



**REMEMBERING**  
**Donald James Gordon Elder**  
December 12, 1928 - January 7, 2024



ELDER, Donald James Gordon

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Don died in his sleep in the early hours of January 7, 2024 on Salt Spring Island where he had moved in his final years to be close to his sister, Jean.

Don was a first class gentleman who defied aging as long as he could and then accepted care with reluctant graciousness.

Previous to his two years on Salt Spring, he had made his home in James Bay in Victoria and was known at the New Horizons Centre where he made friends among the Ukulele community. He was greeted by his first name at the local pub. Music and film remained important to him. He made a Youtube celebratory video about Emily Carr. He sang Handel's Messiah with the Victoria Philharmonic Choir with his friends and relatives attending to admire him in his tuxedo. In the early days, at the University of Alberta as he obtained a Master's in Education, he also sang in the University Chorus. He and Jean attended their first opera together at the Edinburgh Music Festival when they were teens and Don went back a second night because he loved it so much. He accompanied his step-daughter, Carol, as she was becoming an accomplished bassoonist.

After living in England, teaching and travelling, Don returned to Medicine Hat, taught there and then in Stratford before going to Toronto in the early 1960's where he became a creator, writer, producer, and director first at Ontario TV and then for CBC Children's Television. He took great pleasure in announcing that he had worked on Mr. Dress Up, Coming up Rosie, and Reach for the Top. He acted as consultant to the Asian Institute of Broadcasting centred in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia where he advised the Institutes's members and visited most of them. He,

afterwards, kept in touch with the institute and helped its members when he could. From the tropics he went to the Arctic spending a winter in what was then Frobisher Bay(Iqaluit) helping develop Nunavut broadcasting. In between, he and his wife invented ingenious ways of raising money until finally he was hired by Ryerson University in Film and Media Studies to fill a temporary part time job until a woman could be found for the position. He held that temporary position plus a CUPE presidency for 25 years, retiring at age 85.

During his many years in Toronto, Don was married to Suzanne Terryberry, and served as step-father to her three daughters, Kathy Stahr and Susan Patterson, both now from Vancouver and Carol Patterson of Tel Aviv, Israel. Suzanne died in 2015 after Don had moved first to Vancouver to be near Susan and then to SSI and Victoria.

His charm and fierce independence has served him well and he will be missed.

Thank you to the caring staff at Heritage Place, Lady Minto Hospital and Greenwoods Eldercare on SSI .

There will be no service as per his request but he'd be honoured with a toast when you next gather together.

