

PROSPECTOR J.P. ROSS DIES SUDDENLY IN WHITEHORSE



John Peter Ross (Photo submitted by family)

John Peter Ross, known among friends as J.P., died suddenly at his home in Whitehorse, Yukon in early May, 2008. He was 60 years old.

J.P., a Yukon resident of nearly 35 years and a dedicated member of the Yukon Prospectors' Association, was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, on March 16, 1948. He was young when his family relocated to Montreal where he grew up and was educated.

He graduated from McGill University with a Bachelor of Science in chemistry and a minor in biology in 1970 before coming to the Yukon where he did time in United Keno Hill Mines' mill at Elsa on five different occasions.

He started out pushing a broom in the mid-1970s. "People were quitting so fast, I was promoted three times in the first five hours to the position of the ball mill operator," once explained J.P., who had to keep coming back to replenish his purse in between money-draining prospecting jaunts.

Inquisitive, he began exploring the northland as soon as he set foot in the Yukon. He read prodigiously and interviewed prospectors and miners who sparked his interest in pursuing independent mineral prospecting as a primary vocation in 1985.

A smart businessman, his new-found career began to flourish. In 1995, the Yukon Prospectors' Association (YPA) selected John Peter Ross as Prospector of the Year. The YPA award, based on a prospector's successes in uncovering new mineral

discoveries, recognized his good fortune in finding the Killermun Lake gold property in the Ruby Range-Aishihik area in the vicinity of Haines Junction.

J.P. will be remembered for his fashion statement, a pair of red suspenders, and as a top prospector. His name is engraved in the base of the bronze prospector statue that watches over downtown Whitehorse from the corner of Main Street and Second Avenue.

He will be missed by his prospecting friends. Besides his vast interest and knowledge on an eclectic array of subjects, J.P. shared his information willingly, indeed an extraordinary trait for a person operating in the highly-competitive prospecting and exploration business where most people keep their secrets close to their vest.

J.P. was definitely his own person. His staunch individualism earned him the rite of passage into Jim Robb's illustrious Colourful Five Percent club.
