



REMEMBERING

Anton Kristian Pedersen (Tony)

February 4, 1920 - July 30, 2023



As kind as he was gentle.

Tony Pedersen was born on his great-grandfather's farm in Denmark in 1920. He began a Machinist apprenticeship at 18. After completion, he was one of 12 men among 300 applicants accepted as machinists for the Danish Air Force. During this period Germany had occupied Denmark. In 1943 Anton and fellow servicemen were interned in a camp. It was believed that Danish King Christian X intervened on their behalf and effected their release. Anton then escaped to Sweden on a fishing boat, where he spent the remainder of the war at a Swedish air base, while also working in the Danish underground.

At the end of the war, the lure of travel called, and he left Denmark for Brazil with the allowable maximum of \$50 in his pocket. In Brazil his new name became Antonio. Here he worked for a Brazilian company servicing DC3's, and learned Portuguese language. The company was in dire straits and he was unable to extract more than 60% of his pay. In lieu of the remainder, he was provided a flight to Sao Paulo on one of the DC3's. On take-off he felt a draught and realized the door was hanging on its hinges. He woke the Steward and together they braced and pushed to close the door. The window trim beside his fellow passenger fell from the wall. When leaving the aircraft, he noticed a sign over the exit door that read "This Aircraft is protected by Saint Christopher".

After a brief stint at a Studebaker plant in Sao Paulo, he obtained a job at the I.T.A.U. Airline Company, where he learned about graft.

Next, he was hired by the Danish East Asiatic Company to inspect farm machinery and diesel engines. This required travel to the interior of Brazil by steam train and on ancient buses, where he learned about large, and/or poisonous snakes.

The two years that he had planned to be in Brazil came to an end in 1950. Unfortunately, he was short of money as he had made a loan to a friend who could not be found. He bought cheap passage on an old WW1 steam engine troop ship, arriving in Berne, Switzerland with no money after paying off the customs officer who had checked his suitcase in Brazil. He sold his photo light meter, realizing

enough money to get to the Danish border. At the border he was able to sell his plastic raincoat as it was a novelty at that time. Arriving at Fredericia, the railway officials allowed him the rest of his trip on credit.

Not long after returning to Denmark he applied for immigration to Canada. Arriving at Pier 21 (with the allotted \$50), he was greeted by volunteers and reps of the Player Cigarette Company who handed out free packages of cigarettes to the newcomers. He made his way to Winnipeg, hub of Canada. He was offered a position with the Central Northern Airways bush flying company, operating out of Flin Flon. Tony was assigned to the remote Cold Lake base where he was to work maintaining ski-planes, trading the skis for pontoons when the weather warmed. This is where he learned English, unwittingly picking up many 4-letter words as well.

In 1951 he was hired by T.C.A. on a Defense Contract. His bachelor days ended when he met Eva and married in 1954. They lived in Tsawwassen where he made a career with Air Canada. Together they sired 3 children, and adopted a 4th.

Moving to Salt Spring Island in 1981, Tony joined the Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club while in his 60's. His intimate knowledge of the south end of the island led to BC Parks recognition of him as a Park Steward at Ruckle and Beaver Point Parks. He became an Honorary Member of the Trail and Nature club almost 20 years ago, while in his youthful 80's.

Tony was predeceased by his Partner in Life Eva, and by their adopted son Terry. Tony is survived by children Karen, Ellen (Pat), Tom (Sayuri) and grandchildren Lisa, Marina, Kai, Fyn, and Brianna, for whom he provided the perfect model of love, humour and tolerance.

