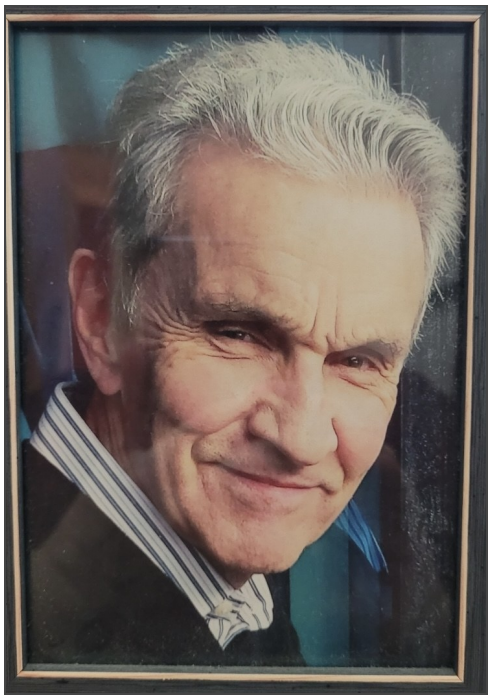
Henry Eric Melanson



FEBRUARY 7, 2025

Henry Eric Melanson, known as Hank, was born on June 22, 1937 in Bathurst NB Canada. On February 7, 2025 Hank died peacefully with family and friends at his side not far from his Burnaby home.

His parents moved West with their growing family of five. Hank's father, an engineer, died in a plane crash when Hank was 12 years old. Hank was the second in the family and eldest son. He and his siblings took up many family responsibilities including caring for their Mom and for one another.

Hank is survived by his beloved son Adam, his sisters Ann Paris (Ray) and Mary Ellen Gillan (Bob), as well as by his brothers Mike and Pat (Wendy), who was like a son to him. He also leaves behind his former wives Sharon Gretzinger (m. 1961) and Toni Pieroni (m. 1977) and many close and precious friends who were like family to him.

As a youngster Hank was a very good basketball player and always played happily on the Vancouver College High School team. He also learned to dance at this time and was first attracted to Sharon when he saw her on the dance floor.

Hank's enduring interest of his adult life was moving vehicles. He raced his precious red Corvette (as did Sharon - which tickled him to no end). He was completely devoted to people having good, well-cared-for cars, and became known

for his business, “Cars by Hank”. If he helped someone find a car, he would also help them to care for it and would remain on-call for assisting them with its needs. He remained passionate about working with people and their vehicles his entire life.

He also loved boats and built a spectacular racing boat, The Red Baron, in his backyard garage, with his friends, Frank Guise and Alex McDonald. The boat allowed him to indulge and reveal his considerable skills as a water skier, a pleasure he delighted in sharing with friends and loved ones.

The highlight of his life, the birth of his son Adam, has always brought joy to his heart. He passed his love of boats and cars onto Adam, who worked with him on vehicles from an early age. Adam has therefore become a very skillful man able to fix and build almost anything.

In the 1970’s, Hank became actively engaged in the personal growth movement. When he turned 50, he and his 2nd wife, Toni, took a year off and travelled to Europe, which became a life changing experience for him. He returned from that trip, resumed his car business, and also formed a partnership with Larry Gilman, putting on a very powerful personal development program called The Mastery of Self Expression. Through that and beyond, he experienced another passion, which was to help people change their lives, and he was amazing at it!

In later years, Hank returned to his love of dancing. As he did everything in life, he went 100%, taking classes, performing, and he developed quite a reputation for his skill on the dance floor. All the women wanted him for a dance partner!

Hank will be remembered long and fondly by many in the large networks within which he lived throughout his life. He was a man of such honesty, integrity and passion. He was truly one of a kind and will be sorely missed.

May he rest in peace!

A Celebration of his Life will be scheduled within the next couple of months.

Messages of Condolence

All the boys at café Calabria will miss our friend Hank. He wasn’t just a customer he was more like family. Our condolences go out to his love ones and family. We will miss you Hank.

— Cafe Calabria

You will be missed Hank. I am glad I had a chance to briefly talk to you on Feb. 6th,. Keep on dancin' up a storm up there-what do they say. "Dance like no one is watching".

— Judy Heintz

Hank is the best man I have ever known. We met on the dance floor and it was like our souls knew each other. Years between us in age didn’t matter. Over 25 years of an amazing friendship. We would talk for hours and hours about anything and everything. Hank is irreplaceable and I miss him every day. Forever grateful for our friendship.

— Karen Brown

Thank You Hank for all the Loving Memories. You will always hold a Special Place in my Heart.

— Michele Lueks

Dear Hank, I just reread a card/letter you had written me for a birthday years ago and it warmed my heart to to end! Thank you for making a difference in my life and for our connection around the Mastery! Sail on and rest well!

— Sharon Whittaker

Hank was my dear friend. I met him at Urban Beat Dance about 25 years ago and we became instant friends and dance partners. Hank had a great impact on me and many people around him sharing personal growth stories, coaching us all to be more authentic and confident. Where ever you are now Hank "Spin her 'till the floor smokes". Hank was one of a kind, larger than life and will be missed dearly. My condolences to all his family and friends.

— Anne Murray

Hank was and is one of a kind. I so appreciated our friendship which included many years of wonderful conversations about many things. He was a good friend and and Hank, thanks for being you and for everything.

— Jim Quigley

I knew Hank from the Mastery. As a matter of fact he is the reason I took the Mastery. I had been recommending it to clients and Hank challenged me to take it instead of simply recommending it! He was larger than life and I shall miss his energy and encouragement and his spirit.

— Gail Muise

Uncle Hank was one of a kind. After my parents had adopted me Uncle Hank accepted me and as the years passed by, I realized that Uncle Hank was always there. Even though years passed and the visits were less than I would have liked. Uncle Hank was always on my mind. Thanks for the love and memories and love Uncle Hank.

— Ian Melanson

I got to spend some time talking with Hank wearing his hats as the Mastery enrolment wizard and car sales guy.

I will always remember you as the Mastery enrollment legend like no other!

Rest in peace, Hank.

— Emily Nakai

Our condolences to Hank's family. Hank was one of those special people who held a place in our hearts no matter how often we saw him. His energy and zest for life and people was an inspiration. We valued his care through many cars and wonderful connections. Dance on Hank, knowing you have touched so many and are loved by so many.

— Shirley and Jim Vollett

Aww, Hank!! You were one of a kind my friend :) Not only did you set me up with amazing cars over the years (one of which I’m still driving!!) you also enrolled me in the Mastery of Self Expression. That was a life changing event for me and it is always you I thank in my heart. I’m so grateful to have known you. My sincerest condolences to family and friends. Rest in peace, dear Hank!!

— Amy Phillips

Hank Melanson 1938-2025

What a lovely tribute to my ‘big’ brother

— MaryEllen Melanson Gillan

Alternatives
FUNERAL & CREMATION SERVICES

https://www.myalternatives.ca/obituaries/melanson-henry-eric

Printed on October 11, 2026