

## Ms. Maria “Isia” Kott



Ms. Maria Kott, known to everybody as Isia, a beloved wife, mother, and grandmother and an active member of the Polish community in Seattle, died peacefully of cancer on January 23, 2020. She was a gentle and caring person and loved by all. She was 64.

Maria Elżbieta Kłoczowska was born in Lublin, Poland in 1955 and raised there in a patriotic family. She was devoted to her parents: Krystyna Kłoczowska, from whom she inherited deep faith and inner strength, and Jerzy Kłoczowski, a renowned historian and Polish WWII Resistance fighter with the Home Army. Her brothers were active dissidents. The middle of five children, she was especially close with her younger siblings, Janek and Ania.

As a young au-pair in Belgium, she took care of a terminally ill baby and after that experience, she decided to turn her love and care for others into a career. She received her MSc in special education from the Państwowy Instytut Pedagogiki Specjalnej in Warsaw in 1979, with a specialization in educating the chronically ill. While a student there, she served as an underground courier for the dissident group ROPCiO – Movement for Defense of Human and Civil Rights. After graduating, she worked as a teacher in Warsaw schools.

She met her husband Ryszard Kott, a young assistant at the Computer Science Institute in Warsaw and they married in 1979. In 1989 he got a job at a small company called Microsoft, and she followed him, bravely and knowing no English, with their two young sons to Redmond in 1990. Leaving her extensive family support behind, she took comfort in close friendships within the Seattle Polish community and in keeping traditions alive, making sure her sons spoke Polish and maintained connections to Poland.

Always interested in arts and culture, she organized with Ryszard the first exhibition of Polish poster art at the Seattle Polish Film Festival and several other art exhibitions in Seattle and Pacific NW, and also Solidarity anniversary exhibitions with Martha Golubiec. She was a co-founder and a lifetime member and supporter of the UW Polish Studies Endowment Committee. She was also active in the events organized by the Seattle Polish Foundation and in fundraising for the Polish Home Expansion project. Throughout her life she supported different Polish causes and initiatives as well as charities for the poor.

Isia had an adventurous spirit and traveled to most of the national parks in the Western U.S. She also loved arts and culture and had an uncanny sense of colors; she was very happy visiting museums and monuments of the past wherever she went, from New York and Washington, DC to Paris, Rome, Madrid and Athens; she also went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. An avid gardener, she had a green finger and a gift for potted plants.

Isia is survived by her husband Ryszard, sons Marcin Kott and Tomek Kott with wife Anne & her beloved granddaughter Jozefinka in the United States, and by her family in Poland: brother Piotr Kłoczowski with wife Anna, nephew Józef & niece Maria, brother Paweł Kłoczowski with nephew Jerzy, brother Jan Kłoczowski with wife Anna Piwkowska and niece Ludwika Kłoczowska with her children Janka & Kosma and her sister Anna Kłoczowska, as well as uncle Jan Andrzej Kłoczowski OP and aunt Ewa Mańkiewicz-Cudny; also by six godchildren in Poland and the U.S.

**Memorial Mass** will be held at 1 pm on Friday, January 31, 2020 at [St. Jude Catholic Church](#) in Redmond.

**Remembrance Reception** at 2pm will follow immediately after the mass at the Lovett Hall adjacent to the church, where there will be an opportunity to share memories.

**Funeral** is planned at a later date at the Kłoczowski family grave in Poland.

**In lieu of flowers** please consider a donation to [Bread of Life Mission](#) or [St. Vincent de Paul](#) charities or to the [UW Polish Studies Endowment Committee / UW Polish Studies Fund](#).