



## REMEMBERING **Heinrich Wittenberg (Henry)**

February 8, 1942 - November 13, 2021



Henry Wittenberg, Husband to Elfriede, Dad to Viola, Monika with Dan, and Andy with Alexa, Opa to Ryan, Danika, Mitchell, Luke, Tessina, Jackson and Erin, left his earthly home on November 13, 2021 to go to his heavenly home. He was 79 years old.

Dad was born on February 8, 1942 in Friesland, Paraguay to his parents, Peter and Liese Wittenberg. Dad did not graduate from school, finishing his official education with Grade 6. At the age of 12 he started working full time to help support the family. He started by working in the town's mill, which at that time was run by his dad. At the age of 17 he started working in a logging camp as a machine operator. Eventually he started clearing land in the jungles for roadways. Early on, his boss recognized his love for hunting and gave him time to hunt. God protected him during this time from the elements and the jungle animals. More than once he would need to get off his machine to roll a log, only to find a poisonous snake rolled up waiting to strike. Yet not once was he bitten.

At the age of 18 he met the love his life Elfriede Rempel. After a 5-year courtship and just before his parents and younger siblings moved to Germany, Mom and Dad celebrated their engagement. A few months later, on November 13, 1965 they were married.

In 1966 Mom and Dad decided to leave their home in Friesland and start a new life in Esslingen, Germany, where Dad's parents, 2 brothers and 2 sisters were living. Here he started working as a machinist. But working inside was not his idea of a great job. He missed working outside on the big machines and soon found a job operating a bulldozer. In August 1967 their first child Viola was born. Monika soon

followed in September 1968. Dad was a hard and reliable worker. So much so, when Monika was born, his boss did not pass on the message to him for 2 days. Wanting him to finish his work week before going home. Dad would have none of that, leaving his machine where it was and quickly driving the 2 hours back to Mom and his now 2 daughters. Although Dad loved his job, it did take him away from his home and family for the week, returning only on the weekends. Dad and Mom decided to try Paraguay again and so in 1968 they packed up the family and moved back. But for various reasons this move was not what they had expected and so they moved back to Germany about a year later.

Back in Germany, it did not take Dad long to find work as a machine operator again. He enjoyed his work preparing the way for the Auto Bahn and even working on the Equestrian Stadium in Munich, which was being built for the 1972 Olympics. But again, this job took him away from his family for long periods of time. Not what he or Mom wanted when starting a family.

At the suggestion of his brother Werner, the idea of moving to Canada was born.

Dad spent 3 weeks visiting his brother Werner and Sister Helga. Checking out if the move to Canada would be realistic. He wanted to make sure that he would be able to find work and support his family before moving across the sea again. The trip was a positive experience and the decision to immigrate to Canada was made.

In March 1974 Dad took his family and moved them to Vancouver. Dad started working in construction right away. First working with his brother Werner, and then later starting up his own framing company.

In 1976 the family grew with the much-anticipated arrival of Andy.

In 1980 the family moved to Abbotsford. In April 1981 Dad was baptized and became a member of the King Road MB church. Dad would volunteer and help where he could. As an usher and of course as framing was his specialty, he was there when the new Sanctuary and Gym were built.

Dad was a hard worker, sometimes working 16 hours a day during the long summer months. But this did not stop him from making time for his family. He would come home late on Friday, clean out his truck, pack it up with camping gear and off we went fishing for the weekend. If going away for the weekend was not possible, then it was day trips around the city or visiting with family and friends.

Dad continued with his framing business, growing from framing houses to framing condos and townhomes. He especially enjoyed the challenges of framing 3 churches. The last few years before retiring Dad closed his business and started to supervise projects for Rempel Development Group.

In 2007 Dad officially retired. He now was able to spend more time doing the things he loved with the people he loved. During the spring and summer, much time was spent fishing, either at a Lake or at the River. In the fall he enjoyed hunting, especially with his son and grandchildren. In the winter, Mom and Dad enjoyed their trips to California. Trips to Mexico, Paraguay and a few cruises were also made. For their Golden Anniversary in 2015, Mom and Dad took all the kids and grandkids on a cruise to the Caribbean. A trip of a lifetime with so many memories that will never be forgotten.

Dad loved his family more than anything. Always ready to spend time with us or help us with the many projects that always seemed to pop up. Even if we wanted to, we could not count the hours he spent helping us. He never hung up his tool belt, if there was painting to be done, walls to be built, pictures to be hung or furniture to be put together Dad was there. No project was too small or too big. But his time was also spent helping friends and people in need. He also enjoyed his MDS trips, helping people rebuild their homes lost to natural disasters.

Another past time that Dad enjoyed was playing billiards. He played 2 mornings a week with his new friends at the Abbotsford Seniors Association and a couple evenings a week with his long-time friends. The original four, as they are endearingly known, played for over 25 years at the Wall's. It did not matter what he did, as long as time was spent visiting with family and friends.

Henry is survived by Elfriede, his wife of 56 years, Daughter Viola with Ryan and Tessina, Daughter Monika and Dan with Mitchell and Jackson, and Son Andy and Alexa with Danika, Luke and Erin. He is also survived by his Sister Helga with family, Brother Werner with family, Sister Elfriede with family and Sister Anneliese with Family. He was predeceased by his granddaughter Alina, his parents Peter and Liese, brothers Peter, Abram, and Willy and brothers-in-law Henry and Supi.

As a family we wish to thank our family and friends for their loving support and prayers over the past 7 weeks. Each prayer was felt, each kind gesture was appreciated. God bless.

A memorial service is scheduled for 11:30 am on Tuesday November 23, 2021 at King Road MB Church in Abbotsford. Live stream can be viewed at: Memorial Service for Henry Wittenberg

We request that in leu of flowers a donation be made in support of Mennonite Disaster Services. [mds.mennonite.ca](https://mds.mennonite.ca)

