

Ronald (Ron) Ley Hooper, JP, OAM

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Ronald (Ron) Ley Hooper was born to Edgar and Annie at Kapunda on 23rd June 1916, where his father worked in a flour mill. When he was two years old, the family moved to Eudunda and two years later to Adelaide where his parents purchased a bakery at Prospect. Ron was in the first intake of students the new Prospect Primary School after which he attended Adelaide Technical School, finishing school during the Great Depression.

There being no prospect of finding employment, he worked in his father's bakehouse long enough to realise that a bakers life was not for him. Eventually, he secured a job as a junior clerk in the Lands Department and in the evenings attended the University of Adelaide completing his Diploma in Commerce and becoming a certified Accountant.

In 1939, Ron volunteered for the Royal Australian Artillery. He trained as an artillery officer with 28th Battery of the 2/14th Australian Field Artillery. He was in Darwin during the Japanese bombing raids, and provided artillery support on the northern coast of New Guinea in 1943. Ron was 'Mentioned In Despatches', and took part in disarming the Japanese forces at Rabaul after the Japanese surrender. On leave in February 1943 he married Joyce Scriven. This was the start of a wonderful 68 years of marriage. His daughter Margaret was born in 1944 and son Peter in late 1945.

After discharge he became an auditor in the Auditor General's Department and began a lifetime's association with the War Veteran's Home at Myrtle Bank, eventually as chairman. His professional career saw him appointed Secretary of the Royal Adelaide Hospital in 1959, and the hospitals administrator from 1970 until his retirement in 1979. He was inaugural chairman of the hospitals Heritage and History Committee from 1980 to 2003.

Retirement also gave Ron the opportunity to use his skills as a JP and in Rotary, where he was awarded Rotary's highest honour, the Paul Harris Fellowship, and made a life member in 2011. As an Australian Medic Alert Foundation volunteer he received its highest award for service, the Murray Brae Shield.

In 2000, he was awarded the medal of the Order of Australia (OAM), for services to the community. Ron never expected praise or reward and would downplay his achievements. His primary concern was to contribute to the best of his ability.

Always a great family man, Ron adored and was loved by all his family. Ron passed away in Adelaide on 14th October 2011. He is survived by his wife Joyce, Children Margaret and Peter, five grandchildren and six greatgrandchildren.