



# Memorial Scroll

## Gung Loy Jim

**Gung Loy Jim came from an unusual background to become one of British Columbia's most successful Hereford breeders.**

Gung Loy Jim's grandfather immigrated from Kowloon, Hong Kong, to San Francisco, California in 1872; then to Vancouver, British Columbia in 1907. Loy's father moved to Little Fort, British Columbia in 1917 and built a general store and it was there that Loy was born in 1920, living there until his death in 1995. He received a grade 8 education at Little Fort School and his diploma from Kamloops Business School in 1944. He met Mary (Marie) Peleshaty, and they married shortly after in 1956. They had four children, Kam, Kee, Kym and Kyn.

In the early years, the family operated Jim Man Lee Store, and farmed. A 10-acre parcel of land was purchased in the early twenties and a vegetable garden was established. That land is still part of the ranch today but is now a prime cow pasture. The Jim family also had milk cows, swine, and poultry and marketed their farm products in the store. The business flourished through the 1920's, and then, like most businesses, struggled through the Great Depression.

During the 1930's the store gave out credit to all who needed it. In 1938, when Loy went along with his friends to join the war effort, he was declined due to his ethnicity, and his "flat feet". This was something that troubled him for years thereafter, as Loy always wanted to be a team

player.

It was in 1943 when Loy purchased and registered his first purebred Hereford cattle, maintaining a small herd of 25 cows from the 1950s through the 1970s.

In the early eighties, Loy's sons became more involved in the family cattle operation and the herd was expanded to about 100 cows. Over the last 70 years, Little Fort Herefords (LFH) has been one of British Columbia's most successful Hereford herds. LFH has produced many champions at the Kamloops Provincial Bull Sale and the Williams Lake Bull Sale. Little Fort Herefords has also sold bulls and replacement heifers directly off the ranch to other ranchers throughout British Columbia and Alberta.

Gung Loy Jim absolutely loved Hereford cattle. It was his childhood dream to be a rancher and he became a well-respected breeder and cattlemen who passionately promoted Hereford cattle at every opportunity. In 1993, he received his 50 year pin at the Provincial Bull Sale in Kamloops. He viewed this as one of the greatest recognitions of his life. Fittingly, in a very competitive class just before the award presentation, his bulls placed 1st and 2nd.

Loy created an enduring Hereford legacy which his family has proudly continued on the Little Fort Hereford operation, since his death in 1995.

Loy Jim predominately focused on selling bulls to ranchers. Many of his original customers still purchase Little Fort Hereford bulls today, as

they have for over 40 years. Loy started to show cattle in the early 1970s, winning the Reserve Grand Champion Bull honours at the Provincial Bull sale in Kamloops in 1973. It was the first A.I.-sired bull to win this championship.

Many innovations followed on the Little Fort operation, including the early adoption of embryo transplanting.

At a national level, Little Fort Herefords cattle were shown at Bonanzas where one of his bulls won Reserve Champion honours. Loy and his sons also showed cattle at the Interior Provincial Exhibition (IPE) in Armstrong where they had several class winners. In 4-H, the Jim children showed several Grand Champion Females with Hereford heifers and cow/calf pairs at what was then the largest 4-H show in Canada - the Provincial Winter Fair in Kamloops.

In the eighties, Little Fort Herefords began to focus on showing bulls at the Provincial Bull Sale in Kamloops as a means to promote farm sales. Their bulls won Grand Championships in Kamloops in 1984 and 1987. There were also several division, reserve, calf and group championships extending through the early nineties.

Loy passed away in September 1995, but to this day, and despite cattle purchases, 75% of the herd can be traced back to cattle that Loy bred or purchased in the 1950s. Between 1995 and 2012, LFH won Grand or Reserve Grand Champion Bull at Williams Lake, 19 times. Between

1995 and 2002, the last year for the event, four Grand or Reserve Grand Champion bulls were shown at the Provincial Bull Sale in Kamloops.

Kam, Kee, Kym and Kyn and their families are all actively involved in the Ranch and other agricultural businesses. They have all been involved in 4-H, and Kym and Kyn were both involved in the Junior Hereford Association, attending the first Bonanza in 1980, and several others that followed. Two of the grandchildren grew up on the ranch, and participate in all ranch activities. They have mostly been involved with the 4-H horse club. Marie continues to be actively involved in the ranch today.

Loy was extremely active in his community and was a member of several organizations including Little Fort Farmers Institute, Grassy Knoll Range Association and the Barriere Fall Fair Beef Committee. He was a Yellowhead 4H Club Leader. He also was a volunteer and sponsor in various ranching related activities in the North Thompson Valley.

On a provincial level, he was a Provincial Bull Sale Committee Member from 1985 to 1992, a member of Thompson Valley Hereford Breeders' Association and an active member of Kamloops

Stockmen's Association. Loy also hosted the 1986 Thompson Valley Hereford Breeders Field Day.

Nationally, he served on the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, made numerous trips to cattle shows, frequented the Calgary Bull Sale and toured various western Canadian and Washington State farms in search of breeding stock. The ranch is a site where international Hereford breeders have stopped on unplanned visits after seeing the Little Fort Hereford cattle which had good highway exposure north of Kamloops.

Born into a second generation Chinese family that operated the local general store, Gung Loy Jim also started one of the first commercial fishing camps in the BC interior in 1938, at Taweel Lake, which ran continuously until 1977 when it was sold to US buyers. After taking over his father's general store in 1958, the business evolved to become a retail centre with a gas bar, agency liquor store and a Subway restaurant. The store is still in operation today and will celebrate a 100th anniversary in six years. In addition, "Jim's Food Markets" has expanded to Clearwater and Williams Lake. Throughout his life, Loy Jim was involved in many other businesses, including mining exploration,

real estate, road building and logging. He was an accomplished marksman, and woodworker. In short, Loy was a very prominent entrepreneur whose life and times form an integral part of the history of the North Thompson Valley of British Columbia. He overcame many obstacles to achieve success. Loy had a relentless determination but always acted with integrity, believed in "fairness" and had a wonderful sense of humour. He always cheered for the "underdog" and improved the prospects for many people by providing financial help or mentoring. Nowhere was his universal appeal more evident than at his funeral, where those who were homeless attended alongside those who had much and all had a fond memory or favourite story to share about Loy Jim.

It is with great honour that the Canadian Hereford Association inducts Gung Loy Jim into its Memorial Scroll.

