



Gerard "Bud" Story Burkhart passed away on May 13, 2010 at the family ranch east of Bozeman. He was the son of Harold de la Cuesta and Mayo (Story) Burkhart, born in Hollywood, California on September 8, 1927. He was the last great grandson of Nelson Story, father of the Montana cattle industry.

Bud spent his childhood in Bozeman, attending school in the winter and working on the family ranch in the Gallatin Canyon in the summer. At the age of 16, during WWII, he enlisted in the Navy. Bud was in the Pacific Theater, assigned to the Marine Corps as a radio operator, taking part in the invasion of Siapain, Tinian, Guam and Iwo Jima, receiving the Purple Heart, Combat Action Ribbon, and Presidential Unit Citation for the Asiatic Pacific Campaign with three battle stars and the World War II Victory Medal.

After being honorably discharged, Bud returned to Bozeman and received his GED, then attending Montana State College. Bud worked as a government mule packer for the Geodetic Survey Crew resurveying Yellowstone National Park and the surrounding areas. Bud also worked for the Elkhorn Dude Ranch in the Gallatin Canyon as a wrangler.

Bud and Mary (Biering) were married on June 22, 1951. They lived on the family ranch in the Gallatin Canyon. Bud then went to Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, California and after graduation, joined his father-in-law Harold Biering ranching east of Bozeman. They raised purebred Herefords and foundation quarter horses. Bud was especially proud of the fact that two of his 4-in-hand teams were chosen by Disney to lead the Rose Bowl Parade pulling coaches in 1980 for Disney's 25th Anniversary. They were used for many years in the Disney Park pulling the coaches as well. In 1989, Bud and his family were honored by the Crow Nation to commemorate Nelson Story's cattle drive from Texas to Montana—Bud and a descendant of Chief Plenty Coup drove a symbolic herd of cattle for the ceremony.

Bud was a strong Masonic brother, receiving his 50 year pin this spring. He was Grand Commander of the Knights Templar for the State of Montana, Grand High Priest of the Royal Arch Masons, member of the Scottish Rite, member of the Algeria Shrine and member of the Wyoming Algeria Black Horse Patrol, as well as a member of several other honorary degrees.

Bud was a member of the Rodeo Cowboys Association and active in rodeo as a competitor and a judge. He also helped to form the Montana Rodeo Association, of which he is a past President. He was also a life time member of the AQHA.

He served on the Montana Winter Fair Board as President as well as Horse Director for twenty five years. He was on the Gallatin County Fair Board and LaMotte School Board for many years. He also helped form the Fort Ellis Fire Department.

Bud is survived by his wife Mary of 58 years, his sons, Robert (Gloria); Clint and daughter, Kathryn (Marty); He is also survived by his grandchildren, Kimberli and Juaquin; Michelle, Rachel, Drew, Elizabeth and Nate; Matthew and Meghan; and by his sister in law, Debbie; niece, Amber Ferrin and his faithful dog Tut.

He was preceded in death by his parents; son, Richard; grandsons, Dax and Josh; brothers, Clint Armitage and Pete Samuelson; sister, Etha Jernigan; mother in law, Mildred Arnold and father in law, Harold Biering.

Funeral services will be held at 3 p.m. Tuesday at Grace Bible Church.

Per Bud's wishes, in lieu of flowers, memorial donations are suggested to the following organizations: The Pioneer Museum in Bozeman; 317 W. Main, Bozeman, MT 59715; The Knight Templar Eye Foundation, 1000 East State Parkway Suite I, Schaumburg, IL 60173-4592, or the Justin Cowboys Crisis Fund, 101 Pro Rodeo Drive, Colorado Springs, Co. 80919.