REMEMBERING

Katherine Janzen

July 16, 1922 - April 30, 2022

Our beloved Mom and Oma passed peacefully into heaven on April 30 after a long, well-lived life. Katie was born in Schoenwiese, Ukraine to Nickolaus and Maria Klassen (Niebuhr). She and her younger sister Margaret had a happy childhood, amongst extended family and friends.

Life was difficult under the communist regime, as food shortages and the constant threat of exile for German Mennonites created many hardships for Katie's family. She often told us stories of harrowing escapes. World War II brought its own perils and, to escape communist rule, Katie's family moved to Germany in 1944. There she married her high school sweetheart, Henry Janzen. Their first child, Marie Luise, was born in Germany, but sadly died of meningitis at the age of nine months. Harry, their second child, was born in 1948 and that same year they were able to immigrate to Canada.

Katie and her family eventually settled in Vancouver and attended First United Mennonite Church. They purchased their first house on 55th Avenue where Margie and Ernie were born. Katie loved sewing, cooking, baking and spending time with her family. She was an avid reader, enjoyed playing games of all kinds, and was a fierce competitor. She loved to swim and spent many summers with friends and family in the Okanagan.

In 1978, Henry lost his battle with cancer, leaving Katie a widow at age 56. It was difficult for her, but she had a strong church community and close friends who supported and included her in their lives. She became very independent. She learned to drive, started a part time job and spent a lot of time with her grandchildren. They all have fond memories of sleepovers at Oma's house where she played games with them and always cooked their favourite foods. Even as adults, they loved to spend time with their special Oma.

In 2012, Katie moved to Terrace West in Abbotsford where she enjoyed making new friends and taking part in all the social activities. As her mobility and health declined, she was moved to Menno Hospital (E2) where she appreciated all the special care she received.

Katie is survived by her children, Harry (Tina), Margie (Bob), Ernie (Linda), her 10 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Friday, May 27 at 1:30 PM at The Life Centre, 32027 Peardonville Road, Abbotsford. The family requests that attendees be double vaccinated and wear masks. Please refrain from wearing fragrances. The service will be recorded and available online.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to MCC Canada.