



Peter van Leyen

Peter died peacefully at Dundas Manor in Winchester, Ontario on Tuesday, June 29, 2021 with family at his side. He was a loving husband of D. Blanche van Leyen (deceased, nee St-Aubin) and Annabeth van Leyen (nee Blair Cochrane) and father of Nancy Mallette (Robert), Ben van Leyen (Janet), Susan van Leyen and Grant van Leyen (Lianne) and grandfather of Jason, Shawn, Samantha and Stephanie.

He was a dear brother of Theo and Nell and was predeceased by parents Peter Sr. and Catharina van Leyen and his brothers Ben, Nick and Andy.

Peter was born in Sijbekarspel, North Holland, Netherlands. Following the liberation of the Netherlands and the end of WWII, he and his family emigrated to Canada in 1947 when Peter was 17 years old. The family sailed to Canada and landed at Pier 21, Halifax, Nova Scotia and then traveled by train to work on their sponsor's farm in Renfrew, Ontario. Eventually Peter's father purchased a farm in Renfrew, where he and his brothers worked together alongside their father. Eventually, Peter moved to Ottawa where he became a brick and stone mason, a craft he practiced and taught family throughout his life. Later on he, along with his brother Ben owned van Leyen Brothers Construction, building houses. Peter moved on and worked as heavy equipment operator and foreman at Vanson Construction, where he met his future business partner Ron Vandusen. They went on to form a heavy construction company, Pedro Construction and then built Pedro Storage. Following his retirement, he moved from the family home he built in Carlsbad Springs to his beloved 150 acre farm located east of Vernon, Ontario. Where he worked, well into his 80s, to improve drainage, clear ditches, cut trees, plant and harvest cash crops and turned a small log house into a large comfortable and modern home which was covered in field stone picked from his fields and laid by his own hands. When Peter wasn't working, which wasn't often, you could often find him helping family, telling stories, reading or tinkering away on a project. He woke early, started work and maintained his habit of taking a coffee break, which he was happy to share with others. He adored anything with sugar and many heard and knew his particular refrain; "where are the cookies", pronounced koekjes in his softened Dutch accent.

Special thanks to Dundas Manor for the loving care and attention they provided Peter from July, 2018 to his death.

A private family service will be held on July 24, 2021. Those wishing to remember Peter with a memorial donation please consider [Dundas Manor](#), Winchester, Ontario or an Alzheimer's society.