

Dignity<sup>®</sup>  
MEMORIAL

OBITUARY

*Philip Clyde Bagnell*

PASSED AWAY ON JULY 15, 2023



IN THE CARE OF

JA Snow Funeral Home

When Dr. Philip Bagnell retired in 2013 as Dean of Quillen College of Medicine (East Tennessee State University), his recognition plaque read “A Man of Elemental Force and Dignity, of Essential Honor and True Worth”. His decades as a physician and medical leader in Nova Scotia and Tennessee were incredibly rewarding, and his last decade has been filled with spending time with family and friends, taking care of his family home, and Maritime travel and music. His quiet strength, integrity, and humour made for a remarkable presence. Phil was a physician, a leader, a proud and deeply dedicated family man, and a Nova Scotian to his core.

Born in Sydney, Nova Scotia, the eldest son to the late Philip Edwin and Isobel Mildred (nee Townsend) Bagnell. Phil passed away at age 81 after a brief battle with cancer. He died at

his beloved Tall Trees family home taken care of and surrounded by his family, which was his wish.

He is survived by his wife Heather Louise (nee MacGregor), children: Alexa (Patrick Keefe), Philip Scott (Suzie Villacastin), Sheridan (Gregory Bailly), Regan (Paul Yeatman); grandchildren: Connor, Sawyer, Ian, Mac, Olin, Grant, Annika, Thatcher; sister Isobel (Charlie MacLennan), and niece and nephews Christina, Jeff and Kurt.

Phil graduated from Moncton High School in 1959 recognized for his involvement in student governance and athletics. He was highly decorated and involved in Scouts Canada in his school years, and recognized his scout master (also his family physician) as a strong influence in his decision to pursue medicine.

The first ever in his family to attend University, Phil met the love of his life, Heather, at Mount Allison. Their relationship was the foundation of the Bagnell family, with humour, hospitality, humility, steadfastness and love. Phil and Heather were role models for a strong, independent, respectful and loving relationship that all who spent time with them witnessed, and all their children have had the good fortune to find. His children were the lights of his life. He was immensely proud of each of his children's accomplishments, but even more so of the people they were and how they conducted themselves in the world. He was most grateful for the closeness of his family and dear friends. These relationships brought him much joy throughout his life and comfort during his illness.

After graduating from Dalhousie Medical School in 1968, Phil worked as a family physician in New Glasgow and enjoyed rural practice. He entered Pediatric residency at IWK Children's Hospital, Halifax in 1970. In 1971, their young family moved to Cincinnati so he could train in Pediatric Gastroenterology. There were many stories from this time, but the family favourite was when he saved the life of Gigi the gorilla at the Cincinnati Zoo. Dr. Richard Goldbloom, the Chief of Pediatrics and a longtime family friend, recruited Phil back as the first IWK Pediatric Gastroenterologist in 1973. Phil was revered by his patients and their families. As a physician he embraced complex clinical presentations, and was one of the early contributors to preventing Reye's syndrome. As an educator, there were countless physicians who were influenced by him as a teacher and physician.

In 1991, he was recruited by East Tennessee State University, to start their first Pediatric residency program servicing the rural Appalachian region. The medical community swiftly recognized Phil's outstanding character and talent and he was brought into leadership

roles including Vice President Medical Affairs of The Johnson City Medical Center in 1998 and Executive Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs for the College of Medicine in 2000. He completed his career serving as Dean of Medicine at the Quillen College of Medicine from 2006 to his retirement in 2013. He was recognized by the United States Congress “we have witnessed the growth of ETSU medical program under your tenure, and in turn the people of the community have come to know and support you.”

Retiring with great grace but always a physician, he provided consultation to Dalhousie Medical School upon his return and has led the section of senior and retired doctors for Doctors Nova Scotia in recent years. His plans in retirement “to return to Nova Scotia and be a full-time grandfather” were fulfilled.

In the last two decades, his true calling was as ‘Papa’. For a man who never spoke of his own accomplishments, and rarely of his children’s, he shared his grandchildren’s achievements with great pride. As a varsity volleyball athlete, Phil was an avid sports fan over the years attending many athletic events of his grandchildren, and was a dedicated Halifax Grammar and Queen’s University basketball fan. His curiosity and depth of knowledge made for deep conversations with each grandchild, sharing common interests ranging from social justice, sports, history, computers and technology, genealogy, business and music.

Phil knew he was dying and approached this last leg with the same grace, dignity and honor that he lived his entire life. His family wishes to extend their heartfelt gratitude for the support of Dr. Craig St. Peters, Dr. Lori Wood, Dr. Sue Robinson, Dr. Rob Berry and IR team, Dr. David Bell and Urology service, Dr. Jeff Dempster, Claire Belliveau and Palliative Care for their compassionate and exemplary care. The remembrance service honoring Phil’s life will be held at Snow’s Funeral Home, Lacewood Drive, Halifax, NS with livestream available on Monday, July 24 at 10 am. The family has requested in lieu of flowers to send contributions to the Salvation Army of Canada or the Molly Appeal at Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine.

We will miss the walks on Conrad’s Beach with Dad and Sima, and other furry friends, and are grateful for the unparalleled beauty and majesty of Nova Scotia that our father loved so much.

# *Past Services*

MONDAY, JULY 24, 2023

Memorial Service

MONDAY, JULY 24, 2023

Reception to Follow

## *In Memory Of* *Philip Clyde Bagnell*

