



**REMEMBERING**  
**Ronald Johnston**

June 7, 1936 - April 6, 2020



On Monday, April 6th, 2020, Ronald James Johnston passed away at the age of 83, at Chilliwack Hospital with his daughter Tracy at his side.

Ron was born on June 7, 1936 in Vancouver at St Pauls Hospital, to parents William (Bill) and Alma Johnston. Dad was raised in Vancouver and attended Sir Stanford Flemming Elementary and John Oliver High School. He was accepted into the Mechanics Program at BCIT and after a year of studies he moved to Whitehorse, in the Yukon where he started and completed his five-year apprenticeship. Once fully certified as a mechanic Dad returned to Vancouver and started working at Mandor's Auto Garage. It was here that dad became the go-to-mechanic for the fleet of Vancouver Police Vehicles, which helped save him from getting a few tickets.

Dad was 26 he met Catherine (Cathy) Gillies, on a blind-date and nine months later they were married on May 25, 1963. Over time they welcomed four children and built a home. Dad enjoyed barbequing and on weekends he'd wash the cars and mow the lawns and after when all the work was done, he'd either stand with neighbors or sit in the backyard with a cold beer and relax.

When Dad was 34, he made a big change in his career leaving the garage and starting working for BC Hydro as a heavy-duty mechanic. Dad stayed with Hydro for 30 plus years until his retirement in 1998. Dad was given many promotions over the years from mechanic, to supervisor, field foreman and ending his career in upper management. One position he felt great pride in was when he was able to mentor/supervise new apprentices and many of those apprentices checked with dad over the many years. Dad gained many friendships through his years at Hydro

and who he shared many lunches or after work drinks with at the Kennedy Pub and a few others! Dad always knew the best pubs in every city, he even earned his own bar stool and a nickname, Captain Ron, at the Patricia Hotel, in AB. On the side for extra work dad who service many family members, friends and neighbours' cars. He completely rebuilt, mending the body, completely redoing the engine and even re-painting his daughters Austin Mini. There wasn't much dad couldn't do in regards to fixing any vehicle.

In 1970, dad and mom built a new house in Richmond, BC and the family moved from North Vancouver to their new home on November 25, 1970. In 1992 after us kids had moved out on their own our parents sold the family home and moved to Port Coquitlam and a few years after mom's passing Dad moved to Abbotsford with his new partner.

Dad's passion and joy besides his family was sports, all sports. Dad watched all football, college, NFL and CFL, then NHL through the winter. Dad also loved the Indy 500 car races! When Vancouver held its first Molson Indy Race, in the streets of Vancouver, dad was one of the first in line to get his 3-day all-inclusive tickets. He never missed a year until the last race was run in 2004. These 3 days were a special highlight to his year. One of Dad's great experiences was when he got to see and experience the Monte Carlo Grand Indy 500, in Monte Carlo!

Dad was a man's man. A meat and potato guy. He was proud to provide for his family. He was OCD about cleanliness, you could eat supper off his shop floor and mom loved when he would vacuum as he would even do the ceiling. Dad taught us girls some valuable lessons, always have a dime in your pocket so you can always call home, save the phone call if the police haul you in as, if you do the crime you do the time, always be respectful of others and of their property and never let your gas tank get lower than the half way mark! Dad was also the best story-teller! His stories were always somewhat dressed up, to make a regular event a tad more exciting and much funnier. Some of these stories grew so much that the original event or situation he was speaking of were barely recognizable anymore. It was a special talent he possessed and which he passed on to his daughter Kim.

A very memorable time for dad's grandchildren was when dad brought his granddaughters Em and Ry to Patricia AB. Katie had grandpa out on the quad doing 9-0, they'd sneak up on him and scare him and go down and jump on his bed waking him up for a new day of adventures! The week all together made a life time of memories for them all. Dad was so proud of all his grandchildren and all their accomplishments.

Dad made five goals/dreams as a young man: 1) to be a mechanic, 2) marry a wonderful woman, 3) have a family, 4) have a house with a fireplace and 5) a yard with an inground pool. He succeeded in completing all 5.

Ronald James was pre-deceased by his only son David William Johnston in 1967, his youngest daughter Marie Catherine Johnston in 1974, whom was born with many physical handicaps but an angel given to us for 3 ½, his loving and supporting wife Catherine (Cathy) Ellen Johnston in 1998, his parents William (Bill) and Alma Johnston, his only brother David in 1936, his father and mother-in-law Robert (Bob) and Catherine (Kay) Gillies and his pug - Pudge and his emotional

support and beloved companion Pepper.

Dad is survived by his daughters Tracy Musgrove and Kimberly Machnyk, his 4 grandchildren, Catherine (Katie) and Colton Musgrove and Emily and Ryley Machnyk. His sister and brother-in-law Joan and Vern Donaldson, his life-long best friend of 70 yrs Ray Crawford and wife Collie. His partner Helen Waterhouse and many nieces and nephews and cousins.

May you rest in Peace Dad with those you've missed and loved and are reunited with again!

There will be no formal funeral service as per dad's wishes. The immediate family will have an intimated scattering of dad's ashes at a later date! If anyone would like to make a donation in dad's name his favourite charities were The Children's Hospital or Children's Make a Wish Foundation.

