

On some of our Victoria outings—this must have been when I was seven or eight—we would see Emily Carr walking around town with her pet monkey on her shoulder. Already quite eccentric, everyone in Victoria knew her, although her reputation as an artist had not yet been established nationally. Periodically she would drive her van into the bush and camp for days on end while she painted. “The House of All Sorts,” her boarding house, supported her. She later wrote a memoir of that time with the same title, describing all the colourful people she took in.

Those years were happy ones for me. I was a well-adjusted, active little girl with a good sense of humour—although I didn’t like practical jokes—who was easy going and enjoyed life, especially outdoor games. My temper did sometimes get the better of me when something made me angry, but for the most part I got along with my sisters and brother. Apart from the usual childhood diseases of mumps, measles, and chickenpox, I never experienced sickness and escaped any serious accidents.

Bobby, however, was not so fortunate, as a car accident nearly killed him—the only real tragedy in our family. One Sunday, when I was about five, Dad was going out in his Model T Ford with Bobby and asked me, “Deanie, do you want to come?” “No thanks, Dad,” I replied, and off they went. A short time later a car hit them in a traffic accident—not Dad’s fault—and Bobby went flying through the



**Audrey (left) and I modelling our silk dresses, circa 1933. Each Christmas mother would buy us a hand-made silk dress from a Chinese shop in Victoria.**



**Aunt Mary (left) with her friend, Flo Edwards, in Vancouver. Date unknown.**

windshield, breaking his arm and shoulder blade and inflicting some terrible cuts on his forehead and throat. Fortunately the glass missed his jugular vein. Dad also broke his shoulder blade, and both of them remained in hospital for quite a while.

After they came home from the hospital, I would carry poor little Bobby around and seeing his badly cut arms, feel so sorry for him. Mum had a terrible time trying to cope with everything, as Lorna was still a baby. Grandmother and the neighbours and other friends pitched in to help, but it was still a difficult time for all of us. Bobby never really recovered from this accident.

One of our neighbours on Kisber Avenue, Mr. Porter, treated Audrey and me kindly and had a great influence on me. A little more affluent than the other families, the Porters sent their daughter Kate, Audrey's age, to a private school. Whenever Mr. Porter took Kate for a picnic or an outing, he'd invite Audrey and me to come along. On one excursion we went sailing in Cadboro Bay and another time I saw my first movie, *Snow White*. He did a lot for us. Kate is still good friends with Audrey and I often see her when I visit Victoria.

My first big trip off the Island took place when I was about seven when I visited Aunt Mary, who was working as a reporter at the *Vancouver Province* newspaper in Vancouver. The ride on the CPR ferry thrilled me! I had never been on such a big ship and I loved running all over the different decks, exploring. Aunt Mary lived in a room at the Hotel Vancouver and I stayed with her. When she wasn't working, we would go sightseeing. I loved Stanley Park. At the Capilano suspension bridge, she waited until I had walked half way across and then started shaking the bridge, scaring me stiff! We had such a good time. Vancouver impressed me as being so much bigger and busier than Victoria, and I liked that.

Aunt Mary was the youngest of my mother's siblings—about 10 years younger than my mother and a real live wire. A free spirit, she was a happy, bright, soul who enjoyed life—lots of fun and close to all us kids. I often regarded her as more of an older sister than an aunt. Along with Mother, she ranked as one of my heroes. Ahead of her time, she was always doing something crazy and her adventurous nature rubbed off on me. Aunt Mary got along well with Mum and would come over three or four times a year to visit, and we'd always have a wonderful time. On one visit, when I was about seven, she agreed to look after us so that Mum could go to Vancouver for a well-deserved break. We took Mum to the ferry to see her off and as soon as it had steamed out of sight, Aunt Mary took me to the barbershop and had my hair cut short! Mum was disappointed when she returned, as she loved my long hair.

On another occasion, when Mum again was gone and Aunt Mary was in charge, she told us to come straight home from school as she had a surprise for us. Apparently she had entered her little mutt,



**Aunt Mary in front of the "Lion of Lucerne" in the Glacial Gardens, Lucerne, Switzerland. 1935. Her globetrotting instilled in me a love for travel.**

Brutus, in a dog show at the Lansdowne Exhibition grounds and wanted Lorna to present him. We all dressed up in our best clothes and with Lorna sporting a beautiful bow in her hair, set out for the dog show in Aunt Mary's little car. Audrey and I sat in the rumble seat while the others squeezed into the front along with Brutus. We hadn't gone but a few miles when Aunt Mary bumped into a bus, causing the rumble seat to come down on Audrey and me and giving Lorna a bloody nose. In the ensuing confusion, Brutus jumped out of the car and headed home. That was the end of our surprise!

When I was about 14 or 15, Aunt Mary started travelling more, especially to Africa. She made about three trips, each time taking