

Antoni Zerygiewicz

May 15, 1935 - November 9, 2020

Antoni Zerygiewicz lived the full life of a true renaissance man. He smoked cigarettes, ate cured meats and drank Slivovitz. He loved his family, sailing, skiing, photography, art, dogs and horses.

His early years were tumultuous; his family estate was violently taken by communists during the second world war as a military base. He was sent to live at a Jesuit boarding school and his father was killed. His family finally relocated to Krakow where he began university studies. He obtained his Masters in Art History, a Doctorate of Veterinary studies and became a professor of Latin and also became the manager of a large national stud. He became involved with the Hungarian student revolutions against the communist party, leading to a warrant for his arrest and a quick escape to France with only a valuable crystal bowl to sell and start a new life.

Once in France he found the crystal bowl smashed in his trunk. He had nothing but a strong knowledge of chess, which he now played on the streets for money. He eventually found his way to Samur, the famous dressage stable, where he worked and trained.

He was eventually contacted by the Canadian government who wanted his expertise in genealogy to help reestablish the beloved Canadian Horse. Once in Canada, Toni began training riders and horses and building Three Day event courses. He had a gift for building and designing fences that would scare riders out of their wits and yet make perfect sense to the horses, thereby riding well with excellent results. He loved the challenge of making every fence unique with the goal to build the confidence of Canada's up and coming horse and rider teams. His biggest achievements were Ontario Championships at Inniskillin, Checkmate, IESS, Rossland Park, Rose Hill Canadian Championships and Grandview, which remains at top of the sport to this day. In addition to course design, Toni was a renowned official and dressage judge, known for speaking hard truths in such a kind and cute way that few would feel offended. As a coach, he was able to inspire riders to believe and fulfil their dreams.

A huge debt of gratitude is due to Lauren Guest, who cared for Toni in his final years, and made sure he did not have to live his last days in a hospital. She made his last years as comfortable and happy as they could possibly be, surrounded with dogs and horses in her country home.

Toni passed away peacefully in his sleep at home.

He is predeceased by his mother, father and sisters Dusia and Krystyna.

Toni is survived by his daughter, Christy Zerygiewicz, son in law, Tony Cachia, former wife, Denise Eaves, and granddaughter, Regan.

He is remembered fondly by all who had the good fortune to know him.

Due to Covid, a small viewing will be held Saturday, November 14th in Innisfil for family, followed by a celebration of life in the spring, details to be announced at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to the Kidney Foundation of Canada in Antoni's memory.

