

**Dr Ron Calderisi
1948–2005**

Our good friend and colleague, Dr Ron Calderisi, passed away suddenly while working in northern Ontario in July 2005.

Ron was born in 1948 and grew up in Montreal, attending Loyola College with Dr Hugh Freeman. They went on to medical school at McGill University, where Ron graduated in 1973. Ron entered the general surgery program at McGill University, transferring to the UBC general surgery program where he and I met, passed our fellowship exams in November 1983, and completed our surgical residency in 1984.

Ron established a very busy general surgery practice in Vancouver and was a surgical consultant and, subsequently, the chief of staff at St. Vincent's Hospital. He was a superb general surgeon, revered by his patients and respected by his peers.

We had many memorable fishing trips together, and we remained very close friends throughout the years. He and his first wife, Diane, had two gorgeous children, Benjamin and Rachel, who live in Vancouver. When our children were young, we spent many of the holiday seasons together, and my sons called him Uncle Ron, because he and his family were more like family members than friends.

Ron did voluntary work in Africa, practised in Abu Dhabi, and recently returned to Canada to work in northern Ontario, where he was serving a small community and really enjoying the practice.

His first marriage ended in divorce, and when he married his second wife, Anna, he asked me to be his best man at the wedding. My family and I joined him and his family for what proved to be a most joyous occasion.

His son, Benjamin, graduated from the University of British Columbia in May 2005 and Ron attended the graduation. My wife Rhona and I had dinner with him on the night prior to

returning to Ontario. He was in excellent spirits, his health was good, and it was, indeed, a great shock to all of us when we learned that he had died suddenly en route to the airport. Anna had completed her contract as an operating room nurse in Abu Dhabi, was returning to Canada, and Ron was going to accompany her on the return trip to Canada.

Ron is survived by his wife, Anna; his children, Benjamin and Rachel; his siblings, Maria, Luigi, Irene, David, Michael, and his twin brother, Robert, and their spouses; stepchildren Karlee and Leigh; as well as numerous uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, cousins, grandnieces, and a great nephew. Ron will be sadly missed by all his family and friends. May God rest his soul.

—**O.N.M. Panton, MB
Vancouver**

**Dr Thomas de Roos
1920–2005**

At 0507 on 21 September 2005, Thom weighed anchor, unfurled the main and nosed into the freshening breeze to begin his final voyage. His farewells completed, he was at peace with his mortality. As a symbolic salute, there was a complete power failure in Peace Arch Hospital at the moment of his passing.

Thom was born in Deventer, the Netherlands, and raised on the family cargo vessel leading to a lifelong tie to the sea. He entered medical school at Utrecht University but his studies were interrupted when occupying German forces closed the university. Refusing to collaborate, Thom was conscripted and transported to Germany to work. As a third-year medical student, he found himself head of the neurology ward of a large hospital in Berlin. During a bombing raid, he went AWOL and attempted to return by train to Holland. Lacking identity papers, he was arrested at the border by the German police and jailed. Subsequently he was moved to a so-called education camp, where he contracted typhus.

Sixty-five pounds lighter, he was transferred to work in a second hospital. On observing his emaciated condition the Sister Superior declared, "Doctor you need a vacation." With legal papers, he returned to his Dutch home. Years later when recounting his wartime adventures, Thom would chuckle with a twinkle in his dark eyes and declare, "I am still on that vacation!"

From 1944 to 1945 he served in the Dutch Resistance Forces. During these tumultuous times with the Underground, he had numerous adventures. On several occasions, he narrowly evaded capture by the Gestapo, interrogation, torture, and almost certain death by firing squad. Many of his compatriots did not survive the war. In 1945 he received a citation from Prince Bernard of the Netherlands for his wartime resistance contribution.

Following the war, Thom completed his medical degree and purchased a thriving family practice. In 1953 he immigrated to Canada with his wife and two sons. After completing internship at the Royal Columbian Hospital in New Westminster, he qualified by passing the LMCC in 1954. He settled with his family in the Royal City, where he rapidly built a flourishing general practice with surgical and obstetrical privileges at the Royal Columbian and St. Mary's Hospitals. He was respected by his colleagues and adored by his patients. Thom was active in community affairs and became the division surgeon of St. John Ambulance for New Westminster. In 1963 he was admitted as a Serving Brother in the Order of St. John Ambulance, London, England.

In 1985, after 31 years of service in the general practice trenches, Thom retired from active practice. Unable to fully retard the throttle, he kept his hand on the pulse of the profession doing locums and surgical assists. In addition, he served as chief of staff at St. Mary's Hospital from 1989 to 1995. It is ironic that St. Mary's was

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in memoriam

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demolished in the year of his passing!

Thom's zest for life extended beyond the bounds of family and medicine. He had numerous hobbies and interests. He was an accomplished oil painter and his works enlivened the walls of our hospital.

His education was not limited to medicine. In 1987 he received his degree in yacht architecture from the Westlawn School of Yacht Design, Stamford, Connecticut, and became an associate member of the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers of the USA.

Sailing was a constant competing passion with his dedication to medicine. He was at peace with the world when at the helm—the rougher the sea, the better. His sailing adventures were many, including the Caribbean, Mediterranean, and Atlantic. He competed in two Victoria-Maui yacht races. During the last one in 1992, Thom skippered a crew of cardiac surgery survivors, including himself. They were affectionately nicknamed the Zipper Club and finished first in

their division and second overall. In life and at sea, Thom exuded confidence. Confronted with a crisis, be it of flailing spinnaker sheet or engine failure in tight quarters, he was always calm, focused, and resourceful—unflappable. Thom was the ultimate sailing mentor.

Thom was predeceased by his first wife, Anneke. He is survived and greatly missed by his loving wife of 33 years, Anna May (Girard); his sons from his first marriage, Robert (Brenda) and Tom (Pat); grandchildren, Michael, Tommy, Robbie, Lucy, Josie (James); and great-granddaughter, Annika.

Thom will always be remembered by his family and friends as a handsome Renaissance man with a beautiful mind. May the winds be steady and the seas forgiving for your voyage, Old Salt; safe passage to port.

— **John Albrecht, MD**
— **Ruth Albrecht, MD**
New Westminster

personal view

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ing and illegal activities. However, the societal problems that result from a lack of treatment services outweigh the economic costs of making affordable addiction treatment services available.

If all individuals with addictions in BC were able to access appropriate treatment services when they choose to seek help, the benefits would extend beyond the individual to improve the collective health of our communities.

There is a body of medical knowledge on addictions in this province, and I concur with Dr Oetter in her editorial "Addiction medicine is a specialty—let's recognize it" [*BCM/J* 2005;47(10):526] that addiction medicine physicians need to be supported and recognized. These physicians should be compensated fairly when they provide readily accessible treatment services to all citizens as needed.

Conservative cost estimates in *No Further Harm* (1997), a document published by the BCMA Advisory Committee on Narcotics Harm Reduction, revealed that every dollar invested in addiction treatment would result in a fifteenfold return. This document espoused that addiction treatment constitutes a continuum of services that include primary prevention, harm reduction, and clinical intervention.

The BCMA Council on Health Promotion is interested in striking a new committee to review the area of addictive disease and, if appropriate, recommend system and policy changes for BC. BCMA members and others with knowledge and experience in diagnosing and treating addictive disease who are interested in contributing to this committee may contact Ms Linda Munro at the BCMA.

— **Bill Mackie, MD**
Chair, Council on Health Promotion

The following physicians have died recently; we encourage you to submit an In Memoriam notice for future publication.

Alderman, Dr Philip Morton (b. 1925)

Carr, Dr Donald M. (b. 1938)

Changefoot, Dr George, Coquitlam (b. 1928)

Crichton, Dr Erica Pia (b. 1924)

De Roos, Dr Thomas, White Rock (b. 1920)

Dickout, Dr John Maxwell (b. 1916)

Ferries, Dr John Morrison (b. 1924)

Jones, Dr David Purser (b. 1915)

Kepkay, Dr Paul Harvey (b. 1922)

Rothwell, Dr Gordon Sheldon (b. 1912)

Sandhu, Dr Nalini (b. 1943)

Sherman, Dr Robert Philip, West Vancouver (b. 1954)

Spohn, Dr Frederick Joseph Douglas (b. 1926)