

# Donald Armstrong Gibson

Donald set out on his final voyage on 20 July 2019 after a long, interesting and fruitful life that began on 15 June 1924 in Kaifeng, China.

Predeceased by his wife Elizabeth in 2002 and his son Robin in 1998, Donald is lovingly remembered by his son Ian (Linda) and daughter Joy (Len) and his grandchildren Rohanna, Eli, Zoey, Stefanie and Nicole, and god-daughter Kathie (Chris).

Donald studied medicine and surgery in Canada and England, where he met and married Elizabeth, and where Ian was born in 1951. A surgical position at Mengo Hospital took the family to Kampala, Uganda, where twins Joy and Robin were born in 1953. Donald's surgical career moved in 1959 into orthopedics at The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. A second surgical assignment in Uganda with CIDA in 1969 also began a long association with the Leprosy Mission and the work of destigmatizing the disease. From 1977 until his retirement in 1989, Donald served as Medical Director of the Hugh MacMillan Medical Centre, serving disabled children and their families. Among other innovations, he supported early engineering efforts to build the many kinds of specialized wheelchairs we see today.

Praised by colleagues for some of the most skilled surgical hands they had ever seen, Donald used those hands for home building, large and small woodworking projects, and bonsai. As time permitted, he also enjoyed small boats and sailing on the lakes of Ontario. Donald and Elizabeth moved to BC in 1999 to be near family in Victoria, where Donald maintained his own home until his last year.

Donald cared deeply for his family and maintained strong friendships within his community and across the world. He retained a lifelong interest in organizations that were

important to him and served as a Board member for several, including the International Christian Medical and Dental Association and, after his retirement, Friends of Mengo Hospital.

Donald impressed everyone he met with his observation and acknowledgement of them. Visitors always appreciated his well-furnished mind packed with interesting stories, his courtesy, and his gratitude for any kindness. Those closest to him saw his awe-inspiring focus, determination and commitment to his principles. Years of practice honed his ability to think clearly and make points concisely and to budget his time and energy as a situation required. These gifts he used until his last breath.

The wellspring that fed this remarkable life was a deep Christian faith. Donald looked to scripture and his Christian fellow travellers for support and inspiration, and often expressed his gratitude for God's goodness. One of his disciplines was reading *Daily Light*, Bible readings for each morning and evening. The reading for the night he died begins: "The joy of the Lord is your strength." [Neh 8:10]

Donald's family is most grateful to the staff of Mt. Tolmie Hospital for the special care and kindness they showed to Donald in his last months.

A funeral service will be held on Thursday 1 August at 2 p.m. at Church of Our Lord, 626 Blanshard Street, Victoria.

In lieu of flowers, donations will be gratefully received for Friends of Mengo Hospital Canada.

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Gardens

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