

JAMES THOM BELFORD



JAMES THOM BELFORD Dip Ed, Jordan College, Glasgow, Scotland, MSc, University of Wisconsin at La Crosse Jim passed away peacefully on May 17, 2018, after a brief stay at Victoria General Hospital, Victoria, BC. Predeceased by his older brother Smith Belford, he is survived by his loving wife Gail Button, son John and Marsha Belford, son David Belford, daughter Carol Paci, daughter-in-law Julia Belford, eight grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, Gail's family, and nieces and nephews in Scotland and the U.S. Born April 3, 1926 in Brechin, Scotland, Jim had an active and fulfilling childhood. At the age of six he declared that he was going to be a gym teacher. Jim and brother Smith were always "on the top of the road", cycling and camping in the nearby woods and hills. He was an avid tennis and soccer player, often heading off to a match after having worked an early shift in his father's bakery most Saturday mornings. Dancing was a passion he enjoyed all his life. Jim attended Jordan Hill College of Physical Education and Hygiene after passing his O levels, served in the Royal British Marines, then accepted an itinerant teaching position in West Calder School District, teaching Physical Education at all levels of the system, often riding his bicycle to distant schools. He was a Scout leader and soccer coach, as well as a fine Scottish country dance team member. In 1954, Jim immigrated to Canada with his wife Jessie and their young family to take up a teaching position in Mossbank, Saskatchewan, a position he held for four years, followed by a number of years with the Saskatchewan Government's Department of Recreation. There he made many life long friends including Jack Mackenzie of Regina and Harry and Joan Sirett. In 1963, the family moved to Winnipeg where Jim accepted a position at the Manitoba Teachers' College which later became the Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba. As well as teaching Curriculum and Instruction courses, Jim designed a selection of electives which incorporated his love of music, dance, geography and travel as examples of an integrated way of teaching children. Part of his community outreach was to accept requests to do demonstration teaching in classrooms across the province. Many of his students became life long friends. He was an astute faculty advisor to both undergraduate and graduate students. Jim spent his entire career in the field of education, retiring in 1993. In his leisure time, Jim enjoyed theatre, singing and playing his four string guitar, dancing, running and skiing in Birds Hill Park, entertaining, writing poetry and baking his delicious breads. His travels took him to many parts of the world, including several trips to Australia and New Zealand. He played an integral part in the organization of the Manitoba International Folk Dance Federation, MIFDA, along with his long time colleague Dr. Jane Evans. Life was always

interesting for Jim and he took great joy in discovering new people and places. Jim and Gail retired to Victoria in 2010 to enjoy the lovely weather, beautiful surroundings and to seek out new adventures. Sincere thanks to the staff at Beckley Farm Lodge, both the day program leaders and the extended care staff who supported Jim the last several months. Also to the staff of 4 A South Victoria General Hospital for their compassionate care. Grateful thanks to friends and neighbours for their support and generous offers of assistance. There will be no service by request. Flowers are gratefully declined. A donation to a charity for children would be most appreciated. Condolences to the family at www.earthsoption.com