

Mark Howland Bostwick

Jan. 31, 1939 – July 31, 2025

Mark Bostwick was born in Denver, Colorado on January 31, 1939 to Blanche and Richard Bostwick. His family roots on his father's side stretch back to John Howland, an indentured servant on the Mayflower, 1620 and on his mother's side to Norwegian immigrants arriving in the 1860's. He spent his childhood in Denver attending local public schools, worked as a paperboy for the Rocky Mountain News, as a page at the Denver Public Library and at summer factory jobs at the Schwayder Bros. luggage company.

As a teenager Mark became directly attached to mountain climbing through the Colorado Mountain Club. He ultimately made a number of significant local ascents including early climbs of the east ridge and south face of the Maiden outside of Boulder and the 3rd ascent of the Petit Grepon in the Rocky Mountain National Park. By 1961 he had climbed all of Colorado's 14,000 foot peaks. This interest led to climbs in Europe, Mexico, Peru, Ecuador, Wyoming, California, Alaska and B.C. Memorable climbs include Orizaba, Mont Blanc, Grepon, Nevada Huascaran, Cotopaxi, Pingora Symmetry Spire, and first ascents in the Shakes Glacier area of Alaska.

In 1957 he enrolled at Carleton College (a small Minnesota liberal arts college), dropping out for a year between his second and third years to travel by thumb and Vespa through Europe. Upon graduating he married Jane Schaefer and moved to California to enter graduate school at Stanford University. At Stanford he was a teaching assistant in the History Department and became the senior page at the Hoover Institution research library. Mark was active in student government and the civil rights and peace movements.

In 1969 he took a teaching position at a state college in Hays, Kansas. In 1971 after separating from his wife he immigrated to Vancouver. In Canada he helped set up a West Coast Trail information centre near Port Renfrew. Mark did community development with Leonard Minsky as part of the GVRD Public Program. This was followed by employment as a community animateur for a group whose purpose was to increase community understanding of the role of non-governmental organizations in international development.

For several years he was active in the NDP at all levels. He was a close friend and researcher for Rosemary Brown, MLA. In 1977 he joined a small team appointed by the BCGEU and IWA 1-217 to develop affordable housing. Projects included ownership housing, on reserve housing, non-profit housing co-operatives and the formation of Inner City Housing Development. In 1980 he was hired as a co-op co-ordinator for Columbia Housing Advisory. In this capacity he was involved in co-op housing projects throughout the Lower Mainland. He also served on Co-operative Housing Foundation committees engaged in negotiating program delivery with CMHC and ministers responsible for housing.

When the federal government wound down the co-operative housing program Mark found employment as a Social Planner at the District of North Vancouver. Initially he worked on developing a municipal affordable housing strategy, but over the years this expanded into a number of other social planning

areas. Notable efforts include: an approach to legalizing secondary suites, experiments in equity co-operatives including the Zajac-Norgate senior's co-op, adaptable design guidelines, a substance abuse task force, youth safe house, and the Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness. He was a Director of the Emergency Social Services program. Much of his work involved working with highly motivated municipal and health region staff and politicians across the North Shore. He retired in 2006.

In the mid-1980's his interests in the outdoors expanded to include exploration of back country British Columbia in his 4WD vehicle, often with the Lionsgaters 4WD Club. This led to publication of several guidebooks and many magazine articles on B.C. back roads stressing both the wonders and fragility of the natural environment. At the same time in 1986 he undertook a fourteen year project to document 'changing Vancouver' in black and white film. Other interests included reading, listening to classical music, current affairs and downsizing from climbing to hiking and distance running.

Mark felt a strong commitment to community affairs. At various times he volunteered for Peoples Law School, Uzume Taiko drum group, and local public art juries. He served on the Richmond Heritage Commission (chair) and Richmond Public Library Board.

He was married three times: to Jane Schaefer in 1962, Colleen Fuller in 1976, and Linda Hilts in 1989.

