



REMEMBERING **William Frederick Merritt**

June 4, 1924 - April 1, 2019



William (Bill) Merritt was born in Beamsville, Ont. On June 4, 1924.

He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Janet, and by his niece Ann Merritt (Pat Schmidt) and his nephew, Fred Merritt of Toronto, his brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Louis and Judith Adam of Crofton, and niece Dr. Janet Adam (Scott MacAusland) of Victoria, and nephew Michael Adam (Lindsey Norris) of Kamloops. He was predeceased by his brother Allen Merritt of Toronto.

Following his graduation from Beamsville High School, Bill attended McMaster University where he graduated with Honours in Chemistry and Physics in 1946.

He was a career research scientist working for Chalk River Nuclear Laboratories - a section of the National Research Council (NRC) and subsequently the major research centre for Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL).

He developed a method for the production of Borane for use in neutron counters using his skills as both a scientist and a glass blower.

In the Nuclear Physics Branch he worked on standards of measurement for quantities of radionuclides, for example Cobalt 60 and Iodine 131. At that time Canada was a leader in the production and use of Cobalt 60 for cancer treatment and Iodine 131 for thyroid function.

In 1956 he joined the Environmental Research Branch where he worked on detecting and measuring trace quantities of radionuclides in our environment (soil, streams and rivers). This led to research in the field of Hydrology with the University of Waterloo.

Throughout his career, Bill was the author of more than 80 scientific publications.

Serving on many international committees, (ISO) International Standards

Organization, (IAEA) International Atomic Energy Agency, brought an invitation from the US National Academy of Sciences to visit Eniwetok to advise on the cleanup of that Pacific Island where the US had tested their H-bomb. This was not only an honour but was among the more interesting and satisfying events of his career.

In 1982, Bill retired from AECL and moved to Vancouver Island, where he next served as Emergency Coordinator for Duncan and North Cowichan, writing their first Emergency Program. He retired in 1989.

Throughout his life, Bill enjoyed sailing, skiing, tennis, cruising the west coast on his boat (Wombat) and snorkeling and diving in the Caribbean. Bill was a certified scuba diving instructor. In Duncan he was a member of the Maple Bay Yacht Club and the Probus Club and enjoyed many years of good friendship playing bridge in his later years.

Bill was a scientist in search of the "truth". He often emphasized, to his staff, the difference between "precision" and "accuracy". Precision defines the reproducibility of a measurement or process. Accuracy states its closeness to the "truth". Bill sought accuracy!

One of those "truths" - Bill loved to say "The older I get , the greater I was."

Yes Bill, - you were great!

We wish to thank Dr. Gilbert and the nursing staff on 2 south at the Cowichan District Hospital for their kindness and care through the last several weeks of Bill's life.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the CNIB or to the Cowichan Hospice Society's new palliative care unit would be appreciated.

Memorial gathering to be decided at a later date.

