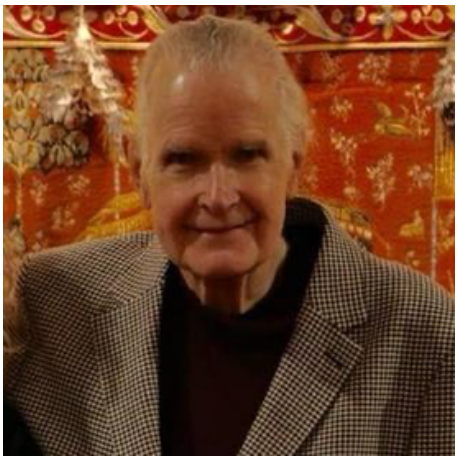


Daniel King Knapp

October 26, 1933 ~ April 2, 2020

Daniel King Knapp, of Salt Lake City, UT, died peacefully on Thursday, April 2, 2020, in his Emigration Canyon home where he lived with his wife Leslie Ann Knapp of 41 years. He was 86.

He was born on October 26, 1933 in New York City, N.Y. He was a championship swimmer and basketball player at Tottenville and St. Peter's High School on Staten Island, N.Y. He played basketball on scholarship at North Carolina State and New York University (NYU), graduated from NYU with a degree in journalism and briefly played basketball for the St. Louis Hawks. His life-long passion for basketball led him to invent and patent a shooting improvement device known as "The Supershot." Later in life, he successfully competed in Senior Tennis tournaments in the US and U.K. He also served in the U. S. Army Signal Corp from 1953-1955.

He wrote and edited fiction and non-fiction for national publications including TIME, The Los Angeles Times, Esquire, Life, The New York Times Magazine, Reader's Digest, The Saturday Evening Post and People. His Esquire profile of Mao Tse Tung, "A Day In The Life Of The Chairman," has been translated into a dozen languages, and included in anthologies and university textbooks. He later published original non-fiction and fiction. His "as told to" biography Going Down With Janis remains a best-seller and when the print edition of his novel, California Woman, was originally published it sold approximately a half million copies.

He was a decades-long member of the Screen Actors Guild, acting also in more than a dozen movies, including "The Mountain Men" and "Charley Varrick," and "Hammersmith is Out" with Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor. He also acted in television programs, including "Mrs. Colombo," "Palmerston" and "Buffalo Bill."

He lived in Manhattan, N.Y., Brinmar, PA and Greenwich, CT with his first wife, Antonia Hussey, and moved to Los Angeles, CA in 1969. He and his wife, Leslie, married in 1979. They lived in Los Angeles, Madison, WI and in Cambridge, U.K. (1997-2013) before moving to Salt Lake City, UT. They traveled together to China, dozens of countries in Africa, Central and South America pursuing primate research and new subjects for fiction and non-fiction. They settled in Emigration Canyon, Salt Lake City, UT, surrounded by mountains, deer and birds.

He is survived by his wife of 41 years, Leslie Ann Knapp, his four children, Lauren Visser and her husband Charles Visser, Leslie Knapp, Hunter Knapp, and Andrea Nolan; eight grandchildren; and his sister Rosemary Hornbuckle. A memorial service and celebration of his life will be held later in 2020, when covid19 restrictions are lifted. Details of the celebration will be posted here. In lieu of flowers, the family asks for donations to the Salt Lake City Mission, P.O. Box 142, Salt Lake City, UT 84110-0142.