

# Memorial Scroll

## Robert (Bob) Earl Thurston, DVM



**Bob's father Len was born in Wales and moved to Canada with his family in 1927, initially settling in Irma, Alberta, where they raised Hereford cattle.** During the war, Len moved to Ontario where he met and married Bob's mother Jean and where they settled to raise their family. Bob was born in Brampton, Ontario, on March 2nd, 1947, where he grew up working in his father's machinery business. Bob often spoke about learning his work ethic and values from having a job as a teen and helping his father.

After graduating with a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from the Ontario Veterinary College in 1971, Bob went on to become partner in Wellington Veterinary Services, before opening Drayton Veterinary services in 1980. In 1985 Bob married Nancy. Two years later, the couple purchased their first farm outside of Arthur, Ontario. Bob and Nancy raised five children - Rick, Dena, Fran, Ivor and John, who blessed them with grandchildren Tom, Sam,

Abigale and Leia. In 1989, Bob and Nancy purchased their base herd of 10 cow-calf pairs, founding Thurston Livestock Polled Herefords. Over the years, the herd was expanded by purchasing cattle from Ontario and the western provinces. The current herd of 35 cows was moved to Lanark, Ontario, after the sale of the Arthur Farm in 2014. After 30 years of practice, Bob retired in 2001 to work for the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Bob's interest in helping the children become more successful, led to improved genetics, feeding programs and reaching out to local Hereford associations. Bob became active as a Director on the Ontario Hereford Association's West Central Zone. The Thurston family has shown Herefords at numerous fairs and MOE (Mark of Excellence) Shows in Ontario, including the Royal Winter Fair. They were also exhibitors at Expo Boeuf in Quebec. Thurston Herefords is a true family enterprise with children, grandchildren and nephews all showing Thurston cattle over the years. Bob enjoyed visiting other breeders across Canada and regularly made the trip west to visit fellow breeders at Hereford sales and at Agribition.

Thurston cattle have been sold throughout Canada and for the past nine years have been one of the guest consignors at the River Valley Genetic Designs Sale. Embryos have been sold overseas to Denmark and cattle

have been exported to Russia and Kazakhstan where Bob assisted in his role with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency in the testing and export paper work.

Bob was a member of a local marketing group - The Breeders of Wellington County - in 2005, to promote the Hereford breed by hosting open houses each May. He served on the Ontario Hereford Association Board of Directors and acted as President in 2013 and 2014. Bob also served the Hereford Breed at the national level by serving on the CHA National Show Committee for several years and was the show chair for the Eastern National Show at the RAWF.

Bob was an avid hunter and outdoorsman who enjoyed deer hunting and canoeing, even taking an expedition down the Nahanni River in the North West Territories. He was very involved with the Grace Anglican Church, serving as deputy Rector's Warden as well as helping with fundraisers and physically maintaining the church. He was a supporter of live theatre and actively promoted the growth and success of what is now known as Drayton Entertainment, helping the production to grow from a single old town hall with 45 performances to seven theatres and over 800 performances. As the dedicated father that he was, he spent hours going to soccer, lacrosse, rugby, figure skating and curling events with his children.

