

NORMAN STANGER



DR. NORMAN STANGER On Friday, April 2, 2010, Dr. Norman Stanger died surrounded by the love of his family and friends. Born November 14, 1927, in Elmwood to Arthur and Evelyn Stanger, Norm traced his family roots to the Orkney Islands, and he lived up to the islanders' reputation for toughness and bravery in the face of adversity as he dealt with the ravages of Parkinson's Disease. Norm is survived by his beloved wife Patricia, the friend of his heart, the light of his life, and the beauty of his world. Norm is also mourned by his brother Gordon and sister-in-law Eileen, sister-in-law Audrey, his nieces, and legions of friends around the world. He was predeceased by his brothers Roy, Walter and Wilf, and by his sister Mary Robertson. Norm attended Lord Selkirk School and St. John's Tech, and was a multi-sport athlete. He excelled in hockey, lacrosse and football (playing for both St. John's Tech and the St. John's Grads), and loved to skate, cross-country ski and swim, which remained his exercise of choice once he could no longer bash people around in contact sports. Although the post-war years were tough for working class families, Norm was determined to get an education, as he aspired to be a veterinarian. Starting at age 14, Norm took on a variety of jobs, mostly humble and difficult jobs, but through sheer willpower, he saved enough to enrol in the U of M where he earned his Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture, later adding a Master's degree in Microbiology. In 1949, Norm met the lovely Patricia, and was smitten. As always, he knew what he wanted, and they were married soon after, beginning a love story that was to last forever, just as they promised each other. Norm worked at the Health Dept. and at Burns until the fateful day when he was accepted at the Ontario Veterinary College. With Pat's encouragement, off he went to study while she earned their keep by teaching in Winnipeg. Being separated was too difficult, so Pat joined Norm in Guelph and after four years of dedicated study, Norm was an award-winning graduate of the University of Toronto (Guelph) and a veterinarian. He practiced in Arborg before accepting a position at the U of M vet lab in 1955. This led to an invitation to join the Dept. of Animal Science. With his strong work ethic again in evidence, Norm both taught and continued his vet practice by caring for the animals at the campus and at the Glenlea Experimental Farm. Norm had a distinguished career as a professor. He truly enjoyed his students, and the feeling was mutual. In fact, he quickly became known as The Pied Piper. Never one to lull students with long lectures, Norm preferred to show rather than tell. He had thousands of photographic slides and even more lively anecdotes to illustrate his points. He was also famous for his sense of humour and his creative practical jokes (which were often reciprocated, much to his delight). Norm was the type of teacher students remember fondly and with gratitude, and the many who remained his friends over the years are a testament to the strong relationships he nurtured. In 1975 Norm

accepted a secondment with CIDA, and he and Pat moved to Lesotho, southern Africa, where they spent several of the happiest years of their married lives. Norm instructed in vet medicine and directed a vet lab, but more than that, he and Pat became beloved community members. Once more, Norm or The Morena (Chief), made a profound impression, and his African friends mourn the loss of a compassionate man who worked beside them, and who was committed to helping them help themselves. Norm was deeply interested in the world around him, and read natural science, politics, and history voraciously. He gardened, coaxing the most beautiful blooms out of the soil. And he travelled the world, trusty camera in hand, taking delight in the sights and the people. Norm also loved the arts, and he and Pat supported MTC, the RWB and Manitoba Opera. Norm was a gifted man in so many ways, and yet he was never pretentious. He was quietly generous, genuinely sensitive and kind, and so accepting of others that one would be hard pressed to remember him being critical of anyone or anything except the cruel, the crooked or the destructive. He was appreciative of the good things in life and took the bad without complaint. This included the tribulations he faced with the progression of his Parkinson's. He was so grateful to Pat for making it possible for him to live out his days in the home that he loved, because any day he could share with Pat was a good day. Norm would certainly want to thank his doctors for their expert care. The kindness and compassion of the nurses and staff of the 4th Floor Victoria Hospital, particularly Ivy and Joanne, sustained both Norm and Pat, and will not be forgotten. In accordance with Norm's wishes, there was no formal service and a private interment. In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to the Dr. Norman Stanger Prize in Pre-Veterinary Studies, the Department of Animal Science, U of M. Farewell, farewell, but this I tell / To thee He prayeth well, who loveth well / Both man and bird and beast. (Samuel Taylor Coleridge)