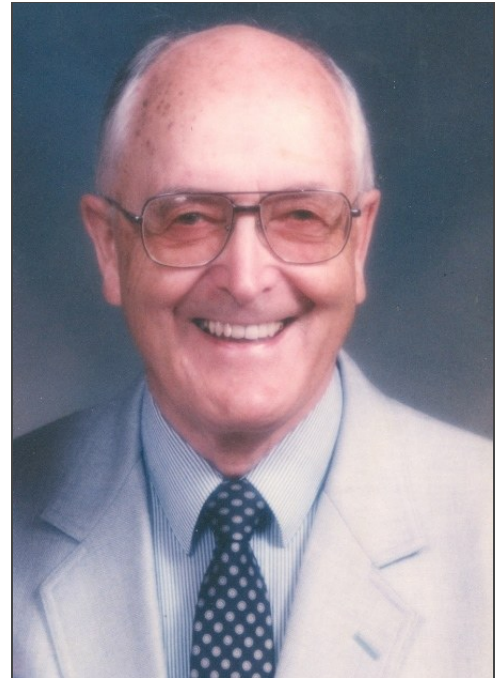


# Roderick Harold Drysdale

OCTOBER 12, 2015

**Rod Drysdale** -- Avro Arrow engineer, businessman, devoted husband and father, life-long learner, adventurer, and witty pragmatist -- passed away on Thanksgiving Mon. Oct. 12, 2015, aged 92, at Vancouver General Hospital, with family present, and to the strains of "You Raise me Up." He had faced recent medical challenges with courageous determination, and when told of medical procedural risks, he had replied, "Well, I survived the War, so let's go for it!"



He started life with the same determination, born in a sleigh mid-winter near Davidson, Sask., as the 5th of ultimately 7 children born to Henry and Kathleen (Morris) Drysdale. After the barn burned down, the family moved from the cold of Sask. to the heat of Texas for several years, before moving to St. Vital, in Winnipeg, where he spent the remainder of his childhood. He grew up in the era of the Great Depression, resulting in a life-long appreciation of modest pleasures and of a good bargain. He became determined to be successful: in personal development in every way, in creating a home, and in financial security.

He served in the Air Force in World War II, mainly working on aircraft electrical maintenance in England, but also serving in the line of enemy fire, with the winning of medals and later promotion to rank of Captain. He later completed his BSc. In Electrical Engineering from the University of Manitoba (1950), as well as courses at the Royal Military College of Canada in Kingston, and most courses

towards a Masters in Business Administration.

In 1949, he married Ruth Fryer, a nurse, and embarked on a 66 year partnership of adventures, humour, constant learning, personal growth, and friendship. He gained engineering experience in Kingston, Thunder Bay, Hamilton, and Toronto, where he led a large engineering team in the building of the legendary aircraft the Avro Arrow.

In Toronto years, he became the proud father of Elaine and Stephen. After winning a boat, he bought property at then undeveloped Go Home Lake near Georgian Bay, Ont., and he hand- built a cottage accessible only by boat.

After the Avro Arrow, many colleagues left to work at NASA space programs, but Rod chose to stay in Canada, and took on new creative challenges working for the Dept. of Industry and Commerce in the Manitoba government. He was instrumental in bringing the potato industry to the ideal soil of Carberry, Man. and during that time the family sampled every style of cooked potato product! The potato plant later became a major supplier of French fries for McDonald's.

Adventure beckoned, and in 1966, the family moved to Calgary, where Rod undertook engineering projects and created his own business management consulting firm.

In 1976, Rod and Ruth moved to South Surrey, B.C., to a cozy home on a rural acre lot, thus beginning a 39-year era of appreciation of nature, and increased enjoyment of family and friends and of their singing poodle. It became a time of great personal growth and of helpfulness to all he encountered, with contentment, and ongoing zest for life and travel adventures.

In his late 50's, he undertook a 2-year Urban Development and Land Appraisal Diploma course at UBC, and worked in land development engineering, land appraisal, and in real estate sales. He was an active member of First United

Church in White Rock for over 35 years, and became President of the local Probus group where he demonstrated his public speaking skills developed through years of Toastmaster training. He loved travelling, locally and abroad, and of taking “the road less travelled,” or going off-road, or by boat, exploring throughout North America, including the Yukon and Alaska. He enjoyed prospecting, camping, skiing, waterskiing, and especially golfing. He valued both exercise and learning throughout his entire life. He followed the news intently. The annual Bumbleton Trophy Croquet Tournament held at their property was a highlight for 25 years.

He was an independent thinker, who took “the road less traveled” in every way, and who strove for excellence throughout his life. He was clever, practical, and pragmatic, but appreciated the importance of humour, wit, and of having fun together. He was a handyman. He became increasingly aware of the value of relationships, and became a model of devotion to his wife and family, supporting them in all of their interests, including attending countless choral concerts and in providing practical solutions and advice. He will be missed in lively family card games and in all of the family celebrations.

He was pre-deceased by his father Henry, (age 101), his mother Kathleen (age 93), and by siblings Gordon, Kitty Parsons (age 90), and Gladys Crispin (age 95), and by many friends who hopefully have greeted him “on the other side” with joy and celebration.

He is greatly missed by his wife Ruth; daughter Elaine Drysdale (and her son Peter Hunt); son Stephen (wife Fern), and their children Steven, Stacey, Anji, and Micheal, and spouses; and by 7 great-grand-children; by siblings Jim (Susan), Kathleen Rempel, and Doug (Dale), and by many nieces and nephews; by special family friend Jean Robles, who called Rod and Ruth “the teenagers,” and by many friends.

The family wishes to express gratitude to the Leukemia/Bone Marrow Transplant Program of B.C., and to the caring clinical expertise of Dr. Stephen Nantel, Dr. Teresa Tsang, and Dr. Mark Hill, who all gave Rod many additional years of love and life. Appreciation is also expressed to Dr. Balakrishna, the ACE Unit at Peace Arch Hospital, and to the many dedicated and compassionate staff throughout VGH involved in Rod's recent care.

A Celebration of Life will be held Friday Oct. 23, 2015, at 1:00 p.m. at First United Church, 15385 Semiahmoo Ave., White Rock, B.C.

Donations may be made in his honour to the Leukemia/Bone Marrow Transplant Program of B.C.

You are invited to leave a personal message for the family.

## Messages of Condolence

Truly one in a million, I will miss Uncle Rod for all he was and his bigger than life personality. He will live on in all of our hearts. I am blessed to have had such an amazing uncle with such a zest for life. I'm sending big hugs and condolences to Aunt Ruth, Elaine, Steven and the rest of the family. I hope the company of family and friends will comfort you at this time.

— **Robin and Roger Chammartin**

Many years ago I overheard the explanation of stars to a young child, that they were "the souls of our ancestors, quietly watching how we fashioned our lives & waiting patiently for our own souls to rejoin them". Some peoples' souls shine so brightly on Earth that they truly must radiate like super novas when their soul is swept onwards. Uncle Rod has been just such a person. Looking at his picture I hear his laughter readily. And a great joy of life paired with keen intelligence is a remarkable blessing & always a pleasure to behold. Auntie Ruth you've been his equal in every way. My warm wishes, hugs & hankies to all his dearest of dears.

— **Ruthanna (nee Drysdale) & Eric Friesen**

So saddened to hear about the passing of Rod. I remember all the great times we had at Realty World. Ruth and family thinking of you at this time. Donah Neidig.

— **Donah Neidig**

My heartfelt condolences to Aunt Ruth, Stephen & Fern, Elaine & Peter. I'm so grateful I was able to see Uncle on his 90th Birthday. Have many memories and all of them have him laughing and smiling. Love that about him. Big hugs.

— **Kathleen Dall'Antonia**

Just wanted to say we were saddened to hear of Mr. Drysdale's passing. We will remember him as the friendly neighbour who always took time to wave and smile. Such a sweet man.

— **Sheila and Thomas Ball**



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<https://www.myalternatives.ca/obituaries/drysdale-roderick-harold>

Printed on June 3, 2026