



REMEMBERING
Lester William Gentry (Bill)
February 16, 1926 - December 26, 2017



Lester (William) "Wild Bill" Gentry died peacefully in his sleep, in his own bed, on December 26, 2017 at his home in Hope, BC at the age of 91. Bill is survived by his loving wife, Sheila of Hope, son Gary (Sandra) of Abbotsford, daughter Lisa of Campbell River; siblings, Joe Gentry of Maple Ridge, Lorna Gentry of Vancouver and Joan Clark of Berwyn, Alberta. Bill was the proud Grandfather of Tony Kelly of Grande Prairie, Samantha Brownlee, Turner and Mellissa Gentry of Abbotsford, and Great-Grandfather of Charlace (Lacey) Brownlee, also of Abbotsford.

Bill was born on February 16, 1926, in Lloydminster, Saskatchewan, to Lester and Georgina Gentry. As many able-bodied young men of that time, he "graduated" from grade eight and went out into the real world, seeking his adventure. He headed directly to his aunt's ranch in Marwayne, Alberta, where he worked as a ranch hand, and trained horses for fun. A patriotic Canadian, one of Bill's lifetime achievements was earning his paratrooper wings during World War 2; one of his life disappointments was missing the opportunity to see the actual action, and instead guarding prisoners of war. After announcing on their very first date, "I'm going to marry you!", Bill made good his word and wed Sheila in 1954. The couple moved to Harrison Hot Springs, where Bill worked as a high rigger. Over six years the couple welcomed two children into their home and Bill set about showing them the value of a life well-lived.

His children remember him as a kind, hard-working father, who worked diligently to keep them "between the ditches", showed them how to work hard, encouraged them to follow their dreams, and be kind to their fellow man, "We're all just people", was one of his frequent reminders. His children also observed that his grandchildren enjoyed gentler rules from their grandpa than they had from their

dad.

Bill was proud to be a logger. He often said that given an opportunity to do anything else, he wouldn't know what else to do. He worked up and down the coast as a hooktender, high rigger, faller, and as a superintendent. While he did a good job as the "push", his love was working in the bush with the crew. One of his highest accolades was saying a co-worker wasn't "afraid to sweat". A generous, witty, individual with a quick, dry sense of humour, who loved a party, people - especially babies, horses, and hard work (not necessarily in that order), Bill was passionate about being good to his fellow man. He rarely drove past people broken down on the roadside, and was known to bring home complete strangers for "Mother" to feed. In his mid-fifties, retired from logging, he purchased a self-loading flat deck truck and delivered supplies to various work sites on the Coquihalla highway while it was under construction. Once that project was completed, Bill purchased a freight truck, and drove off to see what he could see of continental North America. He enjoyed his new adventure immensely, and retired 27 years later at the age of 83.

A funeral is scheduled for 1 pm, on Saturday, January 20 at the Hope Royal Canadian Legion hall, with a reception to follow. All are welcome to attend and celebrate Bill's life. If you have a story you would like to share that day, please bring it! In lieu of flowers, please send donations to a charity of your choice.

