



Mr. Arpad "Les" Laszlo Hajdu

March 16, 1936 - June 3, 2026

Árpád László "Les" Hajdú was born in Gödöllő, Hungary, March 16th, 1936. He became a freedom-fighter during the Hungarian Revolution and was forced to flee to Canada in 1957. Once in Canada, he worked on the CP Rail, quickly learning Italian and then English from his crew members. He also had a hand in the construction of the Trans-Canada highway, working a caterpillar between Field and Revelstoke. In July of 1966, he and Penny Nixon eloped to Idaho in a 1963 turquoise Ford Galaxy convertible and, after a short honeymoon, settled in Calgary, Alberta. Les worked construction in Calgary, building everything from houses to high-rises that still stand today.

The family moved to High River in 1981 where Les developed a number of properties before transitioning to making and restoring furniture. He joined the High River Rotary Club and was an active member for about 10 years. He was an unofficial master of many trades, but a truly gifted wood-worker; this is apparent in every piece of furniture, and every wagon, buggy, oxen-yoke, or wheel that Les had a hand in crafting or restoring.

Les will be remembered by his friends and family for his creativity, his gourmet cooking, his green thumb, and avid story-telling. Les is survived by his devoted wife of 60 years, Penny Hajdu; his two daughters, Julie McLean and Kate Monaghan; and his five grand-children Sam, Will, and Grace McLean, Jaime Monaghan (Sammy Friedman) and Lucy Monaghan; his nephew Jules

Hajdu.

A Celebration of Les' Life will be held on Saturday, June 13th at 1:00 p.m. at the Cayley IOOF Hall.

Caring for the family is Lyle Reeves Funerals of High River (Craig Snodgrass)
403.652.4242.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Service

JUN 13. 1:00 PM (MT)

Cayley IOOF Hall
122 Hammond Street
Cayley, AB T0L 0P0 (CA)

Tribute Wall

CM

“ To Penny, Julie and Catherine and family -

Yvon Charest and I send our late but heartfelt condolences on the loss of your beloved husband, Penny - your dad and grandfather to the girls and the family.....



Although it was mid 70's, I can still remember the first time I met Les - so many years ago. Penny and I became friends while in our Education studies at the University of Calgary. She invited Yvon and me for dinner to to the lovely Hajdu home on 19th street in Calgary. I still remember admiring the beautiful handiwork of the Hajdu home - which revealed Les's incredible creativity and talent with all things wood and construction related. I think we may have eaten some fabulous Hungarian dish that night..... When Penny and Les moved out of Calgary, he did the same in the farm house at the Cayley property.

Yvon and I send our thoughts and prayers to all of you in this still raw season of grieving. The blessing is that he suffers no more and Les leaves behind such an incredible legacy that lives on in his incredible family.

Cynthia Malner-Charest - June 23 at 11:09 AM

JC

“ Oh my, Penny and daughters. our thoughts go out to you all.

I met Les in 1981, as a staff member and colleague of Penny's at Joe Clark School.

I remember Les as a proud Canadian, emigrating here after a career as a fighter pilot for the Hungarian Airforce. As one of the block countries, the Hungarians flew Soviet fighters, and Les regaled me with tales of flying in the last diamond formation, a flight of four with a an arrowhead threesome in front, and a trailing centre plane. The idea was that if the formation was ever locked on by enemy missiles, the trail pilot actually acted as a sacrificial target to protect the other three!!! Terrifying! He told me about having each pilot in the formation swap out, taking a turn in this vulnerable position . His cheerful demeanor and direct, "that's the way it was" attitude were certainly engaging. I never forgot those stories!

I also remember him as a skilled carpenter, and home builder. He was certainly active in expanding the residences in High River.

I will remember him fondly, Penny. We are so sorry for the your loss and and are thinking of you

Jim and Elizabeth Critchley

Jim Critchley - June 22 at 04:58 PM

GS

“ My memory of Les is that of a student in his furniture repair and refinishing class that he offered through adult education. He was a master craftsman as he guided us to take our time and do a good job. His kindness and patience is remembered.
Our condolences to Penny and her family.

Gary and Esther Sawatzky - June 22 at 04:10 PM

KA

“ So sorry to hear of Les’s passing. My thoughts and prayers are with you.

KarenHurl - June 19 at 10:06 PM

JO

“ My sincere condolences to Penny and family



Janice Ottewell - June 19 at 12:23 PM

TR

“ Thinking of you all today. ❤️

Tammy, Randy, Claire and Gaby

Tammy Rogers - June 13 at 01:13 PM

LM

“ Les was such a wise and wonderful person. I will miss him. Sending hugs.



Laura Myers - June 12 at 03:26 PM

JR

“ *The years pass so quickly and connections become memories. Those of Penny and were always warm in our hearts.*

*Jeanette Rousseau
Vancouver*

John Rousseau - June 11 at 10:56 AM

BP

“ *Penny and family
I am thinking of you, so sorry to hear about Les. I remember coming by and Les showed me his goldfish pond set up. He was quite proud of it and I came home with a "collection" of goldfish for my pond. He liked showing me all his yard and gardening ideas. Take care.*

Bev De Paoli

Bev De Paoli - June 11 at 08:22 AM

SW

“ *Thinking of you all as you hold grief and gratitude in your hearts. I remember Mr and Mrs Hajdu having our whole Europe Travel Group of teens for supper in their home in HR after they had chaperoned our trip. He was a very smart and talented man. Thinking of my cousins- Sam, Will and Grace as they remember their Grandpa. Big hugs- Shauna Way*

Shauna Way - June 10 at 07:51 PM

CF

“ *My heartfelt condolences, Penny and Family.*

Cindy Frisk - June 10 at 11:04 AM

TG

“ Toni Groeneveld lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arpad "Les" Laszlo Hajdu



Toni Groeneveld - June 09 at 11:14 PM

AZ

“ Ann Holmes Zirk lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arpad "Les" Laszlo Hajdu



Ann Holmes Zirk - June 09 at 09:48 PM

CJ

“ Sending sincere condolences to all at this time.

Connie Jewell - June 09 at 10:44 AM

MC

“ Mary Lou Carleton lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arpad "Les" Laszlo Hajdu



Mary Lou Carleton - June 08 at 07:37 PM

CA

“ *Connie Anderson lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arpad "Les" Laszlo Hajdu*



Connie Anderson - June 06 at 08:55 PM

SM

“ *Sheila Macklin lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arpad "Les" Laszlo Hajdu*



Sheila Macklin - June 06 at 07:48 PM