

## **HALLIWELL: ROGER LEONARD**

**Born: 14 May 1942, Gisborne, New Zealand**

**Married: 1967, Levin, New Zealand**

**To: Dixie Lee Gawler (1944 - )**

**Died: 26 May 2019, Wellington, New Zealand**

**Buried: Private cremation, New Zealand**



### ***Roger's parents were:***

Herbert Thomas (1913 - 1986) & Rosina Gladys (nee Grundy) (1916 - 2003)

### ***Roger had 1 sister:***

Ngaire (1940 - ) married Neville Tretheway

### ***Roger & Dixie have 4 children:***

Angela Jane (1968 - ) married John Migo ( - 2003)  
Richard Tatton

Jacqui Ursula (1970 - ) married Sean Wilde

Regan James (1972 - ) married Mel French

Amy Joanna (1973 - ) married Michael Law

### ***Roger & Dixie have 8 grandchildren***

Alexander Halliwell (1994 - )  
Benson Wilde (1998 - )  
Geordie Migo (1998 - )  
Max Halliwell (2000 - )  
Meg Wilde (2001 - )  
Sam Halliwell (2004 - )  
Harriet Law (2004 - )  
Charlie Law (2006 - )

**Education:**

Kaiti (Gisborne) Primary school (1947 – 1950)

Levin East Primary school (1950 – 1954)

Horowhenua College (1956 – 1959)

**Honours:**

Paul Harris Fellowship Award (Levin) 1988

Paul Harris Fellowship Award (Wellington) 2010

Paul Harris Sapphire Pin 2015

Alfred Stauder Award for excellence & Outstanding service to the  
Australian Confectionary Industry: 2008

**Associations:**

Councillor: Levin Borough Council 1977 – 1980

Chairman: Horowhenua College Bd of Governors 1988 – 1989

Member: Horowhenua College Bd of Governors 1985 - 1987

Member: Levin Rotary Club From 1967

President: Levin Rotary Club 1978 – 1979

Member: Port Nicholson Rotary Club From 1990

President & coach: Levin Gymnastics Club

Business mentor: Chamber of Commerce

Board Member: NZ Confectionery Manufacturers Assn

Major Sponsor: Levin Hockey Turf – known as the Halliwell Turf – a tribute both  
Roger & Dixie's fathers, who both played Hockey in their youth



Roger was born in Gisborne in May 1942 to Herb and Rose Halliwell, a younger brother to his sister Ngaire.

Herb and Rose owned a local grocery store in Gisborne until 1950, when they made the move to Levin. Herb and Rose started a home decorating business in Oxford St and called it 'The Paint Pot'.

Roger attended school for one reason only, and that was to play sport. The first day he started Horowhenua College he was asked to play for the 1<sup>st</sup> XI, first as wicket keeper and later as a bowler. He won the school cross country and represented the College in swimming, athletics and tennis.

Rugby was the winner on the day though. He played 1<sup>st</sup> XV Rugby right through school and thereafter Horowhenua College Old Boys club rugby for 8 years.

He also played 4 games, as a fullback, for Horowhenua Kapiti province in 1960.

He had dreams of playing for Manawatu against France, however he broke his leg whilst playing for Old Boys, putting a stop to that.

Keeping fit was important to Roger. He loved the water and was surfing by the age of 5 in Gisborne on a board made by his Uncle Fred. He continued going to the pool right to the end, and especially when in Taupo where he loved his early morning 'swim' gossip session with the early morning regulars at AC Baths.

Back to late 1959 and finally it was time to leave school. Herb was not keen on Roger joining the family business until he had some work experience so at 17, Roger moved to Palmerston North where he spent 6 months working in the shop for Tingeys, 6 months in their office and 6 months in the Tingeys glazier's department.



One of his jobs was to glaze all the joinery at the new Fairfield School in Levin, a school all his children would end up attending.

Roger quickly got bored of all this trade work and decided he could make more money for his parents working in the shop, which he did from 1961 to 1972, when he bought the business, under the guidance of his business minded Accountant Uncle, Charlie, who stitched Roger up and made him pay a premium as Charlie said 'it was the right thing to do'.

During this time, every day Roger would walk past the stylish milliners' business on his way to the Bank (probably whistling), and he finally caught the eye of the owner – Dixie Gawler. In 1967, they married, built their first home in MacArthur Street themselves and also spent the first few years of their marriage buying houses, renovating and selling them on. They even found time to have 4 children within 5 years.

In 1974, Roger, Dixie and family made the move to the rural outskirts of Levin and bought a 6 acre lifestyle property where the children grew up. A massive glasshouse, asparagus patch, vegetable patch, every fruit tree you can imagine, 6 sheep, 6 cows, a horse, a pig and a goat. It truly was The Good Life.

*"By the way, the 6 sheep didn't last long as one day while drenching, Dad missed the sheep and ended up drenching Dixie! She remembers the taste to this day. Roger said he probably should have drenched himself as it obviously did Dixie some good as she's outlived him!"*



While in the decorating business, Roger was also national buyer for the PWF, Paint and Wallpaper Federation for 12 years, supplying 50 shops nationwide. Two of those years he spent as Chairman.

In 1982, at the tender age of 40, Roger sold the Paint Pot and retired, as had been his plan all along! He did a bit of this and that, painted the house, the cottage,

tended the garden, dug in a trampoline and built a pool for his family but he was getting bored again!

As luck would have it, Roger was approached by the receivers of a business that had fallen on hard times and asked Roger if he'd like to step in and manage the place and see if he could get it into the black again. Always up for a challenge Roger started work at Granny's Licorice. He reduced the staff from 70 to 17 (plus four under the table workers at home who had to stick stickers on bags every night). Profits started to flow and the costs were covered. The bank was happy and put it up for sale. Roger had always had a sweet tooth so decided to buy it.

He built up Granny's Licorice and sold to Arnotts in 1988. With a 5 year restraint of trade, Roger retired again and did a bit of this and that again.

In 1990, with the kids having flown the coop, Roger and Dixie moved to Oriental Parade in Wellington. But Roger was bored again.

The sweet tooth beckoned and in 1994, under the guise of starting up a mushroom processing plant Roger sneakily bought his old licorice factory back. Along with son Regan, Roger started RJ's Licorice.

With Rogers reputation in the confectionery industry, news travelled fast and it didn't take long for business to boom, building the business up to the point where they built a new factory, doubling the capacity and buying state of the art automated machinery. Regular trips to Germany ensured RJ's was the market leader in processing and quality and built a successful business supplying NZ and exporting to Australia, US, Canada and the UK.

In 2015, at the age of 72, it was time to retire again so Roger sold RJ's.

Music was always a huge part of his life.

## **Service**

Roger was described as "a gentleman of great positivity, kind heartedness & immense generosity who touched many people's lives."

This led to him naturally joining Rotary in Levin for 25 years, and then transferring to Port Nicholson Rotary Club where he was a member for a further 25 years. He was Assistant District Governor in Levin and Wellington Clubs and President of the Levin Club twice.

Roger received two Paul Harris Fellowship Awards for his outstanding service to Rotary and the Community.

He served on the Levin Borough Council for 3 years as Chairman of Staff & Finance.

He was President of the Levin Gymnastics Club, as well as teaching gymnastics. In his tenure, they fundraised to fit out the gym with Olympic quality equipment.

Two years as Chairman of the Board of Trustees for Horowhenua College.

Business Mentor for the Chamber of Commerce, primarily guiding smaller businesses in day to day operations.

Board Member of the NZ Confectionery Manufacturers Association.

Sponsored the Levin Hockey Turf, known as the Halliwell Turf – a tribute to both Roger's father, and Dixie's father, who both played hockey in their youth.

Roger even tried a little bit of acting, appearing as a policeman in the locally produced movie Kingi.

## **Health**

Broken leg in 1961 playing Rugby

Broken Archilles in 1982 playing Rugby

Then there was the heart attack in 1989 while on a trade mission to China with the Palmerston North City Council. When the quick-eze didn't quite cut it, he flew straight home and ended up with a quadruple bypass. He was later told he probably had less than 3 days to live if he hadn't come straight back for the operation. For a

procedure that had a 10 year lifespan, Roger's heart lasted 28 years... long enough to fit in 2 knee replacements and a hip replacement!

