



ROBIN W. W. FRASER

Born September 23, 1929 in Calgary, the only child of James Otis Fraser and Elsie Grey Wright Fraser, Robin died January 2, 2018, at home in Toronto with his beloved wife by his side.

His life is celebrated and his passing mourned by his loving family, Mary Ellen Hebb, his wife of 16 years; children, Morna, Kirsten (Gordon), Jeffrey, Donal, and Elizabeth (Scott). Adoring Grampa to Fraser, Stella, and Kelsey; and loving Appy to Malcolm and Sean. He was predeceased in 1998 by his cherished wife and partner, the extraordinary Helen Victoria (Tory) Fraser (nee Ketcheson).

Growing up in Minnedosa, Manitoba, and in Trenton, Toronto and Oakville, Ontario, Robin attended Upper Canada College and Trinity College (ST). He adored his time at Trinity: a conscientious student, he nonetheless never let his studies get in the way of boisterous shenanigans with friends (a mischievous spirit that remained intact throughout his life). After studying law at Osgoode Hall, Robin joined Fraser, Beatty, Tucker, McIntosh & Stewart (now Dentons) in 1956. In 1963, he became a partner and remained there until retirement in 1995. He was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1989, and in 2000 his beloved Trinity College honoured him with a Doctorate of Sacred Letters honoris causa.

Robin brought passion to whatever he undertook, and his interests were as varied as they were intensely pursued. He loved playing the bagpipes, Scottish country dancing, bird-watching, cross-country skiing, kayaking, and most of all, wilderness canoeing. With Tory and some equally intrepid friends, over decades he covered thousands of miles on wilderness lakes and rivers in Labrador, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories. Accounts of some of Robin and Tory's adventures are on permanent display at the Canadian Canoe Museum in Peterborough, Ontario and were documented in the book *Canoeing North Into the Unknown* by Bruce Hodgins and Gwyneth Hoyle (1997).

Widely admired for his passionate commitment to environmental causes, Robin's contributions were considerable. He served on the boards of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Wildlands League of Ontario, and The Nature Conservancy of Canada to which he was particularly devoted. He also donated his time, expertise, and dedication to the Huntington Society of Canada, the Smile Theatre Company, Artscape Inc., The Frederick Harris Music Co. Ltd; he was a member of the Corporation of Trinity College (he was instrumental in drafting their incorporation papers), and also served as a director of Bird Studies Canada.

It was in this latter role that Robin met fellow birder Mary Ellen Hebb, and for the second time in his life, he had found his perfect match. She brought laughter and love into his later life, and steadfastly kept the nursing home beds at bay while helping him navigate his ongoing battle with Parkinson's. Robin was scrupulously principled, as intelligent as he was affable, and always curious; he would never turn down a chance to debate political issues or difficult moral quandaries. Above all, he had a playful and charming sense of humour and wit that was uniquely his. It was this quality that put him in the vanguard of the delightfully quixotic Republic of Rathnelly of the 1970s (a role for which he was recognized in 2017 when the lane behind the family home was named in his honour). His adamant optimism and keen sense of the absurd enabled him to highlight the humour in things, to frame life's vagaries in ways that brought everything into smiling perspective. It was all but impossible to resist the charm of his great open-mouthed hoots of laughter, and his generosity was unparalleled. These qualities made him a wonderful husband, father, grandfather, friend, and mentor to so many, and he will be sorely missed.

A memorial celebrating this funny and gentle man will be held (where else?!) at Trinity College Chapel, 6 Hoskin Ave., on Saturday, May 12th at 2 p.m. In lieu of flowers, a donation in his name to The Nature Conservancy of Canada would be most fitting and appreciated. Those who loved him would like to thank the many healthcare professionals involved in his care during the last few years, especially Rinzin Lhamo for her great kindness and dedication to Robin's welfare.