



Death Is Nothing At All

Henry Scott-Holland

Death is nothing at all. It does not count. I have only slipped away into the next room.
Nothing has happened.

Everything remains exactly as it was.

I am I, and you are you, and the old life that we lived so fondly together is untouched,
unchanged.

Whatever we were to each other, that we are still.

Call me by the old familiar name.

Speak of me in the easy way which you always used. Put no difference into your tone.

Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.

Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes that we enjoyed together.

Play, smile, think of me, pray for me.

Let my name be ever the household word that it always was.

Let it be spoken without an effort, without the ghost of a shadow upon it.

Life means all that it ever meant.

It is the same as it ever was.

There is absolute and unbroken continuity.

What is this death but a negligible accident?

Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight?

I am but waiting for you, for an interval, somewhere very near,
just round the corner.

All is well.

Nothing is hurt; nothing is lost.

One brief moment and all will be as it was before.

How we shall laugh at the trouble of parting when we meet again!

Good evening and welcome:

The poem just read was written by Henry Scott-Holland. Danelle found the poem on John's desk while trying to sort through some of his paperwork. She believes that it was a message that John wanted to leave to all of his family and friends to provide comfort in his passing.

- All music (even most of the mingling music, although not original artists) are songs taken from John's eclectic playlists.
- There were well over 500 photos to go through and select from for the presentations. The quality of some photos may not be perfect, but each photo is a story. They are moments captured in time of John with friends, family and the great outdoors.
- Please visit the Memory Table if you haven't already. Each item represents a time in John's life and symbolizes the building blocks that laid the foundation of the man we came to know.
- There is a bike wheel with 70 candles that will be lit at the end of the evening representing John's special day and coinciding with our toast to John.
- There is also a "memory book" that Danelle would love for everyone to sign that she can share with family and friends for years to come and maybe tonight with John who isjust around the corner.....!

Life, in all its facets, is a journey. One filled with moments of joy, sadness, triumph, celebrations, obstacles and lessons....all which shape us into the people we become and help create the legacies we hope to leave behind. John was a very multi-faceted guy! You need only look through the over 500 photos posted on the google link to see that he touched the lives of many people and leaves a lifetime of memories for us all.

So...who was John Richard Bates? Here is a compilation of highlights to get us rolling.

John was born in Epsom, England on November 23rd, 1953, 70 years ago, today. The Bates family moved to BC, back to England then back to BC and finally put down roots in White Rock when John was 10. John finished grade 12 and Danelle tells the story that he was busy lazing around for the summer probably riding his bike, fishing, climbing or hiking! His parents gave him an ultimatum that if he didn't get a job or arrange to continue with post secondary education by the fall, they were going to get him a job with their friend who was a mortician. That didn't sound too appealing to John so he signed up to attend BCIT to try and figure out what he was going to do with the rest of his life.

He looked at the curriculum for the Land Surveyor program, saw they did a lot of work outdoors and thought that was the perfect job for him because he LOVED the outdoors! John graduated BCIT as a land surveyor at the age of 20 and was hired by BC Hydro where he would spend the next 36 years, all of his working career, surveying and exploring the great outdoors. John joined the BC Mountaineering Club where he met Daniela Cmiralova. John, Daniela and friends enjoyed two amazing treks in Nepal in 1975 and 1980. John and Daniela married and in 1983 baby Jack arrived and daughter Robyn came along shortly thereafter in 1984. Time spent outdoors, including hiking, canoeing, fishing and skiing continued but on a smaller scale with some modification to accommodate a growing, young family. Life was busy!

John joined the BC Randonneur Club in 1996 for the next 11 years, club member #565 was a force to be reckoned with on rides ranging from 100 to 2000 kilometers. Over that 11 year period, John clocked over 45,315km winning the club's "Iron Butt" award in 2001 with 6917 km ridden in one year. John and Danelle also met through the Randonneur Club and thus began their journey on a bicycle built for two.

In 2000, John started working with Danelle to organize bike tours of BC. Following his retirement from BC Hydro in 2010, John continued to work with Danelle on TourBC and eventually tours in Turkey, Colombia, and Albania. They also did cyclotouring in other parts of Canada, US, Europe, Africa, and South America.

On September 15th, 2012 John walked daughter Robyn down the aisle into the arms of Stephen Kilshaw. Robyn and Stephen blessed John with grandson McKinley in 2020 and granddaughter Marlee in 2022. Both Jack and partner Melissa and Robyn with husband, Stephen and kids, carry on John's love of the mountains from their respective homes in Creston, BC and Salt Lake City, Utah.

In 2015, after cycling in Colombia and experiencing ongoing neck pain, John was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma. With treatment he was eventually able to resume a normal life. Then in 2019, after completing several 200 kilometre rides and a 23 day tour of the Baltics, old injuries started to affect his knees and hips.

In 2022 John got a new hip and life was looking good post pandemic! John took on a new hobby while recovering at this slower pace putting his energy into learning how to cook and becoming quite adept at creating Indian, Thai, and Persian dishes.

2023 was a tough year from the onset and John almost made it to this milestone birthday, but changes happened very fast. "A friend of John's said to Danelle - John always did like to go downhill fast and it was true - on skis, on bike, and eventually in life.

In hospital it was discovered John had developed several other cancers and it was actually lung cancer he succumbed to. John said ironically – “my myeloma treatments worked so well, I lived long enough to develop other cancers”.

So, let’s start at the beginning and enjoy together some of the adventures, and memories that help paint the picture and tell the story of John’s life.

Photo Presentations, Phil’s presentation, open Mic, Nathalie reads Danelle’s “Ode to John”, Ken Wright’s tribute song on trumpet “Unforgettable”, Champagne is distributed, farewell hugs.

Thank you to everyone for being here to celebrate the life and adventures of John. There is no doubt that it would have meant so much to John to see all of the people he loved and shared his life with together in one room celebrating his life on what would have been, his 70th birthday. This is not just a celebration of John, but a celebration of the relationships, memories, and experiences we all shared with John. A man who was and forever will be loved, admired, and respected by us all.

Let us all raise our glasses as we toast to the man, the father, the grandfather, the partner, the brother, the friend, the adventurer. Happy Birthday, John and as Winnie the Pooh so appropriately said....”How lucky.. are we... to have something so special, that makes... saying goodbye ...so hard”. Cheers John!

Ode to John – Danelle Laidlaw

I do not go gently into this fair night
I rail against a fate that holds me firmly in its grip
I am not ready
I have more things to do
My time can't be up already!
It is not fair that I cannot know my grandchildren
Or finish my projects
Or nurture my relationships
But it seems the decision is not only mine
Do not shed only tears of sadness for me when I am gone
I hope I have brought you strength and support
For I have tried to do that
I am so grateful for the family and friendships I have enjoyed
I will miss you all
Please remember me with happy thoughts
Not mournful ones
I do not go gently into this fair night
But go I must
I reach out my hand in submission
And I accept that this is something I cannot control
Cannot overcome
It grieves me that my strength abandons me now
But I have had adventures
Known love
Raised children
And accomplished much
I do not go gently into this fair night, But go I must.

Quotes to accompany presentations:

Younger Years:

“The journey of life is like a man riding a bicycle. We know he got on the bicycle and started to move. We know that at some point he will stop and get off.” - William G. Golding

Phil’s Presentation:

John, Jack and Robyn:

“The greatest adventure is what lies ahead.” JRR Tolkien

Working on bikes:

There is nothing, absolutely nothing, quite so worthwhile as simply messing about on bicycles.” – Tom Kunich

Family & Friends

“The road goes on forever, but the ride eventually ends”. – Mountain biking adage

Rando and Tours:

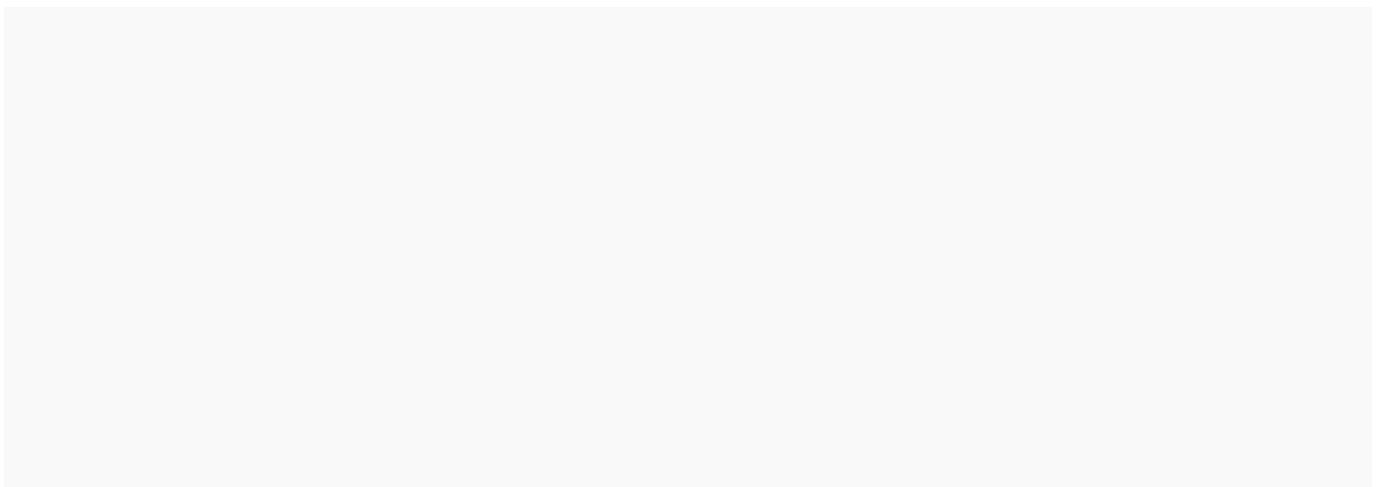
“Riding a bike is everything to a cyclist. The friendship and camaraderie you have with other cyclists...to a cyclist, it is the be-all and end-all of your life”. – Tommy Godwin

Outdoor adventures:

“Everybody needs beauty...places to play in and pray in where nature may heal and cheer and give strength to the body and soul alike”. - John Muir

Danelle & John:

“I would not wish any companion in the world but you.” – William Shakespeare



Links to youtube videos:

Younger Years: (2:53)

<https://youtu.be/2SPEs88VQPs>

John, Robyn & Jack (3:59)

https://youtu.be/SvDKXW_R8yo

Friends and Family: (3:19)

<https://youtu.be/pM2jUKt4Gc8>

Outdoor Adventure (2:38)

<https://youtu.be/5q0LYG24Q7g>

Fixing Bikes: (2:35)

<https://youtu.be/M9qyLEBHre8>

Rando & Tour & Post (18:47)

https://youtu.be/Ud_DZ0oQw9A

John & Danelle (3:03)

<https://youtu.be/kx-Q1WsSmXU>

Donations in John's name can be made to:

VGH Foundation - vghfoundation.ca or

Myeloma Canada - myelomacanada.ca

John's Obituary

<https://www.myalternatives.ca/burnaby/obituaries/2023-bates-john-richard>

Photo link:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/96KfYvU3p4LDSvEn9>