



REMEMBERING
Allan Keith Major

October 5, 1935 - January 15, 2020



Allan Keith Major was born October 5th 1935 in Portage La Prairie, Manitoba. He was the third son to William & Mariam Major. He and his two older brothers Bill and Bob welcomed their baby sister Marlene less than two years later. Three boys and a girl on a family farm in Manitoba during the late 30's meant life was pretty hard, but there were rewards and a little adventure mixed in. Like when the biggest, meanest goose on the farm made it his personal mission to torment a young Allan EVERY SINGLE DAY. That goose would come running - beady eyes blazing, honking & hissing with murderous delight, chasing poor 6 year-old Al all around the yard, leaving welts on the backs of his legs. Until one day Dad decided he'd had enough and got one of his brother's baseball bats. The goose came running at him, and with all the righteous indignation a kid can possibly muster - WHACK - that goose didn't even know what hit him! He happily dragged that monster right into his mother's kitchen, and YES they had goose for supper that night.

The family moved to Vancouver in 1945, where the kids settled into their big city school. Al appreciated how tough his brothers had become from years of farm life when they came to his rescue in the schoolyard. Brother Bill would lay anyone flat for even uttering an insult to his little brother, and each sibling in turn looked after the other. Especially protected was Auntie Marlene, although she'll say it was her looking after him all their growing up years. So much so, that even today she calls Dad her "little brother".

Dad was fortunate to be a teenager in the Vancouver area during the 1950's when the city was booming and absolutely bustling with culture. He owned a fancy hot rod car for a short time and one sunny weekend, he got the bright idea to use maxi pads for polishing it - so he got the box from under the bathroom sink, stuck one to his hand and before long, he'd used every single one of them to polish his candy apple red car, until the whole driveway was strewn with bright red pads! His mother was completely mortified.

As a handsome young man about town, he had no trouble with the ladies - he even danced with Barbara Walters at an after-party one night! Al soon found himself engaged to a young girl named Joanne Bachman. A beautiful wedding followed by the birth of their beautiful baby girl Brenda and Al was immersed in family life. Their son Daniel was born just a few years later, much to Dad's absolute delight. The young family stayed in the Vancouver area for years, with both their extended families nearby to enjoy the hustle & bustle of cousins & grandchildren.

As life is known to bring changes, so it did for Al. Over fourteen years later, no longer married, he met a lovely girl named Susy Fehr. They hit it off immediately, and were soon spending all their time together, much to the concern of Susy's family. He was after all, older, tattooed, and had two teenage children. Their concerns turned out to be unfounded (mostly) when a year later little Tina arrived and but a short year after that Al & Susy were married. They lived in the Boundary Bay area long enough to welcome another two girls, Nikki & Gayle.

The young family moved out to Alberta in 1977, losing touch with Dad's oldest two kids through heartache and distance. Al's first daughter Brenda went on to marry her love, Paul Bouchard and have four beautiful children. Danny married his high school sweetheart Maria and many years later, they were blessed with a daughter.

The families reconnected in the summer of 1984 while vacationing in BC. It was a very emotional, exciting reunion! There are just a few years between Dad's oldest grandson James and his youngest daughter Gayle, so us kids were baffled & delighted. Brenda and the kids along with Danny & Maria traveled out to Alberta a few years later to visit and it was a lot of fun introducing them to small town entertainment vs. big city fun. Things like climbing the communication tower at our local fire hall, or soaking up the summer sun on the roof of the curling rink and playing chicken with the train down at the grain elevators. Or was it just me who did that? Either way, I'm not sure if it was really their thing since they never did come back out to Alberta after that.

Speaking of small-town Alberta, what a place to raise a family! Dad was hired on as custodian of Barons Consolidated School, where he quickly proved invaluable. The school population was small but went from Kindergarten to Grade 8. His biggest fans were the little ones - they loved his beard, his smile, and they loved that he built a new sand table in the kindergarten room! He maintained the big, scary boiler in the winter and he cut acres & acres of grass in the summer. He started driving school bus too, picking up the farm kids every morning, then running the older kids to the next town for high school. He drove bus for all the field trips, basketball games, science fairs, tournaments & shows. He built computer tables, cubbies, shoe racks and fixed countless desks & skinned knees. He coached 3 on 3 basketball and started volunteering as an Umpire for little league baseball and soon the Ladies were asking if he was available. As an Umpire of course. Then Men's fast pitch needed an ump and before you know it, he was in demand and well known around the local towns for his good judgement, easy nature and general theatrics. He joined the Elks organization, hosting community Halloween parties and sponsoring kid's events throughout the year. He taught Outdoor Education to the Grade 8's and hosted weekend survival camps a few years in a row. Mr. Major just didn't seem to really suit him, it was way too formal for who he was in small

town like that. The kids took to calling him "Big Al" and it stuck with him the eleven years we lived there.

1988 - Alberta's economic boom was fading and we all moved back to beautiful BC in search of better prospects. Dad worked several different jobs during those years but his favourite was finishing houses for his good friend Richard. What fun those two had together! This was a happy, busy time for everyone - Tina eventually moved out to BC, Danny's daughter Leanne was born, Nikki graduated high school and married Lance. Soon there were grandbabies, more weddings and another new grandbaby every year it seemed, until suddenly there was a new great grandbaby - much to Mom & Dad's absolute delight!

Their house was full, their lives were full, their hearts were full, and they were busy! Busy with Church - potlucks, weddings, Easter breakfasts & baptisms. Busy with Life - saying goodbye to brothers Bill & Bob and each of their beautiful wives Ruth & Dot, and welcoming new great grandbabies. Busy with Travel - out to Vancouver for baby showers & birthdays, up to Oyama to see sister Marlene & David, over to Alberta for reunions & celebrations.

After some time, Dad's health started getting in the way of work, so he spent more time tinkering in his shop building little chairs, shelves & baskets. More time attending concerts, Christmas pageants and baseball games. More time golfing, camping & visiting with friends. More time with the grandkids, the babies and all his girls. There were many trips to Arizona and many more trips up to the family cabins. With all his health scares over the years, we somehow thought each run to 70 mile might be his last, but then we'd find ourselves planning another trip and asking if he was In or Out? He was always In. No doubt. He loved it up there. He & Mom were there this past Father's Day and again in October for his birthday, staying all the way up to Thanksgiving. It was beautiful weather and a fantastic time. The day before they left, he said "You know Susy, I could take another 10 days of this!" It really was his happy place.

We know things started getting quieter around Christmas and by the start of the New Year his legs just wouldn't hold him anymore. A bed was brought in and for reasons only God knows, he just started fading. Knowing his history, it's hard to be upset with him - he had no cartilage left in either of his knees, quadruple bypass surgery, half a lung removed, hernia surgery, the same hip replaced twice, and an Aortic Aneurism repaired! After each surgery (and sometimes during the surgery) he would hover precariously right on the very edge of life & death, finally coming through with an even greater testimony of God's grace in his life. So when we realized he wasn't bouncing back this time, we knew why. He had quite simply given everything he had. And when you know you're going home, why waste time? "Hurry every chance you get." And so he did.

We are so grateful to have had him for as long as we did, but we do not wish him back. For even though our loss is great, his gain is so much greater.

Al was predeceased by his parents William and Mariam, his first wife Joanne, and his brothers Bill & Bob. He is survived by his feisty sister Marlene (David) Theriau, loving wife Susan of 47 years, children Brenda (Paul) Bouchard, son Danny, Tina

(Tabbitha) Major, Nikki (Lance) Hand, and daughter Gayle.

He was blessed with twelve Grandchildren: James, Heather, Tammi (Mike), Amber, Leanne (David), Dallas, Callista, Chase, Jewel, Jaida, Danika & Jaxon.

Great Grandchildren: Tyler, Blake, Kiley, Alytha, Sophia, Chelsea, Olivia and Hailey. He has nieces & nephews all very dear to him, and cousins & friends too numerous to list by name. He was dearly loved.

A Celebration of Life service will be held at Chilliwack Church of God 45814 Lewis Ave on Saturday February 1st at 2pm. Reception immediately following the service. Please join us!

