Hendrikje Vantol

MARCH 2, 2016



Our Dear Mother, Grand Mother, Great Grand Mother,

and yes, Great Great Grand Mother

Hendrikje Vantol – Ambagtsheer

1919 – 2016

Went Home to be with Jesus

March 2, 2016

Mom was born in the Netherlands in April of 1919. Her parents were Arie and Rookje Ambagtsheer. She was one of six siblings, the second from last.

She was thirteen years old, when her father Arie, passed away. Her mother Rookje was alone for years, when she met a man by the name of Piet de Jong. It was not long before they were married. This man was a good forty years old and a bachelor. A brave man to marry a woman with six children, all well into their teens. In time they had a daughter, who most of us here came to know and love as “Tante (Aunt) Jopie”. As time went on she periodically came to visit us here in Canada.

In 1939 Mom had her first child. A son. Cornelis. It was then that the war broke out, and it was not long before the Country was occupied by the Germans. Near the end of the war, her first born was hospitalized with spinal meningitis and TB. In those days that was considered a fatal disease. As it turned out, after weeks in

the hospital, he survived. Many considered this a miracle. After his discharge she had to periodically take him to the hospital for examination and x-rays. This place was located in Gouda app ---miles, by bicycle. This was a feat in itself, let alone the fact that we were still occupied, and the general surroundings were not exactly user friendly.

At the end of the war she had twins, a boy and a girl. Rookje and Arie. At six months Arie passed away from meningitis. I slept in the attic at that time. To this day I can remember hearing her scream when she discovered him.

May 1945, we were liberated by Canadian troops. Everyone was simply drunk with joy. I remember the troops with their armaments passing by on the other side of the canal. Up until then I was afraid of soldiers. But not of these. They had a totally different spirit.

After that, things went relatively normal. Everyone worked hard at getting back to normal. Brother Jim came along, and then brother Harry.

Close to the end of the 1940's, there was a lot of talk about immigration. Particularly to Canada. Lots of room, lots of work, and plenty of opportunity. After much deliberation, Mom and Dad decided to take the plunge. Needles to say, this was not an easy decision.

Nevertheless, in June of 1952 we made a tearful departure to the "land of promise". We made the trip by boat and train. Mom was confined to our stateroom and took seasickness to new heights. Boy, was she sick. But we managed to make the crossing. We landed in Halifax harbor on July 1, 1952. After that we boarded a train, (with a steam locomotive) for our trip across Canada. Endless. Five Days.

We arrived in Vancouver B.C. and moved into an "Immigration House", while Dad looked for work, and we looked for a permanent place to stay. We were no sooner

settled in the Immigration house, when Jimmy was hospitalized with rheumatic fever. This he and us also survived, PTL, and he was discharged with a slight heart murmur, and a healthy fear of needles.

Dad soon found work and a place to live. 51st Ave near Victoria Dr. Then to Glenn Drive, then to Richmond. In the meantime Jenny and Cindy came along, giving us two Canadians. Other than a couple of miscarriages, Mom faired quite well. She had “fun” learning the language. She had her share of pain, and delight, in raising her six (stubborn?) children.

After the children were out of the house, the three sons built a brand new house in Cloverdale for them. This under the watchful eye of Harry our supreme commander/supervisor/slave driver, and Dianne our talented architect.

They spent many peaceful years there, until Dad showed signs of Alzheimer's. Mom took care of him for seven to eight years, until she couldn’t anymore. Dad was moved to Ebenezer care home, much to Mom’s displeasure. But she had no choice.

She lived alone until Dad passed away in 2003 and then made the move to an apartment in Elim. Not long after that, she became more and more in need of help herself. When she started falling and her eye sight was failing, it became necessary to move her to the Harrison at Elim, where she received compassionate and loving care. It was there, on March 2, 2016, she went home to be with Jesus.

In the end of November last year she was notified that her baby sister (Tante Jopie) had passed away. This made her very sad, but was comforted with the thought that Jopie was safe in the arms of Jesus.

Quite an eventful life. In April she would have turned 97 years old. She loved to have the Word read to her and parting prayer before we would leave. She was quite a lady. Always faithful. Hard working. Always ready to speak her mind.

It was a privilege to have her as a Mother.

You are invited to leave a personal message of condolence for the family.

Messages of Condolence

As her oldest daughter, I express my deepest sympathy to all my family and those who loved her.
Mom, I will love you forever!
I will love you for always!
Rosie

— Rosie van Tol

Thank you so much for sharing these memories, Uncle Cor. Reading these words and remembering pieces of Oma's story not told here both humble me and make me profoundly grateful. Sending love to all of my family, spread across the world as they are.

— Michelle Bennett

We want to express our sympathy to John, Cindy, their family and all of you. We have met many of you in past years. We are sorry for your loss and pray for a blessing on your day tomorrow. May God grant you all comfort.
Love, Jake and Donna

— Jake and Donna Stelpstra

My deepest condolences to the Okie and her family

— Darlene Keks

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