



IN MEMORIAM

Jeff Wilkinson (1921 - 2006)

Jeff Wilkinson passed away peacefully at his home in Howick in July 2006 after a short illness.

Jeff was born in Pietermaritzburg in 1921, the youngest of a family of six. His father, a Methodist minister, was from Plymouth, and his mother, whose spirit of adventure he had inherited, was a genuine cockney, having been born within the sound of the bells of Bow.

His parents lived in various South African towns, and consequently he had a varied primary school education, finally matriculating from the old Kearsney College outside Stanger.

A few years of surveying, primarily on the Vaalharts scheme, preceded his entry into the SAAF at the outbreak of World War II. However, he was shot down and wounded over the Western Desert. After his recovery, he saw out the War as a flying instructor at Robert's Heights and Potchefstroom.

In 1944 he married Gwennyth Putterill, whom he had known since childhood, and whose brothers had been at Kearsney with him.

In 1946, following cessation of hostilities, Jeff registered at UCT under the ex-servicemen's scheme. In 1952, on completion of his medical studies, he did his internship at Grey's Hospital, Pietermaritzburg. He and his family (now including three children) moved to the then Basutoland, where he worked in general practice until a bilateral nerve deafness resulted in him being granted a WHO scholarship to study radiology in the UK. In the course of three years from 1962, at St Mary's in Paddington and the Hammersmith Hospital, he successfully completed both the DMRD and DMRT degrees before returning to the Queen Elizabeth II Hospital in Maseru to establish a radiology department for the entire Basutoland.

After independence he left Lesotho, entering government practice at the National/Pelonomi hospitals in Bloemfontein, before moving to a private radiology practice.

On retiring, Jeff and Gwen moved to the Amberfield retirement village in Howick, where they lived until their deaths, seven months apart, after 61 years of happy marriage.

He leaves behind three children, his elder son having followed him into medicine, four grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

Lynton Wilkinson (son)