

Geoffrey Richard Holland was born in Oakleigh, Victoria on 5 September 1945. After High School, Geoff completed a degree in Engineering at RMIT. He commenced his National Service as 3788619 at 2 RTB, Puckapunyal, on 20 April 1966. He was selected for Officer Training and

commenced at the Officer Training Unit, Scheyville, with Class 2/66 on 6 May 1966. In his Junior Term he was allocated to 13 Section, 5 Platoon,



B Company. Geoff remained in 13 Section during his Senior Term. Geoff graduated with his class on 29 September 1966, was allocated to the Royal Australian Engineers and was posted to the Army Apprentices School at Balcombe, on Victoria's Mornington Peninsular, on 30 September. Geoff transferred to the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and on 31 July 1967 was posted to the Southern Command (Victoria) Chief Engineer's No. 202 Works Section at Swan Street, Richmond, from where he was discharged at the end of his two years NS, on 19 April 1968.



Left: Sister Jan and Mother May Holland pinning on Geoff's 'Pips'.

Geoff started his own company, GHA Engineers, with an office in Lygon Street Carlton. He contributed to some major projects in Victoria, including being the first engineer in Australia to raise an existing multi-level building and putting a multi-level car park underneath, and being the lead consulting engineer on the Great Victorian Rail Trail project, which brought together his engineering knowledge with his love of bridges and trains.

Geoff was married three times. Firstly, to Carol (right) in the 70's, then Helen in the 80's and finally to Pam in 1991. Pam and her two children, Damian and Kayte, came to live with Geoff at his 600-acre farm in Tallarook, just south of Seymour (and Puckapunyal) in 1990. On the farm, Geoff bred Super-fine Merino sheep, having his greatest wool sales in 1992.



Above: Geoff and Kayte in New Zealand in 1992.

In later years, Geoff added Black Angus cows to his stock. The farm was not on town power or water, so Geoff taught Damian and Kayte lots of life skills including how to fix a generator in the dark, how to build fences, how to tend to the sheep and how to drive.

Geoff and Pam's marriage ended in 2005, but that made no difference to his relationship with Damian and Kayte. For someone who didn't have biological children Geoff was a great dad, and a great grandpa. As one of the grandkids said: 'What generous but crazy man would take three granddaughters to three different theme parks on the Gold Coast over three days!

Geoff always had a love of travel. In his twenties he travelled around England and Europe extensively, and then around most of Asia in his 40's all the way through to October 2022 when he last visited Japan. He visited America many times, including with Pam and Kayte in 2001 and with Damian and his family of six in 2013. On a trip to Turkey in 2009, Geoff was on a group tour where he met a lady named Linda who had lost everything in the Black Saturday Fires earlier that year. That started a great friendship and knowing she had no real stability in her living arrangements, he invited her to live at the farm. This generous act helped Linda get back on her feet and rebuild her house in King Lake. On his last trip to Uzbekistan in 2018, Geoff met Christine, who I would be comfortable to say was the love of his life. They spent the last five years spending three months travelling together then the next three months apart and then repeating the process. They spoke on the phone every day they were apart. Christine was last in Australia in February, and sadly that was the last time they were able to be together, as she started having heart issues while she was in Australia and is now waiting for open heart surgery in England.

In April 2023, Geoff was feeling quite unwell, and had a fall at home. He was found by the two teenage neighbours who did farm work every Saturday for him. He was taken by ambulance to the Northern Hospital in Epping, where he stayed for three weeks. After lots of tests, Geoff was diagnosed with two types of rare leukemia. Knowing that running a farm was no longer something he would be capable of, Geoff sadly sold his farm and home of 30+ years in August 2022, and moved into a more manageable house in Seymour, only 1.3kms away from his son, daughter in law and grandkids. Even though this new area for Geoff was nothing like his beloved farm, he made the best of it. When he was first diagnosed, he also had pneumonia, so we were told he may only have 3 weeks to live. He was blessed with 15 months, in which he travelled to Japan with Christine, and up and down the east coast of Australia, visiting family and friends on the Sunshine Coast, in Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Sydney.

In the last 15 months, Geoff travelled to the Northern Hospital in Epping for chemo treatments, and blood and platelet transfusions. He had an amazing team of doctors and nurses at the Northern that took amazing care of him every step of the way. He was lucky enough to be put on a cancer treatment trial, which worked well for 12 months. The first weekend of May 2023, his daughter Kayte came to Victoria from Queensland, to spend some time with him. During this weekend, he finally made the decision to stop working. He had continued his Civil Engineering business right to the end. Late May 2023, Geoff called Kayte, saying he felt within himself that he only had a few weeks left. Kayte came back to Seymour to become his carer, helping him live as comfortably as possible at home, until he moved to the Palliative Care ward at the Northern Hospital, where he spent his last week. passed 27th June 2023. Geoff is survived by his beloved partner Christine, children Damian and Kayte, and seven grandchildren: Yvette, Jessica, Caitlin, Ashlee, Ainsley, Aiden and Jalen. (With Kayte Ratcliffe)



Right: Standing: Ray, Jan and May Holland. Seated: Geoff and Neville Hollan



Left: Geoff 'Brewing Up' in the kitchen on his farm.



Right: Geoff and the grandchildren