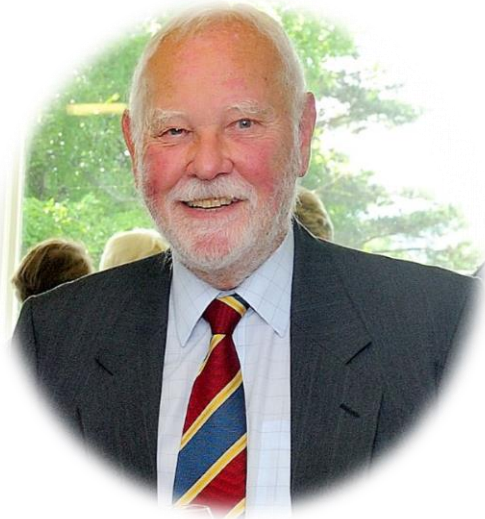


A Tribute

Keith Smith



From Angela Smith

It is with a heavy heart that I write to tell you of the death on Monday, after a long illness, of our dear friend and former colleague Keith Smith. Keith joined SURSA early on and wrote to ask me if there would be a Walks Group as part of the Association. I replied by asking if he would create one, and he certainly did. He planned the walks with meticulous care and took us through a wide variety of landscapes, sometimes pausing to tell us about the geology of the country we were walking through. It was fascinating, and he was always an entertaining and thoughtful companion on the walks. He was formidably well-informed but wore his learning lightly, with a dry sense of humour. He contributed to other SURSA groups, sharing his knowledge of long-case clocks with the Talks Group and contributing brilliantly to one of the Book Groups. His wife Muriel was already part of our group and he said he'd come to a meeting to see whether it interested him. It did, and he then brought a totally new dimension to the group as he discovered writers that he hadn't read before. His delighted response to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* was memorable.

A group of us joined Keith and Muriel Smith's friends to say good-bye to Keith, who died on 1 September 2019, at the Woodland Burial Ground in Strathearn. It was a beautiful day – the kind of day that Keith hoped for when he was organising SURSA walks – clear, sunny and breezy with every fold in the valley and the hills visible. At a gathering in Crieff after the interment we heard tributes from Keith's former colleagues, friends

and family. Peter Hope, who was Keith's half-brother, composed the music that was played. Keith only discovered that he had a half-brother after he had retired. It brought about a sudden and joyful extension of both families.

From Ian Simpson

I'm very sorry to inform you of Professor Keith Smith's death earlier this week; he had been very ill for some time. Coming to Stirling from the University of Strathclyde, Keith contributed much to Environmental Science in its earlier years and was key in establishing hydrology, climatology and environmental hazards within the Environmental Science Department. He was one of the first to pick up on the trend of increasing wetness over Scotland in the 1970's and 80's (and subsequently) together with the ways in which this was influencing annual, seasonal and extreme monthly river flows. He was a really excellent teacher, one of the most organised and clear I can think of, and his text book on Environmental Hazards ran to several editions; he also wrote books on flooding hazards, applied hydrology and on applied climatology. Keith served the University and the Department in a number of leadership roles including as Head of Department and as Dean of Natural Sciences. In his many contributions, his commitment and good humour, Keith was most certainly a colleague you could look to and properly understand what it is to be an academic.