

Ernest Robert Mills – VHS Class of ?

MILLS, Ernest Robert Bob passed peacefully in Jubilee Hospital on July 24, 2018. He was born in Victoria on January 4, 1937, the eldest child of Agnes (Stephenson) and Ernest George Mills (CERA). Bob's father served in the RCN during [WWII](#) but did not survive the sinking of the HMCS Athabaskan in 1944, leaving a young family. Bob grew up within the extended Stephenson family whose Phoenix Dairy operations took in much of the present Esquimalt High property. As a teenager, and to fund his education, he worked a variety of jobs, including logging at Chamiss Bay, restaurant server/dishwasher, green chain worker and milk delivery. He enjoyed athletic activities, earning trophies in scuba diving (octopus grappling, spear fishing), fastball with the Stuffy McInnis League, curling and dancing. Returning to school, he graduated from Vic High, then continued to UVic, attaining a Bachelor of Science in 1965. He worked at the Nanaimo Biological Station, then moved onto the BC Fish & Wildlife office in Nelson, BC as marine biologist. Here, he worked to preserve salmon stock during 1960's dam construction. After returning to Uvic, he completed his Education degree and in 1967 began his career as a well-respected science teacher in Campbell River Secondary Schools for over 30 years. He had the ability to reach struggling students who responded well to Bob's unique encouragement. As an enthusiastic naturalist, he promoted many projects with his pupils, including Science Fairs, clearing spawning creeks, dogfish tagging, sponsoring basketball games, coaching Little League baseball, and organizing nature field trips. After his retirement in 1997 he loved to garden, growing amazing heirloom tomatoes and other vegetables. In addition he was an avid wine maker, winning blue ribbon awards at various island fairs including Sannichton. For the past 10 years, Bob lived in Victoria, quietly enjoying his retirement years. Days passed eating lunches and doing crosswords at Cattle Point or Mt. Tolmie, entering football pools, and watching sports. He also volunteered as a driver for family and friends who were unable to do so themselves. We will all treasure his memory and miss him dearly, especially his unique sense of humour. Bob is lovingly remembered by his sons, Harley and Roderick and grandkids, Annick and Rowan who were joys of his life. He is survived by his wife, Tannis and step-daughter, Lisa (Kate). He will be missed by his siblings, Diana Heal, Darlene Sophonow, and brother, Tom Steele all of Victoria; also several nephews and nieces, notably Carrie Sophonow who took special care of Uncle Bob. We are all thankful for the extra attention, and enjoyment given Bob by brother, Tom; also his shared gardening interest with Donalyn. He will be missed by many Campbell River friends, especially Doug Spence who phoned faithfully daily to check up and chat. Many thanks to Drs. Wolzak and Prendergast plus the N5 staff of Jubilee for their kindness and care. Celebration of Life TBA. No flowers but donations if desired may be made to the Canadian Wildlife Federation in his name.



