



REMEMBERING
Heinrich Klassen

April 9, 1927 - February 13, 2021



Heinrich Klassen was born on April 9, 1927 in Siberia to Peter & Sarah Klassen. He was the oldest of 10 children. Due to difficult times under communist rule, they were given permission to travel to Germany and then on to Paraguay. This trip was made when Heinrich was only 2 ½ years old and his sister 1 month old. They settled down in Gnadenheim in the colony of Fernheim and began growing cotton, beans & peanuts. Heinrich attended school until he was 13 years old. At 18, he apprenticed as a blacksmith eventually setting up shop in Wiesenfeld. In 1950, his father was tragically killed while digging a well. Heinrich, only 22 years old, now needed to help more on the farm as well as continue his blacksmith business. In 1952, Heinrich was baptised at the Mennonite Congregation of Philadelphia. This was a very important milestone in his life. On Jan. 31, 1953, he married Hilda Neufeld and they settled down on a small farm in Wiesenfeld. In Aug 1958 they moved to Vancouver, BC with their 2 sons, Arthur and Henry. A third son, Peter died at birth only 2 months earlier. Their 4th son, Erwin was born in 1962 in Vancouver. Heinrich worked at Canada Wire for 27 years until they shut down. He then worked at Triumph (at UBC) doing maintenance until he retired at age 64. Heinrich was very active at FUMC where he taught Sunday school and served as a deacon. On June 17, 1973, sadly, Hilda passed away from a heart condition. A year later, Heinrich and Erwin were in a serious car accident and Heinrich spent 3 weeks in the hospital recovering from many broken bones. Only a few weeks later, Erwin became very ill and was diagnosed with diabetes and Heinrich needed to learn to give insulin injections and cook meals suitable for diabetics. These were some of Heinrich's most difficult years. On Feb. 14, 1976, Heinrich married Helen Rempel and they moved to a house on Sherbrooke St. Once again, he had a loving wife and companion and together, they made some memorable trips: Fort St. John, Alabama, Kitchener, Winnipeg, Europe and Paraguay. Besides seeing

some of the tourist attractions they especially enjoyed their time with friends and family who welcomed them into their homes. In 2005, Heinrich was diagnosed with macular degeneration. He had to give up his licence and soon was declared legally blind. This was difficult for him because he couldn't recognize people who he met on the street or in church. He felt very sad about this but rarely complained. After a couple of heart attacks, he underwent 6-by-pass heart surgery in 2010. In May 2016, Erwin passed away. In April 2017, Heinrich fell and broke his hip. His recovery was slow. A year later, they moved to Assisted Living where they could get the help they required. In Jan 2020 Helen broke her hip and was no longer able to provide enough help for Heinrich. He moved to Long Term Care in May 2020. Due to Covid 19, we were not able to see him for many months. Eventually, his son, Henry could see him for ½ hour every week or two. Helen was not able to visit because she was in assisted living but she called him every evening. Although Heinrich experienced many hardships he continued to be positive and kept his good sense of humour. Heinrich's health continued to decline and on Feb. 10, 2021 he was taken to VGH. The family sat by him continually but he was no longer able to communicate. On Feb. 13, 2021, with family around him, he peacefully went to be with the Lord. He will be missed by his whole family.

Helen Klassen

Art & Janice Klassen

Jonathan Klassen

Joel Klassen

Maria Klassen

Henry & Karen Klassen

Shelley & Anthony Dyck ~ Carson, Isaac

Angela & Steve Polinsky ~ Aaron, Jace

Carolyn & Craig Thiessen ~ Natalie, Zachary

Heather Klassen

