

Dr Douglas Graham 1942–2008

Dr Douglas Graham was born in Workington, Cumberland, UK, on 7 January 1942, the eldest son of Thomas and Margaret Graham. The prism of his life reflected his many interests—the practice of medicine in both government and private milieus, his struggle for change in societal and governmental attitudes to addictions, his love of family, his sense of humor, his passion for music, and the magic of radio-controlled airplanes.

Doug attended Keswick Grammar School, adjacent to the beautiful Derwentwater. After school, he first worked for an engineering factory and then a pharmaceutical company in London. He immigrated to Canada in 1965 where he worked as a piano salesman. He enrolled at UBC in 1968 and graduated with a BSc in 1972. He subsequently moved to New Zealand, began his medical training, and returned to Canada to complete his MD at UBC.

He started a family practice in Kelowna and later moved to Victoria,

where he concentrated on addiction medicine. He cared for his patients in physical, mental, social, and spiritual ways and fought the “conspiracy of silence” around addictions in local, provincial, and federal governments. He worked with the authors, the CPS BC, and the BCMA through the Physician Support Program (as it was then called) as the clinical coordinator to address the problems of addicted physicians and their families. Doug was a fellow of the American Society of Addiction Medicine and his work achieved wide recognition, including the Dr David M. Bachop Gold Medal for Distinguished Medical Service. The last 3 years of his professional life were spent as the medical director at Cedars, a residential treatment centre in Cobble Hill, BC, where he was a staff physician.

All of this was delivered by an often impeccably outfitted Doug, complete with a great smile and the never-lost cadences of Cumberland. One of us was at a conference in San Diego in 1977 when the echo of that famous accent reached his ears; we were soon

firm friends. The other met him at a conference on addictions in 1985 where we skipped several presentations to assist Douglas in the purchase of purple shoes that had to be the exact hue as his shirt and tie. Thus began a long and rewarding friendship.

Douglas was an accomplished pianist, a musician’s musician, often referred to as Dr Jazz or Dr Goodvibe. He played the local night club scene, big bands, small groups, conventions, and on the ferries to Seattle.

Despite several progressive medical problems, Douglas rarely projected and lived each day to the fullest. In November 2008 he was admitted to Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria for radiotherapy for a cardiac arrhythmia. This was successful, but unfortunately he subsequently suffered a series of strokes to which he peacefully succumbed, surrounded by family and friends, on 11 December 2008.

—**Kenneth R. Thornton, MD**
Victoria

—**Edward P. Kardera, MD**
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