

Robert was born on June 4, 1933, to Horace and Ida Ruth Holt in Alpine, Texas, where his father was a depot manager for the Santa Fe Railroad. The family was soon transferred to Muleshoe, Texas, where Robert grew up with many close family members including aunts, uncles, cousins, and his sister, Carolyn. During his high school years, his family moved to nearby Amherst. He met Sally Birdsong at Amherst High School. They married during his junior year at Texas Tech University.

Robert was a wonderful musician. He could play almost any instrument, but his favorites were piano, banjo, guitar, clarinet and harmonica. His favorite memory of college was being a member of the Goin' Band from Raiderland, in which he played clarinet and was active in the band fraternity. His grandson, Rex Emerson, has followed in his musical footsteps.

Shortly after graduating from Texas Tech with a degree in Finance, Robert and Sally had their first baby, Sally Anne, and Robert was drafted into the Army Finance Corps. They were stationed in Frankfurt, Germany for two years. Upon his discharge, they settled in Tulia, Texas, where Robert worked as an accountant for what was then called Graham, Glover & Brown accounting firm.

While in Tulia, Robert and Sally had two more children, Nancy and John. Shortly after John's birth, the family moved to Amarillo, where Robert lived from then until his death. He started his career in banking at North State Bank and later became President and CEO of Western National Bank.

Robert was very active in the community. He was involved with the North Amarillo Kiwanis Club, the Amarillo Chamber of Commerce, the Panhandle Humane Society, and the Amarillo Executive Club, serving a term as president. He served as a volunteer EMT and as municipal judge for Lake Tanglewood. A charter member of St. Stephen's Methodist Church, Robert taught adult Sunday School there for many years. He also became active in local and statewide Republican politics. He resigned as bank president in 1973 to run for State Treasurer against Jesse James in the 1974 state elections. He lost by a narrow margin but loved his time campaigning. He got to know George H.W. Bush, John Tower, and Gerald Ford, among other prominent politicians, and had many letters, photos, and other mementos from this time.

After the election, he joined J.W. Palmer & Associates, which was a new and upcoming data processing company in Amarillo. They handled billing and accounting for many local businesses, including Colberts, Mr. G.'s, Daisy's, Kleins, and several oil companies and other retail businesses. Robert later bought out the other partners and renamed the company Datatek Systems, which he operated for many years.

Robert held a private pilot's license and adored flying his plane. When his daughter Nancy was head cheerleader at Texas Tech he flew the squad to many football games. He also had a houseboat on Lake Tanglewood, appropriately named The Ragtime, where the family enjoyed many wonderful times.

In 1977, he married JoAnn Weisbart, and acquired two bonus children, Geoff Weisbart and Devra Weisbart. He and JoAnn had many adventures during their 47-year marriage. Interested in her Jewish faith, Robert converted to Judaism in the 1990s and became an active member of the Temple B'nai Israel, ultimately serving as the chair of its board.

Robert lived the last few years as a resident of Ussery Roan State Veteran's Home. His family deeply appreciates the administrators and staff for their excellent care of him in his final years.

Robert was preceded in death by his parents, and his wife JoAnn. He is survived by his sister, Carolyn Harmon; his children, Sally Emerson and husband Don, Nancy Gormley, and John Holt and wife Ann; Geoff Weisbart and wife Melanie, and Devra Weisbart; a nephew, Kit Harmon; seven grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Celebrating The Life Of



ROBERT GARLAND HOLT

June 4, 1933

April 29, 2026