

Lorne Gordon McArthur

1938 – 2025

Lorne Gordon McArthur passed away in 2025, leaving behind a legacy rooted in community, horticulture, and heartfelt connection. Alongside his beloved wife Marilyn, Lorne was a cornerstone of the Alberta Horticultural Association for over six decades. As dedicated executives, exhibitors, and educators, they shaped the province’s horticultural landscape with passion and expertise.

Together, Lorne and Marilyn exhibited flowers and vegetables across countless shows, earning a trove of awards and ribbons. Their love for dahlias and gladiolus took them to competitions across the United States, where they not only claimed top honors but also forged lifelong friendships. Both were esteemed senior judges in horticulture, dahlias, and gladiolus, and taught weeklong judging courses at Olds College—mentoring the next generation of growers and floral artists.

Their market garden flourished for years, producing vegetables and flowers, including over 100,000 gladiolus blooms at its peak. As one of the original vendors at the local farmers market, their vibrant flowers brightened stalls for more than fifty years. Lorne’s legacy lives on through the “Echo” dahlia varieties he hybridized, many of which continue to thrive today.

A visionary and mentor, Lorne spearheaded the creation of the Piper Creek Trial Garden—the only active trial garden in Canada—cementing his role as a national horticultural leader.

Beyond the garden, Lorne was a founding member of the local chapter of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and a spirited sportsman. He found joy in curling, golfing, cribbage, and cheering on the Edmonton Oilers. At just 14, he learned taxidermy from his grandfather and built a respected business known for its artistry and precision.

Lorne also served 17 years as a federal meat inspector, with one of his most cherished memories being the reindeer harvest in the Northwest Territories—a unique experience that brought him deep camaraderie and unforgettable stories.

Known for his warmth and sociability, Lorne always had a coffee or drink ready for friends. His kindness, generosity, and unwavering dedication touched countless lives. He leaves behind a legacy of beauty, mentorship, and love that will continue to bloom in the hearts of all who knew him.

