

Willford, Lesley Roy

August 23, 2023



LESLEY ROY WILLFORD

June 16th, 1935 □ August 21st, 2023

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of Lesley Roy Willford who entered Heaven on Monday, August 21st, 2023 at the age of 88 years. Les was the son of Archie and Fern Willford who were farming in Coronach, Saskatchewan when the infamous Dirty Thirties hit. They were forced to make tracks for greener pastures and moved to Birch Hills, Saskatchewan where Les was born on July 16th, 1935. The family farmed there for a few years and returned to their farm in Coronach in 1941 or 1942. Les was the seventh of eight children. His early childhood was spent learning the merits of hard work and obedience, guided by loving parents and a firm hand. Being one of the youngest ones in the family he was always honing his skills and eager to learn everything the older boys were doing, mostly in an effort to

avoid doing dishes and get on to the real work. This included running farm equipment, picking rocks (another one he preferred to avoid), and helping move buildings including the house where they lived in Coronach. He spoke often of the early years, riding horses to school or with the sleigh in the winter. He always looked back on these early days with fond memories and interesting stories. Les traded school in grade 10 for a curling bonspiel (later obtaining his GED) and then started to work as he couldn't wait to start making money and get on his way. He worked for farmers, the telegraph near Churchill, on the oil rigs, driving cab, and a variety of other early jobs. On June 17th, 1961 he married Lillian (Noble) and settled in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, bought a house on the corner of 9th Ave W and Stadacona, and started to raise their family. In April 1966 they purchased an acreage west of Moose Jaw where they lived for many years, eventually subdividing the land two more times (1993 and 2007) and building not one but two new homes. Over the years the acreage was used for snowmobile parties, rides on the ponies, picnics, weekly slow-pitch practices, and a variety of other activities. The house always welcomed company with an open door policy and nobody left hungry. Many times, Les would arrive home to friends already being there with the coffee on, ready to play cards or games, which he loved. He was a leader in the Christian Service Brigade, coached Ringette and Hockey for his children's teams, and played slow-pitch with the Dept of Highways team and the Church youth team. He enjoyed playing pool, shuffleboard, and darts. Sunday mornings he would often pick up the guitar to play and sing while he waited for the family to get ready for church.

Les as an automotive mechanic, owned and operated Monarch BA Service Station (Gulf) for 11 years, worked at Backlin Trailer Sales repairing and selling trailers, sold snowmobiles, and eventually settled at Department of Highways where he worked for 21 years doing heavy duty mechanics and then in the electrical room. Outside of work, Les was never happier than when he was in the shop working on a project. He took on many projects and was proficient at everything. He always tried to make whatever he needed, and often said "by the time I'm done, I will know how to do it". Les lived his life with a can-do attitude and was always willing to lend a hand to anyone. Many a friendship was

created this way. In 1996 Les retired from Highways and spent time golfing, going to the Warrior games, woodworking, and visiting with friends and family. He was predeceased by his daughter, Lori Martin; parents, Archie and Fern Willford; and siblings: Marie McKee, Dan Willford, and Ina Lee. Les is survived by his loving wife of 62 years, Lillian; children, Neil Willford (Sheila) and Grant Willford (Rachel); grandchildren: Tyler Martin (Zoe), Andrew Martin (Erin), ShayLynn Willford, Ryan Traves (Diane), Austin Lagasse, Colin Willford, Matthew Willford, and Kaitlyn Willford; great-grandchild, Dade Traves; siblings: Edith Schnell, Bernice Foley, Dwain Willford (Carol), and Earl Willford (Helen); and in-laws, Bev Noble and Gerald Noble (Gladys).

The Funeral Service will be held on Tuesday, August 29th, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. in Moose Jaw Funeral Home. Pastor Dave Nelson will officiate and a private family interment will take place in Rosedale Cemetery. **Those not able to attend may view the service virtually by going to**

www.moosejawfuneralhome.com/webcast/. In lieu of flowers, donations in Les' name may be made to the Alzheimer Association of Saskatchewan, 301 – 2550 – 12th Ave, Regina, SK S4P 3X1 or Canadian Cancer Society, 200-325 Manning Road NE, Calgary, AB T2E 2P5. Arrangements are entrusted to Moose Jaw Funeral Home, 268 Mulberry Lane. Gary McDowell, Funeral Director 306-693-4550

1.



Corliss Okerstrom on August 23, 2023 at 7:04 pm

Thoughts and prayers for all of you Remember the good times and Les will be with you

[Reply](#)

2.



Stuart Anderson on August 24, 2023 at 9:48 am

I knew Les from his service station days. I bought the property on 1st & Manitoba several years after. Les was one of the good guys.

[Reply](#)

3.



Ron and Elaine Yaganiski on August 24, 2023 at 10:38 am

So sorry Lillian and family to read of the loss of you dear husband, father and grandfather. Our thoughts and prayers are with you in your time of sorrow. Rip in peace Les.

[Reply](#)

4.



Carol (Bilodeau) Rempel on August 24, 2023 at 7:13 pm

Lil, Neil and family,

Each of your family holds a special place in my heart, and I mourn with you as I learn of Les' passing. I can't think of Les without feeling the warmth of his smile and hearing your laughter, Lil. One of my favourite memories of Les was when he helped me get my first car, "Myrtle". The joy and genuine hospitality of your home has never left me. Though I know he is safe in our Saviour's arms, he is

deeply missed here.

X0,

[Reply](#)

5.



Linda Foley Thiessen on August 29, 2023 at 2:19 pm

What a beautiful tribute to Uncle Les! He was a wonderful husband, father, grandfather and uncle! I have many wonderful memories of visiting at your home, Aunt Lillian ☐ We loved coming to your home! As was said today, you were both so welcoming and loving. I was only 11 when you and Uncle Les were married but I and my sister, Maureen, remember that day! We were so excited to be there!

When I had to write some of my Grade 12 exams in Moose Jaw in the month of August (after the accident) I stayed with you. Uncle Les gave me a ride downtown to the high school. I was quite overwhelmed seeing the size of that school, but he encouraged me!

I remember when you and Uncle Les visited Dwayne and I in Calgary; what a special day that was. I was expecting at the time, and I asked if you would mind if I used the name Lori, if I had a girl. Of course, you didn't mind ☐

There are many, many memories and I thank you for each one. I wish I could have been there today!! Sending much love and many hugs ☐

[Reply](#)

