

David Mackenzie Bennett

David was born in Singapore to Wendy (nee Harmston) and Geoffrey Bennett. He was the youngest of three sons – a brother to Richard and Andrew. He grew up in Jakarta, Indonesia until early 1999 when he moved with his parents to Victoria, BC. He lived the rest of his life at home in an area he loved, Ten Mile Point. From infancy, he endured many ailments. They ultimately contributed to his sudden death from cardiac arrest at the young age of 36.

Those fourteen years in Jakarta had a strong effect on his development and on his view of the world and its people. Although he was unable to fulfil his own dreams, he focused on ways to assist others, including his parents, his grandmother Nana and many friends and neighbours. For many years he partnered with Wendy to comfort and care for his Nana. He saved her life several times. Everyone remembers David as a kind, perceptive and empathetic person. Even when he felt very ill, he made sure to help whenever needed.

Essentially self-taught, he excelled at computer technology and all manner of electrical and mechanical problems. In his early twenties he dreamed of using his computer skills in police work. Family and friends benefited from his knowledge and ability to build, fix and explain the intricacies of their computers and phones. An excellent cook, even from his teens, he often prepared meals for family and visitors.

David had a strong connection with animals. He knew intuitively what they needed. These loving relationships began at an early age with his cousins' pets Mooshie, Dolly and Tanu. When he arrived in Victoria in 1999, David adopted Wesley, his beloved springer spaniel. This led naturally to walking and caring for many neighbourhood dogs, some of whom would run off to visit David at home. The family van became the "dogmobile" as David drove groups of dogs to play in

scenic spots. As Wesley aged, he cared for him lovingly. Over the following years he nursed other old and disabled dogs in our home: Tanuk, Robbie, Wendy-dog and Orim. His empathy extended to all creatures, including backyard birds and the maintenance of Wendy's two dozen feeders and baths. He tended to the needs of friends' cats for many years. Over a decade ago, a feisty, near-feral cat adopted David, who welcomed him into the home and named him Kitty. More recently, he added Zipper to the family. They both became his constant companions. Despite David's deteriorating health, he continued to look after a sick and elderly Kitty to the very end.

Although David had more to cope with than most people, he cared for others. Please consider a donation to an animal shelter or to a charity that supports homeless people, such as [Our Place Society](#)

In the words of his cousin, Beaudin Bennett, who knew David well:

"He was such a tremendous person with a generous spirit and kind heart. All who met him knew this to be true. He had a keen sense of humor, a heartfelt laugh. Perhaps most important, and a rarity these days, David was a listener, with all the associated characteristics of empathy, thoughtfulness, and a tender heart. He really, truly cared. David was someone with an intellect, with wit, with the confidence to tear your computer apart, find the ailing mother board or cooling fan, and reassemble. Someone who would drop everything to pick you up from the bus stop (or farther!) at the bottom of Tudor on a rainy winter's night. Someone who would listen when you were sad, pick you up when you had fallen..."

"David was a beautiful person. He was full of laughter, humour, and wise insights that you'd never expect to hear from a young man. It was as if David had already lived a life before coming to this Earth, and learned a life worth of lessons while at it. Perhaps this was because of his

upbringing in another part of the world, or his international schooling, or maybe something else.

“David was loyal. To his friends, to his pets, and to his family. He was selfless, always putting others before himself, and making sure that everyone around him had what they needed to be happy. David often kept to himself, but when he wanted to engage, he made friends easily. I think it was partly his generosity, compassion, and kindheartedness. But – and I mentioned this in a text message to you a few weeks ago – David also possessed an even rarer superpower: he was a listener. When you were telling him of a challenge or opportunity, David was all there. One hundred percent of his attention and thought power was dedicated to you and whatever you were sharing with him. The same went for music. I often had a guitar with me, on evenings wandering the neighbourhood or sitting on the bed in his room with Wesley sprawled next to me, and David would pipe up when he liked a particular riff or chord progression: “Very chill” “Really beautiful man” or “Makes me think of...” he’d say.

“A true friend, David often seemed to know you better than yourself. A perfect example: the TV show *The Office*. I had caught a few minutes of the show here and there, and didn’t think much of it. Then, about a year ago, Kathryn and I watched an episode start-to-finish. Before I knew it, we’d watched half the series, with each episode bringing a fresh round of hilarity and original pranks. David knew I would enjoy it, before I had any idea. A similar but different story with the *Wheel of Time* book series. When we were teenagers, David kept pestering me to read the series. For whatever reason, I had little interest. David’s solution was to wait until I was leaving on a cross-Canada road trip, sneak over to 3972 Tudor in the middle of the night, and hide a copy under the driver’s seat of my car, with a note wishing me safe travels and enjoy the read. (Sadly, despite my best intentions, I’ve still never read the book – suffice to say it

is now on my reading list!)

“David also loved a good police drama. I remember the excitement in his voice when he recalled witnessing a police chase somewhere around Gordon Head Rd. and McKenzie, while out on errands. He specifically mentioned the car being chased losing a hubcap as it careened through the intersection. Later, I have a memory that Jenny and me were in the area, found the hubcap, and gave it to David (perhaps as part of a birthday gift?).

“There are so many more memories... Indeed most of the best memories of my teenage years and 20's involve David. Long nighttime walks around Ten Mile Pt. with Tanoo and Wesley, running from the police at beach fires, getting our driver's licences and making trips to Hillside Mall, riding the 11 bus downtown to go shopping, late nights gaming...the list goes on. Whenever I returned from a big trip or a semester at SFU or Laurentian, after the first dinner with Jenny and Dad, inevitably they'd ask me if I had any plans for the evening. The answer was almost always “going over to visit Dave” or “going to hang out with Dave”. He was one of my closest friends and confidantes and he was always there for me. When I was 17 or 18, I recall lamenting to David that I would never be able to grow a beard. His recommendation: be patient, and massage your facial hair follicles regularly. Twenty years later when I look in the mirror, I have a beard. David was right! It worked!

“More recent memories of David are no less fond: playing darts on his 35th birthday on Feb. 13, 2020, just a month before the pandemic set in and everything changed. Going out in the canoe one afternoon to pull my crab trap in Cadboro Bay. One time, I was driving home from Yuma AZ and wanted to stop at a famous restaurant in Las Vegas. I was on the Interstate south of Vegas, so I couldn't stop to check my maps or do a Google search on my phone. The highway was too busy and there was nowhere to pull out. Using my headphones, I called Dave while

driving and told him what I was trying to accomplish. David guided me in (almost like an air traffic controller) and walked me through which exit to take, where to turn left or right, and how far I was from my destination, until I arrived at the steakhouse in downtown Las Vegas."

In the words of others who knew him well:

"David was one of the first people to really get me interested in computers. This influence carried with me throughout the rest of my career and life opening up possibilities that I may in fact owe, in part, to him."

"For us it is easy to remember David's empathy, kindness and we dare say, gentle sense of humour. He had a beautiful smile and a deep connection with animals. His kindness and love of his family was on full display in Sept 2019 when we celebrated birthdays together at your house. He worked so hard to feed us all so well."

"A gentle, caring, compassionate, kind and empathetic soul. He always had time to talk and was a terrific listener, focusing on and genuinely interested in others. I know both my parents experienced him similarly. He will be missed."

"The love that you shared with David was deep and beautiful. He was cherished in life, and could not have had a more loving and supportive family. He was blessed as he in turn gifted everyone around him with his sense of fun, intellect and kindness. We wish him deep peace now, at rest from the pains that his body brought him during his life."

"During visits with you in Jakarta and Victoria I always remember David as the quiet and gentle soul with the forever smile."

"Since news of his passing, all the positive memories with David have been flooding back so vividly. All I can see and feel are all those positive qualities you mentioned... his

compassion, his deeply sensitive and empathic soul (one of his greatest strengths) and his desire to help family, friends and neighbours in the ways he knew how. I recall his dedication to loving and helping Nana during her time in Victoria, his love of animals and the very special connection he had with them, he was a true healer to them even as he suffered. His humour that I love and share, appreciating the personality quirks in both people and animals. All of this has been shining so brightly around him. His legacy is strong and so easily seen and felt."

"He has always been a friendly person to meet and have a chat with on the road or in the park while he was out for a walk with a dog (or two:) Such a gentle soul."

"This is such a tragedy. David was a beautiful person in every way."

"We had so many happy times. We laughed a lot. I always know that Dave was at a higher level than us. He demonstrated his gift of people, his humility, his human quality and I really appreciated that. The way he coped with his condition surprised me many times. I had the fortune of sharing with him and exchanging our sometimes-frail moments in our lives. Dave was a special person in so many ways. Wendy, do you remember that Christmas when Dave went to get me a huge beautiful Christmas tree because I didn't have one and surprised me with it? Well two weeks ago I was setting up again for Christmas and I thought of how sweet Dave was to do such a nice thing for me. Looking at the Beautiful tree always reminds me of Dave's kind and spiritual soul. His sweet genuine smile will always remain in our hearts."

"Since hearing the news about David I have been thinking of you. What a terrible thing to happen. It must be so heart wrenching for you to think about David, what was, what could have been and what is. When I think back over the years, I remember him first as this sweet, polite, shy, freckled and

curly headed young teenager already so adept with computers. I remember he would walk our dog occasionally. I knew I could trust him to take good care of her. He carried on to take care of and love many other four legged creatures. We would frequently run into him walking a dog. Over the years he helped us with our computer and impressed us with his skill."

"We have met David only once, on our visit to your home in Victoria, but we have a clear memory of the mid-teen who acted like anything but. David went out of his way to make sure that we were comfortable and had everything we needed. I specifically recall that he got himself out of bed early on the morning of our departure, just to wish us goodbye – a monumental gesture for a 15 year old. That he possessed, as his cousins have described, "a generous spirit and kind heart" was already abundantly in evidence."

"I remember his smiles, his chuckles when he read the Far Side Jokes, or viewed The Monty Python movies. We have photos in which he expresses pure joy. He enjoyed the time [each summer] when visiting the big family, the grandparents on both sides, so devoted to him, the fun with the cousins."

"I have fond memories of David as a small kid at your annual Christmas gatherings in Jakarta and what a fun time he seemed to be having! The world will be a less happy place without him here."

"I have been walking by your house daily. We both keep looking up, hoping as always, that Dave might be outside and our dog could run to him. We both catch ourselves often with questions about something computer related, or to do with our new car, thinking we need to call David. He was so kind, patient and helpful to us. We miss him very much. I miss my many long conversations with him at our door when he'd pick up or bring back the dog and our "spirited" debates that, of course, I never won."

“When I think of David, I think of a kind, gentle and loving human being. I know many humans and animals alike will be grieving his loss, myself included.”

“David is so often in our thoughts and will always be in our hearts.”

We shall love and miss him, always.

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Gardens

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