

# James George Peebles

Jim passed away at the Royal Jubilee Hospital at 9:05 pm on October 26. During his time in hospital, he was comforted around the clock by his sisters Gloria and Phyllis and his brother Don. He was telephoned and visited often by friends and family including nieces and nephews who came from near and far to share their love and respect for this very well-loved uncle. The nursing staff often commented that there was a lot of love in Jim's room. There was laughter, too, as Jimmy's sense of humour came through in spite of not feeling his best and he was especially delighted with a phone call from his childhood friend, Lois, during the final week in hospital.

James was born in Calgary Alberta to Collis and Marie Peebles on August 10, 1945 amid jubilant celebrations at the end of WWII. In the midst of the incredible din of cheering and singing that night, it was unclear at first whether he was born before or after midnight and it was a running joke around Jim's birthday whether we should celebrate on the 9th or the 10th. James grew up with his three sisters and two brothers on the banks of the Nose Creek in rural northeast Calgary. He attended North Calgary School, an original wood-frame cottage school. Later he attended Balmoral Junior High and then Crescent Heights High School. He enjoyed curling in high school and was a chess champion. He had fond memories of the people and places in the neighbourhood which consisted of a diverse mix of families living on small acreages in modest homes. In recent years Jimmy often reminisced about life in the Nose Creek valley. There was always an all-ages/all-genders game of scrub baseball to be had in summer or a rousing game of shinny hockey on the frozen creek in the winter. Jimmy once almost drowned in the creek if it weren't for an older neighbour girl who pulled him out. Jimmy was part of a large extended Peebles clan of his Welsh uncles, aunts and cousins most of whom lived in the Bridgeland area. The

extended family was very close and spent many happy times together celebrating special occasions. There was also a large extended family on Jim's mothers side, Marie (nee Storek), and in recent years Jim connected with cousins by telephone and was looking forward to attending a Storek family reunion in central Alberta, however, this had to be postponed due to Covid. Jimmy remembered enjoyable fishing trips with brother-in-law, Ray Thurlow, in the rivers and lakes near the Rockies. He also did a lot of camping and dirt biking in the foothills with his good friend, Alan Johnson and the Aussies.

Jimmy was always up to all kinds of shenanigans. He was a real lover of fire; so much so that he and a friend lit the creek valley on fire, almost burning the family house to the ground, but luckily, his mother, Marie, saved the day by beating out the flames with wet sacks. The next year, Jimmy lit the baseball field on fire, trying to rid the neighbourhood of a large infestation of mice. Besides lighting fires, Jimmy was always busy with a variety of projects such as raising homing pigeons, rebuilding bicycles, building soapboxes and once building a mini hydroplane from plans in Popular Mechanics.

Being so interested in how things worked, Jim naturally followed in his father's footsteps and trained under Collis as a master automotive mechanic. There wasn't a car that Jimmy couldn't get on the road again. Jim enjoyed the occasional practical joke and one of the most memorable was a Hallowe'en night back in the early '60's when drive-in movies were popular. Jim's sister, Sylvia, crafted a life-sized and very life-like dummy. A friend climbed up behind the movie screen and threw the mannequin over the front of the screen. It created quite a ruckus and the movie had to be stopped because at first everyone thought it was a real person hanging there. Jimmy and a friend took the dummy down and paraded it through the snack bar and the owner rewarded them with refreshments on the house because it was such a good Hallowe'en prank. It was the prank that kept on giving when it was reported the next

day in the Calgary Herald newspaper.

In 1979 James and his little brother Tommy accompanied his mother and father, Marie and Collis, in a move to Victoria, BC. Jim took to the milder climate like a duck to water where he continued working as a mechanic in Victoria and for several years lived in Duncan BC where he co-owned a garage. James also developed a passion for gardening of which his mother was a great example. Jim loved the outdoors and he loved dogs. An early riser always, he regularly roamed with his beloved dogs, Major (a Dalmatian) and Baron (a Doberman) exploring the many green spaces around his Royal Oak neighbourhood. Jimmy had a special connection with all animals and this was so apparent when he volunteered his time to travel to his brother Don's ranch in northern Alberta where he took on the job of night watchman to watch for new calves. He helped to care for mother cows and new calves and he once bottle-fed an orphan calf who he named 'Baby Herman'. Jim really loved that calf as he did all animals.

From Royal Oak, Jim moved to downtown Victoria where he appreciated apartment living and made many more good friends at Fisgard House. He was able to cycle almost everywhere. For longer trips Jimmy would often put his bike on the bus for part of the trip. He knew all the routes and times and could get places just as fast with this method than he could travelling by car. He enjoyed meeting new people each day and was interested in the many changes that Victoria has gone through over the past two decades, such as the new bicycle lanes and the new developments downtown. He used his close proximity to the Save On Foods Arena box office to purchase tickets to games and shows. He would go early and wait in line to get tickets for the best shows for family and friends. He saw Elton John, Rod Stewart, John Prine, Ringo Starr and many more as well as many great sporting events right here in Victoria.

Jim was a huge sports fan, following the Mariners and Seahawks

and the BC Lions and Canucks with great interest. He wore his Mariners and Seahawks sports jerseys and t-shirts with pride. Go Hawks! Jim enjoyed cheering on local community sports teams as much as he enjoyed the big leagues and followed the Mt. Doug High School basketball and football teams as well as the West Shore Rebels. A sportsman himself, he especially enjoyed downhill skiing, cycling, golf and in recent years, jet skiing with his good friend, Brian. He was always up for an adventure and loved a good road trip. He loved maps and was an amazing navigator. He travelled regularly to Vancouver and Seattle to see his teams and he enjoyed trips to Calgary, Grande Prairie, the interior of BC and California and Arizona. He made it easy for his travelling companions because he was meticulous in researching and planning every detail including making all the reservations so all there was left to do was to enjoy the experience such as visiting the Grande Canyon, attending a PGA tour in Washington State, trekking the redwood forest near San Francisco and going to concerts such as the Rolling Stones in Seattle in 2019.

Jim amazed everyone with his knowledge of a wide range of topics and if anyone in the family wanted to know some obscure fact, everyone would say, 'Just ask Jim'. When Jim slowed up a bit on pulling wrenches (although he still did this quite regularly for friends and family) he wanted to try an entirely different occupation and enjoyed several years working part-time at Thrifty Foods stocking shelves. He really enjoyed working with the public amid the hustle and bustle of shoppers. He also liked donning black dress pants along with a crisp white shirt and tie to go to work. Jim always took care to look his best.

Jimmy was kind hearted, had a generous spirit and never hesitated to help someone in need, never expecting anything in return. Family was his first concern and he was always there to help. He was very interested in and encouraged the young people in his life, spending countless hours cheering them on

in their sports and including them often when golfing or travelling to sports events in Victoria, Vancouver and Seattle. Jim had a wide network of old and new friends whom he kept in touch with regularly by telephone. A great guy in every way. Jimmy squeezed every drop from life and was always active and planning new adventures. He was very loved and will be so missed and always remembered by all who knew him. James attended the Baptist Church and was baptized in the Esquimalt Lagoon in 2009 with family and friends attending. It was a joyous day.

James was a lifelong sufferer of a genetic disorder called Myoclonic Dystonia which is a painful movement disorder. In 2010 he underwent leading edge DBS (deep brain stimulation) surgery performed by world renowned surgeons and UBC professors, Dr. Christopher Honey and Dr. Jon Stoussel. This operation was a tremendous success and James was able to fully enjoy his life, free from the pronounced movement disorder. He developed a strong bond with the medical team in Vancouver as one of the first to undergo the surgery and this helped to move the research forward to help other people such as Michael J. Fox, who suffers from Parkinson's disorder.

James was predeceased by his mother and father, Marie and Collis Peebles. He is survived by his sisters Sylvia St. Louis (Gerry), Phyllis Thurlow (Ray), Gloria Peebles, brothers Donald Peebles (Sandra), and little brother Thomas Peebles. He leaves behind beloved nieces and nephews, Gwen Benty (Ron), Carrie Arscott (Don), Stacy St. Louis (Jaclyn), Laura St. Louis, Jennifer Dinsley (Edward), Shauna Brown (Sean), Kathleen Johnson (Bruce), Daniel Peebles, Owen Peebles (Robyn) and many great nieces and great nephews who will surely carry forward his legacy of love, generosity and living life to the fullest. Jim was truly an exceptional individual and we are all blessed to have known him. The family would like to express their sincere gratitude to the nursing staff at the VIHA Clinic on Cook St. and the Royal Jubilee Hospital for the

amazing care, compassion and sensitivity given to James during his final days with us.

To remember Jim, consider donations to your local food bank.

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Gardens

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