

From Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia

In Memoriam: Dr. David Murphy

It is with great sadness that the Faculty of Medicine shares news that former faculty member, Dr. David Murphy, has died.

Born in Montreal (b. December 26, 1933) to Herb and Helen (Hyde) Murphy, David began his professional career as a veterinarian. Before long, he was back in school at McGill University to study medicine where he met his future wife, Dr. Sonia Salisbury. In 1973, they moved with their three kids to Nova Scotia where David took a position as a cardiac surgeon at the IWK. David had a profound impact on the way cardiac surgery is practiced in the Maritimes - founding the Maritime Heart Centre, which continues to provide clinical and material support for cardiac patients.

He served on more than 20 provincial and national committees including the Canadian Heart Foundation and the Executive Council of Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. He received numerous research grants and publications. He was especially proud of his widely published work with Dr. Drew Armour on the neural control of the heart.

His honours included McLaughlin and James IV travelling fellowships. He was awarded a Senior membership with Doctors NS and a Distinguished Service Award from the Canadian Medical Association.

He is survived by the love of his life and wife of 60 years, Dr. Sonia Salisbury, Halifax; sister, Judy Murphy (Fredericton); children, Luke (Laura Mac Donald), New York; Deirdre (Robert Kapanen), San Francisco; Matthew (Amil Niazi), Toronto. His beloved grandchildren Chloe Kapanen, Callum Kapanen, Sommerset Murphy, and Oma Murphy. He is predeceased by his brother, Peter Murphy (St. Albert, AB). Kingsburg will miss the sound of his tractor, wayward sheep, rusted sculptures, and the guarantee of a hearty wave. Donations in his name can be made to NSCAD through nscad.ca. A memorial for Dave will be held sometime this summer.

Dr. Murphy's full obituary can be read here: <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/theglobeandmail/obituary.aspx?n=david-alton-murphy&pid=197890897>

We regretfully share the news that Dr. David A. Murphy, after being unwell for some time, passed away this morning at home with family.

Dr. Murphy, with a love for animals, began his career as a veterinarian. With his thirst for knowledge and motivation he made the decision to enroll at McGill Medical School, graduating in 1960 and then went on to complete his surgical training at the Royal Victoria Hospital in 1965. Subsequently, he pursued fellowships with Dr. Robert Gross, a pioneer in cardiac surgery, at the Boston Children's Hospital as well as the Hospital for Sick Children at Great Ormond Street, London.

David came to Halifax in 1974 and served as Chief of Cardiac Surgery for many years at both the Victoria General Hospital and the IWK Health Centre. His vision of a regional cardiac sciences centre came to fruition, collaboratively with radiology (Dr. Fraser), anesthesia (Dr. Moffatt), and cardiology (Dr. Chandler), to establish The Maritime Heart Centre. Both he and Dr. Brian Chandler, Cardiology, instituted the present referral system and peer-reviewed waitlist which has been the core of the clinical cardiac service in Halifax.

Dr. Murphy was instrumental, along with Dr. Sullivan, in developing the cardiac transplant program here in Halifax; likewise, he forged very effective basic science research collaborations as a foundation for the research achievements today. David took pride in teaching and was responsible for implementing a Royal College approved cardiac surgery residency program here in 1978; he continued to mentor trainees throughout his career.

Retirement was just a stepping stone for David as he went on to earn a Bachelor of Fine Arts at Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, embracing a life-long passion for the visual arts.

Despite his ambitious career, David and Sonia found a balance and raised a beautiful family.

We greatly appreciate Dr. Murphy's contributions to cardiac surgery and the Maritime Heart Centre. Murphy's sense of humor and inspiration will be missed.

With deepest sympathy to family, friends and colleagues – we remember.

