



Lieutenant G. M. COLLESS

(1945 -2016)



**Lieutenant Colless was President of the Club from 2006 to 2007
He was elected to Life Membership of the Club in 2011**

Geoffrey (Geoff) Malcolm COLLESS was born on 6 April 1945 at Barcaldine, Queensland, to Geoffrey and Agnes May Colless. He had six siblings – Marie (Hall), Ann (Jones), Michele and Susan (who married the Youngberry brothers) and Graeme. An older brother, Peter, died as an infant.

His father Geoffrey moved the family in 1946 to Atherton, where he was the Shire Clerk. Here, young Geoff attended Atherton Primary and Junior High School until his father's untimely death in 1959. He then attended and matriculated from St Augustine's College in Cairns. Geoff enrolled in a Diploma in Architecture course at Queensland Institute of Technology in Brisbane in 1964. Studying part-time, he graduated in 1970.

In 1967, Geoff married Janelle Brewster. They had five children – Luke, Shane, Adam, Megan and Nathan – whom they raised in the Brisbane suburb of Bardon. Geoff and Jan subsequently became proud grandparents to eleven grandchildren.

Geoff was called to the colours under the National Service Act on 2 January 1971. 1737423 Private G. M. Colless was posted to 3 Training Battalion, Singleton for recruit training. He was then selected and posted to the Officer Training Unit, Scheyville - in the class of 1/71, with the Regimental Number 1417. He graduated, and on 15 July 1971 was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Royal Australian Engineers. Further Corps training was undertaken at the School of Military Engineering before being posted to 11 CE Works Eastern Command on 16 September 1971. His national service obligation ceased on 27 July 1972, and he returned to his civilian career in Brisbane.

We thank the History Interest Group and other volunteers who have researched and prepared these Notes. The series will be progressively expanded and developed. They are intended as casual reading for the benefit of Members, who are encouraged to advise of any inaccuracies in the material.

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For his military service, Geoff was awarded the Australian Defence Medal and the Anniversary of National Service Medal.

Geoff's profession as an architect was practised in Brisbane as a Principal in the firm of Miller and Colless from 1972 to 1979; and then as the Principal in Design Network Australia from 1979 to 2009. He was registered as an architect in both Queensland and NSW; and completed a Graduate Diploma in Urban and Regional Planning from the Queensland Institute of Technology in 1980. He contributed to his profession through service on the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (Queensland Division) from 1983 to 1986; on the Board of Architects, Queensland from 1981 to 1990; and as a Member of the Faculty Academic Board and lecturer at the Queensland Institute of Technology from 1973 to 1989.

He was active in several professional bodies and in the community at large. He was a Fellow of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a Fellow of the Institute of Energy, and a Member of the Royal Australian Planning Institute. Geoff stood as the National Party candidate for the Brisbane seat of Mt Coot-tha at both the 1986 and 1989 State elections. He was an active member of Rotary Brisbane Planetarium from 1979, and President in 1992-93. He was involved as a member and office bearer of numerous community and school organisations. Geoff was proud of his patented design of a moveable crowd-control barrier - which was notably deployed in the Hong Kong Transfer of Sovereignty ceremonies in 1997.

The United Service Club, Brisbane, featured in Geoff's life for many years. He joined in 1973 and was a member for 43 years until his death. During this time he served on the Committee for 24 years in three periods – from 1977 to 1985; from 1989 to 1996; and from 2001 to 2009. He was President in 2006 and 2007; and during his term of office was instrumental in the redevelopment of the Club's front terrace area, and the acquisition and display in the Club of the LTCOL B. A. Wark Victoria Cross. He was elected to Life Membership in 2011

In 2006, Geoff married Dianne Bartholomew and they lived on Bribie Island from 2009. In later years, with Dianne, he embarked on a period as an NGO volunteer overseas. His first venture was from September 2013 to December 2014 in Samoa - as an *Urban Design Officer in the Ministry of Environment*. His second deployment was from May 2016 in Siem Reap, Cambodia - where he was a Market Development Advisor to the Melon Association.

It was during this last activity that he died suddenly on 30 August 2016, aged 71, at the Khemara Hotel, Battambang, Cambodia.

Sources included:

- Various web pages
- *United Service Club, Queensland: The First Century, 1892-1992* by Flight Lieutenant Murray Adams and Lieutenant Colonel Peter Charlton
- Club Meeting Minutes, Annual Reports and sundry documents
- Mrs Dianne Colless