



REMEMBERING

Waldemar Peter Froese (Wally)

November 28, 1941 - March 3, 2024



Waldemar Peter Froese was born on November 28, 1941 to Peter and Kornelia Froese as their first born child in McCreary, Manitoba. As a young child he enjoyed outdoor play and soon his younger sister Nellie was born. They lived on a farm near his grandparents and he would go for walks along the mostly deserted road to explore. Soon his brother John joined the family and at about 6 years of age, his parents along with the three siblings decided to move west and stayed at his mother's family home near Neuanlage, Saskatchewan and his Dad scouted out a place to move to in Abbotsford, BC and so then they moved to Mt. Lehman Road south of the Abbotsford Airport where he lived until 1966. Little did Wally know that he would one day raise his own family on that same street. During this time his father, Peter Froese Sr., pastored at the family's home church, West Abbotsford Mennonite Church on King and Townline Road. He started school at Peardonville Elementary for grades 1-6, which is where his children Marcy and Patricia would one day attend for their first years of elementary school. In grade 7 he attended MEI, where he studied until the end of grade 11. During these years the Froese family was joined by the addition of siblings Menno, Ernie, Peter, Harry and another sister Linda. At 17 years old, he stopped attending school to work full time as he felt it was a hardship on his parents to pay for all the children's tuition. He took jobs hauling berries, picking berries, and whatever he could do to be able to buy himself a pickup truck. He also helped with field work, chickens and berry crops. Later he got a job hauling feed out of CC Funk's feed mill in Yarrow. After that mill burned down in 1964 Wally got involved with the building of a new feed mill in Abbotsford owned by CC Funk and Jake Friesen. Wally was boots on the ground and instrumental in getting the new mill built and running by opening day in November 1965. This feed mill would become Clearbrook Grain and Milling where Wally spent the majority of his working years managing the day to day events of bringing in

grain cars on the tracks, mixing the grain to the specific formulas for different livestock, taking calls and orders from clients, and managing the delivery drivers and schedules to make sure the animals of the Fraser Valley and beyond did not go hungry. He leased part of a raspberry farm and worked there in the hours he was not working at the feed mill.

Wally met Velma Ediger at church, during this time in the fall of 1964. One Sunday at a stop sign on the way home from church this tall, dark haired, brown eyed young man ran up to this sweet registered nurse's window and asked her for a date to a basketball game on a double date with friends. Velma accepted his offer and eventually they were married a year later on February 25, 1966 and after a brief honeymoon in Leavenworth, WA settled in Clearbrook, BC. In the fall of 1966 Wally and Velma moved into a farm house they purchased on Old Yale Road near Ross Road where they raised chickens, pigs, cattle, and horses. Velma was working at the MSA Hospital as well as helping take care of the farm and soon they became parents to Marceen Ruth in 1970. Two years later they added another daughter to their family, Patricia Lynn. Wally enjoyed showing his Tennessee Walker horses, and taking the family out in the buggy and driving his horses. Five years later they had a son, Kerry James.

In 1978 Wally and Velma, along with their three children, made the move to south Mt. Lehman Road, which was a 40 acre broiler breeder and raspberry farm right on the US border. Over the next 30 years the family expanded the farming operations, removing trees, adding crop fields such as strawberries, corn and more raspberries. They also added more barns and updated the egg collection systems. Summers were always very busy with long days on the farm. In addition to the daily egg collecting it was harvest time for the berries and sometimes the family would not eat dinner until 10 pm once the last load of berries got to Abbotsford Growers. Southport was one of Abbotsford Growers largest suppliers during those years. Wally bought automated berry picking machines and Marcy and Patricia spent many hours working on them, as well as in the field. Even a generation later, Marcy's children would also work on them. Wally was a hard worker and he expected everyone around him to work hard as well. Many people were employed on the farm and became family friends during those years. Like he didn't have enough to do, Wally also often took long haul trips to Alberta hauling feed to Jake Friesen's farms. He also served on the Agricultural Committee at the City of Abbotsford.

Wally had a tendency to be gruff and *definitely* to the point. When he had teenage daughters, his nickname by the West Abbotsford Mennonite youth group was "Shotgun Wally". He loved to drive BIG cars-basically boats on wheels. He had a massive hat collection that was hard to rival. His favorite foods were Brownies chicken for Sunday lunch, and he could never turn down a Dairy Queen soft serve vanilla cone dipped in chocolate...or anything chocolate, for that matter. His favorite snack was shelling his own peanuts, and regular family outings were Friday night trips to Harrison Hot Springs pool and then a dinner at Chan's Kitchen after. The next move was to the northern Mt. Lehman area, where Wally and Velma built 2 brand new broiler barns on 20 acres, all while he was still working full time at Clearbrook Grain. Eventually he retired from the feed mill after 41 years of loyal

service.

Wally had a back injury at a young age and that was very troublesome through the years but his driving work ethic kept him going. He retired off the farm in 2015 to a next door farm on Olund Road where he could still keep an eye on the farm. He loved to roam his acres of land on his quad. In his later years Wally and Velma went on several cruises and enjoyed time away but holidays were seldom taken throughout their working years. Family holidays while the children were growing were usually limited to the odd weekend camping in Penticton in the summer once the berry harvest was finished with the boat every few years.

The last years of Wally's life have been difficult for mobility, as he struggled with the effects of his diabetes, and so most of them have been spent at home or at the hospital. We as a family would like to thank the staff of nurses, as well as his daughter Marcy who is an RN as well as other family members who came to take care of Dad. Wally passed peacefully at home, which is exactly where he wanted to be. He is mourned by his loving, faithful wife of 58 years, Velma, along with his children, Marcy and Ernest Neudorf, Patricia and Marv Loewen, and Kerry and Anita Froese. He also leaves behind ten grandchildren, Kaitlyn (Harley) Loewen, Loreal (Luke) Klassen, Lauren (Conner) King, Chelsea (Brandon) Wehr, Sherise Goertzen, Colton (Anicka) Neudorf, and Daniel, Joseph, Sarah and Hannah Froese, along with one great granddaughter, Josie Klassen. Wally had a strong Christian foundation and knowledge that he will be meeting his Lord and Saviour in Heaven.

