

in memoriam

Dr Ruth Roffmann 1917–2006

Dr Roffmann was born in Germany on 6 April 1917. She earned her medical degree and began her internship on the front lines during the Second World War.

In 1952, Dr Roffmann and her sister (my mother) immigrated to Canada, settling in Vancouver and Surrey. While on holiday in 1960, Ruth met and fell in love with the head wrangler at a dude ranch. She would go on to marry Jake Reinertson in 1963 and move her practice to the small village of 100 Mile House.

Ruth had a huge learning curve to overcome upon becoming the village doctor in a very rural setting in the middle of cattle country, living on a ranch, and learning about ranching.

Dr Roffmann was loved and respected by her patients for her sense of humor, compassion, and understanding. These attributes did not fade away when a patient came to see her for nonmedical advice.

She had a special relationship with the Aboriginal people of the area, admiring them for their deep commitment to family and to each other.

At the age of 65, Dr Roffmann slowed down a little, working only part-time.

At the age of 70, she retired and joined Jake with full-time ranching.

In 1992, Jake died and the light went out of my aunt's eyes as she bided her time here on earth, waiting to be with Jake again.

On 14 July 2006, my aunt and uncle were reunited for the last time.

—Jorunn Ivarsdatter
North Vancouver

Dr William Murray Robinson 1945–2006

Less than a year after a dreadful diagnosis, constant pain, immobility, and therapeutic setbacks, Murray died comfortably in his home. His family and close friends remained with him a few more hours, with candles lit, sipping good wine.

Murray was a realist. After oceans of tears had been shed, he set out all his arrangements. To ease the foreseen burdens on his beloved wife, Patty, and adored son, Alec, he planned his funeral, picked his eulogists, and asked me to write his obituary for the *BCMJ*. He also decided that his memorial service should be on a Saturday "so that the surgeons won't lose any OR time"!

Murray was a Vancouverite. He grew up in the Dunbar area and stayed nearby. His mother still lives in his and his brother's childhood home. He attended Lord Kitchener Elementary School, went (rarely) to Sunday school at Dunbar Heights United Church, and excelled at Lord Byng High School, graduating in 1963. After 3 years of undergraduate studies at UBC, he was admitted to its Faculty of Medicine, receiving his MD in 1970. He had an outstanding academic record, annually placing in the top 10 of his class. He interned at St. Paul's Hospital in 1970



Helping Yourself or a Colleague

Physicians are feeling the strain in a changing health care world. We are not invincible and we need to take care of ourselves. Self care does not mean diagnosing and treating ourselves or our families. In an ideal situation, all BC physicians would have and regularly consult with their own family physician. Unfortunately, this is not always the case and one of the main obstacles seems to be concerns about privacy.

The Physician Health Program of British Columbia is a confidential resource for physicians, medical students, residents and their families. Common concerns dealt with by the program include, but are not limited to: personal and family emotional health issues, the inappropriate use of alcohol and/or drugs or coping with physical illness etc. The PHP is staffed by physicians who are keenly aware of the sensitive nature of these matters and who respect the privacy of those who contact the program. If you choose, you can call the program anonymously.

We should not be afraid to reach out for assistance if we need it. In addition, we have a responsibility to colleagues who might be experiencing difficulty. If you have concerns about yourself or someone close to you please don't hesitate...

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Dr. Paul A. Farnan,
Clinical Coordinator