

# Grandpa's Hands

by Melinda Clements

Grandpa, some eighty plus years, sat feebly on the patio bench. He didn't move, just sat with his head down staring at his hands.

When I sat down beside him he didn't acknowledge my presence and the longer I sat I wondered if he was OK.

Finally, not really wanting to disturb him but wanting to check on him at the same time, I asked him if he was OK.

He raised his head and looked at me and smiled. "Yes, I'm fine, thank you for asking," he said in a clear strong voice.

"I didn't mean to disturb you, Grandpa, but you were just sitting here staring at your hands and I wanted to make sure you were OK," I explained to him.

"Have you ever looked at your hands," he asked. "I mean really looked at your hands?"

I slowly opened my hands and stared down at them. I turned them over, palms up and then palms down. No, I guess I had never really looked at my hands as I tried to figure out the point he was making. Grandpa smiled and related this story:

"Stop and think for a moment about the hands you have, how they have served you well throughout your years. These hands, though wrinkled, shriveled and weak have been the tools I have used all my life to reach out and grab and embrace life.

"They braced and caught my fall when as a toddler I crashed upon the floor.

"They put food in my mouth and clothes on my back.

"As a child my Mother taught me to fold them in prayer.

"They tied my shoes and pulled on my boots.

"They have been dirty, scraped and raw, swollen and bent.

"They were uneasy and clumsy when I tried to hold my newborn son.

"Decorated with my wedding band they showed the world that I was married and loved someone special.

"They trembled and shook when I buried my Parents and Spouse and walked my Daughter down the aisle.

"Yet, they were strong and sure when I lifted a plow off of my best friend's foot.

"They have held children, consoled neighbours, and shook in fists of anger when I didn't understand.

"They have covered my face, combed my hair, and washed and cleansed the rest of my body.

"They have been sticky and wet, bent and broken, dried and raw.

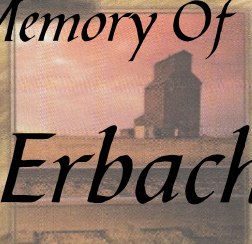
"And to this day when not much of anything else of me works real well these hands hold me up, lay me down, and again continue to fold in prayer.

"These hands are the mark of where I've been and the ruggedness of my life.

"But more importantly it will be these hands that God will reach out and take when he leads me home.

"And with my hands He will lift me to His side and there I will use these hands to touch His face."

I will never look at my hands the same again. But I remember God reached out and took my Grandpa's hands and led him home.



*Following the interment, the family welcomes everyone to join them for a lunch at St. Paul's Lutheran Church.*

*Donations may be made to St. Paul's Lutheran Church, the Melville Heritage Museum or to a charity of choice.*

*In Loving Memory Of  
Harold Erbach*

*1929 - 2016*



In Loving Memory Of

***HAROLD HEINRICH  
ERBACH***

Born: Saturday, October 5, 1929

Died: Friday, February 12, 2016

Age: 86 years



**FUNERAL SERVICE**

St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
Melville, Saskatchewan  
Tuesday, February 16, 2016  
at 11:00 a.m.

**CLERGY**

Rev. Phil Schwindt

**READER**

Amanda Mucha

**EULOGIST**

Lorna Tressel

**HONORARY BEARERS**

Grandchildren

Brandi Mucha	Dwight Erbach
Tyler Erbach	Drew Erbach
Dustin Erbach	Jordan Erbach
Kaitlyn Matchim	Krysta Erbach

**URN BEARERS**

Grandchildren

Traci Tral, Derek Mucha

**INTERMENT**

Melville City Cemetery

Harold Heinrich Erbach passed away Friday, February 12, 2016 at St. Peter's Hospital in Melville, SK after a brief illness. He was 86 years of age.

Harold was born on October 5, 1929 on the family farm near Colmer, SK to Jacob and Katherine (nee Keller) Erbach. He was baptized at St. John's Lutheran Church and confirmed at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Melville. He attended Colmer School until Grade 7, where he developed his love of all kinds of sports. He excelled in track and field, was an avid ball player and also played rec hockey with friends and neighbours.

During this time he helped on the family farm while also working part time with the CN at Colmer and for Albert Schmidt on his farm. Then Harold and his friend Ernest Schick went on a working adventure to Churchhill to work at a logging camp for a brief time.

In his younger years he enjoyed hunting rabbits with his brothers and sold the skins for 5 cents each to earn extra spending money. Later on he hunted bigger game, including white-tailed deer with his friends and brother-in-law Harvey Friesen. Harold then became a commercial painter, painting various churches, schools and barns in the area.

Harold met his wife Phyllis at City Cafe in Melville, SK. They were united in marriage on January 12, 1955 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Melville. For a short time, they lived on the Schramm farm at Goodeve, moving to the Erbach farm in the fall of 1955, where they grain farmed and raised Hereford and Charolais cattle. There they raised their three children, Donna born in 1957, David in 1959, and Dwayne in 1962. Harold's pride and joy was his family, and he attended many baptisms, confirmations, grads, recitals, school events and weddings throughout the years.

Harold started curling at Duff in the late 60s with his brother Albert and friends Joe and Wes Serfas. Later he and Phyllis joined the mixed and then the seniors' curling leagues and attended many bonspiels. Coffee with friends

at the King George was a favourite pastime. They had many holidays over the years including trips to Hawaii, Vegas, Reno, Thunder Bay, Edmonton, Peace River, Deadwood, Winnipeg, BC and Minot.

Harold and Phyllis moved off the farm in March of 2014 to Caleb Village in Melville. After Phyllis's passing, Harold stayed at Caleb a few months and then moved to the Ituna Care Home. After moves to Canora and then Esterhazy, he eventually ended up at Melville St. Paul Home in March of 2015, where he resided until his passing.

Harold was predeceased by his loving wife of 59 years, Phyllis; his parents, Jacob and Katherine (nee Keller) Erbach; in-laws Peter and Christine (nee Rathgeber) Schramm; twin grandchildren Stephanie and Harold Erbach; brothers, Walter in infancy and Donald Erbach; sisters, Lorna in infancy, Mary Rathgeber and Janet Rehbein; sisters and brothers-in-law, Tillie Erbach, Henry Rathgeber, Ernest Rehbein, Harvey Friesen, Peter Schramm in infancy, John and Hilda Schramm, Louis and Frieda Schramm, William Schramm, Karl Schramm, Matt and Katherine Walsh, Alec Ungurian and Alvin Propp and godson Doug Propp.

He leaves to mourn and cherish his memory: three children, Donna (Harvey) Mucha, David (Paulette Bereti) Erbach, Dwayne (Karen) Erbach; ten grandchildren, Brandi (Jason Schaeffer) Mucha, Traci (Colan) Trail, Derek (Amanda) Mucha, Tyler Erbach, Jordan Erbach, Kaitlyn (Ryan) Matchim, Krysta Erbach, Dwight (Chelsea) Erbach, Drew (Lauren Butts) Erbach, Dustin (Danielle Lane) Erbach; great-grandchildren Peyton Schaeffer, Paisley and Greysen Trail; brothers Albert Erbach and Gilbert Erbach; sisters Violet Weibe, Lydia (Harold) Sastaunik and Lyona Friesen; sisters and brothers-in-law Patricia Schramm, Gail Schramm, Hilda Propp, Mary Karpo, Tillie Ungurian and George (Ellen) Schramm, as well as his godchildren and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.