

Julian Coward

Julian lived a full life, with joy in his family, satisfaction with his work, and enthusiasm for his outdoor pursuits and creative interests.

Julian Michael Henry Coward passed away peacefully, with family by his side. Loved and sadly missed by his wife Mary, sons Andrew and Michael, daughter-in-law Joan Marie, grandsons Matthew, Andrew and Patrick, his sister Tessa Kirby in England, and many relatives and friends.

Julian was born in England. He studied electrical engineering at the University College London. In 1966, he met Mary who was on an exchange year from University of Toronto. In 1968, he followed her to Canada – and also to do a Ph.D. in hydrogeology at McMaster University in Hamilton. They married in 1969 and for their “honeymoon”, drove with eight friends from England to Nepal on a caving expedition.

Julian’s first job was in Toronto with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. In 1976, the family moved to Edmonton where Julian worked for Syncrude for almost 30 years in the Research Department. Life in Edmonton was rich with family, community, and work. Julian enjoyed outdoor activities – skiing, hiking, and camping. Also, indoor pursuits – woodworking, science projects, and acting as an “extra” in the Edmonton opera.

Caving, or spelunking, was a passion from his university days. He explored the caves in England and Europe, went on expeditions to Nepal, Peru, and Mexico, and expanded caving knowledge through research, mapping and “speleo electronics”.

Travel was also an ongoing enthusiasm. He hitchhiked through Norway as a teenager, travelled with Mary as a student to Nepal, South and Central America, made many trips with his young family to visit grandparents in England and Toronto, and finally, in retirement, enjoyed tours and cruises with

friends.

He took great pleasure from his children, and now with his grandchildren, passing on his engineering talents and love of “making things” as well as his outdoor pursuits and travel.

In 2005, Julian retired to Victoria, where he and Mary enjoyed an active retirement. They loved their house on the Gorge, enjoyed hiking and bridge with friends. Julian bought a small wooden steamboat named “Hotspur” to putter up and down the Gorge. He volunteered at Heritage Acres and enjoyed the Victoria Symphony. And he found time to write a history of himself and his family.

Despite coping with Alzheimer’s for 10 years, and melanoma for the past two years, Julian always found the best in life. He always expressed his gratitude for his full and satisfying life of family, work, travel, and interests. He faced his challenges with patience, humour and gentleness.

The family would like to thank the Alzheimer’s Society of BC, the Day Programs at Sunset Lodge and Elk Lake, and HandyDart. Also, thanks to the BC Cancer Agency. And special thanks to those at Douglas Care, who cared for Julian, and our family, through his final months.

A Celebration of Life will be held Wednesday, September 13, 2017, at McCall Gardens Sequoia Centre, 4665 Falaise Drive at 2 pm with a reception to follow.

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

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