REMEMBERING

Richard Brooks

February 12, 1931 - May 2, 2017

With deep sorrow, we announce the passing of Richard Carl Lincoln Brooks on May 2, 2017 at the age of 86 years after a blessedly brief struggle with cancer. A native of Wembley, Alberta, Richard was born Feb. 12, 1931.

His grandparents on both sides were pioneers in the Peace River Country of Alberta. His father, Carl Chandler Brooks, immigrated to the Pipestone Creek area near Wembley in 1918 with his family from Twin Falls (Filer), Idaho, at the age of 17. Carl's father was Flavus Brooks, mother Henrietta Kilmer Brooks, and sisters Marie, Crystal, and Ethylyn. Richard was the first grandchild for this family and his unmarried aunts showered him with affection and lifelong caring.

Richard's mother, Agnes Watson Brooks Campbell, came as a two-year-old to the Wembley area from County Down, Ireland. The Watson family had nine children and Agnes was the youngest. Agnes' family was John Watson, Jane Morrow Watson, and the children John Finlay, William George, Jane (Jean), James Sydney, Violet, Emily, Margaret, Sid, and Agnes. The many first cousins were lifelong companions for Richard.

Richard was predeceased by his wife, Zena Anne Luciak Brooks, of Vegreville, Alberta. They were married Oct. 27, 1953 and were together 61 years, receiving a congratulatory note from Queen Elizabeth II for their diamond anniversary.

After a short time as a bank trainee as a young man, he knew it was not for him. He started working in the oilfields with Cascade Drilling, and the oil industry was in his life from then on. After marrying, Zena and Richard were part of the early years of the oil patch, moving constantly with their trailer as work required.

Richard is survived by four children, born during the nomadic years. Susan Marie Lange, Catherine Jane Jenkins, Edith Mae Shackleton, and David Richard Brooks.

After finding some stability with a permanent home in Sherwood Park, Alberta, the family moved once more to Port Colborne, Ontario in 1969. Although the sting of moving far from family and friends in Alberta was great, the family did find many happy times on Lake Erie with a sailboat and speedboat. There were many many visitors through the years so contacts were never lost. Richard found success with his career, becoming the General Manager for Underwater Gas Developers. After retirement, Richard and Zena had a year with a grand tour throughout Canada and the U.S. in a motor home, doing what they loved most, visiting with friends, old and new.

Richard and Zena settled in Oliver, B.C. in 1989 where they remained to the end. Richard was an active member of the community, serving with the Senior Curling Club as President, in the Senior Center as videographer of Saturday morning dances, in the Alliance Church also as videographer to broadcast services for a local TV station, as a volunteer with the Gleaners, and as an longtime volunteer with the Kiwanis Club in Oliver where he found great joy working in the electronics corner.

Richard's father was a big-game outfitter and guide in the Peace River area which meant that Richard grew up on horses and had a deep appreciation of the wilderness. He was able to reconnect with this love by making many trail rides in his retirement into the wilderness he knew and loved in the Grande Cache area of Alberta. He found a kindred spirit in Norm Drysdale. There were many trail rides with Richard's brothers and their children, and with the Drysdale clan.

Richard's father died tragically in a plane crash (a CF-BTX Barkley-Grow) in the wilderness when Richard was 14 years old. Richard and his brothers were able to place a commemorative plaque at the site of the crash on Kakwa Lake during one of the trail rides. As well, they placed a plaque near Brooks Falls on the Monkman River in Monkman Provincial Park, which commemorated the naming of the falls after Richard's father.

Richard was predeceased by his brother Cecil Brooks of Melville, Saskatchewan and wife Gladys Alexander Brooks. The children of Cecil are Dennis, Larry, Curtis, Brian (predeceased), and Todd. He is survived by two brothers, Dennis Brooks and his wife Emma Miller Brooks, and by Stanley Brooks and his wife Lori Wideman Brooks. Stanley's children are Duane, Shane, and Jason. Although Richard and his brothers grew up without a father, there was never a bitter word and all brothers have faced life with humor and strength.

Richard also served as president of the Mutual Admiration Society he formed with his eight grandchildren – Emily Kalda of Reston, Virginia, Katie Kalda of Panama City Beach, Florida, Courtney Vahrmeyer and husband Aaron of Thornhill, Ontario, Ashton Wright and husband Adam of Toronto, Quentin Carl Kenneth Brooks of Redwood City, California, Scott Shackleton of Calgary, Alberta, Sophie Brooks Lange of Elk Grove, California, and Sarah Lange of Elk Grove, California. No matter the distance he had to travel, he was close to all his grandchildren.

A viewing will be held May 7, 2107 at the Nunes-Pottinger Funeral Home. A Memorial Service will be held in the summer of 2017 in Grande Prairie. Richard's ashes will be placed beside those of his wife, Zena, at the Lake Saskatoon

Cemetery where many of his beloved ancestors are also buried.

Condolences and tributes may be directed to the family by visiting www.nunes-pottinger.com

Arrangements entrusted to Nunes-Pottinger Funeral Service & Crematorium, Oliver & Osoyoos, BC.