

James “Jim” Hume

Former Times Colonist columnist Jim Hume dies at 98

Premier John Horgan said Hume brought a sharp eye and sharper pen to B.C. politics for decades.

Jim Hume, who covered politics for the Times Colonist and its two predecessor newspapers for more than a half-century, died Wednesday morning in hospital aged 98.

He lived independently up until three days ago, when he became ill.

Premier John Horgan said Hume brought a sharp eye and sharper pen to B.C. politics for decades.

“On behalf of the people of B.C. I extend our condolences to the family and friends of Jim Hume, who cared deeply about his adopted home.”

Hume arrived in B.C. from England in 1948. His first job was as a crew member aboard the garbage scow that routinely sailed out of the Inner Harbour and dumped the city’s refuse in the ocean just off Dallas Road.

He also worked as a McGavin’s bread truck driver to support his young family, while angling for a way into journalism. His first full-time reporting job was at the Nanaimo Daily Free Press. He moved to that paper’s Port Alberni bureau for a time, then moved to become editor of the Penticton Herald.

He moved on to the Edmonton Journal as an editor and later an Alberta legislature reporter and columnist. In 1965, he returned to Vancouver Island and became the legislature reporter for the Victoria Daily Times.

Hume did brief stints with the Capital Regional District as an information officer and with CFAX Radio, then returned to the

newspaper world at the Daily Colonist in the early 1970s, while raising six sons.

Although he never played rugby, he was deeply involved in the Velox Valhallian rugby club for years, serving a few years as president. A history of the club recounts how he moved out of a rental home in Gordon Head and one of his sons continued the lease. It eventually became the Velox clubhouse.

His writing appeared in this newspaper for more than 65 years, up until 2014. He later started posting essays and columns on his website (jimhume.ca) as The Old Islander.

He continued his insightful, historically grounded observations on the passing scene until April 1. His last column was a sober warning about the potential after-effects of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Hume was a conscientious objector as a teenager and young man during the Second World War, due in part to his father's horrific experience in the First World War. He worked as a bike messenger in the early days, cycling 20 kilometres between military installations. He later served as an ambulance attendant.

In the later stage of his journalism career, he expressed determination to better Bruce Hutchison's iron-man record of writing until age 91. Hume wrote: "I could never match his talent, but I could, with a bit of luck, tie or beat his 91 years at bat."

He beat that acknowledged master's record by several years.

He was awarded the Bruce Hutchison lifetime achievement award by the Jack Webster Foundation in 1994 and the Queen's Golden Jubilee medal in 2002 for contributions to public life.

Hume sipped cocktails and chatted with the Queen on board the royal yacht Britannia, talked to British prime minister James

Callaghan at Number 10 Downing St., was a guest of the French Foreign Office at the Quai d'Orsay and lunched with lords and cabinet ministers at Westminster.

He won two Grey Cup bets with Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson and covered B.C. premiers going back to Byron Ingemar Johnson (1947-1952).

Johnson was the first premier he ever wrote about, but he ruefully recalled that it was a freelance piece and he never managed to sell it.

Hume joked that former premier Bill Bennett uttered the worst thing that any premier ever said to him: "Hi Jim. Are you still writing for the newspaper?"

Article written by Les Leyne and posted by permission of Dave Obee, Editor and Publisher, Victoria Times Colonist.

Please also see the following article by Vaughan Palmer of the Vancouver Sun –

https://vancouversun.com/opinion/columnists/vaughn-palmer-jim-hume-kept-politicians-feet-to-the-fire?utm_term=Autofeed&utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Twitter#Echobox=1649892297

Condolences to the family may be left below.

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