

Former Citizen editor ? Wes Keller dead of an apparent stroke

The unofficial dean of Dufferin's journalists has died.

Wes Keller, who at various times was a staff reporter at all Dufferin's newspapers, as well as editor of the Caledon Citizen for a time in the early 1980s, died of an apparent stroke over the weekend. He was 82.

After reaching the then-normal retirement age of 65, Mr. Keller continued writing for the Orangeville Citizen, Shelburne Free Press and Economist and the Grand Valley Star Vidette, and had been covering Dufferin County and Shelburne councils.

After careers in Western Canada in life insurance and as a private investigator, Mr. Keller decided to become a full-time journalist in the mid-1970s, joining the FP&E in January 1978.

Sheila Duncan, who joined the Citizen later that year and was Mr. Keller's editor for many years, described him as "a relentless investigative reporter and a hard-nosed writer."

Now director of communications for the Town of Orangeville, she said Mr. Keller "lived for the thrill of the story. But his passion also included people."

"He loved to converse ? getting lots of stories and chuckles out of talking to people. He had an insight that sometimes led to the less-than-usual angle with an article. His slow drawl belied his quick wit and sharp words. A stereotypical newspaperman of his day ? and for about five decades ? there are lots of stories about Wes Keller and most of them are undoubtedly true.

"He was always an interesting presence, with strong opinions, in the newsroom. Whether he was waxing poetic or cursing fiercely, there was no mistaking that he also had a gentle soul capable of writing some wonderful features. Once you met Wes, there was no forgetting Wes. A character and a charmer, he was a well-respected journalist and a great friend."

A celebration of Mr. Keller's life is scheduled for April 4 at Orangeville Legion

