

John Saunders

April 28, 1944 – August 7, 2024

Rotary Club of Winnipeg-Assiniboine

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of John Kenneth Saunders, a cherished husband, father, grandfather, and friend. John passed away peacefully, leaving behind a legacy of love, dedication, and extraordinary achievements. Born in Melbourne, Australia, in 1944 to Edith and James Saunders, John led a life filled with purpose, curiosity, and generosity.

John began a notable career in academia at Sherbrooke University, where he published extensively and eventually became the head of the chemistry department. Family needs drew him back to Australia, where he took up a position at the University of New South Wales. Yet, the call of Canada brought the family back, and John joined the National Research Council (NRC) in Ottawa.

It was at NRC that John collaborated with neurosurgeon Dr. Garnette Sutherland to develop the groundbreaking intraoperative MRI, a pioneering tool that revolutionized the way surgeries are conducted. His visionary work laid the foundation for IMRIS, a company he founded to bring this technology to hospitals around the world. Even after retirement, John's passion for innovation led him to join CUBRESA, continuing his contributions to the field.

John’s expertise in MRI earned him global recognition, with numerous scientific papers and several patents to his name. But beyond his professional accolades, John will be remembered for his humility, integrity, and love for his family.

Outside of work, John found joy in life’s simpler pleasures. He was an avid golfer and cherished his time with friends at Breezy Bend. He was also a devoted member of the Rotary Club of Winnipeg-Assiniboine and a lover of books, often unwinding with a good read and a well-deserved dram of whiskey.