



Gurpreet Singh Minhas



A Tribute to My Father

With great sorrow, I announce the death of my father **Gurbinder Singh Minhas, Notary Public, on April 15, 2010.**

My family and I would like to thank everyone for their tremendous support and wishes. My father's funeral was held on April 24, 2010. That day I had a full speech about my father prepared, but was unable to deliver it in its entirety. I appreciate this opportunity.

Gurbinder Singh Minhas was born on April 24, 1953, in Model Town Jalandhar, Punjab, India, in the home of the late Sardar Piara Singh Minhas, a practising Advocate at the time, and Piara's wife Daljit Kaur Minhas.

During his grade-school years, my father excelled in his studies; his teachers commented on his excellent educational abilities and memory. A school teacher told my grandparents that my father was so studious, it was unlikely he would get far in his life;



My grandfather, my grandmother, and my father with his younger brother (my uncle)

brainy students typically did not do well in the real world!

He completed grade school in Jalandhar in 1968, his Bachelor of Arts at the DAV College in Jalandhar in 1973, and his LLB in Dehradun in 1976, at the age of 23.

Success can be measured by the challenges you have overcome while trying to succeed, and that is very true of our passage.

My father spent his first 6 months as a lawyer practising law with my grandfather, then worked with civil and income tax lawyers until he immigrated to Prince George, British Columbia, in February of 1979. I was recently told he was quite adamant about coming to Canada to provide a better life and better opportunities for his coming generations.



My mother and father at their wedding in 1979

He had a court marriage with my mother Narinder Kumari Minhas on March 11, 1979, and a religious marriage ceremony on April 15, 1979.

My father's first job in Canada was as a labourer with BC Rail. Over the next 12 years or so, he worked with BC Rail in many parts of northern British Columbia, in many different capacities, from machine helper to machinist. He mastered over 40 different trades and often worked under extreme weather conditions.

My father was not satisfied with working for BC Rail. He was a lawyer in India and was not the type of person who enjoyed working for, or under, others. He had a growing resolve to follow a career in the legal field.

Around 1984, after many discussions and deliberation with my mother to weigh the financial situation, the time commitment, and other factors, my father set his mind on pursuing a BC Notary Seal. It was a natural fit for him, given his background and his interest.



My father (far right, at the back) and his friends in 1971 in Kashmir, when he was finishing his law degree

Family and friends suggested he become a lawyer, but he preferred to become a Notary Public. He completed the Notary Preparatory Course while working at BC Rail and was commissioned as a Notary Public for Prince George in June of 1989. He started his notarial practice from home on a part-time basis and, in 1991, opened an office and began practising full-time.

While in Prince George, Gurbinder was involved with the local community. He had a habit of helping people wherever he could. He actively volunteered with the Guru Gobind Singh Temple Association and served a few terms as Secretary and Treasurer of the Association, at the request of the Temple goers. He was called upon as a Punjabi/English interpreter for certain types of court, tribunal, and mediation matters.

He was a trusted member of the local community, evidenced by the fact that many well-known community members would call upon him for his advice on a variety of matters—Notary-related and otherwise. I remember many late evenings when people visited him at home for advice!

My father had a noncontentious nature. One day, during the time period when there was conflict throughout many of the British Columbia Sikh Temples, my father and I were sitting in the upstairs prayer hall in the Prince George Sikh Temple. Suddenly, violence erupted at the front podium area. People were fighting with fists, musical instruments, and other objects. Some onlookers were sitting down, devastated by the situation; the rest were physically involved—except for my father, who went into the middle of the flying fists and objects.

He sat down with his hands humbly held together, in the manner that hands are held in South-East Asian culture when paying respects or greeting others, and requested calm. Then he stood up between the various antagonists until the situation subsided.

I worked closely with my father during his years as a Notary in Prince George. He practised in Prince George



Notary and family man in 2007: Myself, my sister, my mother, my wife, and my father

until 2002. In June of 2002, he shifted his practice to Surrey, British Columbia.

One of his reasons was to establish a larger practice to pave the way for me to join him. He became very well known in a short period of time and earned the respect of many. Over the years, he served the community with dedication and pride. He always had people's best interests in mind.

My father was a great man and he will be missed dearly.

He practised as a BC Notary Public until his passing.

My father's passing has been a devastating loss to me and I miss him very much, more so perhaps because I had the pleasure of spending the majority of each day with him—at home and at the office—for the past 3 years. He was a wonderful person. Irreplaceable.

His hobbies included reading, history, religion, cricket, soccer, and poetry, to name a few. He had quite a gift for poetry. I would be speaking to him on some unrelated matter and he would deliver a few lines of impromptu poetry!

He was a fan of Clint Eastwood, old Western movies, Khushwant Singh's books, and good food. April has become my favourite month—my 1-year-old son Aaryan was born in April, as were my grandfather, my father, and myself. My father always referred to my son as Gurmandir, regardless of the number of times I told him otherwise! And he was very

proud of the fact that I followed in his footsteps to become a third-generation practitioner of legal services.

My father had a charming personality, a welcoming smile, and a wonderful sense of humour. He made people feel comfortable, like a member of his family. He often greeted them with warm handshakes and hugs.

He was a trustworthy friend. He encouraged and brought out the best in people. He was a brilliant conversationalist and had an extraordinary general-knowledge base. He could, and would, go on and on about various topics!

I admire my father for many things: His drive, dedication, confidence, strong will, passion, his mind, his ability to come up with an answer to every question posed, his never-ending search for knowledge, and for many other things.

His main philosophy in life, passed down to him by my grandfather, was simply to "be good and do good." My father was a great man and he will be missed dearly.

He often said these words to me and to many others. If you dwell upon them, as I often do now, you will find they offer daily encouragement in life, no matter how negative the outlook or the situation:

Don't worry . . . Everything will be fine.

Rest well, Dad. Rest well. ▲

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