

# Biography of Mahmoud (Ed) Abo Ferris

Mahmoud Abo Ferris, (Ed) came to Canada from Lebanon in 1925. His homestead was in Hodgson, Manitoba. Ed married Khisfee, (Rose) Hattum from Gouverneur, Saskatchewan in 1944. They lived in Hodgson until 1945. That was when Rose became homesick for her family. Ed had his cattle shipped to Gouverneur Saskatchewan, where he continued to farm. While in Gouverneur, Rose and Ed had four children, Helen, Victoria, Mary and Hamid. Ed did not like the Prairies as he was used to the bush country. In 1950 he moved his family to Doris, a Hamlet near Barrhead, Alberta. Ed was introduced to Doris by a friend by the name of Ali Taha, who at that time was living in Doris. While in Barrhead their fifth child was born, Ida. Ed continued to farm and at the same time was turning logs into lumber. Their stay in Doris was very short, as Ed was introduced to Lac La Biche by Mike Fyith. Ed then moved his family to Lac La Biche in 1951.

Ed and Rose also moved their cattle and lumber with him to Lac La Biche with the assistance of a friend from Lac La Biche, George Coutney. Ed bought an acreage on the outskirts of Town. Ed continued to farm and turn logs into lumber. In 1952 their sixth child was born, Sam. A year after the Ferris family settled in Lac La Biche they were introduced to mink farming, as most families were mink farming families. Ed gave up the lumber business, however, continued to farm and took on the challenge of mink ranching. Rose and Ed did not know the first thing about mink ranching, they learned the hard way. They lost their first crop of mink due to cold weather, the poor mink all froze. This did not deter the Ferris's from mink ranching. They continued the challenge and were successful for years, during those years Ed also continued to farm. Between 1952 and 1956, there were two more additions to the family, Faye and Susan. From 1956 to 1957, Ed went to work in Yellowknife to work in a uranium mine with a close friend, George Coutney. This only lasted a year as Ed got sick and had to come home. During that time Rose continued to care for the family and kept the mink and cattle farming under control.

In 1958 Lila was born and in 1960 Selma was born. In 1961 Ed returned to Lebanon to visit his family as he had not seen them since his arrival to Canada in 1925.

Ed and Rose slowly got out of mink ranching and expanded the cattle and mixed farming. In 1966 their eleventh child was born, Hane. Ed's health started failing him and he passed away on December 10, 1967.

Left at home for Rose to care for, were five children all under the age of 13. Rose began to down size the farm, however continued to maintain her garden, make smeedy and kishk every year. Rose kept approximately ten head of cattle including milk cows to provide milk, butter, cream and of course, beef. Rose sold milk to the Lebanese families, mainly in the summer as everyone made kishk. She also kept up to one hundred chickens every year and butchered in the fall, which provided for the family for the year. In approximately 1979, due to rezoning done by the Town of Lac La Biche, Rose had no choice but to give up the chickens and the few head of cattle left on the farm. Rose eventually sold her property in 1991, and continues to reside in Lac La Biche.