

2012-01-03

## HELEN BRAUN



With sad but thankful hearts we said our final “Aufwiedersehen” to our mother, Helen Braun (nee Schmidt) on December 25, 2011. Mom left this life peacefully with family surrounding her at the Red River Valley Lodge in Morris. She waited here patiently to see all her children one last time and then she went “home” to spend Christmas with her heavenly family.

Mom will be lovingly remembered by her children Nick (Janet) Braun, Helen (Pete) Friesen, Harry (Suzanne) Braun, Elvera (Hal) Nodsle, Ruth (Gordon) Coates, Charlotte (Mark) Burch, and Leona (Leonard) Gerbrandt; son-in-law Henry Engbrecht; daughters-in-law Linda Braun and Sharon Braun; 33 grandchildren and 30 great-grandchildren; brother-in-law Ed Peters; sister-in-law Malvina Schmidt; and numerous nieces and nephews. Mom was predeceased by her husband Nick, her parents Johann and Sophie Schmidt, brothers Waldemar and John, sisters Mary, Agnes and Katie, three other siblings in infancy, daughter Erna Engbrecht, sons Ernie and Art, son-in-law Ken Klassen, and grandson Darren Nodsle.

Mom was born in Pretichina in the Molotschna Colony in southern Russia on October 11, 1913 to Johann and Sophie Schmidt (nee Zietzer). At the age of 6 she moved with her family to the village of Liebenau. In 1924, Mom, along with her parents and siblings, made the long journey to Canada. They finally settled on Lyman Ranch #4 near Arnaud in October 1924. Mom attended the Timlick School until the age of 13. At the age of 18 she went to work as a housemaid for a wealthy family in Winnipeg for 2 years.

Mom and Dad were married on October 30, 1937 in the Lichtenauer Church at Ste. Elizabeth. They moved to the farm owned by Dad’s father near Morris. Mom and Dad later purchased the farm from Opa Johann Braun and spent their working life farming this land until 1986. Mom and Dad had 10 children in the first 18 years of their marriage, with a set of twins being the first to arrive.

With such a large family, Mom gave all her time to caring for us. She planted a huge garden every spring and froze and preserved all the fruit and vegetables for our winter use. She made all our bread, buns, cookies, cakes, muffins and noodles from scratch with flour that was ground from the wheat that Dad grew, eggs from our chickens and milk, cream and butter from our cows. Mom also looked after feeding the chickens and cows, milking the cows and gathering the eggs, especially at times when Dad and the boys were busy in the fields.

In winter she would give the house a thorough cleaning from top to bottom and spend a lot of time at her sewing machine. She sewed clothing for herself and her children as well as curtains, blankets and blanket covers and she taught her girls how to sew too. Mom also knitted endless pairs of mittens, socks, slippers, scarves and hats. Her sewing and knitting not only benefited her family but she also made many blankets and other items for the MCC to send overseas.

Mom was very involved in the Frauenverein at the Lichtenauer Church, taking her turn hosting the women and their husbands for a weekly gathering, and also serving a term as the group's leader. The Frauenverein produced quilts and other hand work that were auctioned off to raise money for the MCC.

Mom was a gentle and humble soul. All of her work was born out of a heart of pure love, never seeking acknowledgment or praise. Mom gave her life to her family, an act of complete dedication and selflessness. In those busy years, she never once complained that she had no time for herself. After her children were all raised she and Dad did take some well deserved vacations. But she was proud of her long life! Her famous phrase was "I can still walk" as she tore off down the hall at the Lodge with her walker.

Mom also had a strong faith in God and God's goodness. She never felt hard done by when circumstances in her life were difficult. She trusted that whatever happened was God's will, though she didn't say it that way. She would say "whatever will be, will be, the future's not ours to see".

Mom, we love you dearly. You gave us so much of yourself. You never stopped being a mother and grandmother to us, even in your last days you showed your love so well. We were so blessed to have you as our mother, Oma, and Great Oma. Now we say our farewell, until we meet again.

Aufwiedersehen. Schlaf Gesund, Liebe Mutter.

The family wishes to express our sincere thanks to the staff at the Red River Valley Lodge in Morris. Your care of Mom over the last seven years has been superb and we appreciate it so much. Thanks to Jeff and Kathy Wiebe of the Morris Funeral Home for their kind assistance. Thanks to Ward Parkinson and Victor Engbrecht for planning and conducting this service.