



## **H. KEITH RALSTON (1938)**

**Sept 3, 1921 – June 20, 2009**

Suddenly, but not unexpectedly, at Vancouver on 20 June 2009 in his 88th year. He is survived by his wife, Edith Mary (Mollie), whom he married in 1944; son Bruce (Miriam Sobrino), daughter Delia (Rene Olesen); five grandchildren: Tyler and Max Olesen, and Daniel, Martin and Sonia Sobrino Ralston. He was predeceased in 1946 by his youngest brother, Bruce, and by his other brother, Gordon, in 2004. He is also survived by sisters-in-law Ruth Ralston, Nancy Leighton, and brother-in-law, Bill Wyllie.

Born 3 Sept. 1921 in Victoria, B.C., Harry Keith Ralston was the oldest of three sons of Henry Wellington Ralston (1887-1943) and Gertrude Marinda Walker (1884-1964). Keith was educated at Oaklands Elementary and at Victoria High School, where he won the Royal Institution Scholarship for Victoria District on his graduation in 1938. Proceeding to Victoria College and the University of BC, he received a BA with 1st Class Honours in History in 1942 and later completed an MA at UBC in 1965. He also did graduate work at the University of Toronto.

In 1942 Keith entered the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve as an Ordinary Seaman and was discharged in 1945 as Lieutenant after serving on the Atlantic Coast. A lifelong socialist, Keith was the legislative correspondent in 1952-55 for the left-wing weekly Pacific Tribune as well as for The Fisherman and other labour newspapers.

Turning to teaching, he graduated in 1956 from the Vancouver Normal School 'with distinction,' an honour given to only ten graduates among more than 500. From 1956 to 1960 he taught at Templeton Secondary School on Vancouver's east side.

In 1960-64 he was the first curator of the newly established Vancouver Maritime Museum and mounted its initial exhibitions as well as assembling its early collection. After further academic study, he was appointed to the History Department of UBC in 1967. There he specialized in teaching the history of the Canadian West and developed UBC's first course in British Columbia's history. He retired at the end of 1986 with the rank of Assistant Professor.

Published by The Globe and Mail from Jul. 4 to Jul. 11, 2009.