Bruce Watson

With heavy hearts, his family announces the passing of Alexander Michael Bruce Watson on October 28, 2022 at the age of 74 due to pancreatic cancer. He was surrounded by his loving wife Margot and their children – Kenzie, Graeme, and daughter-in-law Angela. Bruce will be missed by many.

His was a life well lived.



Bruce was born in Bathgate, Scotland, growing up at Ballencrieff Mill – home to his family for six generations. There he lived with his father Bob, his mother Jessie, his sister Margaret, his aunts, and cherished Granny. In his youth, he enjoyed being part of both the urban cultural centre of Edinburgh while attending school and the hard-working rural environment of Bathgate when home with family and friends.

As a student, he took an early interest in travel, spending several summers working abroad in Germany – including a memorable trip through the Iron Curtain to cross the Wall separating East and West Berlin. When not studying or traveling, Bruce was active in the youth fellowship at his church and made long lasting friendships.

Upon graduating with an undergraduate degree in law from the University of Edinburgh, Bruce immigrated to Montreal, Canada in 1970. From there he embarked with his new life and career by articling with Peat Marwick (now KPMG) and completing his

coursework at McGill University, culminating with his designation as a Chartered Accountant. While out east, Bruce balanced his days as a staff accountant by taking up skydiving and venturing south to hike all 46 peaks of the Adirondack Mountains in New York, becoming a member of the “46ers”.



In 1977, Bruce moved west to Vancouver, British Columbia, and then to Prince George three years later – where he was made partner, and more importantly met his life partner and soulmate, Margot. Although they knew each other for three years through work, Bruce had a strict rule about not dating clients. Therefore, when he took up an opportunity to open an office for Peat Marwick in Fort McMurray, Alberta, Bruce was then free to ask Margot on a date. After a brief nine month and mainly long-distance courtship, they married May 20, 1984.

During the four years Bruce and Margot lived in Fort McMurray, they welcomed their children, Graeme (1985) and Kenzie (1987), before moving back to the lower mainland of B.C. for another six years. In 1993, Bruce and his family moved to the United States for eleven years, first near Cincinnati, Ohio and later to northern Virginia, just outside of Washington, D.C. He and his family returned to B.C. in 2004, living in Aldergrove for eleven years before retiring to North Saanich.

Bruce had a varied and fulfilling career that allowed him to not only explore new roles and industries, but also explore new walks of life throughout North America. While his career began and ended in public practice, he spent the intervening decades pursuing opportunities as CFO for both public and private companies, through stages from start-up to rapid growth, and as the principal of two not-for-profit organizations. Upon his return to public practice, he was able to lean on his collective industry experience to provide thoughtful strategic advice to his clients. Bruce took great pride in performing his work with dedication and integrity. He sought to be a reliable mentor to his colleagues and was well respected by his peers for it.

Throughout his life Bruce loved spending time in the mountains. He began his years hillwalking in Scotland with his friends and family, joined the Adirondack 46ers as a bachelor from Montreal, explored the Coast Mountains with the BC Mountaineering Club while in Vancouver, led dozens of weekend hikes with his family, and in his retirement enjoyed numerous hikes each week in the wooded trails of his local John Dean Park. He also continued to satisfy his thrill-seeking nature into his older years, including rappelling off a Vancouver high-rise to raise money for charity, skydiving with Kenzie in the Fraser Valley, and paragliding off Grouse Mountain with Graeme.





In addition to using his work to explore Canada and the US, Bruce loved to travel abroad with his family. He made multiple trips to his favourite destinations including Mexico, Britain, and Europe. In 2018, he travelled with his wife and daughter on what became a personal pilgrimage to Israel. He enjoyed researching and planning his travels, finding the most scenic stops to make for several cycling tours he took with Margot in their retirement.

Bruce was also a lifelong musician, starting as a drummer before becoming an avid guitar player, especially in his retirement. In his youth, he ascended to Drum Major, leading the school pipe band. While in university, he switched his focus to guitar and enjoyed playing the local pubs. In his senior years, he performed at local music nights and during lunches at the local Mount Newton Centre for seniors. Throughout his life, he enjoyed playing for his family and friends.



In recent years, Bruce dedicated his newfound time to developing his creative pursuits. In his last four years he recorded three albums, including some of his favourite songs as well as his own original compositions, and wrote two books. He had always been an avid reader of historical, political, and spiritual topics, as well as fiction and humour. His books reflected that range—his first, *Chapman's*

Mill, a collection of family history; and his second, *Scribbles*, a more personal collection of his memories and ruminations on various topics.

Bruce lived his life with integrity, honesty, and humility. He took pride in being a reliable father and colleague, and in providing for those who depended on him. He was a good man, who lived life well, loved his family deeply, and will be sincerely missed.

We would like to thank everyone who cared for Bruce over the years – for their friendship and support to both him and our family.

A Memorial was held at 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, November 8th, 2022, in the Sequoia Centre, at McCall Gardens, 4665 Falaise Drive, Victoria, B.C. For those unable to attend in person, you are invited to attend virtually. Please email OnBehalfOfBruceWatson@gmail.com, and a link will be sent to you.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to The Canadian Cancer Society.

Condolences may be offered to the family below. To view service click arrow below,

McCall Gardens
www.mccallgardens.com