

Charles J. (Charlie) Hodgins

Charles J. Hodgins passed away peacefully at Saanich Peninsula Hospital in British Columbia, in the company of his loving wife, Janice, and family.

He was born on August 1, 1946, in Toronto, Ontario, where he attended St. Michael's College. There he started playing hockey, a game that would play an important role in his life. He attended St. Mary's University in Halifax before transferring to the University of Western Ontario, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts, Economics with a minor in shenanigans at the Ceeps, a legendary student watering hole. He then worked as a staff accountant at Ernst & Young from 1971-1974, preparing him to pass the Chartered Accountant exam on his first attempt – his proudest achievement.

His business acumen defined Charlie. He became a partner in 1974 at Deloitte, where in the next decade he was responsible for major clients across a range of industries, including manufacturing, high technology, and primary resources. This ability to consult in so many fields would become his calling card and led him to co-found First Merchant Equities Management Corporation, the first venture capital firm in a Canadian province. He served as President and Chief Executive Officer for First Merchant from 1984-1998.

His next venture attempted to merge his financial know-how with his love of sport. Charlie's vision for the Global Hockey League was to have teams from puck-crazy countries such as the Soviet Union and Sweden play against teams in Florida, Saskatoon, and Quebec, North American markets that were underserved at the time. A lack of funding ultimately was the league's undoing; however it gave rise to the American Hockey Association, which ran from 1992-1993 and featured teams in Bismarck, Fargo, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Hibbing, and Green Bay. Charlie was even able to bring Russia's vaunted Red Army over

to play exhibition games, including in the AHA's all-star game.

After the dissolution of the AHA, Charlie returned to his roots as a CA and once again reinvented himself in a new industry, joining VIH, a privately owned helicopter company. From 1998-2019, he served as VIH's Senior Vice-President, Finance, and Chief Financial Officer. In that position, he secured financing in excess of \$400 million to buy helicopters and facilities.

Charlie gave back to the business community, too, serving on the board of directors for the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, Deloitte National Accounting, and Saskatoon Airport Economic Development. He also made sure to pass his wealth of knowledge forward, mentoring many young people in his field. As an advisor to the University of Victoria's Faculty of Business, he even put together a case study program in the vein of The Apprentice. His charity work included Spirit of the North Healthcare Foundation, where he helped raise funds for hospital services in remote B.C. towns and Folkfest, a multicultural event in Saskatoon that attracts 400,000 visitors annually, where he served as President. Before that, he served as an ambassador to Folkfest's Scottish pavilion, where he presided in full Scottish regalia, including kilt (pictures available for a small fee).

When he wasn't crunching numbers, Charlie loved to socialize, especially over a meal, and especially if that meal involved prime rib. He was a proud member and two-time bocce champion of the Victoria Gyro Club, where he served as President from 2006- 2007. Sports were an integral part of Charlie's life. In his Saskatoon days, he played for the Molson Relics, a rec hockey team that may or may not have been having a few adult beverages between periods. You could also find Charlie on the golf course, making full use of his Cordova Bay membership, and, in his younger days, skiing. He loved watching sports, too, attending two Master's tournaments, two Open

championships at St. Andrews, and taking in Victoria Royals games from VIH's box.

He also took great pleasure unwinding on his deck. There, he would have a drink or smoke his pipe. He would play music, often ABBA, and take in his garden, tended lovingly by his wife, Janice. Just beyond that were the placid waters of Satellite Channel, which brought him great peace.

Charlie will be missed by those who survive him: his beloved wife Janice, and her children Craig (Laura), Cameron (Jodi), and Susan (Jason). He was a grandfather to Mackenzie, James, Grayson, Hayden, and Chloe. He is also survived by his siblings Brian (Marnie), Greg, Ken (Crystal), Margaret (Ed), and Carol (Roy), as well as many nieces and nephews, and his children Paul, Michelle, and Courtney.

A Celebration of Life and reception will be held at the Mary Winspear Centre in Sidney at 1pm on Friday, October 17th.

Condolences may be offered to the family below.
McCall Gardens

www.mccallgardens.com

This obituary is the property of the "Hodgins" family and may not be reproduced, distributed, or altered in any way without prior written consent.