

### **George Cooper '44 S 1924 - 2016**

George Cooper was born March 13, 1924 at the family farm at West Bend, Sk. He was the eldest son of James and Ellen (Phillips) Cooper. From 1925 to 1933, six more children Letitia, Anne, Tom, Ellen, Bill and Joe completed the family.

George received his first five years of education at Gilbert School, followed by a year of instruction at the Henderson home while the new Firefly School was being built. Most of his Grade 9-12 classes were obtained through correspondence courses with George making his way into Kelliher once or twice a week for chemistry and physics classes. In the fall of 1942, he enrolled into the two-year School of Agriculture program at the University of Saskatchewan. He graduated in 1944 and returned to the family farm to help his dad.

A new chapter of his life began in 1956 when he invited neighbour Iva Budd to attend the evening horse show at the annual Regina Bull Sale. In August of 1957, George chose the romantic setting of Victoria Park in Regina to propose. She said yes and they were married at John Wesley United Church on June 14, 1958. To this union was born four children – James Stuart (1959), Barry Owen (1961), Carol Ellen (1962) and Sheldon Floyd (1964).

George was a farmer, purebred shorthorn breeder and family man who wore many hats. He served on a number of local, provincial and national boards/committees, most of which were linked to the agricultural industry. He also dedicated 23 years of leadership to the local 4-H grain and beef clubs of which all four children were active members. Education in its various forms was important to George and this belief was pressed upon his children and all went on to complete post-secondary programs. Over the years at many family gatherings, George would proudly state how he and his three brothers and then his three sons all held School of Agriculture diplomas. His agricultural roots ran deep as evidenced by his and Iva's participation in the Sod-Buster program – a capital fundraiser that saw its goal realized when the new College of Agriculture was officially opened in the fall of 1991.

Despite the many hours the farm demanded, time was found for family trips and international travel for he and Iva. They visited many European countries, New Zealand, Australia, Canadian provinces and American states. From 1987 to 1989, George and Iva lived in the Sudan where he was the agricultural farm manager on a 10,000 acre joint project between CIDA (Canadian Government International Development Agency) and the Government of Sudan. This allowed them to also travel to neighbouring African countries.

George semi-retired from the farm and he and Iva moved into their newly constructed house in Foam Lake on December 5, 1990. The ensuing retirement years were busy with local service groups, travel, bowling, golfing, an annual fishing trip and many family milestones. Despite different health issues, George was able to remain in the family home until March of this year, and then he moved into Foam Lake Jubilee Home. He passed peacefully in his sleep on August 2.

George was predeceased by his parents, James and Ellen (Phillips) Cooper, parents-in-law Floyd and Sarah (Johnson) Budd, sister Letitia and brother-in-law Al Tomlin, sister Anne and brother-in-law Ken Hall, brother-in-law Glen Harris, Budd brothers-in law Eugene (Lorna), Alvin (Margaret), James (Joanne)

and Lloyd, sisters-in-law Joyce (Raymond) Reidel, Pearl (Joe) Beros, and Helen (Oliver) Aamodt, brothers-in-law George Bast, Phillip Hoover; niece Sandra Cockle and nephew Don Tomlin.

George is survived by his life partner of 58 years Iva, their children James (Rhonda); Barry (Cindy) children Bradley and Katlyn; Carol (Steve) Zunti, children Lori (Akash) Zunti-Ramjeeth, Melanie; Sheldon (Tammie), children Amanda (daughter Aubrie Cooper – Van Ham) and Audra; sister Ellen Harris, brothers Tom (Josie), Bill (Gail) and Joe (Joyce) and in-laws Ruth Hoover, Veva Bast; Norval (Vera) Budd; Donald (Loreen) Budd; Hazel Budd and numerous nieces and nephews.