

Another was meeting her future husband Arnold Warren.

The Warrens moved to Sudbury, instructing and flying as bush pilots. They also worked stints at the Windsor Flying Club, and then on the Sagamo on Muskoka Lakes before moving to Indonesia where Arnold taught flying. Though Indonesian officials gave his wife a piece of paper allowing her to fly, they would not allow her to instruct.

Upon their return to Canada, they sought more lucrative employment — Arnold at a community college, Vi as a librarian (later working for the Ontario Water Commission) — though they continued to fly recreationally.

They retired to Colborne in June 2000 (where Arnold Warren died in 2000).

Vi Warren enjoyed being an active Inner Wheel member and a volunteer with Second Helpings, Meals on Wheels and at Colborne Public School. She also helped the Rotary Club by welcoming exchange students into her home, many of whom stayed in touch after they left.

Honours she received both for flying and for her community work included an Amelia Earhart Medal, a Paul Harris Medal, the Rusty Blakely Memorial Award, an Order of Canada, a Diamond Jubilee Medal and a 2010 induction into Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame.

That took place in British Columbia and, though she was not well enough to go, she heard all about it from her friends Norman and Kathy O'Neill. Kathy O'Neill told her that, once organ-

Vi Milstead Warren is pictured here at her Colborne home in 2010.

izers heard they were friends of the extraordinary Vi Milstead Warren, they were treated very royally.

"Vi was kind, funny, serious, always knew what was going on," O'Neill said.

"It was always a surprise when she said something, because it was always a few words that said a whole paragraph.

"You always felt very favoured that you knew her."

O'Neill was deeply impressed by Warren's modesty.

"I suppose we knew her maybe 10 years before we knew she had done what she did. She never talked about it," she recalled.

When O'Neill brought up all these wonderful accomplishments to her friend at a Rotary function, Warren only replied, "Yes. There's quite a few of us, you know."

"She always put it back at you and, before you knew it, you were talking about your last trip or your grandchild," O'Neill stated.

"Working with her was funny, serious — and everything was done before you thought you should have it done," she recalled of the Inner Wheel projects they collaborated on.

"She was always the one you could depend on. You knew, when she was there, everything was going to be okay."

O'Neill loved those times when Warren would share her memories — the fact that she had to put

a knapsack on the pilot's seat in order to boost her up to see over the controls, the necessity of flying without lights in wartime during night runs. Perhaps it was overcoming such challenges that brought her a very positive outlook. You could even see her shovelling snow, O'Neill said, and she'd look up and comment on what a great day it was.

"Her attitude was always, 'It could be worse,'" her friend said.

O'Neill cherishes the memory of her 10-year-old granddaughter enlisting Warren's help with a Remembrance Day project, and the little girl's probing questions about her German grandfather who had sought to save his family by bringing them to Toronto just before the war.

Both O'Neills are retired teachers, she said, but the way Warren explained it to the child in language she could easily understand impressed them both.

Dickson recalled visits to Warren as delightful times to share stimulating conversations, often over a glass of sherry.

"Vi knew how she wanted to live her life, and could be feisty if she sensed other people's plans interfered with hers," Dickson wrote in her memorial to her friend.

"Vi will be deeply missed and fondly remembered by several nieces and nephews and their families, Arnold's three daughters and their families, as well as

neighbours and friends. This tiny woman will leave a huge hole in our lives."

Warren was one of a kind, O'Neill added. It's not that other women of her time didn't also have ambitions — it's that Warren scrambled and strove and succeeded in realizing hers.

That kind of discipline never left her. Even at her 90th-birthday party, O'Neill observed and admired Warren's sit-up-straight posture.

"I never met another person so relaxed, so serious, so happy, so comfortable. Women like her are very few and far between."

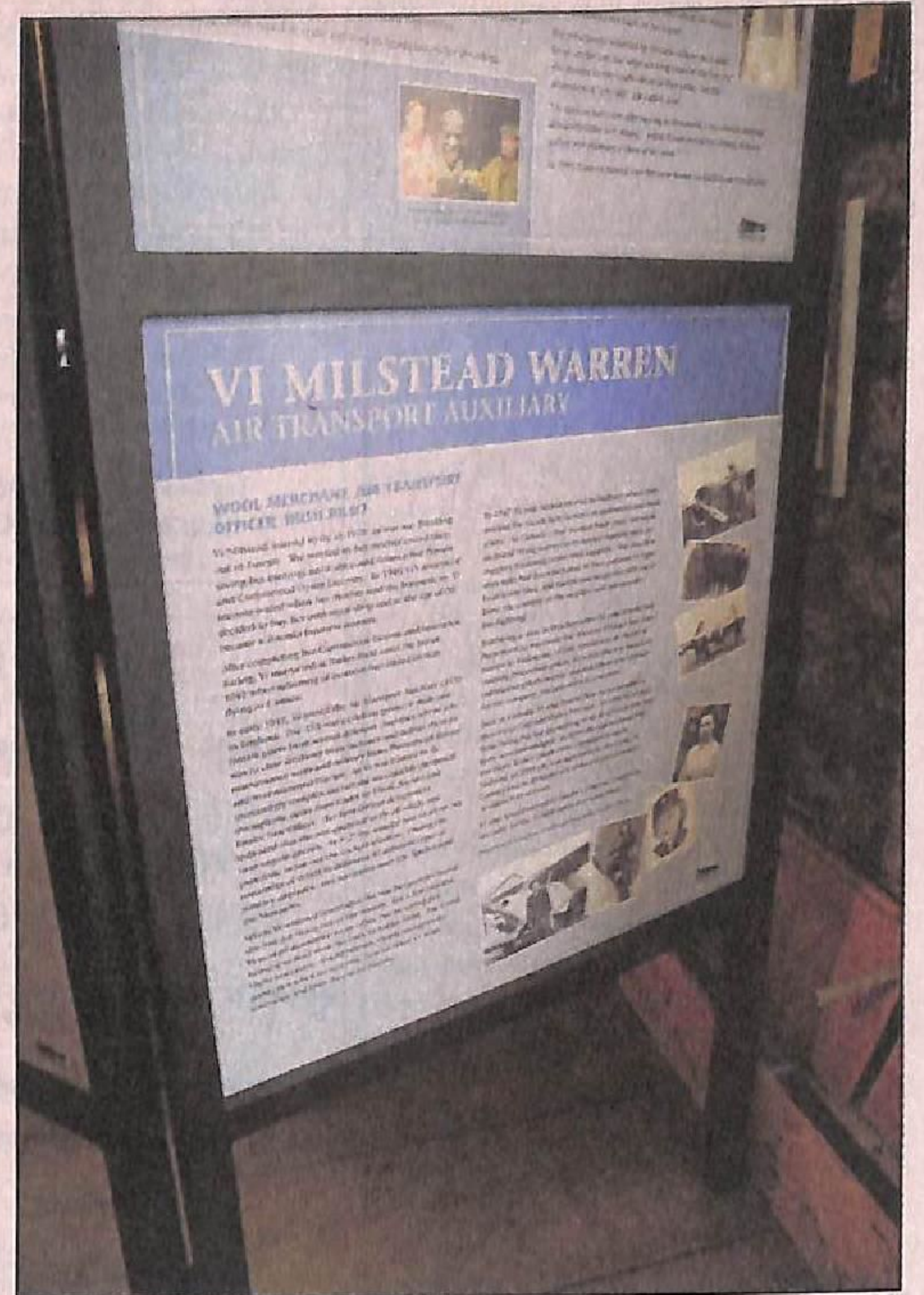
They will never forget her, O'Neill said, nor will their grandchildren. When their 23-year-old granddaughter learned of Warren's death, she immediately contacted them to be sure they would take a flower to the services on her behalf.

This will take place at the MacCoubrey Funeral Home in Colborne. Visitation will take place this Saturday from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m., with a celebration of life to follow. After the service, all are invited to a reception at Colborne United Church.

Condolences will be received at [www.MacCoubrey.com](http://www.MacCoubrey.com)

Memorial donations are welcome for the Vi Milstead and Arnold Warren Flight Training Scholarship Fund, the David Suzuki Foundation or a charity of your choice.

MARILYN DICKSON PHOTO



CECILIA NASMITH/NORTHERLAND TODAY

The Sifton-Cook Heritage Centre in Cobourg recently chose Vi Milstead Warren as one of this area's four foremost women in the military for its 2014 exhibit Our Military Story.

Some of the Rotary exchange students continue to keep in touch with Vi. Vi was a gracious hostess, warmly welcoming guests and wanting them to be comfortable. Vi deeply missed Arnold after his death in June, 2000, but she welcomed new friends in her life, particularly Marian Carter. They enjoyed wonderful times together until Marian's passing. Vi has received many awards for her flying career and her community work, including an Amelia Earhart Medal, a Paul Harris Medal, the Rusty Blakely Memorial award, an Order of Canada, a Diamond Jubilee Medal and induction into Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame. Vi knew how she wanted to live her life and could be feisty if she sensed other people's plans interfered with hers. Her wish to stay at home with her dog, in her beautiful log house was possible because of the loving care of a wonderful team of caregivers, as well as the St. Elizabeth personal support workers, nurses and others who attended to Vi's personal needs. Neighbours, relatives and friends visited, often bringing some of Vi's favourite food, a book, articles or photos. Visits usually included stimulating conversation over a glass of sherry. Vi will be deeply missed and fondly remembered by several nieces and nephews and their families, Arnold's three daughters and their families, as well as neighbours and friends. This tiny woman will leave a huge hole in our lives! There will be a celebration of Vi's life on Saturday, July 5th at 1:30 p.m. with visitation starting at 12:30 at **MACCOUBREY FUNERAL HOME**, Colborne. Following the service all are invited to a reception at the Colborne United Church. Memorial donations are welcome for the Vi Milstead and Arnold Warren Flight Training Scholarship Fund, the David Suzuki Foundation or a charity of your choice. Condolences received at [www.MacCoubrey.com](http://www.MacCoubrey.com).

We shall find peace. We shall hear angels, we shall see the sky sparkling with diamonds. - Chekov  
In Memoriams to remember!