

# Kevin Timothy John O'Keefe

February 9, 1955 - July 31, 2019

It is with great sadness we announce the passing of Kevin Timothy John O'Keefe, a loving son, father, brother, uncle and grandfather, on July 31st, 2019.

Kevin was born in Toronto on February 9, 1955 and grew up in Scarborough. He was a gifted athlete, playing on his high school's basketball and football team. He spent most summers during his youth at the family cottage where he distinguished himself as an excellent water skier and swimmer.

During high school, Kevin worked for many summers at Bark Lake Camp, an extremely happy time in his life and where he formed many life-long friendships. It was here he earned his nickname 'Chief', which stuck with him for life.

After high school, Kevin backpacked around Europe, living for a year on a kibbutz in Israel. He studied English at Trent University and he was an excellent poet, though he rarely shared his work publicly.

He left for BC in the late 1970s to pursue adventure and ended up working at the Smelter in Trail for several years before moving up to Yellowknife at the encouragement of his brother, Harry.

Kevin blossomed in Yellowknife and stayed for over 30 years. He began playing the drums and spent years as a stalwart of the local music scene. Most notably he played with Kanon, a band who opened for Blue Rodeo, Colin James and Lou Diamond Phillips amongst others in its heyday. He co-wrote their album 'Crossroads' with Vince Gauthier. His most recent band was the Lonely Counsel, which played all over Yellowknife regularly until 2016.

Kevin began working at the Legislative Assembly as the Legislative Planning Coordinator in the mid-1980s and held this position until he retired with over 30 years of public service. He weathered many governments, the separation of Nunavut from the NWT and had a hand in supporting the creation of many of the NWT's current laws.

Kevin's true calling in life came when his children were born in the 1990s. An utterly dedicated father, he gave selflessly to make sure they never wanted for anything and were loved unconditionally. This love extended to his larger family and Kevin spent most of 2018 supporting his brother Tim as he underwent cancer treatment in Edmonton.

Kevin's heart was always at the cottage in Salerno Lake, near Irondale, Ontario and he spent many happy summers with his cottage family, swimming and water-skiing. He retired to Peterborough in 2018 to be closer to his spiritual home.

Kevin was a gentle, kind, creative and loving soul, beloved by many and desperately missed. He is predeceased by his mother, Kathleen (nee Pamplin) O'Keefe, his father, Harry O'Keefe Sr and his brother, Harry O'Keefe Jr.

He is survived by his sister Kathleen Mansfield (Gary), his brother Tim, Sister-in-law Debbi, his children Keelie Sorensen-O'Keefe (Robbie Warren) and Lukas Sorensen-O'Keefe, his grandson, 11-week-old Theo Warren, and his nieces and nephews Kevin Mansfield (Brandy), John Mansfield (Monica), Todd Mansfield, Brie O'Keefe and Harry O'Keefe IV.

Ontario memorial services will be at the Highland Park Funeral Centre in Peterborough, on Friday, August 9 at 11 AM.

A Yellowknife Celebration of Life will be held September 4, 2019 at the Legislative Assembly at 2 PM.

Donations may be made, in memory of Kevin, to the Canadian Mental Health Association in lieu of flowers.

