

OBITUARIES

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Gerrit Van Zeumeren

It is with great sadness that we share the news of our father's sudden passing on September 26th due to heart failure just months after a week-long family celebration of his milestone 90th birthday. Dad and his new bride Hielke (Hilda) immigrated to Canada from Arnhem, The Netherlands in 1953 through Pier 21. As an Agricultural College graduate, Dad was able to realize his dream of owning a dairy farm in Canada, with the purchase of a farm in Masstown, Nova Scotia.

A beautiful singer and lover of all music, Dad credited his quick learning of English to hours listening to old time country & western music while he milked cows. An entrepreneur at heart, Dad's ventures ranged from dairy farming and farm services, to a fruit stand, a motel and campground business.

Dad was proud to represent Colchester County as a Councillor in the 1970s, while also being an active member of TIANS, the Nova Scotia tourism marketing group. He especially enjoyed his appointment to the Nova Scotia Resource Development Board where he was able to help the next generation of dreamers and entrepreneurs.

Dad's ventures in business and life were fully supported by his wife of 69 years. Whether driving a farm tractor while eight months pregnant during haying season, cooking meals at the Massowner Motel, driving a 5th Wheel RV around North America or wintering for 30 years in Florida, they were a like-minded pair of adventurers. No matter where they called home, both they and their home personified the Dutch word "gezelig".

Dad was forever an interested and interesting individual. Endlessly curious and even tempered, Dad loved to read (even the infrequently read instruction manuals of any newly purchased item) and had an exceptionally sharp memory. He could recount details of life during World War II in The Netherlands as clearly as the latest current events. He was a wonderful conversationalist who could make everyone feel at ease and special. In both good times and bad, there were few situations in life where Dad did not have a witty Dutch quip to bring a smile.

Following his second attempt at retirement, Dad took up backpacking in his 70s. His unforgettable hiking adventures

with children and grandchildren include the Grand Canyon, Juan de Fuca Trail and Cape Chignecto (5 times). After the backpack was hung up for the last time, Dad could often be seen peddling between Folly Lake and the Masstown Market on his bright orange e-bike.

Over the past two decades at Folly Lake, some of his favourite hours were spent planning, tending and harvesting from his ever-evolving, and somewhat experimental vegetable garden. Born colourblind, Dad could only see grey, however this wonderful person lived every day in full technicolor!

Dad loved to characterize his family by his favourite Garrison Keillor quote (author of Lake Wobegon Days) whereby "all the women were beautiful and the children were above-average." Dad will be dearly missed by his wife, Hilda (Hielke Hoogendam); sons, Brent (Rhona) Woodstock ON; Ralph (Janice) North River, NS; Paul (Irene) Calgary, AB; and daughters, Audrey (John) Conroy, Folly Lake, NS; Johanna (Masoud) Alborzi, Lake Jackson, TX; Joyce (Tom Agoston) Calgary, AB; Opa's grandchildren (all having been sung to many times on Opa's knee - especially the song, My Grandfather's Clock) include Sarah (Steve); Leanna (Greg); Rachel; Byron (Alison); Trevor (Jill); Grant (Amanda); Ross; Nina (Matthew); Kevin (Sarah); Sean (Saachi). Opa's great grandchildren include Carter, Adelyn, Layla, Ellie, Theo and Ava. Missing their big brother, folksong leader and family historian, are his brothers, John (Geri); Henk (Ria); Herman (Freda); and sisters, Irene and Elly (Pat). He was predeceased by his sister, Mety, and brothers-in-law, Cor and Jim.

At Dad's request, cremation has taken place and there will be no memorial service. Arrangements have been entrusted to the Mattatall-Varner Funeral Home, 55 Young Street, Truro. For those wishing to do so, donations in Bert's memory to a local food bank in your area would be greatly appreciated. Private messages of condolence may be sent to the family by viewing Bert's obituary on-line and selecting "Send A Condolence" at:

www.mattatallvarnerfh.com



Shirley (Lavers) Johnson, 1921-2022

It is with the greatest sadness that the Johnson family announces the passing of Ruth Shirley Johnson on October 12, in Halifax, NS, at the age of 101. Born on September 7, 1921, Shirley Johnson (nee Lavers) was raised in Parrsboro, Nova Scotia. Her father was David Lavers, proprietor of D.A. Lavers General Merchant in Parrsboro and her mother was Nell McLaughlin, a school teacher from Economy. Shirley's family had McLaughlin and Lavers relatives throughout Cumberland and Colchester Counties.



She graduated from Acadia University with a degree in Home Economics in 1943, at the height of World War 2. She immediately put her studies to good use as a dietitian in the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps (RCAMC), and it was during the war that she met the love of her life, a young pilot named Robert (Bob) Johnson, while stationed at Camp Debert, NS. They were married in 1946 in Bob's hometown of Winnipeg, Manitoba, and remained a united and devoted couple until Bob's passing in 2014. Together, they raised four sons and one daughter.

Shirley's creativity in food preparation and knowledge of nutrition made family mealtimes a memorable time of gathering and connection, a legacy that endures today.

In addition to her family life, when conditions permitted, Shirley also enjoyed an accomplished career. The first instance was in the RCAMC during the war, before she was married. Secondly, she was the Post-Master for the Waverley Post Office (NS) for six years. During this time she also co-authored the first history of Waverley, entitled "This Is Waverley". Ultimately, she became a social worker for Halton County Children's Aid Society in Burlington, Ontario, primarily working in adoptions and then some years later with Prince Edward Island Social Services in the field of child protection and family support. In the years following her time with PEI Social Services, she was often visited by former clients who became friends, thanking her for the profound impact her compassion and caring service had on their lives.

Shirley always contributed greatly to her community. After she and Bob settled in Charlottetown, PEI, in 1977, they both became active members of Spring Park United Church. In addition, Shirley was a vital member of Spring Park United Church UCW (a past-president), RCAFA, the Canadian Nursing Sisters, IODE, the DeHaviland Club, Gyros, Probus and the Royal Canadian Legion, who named her honorary President for a one year term. Shirley was also past president of the Gordon Cove Cottage Association, near Bedeque, PEI. The family cottage was the locus of wonderful family gatherings over the years.

Shirley was predeceased by her devoted husband of 68 years, Robert, by her brother Dr. Harlan Lavers (the late Adelaide McKean), and by many well loved cousins. She leaves behind her five children, David (Mary Ann Pacey), Robert (Linda Getchell), Peter (Lyne Montsion), Harlan (Marco Rainville) and Elaine (Brad Murray), eight grandchildren, Eliot (Stacey), George (Emily), Veronica (Dan), Nathaniel (Madison), Robert III, Heather (Marcel), Cameron (Kate), Katie (Matt), and eight great grandchildren, Isla, Maxwell, Josephine, Alfred, Zoya, Dalvay, Hunter and Macey, as well as several nieces and nephews. She was particularly close to her niece Linda (Lavers) Erikson. Shirley will live on in our hearts and memories.

The family would like to express their gratitude to the staff of Andrew's of Stratford, PEI, and Camphill Veterans Hospital, Halifax, NS, for the excellent care she received from them.

A memorial service will be held at Belvedere Funeral Home in Charlottetown on November 11 at 3 pm. Visitation from 2-3. All are welcome to join us in celebrating the life of Shirley Lavers Johnson, a loving wife, mother and a proud WW2 veteran.

Shirley was ever a devoted daughter of Nova Scotia and her hometown. For those who wish to do so, a donation in her memory can be made to the Ottawa House-Parrsboro Shore Historical Society. Messages of condolence may be shared on Shirley's Memorial Page at www.belvederefh.com

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FIELDING, Theresa Lee - age 61, Upper Onslow, daughter of Judy Taylor (Jardine) and the late Herman Taylor, passed away peacefully on September 20, 2022, in the Colchester East Hants Health Centre, Truro. Theresa had a long battle with cancer but always managed a positive and caring attitude. Despite her diagnosis, she was always giving back, especially supporting the Colorectal Cancer Resource & Action Network (CCRAN) and raising funds for the organization. Theresa's positivity and kindness were well known with her friends and coworkers at Central Colchester Junior High School, where she worked as an educational assistant, and also during her time as a business owner. Theresa's true passion in life was her family. Her perfect moments were when she had them all together. She was the centre of the family, organizing events and making sure everyone was always taken care of. She leaves shoes that are impossible to fill. In her final years, she was able to realize her dream of a cottage on the ocean and would often be found with Mike sitting on the 'bluff' watching for eagles. Theresa was predeceased by her father, Herman Taylor. She is survived by her mother, Judy Taylor; husband, Michael Fielding; daughters, Amanda Fielding (Chris), Kristin Fielding (Paul) and Taylor Fielding; grandchildren, Brady and Claire; sister, Tina Cameron (Dana); brother, Todd Taylor; sister-in-law, Gail (Chris); nephews, Landon Taylor (Jody) and Matthew Brennan (Kendra); nieces, Brittany Brown (Curtis), Morgan Brown and Megan Taylor (Luke) and her aunt, several cousins as well as her great nieces and nephews who held a special place in her heart. A special thank you to the Lane family for their support, especially Michelle and Melanie (Moni) who were lifelong friends of Theresa, the Palliative Care team in the Colchester East Hants Health Centre, Dr. Rowe, Dr. Henderson, Dr. Singh, Dr. Caldwell and Filomena Servidio with CCRAN. In lieu of flowers the family asks that donations be made to CCRAN (<https://ccran.org/>). A private family graveside service will be held at a later date. All that knew and loved Theresa are invited to a Celebration of Life on October 1st at 6:30pm - 9pm in Jenkins Hall (Dalhousie University Agricultural Campus).

SABOURIN, Rene L. J. - 72, Little Dyke, passed away on Friday, September 23, 2022, at Colchester East Hants Health Centre, Truro. Born in Timmins, Ontario, he was the youngest son of the late John and Orillia (Mageau) Sabourin. Rene is survived by his two sons, Jerome (Lindsay) Sabourin; and Peter Sabourin (Amy Brandon); beloved granddaughter, Mackenzie Renée Sabourin; grandnephew Cash Hartlen; his brothers, John Sabourin and Albert Sabourin; sisters, Teri Sabourin and Denise (Doug) Russell; sisters-in-law, Aline Sabourin and Gail Mackenzie; nieces, Lisa Hartlen and Lori Mackenzie; and special family friends, Rob Teale; David Parks (David MacIsaac) and Rob (Erin) Brown. Rene was predeceased by his wife of 49 years, Linda Sabourin (née Mackenzie); older brother, Denis Sabourin; brother-in-law, Alan MacKenzie; his dog, Cymon. Honouring Rene's wishes, there will not be a visitation or funeral service. Arrangements have been entrusted to Mattatall – Varner Funeral Home, 55 Young Street, Truro. Full obituary and condolences at: www.mattatallvarnerfh.com

WELTON, Ada Alice – 89, Economy, passed away peacefully on Monday, September 26, 2022, at The Mira Long Term Care Centre, Truro. Born in Economy, she was a daughter of the late Gordon and Rose (McNutt) Marsh. Ada is survived by her children, Ron Welton (Debbie), Cynthia Welton, Kevin Welton (Margaret); grandchildren, Christopher Welton (Crystal Roberts), Scott Welton (Crystal Muise), Jennifer Welton (Stephen Faulkner), Michael Welton (Melinda Pyke), Alexander Brown, Jacob Brown; great grandchildren, Taylor Phinney, Colty Phinney, Devon Welton, Julia Welton, Mary Welton, Owen Faulkner, Riley Faulkner; sister, Marion Cochrane. Along with her parents, she was predeceased by her husband, Donnie Welton; sister, Edith Cochrane; brother, Chester Marsh. Funeral service was held Saturday, October 8, 2022, at Economy United Church, Economy. Interment in Economy Cemetery. Arrangements have been entrusted to Mattatall – Varner Funeral Home, 55 Young Street, Truro. Full obituary and condolences at: www.mattatallvarnerfh.com

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