



HAPPY BIRTHDAY SHIRLEY!!!



ISAAC Canada and ISAAC would like to extend a very Happy 90th Birthday to Shirley McNaughton on January 3, 2021.

To many, the name Shirley McNaughton is synonymous with the field of AAC.

Shirley was the teacher on the team at the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre who found Charles Bliss' book, Semantography and who introduced Blissymbols to a few students at the centre school in 1971. This was the first formal language system that was used for communication by people whose speech did not meet their communication needs. Shirley then went on to create the Blissymbolics Communication Foundation. This organization provided training in Blissymbols to professionals from all over the world. Many came as interns for extended periods and then took their knowledge of Bliss back to their home countries. Thus, Blissymbols became the precursor to the field of Augmentative and Alternative Communication.



Shirley was among a small group of international professionals who met in Lansing Michigan in 1983 and founded ISAAC. Shirley was elected the first President of ISAAC and continues to be involved in the AAC community.

Shirley established Bliss House in Muskoka Ontario. Many people who use AAC came to Bliss House for an opportunity to improve their Bliss skills, for recreation and for friendship. AAC professionals, both local and international, came to volunteer their time to help at Bliss House. While there, they had the honour and privilege of being mentored by Shirley.

In 1989, Shirley was invested as a member of the Order of Canada for her work with persons who are nonspeaking. She has earned numerous other Awards and Honours for her tireless work.

Shirley's most recent accomplishments include the establishment of the Bliss iBand in 2014. This musical group brings together adults with disabilities, many of whom use AAC, to learn to make music together. One of her present projects is tracking down and cataloguing material for the Bliss Archives, which will be stored and available at the University of Toronto.

Thank you for your continued years of dedication to Blissymbolics, ISAAC and to people who use AAC. The year 2021 also marks the 50th anniversary of the first use of Blissymbolics in Canada. What a wonderful year it will be. We wish you a joyous birthday and congratulations on all of your achievements!



Happy Birthday

Submitted by Lynnette Norris, Laurel Robinson and Nora Rothschild