

# Irvin (Irv) Harold Grabke

On March 18, 2009, at the age of 81, Irv suddenly passed from the arms of his wife Kay into the arms and care of his loving Saviour and Lord.

Irv was born on May 14, 1927 in Detroit, Michigan and immigrated to Canada with his parents in 1932 where he grew up farming in the Whitemouth area of Manitoba. After attending the Briercrest Bible College he met the love of his life Leokadia (Kay). They married in 1949 and eventually raised 5 children; 3 daughters and two sons.

Irv received his journeyman electrician license and worked for Manitoba Hydro at Seven Sisters Falls for a few years before opening his own electrical repair shop in River Hills, then Whitemouth and later a full service store named "Irvins Electric" in Lac Du Bonnet. In his area he provided many families with their first experience of an electric home with the amazing appliances that were possible. Twenty years later Irv moved on to Pinawa where he was an inspector for the Atomic Energy of Canada. In 1972 the far north intrigued him to move to Yellowknife, Northwest Territories where he worked for the Government of the NWT in increasingly decisive positions in the Safety Divi-

sion. He retired in 1984, moved to a lakeshore near Yellowknife, became an Arizona Snowbird, and then eventually settled down in Kelowna for his last years.

While living on the lake in Lac du Bonnet Irv developed a passion for water sports, especially water skiing. He was instrumental in forming the Lakers Ski Club, which continued for 50 years and nurtured many national champions. Most summer weekends were spent at the many Provincial and National water ski meets which he developed and promoted. He was also an active Lions Club member, contributing to the success of a multitude of civic projects and events.

An avid outdoorsman, Irv was a Boy Scout Leader for many years that passed on his love, knowledge and respect for the wilderness and other scouting principles. Young men in Lac du Bonnet, Pinawa and Yellowknife often thanked Irv for the strong positive influence he had in their lives. For many years in Yellowknife Irv continued to promote bush skills through his management of the Northern Games at the annual Caribou Carnival. Coordinating three intense days of wood chopping, tea boiling, and log sawing out on the ice, as well as being

in charge of the finale fireworks, gave many people the opportunity to celebrate the end of a long northern winter.

Throughout his life, Irv's faith in his Lord never wavered and he knew that he would be with his Saviour face to face some day. His parents instilled in him a passion for music and he sang in choirs wherever he lived. He had a beautiful voice and it was a joy to hear him break out in song at any moment. Irv was such a "kibitzer" who will be remembered by all for his love of playing practical jokes on family and friends. Irv's happy attitude and smile will be missed by the residents and staff at Fernbrae Manor where he was always telling someone - "You're Speeding".

Irv was predeceased by his parents, Fred and Ida (Knopf) Grabke and his sister Gertie Best. He was a loving and wonderful person who was so very proud of his wife, children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Forever loving him and left to miss him deeply is his wife of 60 years Kay (Sommerfeld), his children Gwen Grabke (Brian), Deb Hamer (Norm), Dan (Lois), Murray (Josie), Faye Grabke. His grandchildren and great grandchildren Cassandra Scherer (Rory), Robyn Hanson (Dan), Jordan



Hamer (Miranda), Dwight Grabke (Michele Stacey), Carl Grabke, Shane Grabke, Travis Grabke, David Scherer, Bryce Scherer will miss their "Papa" and treasure their wonderful memories of his love. He will also be missed by his sister Helen Zink, brothers Phil (Gladys) and Richard (Lillian), Kay's sister Rose and husband Bill, and his many nieces and nephews.

A celebration of his life took place at First Memorial Funeral Services, Kelowna, British Columbia on Monday, March 23, 2009. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Condolences may be sent to the family by visiting [www.firstmemorialkelowna.com](http://www.firstmemorialkelowna.com)

