

# Caring worker comforts dying COVID victim

## Maintenance man steps into role of caregiver for woman's final moments

By Tristan Marks  
NewsNow

The pandemic has been a dark time for many. As dark as it was for Grimsby resident Margaret Roper, who lost her mother Iris Roper to COVID-19 last week, she said she was blessed by "a bright star" through it all.

On her mother's last day, Margaret was almost unable to say her good-byes. Ballycliffe Lodge Long-term Residence in Ajax, where Iris lived, was on lockdown due to the spread of the virus. No one other than staff was allowed in.

One kind worker brought Iris to a window, holding her hand for comfort as Margaret spoke through his cell phone to her mother from just outside. Margaret only got his first name.

"He told me that his name was Paul," said Margaret.

He had helped Margaret the day before, when she came to visit her mother with her sister, June, pro-

*"It was like God's doing. He just came in," - Grimsby resident Margaret Roper of the maintenance man who comforted her dying mother*

wish that man would come over with his cellphone again, and then there he was," said Margaret. "It was like God's doing. He just came in."

viding a line of communication with his cell phone. When they returned later that weekend, Margaret couldn't find Paul at first.

"I said to my sister that I

At first Margaret thought he must have been a nurse or a personal support worker.

"When I asked him, he said, 'I'm just the maintenance guy,'" she said. "To me, he's a saint."

Travelling to see her mother was not easy. Margaret, who moved to Grimsby in 2010, does not drive and relied on public transportation and family in the area to get to Ballycliffe Lodge in Ajax.

"I would take Coach Canada all the way up to Union Station and then transfer to Ajax. My daughter and my sister who live out

See MOTHER, Page 3

## MOTHER

From Page 1

west were able to take me to see my mom," said Margaret.

Iris was 93. Margaret said that being with her family and her mother those final days helped her come to terms with the death.

"They say there's six stages of grief, but I'm on the accepting stage right away," she said, adding that she has come to think her mother's passing was a mercy.

"If she survived, how long would she have gone without visitors? May? Longer even? It would have destroyed her spirit."

Most of all, she thanks Paul for his kindness, and said she will never forget him.

"I wrote my account of the events



Margaret Roper and her mother, Iris, in a photo taken in February.

that happened, and of my mother's passing, that man was a bright star."