

Mark Geoffery Stone

Born December 24 1948 passed away suddenly on September 14 2015. Born in Duncan to parents Patricia and Paul Stone, Mark is survived by his loving wife and best friend Jo, his seven siblings Julie, Brenda (Bryan), Jim (Nancy), Allan (Sue), Anne (Bruce), Jane (Joe), and Cathy, and brother-in-law Brian (Carol). Mark's loving family includes 22 nieces and nephews, 14 grand nieces and grand nephews, and a large extended clan.

Mark grew up in Mesachie Lake, moving to Duncan at the age of ten. Always an excellent athlete, Mark quarterbacked the Cowichan Timbermen football team to the BC finals. He also played scrum-half for Brentwood College's rugby team, which went on to be the first private school to win the Provincial Rugby Championship. In his final year at Brentwood, Mark received the prestigious Yarrow Shield, awarded to the graduating student who displays, in addition to scholastic and athletic excellence, the qualities of stability, strength of character and a willingness to serve.

In January 1970 Mark married his high school sweetheart Jo. For their three- month honeymoon in Europe, they boarded the Italian ocean liner the *Michelangelo* in New York and headed to Genoa. This was the beginning of a life-long interest in travelling the world together. Mark was an adventurous traveller who relished the challenges he encountered. Travel also sparked Mark's enthusiasm for different cuisines and led to his becoming a fabulous cook.

After receiving a BA from SFU, in the late 70's Mark graduated with an MSW from Carlton University in Ottawa. Returning to Victoria, he chose to dedicate his career to helping those less fortunate. After a brief stint with the CMHA, Mark spent over 25 years providing substance abuse counselling to

individuals in the community, at the Vancouver Island Regional Correctional Centre and at William Head Penitentiary. He had a sincere passion and commitment to the welfare of this unique client population, and the successes he attained positively improved the lives of those he worked with, their families, and the safety of our communities.

Mark loved the natural world and was never happier than when fly-fishing, birdwatching, boating in Sansum Narrows, or doing projects with Jo and others at the Point and Fernhill. He was an exceptionally gracious host to friends and family, and he particularly cherished the time he spent with his young nephews and nieces and the adventures (and misadventures!) they shared over the years.

Mark was never without a cat in his life – usually named some version of Ralphie, Sammie or Stevie. An avid reader, books were always near at hand. In the past couple of years Mark spent tireless hours enhancing his lovely bird sanctuary/garden. Working out at the Oak Bay gym, followed by coffee and lively conversation with his beloved gym buddies, also comprised an important and valued part of his routine.

Mark was a wonderful, warm, and generous person who treasured his wife, family, and friends, and he always extended the utmost courtesy and thoughtfulness to those he met. He had a quick and incisive sense of humour that informed his observations and view of life, and this was a valued part of knowing Mark. He leaves a gaping hole in the lives of so many and he will be so very deeply missed.

A family memorial service has taken place. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to Oxfam Canada or Save the Children Canada. Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Bros. Funeral Home

www.mccallbros.com.