

IN MEMORIAM

Dirk Klaas Peetoom July 11, 1931 - April 30, 2020



The family of Dirk Klaas Peetoom, 88, of Dartmouth is saddened to announce his passing on April 30, 2020 at home of natural causes. He was a loving husband, father of three, and grandfather of seven. Dirk was born on July 11, 1931 in Langedijk, the Netherlands and grew up in Noord-Scharwoude, which was under Nazi occupation from 1940-1945.

Dirk's dream was to become a military bandsman, and the stars aligned when his father spotted an article in the newspaper, saying the Canadian army was recruiting musicians from Holland. He headed to the Hague with his euphonium to audition, and a few weeks later arrived in Canada, in April 1953. He was billeted as a soldier in Dartmouth with the Hiltz family. There, he met their daughter—Marguerite. The rest, as they say, is history.

Dirk and Marguerite were married on November 27, 1954 and together built a beautiful life, full of love and family in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, where they raised their two sons, Karl and Michael, and daughter, Nolda.

Dirk had a genuine enthusiasm for music and people and served as Chief of the Stadacona Band of the Royal Canadian Navy for many years, until his retirement in 1985. His career in music took him across Canada and around the world. He was known by his colleagues as having a mind like a steel trap for music—knowing many large band arrangements by heart and having an amazing sense of tempo. A 'human metronome,' he could always be counted on to set the pace.

After retiring from the Forces, Dirk kept his passion for music alive by playing with local classical music groups, such as the 'Mostly Telemann' ensemble, or his own Sunday afternoon wind quintet that would meet weekly in his living room and also enjoy Marg's famous hospitality.

Dirk and Marg enjoyed their long golden years together, always keeping active, wintering in Florida and filling their time with camping trips all across North America in their trusty VW Westphalia, day-long cycling trips, hiking with the Dartmouth Volksmarch Club, cultivating tulips and a vast array of vegetables, playing countless games of crib, cooking (Dirk's famous Dutch pancakes, meatballs, and soup were some family favourites), and spending lots of time with their grandkids.

Dirk was a natural storyteller, easy to laugh, open-hearted, and always had a tale or two up his sleeve. Popular topics included: growing up in Holland, his family tales, misadventures abroad with the military band, and camping adventures and mishaps. He was always fast to make friends—within minutes of setting up at a campground, Dirk could be counted on to pull out his bike and do a circuit of the place, introducing himself to people, who he would then bring back to his campsite and introduce to his family.

He kept up a steady stream of correspondence with friends and family throughout Canada, the US and the Netherlands over the years, by phone, handwritten letters, e-mail, and even Facetime! He always looked forward to hearing everyone's updates and chatted with pride about what his own family was up to.

Dirk was incredibly devoted to the love of his life Marguerite and was beloved by all his family. He will be deeply missed as he continues on his journey.

He leaves behind his wife, Lola Marguerite (Hiltz), sons Karl (Colette), Michael (Nathalie), daughter Nolda (Dave) and son-in-law Archie; grandchildren: Kai, Mel, Etienne, Miranda, Alexandra, Megan, and Cameron.

A celebration of Dirk's life will take place this summer. His resting place will be at Mount Hermon Cemetery on Victoria Road, just around the corner from Dirk and Marg's first home.

Donations in memory of Dirk can be made to Christ Church in Dartmouth or the QEII Health Sciences Centre.