

John Henry Austin IV

On Wednesday November 3, 2021, John Henry Austin IV, loving husband, father, grandfather, brother and friend, passed away at the age of 80 in the comfort of his home after a brief illness. John is survived by his wife Liza, sister Ann, children John, Alexander, Casey (Nick), grandson Benjamin, grandkids Henry, Grover, Atticus, Elektra and Rufus, and extended family in Victoria, Toronto, the United States and Greece.

John was born in Bournemouth, England, on August 24, 1941, to Imperial Airways and RAF Captain John Henry Austin III of Blackpool, England, and Patricia Marjorie Austin (nee Musson) of Weston Ontario. John was a graduate of Wilfrid Laurier University and the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. It was there, while teaching at Temple University and enrolled in a PhD program on the Canadian Banking system, that John met his beloved wife Liza, who was studying as a foreign student from Greece. They married in 1970 and moved to Toronto for John to consult on the future of the family travel business, while he continued to teach at Wilfred Laurier on and off. John found a career in travel to be exciting and the business expanded alongside their family as he and Liza were blessed with three beautiful children.

In 1989, having had enough of cold Ontario winters, seeking new midlife adventures and a desire to see their children grow in a gentler place, the family moved to Victoria. Ever supportive, John raised the kids while Liza travelled back-and-forth between Seattle to study naturopathic medicine. Upon her return, John proudly helped Liza set up her medical practice. It was around this time that they were blessed with the arrival of their first grandchild Benjamin, whom they had the honour and privilege to raise alongside his father. John was a hands-on parent and he was very happy to have that

experience again – Ben made him feel younger.

John re-entered the business world in the early 2000's by joining the RBC Mortgage team. One of John's greatest enjoyments in life was helping others to actualize their dreams, whether it was the perfect trip, helping them to secure financing for a home, or just to talk strategy about the ins and outs of life itself. For those lucky enough to work with him, he was generous with his time, meticulous with details, and genuine with his care. To a great deal of his clients, and as well to his friends, John was a brother, a father, a mentor. He was passionate about the big moves in life, the large leaps, the realization of life goals. Nothing engaged John more than the opportunity to help someone succeed in what they hoped to do. And those who were new to Victoria often received introductions so that they felt welcomed, instantly gaining a community.

It was for these same reasons that the Victoria Golf Club bestowed John with the Pemberton Award of Merit in 2017 and, more recently, an Honorary Membership. In 1998, John pioneered a wonderfully successful community group at Victoria Golf Club called FOG (Friday Open Golf) which allowed new and existing members to connect with one another over their mutual love (and frustration) of the game. Now John would never admit to being a fine golfer (or let you think it for that matter) but, as his FOG friends would tell you, he was impressive with his approach shots and was one of the best green readers around.

Generous by nature, John provided more than was needed for his family whom he adored and who filled him with pride. John delighted in being a father and doted on each of his children, providing as many gifts of experience and opportunity as he was able. He lived a long and wonderful life, rich with family, traditions, beautiful homes and storybook gardens. He traveled the world, nurtured lasting friendships and had meaningful careers. He thoroughly enjoyed peach pies, sushi, salt (within reach), pasta of any kind, John le Carré novels,

fine wool trousers, Canadian icons, well-priced white wine, formula one races, and golf, golf, and golf. With his velvety voice that his wife insisted could have made him a career in broadcasting, John was a supremely charming conversationalist, always providing the perfect amount of eye twinkling and dry wit. No one could deliver a compliment quite like John and we all loved him for it. And, rest assured, he loved us too.

A celebration of life for John will be held on Sunday May 29, 1-3pm, at the Victoria Golf Club. In the meantime, John would be pleased to see you enjoy a round of golf in the sun or a glass of white wine with the latest spy novel. His memory may be honoured in helping those less fortunate by supporting Our Place or the Dandelion Society of Victoria.

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

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