

William Drury Clark, QC.

Bill died peacefully with family on May 14th at Beacon Hill Villa in Victoria, BC, at the age of 92. Although he suffered debilitating conditions over the last months, he was finally ushered into the Great Beyond with much love and caring.

His whole life was fully lived.

Bill Clark was born in a small house in downtown Edmonton, Alberta on April 16th, 1924, first child to Harriet (nee Brink) and Hector Clark who were then farming on the Clark family plot near Horse Hill, 10 miles northeast of town. Along with his parents and four younger brothers, Bill lived and worked on their farm throughout the Great Depression of the Dirty Thirties and up until he graduated from Eastside High during early WW2. Fortunately, Bill was assigned to an artillery logistics office near Edmonton, which allowed him to continue with his studies at the University of Alberta. He spent one summer break with the US Army building the Alaska Highway. But the army knew that whether the allies won or lost the war, we would still need lawyers. So amidst the turmoil, Bill first earned a Commerce Degree, and then awarded a Bachelor of Law Degree just after the dreadful war ended.

He was one of only three U of A Law graduates that year, and was quickly admitted to the Canadian Bar Association.

After WW2, the Oil Patch was gushing up all around Alberta, and Bill's innate skill at negotiating and writing contracts soon became invaluable. Working for several oil companies, he became the leading homegrown Albertan specialist in oil and gas contract law. He worked with many of the original oil pioneers from Oklahoma and Texas. By 1953, Bill and a friend had started Polychemical Industries on Chemical Row, the first company in Canada to make polystyrene foam coffee cups they called Themokups. Over a forty year career, Bill became colleague, friend, or acquaintance with most of the major

players in the Western Canada oil and gas industry. He was an original member of the Edmonton and Calgary Petroleum Clubs, and the Oilmans Golf Tournament.

One assignment in 1955 took him to Carlyle, Saskatchewan, to set up a small satellite office to help represent local farmers negotiate drilling rights. His very first client proved the most important, as Mr. Young introduced his own daughter as an applicant for the receptionist position. So the vivacious Velma Young was immediately hired, and they were happily married that November in Carlyle. Vel and Bill set up house back in Edmonton, where they produced four rambunctious children within six years. For many years, Bill had a law office in the McDonald Hotel.

Then in 1963, Bill and Vel moved the family to Calgary where Bill found opportunity to do legal work for a newly arrived French oil company. It was there, in the distinctive Aquitaine Oil Tower that he met many foreign professionals, and made several enduring friends. Bill's legal teams were responsible for several large projects throughout Western Canada, including the huge sulfur extraction plant at Ram River, offshore oil projects in the Beaufort, and tar sands research. As Senior VP, Bill was transferred to the Head Office of ELF in Paris, France in 1975, so the family relocated to the Rue de Berri. Bill learned to speak French, and the whole family completely savored everything about living in France. A few years later, Bill accepted another two year position in Geneva, Switzerland, where they similarly moved the whole family who were thrilled to be living in the Alps.

Returning to Canada after all that excitement, Vel and Bill bought a house in Oak Bay, BC, retiring there in 1984. But they continued to travel to Europe, around Canada, the USA, and particularly often to visit friends and family wintering in Phoenix. They also had a condo in Mexico that they frequented for many years often with children and grandchildren along. They attended many family reunions

together for both the Clarks and the Youngs. Bill instigated many additional road trips from Victoria over the Rockies to visit his brothers.

Bill played sports all his life, starting with baseball on a diamond his father made behind the barn. He played badminton, and he curled in many bonspiels. He coached baseball, and co-founded the South Calgary Little League. Bill and family were longtime members of the Royal Glenora and Glencoe athletic clubs. In retirement, Bill golfed three times a week at the Victoria Golf Club, and scored a decent round well into his late eighties. Bill was also a big sports fanatic, once being the sports page writer and editor for the U of A Gateway student paper. He loved following the exploits of the Eskimos football team and Oilers hockey team, and enjoyed a home game at Northlands just a few years ago.

Bill was a voracious reader, buying hundreds of books of all varieties for himself and family. He devoured mystery thriller novels one a day, pondered political and business works, and religiously read the daily newspaper. He was an audiophile, collecting hours of classical music and obscure English made stereo equipment. He was a forever patron of the Calgary and Victoria Symphonies, Operas, and Chamber Music Societies. Bill was a charitable man by nature, but became particularly talented at directing oil company donations to local charities and performing arts groups.

Bill was very computer savvy for his generation. He wrote electronic financial spreadsheet programs and used the Internet with proficiency. But although he otherwise embraced high technology, he refused to carry a cell phone and didn't like passwords.

Yet despite all of his experiences and skills, Bill was modest and ever mindful and proud of still being a farm boy. All his life and as a lawyer, Bill strived for justice for all people in our greater society. He valued honesty, transparency, and

fairness above all else. Bill commonly argued as the devil's advocate, and always supported the underdog or disadvantaged.

Bill Clark was a dedicated family man, a loving husband, and a steady father and best friend to his children. He was consultive with his wife and kids, and always ready to debate the hard questions in life. The ongoing success of his family is a testament to the importance he assigned to clear thought, the best possible education, and positive experiences.

Bill is a perfect example of how a modern man can live a sublime life. He set the bar pretty high for the rest of us.

Bill is survived by three brothers, Doug, Ward, and Kent Clark, his wife of sixty-one years marriage Velma, children Allan (married to Sin-Lin Chan), Brenda (married to Michel Clairo), Roger (married to Ruby Mah), and Clark Clark, and grandchildren Amandine, Jillian and Max Clairo, and Daniel Clark.

Our family wishes to sincerely thank everyone for the expert treatments and services Bill received on his journey through the health care system. We are especially grateful for the kind efforts and compassionate care provided to Bill, and our family, by the staff at the Victoria Royal Jubilee Hospital, the Beacon Hill Villa, and VIHA.

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