

IN MEMORY OF
**PETER
DEKKER**



Peter William Dekker ~ of Kincardine and formerly of Listowel, Peter passed away peacefully at home after a year of healthcare issues, on Saturday, March 26, 2016, at the age of 83.

Born March 21, 1933 in Hilversum, Holland, Peter immigrated to Canada with his family in 1948. Perhaps best known for his powerful singing voice, Peter sang at many Churches, weddings and was the founder of Music Alive in Listowel. He was the Founder of Conway Furniture in Listowel, a past member of the Atwood Lions Club, a past Chair of the Listowel Hospital Board, was on the Listowel Parks and Recreation Board and was a past member of the Listowel Rotary club. Peter remarried in 1998 to Judy Nevery and has resided in Kincardine (and John's Pass Florida) since then.

Peter is survived by his wife Judy Nevery, and by his children Penny Evans, and Paul and Kristina (McCoag) Dekker, all of Listowel. He will be missed by his grandchildren Rory Madge, Liam Madge and his fiancée Shannon Vance, Patrick Madge, Mitchell Dekker, and Harrison Dekker. Brother of Hans and Bernice Dekker of Goderich, and Robert and Karen Dekker of Kitchener, and brother-in-law of Nita Dekker of Baltimore.

He will be remembered by Judy's family, Cathy and Greg Brooks of Oshawa, Janet and Moe Benarroch of Mississauga, Karleen Nevery of Vancouver, and Gord and Darlene (Nicholson) Nevery of Waterloo, and by their families.

Peter was loved and will be missed by many nieces and nephews.

Predeceased by his wife Jeanette (Young) Dekker, parents Pieter Willem and Gerardina (VanEybergen) Dekker, and by his brother John Dekker of Baltimore.

Peter was born March 21, 1933 in Hilversum, Holland to Pieter and Gerardina (Van Eybergen) and grew up with his brothers John, Hans and Robert during WWII. The family owned a Fruit and Vegetable store in town which made life for the Dekkers a little easier than for most in this horrible time. It allowed them to be nourished and to feed some neighbourhood children and also some of the hidden during the war. After the war Gerardina took her boys (including Pieter) to Canada and eventually landed on a little farm in Eramosa Ontario (near Guelph) in 1948. Peter's work career started as a mop boy in a pickle factory in Guelph then advanced to a bread route where he honed his sales skills, as well as his English language skills.

Somehow he was introduced to Jeannette Leone Young (from New Liskeard Ontario) who lived at the YWCA in Guelph in the mid 50s. They double dated with Jeanette's sister Kate and Don McDougal. At some point in the conversation, Pete said "not yet", Jeanette said "see ya later"; he caught her in Winnipeg and they were married in Guelph in 1958(?).

Peter hit his stride in the late 50s working with Prudential of America and being the vocalist in the Raddy Blagdon Big Band. They had a weekly Saturday night gig at the Concordia club in Kitchener and Peter would arrive in his White Impalla convertible with red leather interior; dressed in his white tux and black tie he was quite the dude! With the arrival of his Children; Penelope Jane in 1960 and in Paul William in 1962, (and with the arrival of rock and roll in 1964) Peter gave up the pro music business and focused on his career. Although Peter gave up the Band he did use his vocal talents in live theatre starting with the KW Amateur Theatre group with the lead role in The Sound of Music.

As a side note to this, Peter had been on a fishing trip in the late fifties to a place called Inverhuron.

Subsequently he rented a cottage from Nellie Evans. Cute little place (with a twin) above the river. The Dekker entourage would often include "Omi and Grampa" as well as Peter's Brother Robert. Doug and Vera Eason would rent the twin cottage from time to time as well. In 1963 Nellie Evans' son built a cottage in front of her cottage and blocked her view of the lake. She informed Peter that she was not renting the cottage any more as she was going to use it herself. She then offered to sell Peter her cottage (without the view) for \$7000 payable at \$100 a month provided Jeanette and the kids would deliver the cheque in person. That cottage is currently used by Kris and Paul (and looks much like it did). This cemented Peter's connection with Kincardine coastline.

Peter was always driven to be a financial success. At some point he felt he should be his own boss and left the insurance business. He bought a Dura-clean rug cleaning franchise. Then became a carpet installer. While installing a floor in Listowel, Peter and Jim MullHolland saw an empty store front in downtown, on the south west corner of Main and Wallace. Here they opened Conway Furniture in 1968; and soon after a second store in Hanover and a third store in Kincardine. In 1973 all three premises were vacated when an 8,000 sq. ft. store was built just east of Listowel where Conway remains today.

In 1970 Peter stopped the commute from Kitchener to Listowel and moved his young family to an old farmhouse on the 2nd of Grey owned by Jim and Violet Smith (Violet was a lovely person as was their son, Bill). It was quite an adjustment for Pen and Paul; from the 6th floor on River Road to party lines and school buses. On the up side they did get Cleo the golden retriever, and Romeo and Juliet the cats. The rent was \$75 a month (it was \$125 in 1985 when they left).

During the 70's and 80's Peter sang at churches and weddings and, accompanied by Doreen Danbrook, at Lions Functions and Nursing homes. He did a couple of shows with the Hanover Little Theatre group including Guys and Dolls. Through this ministry of song, he connected with many people. He was always a popular guy and a hard worker and as such, Conway thrive.

Peter was active with the Atwood Lions Club. While Paul was in the Elma Logan Minor Hockey system Peter volunteered and fundraised. He was on the Parks and Recreation Board and on the Listowel Memorial Hospital Board. After a production of South Pacific, to raise money for Grey Central Public School in Ethel, Peter joined the Rotary Club in Listowel and started "Music Alive". This organization brought great live theatre to Listowel with all the Rogers and Hammerstein greats, like South Pacific, Brigadoon, Guys and Dolls and of course, the Sound of Music. Peter was the Producer and often the star but he brought in Earl Reiner to direct the plays and a few pro musicians as well. The shows were entertaining, gave an outlet for great local talent, was fun for the cast to be a part of and raised some money as well.

In the early 80s both Penny and Paul headed for school. At this time Peter thought Paul was gone to the world of Physics in Waterloo so he decided to sell Conway Furniture. In 1983 Paul and Physics mutually decided to part company so Paul came back to work at Conway (although he did complete his BSc).

In December 1985 Penny was married to Larry Madge (Goderich). In Early of 1986 Peter and Jennie moved off the farm and into town to 3 Tatham Place, with Peter's Mother, Gerardina (Deen) who had sold her large home in Waterloo. In September Paul married Kristina McCoag. A few years later Paul took the helm at Conway Furniture so that Peter could spend time at his new, beachfront Inverhuron Cottage (purchased in 1982 after selling Conway). Into the early 90s Peter was hoping to start spending time in Florida but Jeanette wouldn't leave her grandchildren who had started to arrive with Rory in (1988), Liam (1990) and Patrick (1992) Madge; and Mitchel (1991) and Harrison (1993) Dekker. We certainly all enjoyed those summers at the cottage with the Madges and Dekkers.

In 1996 Jeanette passed away and Peter was very sad.

A year later he was happy to be introduced to Julia (Judy) Nevery from Wingham and they were married in 1998. Judy and Peter continued with the fun summers in Inverhuron (where they were introduced). They bought a lovely condo overlooking the harbour in Kincardine as an escape, and to pass the grey, cold fall, and they spent winters around St Pete's and John's Pass in Florida. Peter and Judy have many friends together and they are both very fortunate to have had two successful and loving relationships; they have both looked after each other when health fails, perhaps that's why.

Peter was a proud man. Proud to be Canadian, proud of his work accomplishments, proud of his family and Grandchildren. He went to be with his Lord on the terms he asked for. No disabling strokes, no nursing homes and relatively little pain.

Visitation will be held at the Eaton Funeral Home, Listowel, on Tuesday from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

The funeral service will be held at Calvary United Church, Listowel, on Wednesday, March 30th at 11:00 a.m.

Following interment in Fairview Cemetery, Listowel, the Celebration of Peter's life will continue at Perth Meadows, Listowel.

Memorial donations to Kincardine and Community Health Care Foundation or Listowel Memorial Hospital Foundation would be appreciated