



Christopher Michael Bell

July 27, 1966 - May 15, 2024

Christopher M Bell

It is with great sorrow that we announce the death of Dr. Christopher Michael Bell. Chris passed away on 15 May 2024, surrounded by loved ones after a brief, but aggressive, Blitzkrieg-style attack of cancer.

Chris was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, on 27 July 1966 to parents Bonnita Anne (Barclay) Bell and Peter Alvin Bell. He spent most of his youth in Calgary, Alberta. Chris is survived by his parents, Bonnie and Peter, his sons Alex W. and Matthew A. Bell, sister Erinn Sehn (Chad), nephew Garyth Sehn, and his loving partner Deanna Foster.

Chris was a brilliant scholar. He completed his BA Honours at the University of Calgary, his MA War Studies at the King's College in London, and his PhD at the University of Calgary. His work took him from where he grew up in Calgary to where he finally settled in Halifax to work at Dalhousie University in 2003.

As a member of the history department, he made an incredible impression on students for 20 years, who have shared their immense joy from his classes. A popular, award-winning teacher, he loved teaching and mentoring students. He was a fierce supporter of the importance of academic integrity, and nurtured that within his students. Students appreciated his witty sense of humour that always made the material interesting.

His passion for history was evident with every lecture in the classroom, every presentation at a conference, every meticulous footnote. Along with scholarly works, he loved a good murder mystery. His love of books started from childhood, where he was known to chastise his mother for bending the spines of books. Collecting books was a lifelong passion that he shared with all who knew him. He was the author and editor of several books, including his most recent book on Churchill and the Dardanelles.

Chris loved to travel, which he often did with his partner Deanna. She was his best friend,

his true love of many years, and he disheartened that they won't have more adventures to share. From local bookstores to Europe, he was eager to journey near or far. He always found something to enjoy about every city he visited.

Chris would like to acknowledge how grateful he is for the overwhelming support and kindness he has received over these last few weeks. Many thanks to his parents, sister Erinn and brother-in-law Chad, for coming to be with him. Thanks to his friends and colleagues from the academic world (including DMO, MS, JF, DC), childhood friends, including Charles and Alvin, and former students. And to the nurses and doctors in the palliative care ward, which he described as an "oasis of empathy."

An inspiring mentor, a supportive friend, brilliant scholar, a loving partner, son and father, Chris was taken from us much too soon. He will be forever missed.

"Do not grieve for me too much. Death is only an incident, and not the most important which happens to us in this state of being. Look forward, feel free, rejoice in life." - Winston Churchill, 1915.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to a cancer fund. A memorial of life will be organized in the fall at Dalhousie University. Messages of support for his family and the sharing of memories can be passed on to Deanna Foster at deanna.foster@dal.ca