

## **Appendix A**

### **A Review of Important Dates:**

My husband was John Moerman. His parents were Marinus Moerman and Antje van Vliet. They were married in Vlaardingen, May 1, 1913. Corrie Moerman van Leeuwen's parents were Cornelis Jakob van Leeuwen and Jaapje van Vliet. They were married in Vlaardingen as well, on April 29, 1914. Our Mother's Grandparents were related, I believe, as second cousins. John and Corrie Moerman married in the Town Hall of Schipluiden and celebrated their union in their home Church, on March 10, 1948.

During the Second World War (1940-1945) there was no work or house available in Holland for those who wanted to get married, unless they could live in with their parents. Many couples married in the first years after the war was over and immigrated to Canada and the United States. As we were two years engaged already, we felt that it would be a miracle if we could live in Holland after our marriage. Many families had taken a family in their homes during the war and so did our parents. The farm of my Mom's brother was inundated with water for more than two years and the family of seven lived in our home during that time. The reason of the inundation was to keep England from landing in Holland.

Of course there was a lot of adjusting to do these years as we were with 19 around our tables and we still made room for several people who were hiding on our farm. It became a family of 23 people for three meals every day until the war had ended, two years and three months later. Yes, war is a time that you have to learn to adjust. It sounds maybe strange to you that we even had to adjust to normal living again, after years of uncertainty and fear. When John was in the under ground forces especially, our minds were always very alert and under stress. We have a saying in Holland that "hope keeps you going" and I know for certain, that our hope for the future, by the grace of God, has pulled us through. When the war was over on May 5, 1945 and the peace document signed, we too, with many others started planning for our future. It did not take long before it became clear to us that it meant immigration to another land for us.

Canada was our first choice. Our cousin Peter Luchtigheid, who lived in Chatham, Ontario for 20 years already at that time, was more then willing to help us. Just before Christmas, 1947, we received a letter from him that he had found work on a farm close to Blenheim and a house for us as well. This

gave our parents peace to let us immigrate to Canada. During that time other countries were opening their arms for immigrants as well: France, Australia and the USA plus some others.

Since my cousin lived there and we had met Canadians and Canada was open for immigrants, it seemed to us that this was the place to go. It felt like knowing some of them already as several had lived on our farms for a while, during the end of the war. And we had even learned a few words of their language already. Now as I look at the mountain we were climbing, we did our utmost to ease the pain of leaving, also for our parents. There was no future in Holland for us and many others. John went all over the place but always in vain. I was glad when our parents told him to stop and gave permission to immigrate.

Yet, leaving our parents and family was a very difficult part of our life but there was no other choice. Going together through the war with all its stresses, our love had rooted deep and since there was no work on a farm or a house available (which was John's dream) our parents agreed to go through with our immigration.

It was very difficult to leave all we loved so dearly but later we heard that it was very hard on our parents as well. Mom wrote that she was proud of us that we had "bitten the bullet", so to speak and were the first couple that had left for Canada in our town. Before we left we had contact with a family who was the first one from our town of Schipluiden, who left for the United States. They had connections in that country as we did in Canada via my first cousin, Peter Luchtigheid. My dear husband, John, was a first class immigrant! Many people have come for advice those first years and my "home sickness" disappeared very quickly. Was it easy to leave our Homeland? No, it was not. But there was no future in Holland for farmers for several years, unless you could take over your Dad's farm. Our engagement was celebrated April 20, 1945, not in 1943, as was planned because of danger for John's life during the war. It was not by choice that we immigrated.

We would have loved to live in Holland but we were thankful that our parents gave us permission to inquire about Canada. We were glad that a way was opened to get married but sad that the price was higher than we had hoped, leaving our loved ones and the country we loved. We had just experienced how dear this land was to us. I found it very difficult to think

that John risked his life for a couple of years and could not live there three years later. We were not alone in this. There was no room for thousands of others who needed a place to work and to live. War ruins much in a short time and it takes years before what was destroyed is rebuilt. Our wedding day was on March 10, 1948. Two weeks before that date we went to the Town Hall for our marriage license. It was the custom to celebrate that evening in the Bride's home with our parents, sisters and brothers on this occasion. Our Mothers organized three evenings for our home and three evenings for John's home. These included a reception evening for friends, one evening for neighbors, (we invited 15 neighbor couples) and one evening or afternoon for Aunts and Uncles. I believe that this was "farmers style" since they often helped each other with haying and also when there was sickness. I have never been in Holland to any other weddings then "farmer weddings"!

We enjoyed all the festivities enormously. I can not find another word for it. Of course the farewell wishes, hugs and handshakes were endless, yet all the friendship and love meant very much to us.

On our wedding day my Groom came for his Bride at one o'clock. The event with parents and brothers and sisters from both sides was impressive and the church service we have never forgotten. The text our pastor used was, "Wat zoekt gij"? "What are you seeking" in your marriage, in your life and in your new Country, Canada? We have never forgotten this. We even were presented with the sermon! Another message we never forgot was from my Dad. You could call it a "tear puller" as someone called it but it came straight out his Father heart!

Our celebration at home afterwards was awesome as well, in spite of knowing that we would not be together anymore with both of our families for a long time. How long we did not know of course but we did know that God was showing us the way all along and would never forsake us.

April 5, 1948 was the day that we left with a friend who was first mate on the freight boat "De Hedel" from Antwerp, Belgium to Montreal, Canada. It might sound like an adventure but it was not in reality. It was very difficult weeks in our lives. Not for our marriage, our honeymoon was beautiful. Maybe it is best said in a few words, that we had to recover from the shock of leaving home and country for good. There was no flying home at that time yet, if necessary. It was all very final and uncertain. Every thing familiar was left behind.

Yes, we had chosen this path to go but only after years of praying and hoping that we would find a place of work and a house to live. We had accepted our immigration as Gods direction and at that time we knew that Canada was the place where God wanted us to live after we were married.

The three weeks home after we were married are difficult to describe. It was full of preparation for our trip to Canada, in gathering our belongings and finding ways to pack and move the furniture our parents gave us. We were told not to bring furniture but our parents had no rest until they found a bed and all that belonged to it, six chairs and a table. These items were paid for with wheat, butter and milk over a period of time.

And of course we had to say all our “good byes” in the homes of our loved ones. It felt like a mountain we had to climb. I think the mountain was higher for me than for my husband, if I understood him correctly. It was a most difficult task for all immigrants! To think that it could be the last time that we hugged our Parents was too much for me, when we were leaving for Canada. Of course we were both having the same feelings but there was no other way. It was good that we did not know that it would be ten years before we could visit home again!

After a stormy boat trip of three weeks, we arrived in Montreal and took a train to Chatham, Ontario. As we could only take \$100.00 each, along from Holland we had to be careful with our money so that we would be able to fill our cupboards when we arrived in our home in our new “homeland.” For \$60.00 the train brought us to Chatham Ontario. We arrived at midnight and took a taxi for the last 6 miles to my first cousin Peter and Edith Luchtigheid who received us with open arms. I cannot tell you how glad we were when we saw them and we could have a good rest which we did not have for a long time. They gave us a beautiful weekend before they brought us to the farmer where John was going to work and we were going to live. This was a 10 minutes walk from the farm. We were glad that we had brought our bikes. That was a great help. John worked for 80 cents per hour as most immigrants did at that time.

We were richly blest with everything we were able to bring along, thanks to our parents! I was also glad that we had a few things to do our cooking in as well, in spite of the scarcity in the stores in Holland yet. We had also received a few presents that were helpful. It took a while before we had

everything we needed but it is amazing with how little you can start, if you have too.

I will never forget the moment that we saw our first glimpse of Canada after being three weeks on the ocean on our 2000 ton freight boat. At six o'clock in the morning we were told that we could see a very thin line of land that was Canada, on April 26, 1948. Of course we were on deck in no time to see our new "Fatherland" to be. If all went well, a land with great possibility we were told. We both felt sort of lonely or did we feel forlorn? Severed from our homeland and not yet connected with our new country, just wondering what it would be like and how we would be able to adjust?

We were not worried, knowing that we had left home for a purpose. We felt "God directed," there was no other way, after being engaged for five years. We also were at peace that we had followed our parent's advice and taken no steps without their blessings. They agreed that there was no future for farmers in Holland for some years, not even a home available for those who married after the war (1940-1945). It was a wonderful feeling to know that God was directing us to Canada in 1947. By the time everything was ready, it was April 5, 1948 when we said farewell to our loved ones and our beautiful little country. I never thought that this would be so difficult to do. We have both believed and our parents with us, that this was the way to go even though leaving home for good was a most difficult thing for us and our families.

I did have a choice to let John go alone to Canada or to go with him. I preferred to go together through this adventure. My parents agreed with their whole heart, if John promised to bring me home again if it was not going to work out. And of course John did. He also promised my Dad and Mom that he would always care for me to the best of his ability. And I can say again from the bottom of my heart that he has done that in everything and this brought me to tears I was going to hold back until we were together!

Now the trip was coming to the end and we were longing for our own home. It was an uncertain adventure and when you would walk off the boat with the feeling, "come what come" as some have done, it would be a heavy assignment. But we knew that we could add "thank you Lord that we are together in this and that you will not leave us nor forsake us"! And He never did and He never will! Mom and Dad were even proud of us! I could hardly believe what I read in their letter! The farm of Leonard Giffen, where John

was going to work, was five miles south of Blenheim, Ontario. The first thing I had to learn when we were settled down in our house was to listen to the silence when I was alone! Being number seven of 12 children living on a farm, I never had been alone before I was married! Compared with the “beehive” on the farm where I was born, it was surprising that it was not hard at all to adjust to the silence. I could hardly believe that I loved the silence when John was gone to work.

But by now I was dreaming about our own baby who was on the way and that was the Lords timing! God took care of every detail when we immigrated, for John at work and for me who was always used to a big family to being alone most of the time. I got busy knitting baby clothes and doing other things I was dreaming of since I was alone until our baby was born. And so was my husband in the evenings. He was busy making a dresser for the baby from the box that our furniture came in from Holland.

I was very blest that my husband came home for all our meals. He left in the morning before six o'clock, to milk the nine cows and came for breakfast at eight and for lunch mostly at noon. We had a late supper in the evening.

We had no electricity but we did have a gas stove that leaked gas, alas. Our doors and windows were always open for fresh air, day and night, except during a thunderstorm! And since it was only one summer I could easy live with it even though I was told that I would get used to it! But I never did of course and it was a good thing that we moved before the winter.

The reason we moved that fall was that the workdays were too long for John. Twelve hours was normal. As a fruit farmer heard what we were up to, he came to ask John to work for him for eight hours. This worked out well and we were very happy on the fruit farm. Dad loved all the work in the orchards and the weeks of fruit picking as well. I was picking fruit, by the basket, when I had time to spare. The fruit trees were very low, which I had never seen before and picking fruit was fun for both of us. We also were allowed and even asked to pick up windfall as much as we could use. Needless to say, I bought several dozen fruit jars and filled them together in the evening hours. What a treat!

As soon as we were sure that our baby was on the way, we told the Broadway family and asked them if they would bring us to the hospital. We were glad that they promised to do that. The hospital in Chatham was twelve

miles from our home. I sure was glad knowing that we could count on him. When I knew that “this was the day” that our baby was looking for an exit, I told John at lunch time. Little did I know that my dear husband did not want to leave me after lunch. Not until our neighbor promised to keep an eye on me, did he go back to work until suppertime. When he came home I was ready and packed to go to the hospital. I had supper ready to eat on the way for John and he did eat to do me a pleasure. I was not in a hurry but since it was our first baby I had no idea how long this could take. And so with a constant prayer on our heart we prepared together as best as we knew how for the birth of our first baby! This was on January 12, at seven o’clock in the evening.

It was a very cold winter, far below zero for several days already. Dad and I were sitting in the back seat of the car of our neighbor, who brought us to the hospital. We were holding hands and praying. I was sure that something was wrong and Dad was aware of it too. We felt it when we went for my check ups. They never said that everything was fine. When I asked the Doctor he said that we would not understand and of course he was right about that. But we were always sure that God was in control and we kept our minds on Him. The son of our boss drove too fast to our liking and we asked him to slow down. But we realized that we could not convince him to slow down a bit because it was our first baby! My dear husband was five hours in the waiting room. He was with me for a very short time before they brought me elsewhere and was put to sleep. Once a Doctor came to tell John that it was a difficult delivery. At one o’clock after midnight, John heard the wonderful news that Murray was born and all was well with both of us! I was not aware that I was a mother until breakfast time when Dad was trying to wake me up. My joy was complete when I saw that it was Dad, standing by my bed waiting for me to understand (grasp) that our son was born. When I did, our joy was complete even though I could only express it in a whisper.

A week later we went home with the three of us and a nurse from our church came for a few days until I was able to take over. I never had felt so full of joy when I put our first baby, Murray, in his crib! Of course it always has been a joy to come home with our babies but this first time we were told not to count on a baby. That happened to Dad in those hours of waiting while I was not aware of anything for eleven hours. For John it had been a very difficult night of uncertainty but God made everything wonderfully well!

During this time John's heart was still longing to be a dairy farmer and after one year and 6 months of working in the fruit, a dairy farmer from Cedar Springs came to see John if he was interested to become his hired man. Was he ever! He was glad to work for Roy Warwick and was longing to learn everything there was to learn about dairy farming. But in that year it began to show that God had other plans for us because it became very clear that these long days of heavy work was too much for Dad.

Besides the long days of work, Dad often helped new immigrants or they came to us so called old timers in the evening. And that was too much for him and this "broke the camels back," so to speak. The work was endless. When we came to Canada, we did the same in the first years. There is so much to learn when you move to another land. Our boss understood this well that John was in a pinch with all the new immigrants. The field men were over loaded with the influx of thousands of immigrants and were glad that some "early birds" were helping out with giving some advice.

As Dad started loosing too much weight in 1953, (our fifth year that we were in Canada) he had to make a decision on Doctor's orders. "Be a preacher or a farmer, John; you cannot do both" was the verdict. As Dad was leading a Dutch service every Sunday morning, I was not aware, at that time, that he was dreaming to work as a pastor since he was a teenager. He shared this with me when everything had fallen into place to go to College and Seminary in Holland, Michigan. With the help of our Pastor and others, we were amazed how quickly everything was settled for Dad to go to College (which was a miracle in itself). Soon he was on his way to Holland, Michigan on Sept.1, 1953. The weekend that Anne was born, Dad came home for a few days and the third week in October, he came to move the whole family to Holland, Michigan.

Five years of study made his dream come true and Dad would pastor four churches from his graduation in 1958 to his retirement in 1988. He served first in the Reformed Church in Cambridge, Ont. (1958 - 1961). The second charge was Emmanuel Community Church in Edmonton, Alberta (1961 - 1970). The third church was in southern Alberta (two miles from Monarch). The church on the prairie, as I like to call it and 17 miles from Lethbridge. We served from August 4, 1970 - June 30, 1976. From 1976 - 1978 we lived in Mayerthorpe on our vacation place that we had bought in 1961, to regain Dad's and my health as well. After this break, Dad served eight years in good health in Grace Community Church in Surrey, B.C. (1978 - 1986).



This was a great joy to him and to all of us, that this was possible. In closing of his active ministry, Dad served two more years in Emmanuel Community Church in Edmonton (1986 - 1988). As a crown on his 30 years of active ministry, we lived for ten years with much joy on our hobby farm in Mayerthorpe, from April 1988 until March 28, 1998. Dad was suddenly taken to his Heavenly Home on Saturday afternoon between 4:30 and 5 o'clock March 28, 1998. That day, Dad went to Barrhead to buy a few chickens for the summer to enjoy. I came home from church with my friend Linda, after we had helped with a clothing exchange. Just when she left, Dad came home and told me that he was not coming in for lunch. I made him some and stayed with him to help as much as I could. At 4:30 he asked if "we could eat earlier because he was hungry all ready!" I told him that we could. The chicken was in the oven and that I was going in to add some vegetables.

Anne was three weeks old when Dad came home to move us all to Holland, Michigan. It was an adventure for young and old. I was excited about living in the States for some years. I have always treasured these years and learned much in spite of my language barrier. These years have enriched my life in several ways. The joy that Dad and I had more time to spend time with us was a surprise for both of us during these study years and we loved it! We all adjusted quickly to our new surroundings and Dad loved to study.

After the nine months in school were over for Dad, our first summer charge was 1954 in Rutven, Ontario. It was a newly planted church where Dad worked as a Student Pastor. Three afternoons Dad was home (to study as much as possible) while I was washing floors etc. at three different homes to put "bread and butter" on our table. That was my little part to Dad's study adventure! Four more years followed in the same pattern; nine months in school and three months in a church in Canada. Soon after Dad graduated in 1958 we moved to our first Church in Cambridge, Ontario.

Just before his graduation we heard the news that Dad had an opportunity to go to Holland on an immigrant boat, serving as the boat Chaplain. Of course I wrote this to our parents the same week with the result that my parents wrote back that I had to come along! This became a very exciting time of planning because my parents were paying for my trip. This was our only chance to show our children to our parents and family. We puzzled with our money situation until we could go with our whole family! On John's second birthday, July 26 1958, we left from Montreal, sailing on the "Grote Bear"

where Dad worked long days. I was told that he was the only one who could speak Dutch in the Pastors Class of 1958 and that was needed to work with the new immigrants on the way home to Canada. It was a very unexpected surprise for all of us. It did not take us very long to get ready for this wonderful adventure of going home after ten years. Our parents were overwhelmed, especially my Dad! I don't think that he thought this was ever possible when we left in 1948. This was based on the past when our cousin left for Canada in 1928 and had never been home for a visit. I am sure that my parents had this possibility for us in mind as well and that was very understandable. Needless to say that Dad and I, were humbly proud to show our four children to all our loved ones. When we came home we got busy getting acquainted with our congregation and tried to get into the routine of living as a family without being spoiled every day for six weeks! We lived in Cambridge until April 3, 1961.

April 3, 1961 we moved to Edmonton, Alberta where both immigrant churches were vacant. We had struggled several weeks to make the decision to move. The Head Office kept saying that no one was available who spoke the Dutch and English language. I found this move very difficult and at the same time I felt disobedient if we were going to stay in Cambridge. Of course I left the decision up to my husband and after three months we both were convinced that Alberta was the place where we were needed.

We first lived several miles away from the place where the services were held. Later when the new church and manse were built, we moved on January 16, 1966, next to the church on 66 Street and 140th Ave. We enjoyed living next to the church very much! After more than nine years working in Edmonton, we decided that it was time for Dad's health, to go to a smaller church. When a Call came from Monarch, we felt that this was the church where Dad could slow down a bit which was necessary. August 4, 1970 we moved to our home in Monarch, also next to the church, two miles from Monarch and 16 miles from Lethbridge, in southern Alberta.

June 30, 1976 we moved to our hobby farm in Mayerthorpe, Alberta. Dad needed a long break to regain his health and strength. These two years brought a great improvement in Dad's health. It was a very special time for both of us. I have enjoyed it as a fore taste of our retirement!

It was two years later on September 1, 1978 that we moved to Surrey Reformed Church, where Dad worked with joy and in good health until 1986. He concluded his active ministry in Emmanuel Community Church in 1987 and 1988 in Edmonton Alberta.

April 1, 1988 Dad and I moved to Mayerthorpe for our retirement even though we still went to Edmonton for three days on the weekends. Dad led the morning service in Emmanuel Church and a board meeting when needed until a new Pastor took over in the month of July, 1988. I think, that this way of working part time, was a beautiful way to wean Dad from his many years in the ministry. To give a little picture of where we have lived during our 50 years of marriage, I begin with the first 5 years when Dad was working on three different farms. The first farm was mixed farming, dairy cows and grain. We first lived in the house of Leonard Giffin, four miles south of Blenheim.

The second farm was all fruit farming which was so much more fun for both of us. We loved the work and we loved the fruit! We lived in a cozy little house where I could pick some cherries through our bedroom window! Murray was born on Tom Broadwood's farm. The third farm was all dairy farming, also in Cedar Springs, Ontario area. Dad loved the fact that Roy Warwick, a big dairy farmer in Cedar Springs wanted John to work for him. We liked our beautiful little house with a real bathroom (our first in Canada) our garden and John loved his work. I could even walk with Murray to Mother Schalk, as we called her. I began to really root in our new land! In the fall our son Jack was born. We called him Cornie, as our Pastor from the Reformed Church in Chatham, advised us. The following five years from 1953 to 1958 we lived in Holland, Michigan, USA. Dad took two years in Hope College and three years in Western Seminary.

Dad had left for Holland, Michigan on Sept.1, 1953. During the time that Anne was born. Dad came for a long weekend to be with us and moved us all to the USA, later in October. John was born during the summer months in 1956, when Dad served the Exeter church.

In June, 1958, we celebrated Dad's graduation from Seminar and soon there after we moved from Holland, Michigan to Cambridge, Ontario to serve the First Reformed Church. Before we started our work we went on a most exciting trip with our family to Holland, visiting our loved ones. September 15, we arrived home after a very good time and a good trip as well across the

Atlantic Ocean with “De Grote Bear” to Holland and “De Waterman” on our way home to Canada. Dad was leading services and was also counseling most of the day especially on the way home when many new immigrants were on board to their new Homeland, Canada.

Our son, James Peter, was born on January 25, 1960 in Cambridge, Ontario. There was great rejoicing again in our family. As the mother of Jimmy I was privileged to study our baby’s face first and still claim that he was laughing the minute the nurse laid him in my arms! At that time, Dad could never be with me when our babies were born. That was the only regret Dad had, that he immigrated! He found it “cruel ” for the Mothers to be alone and I found it cruel for my husband, to sit in the waiting room for hours not hearing anything. My husband suffered more from “not knowing” and could have been a great encouragement to me, with our first baby especially. But that was the rules at that time which were changed not long after Andy was born. We moved to Edmonton, Alberta on April 3, 1961 to 111 Ave and 116 Street. Our son, Andrew Nicolas, was born October 23, 1961 in Edmonton, Alberta. When the new parsonage was built, four years later, we moved to our new “manse.” It was next to our Church on 140 Ave and 66 Street on January 16, 1966.

Our next move was to Monarch church in South Alberta, 16 miles from Lethbridge, on August 4, 1970. On March 19, 1972, Stacy and Russell became part of our family. June 30, 1976-1978 we moved to our hobby farm in Mayerthorpe for a period of two years until Dad’s health was restored.

From 1978- 1986, Dad was the Pastor in Grace Reformed Community Church in Surrey, B.C.

From 1986 - 1988, Dad concluded his active service in Emmanuel Community Church in Edmonton, Alberta.

April, 1988, we moved to Mayerthorpe to begin our retirement adventure! We enjoyed every day to the fullest. Together we worked in our garden and in the field for our wood supply. We took many two mile long walks in the snow, in our bush and in our field in summer and winter. It was beautiful! I will never forget the ten years that we lived there it felt like a crown on Dad’s hard work, the 30 years when he was in the pastorate. It seemed to me that Dad was in such good health these years. He left us so sudden and so unexpected on the 28 of March in 1998, when we just had celebrated our Golden wedding feast of 50 years.

We were dreaming about going on a trip to Alaska (and other places) but Alaska was going to be our first trip, we had decided. We always talked about “the Lord willing” of course but if it is not God’s will it is very hard especially since Dad had no complaints about his health at all. I have learned from Dad’s sudden passing that we all can be taken Home at any time as God has planned for each one of us. We all know this but we also have to remember it than we can always have rest and peace. Our preparation should be done in advance so that we can go Home any time. We cannot build on our health and wellbeing or protection, for that matter. When God calls, we are going to our Heavenly Home!

In July, 1988, my brother Pieter and his wife Maartje came to celebrate Dad’s birthday and also our 40th wedding feast. My sister Cathy and her grand daughter, Regan, also came for the occasion.

Feb. 24, 1990, Russell married Luanne Gunders in Mayerthorpe, Alta.

June 27, 1993, Stacy married Murk Post in Edmonton, Alta.

July 10, 1993 Linda Moerman married Mark Klassen. in Sherwood Park.

August 14, 1993, David Moerman married Saralyn in Edmonton, Alta.

On February 7, 1991, Carrey Anne Holloway was born in Mayerthorpe Alta. On August 22, 1992, Elijah John Donald Holloway was born in Mayerthorpe, Alta.

Dad went to Texas to marry Wayne and Amy Moerman in August 1993. (Wayne Moerman, is the son of Dad’s youngest brother Jaap.)

Andy married Terri Arens in Grace Community Church in Surrey, B.C. on Oct 2, 1993.

November, 1993, Grace’s Father, Mr.Kaptein, went to his “Heavenly Home.”

December, 1993, Henry’s Father, Mr.Van DeVliert, went to his “Heavenly Home.”

December 15, 1993 Jeanne's Father, Mr. Scholten, married Corrie in Lethbridge.

Spring, 1994 Dad and I went to Holland for three weeks. This was the last time that we visited our relatives together. We went four times home, since we came to Canada in 1948. (1958, 1971, 1978 and 1994.)

August 28, 1994, Selah Post was born in Edmonton, Alberta. In May, 1995 Dad went to Holland with Andy and Terri for ten days. It meant much to Dad to celebrate the 50 years of freedom since Holland was freed in 1945 with the help of many Canadian soldiers. Dad received an invitation from Holland since he had served a few years during the War in the underground forces. I had a difficult time to decide to go with Dad or stay home. I found it too emotional to go to these services and yet I wanted to be there with him. We talked much about it and agreed that it was better for my health to stay home. I was glad that Andy and Terri went along. That gave me peace with our decision. When Dad came home, almost the first thing he said to me was, "Mom, I am so glad that you did not come along, it was very emotional, much more than I thought it would be."

April 18, 1996 Jordan Post was born in Edmonton, Alberta. Stacy and Murk's second child.

June 1995, Mom's brother Nico and his wife Jannie came from Holland to visit us for two weeks. As always, these visits from home were highlights! 1996-1998, Stacy and Murk moved to Santiago, Chili, for his work as a hydraulic engineer.

April 2, 1996, Katie Anne Moerman was born in Surrey, B.C. daughter of Andy and Terri.

September, 1996, Our first great grandson, Brendan Mark Klassen, was born to Mark and Linda.

September, 1997, our second great grandson Justin John Moerman was born to David and Saralyn.

September 20-30, 1997, Dad went to Holland with John and Jeanne to the Van Leeuwen's Family reunion.

July 5, 1997, the last birthday celebration of Dad. It was his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday and it was celebrated with most of our family in Mayerthorpe. To the best of my knowledge, Stacy and Murk and family were in Chile and Jim and Babette and family were rejoicing about baby Esther who joined their family during that week!

July 6, 1997, Rebekah and Greg Earle married in Westlock, Alberta.

June 3, 1998, Stephanie Klassen was born in Edmonton, Alberta.

July 8, 1999, Joel Moerman was born in Edmonton, Alberta.

February 24, 1998, John Andrew Moerman was born in Surrey, B.C.

March 14 and 22. We celebrated our Golden Anniversary in Mayerthorpe Pentacostal Church and in Emmanuel Church in Edmonton, Alberta with our family and many friends. How good and gracious God is, that we could rejoice together, not knowing what was ahead of us and what became such a change in my life.

March 28 1998, Dad went suddenly to his Heavenly Home “in a twinkling of an eye.” Just before he had asked me if we could eat earlier because he was hungry already! I went inside to add vegetables to the chicken in the oven and when I came back, Dad was “asleep in Jesus.”

April 1, 1998. We celebrated Dad’s Homegoing Service in Edmonton’s Emmanuel Community Church as well as in Mayerthorpe Pentecostal Church on April 2 with our whole family and many friends who had been with us when we celebrated our 50th Wedding Anniversary.

I have named it for myself “a droevig feest” (a sad feast,) and so far it is the greatest loss I have ever experienced in my life. Losing your parents, brothers and sisters is very sad as well, yet it does not compare with losing your dear life partner of 55 years. You have grown together so much, as you were not even aware of to the full, until the Lord takes him or her Home. July 1– 6, 1998, we had our last family reunion on the farm in Mayerthorpe. The purpose was to move all our belongings, clean everything and make the farm ready to sell. Everything was very painful but I was not the only one who was hurting. We all were trying to cope with the sudden loss of Dad. I think that it was a good to be on the farm with all the memories of Dad. We

all needed to share this as painful as it was. I was also glad that I had visited all our children in the two months before we had this final time on the farm. Now I was ready to go with Murray and Carol to my new home in Maple Ridge. It all was pointing to the fact that our life together was over, never to return. Of course I knew this for three months already but seeing the changes make you more aware that it is real and final.

I was not able to write about Dad's Home going for the first years. It is now six years later and some facts and feelings are fading somewhat but the memories are more precious as the time goes on.

I found a few sheets today about our last visit together to Holland in 1994, that I had written when we were home for three weeks. Our first visit was to brother Jaap or Jacob and Maartje's home. They have seven children, three were married at that time and the other four were all home for the occasion of our visit. As it was often done, one of the girls was called Corine, named after me. All the girls are musical. Two girls are playing Church organ and their son is preparing choirs to sing in churches or else where. He had a small choir in which his girl friend and three sisters sang as well. All these kids asked many questions. It was a joy to be with them.

On July 1, Dad's birthday was celebrated at Dad's sister, Maartje's home. The Moerman family and the Van Leeuwen family came, plus many cousins and friends. It was a very special evening. To be in the church, where we both were baptized, made Confession Of Faith and were married on March 10, 1948 brought more memories than anywhere else to both of us. When Dad and I stood at the place in the church, where years ago we knelt and made our promises to each other on our wedding day, it was almost too much for my emotions. It is so different when you come home after many years. Every memory seems to pile on each other and it becomes overwhelming. It was wonderful to be home, even though it had only been four summers that we had made the trip. Flying has never agreed with me and crossing the ocean by boat was better when there was no storm. But a trip by boat took too long for John's work and I was glad because it took too much out of me. I just had to learn to adjust to a one day visit for each of our brothers and sisters, since we had a large family. It is better then no visit at all! But I am more then thankful that we were able go together.

Of course I had chosen to go with my husband to Canada, in 1943 when there was no immigration in the picture yet. We were in the middle of the



Second World War. That was the beginning of John serving in the underground forces. The farm where we lived was for some a haven of rest for more than two years. We also made room for a family of seven people who came to live with us, a brother of my Mom with his family because their farm was flooded, so that England could not land in Holland. In these years we were sitting with 23 people around our tables. War means that every one helps as many people as possible to survive. Food was on coupons; not enough to live on but enough not to die for most people. The last year of the war (1944) was a terrible cold winter. Many have died because they could not heat their homes. There was only power one hour in the morning and one hour in the evening for cooking. We gave many people one cup of milk to drink, after we milked in the morning, until we had just enough left for our quota to deliver, which was Dad's income. The last two years 100 people came to our farm for something to eat or drink. I found it a terrible time, you feel so helpless. We needed our three weeks vacation to visit them all, but since we were with Oma every evening, it worked out very well. We had beautiful days wherever we went. The whole Sunday we spent with Oma, (Corrie's Mom) so we could sleep every night in the same bed. That made it very pleasant. When we came home, we had a "lekker kopje thee" with Oma, while we told her our adventures of the day. She loved to be kept up to date with all the visits to her children. We also went to John's oldest sister, Maartje and visited with all the Moerman families in all their homes and also with some relatives who lived too far from Schipluiden. We loved all these contacts and to be with each family a whole day brings the contact we were longing for. We also met several Moerman cousins I did not remember and John did not even recognize them any more. It became a guessing game which was a lot of fun. We had beautiful contacts with every trip we made. It is hard to believe that 1994 was the last time that we were home together. Since then, three brothers and one sister have passed away from my family and two brothers and one sister from Dad's family. I wrote before, that the church services were overwhelming, especially our last Sunday in Holland. 70 relatives plus our own families had come. I was glad to see them all, yet I was also glad when it was all over again because I have never learned the art to do this parting without tears flowing.

This has started when we immigrated which was very difficult. All these last final greetings, especially from our parents, was more than I could handle. I never got used to it. I always felt bad for my husband that I was not stronger when the day of departure came. But his love and encouragement has helped me always through everything. Compared with most immigrants of that

time, we went only four times home between 1948 and 1988, while many went every two or three years. We have been blessed with four visits of John's parents and three visits of my Mom who came to Canada after my Dad had passed away. My Dad had suffered a sun stroke and because of his headaches he was not allowed to come by plane. I had made the decision during the last year of the war already (1944) that I would follow John and that was four years before we were able to get married.

Immigration was not a possibility until 1947 for us. I think that the danger of war created situations that you needed each other's promises, to pull and plow through the uncertainty of life itself. I had never any doubt about that early decision. We were convinced that God had brought us together for these difficult times. We never have parted without a prayer of protection and direction, not knowing what would come our way.

One of our children have asked me, not too long ago, "Mom, have you ever been young?" I had never given that one thought but now I look back, there are two things that come to mind. The war started on a Friday morning when we all woke up from a tremendous noise of planes and shooting at 4 o'clock, May 10, 1940. Three weeks before, I had celebrated my 15<sup>th</sup> birthday. Our peaceful life was gone. Alertness and watchfulness was added to our busy life, plus fear for the future at times. Five years we lived in uncertainty. We learned to cling to God and daily walk with Him. My parents were heroes who created everyday a sphere of rest and peace in our home through reading God's Word after our meals and singing together many evenings, with or without the soldiers who were on our farm. Mom spoiled them with hot chocolate or coffee in the evening and with her kindness when they responded to her invitation. It was not hard to love our enemies in our home. We knew that they were forced to serve and would get the bullet if they disobeyed, we were told and we had to respect them. Not one soldier has harmed us but we had to be very careful with our words not to bring any one in danger who was hiding at our place. We had to stick to the rules.