

Horst von Selz of Boilermakers Local Lodge 191 A.k.a. Selz

Written by Monika von Selz

Horst is only known as Horst Selz,



This picture was used for Horst's Birthday celebration in the Times Colonist

Horst, Happy 99th Birthday!

Dear Horst, today we are celebrating this milestone with you. We are looking up to you and your accomplishments in life.

With love, Monika, Falk, Robin, your family, your dog Spike, your friends, your choir buddies, and all of your European relatives.

Enjoy!

Horst was born a German on November 7, 1922, in Danzig, a free Hanseatic City. Danzig had periods of being under Polish, Prussian, and German rule. It is a shipbuilding town and joined the Hanseatic League in 1361.

Life was hard in the 1920's and 30's growing up in Germany. In his younger years Horst had to feed the pigs before he would walk one kilometer to school. At the age of 14 Horst started his apprenticeship in the City of Schwerin, in the state of Mecklenburg (one of 16 states in Germany) at Meister Schuetts Schmiede (forge). His family recently moved to Gammelín, a very small village in the same state. On the week-ends Horst would ride home 20 kilometers on his bicycle to see his parents, especially his mother who had to wash his clothes for the next week. His Dad became the mayor of Gammelín, but the family would still work very hard on the farm.

During the 1930's in Germany inflation was high and jobs were scarce, apprenticeships were difficult to get, but Horst was a smart boy. The story Horst likes to tell is, how he got the spot as an apprentice: Herr (Mr.) Schuett said: "you are very small "and Horst said: "but I am still growing." That did it, he got to be the new apprentice and it took 3 years to finish his education.

In 1950 Horst moved to Hamburg with his new wife Cecilia (also from Gammelin) and it was her , that had the idea to immigrate to Canada. In the meantime Horst started to work for Bartel & Lueders and partner Hugo Hindemann shipyard , that repaired vessels .He left in April 1954 and started to work for Roland Finemann, a welding shop specializing in making special spray containers . He stayed with Mr. Roland Finemann until the spring of 1955. He was a kind person and drove Horst and Cecilia to Bremerhaven , to board the ocean liner , the " Seven Seas " , that would get them to North America, where they would start a new life.

Their destination was Regina , their new home. It was in Regina, that Horst joined the boiler makers in 1955. There was so much work , everybody was looking for help. It was cold in the prairies and the rumours were circulating , there was a lot of work in Victoria , BC, especially at the shipyard called Yarrows . Horst and Cecilia arrived in Victoria May 1957. Horst got a job at Yarrows where they were building barges for Seaspan at the time. Horst worked at Yarrows for 30 years on many construction projects. He was a master at his trade, mostly operating the Union Melt machine. He was only late once in his career, when his Chevy had a flat tire. He retired in 1987. Horst and Cecilia had four children: Mady in 1958, Falk in 1960, Robin in 1964 and Danny in 1965. Horst's wife became ill with cancer in the late 70's and she didn't want treatment. Horst looked after her at home for the last 7 years of her life. He lost his wife Cecilia in 1986, she was only 58 years old.

Horst built his own house, sheds, barns and tended to his chickens, one horse for his daughter Mady, one cow, 7 sheep, and one potbelly pig named "Hastings ". A real Superman!

I, Monika (wife number 2) was introduced to Horst by one of my clients, her husband worked with Horst. We married in 1989 and spend time together tending the "farm "and having fun travelling around Europe.

On June 3, 2021, our 32 anniversary Horst had a problem walking and ended up in the hospital. He never came home again. He is in a long-term facility; he is in great spirits and soon to be 100 years old this year November 7th,2022.

Local 191 would like to thank Brother Selz for his long service and for his contribution to Local 191.

Horst will be celebrating his 100th Birthday this November 7th, 2022.

The end.