

in memoriam

Dr Albert (Al) Charles West Johnston 1923–2013



Dr Johnston, a longtime resident of Greater Vancouver and Salt Spring Island, died peacefully on 28 July 2013.

Al was a clinical professor with the UBC Department of Ophthalmology, devoting much of his time to clinical teaching, developing the neuro-ophthalmology program, serving as an examiner for the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, and participating in medical conferences throughout North America and beyond.

Al was born in Armstrong, BC, and was the fifth child in a family of six. The family lived in Vernon and Victoria prior to moving to Nanaimo, where he attended Thomas Hodgson Elementary School and John Shaw

High School, completing his grade 13 education. Al loved the water and outdoors and worked during a number of his high school and university summers for Fisheries and Oceans Canada in northern BC.

Al joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in September 1942 and served in England (including landing on the beaches of Normandy during the D-Day invasion), Holland, Belgium, and Germany as a leading aircraftman for the RCAF 403 Wolf Squadron with honorable release in 1946.

Following the war Al began studying biological sciences at the University of British Columbia and graduated with honors in 1949. He entered medical school at McGill University in the fall of 1949 where he met his future wife, Margaret (Peggy), who was in the prior year's class. Al and Peggy were married in 1952. Following his graduation in 1953, Al returned to BC to do his medical internship at Vancouver General Hospital.

Al and Peggy moved to Detroit, Michigan, in 1954 where he spent 4 years attending Wayne State University and Henry Ford Hospital for his ophthalmology residency while Peggy completed her residency in dermatology.

Al and Peggy returned to BC and opened their medical practices in 1959 in an office they shared until their retirement in 1989. During their years of practice, Al and Peggy raised four children and actively spent their free time on Salt Spring Island, boating on the waters of BC and traveling to other parts of the world.

Following retirement Al and Peggy built their retirement home on Salt Spring Island. Al enjoyed his retirement with Peggy, his children, their spouses, and his grandchildren.

Al is survived by his wife, Peggy; his children, Kathleen (Kathy), James (Jim), William (Bill), and Thomas (Tom); and four grandchildren.

—Bill Johnston, MD
Nanaimo

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