

Donald James Robinson

JANUARY 26, 2024



Donald James Robinson

November 26, 1926 - January 26, 2024

Donald James Robinson, 97, passed away peacefully at home on January 26, 2024 with loving family by his side. Don led a long and interesting life which began on a stormy November night in a farmhouse on the home quarter near Kedleston. The doctor on call got lost in a blinding blizzard on the way to the farm but finally arrived just in time for Don's entrance into the world. The farm was a great place for a young lad to grow up with lots of room to explore, all kinds of animals, and no end of sunny days. He lived through the dirty thirties and remembered the hordes of grasshoppers, the heat, the big dark dust storms. He and his active school chums raced tumble weeds and Russian thistles across the school yard. Don and his two sisters made a four mile trip to Moorland School and four miles back every school day through winter storms and prairie heat. Only on two occasions did the horse and conveyance return without him.

Don finessed his age to join the army in 1944 when he was 17 years old. He volunteered for the Pacific, however the war ended before he was deployed. Not quite ready to settle down, he bought a reconditioned '45 Harley Davidson motorcycle and set off to explore parts north where he worked with the DNR to fight forest fires, build out-of-the-way roads in provincial parks, and drove heavy logging sleighs to freight hall goods to the most northern parts of the province. The stories he would tell of the gruelling work and colourful characters he

encountered during this time were legendary. He operated the last of the sleighs before airplanes were introduced to do the job.

Don was drawn back to the farm in 1949 where he sold his prized motorcycle to buy a three-row cultivator. His passion for farming took seed and he evolved the farm strategically over his lifetime with cattle and grain operations. During this time, he also served the rural municipality of Dufferin for thirty years.

His curiosity about airplanes led him to enroll in the Regina Flying Club where he earned his private pilot's license in 1952. Not many farmers could boast of having a Piper Cub airplane, and Don charismatically used this to his advantage to court the beautiful school teacher who was new to the area. With his flirtatious charm, he edged out other interested suitors and married Theresa Fritz in 1954.

Don's passion for farming and family and friends would extend over the next 75 years. He and Theresa raised six children on the farm where family, hard work, adventure, a love of the outdoors, time at the beach, and visits with good neighbours filled the days. He loved the land and the area where he grew up. He loved driving the countryside with Theresa to inspect the crops, look in on the cows, and check out the pastures in all seasons, delighting in the saying "if you're not getting stuck, you're not trying hard enough".

Farming comes with a lot of ups and downs. It either rained too much or not enough. It was physically demanding, long days and short nights. Time off was recorded in hours, not days or weeks. He was tough as nails and his work ethic rivalled that of those half his age. He instilled this work ethic in his six children who were enlisted to do chores before school, pick rocks, chase cows, haul bales, fix fences, and help with harvests long into the autumn nights. As we have often reflected, we fondly agree he was the toughest boss we have ever had. Don could fix anything and often invented new ways to keep things going. We marvelled at his ingenuity.

After 39 years of marriage, Theresa died suddenly in 1993. This was devastating to Don. However, years later, he was so fortunate to find great companionship with the second love of his life Ethel Measner. They shared a passion for farming, dancing and an active lifestyle for 25 years, before Ethel's passing in 2023.

Don will be remembered for his love of spirited conversation. He loved to engage people and was known to sometimes change sides just to keep the debate going. He had an insatiable curiosity about the world and people with whom he came in to contact. And with his wonderful sense of humour, he was the greatest story teller we will ever know.

Like many from his generation, the changes he embraced throughout nearly a century are almost incomprehensible. He would be in his 20's before he lived in a home with electricity and running water. Decades on, he was intrigued with the latest technology in farm machinery. He remained convinced he could drive the tractor in a straighter line than the state-of-the-art gps with which it was equipped.

Don was active on the farm almost to the very end...cutting hay, fencing, digging dugouts, and helping his son. Ken and his family have taken over the Robinson farm, which is now into its second century of operations.

His family is deeply saddened by his passing. We feel so grateful for the colourful life we shared with him and miss him dearly. Don is predeceased by his first wife Theresa Robinson and second wife Ethel Measner, two children (Colleen and Penny) and two grandchildren (Jimmy and Melodie). He is survived by his two sisters Brenda Harder and June Baumgartner and his sister-in-law's Maureena Fritz and Ruth Fritz, his five children Gale Seidlitz (Dave), Tracy Robinson, Anita Robinson (Tim), Tara Robinson, and Ken Robinson (Holly), four stepchildren Murray Measner (Liz), Adrian Measner (Lynn), Bev Fraser and Warren Measner

(Joanne) and many loving grandchildren and great grandchildren.

In typical Don fashion, there are no services planned, certainly no pomp and circumstance.

A celebration of life will take place at the Lumsden Centennial Hall February 24, 2024 at 2:00pm. Lunch will follow. In lieu of flowers, donations in Don's memory can be made to the Kedleston Community Cemetery Box 143, Dilke, SK S0G 1C0, or Sharon Fahlman asfahlman@sasktel.net.

Messages of Condolence

My deepest sympathies for your loss. Mr. Robinson clearly lived a great and rewarding life and, based on the little I know, is leaving behind a great legacy.

— **Olivier Chouc**

Sending you all my love.

I have such fond memories as a child of Uncle Don, he had the greatest sense of humor and I loved his stories, I remember him also loving a good debate. I remember how hard he worked on the farm and I remember how much he loved his family.

Rest in peace Uncle Don.

— **Kimberley Morgan (Bleile)**

Dear Tracy, please accept my heartfelt condolences for the loss of your father. From what I know of you, it's evident that your father was a significant influence in your life. His wisdom, love, and guidance surely played a pivotal role in shaping the remarkable person and leader you are today. My sympathies also to all the family and friends.

— **Josée Girard**

Dear Tracy,

What a wonderful and spirited life your father Donald has lived. Thank you for sharing his inspiring life story. My family and I send you our most sincere condolences for your loss.

— **Patrick Lortie**



<https://www.myalternatives.ca/obituaries/robinson-donald-james>

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