



Arthur Ong

December 28, 1939 - February 21, 2023

Arthur Beng Keong Ong of Vallejo, California passed away on February 21 at the age of 83 after battling cancer. He was with his partner of eight years and in the thoughts and prayers of his family and friends here and in Malaysia.

Arthur was born to the late Choo Gaik Hoon and Ong Kok Hoo on December 28, 1939, in Penang, Malaysia. He was youngest of four children. His family spent summers at the Choo family compound on the beach in Penang on Gurney Drive. It is here that Arthur developed a life-long passion for swimming, recently swimming up to two miles per day in pools in Walnut Creek and Vallejo's In-Shape gym. Youthful summer jobs included work at the family Honda dealerships in Ipoh.

After he completed his schooling, he met Reg Staples, a British representative of the Lipton Tea Company. Arthur and Reg moved to London, UK briefly, and then settled in San Francisco, CA. They made their home in the Castro District on Caselli Avenue where the nascent gay rights movement was beginning to flourish, and Harvey Milk was their photo developer at the neighborhood camera store. Arthur was appointed to a position in computing with PG&E.

The young couple quickly made many friends including Warren and George, later Herb; Dennis and Bob, later Tommy; Richard and Manuel, later Ric; Jack

and Chet; Grady and Kelt; Patrick and Felix; Rob and Walt; Wells and Steve; Hans and Jerry; and Larry. Arthur was the kind of person who attracted lots of friends, and he and Reg loved entertaining them. They were known for their elegant dinners, and for seeking out the most exciting new Bay Area restaurants, helping to discover Chez Panisse, Fleur-de-lis, the Carnillion Room, and many others. Arthur and Reg later lived in Tiburon, Daley City, and Vallejo, where they continued to host longtime friends with the same gracious hospitality.

Over the years, many of Arthur's Choo and Ong family members moved to the Bay Area from Malaysia, and Arthur happily took on the role of host for their annual Christmas Eve celebration. This family tradition continued for several decades and was a great joy to Arthur.

Arthur and Reg were together 41 years. After Arthur lost Reg to illness in 2004, he moved to his home in Carquinez Highlands and retired from PG&E. Soon thereafter he met Scott Todd. They were together for 10 years, making yet more friends: Keith and Tom, Ron and Lei, Howard and Gary, Francis and Mike, Paul, Mary, Diane and Lance, Claudia and Steve, and the monthly 5000 game gang, and the friends at 1220.

Arthur loved to travel, and—first with Reg, then with Scott—joined many of his long-time friends for cruises to England, China, Australia, Bali, and many other destinations. And he loved his cats. After his move, he connected with two cats, three really, who were saved from the streets by his love and affection. Arthur saw to it that Lolly-Pop and Sheba lounged and ate to their hearts' content, and Lucas joined in, too.

Scott passed in 2015 and shortly thereafter Arthur met Jim, and a whole new group of friends were made and cherished, including the Solano Sunset Rotary gang, Gina and Tom, Liz, Mike, and Gordon. Together, they enjoyed

performances of the San Francisco Ballet and Opera, Vallejo Symphony, New Conservatory Theatre, and Broadway shows. With Jim, Arthur travelled to the one country he longed to visit but hadn't—Greece. In August 2018 they travelled to the Greek island Kythira, the Peloponnese, and Northern Greece to see family, learn about history and have new adventures.

His friends and family will miss him dearly. Other friends, who have predeceased him and are remembered with great fondness, are likely treating him to a banquet in heaven.

Arthur was predeceased by his sisters Elizabeth Huang and Ong Choo Imm. Survivors include partner James Sotiros; sister Ong Choo See; cousins Peter (Hong) Lo; and nieces and nephews Ann (Bruce) Woodbury, Connie (Bob) Huang, Max (Aubrey) Huang, May Goh Orr; and several grand and great grand nieces and nephews.

Final arrangements are under the care of Passalacqua Funeral Chapel. The family thanks the professionals at Kaiser Hospice Vallejo for their extraordinary care of Arthur during his last days. Gifts in memory of Arthur Ong can be made to the Humane Society of the North Bay <https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/hsnb>. May his memory be eternal.

Photo credit: David Eisenbud

Tribute Wall

HW

“ Arthur was a loyal, caring friend to Gary & me and is remembered fondly.

Howard Waki - March 06, 2023 at 05:26 PM

GS

“ Such a privilege to know this wonderful man, friend, lover of the arts, funny, caring... such a loss. Just processing what it means to have him gone. So very sorry to all who loved him. Gina Snyder

Gina Snyder - February 26, 2023 at 12:44 PM