

A celebration of the life of
KEITH LYONS
7th May 1952—13th May 2020



Norwood Park Crematorium
Wednesday 20th May 2020
at 4:00pm



ORDER OF SERVICE

Welcome

Beth



Eulogy

Sam



A message from Keith's coaches



Poem

Jolyon & Ivy



Reflection on Keith's life

Beth



Music - Abide with me

King's College Choir



Closing Thoughts

Sue



Exit Music - If it be your will

Antony

Keith was born on 7th May 1952 in Buckley, North Wales and was given a good start on his learning journey by his Grandfather, who among other things taught him to write in the compact, neat and unique script that helped Keith to graduate from Mold Grammar School, University of York, Loughborough College and the London School of Economics.



*Keith with his Grandfather
c.1960*

While at York, his desire for equality and justice came to the fore when he joined the anti-apartheid movement.

In the following years he continued to speak out about the impact of apartheid on sport with his vocal opposition leading to him being banned from traveling to South Africa.



*Keith at his graduation from York
University 1973*

Keith had the opportunity, while he studied for his PhD at the University of Surrey, to refine his interest in learning through an ethnographic study. This paved the way for his unique approach to observing sport and laid the foundation for his future career in performance analysis. Sport was a central part of Keith's life, as a rugby player, a coach, a performance analyst and a coach mentor. The roles he performed were diverse, from lacrosse to canoeing, made possible by his ability to observe patterns and his desire to support people.

The suicide of his brother John in 1982 had a profound effect on his life after which Keith became more introspective. His wife Sue believed that it was this moment that solidified Keith's desire to help others, especially those going through difficult times. Following Keith's death, a number of the coaches he mentored recounted that Keith was often the only person to contact them after defeats or when they faced difficulties. When most people stayed quiet in times of trouble, Keith was there. Keith believed the time to step forward was when things were hard.

A triumphant moment for Keith came when he finally got to travel to a unified South Africa in 1995 as part of the Welsh Rugby World Cup Team. He later recalled that one part of that trip, an outreach project to teach young black South Africans to play rugby, was one of his happiest moments.

“ I hoped to go to coach in South Africa in 1977 but was not able to do so I arrived in Soweto eighteen years after my first attempt. I felt immensely privileged to be there and indescribable joy.

Keith writing about his South African experience



Keith with his family

Keith moved to Australia in 2002 with his family, who were the core of his identity. He loved being at home with his wife, children and later his grandchildren. Keith unconditionally supported his family in their endeavours and would travel the globe or stay awake for days to help them if they were in need. For his son Sam he spent thousands of hours on the riverbank watching and coaching regardless of the conditions, never complaining and always shouting encouragement.

Keith's unique skill was to make everyone with whom he communicated know they were valued and their experience mattered—including those that provided him with care while his battled lymphoma of his brain. It was a real comfort to Keith's family that they could spend that final year with him, focussing on his health and the family. His daughter Beth reflected that this was his last journey in learning, as he embraced the new skills he needed and the new people he could share his time with.

Following several rounds of chemotherapy and radiotherapy Keith died in The Canberra Hospital at 1:30 am on 13th May 2020 surrounded by his family.

Just 10 days before his death Keith wrote for the last time in a birthday card to his wife Sue. His handwriting was still compact, neat and unique, a fitting tribute to the power of a supportive teacher willing to invest in learning, an investment Keith made in so many, for whom life is better because he was there.

Keith was preceded in death by his parents Donald and Joan, and his brother John. He is survived by his wife Sue, and his two children, Beth and Sam, his grandchildren Ivy and Jolyon, and his sister Judith.



KEITH LYONS

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Keith valued the power of education, if you would like to donate to a cause on Keith's behalf please consider the Braidwood and District Education Foundation. A link can be found at keithlyons.me/funeral