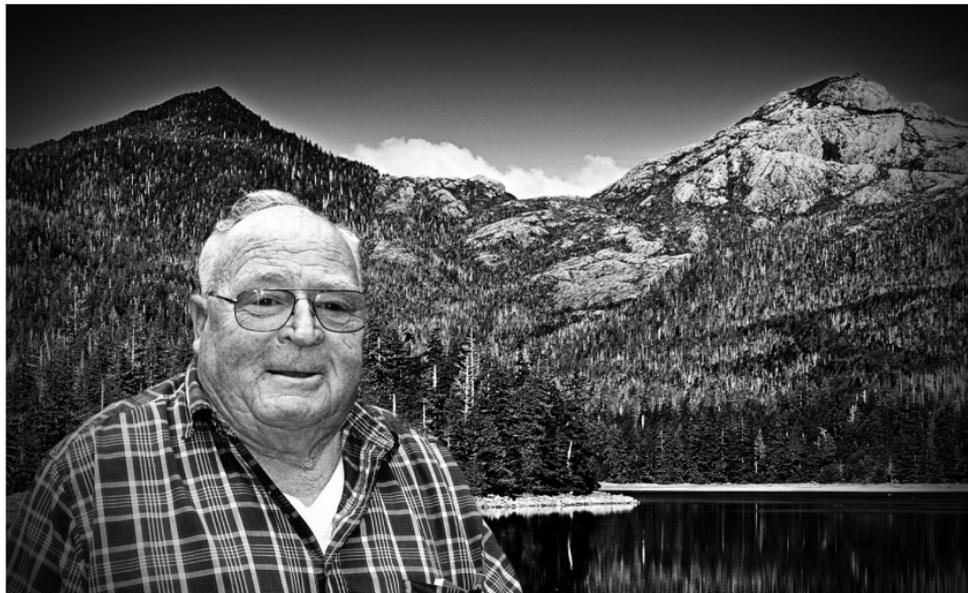


*In Memoriam*

# Robert L. "Red" Dotson

August 15, 1928 ~ September 3, 2012



Robert L. Dotson of Ketchikan, Alaska passed away on September 3, 2012 in Peace Health Medical Center after a long fight against heart disease.

He leaves his wife of 62 years, Irene Dotson; his daughters, Susan Dotson and Mary Anderson; grandchildren Derek Dotson, Robert Horwath, Harl Corbin, Raymond Anderson, David Anderson, and Jennifer Scarlett; six great-grandchildren; and many close friends and admirers.

Born in Yakima, Washington, August 15, 1928, to Raymond and Isabelle Dotson, he journeyed to Alaska with his parents in June of 1943 on the Aleutian steamship. One can only imagine what a voyage it must have been for a 14-year old boy—16 years before Alaska became the 49<sup>th</sup> star in the spangled banner. Many more horizons would unfold for him as he grew to manhood reveling in the outdoors of Southeast Alaska.

Known as "Red" to his friends, owing to a shock of red hair and a ruddy complexion, Robert's life was one of continual adventure. He sailed on the mailboat Yakobi as a seaman in the early 50s; worked for the Forest Service as a surveyor and active forest firefighter; tracked wolves and black bear in the Coastal Range Mountains; and long plied the waters of the Alaska Marine Highway—an able-bodied Master Seaman if ever there was one.

Red gained an awe-inspired respect for nature, while developing an intuition that riches lay beneath the surface of Alaska's majestic terrain. Following his intuition to ground, in 1955 he and his young wife staked mining claims at Bokan Mountain, Alaska—hoping and trusting that someday someone would believe in the promise as much as they.

With his deep respect for the environment, Mr. Dotson was especially tickled in his later life to know that his Bokan mining claims contained an abundance of rare earth minerals; metals of great use to clean energy and the technological future of the United States. He passed with the knowledge that his life's work at Bokan would very likely bear fruit as a producing mine and a source of prosperity to Ketchikan, his home of over 50 years.

Red was a hero of Southeast Alaska. His courage and perseverance in mineral exploration continued a legacy of Alaskan Panhandle prospectors that extends back to 49ers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He was an avid reader of northern poet Robert Service, and could quote long passages of Service's frontier prose. Service's Epitaph could well be a fitting elegy to Robert Dotson:

*"No matter how we sow and reap  
The end of all is endless sleep;  
From strife a merciful release,  
From life the crowning prize of Peace."*

Farewell, Red Dotson. Just as in your days on the Alaska Marine Highway, you've got another incredible vista waiting just around the next bend.