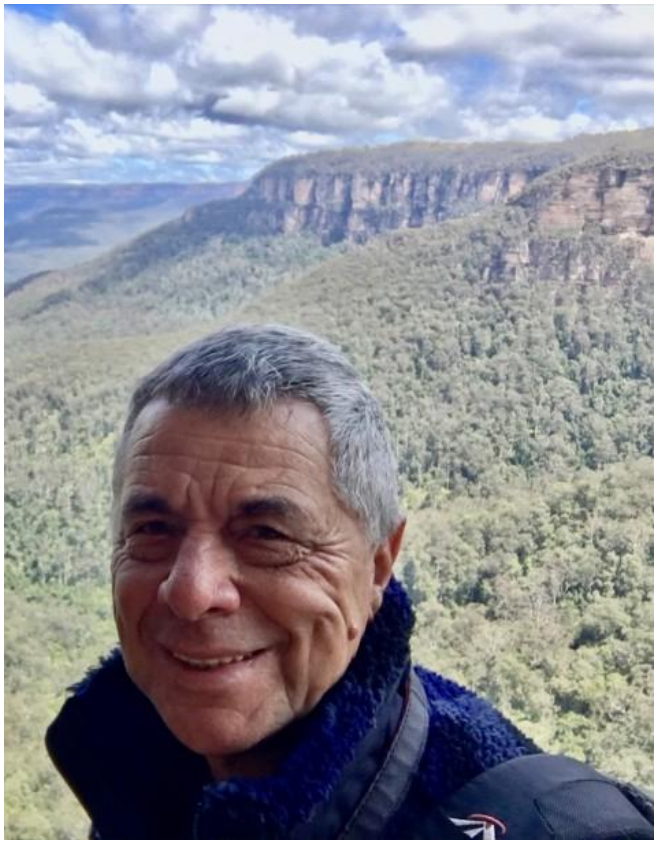
Ron Goldbery



15 December 1943–1 April 2024

Ron Goldbery sadly passed away in Sydney after a long illness, aged 80. He was born in Sydney following his parents' escape to Australia from the Dutch East Indies (DEI) ahead of its occupation by the Japanese in 1942 during WW2. Ron's father, Max Harry Goldbery, was British and his mother was Dutch. The family returned to the DEI after WW2 to resume working for Ron's maternal Dutch grandparents' business, but Ron did not learn English there because it was not his family's spoken language. Ron's family returned to Sydney in 1949 before the Dutch Government ceded sovereignty of the DEI (West Papua excepted) to the incumbent Republic of Indonesia in December that year.

The family resided in Coogee in Sydney's eastern Suburbs where Ron began his education. His secondary education was at Randwick Boys High School (1956–1961) and his tertiary education at the University of New South Wales (now UNSW Sydney) where he completed his Bachelor of Science (Honours) in 1966, his Master of Science in 1970, and his PhD in 1974, all in the Department of Applied Geology. Ron's PhD research was on the sedimentology of the Permian marine formations of

the southern and western Sydney Basin with particular reference to the occurrence of the mineral dawsonite and its accompanying suite of rare authigenic minerals. Ron's BScHons work on the geology of the western Blue Mountains (WBM) of New South Wales (NSW) was published in 1969 as Bulletin No. 20 of the Geological Survey of NSW (GSNSW), and remains a foundational reference work on the geology of the region. Ron worked at the GSNSW in the Division of Regional Mapping during the period 1967—1970 while undertaking his MSc and produced the first edition (provisional) series of 1:50,000 geological maps and accompanying Basic Data Notes covering the WBM during that period.

In August 1974, with the strong endorsement of Professor J.J. Frankel of the UNSW, Ron was appointed Senior Lecturer at Ben Gurion University of the Negev (BGUN) in Beer Sheva, Israel, to be taken up in September 1975. Ron and his wife Suzanne left Australia for Israel in late 1974 and took a year to get there via tours of the U.K., the USA, and mainland Europe by car, which they drove overland from France (and via car ferries) to Beer Sheva, arriving there in time to find accommodation, settle in, and start learning Hebrew before the start of teaching.

Ron was at BGUN for 10 years (with a sabbatical break in 1980–81 at the Queensland Institute of Technology in Brisbane). In Israel, in addition to his teaching duties, Ron specialised in the exploration for and analysis of the country's resources of bauxitic clay, kaolin, phosphate, and limestone, and he published several papers on the sedimentary and weathering overprint origins of these and other deposits in this period.

Upon returning to Australia in early 1986, Ron worked as a consultant for Century Metals and Mining NL (on alluvial diamonds and hard-rock gold: 1986–87), and for Kidston Gold Mines Ltd (on regional gold exploration in the Gilberton area of North Queensland: 1988–90).

In 1987 Ron became an Honorary Associate in the School of Earth Sciences at Sydney's Macquarie University where he established (and managed till 1996) a commercial geotechnical laboratory titled Geotech Analytical Services, focused on the technical evaluation of industrial materials and minerals using innovative technological approaches to their analyses, some of which analytical equipment he developed himself, demonstrating that he was ahead of his time in this space.

Returning to industry full-time in 1997, Ron founded Queensland Opals NL, the first dedicated opal-mining company to be listed on the ASX (ASX ticker: QOP). He was

Managing Director (MD) of QOP till 2002, establishing several open-cut opal mines in southwest Queensland and developing QOP's international sales operations. This further cemented Ron's reputation as a leader in resource exploration and commercial development. From 2003 to 2010 Ron worked as a consultant for Wallarah Minerals P/L on a marble resource at Coolalie near Yass, and for Zeomin Technologies P/L on zeolite prospects in the Melville Range southwest of Tamworth, and contributed to their advancements in industrial applications. From 2019 to 2022 Ron consulted for several Western Australian based companies exploring for glass-making sand and silica flour deposits; and, as Chief Geologist at InterGroup Mining P/L from 2020 till 2024, he developed a kaolin resource west of Charters Towers in Queensland.

As MD of Integral Mineral Resources Australia (IMRA) in the period 1994 —2000, Ron spearheaded the development of a multi-commodity friable sandstone deposit in the WBM of NSW for Newnes-Kaolin P/L (NKPL), known as the Newnes Junction Sand Extraction and Kaolin Mining Project, of which he was the MD and project manager starting from 2002. In 2003 NKPL took on the name Sydney Construction Materials P/L (SCM) of which he was the MD till 2024. Ron's work for NKPL and SCM led to the successful delineation of a 21-million-tonne mineable resource of construction sand, specialty sand, and kaolin, navigating complex environmental and governmental regulations with unwavering commitment to responsible resource development. From 2009 till the onset of his illness Ron was also Chief Geologist (part-time) at Stratum Resources which consulted for SCM during the development phase of the Newnes Junction project which started in 2003.

During a career of more than five decades, Ron established himself as a distinguished geologist, industry leader, academic, and mentor, who made major contributions in the exploration and exploitation of gold, base metals, heavy minerals, diamonds, industrial minerals and other materials. His expertise in kaolin, refractory clays, limestone, and zeolite for agricultural and pozzolanic applications placed him at the forefront of industrial mineral exploration. His meticulous approach to geological evaluation and JORC resource estimation set a benchmark for accuracy and diligence in the field.

Ron brought wisdom, integrity, and warmth to his work, and to his personal and family relationships. He is deeply missed by his colleagues, friends, and family. His contributions to geology and mineral exploration leave a lasting legacy, inspiring future generations in the pursuit of scientific excellence.

Ron is survived by his wife of 55 years, Suzanne, their son Elon and daughter Tamar, and four grandchildren.

PATRICK CONAGHAN and MURRAY LINES, with input from SUZANNE and ELON GOLDBERY, ANN BYRNES, MICHAEL LEU, PETER FLOOD, and ROBERT COENRAADS. (1 November 2025)