

OBITUARY

Hugh Roulston Fraser

JUNE 19, 1967 – MARCH 18, 2022



Hugh Roulston Fraser, 54, Halifax, died March 18, 2022, following a heart attack.

Born in Halifax, Hugh was the youngest son of Anne (Archibald) Fraser, Victoria, B.C., and the late Murray Fraser. Modest and prolific throughout his 30-year career, he bridged the worlds of journalism in print, radio, and TV, along with politics, government, and communications in Nova Scotia.

Hugh held a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) from Dalhousie University and a Master of Journalism from Carleton University. Starting as a summer sportswriter at The Chronicle Herald (where he met his wife Amy in 1989), he went on to become a writer, editor, and producer at CBC Newsworld from 1992-99. Hugh also worked on several other CBC programs, notably as show producer on The Docket, which was nominated for a Gemini Award in 2004. He was Press Secretary to Premier John Hamm; a Senior Public Relations Counsel at Bristol

Communications; as well as an advisor and communications director for provincial and federal government departments.

For a decade, he operated a one-man show at Fraser + Sons Communications Inc., joking that the junior staffers might take a while to hit their stride. In late 2019, he joined his favourite Fraser + Sons client, Property Valuation Services Corporation, as a Senior Advisor, and had recently become its Vice President, Stakeholder Relations and Communications.

Funny, urbane, gracious, and competent, Hugh was great with people and at home in any province: He put everyone at ease and could walk into any situation effortlessly. Through work and school, he got the opportunity to live in some of his favourite cities: Victoria, Ottawa, and Quebec City among them.

Hugh was politely skeptical of any pageantry or pretension, wielding a witty, dry sense of humour, and an encyclopedic memory of baseball stats, obscure James Bond references, and countless lines of SCTV dialogue. He loved being outside and was a committed gardener, taking particular pride in his backyard hydrangeas, but also excelled inside at home improvement projects: He painted every wall in the family home, some twice. He was a diehard Bruins and Red Sox fan, and his blind devotion to both was successfully rooted in the next generation, along with his love of Springsteen, the Rolling Stones, Stan Rogers, Kathleen Edwards, Warren Zevon, The Big Lebowski, Hemingway, Miles Davis, and Rod Stewart (but not so much The Skydiggers).

A long-suffering and much beloved minor baseball coach, with a career spanning three sons and more than a dozen teams, Hugh could be counted on to bait the umpires with bullseye one-liners and crack wise at the expense of the highly-strung coaches from other teams.

Hugh enjoyed cycling on the BLT Trail, travelling (especially to Boston and New York City), and making intolerably strong, fummy Martinis. Hugh was at his best down at Blinkers, the Fraser family cottage in Boutilliers

Point. Outfitted with a tiny aluminum bat, he'd hit groundballs and lazy pop flies to the kids on the cottage field, pleading "no sidearm!" as they lobbed the ball back to him. He liked being on the water: Paddleboarding to Cowlow Cove, firing up the boat for a race or tube around St. Margaret's Bay, fishing for mackerel, and swimming. He was usually the last one out of the water and loved sunny days. Even in early April, he'd start cultivating his deep "base tan," ensuring his George Hamilton hues would last until Christmas. He often complemented this activity with a cold local beer (or, after the sun went down, two fingers of Laphroaig) and a good book. His stacks of books in the living room, on the kitchen counter, and at his bedside, were dominated by the likes of John le Carré, Charles Ritchie, Margaret MacMillan, Richard Ford, Dean Jobb, Patrick Radden Keefe, Robert Caro, Ben Macintrye, Graham Greene, Evelyn Waugh, David Sedaris, and Cormac McCarthy, just to name a few. On weekend mornings, if he wasn't working out at the 'Y' already, he'd be in the kitchen, decked out in a big toque and Bruins sweater, reading *The Athletic*, *The New York Times*, or *Washington Post*, and offering up breakfast sandwiches—all piled with bacon, sharp cheeses, onions, and fried eggs—to later risers.

Amy was the centre of Hugh's world: He always smiled the biggest in pictures with her. They teased each other like newlyweds and knew how to make each other laugh like no one else. They were best friends, and they sparkled in their circle of lively and loving friends.

Hugh cherished living in Halifax and traipsing around the city, often with his backpack full of library books. He charted Halifax's growth with Amy and the family lab Looch—named after family favourite and bruising Bruin, Milan Lucic—on treks to the waterfront boardwalk, Point Pleasant Park, and along Agricola Street to the Hydrostone.

After spending time with Hugh, you always left on a high because you laughed so hard at his banter, teasing, exaggerated gestures, biting political commentary, and deep trunk full of hysterical impersonations and mimicry. He was also an excellent writer and editor, and his likely

advice here would be to “keep it tight.” On this one occasion, we weren’t able to follow that advice.

In addition to his mother, Hugh is survived by his wife, Amy (Pugsley); sons, Ted, Carleton University; Patrick, University of Toronto; Daniel, Citadel High at home; his brothers, Scott (Suzanne), Andrew (Janine), both of Halifax; and their children, Sam, Lauren, Max, Eliza, Audrey, and Charlotte. Uncle Hugh (or “Hughie!” to his youngest Fraser nieces) also had a lovely coterie of nieces, nephews, brothers- and sisters-in-law in the Hancock, Patterson, and Pugsley families, many of whom joined the Frasers for Sunday dinners. He was also a beloved nephew and cousin to many Archibalds across Canada, cousin to John Gilbert, Fredericton, N.B., and a treasured son-in-law to Joan Pugsley, Halifax.

Hugh was predeceased by his father, Murray Fraser; father-in-law, Justice Ron Pugsley; maternal grandparents Gordon and Marion Archibald; paternal grandparents, Dr. Murray and Audrey Fraser; and uncle Bill Archibald.

A service and reception for Hugh will be held at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, March 29, at Kenneth Rowe Hall in Pier 21.

The family asks that any donations in Hugh’s name be made out to the IWK Foundation LifeFlight Helideck in Halifax.

~ JA Snow Funeral Home ~

Dignity Memorial