

CONNECTIONS

November 2019

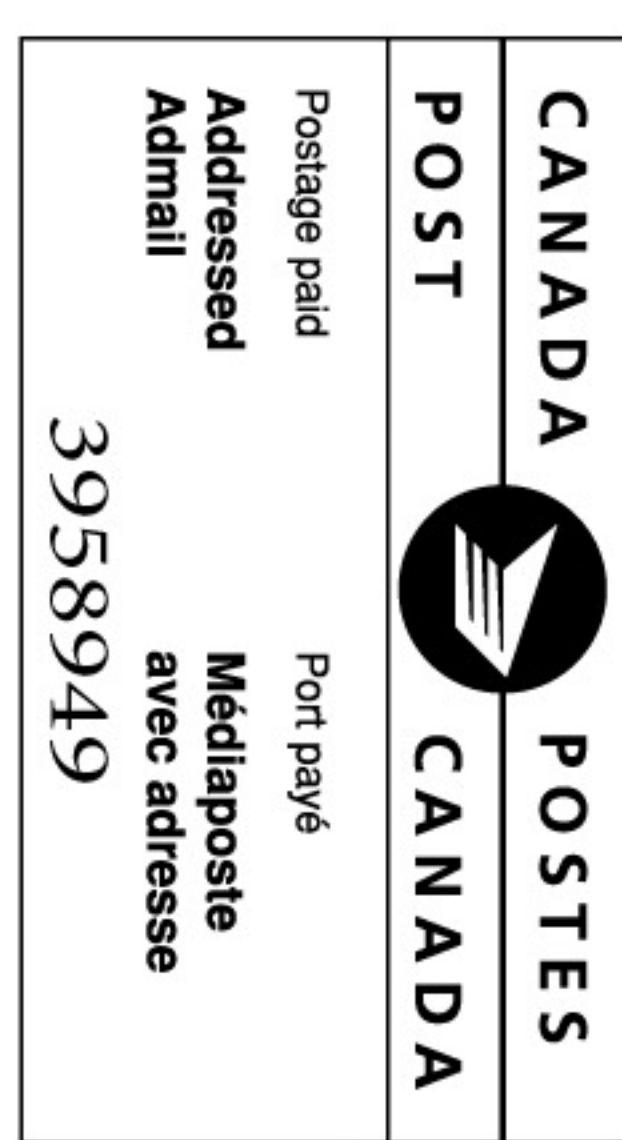
MEI Newsletter



Equipping students for life and forever



4081 Clearbrook Road
Abbotsford, BC V4X 2M8



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In this issue...

November 2019

3 Salvation for All People

Vijay Manuel, MEI Head of Schools

"Without the vision of these people of God, a church of purely new believers in Jesus would never have been established here."

4 New Careers Program

"We are excited to begin connecting with the community, and dreaming alongside these students about their employment future."

6 MEI Alumni: We Need You!

"He wants to do radical things with fresh perspectives to catalyze change in Abbotsford and the world."

8 MCC Colombia Adventure Tour

Sharon (Dueck) Simpson, MEI Alumnus (1983)

"Villagers want nothing more than provide a safe life and future for their children. MCC runs Peace Clubs for the children to give them teaching on friendship, trust and peaceful living."

9 Outdoor Enhancement Project Comes To Life

Heather Smith, MEI Middle School Principal

"It's a joy to look out the window to watch students gathered around taking turns using the outdoor equipment."

10 MEI- Laying a New Foundation

Leslie Stobbe, MEI Alumnus (1949)

"A spiritual revival broke out and a number of somewhat rebellious students did an about turn and accepted Christ as their Saviour"

12 MEI Hockey Alum Accepts U-Sport Hockey Scholarship

13 Alumni Giving Back By Coaching

13 Alumni Updates

18 Reunion Recaps

23 Upcoming Reunions

Salvation for All People

"We believe the good news of God's salvation in Jesus Christ is for all people. Christ commands the church to make disciples of all nations by calling people to repent, and by baptizing and teaching them to obey Jesus. Jesus teaches that disciples are to love God and neighbour by telling the good news and by doing acts of love and compassion" (MB Confession of Faith).

As some of you know, my mother passed away very shortly after receiving a cancer diagnosis this past summer. I see the world a bit differently after those ten days at Abbotsford Hospice Society's Holmberg House.

One particularly powerful moment was when a lady and her son visited my mother. It turns out that she is one of the 87 people who repented, was baptized, and is now obeying Jesus through the ministry of my parents and their many friends and supporters at South Abbotsford M.B. Church (1980 - 2000).

This wonderful lady prayed powerfully for my mom and then shared her testimony with me; how through my mother's life she was impacted with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and is now

living for Him along with her adult son and his wife. The son told me, "We are now working on our extended family!" Wow.

Seventy-five years ago, MEI was founded on the values and beliefs of the dear Mennonites who had immigrated to the Fraser Valley in the 1920s primarily from Russia. These people were fleeing persecution that is too horrible to describe here. Our family's own Opa and Omi



First Mennonite Church Meeting, Yarrow, BC (Source: yarrowbc.ca)

(Ben & Martha Janzen) came to Yarrow and Abbotsford during this time. It was the children and grandchildren of these immigrants who were responsible for bringing the Manuel family to Abbotsford with the hopes that my parents would be able to reach out with the good news of Jesus to the Indian peoples settling in this community in their own language. Why? Because they believed that salvation is for all people. Without the vision of these people of God, a church of purely new believers in Jesus would never have been established here. Again, wow! Praise God!

Friends, let's make this the year of telling and sharing of the love, joy, and peace that we can all experience as a result of a Holy Spirit led life.

...*"for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"*" Romans 10:13-15

Let us be the ones to bring the good news to those who are in our circles of influence, for "We [continue to] believe [as did the Mennonites who established MEI] that the good news of God's salvation in Jesus Christ is for all people" (MB Confession of Faith).

Submitted by Vijay Manuel, MEI Head of Schools and MEI Alumnus (1991)

Connections - MEI Newsletter

Connections is a semi-annual publication of MEI. It seeks to keep the MEI family informed of the on-going events in the life of its students, faculty, and alumni. To achieve this purpose Connections would like to hear from you! Tell your friends, former classmates, teachers, and the rest of the MEI community where you are and what you are doing.

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E-mail: alumni@meischools.com Visit us at: meischools.com

All design work completed by Joel Nickel, MEI Class of 1995

New Careers Program

The Ministry of Education has emphasized the importance of K-12 Career Education in the recent changes to curriculum. In response, MEI Secondary has created a Careers Department, led by Samantha Hawkes.

The purpose of this department is to provide our students with experiential learning opportunities that will help them bridge the gap between their secondary and post-secondary experiences. In the Career Education courses offered at MEI Schools, students will explore how their past experiences shape their current stories, as well as their future success and failures in life. Through the initiatives of the Careers Department, the diverse student body at MEI Secondary will be connected with work placements or volunteer experiences, enabling students to make connections with the greater community and set them on a possible future career path. In addition to experiential learning, students will explore the importance of mentorship. Through this program, students will be connected with a mentor who can encourage their strengths and support their areas of growth.

If you or your business are interested in learning more about the new MEI Schools Careers Department or if you would like to get involved in our mentorship/work experience programs, please contact Sam Hawkes (shawkes@meischools.com).

MEI Secondary's Career Education Department is also excited to offer work placement and volunteer opportunities for our students with diverse abilities. These students will have the opportunity to work in an environment with the individualized support required for them to succeed in local Abbotsford businesses. We are excited to begin connecting with the community, and dreaming alongside these students about their employment future.

If you or your business are interested in learning more about how you can get involved with this new program, please contact Jessica Tranquada (jtranquada@meischools.com).



Gavin Gaines (Grade 11) is a Fire Fighter Cadet representing MEI, and is training every Wednesday evening at Fire Hall # 3 (Aberdeen) for the next 10 months. He is very thrilled at all the knowledge and skills he is acquiring through this program. He wants to be a firefighter one day and he feels blessed to have this experience while in high school.



Faith Gazolla (Grade 10) meeting with Starbucks store Manager and Regional Manager to discuss the possibility of future employment!

Advancement

Meet Bev Gascon (left) & Peter Hay (middle) pictured with Vijay Manuel, Head of Schools. Peter is the new Advancement Manager at MEI Schools and continues to work closely with Bev Gascon.

Congratulations Peter!



IT'S TIME TO GIVE AWAY



A NEW CAR!!

ALUMNI NIGHT

MEI ALUMNI: THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE TO ENTER THE DRAW TO WIN A BRAND NEW MAZDA 3, TO BE AWARDED AT THIS EVENT

FRIDAY JAN.31



CAR DONATED BY



Contest & event details ▶ meischools.com/vip

MEI Alumni: We Need YOU!

MEI Class of 2011 alum Lucas Driediger joined us for chapel on October 1, 2019 to kick off the MEI Missions program. He currently serves with the Abbotsford Food Bank and shared with us how a simple moment in an MEI chapel influenced the course of his life.

When Lucas was a student, Dave Murray (Abbotsford Food Bank manager then and now) shared about his heart for the community which stirred the idea for Lucas about serving locally. That message laid dormant until later in University, when he felt called to serve at the Food Bank.

Lucas challenged students to ask God for specific direction, reminding them that He wants to do radical things with their fresh perspectives to catalyze change in Abbotsford and the world.

Service opportunities at the Food Bank were on Lucas' radar because of the impact of an MEI chapel speaker. Lucas' message to get involved and make change applies to all of us, and here are two opportunities for you to share your wisdom so that we can all grow together.

Do you feel called? If so, perhaps you could serve as a chapel speaker or participate in an alumni worship band.

Is there something on your heart that you would like to share with the student body? This could be a 20-minute talk (or shorter), and can even be done interview-style.

Or join a team, and model worship leading for our students and current teams. Please email our chapel coordinator, Adam Smith (asmith@meischools.com) to learn more!

Grow
WITH US

MEI ALUMNI:
WE NEED YOU!

email Adam Smith: asmith@meischools.com



MEI Schools Accepting Applications

FOR 2020-21



Limited
Space
Available

Preschool to Grade 12

NEW STUDENT APPLICATION
OPENS JANUARY 7 - 13

COME FOR A SCHOOL TOUR
RSVP at www.meischools.com/tours

November 28	Thursday	(9:00 - 10:00am)	at MEI Secondary
December 3	Tuesday	(9:00 - 10:00am)	at MEI Elementary
December 9	Monday	(12:30 - 1:30 pm)	at MEI Middle

FOR MORE INFORMATION

📞 604.859.3700 ✉ advancement@meischools.com 🌐 MEIschools.com

MCC Colombia Adventure Tour

Along with nine Canadians, I travelled the San Juan River in Choco, Columbia last May. Our boat travelled under the protection of four unarmed Mennonite Brethren pastors. Their relationships of trust with the drug gangs was our protection from assault. Between January and May, 36 community workers were killed in this region as they sought to bring alternative farming and peace. We were on a Mennonite Central Committee Learning Tour taking us back to Mennonite Brethren church plants established in the 1950's.

We visited an agricultural processing plant operated and maintained by Pastor Javez with support of MCC. It is the single processing plant in this region. Farmers travel the river to process rice and cocoa (chocolate) beans, providing an alternative livelihood from coco (cocaine). Drug gangs pressure farmers to grow coco (cocaine) and threaten them or take their land when they choose alternate crops. Villagers want nothing more than provide a safe life and future for their children. MCC runs Peace Clubs for the children to give them teaching on friendship, trust and peaceful living. Gunfire during Peace Clubs made it unsafe to meet outdoors. Parents join to learn principles of friendship and reconciliation. Every life has been touched by drugs, murder, threats or retaliation. Forgiveness and reconciliation are miracles and a difficult path forward to break the cycle of violence.

I am profoundly impacted as I think about the contrast of ease and safety that I know in Canada and Colombians wish they had in these rural villages. To see how they look to us for encouragement in their faith and efforts to provide a safe life is compelling. There is much more to process, but the shift in my heart and mind will forever change how I engage with and seek to support others – near and far.

About Sharon

*Student Body President,
MEI Class of 1983*

*Married to Gary Simpson,
Pastor, Broadway Church.
Together they have 4
children, 2 in-laws, and
2 granddaughters*

*Current work:
Director, Communications and
Stakeholder Engagement at Menno Place*

Submitted by Sharon (Dueck) Simpson, MEI Class of 1983



Sharon with her husband, Gary, on the San Juan River



Pastor Rutellio, Pastor Americo, Pastor Fernando and Pastor Javez dropping us off after a journey to the Bebedo Mennonite Brethren Church, founded by John and Mary Dyck (MB Missionaries)

Outdoor Enhancement Project Comes To Life

MEI Middle School is a place bursting with student energy and enthusiasm. It's long been established that developmentally Middle Schoolers need to move and be active. Our students enjoy sharing the playground and fields on campus; but there is very little green space immediately adjacent around the middle school building, and in that small area we have wrestled long and hard with drainage issues and mud.

As we began to dream about enhancing this outdoor space, we wanted to create "a gathering space" that middle schoolers would enjoy but also a space that would allow some activity. Our dreams gained some momentum as the Middle School PAC got behind the vision and our students participated in a number of hot lunch sales to raise funds for the project. To top off the fundraising, we added a record Entertainment book sale and raised additional funds through some pop-up food sales.

This October, we were pleased to unveil Phase 1 of our Outdoor Enhancement Project. This included pouring concrete and installing five exercise stations: The Airwalker; an Elliptical; Chest Press; Recumbent Bike/Hand Bike; and Plyometric Station.

The outdoor area will be further enhanced next spring with Phase II involving the installation of an outdoor ping-pong table and new basketball hoops. Some outdoor seating and conversational areas will bring the project to a close in Phase III.

We enjoyed a few days of sunshine this fall which demonstrated that the exercise stations will be well used. Now, even in inclement weather, it's a joy to look out the window to watch students gathered around taking turns using the outdoor equipment.

We would like to express our appreciation to all who have supported this project and especially acknowledge those parents who faithfully serve on our Hot Lunch committee. We appreciate Nathan Neudorf, Shaun Maddigan and Erik Bird, from Facilities who installed the equipment. We'd also like to thank some donors who supported our project in significant ways: MEI Middle Grandparents, Don and Orilyn Pasiuk; parents, Mike and Janice Redekop; MEI alumnus, Darrell Rempel; and former MEI parent & grandparent, Abe Konrad.

Submitted by Heather Smith, MEI Middle School Principal



MEI—Laying a New Foundation

In the summer of 1945 my parents enrolled my sister Lillian and I in the new Mennonite Educational Institute located only half a mile from our house on Emerson Road. It had been founded in 1944 through the collaboration of Mennonite Brethren and the Conference of Mennonites churches in the Abbotsford area. Franz Thiessen had been engaged as principal and only grades 9 and 10 were initially offered.

Lillian and I had completed eighth grade at Mt. Lehman Middle School and our natural destination would have been Philip Sheffield High School in Abbotsford. We knew about that school because as boys we had been bused there from Mt. Lehman for basic classes in woodwork, metalwork, lettering for making signs, etc. Samples of our work graced walls in our homes. So why consider the new MEI?

For starters, it was a Christian Mennonite school with a faith-based curriculum in the Christian Education building on the church property of the South Abbotsford Mennonite Brethren Church. Proximity to our home after being bused to school for four years also made us more available for work on our parent's dairy and berry farm. As a family we had recently climbed out of poverty and could afford the minimal tuition fee. All five of us Peter J. Stobbe children eventually graduated from the newly-built MEI and went on to college, where we found our MEI studies were greatly appreciated.

Reflecting on that revealed important experiences.

1. Our Mennonite Brethren perspective on Christianity was quickly expanded by students from the General Conference Mennonite Churches—with the MEI the first cooperative venture between the two local versions of Mennonites from Russia.

1944- Original MEI campus;
a 26' X 46' addition was made
to the South Abbotsford Bible
School building



1946 MEI Spring Production
"Das Lied von der Glocke"

2. Franz Thiessen, our music and German teacher insisted on us memorizing all 420 or so lines of the German poem, "Das Lied von der Glocke," by Goethe. My sister and I spent hours memorizing the words while pumping water at a neighbor's well when lack of wind silenced the pump action. Students also participated in a dramatic musical version as a fundraiser. The dramatization even traveled to Sardis, though students from there were being enlisted in Sharon Mennonite Collegiate Institute, started in 1945 in Yarrow.
3. William Neufeld taught English, Geography and basics of agriculture—which my father promptly implemented. Before we completed grade nine we had to identify world capitals and place them within half an inch of their location on a map. That knowledge came into play when I visited many countries as a book authoring specialist and publisher.
4. Principal Dyck taught math with enthusiasm, while always carrying a yardstick to point to illustrations on the blackboard. Discipline was never an issue.
5. Our chapels featured visiting Christian leaders, introducing us to the many facets of Christian service. After one of those visits a spiritual revival broke out and a number of somewhat rebellious students did an about turn and accepted Christ as their Saviour.
6. Even though German was still the language at home, we had Bible study classes in English, preparing us to enter the English-speaking world of our neighbors—and helping us reach out in Sunday School and VBS classes into neighborhoods not served by churches.

Submitted by Leslie Stobbe, MEI Class of 1949



1944 Teachers during the first MEI days. L-R
Mr. William Neufeld (45-52, 53-59, 61-62)
Mr. Isaac John Dyck (45-57, 62-66, 68-69)
Mr. Franz Cornelius Thiessen (44-50)
Mr. H. H. Nikkel (44-47)

MEI Hockey Alum Accepts U-Sport Hockey Scholarship

MEI Hockey Academy is excited to see one of its own move on to Canada's highest collegiate female hockey levels that many little girls could only dream of. Desiree Wiens, a current MEI Grade 12 student has just accepted a U-Sport hockey scholarship from the Trinity Western University Female Hockey Program that is moving into the prestigious U-Sport League starting September 2020.

The dream started in the Abbotsford Female Hockey Association Novice age group. Desiree played five years in the AFHA before playing one year in the BC Hockey Female Major Midget League and is currently playing in the Junior ranks with the Pacific Steelers that play in the highly regarded JWHL that travel across Canada and the United States to play against the best Grade 11-12 and post grad players in these countries. It is the Junior Steelers that helped Desiree learn the game at the highest levels and has helped her achieve her dream of playing University level hockey.

Desiree also feels that while her community hockey teams and coaches helped her learn to play the game, it was the extra ice time, coaches and skill development from the MEI Hockey Canada Skills Academy that gave her the opportunity to be at her best. Desiree thanks all of her coaches and teachers from MEI for the support and help in getting her this amazing opportunity with Trinity. Desiree is making history as she commits to Trinity as the first ever signed female U-Sport Hockey Athlete in Trinity's history. She also has a family connection to Trinity as her cousin, Chris Wiens is the assistant coach for the Trinity's men's hockey team. Chris Trendall, another assistant coach of that same men's team, coached Desiree in the MEI Academy for many years as her skills coach.

As MEI Hockey and Trinity Hockey both share similar values and intentional character development, it is great to see another MEI athlete make that commitment to continue attending a Christian athletics program and school. Desiree will lace up her skates for the Trinity Western Spartans in their inaugural season in the fall of 2020.



Desiree with the Head Coach of the Spartans Womens Hockey Team Jean LaForest



Desiree's parents: Shelly and Harold Wiens

Alumni Give Back by Coaching

Coaching a team at MEI Secondary is a joy in itself but there are times when the role brings extra special joy. Last season the Junior Girls' basketball team was led by Samantha Hawkes and Rick Thiessen as co-head coaches while Janelle Threlfall apprenticed as an assistant coach.

All three of the coaches are MEI alumni, which alone makes it special, but Rick Thiessen also served as the high school coach of both of the young women he worked alongside last season. What a privilege it was for the three of them to spend time reminiscing over the many good memories they shared. Last year's Junior girls got to hear many stories about Mrs. Hawkes and Ms. Threlfall from "Grandpa" Thiessen in his "rocking chair."

What about you MEI Alums? Were you an athlete at MEI or beyond and have a desire to give back to the Eagles' athletics program by coaching? Rick Thiessen would love to chat with you about what that could look like. The school is often looking for individuals who have a passion for a sport while also desiring to mentor young athletes to use athletics as a tool to pursue personal growth in all areas of life. MEI seeks to capitalize on the many hours teams spend together by emphasizing the spiritual growth opportunities that exist as coaches intentionally foster an awareness of God's role in creating athletes and how we can worship Him with our play.

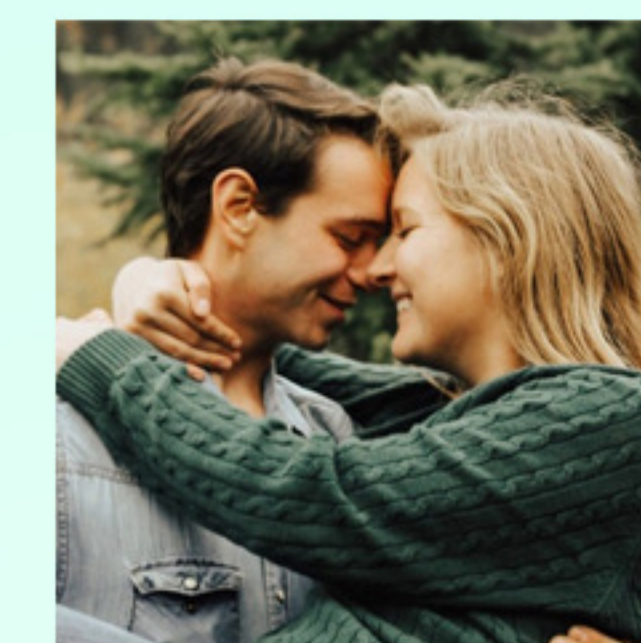
If you are interested in this opportunity, please email rthiessen@meischools.com to connect.



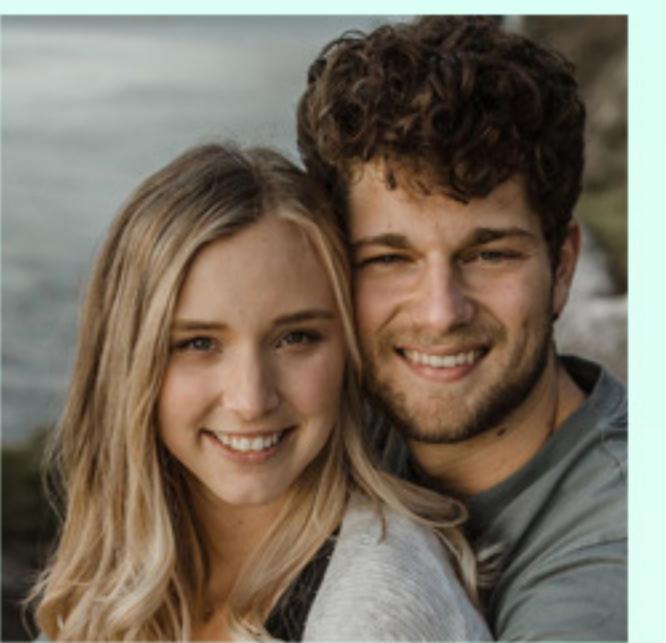
2018-19 Junior Girls Basketball with 3 generations of MEI alumni coaches; Rick Thiessen (1980), Sam Hawkes (Hill, 2001) at right, and Janelle Threlfall (2010) at left

Alumni Updates Engagements

Chelsea Neudorf (2014) and Brandon Wehr are planning for a winter wedding in January, 2020



Catherine Taekema and Mitchell Janzen (2016) are making plans for a spring wedding in May of 2020



Kaitlin Wiens (2015) and Nathan Hildebrandt (2015) are planning on having a backyard wedding in July 2020

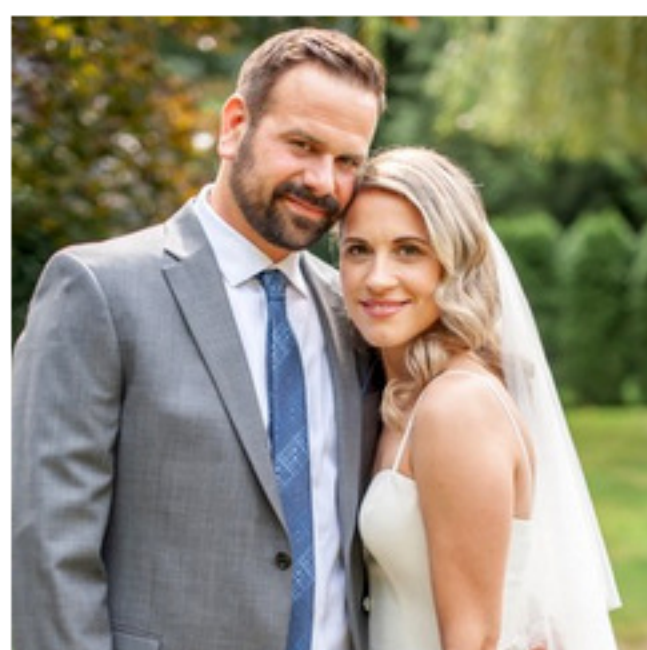


Candice Vuong and Daniel Siemens (2016) are planning for a summer wedding in 2020

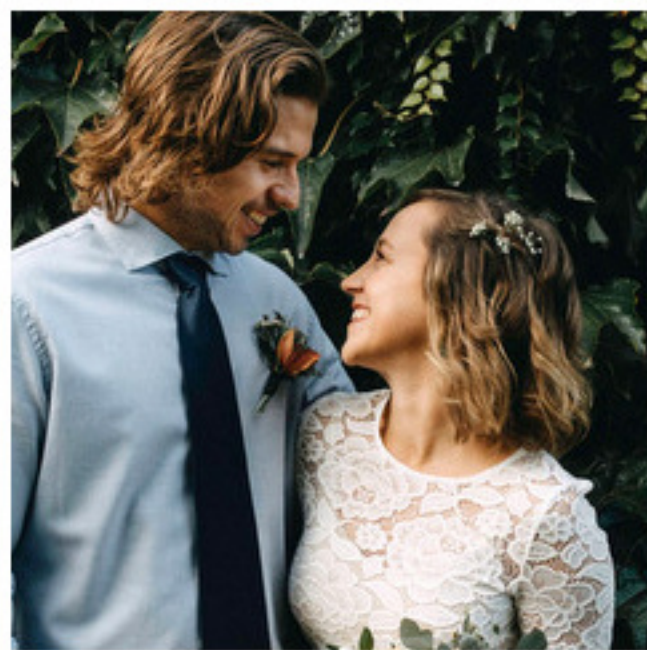


Weddings

Rachel (Fast, 2007)
and Davin Roy (2001);
September 7, 2019



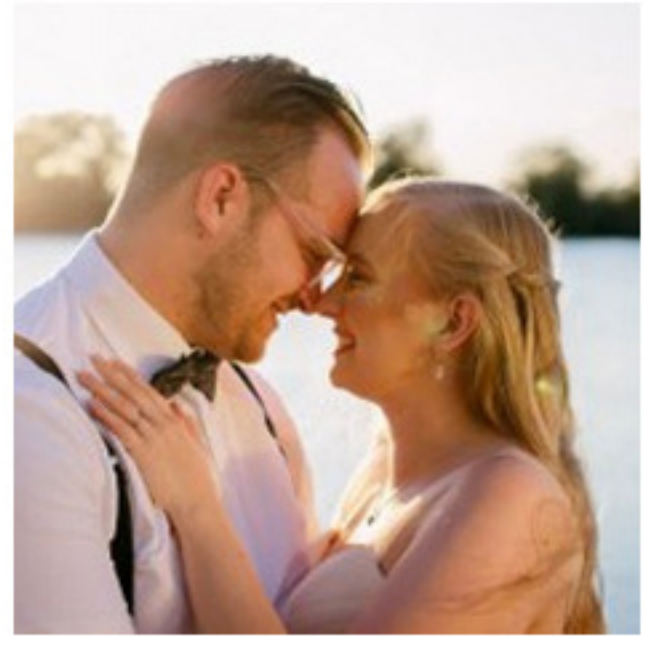
Rebecca (Funk, 2007)
and James Ens (2010);
October 6, 2018



Mariah (Bergen, 2012)
and Sam Park;
March 29, 2019



Becca (Carsience, 2015)
and Alexander Gust;
June 16, 2019



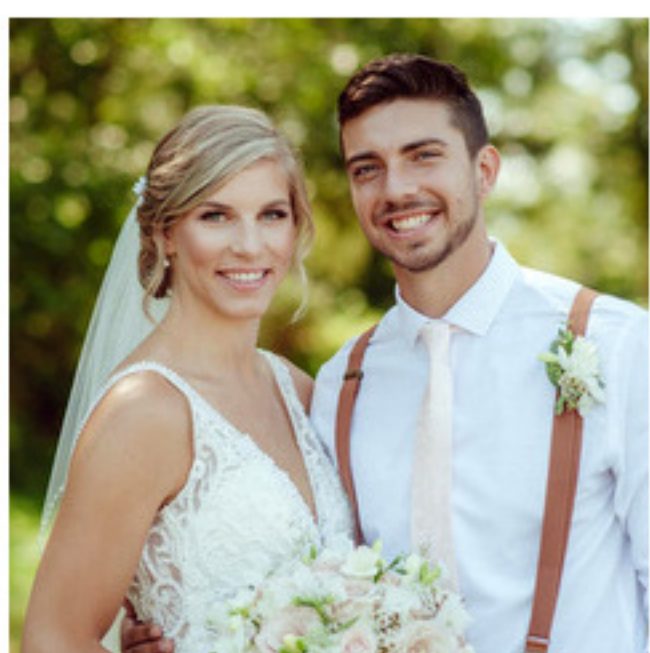
Julia (McLean, 2007)
and Nelson Bergen (2008);
September 21, 2019



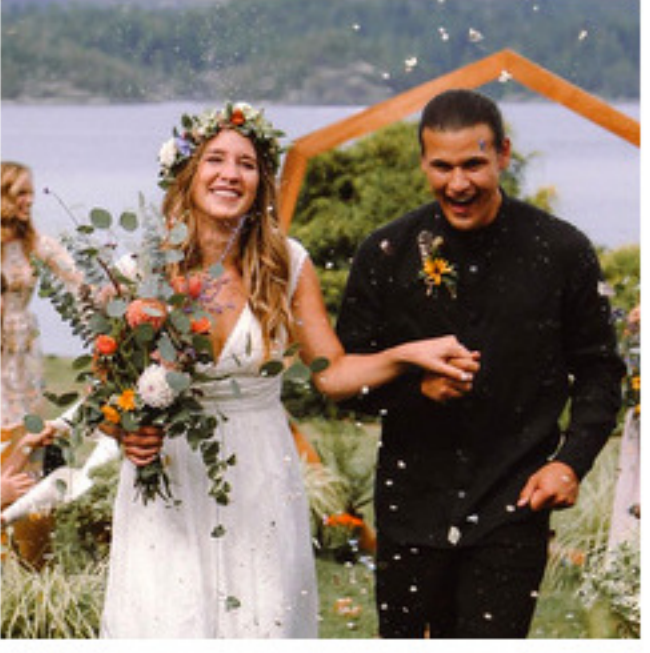
Jessica (Braaksma, 2011)
and Jordan Blackman;
September 25, 2019



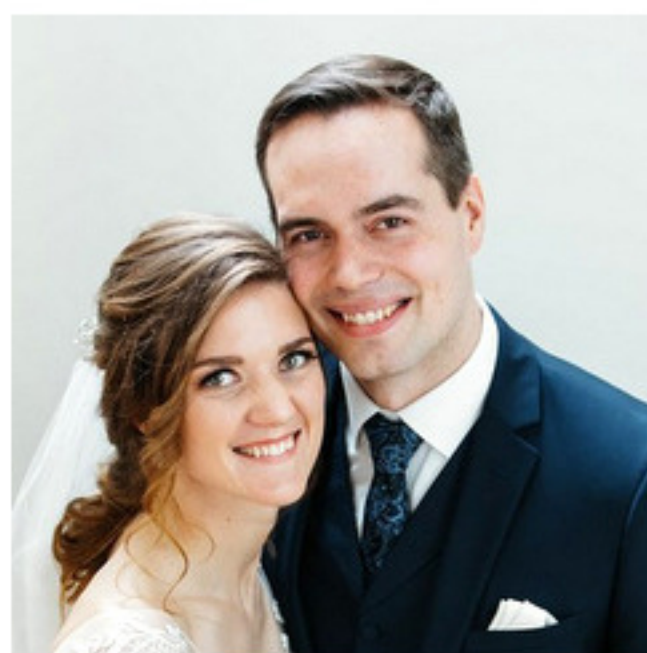
Tessa (Ratzlaff, 2014)
and Josiah Allison;
July 28, 2019



Bethany (Klassen, 2016)
and Adam Combs;
September 7, 2019



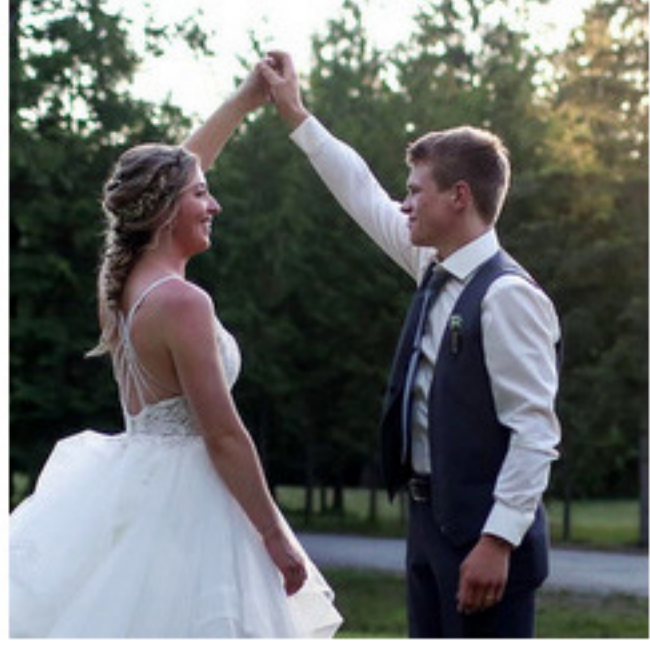
Heidi (Roeck)
and Paul Esau (2008);
May 18, 2019



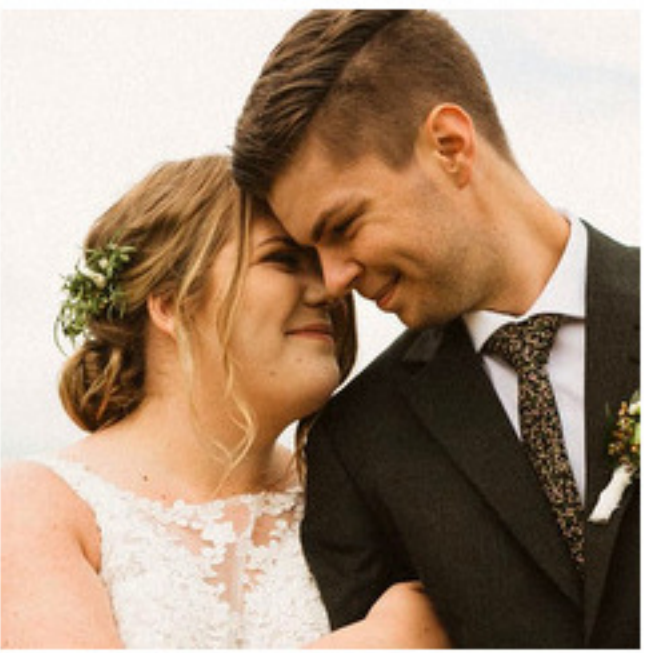
Emily (Siemens, 2011)
and Nic Duynstee;
September 8, 2019



Krista (Alexander, 2014)
and Brody Dyck;
July 20, 2019



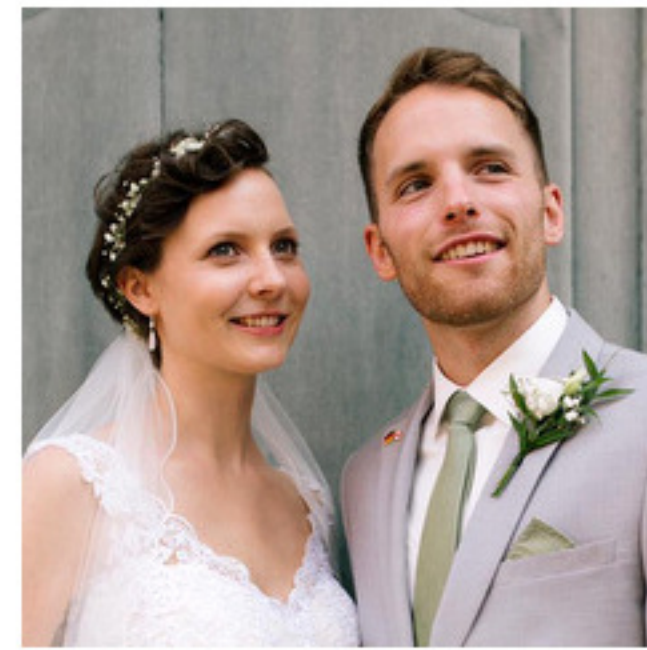
Peyton (Smith, 2016)
and Jackson Rennert;
June 8, 2019



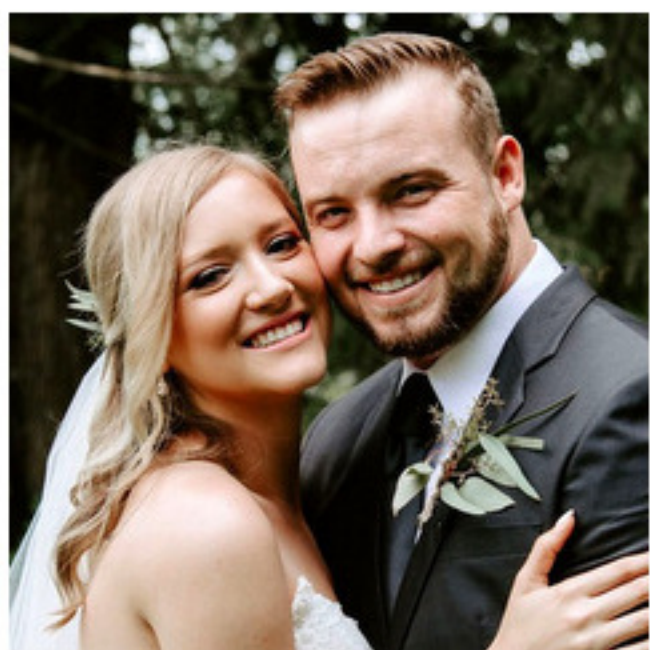
Ellie (Clarke)
and Liam Neufeld (2010);
July 26, 2019



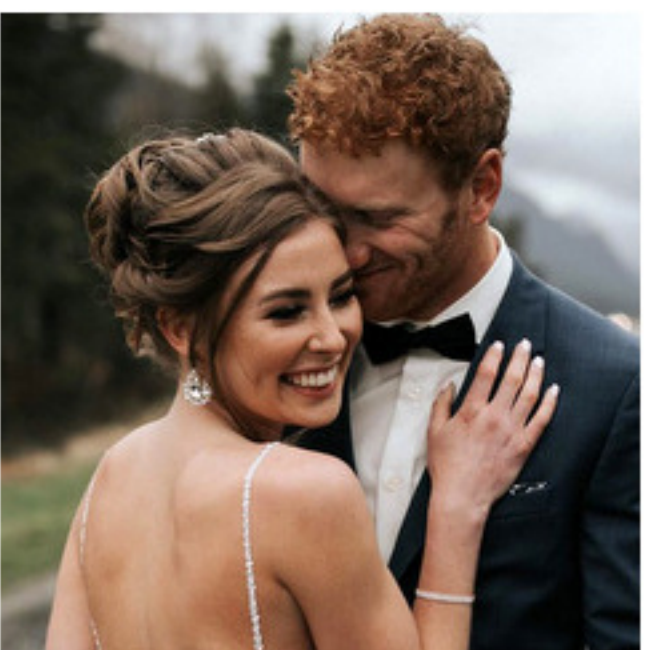
Jule (Masurek) and
Tyler Koslowsky (2011);
August 2, 2019



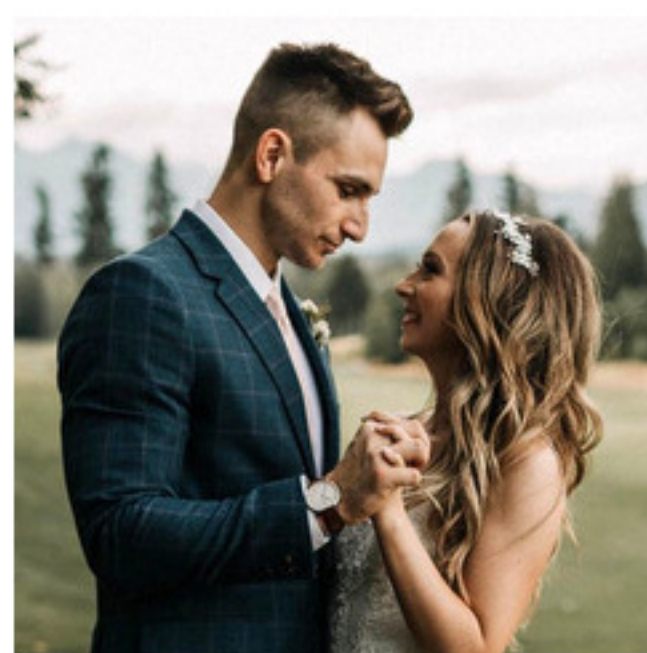
Lauren (Neudorf, 2014)
and Conner King;
July 6, 2019



Madelyn (Gosselin, 2016)
and Justin Penner;
April 6, 2019



Tess (Murchie, 2010)
and Trent Vilio (2010);
July 26, 2019



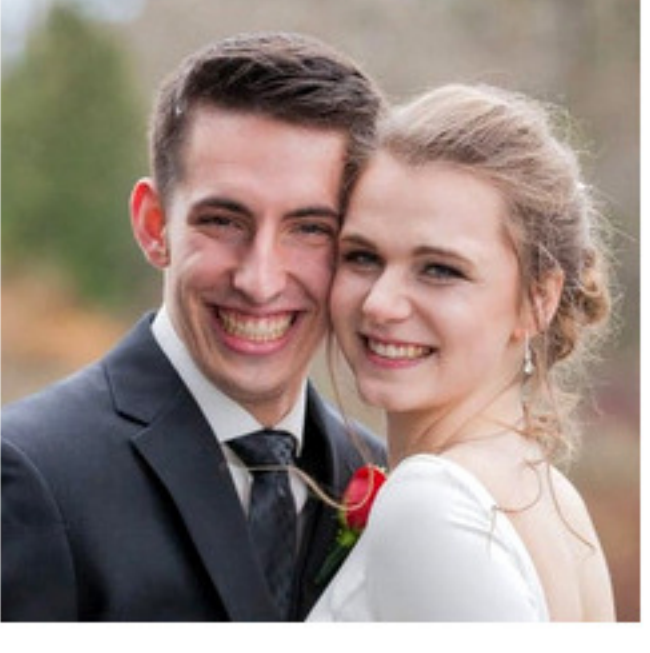
Tiana (Parks, 2013)
and Ryan Markloff (2011);
July 13, 2019



Bree (Enns, 2014)
and Braydon Neufeld;
June 9, 2019



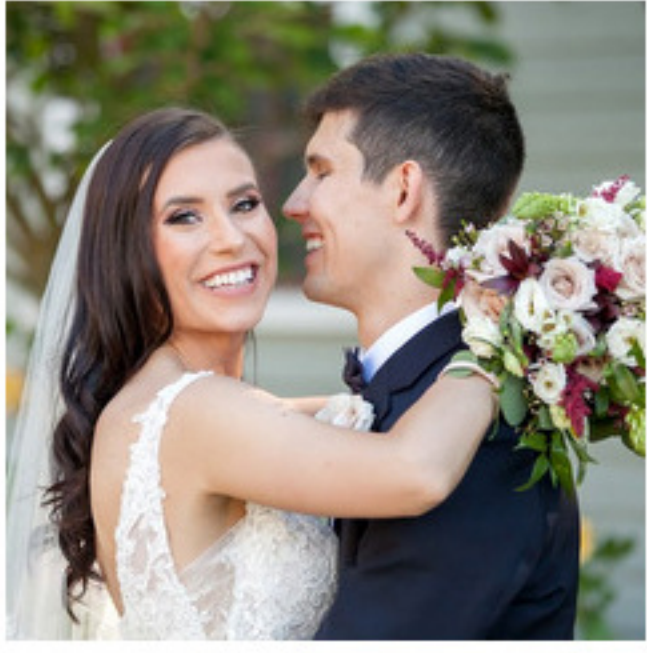
Olivia (Wiebe)
and Josh Fefchak (2016);
December 16, 2018



Jacqui (Omichinski, 2010)
and Matt Perkins;
May 18, 2019



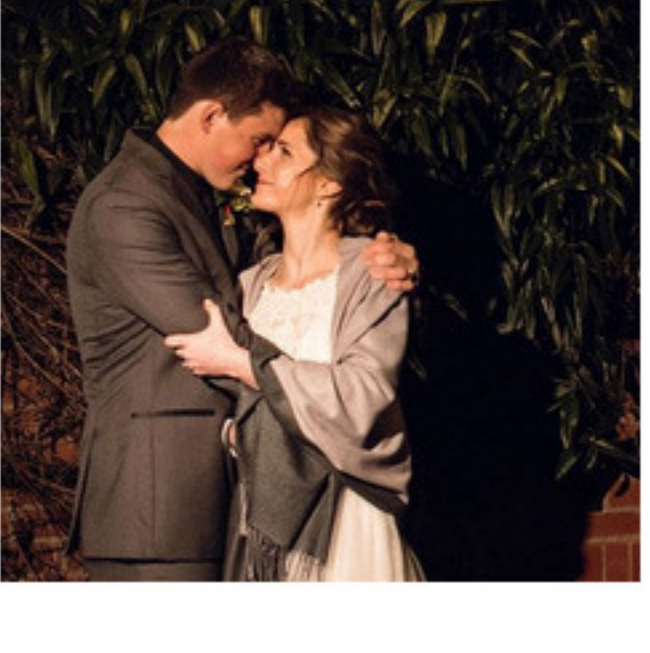
Amanda (Enns) and
Raymond Bamford (2011);
June 30, 2019



Andry (Friesen, 2014)
and Steven Chaplin;
June 2, 2019



Hanna (Steidle, 2016)
and Jalen Krahn (2016);
December 15, 2018



Alexandra (Driedger, 2010)
and Peter Horton;
May 18, 2019



Katrina (Bates, 2011)
and Nick Brinkert;
March 23, 2019



Paige (Bergen, 2015)
and Peter Yoon;
June 22, 2019

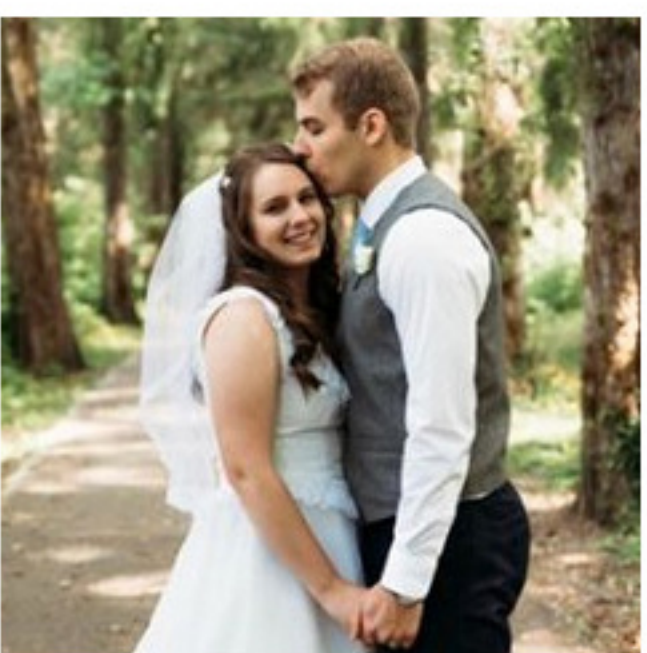


Births

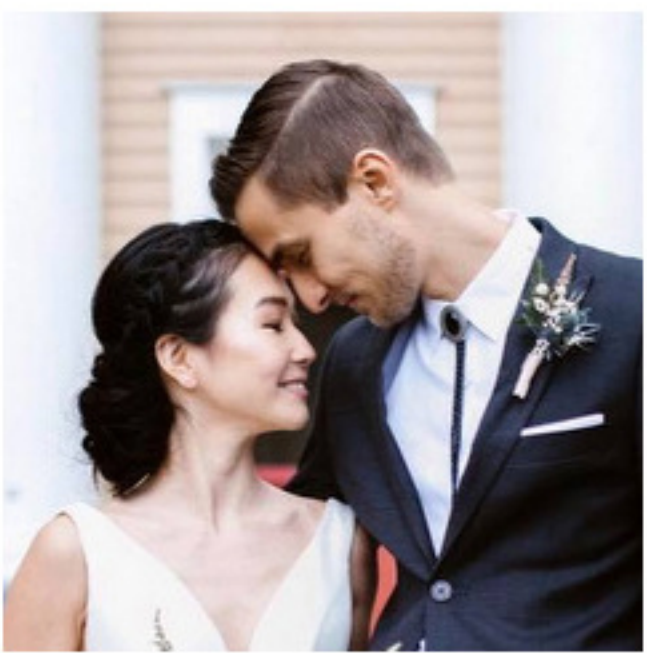
To Laurel (Heetebrij, 1995)
and Joseph Aylott
A son, Joel Thomas Robert
Aylott (7 lbs 5 oz), born May
26, 2019. Welcomed by older
brother Noah (11 yrs)



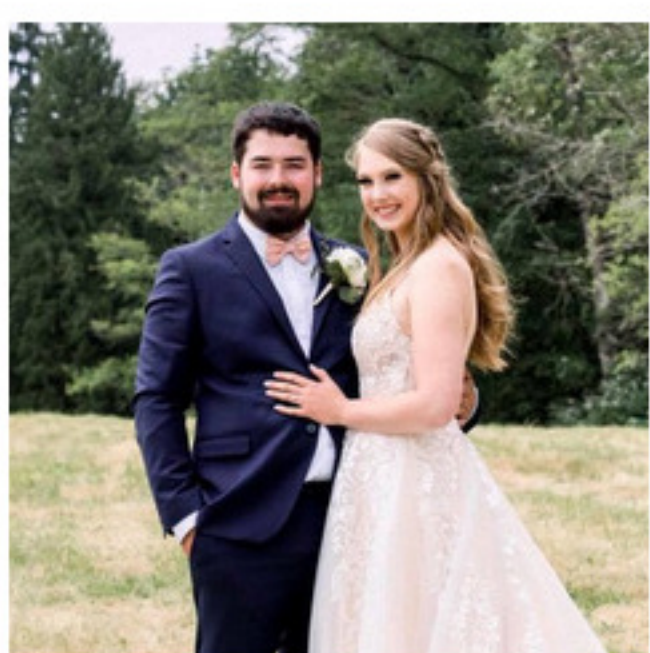
Jazzlynn (Betts)
and David Wiebe (2010);
May 18, 2019



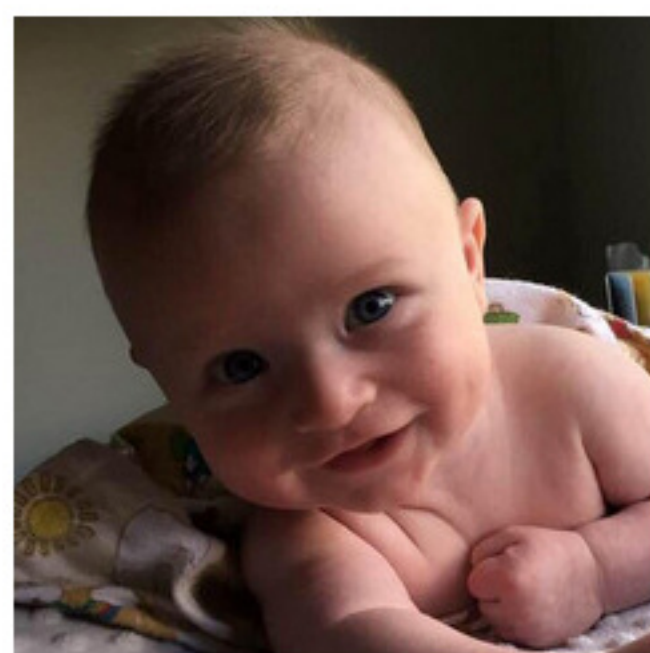
Kaori (Kaneko)
and Trevor Unruh (2012);
September 14, 2019



Anastasia (Pool-Bouwman,
2015) and Ryan Breukelman;
June 22, 2019



To Gemma (Kyliuk)
and Dusty Warawa (2001)
A son, Bentley Maxx Warawa
(7 lbs 2 oz),
born April 11, 2019



Births continued.

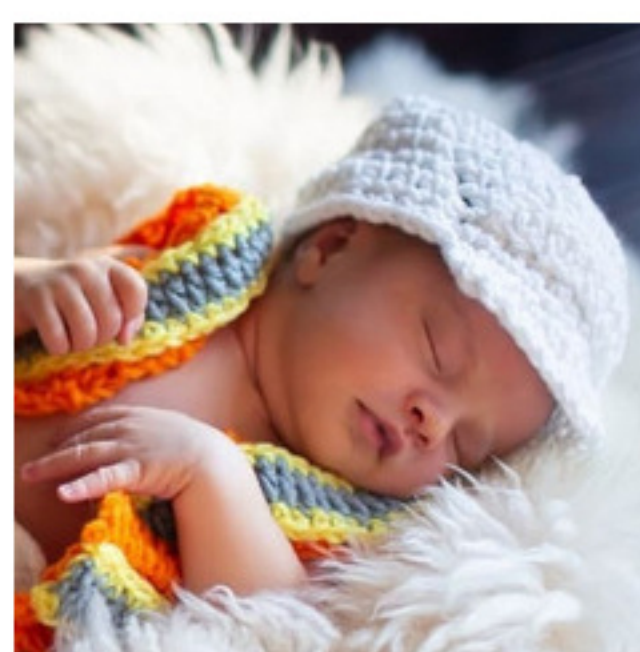
To Becky (Robertson) and Kyle Born (2003)
A daughter, Annabelle Jewel Born (8 lbs 12 oz), born September 12, 2019. Welcomed by older brother Augustus (2 yrs)



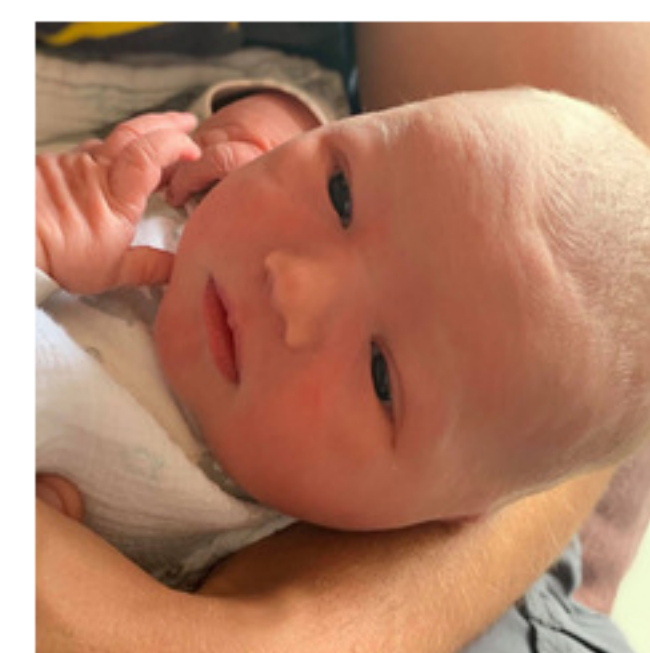
To Sarah (Isfeld, 2006) and Sean Patrick
A daughter, Kennedy Grace Patrick (7 lbs 10 oz), born July 31, 2019



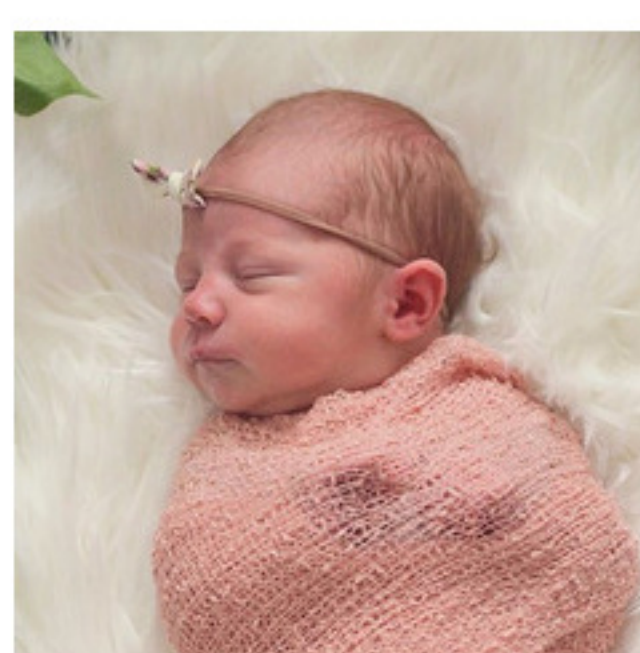
To Krystal (Neville) and Brad Loewen (2003)
A son, Liam Alex Loewen (8 lbs 2 oz), born August 14, 2019. Welcomed by older brother Kairo (10 yrs)



To Brittany (Spenst) and Levi Dick (2006)
A son, Leo Grayson Dick (7 lbs 5 oz), born July 23, 2019



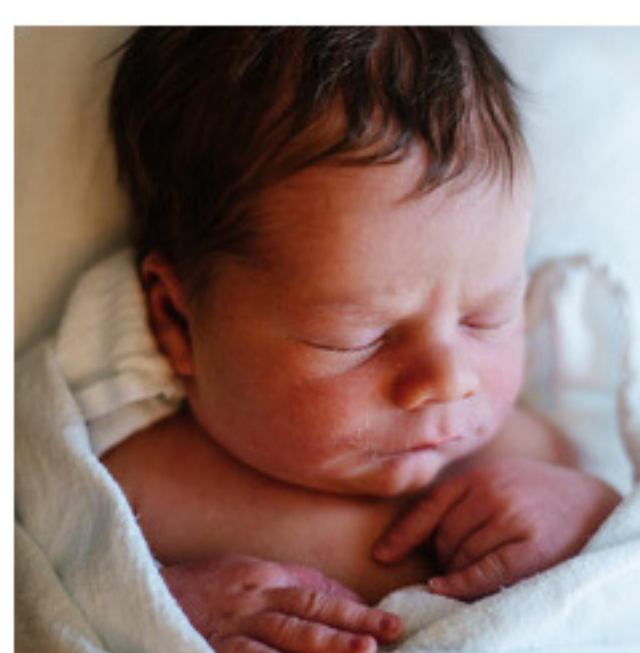
To Andrea (Schierling, 2004) and Ken Eyjolfson
A daughter, Layla Grace Eyjolfson (6 lbs 11 oz), born May 7, 2019. Welcomed by older sister Brynlee (4 yrs) brother Carter (2 yrs)



To Corina (Reimer, 2006) and Shane Boes
A daughter, Nora Katie Boes (10 lbs 1 oz), born July 20, 2019. Welcomed by older sisters Lennon (5 yrs) and Ivy (2 yrs)



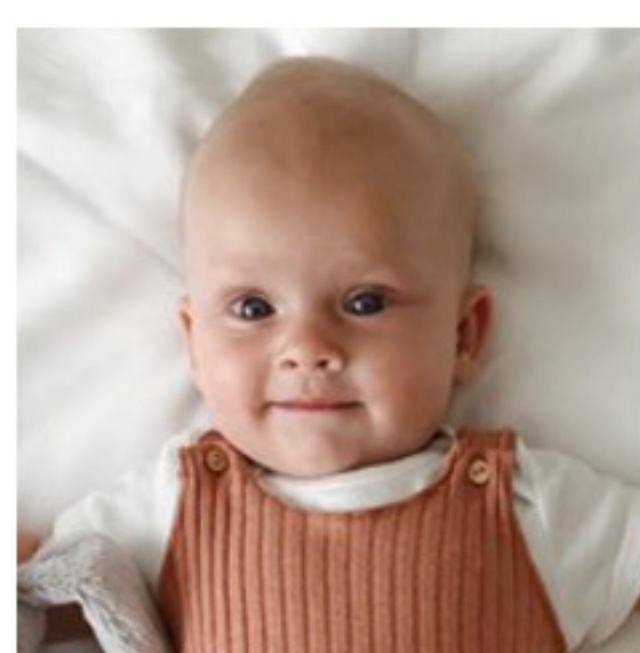
To Emily (Hiller, 2005) and Brendan Dick (2005)
A son, Jacob Ezra Dick (8 lbs 13 oz), born July 13, 2019. Welcomed by older brothers Devon (4 yrs) and Nathan (2 yrs)



To Sarah (Stephens, 2011) and Brad Quiring (2008)
A son, Bowen Jack Quiring (8 lbs 1 oz), born June 5, 2019. Welcomed by older sister Grey (1.5 yrs)



To Marie (Spiro) and Dustin Willms (2005)
A daughter, Elodie Bloom Willms (7 lbs 8 oz), born May 10, 2019. Welcomed by older brother Isaac (2 yrs)



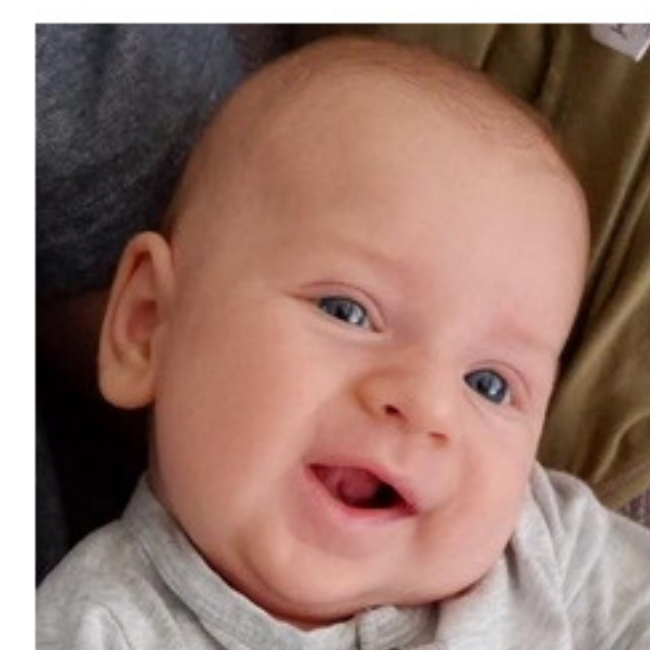
To Kirsten (Janzen) and John Wiebe (2008)
A daughter, Charlotte Andrea Katherine Wiebe (9 lbs 12 oz), born May 25, 2019



To Alison (Siebert, 2006) and Duncan Priebe
Twins; daughter Clara Violet Priebe (6 lbs 3 oz) and son Reuben Jasper Priebe (5 lbs 8 oz), born August 2, 2019. Welcomed by older sister Ivy (2 yrs)



To Michelle (Parberry, 2009) and Eric Goosen
A son, Brooks Myles Goosen (7 lbs 5 oz), born August 6, 2019



To Olivia (Reimer, 2010) and Logan Song (2010)
A son, Oliver James Song (7 lbs 3 oz), born May 16, 2019



To Marie (Siemens, 2013) and Matthew Kelly
A son, Benjamin Michael Kelly (8 lbs 10 oz), born October 17, 2019



Family Updates

Cranbrook Bucks Owner

Congratulations to Nathan Lieuwen (MEI Class of 2009), who is now the majority owner and president of the (2020-21) BCHL hockey club the Cranbrook Bucks. Lieuwen, a WHL alumni with the former Kootenay Ice, is joined by fellow alum Adam Cracknell in the ownership structure, along with Scott Niedermayer, a Hall of Fame NHL defenceman who was raised in Cranbrook.

"I'm very excited and proud... it's been a lot of hard work and a lot of long days. To get to this point is very special," Lieuwen said. "...We look forward to working with our community and the surrounding areas in building lasting relationships and partnerships. We're excited to be part of the Cranbrook scenery and the hockey behind it."

Niedermayer credited Lieuwen's passion and excitement for getting a hockey team in Cranbrook as a reason for getting involved with the effort. "Especially seeing his passion and how excited he was about trying to do this made it very, very easy for me to say yes," said Niedermayer.



Nathan Lieuwen, the majority owner and president of the Cranbrook Bucks, at the podium with Scott Niedermayer and BCHL commissioner Chris Hebb in the background

Harvard Law Graduate

Brayden Koslowsky (MEI Class of 2009) graduated from Harvard Law School on May 30, 2019. Brayden was awarded a Juris Doctor degree, cum laude. In October, Brayden joined the London-based law firm Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer -- one of the oldest and most renowned international law firms in the world -- in its New York City office, where he will practice in the area of international dispute resolution. During law school, he served as a legal intern with the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America & the Caribbean in Santiago de Chile. He also lead and participated in numerous projects which aimed at improving international law surrounding trade, development, and public participation in environmental decision making. Prior to beginning his law degree at Harvard, Brayden earned a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies from Trinity Western University, and worked in development and education in Guatemala, South Korea, and Thailand.



Brayden with his wife Natalie in front of the Harvard Law School library at graduation in May 2019

In Memory of

Joan Elizabeth Ens

November 10, 1956 - May 13, 2019

Forever with Jesus

Joan (nee Rempel) passed away in the presence of her husband and two children in Burnaby General Hospital after a 4 month stay in the hospital battling an aggressive malignant brain tumor.

Joan attended MEI from 1969-1973. After high school, she found herself in Germany, attending Capenwray in Bodensee. Following bible school, she did a bit of travelling in Europe with friends.

Coming back to Canada in the year that followed, she received permission and financial support from her parents to attend nursing school at the Health and Sciences Centre in Winnipeg to receive a Registered Nursing Degree. Back in BC, she completed her degree at BCIT and worked at a few hospitals, but mostly at Shaughnessy Hospital on Oak Street in Vancouver.

On July 20, 1985 she tied the knot with husband Peter Ens. After the first child was born, she decided to be an at home mom.

Travelling was always on her mind to which she organized many family trips and vacations.

She is lovingly remembered and terribly missed by her husband Peter, daughters Melissa and Christina and son Michael. Also leaving four grandchildren - Carson, Amelia, Lucas and Matteo.

A celebration of Life was held on May 27, 2019 at the Bakerview MB Church.



Reunion Recaps

Class of 1956 63 Year Reunion

The (Grade 13) Class of 1956 enjoyed a luncheon together on April 12, 2019 at the Magnolia Room in the Garden Park Tower. Efforts were made to connect with and invite everyone in the lower mainland who was part of the class from grade 8 onwards, and about 30 people attended (including spouses).

Submitted by Art Schmidt



MEI Class of 1956 at 63 Year Reunion

Class of 1959 60 Year Reunion

After all the months of preparation for the 60th reunion of MEI class of 59, it came to fruition on May 24th, 2019. Parking directors ushered us onto the yard of the MEI Senior High just before 9 am after which students and staff greeted us at the lobby doors. We felt most welcome as we began our special event.

In the library we were addressed by Principal, Mr. Mark Thiessen, Vice Principal, Mr. Mark Bergen and Head of Schools, Mr. Vijay Manuel and entertained with the performance of several musical selections by Mr. Wedel's concert choir. We then continued the rest of the tour of the school while classes were in session. Mr. Rick Thiessen and some students gave us insight into what seemed to be the heart of the students' exploring, learning, and growing in Christian faith. The students said they felt safe to pose any questions in their discussions.

We soon headed over to Garden Park coffee shop to pick up soup and sandwiches and gathered in the Magnolia room where we continued catching up with good, old friends from at least 60 years ago. Our connecting with each other continued at the Mennonite Heritage Museum where capable story-tellers like Helen Pauls took us around the walls of photos. Fellow classmates suddenly became cousins after consulting their genealogy printouts. How exciting! Thanks to Jennifer Martens for arranging this. We have such a rich heritage, and we are grateful that it's preserved in this building made possible by the generous man with a vision, Mr. Peter Redekop.

By 5 pm we were lined up for a group photo back at the Senior High library, to be followed with an excellent meal catered by Karen Bergen. We were privileged to have two of our teachers and their wives attend the dinner. Mr. John Ratzlaff with wife Helen and Mr. Victor Thiessen with wife Martha joined us and later shared some special words with us.

We were a total of 54 people seated at the dinner tables enjoying a delicious meal with close friends. It was like a family gathering. True to Mennonite form there was lots of singing with instrumental accompaniment - strings, piano and professional guitar. There was sharing from the heart and an abundance of reminiscing of school days at MEI. Our emcee, Ernie Schmidt did a great job of tying it all together and we all felt God's nearness as we gave thanks for His faithfulness in our lives.

I heard the comment, "I wish the evening program would never end."

Submitted by Gerda Neumann



MEI Class of 1959 with spouses; teacher Victor Thiessen seated at right

Class of 1969 50 Year Reunion

On June 1, MEI class of 1969 and our partners got together to celebrate our 50th grad reunion. We came from Ontario, Winnipeg, Alberta, Washington and other parts of British Columbia. We met at the school in the morning for brunch and had a tour of the school, had a trivia game about the year 1969, and did a lot of reminiscing about our years together at school. In the afternoon we had some free time and some went winetasting, and some took a tour of Suderman's antique car museum. We met for a delicious dinner at the school and then watched a couple of videos that had been put together about the highlights of 1969. It was a great time of reconnecting, laughing, and telling stories.

Submitted by Viola (Enns) Connolly



MEI Class of 1969 with spouses

Class of 1979 40 Year Reunion

The MEI Grads of 1979 celebrated their 40th reunion at the beautiful home of George and Caroline Siemens on June 1st, 2019. It was everything and more than most of us anticipated! We had not had a class reunion since our 10 year, and most of us were nervous about the changes that inevitably come after 40 years. Art Hoehn acknowledged everyone's anxiety right at the start, which removed the elephant from the event right at the get go. Name tags with grad photos were a saving grace for all of us. The comic post on our 1979 MEI Reunion Facebook group page about wraps it up: "Some of my classmates changed so much that they didn't even recognize me."

Brian Unger masterfully facilitated the ice-breaker activity in which each and every classmate was given a voice, explaining the link to their clue. Lots of laughter erupted as crazy mischief of high school was recalled. Trying to break up the buzzing conversations for a group photo was nothing short of a challenge.

We then enjoyed a delicious catered dinner from Francisco's, topped off with amazing, homemade Bienenstich made by Caroline (George Siemens' wife). The busy chatter of conversation was only interrupted by MEI cheerleaders, Jennifer (Friesen) and Florence (Neufeld), shouting, "Give me an 'E'..." followed by the arrival of a group of decrepit, senior citizens. Dressed in ill-fitting, MEI Eagles basketball uniforms of the 70s, they hobbled up the path with walkers and canes. The '79 Eagles basketball jocks performed an impromptu, self-deprecating skit that left us in stitches. Later on, Frank Ratzlaff treated the entire group to the highlight of the evening: his original songs with guitar accompaniment, along with the very familiar Eagles song of our era, 'Peaceful Easy Feeling.' The entire group was swept up in reminiscent fervour and sang along. It was a fantastic time of reconnections, reacquainting, reminiscing and letting go of preconceptions.

Post-reunion activities continued in the weeks following as a group of gals met up for an evening at Elizabeth Klassen's beach home in Tsawwassen. Others have since met for coffee or made contact with each other while passing through on vacation. I believe that most who attended this 40th reunion, walked away with a renewed perspective of one another and a realization that our years at MEI laid a foundation of hope, mercy and grace. May God find us faithful.

Submitted by Margita (Janz) Bergen



MEI Class of 1979 with spouses

Class of 1989 30 Year Reunion

On July 7th, the class of '89 held their 30th grad reunion at the Pearson home in Abbotsford. We had 32 grads (and four brave spouses) show up for an evening barbecue.

The six hours we spent together fairly flew by as everyone had such a great time; watching our old grad video, reminiscing about life in 1989 with some trivia, reading life updates from grads who couldn't make it to the reunion, winning some MEI swag for some lucky grads, enjoying a delicious meal and of course, catching up with friends we hadn't seen in a long time. It was so much fun, we can't wait to do it again in five years!

Submitted by Sonya (Schellenberg) Larnder



MEI Class of 1989 with spouses

Class of 1994 25 Year Reunion

On July 5, 2019, MEI Schools Class of 1994 and their partners gathered at Norina (Moss) Friesen's home to celebrate their 25-year reunion. Individuals came from locally and also from as far away as central Canada and the United States.

Laughter and stories could be heard around the neighbourhood from this cheerful group of adults reminiscing about years past. Highlights were a trivia game featuring questions from this class's graduating year and a screening of the 1994 all-night MEI grad celebration video (probably the last time all of us voluntarily and willingly stayed up all night).

Submitted by Kayla (Dean) Exham (Class of 2008)



MEI Class of 1994 with spouses

Class of 1999 20 Year Reunion

MEI Class of '99 had a great time celebrating at our 20th grad reunion. We met on September 7th at the Canadian Brewhouse for an informal evening together. We had 35 grads and several spouses join us. It was great to reminisce and catch up with our friends and enjoy some delicious food! We look forward to doing it again!

Submitted by Lyra (Harris) Dyck



MEI Class of 1999 with spouses

Class of 2009 10 Year Reunion

The MEI Class of 2009 reunion was a grand outdoor celebration, hosted at the Moerman home (big thanks once again). A remarkable attendance of 65 and counting! The youngest attendee was the ever so cute 2 day old Corran Douglas Jackson, the newest member of Catrina Lewis' family. Our fabulous photographer from the class of '71, Paul Funk, did a wonderful job of capturing the event. Five of the lifers were in attendance - Josh Brown, Kaitlin Hiebert Yoo, Catrina Lewis Jackson, Rachel Dueck Herfst, and Balina Bath. Although ten years had past, it felt like ten minutes. As soon as dinner was served (thank you to Lepp Farm Market), old friends collected in their perspective groupings all around the property, mirroring what we once saw in the high school hallways. After all, the only real changes were their surnames and titles. Many laughs were shared while the alumni opened letters from their younger selves - reminiscing on old friendships, loves and memories! We look forward to another successful reunion in five years, stay tuned!

Submitted by Balina Bath



MEI Class of 2009 with spouses

Alumni are invited to submit recent news!

Marriage, job change, addition of a child, award, promotion, graduate school, retirement, and so on! Mail to 4081 Clearbrook Rd., Abbotsford, BC V4X 2M8 or Email alumni@meischools.com

Please model your information after these current listings, and include name (both married and maiden names as applicable), and graduation year.

Upcoming Reunions

Class of 1980 40 Year Reunion

Friday June 5 – Saturday June 6, 2020

Join us for a catered lunch and school tour on Friday, followed by a BBQ dinner on Saturday. Connect with the MEI Class of 1980 (secret) group on Facebook by getting in touch with **Charlotte (Klassen) Lepp** (Ph: 604-556-6750 Email: clepp@leppfarmmarket.com)

Grade 12 Class of 1960 60 Year Reunion

Friday, May 29 – Saturday, May 30, 2020

Join us for a weekend reunion event that you won't want to miss! Currently all activities planned will be at Clearbrook Road locations. Will be offering overnight accommodation for extended dates for out of town participants at Columbia Bible College at attractive rates. More details to follow.

Contact Henry Suderman (Ph: 832-233-6800 E: hsuderman@gmail.com) or

Linda Friesen (Ph: 604-793-6387 E: shookave@shaw.ca)



MEI Gr. 12 Class of 1960 at 55 Year Reunion in 2015

Attention classes of **1950**, 1970, **1990**, 2000, and **2010**!
It's time to plan your **70th**, 50th, **30th**, 20th, and **10th** reunions!

Reunions are organized and planned by **you** and **your classmates**, and we'd love to help with ideas, facilities, and promotion.

Contact the MEI Alumni Office

E: alumni@meischools.com
P: 604-859-3700 ext. 327

Connect with @MEIalumni

