

Obituaries

We welcome original tributes of less than 700 words; we may edit them for clarity and length. Obituaries may be emailed to journal@doctorsofbc.ca. Include birth and death dates, full name and name deceased was best known by, key hospital and professional affiliations, relevant biographical data, and a high-resolution head-and-shoulders photo.



Dr Donald Enarson
1946–2022

Dr Donald Enarson died unexpectedly at age 75 on 2 June 2022. Known to everyone as Don, he attended medical school at the University of Alberta, graduating in 1970. He trained in internal medicine at Vancouver General Hospital and the Mayo Clinic, joining the UBC Department of Medicine in 1980, becoming associate professor in July 1985, and full professor in November 1987 at the University of Alberta. His Christian faith in many ways dictated his career, and in 1974 he spent a year in South Sudan as a medical supervisor of the interdenominational Christian organization African Committee for the Rehabilitation of South Sudan. From 1978 to 1980 he served with Overseas Missionary Fellowship as a consultant in health in the Philippines.

Don's lifelong interest in tuberculosis stemmed from his awareness that the disease preferentially affected the most socially

disadvantaged. To this end, in 1991 he joined the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease as its first full-time director of scientific activities, based in Paris. During his tenure he made remarkable contributions. He wrote a seminal paper describing the five essential components of directly observed treatment short course, which was eventually adopted by the World Health Organization in 1994 and subsequently expanded around the globe. The strategy was later applied to other lung-health problems including asthma, COPD, pneumonia, and respiratory infections in children.

He also pioneered an epidemiologic approach to tuberculosis prevention and care, acted as a public health advisor in 42 countries, lectured in 72 countries, and coordinated training courses in 15 countries. Despite his extensive travels, he found time to author over 400 scientific publications. He was a mentor to many young physicians, always available to offer advice, supporting them in becoming knowledge experts themselves to, in turn, offer support in their low- and middle-income communities. In any meeting that Don attended, he was surrounded by throngs of attendees waiting to speak to him or just shake his hand.

In 2019 he was awarded the Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Alberta, its highest honor, recognizing lifetime professional achievement and service to society.

Don and I shared duties on the board of the BC Lung Foundation prior to his retirement. His style was to listen carefully to the issue at hand and then calmly give his sage opinion. Spending time with him in Paris was always memorable, as he was an enthusiastic gourmand and relished ordering unconventional dishes such as pigs' ears and challenging his company to do the same! He orchestrated legendary meals at his home, where he would

provide 20 to 30 dishes to choose from, all of which he made himself.

He was the quintessential professor and dressed accordingly, always sporting a colorful bow tie and blazer. Don was a warm, kind, caring physician; a gentleman; and a scholar. I can give him no higher praise. Nor indeed can his country, as shortly before his death he was awarded the Order of Canada. He is survived by Penny, his wife and constant companion for what she describes as 46 wonderful years. He leaves a global legacy that BC and indeed all of Canada can be proud of.

Requiescat in pace.

—Kevin Elwood, MD
Vancouver



Dr Petar Kokan
1930–2022

Dr Petar Josip Kokan was born in Split, Croatia, on 9 July 1930. He witnessed the events of World War II and how they affected Split,

including the Italian occupation, followed by the German occupation. After the war, Petar was a hardworking student and rowed at the Gusar rowing club in Split. He studied medicine and graduated from the University of Zagreb in 1954. He then went to Germany, where he completed a residency in general surgery.

Petar did not want to live in a socialist state and made the difficult decision to leave his family behind and take his new bride, Nada, with him overseas. He arrived in Canada in 1960 and, after living for a short while in Toronto, moved to Victoria, Vancouver, and then Nelson, where he was the public health officer.

He moved back to Vancouver by 1968, completed a residency in orthopaedic surgery, and started his own in practice in 1974. He worked consistently and always did his best for his patients, whether from his office on Burrard Street across from St. Paul's Hospital or from Shaughnessy Hospital or Mount Saint Joseph Hospital. He finally closed his practice in 2000.

Although he was most often at work, he made the most of his occasional days off and loved the outdoors that British Columbia has to offer. He loved hiking and skiing especially, and the beach and windsurfing in the summertime.

He will be remembered for being the centre of attention wherever he went. He loved people and loved telling stories, making speeches, or singing in an impromptu klapa.

He loved his regular walk down to the Fraser River. He loved watching his grandchildren play soccer, ride horses, or play their musical instruments. He cherished debating anybody and listening to their views, but of course he was always right!

On 14 September 2022, at age 92, he passed away peacefully with his family at his side at Vancouver General Hospital, following medical difficulties that developed after falling and suffering fractures. He was steadfast in his Catholic beliefs and knew that he would be ascending to heaven where he would join his beloved brother, Luka; sister, Pina; and parents, Manda and Ivan.

He leaves behind his wife, Nada; children, Jane, Matthew, Peter, and Daniel; and daughters-in-law, Marnie, Michelle, and Melisa. He is sadly missed by his beloved grandchildren, Daniel, Julia, Owen, Thomas, Faye, Steven, Ethan, and Natalia.

Our family is eternally grateful to the Croatian Catholic community and to Fra Duje, who blessed him twice in hospital, with last rights given shortly prior to his death. Petar was a proud Croatian and will be sadly missed by all.

—Peter Kokan, MD
Vancouver



Dr Kenneth Walter Turnbull 1937–2022

Dr Ken Turnbull passed away at 84 years of age in Vancouver on 3 July 2022. Born, raised, and educated in Vancouver, he was valedictorian of his high school graduating class and completed his undergraduate degree in civil engineering, his MD, and an anesthesia residency at the University of British Columbia. Following graduation he was appointed at Vancouver General Hospital (VGH), where he practised for 30 years, and to UBC, where he was a clinical professor. His practice was broad, and he was involved in all areas, including cardiac anesthesia and ICU care.

Ken will perhaps be best remembered for his ever-constant smile and laugh. He loved his work, his friends, and his family, and brought to all of them a tremendous *joie de vivre*.

Ken was a passionate clinician, instructor, academic, leader, and mentor. He excelled as a clinician-teacher—he was frequently requested by his colleagues for their own care.

One colleague commented, “With his excellent clinical judgment and EQ, Ken could mentor in such a subtle manner that he built confidence in my own dubious abilities. I particularly admired how he never talked down to patients when they were at their most vulnerable.” Another remarked, “Ken was always a delight to be around. He had tremendous good humor and always seemed to be laughing.” Another commented, “I am one of the few younger-generation anesthesiologists who had the great fortune to have him as my medical school mentor and was able to seek his guidance and support throughout my anesthesiology training. He truly was an exceptional clinician, leader, teacher, and mentor. He was also a pioneer in our field.”

Ken was a leader in the VGH department throughout his career; he was responsible for the Visiting Professor Program for many years and was an early leader in the developing field of resuscitation, and much later, of simulation programs in anesthesia. He served on many committees at VGH and as interim head of the VGH Department of Anesthesia. Outside his department, he was president of the BC Anesthesiologists' Society and a representative to the Canadian Anesthesiologists' Society's council in the 1970s. While not a researcher, he had several publications (including co-authoring one on chronic bronchitis as a student, and a significant early patient safety review¹). He was a popular visiting professor nationally and internationally.

Ken was awarded the Canadian Anesthesiologists' Society's Clinical Practitioner Award in 2002; it was only the second time that the award was given and the first time to a BC recipient. He was also recognized with a Doctors of BC CMA Honorary Membership Award in 2016, and he was the recipient on two occasions of the Physician's Recognition Award from the American Medical Association.

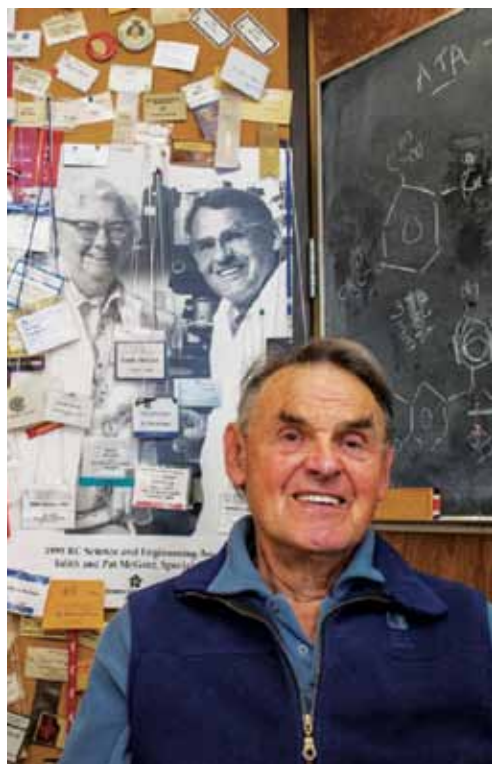
Outside the operating room, Ken was equally known. He had friends all over the world as a result of his passion for ham radio. He was an active flyer, piloting a Republic RC-3 Seabee (an amphibious sports aircraft), flying with friends to lakes around BC for camping and fishing.

Dr Turnbull and his ever-present smile will be sorely missed by his family (Deanna, three children, and six grandchildren) and his many colleagues and friends.

—Richard N. Merchant, MD, FRCPC
New Westminster

Reference

1. Turnbull KW, Fancourt-Smith PF, Banting GC. Death within 48 hours of anaesthesia at the Vancouver General Hospital. *Can Anaesth Soc J* 1980;27:159-163.



Dr Patrick L. McGeer
1927–2022

A long-form version of this obituary is published at www.bcmj.org.

Dr Pat McGeer died peacefully at home surrounded by family and devoted friends on 29 August 2022. Pat was born in Vancouver to James McGeer, a judge, and Ada (Schwengers) McGeer, one of McGill University’s first female graduates and a producer for CBC Radio. In his early years, he was fascinated by chemistry, conducting home experiments with explosives. He went on to graduate with a first-class honors degree in chemistry from UBC.

Pat was also the UBC Thunderbirds’ all-time leading scorer and represented Canada on the 1948 Olympic basketball team. His team’s most famous exploit was a cliff-hanger defeat of the Harlem Globetrotters. Turning down an offer from the NBA’s Philadelphia Warriors, he went on to pursue his PhD at Princeton.

Pat graduated in 1951, with a thesis that pointed out how radio waves could be used to heat food. Next came a job at DuPont’s experimental research station in Wilmington, Delaware, where he met fellow research chemist Dr Edith Graef, courting her with flights in his diminutive Aeronca Champion. They married in April 1954 and moved to Vancouver, where Pat obtained his medical degree from UBC. Edie meanwhile volunteered as an assistant in Dr Bill Gibson’s fledgling neurochemistry lab at UBC. Over dinner she fascinated Pat with stories from the lab, and after graduation they joined forces, initiating a scientific partnership that would last over 60 years.

Pat was instrumental in establishing the then fledgling field of neuroscience in Canada, and in the 1960s he founded the UBC Division of Neuroscience, serving as its head for nearly 20 years. Pat and Edie achieved many notable firsts, such as introducing the concept of using neurotransmitter synthetic enzymes as markers for biochemical neuroanatomy and pathology and pioneering the concept of neuroinflammation as a contributor to neurodegeneration, particularly in Alzheimer disease. They co-authored, together with Nobel Laureate Sir John Eccles, the first edition of *Molecular Neurobiology of the Mammalian Brain*.

They had time for fun and family too. Their recycled BC forestry boat was often on Howe Sound, with Pat in the bilge tending the recalcitrant diesel engine. After one breakdown too many, it was retired in favor of cottage life (first on Bowen Island, then on Skaha Lake)

and other recreational activities: travel, skiing, and boating in a speedier runabout.

Pat’s interest in politics was driven by his early career at DuPont. In the first of nine campaigns, he won a landslide Point Grey by-election in 1962. As an opposition Liberal member, he wrote a book, *Politics in Paradise*, laying out a vision of a higher-tech BC for a more prosperous future.

He later recruited his college friend Garde Gardom to run with him in the then two-member seat. They were a dynamic duo, first as opposition Liberals and later in government bench, having joined forces with the Social Credit Party in 1975.

Pat held several cabinet posts within the Social Credit Party and as minister of successive portfolios of Education; Education, Science, and Technology; Universities, Science and Communications; and International Trade.

He began North America’s first open university (the Knowledge Network), sponsored an engineering program at Simon Fraser University and the University of Victoria, encouraged BC’s nascent tech industry with the Discovery Foundation, spurred a natural-gas vehicle industry in response to the oil crisis of the 1970s, and was the leading force behind building a teaching hospital at UBC.

Pat also played a vital role in the history of the wine industry in BC. As a cabinet minister he upset the local industry by criticizing the BC wines of the early 1970s. When wine producers challenged him to a blind public tasting of local versus imported wines, he identified the poorest wines as being from BC. A world-renowned BC wine industry followed.

Pat’s pride and joy were tennis and his backyard grass tennis court, where he played regularly into his 95th year. For over 40 years it was the centre for a burgeoning community of avid tennis players, all of whom were excited to be invited to participate in the annual “Wimbledon West” tournament.

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Though Pat retired from his formal academic position in 1992, he and Edie maintained an active research program. Attracting international attention and acclaim, they collaborated on three books and more than 1000 research papers, documenting discoveries that would lay the foundations for groundbreaking treatments of diseases ranging from Parkinson to Alzheimer disease. Pat returned to the lab full-time with his trademark zest. The discoveries came thick and fast, including the link between Alzheimer disease and neuroinflammation. In 2012 they founded Aurin Biotech, a company dedicated to the development of novel agents to fill the need for safe, effective, and orally available therapeutics for Alzheimer disease.

Pat received multiple honors, awards, and honorary degrees throughout his life. Both he and Edie were appointed to the Order of Canada and the Order of British Columbia.

Pat is survived by his wife of 68 years, Edie; children, Rick (Karen), Tad, and Tori (Philip); long-time family friend Jane Burnes; and grandchildren, Rory, Owen (Molly), Sean (Alex), Kailee, Liam, and Simone.

—McGeer Family

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Dr Nadine Rena Caron receives #OrderOfBritishColumbia. Dr Nadine Rena Caron of Prince George is one of 14 exceptional people being appointed to the Order of British Columbia in 2022, the province's highest form of recognition.

Read the article: bcmj.org/news/dr-nadine-rena-caron-receives-order-british-columbia



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