

Mary “Jean” Ross

Jean Ross, an equestrian of excellence, passed away peacefully on July 7th, 2022 while under the care of the devoted staff at the Palliative Care unit at the Saanich Peninsula Hospital. After a brief but intense fight with cancer, Jean died surrounded by her family. Jean is survived by her husband James “Jim”, sons, Jonathan, Simon (Shannon) and Justin (Otavio) and her grandchildren Hanneli and Stella.

Born in 1946, Mary Jean was raised by Douglas and Mary Stewart alongside her brothers Patrick “Paddy” and William “Bill” Stewart. Dividing time between her schooling at Crofton House and the basketball court, where she met her lifelong friend Louise; a family ranch in Ashcroft, where her great love of horses and riding was born; and visiting extended family in Ontario, Jean’s upbringing was filled with sport and athleticism. Upon graduation from school in Vancouver, Jean completed a year in Toronto at Branksome Hall before returning to the West Coast to pursue her further studies at the University of Victoria.

While attending the University of Victoria, Jean met her first husband, Andrew Carpenter. Married in 1967, Jean and Andrew moved to Dublin, Ireland where she once again discovered her love of competitive equestrian three-day eventing and the thrill of cross-country fox hunting while they raised their two boys together. An avid member of Brennanstown Riding School “Mary Jean”, as her dear friends called her at the time, was a regular member of the Winner’s Circle at local events.

As time in Ireland passed, Jean and Andrew’s marriage ended and she became a devoted single mother of her two boys working tirelessly to provide them with opportunities and the best education possible. To this end she brought her family of three to Toronto in 1981 to join her extended family there as

she built a new life in a vastly different world.

While living in Toronto, Jean met the great love of her life – James. Devoted to each other, they brought Justin into the world and engaged in the greatest period of adventure in Jean's life. They moved to England for a year, then jumped across half the globe to settle on the Saanich Peninsula where they ran an equestrian barn for 13 years above Elk Lake. While living out this dream Jean and Jim traveled extensively and discovered a deep appreciation for the RV-ing lifestyle. Weaving across the continent, Jean and Jim made many wonderful friends and shared countless adventures. They settled for a winter retreat in the Coachella Valley. For 15 years, Jean and Jim fled the rain and snows of our homeland and basked in the warmth of dear friends and desert sun before migrating back to their home on the Saanich Inlet every spring.

Jean's passion for life was deeply infectious; from riding to gardening to cooking to puzzles, Jean was curious and intelligent, caring and compassionate, enthusiastic and always ready for a vibrant chat. Holding family above all else, Jean was our steady compass in any weather. Thank you for giving us all so very much – we love you and will miss you always.

A celebration of Jean's life will be held at 10:00 am on Sunday, September 11th, 2022 located at The Gardens at HCP, 505 Quayle Road, Victoria, BC

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to The Saanich Peninsula Hospital, Palliative Care Unit. Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Gardens

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