Hugh B. Lade ‘65

Kind, generous, and a little bit funny.

Hugh Blizard Lade, 79, died peacefully at home in Seattle, surrounded by his loving family, on June 14, 2023 from CNS lymphoma.

Born in Seattle, WA, on December 7, 1943, Hugh was the treasured only child of Carol "Cris" Blizard and Elmer Vincent "EV" Lade. Hugh helped build the family home in Kenmore when he was eight years old. Bright and hardworking, he skipped ahead in school and spent a summer studying abroad in Denmark. Hugh graduated from Lake Washington High School in 1961, after which he attended Dartmouth College. Hugh led the freshman crew as stroke and spent four years rowing with the team, where lifelong friendships began, including with Bob Ernst ‘65, who remains one of his closest comrades.

After graduating from Dartmouth in 1965, Hugh returned to Seattle where he was set up on a blind date with Carol Robertson by mutual friends of their parents. His studies continued at the University of Washington and he was awarded an MBA in 1967, the same year he began two years of Peace Corps service in the Polynesian island nation of Tonga. Contrary to the warning given by his peace corps training officer, Carol did "wait for him" and even spent extended time visiting during his service. They were married shortly after his return in 1970 and lived happily ever after for over 53 years. Their relationship, and his love for Carol is what brought the most joy and passion to Hugh's life. The couple settled in north Seattle, but took off on another international adventure in 1973 with a 7-month tour of Europe on their bicycles.

Although concerned about the state of the world, the couple decided to start a family. A loving and devoted father to his children, Brian, born in 1976, and Emily in 1978, family life included Saturday pancake breakfasts, playing in the backyard pool, and skiing at Crystal and Stevens. For long road trips, Hugh rigged up a tv/vcr to keep the kids entertained with movies he had copied on vhs tapes. Their biggest champion and consigliere, problems were faced with calm, thoughtful solutions, and Hugh's children continue to rely on his wisdom and advice for life and work matters.

Hugh managed the family business, Multiscore, manufacturing industrial woodworking machinery in the Ballard neighborhood. Assuming the head role after his father's passing, he treated employees like family, not only providing good pay and benefits, but supporting them through personal struggles.

Active and athletic, Hugh ran 10Ks, raced a hobie cat, and enjoyed cycling and skiing. The family enjoyed ski trips to visit cousins in Sun Valley, Idaho, and a Dartmouth buddy in Park City, Utah, and the annual extended family trip to Orcas Island. Other memorable trips and adventures include a return with the family to Polynesia and Hugh's Peace Corps home of Tonga in 1993, fishing trips with Brian, meetups with Peace Corps buddy Paul's family, Mexican beaches with his family, and with his surf buddies, and traveling as far as Macau for concerts. As empty nesters, Hugh and Carol continued to travel, taking cycling trips with their "Greenlake group", visiting Yellowstone, exploring the Alaskan wilderness, and a glacier in Juneau to meet a lone black wolf who played with dogs. A photo Hugh took of Romeo and a pet dog is published in two books. Tropical beaches remained his favorite retreat and Hugh spent his last birthday in Hawaii with Carol and their friends, Bob and Pat.

Hugh loved music and playing guitar. He built guitars with his father, and in 1990 started a rock band with his dear friend Mike and cousin Geoff. The Usual Suspects booked gigs and weddings, and got together regularly to practice for over 30 years. Carol loved seeing Hugh as a rock star. In later years, Hugh also had regular jazz jam sessions with a group of friends he affectionately referred to as "The Old Guys".

Inspired to get back to rowing when his son Brian was on Greenlake's winning team in the '94 nationals, Hugh joined Lake Washington Rowing Club, where he spent nearly three decades as a member, coach, regatta organizer, mentor, and trusted friend. He was recognized for his years of service as the 2022 recipient of the Board of Directors Award.

Selling Multiscore after his mother's death in 1999, when he was still young enough to enjoy an active retirement, he continued his passions and kept busy by operating Bladework, a mobile knife sharpening business servicing local restaurants. His kids also needed him back at work to help operate Brian's cannabis business after legalization in 2014, where he helped Emily manage the finances and advised Brian on operational and personnel matters.

In 2001 he began his most cherished role when he became a grandfather to Desmond Hugh, who shares his name and some of his best qualities, and later to Ciara and Aidan. Spending time with his grandchildren brought him endless joy and "Poppy" passed on his love of playing guitar to Des and Ciara, and his knife sharpening skills to Aidan. Honoring his legacy, his grandchildren strive to be more like him in their lives and relationships.

Hugh is survived by his wife Carol, children Brian (Carolina), and Emily, grandchildren Desmond, Ciara, & Aidan Healy, step-grandchildren Edgar & Alina, and several grand-furbabies that adored him.

A Celebration of Life for family and friends will be held at LWRC on July 21.

To honor Hugh and his tenderness for animals, please consider a donation to ASPCA or your favorite rescue organization.