely family. How's everyone doing today?"

May smiled and with a soft, unmistakable British accent replied, "Good morning. Let me introduce my new friend to you, Father. This is Sally."

The priest nodded his head respectfully, extended his hand, and said, "Welcome, Sally, to our parish. Is this your first time?"

Sally, overwhelmed by her surroundings, began to shake. She put her head into her hands for a moment, wiped her eyes, and then stuttered, "I've been out there for awhile. You can't begin to imagine the things I've been through. I've wanted to come into your church so many times, but knew I'd get kicked out."

She began to cry. May squeezed her hand and looked into her eyes, then looked at the priest. "Father, on my way in this morning I noticed that Sally had been indignantly escorted out of the church. And so she's now my permanent guest. And Sally, if you would like to meet me at the front door next Sunday at the same time, you can join us once again."

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May then led Sally to the beverages and poured her a cup of tea. Neither of them could resist the scintillating aroma of fresh, home-baked muffins and cookies. Sally willingly accepted the church's generosity.

After Sally had a plateful, May excused herself and met with the many parishioners who were waiting patiently to share a moment with her. She was well-liked and a gifted storyteller. Her eyes would look around the room as if she was talking to everyone there. Her British accent seasoned her sentences with a melodic rhythm that punctuated the air with humour and shared a lively spirit with a grateful audience every Sunday.

Following a short visit with her many friends, May returned to Sally to ask her if she needed anything else before she went home. Being both proud and shy, Sally politely shook her head and said no.

Rather than leave her stranded in a room full of strangers, May invited her to leave at the same time. After they reached the street, May opened her purse and took out a few dollars and said. "I can tell, Sally, you haven't been eating properly. Here's a little money. Please go and have some vegetables and protein. If you need anything before next Sunday, don't hesitate to knock on the priest's door. It's over on the Cordova side. Just open the gate and go up to the door. I will let them know you might be coming. Is that alright?"

Sally, overcome by all of the kindness, broke down into tears again. May smiled and re-entered the side door, disappearing back into the church.

As she and her husband later walked out of the church hall, a number of parishioners stared at them with raised eyebrows. A short round woman with a feathered hat whispered, "Now who does she think she is, bringing that kind of riff-raff in here? She should be ashamed of herself."

Her friend agreed. "You're absolutely right. I trust it's just a phase she's going through. We shouldn't worry too much. It won't last."

May's sensitivity to Sally provoked some parishioners to dismiss her act of kindness as a temporary whim destined to be short-lived.

## **Chapter 2**

### **The pensioners' club**

The story in chapter 1 about Sally going to church portrays the kind of person May Gutteridge truly was. On several occasions I witnessed her rushing to calm down noisy or otherwise disruptive attendees during a church service to comfort them rather than remove them, often to the dismay of a few parishioners. If questioned she would say respectfully, that, not only did the poor and disenfranchised have every right to be inside a church of God, but they belonged there.

Father Wilberforce Cooper had been the most recent rector to retire (1952) from St. James' church. He was well-known for his immense contribution to the Downtown Eastside. Father David Somerville followed and sought to perpetuate the church's compassionate outreach by organizing resources to help the

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countless alcoholic seniors who drifted aimlessly down Hastings Street, broke and vulnerable, after blowing their pensions on their vices. He recruited the assistance of William (Billy) Frank Meal, a parishioner, and together they began what was called the Pensioners' Club in the lower room of the parish hall in the late 1950s.

This was the true origin of a unique brand of social work at St. James' Church—one that managed some of their clients' money by having the monthly pension cheques deposited, voluntarily, into a separate bank account administered by St. James' Church. The pensioners' rents would be paid with the remaining money being distributed weekly. There were seventeen old-age pensioners at the beginning.

Billy Meal died suddenly of a heart attack in 1960. After his funeral service it quickly became apparent that there were by now seven hundred members in the Pensioners' Club—which added a huge burden onto the clergy's busy shoulders. Before long May received a call at home from Bishop Godfrey Philip Gower, the fifth Anglican Bishop for the diocese of New Westminster asking her if she would be interested in helping the church expand the Pensioners' Club in the basement of St James'. She was ecstatic and jumped at the opportunity.

One of May's special qualities was her willingness to recruit clients. The very same people she was asked to help. She did not search for the best qualified or the most educated, but rather, she gave people like Sally a chance and by doing so, they would grow stronger and healthier and become the best equipped to make a difference in this community.

May began the work of converting the church basement, a huge single room that looked like an empty gymnasium, into a meeting place large enough to accommodate all of the pensioners. Other members of the Downtown Eastside community joined her to arrange a few collapsible tables where the pensioners could sit and have coffee and muffins. May set-up a place to put a telephone and to complete the necessary paperwork and administrative tasks for the club.

Word got around quickly about May's daily routine to help manage the affairs of so many poor seniors. Almost immediately other church members started showing up in the morning to help her. Her ability to attract volunteers and sponsors to a cause made May Gutteridge incomparable. She never conducted any real job interviews.

Building a new Pensioners' Club on the north end of the church took several months. Many local seniors were too nervous to go into the church basement as the religious tone scared them away.

Bertha, Sally's friend, was eager to help. She came every morning assisting May with setting up the club, by making coffee and tea and doing whatever was needed to make everyone more comfortable. Bertha was one of the first of many dramatic transformations to be witnessed on the Downtown Eastside as a result of May's work. In a few short weeks her health and physical appearance had drastically improved. Who would have imagined that making coffee every morning for strangers would change someone's life?

May did convince Sally to assign her cheque to her for administration as the government's welfare policies were quickly changing. Sally could be assured of a

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roof over her head and May could see her every week. With a little bit of luck, she might even convince Sally to volunteer sometime later.

May spent hours and hours phoning government agencies trying to get government funding for the Pensioner's Club - without avail. She would not be deterred.

She met with the local police to inform them of the new service. She walked around the neighbourhood and talked to the shopkeepers, merchants, restaurant owners—even the slum landlords and skid road hotel managers. What startled everyone was her gentle kindness. They could see she was not snooping around to file complaints. She just wanted people to know she was there to help and was a part of the community—a neighbour, not an institution.

### **Chapter 3**

#### **The east enders society**

On the outskirts of the city, an old provincial prison facility known as Oakalla sat appropriately on the edge of a threatening, cliff-like hillside in Burnaby. It looked like Alcatraz with its huge, impenetrable brick walls and guard towers circling the perimeter. Archbishop Philip Gower suggested May go out and see what she could do to help the young offenders.

She contacted prison authorities and soon learned how women from the Downtown Eastside were routinely rounded up by the police and incarcerated. Usually, they had committed some minor offense like public drunkenness or petty theft—only to be released without any money or place to go. This meant they would inevitably end up back at Hastings and Main streets, the hub of the Downtown Eastside and drift back into their old lifestyle of addiction and crime.

After meeting with the prison officials, May said it was astounding in a civilized society to witness such indifference towards the treatment of addiction and mental illness. “Most of these inmates are not criminals or a serious threat to society but are victims of circumstance, victims of child abuse or unspeakable neglect.”

In addition to the criminalization of alcoholic women, other aspects of B.C. society in the 1950s and early 60s were shocking by today's standards. May disclosed in an interview with Robin Fowler that First Nations women could not qualify for social assistance back then. To get around this, many young women were forced to go along with any man that gave them shelter, later to be subjected to many forms of abuse.

Eventually, when welfare money was made available for First Nations women in the 1960s, the authorities at first refused to give it directly to them. They would, however, channel the cheques through Mrs. Gutteridge whenever she made the request.

The need was so great in the inner city and there was so much to do. May told the rector at St. James' church she was especially concerned about First

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Nations girls being abused, and she wanted to create a place of refuge for them. To this end she began contacting several people to form an advisory group. After a few weeks, May had assembled an extraordinary group—a cross-section of professionals, community representatives, and parishioners. They called themselves the *East Enders Society*. With the help of a couple of social workers, the society rented a house on the 800 block of East Hastings Street to offer a sanctuary for First Nations women. The house had originally been built for a police inspector, but had been converted into a rooming house and since fallen into a state of disrepair.

“I always remember my husband on the Sunday morning we went to go into it,” May mentioned many years later. “He said, ‘You can’t take this house. It’s too terrible.’ Anyway, we took it and I loved doing that. I’ve always been very keen on renovations, and so, to me, it wasn’t impossible. We got in and cleaned it all up, fixed up and painted it and then got it furnished. People were so generous from the church. When they heard about it, they gave us all kinds of furniture.”

The incorporation of the East Enders Society was completed on March 24, 1965. To raise funds to purchase the building and operate their services, the board members agreed to approach both civic and provincial governments. The “Open Meeting” to boost fundraising was scheduled for April 21, 1965.

The *East Enders Society* was officially formed to provide emergency, temporary shelter for women of the Downtown Eastside. Janette Andrew, a client who arrived at the hostel when it first opened, later talked to me about her early days there and her impressions of May. “I met Mrs. Gutteridge and thought, ‘Oh she sounds so strict, so bossy.’ It reminded me about my early years at the Residential School and not to talk back to someone in authority,” she recalled. “I grew to like her as she never put anyone down but made you feel important, like, ‘Go get it girl’ or ‘You can do it.’ Mrs. ‘G’ never judged you for your faults. She always thought positive and not negative.”

It was not long before the courts and lawyers heard about this new resource on the streets of the Downtown Eastside. They began to make referrals and get involved.

Mary Southin was one such lawyer who defended a number of May’s clients in the criminal justice system, all pro-bono as legal aid did not exist at the time. She became the first legal counsel for the East Enders Society and later a BC Supreme Court Justice in 1985.

Court workers and other people like Cathy Ferry also gravitated to the society to collaborate with May’s many initiatives. Cathy Ferry was a Kwakiutl princess from Alert Bay British Columbia and an active leader in First Nations issues. Mrs. Ferry became a board member of the East Enders Society on November 2, 1966. Her membership in the East Enders meant a formal acknowledgment of First Nations problems and the need for the community to work together.

While the new society was scrambling for money for their women’s hostel, May learned about a new Anglican residence known as Bishopthorpe to be built on West 49th Avenue. As she told Lyndon Grove, author of *Pacific Pilgrims* in

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1979, “The cost of construction was \$68,000. Revenue from the sale of the former residence on Balfour would provide almost half of this with the rest coming from the diocese.”

May was furious. She said to the priests, “I think this is terrible—\$70,000 is going to be spent on a house and we can’t even raise \$1,400 for a hostel. For two pins I’d picket the synod.”

Alec, the church janitor, made her a wooden placard. She thought to herself, “I’ll pray for three days. I don’t know how I’ll know, but I’ll just keep going very slowly. I’m very, very cautious and conscious that I must never do anything that will bring disrepute to the church, to the body of the church, to Christ. So I hid the wooden thing in a cottage we have at the back of the yard at home, because my husband wouldn’t understand me doing that kind of thing - he’s very reserved.”

The next morning she got up early. It was a lovely morning. She had a big piece of paper. She went out in the garden and there were some flowers, so she picked them and stapled them around the edge. She put it in the back of her car, and didn’t even know what she would do.

She got over to St. John’s Shaughnessy, where the Synod was sitting and thought, *Guide me. If I’m to do it, I’ll do it. I’m frightened, but I’ll do it.*

Then May got out of the car, stared at the sign, lifted it up, and began walking up and down the street.

By early afternoon, May got the money for her hostel, but ironically it was from a woman from the United Church who wanted to work with her, and not the Anglican Church.

Her morning picket of the synod was an unprecedented act of defiance—and of courage. She had publicly established herself as a fierce crusader. Unfortunately, many of those attending the Synod disapproved of such tactics and would later isolate themselves from May and her parish work.

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At a special meeting of the East Enders board on September 29, 1966, May mentioned she was finding the work at both the hostel and the Pensioners’ Club more than she could manage. She could not continue for much longer to do both. They would have to find another president for the East Enders.

At the same meeting May spoke at great length about the needs of the community generally, and those that might be met by the East Enders Society in particular. “The needs are as follows. Firstly a reception centre, and secondly, daycare, where we would have the following services: counselling, group therapy, a sheltered workshop, a recreation and coffee hall, bathroom facilities, apartments, and rooms which would be supervised.”

Little did she know that her vision would be realized in a few short years.

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## Chapter 4

### St. James' social service

May Gutteridge was willing to take on worthwhile projects when there was absolutely no money available to fund them. Remarkably, she set out all alone without ever receiving an income to alleviate some of the human pain and suffering in the Downtown Eastside. She even quit her job at UBC.

Her approach to help people was a holistic one: treat the whole person, not just symptoms or some immediate crisis. Counselling meant doing a number of things, not just one isolated activity. It consisted of offering a listening ear or giving advice, and responding to a number of very basic human needs. These included helping clients find a place to live and helping those who lacked the literary skills to fill in applications for social assistance, old age pensions, veteran affairs benefits or properly represent themselves to landlords or government institutions. The Vancouver Police Department had even started contacting May regarding their unidentified bodies, for she would always find the money to give them a respectful burial.

Some of the clients from the East Enders Society joined May as volunteers with her emerging brand of social work in the basement of St. James' Church. One of the first to volunteer was Janette Andrew in 1966. Janette did many tasks including laundry, home help, and office payroll. She even worked with a client herself as there was no worker available to do the job. Janette along with Bertha Wright became founding members of St. James' Social Service long before there were paid employees and the formal cheque administration program with the City of Vancouver. Janette remained a faithful employee until her retirement in 1983 and lifelong friend.

Janette recalled how May influenced her life. "I remember one day I just quit working and stormed out of the office for some stupid reason. Mrs. G followed me right up to Powell and Main Street, talking all the time - about not coming back to work for walking out. I walked into the bar on Powell and Main, used to be the Melbourne Hotel. I thought I would lose Mrs. G by taking this step. Oh no. Mrs. G followed me right into the bar so I walked out and continued home. To this day I can laugh about it with Herbie and Molly but at the time I was angry, embarrassed and surprised that Mrs. G would follow me into the bar. A memory I will never forget."

Eventually, with May's help, Janette was able to move out of the hostel and live on her own. "If it wasn't for Mrs. G helping me all these years, with a job, helping me to move from the East Enders to a place of my own," she told me, "I don't know what would've happened."

David Trigueiro, May's first paid social worker, gave a practical review of St. James' Social Service to me in 2009. "Mrs. Gutteridge described St. James' Social Service as doing what a family would do for people."

## *From Lost to Found*

This was an excellent description. She staged an intervention when clients fell so deep into alcohol or drug addiction they couldn't find their way out. She helped them put their finances in order, helped find them a place to live, and she helped them find work in the Gastown Workshop and Home Help Program. She then brought them along to the point where they could find a full or part-time job and support themselves.

"In most situations," David added, "this was a long process with numerous backslides into their destructive, former lives. But she was always there to lift them up and put them back on track. Sometimes taking months or even years, the program was, nonetheless, more successful than jail or Riverview mental hospital."

The secret to May's social work was the cheque administration program which dated back to the 1950s and Billy Meal. In the beginning cheque administration was voluntary. The client turned over their old age pension cheque or welfare cheque to May who would deposit the money into a trust account. She would then pay the client's rent and divvy the remaining money up into weekly instalments. The client would come to St. James' once a week to receive their allotment which was intended for food and transportation.

In other words, May helped people manage their money. She believed this to be critical for any program dealing with chronic alcoholism or drug addiction. Otherwise, the alcoholic or addict would spend all of their money the day they received their cheques and end up on the street, homeless, vulnerable to malnutrition and illness, or, in more extreme circumstances, death.

While talking with Robin Fowler in 1998 May recalled her early days with St. James' Social Service. "In the Downtown Eastside [in the 1960s] they talk about three hundred homeless. You see, they're not homeless. They just didn't pay rent. That's the problem. They received the money, but they didn't pay any rent. Now, I would interview those people, because that's what I used to do. I would sit with people and listen to their story. I would make notes. I would get their name and address, where they were born and details about their family background.

This usually led to money. Where did they get their money, and if they didn't receive any, I could help them get it. Did they have accommodation? If no, then I helped them get it. And we knew the hotels weren't very good, but we always get a group to go and scrub it out, clean it up and get the linen - make sure it was really nice.

You see, if they pay their rent and they're eating nutritious meals, and you do that for three months, they will stay."

The many benefits of cheque administration were soon recognized by municipal and provincial welfare authorities. It saved them (and the taxpayer) a great deal of time and money in responding to those who repeatedly ran out of money before the end of the month and came back for more money, accommodation or food vouchers. May further responded to many of the other problems associated with extreme poverty such as a lack of clothing and furniture. Her growing network of resources included First Nations Court Workers and help for abused women.

# The May Gutteridge Story

In 1968 the City of Vancouver formalized a cheque administration program with Mrs. Gutteridge for residents of the Downtown Eastside who received social assistance money and were deemed “hard to handle.” This program was no longer voluntary for clients which often resulted in angry outbursts on their initial visit. Soon, it would become the flagship program for St. James’ Social Service.

## Chapter 5

### FLOYD GOES TO THE HOSPITAL

May was never too busy to give personal attention to her clients. One nasty, cold mid-November morning in 1969 she got a call from the police. They had found Floyd Robinson, a regular at the Pensioners’ Club, lying unconscious on the street. They were taking him to the drunk tank when they found her phone number in his jacket pocket. They asked if there was anything she could do. She exclaimed, “Yes, officers, please bring my Mr. Robinson over to the church. He is one of our most liked gentlemen. And please hurry.”

They arrived ten minutes later. When May saw the elderly man’s condition, and after touching his freezing hands, she implored, “I’m afraid he’s too ill to come here. Please take him to the hospital. I’ll meet you there.”

Even though there were two other trusted volunteers present, May asked Bertha to look after things while she was gone.

When May arrived at the hospital, Mr. Robinson remained disoriented and barely conscious. Still disabled by his injuries, he lay on an emergency ward stretcher. No doctor could be seen and the police had already left. May stomped over to the Emergency counter and asked to speak to someone in authority. Five minutes later the head nurse angrily walked up and snarled directly into May’s face, “What seems to be the problem? Is there some reason why you must harass the staff?”

May, baffled by this belligerence, said, “And what is your name, young lady?”

“That’s not important. We’re not going to tolerate abusiveness here.”

May’s eyes became inflamed with fury as she announced, “You’ve said quite enough. I must now insist upon speaking with the hospital’s administrator. Either direct me to the appropriate office or contact them immediately.”

The head nurse let out an audible huff and walked away. The receptionist then politely informed May that the administrator should be arriving in a few minutes and to have a seat. May, quite disturbed by this time, complained, “And what about the injured patient lying over there in the hallway? Shall we just ignore him? He is one of our senior citizens and fought in World War I for you and me.”

Just then the hospital administrator arrived, dressed in an olive-coloured Savile Row suit. He burst through the doorway and extended his hand as he spoke. “I’m sorry to have kept you waiting. I’m the hospital’s administrator. How can we help you?”

## *From Lost to Found*

May visibly retracted from her tense “ready to fight” stance. “Thank you for coming so quickly. I’m quite surprised at the head nurse’s attitude towards me. I didn’t have a chance to say one word before I was accused of harassing hospital staff” she stopped, inhaled a huge breath of air before saying loudly, “and *being abusive*. These are wild and groundless allegations. They reinforce an underlying disrespect for patients and the public.”

“Well, let me apologize. What organization did you say you represent?”

“My name is May Gutteridge. I’m here to assist Mr. Robinson, lying over there on the bed. I’m the parish worker from St. James’ Church who was contacted by the police about his unfortunate condition. I asked them to bring him to Emergency because he was too ill for us. It’s taken me over an hour to get here and after this long period of time, no doctor has yet looked at him to, at the very least, confirm he’s still alive.”

The administrator nodded his head and said, “Let me check for you. I’ll be right back.” He left for a few minutes and returned with some news.

“Mrs. Gutteridge, it looks like one of our first stumbling blocks was the failure to locate a proper medical card.”

“You can’t be serious. Is this what life and death boils down to? A card?”

“Well, it’s our first step in a list of mandatory procedures. We have a fiduciary obligation to the governments and private donors who fund the hospital to minimize unnecessary costs.”

“So, what would you do if the patient died while you were fumbling through their wallet and pockets? It seems to me that a hospital’s primary duty is to care for patients. I will, however, take this matter up later. Let’s not delay Mr. Robinson’s diagnosis and treatment any further. I can attest to his status as a BC resident and that he is also a commemorated veteran of the armed services.”

“Sure. I’ll authorize someone to look at him right away.”

The hospital official backed up while facing May, and then turned and disappeared into the hospital. A youthful-looking doctor arrived and greeted Mr. Robinson, now awake. He performed what appeared to be a regular examination of the eyes, ears, nose, and throat. He then executed a co-ordination test to see if the patient could stand or if anything might be broken. Mr. Robinson passed the examination and now was joking with the doctor.

May got a bit closer and said, “Good morning, doctor. How does our favourite member of the Pensioners’ Club look?”

“Oh, Mrs. Gutteridge. It’s very nice to see you. Why are you here?” asked Mr. Robinson.

“A little bird told me that someone was quite naughty last night and didn’t make it home. Am I right?”

Both the doctor and Mr. Robinson chuckled. Mr. Robinson answered, “Yes, you ARE right. No sense in trying to fool you. You figured me out a long time ago.”

The doctor said, “He seems to be doing fine now and is free to leave the hospital.”

By this time the hospital administrator had joined the gathering around the emergency bed and confirmed that Floyd Robinson could go home.

## The May Gutteridge Story

May thanked them both and helped Mr. Robinson off the mobile bed and into his shoes. He was quite short and frail, with a balding head. He spoke with a slight lisp, "Are we going to have lunch first?"

"Don't you worry," May said as her face lit up with a big smile. "We'll fill up that stomach of yours straight away."

They returned to the Pensioners' Club and May helped Mr. Robinson down the stairs and checked in with Bertha. All was quiet and orderly, and with that, May, still disquieted by the hospital experience, walked over to the police station and asked to speak to the police officer who had been involved with this incident.

He happened to be in the building and came out to speak with her. "How's the old chap doing? He was as cold as ice when we found him and really out of it."

"Yes, thank you very much for calling. I was just wondering, can you offer any sort of explanation as to why the hospital seemed so reluctant to get involved with my parishioner?"

As May was well-known in the area, the officer answered, "Now, you didn't hear it from me, okay?"

"Very well."

"You see, all the hospitals just hate getting our kind of deliveries, you know, drunks and drug addicts. They think it's such a waste of time to patch 'em up and send 'em back to the streets, so they can do it all over again and end up coming back for more treatment."

"Thank you, officer, for your candour."

"You are most welcome."

And with that information, May returned to the parish hall, phoned the hospital board chairman and said, "Hello. My name is May Gutteridge. I'm the parish worker for St. James' Church and would very much appreciate an opportunity to come and speak to your board. I have a brief but important message to relay."

"Thank you for your call, Mrs. Gutteridge, but I will need to know more about the substance of your request before taking the matter any further. What is it you would like to say to the board?"

"I would like to address how the hospital treats the poor and vulnerable, especially in the emergency ward. Recently one of my parishioners found himself in the unfortunate position of being unconscious on the street and then delivered to Emergency by the police. It was a shock for me to arrive one hour later to find him still lying in the hallway, on a portable stretcher, still unattended by any medical staff."

The hospital official realized there was merit in her complaint. He agreed to create some new procedures that would address some of the deficiencies encountered by her client's visit to the Emergency ward and to better respect the well-being of *all* patients.

After hanging up the phone, May found Mr. Robinson all alone sitting in the far corner. She went over and sat down beside him. "Now," she said, "what am I going to do with you? What happened last night?"

"Oh," he said sheepishly, "I guess I had a bit too much to drink."

## *From Lost to Found*

“Perhaps I must accept the fact that I’m unable to reform you. Right?”

With a big smile he nodded in agreement.

“But I *might* be able to control your reckless habit of not just overindulging, but spending everything all in one night and then being evicted the next day by your landlord. How would you like that?”

He agreed with her. This sent a profound message to May that no-one *wanted* to be homeless or without food. This happened because of their addictions or inability to look after themselves. They needed help with managing their money as well.

She then said, “Floyd, how would you feel about having your monthly money directed to me, where I would deposit it in a general account, pay your rent, buy some groceries, and then you come to the church once a week and I would give you what’s left, divided by four weeks. You would be safe for the rest of the month and could still have the dignity and autonomy to do what you wish with your money, your remaining money. What do you think?”

Mr. Robinson happily agreed. “Yes, that would be nice, to have some kind of future after payday.”

In the interim, May had to find Floyd a place to live. So she made a few more phone calls. She found a place for a week at a time. She booked him and returned with the good news.

The day was just finishing. It was 5:00 PM. Bertha was still there. May went to her and thanked her for keeping the organization running so smoothly in her absence. Bertha in turn thanked May for trusting her. She revealed that it was May’s faith in her that gave her strength.

Floyd Sells and friend, John.



# The May Gutteridge Story

## Chapter 6

### 215 EAST CORDOVA STREET

One day in December 1969 one of the more distraught clients waiting for his weekly allotment walked up to May and pulled out a knife. He lunged forward and demanded all of his money. May, unfazed by the aggression, was standing her ground when Bertha suddenly came to her defence. She walked up to the attacker and said, "What are you doing? You're messin' with the only person on this earth that's able to do something good for you. Give me the knife or watch what happens next."

Bertha's quick actions stopped the assailant who put away the knife and apologized. Bertha told him he was lucky to be in the same room with May Gutteridge, and anyone who wanted to mess with her would have to come through her first.

Just before Bertha's intervention, May started to walk directly into the knife, with her right hand extended and index finger pointed and waving at her attacker. Still, she was pleased with the outcome. However, God had sent another message. It was too dangerous for innocent bystanders in the church to have these kinds of problems. She needed to move St. James' Social Service to a safer place.

The following week she began to canvas local businesses for a new location. She found a benevolent landlord who owned an abandoned building located at 215 East Cordova Street that had once been a noodle factory. He respected May's work and donated the office space for one dollar per month.

They moved out of the church basement in January 1970.

It was a large building with an attractive Latin-American face to it. After much preparation, the building was made ready by workers on social assistance. Volunteers from the St. James' congregation and members of the Junior League of Vancouver gave extensive volunteer time as well as financial assistance. In the front office May managed the cheque administration program.

The Gastown Workshop was an insightful program that grew naturally from Mrs. Gutteridge's deep-rooted philosophy of helping people rise above tragedy and addiction to live meaningful lives. For many, it bridged the great abyss between welfare and employment. Shortly after moving to 215 East Cordova she created this new activity centre that encouraged drifters and clients alike to get involved - to *employ* their skills or past occupational experiences. The Gastown Workshop busily *made* things. It brought people together to *do* something. It provided an outlet, a place, a venue for so many to walk out of their dark and lonely rooming houses and be a part of a group - to contribute to a worthy cause - to create something of value for others - to do something rewarding rather than destructive.

Father Lloyd Wright, a keen supporter from St. James' Church who joined her St. James' Social Service advisory board early on, recognized the unique qualities of the workshop in a St. James' Church newsletter in 1970. "When a person, having applied for Social Assistance, receives the first cheque, his or her

## *From Lost to Found*

troubles are not necessarily over. Rather, they could be just starting. The real problem is inactivity. We all like to feel that our efforts are meaningful, and this is where the importance of the Workshop shows itself. It provides fields of meaningful activity.”

Weaving and quilting were important activities at the Gastown Workshop. They provided an outlet for the artistic abilities of many residents of the Downtown Eastside. Many learned the art of weaving from start to finish. First, the raw wool would be washed, then it would be dyed, carded, spun and, finally, woven into attractive products. Colourful quilts made in the workshop soon became famous across British Columbia for their beauty and quality.

Father Wright drew attention to the role First Nations women played in the Gastown Workshop and how it originated in 1962 with the Indian Women’s Sewing Club. In the same newsletter Mrs. Catherine Ferry said, “It was a club for ladies who met together to sew, knit and crochet clothing, mostly for children. They dreamed of the day when somewhere there could be a centre that would not only be for sewing but would also serve as a social centre. All of the members knew only too well what it meant to come together, even just to sew. That dream has now come true.”

Mrs. Ferry also gave lessons to 18 pupils ranging in age from five to twenty in First Nations dancing. This added a cultural dimension to the programs found at St. James’ Social Service.

At the same time another essential May Gutteridge social service program emerged: the Gastown Home Help Service, a program providing housecleaning and grocery shopping for the elderly or those recently released from hospitals who were unable to do basic household chores or maintain rudimentary hygiene.

It was important for May that people live with dignity and respect and many of the rooming houses and hotels were filthy. Twelve women would be sent out into the community to help maintain a clean home and oftentimes shop for groceries.

The Home Help Service, similar to the Gastown Workshop, was a core program that evolved from her involvement with the East Enders Society, the Pensioner’s Club and the cheque administration program.

Other important services available at St. James’ Social Service’s new location included a thrift shop, where volunteers recovering from assorted addictions helped sort, launder and distribute donated clothing to five to six hundred people monthly. A hairdressing shop provided free haircuts for Downtown Eastside residents and volunteer/employment opportunities for clients and residents. A radio and TV repair shop allowed one of St. James’ client’s technical expertise to be put to good use by repairing radios and televisions for those otherwise unable to afford to maintain a basic connection with the outside world. A well-equipped kitchen produced free hot lunches every day for staff and clients - free coffee for all who visited the Gastown Workshop. Free legal advice became available on Thursdays.

# The May Gutteridge Story

## Chapter 7

### The First Paid Employees

Having arrived in Vancouver from England in May 1970, Kathy Swain was looking for work. She, to this day, believes that she has a postal strike to thank for her introduction to Mrs. Gutteridge and St. James' Social Service. She replied to a newspaper advertisement for a part-time secretary. May had received a grant from the Junior League to pay for the position as she struggled frantically to keep up with all of the paperwork. Kathy's letter was one of those received just before the postal strike started. (After the strike many more letters came from hopeful applicants.)

Her first sight of May was on June 27, 1970 when she turned up at 215 East Cordova Street for an interview. The outside of the two-storey brick building was very attractive, and inside were bright orange pipes that hung just below the ceiling. In the main room tables were set up and piled with clothing, books and miscellaneous items—a rummage sale was to be held the following Monday.

Mrs. Gutteridge, who was wearing a multi-coloured chequered suit, offered her a cup of tea. They chatted, and then May offered Kathy the job, which would be from 9am to 1pm. and paid \$200 a month—making Kathy the first paid employee of St. James' Social Service.

May then asked if she'd like to help with the sorting of things for the sale, and Kathy said she would. It was both the strangest interview she had ever been to and the most enjoyable. Kathy had no idea when she accepted the job that she would be lucky enough to be working for St. James' Social Service until she retired in 2006.

As for May, she couldn't have been happier with her decision to hire Kathy. "She's been my supporter, in every way, shape and form. An absolute godsend, no doubt about it," May recalled in 1998 to Robin Fowler.

David Trigueiro was the first paid social worker at St. James' Social Service. It was late spring in 1971. He had been looking all over for a job without luck when Fr. Ron Sands approached him at St. James' Church and told him May Gutteridge was looking for someone to fill in when she went on holiday to England in July. The pay would not be much—\$100 a month—but he could have a room rent-free in San Diago House, a rooming house the church had purchased for pensioners.

By the time David started, May had built up a cheque administration client base of approximately 200 men and women. Administering client monthly cheques was a full time job with much of the work being carried out by volunteers she had recruited from the Junior League of Vancouver. These were extremely loyal, hardworking women who each devoted two full days a week to interviewing each client, taking single mothers grocery shopping, arranging for home help and finding them rooms and apartments.

They brought in others from the Junior League who served St. James' Social Service with dedication for twenty years or more. Cathy King, a widowed member

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of St. Francis in the Woods in West Vancouver, drove over two days a week from the British Properties. Nancy Bell was from Christ Church Cathedral and put-putted from Kitsilano in her Morris Minor.

These dedicated Christian women had also taken Tibetan refugees into their homes and later in the 1970s helped settle Indian refugees thrown out of Uganda by Idi Amin.

Early in the 1970s funding from the City of Vancouver, the provincial and federal governments made it possible for May to hire much needed staff. The number of client referrals had increased. The Gastown Workshop and Home Help Service had become better known and attracted more attention from residents and professionals working in the Downtown Eastside.

In 1971 the Liberal government under Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau initiated an innovative program, *the Local Initiative Program*, to fight unemployment, This significantly facilitated the expansion of St. James' Social Service to more adequately meet many challenges in the Downtown Eastside that had been neglected for so long, especially the children of addicted families.

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Besides the serious business of social work, there were so many other activities at St. James' Social Service. Every year, as December arrived, requests for Christmas food hampers and gifts for children would be made, and the list of those wanting tickets for the Christmas Dinner held in the St. James' Church hall would flood in.

Tickets for the Christmas Dinner were prized possessions. The guests would be treated like royalty. Once through the doors, the coat checkers took their jackets and any parcels. They would be escorted to the upper hall of the church where they were served tea or coffee. Later they would be called down to the beautifully decorated lower-hall, a huge, sparkling Christmas tree, music, entertainment and dancing.

Turkeys donated by the famous Woodward's department stores were the main course. They were cooked and served by volunteers. After dining each guest received a wrapped gift containing \$5 and a pair of socks. Many of the guests stayed for the dancing and carol singing that followed. The evening was always great fun.

May once hosted a wedding reception in the Gastown Workshop space. When Mary and Ray, clients that had been referred to May for cheque administration years before, decided to marry, May offered to put on the reception. Mary found a long, lacy wedding dress in the St. James' Thrift Shop. The wedding was held in St. James' church. May both made the wedding cake and gave Mary away. Kathy Swain recalled, "On the wedding day it was organized chaos. May was in the workshop surrounded by tables laden with plates of sandwiches and goodies trying, with a hair dryer, to dry the icing on the wedding cake while waiting for the decorations for the cake to be delivered.

Unfortunately the person charged with buying them had, without realizing it, caught an express bus, which didn't stop at Hastings and Main, but instead

# The May Gutteridge Story

continued eastward some thirty minutes away. The decorations did eventually arrive, just in the nick of time.

By then Mary was dressed and ready for the church but insisted on switching her own bouquet for the one the bridesmaid had and wearing her yellow coat with black shoes as she was cold. Ray was suffering from a hangover and way ahead of Fr. Wright, who was conducting the service, by repeatedly insisting that I love her, I do.”

It turned out to be one of the best and most enjoyable weddings Kathy ever attended.

Other annual events included a day trip for members of the Pensioners' Club to Camp Artaban, on Gambier Island, and the Strawberry & Cream Tea May put on in her garden.

May's lively personality and commitment to the Downtown Eastside were given another venue by one of the priests at St. James' Church, Father Ronald Sands. As a way to extend the church into the community, he organized a celebration of early Vancouver named *Gastown Days*, in 1969, where an elaborate exhibition of historical photos of the golden days in Vancouver were displayed.

After travelling to England, Father Sands returned with another historical festival for St. James' to share with the wider community. This was known as Canterbury Fayre, where the church's basement was converted into a medieval setting. The clergy, May, the parishioners and the public at large were invited to dress up as some historical figure that would attend a sixteenth or seventeenth-century "fayre."

The event attracted a wide following. The in-house artist from St. James', Fritz Jacobsen, designed and built the sets. Fritz lived at Pender and Shanghai Alley in Chinatown in the same building as the narrow store which is in Guinness Book of records. His profession was book illustration.

Dance troupes, a medieval archbishop, kings, jugglers, damsels and rogues paraded around the St. James' crypt. This was a high point on May's social calendar. Canterbury Fayre was celebrated for nine years, from 1970 to 1979.

May and the many volunteers at St. James' Social Service assisted St. James' church host the festivities. It became an important fundraiser for St. James'



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## *From Lost to Found*

St. James' Social Service thrived in a community spirit that transcended the boundaries of a job. Kathy Swain recalled in 2009, "In the 1970s the Downtown Eastside was still commonly called 'Skid Row'. I felt there was a sense of community there far more than in the West End where I lived. People looked out for each other."

### **Chapter 8**

#### **st. James' social service moves**

May had been consulting with Peter Davies, a Vancouver city planner and other organizations regarding the formation of the Downtown Health Clinic in 1972.

Peter Davies had worked closely with May, Ray Guttridge (no relation) of the Central City Mission and others in the area to organize one comprehensive agency that consolidated all available services under a single board of directors and, as much as possible, under one roof.

The thinking behind consolidation was this. There were several hundred people living in the downtown eastside in various stages of alcoholism, drug addiction and poorly controlled mental illness. None of them had any family, or they had been rejected by their families.

Most spent their days going from one agency to another for food, clothing, help with getting their pension or welfare cheques or simply someone to tell their troubles to. Each of these agencies depended to some degree on government grants, in particular the federal Local Initiative Program grants.

As each of these agencies was reporting essentially the same clients to the government, there appeared to be several thousand in need of service instead of the much smaller figure of several hundred. The idea, in the beginning, was to bring all of the social services together under one roof. The political and economic advisors accused Mrs. Guttridge and The Central City Mission of being part of the problem as they were involved with many of the same people and duplicating services. They should either become part of the solution, i.e. consolidate or get out of the area.

May chose to join in with Peter Davies and the Downtown Health Clinic as St. James' Social Service had just received word their premises at 215 East Cordova Street were going to be demolished to make way for a new provincial court building. She had little choice as there was no other place to go.

May moved St. James' Social Service in with the Downtown Health Clinic at the parish hall of St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church in the same block as St. James' Church. This was the second time she was forced to move.

The move down the block was made over a weekend. Quarters were tight, but room was found for everything. The clothing store and workshop were located in a large, separate room at the rear of the main hall. A kitchen and lunchroom were constructed in the main room. The clinic's administrative office and the

## The May Gutteridge Story

doctor's office were located at the entrance to the hall and St. James' Social Service's offices along the one wall.

David Trigueiro described what the consolidation was like. "Several of May's clients were also working for the clinic. Andy, a recovering alcoholic, was the clinic's handyman. Queenie, a recovering alcoholic and former Registered Nurse, was working as its nurse. Andy had already gotten into trouble for drinking the clinic's supply of rubbing alcohol and was in recovery. The directors wanted him fired on the spot, but Mrs. G had persuaded them to give him another chance.

Meanwhile, after extensive and fruitless advertising, the clinic had finally managed to hire a doctor. He was a new Canadian who had just passed Canada's extensive system of exams to qualify as an MD in the country. He was also a paediatrician with no trauma or geriatric experience and even less interest. But, he was available at the right price.

The doctor flatly refused to go into the tenements and rooming houses where virtually all of his potential patients resided. He said they were dirty and dangerous. He refused to touch the most sordid and decrepit patients when they consulted him in his office. Queenie was delegated to do all the touching."

Whenever the clinic office was occupied there were constant complaints about the people waiting to consult St. James' Social Service about their weekly allowance, shopping, and home help. Sometimes they were drunk. Often they were dirty and smelly, especially the old, single men whose welfare cheques David administered.

Once, a mentally ill client did a striptease in the waiting area singing "Let Me Entertain You" as her accompaniment. She was bi-polar and had quit taking her medication. When in a manic state she also liked to describe her lovemaking with her husband, who never darkened St. James' door.

During Olive's striptease performance, one of the clinic's program directors slammed into David's office demanding that she be thrown out if she could not be settled down. While he was at it, she also demanded that the old men not be let in if they were not clean and sober."

"People won't come to the clinic if they don't have a clean and quiet atmosphere," she argued.

David Trigueiro tried to explain that these were the very people the clinic was supposed to serve, but she wasn't having any of it. There were no patients, she said, because of the dregs hanging out and eating in the waiting area and lunchroom.

David concurred. "She was right about one thing. The clinic had no patients other than the "dregs" sent there by St. James' Social Service. There were no single mothers bringing in their children, no sweet young women looking for family planning and abortion counselling - just drunks and derelicts."

One woman, a tough-as-nails husband beater whose poor, drink-sodden husband was at her side, actually attacked the doctor when he made some suggestion that displeased her. He came running out of his office with the woman in hot pursuit throwing his equipment at him. She had once fetched David a left hook that blackened both his eyes, so David knew well why he was running.

## *From Lost to Found*

With no proper patients to look after, the doctor started giving physicals to the *staff* in order to fill up his day. He once told David he had a strong heart but should quit smoking.

May soon became frustrated and felt the atmosphere under the one 'unified roof' stifled her staff in their efforts to help people. Their new corporate partners belittled their clients because of the very imperfections that drove them in through the front door.

Something else was about to happen. One day, out of the blue, a city health inspector showed up at St. James' Social Service to inspect the kitchen. May was out of town so it was up to David and Kathy to show him around. The place was not as clean as it should have been and some food was stored improperly. But, more than that, he told them they would have to add a separate bathroom for the staff.

He was very apologetic, but said he would have to close the kitchen down if the deficiencies were not rectified. David asked him how long they had to do the work, pointing out that this was the only meal many of the St. James' Social Service clients got in a day.

Here the inspector slipped up, accidentally revealing that St. James' had been turned in. "If we get another complaint we'll have to shut it down right away," he said.

On her return May took the matter to the board of directors. Nobody had any idea who might have reported the kitchen to the health department. One of the board members did say that "you couldn't expect people to eat when there were filthy drunks hanging around." May admitted there was some truth to this, but then pointed out the cooks were recovering alcoholics and on welfare - and so were the cleaners. She asked again why she was not approached instead of the health department.

No-one came forward. For May this was the last straw. She set out immediately to move St. James' Social Service for a third time. It didn't take too long. She discovered a compassionate advocate in the person of Mr. Ng, who also owned the Victory Hotel and most of the 300 block on Powell Street. May negotiated a lease at 331 Powell, which brought the tenancy of St. James' Social Service under one roof with the Downtown Health Clinic to an end.

"So I went along and it was an earth floor...it was all just dirt," May recalled in a taped interview in 1997 with Robin Fowler about the premises at 331 Powell. "And so we got it. MacMillan Bloedel gave us the funds to put down a new floor. That was the kind of thing, you see. People, all kinds of people, believed that we should be doing something better in the Downtown Eastside."

All the moving between premises was done in a small van owned by Frank Leader who May often hired to help St. James' clients move. Herbie Roberts was a Downtown Eastside resident who May hired to help Frank as a swamper. No one could foresee his destiny as the second most durable employee (next to Kathy Swain) who retired in 1996. He told me in 2009, "I found Mrs. Gutteridge gave me a chance to get out of my life-style. In other words, I was very appreciative of her kindness. I found that my life would've took another route or else I wouldn't have made it on skid road. I probably would have died earlier."

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Frank and Herbie also collected donated items of clothing and furniture which was given to those in need through a voucher system.

The new buildings were renovated by clients such as Al Beauchemin, a carpenter. Al Beauchemin served to illustrate yet another example of someone May had nurtured back to health who became central in literally building St. James' Social Service from the ground up. As a skilled carpenter, he mentored numerous St. James' clients as they rose to May's challenge to work - at first part-time and for many others, on to full time employment.

The proud signs outside the building were created by local artist Fritz Jacobsen, a parishioner from St. James' church. The space at 329 Powell became St. James' administration office, while 331 Powell housed the Gastown Workshop, cafeteria, laundry, shower and bathrooms..

The move to 331 Powell St. launched the true birth of St. James' Social Service.

Kathy Swain has many fond memories of those early years on Powell Street. As she said to me, "I remember the year Cabbage Patch dolls were the rage and the stores sold out of them. Mrs. G. suggested to the women in the workshop that they make a version of them—they did, and sold all the dolls they made. The workshop was also asked to make a flag for the Habitat Forum held in Vancouver, quite an undertaking. The women in the workshop produced beautiful patchwork quilts and for a number of years were invited to St. Faith's Church Annual Garden Sale. The church folk sold plants and the Workshop quilts, Salish rugs, knitted items, paintings, leatherwork all made by the women and men in the workshop."



The phenomenon of attracting gifted volunteers and dedicated helpers accelerated on Powell Street. As on-site activity brought attention to the new digs, many people wandered in and wondered what was going on. Soon people, young and old, willingly volunteered. They all suffered from at least one flaw that brought them into this community of broken lives.

# *From Lost to Found*

## **Chapter 9**

### **A PHILOSOPHY OF RESPECT**

How May did it no one really knows. While moving the social service to 331 Powell she, at the very same time, negotiated leases across the street for the home help program. St. James' Social Service was taking on a visible presence as it sprawled along both sides of Powell Street. Both the workshop and home help flourished beyond anyone's expectations. By 1972 the Gastown workshop occupied the entire front half of yet another new premise May acquired from Mr. Ng, 333 Powell, where she had installed a fully operational cafeteria - offering free nutritious food for staff, clients and residents who sought May's help. 329 Powell Street was converted into the St. James' Social Service Thrift Store.

The home help program philosophically reached back to May's early days in England. Having a clean and tidy home was considered tantamount to human existence. Cleanliness was truly next to godliness for May.

The home help program's sole purpose was to give people a nice, comfortable home. It could be a plain little hotel room in the heart of skid road or an apartment on the municipality's fringe. Rather than just complain to city hall about health bylaw infractions in the skid road hotels, May would launder and replace dirty linen, sending in her team to ensure as healthy and hygienic a place to live as possible.

"I can't understand how so few understand the importance of a clean house," she often remarked to staff, "How could anyone feel good about themselves when they wake up in the morning with dirty bed sheets? And the sight of unwashed dishes would depress anyone."

In moments of frustration, May would refer to certain political movements that lobbied to have the slum residences shut down only to see more homeless walking the streets, completely unprotected, or the mentally ill freeze to death, quietly. The poor were not a well-organized political force in society—they could be easily manipulated or used for political purposes, on either side of the political spectrum. What the poor and vulnerable needed most was compassion—not some patronizing hand trying to rally them into an election or protest march.

While re-establishing St. James' Social Service at 331 Powell Street, she developed the first residential housing facilities managed by St. James' Social Service - the Prior Street House facility that assisted both men and women - to live in the Downtown Eastside community. It was an old rented house at the corner of Prior and Gore Avenue that accommodated six to seven people. The facility was later moved to Cordova Street and renamed the San Diego Lodge.

In another part of the city at the same time, a recent arrival, Douglas Welbanks, fresh from the farm belt of south-eastern Ontario, was working in his first job at the Denman Place Inn. I met a bookkeeper there, a soft-spoken, mild-mannered accountant, Philip Green, who was a deeply religious Anglican and whose kindness was only surpassed by his generosity. We became good friends.

## The May Gutteridge Story

I also had Christian roots. The Golden Rule, *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you*, was one Christian principle I firmly embraced from my upbringing. What I didn't fully comprehend at the time was how this translated into a founding philosophy for modern human rights legislation. May enforced this ethical code each and every day with a gentle tenacity. She believed every person had a right to just treatment and a responsibility to ensure justice for others.

A second Christian principle survived my adolescent journey through the 1960s - *there is no greater love than to lay down your life for a friend*. This powerful moral gave perspective to Easter for Christians and May's unending love for the poor in the Downtown Eastside.

Father Wilberforce Cooper set the wheels in motion for someone like May Gutteridge through his strong commitment and outreach to the poor, the elderly, and the addicted. It was amazing to see Philip Green's parents forming part of the early St. James' story as they worked at an Anglican school in Elkhorn, Manitoba, and shared a special connection with Father Cooper.

Philip's mother learned of Fr. Cooper and St James' Church in Vancouver from the out-of-work men who were riding the trains during the Great Depression. Fr. Cooper ministered to them in Gastown and told them as they were riding the train to watch out for the water stop in Elkhorn, Manitoba. When there, to get off the train and run across field to the school for food. Philip's mother was in charge of the bakery. She gave the men a hot meal then made sandwiches for them to take back on the train.

Philip supported May and St. James' Social Service from the time of his arrival in 1970. He continuously channelled people like myself to May who helped us find our place in society and to experience Christianity in action.

One year after meeting Philip, I left the hotel business and attended Vancouver City College and Simon Fraser University. As an enthusiastic student I was eager to find employment that would supplement my studies. I asked Philip if he knew anyone who might be looking for a university student. He immediately recommended May Gutteridge. He encouraged me to give her a call, but also to drop in, spend some time in her office and volunteer a bit. I followed these helpful suggestions and actually became fascinated by May Gutteridge and her incredible community work. She was noble and fearless, strong but kind, humorous and serious—all at the same time.

After I had volunteered for a short time, she hired me for the front office—to do social work. Soon many of the grand theories I had learned in university crumbled into shattered pieces. Counselling responded to unyielding pressures and relentless crises each and every day. Everyone had some pressing, urgent problem. Most these problems involved money in one way or another.

In an early conversation with David Trigueiro, he told me a very interesting story. "The provincial policy-makers have recently been enthusiastic about rehabilitation. They don't like the idea of just handing out public money. They want to go deeper into the underlying causes and fix the root problems. And so they created a new portfolio and hired a contingent of rehab workers to go into the communities, especially down here in the Downtown Eastside."

"That sounds like a good idea to me," I replied.

## *From Lost to Found*

“Yes, there’s nothing wrong with the theory.” He chuckled, and continued, “So after six months, you know what the main administration centre had to do?”

“No.”

“They had to give each rehab worker a bag full of quarters because virtually everyone they met wanted money and needed bus fare to go up to the main office and speak with the financial workers.”

This dug into the heart and soul of what May Gutteridge had understood all along. Before you could help people change, you needed to first deal with the basics of survival in some direct way.

May taught a very practical lesson about chronic alcoholism in the Downtown Eastside. “The chronic alcoholic has given up entirely on life and is, in actual fact, committing suicide. There’s little fear of death as their lives lack substance and meaning. They hate themselves for some reason. In their minds and distorted memories, they believe they are beyond forgiveness.”

I found May’s elaborate network of social services to be exceptionally brilliant. Nowhere in my more abstract studies had I read about feeding and bathing clients before trying to pry open their minds and find out what caused such pain and suffering.

There was no expectation of perfection. May’s understanding of addiction and human nature was far-reaching. She also possessed a rare form of confidence. She knew what she was doing and had no doubt about where she was going. Her belief in everyone’s ability to rise above adversity was in itself stimulating. She knew the journey was a long series of small steps, disappointments and failures but also one of encouragement and second chances.

Her strategy for changing the cycle of addiction was basic. Start with trying to stop the drinking or drugs by providing a place, a centre, where people could go and do something, like help out, volunteer, meet others who were doing something better with their lives.

When people fell off the wagon, she would welcome them back without a sermon. No apology was requested although it always came, as everyone would feel badly about letting Mrs. G. down. Somehow they had tarnished her belief in them and this was, in their minds, sacrosanct. When they returned to St. James’ Social Service, they would become more dedicated and work harder.

All of the tools for success were there. People could witness a much better life. For May Gutteridge the only way to rise above poverty was employment. In fact, by the time I had arrived in 1972, most of the people running the programs were previous clients.

St. James’ Social Service was an island of hope, a flourishing oasis of activity thriving on the growth of those it was established to serve. Through her visionary social work, May had learned a profound but simple truth made famous by Mother Teresa— do small things with great love.

# The May Gutteridge Story

## Chapter 10

### Carolyn and Iver

Carolyn and Iver were near the top of the government's list of 'hard to handle' families when referred to St. James' Social Service. Carolyn, a First Nations woman, had married Iver, a Danish longshoreman. They had five children. When I met them the children were aged 12, 10, 9, 6 and 4. The couple's stormy marriage endured fourteen years, through thick and thin, illness and health, and under the merciless grip of alcohol addiction.

Iver was a lean five feet ten inches tall, with fair hair and complexion. He was quite articulate and spoke with a Danish accent. Under most circumstances he was rational and reasonable. Like so many others in the Downtown Eastside, if under the influence of alcohol he would undergo a complete transformation and become aggressive, unreasonable and sometimes violent .

Long-forgotten injustices would suddenly come back to life. His face would turn completely red. The veins in his neck would swell in anger. It looked like his entire body might explode.

At this stage he could get physical and hurl chairs through the air, bang his fist against a desk or punch a wall. During these alcohol-induced outbursts, he would frequently sustain painful injuries that would go untreated until sobriety would awaken his nerve endings and alert his attention to the damage done.

One time he came into the centre in an impaired state bleeding profusely. He had just bashed his fist through a glass window, breaking it and seriously cutting his arm. Even so it took considerable persuasion to calm him down and get him into an ambulance.

In the local bars and on the street, Iver had cultivated a well-deserved reputation. Only strangers or the ill-advised would tangle with him. It did not matter how big or muscular they were. His fearlessness and tenacity would easily defeat any aggressor.

Carolyn was a bit shy, kind and generous and always willing to help anyone in trouble. She was a loving mother who wanted the very best for her children. She was also an alcoholic. Carolyn was one of the few who were unafraid of Iver's intoxicated rages. With the exception of May Gutteridge, she was the only one who could prevail over his fits of fury.

Their first visit to St. James' was memorable. David Trigueiro began the interview in a soft but firm voice. "Good day, Mr. and Mrs. Andersen. My name is David. Your family has been referred for our care by the Province and..."

He was immediately interrupted by Carolyn. "Hey, we're not interested in what you're sellin'. We just want to pick up our money."

"Oh, okay." David smiled and regrouped. "I'm sorry, Mrs. Andersen, but that won't be possible. We..."

## From Lost to Found

This time Iver jumped in. “Yes, Mr. David. We know what goes on in a place like this. We’re not like any of them. We got five beautiful kids and we can look after them best.”

David smiled and then tried again. “The good news is the rent’s paid. Now we should take a look at some of your other bills.”

Carolyn nodded in agreement and then opened her purse. She pulled out a bundle of soiled envelopes. She handed them to David and said, “Here’s a few. We’re behind in hydro and the phone. We got another disconnection notice yesterday.”

“Okay, let me make a few calls.”

And so they sat and listened as David skilfully negotiated a token repayment arrangement on the hydro arrears, provided he would pay the current bill in full immediately.

The phone bill had several long-distance calls. David tented his hands in a pyramid-like position and asked, “Why are there so many long-distance calls when you’re struggling to pay your regular phone bill?”

“Yes,” Carolyn said. “We know there’s no money, but my mother’s sick and lives up in Bella Coola. I know there’s no money, but what else am I supposed to do?”

“Okay, I’ll do my best with the telephone. Could you tell me a little more about these veterinarian bills? They’re quite high. How many pets do you have?”

Iver answered this question as he twisted his head sideways. “Yes, Mr. David. We do have a pet. We have a nice little monkey. It’s the cutest little thing and the kids just love him so much.”

This was completely astounding. The vet bill was \$500. They could never repay that. And so David tried to remain calm and keep the interview going smoothly. “I really don’t know what to say or do about the veterinarian bill. By the way, when did you get the monkey?”

“Two months ago,” Iver answered.

“Where did you get it?”

“Oh, just downtown.”

“How much did you pay for it?”

“We got a good deal. Only \$350. They usually want \$1,000.”

David’s eyes were widening as he attempted to absorb the absurdity of the situation before asking, “So how did you pay for it?”

“Oh, I got lucky playing some cards. I won four hundred bucks.”

*So far, so good*, David thought. The next question was not quite so easy. “So, how much does it cost to feed this exotic pet?”

There was silence. No one spoke. David then asked, “Do you know how much?”

Both of them moved their arms in a way that expressed doubt. Iver then answered, “He don’t cost too much extra because we feed him all kinds of things. He doesn’t seem to like coconuts though. Iver stopped and laughed. He stared into David’s eyes before saying, “But he’s crazy about pizza.”

David excused himself and went to find Mrs. Gutteridge. He saw her standing just outside her office, which was the last one at the back. He asked her for a

## The May Gutteridge Story

minute in private and they went into her office. She smiled and said, “Now, David, what is troubling you?”

“We have this new family being referred to us who are pushing all of the boundaries beyond intelligent limits. It’s a family of seven—two adults, five children and, if you can believe it, a monkey.”

This disclosure brought Mrs. Gutteridge to her feet. She told David to follow her as they marched back to the front office. In her tweed business suit and matching beret, she looked at Carolyn and Iver and spoke with calm authority. “Hello. I’m Mrs. Gutteridge. David here informs me you have a monkey as a pet. Is that right?”

As May Gutteridge carried a legendary reputation of respect in the Downtown Eastside, Carolyn answered carefully, so as not to cause any trouble. “Yes. We all love him so much.”

May’s voice began to rise as she responded to Carolyn. “Yes, yes, yes, I don’t doubt that for a moment, but why in God’s name would anyone want a monkey? They are wild animals from the tropics and do not belong in a house—anyone’s house. They need their natural habitat or else they will die.”

Carolyn, with this stern pronouncement, began to cry. Iver came to her defence shouting, “There’s nothin’ illegal about havin’ a monkey as a pet. We got all the papers to prove it, too.”

“I most certainly did not call you a criminal, Mr. Andersen. I said that a residential home is no place for a wild animal, especially one from a tropical country that would have a specialized diet and needs. It’s not good for the animal or for you.”

This truthful assessment seemed to make a difference. Iver calmed down and said, “The kids really like him. The guy at the pet store didn’t say there was nothin’ wrong. Why don’t you come over and see for yourself?”

This brought a warm smile to May’s face. She answered, “Thank you so much for your invitation. I won’t be able to come until later in the week. Would that be all right with you?”

Iver and Carolyn nodded with approval. After May had left the room, David took his seat and continued with the interview. “So, where were we? Oh, yes, I remember. We were wondering about how much it cost to feed the monkey. Never mind. We’ll look into this later. As you know, regardless of how much everything costs, you only have so much money. I’ve calculated your weekly amount after the rent and utilities have been paid, and a small amount for your telephone and hydro arrears. So here it is.”

Carolyn and Iver stood and thanked David for his time and left. It was 11:30 AM. Two hours later he saw Carolyn and Iver sitting in the waiting area again. He immediately invited them in and sat down. “Hello again, Mr. and Mrs. Andersen. What can I do for you now?”

“We’ve come back for the rest of our money,” Iver answered abruptly.

David was flabbergasted. “I thought we agreed this morning about the weekly instalments until your next cheque comes in.”

“Oh, no no no. We never agreed to nothin’. You gave us a piece of our family money, and now we want the rest.”

## *From Lost to Found*

By this time David could smell the alcohol and see Iver's face turning red. He reiterated, "As I explained this morning, this will not be possible. So, I must now ask you to leave and come back next week."

The veins now stuck out from Iver's neck. He stood up and banged his fist against the desk and yelled, "I told you we want our money. Right now."

David understood this situation had reached crisis proportions. He stood up, and just as he was about to speak, May rushed in and said in a stern tone, "This kind of behaviour is not acceptable in this place. You must leave immediately. And don't come back until you're sober."

Iver, confronted by such fearlessness, backed off. The veins in his neck receded. He stood down. The ultimatum to come back when they were sober was, above all else, reasonable. They got up and left.

This episode pushed up the timetable for a home visit. A number of alarm bells were ringing. The next day David and May drove over to the Andersen's' provincial housing complex, near Chinatown. Once at the complex, they walked past broken bicycles, cracked windows and flaking paint. They reached the Andersen's' door and knocked. When the door opened, they both got a whiff of the most horrid, putrid smell imaginable—something resembling the smell of a dead, decaying animal trapped for days in a house. Both gagged as they frantically searched for handkerchiefs to mute the offending stench.

The Andersen's' twelve-year-old daughter stood before them and politely said hello. May responded, "Hello. My name is May Gutteridge and this is my assistant David. We're from St. James' Social Service. We've been asked to help the family out for a while. Is your mother or father home?"

"Yes. But they're still sleeping."

"This is pretty late for a schoolgirl to be home. Are you not attending school today?"

"Not until a little later. I have to babysit my younger brother until Mom or Dad gets up. They're not feeling too good."

May, saddened by the stark realities that lay before her, continued, "So what's your name?"

"I'm Candice."

"What a lovely name for such a pretty young lady. And what's your brother's name?"

"Jorgen."

"May we come in please?"

"Sure."

After May and David entered, the repulsive odour got stronger. They soon discovered that a dirty animal cage combined with uneaten food, monkey urine and feces were to blame. It was awful. May turned her head the other way for a moment, crossed her arms and said, "Okay, Candice. We're going to clean this place up. How would you like that?"

Candice grinned with excitement.

"The first thing to go is the monkey and the infectious bacteria that live inside that cage," May declared.

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At that precise moment Iver rounded the corner and snarled, “Says who? The monkey’s mine not yours.”

“I will tell you this, Mr. Andersen. Either the monkey is returned to the pet shop from where it came or I will notify the authorities to have the children removed from these premises before the clock strikes twelve. Even a child can see this is most unhealthy. I have a duty to protect children and will not allow this disgusting situation to continue.”

This obviously disturbed Iver, who in a more conciliatory tone said, “Oh, all right. I love my children.”

And so May started to clean the house. She asked Iver to take the monkey outside and clean the cage. She asked David to go back to the centre and get a vacuum cleaner, some buckets and cleaning supplies.

For the next three hours they all worked together. May and Carolyn washed and dried a large pile of dishes. David and Iver vacuumed the floors, washed down the walls, and cleaned the bathrooms. Candice was most helpful, too. When they were finished May said to Iver, “You come with me. We’ll take the monkey back to a safe home.” She surveyed the clean premises and, turning to Candice and Carolyn before she left, said, “Now isn’t that a little better?”

Everyone nodded with big smiles.

Once again May had worked her magic by focusing on hygiene and cleanliness. She had showed this family she was not above washing dishes and dirty floors—that she was serious when it came to helping people. She had demonstrated that they were important, more important than anything else on this day, and significant enough for her to spend time helping to get a very dirty job done.

This kind of dedication was rare. It changed everyone’s lives in the Andersen family that day. From that moment onwards they trusted and loved her. May Gutteridge really did care about them.

Iver began to come to 331 Powell every day after the famous home visit. He would come in and talk to staff and clients and help out whenever someone needed an errand run or to lift something heavy. There were always many things going on.

He learned about the Home Help Program May had created to make home visits, clean up rooms and help those too frail or sick to shop for groceries. In the earlier days the staff concentrated on seniors. It had long since expanded to include families and anyone who needed them.

Iver would never commit to employment for he liked to disappear in the afternoons and drink, but even so, he would pop in and out, reeking of beer. He also took it upon himself to protect the centre from the more sinister types that drifted in and out of the doors. His presence became a deterrent for anyone who might get rough. He threw many a hostile wanderer out before any other intervention was required. He was well-liked and respected by everyone.

Carolyn had eased her way into working part-time at the centre and becoming friends with the staff. The Andersen family was in transition. Their home was in order and they were listening to this new voice that had already improved their lives.

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Candice and the other children frequently came to visit, too. I had been assigned to their case and took great interest in their school work and extracurricular activities.

After several months I was invited to their school. As I parked my car and entered the school property, I could hear the sound of children's high-pitched voices yelling in the distance, "Mr. Welbanks, Mr. Welbanks, Mr. Welbanks." Before reaching the door, I was swarmed by a crowd of excited kids. These children, who dwelled in the shadow of drug addiction and parental neglect, had heard the story about St. James' Social Service, and how May Gutteridge had cleaned the Andersen house. It was a special moment that warmed my heart and gave irrefutable evidence in the effectiveness of May's kind and humble methods. Even children appreciated them.

## **Chapter 11**

### **sandy and meredith**

Sandy and Meredith came from Dawson Creek who travelled to the coast and ended up on the involuntary referral list to St. James' Social Service. They were teenagers who had coasted for several years without parental guidance or ties. They tumbled through a revolving door of foster homes, all their stays ending tersely.

The City of Vancouver social services department saw May as the only person who might finally connect with them. They constantly ran out of money. They had no remorse for their actions.

They entered the doors to St. James Social Service without a care in the world. Here today, in Boston Bar tomorrow. Their years of non-conformity to any kind of structure made them invincible to rules, impervious to good advice and exempt from making any commitments. They just wandered. Everywhere.

Meredith, the wilder one, was feisty, quite short and had mischievous eyes that constantly looked for ways to avoid conversation. A premature maturity stained her face with painful experiences.

Dressed in a biker's outfit, you could hear Sandy arrive with his motorcycle boots ricocheting off the wooden floor drawing attention to his arrival. He was 5' 8" in height, thin with long black hair and most friendly.

Their first meeting with May was quite relaxed. She laid down the basic rules while extending a warm and helping hand. After paying their rent, they received their first installment of weekly money and immediately left the building.

Three hours later Sandy came back reeking of some obnoxious smell. The pupils in his eyes were the size of bowling balls. This time he was angry, but his state of intoxication impaired his belligerence. He couldn't pronounce words. He drooled and dribbled and frothed at the mouth. He could barely walk. A few moments later he passed out in the middle of the waiting area.

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It was later identified that the offensive odour was glue. May heard about the incident and instructed the staff to send Sandy to her office the next time he came to the centre.

The next day Sandy appeared and was sent to see May. She invited him into her office and began by saying, "You know, young man, you had us worried. What exactly happened?"

"Ah, ah, um," he blushed in embarrassment. "Yeah, well, I had a bit too much to drink."

"I can see you're unfamiliar with our services here at St. James'. I'm fully informed about the perils of glue sniffing. It's very dangerous and can easily be life threatening. Would you be interested in helping us out here? There's so much to do."

Sandy who was naturally agreeable, said yes. Sandy would show up once in a while and be greeted enthusiastically by May, who would send him on short errands. Soon they had developed a strong bond of trust.

One year after his and Meredith's first appointment at the centre, Sandy became a reliable standby swamper for the St. James' van.

Then, Meredith got pregnant. Her pregnancy was a philosophical moment for May. She worried deeply and tried to give Meredith other options such as adoption or finding a family member better equipped to raise the baby. Meredith ignored all recommendations. The child died early after birth. May mourned for several months.

### **An Angry social worker**

May Gutteridge's ability to help complicated and very difficult clients became legendary and positively influenced an expanding range of professional colleagues. Except there was an angry social worker from the city who throughout 1973 who subjected David Trigueiro and myself to repeated unpleasant telephone calls. She was most unfriendly. She seemed to find fault with any reasonable requests for financial aid for St. James' clients. David was enraged and complained to May who finally decided to call her from David's office. We both overheard the conversation.

"Now, I can't imagine why you're so terribly angry. You speak with such contempt. What's the matter? Do you have a small child at home you're worried about? "

There was a long silence, and then we heard, "You see, I realized you were bothered by something much more serious than our humble mission to help people in need. You're angry because you would rather be with your little baby girl. Why don't you come down this afternoon for a visit? We could have lunch at our cafeteria and enjoy a much better conversation in person."

May smiled and said to the two of us, "I thought there was something peculiar with our friend at head office. She's under great personal stress as she recently had a child and is worried sick about leaving her alone with strangers and babysitters. We've all become her enemy when it's something much different

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causing her trouble. She will be coming down today to meet us. I'll let you know when she arrives."

After the unhappy city social worker arrived, May introduced everyone to her. The two of them disappeared behind her office door for the rest of the afternoon. The effect was immediate. From that point onwards they became the best of friends. The social worker began to actively support all of St. James' programs and spoke softly and with gentleness. Each week she would visit May and spend a couple of hours with her. The details of these visits were never disclosed, but the old angry social worker had disappeared forever.

### **A shy van driver**

Bill Hustler was another example of how May changed people's lives. As he mentioned to me in 2009:

"The year that I spent at St James' Social Service (1974) driving the van was one of the most memorable of my life. For some reason, the people and places from that time are unusually vivid."

Bill was a very reclusive person who rarely spoke to anyone. He had middle class roots but somehow ended up at St. James' Social Service. Working for May, moving people and their belongings around and getting to know the hearts and souls of May's employees gradually rehabilitated his lost sense of self and direction.

He recalled how the daily routine at St. James' was mainly busy and upbeat. People were happy to be working together. He said there was something unusual about the atmosphere, maybe, the recognition of possibilities, a chance to bring some order and purpose to what could be a haphazard existence. For middle and working class people so much is taken for granted. Bill eloquently reflected, "*The expectation of the norm dulls the surprise of the everyday occurrences.*"

One of his most satisfying memories was about many weekends that were spent with a group of kids from the neighbourhood. Bill would load up the St. James' van with ten or twelve kids and head off for a weekend of camping around Pitt Lake. They finished off the summer with a week at Long Beach.

For Bill, the story of the St. James' van was surprisingly typical of May Gutteridge. When he first arrived there, they had a well-used old four cylinder van. When it finally became beyond repair May suggested Bill call Jim Pattison to see if he would like to donate a van. The task was much too daunting for him at the time. She ended up purchasing a van from her personal resources. She was unbelievably committed to her work and completely unassuming.

Bill laughed as he recalled, "Oh, and after a year Mrs. G. fired me. After the summer with the kids I took a full time evening job in North Van. She said that the job at St. James' was for people who had difficulty holding a job so I should make room for the next person."

# The May Gutteridge Story

## CAROLYN RUSHED TO HOSPITAL

One day in 1974, just after I arrived at the office, Iver burst in through the front door in a state of panic. “Carolyn’s sick. Somethin’ very bad happened. You’ve gotta help.”

“What’s the matter with her?” I asked.

“I don’t know. Can you come and see her?”

At that moment May arrived and could see something was wrong, “Good morning, Mr. Andersen. You don’t look well today. What seems—”

“It’s Carolyn. She’s can’t get out of bed. Can you come an’ see her?” pleaded Iver.

May and Iver left together. Immediately upon seeing Carolyn she called an ambulance. May said to Iver, “Now, Mr. Andersen, you’d best remain here and look after your children. I will go over to the hospital and ensure Carolyn is safe and well cared for.”

By the time May had reached the Emergency ward, Carolyn had been moved. She walked up to the counter and said, “Good morning. I had arranged for a Mrs. Andersen to be delivered here. Has she been moved?”

The attendant asked, “Are you referring to the First Nations girl who just arrived a few minutes ago?”

“Yes, as a matter of fact, I am.”

“We’re very happy to hear that. She didn’t have a medical card. Do you by any chance have her card number?”

“Yes, yes, yes, don’t worry, we’ll be happy to send those details to you. Where is she now?”

“She’s been sent to intensive care.”

“So what’s wrong with her?”

“We don’t know. We’re running some tests and expect to know a bit more about her condition later. Do you know who her family doctor is?”

“Yes,” May said impatiently, “We have all those details on file. Is she conscious now?”

“No, but there is no need to detain you any further. Let us know how we can contact you, and we will advise once we have further details.”

May then left and returned to the office. Iver was sitting, lost in deep thought on the front bench. She said, “Carolyn is in intensive care and undergoing a number of tests. They don’t know exactly what’s wrong. We’ll keep in touch with them and keep you fully informed. I would like to recommend you go home and make sure the children are well looked after when they get home from school. I’ll ask the cafeteria staff to prepare supper for you and the kids, and I’ll bring it with me the end of the day. All right? “

With this news Iver became more relaxed and said, “Thanks so much. You’re right. I’ll get home and look after the kids.”

At about 3:30 pm Iver’s eldest daughter, Candice, came in. She had matured early in life, and now thirteen years of age, cared for her brothers and sister and in many respects Iver and Carolyn as well. She came into my office and said, “Dad

## *From Lost to Found*

told me what happened this morning and I thought I'd come down and see when Mom might be coming home."

"That's a very good question, Candice. Let's go and ask Mrs. Gutteridge together."

May came back to greet us and brought everyone up to date on Carolyn. "How is your schoolwork, Candice?"

"Pretty good."

"That's great. I guess you're here about Mom. All I can tell you is that she's still in intensive care and will not likely be returning home for a few days. If you would like to wait for a few minutes, I must see that young lady in my office, and after that I could give you a ride home. I promised your father I would drop in later today. Would you like that?"

"Yes, Mrs. G."

### **something went wrong at the hospital**

Iver was waiting for the front doors to open at 9 am the next day. He had that distraught look in his eyes and quickly erupted into panic, "You guys gotta do somethin' about the hospital. I was up there on the weekend and they did somethin' wrong to Carolyn."

"What was that?" David asked.

"Somethin' happened with some ice. I heard them. Someone said they left her in the ice too long."

This sounded like a drunken hallucination. David asked, "So where is she now?"

"She was taken out of intensive care last week and now she's back in there. They won't let me or the kids see her. I know they did somethin' wrong."

Upon further review it appeared Iver had caught the hospital in the act of a cover-up. Indeed, something had happened to Carolyn. Mrs. G. jumped in her car and drove over to the hospital. After arriving at the Emergency ward she said, "Good morning. I'm the parish worker at St. James' Social Service and would like to speak with the hospital administrator."

The receptionist asked her to be seated and a few minutes later he appeared. "Hello once again, Mrs. Gutteridge. How can we help you?"

She stood up and walked towards him and said, "Yes, I remember our last consultation. This time my inquiry regards Carolyn Andersen. She was admitted recently and then transferred to the intensive care unit. We need to discuss her situation."

The administrator excused himself and went into the office area. About a half hour later he returned and said, "I've taken a look at the file. What exactly would you like to know?"

"Perhaps you would be so kind as to tell me why she was admitted. What was the medical emergency?"

## The May Gutteridge Story

“Upon review of the file, it looks as if the trouble was related to some kind of poisoning. She had lost consciousness so we transferred her to the intensive care unit.”

“So why is she still there?”

“I don’t know. There’s no update. Let me go ask. I’ll be right back.”

Another half hour had passed by the time he returned. “Yes, Mrs. Gutteridge,” he said. “She’s still in intensive care because of some unexpected developments. She, for some reason, became paralyzed from the waist down. We’re trying to determine what happened.”

“When do you think you might know?”

“It shouldn’t be too much longer. Why don’t you go back to the church and we’ll give you a call when we have more definitive results.”

“Thank you for the information. I’m with St. James’ Social Service which is at a different number and address from the church.”

“Oh, my apologies. We do have the correct number.”

May returned to the centre and told Iver what she had learned.

The next day Iver arrived at 10 a.m. pushing Carolyn in a wheelchair. Both May and I saw them enter and came to the front entrance. May spoke first. “Good morning to you, Carolyn. I can see you’ve been released from the hospital. How are you feeling?”

“Mrs. Gutteridge,” Iver said. “Look what they’ve done to her. She can’t walk. They crippled her.”

“How could this happen? What did they tell you, Carolyn?”

“They wouldn’t tell me anything. They released me last night after Iver kept asking questions.”

Iver interrupted. “They think we’re stupid. They don’t know I heard them talking. They can’t get away with this. This is wrong.”

After hearing this May looked at Carolyn and said softly, “You’ve been through a lot, my dear. This isn’t the place for you to be right now. Let me give you a ride home. You need to rest and get your strength. I will then go to the hospital and see what I can find out.”

After dropping Iver and Carolyn at their home, May went to the hospital. She walked into the admitting department and said, “Good morning. It is of the utmost importance I see your hospital administrator please. Would you inform him that May Gutteridge from St. James’ Social Service is here to speak with him?”

The hospital official soon entered the waiting room and invited her into his office. Once the door closed she spoke first. “I’m most disappointed you did not show the courtesy of a return phone call regarding my inquiry about the circumstances around the care of my client. She’s a mother of five children and no one has shown her any respect. This would cause any reasonable person to become suspicious.”

The hospital administrator cleared his throat several times before speaking. “Yes...yes...Well, we have a busy hospital with hundreds of emergency cases a day. We do the best we can.”

“So, why was she released before you talked with me?”

## *From Lost to Found*

After a short pause he replied, “The medical team felt she was able to join her family, and her husband persisted so aggressively to have her discharged that we saw no danger. The truth of the matter is we are uncertain as to the diagnosis. We don’t know why she has become paralyzed and whether or not it’s temporary. Quite frankly, Mrs. Gutteridge, we don’t have the staff or resources to treat alcoholics or drug addicts who abuse their health and then come knocking on our door and expect us to make them better. She can see her family physician for further tests.”

May became outraged and launched a spirited rebuttal. “So you’re saying some people are more deserving than others. Is that how you draft your medical policies here? Well. I’ll soon find out, as I intend to launch a complaint with the government regulators and the medical association.”

The hospital official had backed himself into a corner. He could not gracefully escape. He decided to stand his ground. “You’re free to do what you think is appropriate. I have nothing further to say.” He opened the door and as he exited, May commented, “This isn’t over. You might be successful in pushing around defenceless or those less than perfect souls who are trapped in addiction, but I will not be so easily deterred.”

And then she left and rushed backed to 331 Powell. She phoned her legal counsel, Laura, who came to the office early that afternoon. May relayed the scanty information she had regarding Carolyn’s unexplained paralysis and then asked, “Doesn’t this look just a bit fishy to you?”

“Absolutely. There’s no question that something is wrong here. I think the best way to get some quick action is to go to the board of directors of the hospital and give them a chance to investigate your complaint and rectify the situation. If that doesn’t work, then we go to the government bodies. Shall I give them a call?”

“Oh no. I will give them another call. Thanks for your advice. I will tell the family about our inquiry.”

May decided to go quietly to the church and pray for the Andersens. She worried deeply about the children.

As she left the building one of the home help volunteers came up to her and said, “Thought I’d just come down and let you know about how awful the conditions are at my hotel. The landlord is completely unwilling to fix anything. We’re getting really upset because there’s no running water and constant breakdowns of the boilers. It’s not right. We’ve paid our rent and should be treated better.”

May answered softly, “Thank you for the update, my dear. I guess it’s time for me to go to city hall, and on the way, stop to see Jack Webster. I’ll go this afternoon. Enough is enough.”

Jack Webster was a famous radio and television personality in British Columbia from the early 1960s. He was an early supporter of May Gutteridge. He helped immensely in drawing public attention to the atrocities in the Downtown Eastside. He also had a farm and sent the wool from his sheep to the Gastown Workshop for staff to weave and make clothing. This allowed May to integrate the workshop with the wider community and added public recognition to the workers for their skills.

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As she reached the corner of Gore and Powell and was about to cross, Kathy Swain came running down the street. In a panicked voice she said, “Mrs. G. Hope you haven’t forgotten about the board meeting tonight. It’s an important one.”

“Thanks, Kate. I must admit this has been a hectic day. Thank you for the reminder. See you at 6:30 PM. It looks like I’ll be going up to visit the mayor today.”

“Right then. See you there.”

May was worried as St. James’ Social Service had reached a turning point. The Alcohol and Drug Commission had just turned down their funding request for the two paid social workers, David and me. If St. James’ couldn’t get the funding elsewhere, then they would have to shut down the social work component, even though the City had just sent over an additional forty-five new cases for cheque administration. All of May’s years of hard work dangled on thin strings.

When she arrived the mayor wasn’t available so she ended up talking with a city planner about their bylaws. After leaving 12th and Cambie May detoured over to her home on West 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue to enjoy a few minutes’ rest and to freshen up for the evening meeting. She told her husband, Arthur, about the board meeting. Arthur crossed his arms and said, “You know, it’s one thing for you to give to those people the daytime, but I’m supposed to get a small slice of the night-time. You’re cutting into my portion, the evening piece. Now what am I supposed to do?”

May chuckled and answered, “Why don’t you come with me?”

After a few seconds Arthur relaxed his arms and said, “You know, I think I might just as well come with you. I don’t trust you driving at night, and that small little car isn’t that safe.”

They arrived at St. James’ later that night. The room was full with fifteen of May’s faithful supporters. After the introductory prayer she told them the bad news about losing the funding for the two social workers. “After I spoke with our good friend Dr. Connolly, he suggested I talk directly with the Minister of Social Services, Mr. Norm Levi, which I will do. If we can’t get the funding, then we will have to shut down our social work component, which would be unimaginable. It’s becoming more and more obvious we will have to form a society that will be distinct and separate from St. James’ Church, although this breaks my heart. I’ve always seen the two as being inseparable. The good news is that it will give us a better legal framework to buy the property at both 331 and 333 Powell. We also need to do something with the Victory Hotel and somehow improve the living conditions of so many of our clients who live there. It just never ends, does it?”

The meeting ended after a lively debate about private and public funding. May and Arthur arrived home at 10:30 pm.

## *From Lost to Found*

### **Carolyn Dies**

Carolyn Andersen's untimely death shook the Downtown Eastside with yet another tragedy that, under normal circumstances, would have gone unnoticed. May was on her way to 331 Powell when she saw Iver Andersen hunched over and sobbing outside the front door. She immediately went to him and said, "Good morning Iver. What's the matter with you?"

Iver was so upset that his erratic breathing prevented him from speaking. Finally a few audible words came through. "She's dead. Carolyn's dead. They killed her." He whimpered.

May, shocked by his words, blinked her eyes rapidly and asked, "Now Iver, am I understanding you correctly? Did something happen to Carolyn?"

"Yes, that's what I'm saying. Last night she died."

This was completely unexpected. May was stunned. She shook her head back and forth and, while turning towards her office, said, "Excuse me, Iver, for a few moments. I must go in here and collect my thoughts. Please don't leave."

She closed the door and then collapsed into her chair. Her head fell into her hands and she prayed for strength and guidance. "*Holy Father. I know you have a plan for us and that Carolyn's premature passing has a purpose. It hurts me so, to think about a family losing their mother and being so lost. We had made such strides. Carolyn was doing so well, and Iver, too. I don't know what to do. I'm lost, too,*" and then she cried quietly for a few minutes.

Wiping away her tears, she picked up her Bible. Tucked inside the cover she saw a picture of Mother Teresa, and thought about how the nun was able to endure the hardships of disease, and how people were starving and dying every day due to poor living conditions, things as simple as not having clean water. Canada was so much better off. *How could anyone here complain,* she thought.

*Yes, we have problems,* she considered, *but we also are blessed to be surrounded by such a bounty of material things - nutritional food, purified water and shelter.* Sighing and drawing back her shoulders, May then stood up and returned to Iver. "Sorry to take so long, Iver. I too loved your wife and this news truly has touched my soul. Please, come to the church with me. I'm going to break one of my rules today. I will take to church to see Father Gardiner. I want you to know you're not alone. We will find a way for you and your children."

Iver began to sob again. But he was also touched by May's strength and support. They found Father Gardiner and told him what had happened. He said to Iver, "I'm so sorry for your loss. You don't have to worry. This lady will help you through this difficult time. Any way that I can support her, I will."

They then went to the elementary and high schools and picked up Iver's children, and took them all to St. James' for lunch. Afterwards, May assembled everyone in her office and said, "We've all suffered a great loss, and we'll miss your mother greatly. Now, we have to be strong, all of us. Your father is going to need a lot of help to raise you children. We're all going to pitch in and help him. How does that sound?"

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Candice, the eldest, began to weep. May spoke to her quietly. “Candice, I know you miss your mother. And what has happened is a true tragedy. We are going to do this together. Don’t you think for a moment you will now have to fill your mother’s shoes. You’re still a child and we’re going to respect that. What I mean is we are going to be a real team: David, Doug and I, and your father are all going to get focused on you and your family.”

May then looked at the younger four children and said, “How would you like that?” They quietly nodded.

She looked at the youngest two and said, “And would you like to see us more often, Jorgen? How about you, Thomas?”

They both nodded their heads. She looked at Iver. “And how about you, Dad? Are you all right with all of this?”

Iver, deeply moved by this show of support, lifted his sad face, exposing his puffed-up red eyes and said, “Ya ya. Thank you everybody. I’ll do my best.”

“All right then,” May said, slipping into a more businesslike tone. “Candice and Dad, let’s help you with some of the supper preparation. I’ll send over whatever our daily menu is from the cafeteria, to help out. Iver, you’ll have to be home every night. You can’t leave these children alone. Make sure the younger kids are in bed by 9:00 pm, and Candice, I think 10:00 pm is late enough for you. I will come over every morning to make sure everyone makes it to school on time. Candice and Dad, you will have to make the lunches. If for some reason you can’t, then let me know. Phone me. We’ll help out when needed. I’ll have the home help staff come over every day to tidy up and help with the dishes and laundry. Have I missed anything?”

Iver spoke up, “Only one thing: how about the funeral for Carolyn?”

May answered, “If it’s all right with you, Iver, I will make the appropriate arrangements and organize a service at St. James’. Would that be okay?”

“Yes. Thank you again, Mrs. Gutteridge.”

And so this long, eventful day came to an end. May called the church, where she made the funeral arrangements with Father Gardiner, and then the funeral home, and let Kathy, David and myself know about the new family program for the Andersens. It was well past suppertime when she finally reached home.

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For May, Carolyn Andersen had been in transition, from lost to found. This made the hospital incident that much more difficult to accept. Iver lived up to the challenge. He stayed at home during the evenings. He rallied around his children during the day. His only diversion was 331 Powell Street. Candice displayed courage and maturity in accepting her new role as a primary caregiver for her family.

More than two hundred people attended the memorial service at St. James, and once again May came up with the cookies, beverages and a reception hall big enough to accommodate everyone. The service was held on a Saturday.

## *From Lost to Found*

The following Monday Kathy ran to May with an urgent message, “Oh, Mrs. G. Someone high up in the Alcohol and Drug Commission just called and left this message. You’d better phone them straight away.”

May thanked her and returned to her office. She dialed the number. A receptionist answered, directing her to Mr. Norm Levi’s office. Surprisingly, one of the chief assistants got on the phone and said, “Hello Mrs. Gutteridge. We called to say that the Province of British Columbia supports your work completely. In fact, I’ve been authorized to not only approve the grant for the social worker salaries that were improperly denied, but also absorb all of the federal funding you’ve been receiving through the federal Local Initiatives Program. This way you won’t have to fill in applications every year or constantly worry about your funding. You have the Province of British Columbia supporting your work now.”

Mrs. Gutteridge was taken back. After a few seconds of silence she came back on the line. “It’s funny how it feels when all your life you’ve been chasing governments and corporate sponsors, and when you hear something like this, you become speechless. I can only say thank you and invite you and Mr. Levi down to see our programs first hand. You’re always welcome.”

This was one of those rare moments when all of May’s enormous efforts combined into a glorious moment of triumph. The stable funding would allow May and St. James’ Social Service to focus on other pressing issues, such as finding proper accommodation for seniors, and a sanctuary for abused women (the East Enders Society had recently discontinued the emergency shelter program for women in favour of long-term care). There was much to do—and all of it needed doing *now*. With secure, more or less permanent funding, May could also turn her attention to the Victory Hotel.

## **Chapter 12**

### **Fighting Back**

May dropped in the next morning to see Jack Webster. She had gone to Jack on other occasions and was a familiar face. After escorting her into the studio and before the broadcast asked, “Now what’s a nice lady like you tryin’ to come onto a show like mine f’rrrr?” And then laughed.

“Oh, Jack, you know me. I only call when I’m in trouble. You’re my guardian angel. This time it’s the slum landlords down here and their reluctance to fix the plumbing or basic heating. I thought this might be a newsworthy item for you.”

“Have you tried talkin’ to the Mayor about this yet?”

“I tried yesterday afternoon but the mayor wasn’t available. I did talk to a city planner about current bylaws and the city’s inadequate enforcement with slum landlords.

Jack then began the show. “Gooooood morning, Vancouver. This morning we have a good friend and very special guest. From the Downtown Eastside—not a

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place too many would want to wander around without police protection—is one fearless champion of the underdog, May Gutteridge. How are ya today?”

“Thank you for your kind welcome, Jack. As you know, I’m the parish worker for St. James’ Social Service.”

“Yes, and you’re far too modest. You’ve helped so many more people than anyone else I know—including the government,” Jack said, before erupting into a growl-like laugh.

“Now, that isn’t quite the case,” commented May. “The governments from all levels have shown marvellous support for our work by funding so many of our programs - and they do the same for most of the other agencies and groups that are also working on the Downtown Eastside.”

“You make it sound like it’s their money,” responded Jack, his voice rising. “And it isn’t. It’s taxpayer money and should be put to good use, like helping people.”

“You are, of course, quite correct, Jack. Why I’ve come here today is to talk about the deplorable living conditions in many of the hotels in the Downtown Eastside and how government regulators are so slow to enforce their by-laws. We have some of our people in this one hotel, who have paid their rent and don’t have any running water or heat.”

“Just a second, May. Let me grasp this. You’re sayin’ these derelicts get away with it - and I’m talkin’ about the landlords.”

“Yes, that’s exactly what I’m saying. What’s even worse is how cruel this negligence is—how so many, about half of the tenants, are mentally ill and unable to either look after themselves or complain to anyone about their mistreatment.”

“And what does city hall have to say about this?”

“Yesterday they told me they would investigate my concerns. But this isn’t the only hotel with troubles. There are far too many others.”

The show’s telephone lines were opened up and an energetic discussion followed. May was overwhelmed by the deep public support callers demonstrated, especially for the services given by St. James’ Social Service. She thanked her great friend and left for the Downtown Eastside.

## Chapter 13

### nadia and nigel

One day in the summer of 1974, as May walked into her office, the phone rang. It was the welfare department. “May, I’m not sure if you can help, but we have a unique situation regarding a deaf mother and her husband and three children. Have you a few minutes now?”

May shrugged her shoulders and said, “Now’s as good a time as any. Please continue.”

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“Oh, that’s wonderful. Now, the family has been on and off social assistance many times. Part of the problem is regular employment for Nigel and the fluctuating mental health of the mother, Nadia.”

“How old are the children?”

“They are five, seven and eleven years of age. I was just about to get to the children, but our gravest worry is Nadia’s repeated attempts at suicide. This devastates Nigel, as he really seems to love her. He’s a very nice man who is willing to work but is too nervous to leave Nadia alone. We’re running out of options. The doctors and community mental health teams have been working with her and the family, but we can’t seem to find a breakthrough.”

May reflected for a moment and then said, “Are any of the children deaf?”

“No.”

“Are they all attending school regularly?”

“Oh, yes. They are also very nice children.”

“Where do they live?”

“They’re over on the boundary of Burnaby and Vancouver, down by the PNE.”

“And what kind of work does Nigel do?”

“He seems to be a handyman and labourer.”

“Okay, that’s great. We might be able to utilize his skills, and they don’t live too far from us. Sure, send them along. I would like to interview all of them.”

Just as she hung up the phone, Kathy ran into her office with yet another crisis. Luckily, May possessed an uncanny ability to multitask and respond decisively to problems. This was truly one of her great strengths, one that was constantly put to the test.

In a panicked voice she said, “Excuse me Mrs. G. but I really don’t know what to do. Harry down at the furniture store seems to be quite drunk.”

May immediately stood up, took Kathy’s hand and said softly, “Come with me. Let’s go and see him together.”

They walked down the street to the furniture store. Harry was trying to conceal his intoxication but the overpowering smell of alcohol filled the room. May walked up to him and said, “Now, what’s that smell, Mr. Jacobs?”

Harry turned and accidentally knocked an ornament off a book shelf. He smiled, baring his few remaining teeth. Like a child caught doing something bad, he confessed instantly. “You got me, Mrs. G. I fell off the wagon last night, but didn’t want to leave you up a creek this morning.”

May looked at Kathy. She walked over and took Harry’s hand and said, “Now, you’re coming with me. I will drive you home. But come back when you’re sober.”

He nodded. She looked at Kathy and said, “Now, Kate, could you find someone to attend to the store, I’ll deliver our favourite rascal home to sleep it off. “She then looked at Harry and smiled. As she steadied his drunken wobble, her arm interlocked with his, the pair marched out of the store, looking like tourists visiting the big city.

Just then Bertha was coming up the street and was about to greet them when May said, “Good morning, Bertha. Sorry to be a bit busy, but we need to find a

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temporary replacement for Harry, as he's under the weather. Would you mind helping Kathy?"

"Sure."

As the door closed behind them, Kathy sighed: "I don't know how she does it. She's so busy, there are so many things that need to be done, but she still finds the time to drive Harry home personally. I guess you could say this is the personal touch that's so refreshing. She could easily have asked Bill to take him home in the van."

Bertha nodded and said, "That's just our Mrs. G. Don't you worry about the store today. I'll take care of it."

After returning to the centre, she saw a short man with a woman and three children sitting in the waiting area near her office. As she approached he said, "Hello, are you Mrs. Gutteridge?"

She gently nodded her head and said, "Yes."

"My name is Nigel Carr. This is my wife, Nadia, and our three children. Social services referred us to you."

May took a deep breath, wishing that she had a more organized booking procedure, and said, "It's a pleasure to meet you all. Come right along into my office."

After everyone was seated May asked Nigel, "Now, could we begin with some details about what it is that Nadia enjoys doing? Could you ask her for me?"

"Oh, you can speak directly to her." Nigel said. "She can lip read."

"That's wonderful. Now Nadia, what sort of hobbies do you have?"

Nadia, caught off-guard by such a question, looked puzzled, and struggled for an answer. May quickly decided on another approach. She stood up and said, "Okay, why don't we all go for a tour of our facilities? That way you can learn a little about *us*."

This brought relief to Nadia's face. They went to the walkway between 331 and 333 Powell, where May stopped and explained, "On this side of the building we have our counselling and social service administration offices. This is where we *talk* to people. On this side, just through the walkway, is where we *do* things for people."

As they crossed over into the other building they immediately noticed how much brighter the lights were. May pointed her index finger and said, "To the right, is the Gastown Workshop. As you can see, it's a happy and productive place. Everyone here uses their unique skills and talents to create things. We weave our own wool, make our own clothes—some of the finest first nations hand-knit sweaters are made here. We do very professional leather work, we have a professional hairdresser, and we encourage anyone with skill or ability to join us."

Next they moved to the rear part of the building. As they passed through another narrow corridor, she stopped and said: "We have a laundry service for our home help program. Here's our washing machine and dryer, and on the other side we have complete shower facilities for our clients. Just ahead is my right-hand person, Kathy Swain. She organizes everyone, including me," and then laughed.

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Finally, they reached the back of the building. May took a few steps and said, “Let me introduce you to our chef and kitchen staff. Over here is Art and Reubina and as you can see, this is our humble cafeteria. Would anyone be interested in tea or coffee?”

Nadia and Nigel looked pleased to see food. The three children were all hungry and eagerly pointed at the big, steaming pot on the stove releasing a delicious smell. May said, “Ah yes, children. That’s my favourite beef stew. Don’t worry. As you can see by the clock on the wall, lunch is only fifteen minutes away. I hope you all will join us.”

The family seemed excited. May led them back to her office and said, “Why don’t we stop our discussion right here and let you wander around for awhile? Our home help program is across the street, and our thrift shop and furniture store is just down the street. Go down and say hello to Bertha. If you need anything, she’ll be happy to help you. First go and enjoy some lunch. Come back a little later and we can talk some more.” She then looked at the three girls and said, “Are any of you missing school today?”

“No,” Nigel said. “It’s a professional day for the teachers. That’s why we all came today.”

“All right then. I’ll see you a bit later.”

The lunch hour would give May an opportunity to visit Iver. After advising Kathy, she rushed to her car and drove over to the Andersen’s. She parked and walked into the housing project. She was surrounded by urban poverty. The pungent smell of urine and decaying garbage reminded her of the unforgiving hardships that gripped the neighbourhood with an iron fist.

When she reached the Andersen’s unit there was no answer. No one was home. She worried that Iver had fallen off the wagon—perhaps to somehow cope with his wife’s horrendous tragedy.

May returned to the centre and joined the new arrivals—Nadia, Nigel and their three children—in the cafeteria. After lunch May said, “You know, it might be best if you take your time and think things through. I understand there has been great turmoil happening to everyone, and what I would like to do today is to make certain that you all know you’re welcome here—any time. You do not need an invitation. And Nadia, I want you to really think about your future and come back tomorrow so we can have a good talk.”

She turned and looked at Nigel, and said, “I understand you’re able to fix things and generally help out. Do you have a job at the moment?”

“No, not just now.”

“So, please come down and check with Bertha and Kathy about the furniture store and our truck deliveries. Our work orders fluctuate daily. If we’re busy, we could use your help.”

“Our carpenter, Al, needs people from time to time, too. So you never know. Come on in and we’ll see what happens.”

She then looked at the three girls and said, “I’m so sorry to have spent so much time with your parents today, but I could tell you had empty stomachs, and a day off from school, and you probably have some friends you’d rather be with

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right now. We've filled you up with stew and pie, so you must all be ready to go burn off the energy. Am I right?"

The girls smiled. May continued, "But this is merely a beginning. I hope you will visit regularly. Let me know how you're all doing. If you need anything, and I mean this sincerely, you must speak up, and don't be bashful. I'm here for that reason alone. Oh yes, and just one final thing. Please forgive me for being so rude. I don't even know your names..."

With that the eldest answered, "Oh... ah, I'm Emily, and my middle sister's Tara, and the baby of the family is Jamie." And then she giggled, as she was a bit shy.

The family left. May was finally alone.

## Chapter 14

### The substance of legends

May's early efforts with the most difficult clients sent her way strengthened her reputation for honest, sincere and devoted care that won the trust of clients, staff and governments. Two of the most memorable stories, that of the Carr family and the Andersens soon became legendary.

After entering the centre that morning, May noticed Nigel waiting for her. She smiled and said. "And what could we do for you today, Nigel?"

Nigel's face screwed up while tears fell down each side of his face. He cried out, "Oh, Mrs. Gutteridge. What am I going to do? Nadia jumped off of the Granville Street Bridge last night."

"What did you say?"

"Yeah, she tried to commit suicide again. She jumped off of the Granville Street Bridge. Do you know how high that is?"

"Oh, my dear God. Is she okay?"

"I think so. The hospital said she punctured one of her lungs in the fall. They're going to keep her for a week or so."

"Thanks be to God. Are the children aware of this?"

"Emily is but not the younger ones."

"All right. Where's Emily right now?"

"She's in school."

"Let's go to the hospital right now and on the way stop at the school."

They went over to Emily's school. They spoke with the principal about what had happened and asked whether the school counsellor might speak with Emily and keep an eye on her.

Next, they dashed over to the hospital and went up to the ward. After receiving clearance from the nursing station, they entered Nadia's room. Nadia was sleeping. May suggested that she leave the room while Nigel awakened her to ask if she was well enough to talk to her.

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After a few minutes Nigel waved her in. As she approached the semi-inclined bed, May saw the intravenous tubes running into Nadia's arm. Nadia's face was slightly bruised and her upper lip swollen—signs of her great fall. Her pale and purplish face was surrounded by her long black hair, which was spread out on the white pillow. Her eyes were clouded with heaviness and were larger than usual.

A polite smile lit up Nadia's face when she saw May enter, which seemed to bring a sense of calm to her spirit. She motioned in sign language to Nigel, "I am not worthy of this visit. There are so many others so much more deserving of her time and care. Tell her I thank her from the bottom of my heart for her visit but to please not waste her precious time with someone like me."

After Nigel relayed this message, May approached Nadia's bedside, clasped her free hand, and said, "Now you listen to me. You mustn't ever think that way again. You are a beautiful young lady, a mother of three children, and have a devoted husband who loves you. I don't need to know anything more about what happened last night, only that you will be coming with me to the Gastown Workshop when you are discharged. We already have a spot ready for you. Don't dwell on the past, my dear. You are here and that is all that matters."

After lip-reading this message, Nadia smiled and nodded her head. She spoke through her husband, "I think I understand now. I'm so sorry for what I've done. Please forgive me."

May smiled and glanced up to the ceiling. She said, "You know, Oscar Wilde, the famous Irish playwright and author, once remarked, 'All saints have a past, all sinners have a future.' You and I, my dear, are sinners, and we both have a great future ahead."

She leaned over the bed and kissed Nadia's forehead. "Now you have some rest," she said. "Nigel will come every day and night. I will help you with the children in the interim. You don't have to worry about anything but getting some rest. Let me know if there is anything you need, okay?"

Nadia nodded.

May took Nigel home and went back to the Downtown Eastside. She parked her car and stopped to pray at the church. Father Gardiner noticed her and extended an invitation for tea. As they sipped May said, "What do you think, Father, about this? You know I'm very angry about Carolyn and being so powerless to make things right, but just now I think I've found a way to help."

"Now that is something I can't wait to hear about. Please tell."

"I've worried for a long time now about the children and both Carolyn and Iver being so lost, so disconnected. Yes, we are filling in a few of the blanks, but Iver has all of his family in Denmark. As you know, I believe in families and the network of support that is always there for blood relatives. Iver wouldn't be so lost if he returned to his homeland, and the children would have a much better chance at rising above life's many obstacles. So do you think that would be a worthy mission for us, to find a way to send them all back to Denmark?"

Father Gardiner was impressed with this suggestion. It gave everyone a fresh start and provided the family with that strong connection to siblings and relatives. He smiled and said, "This is extraordinary, May. You've outdone yourself this time."

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Pleased with his support, May replied, “Well Father, this marvellous solution came to life only thirty minutes ago, courtesy of a merciful and loving God. I am merely a messenger. If I have your support, I’ll get started right away.

“You always have that, May.”

While returning to 331 Powell, May could barely contain her excitement. She looked everywhere but Iver was not there. She then assembled David, Kathy and me in her office. “I have some news to share with you. I am proposing that we send the Andersen family back to Denmark where Iver’s family live. I understand he has a couple of brothers and sisters there, and this would give them what is so absent here, an extended family. So what do you all think of this?”

We looked at one another with raised eyebrows. David answered, “I think this is extraordinary, Mrs. G. It addresses the heart and soul of the Andersen’s current malaise.”

I concurred. “Yes, Mrs. Gutteridge. This may have been the answer all along, hiding behind the obvious. I think you may have seen the trees after studying the forest for so long.”

Kathy added, “This is fantastic. What a wonderful idea. Oh yes, it truly would be the best thing for them all.”

As we dispersed we spotted Iver. David waved him over and said. “Iver, I think you might be interested in what Mrs. G. has to say to you. Go right in.”

Upon hearing the plans, Iver was ecstatic. He had never really considered a return to Denmark as a viable option.

Mrs. Gutteridge immediately began making plans. She asked Iver to contact his family and set a date for his return and, of course, to see whether he and his five children would be welcome. It took five weeks to receive a letter from Denmark, but the warmth of the response surprised even Iver. He came in and showed—and translated—the letter to May. It was heartfelt and sincere. His family were very happy to hear about his return home.

This news reaffirmed May’s divine presupposition. For her, God was wonderful. St. James’ Social Service became the channel for a basically *good* family lost in the wilderness of addiction and poverty to find rebirth and renewal. She always knew Iver had character and moral fibre, which she understood came from his family upbringing.

This was an outcome that truly rose above adversity and a less-than-perfect legal system, to right the wrongs of its lesser voices.

Iver and his children returned to Denmark two months later.

# *From Lost to Found*

## **Chapter 15**

### **saying goodbye**

It was June 1975 when I gave May my notice that I had successfully competed for a job with the provincial government. An exciting new program entitled the Debtor Assistance Branch had been created to help individuals and families with financial problems.

That same day, David Trigueiro announced his plans to move to Calgary.

And then, without notice, Kathy appeared at May's door with tragic news. Kathy, who always exhibited great strength and a stoic demeanour, had tears in her eyes. May looked up and was startled. "My goodness Kathy, what has happened?"

Kathy wiped her tears away and managed to say, "It's so awful, Mrs. G. Bertha has passed away."

This brought May to her feet. She shook her head in disbelief. With a strained voice she asked, "Oh, my God. How could this have happened?"

By this time Kathy had regained her composure. "It looks like it must've been a drug overdose, Mrs. G. It's so sad. She's been here so long and always so loyal. What are we going to do without her?"

"My good Kathy, I am without words. Would you excuse me for a few moments while I go and collect my thoughts?"

With that she adjusted her beret, straightened her clothes, and walked out of the centre. She headed over to St. James' Church and used her keys to enter. Quietly, she went over to the chapel to pray. Thirty minutes later Father Gardner opened the door to find her there. He said, "It's good to see you, May. Isn't this an unusual time for you to be here?"

She looked over, stood and moved a bit closer. "Yes, Father. I'm the bearer of very sad news. I could not bear it alone, so here I am asking once again for strength and guidance."

"And what is the nature of this news?"

"You remember Bertha? Of course, you do. Everybody knows Bertha. How she was sent to the doorstep of Gore Avenue and Cordova Street to wake us all up from a long, cold sleep. She brought joy and strength to the cruel alleyways and suffering streets down here. She showed us the way. She gave us the reason to reach out. She proved to me I wasn't crazy, that the voice calling me was real."

May stopped. While looking straight into the priest's eyes she said in a quavering voice, "Yes, the Holy Father has taken her from us. I feel so terribly alone, lost again. I don't know what to do."

He invited May for lunch. While finishing May talked about St. James' Social Service. "You know, I received Doug's resignation today and David's intentions to leave. And you know, this is also a bit sad; but this was not unexpected. They were temporary visitors to the Downtown Eastside. But Bertha was permanent. She was a leader. She wasn't supposed to go. And what's even worse, if you don't

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mind me saying, people like David and Doug are dispensable. There are many others, willing and able to fill those front offices. But Bertha isn't replaceable. She brings everything to a halt."

They both sat in stillness for several minutes. Father Gardiner spoke. "I agree. Bertha has left us in a much better place. But so have you, my dear. You're the one, May Gutteridge, who has lifted our hearts up all the way to awareness and action. Bertha was one of the very first to benefit from your powerful vision. You alone took her hand when she was abandoned by everyone else, just like Sally. You brought her in, out of the cold, and walked past those who mocked your kindness and generosity. Bertha's passing does not bring the world to an end. Rather, her passing allows us to stop and bear witness to her contribution to building the foundation upon which St. James' Social Service now sits. We can finally honour her life and how she touched so many, including you and me. We can stop and say thank you."

May was comforted by these words. She perked up, adjusted her purple beret and blinked her eyes before saying, "Indeed, what was I thinking? You see what happens when I start feeling sorry for myself or even begin to think I'm in control of anything. I am merely a messenger. I neither author nor edit my destiny. I have many times before acknowledged Bertha as an angel from heaven, and now she has returned home. She has helped me more than words can begin to say. You couldn't be more correct. It was through her suffering that she found true love and peace."

Father Gardner paused to clear his voice before saying, "This is a story of success and redemption that should and must be told."

"I guess I'd better be on my way," May concluded. "We have a lot of preparation to do before saying goodbye."

In the coming days, May and Father Gardiner organized Bertha's funeral, to be held at St. James' Church the following Saturday. May arranged to cater a reception at the church's Sunday coffee room. The word went out that a family member of St. James' Social Service had passed away and how important it was for all staff and those who knew her to attend.

When Saturday arrived, dark clouds hung over the city and raindrops the size of marbles pounded the pavement. The interior of the massive church became a physical sanctuary from the unfriendly weather outside. Reverent organ music conveyed a feeling of great spirituality. The flickering, cream-coloured candles symbolized both life and death. The church was full. May was to give the eulogy.

After a short service, Father Gardiner introduced May. She wiped her eyes on the way to the podium. She turned and faced the congregation. "Greetings my dear friends and colleagues. This is a very happy day as we celebrate one of our greatest friends. Bertha was our friend. She was kind and generous. She was also strong and unafraid. This is also a sad day because she has left us behind. We must now learn from her example. She touched my life most deeply. I remarked just one week ago to Father Gardner that Bertha cannot be replaced. And I still believe it. We will not try to recruit a replacement for her. Instead, we will say thank you and never forget her. "

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After the service everyone was invited into the adjoining hall for refreshments. As the small door in the far corner of the church opened, rich and delicious smells of baked goods and coffee filled the air and mingled with the lingering scent of incense.

The hall overflowed with animated conversation when one of St. James' staff came in through the side door, dripping wet and desperately looking for May. She found her behind the stage setting out more platters of food, and ran up to her and in an exasperated voice said, "Mrs. Gutteridge. You must come with me. There's someone badly hurt out on the street."

"Let me find my coat and umbrella. I'll be right there."

They went away for a long time. People began to leave. May finally reappeared dripping tiny raindrops from her glasses and rim of her beret. Father Gardiner went over and said, "I heard there was some kind of trouble. You look a bit drenched. Is everything all right?"

"Well, it is now, Father. This poor girl had been badly beaten and had nowhere to go. It looks like we're going to have to go back into the emergency shelter business. What's even more disturbing, this young girl had two children waiting for her at home."

The celebration of Bertha's life had just ended. Even this sacred moment had been disrupted by the perils lurking beyond the church's protected perimeter.

## **Chapter 16**

### **new faces in the family**

The year 1975 turned out to be the year for monumental changes for May and St. James' Social Service. All of sudden it seemed everyone knocked on her door. Governments had faith in her work. Mr. Ng, the owner of the Victory Hotel at the northeast corner of Dunlevy and Powell Street, asked her to take it over as he was too elderly to manage it. May officially incorporated St. James Social Service as a registered non-profit society.

May hired Monica Hogg in the fall of 1975 to work the afternoon shift at the Victory Hotel. Monica recounted her first interview with May. "I arrived for my interview in May's cluttered office. That day it was a hive of frantic activity. The phone rang constantly. People were running in and out with questions that needed to be answered. Boxes were piled everywhere. The bookshelves overflowed. May's desk was smothered in paper."

Monica was there for over an hour before getting ten minutes of May's time. May hired her immediately on the spot.

As was common with May and many of her unorthodox, visionary ideas, she asked Monica to organize a fundraising event called *Omar's Bazaar* for a full day at Oppenheimer Park. May had become involved with a young Salvadorian family through the church. After she heard they could not afford to bring their young son to Canada with them, she decided to get involved.

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The bazaar illustrated May's ingenuity and drive as she dedicated her time and staff to reuniting a young boy with his parents. The event was most successful and raised enough money to cover the expenses that May had *prepaid* to bring young Omar to Canada.

May changed Monica's life forever. In 2009 Monica said, "I learned so much from May over the years. She had never ending faith in people. I saw her set up an apartment for families over and over again. I thought she was crazy to keep giving them chance after chance, and every time they would mess up, sell everything for alcohol or drugs. May believed it was only a matter of time before people would make it - and she would never give up. This included her help in finding her clients jobs because she believed that given the opportunity, they would live up to it. Many times they did and if they didn't, she would try again. May gave me many opportunities over my years at St. James' (1975-1983) which gave me great confidence in my abilities. Since then, I've always known that I can do anything."

Lorena Gagnon (Gulbrandsen) was one of the first to cross the intergenerational bridge of families helped by May Gutteridge. May knew Lorena's family from Prince Rupert as they arrived with their five children in the Downtown Eastside in 1964. May established a lifelong relationship with them that included attending their weddings, funerals, baptisms and other special occasions. May became the godmother of all three of Lorena's children.

Lorena was seven years old when she first asked May if she could have a job. In 1976, when she was sixteen, it became a reality. As of January 2010 Lorena was still working at St. James' in the Home Help program in a job she continuously held with pride and honour.

May hired Maureen Lange, a registered nurse in early 1976 as one of the workers at the Victory Hotel (for the meagre wage of \$3 per hour). More and more mentally ill people were released from institutional care into the wider society. Most of whom were unable to care for themselves. Many communities experienced constant and growing pressures to find solutions for housing, medical and psychiatric services, as well as substance abuse and rising crime rates.

Hiring a registered nurse was something quite new for May Gutteridge and St. James' Social Service. It would later prove to constitute a fundamental paradigm shift from the early days of cheque administration and the Gastown Workshop to residential health care. St. James' Social Service was getting busier and bigger.

Even so, May would still find time for the children from the St. James' Social Service community. In 1976, she organized a trip to Disneyland for twenty-five of the children whose parents attended or worked at St. James' Social Service. The Disneyland trip was so astounding that it could easily become folklore. It was unheard of for a social worker to take her clients' children, a total of twenty-five of them, on an expensive trip thousands of miles away from their home in the poorest part of the city. Once again she made dreams come true, dreams that permanently influenced everyone's lives in many ways.

In 1977 she said in the St. James' Social Service Society Annual Report, "In June last year we achieved a dream. Twenty-five children ages from 9 -18, three

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mothers and myself made a trip to Disneyland. We had talked and talked of such a holiday. We had hoped that workers would save for the holiday and they were promised matching dollars, but in the end. this did not happen. So we used the matching dollar money and took the children...We had a very successful holiday. All of the children were part of a group that has met at St. James' Social Service for many years. Most Thursdays we've had supper together and pursued many activities like handicrafts, horse riding, beach trips, visited theatres, watched films and played games. *This was the highlight of our years of friendship.*"

A few weeks later after the Disneyland trip, Monica was on shift when one of the priests from St. James' Church phoned and said he had a young man who needed a place to live for a few days. The young man in question was Robert White who had arrived in Vancouver with no money, no friends and no place to live. Monica referred him directly to May.

It was in September 1976 when May first met Robert White. Father Wright brought him into the centre as he became acquainted with him through the church. Robert was in his late 30s, balding and medium height. He spent five years in a monastery in Ontario. After their brief encounter May invited him to join the St. James' family. Robert gratefully accepted.

### **POWELL PLACE**

Powell Place was originally called the Sanctuary for Women but the name was changed before the opening on December 10, 1976. Its address was carefully concealed from the public as part of the service was to protect abused women and their children from their abusers. It was secretly located upstairs to 333 Powell and known to be 333 ½ Powell Street to the staff.

Powell Place was an emergency shelter facility for women and children in crisis. In the 1977 St. James' Social Service Annual Report Elizabeth Beauchemin (Al Beauchemin's wife) wrote a poem to commemorate its debut:

The Women's Sanctuary opened  
The work is nearly through  
As we prayed to God for blessings  
A dream finally came true.

The rooms are standing empty  
Only fridges, stoves, no more  
To furnish such a building  
Will be no easy chore.

Some thoughtful loving person  
Will soon come through the door  
And provide whatever's needed  
For the helpless and the poor

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Jesus tells us in the Bible  
Ask and ye shall receive  
So in His hands we place it  
And in His word believe.

There will always be a haven  
A smile, a friendly face  
For those who need to enter  
Into our Powell Place.

May did not have any special criteria for the type of women who came to Powell Place or what their problems might be except that the women must be in need of a supportive home while dealing with a crisis. Problems ranged from abuse and battery, drinking or drug problems, to psychiatric or emotional problems. A good 75 per cent of the clients were women who had run away from their husbands after suffering violence or abuse.

What happened to these women when they arrived at Powell Place? The staff followed procedures well-established by May when she first started St. James' Social Service - sit down with her, listen to her problems, and help her get through government agency red tape whenever required.

They were encouraged to take a couple of days to relax and calm down in the comfort and protection of the facility. They would be stronger, less emotional and clear-headed then, to begin making informed decisions. This also gave the Powell Place team of six workers time to get to know their circumstances and issues better.

May emphasized help with practical advice about house hunting, job finding, that they were seeing a social worker or they would be referred for psychiatric counselling or medical issues. Powell place strived to help vulnerable women act independently and take responsibility for themselves. May saw this as the first step to a more positive self-image.

In the 1977 St. James' Social Service Annual Monica Hogg reported that, "Powell Place has been open now for one year (1976). We had 392 women and 114 children come through our doors. Our capacity is 9 to 11 women plus several children (at any given time) although we have managed to fit in one or two more from time to time."

Many of the women came back to visit and kept in touch. Powell Place received great support and praise from the social workers and agencies they dealt with. Monica ended her report by saying, "Our most difficult problem is getting the women to move....So they must like it here."

1978 was also a special year for the Home Help Program. As of January 1<sup>st</sup> it became part of the provincial government's long-term care program, a self-sufficient operation complying with government guidelines.

"We have for the first time a *permanently* funded service," May gleefully remarked in the annual report.

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### **Victory**

May had entered negotiations with the City of Vancouver to buy the Victory Hotel property at 391 Powell Street in 1975. She explained the difficulties in the 1977 St. James' Social Service Annual Report that by 1976, after two years of operation, they were faced with the reality they could not keep going financially. When the elderly owners asked St. James' Social Service to take the Victory Hotel over because they were unable to continue owing to ill-health, May believed she had an obligation to the people they had placed in the hotel. She asked, "What would happen to them? They were doing well on our programme. They were learning to live in society after being in hospital for a long period, some had recently been discharged to us after years in hospital."

May thought that if the original owners could make a living out of operating the hotel then St. James' should be able to at least break even. Unfortunately, they didn't realize it was so sub-standard. They fixed, painted, did all of the work while the owners paid for most of the materials. But they just couldn't bring the hotel up to the City's standards. With twenty-four hour staff, paying basic wages, and using all of their experience and resources by the end of 1976 they simply could not continue. And then the unthinkable happened. City inspectors were about to take St. James' Social Service to court.

May recalled in an interview with Robin Fowler in 1997, "The City of Vancouver were going to take me to court because the Victory Hotel was in such terrible shape... I was on Jack Webster's show and when I was leaving he said, 'Oh, May, sit down and talk for a little while.' So, I sat down...and said to him, 'Oh, did you know they're taking me to court?'"

"Well, of course, the roof blew off. So, the next thing, he got hold of Jack Wasserman, who had the daily column in the *Vancouver Sun*, and told Jack, "Do you know they're taking May to court?" So, next day there was a big article in the *Vancouver Sun* that put the spoke into everything. Everybody made sure that I didn't go to court."

Immediately after the media coverage Mr. Rankin, Renate Scheerer (Social Planning) and City Inspectors got into the act. Mr. Rankin called a meeting with all concerned and the owners. The City ended up purchasing 333 Powell for \$60,000 and \$240,000 for 391 Powell (Victory Hotel) City Council further agreed that St. James' Social Service would renovate the hotel as they had demonstrated their ability in the other properties.

In 1977 the Victory Hotel formally became Victory House, a forty-five bed community shelter facility. At any one time all forty-five beds were filled. All of the clients received social assistance of some kind. Thirty-four out of the forty-five residents were from the cheque administration program at St. James' Social Service. Many one-to-one programs were arranged with particular members of staff to enhance and motivate certain individuals. When problems arose with such things as their welfare money, each person was guided and encouraged to follow through to a solution themselves. When this wasn't possible, staff intervened to resolve the problem.

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May appointed Robert White the manager of Victory House in 1977. He described Victory House as something more than just housing. It was another program co-ordinated with all of May's other programs: St. James' Cheque Administration, the Gastown Workshop, the Home Help Service and the Thrift Store. In the following year's annual report Robert summarized how May's holistic approach to social work was applied to residential health care, "At Victory, we are not simply interested in housing, but as part of housing, diet, physical, emotional and spiritual development. This includes development in work skills, personal skills, such as housekeeping, a tolerance of each others foibles, community interaction, and budgeting."

In the 1978 St. James' Social Service Annual Report, Robert quoted Jean Vanier to best describe the St. James' Victory House.

"A community is not an ideal floating in the air for heroes to grasp, but a living reality made up of human relationships, of work, of dirtying and washing the dishes.

It is in the irritations, the moments of sheer boredom, the happiness of shared meals, the conversations with friends, the moments of peace, that we show what a community is all about.

It is through this everyday living that we communicate to people that we care for them. Love is not some high-flown ideal; love passes through matter, through food to be cooked, the floors to be cleaned, the look, the handshake, the smile, the laughter."

## **Triage**

On the eve of her next major initiative on December 14<sup>th</sup> 1981 May was publically recognized as she received the Order of Canada for her outstanding achievements and contribution to making Canada a better place. This was a timely commemoration as Dr. Danica Beggs, who was considered by many a medical pioneer in British Columbia, had just released a research paper confirming what May had been saying about the lack of proper treatment for the chronically addicted - that it was actually very expensive as it cost the taxpayer hundreds of thousands of dollars.

May repeatedly talked to me about what she labelled 'the 'revolving door approach' to treating alcoholism and drug addiction. "There's this endless cycle of the very same people becoming ill from their addiction, having an ambulance take them to hospital, where they would be patched up and released as quickly as possible back to the very same place to do it all over again - over and over again. You see, you have all these different branches of government spending money on the same people for the same problem - Drug and Alcohol Commission, Medical Services, Social Services and so on."

The detox centre in the Downtown Eastside was another example where people would be repeatedly detoxed. May would say to St. James' staff, "The

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problem is not in detoxing alcoholics. Rather, it's the inadequate follow-up and support services after detoxification. “

May's techniques to treat alcoholism and drug addiction had been validated by Dr. Beggs.

In 1981 May was asked by social services and health authorities to become involved with a consolidated approach to the absolute 'hardest to handle' clients living in the Downtown Eastside. This was a difficult and often violent group. The Triage Centre, a 28 bed interim housing assessment facility was established and jointly funded by the Ministries of Health and Human Resources. It was located on Main Street in the old Bank of Montreal building near the Georgia Viaduct in January 1982.

For some, the usage of the term triage was interesting. Fr. Alwyn Hyndman, one of St. James' staff at the time, told me, “Did you know that triage originated on the battlefields of Europe? It was designed for wounded soldiers.” In other words it was not intended for the field of social work.

The Encarta dictionary defines triage as “the process of prioritizing sick or injured people for treatment according to the seriousness of the condition or injury.”

May's definition of the triage centre in the Downtown Eastside was, “A program to house and sort out the unwanted in society where we will send the sick to hospital, the well back to their homes and teach peace to the troubled.”

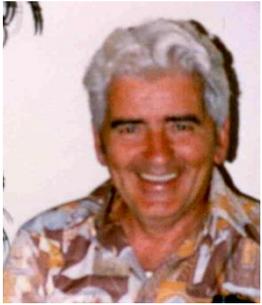
The centre's mandate for the Triage Centre was outlined by Judith Waites in the 1984 St. James' Social Service Annual Report. It was to identify, assess and house (for indefinite period of time) chronic system abusers; that group of individuals whose complex needs and behaviours (manipulative, threatening, aggressive) did not allow them to fit into the existing mandates of social services, agencies or systems. Their problems were drugs, alcohol, mental, behavioural, emotional, legal or a combination thereof. Consequently, they were all deemed inappropriate for most facilities. These individuals 'fell through the cracks of the system' and began an endless series of hospital visits, jail, hostels, and hotels. Triage became their 'point of last resort.

By 1987 the Triage Centre had become an intricate part of the social services network in the Lower Mainland that included an Outpatient Program for those who were virtually impossible to place into independent living situations or long-term care. “For these clients a system of support has evolved...This support system is the *Outpatient Program*,” said David Kozinsky in the St. James' 1986-87 Annual Report.

For some clients the Out-Patient Program was the ladder to putting their lives together and, in turn, helping the Triage Centre and their neighbours. For May, the Triage Centre was their family, a place where they were allowed to be themselves and to feel accepted through warmth, patience and understanding.

# The May Gutteridge Story

## wagner hills farm



Very few knew about May's involvement and continuous help in creating a facility that bears Wes Wagner's name quietly residing in a rustic valley in rural Aldergrove, far away from the hazards of the Downtown Eastside. The Wagner Hills Farm program represented another example of her willingness to get involved in worthwhile projects - especially when there was little or no money to fund them. Perhaps more importantly, Wagner Hills Farm presented a recovery program for addictions that openly integrated Christian principles with her well-established methods that centred on proper housing, regular nutritional food, a respectful community and work (employment).

Wes Wagner, a successful Vancouver businessman sought May's advice after being introduced to her by Neil Otke, one of May's staff, at a meeting held at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Vancouver, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1979. He wanted to find out how he might help people in a Christian way. He had purchased property in 1974 in the Fraser Valley that sat dormant.

Wes recalled how and where the preliminary vision of Wagner Hills Farm came from. "Neil Otke, from our church explained his experience when he took some of the downtown people from St. James' Social Service to a church camp at Crescent Beach. He told of how these people came out of their shells, they started to smile, laugh and just became different people. That experience caused him to write a dream of what it would be like if these people could go out to a farm and enjoy the fresh air, the animals and see God's creation in a different light. He developed an idea he called 'Step Two Farm' but it was only an idea. No funds, no farm and no support from anyone."

Wes had this vacant property but was not sure what to do with it. He said to himself, "I thought of the farm, but that was all. I was looking in other directions. This had nothing to do with me. I had no obligation or special feelings for these people. May and I talked a little after this initial meeting in 1979. They were nice people doing good work. I wished them well, and that was it - or, was it?"

The idea kept going through his mind. Weeks went by. The idea would not go away.

He called St. James' and asked for Mrs. Gutteridge. She did not remember him, and it took some explaining. She asked him what he wanted. Yes, she remembered their conversation at the church that one evening. Yes, the need for something like a farm was a good idea, but that is about where the conversation ended.

Two or three months went by. The thought just would not go away. Wes called Mrs. Gutteridge again and the conversation went just about the same as the first one, with the same ending.

A few more months went by. Wes Wagner's thoughts about needy people were still out there. Did he really care? Even if he did care how could he help? He

## *From Lost to Found*

called Mrs. Gutteridge again. By this time she was beginning to know who he was, so, she got right to the point. “Well, it’s your farm. If something is going to happen *you* are going to have to make the start.”

Wes was disappointed. “That was not what I wanted to hear. I would have rather Mrs. Gutteridge had said, “Forget it. The need isn’t there” or “It’s being done by someone else” or “Let me develop the thing for you, just leave it in my hands.” But no, she said “It’s *your* move.”

More time passed. This wasn’t going away. How could he deal with this? He needed help. Where could he turn? Praying, yes. He had been trying that, but there was no loud shouts of where to go. He only knew of one person who had first hand experience.

So he called her again, “Mrs. Gutteridge. If I start something like this, I will need your help. I will need a committee to work with. Would you help on such a committee?”

Wes was surprised when May immediately said yes.

Their first meetings were held every three months at Mount Zion Lutheran Church in New Westminister. For the most part, they just sat around and talked and prayed for direction. After several of these meetings and nothing of any significance happening, Wes got impatient. He complained to Mrs Gutteridge, who would always say, “Give it time. If it is God’s will, it will happen.”

Not only did May’s prophetic words make Wes feel better, it finally did happen in March, 1982 when The Wagner Hills Farm facility began. It was a distinctive rehabilitation program for substance abuse victims guided by a Christian philosophy that was further enhanced by a country atmosphere and hard but satisfying farm labour that continues to operate in 2010.

To get the farm going May hired Helmut Boehm as a social worker at St. James’ Social Service in 1981. She donated furniture and encouraged clients and staff to go out to Aldergrove to take a look. This evolved into the farm purchasing a bunkhouse and adding a kitchen and meeting room. Wes’ dream of using the property to do something special to help people began to happen.

Helmut told me in 2009, “The provincial government had created a program in 1982 that would subsidize employers who hired people on social assistance (to help people get off of welfare) and this allowed Wagner Hills Farm to take the step that May Gutteridge understood so well - employ people - give people wages instead of social assistance.”

Wes Wagner readily acknowledged to me in 2009 May’s role in creating a program of such lasting value. “Today, Wagner Hills Farm touches the lives of over 100 men and women in the greater Vancouver area and is reaching out to other parts of the world.

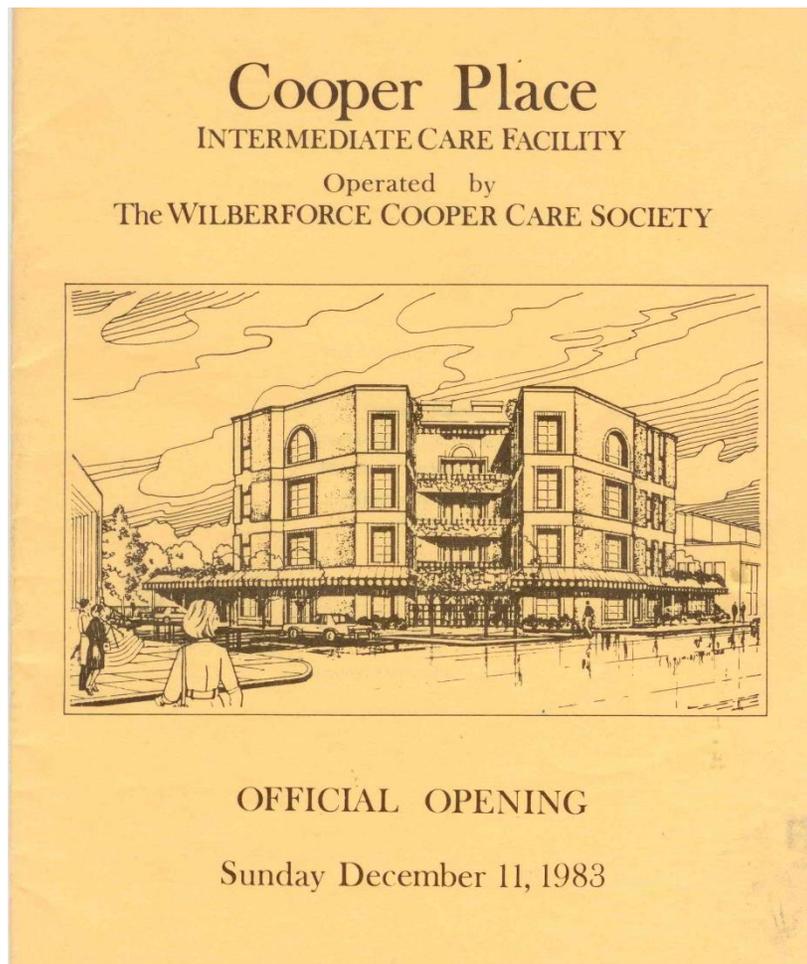
A larger amount of credit goes to a woman that had God’s kind of love in her heart. Anytime I become impatient I hear her words repeated, “Give it time. If it’s God’s will, it will happen.”

Thanks May.”

Over 3000 men have lived at Wagner Hills over the past 28 years.

# The May Gutteridge Story

Wagner Hills Farm  
Board of Directors  
Wes Wagner, May  
Gutteridge, H. Paul  
Schmidt, John  
Metzger, Graeme  
Moore



## *From Lost to Found*

### **COOPER PLACE**

Another long standing dream for May Gutteridge came to life on Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup> 1983. From the very beginning of her work at the Pensioner's Club May had wanted to see a residential facility for old people in the Downtown Eastside. She possessed a deep, eternal respect for seniors. She strongly believed they should be allowed to make their own decisions about where they lived and to live as independently as possible. She told many stories to staff about seniors being swept far away from the Downtown Eastside by government or families and relocated in old folks' homes, only to make their way back to the Downtown Eastside—with or without "permission"—and at their own risk. Their affection for the Downtown Eastside spoke to another public misconception. As May said to Ron one day, "You would think the people down here are a bunch of loners but in fact they come here to form a community, even if a bit imperfect."

Cooper Place was a fond old dream for May that never weakened. After years of searching for some way to make it come true, after discussing her inspired wish with parishioners, negotiating with politicians and motivating public officials, Cooper Place became a reality on December 11, 1983. The 73-bed intermediate residential care facility in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside was jointly sponsored by the St. James' Social Service Society and St. James' Anglican Church. This was one of May Gutteridge's most precious achievements.

"Everyone recognized that Cooper Place would never have happened without May Gutteridge," Ron Yuen, the architect for Cooper Place said to me.

"She was truly the engine and driving force."

Early Sketch of Cooper Place



Cooper Place upon Completion

## The May Gutteridge Story

May's reputation for being a pioneer was reaffirmed in 1984 when she detoured part of her focus into the recycling business. She turned out to be an early environmentalist.

She persuaded the City of Vancouver to letting her use an old abandoned warehouse at 496 Prior Street for \$1.00 per month. She soon demonstrated acute entrepreneurial skills as she hired and successfully managed a waste-management recycling business until the City of Vancouver took it over in 1987.

In 1984 May started a second business in the Gastown Workshop. She received a Manpower program to do a feasibility study on the possibility of making church vestments as a profitable venture - especially to provide employment. After the study they hired a working manager within the workshop and launched her second independent business. In May 1988 the vestment business was incorporated as St. James' Custom Vestments Inc.

In 1984, the buildings at 331-333 Powell were condemned by the City of Vancouver. After May heard the news she contacted the city and asked for help. May laughed as she reflected in the 1984-85 St. James' Social Service Annual Report about the "delightful" procedure of "dancing" with members of city council, social planning, property and insurance, architects, consultants, and how it resembled square dancing—lots of wrong turns but with practice and more patience. "They would finally make the right square in the end," she said.

Indeed, St. James' was offered four consecutive lots for the redevelopment of St. James' Social Service. (315, 329, 331 and 333 Powell Street).

It was decided that St. James' Social Service would stay at its present location, 331 Powell Street until one of the new buildings which covered two of the four sites was finished. The next year the City had planned to finish the project by building on the remaining sites. The new building would include offices, a workshop, a slightly enlarged Powell Place, and six apartments (for Cecelia House - a transition housing facility). Another year later the remaining projects, such as Victory House at 391 Powell would be completed along with more apartments for San Diego Lodge.

The North 300 block of Powell Street was about to receive an extreme makeover.

While May and St. James' Social Service received such generous support from government and were about to be physically transformed from shabby run-down buildings scattered all over the place into one sophisticated, modernized structure, May never lost sight of the lesser voices. Even after they passed away she would recognize clients, staff and colleagues alike. She sincerely believed that unless we and society at large show respect and dignity to a person's ending, we will soon get so careless about human life that anything will go.

May, in 1984-85, publicly honoured Fr. Gardiner, Fr. Wright and Fr. Retter at St. James' church for all of the years they had buried dozens of people she called "our friends", with great dignity and how they always followed them to the grave or crematorium. "Our services often bring family and friends together—the lonely man gunned down outside the church had the same service as the mother of a famous department store owner—just less flowers. The organ played, the body was put to rest—the Soul was prayed for."

## *From Lost to Found*

### **FAMILY AGAPE**

Ann Conway  
May  
Father David Retter



Family Agape Bus

May heard about a program in France where troubled families took part in kitchen activities. It was a place for mothers to learn basic life skills like how to cook, how play and provide positive guidance for children. May decided that the Downtown Eastside needed one too. She added a very important item to what was called the Family Agape program: medical checkups for the children.

In 1983 May formed a committee of eight people, including the architect, Ron Yuen, and Ann Conway, a parishioner from St. James' church. May told everyone, "Most of the adults who come to us for help have suffered severe abuse in their early childhood. We must provide help for parents with pre-school children at risk. We need a family centre where they can learn basic parenting and life skills with a play program for their children."

The committee was chaired by May and became the board of Family Agape when it first opened in 1985. Ann mentioned to me how exhilarating it was working for and with May. "She was extremely perceptive when dealing people's personal problems, including mine, and could get to the root of the matter very quickly and come up with a wise and loving solution."

The purpose of the Family Agape centre was to provide to more than thirty-five families the experience of an extended family, to teach nutrition and hygiene, home nursing and parenting skills while providing a place for preschoolers.

## The May Gutteridge Story

Parents and children were extended all the benefits of the other services found at St. James' including the clothing and furniture store, the Home Help Program, the Gastown Workshop, and professional social workers for counselling and assistance.

The centre concentrated on single parents and families with children under five years of age. Client families, in many circumstances, suffered from drug or alcohol addiction, sexual or physical abuse, or mental illness. Family Agape also helped vulnerable pregnant women who required advice with nutrition, medical matters and decision-making.

A typical day at the St. James' Family Agape centre was best described by Enid Brazier in the 1985 annual report.

"The doors opened at 9 am and warm greetings were heard as toddlers and parents were unbuckled from the seats inside the "Agape Bus"..... The rustle of laundry bags and washing machines roaring to life could be heard beginning the day.

Many parents and children would sit down to a bowl of cereal, the breakfast somehow not eaten at home. Others would begin painting or working. ....

A parent could be heard chatting with a baby as its diaper was changed. Splashes and playful noises came from the bathroom where a toddler was having fun in the Agape bath tub.

Another parent would be humming softly to her baby as she rocked her to sleep in the Boston rocker.

Other parents could be seen in the kitchen— hosting the day by setting out coffee mugs and arranging the guest book. Another busy chopping fruit for the morning snack.

A father could be seen sewing buttons on his son's coveralls...."

Raising children was serious business at the Agape centre. Lunchtime highlighted families eating together. The children would all brush their teeth after lunch. At the end of the day voices would fill the air pleading, "I hope Alan (The Family Agape bus driver) takes me home last."

May maintained a close eye on Family Agape. She continued to be a valuable resource for the staff. Many families were still referred directly to her for help. Betty was one of those parents. Her emotionally charged story of tragedy vividly documents the postwar era of residential schools, discrimination, family abuse and how Betty triumphed at St. James'.

Betty and her twin sister were born in 1950 into a Cree family on a reservation in northern Saskatchewan. Their mother was physically abusive, and when Betty later questioned her as to why she replied, "I thought you were supposed to hit kids. That's how I was raised." Both girls were sexually abused by their father for many years.

At six years of age the twins were sent away to a Roman Catholic Residential School. They had to learn English and were often beaten if they spoke Cree. When they returned home for the holidays they were beaten if they spoke English. They spent time in foster homes.

When Betty and her sister reached their mid-teens they were encouraged by their relatives to drink alcohol and to "have a good time" at the bar, when money

## *From Lost to Found*

allowed. Soon Betty became a binge drinker. In her late teens she and her twin were involved in a car accident in which Betty was injured and her sister was killed, a painful shock for Betty.

Between her drinking binges Betty was capable and held down a cleaning job in an apartment building in Edmonton. She married a man and they had six children. He soon became abusive. He was killed suddenly in an accident. One night during a drinking bout there was a fire in her apartment. She was badly burned on her back. The six children were taken away, put in foster homes and later adopted.

Eventually, Betty re-married a First Nations man from the Northwest Territories. He had serious drug and alcohol addictions, and he was physically abusive—but Betty loved him dearly. After becoming pregnant she was involved in a car accident. While escaping with minor injuries before giving birth, the baby boy was born with a developmental mental disability. Another son was born 18 months later and was strong and healthy.

She arrived in 1985 when her little boys were two and one-half and one year old. Betty was in her mid-thirties, carefully dressed and very pretty. When sober, she maintained a clean and attractive home. She took good physical care of the children, feeding them simple, nutritious food. She was a good cook. However, she needed a lot of help in managing and disciplining the boys in a constructive way, instead of hitting them. The boys needed help, especially the eldest, who had not reached a level of clear speech. A speech therapist at Family Agape helped him.

At this time Betty's husband's condition worsened. He became more abusive. One day he slipped into Family Agape and started hitting her in front of the staff. The police were called. A few months later after this incident he jumped from an upper story hotel window and later died.

Betty was once again devastated. She regressed into a series of three-week long alcohol binges. Everything fell apart. The children were apprehended and put in foster homes. Betty went to a treatment centre. She left after a few days saying she had to do it her own way. She then became a Christian. After finding herself sitting in a bar with her drink she suddenly said to herself, "What am I doing here? I don't need this." So she got up and left and has been sober for the last twelve years.

Her boys were returned to her. They never touched alcohol or drugs.

It was a sad day when funding for the Family Agape program was discontinued just a few years after the program was launched. It closed in 1992, not long after May retired.

# The May Gutteridge Story

## Chapter 17

### May's 25th Anniversary

On January 30, 1986, May at 69 years of age received public recognition for her twenty-five years of dedicated service to the Downtown Eastside. St. James' Church organized a citywide commemoration.

May commented in the St. James' Social Service Society 1985-86 Annual Report. "We celebrated our Silver Jubilee on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1986.....We toasted each other with champagne (a gift from a board member) and delicious eats from Vancouver Vocational Institute...It was a grand evening with our friends and supporters and staff who had worked with us over the 25 years, meeting and remembering together."

Among the guests in attendance were Archbishop D. Hambidge, representatives from the federal and provincial governments, Father Gardner, Father Wright, many St. James' parishioners and Catherine Adams (Ferry) "in her First Nations costume," May said. "She and her family danced the celebration dances for us."

May received the Silver Eagle Feather Award from the Professional First Nations Women's Association. From the City of Vancouver she

received the Distinguished Pioneer Award. "What a way to celebrate our quarter of a century in a new building," May said in the 1985-86 St. James' Annual Report as they moved on September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1986 to their brand new facility at 329 Powell Street with 9 new offices, a Sheltered Workshop, Powell Place - now a 14 room facility (up from 11) and six fully furnished apartments on the third floor for second phase housing. The new building had been made possible with the generous help of three levels of government: The City of Vancouver for buying

Thursday, January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1986

## SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING

for the

## 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

OF THE FOUNDING OF HER WORK  
IN THE DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE AREA

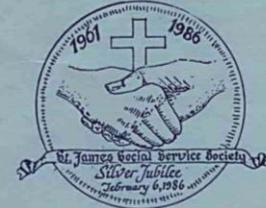
by

Mrs. MAY C. GUTTERIDGE

BECOMING

THE S. JAMES SOCIAL SERVICE SOCIETY

in  
1975



Mrs. Gutteridge began her work in this area in 1961 in the Pensioners' Club Room in S. James Parish Hall. She moved to the offices in the basement of the church a few years later. In 1969 she moved to the "Spaghetti Factory" (where the Remand Centre is today). In 1971 she moved to the Medical Clinic on Cordova St. (beside S. Paul's Church). In 1972 she moved to the present premises of the Society at 331-333 Powell St. In 1975 the present S. James Social Service Society was incorporated, with Mrs. Gutteridge as President and Executive Director.

S. James' Church Vancouver British Columbia

## *From Lost to Found*

the land, Central Mortgage and Housing for the capital cost, and the Province of British Columbia for a generous grant.”

On November 20, 1986 May received the Brockhurst BC Senior Award at a presentation dinner at UBC for being one of British Columbia’s outstanding seniors. She received a number of letters of recognition from the Prime Minister of Canada, the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, Mayor Mike Harcourt and Jack Webster.

Kathy Swain told me in 2009 that May and Arthur had always given so much to others. She recalled, ” Did you know that the Christmas before (1985) May and Arthur were so busy arranging Christmas turkey for everyone down in the Downtown Eastside that when they got home Christmas Eve, they were both shocked when they discovered they didn’t have any food in their own fridge.”

After a quarter century of uninterrupted leadership, May began to take a step back as Arthur, her husband, had been tugging at her coattails since his retirement in 1980 for her to come join him and retire, too. It was common knowledge amongst the staff that she had been grooming Robert White to step into her shoes. He proved to be a good choice with his compassion and commitment to both clients and the Christian spirit.

The following year, 1987, May was further honoured with an honorary Dr. of Laws Degree from Simon Fraser University. In February, 1988, the Certificate of Merit was awarded. The Certificate of Merit was signed by Brian Mulroney and Margaret Mitchell on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1988.

## **Chapter 18**

### **Robert**

In 1987 May appointed Robert White to become the first executive director of St. James’ Social Service Society. Some questioned her judgement as Robert started out as a client. Others saw this as another example of how May trusted the Downtown Eastside to deliver leaders.

The staff and clients all liked Robert. He brought a rare blend of spirituality, practical commercial experience from the hotel business, a charming personality, kindness and total dedication to May and St. James’ Social Service. From May’s perspective, no one else’s resume came close.

By this time St. James’ Social Service had grown to employ a staff of 150 people. Now, there were departments, teams, policies and



## The May Gutteridge Story

procedural manuals. Robert, nonetheless, carried May's gentle philosophy forward. In his first annual report, in September 1988, he said, "In our efforts to cope with our size and staff, it is extremely important and always foremost in my mind that our purpose for being here is to demonstrate the caring, non-judgemental love of our Lord. This will sometimes escape logic or reason and cause us to do things 'because'.

But behind the scenes a clash was mounting between two worlds. The information age of computers, accounting software and word processing was quickly revolutionizing the modern worksite. The modern management machine no longer needed or wanted the knowledge of its predecessors. This invisible tension appeared in Robert's second annual report as Executive Director of St. James' Social Service Society in 1989.

"We finished our computer training this spring. We are now (I think it is called) computer literate—we think! Benny, who will carry the greater burden, is slowly entering all our accounting into the computer. It is our hope that this September we will be in a position to have printouts on all our major departments."

On May 2<sup>nd</sup> 1989 construction began on the final phase of St. James' Social Service at 329-333 Powell Street. The new building would house the Home Support offices on the ground floor. The second floor would contain 17 studio suites of affordable housing. The third floor would house a further 8 studio suites and a six-bed hospice. May had succeeded with finding a place for a hospice not yet officially opened.

Robert continually struggled with the reins of this new, defiant creature - progress. Funding sources such as governments demanded complex statistical and accounting reports. The St. James' Social Service Society Board of Directors increasingly required better and more detailed information, more appealing and professionally printed annual reports and program brochures. Unionization rumbled in the background. Staff now demanded benefits, pensions and wage increases. Organization charts, grievance and staff appraisal procedures all replaced the simplicity of just "helping people."

Each year saw growing tensions materialize between what in the past May saw as 'her' Board of Directors and 'her' staff. Like Robert, May was rapidly becoming sidelined from a multi-layered corporate entity that no single person controlled.

St. James' Social Service Society was no longer a small, intimate group of friends. The Society was now comprised of an independent board of directors and a diverse management team. May had succeeded beyond anyone's imagination, but her organization had become very complex.

Even so, in 1989, May's Christian touch still flourished in the lives of clients and staff alike. The thirty year old cheque administration program continued to thrive and embrace her original philosophy. In Pamela Willingshofer's words, "The mandate of the Administration Department can best be summarized by the words of Jesus Christ in St. Mathew's Gospel 25:35-36, For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a

## *From Lost to Found*

stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

Unfortunately, Robert left St. James'. He tried hotel management and a number of other jobs. In 1991 he became a hospitality teacher at Trend College and then in 1995 he became a teacher at Sprott Shaw College. However, after 1997, Robert abruptly disappeared. Nothing more was said to May or any of the staff at St. James'. Robert never contacted anyone ever again. He completely vanished.

One day David Retter, the rector of St. James' Church at the time, learned about Robert's whereabouts while on a trip to Penticton in 1998. While walking down a street, he saw what appeared to be a homeless person wearing a coat, a very special coat that he had given to Robert. He walked up to the man and said, "Excuse me, would you mind if I asked you where you got that coat? I gave one just like it to an old friend some time ago."

The man replied, "Oh, no. Not at all. I got it from the thrift store downtown."

He thanked the man and then found the thrift store and inquired there. He discovered that the coat had come from a funeral parlour. After some more digging, he found out that Robert had been found dead from exposure, sleeping on a park bench. It was a shocking tragedy that touched the St. James' world with great sadness.

May was devastated. It was such a terrible way for anyone to lose their life, all alone, lying on a park bench. It was an unnecessary and preventable death.



May and Robert White

# The May Gutteridge Story

## Chapter 19

### may's place

May had been aware for many years about hospice care - a name first applied to specialized care for dying patients in 1967 by physician Dame Cicely Saunders, who founded the first modern hospice, St. Christopher's Hospice, in a residential suburb of London. May's ongoing work with seniors included psychological, emotional and spiritual guidance during the final days of life. She mentioned to me in the mid 1970s, on many occasions, that the long term effects of addiction often showed up through secondary illnesses like emphysema, sclerosis of the liver, heart disease, and cancer. "The *chronic alcoholic* would only begin to recognize the pain from these secondary illnesses when they sobered up. Some would then seek medical attention while others would return to a state of perpetual intoxication to avoid the pain and die much sooner."

Her devotion to residential care in the Downtown Eastside by the 1980s had been well-established through San Diego Lodge, Victory House, Cooper Place and Cecelia House. In the 1985-86 St. James' Annual Report May spoke about how San Diego Lodge a.k.a. the Blue House "...in many ways serves as a kind of hospice. It allows the people of the community to stay with their friends in familiar surroundings as long as possible, and we have found this small service to be most fulfilling."

However, a new and frightening disease appeared. *Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome*, otherwise known as AIDS, by the latter 1980s began to impact the Downtown Eastside in the form of a significant rise in terminally ill patients. The role that hypodermic needles played in the transmission of AIDS made the Downtown Eastside particularly vulnerable.

For all of these reasons, May saw a fundamental need for a hospice in the Downtown Eastside - a place for seriously ill *poor* people to receive proper and compassionate care during their final days of life. In 1988 the Board of Directors and the executive team at St. James' Social Service Society began gathering up-to-date information on hospices. She wrote to St. Christopher's Hospice in London and encouraged local physicians to travel there to receive training. Fundraising soon followed.

May had created space for a 6 bed hospice before construction commenced on the final building for the 329-331 Powell Street St. James' Social Service complex.

*May Gutteridge Community Home* or *May's Place*, as it has always been known, became the first free standing hospice in British Columbia when it opened in October, 1990. Tyleen Katz, the first administrator and the real force behind the hospice, proved to be a gifted fundraiser summarized the historical period:

"The 1980's were times of great accomplishment for May Gutteridge and St. James Social Service Society. Finally, after all the years of running programs out of odd assortments of run down properties, land

## *From Lost to Found*

was acquired at 300 block Powell Street and a brand new building was in the works. The property included the administration offices, financial aid offices, home support workers, apartments for second and third stage housing for people suffering from mental health problems, Powell Place shelter for abused women and children and various day programs. This was a very big project.

For some years May, some of St James staff, a few members of the downtown eastside community and others already working with terminally ill patients in various settings had been talking about the need for a hospice in the area. The ever nagging issue of people dying in grossly substandard living conditions in a community that was rarely understood by the outside world was a major challenge. A community that was also rapidly growing.

Various sites had been explored as new buildings were constructed. An annex to Cooper Place was seriously considered but for various reasons never happened. When the new building at 300 block Powell Street was approved the reality of incorporating a hospice into the design was easy to accomplish. St. James home support workers had always led the hospice cause and were some of the first to join the staff when the hospice did open. The reality was that many of their clients had multiple problems suffering from mental health issues, addictions and often a terminal illness. However, the tendency of these people was resistance to being hospitalized and this in turn created huge issues for support workers in providing adequate care. May was from England where hospices had been in existence for some years – she understood the hospice principals of care - incorporating a residential hospice into the new building would respond to a very large void in Vancouver and Canada as a whole.

During this same period (mid to late 80's) PBS was running a series on death and dying and May with those mentioned above and one of the mental health doctors followed this closely. Letters to St Christopher's Hospice in London (the first true hospice) went back and forth and the physician went there and took a training course. May was a pioneer – a 6 bed hospice in the new building would fulfill a big need. At this time there were no hospices in BC and less than a handful country wide so this was really treading new waters.

In September 1990 the first hospice staff person was employed. The operating structure, staffing, budgets etc. were rapidly put into place and within weeks the first patient was admitted to the May Gutteridge Hospice or May's Place as it has always been known.

The timing could not have been better. AIDS was rapidly becoming epidemic in the down town eastside the disease was ugly, feared greatly, killed quickly and knew no age barriers. The country as a whole was scrambling to put services into place.

# The May Gutteridge Story

The hospice was well received, most importantly, by the local community and whereas hospitals were feared May's Place was not. Within weeks May's Place became a community name it was operating to capacity and waitlists became the norm.

## COTTAGE HOSPICE

It took five years. Thousands of volunteer hours. Great partnerships. The Vancouver Parks Board for a dollar a year rented St. James a dilapidated building in Burrard View Park. St. James went into high gear and in the spirit of May Gutteridge raised the money to renovate the building and turn it into 10 bed hospice. A wonderful room and kitchenette for the use of the community was built into the design. Big names such as Diana Fowler Le Blanc, wife of the then Governor General Romeo Le Blanc, hosted a luncheon for some of the Vancouver elite to show her support. She came back to officially open the hospice a few years later. May was at that opening.

In the early years of May's Place, visitors from all over the world would come by to see our success story. A program that cared for some of the most complex difficult cases in a simple and humane way and at a very low cost.

A few years later, in 1996, Elizabeth Taylor would quietly attend May's Place and donate \$50,000 and gave Jim, one of the patients trying to raise money for a fireplace at Cottage Hospice, \$5,000. During the International Aids Conference in Vancouver later that year, in July, on the condition that no media would be notified of her visit, she donated an additional \$20,000.00 to May's Place Cottage Hospice, a second facility developed by St. James' Community Service Society that opened in May 1999."

**Elizabeth Taylor with Tylen Katz**



# *From Lost to Found*

## **Chapter 20**

### **Retirement**

May officially retired on July 19, 1990, just prior to the opening of May's Place. Still, she had not totally withdrawn all involvement. On Thursdays she visited the hospice with Arthur, took care of the plants and spent time visiting the patients. Most of all, she was a fountain of information and knew where to go and what to do when something was needed.

At 74 years of age May was badly in need of a vacation. She promised to join Arthur when he retired back in 1980. It was ten years later. May understood that it was time to step aside. She had answered the call that sent her into thirty years of hard, passionate parish work. She started out in a church basement and now most of the north 300 Block of Powell Street sparkled with fresh new life and state of the art architecture, complete with a courtyard in the middle, designed for maximum comfort for clients and staff. This was the new site for St. James' Community Service Society.

After her retirement notice May and Arthur ran out and bought a camper. They began roaming the earth freely, almost like newlyweds, for the very first time.

Her eldest daughter, Sonia, contracted breast cancer in 1996. This traumatic medical condition clouded May's world with worry and disbelief. Just one year later May received the same cruel diagnosis that she, too, had developed the deadly cancer that threatened her daughter's life. She found herself promptly thrust into chemotherapy. Just at the tail end of her own successful treatment, at the end of 1997, Sonia died.

The funeral was held at St. James' Church. This truly was a day of mourning, to witness such a holy woman endure the loss of her daughter - and mother of three - before her own passing. To see her suffer so deeply caused unspeakable sadness. I was there and absorbed the full intensity of her tragedy firsthand.

Attending Sonia's funeral meant that I had reconnected with May, after five long years. No good reason could explain the hiatus, just the inflexible domination of the five-day work week and all-encompassing routines that, at the time, seemed so important.

I began to visit her home on a much more regular basis to enjoy her lively spirit and receive an invisible cleansing to whatever mundane troubles bothered me. We never talked about social work or personal afflictions. I just enjoyed her sense of humour, her love of life and her fine cooking.

Next to the camping trips with Arthur, May's peaceful home on West 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue was the centre of her retirement. She was just as sharp in the year 2000 as I remembered her in earlier days. Her mind remained alert and her passion invincible.

As had happened before and for no particular reason, our paths went in separate directions and soon became completely disconnected. I never received

## The May Gutteridge Story

notice of her final days in the UBC palliative care unit. I would have liked to have been there.

Benny Chin, another former St. James' Social Service employee, gave a heart-felt portrait of May's final days. "The last time I saw Mrs. G in her weakest state, lying in bed at the University of BC Hospital, I just stood there helplessly. It was hard to bid farewell to Mrs. Gutteridge at the St. James' Church service. She was such a symbol, a lighthouse, which gave light to others but received very little for herself. Even though she is no longer with us, she has left behind an unforgettable and amazing legacy."

May Cecelia Gutteridge died on February 26, 2002.

I only learned about her passing much, much later. It was by way of a conversation with an old friend, Philip Green, who was another link to those inspirational days at St. James' Social Service in the 1970s. He told me in a very casual way, "Oh, by the way, did you know that May died?" Those words took a long time to sink in. Just like when my mother passed away, those words entered my sensitivity centre deep inside my heart and remained dormant for the longest time. I carried them around with me everywhere I went for several months. I was fine until one day I collapsed emotionally from the stark realization that May Gutteridge, my friend, my mentor, my rod and staff of the Christian faith was no longer here. All of a sudden I felt alone, unprotected and vulnerable. I shivered in sadness - immobilized by a melancholy for which there was no cure.

It took a further six years to wind through the labyrinthine journey of life before I realized that May Gutteridge is not lost. She is still here. She now lives through us, through this book and through all those who remember her, through all of those who she helped and through those of us who continue to try and make the world a better and more loving place.

## *From Lost to Found*

### **Chapter 21**

#### **Biographical highlights**

**BORN MAY 21, 1917 IN GOSPORT, HAMPSHIRE, ENGLAND. THE DAUGHTER OF ERNEST AND POLLY SYMONDS.**

**MARRIED ARTHUR GUTTERIDGE IN MARCH, 1940.**

**SHE WAS A WREN "THE WOMEN'S ROYAL NAVAL SERVICE" DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR.**

**ARTHUR A. GUTTERIDGE, A SCHOOL TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL, AND THEIR THREE CHILDREN IMMIGRATED TO SASKATCHEWAN IN 1955.**

**THE FAMILY MOVED TO BRITISH COLUMBIA IN 1958.**

**SHE WAS A REGULAR WORSHIPPER AT ST. JAMES' CHURCH, ATTENDING HIGH MASS EVERY SUNDAY AT 11:15 AM, AND ALSO THE THURSDAY MORNING MASS.**

**SHE WAS PRE-DECEASED BY HER DAUGHTER, SONIA GUTTERIDGE CRADDOCK, WHO DIED IN 1997.**

**MAY C. GUTTERIDGE DIED FEBRUARY 26, 2002**

**SHE LEFT HER TWO SONS MICHAEL JOHN GUTTERIDGE OF INVERNESS, SCOTLAND, AND LANCE GUTTERIDGE OF VANCOUVER, AND 11 GRANDCHILDREN AND 3 GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN.**

**ARTHUR A. GUTTERIDGE PASSED AWAY FEBRUARY 15, 2006**

# The May Gutteridge Story

<b>St. James' Social Service</b> .....	<b>1961</b>
<b>Cheque Administration (Case Management)</b>	<b>1961</b>
<b>Home Help</b> .....	<b>1962</b>
<b>The East Enders Society</b> .....	<b>1965</b>
<b>Legal Aid</b> .....	<b>1965</b>
<b>Gastown Workshop</b> .....	<b>1968</b>
<b>Santiago House/Blue</b> .....	<b>1971</b>
<b>St. James' Furniture Store</b> .....	<b>1972</b>
<b>St. James' Cafeteria</b> .....	<b>1972</b>
<b>Victory Hotel</b> .....	<b>1975</b>
<b>Conversion to Victory House</b> .....	<b>1977</b>
<b>Powell Place</b> .....	<b>1977</b>
<b>Director of Vancouver General Hospital</b>	<b>1979</b>
<b>New Cafeteria</b> .....	<b>1981</b>
<b>Order of Canada</b> .....	<b>1981</b>
<b>Triage Centre</b> .....	<b>1982</b>
<b>Cooper Place</b> .....	<b>1983</b>
<b>St. James' Family Agape Centre</b> .....	<b>1984</b>
<b>Recycling Project</b> .....	<b>1984</b>
<b>St. James' Vestments</b> .....	<b>1985</b>
<b>Florence Apartments- Cecelia</b> .....	<b>1986</b>
<b>Brock House Award</b> .....	<b>1986</b>
<b>BC Senior Citizen of the Year Award</b> .....	<b>1986</b>
<b>Silver Eagle Feather Award</b> .....	<b>1986</b>
<b>Pioneer Award from the City of Vancouver...</b>	<b>1986</b>
<b>St. James' Vestments</b> .....	<b>1986</b>
<b>Dr. of Laws (SFU)</b> .....	<b>1987</b>
<b>St. James' Recycling Project</b> .....	<b>1987</b>
<b>Chinatown Lioness Club Ambassador Award</b>	<b>1988</b>
<b>Certificate of Merit</b> .....	<b>1988</b>
<b>Chinatown Rotary Club Award</b> .....	<b>1989</b>
<b>The Paul Harris Fellow Award</b> .....	<b>1989</b>
<b>Reconstruction of Powell Street</b> .....	<b>1984 -1990</b>
<b>The Blue House -San Diego Lodge</b> .....	<b>1970 -1990</b>
<b>Women of Distinction</b> .....	<b>1990</b>
<b>May's Place (Hospice)</b> .....	<b>1990</b>
<b>May's Cottage Hospice</b> .....	<b>1999</b>

St. James' Community Service Society became one of the largest social service agencies in Vancouver with 250 employees and an annual budget of \$10 million.

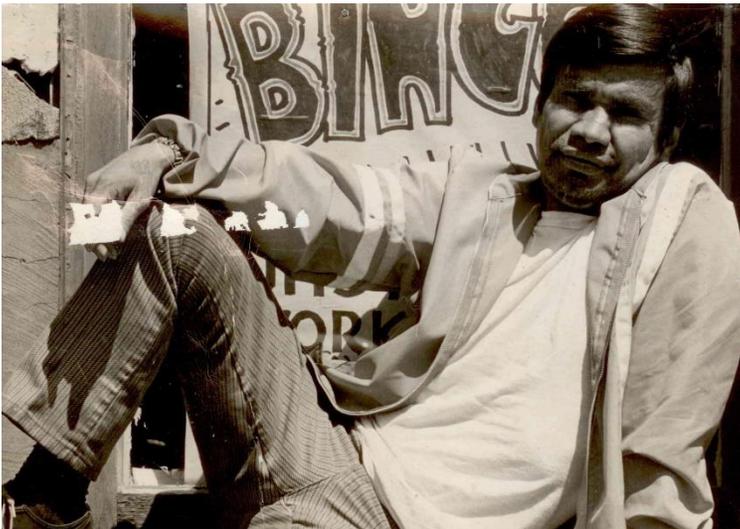
## From Lost to Found



**May and Arthur and their three children  
Michael, Lance and Sonia arriving in Canada in 1955.**



**Gastown Workshop**



**Herbie Roberts, one of May's first and lifelong employees**



**Louise Jacques weaving in the Gastown Workshop**



# The May Gutteridge Story



**Gastown Workshop**



**Volunteers Mrs. Bell and Cathy King**



**Bertha Wright, Nancy, Lizette, David Triguero and Margit moving from 215 East Cordova Street**

*From Lost to Found*



**Staff Meeting in the early 1980s**



**Cabbage Patch Dolls and Quilts creators**



**Staff Photo**

# The May Gutteridge Story



**The Pedersen family, Bertha Wright, her husband and Danny Hale and baby.**



**Fr. Ron Sands and May**

*From Lost to Found*



Lieutenant Governor David Lam, May and Gordon Campbell



Arthur, Santa and May



May outside in the back of her West 39<sup>th</sup> Ave home

# The May Gutteridge Story



**May and Arthur at their home**



**May Gutteridge**

*From Lost to Found*  
**epilogue**



**St. James'**  
ANGLICAN CHURCH



A Day in May for  
Mrs. G

May 14<sup>th</sup> 2011

303 East Cordova Street  
Vancouver

# The May Gutteridge Story



**St. James'**  
ANGLICAN CHURCH

May 14<sup>th</sup> 2011 has been selected to remember and celebrate May Cecelia Gutteridge, or Mrs. G as she was fondly known by her colleagues and co-workers, and for her many contributions to and for the people of the Downtown Eastside.

St. James Anglican Church at 303 East Cordova Street, Vancouver, her parish for over forty years, will host the commemoration from:

**2:00 pm – 4:00 pm**

**In the**

**St. James' Parish Hall**

(Entrance on Gore Avenue)

Pictures and family mementos will be displayed for friends, colleagues and those who knew her or are interested in her profound legacy.

## **Program**

**2:00PM – 2:30PM**

**Music by Michael Gillette**  
**Refreshments**

**2:30 PM Greetings and opening  
prayer Father Mark Greenaway-  
Robbins**

**Introductions Dr. John Conway**

**3:30 PM – 4:00 PM Refreshments**

### **Keynote speakers**

Archbishop Douglas Hambidge  
Judy Graves  
Dr. Carol Matusicky  
Mike Harcourt  
Dr. Lance Gutteridge  
Doug Welbanks

**Closing comments: Dr. John Conway**

*On May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011, St. James' church hosted a celebration of May Gutteridge's life entitled, A Day in May for Mrs. G. A distinguished group of friends, family and colleagues came*

## *From Lost to Found*

*together to commemorate her work. The following attempts to capture the spirit of the moment.*

A grey sky guided Mike and I to the Parish Hall door at St. James' Church, a place famous for its outreach to the Downtown Eastside community. It was Saturday, May 14<sup>th</sup> 2011. Michael Gillette, a good friend, had volunteered to strum background sonatas on his classical guitar while the church hosted a public celebration of May Gutteridge's life.

Over the last three years, while researching her life, I was surprised by how many people had never heard of her. This seemed to be quite strange as my memories after working at St. James' Social Service so long ago, in the early 1970s, remained crystal clear. She helped so many people in so many incredible ways.

We were lucky to get a parking spot on Gore Avenue directly across the street from the entrance. We got out, plugged the hungry parking meter with metallic currency and suddenly Darren, one of the people recruited for the day's festivities, emerged from the dark wooden door at the side entrance of the church.

We unloaded Mike's guitar equipment and rushed across the busy street to set up everything for 2pm – when people were expected to arrive.

Up a small flight of familiar steps we went – well-travelled during my earlier social worker career. We entered the hall that hosted so many of May's past events.

To the left, several tables joined to form a contiguous line in front of the stage. Rows of china cups and saucers were delicately stacked three-high. Sugar and milk containers sat at the far end along with thermoses soon to be filled with freshly brewed coffee and tea. This immediately caught our attention because it contrasted so radically from the normally empty room and wide-open shiny floor that reflected trickles of light from the outside alley and the flickering lights beaming inside.

On the south wall, midpoint in the room a head table with 7 chairs was placed in front of a Christian cross made from polished woods and shells from the South Pacific, donated to St. James Church by the Melanesian Brotherhood of the Solomon Islands. In front of the head table, rows of chairs, carefully arranged in theatre style, with a centre aisle, went back to the north wall. The parish hall looked great.

Michael Gillette found a place for his equipment off to the side the head table and began unpacking. Mary Brown, a St. James' parishioner and board member of St. James' Community Service Society, appeared on the stage and descended the stairs to greet us.

I could see Pamela Jeacocke and a group of ladies in the kitchen, behind the stage, busy baking a delicious selection of oven-baked pastries for May's many friends and family. I went up and asked if I could snap a picture for posterity which was shyly refused.

From the top of the stage, I digested the symmetry of this well-organized chamber that sat quiet and empty. I worried with considerable anxiety that very few would attend as just the day before I had received a flurry of apologies and cancellations. Father Don Willis who authored one of the most eloquent testimonials about May, couldn't make it due to surgery the day before. Sally Hatfield, an early volunteer and one of May's long-time supporters, also underwent

# The May Gutteridge Story

surgery and was unable to come. Monica Hogg, one of my greatest contributors who brought May back to life on the internet, and who contributed tremendously to May Gutteridge's historical record, couldn't make it. Philip Green, a long time friend who originally introduced me to May Gutteridge in 1972 had left for a family reunion in Chicago that could only be held on May 14<sup>th</sup>. So, my worries were real.

Mike Gillette's first warm-up song interrupted my introspection. The reverberating notes and lively melodies filled the room with songs of love. I went down the stage steps and then out to the street to see if anyone – anyone - might be coming. Darren, a tall strong young man, proudly stood by the door to point potential attendees in the right direction. Out from a crowd, Janette Andrew and Herbie Roberts, whose life-long relationships dated back to the very beginning of the May Gutteridge legacy, became visible and smiled as they were the first to enter. John and Ann Conway also appeared at the door. John was the Chair of the May Gutteridge committee, formed in late December 2010 to organize the May 14<sup>th</sup> celebration, and Ann was a former colleague of May's from the St. James' Family Agape program. Their early financial and moral support for writing the May Gutteridge story allowed my good intentions to be translated into a final, well-edited book.

Mary MacDougall, the former Executive Director of Catholic Family Services in BC arrived with Trudi Shaw, now a Deacon but who was a former staff member in her early career with May. Trudi and Mary both graciously took over the role of greeting people and handing out beautifully designed programs printed through the generosity of Glenmore Printing of Richmond.

Lance, Tallulah and Ursula Gutteridge followed with artefacts and enlarged pictures of their great mother and grandmother. A full-scale framed picture of May, inscribed with her birth date May 21<sup>st</sup>, 1917, and her passing on February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2002, was positioned on an easel at the end of the head table so that the audience would see May as they watched and listened to the keynote speakers.

Into this festive atrium came a slow but constant stream of people climbing their way up the steps to enter this room already transformed with tender loving care. Many professionals were now in the room. Among them were Sr. Elizabeth Kelliher from the Sisters of the Atonement, Scott Small from the Catholic Charities Men's Hostel, James Bennett, well known for his work with disadvantaged in Surrey, Marleen Morris and Jonathan Oldman from St. James Community Service Society, Helmut Boehm, the Executive Director of Wagner Hills Farm and a current city councillor, Ellen Woodsworth.

All the keynote speakers, Archbishop Douglas Hambidge, Judy Graves, Carol Matusicky, Lance and I had arrived, except for Mike Harcourt. Would he come? I asked myself still twitching with apprehension.

We began to take our seats when someone with a black leather jacket entered the doorway and began shaking hands with everyone in the room. It was Mike. I exhaled a quiet sigh of relief.

We announced that the presentations would begin in 5 minutes. The room by this time was quite full. More chairs were added.

## *From Lost to Found*

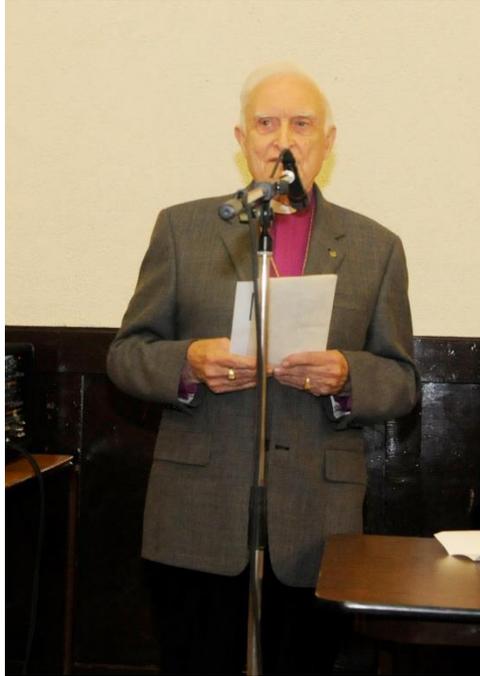


Dr. John Conway



Dr. John Conway, the Master of Ceremonies, welcomed guests and speakers (From left to right) Douglas P. Welbanks, Judy Graves, Dr. Lance Gutteridge, Dr. Carol Matusicky, Mike Harcourt and Archbishop Douglas Hambidge.

## The May Gutteridge Story



Archbishop Douglas Hambidge

Archbishop Hambidge walked to the microphone that stood at the end of the table in between me and May's picture, and began the celebration by saying, "When I first came to the diocese no-one would mention the name May Gutteridge. After all, she had picketed the Anglican Church of Canada. Can you imagine that?" He spoke with vitality and humour as he recalled how May intimidated and angered some in the church with her passionate crusade for the poor and the disenfranchised. The Archbishop also informed us how May consistently referred to those she helped as her friends.



Judy Graves

Judy Graves shared her heart-warming story of personal agnosticism back at the time she first met May Gutteridge. How she eventually converted her beliefs to

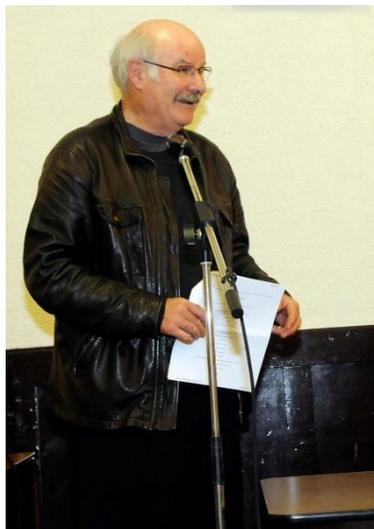
## From Lost to Found

embrace the kind of Christianity she witnessed through May and others in the Downtown Eastside who never lost faith and never gave up.



Dr. Carol Matusicky,

Dr. Carol Matusicky, the former Executive Director of the BC Council of Families, supported my efforts to help the working poor throughout my career. She was a respected leader in Canada for helping families and board member of the *Vanier Institute of the Family*. Carol possessed firsthand knowledge about the Downtown Eastside as her family owned a marine business in the same block at Powell and Gore Avenue in the 1950s and 60s.



Mike Harcourt

## The May Gutteridge Story

Mike Harcourt disclosed to the audience how elected officials and bureau chiefs locked their doors when they heard that May Gutteridge was in the building. He said, “Harry Rankin would be upset to hear that May was at City Hall. ‘What does she want this time?’ he often complained.”

We could see that Mike enjoyed his ruminations of this strong, courageous woman who could knock down the walls of disinterest and apathy, ‘always politely’ and send shivers of fear through the halls of bureaucracy.

Mike told an amazing story about how May had pushed government for better and safer living conditions for the poor in the Downtown Eastside for years. One day in the early 1970s he witnessed the Commercial Hotel go up in flames from his storefront office that resulted in the tragic death of several people. In a matter of just a few weeks, the amendments she had vigorously lobbied for, were finally enacted.



Dr. Lance Gutteridge

Lance Gutteridge took the microphone next fully intending on publicly presenting the framed picture of his mother to St. James’ church to be hung in the May Gutteridge Room. As he began his reflections of early childhood in Prairie River Saskatchewan, the lack of plumbing, the sink that drained into a bucket that everyone forgot to empty until it was too late, his voice quavered with emotion. His warm tribute to his mother ended, gracefully.

## From Lost to Found



Douglas P. Welbanks

I had the honour of speaking last. I had fully intended to thank a long list of people. I had planned to begin by thanking Archbishop Douglas Hambidge for continuing to speak to me after reading one of my earliest and rawest manuscripts. I also reserved a special mention of Bishop Michael Ingham for smiling as he flipped through the pages of an early draft. My visit to his office led to Lyndon Grove and his book, *Pacific Pilgrims*, which helped me accumulate new information most helpful to the reconstruction of May's earlier days.

I wanted to thank Fr. Don Willis personally for giving me such inspiration in the earliest hours without reading one word from the manuscript. His blind faith endorsed me as a person, as a writer and gave me the confidence to keep going.

David Triguero also read primitive early drafts, answered my many phone calls, helped me collect missing information, soothed my frustration with the faded memories of friends and colleagues that blocked the restoration of her life – and for contributing a 3,500 word, well-written article, spoken in a gentle voice with affection and humour.

I also wanted to thank Philip Green who acted as my agent and ambassador to St. James' Church and likewise read early drafts and contributed a well-written article. Many early articles from many people that included Tyleen Katz, Kathy Swain, Ken Christie, Helmut Boehm, Benny Chin, Lorena Gulbrandsen, Bill Hustler, Father Alwyn Hyndman, Maureen Lange, Father Harold Nahabedian, Herb Roberts, Janette Andrew and Wes Wagner were received with great appreciation. These stories, facts and events helped a great deal in shaping the conversation and personality of the book.

I wanted to thank Randy Murray, the Communications Director for the Anglican Diocese as his strong support and help in getting the word out to the parishes about May's life and this celebration, today, was invaluable.

# The May Gutteridge Story

I wished to thank Jack Ong for putting May on Wikipedia, guaranteeing her a permanent presence in the global community.

Sitting directly in front of me on this joyous day of recognition was living proof that May Gutteridge lived through others. As I glanced around the room I saw Sandra Gray's face. Her mother died at 39 years of age leaving 6 young children behind. May took up the difficult case for having the eldest teenage child appointed legal guardian. She succeeded. Today, Sandra has a Bachelors degree of Social Work and her sister a PHD in social work.

Lorena Gulbrandsen also reaffirmed May's loving and caring approach to helping people as she was hired in the mid 1970s, the daughter of a family Mrs Gutteridge first met in the early 1960s who found life-long employment at St. James. I wanted to thank her for travelling such a long distance to pay tribute to May....

The preceding keynote speakers spoke with so much love and energy that illustrated so many May Gutteridge moments, and with such an uplifting message, I decided to express my gratitude to a collective *everyone* who helped during the 2 year-long labour of love. All who were dedicated to creating an endearing portrait of a magnanimous lady that would adequately reflect her enormous contributions to Canada and British Columbia and best reflect her kindness and honour the generosity of her spirit.



## *From Lost to Found*



Friends and guests



Jeanette and Herbie Roberts

# The May Gutteridge Story



Michael Gillette



Tyleen Katz and Ann Conway



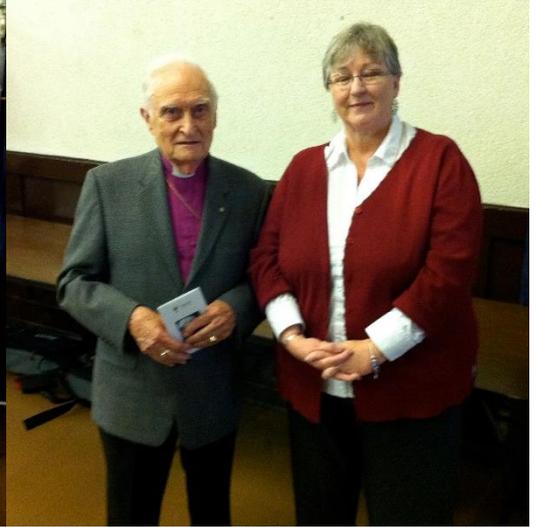
*From Lost to Found*



Darren



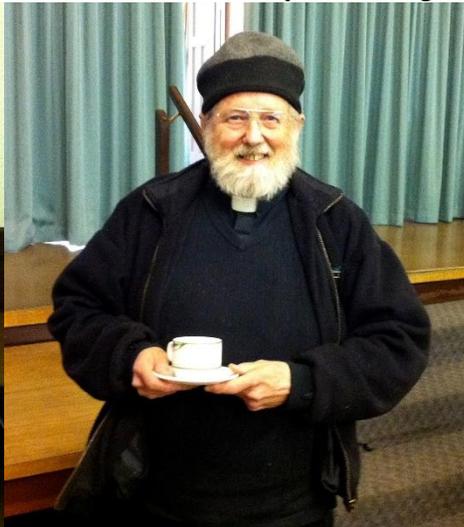
Guest and Mary MacDougall



Archbishop Hambidge and guest



Mary Brown and Dr. Conway



Fr. Al Hyndeman



Lance, guest, Mary and John



Ursula Gutteridge

# The May Gutteridge Story

## To May Gutteridge

### A Tribute

*“I heard of May Gutteridge very soon after I came from the Diocese of Caledonia in North West B.C. to become Bishop of this diocese in 1980. In the Synod Office they spoke of her in hushed tones. She was the one who had actually picketed the Diocesan Synod, with a placard some years earlier. Imagine!*

*It seems that the synod was about to decide to spend what was then an exorbitant amount to build a bishop’s house for one of my predecessors. Nor was there anything in the diocesan budget for work among the poor and the homeless of east Vancouver. To May’s way of thinking this was a reversal of what the church’s priorities ought to be and she was not prepared to be silent.*

*The story grew with the telling. Soon I was hearing the May had actually stormed the synod meeting; that crowds gathered; that TV cameras were everywhere. Then I met May herself.*

*Here was this quiet, self-effacing woman, with an obviously deep love and respect for her beloved church.*

*Here was a woman who changed quite dramatically when she discovered that some of her friends in the neighbourhood were being treated unfairly or given a run-around – incidentally she always thought of them and spoke of them as her friends – never clients or cases – always friends. When one of these fell through the cracks; when one of these was pushed around by bureaucratic red-tape, then she was their outspoken champion; then she was the one who went to provincial government offices in Victoria or City Hall in Vancouver, or the Synod of the Anglican Diocese and explained where things had gone wrong and how they could be sorted out. Nor was she easily distracted from her singleness of purpose.*

*Strangely enough May was not a pushover. Many found that out to their cost. She knew that to love another person is to care for their well-being, and she recognised when it was tough-love that was called for, and it was unquestionably love for others that motivated her. It was love for the ones most challenged by life that enabled her virtually to change the face of this part of Vancouver in so many ways. But it was more than philanthropy that motivated May.*

*What lay behind it all was her commitment to what she believed God was calling her to be and do. She loved God, and it was that that directed her to reach out as she did. Whenever I was in the pulpit of St. James’ Church, there was May on the far left side of the church preparing to receive the Eucharist, her source of both her strength and her motivation. When one of her noisier friends was restless in the service, May would go and sit with them, and all would be well.*

*It was May’s quiet and deep faith that so nourished her life that she was able so freely to give herself – her time and all her energies so that even the poorest of lives could become tolerable, and be lived with some measure of dignity, even if it meant picketing the Synod of the Anglican Diocese of New Westminster.”*

*+Douglas Hambidge – Archbishop – May 2011*

## From Lost to Found

*“The person of greatest influence in May Gutteridge's life was a parish worker in a church near her childhood home. This woman was very kind to young May, and May took her as a model of service. She told me that she thought the highest honour was to be called a Parish Worker (she always saw the designation in capital letters). When May became a member of the Order of Canada in 1981, her personal modesty made her declare that the honour wasn't hers alone, but belonged to the St. James' Social Service team.*

*I remember May and her husband at Mass at S. James', always friendly, always reverent. She was a remarkable woman. A great Parish Worker.”*

### **-Lyndon Grove**

Author of *Pacific Pilgrims* 1979

*“I believe she was a saint in our midst and I have the intention of asking the national church to add her name to the church's calendar of commemorations.”*

### **- Fr. Harold J. Nahabedian**

Former Assistant Priest at St. James' Church

*“When I turned sixteen years of age and while attending high school I wanted to work a weekend job so I could earn money. I remember going to see Mrs. G and told her of my wish. Mrs. G then offered me work at St. James' Home Help Department on weekends.*

*I'm proud to say that I'm still working at St. James' Home Help (2010). Mrs. G was the godmother to my three children. She was my most precious friend and teacher.”*

### **- Lorena Gulbranson (Gagnon) Life-long employee of St. James' Social Service**



*Lorena's son drew a picture for May.*

# The May Gutteridge Story

*“Mrs. G. was a woman of great faith but didn’t ‘preach’ to the clients or staff, some found her a bit formidable but not when you got to know her. She was given numerous awards and she always said she would not have been able to do the work she did without her faith, her husband’s support and all the Society’s loyal staff and volunteers. She had her detractors. She spoke out for what she believed was right or if she thought there was an injustice.*

*I am grateful to have known and worked for Mrs. G, I admired her faith, compassion, willingness to see the best in everyone, her certainty that if a project was meant to be, funding for it would materialize!”*

- **Kathy Swain**

Former life long employee of St. James’ Social Service

*“For those of us, who saw and interacted with May, we saw a woman who could be tough with bureaucrats when seeking help for the poor and downtrodden in the Downtown Eastside and yet a gentle and peaceful woman.*

*May in the middle of Sunday worship would interrupt her worship to offer a loving word, a hug or some money to “a street person” who had wandered into the church, and/or on some occasions might be causing a disturbance.*

*May, I believe, was a woman who truly lived her faith.”*

- **Cynthia Green**

St. James’ Church Parishioner

*“It was 1997 when Tyleen Katz formally introduced me to May Gutteridge. At the time, Tyleen and I were working together on a fundraising committee to raise the funds for a new hospice in Vancouver. Tyleen had known May for some time and was a great admirer. I had met May briefly before and knew her by reputation through research work I had assisted with in the form of a needs assessment and a feasibility study for the development of the new hospice. We hoped that this facility would help to absorb the growing waiting list of the only other existing free-standing hospice on Powell Street – a wonderful oasis for the dying known as “May’s Place”.*

*Tyleen was frustrated that the extent of May’s life accomplishments, especially those changes she had effected on Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside, had not been recognized in any significant way. Consequently, Tyleen contracted me in my capacity as a personal historian to interview May for a total of four hours, which I did in February and March, 1997. Tyleen paid me for this work, and I was pleased to donate the remainder of the time I spent interviewing and transcribing the tapes so that a more permanent record could be started of May’s impressive and inspiring work.*

*As many others had undoubtedly discovered before me, one didn’t engage in conversation with May Gutteridge for hours without falling completely in love with her. Sitting in her kitchen over numerous cups of tea, I grew closer to this remarkable woman and to her story. Her husband Arthur would occasionally tread softly through the kitchen and silently salute us with a wave – an appearance that always prompted May to greet him with deep affection.*

*As time went on, May and I continued our new friendship with occasional visits and the mutual wish to have something come of this story we had started. At one point in 1999 I*

## From Lost to Found

*applied with the help of the St. James' Society's administration to the BC Heritage Trust for a grant to further the work we had initiated, but funding was not granted at the time. As a new mother and a personal historian who was just beginning to build a small business, I lamented the fact that I was unable to donate the time and funds necessary to bring May's story to completion.*

*May spoke eloquently about her life and its many turns, but it was clear that what she really wanted to talk about was her work in Vancouver. What I recall most was her humility in the face of such accomplishment. In her descriptions on and off tape, May revealed the degree and intensity of her commitment to the community she had chosen to adopt as her own through the St. James' Anglican Church (and subsequently to the St. James' Social Services Society). May's leadership was palpable in the way that she spoke and in her unswerving passion for what she knew was right. She lived and breathed her loyalty to people whose life circumstances had brought them hardship and seemingly insurmountable challenge. May's knew through her faith that the challenge was in fact not insurmountable. She was full of hope and light. Her legacy remains as such."*

- **Robin Fowler**  
Speak Memories Publishing

# The May Gutteridge Story

## MEMORIES



# From Lost to Found

Top: Noel, Robert White, Names unknown

Bottom: Name unknown, Monica Hogg, Cecil Roberts and baby, Name unknown



# The May Gutteridge Story



Flo Johnson



Sally Thompson (Purple)



Benny Chin



May



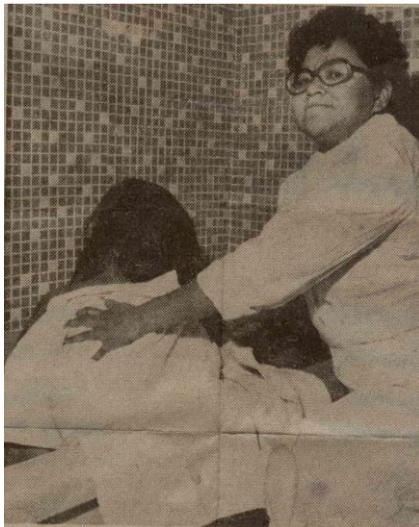
Mrs. Cathy Ferry (Adams)



May



Antol



They've learned to make the most out of the least at the Eastown Shelter Workshop . . . Herb Roberts, left, Janice Major, and May Gutteridge.

*From Lost to Found*



Loreena Gulbransen and family



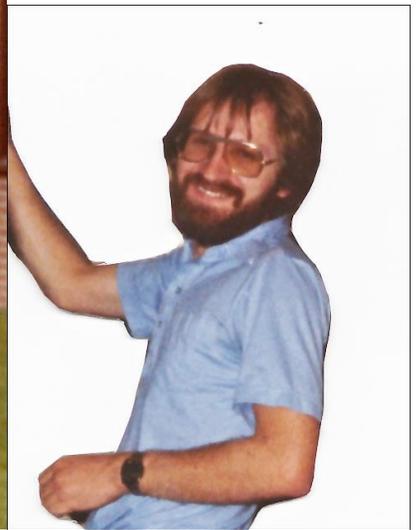
Kathy Swain



Father Nahabedian



Ken Christie



Jonathan

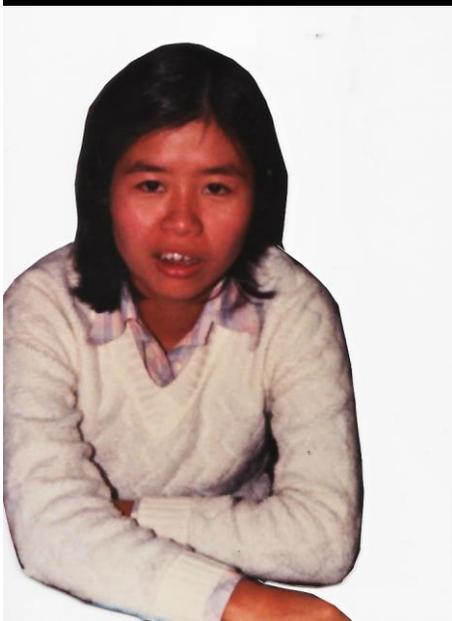
Neil



Maureen Lange



# The May Gutteridge Story



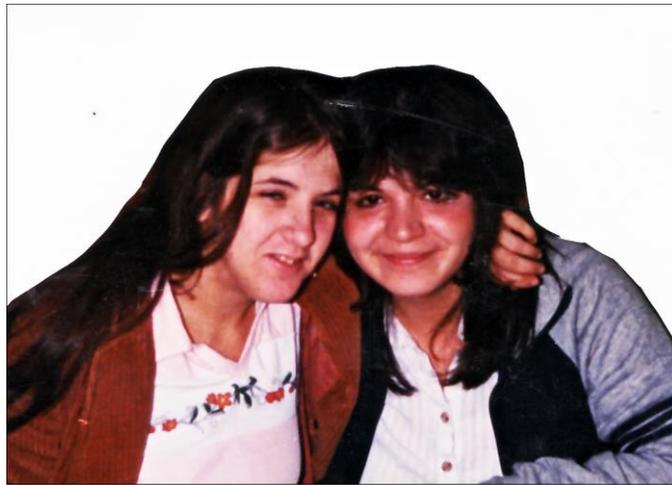
Beckie



Al



Mark



Bev with Lorena



# From Lost to Found



## THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF HOUSEWORKERS LIMITED

CHAIRMAN : MISS D. M. ELLIOTT, C.B.E., J.P.

53 MOUNT STREET, LONDON, W.1. • TELEPHONE: GROSVENOR 8986 TO 8989

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Mrs. May Cecilia Gutteridge of 65 Bury Crescent, Gosport, was employed by the Institute from November 1948 to April 1949 on a part-time basis and, subsequently, from April to November 1949 on a full-time basis, as Organiser of the Gosport and District Daily Houseworkers Service. She has also, since November 1949, up to the present time, acted as Assessor in the course of examinations of candidates for the Institute's Diploma.

During her employment in the Daily Houseworkers Service, Mrs. Gutteridge was able to build up the Service, but it became clear in October 1949 that the Service could not be extended sufficiently to warrant its permanent retention, and it was, therefore, closed down in November 1949. During this period, Mrs. Gutteridge was responsible for the office organisation and her relationship with both workers and householders was excellent.

The work which Mrs. Gutteridge undertook called for marked ability in the handling of people and accuracy of records.

As an Assessor, Mrs. Gutteridge was required to assess the personal qualities of candidates and to make recommendations concerning their suitability for admission to the examination proper.

In all her work Mrs. Gutteridge has proved satisfactory, honest, and reliable, and I have no hesitation in recommending her for any post where these qualities are required.

Secretary

19th March 1953

# The May Gutteridge Story



ORDER OF CANADA      ORDRE DU CANADA

RIDEAU HALL  
OTTAWA  
K1A 0A1

CONFIDENTIAL

November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1981

*Dear Mrs Gutteridge*

I am pleased to inform you, in confidence, that the Governor General has received a recommendation for your appointment as a Member of the Order of Canada. As you know, the Order was established in 1967 as a means of recognizing outstanding achievement and honouring those who have given service to Canada, to their fellow citizens or to humanity at large. An Advisory Council has the responsibility for recommending appointments to the Governor General, who is Chancellor and Principal Companion of the Order. The Queen is Sovereign of the Order.

May I ask you to let me know whether you are prepared to accept this appointment. If your answer is affirmative, please send a brief biographical sketch, as well as a recent photograph of yourself. We will provide this information to the news services when the time comes to release the next list of appointments to the Order.

It would also be very helpful if you could state the exact form in which you would like your name to appear on our records.

As it is planned to publish the list towards the end of December, I hope you will find it possible to let me have the text and photograph for November 20th. You will, I am sure, understand that this matter should be held in strict confidence until the official announcement is made.

Yours sincerely,

Roger de C. Nantel,  
Director,  
Chancellery of Canadian  
Orders and Decorations.

Mrs. May Cecelia Gutteridge,  
4063 West 39th Avenue,  
Vancouver, British Columbia.  
V6N 3B1

## *From Lost to Found*

### SILVER JUBILEE YEAR

We celebrated our Silver Jubilee on 30 January, 1986. The Board of Directors and the Executive Board took over all the planning of the celebrations and special events.

The first being a special service - with the guest speaker, Archbishop D. Hambidge. Many friends came to celebrate with us. After the service a wonderful reception was held in the Upper Hall of St. James' Church. On the platform were Archbishop Hambidge; the representative of the Federal Government, Mr. Ray McAlister representing the Honourable Pat Carney; Mrs. Nancy Denofreo representing the Ministry of Human Resources; Mr. J. Nichols, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation; Mrs. Catherine Adams in her Native costume - she and her family danced the celebration dances for us.

We toasted each other with champagne (a gift from a Board member) and delicious eats from the Vancouver Vocational Institute, organized by Mrs. M. Hornby, a Board member. The Board of Directors gave the Executive Director a silver tray with the Silver Jubilee logo engraved on it. Father Gardiner, Father Wright and many parishioners were present to support us as they always are.

It was a grand evening with our friends and supporters and staff who had worked with us over the 25 years, meeting and remembering together.

# The May Gutteridge Story

NOV 17 1986

## SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR



BURNABY, BRITISH COLUMBIA V5A 1S6  
Telephone: 291-4641 Area code 604

November 12, 1986

Mrs. May Gutteridge  
331 Powell Street  
Vancouver, B. C.  
V6A 1G5

Dear Mrs. Gutteridge:

In recognition of your outstanding contributions as a volunteer and in providing assistance to those in need in Vancouver, the Senate of Simon Fraser University is pleased to offer you an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws honoris causa.

Our Convocation ceremonies to honour our graduating students will be held on our campus on Thursday, June 4th and Friday, June 5th, 1987 with your Honorary Degree being given at 2:30 p.m. on June 5th, when the students in the Faculty of Arts receive their degrees.

I understand that our President, Dr. William G. Saywell, has advised you of Senate's decision and I would like to add that it would indeed be an honour for all of us at the University if you would accept this degree.

I would very much appreciate hearing from you within the next two weeks.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Hamilton".

William G. Hamilton  
Chancellor

Enclosures

cc: Dr. W.G. Saywell, President  
Mr. W.R. Heath, Secretary to Senate

chanlet2

*From Lost to Found*



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME, GREETING:

BE IT KNOWN THAT WE, THE CHANCELLOR,  
THE PRESIDENT AND THE SENATE OF SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
HAVE CONSTITUTED AND CREATED

MAY CECILIA GUTTERIDGE

WHO MERITS THE HIGHEST DISTINCTION AND HONOUR

DOCTOR OF LAWS HONORIS CAUSA

AND HAVE GIVEN AND GRANTED HER ALL RIGHTS, PRIVILEGES,  
AND HONOURS PERTAINING TO THIS DEGREE.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, WE HAVE SEALED AND SUBSCRIBED

THIS DIPLOMA BY OUR HAND,

ON THE FIFTH DAY OF JUNE,  
ONE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SEVEN

*W. Hamilton*  
CHANCELLOR  
*C. R. ...*  
PRESIDENT  
*D. ...*  
REGISTRAR



# The May Gutteridge Story

## Professional Native Women's Association

May Gutteridge  
4063 West 39th Ave  
Vancouver, B.C.  
V6N 3B1

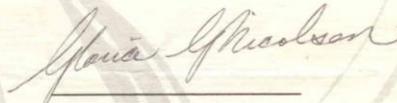
Dear May;

Congratulations! You have been chosen by the Professional Native Woman's Association to receive their 1986 Silver Feather Award in recognition of your outstanding contribution and service throughout the years to the Native Community.

We look forward to meeting you on May 30th at the Native Graduation Dance, at which time you will be presented with your award.

Enclosed are two complimentary Dance tickets.

Yours in Sisterhood



Gloria G. Nicolson  
Coordinator

GN:mn

Office hours: Monday - Friday 9:00 - 5:00

*From Lost to Found*



WOMEN OF  
DISTINCTION  
• AWARDS •

PRESENTED TO

*Dr. May Gutteridge*

IN RECOGNITION OF  
HER NOMINATION

1990

VANCOUVER



## The May Gutteridge Story



**Father Gordon Gardiner**  
July 21<sup>st</sup> 1921-August 21<sup>st</sup> 2016

Father Gordon Gardiner supported May Gutteridge and St. James' Social Service (Society) throughout his time at St. James' Church. He often accompanied May to city hall meetings and other events around the city.

He willingly opened up the church for her many, if not endless extracurricular events, without hesitation - for Christmas parties, wedding celebrations, special events and functions. Although May Gutteridge kept her spiritual beliefs sacredly outside of her social work activities, with Father Gardiner's unwavering support, it seemed that the church and the social service were one and the same entity.

The following two letters, one at the time of his arrival, September 7<sup>th</sup> 1966, and the other when he retired at Easter, 1988, will allow an opportunity for him to speak in his own words.

## From Lost to Found

### St. James' Church

September 7, 1966

Gore at Cordova Street.  
VANCOUVER 4, B.C.  
MU 5-7503

Dear Friends :

Since coming to S. James' last May many people have asked me whether I am happy in Vancouver and at S. James'. May I say at once in this first letter how happy I am, and have been during the last few months since coming here.

The Induction itself was a wonderful introduction to the parish. I felt then and have felt since, surrounded by the good will and friendliness of the people of S. James'. This has been a great help as I have started to take up my ministry here.

A parish priest is fortunate in many ways when he moves. It is as though he had a ready made family wherever he goes. In moving from place to place the Family of God gathers round to welcome him. Certainly this has been my experience here.

From time to time there may be occasions when we are privileged to join in a family reunion. Relations come from far and near to be together for some great event. The worship of the Church in a way is its regular Family Reunion. - God's sons and daughters gather together under their fathers in God, to be God's Family at His jubilee in the Eucharist. I hope we will never lose the sense of the importance of that great event.

We are fortunate to have the assistance of two priests who have come on the staff of S. James' this summer - neither of them is a stranger. Fr. Wright was a member of the congregation before training for the priesthood. Fr. Hutchins has been in this diocese for ten years and has many years experience in the priesthood. The three of us are anxious that the parish and congregation should continue to be well served.

This bulletin will bring before you some of the events of the parish during the next month or so.

May God bless S. James' - its parish, its congregation, its members, its life, its work, its worship, its organizations, its officers and its clergy. All best wishes

Sincerely,

J. G. GARDINER

JGG/t

Fr Gardiner Letter upon arrival

# The May Gutteridge Story



## S. JAMES' CHURCH

303 E. CORDOVA ST.  
VANCOUVER, B.C. V6A 1L4  
TELEPHONE 685-7503

Easter-tide 1988

Dear Parishioners of S. James:

The editor has kindly asked me to contribute a final letter to the Newsletter.

I come to the end of my tenure as Rector of S. James with great thanksgiving to God for His great goodness to me over the years, not only here at S. James but also all the days of my life. I'm thankful that He gave me my vocation to the ministry of the Church early in my life so that I had an early motivation to direct me at the various stages of my education. Also I'm thankful that He has given me the grace that has sustained my faith in the truths of the Christian religion through periods of difficulty. Doubts, of course, test the faith of all, but I am thankful that Providence has always reinforced my faith.

As I look back on my 42 years of active ministry, I realize how good God has been in the way He has guided my steps after my Ordination. First in Toronto with Fr. R.P. Walker at S. George's, where I received optimistic guidance, constant encouragement and enthusiastic approval which got me off to a good start.

Then I was fortunate in being asked to join Fr. Howard Buchner and Fr. George Robinson (of blessed memory) in the wonderful corporate ministry at the revived S. Faith's Mission, centred in Edson, Alberta. That was a great experience both in the fellowship of the Mission itself as well as in the friendly people from one end of the Jasper highway to the other who supported us and received our ministrations during the seven years we were together.

The year I spent in England and Europe was a good period of adjustment from one type of ministry to another. The months at S. Deiniol's Library Hostel at Hawarden gave me many pleasant memories and associations.

S. Bede's, Winnipeg, was a new challenge - to try to organize and lead a new suburban parish in a newly built subdivision at the west end of Winnipeg (The City of S. James, in fact). I was blessed with an enthusiastic and supportive group of people, whose generosity led to the building of a parish hall and church which I believe were worthy of the high purpose for which they were erected. Winnipeg was my happy home for nine years.

And so to Vancouver and S. James, 22 years ago. How often I have marvelled that God in His Providence brought me to this wonderful and historic parish, in succession to so many distinguished predecessors. But again He has sustained me inestimably. I find it hard to believe that the time has flown by so quickly. Many of those who welcomed me then have passed to their rest, and each year on their anniversaries we give thanks for all they have done for S. James. I am thankful for the support and assistance of my brother priests

## From Lost to Found

-2-

and of the lay staff and for the stability of the team we have had. I am thankful for the generosity of the parishioners and benefactors who have supported S. James through the years and its building renewal programs and its outreach programs. I am thankful for the Canterbury Fayre and the unique opportunities it gave for creativity, cooperation and community feeling that brought us a city-wide reputation. I am thankful for the work and growth and effectiveness of S. James' Social Service Society and its many programs for the relief and benefit of distressed citizens of the east side. And for the renewal of S. Luke's Home into S. Luke's Court, and the establishment of Cooper Place in loving memory of Fr. Cooper and Miss Cooper as a monument to their years of care and concern for the people of this parish.

Thanksgiving is its own reward and I believe myself amply rewarded for my years of ministry here, and leave S. James in confidence that God's Providence will care for His own in the future. I have you all in my heart and trust I have a place in yours.

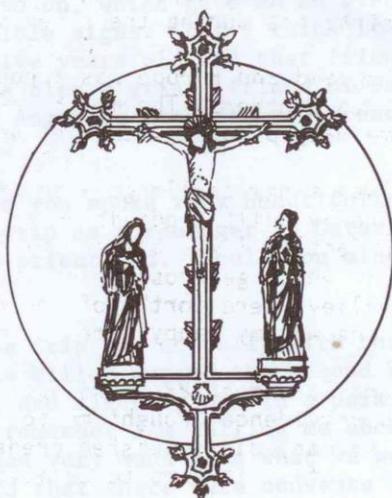
Some words of Psalm 132 have occurred to me again and again over the past and first came to my attention as a text used for a sermon by Fr. Somerville years ago in Winnipeg.

"This shall be my rest forever,  
Here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein".

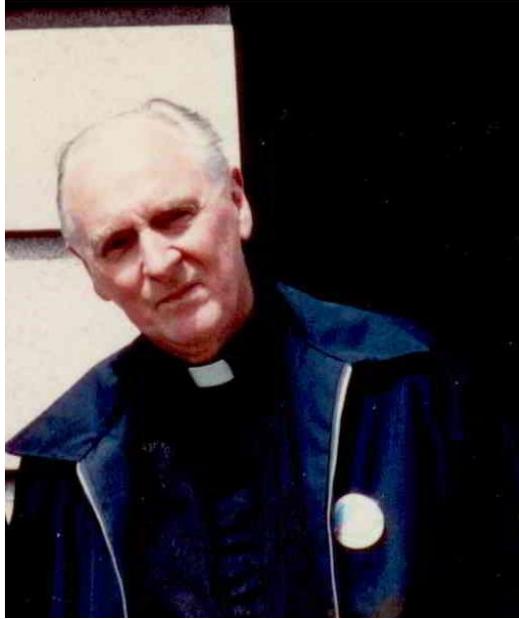
Blessings always from God the Father, through Jesus His Son, in the power of the Spirit, with the prayers of Our Lady, S. James and all the Saints.

Sincerely,

Gordon Gardiner,  
Rector.



## The May Gutteridge Story



**Father Lloyd Wright**

December 14, 1917 - January 11, 2007

Father Lloyd Wright played a huge role in the evolution of St. James Social Service from 1966 to 1990. He had a most distinguished past. He was originally from the remote coastal town of Ocean Falls, three hundred miles north of Vancouver. His parents sang in the church choir and he was a faithful server while living with his parents. He also joined the armed services and fought in World War II as a soldier.



Father Lloyd Wright

Father Lloyd Wright was a faithful supporter at May's early advisory board meetings, and continued as a board member of the incorporated St. James' Community Service Society until his retirement. His tremendous support of May Gutteridge and the work being done at St. James' Social Service never waned.

## *From Lost to Found*

In 1971 Father Wright wrote an article for the St. James' church newsletter.

"I sat in the middle of the Gastown workshop the other day, having gone there hopefully to obtain some up-to-date information on its operation. It was Friday and the editor of the Newsletter had given me a deadline for my article, but Friday especially is a difficult time to "nail" May, Kathy (Swain) or David (Trigueiro), the active directors of the Workshop. I sat there wondering how I was going to start without a push from one of the big three, when it occurred to me that the place was full of signs which have a story to tell of all the activities that go week after week.

The signs are all sizes – some are lists of names, some describe events, others describe operations and activities, and so I started to move around the Workshop observing each announcement.

Every effective social service operation should be a referral centre and I noticed on the wall in the main administrative office a long list of agencies which all offer assistance. At the top of the list was City Hall. Much of S. James social service work is tied in with the City Administration. I then noticed CN Railway – Special tickets. Our agency is recognized by CNR and arrangements are made from time to time to supply transportation at a cheaper rate, for clients. "Children's Aid and Catholic Children's Aid". Children are quite frequently the victims of family social upheaval and SJSS gives priority to meeting the needs of the young. "Emergency Meals" – Meals on Wheels is an operation carried on within the area and, although SJSS is not in on this activity, it is important for such a service to be advised of those who are in need. Because of its work and knowledge, SJSS is able to supply the required names. "John Howard Society, Narcotic Addiction and Director of Corrections – these names indicate the interest taken in those who are, or will be, involved with such institutions.

In a lighter vein, I read the sign, "Children's Halloween Party, Thursday Oct. 28, Food and Games, Adults Welcomed. Who and where? At the Workshop and sponsored by the Junior League. These ladies have supported Mrs. Gutteridge, director of SJSS, faithfully and extensively for several years now and are to be commended. Then I read a sign which announced, "Gastown Hairstyling 10am – 4pm" This is one of many operations such as TV repair, bookkeeping, cooking, quilting, weaving, leather craft, crocheting and janitorial services. Approximately 39 people are involved in these operations. The Vancouver Opportunities Program provides for the payment of \$50 extra to welfare recipients for 30 hours of work per month in the Workshop. Many of these people are handicapped to some degree and thus the Workshop becomes a place where they have an opportunity to begin work and meet others. Daily luncheons are served to all participants and often there is room for others, too. On Wednesday a Gospel Message is offered to those at lunch.

Then I saw an instruction which read, "Please register your name and hours in the Home Help Program." On enquiring, I found out that there were 12 people involved in Home Help. This service has been operating since April 1970, to assist the house-bound aged, the infirm and the handicapped with cleaning, laundry and shopping. Kathy (Swain) administers this section very efficiently.

A sign on the door of a small office read: "Legal Advice Clinic, Tues. and Thurs. 10am -1pm – Linda Ragona, Christine Dryvynsyde, Al McLean David Lee". All these good people assist those who find themselves facing the complicated demands of the law. Obeying a sign I went upstairs to visit the Free Medical Clinic which is open Monday to Friday evenings from 7-9pm. There were several people waiting in the clinic in which a Registered Nurse is

## The May Gutteridge Story

in charge. The doctor was out and would be back soon. I did not wait but I understand about 15 persons are taking a first aid course to prepare them to visit, along with an RN, the sick of the vicinity. Some, if not all of these people, will be receiving the extra income provided by the Opportunities program.

On returning to the Workshop a big sign in the window announced, "Bingo Friday nights. Prizes. 25 cents includes cards....also in the window was a small sign that simply read, 'Thrift Shop'....the workshop is grateful to Martin and Roger Henniger at Valery Black Draperies Ltd. For the remnants they supply so that some of the women can make colourful and attractive quilts.

And one more sign in the window, 'S. James Social Service, a project of S. James church, Gore Ave. and Cordova.' Mrs. Gutteridge has directed SJSS for many years now and out of it has developed the Gastown Workshop with all of its activities. The Service itself administers welfare payments for 77 people and 12 recipients of provincial funds. In 1970, \$90,000 was paid out with the faithful assistance of volunteers like Mrs. King, Mrs. Bell, Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Rigg.

There are other services offered such as Christmas hampers, dinners, used furniture and a free clothing bank. One facet of the Service demands singular notice. It is the S. James Pensioners' Club, which provides an attractive room where pensioners in the area gather for lunch and companionship. The latter is provided by many members of our own congregation.

There seems to be no end to the extent of the activities at SJSS. In the course of a year, many individuals are assisted, but one very important feature of the Service is the opportunity it provides for so many other people and groups to be involved in offering their good will and concern.

We, in this congregation, are greatly indebted to all those who assist in any way with the work of S. James Social Service and especially to David Trigueiro, who assumes the role of assistant administrator to Mrs. Gutteridge, whose activities and interests often take her away from the Workshop, and, to Kathy Swain, who directs the Home Help Service and enters into much of the social services work.

Ivy Pike is a newcomer who has fitted into the picture well and assumes a role, David tells me, of all-round trouble-shooter. And, of course, May Gutteridge herself, who has the responsibility of the entire administration and is greatly responsible for the Christian atmosphere that permeates the Service."

# *From Lost to Found*

## **Appendix**

A few of the minutes from the East-Ender's Society have been added to this appendix to illustrate, in part, how May Gutteridge began.

The March 24<sup>th</sup> 1965 minutes show that 12 people were present at St. James Church. A house had been purchased with donated funds of \$10,000 at 883 E. Hastings Street. Plans to make monthly payments on the remaining balance of \$5,000 were being made along with a public meeting to raise public awareness about First Nations women and their circumstances.

The March 30<sup>th</sup> 1965 minutes commemorate the incorporation of the East-Enders Society with the help of Mary Southin, a lawyer who would later become a BC Supreme Court Justice.

The April 28<sup>th</sup> 1965 minutes highlight how meetings were conducted and decisions made.

The May 12<sup>th</sup> 1965 minutes reflect the state of finances and ongoing efforts to raise funds and transfer the property into the society's name.

The July 19<sup>th</sup> 1965 reported that 27 girls had stayed at the hostel and Mary Southin's continued involvement in setting up the facility.

May announced her departure as the president of the East-Enders society as she could not manage both her work at St. James Church and the Society in the September 1966 minutes.

In the November 2<sup>nd</sup> 1966 minutes May outlined a plan that the East Enders might follow.

The January 1973 East-Ender's minutes draw attention to the shift from short term to long term care for the lodge. This marked the beginning of May's efforts to create a temporary shelter for women that was finally achieved by St. James Social Service in the Powell Place program in the latter 1970s.

The minutes of St. James' Social Service for March 28<sup>th</sup> 1972 have been inserted to recognize volunteers and staff involved at the time as well as highlight the financial pressures and the action taken to meet those challenges.

The June 5<sup>th</sup> 1972 minutes of the advisory board for St. James Social Service document legal problems, lease issues, the problems of obtaining fire insurance and the ongoing pursuit for funding. The issue of forming a society came up as a potential solution. A variety of interesting viewpoints were recorded at this meeting.

The November 1972 minutes of St. James Social Service provide an excellent historical overview of the 1970s.

The May 6, 1974 minutes of St. James Social Service give insights to the pursuit of government funding the march to incorporation as a society.

# The May Gutteridge Story

Minutes of the meeting of The East-Enders Society held at St. James Church on March 24, 1965 at 7.30 p.m.

\*\*\* \*\*\*\*\*

The regular monthly meeting of The East-Enders Society was held on Wednesday, March 24, 1965 at 7.30 p.m. with Mrs. A. Gutteridge; the president in the chair. There were 12 members present.

Minutes: After the minutes were approved as circulated Mrs. Gutteridge  
Reports: presented the report on the purchase of the house.

The address of the house is 883 E. Hastings; purchase price was \$15,000.00. As \$10,000.00 has been donated the balance owing on the house is \$5,000.00 with payments to be made beginning May 1st at \$85.00 per month and at the rate of 7%.

A tentative budget for the operation of the house was presented. Attention was made that some of the items might require more funds. It was agreed that if necessary permission be given to advertise for a matron. It was also pointed out that at this time the society could not assure such a person of permanent employment or pension.

Miss Dale reported that \$500.00 had been received from the Vancouver Foundation which brings the balance on hand to \$1,629.93.

Mrs. Gutteridge suggested that a public meeting should be held as soon as possible. Mr. Clugston and Mr. Sullivan agreed to make arrangements to have the meeting held at First United Church. Suggested dates were April 21st or 22nd. Mrs. Harwood agreed to prepare a special invitation list - names to be handed to her by April 1st. Miss Dale consented to address the envelopes and Miss Willows to do the mimeographing. It was suggested a mimeographed statement be circulated at the Public Meeting giving a statement of the cost of the house etc. and also a form at the bottom for money donations to be noted. It was suggested that possibly a speaker might be found to speak on The Indian Situation to-day or other pertinent information, this to be followed by a presentation of information concerning the house and concluding with a sale of goods made by the Indian women and refreshments.

It was agreed that a special meeting be held on Tuesday, March 30th at 7.30 p.m. to make further arrangements.

Miss Dale was given permission to rent a post office box for another year.

Miss Willows moved and Miss Ross seconded the motion that Mrs. Gutteridge be reimbursed for certain expenses incurred. Carried

It was agreed to wait until after the Public Meeting before sending any more letters for donations and also consideration of the \$1.00 a month club. Miss Dale and Mrs. Gardiner agreed to draft a letter re \$1.00 a month Club.

Members were asked to present any suggestions as to a suitable name for the house.

Miss Dale showed a sample of a Membership Card which she had prepared. Miss Willows agreed to have cards mimeographed. The meeting adjourned.  
(Mrs.) M. Gutteridge (Miss) P. Willows

## From Lost to Found

Minutes of the Meeting of The East-Enders Society held  
on March 30, 1965

A special meeting of the Society was held at St. James Church on March 30, 1965 with the president, Mrs. A. Gutteridge in the chair. There were nine present. Regrets for non-attendance were received from Miss P. Willows.

Minutes - The minutes were circulated as distributed.

Mrs. Gutteridge reported on her meeting with Mr. D. McGann of the Vancouver Foundation. It was agreed to send letters to the Provincial and City governments asking for help.

A letter from Miss H. Southin was read announcing the incorporation of the Society as of March 24, 1965. It was agreed to send a letter to Miss Southin conveying our grateful thanks for all her work on our behalf. Considerable money has been saved and her professional guidance has been of very help.

Preparation for Open Meeting - April 21, 1965 at 8.00 p.m. in First United Church.

The following program was agreed on after it was enthusiastically debated.

- 1) Welcome - President - short history and need of a hostel
- 2) Glen McDonald (need)
- 3) Mrs. Ferry
- 4) Insp. Nancy Hewitt
- 5) Matron - Mrs. M. White
- 6) Treasurer's Report
- 7) Summation
- 8) Vote of Thanks - Mr. Clugston

Mrs. Ainsworth will provide name tags for each member who will be expected to be out-going and answer questions.

Coffee and biscuits will be served. A display of work by the Indian women will be shown in the wide corridor.

The invitations will be mimeographed by Miss Willows, lists will be compiled by Mrs. Harwood and Miss Dale will address and stamp the invitation cards. A Synopsis of the work re the Hostel plus a space for an appeal for funds will be mimeographed for distribution.

The meeting adjourned.

M. Gutteridge

President

The next meeting of the East-Enders Society will be held on April 28, 1965 at 7.30 p.m. at St. James Church.

# The May Gutteridge Story

Minutes of the meeting of the East-Enders Society held on April 28th 1965.

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The meeting of the Society for April was held at St. James Church with the president, Mrs. A. Gutteridge in the chair. There were seven people present. Regrets for non-attendance were received from Miss Willows. Mrs. Gutteridge opened the meeting with a moment of silent prayer.

The minutes were approved as circulated. Mrs. Gutteridge discussed the Open meeting of the Society and apologised for not having the Press there. She suggested that four committees be set up:

1. A Publicity Committee - Mrs. A.H. Bayne, Mrs. J. Gardiner, Miss P. Dale.
2. A House Committee - Mrs. A.A. Gutteridge, Miss P. Willows, Mr. P. Clugston.
3. A Furnishing Committee - Miss Ross, Mrs. R. Ainsworth, Mr. Verbeek.
4. A Fund Raising Committee - Mrs. Gardiner, Mrs. J. Arens, Mr. J.J. Murphy.

Miss Dale gave the Treasurer's Report as follows: (as at April 28, 1965)

Balance on hand, Feb. 24/65	\$1,110.93	<u>Disbursements:</u>	
Donations and receipts	679.50	Welfare Work	\$117.40
		Post Office Box (2nd year)	6.00
		Postage and incidentals	6.15
		Sundries for hostel	45.25
		Wages (Mr. Holman)	70.00
		Balance on hand	1,545.63
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	\$1,790.43		\$ 1,790.43

Miss Dale was authorized to change the name of the account at the Royal Bank of Canada from East Enders of St. James to East Enders Society. Miss Dale also reported offers of clothing and house goods were received.

Mrs. White resigned from the Board of the East Enders to become Matron of the Hostel.

Mrs. Gutteridge moved and Miss Dale seconded that Mrs. Ainsworth's suggestion that the Hostel be called "St. Mary Magdalene House" be entered into the minutes. Mrs. Ainsworth felt that in this name the East Enders would always have their true motivation in front of them.

A vote of thanks was given to Miss Willows for a loan to help the funds of the East-Enders. This is to be paid back from the Society's funds over a period of time.

Mr. Sullivan suggested that the meetings continue as they are but on the question of votes, these will come from at least five Board members. Especially where money is concerned. He also suggested that \$200. be put aside for advertising, with extra output for 'letter heads' etc.

Miss Ross raised the question of Insurance with regard to accidents, for people in the Hostel.

The meeting adjourned.

M. Gutteridge,  
President.

The next meeting of The East-Enders Society will be held on Wednesday, May 26th at 7.30 p.m. at St. James Church.

## From Lost to Found

Minutes of a Special Meeting held of the Board of Directors  
of the East-Enders Society at St. James Church on May 12, 1965  
at 7.30 p.m.

A special meeting of the Board of Directors of The East-Enders Society was held at St. James Church on May 12th, 1965 at 7.30 p.m. There were ten present, with Mrs. A.A. Gutteridge in the chair.

The meeting was opened with a silent prayer.

Mrs. Gutteridge then thanked the Publicity Committee for the work that had been done reporting that the work of the society was being publicized on CNEK, The Province and "The Times" papers. Mrs. Bayne was also thanked for contributing copies of a News Release that would be widely circulated.

Miss Dale then gave the following financial report:

Bal. on hand April 28	1,545.63	Expenditures:	
Receipts:		Watkins Winram Oil Co.	\$ 35.20
Loan from 1 a member	2,000.00	Mortgage Payment	85.00
Donations	717.12	Sundries for hostel	15.00
		Dependable Roofing & Chimney Service	5.50
		Other expenses	460.12
		Bal. on hand May 12	3,661.93
	\$ 4,262.75		\$ 4,262.75

It was suggested that bills be paid once a month, that regular accounts such as phone and light be automatically paid without being presented to the meeting and that special bills be initialed or endorsed by an Executive member. It was also agreed in future donations from organizations be itemized but donations from individuals be reported in a lump sum. Floor covering for hostel rooms: After some discussion it was agreed to buy congoleum rugs for the bedrooms.

The chairman then reported that she had been asked by Alderman H. Wilson to present a brief concerning women on skid road at the City Council on May 13th.

Dollar a Month Club: Miss Dale reported that there were now 16 members.

Hostel Furnishings: Miss Ross stated that the IODE would furnish linen for any stated number of beds, and asked how much the society needed. It was agreed to ask them for linen for 10 beds.

Mrs. Bayne reported on her activities in publicizing the hostel and asked for a vote of confidence. It was pointed out that the Board of Directors are fully responsible for any actions taken on behalf of the Society and that in any publicity Mrs. Gutteridge's name should be the only one used if any reference is needed.

Mrs. Bayne was given a vote of confidence and thanked for her efforts in promoting the work of the society.

Transfer of property: Miss Willows reported that Miss Southin was being consulted in order to have the property transferred to the Society. Mention was made of some of the concerns of the owners and a paper would be drawn up in due time covering the matter.

Miss Dale moved the meeting adjourn.

P. Willows, Secretary

# The May Gutteridge Story

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors of The East-Enders Society held on July 19, 1965 at 7.30 p.m. at St. James Church

In the absence of the president, the vice-president, Mrs. S. Ainsworth was in the chair. The following were in attendance: Mrs. S. Ainsworth, Mrs. K. Arens, Miss P. Dale, Miss M. Southin, Mrs. M. White, Miss P. Willows and Messrs. P. Clugston, J. Murphy and I Verbeek.

Minutes: The minutes of the previous Board Meeting were distributed and accepted as read.

Reports: Mrs. M. White reported that 27 girls have stayed at the hostel up to date. She also requested a job description which would clarify the following:

- 1) her responsibilities to the Board
- 2) policy of appointing volunteers to assist
- 3) Policy re payment of workers on an hourly basis - who is responsible for keeping account of the time and hours of work etc.
- 4) Mrs. White requested that she be responsible for petty cash only and not other funds.

It was also reported that Mrs. D. Sumner who had been in correspondence with Mrs. Gutteridge had contacted the hostel. Mrs. Ainsworth agreed to contact Mrs. Sumner and explain the present situation.

After some discussion of the above items Miss Southin moved and Mr. Clugston seconded the motion:

- 1) that the establishment be a matron and an assistant matron
- 2) that the matron have supervisory authority over the assistant matron,
- 3) that a Personnel Committee consisting of the acting president and Mr. Verbeek seek out an assistant matron and recommend to the Board of Directors the appointment of this person and the salary scale.
- 4) that there should be no visitors to the hostel including Board members and members of the society unless on business. It is understood that the matron has the right to refuse people and if in doubt can consult the acting president. It was also deemed advisable for the matron to keep a record of the names of people who have been refused entrance but who might need to be contacted at a future date. Carried.

AA Meetings - Miss Southin moved and Mr. Verbeek seconded the motion that the recommendation of the matron to discontinue AA meetings at the hostel for the rest of the summer be granted. Carried.

Summer Program - It was reported that the building of rooms in the basement are well underway and Mrs. Deckett has plans for various activities for the girls. It was pointed out that attendance would be on a voluntary basis and that Mrs. White is only responsible for her area of work, namely the supervision of the hostel.

## From Lost to Found

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Board of Directors  
held at St. James Church on September 29, 1966 at 8.00 p.m.

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A special meeting of the Board of Directors of The East-Enders Society was held at St. James Anglican Church on September 29th at 8.00 p.m.

Present: Miss P. Dale, President, Mrs. C. Ferry, Mrs. E. Sharpe, Mrs. M. Sharp, Mrs. S. Ainsworth, Mrs. J. Crowley, Miss Mary Ross, Mrs. W. Lee, Mrs. M. Gutteridge, Mr. and Mrs. Dunick, Mr. Peter Clugston, Rev. J. G. Gardiner, Mrs. N. Bell and Miss P. Willows.

The meeting was opened with a moment of silence, following which Miss Dale outlined the reason for the special meeting. Before discussing the main items of business mention was made of the Seminar on Problems of Voluntary Action which was to be held. It was agreed not to send a representative owing to the cost.

Miss Dale then read a letter which she felt should be sent out to various organizations in the city asking for funds. After some discussion it was agreed to refer the letter to a Fund Raising Committee which would consist of, Mr. Clugston, Mr. Dunick, Mrs. M. Sharp and Miss Dale.

Treasurer's Report: Miss Dale pointed out that a correction was necessary in the report at the previous meeting. Bank loan payments for 1966 were \$755.00 and not \$1755.00 as stated in the report.

Executive Director: Mrs. Gutteridge stated that she was finding the work of the hostel and of the church more than she could manage and stated she could not continue. Discussion then followed concerning future plans of the hostel and the possible need for expanding the services. It was pointed out that the United Community Services Research might give us direction as to what needs should be met. It was agreed that if possible someone should be obtained to come and speak to the Society.

Another location for the hostel was discussed. It was moved by Mr. Dunick and seconded by Miss Ross that the following act as a committee to explore the possibilities: Mrs. Crowley, Miss Willows, Mrs. Sharpe and Miss Christie to be consulted as the need arose. Carried.

Personnel: In view of the fact that Mrs. Gutteridge is unable to continue as Executive Director it was moved by Mrs. Gutteridge and Mrs. Bell seconded the motion that Mr. Clugston and Miss Ross be a Personnel Committee to explore the possibilities of getting s such a person. Carried.

It was agreed that a special meeting <sup>should</sup> be held on October 12th at which time the two committees would report.

Miss Dale welcomed Mrs. Ferry and Mr. Dunick who are now members of the Board of Directors.

The meeting adjourned on motion of Miss Ross.

Board Willows Rec. Sec'y

# The May Gutteridge Story

Minutes of the Board of Directors' Meeting held on November 2, 1966  
at 8.00 p.m. at St. James Church.

Present: Miss P. Dale, President, Mr. and Mrs. H. Dunick, Miss Mary Ross, Mrs. S. Ainsworth, Mrs. W. Lee, Mr. P. Clugston, Mrs. M. Gutteridge, Mrs. C. Ferry, Mrs. J. Crowley and Mr. Boyd of Bell, Manning and Co. and Miss P. Willows.

The president called the meeting to order with a moment of silent meditation. She then welcomed Mrs. Ferry and Mr. Dunick as new Board members and also welcomed Mr. Boyd who had been especially invited. She stated that Mrs. Sharpe was ill and was at present in hospital. Dr. Ross had also expressed his regrets for being unable to attend the meeting.

Miss Dale said that a letter had been written to the Vancouver Foundation after the last meeting requesting financial support. She then read a letter in a reply asking the Society to give information to the Foundation as to specific plans for expanding its program.

#### Treasurer's Report:

The secretary read the treasurer's report and on the motion of Miss Willows and Mrs. Lee it was adopted.

Minutes: On motion of Miss Ross and Mrs. Dunick the minutes of the two previous meetings were adopted as distributed.

#### Report of Mrs. Gutteridge:

Mrs. Gutteridge spoke at length on the needs of the community and in particular those that might be met by The East-Enders Society. She said that the needs were as follows: 1) a Reception Centre (which we have at present 2) Day Centre - which would have the following services, Counselling, Group Therapy, Sheltered Workshop, Recreation and Coffee Hall, Bathroom Facilities and apartments and rooms which would be supervised.

R. Fox Apartments: Mrs. Crowley in reporting the visit made to City Hall strongly advised that no further steps be taken as the city would inform the Society when and if ready to negotiate.

Correspondence: Miss Dale stated that a letter had been received from the Social Worker explaining that she would be interested in working for the Society.

It was moved by Mr. Clugston and seconded by Mrs. Ainsworth that a letter in reply be sent to Dr. David McGarr of the Vancouver Foundations outlining present plans of the Society which included employing a social worker at \$400.00 a month plus transportation, of hoping to obtain the Fox Apartments for expansion purposes and also a budget for 1967. Carried.

Office Assistant: Mrs. Gutteridge stated she was in great need of office help, and suggested that as Mrs. Bell has had considerable experience working with her that possibly the Board would consider hiring her on a temporary basis. It was pointed out that as a paid employee she could not be a member of the Board of Directors. After some discussion it was moved by Mrs. Dunick and seconded by Mrs. Crowley that Mrs. N. Bell be engaged on a temporary basis (two months) at \$100.00 a month, to be taken from the Housekeeping Account. Carried. A vote was taken re her membership on the Board. It was agreed that she remain

## From Lost to Found

Minutes of the Eighth Annual Meeting of the East Enders Society held on January 29, 1973 at 8 P.M. at the Women's Centre, 217 Dunlevy Avenue, Vancouver 4, B. C.

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The Eighth Annual Meeting of the East Enders Society was held on January 29, 1973 at 8 P.M. at the Women's Centre, 217 Dunlevy Avenue, Vancouver 4, B. C.

The meeting was called to order with Mrs. V. Frazer-Crierie, President in the chair. Twenty eight people were present including the Board of Directors.

Minutes: The minutes of the last annual meeting were circulated and were approved on the motion of Mrs. Crowley and Sgt. Mortimore.

Finances: The financial statement was circulated and showed a balance of \$22,319.12. It was reported that donations and bank interest were over \$9,000 this year. In the operation of the lodge the receipts from Government sources and room and board were \$16,000 whereas the expenses were \$22,000. It was moved by Miss Walker and seconded by Miss Thomas that the financial statement be accepted. Carried.

President's Report: Mrs. Frazer Crierie in her report described the change in emphasis from short to long term care at the lodge. This was started as a pilot project and could be continued under other auspices. With the changes of supervision at the lodge the social worker concentrated her work in the downtown area. Committees were formed to study the future role of the Lodge and Drop In Centre. It is evident that the financial costs to the Society are increasing as well as the many responsibilities of the volunteer Board members. Interest and concern has also been growing for the need for good low cost housing for unemployable women 45 - 65 years. Better citizen protection has also been a concern and a brief was prepared to support this need. The Society has been represented in many downtown community societies and many organizations have contributed generously. Gratitude was expressed to staff and volunteers and to the Board. It was recommended that the Society keep in mind the needs of older women and strive to provide good housing on a long term basis.

# The May Gutteridge Story

Report on meeting of St. James' Social Service - Gastown Workshop - Advisory Board held on Tuesday, 28 March, 1972.

Present: Mr. Astbury Mrs. Major  
Mrs. Bell Mr. Malhan  
Mrs. Dryvynsyde Mr. Trigueiro  
Mr. Gutteridge Mr. Wright  
Mrs. Gutteridge Miss Swain  
Mrs. King

Apologies: Mr. Adams Mrs. Rigg  
Mrs. Brown Mrs. Walton  
Mrs. Ferry

Mrs. Gutteridge summarised the Report of the 2 March, 1972, meeting.

## Annual Report

Mrs. Gutteridge read out the list of those who had received the Annual Report.

## Applications for Grants

Application submitted to The First Citizens Fund for a grant of \$31,800.00.

Mr. McDonnell, who has succeeded Mrs. Keayes as Education Co-ordinator for the City, visited the Workshop and will continue trying to obtain recognition of Gastown Workshop as a sheltered workshop and obtain funds for its operation.

## Premises

331-333 Powell Street has been rented at a cost of \$150.00 each per month - total space 4500 sq. ft.

The Urban Design people had drawn up plans to meet our requirements and estimates for the renovations obtained, the cheapest being \$18,000.00 which was beyond our means.

Mrs. Gutteridge stated the firm giving the \$18,000.00 estimate had met with her and some people from the workshop and a suggestion was made that the firm bring in lighting, and plumbing, and workshop personnel could continue with the work. The original plan could still be worked to but spaces left, and when money was available the items could be completed.

Consideration was given to the possibility of leaving out the kitchen and personal care room planned for, and in the meantime using the Pensioners Club kitchen at 230 Gore Avenue until the Local Initiatives Programme was completed at the end of May. (The Church kitchen was not available as the Chinese ladies LIP would be using it until the end of May.)

Mr. Gutteridge proposed -

- a. We ask the Downtown Community Health Society if we might stay at 373 E. Cordova a further month.
- b. Adjust the rent already requested and pay the full amount for the further month if granted.
- c. Start work on the Powell Street buildings in stages - the workshop would need light, heat, ventilation, plumbing etc which would cost around \$56,000.00.

## From Lost to Found

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d. If DCHS refuse the request, start to phase out the Workshop. Mrs. King suggested the City be asked to help find a suitable building in view of the help given them with cheque administration etc. However, Mr. Astbury and Mrs. Gutteridge thought the City would not help in this way.

MacMillan Bloedel, in answer to a letter requesting help, had asked for a list of lumber required in the renovations and it was hoped they could help with this.

The Board agreed that a detailed list be made of items required for the renovations and Mr. Malhan and Mr. Astbury undertook to do this. When the list is completed it was agreed to send to various firms asking if they could supply the items free or at special rates.

Also agreed to write to the Plumbers, Electricians and Carpenters Unions stating the project is for pensioners and the poor and requesting their help.

Mrs. Dryvynsyde undertook to write to Fr. Gardiner requesting a grant from St. James' Church Trustees to help with the cost of the renovations and saying representatives of the Board would be pleased to meet with the Trustees to discuss the matter.

Mr. Gutteridge proposed that DCHS be approached for an extension of one month - the Society's next meeting is on 30 March. The meeting agreed to send a letter stating a Board member would meet with DCHS if required (leaving it to DCHS to mention payment).

Janice Major related a chance meeting she had had with Peter Davies (DCHS) - he asked if the Home Help would stay on at 373 E. Cordova, but was told it was part of St. James' Social Service and would move. He also asked if the LIP Home Help was claiming overheads for rent. (The Home Help pay \$45.00 a month to St. James' Social Service for rent, including telephone etc.)

Mrs. Dryvynsyde said the lawyers had also been requested to stay, and a letter had been written to Community Legal Aid, but both Mrs. Dryvynsyde and Mrs. Ragona had answered 'No' as Gastown Legal Advice Clinic is a joint project with Junior League of Vancouver.

### Miscellaneous

Mrs. Gutteridge said the Burnaby Rotary Club will be taking St. James' Social Service as its project and raising funds for us.

The 'apparel store' at 258 Powell Street is now well established and heating has been put in there.

### Finance

Mrs. Gutteridge mentioned the high cost of purchasing food for the cafeteria and emergency help.

The LIP cafeteria had not received cheques from The Department of Manpower regularly and therefore there was a \$3,000.00 overdraft on this account, however a representative from Manpower had called and it was hoped that all queries had been cleared and the cheques would be received. (The Home Help LIP cheques are received regularly)

The meeting closed at 10 p.m.

# The May Gutteridge Story

MINUTES of the Advisory Board of St. James' Social Service, held at the Workshop premises on Monday June 5 '72 at 8p.m.

Present: Fr. Wright Mrs. Gutteridge Mr. Gutteridge  
Mrs. Ferr y Mr. Astbury Mrs. Bell  
Mr. Malhan Mrs. Ragona Mrs. Dryvynsyde

Before the meeting was called to order, Mrs. Gutteridge and Mr. Malhan conducted a tour of the new premises at 331 and 333 Powell Street, so that the board could see the progress of the renovations.

## LEASE:

Mrs. Ragona reported that difficulties had arisen because the owners' lawyers seem to be delaying the completion of the two leases. Mr. Eng's lawyer had suggested numerous minor changes to the draft lease prepared by Mrs. Ragona and Mrs. Dryvynsyde, some of which were acceptable but some not. Mr. Chong's lawyer had only suggested two changes which were acceptable. Mrs. Ragona had written to each lawyer informing them that the changes were acceptable or not as the case was, but had no reply. She therefore had two leases in final form prepared, incorporating the changes acceptable to us, and these were sent on June 5th to the two lawyers with strongly worded letters stressing the urgent need to have the leases signed so that the \$6,000 promised by Saint James' Church could be available to Mrs. Gutteridge. Mrs. Gutteridge undertook to see both Mr. Eng and Mr. Chong to tell them that their lawyers have the leases and would they sign them as soon as possible. Fr. Wright assured the board that the Church will release the money as soon as the leases are signed.

## INSURANCE:

Several agents had inspected the premises with a view to obtaining a policy but feel that the risk is too high. Mrs. Gutteridge promised to speak to Mr. Eng and Mr. Chong to have her name added to their fire policies, since should a fire start in the leased part of the premises the Insurance Company could sue Mrs. Gutteridge to recover what had been paid to the owners. If Mrs. Gutteridge were named in the owners policies, the Insurance Company cannot sue her. Mrs. Ragona undertook to put pressure on at least one Insurance Company to write a policy for tenant's property, and liability.

## SOCIETY:

Mrs. Gutteridge feels it would be advantageous to be a society when enquiring about purchasing the properties at 331 and 333 Powell Street, especially from Central Housing

## From Lost to Found

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Fr. Wright thought the Foundation was a 'holding company' for property and nothing else. Mrs. Gutteridge disagreed as it could not be called a 'holding company' when it was set up for 'Little Haven'.

Mr. Astbury, who has worked in the area for the past 40 years and was a member of the Social Work Board set up at St. James' Church, recalled the early days of the Social Service work - Fr. Cooper - Mr. Meal - and how Mrs. Gutteridge had developed her own concept of this since 19        helped people other organisations would not touch, often with amazing results, and carried the main weight of the responsibility - he did not know of anyone who could run it the way Mrs. Gutteridge does.

He reminded the Advisory Board the more the Government gave money the more we would have to be organised, audited, reported on, etc. and always there is the possibility the Government could take it over at any time. He did not think a clean break should be made with the Church.

Fr. Wright said the Trustees had taken on full moral obligation - if debts were incurred the Trustees would back the Social Service.

Mrs. Horner asked the reason behind not using the number - Fr. Wright said all monies have to be accounted for and Mrs. Gutteridge said everybit of Social Service money is recorded and there should be no difficulty. She gave St. Paul's Anglican Church as an example - it has a housing project which is part of the Church but at the same time separate books are kept for it.

Mr. Astbury said if St. James' Social Service was going to disassociate itself from the Church it should be notified. Mrs. Hatfield wondered what the commitment of the Church was to the Social Service. Mrs. Gutteridge said from the start in 1961 right up until we moved into Powell Street there had only been her honorarium - nothing for the pensioners etc.

Mrs. Gutteridge thought the Social Service could be a branch of the St. James' Foundation - with special frame of reference, e.g. cannot take on buying of property etc. but clearly this is not possible and a new Society will have to be formed.

Mrs. Walton thought the congregation of St. James' had begun to change their attitude and there was a great deal more acceptance and understanding of the Social Service than before.

Mr. Astbury pointed out that under the Societies Act the officers of the Society are financially responsible for the Society.

Mrs. Rigg wondered why the Trustees could not accept in faith what Mrs. Gutteridge is going. If they got an Annual Report she did not see what else was needed.

Mrs. King proposed the Advisory Board write to the Trustees once more on the subject and Mrs. Walton thought it would be more urgent now as the Trustees would know we had to be registered as a Society.

# The May Gutteridge Story

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Mr. Astbury suggested a letter along the following lines  
"We are required to be registered as a non-profit body under the Societies Act and we would ask that you allow us to comply with this and supply us with the authority to do so.

"If however you are unable to do this and feel that you cannot be justified in doing so would you please advise us as soon as possible as it would then be necessary to reconstitute the organisation under the Societies Act as a separate organisation not associated with St. James' Church."

Agreed four members of the Board be 'phoned when the letter was ready for permission to send it.

The Advisory Board asked Mrs. Gutteridge to delay her resignation until a reply was received from the Trustees, which she agreed to do.

## St. Faith's Sale

St. Faith's had again asked us to put on a display and to demonstrate weaving, etc. at their Bake Sale held on May 4th. The Sale realised \$394.55 (St. Faith's \$199.30 Workshop \$195.25) and the proceeds have been given to St. James' Social Service.

## Open House

Arrangements are being made to have an 'Open House' on Thursday 30 May, between 5 and 9 p.m.

## Strathcona Community Care Team

The Team has now moved into new offices in the 600 block of East Hastings. Eventually there will be 13 such teams in the Vancouver area.

Meeting closed at 11.15 p.m.

# From Lost to Found

November

NEWS BULLETIN

1972

St. James' Social Service  
- Gastown Workshop -  
331--333 Powell  
Vancouver 4, BC.  
Tel : 683 4641.

## Members of Advisory Board

R. Adams	Mrs. M.C. Gutteridge	C. Roberts
R.F. Astbury	Mrs. Z. Horner	H. Roberts
Mrs. N. Bell	Mrs. C. King	Mrs. D. Slotten
Mrs. M. Beckett	Mrs. J. Major	Mrs. R. Spahan
Mrs. C. Dryvynsyde	A. Mallac	Mrs. N. Walton
Mrs. C. Ferry	Mrs. L. Ragona	D. Welbanks
A.A. Gutteridge	Mrs. S. Rigg	Rev. L. Wright
Rep. of Junior League of Vancouver		Mrs. V. Durand
Rep. of St. Faith's Action Group		

Store front institutions are all the fashion these days. We have "store front" lawyers, "store front" doctors, "store front" information centres springing up everywhere. It may surprise many to discover that St. James' has its own "store front" social agency and workshop.

Two old stores have been renovated and a striking sign, designed by Frits Jacobsen, boldly proclaims 'St. James' Social Service'. Situated right in the bustling commercial area of Powell Street it is admirably fitted to serve the 'Open Door' concept of St. James. Anyone wanting help can walk in and obtain assistance.

Inside the first store, 331, are the Welfare Administration offices, the Legal Aid office and the Home Help office. In the adjoining store are the Workshop, washing and drying room, and a completely equipped Cafeteria. The latter can provide breakfast lunch and snacks to the workers, people waiting to be helped, and to members of the Pensioners' Club.

Still to be finished are the Hair Dressing Salon, Furniture repair room and the 'Personal Care' department - a place where such things as a bath, foot care, clothes changing can take place in privacy.

# The May Gutteridge Story

Despite these such things as plumbing, electrical wiring, have to be installed professionally and are extremely expensive. It is estimated that a further \$9000. will be needed to finish the job.

The St. James' Social Service Advisory Board - a group of parishioners and other concerned people - has been grappling with this problem.

The 'Open Door' policy is used - initially it may be a meal for a hungry person, but because we are waiting and willing to give continued support the chance encounter often ends in another useful working member of society. This last month alone 1200 meals have been served!

At this time we have 32 Workshop; 10 Cafeteria; 42 Home Help; 5 Office workers; 8 Boarding home; 8 Clothes store persons in full or part-time work. The Pensioners' Club has 18 members and many people who drop in for a chat. The Free Clothing store is widely used.

We have two Federal Local Initiative Programmes - the projects are two-fold: one to provide full-time paid employment, two to provide services to the elderly, sick and needy in the community. These grants are given for wages and with the exception of a small amount towards overheads, the whole amount is paid out in wages. St. James' Social Service is very willing to be responsible for organizing these programmes, as the need for employment is so great.

Forty people also work part-time under the Vancouver Opportunities Programme - St. James' Social Service is most happy to provide a workshop and programme so that these workers have an opportunity to work and augment their social allowance.

Our sincere thanks are offered not only to our own parish church but also to the ladies of F.R.E.S.C.O., The Junior League of Vancouver, The Vancouver Foundation, The City of Vancouver, the Provincial Government, the Government of Canada, the Burnaby-Hastings Rotary Club, St. Faith's Action Group, various Churches and hundreds of individual supporters.

It is Christmas Hamper time all the year round for us although we do celebrate the Christmas festival with special joy.

Financially through the generosity of all those mentioned, rent, overheads, and wages are taken care of, but we rely on private donation to provide emergency meals, groceries, accommodation and financial help.

# From Lost to Found

## Appendix.

## Appendix.

### 1. Advisory Board

Mr. R.F. Astbury	Mrs. C. King
Mr. R. Adams	Mr. A. Malhan
Mrs. N. Warren Bell	Mrs. J.M. Rigg
Mrs. C. Ferry	Fr. C.G.L. Wright
Mr. A.A. Gutteridge	Mrs. B. Dryvynsyde
Mrs. M.C. Gutteridge	Mrs. M. Ragona
Mrs. C. King	Mrs. J. Brown
Representative of St. Faith's Action Group	
Representative of Workshop.	

### 2. List of

#### 2. List of Volunteers

Mrs. Z. Horner	Mrs. B. Brink	} Junior League
Mrs. N. Walton	Mrs. B. Dryvynsyde	
Mrs. N. Warren Bell	Mrs. P. Hatfield	
Mrs. C. King	Mrs. D. MacDonald	
Mrs. J.M. Rigg	Mrs. B. Mann	
	Mrs. J. Money	
	Mrs. P. Forward	
	Mrs. M. Ragona	}
	Mrs. D. Thompson	

#### Pensioners Club :

Mrs. Connolly	Mrs. Paddock
Mrs. Hardinge	Miss Vivash
Mrs. Kelly	Mrs. Urquhart
Mrs. McCulloch	Miss Wakefield
Representatives of FRESKO	

### 3. Employees

Mrs. J. Major  
Miss K.V. Swain  
Mr. D. Wellbank

### 4. People we are helping

a) Administration - 95  
b) Older Persons Home - 6  
c) Local Initiatives Programme  
Cafeteria - 7  
Home Help - 16

# The May Gutteridge Story

REPORT on meeting of St. James' Advisory Board held on Monday 6 May, 1974 at 331 Powell Street, Vancouver.

Present: C. Roberts Mrs. M.C. Gutteridge  
D. Welbanks Mrs. N. Walton  
Mrs. B. Hudy R. Neumann  
Fr. L. Wright Mrs. S. Rigg  
Mrs. C. King Mrs. S. Hatfield  
Mrs. Z. Horner R. Astbury  
Miss K. Swain

Apologies: Mrs. L. Ragona, Mrs. C. Dryvynsyde, D. Trigueiro.

## Alcohol & Drug Commission

In February, 1974, a Report was sent in as requested giving details of services and the hope that continued funding would be available.

Mrs. Gutteridge told the meeting she had just contacted the Programme Secretary to find out about continued funding and been told that as no formal application was received and grants had already been allocated we would not receive a grant. Review of applications is in March and October. As it was assumed our report, which included the request for funding, was all that was required Mrs. Gutteridge contacted the Drug & Alcohol Commission in Vancouver and spoke to Dr. Connolly - she also spoke to Mr. Battison in Victoria who advised the best course at this stage would be to speak to the Minister of Human Resources himself. Mrs. Gutteridge will try to contact Mr. Levi again tomorrow.

If further funding is not forthcoming there will be no alternative but to close down as it would be impossible to do the volume of work without the assistance of David & Doug.

(We have been asked to take on 45 more administration cases following the closure of one administration office.)

Mrs. Walton suggested the Diocese be approached for funding but Mrs. Gutteridge said this would be no use as they cannot fund Artaban or the UBC Chaplaincy.

## 333 Powell Street

Mrs. King had spoken to Mr. Peter Kaye of the Vancouver Foundation re possible financial help from that body. The Foundation could not buy the property as this is not its function, however, it would probably be able to help with furnishing rooms. The request would be best to come through St. James' Church.

It was suggested the money to buy the building might come if a request was made to the Diocese as they have means of acquiring low interest rates on borrowed money.

An official reply had never been received from the East Enders Society although from a newspaper cutting it seemed they had put their money into low cost housing with the Lions International.

## From Lost to Found

- 2 -

Mrs. Gutteridge has discussed with the Mayor, who referred her to Maurice Egan, Social Planning, the possibility of the City buying the property. Mr. Egan and a representative of Property and Insurance Department, had visited and will revisit within three weeks. The Building Inspector had called and the building permit is still in order on the structure.

### Lots C & D

Extracts from Council Minutes had been received which indicated that although St. James' Social Service letter had been received, they were not asked to present their idea to Council at the appropriate time. The sites are now scheduled for housing and will be developed by the Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association and the Shon Yee Society and will be for those of Chinese origin. Mrs. Gutteridge mentioned the difficulty of getting low cost housing on the McLean Park project for Flo Johnson who is under notice to vacate her present housing.

### Furniture Store

The store on the corner of Gore and Powell Streets is now for rent - \$150.00 a month. This is a better position than the Dunlevy Store and Mrs. Gutteridge will enquire about renting it.

### Formation of a Society

Now that the Home Help and Cafeteria are to be funded by the Provincial Government, which has asked all agencies receiving monies to be registered as a Society, the question of forming a Society again arises.

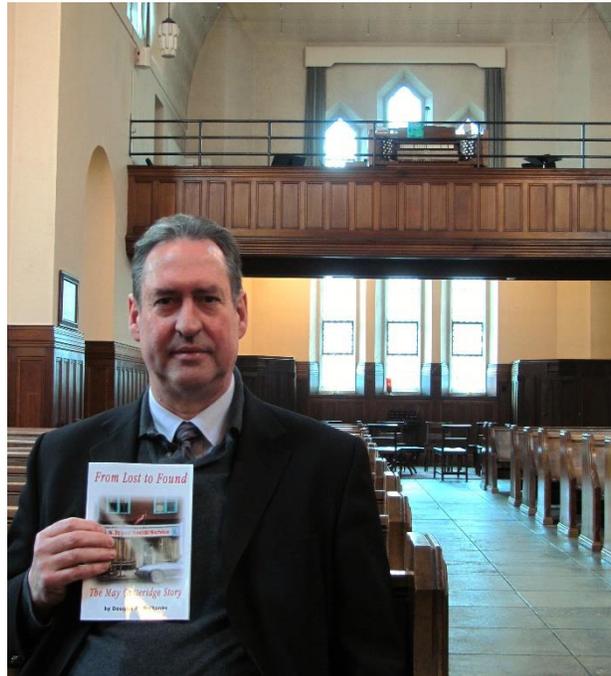
In the past the Social Service has asked to use the charitable number of St. James' Church - a scheme acceptable to the National Revenue was suggested but the Church did not agree. There is also the St. James' Foundation but its Trustees are not in favour of the Social Service being included in that Society. The feeling being that Mrs. Gutteridge had built up the whole Social Service and created the name of Parish Worker herself. Mrs. Gutteridge saw the only solution to be the formation of a Society under the name of 'Gastown Workshop' and for her to resign as Parish Worker and hand back the Pensioners work to the Church and just concentrate on the work at 331 and 333 Powell.

Fr. Wright explained the difficulty of keeping abreast of events in the Social Service when not involved in the day-to-day running of it, and because of this Fr. Gardiner gave Mrs. Gutteridge carte blanche to carry on. The Rector thought it would be better to form a new Society with representatives from the Church as there is a great gap between the functions of the Social Service and the Foundation's Trustees who are responsible for the Church building and fabric. Mrs. Gutteridge queried why it had to be this way, why

# The May Gutteridge Story

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**DOUGLAS P. WEIBANKS**

Former employee of St. James Social Service and proud to have been a friend of  
May Gutteridge.

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## *From Lost to Found*

*"May was a formidable woman - not the kind of woman you would say no to'  
And, why would you?  
Because her cause was so eminently worthwhile."  
Mike Harcourt  
Former Mayor of Vancouver and  
Premier of British Columbia*

*The impressive story of the tough British woman who was among the first to go the extra mile for the poor of the Downtown Eastside ...  
Douglas Todd, The Vancouver Sun*

*"You have witnessed with feeling and conviction how a strong and gentle woman became a voice for the voiceless, a champion for the vulnerable and the forgotten. The world needs May Gutteridge today."  
Vincent Travers OP*

*"Wow. That was some woman. A remarkable woman whose life story provides us with a model of life. Each of us should be a kind and caring human being."  
Mary MacDougall Former Executive Director,  
BC Catholic Family Services.*

*"I was very moved by May's story. She always saw the whole person."  
Dr. Carol Matasuicky,  
Former Executive Director of BC Council  
for Families.*