



REMEMBERING **Susie Thiessen**

April 13, 1929 - August 20, 2021



It is with great sadness we announce the death of our beloved mother, grandmother and great grandmother, Susie. After a long and healthy, vibrant life she peacefully went to rest with her Lord and Savior.

Susie Thiessen (Klassen) was born on April 13th, 1929 in Riverside Municipality of Manitoba. She was the seventh child of twelve born to parents Kornelius H. Klassen and Helene Ratzlaff. Kornelius and Helene had emigrated to Canada in 1926 with five children. The sixth child died in infancy in Siberia.

Susie was the second child born in Canada and lived on a rented farm close to Dunrea, Manitoba. The Great Depression came in the year she was born and the family worked hard to survive. The farm produce kept them alive but her parents decided it was time to move to BC. So after selling the few assets they had, the mother and the youngest three siblings, with a fourth expected in two weeks, took the train on a long journey west. That left eight people to fit into a small Model T for the long trip to BC. Susie remembers sitting next to a big bag of roasted "zwiebach" which they all munched on during the five days journey. This was October of 1936 but the trip went quite well as her father had made arrangements where they would spend the nights. Susie was seven and the youngest so she enjoyed this adventure very much. The families that took in these eight weary travellers were probably glad they were only staying one night!

After a safe trip, they settled in Abbotsford and rented a house on Emerson Road (Street) near the US border. Their father, H. Klassen, had picked up mother and the three kids at the Railway Station in Mission and brought them to the rented house. Two weeks later the youngest child was born and now there were eleven siblings -

6 girls and 5 boys.

The family worked hard to get a place of their own so it wasn't long until they purchased an acreage on Emerson Road. They cleared the land and built a small house, gradually adding barns and such. The South Abbotsford MB Church was almost next door so that was always handy when you only had one car and thirteen people!

Susie and Henry were enrolled in the South Poplar School which was also next to the church yard. Next she went to North Poplar School in Clearbrook for grades 5 and 6, then to Devoch School in Peardonville for grades 7 & 8. When MEI opened its doors in 1944 she was immediately enrolled and finished grades 9, 10, and 11 there. Then she attended one year Bible School and left to work in Vancouver in 1949.

She became a Christian when she was thirteen and was baptized in the South Abbotsford Church when she was sixteen. She loved to sing so she was in many choirs and also sang in double trios for many years both in Abbotsford and later when she joined the Vancouver MB Church.

She worked at Shaughnessy Military Hospital from 1950-1955 in the dietary department until she got married.

She met Peter Thiessen in 1953 and were married in 1955. They had four children: Edward, Linda, Paul and Lori. She stayed at home raising the children until Peter's mother was allowed to emigrate from Russia to Canada in 1966. With the support of her mother-in-law this gave Susie a chance to go back to school and pursue a career. She spent many days and nights studying amidst all the noise and distraction of four lively children. With great determination and God's help she was able to get a teaching license at the age 40. She was most proud of the fact that despite all the distractions and setbacks, she earned her teaching degree.

She was a substitute teacher for five years in the Vancouver Schools until a new school opened in the Richmond Bethel Church in 1974 called Seacliff Christian School. She taught there for twelve full years. Due to failing eyesight she retired in 1987 and became a volunteer at the MCC store on Fraser Street. For her, this was a fun place to work! When Peter passed away in July 2006, she remained living in their house even though it was a large property.

Nicole Isaya (Vidal) (granddaughter - Lori's daughter) came to live with her for one year in 2016 to study photography. Then Sheryl Thiessen, daughter-in-law (Paul's wife) came a few months after as she took up a weekday job in Vancouver and was there until the end of 2020. Susie was diagnosed with lung cancer on March 24, 2020 and through God's grace responded quite well to treatments until her death.

Susie enjoyed many activities such as bowling, volunteering at MCC, painting pictures, softball, crossword puzzles and watching sports but mostly she enjoyed serving the Lord singing with ladies groups and choirs.

Susie made many friends through her work and social activities, was known for her fun competitive spirit and her silly, irrepressible sense of humor. Her positive attitude carried her through many of life's challenges, she was a devoted Christian and relied on God to sustain her. We will miss the joy and fun she brought to our

lives but know she is with her beloved Savior in heaven.

Susie is predeceased by her husband, Peter Thiessen, her parents, five brothers and three sisters. She has left behind two sisters: Mary Klassen and Betty Stone. Her children are Ed (Sue) Thiessen, Lin (Toby) Kreisz, Paul (Sheryl) Thiessen and Lori (Gary) Vidal. Her Grandchildren are Amber (Steve) Willems, Derek (Alicia) Thiessen, Jenny Kreisz, Matthew (Violette) Kreisz, Brook Thiessen, Tanner Thiessen, Kent (Rebekah) Vidal, Mac (Hannah) Vidal, Nicole (Washington) Isaya, Alex (Sam Tameling) Vidal. Great Grandchildren: Daxton, Makena and Maise Willems, Coraline Kreisz, and Nathaniel Isaya.

Funeral service will be held September 3rd at the Midtown Church (formerly Culloden Church) 6060 Culloden Street, Vancouver, BC at 1:00 pm. Due to covid regulations, we must limit the number of attendees and priority will be given to family and close friends. If you wish to attend, please rsvp to edsue@telus.net

