



## Heinrich "Henry" Diessel

November 25, 2023

Heinrich Diessel, known better as Henry or Heini, passed away peacefully on November 25, 2023 in his 90th year.

He was born in Grosse Forste, Hildesheim (Germany) on March 24, 1934, to Johanne Diessel and Elisabeth Henriette Diessel (nee Hoveling). He lived there until, as a young adult, he moved to Toronto, Canada with the support of St. Patrick's Catholic Church, bringing with him his skills as a carpenter (and his strong hands that would, through his life, build a cottage, a sailboat (in the family living room!), furniture, and toys for grandkids to come.)

At the age of 21, he met and married Andrina (Rena) Watson Mitchell of Edinburgh, Scotland. Seven years later, his daughter Lisa was born, followed a few years later by John and then Sandra. With babies in tow, they moved from an apartment in Roncesvalles Village to their own home in Etobicoke (Our Lady of Sorrows Parish).

Henry spent much of his working life as the plant manager at Beautiline Showcase Systems, a modular furniture manufacturer in northern Toronto, where he shared his creativity until the business was sold. After taking that unexpected early retirement, he found himself making a different career from another of his loves: cooking. He eventually landed as cook at Holy Martyrs of Japan Parish Church in Bradford, Ontario, keeping the two priests happily fed, and happily hosting events such as school principal lunches and Pancake Tuesday community dinners. After the priests transferred, Henry decided to move on to Our Lady of Grace Church in Aurora, but he was unable to stay

long after suffering a series of strokes.

Henry was, by that time, living in Gilford (Innisfil), Ontario. It was a place he thrived in, where he could share his love of animals and country living with his grandchildren. He demonstrated a particular fondness for the family donkey, but also had a great affection for the chickens who were his greatest fans. He also had an affinity for duck calls, but that's another tale.

Eventually, increasing challenges to his wellness brought him back to Toronto, where he resided with family for as long as possible.

After a rapid decline in his health this past month, he was transferred to Bridgepoint Palliative Care. He spent his last days surrounded by family and compassionate caregivers.

Henry is survived by his daughter, Lisa Diessel (Ivany); his son, John Diessel; his daughter, Sandra Diessel; his grandchildren, Darryl, Colin, Andrew, Eric (Jenna), Kara (Quoc), Catherine, and Victoria (Fernando); and his two beloved great grandchildren, Henry and Annie.

He was predeceased by his wife (divorced), Rena; and by his daughter-in-law, Susan (nee Rock), wife of John.

He is survived by his younger brother Hermann; sister-in-law Ursula (wife of his late brother Hubert); and many nieces and nephews in Germany.

He was predeceased by his parents, his half-siblings Martha, Catharine, Johannes, and Helene; and his siblings Alois, Elisabeth, Hubert, Rita, Maria, and Adelheid.

Henry's life will be celebrated with a funeral mass on Thursday, December 7th, at 11:00 a.m., at Holy Martyrs of Japan Parish Church, 167 Essa St, Bradford, ON L3Z 2V3.

There is no visitation. Interment of his ashes will take place in the spring.

In lieu of flowers, kindly make a donation to Nature Conservancy Canada, [www.natureconservancy.ca](http://www.natureconservancy.ca).

# Tribute Wall

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“ *Beginning in 1980 I worked with Henry at Beautiline Systems, and 2 other firms afterwards. Henry also provided me with a reference letter of recommendation for employment in 1992 to the company of which I remained until my retirement in 2020.*

*I have often wondered about Henry throughout the years but was not successful until now. It brings me with sadness and closure as his guidance at the beginning of my working life remains to this day.*

*Thank you Henry and for the Diessel Family, my sincerest condolences.*

*Steven Donalds*

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**Steve Donalds** - January 22, 2024 at 06:53 PM