

Laurens Keville Larson
September 6, 1937 – October 27, 2023

Laurens Keville Larson, 86, of Mobile, AL passed away on October 27, 2023.

Keville was born in New York City on September 6, 1937 to Estelle McGowin Larson and Lawrence Keville Larson. He grew up in Douglaston, NY with his sister, Theresa Larson Scheetz and brother, Stallworth McGowin Larson. Keville attended PS 98 for elementary school, and Friends Academy, a Quaker school, for high school. He appreciated the Quaker's universal belief that "there is that of God in everyone" and the worship style of sitting in silence unless someone is moved to minister and speak to the group. Keville attended Stanford University as an undergraduate student, where he played on the Stanford Cardinals soccer team, for whom he was an All-Conference player for the 1957 season. He completed his studies at Stanford with a BA in Geography.

Keville followed his undergraduate career with graduate school at Yale University and obtained his Masters in Forestry in 1961. After graduation, he moved to Mobile, Alabama to work with his uncle, Julian McGowin, at the forestry consulting firm, Pomeroy & McGowin. In 1969, Julian and Keville separated the firm from Pomeroy, forming Larson & McGowin, Inc, with Keville as President, creating a successful and widely respected company that exists to this day. Keville never stopped learning and continued his lifelong education, taking courses at the University of Washington, Yale University, North Carolina State University, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Auburn University, the University of South Alabama and others. He taught courses in forestry at Auburn University and at Yale University, as the F. K. Weyerhaeuser Fellow at Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies in 2000.

Keville was deeply involved in many forestry organizations, including the Association of Consulting Foresters, the Forest Industries Committee for Timber Valuation and Taxation, the Forest Landowners Association, the Society of American Foresters, the Alabama Forestry Association, the Alabama Forest Resources Center, the Practicing Foresters Institute Trust, the Forest History Society, the Yale Forest Forum, the Coalition of Prescribed Fire Council, and the Seventh American Forest Congress and was a career-long Registered Forester. He greatly valued the many friendships and broad exchange of knowledge these groups brought to his personal and professional life. Throughout his life, Keville was a strong proponent of private property rights and believed strongly in the controlled use of fire to keep forests both healthy and safe from wildfire, a practice and philosophy for which he was a strong advocate.

Keville was an active member and past President of the Downtown Mobile Rotary Club, board member of the Mobile Botanical Gardens, for whom he was instrumental in establishing and maintaining the Longleaf Pine Treasure Forest, supporter of the Boy Scouts of America, and member of Dauphin Way United Methodist Church. He helped establish a soccer program for young people and adults and was an enthusiastic proponent of soccer in Mobile, a sport he enjoyed and played into his sixties. A passionate sailor, Keville spent his youth teaching sailing and competing in Long Island, sailing his beloved Lightning sailboat, Zephyr, on the waters of Little Neck Bay, and continued sailing throughout much of his life, passing on the skills and enjoyment to his children on Mobile Bay and Dog River.

Keville was long involved in the music world, enjoying leadership roles in the Greater Mobile Concerts, Inc, the Mobile Opera, the Mobile Symphony and recently MOJO, the Mobile Order of the Jazz Obsessed, sharing a love of good music with his community. In addition to his love of the woods, reading, playing the guitar, and riding horses were great joys to him. His philosophy in life has always been to keep things in perspective, build for the long run, and, most importantly, "accentuate the positive." Keville is survived by his loving wife of 62 years, Eloise Echols Larson, his children Christopher Keville Larson and Jessica Larson Little, and granddaughters Catherine Keville Little and Lillian Dorothy Little. There will be a visitation at Dauphin Way United Methodist Church at 10am on Thursday, November 2, 2023 followed by a church service at 11am in the sanctuary in his memory. The family requests donations to Dauphin Way United Methodist Church, the Longleaf Pine Treasure Forest at the Mobile Botanical Gardens, or a [charity of your choice](#).