



REMEMBERING
George Mahovlic

December 24, 1924 - April 19, 2022



If you can remember me only with tears...

Then don't remember me at all.

If you can remember me with laughter...

Then remember me always.

(Anonymous)

On April 19, 2022 George died peacefully at home with his loving wife and daughter at his side at the age of 97 years.

He will be lovingly remembered and dearly missed by his family and wife of 65 years, Violet; his daughter Lorrie (Morley); son George Jr. (Sandra), and son David (Sheri); grandchildren and their partners: Stephanie (Kyle) and Meagan (Aaron), Brin (Nelson) and Brody, April (William) and Jason; cousin Frank Radelja (Daphne) and his numerous niece's and nephews.

He was Predeceased by his parents John and Magdalena; five siblings (John, Margaret, Kay, Ann and Mary); in-laws Joseph and Rose Manestar; brothers-in-law Joseph Jr. and George, and son-in-law Rolly Boisvert.

George was devoted to and actively participated within the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 213, Royal Canadian Legion, Good Sam Club, Gyro International, and the Croatian Fraternal Union (CFU).

Born in Gorni-Ostrc Yugoslavia, George arrived in Canada aboard the S.S. Stuttgart the morning of July 16, 1932 landing in Halifax Harbour along with his mother and baby brother John. They journeyed across the country by rail to join his father, in Flin Flon, Manitoba, who had arrived at the same pier 5 years earlier in 1927. In Flin Flon, his father had established a small boarding house which his

mother continued to run while his father worked for the railway and George attended grade school and worked his first job delivering groceries for the local store. His four sisters were all born in Flin Flon where the family lived for 6 more years until shifting their home to New Westminster on Strawberry Hill in 1938.

WWII began in September of 1939. At the age of 21 George enlisted in 1944 and returned to civil life in 1946 rejoining his family in New Westminster. Following the War, Yugoslavian propaganda falsely enticed Yugoslavian immigrants to return to their homeland. His father, along with his mother and 4 sisters, left Canada in August of 1947. George and John remained in Canada working on the docks and shipyards.

Word had traveled back that the promises made by Yugoslavian Government were false and his family was desperately trying to return to Canada. Anxious for their return, George worked extraordinarily hard to ensure their safe return. This required George's sponsorship including purchasing a home in New Westminster, ship passage and financial aid. In 1950, the Yugoslavian Government sporadically began reissuing seized passports and the entire family successfully reunited in April 1951. The significance of becoming a Canadian citizen was monumental for George and in 2007 a lifelong dream became reality when he and Violet travelled to Atlantic Canada and revisited Pier 21 in Halifax, which is now a historical museum. Here they were able to obtain copies of original documents of his arrival to Canada in 1932.

George aspired to find a respectable career and Electrician was his choice. For weeks he would arrive at the doorsteps of W. L. Stevens Electric early in the morning following his shift on the docks. He would inquire if they were ready to hire an ambitious and hard-working young man only to be met with continued rejection. His relentless persistence was successful and his trade apprenticeship as a "Winder" began. He became a member of the IBEW and continued his career as an Electrician with W. L. Stevens for the next 25 years.

In Vancouver, George was active within multiple organizations giving significant importance to his association with the CFU. He performed and produced numerous stage productions and became a recognized talented singer and award-winning square dance caller. While working with Hank Snow, he was invited to journey his success to Nashville. At this moment in the height of success, George saw the lifestyle this could create and shifted his focus from becoming a Nashville star to starting a family.

His many interests in group activities included creating the CFU 5 pin bowling league. It was here where he caught the eye of a beautiful young woman - Violet Manestar - who had joined the league with her brother. He knew in an instant that this woman was special and thus their courtship began. They married June 8, 1957 and were to celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary this year.

After their wedding, George brought Violet to a small 6-unit apartment building he had purchased which became their first home and income property. After their first child was born, he named the building 'The Vi-Lor'. This name still graces the building to this day.

As their family grew, they sold the apartment and purchased a home on Hersham

Avenue in Burnaby where they continued to raise their three children, Lorrie, George Jr. and Dave.

Over the years, George and Violet sought warmer climates making many fond memories vacationing in Hawaii, Mexico, Croatia, and Italy. They became Snowbirds, annually travelling to Yuma, Arizona where they created numerous friendships. During their summer family vacations they loved exploring the beauties of interior B.C. and the Okanagan Valley. Here, the future changed upon the discovery of Osoyoos, which as George described it, was "Love at first sight". He honored this with a love poem he wrote at the age of 84 "Osoyoos". This poem continues to touch the hearts of many; it graces the walls of Osoyoos Town Hall and their website to enjoy and share.

<https://www.osoyoos.ca/content/osoyoos-poem>

After 25 successful years as an electrician, he knew he could retire from the trade and pursue his dream of moving the family to Osoyoos and building a small motel. In August of 1970, this is exactly what he was able to do. On his vacation property located on the lake in Osoyoos he started building the "Bella Villa Motel" with a local carpenter Tony Zelko, who became a lifelong 'partner in crime'. The Motel opened for Business in May 1971 and together with Violet, they ran it for 14 years.

During his success with the Bella Villa, George immersed himself within the Osoyoos business community joining multiple local organizations. Activities within his participation introduced him to numerous other devoted Osoyoos community members creating countless friendships. George always found importance in bringing people together and hosted gatherings and large parties at the Motel for guests and local friends. As the life of the party, George was known for his vivid story telling, hilarious jokes, kind heart, generosity and love of good wine, food, music and hosting the most memorable events.

Throughout his life, he was passionate for the arts in many forms including intricate black and white photo paintings of his family. He was always recording his life with them in photos and videos and compiled a history of all which he gifted to the family in a 'Life Story' Memoir recorded in his own voice and gifted to his family. He persevered through the slow loss of sight and hearing and continued his unique joy for creativity through numerous inventions, projects, and divine paintings.

In his continued love of warm climates and meaningful gatherings, his ultimate achievement occurred on his 90th birthday when he gathered his entire family for an all expense paid vacation to Holguin, Cuba. Bringing the family together in this moment revived true connections for the family and in particular his grandchildren. He also left an everlasting impression on the Cuban community who were sad to hear of his passing and held a special mass in his honor.

His true passion for life, love, laughter and his dedication to family resonated with anyone fortunate enough to ever have met him.

There are not enough words to express the special and most heartfelt appreciation

George and the family have for Dr. Lorraine Kane; her care went above and beyond throughout George's life.

The family would also like to extend special thanks to Carmen & Liza the Palliative Care Nurses whose grace and patience brought comfort and trust. The many Home Care Workers with special note to Ginette, Kaitlyn, Amber, Kayla, Johnathan, and Grace. Your kindness filled our home with warmth every time you opened the door. To all the many, many, many friends and neighbors for their boundless kindness, support and laughter with special thanks to Peter & Susan Evans whose selfless acts provided a rare and beautiful gift to our entire family.

For those who choose, the family would be honoured for donations to be made to the Osoyoos Royal Canadian Legion or the CNIB Foundation in memory of George in lieu of flowers.

A funeral mass will be celebrated at 2:00 pm, Tuesday, May 3, 2022 at St. Anne Catholic Church. Interment and committal will follow at the Osoyoos Lakeview Cemetery. A reception in the church lower hall will follow the interment.

Condolences and tributes may be directed to the family by visiting www.nunes-pottinger.com

