



Don MacKay

Donald Robert MacKay (“Don”) passed away on November 24, 2023 at the age of 78 with his loving wife of 53 years, Mary (Simons), and his daughter, Krista, at his side.

Don was born in September of 1945 in Shelburne, Nova Scotia to parents William Russell MacKay and Doris Mae Dimock. Don spent his childhood in nearby Lockeport before moving to Kentville, Nova Scotia in his late teens to live with his sister Jeanne and her husband David Corkum. After completing High School at Horton District High School, Don attended Acadia University where he obtained his Bachelor of Commerce in 1969. As a teenager and young man, Don excelled in sports, his favorite being basketball. He played on two provincial championship teams in Lockeport and also played Junior Varsity while at Acadia, demonstrating the quiet intensity that only those who knew him well understood he possessed.

After completing his studies, Don began his professional career at the Royal Bank in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia in June of 1969. By the winter of 1970, fate and the brass at RBC transferred him to Toronto, Ontario. On his first night there he met a young nurse from Collingwood, Nova Scotia named Mary Cameron Simons who was living in Toronto and working at the Hospital for Sick Children. The following year they would be married back in Collingwood. For the rest of his life, the two would rarely be apart.

In 1976, Don and a then pregnant Mary moved back to Nova Scotia and settled in Halifax. Over the next two years, they welcomed first a daughter, Krista-Lynn Grace into the family, and then a son, Trevor Craig.

Don would go on to have a varied and successful career in sales, including two stints at the Atlantic Television System (ATV) that were separated by a venture into the restaurant business. With a partner he opened two Arby’s restaurants in Bedford and Bridgewater, Nova Scotia that they operated together. Later, he would finish his career operating his own sales agency until his retirement. He also owned and harvested a blueberry field in Middle-Musquodoboit, Nova Scotia with his brother-in-law Jack Simons.

Don was dearly loved and will be missed by his family and friends. He was a dedicated and loving partner to Mary and an involved, affectionate, supportive, and patient father to Krista and Trevor. He was a social person who made friends easily and who loved conversation with people of all walks of life about all manner of subjects. In any room and with anyone, he was never out of place. He was compassionate and kind to all, a result of both his gentle demeanor and his strong faith. He was an active member of Bethany United Church for over 40 years, taking on many roles from members of session, executive board, board of managers, board of trustees, to treasurer. His favorite part of church, by a longshot, was singing tenor as a member of the Bethany choir.

Don/Dad/Papa leaves behind his loving wife, Mary; his daughter, Krista (Matthew) Parrish; his son, Trevor (HwaYoung); his grandchildren, Bailey, Cameron, Theo and Toby; and his siblings, Ronald (Sandra), Jeanne (David) and Peter (Heather).

Don was predeceased by his parents, Russell and Dori; and his sister, Joan. All of his family, and his many friends, will miss his comforting presence and his hearty infectious laugh.

Don and his family are immensely appreciative of the medical care that Don received since his first cancer diagnosis in 2017. In particular, heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Dr. Mark Taylor and his entire clinic staff, Dr. Paula Yliheikkila and her team, Dr. Chad Robertson, Dr. Ashely Davidson, and Dr. Alec G Falkenham for their exceptional efforts and their commitment to patient care.

Based on Don’s wishes, a visitation will be held in Bethany United Church on Saturday December 2nd between 7:00- 9:00PM, with a celebration of life ceremony on Sunday December 3rd beginning at 2:00PM, again in the

church, with a reception to follow. Donations in Don's name may be made to Bethany United Church or the QEII Health Sciences Centre Foundation, Head and Neck Oncology Fund (T626).