

## Bill Pratt

“I was the fixer who ended up doing a lot of the dirty work.”

A builder and a booster, Bill Pratt could persuade anyone to do anything, but if they didn't do it right he'd fire them. He was the project manager for Calgary, Alberta's first shopping centre and the new Grandstand at Stampede Park; he was in charge of retooling McMahon Stadium, developing Heritage Park and building the Olympic Saddledome.

Best of all, Pratt was president of the 1988 Winter Games, proving first to Calgarians and then to the world that Calgary could host that larger than life event.



Bill Pratt

*Photo by David Lazarowych / Calgary*

Pratt always claimed that he led a good team, but he was the terminator and the visionary. He took criticism on the chin, and his construction worker persona didn't always sit well with boards or politicians. He was blamed, booed and spit at; he was praised, paraded, and promoted. But he pulled off Calgary's biggest event ever, gathering big business, volunteers, national and civic pride, the media and the contentious Olympic Committee into his big white hat.

He was “Mr. Calgary.”

### The Winter of '88: Calgary's Olympic Games

The XV Olympic Winter Games transformed Calgary from a western cow-town to an international city. “After the Games, you no longer had to explain where the city was,” said Ralph Klein, Calgary's mayor during the '88 Games.

The Games' afterglow included financial profit, world-class sports facilities, and Bill Pratt emerging as a media darling. Where once they had criticized his actions as president and chief operating officer of the '88 Games, the media now lauded his results.

Pratt made unpopular decisions and cracked the whip but, ultimately, he got the job done.

Full Name: William Donald Pratt

Born: November 8, 1928 – Died: November 27, 1999

## Additional Resources

- **Alberta on Record**  
<https://albertaonrecord.ca/pratt-bill>

## Our Collections

### Glenbow Museum

<https://www.glenbow.org>

### Glenbow Western Research Centre | Glenbow Library and Archives

<https://libguides.ucalgary.ca/glenbowlibraryandarchives>

### Glenbow Library and Archives | Digital Collection

<https://digitalcollections.ucalgary.ca/asset-management/2R340826N9XM?WS=PackagePres&Flat=1>