



## James Lewis Hougland

September 13, 1922 - May 12, 2014

James L. "Jim" Hougland, a resident of Entiat for the past 70 years passed away at his home on Monday, May 12, 2014 at the age of 97.

He was born on September 13, 1922 to the late Aaron and Bertha (Gardiner) Hougland, at Kansas City, Kansas.

He worked as a logger for Zwright Logging for 40 years.

At his request no services will be held.

### Elegy for James L. Hougland

I did not want to write this. I put it off. I came up with all kinds of excuses. That big presentation for work needs to get done, the kids have an activity; mostly I told myself I really did not need to do this. When it was TIME, I would get it all on paper. Writing it would mean it was TIME. That the cancer was real and it was time for Grandpa to go. Irrationally, part of me thought the longer I put this off, the longer he would be around for us. To joke with my son. To listen to a story from my daughter. To putter around in the yard setting his medusa-hair sprinkler hose design. I wanted to give him and us a few more days, a few more weeks. He had been driving just a few weeks ago! He would tough this out, just like the time he slipped from the top of a snowy load of logs and cracked his head open.

Whatever talismanic properties my procrastination held wore thin. The cancer chewed through it and got serious. No more driving. No more jokes. No more listening. Grandpa picked up new activities now. Hospice. Occupational

Therapy. Sleeping. Thinking about eating, but mostly not. Striving to maintain his independence to the very end.

As he was slipping more and more into the twilight, I thought a lot about my childhood. I was the luckiest boy alive. My grandfather was a logger, which next to being a superhero, was about the best thing I could imagine. Going with him in the woods I got to see all kinds of logging machinery and trucks; trees being cut down and moved around, loaded on to trucks and just enough danger to be exciting. As far back as I can remember, I rode in his logging truck. Early on, I was too young to go by myself, so my grandmother or mom would go with me. Grandpa would fashion some type of box or other contraption for me to sit on (The horror! No seat belts!) and away we would go. I was more than a little excited and certainly a lot more comfortable when I was old enough to go on my own. As time went on, I would spend weeks with him in the summer, going to work every day. I learned how to drink Pepsi from a bottle and throw the bottle caps out the window. I learned how to fix and rewire the inevitably broken lights on his truck. I learned the best (only one!) way to open a pack of unfiltered Camels and prep them for smoking (Hit the pack upside down on something a few times to tightly pack the tobacco in the cigarettes. This is key. You miss this and you have blown the whole operation. Then find one of the folded foil corners and tear it along the center seal. Carefully. Then gently pull that around the top edge from center all the way around the end back to center. Now you are ready to smoke my friend). I learned how to swear and hold grudges. Mostly though, we had fun and adventures. Just the two of us.

One of the best parts of going with Grandpa was having jobs. When I rode with him, I got to help out. Not make-work kid stuff, but real work that helped Grandpa. I filled out the trip tickets and stapled them to the bottom left log on the load. When he would throw wrappers over the load to secure it, I would bring the binders and cheater pipe to him that cinched it all down. Branding was one of my favorite jobs. At certain sites, you had to brand the logs with a branding hammer. Once the logs were on the truck and trailer, I would get up

on the frame and hammer brands. If I was lucky, there was painting along with branding, where I would put dabs of paint from spray cans onto the logs. I got to be part of the operation. As a kid, I thought this was awesome. My classmates were off doing kiddy stuff and I was almost a real logger! Now riding in the truck was not without its complications. Somehow Grandpa managed to turn the truck cab into a labyrinth of cords and cables for radar detectors, CB radios, two-way radios and all of their antennas and microphones. I was always warned "don't bump the cords". As child I was petrified to hit one of these trip wires, setting in motion a horrific Chain of Events that I imagined could never be unwound. What would actually happen was never clear to me, but I knew it was something I DID NOT want to find out. The cords were always there. A silent menace lurking next to me that I dared not awaken.

One summer day our loaded truck went off the road as we were headed to the mill. As we went off into the ditch, I thought we were headed for a rollover down a big embankment. Somehow, the truck stopped part of the way over, with the passenger side heading down. The soft dirt in the ditch was holding the truck for the time being. Knowing it probably wouldn't last long, we both needed to get out and get out in a hurry. Grandpa jumped out of his door and hollered for me to get out of the truck through the driver's door. I was terrified of the truck rolling over with a full load of logs, but in order to get out, I was faced with the cords. The Cords! They were between me and safety. I now had two problems. First, I needed to get out of the truck before it rolled over. Second, if I hurried and snagged the cords, I would start the Chain of Events while also ensnaring myself in the truck. I knew I had to get out as I wasn't sure how much longer the truck would be upright. Staring down the cords, I quickly picked my path and went. As I got to the driver's step and jumped onto the road, relief washed over me. I had made it. The cords had not reached out and wrapped me boa constrictor-like in the cab. I hadn't set a Chain of Events in motion. Grandpa then asked me "Why did you take so long getting out?"

He also liked to smoke and drive. His favorite time to smoke appeared to be whenever it was the most dangerous place you can imagine. For a while, we used to haul logs to a mill in Klickitat, WA. This wasn't any mill. This was a mill that was at the bottom of the steepest, twistiest, switch-backed filled canyon road you can imagine. I hated going to Klickitat, for to kid eyes, the road had steep drop-offs, hundreds of feet deep that we were constantly inches from driving over. Every time we made it to the mill I thought we had cheated death. Racing down the canyon was not the only peril I faced on this trip. The real problem here was at the beginning. Grandpa's ritual at the top of the canyon was to light a cigarette. A cigarette! People talk about smoking being hazardous, but they have no idea about real hazards. "Time for a cigareete!" he would say, and then cackle. Cigareetes he called them, a real LOL before its time. I can see the first switchback coming and Grandpa has his knee on the steering wheel, both hands working the mission-critical step of torching off a Camel. Not what I would think where we would want our attention in the areas of steering and/or shifting, saving us from certain death. No, the priority was getting that damn cigarette lit. As we approached the first corner I started visualizing what it was going to be like flying off the road in a fully loaded logging truck. Somehow, with a combination of knee and one of his hands, we would make it through the first corner. At that point the Camel was usually going and I just had the road with which to contend.

As he approached retirement, I wanted one last ride in with Grandpa. I was in college and even in my self-centered post-adolescent state, it was important to get in that last trip. Through my summer jobs in construction I had also learned to drive a truck. I wanted to show him I had taken those lessons to heart and had been watching for all of those years. I wanted him to be proud that I could carry on what he had shown me. We got our last trip in and I even got to drive a little bit. It was just as fun as when I was eight years old.

However the cords and cables were as troublesome as ever.

Now he is gone. Off to head down the canyon one last trip by himself this time. No passengers. No helpers needed on this round. I hope he has an

open pack of Camels and plenty of Pepsi. He was able to be at home until the end with his family, just how he wanted it. As I talked to him for the last time I realized I wasn't lucky because of what I got to do with him. I was lucky because I had him. Yes we got to do fun and at times, terrifying things, but I simply got to have a lot of time with him. He showed me the value of hard work and giving every day your best effort. He told me stories about a lifestyle and a time that has mostly disappeared. The more I talk to people about their childhood I find out how unique that was and what a treasure I had. My kids even got to know him. One of my best friends told me the other day I was lucky to have him around as long as I did. He's right, I am. But it still wasn't long enough.

James L. Hougland passed away on May 12, 2014 in Entiat, WA. He is survived by his wife Bertha (Whitehall), daughter Camille Rimmer (Mark) of Coeur d'Alene, ID, and son William (Nancy) of Huntsville, AL. His grandchildren are Adam (Karla) Rimmer of New Canaan, CT and Stacey (Jesse) Cotner of Jacksonville, FL. James is also survived by four great grand-children; Colson James and Annabel Jade Rimmer of New Canaan, CT and Courtney and Garrett Cotner of Jacksonville, FL.

Arrangements are in the care of Heritage Memorial Chapel, East Wenatchee.

# Tribute Wall

NH

“ Dear Bertha, Camille, Bill, and family:  
What a joy to have known Jim! His smile and chuckle were gifts he gave freely to everyone. He was a loyal worker and steadfast friend to the Zwights. I remember warmly Bertha & Jim sitting with them at their 60th anniversary party.  
His grandson's tribute so captured the Jim I knew from summer trips "into the woods" with Guilford and Steve.  
May your memories sustain you. Jim will be missed. In sympathy,  
Nancy

---

**Nancy Harris** - May 19, 2014 at 04:44 PM

PW

“ Dear Camille and all of the Houghland family,  
I am so sorry for your loss, but also know how blessed you are to have shared his long, wonderful life. What a beautiful tribute in the paper written by his grandson. I am assuming it is Adam that has such wonderful memories of his grandfather. Even in loss, we have all those happy memories that nobody can ever take away. Special hugs to you and all your family.  
Peggy Whitmore

---

**Peggy Whitmore** - May 18, 2014 at 10:40 PM

FC

“ Dear Hoagland family,

*I doubt that any of you remember me but I first met Jim in 1946 when I was twelve years old and just coming into The Boy Scouts when he was Scoutmaster and at the time he owned the Mobil Station in the old town of Entiat. My first memory of him was when he tried to teach me to tie knots.*

*I saw him about ten years ago when I was biking down the Entiat River Road and he was working in the yard and I stopped to chat. I was most pleasantly surprised when he remembered me.*

*Farewell and Godspeed Jim and God bless the Hoagland family.*

*Foster*

---

**Foster Copeland** - May 18, 2014 at 10:20 PM

SH

“ Dear Bertha, Camille, and Bill,

*I have such wonderful memories of Jim throughout the years and never picture him without seeing that little smile that seemed to always be on his face when he was in a group. He obviously enjoyed the company of family and friends, and it was a friendly place in his company.*

*There are just some folks who we are glad are in the world and who we know are making that world a better place even though they don't seek the limelight. Jim was certainly one of those and I am so glad to have known him.*

*My sincere condolences to you and to your family, Suellen*

---

**Suellen Harris** - May 16, 2014 at 02:09 PM