

Roger and Jill Guard were loving and devoted parents and grandparents and their family meant everything to them.

We remember them first as the most wonderful parents and grandparents imaginable. They were utterly devoted to my sister, brother and I and they loved their two grandchildren dearly. Mum was so looking forward to getting home to see Kai and Ella, during her trip she was constantly asking for more photos and video of them. I did send her photos and video of Ella walking for the first time, which she thought were wonderful. She loved the kids so much, and was the most amazing grandmother to them. She had been driving down from Toowoomba to Brisbane for a couple of days each week to help look after them.

They left Brisbane on the 1st of June and I dropped them off at the airport. They were very excited about the trip, which included a few weeks travelling around the UK and Ireland, including a visit to relatives in Devon, and then a Scenic Tours cruise from Budapest to Amsterdam. They met up with Mum's sister Liz and her husband Malcolm in Budapest, and enjoyed the cruise with them. They sent us many excited emails describing what they were seeing each day and where they were dining. We are glad that they had a wonderful holiday and that Mal and Liz will be able to tell us all about it. Mal and Liz had planned to extend their holiday after the cruise and are now arranging an early trip home after hearing the news.

My father was head of Pathology at Toowoomba Base Hospital and he loved his job and his profession. He was proud of having completed 40 years of service as a Queensland Health pathologist. He was dedicated to his laboratory, his staff and the public health system and was always focussed on providing outstanding service to his clients. Away from work, he was an avid reader and was incredibly knowledgeable in geography, history and science. He was interested in knowing how the world works, and fascinated by the endless complexity of nature. He challenged his kids to be curious and inquisitive and to find out facts for ourselves rather than accepting assertions without evidence. He was a scientist to the core. He has a collection of National Geographics which includes every article printed since 1888. He enjoyed collecting stamps. He also has an extensive butterfly collection and was involved in breeding butterflies in North Queensland for many years. He was a keen birdwatcher.

He was an extremely loving father and on his weekends and holidays he encouraged us to do outdoor activities such as running and bushwalking. Our family holidays were great adventures across the country and overseas, visiting national parks. He fostered in us a deep love of nature. He built several treehouses for us, and flying foxes, and always had a project underway. He built over three kilometres of walking tracks at my parents bushland acreage in Toowoomba, as well as digging a dam by hand, constructing an enormous retaining wall and an underground room. His latest project was a spiral staircase at the front of the house which looks magnificent.

Roger was passionate about running. He started running marathons in the late 1970s, and set a personal best of 2 hours 39 minutes. In those days, he ran barefoot! He became quite famous for it, since they lived in Cairns at the time and it was a small community. In more recent years he started wearing shoes but he continued to run marathons, ultramarathons and trail runs and was still actively

running. He was a regular participant in TRAQ runs ([runtrails.org](http://runtrails.org)) and the Glasshouse 100 mile run. He was President of the Toowoomba Road Runners for many years and organised the Toowoomba Marathon every year in recent times. He wrote histories of the regular Toowoomba running events which can be downloaded here: [trr.org.au/about.htm](http://trr.org.au/about.htm) It wasn't just a running club to Dad, it was an important social engagement for him. The entire Toowoomba Road Runners club knew Roger as a friend, mentor and leader and will miss him terribly, I'm sure. They have offered us support and we appreciate their thoughts at this difficult time.

Jill was also a dedicated doctor who worked in general practice for many years. She worked for most of her career at the Family Planning Clinic in Toowoomba specialising in women's health. She also committed herself to multiple worthy causes including Meals On Wheels, assisting Sudanese refugees in Toowoomba and sponsoring children through World Vision. She was a talented musician and played the cello, piano and recorder in multiple community music groups and as part of Toowoomba Choral Society musical productions. She encouraged each of us to take up an instrument and my siblings and I all still enjoy making music thanks to her influence.

Jill was an incredible mother. Not only to her own children, but many other relatives and friends who spent time at our home were treated as extra members of the family. In 1998 Mum and Dad looked after Lisa, an exchange student from Sweden, and she was like an extra daughter to them. She was also the most amazing grandmother. She absolutely adored her grandkids Kai (2) and Ella (10 months), and she found it terribly hard to be away from them for the seven week trip. She was loving her role as grandmother and Amanda and Bevan relied on her help so much. Kai was so looking forward to seeing his Grandma again.

Mum also had a wide range of social activities including regular engagements playing bridge, playing tennis and book club. In each of these groups she made very strong friendships, and she will be sorely missed. She cared for a number of people in need over her years in Toowoomba, and provided emotional and practical support for many more. She was truly selfless and consistently put her family and friends' needs above her own.

As a couple they were always loving and supportive of each other and shared their love of nature, gardening, travel and reading among others. They especially loved travel, and were looking forward to many more adventures together. In 1988 our family lived in Sweden for three months, and then travelled around Europe together for another three months. This was a very special time for the family, with so many wonderful memories, and led to the development of many strong bonds of friendship with families in Sweden and relatives in England. My siblings and I also participated in overseas exchange programs and developed close ties with families in Iceland, Belgium and France. My parents met and spent time with all of our host families and they loved them deeply, and were grateful for their generosity in caring for us.

Both our parents were deeply generous people and supported environmental, humanitarian and development organisations as well as the Toowoomba Hospital Foundation. In 2012, Roger and I took part in the Oxfam Trailwalker 100km run in a team together and we thoroughly enjoyed sharing that challenge.

Amanda, David and I are deeply grateful for all of the generous support we are receiving from family and friends. We are a very close family, and we are all just devastated by this loss. But we are looking after each other and we know that Jill and Roger only want the best for us. We know that they are proud of their children and we hope we can repay our debt to them by living good lives, and following their excellent example.

Jill has three sisters (Liz, Cathy and Bronwyn) and her mother Joan. Roger has one sister, Marion. All have been a hugely important part of their lives along with their families. They have been an enormous help to us during this time and they share our grief. We are all in close contact and are supporting each other.

Our thanks go to the Toowoomba community and Mum and Dad's friends, neighbours and colleagues who have all shown their support by telling us how much our parents meant to them.

We also send our love and best wishes to all of the other families who have been touched by this tragedy.

Jill and Roger would have wanted some good to come out of this tragedy. We request that donations be made in their memory to Medecins Sans Frontieres ([msfinmemory.everydayhero.com/au/jill-and-roger-guard](https://msfinmemory.everydayhero.com/au/jill-and-roger-guard)) and/or the Toowoomba Hospital Foundation ([toowoombahospitalfoundation.org.au/support-us](https://toowoombahospitalfoundation.org.au/support-us)).

We call on the people who carried out this terrible act to put down their weapons and seek a political solution to their problems. Violence is not the solution.

Paul Guard

their loving son always.