



REMEMBERING
David Wakelin

September 8, 1945 - April 3, 2020



It is with profound sadness that I announce the passing of my beloved husband of fifty-three years. Dave took his last breath shortly before 6am on April 3rd with our two sons and myself at the bedside. Over the last four and a half years, Dave struggled with a debilitating and progressive illness that eventually took away his speech and mobility. He was a fighter and battled to the very end. As a consequence of his neurologic decline, he suffered an aspiration event that proved overwhelming for his weakened state. He was predeceased by his mom, Margaret in 1992, and his dad Lorne in 2009. Besides myself, Dave is survived by his sister, Jeanette Taylor (Joe), and his two sons Don (Cynthia) and Rob (Mindy). He has also left a legacy to five grandchildren - Asher (5), Cole (7), Landon (9), Devon (23), Shyanne(24), and two great-grandchildren, Emmitt (9 mo) and Kai(3).

He was born at Grace Hospital in Vancouver B.C. and moved with his family to Victoria in 1952. Dave attended Monterey, Quadra, Landsdowne and ultimately graduated from Mt. Doug high school in 1962. He started post graduate studies in Forestry at Victoria College but transferred to pre-med after observing the world of medicine up close and personal as a result of an acute appendicitis. He was accepted into medicine at UBC and started his medical training in 1965. In the summer of 1967 we were married . In 1969, he began his internship at St Joseph's in Victoria and was accepted into an ophthalmology residency in Ottawa. In 1973, Donny was born and Dave completed his training by the summer of 1974. Shortly thereafter, we moved back out to Vancouver Island and Dave started the Duncan Eye Specialist clinic. Robbie was born in the winter of 1976. Dave was in solo practice until joined by Dr Stan Polack in 1978, Dr Donald MacGregor in 1989, and then Dr Karen Hoar in 2009. Starting around 2000, in an attempt to acquire more time for family and golf, he cut down his work schedule. In the years that followed, Dr Arnie Laxdal, Dr Ed Patterson, and Dr John McLeod all helped support the practice and patient needs for a number of years.

Dave was a long-standing member of Cowichan Golf & Country Club and eventually also joined Royal Colwood. He loved golf, but perhaps even more the bonds and friendships the game fostered. Dave played soccer for many years early in his career starting back in the late 70s continuing into the early 90s with the doctor's squad. This included many local games, but also a number of international tournaments. With the exception of one particular victory over the local lawyers, I don't really recall hearing much about the wins and losses - but he definitely enjoyed sharing a cold beer afterwards with the boys. He encouraged a diverse number of sports for his own sons and even ended up coaching a little hockey in the mid 80s. He loved watching his boys play hockey. He went to Edmonton and Montreal for tournaments and when Robbie was playing Junior in the interior, he flew out to watch some games - even if that meant enduring a bus road trip with the team.

Dave had very steady hands and was quite skilled at what for some would be considered tedious work. He loved to build models as a boy and this blossomed into his RC plane hobby. He belonged to the local Radio Control Club for many years and has built countless planes that still line his shop. Even after his illness progressed, he would still regularly try to make his planes air-worthy but recognizing his limitations, had others take them up for a flight.

Although he was well traveled, Dave wasn't a big traveler - he was typically quite content to enjoy life in this beautiful part of the world. However, I certainly liked to get out and see the wonders of our planet and he was more than happy to accompany me on almost any adventure. To that end, he even functioned as the "team doctor" for my field hockey team on trips to Fiji and Hong Kong where his primary role often transformed to that of "team musician" regularly entertaining us on guitar. Beyond the trips that I would organize for us, starting back in October 1981, he loved to be a part of an annual pilgrimage with "the boys" to the likes of Tahoe or Vegas in honour of one of their fallen colleagues, Rollie Martine. He also was able to travel a number of times to some of the more fabled and historic golfing destinations in Scotland and England.

In February of 2015, Dave finally retired from his ophthalmology practice and in September received a diagnosis of multiple myeloma. This was a date that dramatically altered the course of our lives. He was forced to hang up the golf clubs which was quite difficult for him to accept. Initially, he spent more of his free time working on his RC planes. He continued to read voraciously, but as he started to decline cognitively, even these activities proved too difficult. In the spring of 2017, as a family we coerced him into one final trip to Hawaii. Initially, he expressed reservations about making the journey, but when he learned his boys and their families would be present he agreed to make the effort. At that time, he was still ambulatory with a cane and could enjoy swimming in the pool with his grandchildren. In spite of his plight, I never recall him asking the question, "why me?" In hindsight, I know he had to have suffered in silence, especially if I ever let on either consciously or unconsciously, how upset I was at his fate. But as he declined, the outpouring of support from our close friends was real and greatly appreciated. Through it all, he was always gracious to those around him trying their best to help him through the struggle.

Dave had a quiet but consistent faith in his Lord and Saviour. He was always extremely grateful for the good things in this world. Dave's knowledge and wise counsel, his innate sense of humour, his tenderness of heart and generosity toward friends and family all underscore the very essence of his life. To say the least, it has been a great blessing to have been by his side all these years. He will be deeply missed.

In lieu of flowers, please consider an online donation to the Cowichan Valley Hospice Society or Camp Imadene.

Memorial Service TBA in the weeks to come.

