

## ODE TO CLARENCE

Clarence was born in Clinton on the 4th of May  
A cute little guy, they all did say.  
Raised at Meadow Lake.  
Tried to be good for Mom and Papa's sake.

Born to be a hunter  
Packing a gun when he was only young  
The youngest of four boys.  
He grew up a little high strung.

School was 27 miles away  
And there were always chores to be done.  
He went for a few years  
Mom must have shed many tears.

Looked out the window and over the hill  
All you could see was 2 geese and a gun.  
He must have been a good shot  
Because he always got his kill.

Times were tough  
There was always lots to eat  
Mom said don't worry  
Clarence will get us some meat.

At the age of 14,  
Gang Ranch here I come.  
Ranching not for me  
I'll go have some fun.

Working at Lillooet in the box factory  
This job was not for me  
I'll go join the Navy  
And go out to sea.

He had to grow up fast,  
Would you believe they made him a Cook?  
Not going to tell all of his past.

The war was over, what to do?  
Got on a ship called "St. Roche" and headed out to sea  
Eleven days stuck in the ice  
Now that wasn't so nice.

Back in Clinton, living a good life  
Bought a D4 Cat  
Hired Ardie to build a road  
He rolled the cat – so much for that.

The Americans wanted a guide to show them the game  
So Clarence grabbed his gun and headed home to do the same.  
The hunters shot everything they could see  
We killed nearly all the game, three other guides and me.

Heard there was work up north  
Lots of money to be made at the Bennett Dam  
Packed my bags  
And said, "Here I am".

He was soon sick of that rat race.  
"Let's open a café"  
I said to Ray  
I'll cook and you'll pray.

Back in Clinton time for a new life.  
Went to visit Mom and Gus  
And found him a wife.

Though a bit younger than him  
He saw she was just his size  
Everyone who knew Kathy said  
She was 1<sup>st</sup> prize.

So off to Kamloops to tie the knot  
Settle down now you old fool  
Quit your drinking  
Have some kids and be cool.

Adopted a little girl – Lori  
Later they had a boy – Kevin  
And that was that  
Turned out Kathy had a pretty good head under her hat.

Bought a trailer  
Things went pretty well  
Took a job at Mica Dam  
Stayed there for quite a spell.

In Armstrong they made their home  
To be a good husband and father,  
Was his goal  
Didn't want to grow old alone.

Big Lake every year,  
Come rain or shine  
Kathy packed up the trailer, let's go catch some fish.  
She probably just went along, just being kind.

Caught the big one – 12 pounds it weighed  
Settle down now Clarence, you've got it made.  
But there was no stopping that Son-of-a-gun  
If he didn't have a fishing rod, he had a gun.

Time was marching on – what to do?  
Two grand kids needed a home  
Knowing this would change all their plans  
Decided to raise those two girls till they are grown.

Not able to get around so good anymore.  
"Hurry up Kathy, let's go make some money"  
So off to the Casino they go him and his honey.

That damn place I'm never going back  
Lost it all again,  
Probably never get it back.

Remember Grandma lived to be 98  
So you have to wait  
Before you go through Heaven's gate.

So many memories, we all have a few.  
And we are all better people for having known you.  
So Happy 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday to you!

Author: Loretta Ferguson