

Community pillar Budweth passes away

A community cornerstone has passed away.

Alfred Hermann Budweth passed away Oct. 24, surrounded by his family. He was 85.

The tireless farmer was a pillar in the community, from establishing a local business to serving in public office. Harmony with nature and his family were his true loves.

He is survived by Margarete, his beloved wife of 53 years, and his 4 children and 4 children-in-law: Christina and Cameron Mingay, Darlene and David Stafford, David Budweth and Karyn Allison, Alf Budweth Jr. and Debra Dobson; as well as 11 adoring grandchildren: Elizabeth, Alexandra, Bridgette and Charlotte Mingay; Katharine, Victoria and Abigail Stafford; Cole, Madelyn and Lauryn Budweth; and, Olivia Budweth.

He was born an only child but he was raised as a beloved brother to cousins John, Gerry and Manfred Jurgeneit.

Born in the Memelgebiet of East Prussia on April 17, 1929, he came to Canada with his mother, Meta, at the age of 6 to be reunited with his father who had come ahead to make a better life. Just a few weeks after their arrival, Alfred's father died suddenly. He and his mother made the difficult trip back to Europe where shortly afterwards the devastation of WWII erupted. He came back to Canada in 1949 at the age of 20.

Alfred began modestly as a fisherman in Port Dover. Early mornings and long, wet, cold days on various fishing tugs cemented his love of honest hard work. A life-long devotion to his Maple Leafs began here as well, fostered by his buddy Red Kelly. A few years later, despite a developing career at Beneficial Finance, the lure of the land led him to the tiny town of Nobleton in King Township where he purchased a 100-acre farm.

After several years of burning the candle at both ends, delivering eggs from his chickens at 4 a.m. and arriving in his chair at the office by 8 a.m., Alfred turned his back on the world of finance. Much to the chagrin of his new bride, he embraced the dream of becoming a farmer.

Alfred lived a rich and happy life on the gently rolling hills of his beloved farm on the 10th. He became a pillar of the community and a leader in the field of agriculture. He embraced new ideas and technologies that are commonplace today.

Family members remember trucks rolling into the yard all night at harvest time so that the local farmers could dry their corn in dad's new Dryer. The men slept for a few hours on the sofa in the kitchen while Dad watched over the operation of the machine. The purchase of Nobleton Feed Mill in 1978 allowed him to combine his passion for agriculture with his strong head for business. Together with David and Alf Jr. that business has grown to the country's largest independent Master Feeds dealer feeding many Olympic Champions, Queen's Plate winners and family pets over the decades.

Alfred Sr. loved the daily interaction with customers in the Mill. Many start up farmers and inexperienced young horsemen benefited from his sage advice and the occasional free bag of feed. Whether you were a bank chairman with a hobby farm or full-time farmer, Alfred enjoyed trading stories, giving advice and talking politics. From his perspective everyone had something interesting to say.

He served several terms on King council, elected by substantial majorities, a sign of the respect with which he was held in the community. A decision not to stand for re-election was made on the basis that his failing health would not allow him to personally canvass every home.

King's senior councillor Linda Pabst served with him on council for two terms.

Alf had a heart of gold, a genuine friend a true community leader. Alf was always wise on his comments, and his decisions, she said.

He was an amazing family man. Burt and I spent quality time with Alf and Margarete. I will miss his straightforward and honest advice.

Despite his many successes, Alfred was happiest walking through his pastures at twilight during the early summer as the smell of Margarete's lilacs wafted through the air and a new crop of calves bounced around him.

Dad often told us that of all his accomplishments the harmony in his family was the only one that mattered.

Thank you to all of the dear friends and relatives who provided support over the last 6 months, in particular, his cousins, his schoolmate Roland Gailus and his dear friend and neighbour Dr. Richard Giroux.

The Budweth family will receive friends at the Egan Funeral Home, Bolton. A Funeral Service will be held at 11 a.m. on Thursday, Oct. 30 at the St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, 5750 King Road, Nobleton. Reception to follow at the Nobleton Community Hall. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to St. Michael's Hospital Foundation (Emergency Room Revitalization Fund), Soldiers' Memorial Hospital Geriatric Day Hospital in Orillia or Southlake Hospital in Newmarket.

He was grateful for the care he received from the compassionate staff at these hospitals.