



REMEMBERING
Mike Cherneff

August 11, 1948 - June 22, 2022



Survived by his wife Brigitte of nearly 48 years, daughter Eva, son-in-law Pat and grandson Theo. Will be greatly missed by brother Gary and sister-in-law Beth, sister-in-law Ute and brother in law Peter, nephew Kyle and niece Lisa (Abe).

Mike got his diploma at BCIT in survey engineering and worked on many exciting engineering projects throughout Canada with McElhanney Engineering. When he tired of travelling he worked for Matson, Peck and Topliss Engineering and then eventually for the city of Burnaby, Survey engineering division. After his daughter Eva was born and Mike was working in town he took courses on weekends and evenings to complete a Bachelors degree at SFU. Having loved that, he decided to get a Masters degree in Planning at UBC and took a leave of absence to complete it. He loved his two years of graduate school and the people he met . That launched him into a career at BCIT as an instructor and eventually program head - a job that he truly loved.

He was blessed with an infallible memory, and was incredibly knowledgeable in history, physics, geography, geology and many other subjects. His knowledge of cars, engines, and other mechanical topics was expansive. Having worked with his Dad in his early years, tearing out and rebuilding engines gave him a strong background in anything with wheels. Watching a movie, one could ask what is that car and would get year, model and engine type; You only had to ask a simple question to get a 30 min (or longer!) explanation of whatever you had asked about. His last project which he didn't have time to finish was restoring an antique motorcycle.

Mike was good at whatever he put his mind and energy to. Gardening, construction, wood working and making models of various kinds were a particular talent. He oversaw the building of his home on Salt Spring and when it seemed not quite big enough he decided to build a studio. He cut and milled his own logs for beams for the project. As he got older, he began to collect and restore Dinky cars. With a collection of over 300 vehicles, most of which he had lovingly restored he became expert at refinishing and painting and restoring the miniature vehicles. If he couldn't find a part he needed he made one. He said they reminded him of his childhood when he could buy them at the corner store. He had a strong creative streak that covered many mediums: photography and painting among them. The family home bears witness to his many projects, such as woodwork with his live edge tables. His photography adorns the walls as do his paintings. While travelling he always found objects to admire and bring home to decorate the house.

Mike also loved animals. His last two, Maggie the Australian shepherd and Hank the Russian Blue cat, kept him company over the last months as only animals can, snuggling up for a nap and wanting to be close. Over the years, Mike always had a dog by his side and a cat or two underfoot. He was delighted when daughter Eva began to ride actively as it meant he could be close to her horses and share in that experience.

His greatest love was his daughter and grandson (he loved his son-in - law too, although they might not always have seen eye to eye on their favourite hockey teams). He was very proud of Eva and all she has become and achieved and so happy that she and Pat and Theo were a happy family and lived close by in order to visit often to have family dinners together.

Mike's creativity really shone at Christmas, which was a very special time for him. When grandson Theo was 2, he started to develop the Christmas village complete with a train. Each year this village would expand, and the plywood holding it would get bigger. More moving parts would be added and the village was lowered so that Theo could play with it. Last year he put out not one Christmas tree, but two, as he felt it was important to have one outside for the neighbourhood to enjoy.

Contrary to what Mike often said, he loved being around people. He was a great storyteller and would frequently regale others with exploits of survey stories from the years that he worked throughout Canada. His friends were very important to him and he cherished those relationships.

Mike was an avid outdoorsman who loved fly fishing, hiking and boating. He was a good sailor, learned to windsurf in his younger years and loved hiking and cycling the North Shore and later Salt Spring island. He would often confound other fishers by being the only one to catch a trout on an outing, much to his delight!

His talent, imagination, creativity and intellect will be missed by all who knew him.

