



REMEMBERING Lilly Boschmann

September 9, 1939 - November 15, 2024



Lilly was born on September 9, 1939, to Susanna and Johan Thiessen in Adelsheim, Russia, in the colony of Chortitza. Before Lilly could know her father, he was drafted into the Russian army. The last time she saw him, she was only 2 years old.

In 1943, Lilly and her mother left Russia through the Red Gate and arrived in Germany. In 1949, they departed Germany by boat and travelled to Puerto Casado, Paraguay, under the Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) care. They settled in Neuland, where her mother got remarried to Henry Sawatzky. In the following years, the family grew by two brothers, Henry and John, and two sisters, Mary and Linda (Mary passed away at the age of 2 years).

In 1957, the family moved to Aldergrove, British Columbia. Lilly worked hard and loved to visit with friends. While visiting her girlfriend in Winnipeg, Lilly met Viktor, and they married 5 months later in 1964. They started their lives in Winnipeg, welcoming two sons, Ron in 1965 and Bert in 1966. In 1967, Viktor and Lilly moved to Aldergrove and initially lived with Erwin Rahn before relocating to Vancouver, where they purchased a house on Inverness Street for a mere \$7,000. From Vancouver, they moved to Ladner, where their third son, Rudy, was born. Rudy was just over a year old when he was diagnosed with cancer and sadly passed away in April 1971. The following year, Lilly and Viktor welcomed their first daughter, Blondina, in 1972 and then Lolita in 1975. That same year, the family moved to Richmond.

Lilly worked hard as a house cleaner and devoted mother to four children, always preparing amazing meals and decorating cakes for birthday parties, even one for then-Premier Bill Vander Zalm. She took courses in baking, decorating and cooking, and despite her struggles with English, she persevered. As the boys grew up and moved to the Fraser Valley, Lilly missed them and wanted to be closer to family, especially as the grandkids came. So, in 1989, the rest of the family moved to Abbotsford.

Lilly welcomed the arrival of her grandkids into her home with joy. Over the years, many wonderful memories of sleepovers and baking with 'Oma' were created.

When the children and grandchildren needed her less, she sought new activities and became the cook at Menno Pavilion. She loved her work there, as it allowed her to visit and feed others, which brought her immense happiness. It was also a precious time when her mother moved in, as she saw her often.

Lilly and Viktor had an active social life. Both of them appreciated their friends so much. Many weekends were spent having people over for barbeque and homemade desserts. The men played pool while the women played games or talked. Lots of fun and laughter filled their home. Some big highlights were the times they spent in Mexico with friends and later when they took the whole family there.

As her husband approached the end of his life, Lilly dedicated her time to caring for him. This journey was difficult, but it strengthened their respect and appreciation for each other.

When Viktor passed away in 2014, Lilly lost her sense of purpose and gradually began neglecting her care. It was then decided she would move to Tabor's assisted living complex. Although the transition was challenging, she eventually found fulfillment in caring for others and felt needed again. The staff were wonderful, and Lilly often spoke highly of how they treated the residents. Of course, she never found the food quite as good as her own, so she would sometimes "direct" the staff on preparing dishes, delighting in the improvements to the buns served.

On her 85th birthday, the family gathered for a celebration. Just 12 days later, she suffered a fall that landed her in the hospital. Over the following nine weeks, there were many ups and downs, and ultimately, on Friday, November 15, she took her last breath and went to be with God.

Lilly is predeceased by her husband Viktor Boschmann, their son Rudy Boschmann, her grandson Colton Unruh and great-grandsons Benjamin McCutcheon and Levi Degerness.

She is survived by her children Ron (Rachel) Boschmann, Bert (Monica) Boschmann, Blondina (John) Berg, Lolita (Norbert) Warkentin, 11 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

