

# Nova Scotia mining pioneer dies, owed 'deepest gratitude'

**Geologist Avard Hudgins, 79, discovered and promoted mines around the Maritimes**

By Rachel Ward, [CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 12, 2016 1:17 PM AT Last Updated: Jun 12, 2016 1:26 PM AT



Nova Scotia prospector Avard Hudgins of Truro died June 8, 2016. (Submitted by Lee Hudgins)

## External Links

- [Avard Hudgins Obituary](#)

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A Nova Scotia geologist and prospector's days of exploring have ended, leaving a legacy as steadfast and unassuming as the rocks he studied.

"My dad had the kindest heart, the warmest smile and face — and neverending questions," son Lee Hudgins says.

Avard Hudgins is credited with discovering and promoting Maritime mines, several of which ended up employing hundreds of people.

"He was a true Nova Scotian, Bluenoser, true Maritimer. He really believed that everything we need is here," son and once business partner Bruce Hudgins says.

"If there were a few others Avards out here, we wouldn't have to worry so much about jobs leaving this province, people having to leave this province looking for work."

Avard Hudgins died June 8 from cancer. He was 79.



Avard Hudgins prospecting in British Columbia. (Submitted by Lee Hudgins)

Hudgins grew up along Nova Scotia's Bay of Fundy shore in the small fishing village of Margaretsville, northwest of Canadian Forces Base Greenwood.

He'd listened to stories at his father's general store, and run along beaches catching salmon in pools and attempting to pound copper out of rocks.

He went on to study his masters at Acadia University. He taught geology in high schools and at the University of New Brunswick, before returning to the field.



Avard Hudgins, centre, in Kamloops, B.C. (Submitted by Lee Hudgins)

As a father, Avard would stop the family car to inspect roadside "interesting rock formations." He and the four boys would go prospecting, or gold panning at the Ovens.

That curiosity, sense of adventure and love of nature continued throughout his life through his three hobbies: hunting, fishing and storytelling.

Plus, "I don't think he ever retired," Bruce says.

## **Every rock 'by its first name'**

The man was a visionary, comparing deposit models around the world to understand Nova Scotia's landscape, says longtime friend and Nova Scotia Prospectors Association president John Wightman.

"I used to say Avard knew every rock in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia by its first name," he says. "He was a dynamic force."

Hudgins travelled extensively for geology work, throughout Canada, Europe and Asia. In Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, he ran companies to research geological environments, do "boots and hammer prospecting," and promote projects to others to take over the mines.

Among his many projects, Hudgins worked on tin in East Kemptville, lead and zinc in Gays River, celestite in Sydney, and gold in Moose River — the project where he most recently worked with his son Bruce.



Bruce Hudgins, Jamie Hudgins, Brian Hudgins, Avard Hudgins, Stephen Kruse and Lee Hudgins. (Submitted by Lee Hudgins)

## **Minister has 'deepest gratitude'**

The award-winning prospector had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the province's minerals, Natural Resources Minister Lloyd Hines says by email.

That work brought hundreds of jobs and "hundreds of millions of dollars in economic wealth" to Nova Scotia, he says.



"Even in tough times, he was always searching and optimistic about finding the next world class mineral deposit in Nova Scotia," Hines says.

"We owe him our deepest gratitude."

## **His 'rock'**

At home in Truro, his family holds deep love for their father. He is survived by sons, Bruce, Jamie, Brian and Lee, and was predeceased by daughter Heather.

His wife and "rock" Joan "were like school kids," long in love and "always" holding hands, Lee says.



Portrait of Avar and Joan Hudgins in front of a rock landscape. (Submitted by Lee Hudgins)

Lee says he'll most miss his dad's voice, "deep, gravely, yet melodic," reminiscent of the Bay of Fundy.

"My dad is the kind of man that had no regrets in life," he says.

"He lived his life with such honour, and was just the most incredibly caring and courageous man."

Visitation is scheduled for Tuesday at the [Colchester Community Funeral Home](#). The funeral is Wednesday at 2 p.m.