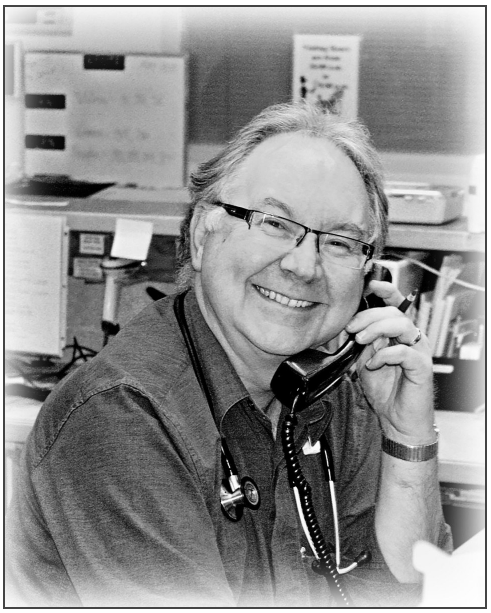
Harland "Hal" Stewart Irvine



FEBRUARY 16, 2017

IRVINE, Dr. Harland ‘Hal’ Stewart
September 5, 1952 – February 16, 2017

Dr. Hal Irvine of Sundre, AB passed away peacefully on Thursday, February 16th, 2017 at the age of 64. He was surrounded by the love of his family, and embraced by his friends and community of whom he served as rural physician for 32 years.

He was a leader, a teacher, a friend, husband and father. His kindness for all he encountered was unparalleled. He was pragmatic, he was just, and above all he was compassionate.

A dedicated family doctor with a passion for the care and health of his patients, Dr. Irvine was renowned for his calming, approachable manner. His love of rural medicine and his community was apparent in so many ways. He thrived on the variety of work in rural practice, from clinic to emergency shifts, delivering babies to palliative care. His selfless dedication to the Sundre community was remarkable and inspiring.

Along with his local practice, Dr. Irvine made several contributions to medical leadership. He was an instrumental member of the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada, president of the Alberta College of Family Physicians, and Chair of the Rural GP Anesthesia Committee. His significant contributions to both rural medicine and anesthesia were recognized with the honour of Alberta’s Family

Physician of the Year in 2013. Dr. Irvine was also a respected educator and secured Sundre as a teaching hospital enabling the next generation of rural physicians in Alberta and beyond.

To many he will always be known as Dr. Irvine, but for others he was simply ‘Hal’. An avid outdoorsman, Hal and his wife Dianne raised their children camping and hiking throughout the Rockies. He had a passion for motorcycling and often toured local and international country roads. This time in nature inspired his love of photography, and Hal became the official photographer for the local theatre group, Peak Theatre Players. Hal’s love for the arts also led to many on stage performances with Peak Theatre, where the Sundre community was exposed to his dry humor, infectious laugh, and many hidden talents.

Dr. Hal Irvine is grieved by his loving wife, Dianne; and their children Sarah (Nathan Kenny), Bronwyn (Owen Petersen), and Brody (Jessica MacInnes); his grandchildren, Sebastian, Forrest, and Maeve; his siblings, Kate Harling and David Irvine, and extended family; his many close friends, colleagues, patients, and students. He will be lovingly remembered and deeply missed.

A remembrance service will be held on Thursday, February 23rd, 2017 at 11:00am at the Sundre Community Centre. The family invites all those who would like to make a contribution in Hal’s memory to donate to the Sundre Palliative Care Association, the Sundre & District Allied Arts Society, or the Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada (specifically research).

Messages of Condolence

Sending our love to Di, Sarah, Bronwyn, Brody, and families. So sorry for your loss.

— Cindy and Nick

Diane, our thoughts are with you and your family. Hal was a very special man as you so well know. He will be sorely missed. He has left a legacy behind. The town of Sundre was blessed by having him for their doctor. I'm so sorry for your loss.

— Brian and Terri Evans

Hal was an amazing man and has left an incredibility legacy in both his work and his wonderful family.
Wayne and I would like to express our condolences and we are so sorry for your loss.
Love always
Wayne, Noreen and family

— Noreen & Wayne Irvine

Dear Irvine Family. It was a pleasure and a privilege to know Hal and to have worked with him, and learned from him the times we bumped into each other at Rural Conferences. It would have been an even greater pleasure to have "shared the stage" with him when he was scheduled to receive his award. Lori and I had the pleasant surprise of bumping into him that evening on a Vancouver street as we had both just arrived for the conference and the award ceremony that was due to happen in the following days. We were shattered to hear of the events that followed, especially given the way he welcomed seeing us with his usual jovial and warm nature. We have thought of him and his family often since then. He will be missed.

— Paul Mackey

To a great gentleman, physician, colleague and mentor. Lucky are we who but knew you awhile, it was by far not long enough.
May God bless you Hal, and grant you good rest in the palm of His hand.

— Mike Caffaro

Please know your family is in my prayers! What a wonderful tribute to a wonderful man who spent his life in service to others in need. xoxoxoxo

— Margaret B Juergens

Hal was a well respected man in our community. He was a great doctor ours for a long time. He will be greatly missed by you all. Our prayers are with you that God will comfort and hold you close.
Love from
Roy and Marie

— Roy and Marie Corless

Condolences to Hal's family and to David and family.

— Raymond Irvine

My condolences to Hal's family. I am privileged to have been positively influenced by Hal, during my short time as a locum in Sundre.

— Gregory Chan

Our thoughts and prayers are with you all. Hal was a very special person and he will be greatly missed. To David and family- may many memories help to sustain you. We are glad you were there to help Diane and family through the months of coping. Love you all so much.

— Sam and Carol Lentz 4106-46 St.

I was already missing Hal's smile at the annual Rural and Remote (SRPC)! But I kept hoping that we'd see him again - my condolences to Diane and his family. Anyone who worked emergency and anaesthesia AND road a motor bike had to be living life to the fullest.

— Dale Dewar

My deepest condolences to Hal's family. I only knew Hal vicariously through his brother Dave. How frequently Dave would mention his older brother and his many accomplishments and service he provided to so many as a Doctor. I am certain Hal will be missed by so many. Blessings to all.

— carmel Larabie

May the love of family and friends comfort the Irvine family during this difficult time. Please accept my heartfelt condolences and prayers.

— Jocelyn Seaman

Diane, my thoughts are with you as you and your family cope with your loss.

— June Chittick

Dear Hal Family,

As a good friend of Kate's, I got to know Hal through her loving description of her dear brother, who was so revered by so many. Eventually, I did have the privilege of meeting Hal & Diane at a family event - a meeting for which I am very grateful. It is clear that Hal was a person of great kindness & compassion, so dedicated to his field, his family, and friends. I send my deepest condolences to the family. May you be comforted by the many memories that hold him close to you.

— Roberta Stern

I knew Hal a very long time ago. For a time, in high school, he was my good friend's boy friend, so I spent a fair amount of time with him. He was a friendly guy with a good sense of humor and a deep love of puns and practical jokes. I left the area not long after that, and as I read what he made of his life after high school, it comes as no surprise. Even at that young age, he was dedicated and intent on his ambitions, and more than once he mentioned that he was interested in medical school. I am so glad that not only did he achieve that, he achieved so much more, both in terms of community and family. My condolences and regards to all, with sympathy on your loss.

— Caddie TKenye

Our hearts go out to the Irvine family during this difficult time. Hal will surely be missed by his family and friends but forever in your hearts.

— Hugh and Diane MacInnes

Hello Diane, my dear friend, Kate, and your other brother,
I met Hal on a wonderful camping trek in Yosemite Natl Park a few years ago.
He was so warm and friendly and fun to be with. He spoke fondly of Diane, wishing you could be with us, and described his beloved daughters and upcoming grand children with deep love. He had a wonderful sense of humour and and a joy of life.
The next time we met was in Vancouver when he came to receive Alberta's Physician of the Year Award. Unfortunately, he ended up in the hospital and soon went back to Alberta and later received his award. At that time, my friend Linda who knew Hal from med school in Alberta was also there. And, now here we are together in Calif on holidays with our spouses Michel and Peter. I send my love and condolences to all of you and know how much he will be missed.
Sincerely, JoAn Maurer
of the Year Award. That honour was soon

— JoAn Maurer

Dearest Dianne and Family,

We're thinking of you with love in our hearts at this time of Hal's passing. May the fond memories of your lives together enjoying life to the fullest comfort you and bring smiles to your faces. We will always remember Uncle Hal as a wonderful father and husband, brother and uncle, with the greatest laugh!

Our deepest condolences to all of you.

Sincerely,

Brad, Teresa, Kyle and Brett

— Teresa, Brad, Kyle and Brett Crarer

Dear Diane and family,
My deepest sympathy to all of you on losing this remarkable man. His gentleness and compassion were obvious when we were students and neighbors in Calgary in the 70's. All his accomplishments since then and the love of his family speak of a life well lived.
Love, Linda Harth

— Linda Harth

So saddened by your loss. Please know that you are all in our thoughts.

— Julie Clarke & Dan Keyworth

Our thoughts and deepest condolences to you Dianne and your family. Hal has left such a legacy in our community. He'll always be remembered.
We're very sorry for your loss.

— Brian & Penny Ford

Dianne, Sarah, Bronwyn and Brody...Our love and thoughts to all of you. We have been heartbroken for you ever since this long and terrible journey began. How deeply we will all miss Hal, a great doctor, a man of warmth and humour and all round wonderful human being. Bless you all.

— Alec and Anne Macklin and family

In 1971, before Hal met Dianne, he and Campbell and I (we were all just friends then) hitchhiked from Queen's to my house in Thornhill (near Toronto). A few months ago I was talking to my 93-year-old mother about Hal and that weekend and she said "I remember ... one of them was in love with you and you were in love with the other one." Funny how she knew what was going on even though I didn't at the time! My heart is still filled with love for Hal, truly one of the sweetest and kindest men I have ever known. Much love to Dianne and the kids.

— Frankie

Dear Dianne & family, our deepest sympathy to you all. We only knew Dr. Irvine for a few years but liked him immediately when we met him for the first time in emergency. He took good care of us both. He will be greatly missed by all that knew him.

— Ed & Darlene Gulka

My sincerest condolences to Diane, Sarah, Bronwyn, and Brody. Hal was a amazing man, and Sundre was lucky to have him as a physician. I'm so sorry for your loss.

— Alex Beattie

Dear Diane and family,

Blythe and Hal were classmates --Class of 77--seems like yesterday! I remember Hal's twinkling eyes and smiles and our correspondence about travels to Australia with family--now 20 years later, one of our daughters is down there doing an art festival in Canberra!
My thoughts and sorrow are with you...Hal was well loved in our medical community--as was evident with his Physician of the Year award-----
May your joyful memories sustain you!
God bless you and Sarah, Bronwyn and Brody.....

Marina Skulsky
Class of 78'

— Marina R Skulsky

aaah, I am sooo sorry Di and kids and families. May your fondest memories rise to the fore and remain there forever. I have (good) memories of the boy from Lacombe whether it was at the Lake (Sylvan) or in Kingston (baby Sarah) and places in between; thinking of you all, always. Take good care of each other. Somehow the story of the door closing and the window opening provides a bit of solice at this time with newest baby. He was tired and deserved his peace albeit way too sad and too young for any of this pain.

— Marianne Ekubor

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