

OBITUARY

Joseph Daniel Johnston, BSc, MD, FACS, FRCSC 1947 — 2003

The Johnston family, Woodstock, NB, and rural surgery grieve the unexpected death of Dr. Joe Johnston on Dec. 18, 2003. As an integral part of a large family of 12 siblings and probably the largest medical family in Canada (seven doctors — 4 rural) Joe sought to be individualistic, charismatic, different. Not for him the mundane or routine — he chose to be a rural surgeon, where he would be part of an essential team, yet have his own space. He did hips, scopes, cesareans, pacemakers, orthopedics and trauma — whatever was most needed in his community. In the rural and remote areas of Canada he sought risk, diversity, adventure and wilderness — the essence of a rural Canadian Doc.

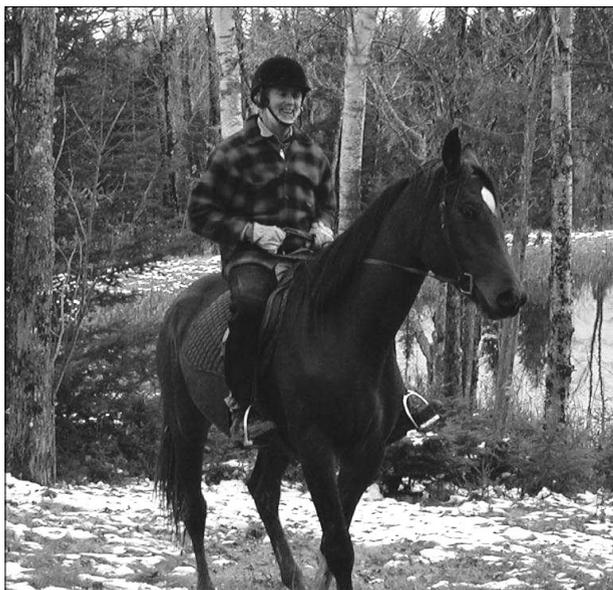
Joe's search for adventure led him around the world. He worked in Rhodesia, hiked through Afghanistan and worked in Alice Springs, Australia. He graduated from Dalhousie Medical School in 1972 and returned to do surgery, where he met and married Cathy McShane. Along with his wife he also leaves behind two daughters, Katie and Theresa.

After becoming a surgeon Joe sought the challenge and adventure of the Northwest and went to Whitehorse for 6 years. In 1987 he moved to Woodstock. His colleague, Dr. Mike Chandra, and OR staff called him "a keen and exceptionally gifted surgeon" who "was willing to face the many challenges as a rural surgeon like his father many years before. . . he had a special ability to leave a memorable impression with each and every person who had the honour to meet him. . . Through a life-long quest of learning, he constantly kept abreast of new and innovative surgical techniques. His uniquely diverse abilities provided his patients the opportunities to undergo procedures rarely performed outside larger centres."

But at the heart of Joe's life were people; life just didn't exist without his family, his friends, his col-

leagues, his community and his place in God's playground — the great outdoors. Performing was a big part of Joe's personality — who can forget his impersonation of Elvis at the SRPC conference in Kelowna? And some of his best performances were in the Woodstock "Operating Theatre." But Joe performed for a reason. He kept things stirred up because it was important for him to see that everyone was having a good time. For him it was always about people enjoying other people.

He will be remembered fondly for his eclectic interests, his infectious sense of fun and for his diverse surgical skills. Thanks Joe — thanks for the joy, the friendship and for making that difference in the lives of all who knew you. You will be missed.



Joe and Rory at Joe's camp in Newburg, NB

Mary Johnston, BSc, MSc, MD