

## Family statement Ken Brennan

This statement has been written by Jan Ferguson OAM, Ken's sister-in-law. Ken's wife Rosemary who is now 82, has contributed, as have his brother-in-law Chris, nephew Dylan and niece Jemma. Ken was a gentle man who was passionate about his career and maintained a caring relationship with Rosemary until his tragic death. Our family remembers him as a quiet yet spirited Uncle who loved to celebrate life and walked with a smile. Due to reasons out of our control Ken left our family to pursue his life in Sydney and subsequently following his death it felt like we lost him for a second time.

Ken was born in Snowtown SA. His mother, Josie Hancock was a young single mother, who lived with her parents. When Ken's mother married, Ken's stepfather let him adopt his surname Brennan. Ken was close to his mother and a stepsister Marion, both of whom are now deceased. He did not have positive relationships with his stepfather and other siblings. Ken was the first member of his family to go to university and had a successful teaching career as a Primary School Principal. He was heavily involved in the Teachers Registration Board and the SA Teacher's union.

Ken met his wife Rosemary in the early sixties whilst teaching in a one teacher school in the Southeast of SA, while she was teaching in Mt Gambier. They married, and lived in various locations in the NT and regional SA, before returning to Adelaide. Ken and Rosemary had an appreciation for the arts in all its forms, amassing a significant art collection together. They travelled extensively overseas especially in South East Asia before it was trendy and enjoyed many fun times together.

Prior to Ken coming out to Rosemary, Ken visited Chris and I to make sure she would have support when he told her. It was very important to him that she would be supported at the time, and then ongoing after their separation. She was in shock, utterly devastated and very sad when they separated. In her words they parted out of sorrow, not anger. Ken chose not to divorce Rosemary so that in the event he predeceased her, she would be the sole beneficiary of his estate which was wealth he regarded they had accrued together. Rosemary fondly describes Ken as an intelligent, fun and a nice companion. Rosemary came to live next door to us as a family after their marital home was sold. Initially when Ken was in Adelaide they regularly caught up for dinner. Once he moved to Sydney, they maintained regular contact on the phone. Ken wasn't overtly "out" in Adelaide and moved to Sydney where he could be himself within a larger LBGTI community. This is when he officially changed his surname from Hancock to Brennan.

Ken's murder had a huge impact on our family. To lose someone we loved and respected for who he was, in such a violent way has been significant and stays with us today. As Kens Brennan's family we feel justice has never been achieved for Ken. We have at various times, over the years contacted the Police seeking an update on the investigations. We are very grateful to ACON for providing support and listening. We respect and appreciate the work and accessibility of the Commission having watched all the live stream material and read some of the tender bundles, as we try to understand and come to terms with this sad period of our history.



Jan Ferguson OAM