

## 2019 Honourary Membership Recipient

### Ruth Schiller



**Ruth Schiller** has been a tireless advocate for the arts and artists in British Columbia. a resident of Osoyoos since 1939 when she immigrated from Germany to Canada. She originally came to Osoyoos to learn English however due to the consequences of the War; she was unable to return to Germany and began her life in Osoyoos. Ruth married in 1945 and began farming with her husband. Ruth and her late husband broke the ground and developed on of the first apple orchards in the desert country of Osoyoos. Her sense of responsibility extended to her fellow orchardists, for she was instrumental in extending the irrigation system in the arid South Okanagan.

In addition to raising a family and managing a fruit stand business for 20 years, she became a leader in the cultural, educational and economic development of her community.

Focusing much of her attention on being an advocate for the artistic and cultural communities, she became a founding member of her local Oliver/Osoyoos Arts Council and the first President of the O&D Arts Council. Expanding her horizons, there followed membership in the British Columbia Arts Board, the Canadian Conference of the Arts, and the Canada Council.

Outside the arts, Ruth Schiller has been involved in a very long list of community organizations including the Osoyoos Desert Society, Okanagan University College and the Economic Development Corporation of Osoyoos.

In 1996 Ruth received the Order of British Columbia and has been one of the main motivating forces for the arts in British Columbia, a community leader with seemingly limitless energy who is respected for her work on a provincial and national level.

In 2012 Ruth Schiller, was presented the *Queen's Diamond Jubilee* Medal. The Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal is a tangible way for Canada to honour Her Majesty for her service to this country. At the same time, it serves to honour significant contributions and achievements by Canadians.

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