



Heritage Project

Hello!

I am Marvin Latimer

(Marvin shared his unique story of skiing at Spruce Coulee! Photos show Marvin & Mary on their engagement day and then their final photo together nearly 65 years later.)



Marvin Latimer lives in Innisfail now, but he and his wife Mary raised their three boys at Spruce Coulee near Bowden. They did some logging on their farm in the early 1950s and again in the late 1990s, and 'every tree we logged was good right to the bottom.' Frank had a decades-long involvement with both the Canadian Limousin Association and the Innisfail Lions Club. But what is most memorable for Marvin from those years was taking his boys to his neighbour Frank's property to ski down Spruce Coulee itself!

"They had put a pipeline over the bank and cleared a 60 foot width of trees and it had a 600 foot drop, so it was a perfect place with no wind and no people. We had our own ski hill!" recalled Marvin. "Frank brought his kids and I brought mine every Sunday afternoon and they spent hours skiing on that hill. None of the kids waited for anything – Frank and I both had a skidoo, so the skiers would all go down together and we'd be at the bottom of the hill. They would all grab onto the ropes on the back of our skidoos and we'd pull them back up the hill to do it all again - and again! My kids still love skiing.

"Mary didn't care for the skidoo, though, so she would spend those afternoons preparing meals and doing the household stuff without anyone getting in her way. Everyone was happy with the arrangement. Skiing was everything back then. One year when the kids were off school between Christmas and New Year's, there was a full moon and we stayed on the hill every night until 9:00. The kids were always home by 9:00, that is, but us dads would skidoo for hours after that. It was fun being out there."

Mary passed in January 2024 at 90 years old, just one week shy of their 64th anniversary. Marvin said they did most things together through all those years, except for the coulee ski trips. He doesn't recall any special recipe she prepared while they were off skiing, "I just ate the food she put in front of us. She rotated all the dishes she cooked for us and she did a good job. I do the same thing now, preparing chicken, pork, beef and fish with lots of veggies throughout the week. I try to get proper nutrition and it's what keeps me so healthy."

Our recipe suggestion for Marvin - Beef with Veggies

Marvin's only suggestion for a recipe to include with his story was various proteins with veggies, so we're sharing this one (although Marvin says just throwing whatever protein & veggies together with salt & pepper will suffice)!

- 8 ounces beef filet, cut into strips
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh ginger root
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 carrot, chopped
- 1 (10.5 ounce) can beef broth
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon white sugar
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon oyster sauce
- salt and pepper to taste

In a large skillet over medium high heat, saute the beef slices in the oil for 5 minutes, or until well browned. Add the onion, garlic and ginger and saute for 5 more minutes. Then add the green bell pepper, carrot and beef broth. Reduce heat to low and let simmer.

Meanwhile, in a separate small bowl, combine the corn flour, sugar, soy sauce and oyster sauce, if desired. Stir thoroughly, forming a smooth paste. Slowly add this to the simmering beef and vegetables, stirring well, and let simmer to desired thickness. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

(Recipe from 'Allrecipes')