



**JAN VAN ALPHEN**

\* 03-04-1949

† 26-08-2007

A kind man, caring father and proud grandfather suddenly left us. Jan was strong as an ox, hard working, determined, honest and fair, was always there for his family, and a man with a strong sense of justice. When a plan popped into his head, he'd do it. He wished nothing but the best for those he loved. Jan was always full of ideas and on his way to realising them, with an admirable and untameable devotion, even in times of hardship.

Jan grew up, a third child, in a close-knit family in Berkel-Enschot, with 6 brothers and 3 sisters. He enrolled in the agricultural college and in '72 bought a little farm in Berkel and married Thea. Together, they built up a nice business. During their marriage of 35 years, they had three children: Sandra, Ton and John. Hard work and self-respect were virtues Jan held in high esteem. In '86 the family moved to Bladel. For Jan, still moving up in the world with grand construction projects, was a will to create a warm and loving home for his family and to invest in a business, thus preparing for the future.

From '79 onwards, his passion, participation in Tractor Pulling, began. He would incessantly talk about all experiences upon returning home and show everyone all the videos. On visits to the USA or Canada his bags would be aplenty with various pieces of machinery. And with a buoyancy and dedication to the sport, he reached the top and gained international recognition. At home, Jan would while away many an hour in the workshop, behind his PC, surrounded by a special selection of the prizes won. A big prize of Amboise, a 12-liter bottle of wine, he happily shared with family and friends during the 25th wedding anniversary of Jan and Thea. In spite of his successes, he always kept his feet firmly on Terra Firma and such modesty spoke volumes of his character.

"Our Thea", the way he would coin our mother, who, during his periods of absence at competitions, would care for the home and cows. He always had total faith and belief in her. Hard at work, suntanned, dark leathered hands covered in oil; a picture of a happy Jan at work. He didn't always like opposition to some of his proposed initiatives, such as the wind turbine park. There was a feeling of injustice as he battled the decision with Thea all the way up to its establishment. The children left home, grandchildren arrived on the scene and Jan loved them. He was always involved, caring deeply for them and enjoyed their company immensely when all of us were at home. He was always proud of his children and recognising his own character in them, very much so when John won the European Championship in '98. When '06 closed, the decision was made to sell the farm. The cattle had left 6 months before and the time thereafter was used to cement old friendships and relationships. Less time spent in the business meant that he could devote himself to tractor pulling and further ideas. In his mind, the new workshop had been fully renovated. We would have such great times together. Thea was to accompany you to future competitions as she did now to the one in Great Eccleston (GB). And sadly now this... you died in the heat of battle. We cannot begin to express how much we'll miss you. Venture Farm will never be the same.

Thea, your children and grandchildren.

Jan, why you? I had to leave you. You've never been away from me for such a long time. I will never forget your last words.

Thea

For all your kind words, condolences and sympathies we give our most heartfelt thanks.