



Clara Emmaline White

February 18, 1937 - July 21, 2015

The Life of Clara Emmaline White (nee' Fleming) – The Cole's Notes Version

Clara was born on February 18, 1937, at her family's home in Scotch Lake, N.B. "Emmy" to her parents, Harry & Ada, she lived an idyllic life on the family farm, schooled in a one-room schoolhouse, fishing in the St. John River, and rafting with her siblings on Scotch Lake, even though none of them could swim! After school she moved to Fredericton where she worked at a furrier's, before attending Fredericton Business College and receiving her secretarial diploma. She met her future husband, Robert John (Bob) White, on a blind date in 1958. Bob was a Sapper in the Royal Canadian Engineers, and after dating for some time he was posted to Germany in 1959.

They maintained contact while Bob was overseas. He was repatriated to Canada in 1963, and Clara moved out to Chilliwack, B.C., on the November 22, 1963 to be near him. She knew the exact date, as she clearly remembered the pilot announcing that JFK had been assassinated. They married on February 8, 1964, shortly before her 28th birthday, and the day before The Beatles were introduced to North American TV audiences. She remarked how shocked they were by their long hair!

Bob's Army career lead to a rather nomadic lifestyle, and later in 1964, he was posted back to CFB Gagetown, N.B.; so a VERY pregnant Clara piled into a

car with her new husband, and they drove across the country, back 'down home'. After settling into a house not far from Scotch Lake, their son David was born December 1964. Within weeks of David's birth, Bob was dispatched on a 1 year UN tour to Egypt, effectively leaving Clara a "single parent", but with the support of her extended family made it through the year.

Shortly after Bob's return from Egypt they moved to CFB Petawawa, ON, and 6 months afterward to CFS Dana, SK. It was while in Dana that their son Philip was born October 1967 (their 'Centennial Project' according to Clara...). After two years in Dana, they moved to CFS Falconbridge, ON, where their son Craig was born March 1971. After 4 more moves across the country in the 70s, they finally settled to Edmonton in 1980. Military life had taken a toll on their marriage and after several years of living apart from Bob, Clara filed for divorce in 1986-one of the most difficult decisions of her life.

Throughout her life Clara worked as a legal secretary at different law offices across the country, and continued to do so in Edmonton, right up until she retired in 2002. Though she had been looking forward to retirement, she found herself at loose ends for some time after she stopped working. Eventually she became involved in many activities that filled her days; bowling, shuffleboard, cards, dining with friends and working with her church group at various events. She even checked off two of her biggest "bucket list" items; in 2012 she took a hot air balloon ride – a gift from her sons – and she treated herself to her dream trip to Nashville, TN, in 2014.

Clara's life was not always easy, but she persevered and even thrived. She lived a full life, was deeply loved by her family, and reveled in her five grandchildren. She often said if she had known how much fun it was to be a grandmother, she'd have had her grandchildren first! While many of her tastes were what one would call traditional, she had a rather ribald sense of humour. She enjoyed a good dirty joke (even told a few), and loved any movie with

John Wayne in it, 'Rio Bravo' being her favourite. She lived an active life until the end, and didn't suffer unduly prior to her exit from this plane. If one can judge the success of a person's life by their experiences, ability to overcome adversity, how much they loved and were loved, then Clara's life was a success by any stretch of the imagination.

She will be missed, and fondly remembered.