



## George Earl Holt

July 13, 1919 - May 7, 2016

Redmond, Oregon George Earl Holt was born July 13, 1919 at Hunters Prairie outside Elma, Washington. He passed away early morning May 7th, 2016 in Redmond, Oregon, just a couple months shy of his 97th birthday. Earl did not have an easy childhood. His mom passed away when he was 9 years old. He completed only the 4th grade and then, at 10 years old and due to family turmoil, wound up living and working at the Spaulding ranch south of Elma. He stayed in a bunkhouse with a hired hand and had no normal friends or childhood playmates. He worked. But, at that ranch he was given an opportunity to fly an airplane. He was a natural and at 15 years old, flying became one of the loves of his life. Around 18 he hitchhiked down to Pendleton, Oregon, broke a couple horses for old man Clark at Clarks Stables, for which he was paid a few dollars and given a sorrel horse which he rode back to Elma. Earl rode into Central Oregon from Elma on a black mare, Black Bess, crossed the Columbia River on a ferry at The Dalles, came on down through Grizzly, and east into the canyon at McKay Creek. There, north of Prineville he met up with Floyd James where he thought he might get a job. That's where he first met the Demaris family, pioneers of Crook County: Bert and Mag Demaris, daughters Edna and Lenora Demaris, young Ray Demaris, Gail Demaris and many others. Earl worked in the area a few years, traveled back to Washington and then when he was about 21 years old returned to Central Oregon to make it his home. He worked driving lumber truck until WWII broke out. He went to Bend, Oregon to enlist in the Air Force because

he already knew how to fly but his left eye wasn't strong enough to pass the test so he enlisted in the Navy. That was when he found out his real name was George, not just Earl. He became a Navy Corpsman assigned to the LST-456. They picked up the 9th Australian Army and then on to New Guinea, Cape Gloucester, and more all within the South Pacific Theater. He was called Doc and never talked much of the horror he saw. Years later, he recounted how he was nearly killed by an enemy he had doctored in sick bay. Another time, their ship was bombed but the bombs were duds. He contracted malaria, fell into a coma, but survived that too. Ordered to the ARB-7 (USS Sarpedon) after recovery, he eventually made it to Okinawa where typhoon Louise almost sunk the ship in Buckner Bay. He never felt the same about the war for not being allowed to go back with his original crew on the 456. He received an Honorable Discharge from the U.S. Naval Center in San Pedro on December 18, 1945. After the war, Earl married Lenora (Demaris-Watrous) in 1949 and they lived out their long lives in Redmond and Powell Butte. The family called them Hoot n Earl. They raised horses and cattle from the 50s through the 80s. Earl used his first name George for work purposes. He drove for George Wakefield Trucking. He drove log trucks to many mills including Dahl Pine, lumber trucks, and finally, tanker trucks from Springfield to Willamette Industries in Bend. In 1985 George went to work for the United States Department of Agriculture, Big Summit Ranger District in the Ochoco National Forest as the Delintment Lake Campground Host. Over the next 10 years, he then worked in range and recreation management, riding his horse Jimbo to check fences and wild horses. In 1988, he received a Special Act Award for dedication to his work on spring rehabilitation and development, and especially for the reconditioning work done at Big Spread Springs, resulting in the saving of the old wooden troughs, (a historical landmark). Earls family roots go straight to Sweden. Grandpa Carl August Hult (Holt) was born July 8th, 1852 in Sweden. The family and many of their friends immigrated to the United States (simply called America on documents of the time), traveling first to North Dakota and then west to Washington state. Earls Dad is Willard

Francis Holt, 1885-1971, Mom, Kittie Lillian (Green) Holt 1889-1928. Willard and Kittie had 8 children: Raymond W. Holt 1908-2008, Edward Francis Holt 1910-1929, Wilma L. Holt (Hollatz) 1912-1995, Harold Homer (Bud) Holt 1913-1991, James Henry Holt 1915-2009, George Earl Holt 1919-2016, Dorothy Marie Holt (McCarty) 1921-2003, and little brother Jack Holt born February 14th, 1924 who still lives in Rainier, Washington. Earl and Lenora were married 62 years. Lenora passed away in 2011. Earl injured his back shortly after and battled with internal pains and ailments over the next 4 years. His daughter cared for him during this time until his recent move to Brookside Place assisted living in Redmond. In Earls final week, though he could barely hold a pen, he wrote letters to both his long time friend Ray Demaris, and little brother Jack, who were both born on Valentines Day, WII Veterans, and in their 90s. George Earl requested no service, but rather that his ashes to be taken up for one last flight. He is sent off with his favorite Roy Rogers-inspired saying, Good luck, and may the good Lord take a likin to ya. He is survived by his three children: son Ed Holt, Drewsey, OR, daughter Valerie Lytle, Redmond, OR, and step-son Donn Watrous, Mission Viejo, CA. He will be fondly remembered by granddaughter, Kelly Partin-Yi, and great-grandchildren, Sawyer and Juniper. A special thank you to the people of Hospice of Redmond for their continued care and friendship, and to the wonderful, positive, family-like staff at Brookside Place, South Canal Blvd., Redmond, OR. A thank you also to Redmond Memorial Chapel for their understanding and assistance with family members over the years. Correspondence may be sent to the George Holt Family, PO Box 58, Powell Butte, OR 97753.

Funeral Home:  
Redmond Memorial Chapel  
717 SW 6th Street  
Redmond, OR

US 97756

# Tribute Wall



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**Redmond Memorial Chapel** - July 12, 2023 at 02:11 PM

FO

“ *George Earl Holt*

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**Funeral Home Owner** - August 07, 2019 at 12:00 AM

MD

“ *Ray vividly remembers watching Earl shoe his horse at the Demaris ranch. Ray was 6 years younger than Earl, so he was a hero cowboy to him. We will really miss his warmth, gentleness, and genuineness as a great person.*

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**Mary Demaris** - April 03, 2017 at 12:00 AM

SL

“ *An interesting gentleman, I could listen to his life stories all day. His daughter Valerie took such care of him.*

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**Susan Lees** - April 03, 2017 at 12:00 AM