

Obituaries

We welcome original tributes of less than 700 words; we may edit them for clarity and length. Email obituaries 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 Geddes Frank
Owen Tyers**
1935–2025

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Dr G. Frank O. Tyers, a pioneering heart surgeon and inventor. Dr Tyers is credited with saving the lives and improving the well-being of countless patients worldwide. Over a career that spanned 6 decades, Dr Tyers made outstanding innovations in cardiac surgery. He is internationally recognized for groundbreaking work in myocardial protection, setting the worldwide standard for cardiac operations. He was an active inventor and developer in cardiac pacemaker design and functionality, introducing programmable technology, hermetically sealed batteries, and advanced telemetry systems. He also started and directed the only nationally and internationally recognized lead extraction program in Canada, and in 1996, 2 years before US approval, he introduced the use of

an excimer laser for this procedure. He was also a leader in quality-of-care appraisal, which prompted the formation of the BC cardiac registry. Dr Tyers became a mentor to generations of surgeons and was a respected voice on national and international advisory boards.

Frank was also a devoted family man. He and Phyllis, the love of his life, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary earlier this year. Frank was a dedicated father to their sons, Randall and Owen. He is also survived by his sister, Catherine, and brother, Dennis. His humility, integrity, and love for his family, friends, and community will never be forgotten. Frank's legacy is etched not only into the field of cardiac surgery but also into the lives of everyone privileged to have known him.

Frank was a man of tireless energy. Beyond medicine, he delighted in skiing adventures with family, warm afternoons in the garden, and long hikes. He took great joy in the companionship of the family's Cairn terriers, Calee and then Tavis. Frank took every opportunity to travel the world to teach and then return home to nurture the vegetable garden with the same care he gave to everything.

Frank was born in Giroux, Manitoba, in 1935 and raised in Kaslo, BC. While there, he became an accomplished clarinetist. After graduating in 1963 from the UBC Faculty of Medicine, he proceeded to Philadelphia for 5 years of surgical training and research at the University of Pennsylvania, followed by an additional 2 years of training in cardiovascular and thoracic surgery at the University of Toronto. His first position was at the recently established Pennsylvania


State University Hershey Medical Center before becoming the head of thoracic surgery at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston. Choosing a path that prioritized patients and allowed him to contribute in Canada, in 1979, he returned to Vancouver to head cardiovascular and thoracic surgery at Vancouver General Hospital and UBC. He continued consulting and following pacemaker patients until March 2022. Throughout, Frank credited the support of Phyllis for his successful career and the opportunity to dedicate his professional life to his love of medicine and his devotion to patients.

Frank's passing marks the end of a remarkable chapter, but his story continues with his family, his medical innovations, the people he mentored, and the countless hearts still beating today because of his vision. In lieu of flowers, please donate to the Nature Conservancy of Canada.


—Owen Frank Tyers, PhD
Delta

Attn: BC Doctors

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