



LATE ITEMS BUSINESS PAPER

ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

To be held on

Wednesday, 27 October 2021
4pm

at

Guyra Council Chambers

Members

Councillor Ian Tiley (Mayor)
Councillor Debra O'Brien (Deputy Mayor)
Councillor Peter Bailey
Councillor Jon Galletly
Councillor Andrew Murat
Councillor Margaret O'Connor
Councillor Dorothy Robinson

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

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Title:	Mayoral Minute: Recognition of Kathleen Anne Partridge OAM	Container: ARC16/0025
Responsible Officer	General Manager	
Author:	Ian Tiley, Mayor	
Attachments:	Nil	

1. Purpose

This Minute seeks to posthumously, permanently and appropriately recognise Armidale's greatest Olympian Kathleen (Kath) Anne Partridge who passed away prematurely on 13 September 2021.

2. OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION:

That Council note the minute.

3. Background

Kathy Partridge was born in Sydney on 7 December 1963 and spent her formative years in Armidale. She returned to her Armidale family in March 2021 after becoming terminally ill.

She is the only person from Armidale who has ever won a gold medal at the Olympic Games. Kathy competed in the Olympics of 1988 (Seoul), and in Barcelona in 1992. She enjoyed her finest moment in sport when she won a gold medal as goalkeeper with the Hockeyroos in Seoul, South Korea in field hockey at the Summer Olympics. Not only was this Australia's first hockey gold medal but it was also Australia's first gold medal in any team sport at the Olympics.

Making her international hockey debut in June 1985 against the USA in a Four Nations Tournament in Amsterdam, Kath was a fast, skilled keeper with excellent technical skills and was a mainstay of Australia's defence as it emerged as one of the greatest hockey teams in the world.

She was a respected team leader, serving as Hockeyroos vice-captain in 1992 in the Barcelona Olympics when the team placed fifth. Kathleen made a total of 65 appearances for the Hockeyroos.

After 1992, she turned her attention to coaching, becoming one of the most astute goalkeeping coaches in the world. She was part of the coaching staff of the men's hockey gold medal teams which won gold medals every year from 1995 to 2000, working closely with her mentor and great friend Dr Ric Charlesworth.

She received the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in 1989 and the Australian Sports Medal in 2000. Kath Partridge attended five Olympics; two as a field hockey player (Seoul and Barcelona) and three in a coaching capacity as a specialist goalkeeping coach with the Hockeyroos. She was appointed goalkeeping coach in men's hockey to work with Ric Charlesworth in 1995 through to 2000. In that time, she won gold medals in a coaching capacity including Olympic Gold Medals in Atlanta (1996) and Sydney (2000).

In 2010, Kath was appointed goalkeeping coach with the Hockeyroos and was dedicated to the building of a formidable goalkeeping squad with Toni Cronk, the London (2012) Olympic goalkeeper, performing - in Partridge's words; 'the best performance at an Olympics by an Australian female or male goalkeeper'.

Kath coached again with Ric Charlesworth at the men's World Cup in Amsterdam in 2014, after being appointed as the first female coach to enter the Australian Field Hockey Men's program in 2013. Kath enjoyed gold success in Melbourne (Champions Trophy 2013) and World Cup gold in 2014 with the Kookaburras. She continued coaching with the Men's' field hockey team until the end of 2015. Her goal keeping coaching skills were pivotal to the long-term successes of the Hockeyroos.

She assisted in the development of Australia's best male goalkeepers. She was the first woman to be part of a senior men's coaching team where her contribution was outstanding. According to Charlesworth she was a deep theoretical thinker about the sport of hockey. Charlesworth, with 50 years involvement in hockey regards Kathy as the best coach of goalkeepers he has known in that time.

A popular book in Kath's collection is *The Rebound Revolution*, which has become a primary advice book for goalkeepers. The book provides the essential skills and attributes needed to be a successful goalkeeper. She tells of her elite sporting journey and is featured throughout when she was representing Australia. Kath wrote two coaching manuals specifically for the craft of goalkeepers and those coaching goalkeepers. Both texts have been sold world-wide and have supported hockey players from many countries.

Kath's induction into the Hockey Australia Hall of Fame was ratified in 2018. On that occasion she said: -

"Being inducted into Hockey Australia's Hall of Fame is indeed an honour. To be considered in the same class as those luminaries who have gone before me is humbling. I have gained so much from playing and coaching hockey; it has offered me extraordinary opportunities and challenges and for that I am truly grateful.

For my part, winning an Olympic Gold medal was the culmination of a team's years of hard work and dedication. The skills acquired on that journey helped form the blue print of my approach to other endeavours in my life. Being appointed to coach the Hockeyroos and Kookaburras goalkeepers over a number of years challenged me in different ways and I get such satisfaction in passing on my knowledge to all goalkeepers I have had the pleasure of coaching. Thank you to the many people who have helped and supported me on my hockey pilgrimage. Hockey is such a marvellous game, offering so much more than the final score."

As well as excelling in sport and coaching Kathy was an outstanding educator. Dr Kath Partridge (UWA PhD 2005), was the Seven Oaks College Principal in Perth Western Australia and worked in public education for over thirty years. Her doctoral thesis in education was about using research to improve the quality of teaching. She was often quoted as saying "we are only here for the kids" and "what can we be doing better?" She held that every child mattered. She was a great believer in children achieving the best education possible

She established Foundations to improve education for Aboriginal children, as well as other outstanding education initiatives. She led by example. She had many wonderful attributes such as her love of animals. Her outlook on life was a belief that life was about trying to lead a good life, about working hard, being kind and helpful and being there for each other. The many tributes all underline that Kathy was a good person.

4. Bequest to the people of Armidale

As indicated above, in recognition of her outstanding achievements, Kathleen Partridge received a Gold Medal in women's hockey at the Seoul Olympics. Subsequently she received an Order of Australia (OAM) medal and also the Australian Sports Medal. Tragically Kath has passed away at the age of only 58 years, succumbing to a terminal illness.

Her three medals are in safe keeping with her family in Armidale. It was Kath's and the families wish that her medals be loaned permanently to Armidale Regional Council to be showcased in perpetuity and preferably in the council offices foyer or other similar public space.

As the most successful Olympic athlete to come from Armidale it is a great honour for the Council to accept, safeguard and display her medals collection in remembrance of her and her outstanding achievements in life.

CITIUS, ALTIUS, FORTIUS (Faster, higher, stronger – the original Olympics motto).

Vale Kathleen Anne Partridge

Cr Ian Tiley

Mayor

21 October 2021