Bessie Laurier Persson



JULY 25, 2017

PERSSON, Bessie Laurier (nee NEILSON)
September 20, 1920 - Colleston, SK
July 25, 2017- Calgary, AB

Bessie Laurier (Yes, after Sir Wilfred!) Persson passed away peacefully at Bow-Crest Care Centre on Tuesday, July 25, 2017 at the age of 96. She grew up on the homestead farm 8 miles east of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan (Colleston School District #9). She fell in love with horses of all kinds, a love that continued throughout her life which she shared with her family. Riding was a favourite activity at birthday parties and her daughter Judy was sent to horse camp several times. Later, she provided horse back rides at the stables for her grandchildren when the family spent summers in Waskesiu. She always attended the Calgary Stampede and loved the chuckwagon races (rooting for Kelly Sutherland!), cutting events, and visiting the livestock barns. In her 50’s she broke and trained her own horse, Kelly. He was definitely a one-person horse!

Bessie was a woman ahead of her time. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Saskatchewan in 1946 and became a Public Health nurse in Shaunavon and Nipawin, using a Harley-Davidson motorcycle for transportation.

Bessie met Ronald Harvey Persson in Waskesiu, Saskatchewan at a dance in the Community Hall. He was a civil engineer for the National Parks and she was on

holiday. They fell in love and were married August 22, 1949. They had four children in the next four years, two boys (Ken 1950, Roy 1954) and two girls (Marian 1951, Judy 1952). Bessie left nursing to raise her family as they were posted in various National Parks across Canada. She returned to work when Roy was in grade 7 and able to get his own lunches. Her tour of duty included Waskesiu, Jasper, Lamont, Banff, Ottawa, Cornwall and Calgary. She finally 'drew the line' when Ron was considering Churchill and the children were in high school.

Bessie had a passion for obstetrics, preferring to work nights on the maternity floors. This led her to further her education in 1974, at the age of 53, when she obtained a Certificate in Advanced Practical Obstetrics (midwifery) from the University of Alberta.

Although she never delivered any of her six grandchildren or four great-grandchildren, she played a major role in their lives as a kind, fun and loving caregiver. Bessie provided all of the childcare for grandchildren Christopher and Anne - and when they were old enough to look after themselves, she still came to their home several days a week to 'look after the dogs' (Buck and Barley), even once hiking 5 km (at age 75) in a blizzard since the buses weren't running. Their friends knew her fondly as a fixture in their lives as she cheered and rang cowbells at all of their baseball games. Her contributions extended to planting seeds of appreciation for music, art and poetry (often recited) to her children, grandchildren and their friends. She was so loving and was never happier than when she was giving of herself.

Grandchildren Karl, Karen, Rachel and Christina, living in Regina, didn't get to see their grandma as much, but she provided cabins at Waskesiu every summer so all her children and grandchildren could re-unite and visit. Bessie also hosted her out-of-town family every year at Christmas when she would cook a Swedish Christmas Eve feast and the traditional Christmas Day turkey for all.

Bessie possessed a quiet but formidable strength, a dry sense of humour, a ready and beautiful smile (noted by many of her caregivers at Bow-Crest) even as she aged, and an eagerness to help with anything. She lived her Christian beliefs and had a profound influence on all who knew her. “Her soul and joy just shone.”

The family will always be thankful for the considerate and loving care that she received at Bow-Crest for the past 2½ years.

Bessie is lovingly remembered by her four children, Kenneth, Marian (Arthur), Judy (Steve) and Roy; her six grandchildren, Christopher (Caroline), Karl (Meg), Anne (Adrian), Karen, Rachel (Cordel) and Christina; four great-grandchildren, Andrew, Peyton, Edward and Bobby, as well as her sister-in-law, Elsie Pope. She was predeceased by her husband, Ron (1987); brother, Don and his wife, Lucille; sister, Wilda and her husband, Jim; brother-in-law, Eric and his wife, Agnes and brother-in-law, Henry.

A Celebration of Bessie’s Life will be held at Hope Lutheran Church, 3527 Boulton Road NW, Calgary, AB on Tuesday, September 12, 2017 at 1:00 pm. Flowers are gratefully declined. Donations, in memory of Bessie, may be made to Bow-Crest Care Centre-Resident Enhancement Fund, 5927 Bowness Road NW, Calgary, AB, T3B 0C7 or to Canadian Lutheran World Relief (clwr.org)

Messages of Condolence

To all of Bessie's family and friends and care givers:
There was strong, caring and wise woman. We were all so fortunate to have been in her presence. And while she will be missed and remembered; she would insist that it was her time, she is at peace and she would want us all to have faith and carry on. We have many fond memories of times spent with the Persson clan. Bessie will continue to be a force when ever we are together.
Our love and prayers for comfort go out to you all.
Maureen, Rod, Kea and Kendra

— Maureen and Rod and Kea and Kendra Adachi

God Speed Gramma Bessie! Will never for get your smile, chuckle, love---and of course your Sweedish Tea Ring!

Much Love to Aunty Judy and all family and friends mourning this loss.

Love Mike, Jace, Mick and Kristi

— Kristi Watchuk

A finely written obituary for a most deserving person. It was my privilege to know Bessie and sister Wilda, who both served in the nursing profession. Bessie was always unfailingly hospitable to me and my family and it was always a pleasure to spend time in her company. What an achievement to have lived so long and left behind such a legacy of love and admiration.
My condolences to all the Persson offspring and their families and to cousins and friends who will always remember her with a sense of joy that she was once among us.

— Lisa Henderson

Bessie was a good and Godly person, woman, mother, grandmother, and friend; a loving and special child of God. Bessie is now home, surrounded by love and we will see her again someday when we are able to join her there. My condolences to Bessie's family on her leaving this earthly existence; but, at 96 years old, we were at least blessed to have her here for a lot of earthly years. (smile)

— Marnie Shaw

Oh Judy..... Your mom was an important woman in my life and a wonderful friend to my own mother. Strong. Decisive. Determined. Independent. Loving. Caring. Energetic. So many fine qualities in one person.... What a great role model! So glad to have known her. My children enjoyed their 'Gramma Bessie' - in person and through the birthday cards that arrived like clockwork, a fiver tucked in to do with whatever the celebrant desired. What a treat! Please extend our condolences to Ken, Marion, and Roy. 'Gramma Bessie' will be sorely missed.

— Sheila (Stanley) Longton

Bessie's voice was one of calm, reason, and common sense. She was a good friend to me and my family, and we loved her. Thanks for sharing this extraordinary woman with us!

— Sheila (Stanley) Longton

Dear Judy, Marion, Kenneth and Roy,
Please accept my condolences on the passing of your Mom. I remember coming to your house in Banff to play when we were kids, and again in Calgary when we were in High School and heading out skiing. Your mom was always gracious and welcoming.
Warm regards,
Carole Porter

— Carole Porter

Hi Ken So sorry to hear of the loss of your mother. I only had the opportunity of having tea with her twice over the years. To me she seemed like a very warm, caring person. She lived a very long life and having not seen or spoke her for a number of years, probably a very healthy life. May she rest in peace
All the best Ken
Sylvia

— sylvia evans

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https://www.myalternatives.ca/obituaries/persson-bessie-laurier

Printed on November 25, 2026