
PESKETT, Charles Arthur (1902-2003)

Compiled by Lorna Peskett Hancock

Born November 6, 1902 in Owen Sound, Ontario, passed away peacefully on November 15, 2003 in Langley, BC. At the Nov 19, 2003 service held at Henderson's Funeral Home in Langley, the Honourary Bearers were:

Philip Vandekerkhove II, Philip Vandekerkhove III, Anthony Vandekerkhove, Dominic Vandekerkhove, Tate Millership, Bob Peskett, Chris Peskett, Ryan Peskett and Brandt Peskett.

Internment was on November 21, 2003 in Naramata Cemetery. The Bearers were:

Philip Vandekerkhove Sr., Les Miller, Ramsey Bushnaq, Malcolm Millership, Josh Shaak-Miller, Luis Peskett, Marvin Peskett, Joseph Vandekerkhove, Luke Vandekerkhove, and Mark Vandekerkhove.

To Whom it may Concern,

This is not intended to be a biography of my life but it may develop partially into that. I am 94 years old and my main purpose for writing this letter is to see if there is anyone out there that remembers me and the good old days or events that I may refer to.

Maybe I should introduce myself first. My name is Charles Arthur Peskett (CAP). I was born in Owen Sound, Ontario, and moved with my parents to Hallboro, Manitoba, which is 6 miles south of Neepawa, Manitoba. Our farm was on the west side of the road and a railroad track but the corner of our place then headed more easterly. The Hallboro Station was about 1/4 or 1/2 mile from our house and some of our neighbours, as I recall, were the Dick Morrison family- Sadie, Maudy, Flossie, Wesley, Johnny and Robbie.

The John Sage family - Emma, Annie, Charlie (my age and school chum), Freddie and Mary. Mrs Sage was a Laing family member before marriage. Some other families were the Annisons, Harrisons, Dudenhoffers, John Halls, Seabys and many others I do not recall at present. I should have mentioned sooner that our immediate family consisted of eldest Winnie, then Allie, James, Harold, Arthur (me) and Herbert.

We moved from there to Dauphin, Manitoba, where my father purchased a half section of land about 2.5 miles east of Dauphin on the Dauphin Lake Road, which is 10 miles east of Dauphin. A busy road in the summertime. As I remember it, we caught a school bus each morning to attend school in Dauphin. My brother, Herbert, attended McKenzie school

and I went to Whitmore where I finished my education (grade 8) on a reputation. I was not in school from Easter onward due to the fact that it was wartime and help was scarce. My parents kept me home to help them on the farm. A few years later we moved to Gilbert Plains, Manitoba, where my father purchased a farm 640 acres, 6.5 miles south of GP and 1 mile east then 1/2 mile south to the building site. 9-24-22.

Our neighbours there were the Bassetts, Rosattos: Morris, Vernon, Fred and Roy and two sisters, Olive was the youngest of the two. Then there was the 3 Castle brothers I believe their names were Les, Duane and Erwin. Other neighbours were George Lee, Russ Hawkins, Dimonicho, Oscar and Billy Schafer and many others I do not readily recall.

If someone reads these few remarks and has some knowledge of some of the things I have mentioned I would certainly be glad to hear from them. Your reply would be very much appreciated by

*C A Peskett
19392 72 Ave
Surrey, BC*

[This letter was sent to the local newspaper after being typed out by Michelle Hancock. We decided it was a piece of history we should all have in CAP's handwriting written in September of 1977.]

A Few Teenage Memories of her Dad by Lorna (Peskett) Hancock:

When I was fourteen:

If I got off the school bus down by the Naramata store instead of the elementary school where we normally did, and went to the shelves I got two chocolate bars, then went to the counter and TOLD Dudley Taylor that I would like to 'put these on our bill', then he'd do it. All I had to do was sign for them.

\$40 worth of chocolate bars later, I get called downstairs where my Dad has his secretary desk, and he's looking at this piece of paper with a slight frown. He shows me this piece of paper (the store bill with my signatures) and says to me 'Lorna, did you put this stuff on our bill?'

I nodded, because I couldn't speak. He said 'We have too many people to feed. We can't afford this.' I said 'OK'. He never said anything else, and I never did it again. I did, however, have 12 cavities that year which hurt like hell . . .

When I was sixteen:

As all kids who grow up in Naramata know, Naramata can be one dull town over the winter when you're a kid. On the day that I turned sixteen, I got my learner's driver's license and shortly thereafter I was driving that road between Naramata and Penticton just like a pro.

Unfortunately, my dad never taught me a thing about how a car works, other than what was obvious, like that a car needed gas to make it go. One day, I'm driving into town and I notice there's a little flickering going on with one of the lights on the dash. Oh well, it must mean something, but I wasn't too worried, I'd check it out in town.

I didn't make it to town because the car stopped rather dramatically and I skidded to a stop at the side of the road. I can't remember if I hitchhiked or walked back home, but I told my dad there was something seriously wrong with that car. He went and had a look, then the car was towed to town, then we said good-bye to the car. They don't do well when they run out of oil. All my Dad ever said was 'That's too bad.' No lectures, no yelling, no anything. No discussion, either. He then went and figured out how to get another car somehow.

When I was seventeen:

Another favourite. By this time, Brian (husband) and I had been going out for a while and we were pretty good friends . . . Brian had decided that he was going to go to Kamloops with a friend and they were going to look for work in the Kamloops area. Well, they left that day, didn't find anything and knew that they might as well come home.

It was the middle of the night when they returned to Naramata and, instead of going home, Brian decided he wanted to

see ME instead of going right home. So, he drives in the drive-way, parks, sneaks quietly into the house and comes to my bedroom which I shared with my sister, Jane. Hey, I'm happy to see him, it's cold and he climbs under the covers. So there's Jane, me and Brian and it's 3:00ish am.

The door opens, and my dad pokes his head in. He looks at us, all three of us, Brian under the covers and he says "Oh, Hi, Brian. It's just you.' And he shuts the door on his way out, and goes back to bed.

NOTE: The other kids in the family were pretty perfect as teenagers. Lorna really pushed the envelope and Dad came through with flying colours!

- - -

When I was going to the rink to practice figure skating, I would say "See you later, Grandpa." He'd say "Where are you off to?" I would say: "I am going to the rink" and then he would say " Happy Landings!" *Grandson Mark Vandekerkhove*

Dad was really good at holding a rattle, rocking a bassinette, or holding a baby. Keeping the babies happy for a while. He would spend hours and hours, never complain and he would just keep going. *Daughter Sally Vandekerkhove*

When Art and Alice came to Maui 12 years ago, he must have been 89, we went up to Haleakela, the big volcano in the middle of the island. He got a kick out of a sign "Walk slowly at this altitude". With his cane in hand, he wanted to have his picture taken beside that sign. So we did. *Son in law Les Miller*

Dad made a cupboard for my sewing once with 48 drawers. At first he said that he didn't know how to make one. Then we talked. I said "Dad, how do you make one drawer?" Then he said how he would do that. Then I said "Well, just do that 48 times and he did." *Daughter Carol Millership*

Grandpa was always happy. I never remember him cranky or unkind. He liked to play cards and do crosswords and he liked a good joke, especially when he told it. *Granddaughter Sara Shaak*

We had to move the freezer from one side of the basement to the other. Grandpa figured that out. He took 3 heavy metal pipes, kept repositioning them and rolled that freezer right across the floor by himself. I also remember that when we had a washing machine that had a lid that wouldn't stay open because of a cupboard right above. Dad got a nail, bent it, installed it on the shelf to hook the lid. That solved our lid problem. We still have the nail holding up the lid. Thanks Dad. *Daughter Lorna Hancock*

The first things I think of when I think of Grandpa Peskett are ice cream, crib and crosswords. Grandpa Peskett could always be seen shuffling a deck of cards at the large dining room table, preparing for another game of crib where again he beats my Dad, Louis. I remember watching him and you could always tell he knew he was going to win because his face would change from a look of concentration to a huge grin. This grin also appeared whenever he had dessert and Grandma would bring out the 4 litre bucket of ice cream. Grandpa would lick his lips and we all knew he was ready for business.

Grandpa was a kind-hearted, caring man who I am so privileged to have known. His gentleness and calm demeanour are just a few of the many characteristics that we all love in him. Grandpa, you will be missed, but we are so happy that you were able to share your life with us. *Granddaughter Kymmie Randall (Peskett)*

Dad loved telling funny jokes. One day, he said to Joseph "Joseph, you smell like a dog." And Joseph kind of looked at him funny, so he said it again. Joseph didn't look too happy, so he said "Well, you do use your nose, don't you?" *Daughter Sally Van*

When I remember Grandpa, I remember a man of few words and many emotions. Whether it was the look of determination and concentration that often crossed his face during an especially challenging crib game or crossword puzzle, or the spark of delight and child-like glee that flickered in his eyes when a big bowl of ice cream was put in front of him, it was obvious that Grandpa experienced life whole heartedly. Even his perfectly timed, witty quips were evidence of the wonderful fullness of Grandpa's character. Though he did not say much, what he did say was simple and profound.

Having lived 101 years, I think Grandpa understood the meaning that life had to offer. I was always proud to be in the presence of a man that I saw as an inspiration and a role model. Knowing he loved me made me feel special and by his

hugs you could always feel his heart.

Grandpa lived a dignified and meaningful life. He was not a boastful or bossy man by nature and instead of telling us how we should live, I believe that he showed us every day. It was Grandpa that taught me to find the humour in life and that gave me the courage to try things, knowing that life is written in pencil and mistakes can be erased. I also learned from him that you don't always have to know the answers. It's okay to ask for help because sometimes all we need is a little direction for things to fall into place. Though I miss Grandpa, I know he will always be with me. *Granddaughter Candice Peskett*

Dad was a great speller. We would have spelling bees even in the last few weeks of his life. He would repeat the word asked and then say each letter perfectly. And these were not easy words. Dad was a great speller. *Son Louis Peskett*
We were always homesick. I remember being homesick when I was babysitting overnight. I just wanted to be home. *Daughter Sally Van*

When I was 9 or 10, I remember reading the bible and Dad would read along or ahead of me at times. He knew all the words. I would skip ahead and again, he knew all the words. I would pause and he would carry on, reading from memory. I would open the bible to a page randomly and he would carry on reading. He could say what book and verse it was too. Dad really knew the bible. *Son Louis Peskett*

Grandpa was always fun to be with. He liked playing cards and always had a joke to tell. He was a wonderful Grandpa and I will miss him very much. *Granddaughter Kim Shaak*

We had a big rat that used to be in the horse barn on our property. It scared us a lot and we were afraid to go into the barn. Grandpa went in and saw the rat in the feed bin. He made a fist and punched out that rat and that was the end of that! *The Vandekerkhove kids*

Dad says that they had one really smart dog. Collie could climb up the ladder facing up and down the ladder facing down. He loved collies! *Daughter Sally Van*

I remember being at the Double Tree Suites in Seattle. Grandpa taught us how to dive by getting on the picnic table and diving in. At the time we were pretty impressed, but later when we thought about it we realized he was 85 at the time. *The Vandekerkhove kids*

The two little yappy dogs at Sally and Phil's should really be outside, Grandpa decided. He was going to make them a little dog house - 2 feet by 2 feet should be enough he thought. Then he had another idea, why not have the doctor remove their voice boxes. *Daughter Sally Van*

What is the difference between a red dog and a banana? If anyone knows the answer, tell Louis. Dad asked him this one over the last few years and never did tell him the answer. [editor: *No answer on Google*]

Every time I drive over the Patullo Bridge, I am reminded of antiques, then Dad and Mom. Many of us kids received beautiful antiques from some wonderful shop they had found. One day, driving over the Patullo Bridge with an antique sideboard strapped on the top of the car, Grandpa's tie-down job just didn't make it. The sideboard smashed on the bridge. I can't imagine what followed. Hopefully everyone was okay. But one thing for sure is that the sideboard is no longer with us! *Daughter Jane Shaak*

Nearing Christmas one year, Dad offered to bring the turkey from the upstairs fridge. He somehow lost his balance on the way down the stairs and ended up bouncing on his butt all the way down the stairs. The amazing thing was that the turkey was totally intact. That was a great balancing act, Grandpa. *Daughter Sally Van*

Sally and Phil tell about a trip that they were getting ready for. Chaos reigned supreme that morning. Everyone was running around trying to get packed. Grandpa said 'Yes, you better really hurry up because you are going on a holiday!' We all calmed down then and there. *Daughter Sally Van*

He sent a letter to where he grew up to see if "anyone remembered me and the good old days or events I may refer to." He had expectations that he would get letters back. In the end he got only one reply from a guy named Shunk. He proba-

bly imagined that there were people there that would remember him, his family or some of the events. The reality was that he wrote the letter at 94 years of age and it would have been a miracle to have found someone that remembered him from the good old days. He was disappointed. *Daughter Sally Van*

I was always surprised at some of the things that Dad talked about of his experiences. He seldom would bring things up unless it might pertain to something that would help someone to give me a better understanding. *Daughter Sally Van*
On getting a loan from Dad: "I'll borrow this from you till you forget." And then we would laugh about it. *Daughter Carl Millership*

I Have a Brother (Grandpa's poem)

*I've got a brother, looks like me, in fact I am a twin.
So I called upon his girl to see if she'd take me for him.
She threw her arms around my neck, I couldn't say a word.
For she didn't know the difference till my brother's voice was heard.*

*He walked right in and he turned around and he walked right out again
He made the round trip in less time than it takes to count to ten
He didn't ask no questions why, he didn't stop to say good-bye
He just walked right in, turned around and walked right out again.*

*To get a wife, Bill advertised and found one that same day.
And he was afraid to lose her so he married her right away
His wife had wooden arms and legs, the falsest teeth and hair
And when Bill came in most of his wife was hanging on a chair.*

*He walked right in and he turned around and he walked right out again
He made the round trip in less time than it takes to count to ten
He didn't ask no questions why, he didn't stop to say good-bye
He just walked right in, turned around and walked right out again.*

I got a call from Mom one day. She said "Louis, we have a problem. It's Dad, he's hurt himself. He fell down. He might have broken his hip" We talked some more, then she gave the phone to Dad who was lying on the floor. Dad and I talked. I asked him questions. The he put Mom on again. I said Mom, call 911" And she did. *Son Louis Peskett*

Grandpa says that he had two wallets. When Grandma would ask for some money, he would open one and there the money would be. It would depend on what was needed which wallet got opened. Mom might have known about that, but she always played the game and didn't let on. *Son in law Philip Vandekerkhove, Sr.*

Growing up on a farm, Dad found a way to pass the time. Him and his brothers would get a hot potato, put it under the tail of a horse and hold it down. The horse would tense up and hold the potato in. The it would take off bucking and kicking around the yard. They all thought that was pretty funny. *Daughter Sally Van*

Dad made things out of wood or metal. He liked to invent things, practical things that we used to make things easier. *Daughter Jane Shaak*

Gramps when he was first married - a legend

One of my favourite stories is the story that I heard about when Art and Alice met. I heard that Art was a very sick man, with all kinds of physical problems requiring frequent visits to the doctor and many different kinds of medication. I also heard that he thought that he would be the first of the family to pass and that he would never make it to 50 years of age. As the story goes, after Art and Alice got married, Alice moved in with Art. When she was cleaning the bathroom (is anyone surprised?), she opened the medicine chest and noticed that it was full of medicines, bottles, pills, capsules ... She said "Art, what is all this stuff?" Art went on to explain that this bottle was for one particular problem, the next was for a different kind of problem that he had and it continued. Alice took one sweep of her hand, dumped everyone of them in

the garbage. She then said "You don't need these anymore, Art. You've got me."

He said "Oooooookaaaaay, Alice," and that was the end of that. *Daughter Lorna Hancock*

I loved the way he used to listen to me playing the piano. I was not very old, and he'd always quietly come downstairs and just sit on the couch and listen, and ask me to play the same song again and again. *Granddaughter Michelle Hancock*
I remember Gramps when he fell and he had a hip problem. Grandma told him to take his vitamins and there were plenty of them. And he did. *Granddaughter Lorill Hancock*

I remember Gramps laughing when he was telling a joke - before the end of it, which he never got to. He just laughed and laughed and I laughed at him laughing. I also remember Grandma and Grandpa taking us to Langley in a big honking station wagon and we picked lots of blackberries and put them in ice cream buckets and Grandma thought that was great because they were just 'there' for us and free and we ate most of them before we got home, but we didn't care. I also remember the cayenne drinks. I had a cold or something and grandma made me this Cayenne drink and I remember looking at it and thinking 'Oh yeah, sure' and Gramps saying "If I have to do it, you do too." *Granddaughter, Angie Hancock*

I appreciate how much Dad has meant in our lives. He was a wonderful father with his peaceful, philosophic ways. He was gentle and had a kind of innocence. I thought of him as a saint of a man with his understanding and acceptance of everyone. He had a fun sense of humour that was always nearby. We will miss him very much. *Daughter Jane Shaak*

Then there was this one that Dad would say to the kids: "I'll spit in your eye and drown you" *Daughter Sally Van*

At a senior's event when Dad was 99, everyone was giving advice to a soon to be groom. When Dad had his turn, he said "Don't let it happen again." Dad always had a great sense of humour. *Daughter Sally Van*

I remember when Gramps came with Grandma to Brian and Lorna's one Christmas. Gramps was playing solitaire at the kitchen table and Grandma was bleaching everything in sight around his card playing. He moved the cards once in a while, but it never interrupted his playing. *Friend Jim McKay*

After turning 100, he was asked "What's it like having 3 digits for your age? That's not so special, two of them are nothing." *Daughter Sally Van*

I interviewed Grandpa for a school project and my question to him was: 'How did you get to be 100 years old?' Gramps said: "one day at a time." *Granddaughter Lorill Hancock*

I have so many memories of Art, but one which always sticks out is his dedication to helping us get our Health Action magazine mailed on time. He liked to sit with us and put labels on and always kept them in the postal code order we needed. He was 80 and he would work beside Lorill who also put labels on and he'd just keep an eye on her without her even knowing it. She was 4 and they were a team.

Lorna would say to him "Are you OK, Dad?" And he would say ' Mmmmm hhhmmm' . . . and nod his head, and kept going. And then Lorna would bring him a dish of ice cream and bananas, his little treat, and he'd stop his work, eat it, say it was a nice sample, laugh and then go back to his job. He never complained, he just kept on going. His presence always brought a calm to the job and everyone loved him.

He had a steady, peaceful energy. He didn't say a lot, but he always acknowledged you with a smile and often a joke or some kind of humour. And I admired his hair. I always thought it was so lovely along with his cravat. He looked very handsome and dignified. He was missed when he moved to Langley, but I still saw him on occasion and he still had that nice smile that he always had for everyone. *Friend Pauline O'Sullivan*

Some remarkable things about my father:

I have never heard him use foul language or yell at anyone

I have never known him to steal or take advantage of anyone

I have never heard him lie or gossip

He always had kind thoughts for others

Mind you . . . we just could NOT get him to say 'please' and he always made sure to finish his ice cream before he arrived home. *Daughter Carol Millership*

Alice and Art Peskett were married 55 years!

Art Peskett's life spanned back in time to horses, carriages and a new invention called the automobile. At the reunion in 2002, a horse and carriage, friends family and fiddle music was the order of the day.

Sally and Phil Vandekerkhove had a special relationship with Dad. Having lived with them for many years, Dad was a big part of their family. Sally and Phil were always attentive to his needs and included him in everything. A special thank you from all of us, Sally and Phil, thank you for being such an important part of Dad's life.

It has been good to know you Charles Arthur Peskett. The world is a much better place having had you in it. We will miss you and your sweet, gentle ways. Love to you always, from your family and friends.