



REMEMBERING Neil Wieler

February 23, 1948 - May 29, 2024



Cornelius (Neil) Wieler was born in Nieheim, Germany on 23 Feb 1948. His parents were Cornelius and Helene (Hildebrandt) Wieler. During World War II his parents and family were able to flee the horrors of Stalin's Communist government in the Ukraine. His parents along with his sisters Helen, Katy, Lydia, Elisabeth and Anne went to Germany via Poland.

During the war, the family moved around Germany looking for safety and employment. After the war, his sister Irma was added to the family. For a while the Wielers lived in Himmighausen. Neil was born in Nieheim a town 8 Km away. His mom was admitted to the Catholic Hospital there. His dad walked the 8 km to see his wife and baby. When he got there, the nuns and nurses were lined up in the hallway excitedly saying "Herr Wieler! Ein Sohn!" (Mister Wieler! You have a son!) So, after 7 girls, the Wieler's had a son! The crown prince!

When Neil was only 8 months old the family emigrated to Canada, directly to Abbotsford where they bought a 10 acre farm on King Road. This was where Neil spent the first 19 years of his life. At first it was a mixed farm - strawberries, raspberries, chickens and even a dairy, but it became a broiler/ layer farm.

Originally, because we didn't have a tractor Dad 'rented' a horse. Riding that horse to cultivate the fields often fell on young Neil - and he didn't really like or trust horses. One day Neil was to return the Clydesdale horse to Mr. Domino, a farmer down the road. While Neil was riding the horse along on the shoulder of a newly excavated road, a large milk truck passed him in a cloud of dust and lots of noise. The horse spooked, jumped straight sideways and left Neil hanging midair. He landed on the gravel and the horse took off. Neil stood on the shoulder until Dad came by in the car on his way to return the rented cultivator to that same farmer. Through tears, Neil told dad the horse was gone. He was sure they'd have to buy Mr. Domino a new horse. Dad smiled and said the only place the horse would go

was home to his own barn. He was right.

Neil's chores every day after school were to feed the broilers, gather the eggs and feed the layers. So he was not unhappy when in his grad year the farm was sold, and mom and dad moved to a new house in Clearbrook. No Chores! Sleeping long on non-school days!

As a child at home, Neil accepted the Lord into his life. The family attended West Abbotsford Mennonite Church and then Ebenezer Mennonite Church. Neil was baptized on the confession of his faith in 1966. It was coincidentally the same day as his high school graduation from MEI. A big day for Neil. In Neil's words "Going to MEI and being part of our church youth group helped ground me in my Christian faith, but even more the teaching of my parents came to me any time I was faced with making decisions about my behavior as a child of God."

Neil treasured his close relationship with our dad. He spoke often of the good discussions they had - about politics, about our Mennonite heritage and very often about the Lord.

Neil met Linda Dyck, the love of his life, at the CPR train station in Mission when their sisters Irma and Norma were leaving for a summer of MCC service in Manitoba. There was a spark, and it didn't take long and the two were dating and falling in love. Neil was pleased to bring his Christian girlfriend home to meet his parents. Linda and Neil were married in 1970 and started life together in Vancouver.

Right out of high school Neil took computer courses. Computer technology was new at that time. He was hired by the Royal Bank in Vancouver and after a few years ICBC. Over the years he worked for various companies but always in the computer program sales areas. For several years he taught a course at BCIT about New and Emerging Trends in Technology. Neil always enjoyed telling us how when he started at the Royal Bank their computer took up a whole floor of the building. Today you could fit a few thousand times the memory that was available on that computer into a micro sd card.

Neil loved golf. He had great golfing buddies. Saturday mornings were often spent at the golf course. Those friendships have lasted through the years. Neil was also instrumental in planning a lot of our Wieler golf tournaments.

Neil loved his family. Neil and Linda welcomed their first son Benjamin in 1975. By then they had moved to the house on 56th Ave. in Aldergrove. Both sets of parents came to help them fix up the house. In 1978 Thomas, their second son was born. Tom spent the first 30 days of his life in ICU at VGH. These were busy years for the young Wieler family. They moved to North Delta and became part of the Cedar Hills Mennonite Church.

It was in North Delta that Ben and Tom had their public school education. Ben kept things interesting and scary with his exceptional skateboarding skills (on occasion skating over cars) while Tom tested his father's accounting skills. This happened when a \$200 long distance charge for calls to New York showed up on the phone bill. Neil indignantly called them and said that certainly wasn't his family's phone call. He was told it was calls to a Wrestling Score Phone Number. It didn't take long

to figure out that Tom and his young elementary school buddies had been innocently calling there regularly to see which wrestler had won the latest match.

In 2008 Neil and Linda were happy to welcome their daughter-in-law Tammy Henry, Ben's wife, into their family. And then, in 2009 they were thrilled at the arrival of Xavier, their new grandson, and in 2014 Oliver, another grandson! Neil loved being a grandfather. One thing he often talked about was that he loved watching the boys develop their impressive gymnastic abilities.

Around this time, Neil and Linda retired, bought a town house in Langley and found a home church at the Langley Mennonite Fellowship.

Neil was scheduled to have open heart surgery on Thursday, May 16. The doctors determined he was not physically strong enough so they sent him home for a few weeks. On Sunday May 26th he was unable to stand and was admitted to the Langley Hospital. The next day night Neil had a serious stroke which caused extreme brain hemorrhage. On Wednesday, May 29th he quietly passed into the presence of his Lord. Now his heart is perfectly whole.

