

Neil Thomas Drewry



Neil passed peacefully and gracefully, at home, surrounded by his family, just weeks after joyfully celebrating his 100th birthday. In his many years, he always wanted to choose quality of life over quantity, but managed to achieve both, for which we are deeply grateful.

Dad was predeceased by his six siblings, and by his beloved wife Doris in 2009, and son David (survived by Joan Backus) in 2016. He is survived by his beloved and devoted family, daughter Donna Field (Rick Gonder), sons Alan and Glen, and granddaughters Alison Field and Stephanie Field.

Neil was born on a homestead farm west of Herschel SK (Sec 31, Tp 30, Rge 18, W3), the fifth of seven children. It was a rugged subsistence life and he epitomized the strength and grace of prairie stock. Neil moved to Victoria in 1941 in search of new opportunities. He met Doris, also from SK; they married in 1944 and grew a strong and loving partnership of 65 years, raising four children. Neil joined the army in 1943, serving overseas for the remainder of WWII. When we asked "Weren't you scared?" he responded in his typically honest manner, "scared to death", and this cemented our understanding of his quiet courage and sense of duty.

In 1948, after completing a BSc degree from UBC, Neil began a 33-year challenging and rewarding career with the provincial

government, beginning with Land Utilization and travelling every corner of his well-loved rural BC. In 1967 he became Supervisor of Assessors for the Surveyor of Taxes, ending his career as a Director of the newly-formed BC Assessment Authority. Retirement in 1981 afforded him over 40 years of enthusiastically embracing new interests and experiences. He took his pilot's licence and explored the great beyond. He and Doris enjoyed many wonderful travels together, and they continued their life-long love of bridge, and the longstanding friendships they had. Neil treasured wonderful friends at Uplands Golf Club and was able to passionately enjoy golf until nearly 100. Dad and Mom shared their great love of immediate and extended family. Neil was the unofficial patriarch of a large number of devoted nieces and nephews; he took a great interest in their families and was so grateful for their affection. We wish to thank all our family and to express our special gratitude to nieces Bev and Linda, who kept Dad mesmerized and joyfully connected with steadfast weekly calls. "Nana and Grandad" devoted themselves to their beloved granddaughters from day one, and were cherished always in return.

Since the 1950's, Neil and Doris were faithful members of First United (now First Metropolitan United) Church, where Neil fulfilled many volunteer roles and maintained genuine connections with his church family. He was a quietly charitable, generous and helpful man who valued community. He enjoyed a long and stimulating membership with the Round Table Club of Victoria, and over 30 wonderful years surrounded by a host of friendly condo neighbours at The Rudyard Kipling.

Dad taught us so much, without "telling". He was an extraordinary "everyday" kind of man. Above all, he was courteous, kind and gentle. He readily accepted others as they were, and life as it was, but always did what he could to make things better. He was keenly intelligent and curious, principled but pragmatic and practical. He was an

enthusiastic, welcoming and relaxed host; others just felt good in his presence. He was humble and modest (except at bridge). Without guile, he was honest, transparent (except at poker) and uncomplicated in relationships. His discipline and fitness regimes were well-known, his humour was delightful. He had an irrepressible good and positive nature, and just a wee bit of the inner rebel. To know him was to love him, and we and many others did.

Neil will be deeply missed by his dear friend Joy Message, who, together with long-time friends Gem Templeman and her late husband Peter, developed a strong and enduring circle, filled with fun and friendship, following the loss of Doris. Our family is so grateful for these very special people.

Our deep thanks to Dr. Shannon Houston, Dr. James Houston, Dr. Caroline Stigant, Dr. Joe, and the amazing Hospice Palliative Response Team, for superlative and compassionate care, both recently and over many years.

A Celebration of Life will be held at Uplands Golf Club at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 15, 2022.

In lieu of flowers, if desired, donations may be made to Victoria Hospice, Kidney Foundation of Canada or Our Place Society.

Condolences may be offered below.

McCall Gardens

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