

Hugh Frederick Van Patter

Hugh peacefully in his sleep in the early morning hours of October 7th, 2020, slipped into a world free of pain. He was predeceased by brothers Alan and Ross, sister Barbara, first wife Justine and son Michael. He is survived by wife Colette, daughter Kim (Jim), son Andrew (Denise), step sons Michel (Teresa), Jean (Ted), Daniel (Gio) and Marc (Andrea), step daughters Ghislaine (Doug) and Joanne (Brent), 13 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

Passing just 2 weeks shy of his 92nd birthday, Hugh lived a long and full life. Born in Elgin county in southern Ontario Hugh grew up surrounded by tobacco fields and fruit orchards. He worked various jobs before heading west to Northwestern Ontario and Manitoba for some of his young adult years. He moved back to Southern Ontario in the 50's to start raising his family. In 1967 he moved his family to Dryden Ontario where he operated his own appliance repair business for many years. He rounded out his working career with stints as a salesperson for Eatons and finally with Sears.

Hugh was recognized in the Dryden newspaper for his volunteer efforts on the board of directors for the Childrens Aid Society and for taking in more than 20 foster children over a 10 to 15-year period. His hopes to adopt the last little girl fostered in the home were dashed when his marriage failed. He never fully got over that disappointment.

Dryden was a great place to raise a family having access to hunting, fishing and camping available within a short drive.

Family outings into the wilderness were frequent. Hugh became a Scout Master mentoring boy cubs and scouts for many years where he was able to teach these boys and young men wilderness survival techniques. His appreciation for nature was keen and his philosophy for "leaving it better than how you found it" was constant.

After being neighbours for 13 years, Hugh (divorced) and Colette (widowed) being still too young to accept life alone formed a friendship that resulted in a 40-year marriage. A blended family of 9 children might frighten some people but not them.

Once they were both retired, they found themselves still full of too much energy to do nothing, so they decided to open a business. The Canadian Craft Gallery was born. They ran this business for many years selling both their own hand-crafted wares as well as handmade crafts from across the country. Inspired by some of the crafts that they were selling, Hugh took up the art of wood carving. His patience and attention to detail made him quite proficient at it.

Colette's skill at weaving made this venture something of which they were both very proud. After several years of long hours and hard work they decided to retire for real, closed the business and moved to a small quiet community near Dryden called Waldhof. There they settled into a quiet life of well-deserved peace and relaxation. The next adventure was to move to Winnipeg. They bought a small home where they were able to putter in the yard and still practice their skills of carving and weaving only now just as hobbies.

After 5 years in Winnipeg, the transition west continued with the final move taking them all the way to Victoria BC. Not only did this bring them closer to a lot more of the family, it moved them into a climate that is a lot more acceptable for senior citizens. Being able to spend more time with children and grandchildren brought joy to Hugh in his twilight years. Coming second, was driving his scooter about town. He was like a teenager with his first Trans Am. Full throttle, huge smile.

His quick wit kept you on your toes being ready to respond his pokes and jabs. Verbal jousting was one of his simple pleasures. Hugh was also known for his patience and

understanding when asked for counsel, and he was always supportive of anyone who needed help.

A Celebration of Life will be held in the Sequoia Centre at McCall Gardens, 4665 Falaise Drive, on Thursday, Oct 15th, 2020 at 4pm PST. The service will also be delivered online for those out of town at the following link: <https://zoom.us/j/94347456460?pwd=Um50RE9sWStHZytzMVpjWkJvWjcwZz09>.

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Gardens

www.mccallgardens.com

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