



Kevin John O'Connor

Kevin John O'Connor died on 28 December 2002 at the age 80 and after a prolonged period of bad health.

Kevin was brought up in Kurow and attended St Kevin's College where he was Head Boy and gained a National Scholarship (in French). At Otago, Kevin soon became prominent as a rugby player of great ability. He played on the back of the scrum for Otago in the days when they owned the Ranfurly Shield. He subsequently played for the South Island, NZ University, and was regarded by most sports commentators as very unlucky not to be an All Black. He had the 'star' quality that would have suited the modern game. He played for the Harlequins with his old friend Ron Elvidge.

After qualifying, he worked in Dunedin Hospital before going to the UK where serious attempts were made to seduce him to Rugby League.

Kevin returned to New Zealand and in 1955 set up practice in the centre of Christchurch, initially with the late Ken Wilson. Although he changed premises, Kevin stayed within a short distance of that site until he retired.

He had an early association with the Brothers of St John of God at Marylands and the Hogben School for Boys. Later he was associated with the Hospice at that site.

Kevin was a police surgeon for 27 years and was a prime mover both in the establishment of the Association of Police Surgeons in NZ and with the International Association of Forensic Surgeons. He attended many international meetings of the latter.

Kevin had an interest in harness racing and was medical officer for many local clubs. He and his wife, Pamela, were also successful standardbred breeders and owners.

Kevin was a large man with a deep voice but under this lay a kindly, almost soft, caring doctor.

Kevin was a cultured man with a deep interest in music. He had an ATCL in piano and a deep love for and knowledge of opera and poetry.

Kevin will be greatly missed. He is survived by his wife and companion, Pamela, and six adult children from an earlier marriage.

Roy Holmes wrote this obituary with valued assistance from Dr John Valentine, Dr Ron Elvidge and Mr Hugh Stevens and the full cooperation of Pamela.