

Albert John Garratt '51 C Feb 4, 1929 – May 4, 2017

Albert John (Bert) Garratt of Abernethy, SK, age 88, passed away May 4, 2017. Bert is survived by wife Norma (Reynolds), children Judy Legaarden, and Bill (Nancy) Garratt, grandchildren Ross Legaarden (Anela Jakupovic), Megan Garratt, and John Garratt - all of Abernethy; sister Norma (Denny) Sanby of Campbell River, BC; brother Gordon (Lorraine) Garratt of Regina; and numerous nieces and nephews. Predeceased by sister Elizabeth (Betty) Young, and parents William Claude and Gertrude May (McCall) Garratt.

Bert was born February 4, 1929 in Abernethy. He attended Abernethy Public and High School, and convocated from the College of Agriculture, University of Saskatchewan (1951). He worked as a radio announcer for a short time and then secured a job with the Canada Department of Agriculture in 1952 in Regina where he met his wife Norma. They were married May 19, 1956. Bert continued to work full-time with the Department in Plant Products until 1960 when he bought land at Abernethy and began farming. He worked part-time with the Department, living in the city during the winters, and moving his family out to Abernethy for May-October. They moved to Abernethy to farm full-time in 1966. Bert began growing pedigreed seed of cereals, oilseeds, forages, and pulses of all kinds. He began processing and marketing pedigreed seed in 1969. This experience and contribution to the seed industry earned him the Outstanding Service Award (1979) presented by the Saskatchewan Branch of the Canadian Seed Growers Association. Bert and son Bill began a farming partnership in 1981 that continued as long as Bert's health allowed.

Over the years, Bert attained many remarkable accomplishments. He was a great community advocate. Bert was the founder of the Friends of the Motherwell, an ongoing local support to the Motherwell Homestead National Historic Park at Abernethy. He was the inventor and draw master for many Abernethy Farmers' Bonspiels to fundraise for the community rink. Bert served as Mayor of Abernethy and was a well-respected local historian. He was the editor and creative force behind DANCE ON THE BRIDGE, the history of the Abernethy District known as 'The Green Book'. Bert also researched and wrote WAITING FOR THE TRAIN, used as a Department of Education Grade 9 Agriculture reference; WILL AND KATE, a history of the local Motherwell family; and histories of the Abernethy churches.

Bert enjoyed curling and golfing until back issues in mid-life forced him to become a spectator of many sports including the Riders! Bert had a work ethic second to none with farming and volunteering for decades. In later years, Bert spent countless hours every day at the farm, cleaning or drying grain, or in his office researching and writing. He was a man who preferred working behind the scenes, not in the limelight. Bert's family is deeply grateful to the staff of Balcarres Integrated Care Centre for their wonderful care over the last three years.

Private Family interment in the Garratt Family plot in Abernethy. Lunch and fellowship at Abernethy Memorial Hall Saturday, May 27 at 12 noon. Everyone welcome.

Memorial donations to: Friends of the Motherwell Homestead Inc., Box 252, Abernethy, SK; or BICC Donations - Recreation Department, Box 340, Balcarres, SK.