

Funeral service held today for Andrew McKinnon

The parish minister at St David's Broomhouse Parish Church in Edinburgh led the funeral service this afternoon for Andrew McKinnon who died this month while playing football at school.

Reverend Michael Mair described the teenager as fun loving, fiercely loyal to his friends and deeply loved by his family.

He said the 15-year-old's death on the pitch at nearby Forrester High School on 14 March left the close-knit local community deeply shocked.

He said people immediately rallied round his devastated family who say they have been overwhelmed by the amount of love, generosity and kindness shown.

Scores of people of all ages gathered at the church for the funeral service which was followed by service of thanksgiving for Andrew's life at Warriston Crematorium.

Mr Mair said: "When the news broke that Andrew had collapsed and died while playing football at school with close friends, there was a deep sense of shock, sadness and disbelief that something like this could happen to someone so young.

"We opened the doors of our church that night because we wanted to provide a place for people to gather, light a candle and reflect on this terrible tragedy and we were overwhelmed

by the outpouring of grief from his friends and family.”

Mr Mair described Andrew as a “lovable rogue” who was loving and affectionate and unafraid of showing and telling people how he felt about them.

“To his friends he was fiercely loyal and hated injustice,” he added.

“He was always willing to back them up and stand with them in whatever challenge lay before them.

“When Andrew collapsed, he had just finished playing a game of football with some close friends and it is testament to their friendship that they refused to leave his side.

“To the community at large, he was a lad with a cheeky smile, always with a football under his arm or by his feet and up to some kind of mischief which was never with malice.”

Andrew, who was a member of Salvesen Community Football Club for 10 years, is survived by his sisters Aimee and Rachel, mother, Janine Dow, father Andrew MacKinnon, and stepfather Gary Weir.

Mr Mair said the schoolboy played as a defender and was a passionate Heart of Midlothian Football Club fan and there was not a chant that he did not know and which he would sing with his “heart and soul”.

“He was proud to be a season ticket holder and his family say that his only regret would have been not seeing them when they won a major championship,” he added.

“It is a time of great sadness for all those who love him as they try to come to terms with his loss.

“Family, football, friends and his girlfriend were the most important things in Andrew’s life, according to his mates.

"He enjoyed singing and dancing, he was precious and irreplaceable.

"Our hearts are broken this day.

"The family have been overwhelmed by the great show of love and affection that the community of Broomhouse has shown for Andrew.

"His death has left a large hole and people have responded by really making an effort to show just how much he was valued and appreciated."

Mr Mair said a GoFundMe online fundraising campaign for the family has raised more than £30,000 so far.

"Last weekend, some of Andrew's friends arranged a car wash, raising £1,000 so that they could contribute towards a memorial for him," he added.

"The family have been strengthened and comforted by the small acts of kindness that people have shown from all walks of life and they are deeply grateful to everyone

"As we say farewell to Andrew, we will reflect on all that he has meant to us, all he means to God and all of the ways that he has impacted our lives.

"We pray for comfort and for peace in our hearts."

A book of remembrance has been opened to enable people to record their memories of Andrew and send messages of condolence to his family.





Andrew with his two sisters PHOTO © Janine Dow