

Norman James Rolston

OCTOBER 6, 2017

Norman James Rolston O.B.C, M.S.C, C.D.

Passed away October 06, 2017 at the age of 85.

Norman was born in Willowbunch

Saskatchewan. His parents moved with their 3 young sons to Quill Lake Saskatchewan, which

seemed like a breath of fresh air compared to

what was known as the “Dust Bowl” of the

southern parts. Norm left home at the age of 17

to work in the mining industry in the North-West Territories. At that time, Norm

had a son, Dennis Whitford, who he loved dearly. He then moved back to BC’s

coast where he joined the army. He spent 13 years with the Royal Canadian

Engineers. He then started a 40-piece brass marching band, performing in parades

across the province. Upon the completion of his army service, the family moved to

the Peace River Country in northern Alberta to begin homesteading. At that time

Norm managed Canadian Propane in Valleyview and then became band leader for,

first the town band, and then the Navy League band.

They moved back to the BC coast where Norn started Rolston Crane and Freight,

contributing to our highways, Sky train and Expo 86. Still going strong, Norm

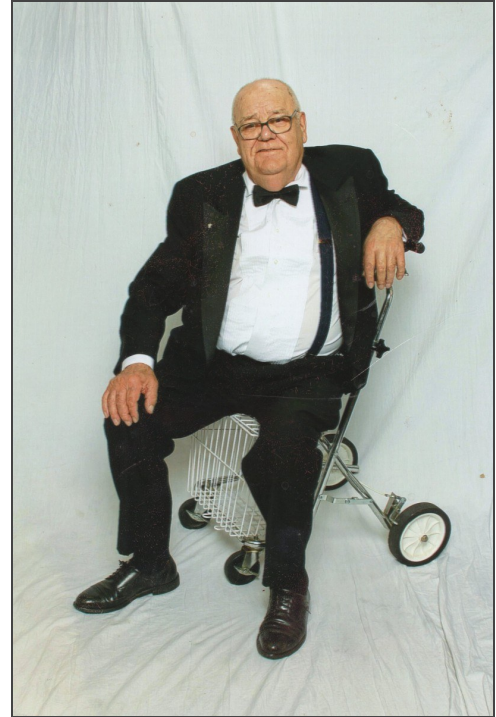
started Able Walkers Ltd, introducing wheeled walkers to the world, thus, helping

millions of people gain their freedom. Being a true humanitarian, he refused to

patent his invention, thus allowing more companies to produce wheeled walkers so

that more people could be helped. For this reason, Norm was awarded the Order of

BC, the Meritorious Service Cross and the Canadian Decoration Medal.



Norman said many times in the last ten years that if he passed away on any given day, he was satisfied with his lot in life.

A memorial Service to celebrate his life will be held at Sharon United Church (5 corners in Murrayville) 21562 Old Yale Rd, Langley on Wednesday October 25, 2017 at 11:30 AM.

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

Messages of Condolence

It was both my privilege and honour to have known Norm and to call him a friend. I met this wonderful guy in the 1980s when I was assigned to do a feature on Able Walkers. Later, I met him several times and stopped by more than once to enjoy a cup of coffee in that cluttered old office of his. We shared another interest which contributed to the consumption of so much coffee and where Norm imparted some valuable life lessons.

I am sure that all British Columbians share your grief. The world will be a poorer place with his passing.

Condolences to the Rolston family.

— **Sandy Macdougall**

A leading NBA team manager named Joe Spolestra described in his book the difference between good athletes... and GREAT athletes.

He claims God has touched the feet of great athletes which is why they can run a 4 minute mile, and jump to extraordinary heights.

God touched their arms and elbows which allows them to throw baseballs at incredible speeds with amazing curves and controls.

God has touched their hearts to give them inner strength.

Using that theory, I believe, when Norm Rolston was born 85 years ago, God held Norm's heart in his hands, and blew on it for luck.

That explains Norm's unusual talent. His love and devotion to his family ...and his empathy towards all mankind.

Norm Rolston was wonderful to study. In 1994 I included his story in my best selling book " The Canadian Achievers" His story was included along with 151 other living Canadian Achievers including Jimmy Pattison , K.C. Irving, Marc Garneau, & Wayne Gretzky, I also told his story on my syndicated network radio program of the same name., I was very proud to know Norm Rolston, to tell all of Canada of his achievements and generosity. He will long be remembered.

Dick Drew

— **Dick Drew**



<https://www.myalternatives.ca/obituaries/rolston-norman-james>

Printed on June 17, 2026