The Memories of Adrienne Gourlay

FEBRUARY 2011



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Transcribed from her original spiral-bound book. Her words are kept exactly as she wrote them.

Ecclesiastes 2:16

Since all that now is
will be forgotten
in the days to come.

Each day is a gift
it is called the “present” because
God gives it to us as a present

Thank You Jesus for each one of mine.

Adrienne.

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Her life in years

The main moments of Adrienne's life, gathered from her memoir and from family memory.

6 March 1940	Born in England *Peaches* 11
1944 to 1946	Sent to Aunty Edie's at Coleshill for safe keeping during the war · aged 4 to 6 *Schools & Other Things* 20
1946	Dad collects her and brings her home to Edgeware · aged 6 *Church* 41
10 May 1948	Arrives in Sydney on the Empire Brent after six weeks at sea · aged 8 *The 10th May* 15
1950	Brother Spencer born · aged 10 *Spencer My Brother* 71
1955	Tries to leave school at 15 for a bank job, and is talked into finishing · aged 15 *The Ferris Wheel* 85
1956	Meets Stephen at Ashfield Baptist Church · aged 16 *Stephen* 144
1957 to 1959	Leaving Certificate (HSC), then Teachers' College · aged 17 to 19
October 1959	Blackheath youth camp: Stephen holds her hand on the drive home, and they're officially "going together" · aged 19 *Stephen* 144
January 1960	First teaching job in Lithgow, boarding with the Townsends · aged 19 *On leaving home* 53
17 May 1960	Stephen proposes by the fire at the Townsends' · aged 20 *Celebrating 50 years of living and loving together* 172
16 December 1960	Married at Ashfield Baptist Church; first home at 51 Atkinson St, Lithgow · aged 20 *51 Atkinson Street Lithgow* 99
13 December 1961	Finishes teaching at Lithgow, and Rachel is born the same day · aged 21 *Stephen* 144
1962 to 1968	Ralph, Jonathan, Merrewyn and Rosalind follow; Rosalind has heart surgery as a baby · aged 22 to 28 *The Word* 95
1960s and 1970s	Back to Sydney: Castle Hill, then Epping; Stephen at Channel 7 for 13 years *All Houses, Great and Small* 109

1981	Buy "Beltana", 1280 acres on Mulla Creek near Tamworth · aged 41 *Stephen* 144
1981 to 1994	Teaches at Dungowan School (13 years) · aged 41 to 54 *The Word* 95
1987 to 2005	Grandchildren born, fifteen of them by 2010 · aged 47 to 65 *On being a grandparent* 58
1992	Visits England at 52 · aged 52
About 1993	Sell Beltana and move down the road to Brindabella, for about eight years of creek flats and poddy calves · aged 53 *All Houses, Great and Small* 109
About 1997	Retires from teaching, receiving a medal for 25 years of service to children · aged 57
About 1997	Takes up watercolour painting, going on to build a wide and beautiful range of work · aged 57
2000	Diagnosed with Parkinson's disease by Dr James Hughes in Tamworth · aged 60
About 2001	Move to the Lake House at Charmhaven on the Central Coast, to be near her parents · aged 61 *All Houses, Great and Small* 109
2002	Her dad dies at 93, and her mum moves in with them · aged 62 *Barnard Henry White* 135
2006	Her mum dies at 93 · aged 66 *Marjorie* 87
14 November 2008	Move to 3 McKeon Ave, Armidale · aged 68 *All Houses, Great and Small* 109
2008 to 2021	Attends Armidale Community Church · aged 68 to 81
2009 to 2011	Writes down her memories and life story, finishing in February 2011 · aged 69 to 70
16 December 2010	50th wedding anniversary · aged 70 *Celebrating 50 years of living and loving together* 172
2015	Esther, her first grandchild, is born · aged 75 *On being a grandparent* 58
August 2021	Moves into Woodport aged care · aged 81
19 September 2026	Passes away · aged 86

01 • Peaches

PEACHES, GOLDEN SHINY Australian tinned peaches! We had these for tea last night and it set me to remember other Australian tinned peaches.

My Aunty Mary, my grandmother's sister, was very special, soft and cuddly, smelling of something nice, I know not what, but I loved her. Aunty Mary lived in a little semi detached line of cottages on the "green" at Cinderford. You approached her house by going through a covered archway to the back of the house. As a little child I used to love to run through the tunnel like covered way screaming to hear the sound of my voice echoing off the walls.

There were geese on the green, and though I loved to run to Aunty's you had to keep within reach of Dad's hand because the geese would chase you.

It was ration time, probably 1943 or 1944. I can remember my size being quite small. So small that I was allowed to stand on the dining room table and help light the gas lamp which would be pulled down to light. I loved the room, darkish, with a fuel stove and Uncle Pete smelling of tobacco sitting next to it, a glow from the fire, somehow cosy to me as a child. On the wall was a picture of Jesus knocking on the door by Holman Hunt and nearby also on the wall was a glass case housing a stuffed squirrel – brown, I recall with beady eyes.

A special treat, the pride of all, was saved up for our visit, in the sideboard in the front room. I think it was called the parlour. It was a dark room, with dark leathery stuffed chairs, It gave me the feeling

of not being used very much. I was allowed to get the special treat out of the sideboard. Ah! it was a tin of peaches! I wonder how many ration coupons Aunty had saved to buy them for our visit. I knew nothing of that sacrifice as a child but they were so special that I can remember them all these years ago. Probably, sixty six or sixty seven years ago.

Aunty's place was special – it had an outside toilet with two seats. I don't know if two people ever used it at the same time but I thought it a fascinating idea. There was a scullery out the back, a laundry, rather dampish as I remember as I used to play on the floor with a little green teaset. I'd obviously been sent out there to make my mess rather than inside. It was a bright green teaset with pictures of a previous king and queen on the pieces. I loved playing out there and used the berries from a large asparagus fern for the pretend food on the plates.

Visits to Aunty Mary were a special delight to me, I don't know how frequently we visited, but it would have been quite a journey by train from London to Cinderford. I do remember quite a long walk from the Cinderford station to her place.

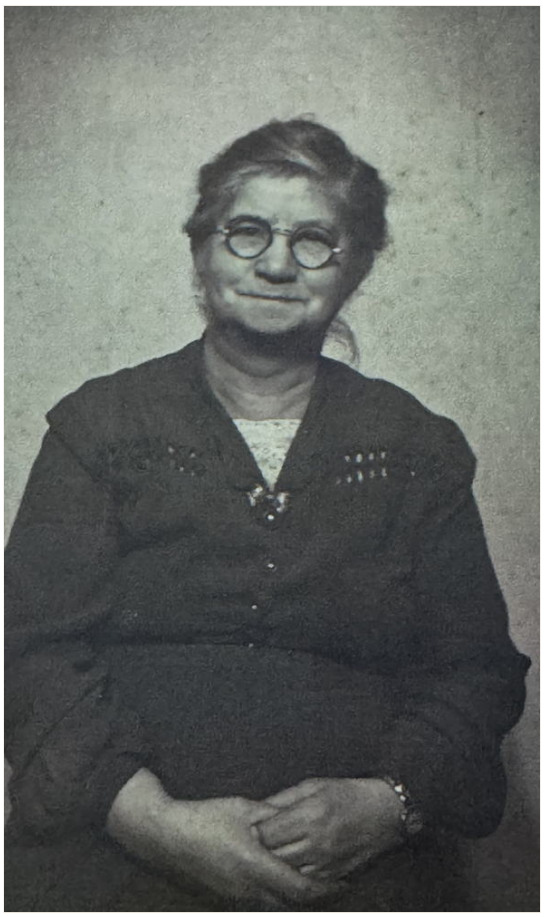
My Mum was born in Cinderford, grew up there, started nursing there, then transferred to London Hospital to do her training where she won a silver medal for her results. It was a treasured possession which she gave me. I had it till it was stolen in a house break-in we had at Charmhaven in about 2004.

I always thought that I was named after Aunty Mary but my mother told me that I was named after Mary Root, the girl my Dad was first engaged to who died of TB before they were married.

I wish you could see Aunty Mary's little house, the dark cosy closeness of it, the squirrel and the painting on the wall. I can see it so clearly myself and it has all been recalled by eating delicious Australian tinned peaches.



Marjorie as a teenager at home in Cinderford.



Aunty Mary.





Adrienne & Michael with Aunty Mary.





Aunty Lally, Marjorie, Adrienne & A. Mary. 1942.

02 • The 10th May

TODAY IS MOTHER'S DAY AND it is the 10th May 2009. My memory is travelling back through sixty one years. It was on the 10th May 1948 when I, together with my mother and father, arrived at Sydney Harbour from the united Kingdom aboard the steamship Empire Brent after six weeks at sea.

We had arrived in sunny Australia and it was a fine sunny day too. All the hopes and expectations that must have been my mother's and father's had brought us to this historic day when our adventure was about to begin. They were looking for a new life, away from war torn memories of bombings, air raid sirens, dashes to air raid shelters and nights of fear to a new beginning, a new life in a new country.

The journey out had been great for me as an eight year old child. I remember lovely meals, roaming around the huge ship, sleeping in deck chairs placed together on hot nights, and the lovely feeling that everyone was a friend. It was not so good for Mum and Dad, as all the men and boys had to sleep below decks near the hold of the ship and the women, babies and girls on the higher decks. I am sure that they were not happy about this separation. As well as this it was not pleasant being in those lower decks when the storms came and the ship rolled. The men were very sea sick and feeling it badly.

There were shipboard entertainments and lounge rooms where pianos were available for those who could play. I think I embarrassed my father as I would sit next to someone who was playing the piano with my "learn to play book" tucked firmly under my arm,

waiting my turn. Anyone would have thought that I was an accomplished musician, instead of a keen but very new beginner wanting to practice my first scales and tunes.

When we crossed the equator, there was a lot of fun. A pool of water was devised, a King Neptune appeared with a trident, long ropey hair, bare chest and a mermaid tail. Passengers somehow managed to manufacture watery fancy dress and grass skirts. I remember being encouraged to eat quite a few oranges so that we could string the pips to make necklaces. Water was hosed over the deck and passengers as we crossed the imaginary but significant equator line.

The scottish bagpipe bands had farewelled us at Glasgow as we sailed away from Scotland and were there again at Fremantle to welcome us with there wonderfully nostalgic strains to welcome us to our new country. We were allowed off the ship to explore. It really was an adventure. The things that impressed me as a child were the displays down near the docklands of sharks' jaws of small to what seemed whale size, openly fixed, displaying rows of razor sharp teeth – very scary. But the things that amazed my Mum and Dad were the fruit and vege barrows, stocked with exotic fruit, bananas, pineapples, melons and citrus; all of which had been either unobtainable in Britain or so overpriced as to be prohibitive. From Fremantle we sailed on to Melbourne and yes, more bagpipes and then on to Sydney where we disembarked on the 10th May 1948.

I do not know the exact emotion that my parents were experiencing as they took their first steps in their new country, but I can imagine their concern when our sponsor Bill Hemmings was not there to greet us. We had had to be sponsored by a family in Australia and Dad had to have a job organised to go to before we were accepted as ten pound migrants. Undeterred by the absence of a welcoming party they opened their mouths and obtained directions to Dacyville, Maroubra. Later in the day we arrived at the Hemmings' home to discover that Mrs Hemmings was sick in bed and that we were not expected until the next day. Bill Hemmings

was in a very tense state of financial stress as a trailer of his had come loose from the car and smashed into a horse float killing an expensive horse for which he was now liable. The children of the house as many Australian children did were all in bare feet. I took the hint and bared my feet too. Mum remonstrated that I would cut my feet. I did exactly that.



My precious Mother. 1942.



On board ship – The Empire Brent 1948.



In sunny Australia 1948.



At the Royal Easter Show, Sydney 1949.

Next day it was off to Daceyville School where I was graded into 3rd class as a result of my ability to read the school magazine fluently – that being sufficient test. I don't remember much about that school but the weekends were wonderful. We went bush walking each weekend with the men and women with whom Dad worked. We caught the train from Central Station to the Hawkesbury area. Jerusalem bay and round the river were sheer delights and a wonderful introduction to the Australian bush. I remember that I had a viyella dress that someone in England, a Rita, had made for me to wear in the new country. It was short and floral and I lived in it until it became too small to wear. Rita had also made me a matching bonnet to protect me from the Australian sun. I never wore it – just promptly refused.

May 10th Anniversaries have come and gone sixty one times but I do remember a beautiful one. Stephen an I were staying at the Far West Children's Home accommodation while he was having chelation therapy in lieu of by-pass surgery for his heart. On the 10th May in the year 2000 we ventured out from Manly and walked through the National Park along the foreshore of Sydney harbour, 13 kilometres to The Spit. The path through the bushland was up and

down, alive with native flowers and probably too long for our state of fitness. However, we reached the Spit and were ever so pleased to see a bus that would take us all the way back to Manly. Along the walk there was a beautiful red flower Called Epacris longiflora which we put to a song as we walked, in order to remember its name. I later found some mugs with this flower on and bought two to remind us of that lovely adventure.

Today's celebration being 10th May 2009 was for Mother. How I loved her. I am forever grateful to God for the beautiful gracious Mother He let me be born to.

Today my dear family have been with me and we (Steve and I) enjoyed lunch at NERAM the New England Regional Art Museum with Merri, Andrew, Chloe & Charlotte; Rachel Anna & Joshua; Beth & Margaret; Meredeth, Paul Bronte & Capri. Later in the afternoon Merre, Rachel and family joined us for afternoon tea and Jonathan and Elizabeth Amy & James arrived to share the evening. The children sustained themselves with copious amounts of afternoon tea and then went on playing outside in the garden and chookhouse. As yet the chookhouse is minus chooks so it provides a good cubby for children. Tea over and chess played and won, the family departed, leaving me with a warmth of wonder at the kindness of God for family and celebrations and remembrances of the 10th May.

03 • Schools & Other Things

A WEEK AGO I WENT TO Charlotte's transition class to help her with making gifts for Mother's day. It was a delightful experience watching her wholeheartedly thread up her beads into a bracelet for Mummy Merri. All concentration, not wanting my participation at all she kept threading a very long bracelet. Later in the session I had to ask her questions and write down her replies. For example, What is mummy's favourite food? What is her favourite colour? What does Mummy like doing most? All her answers were quick and spontaneous, especially the last, to which she responded, "She likes cuddling me." Such a quick child seemingly knowledgeable about so much, so early in life. Charlotte is four and four months at the present time.

My father Barnard Henry White, as I was telling Charlotte today had a photo taken of me at four years four months and he used to like to add four days before releasing me as an evacuee to Aunty Edie and Uncle Archie. Mum's sister Edie lived in Coleshill, some distance from Birmingham. Uncle Archie was the station master of Coleshill railway station and as such lived in the station master's house. It was a big grey granite edifice with a coal scullery converted into an air raid shelter.

I imagine it must have been hard for Mum and Dad, letting their one and only child go and live in the country – but the option was nightly air raids by the German Air force over London, racing to shelters and waiting for the all clear siren before investigating whether or not their home was still standing.

I don't remember being sad at all – the eighteen months away was lovely for me. My cousin was three years older and like the big brother I never had. His older brother Clive had been drowned just a short time previously so I was the substitute playmate for Michael and Child for poor Aunty Edie. In eighteen months I had become "her little girl." She still called me this when I visited her in England at fifty two years of age in 1992. I think there was some emotional partings for Edie when Dad whisked me away in 1946.

Any way, for me at four and a half years of age it was off to school at Coleshill Village. Aunty either walked me or doubled me on her bicycle or I begged Michael to double me home most days. I was given a seat in the back row of the class and a tobacco tin of letters or numbers to sort into numerical or alphabetical sequence. It must have been a reasonable experience for me as I don't have any bad memories at all.

Coleshill was a place of goods trains, fields stretching up either side of the road, fences and trees to climb, freedom to roam with Michael, mushrooms to gather and at times Michael and I would shunt the train trucks and keep the angels busy making sure we didn't get squashed.

I can see one picnic of sandwiches eaten, sitting in stooked wheat sheaves. How delicious the shining wheat stalks made the lunch!

Mr Robinson had a piggery with either a pear or an apple tree overhanging. We would climb up on the sty roof and eat the fruit.

During Summertime we had picnics down by the stream in our knitted swimming costumes. Aunty knitted our clothes; dresses, jumpers, swimmers, socks etc. She continued to knit for my children when the were small.



Charlotte aged 4½ years.





The goods trains beside the house. Edie & Mum, Clive, Ade, Michael.









Aged 4½ years – evacuated for safety.

Sunday saw us in Sunday School or church. I still have my fifth birthday present. A prayer book from Edie and Archie. I must have been allowed to take the collection up one Sunday for I can remember the noise the pennies made as they dropped to the floor. I don't recall being asked again.

Gradually I began to speak the local dialect which was not the London vernacular and Dad on my return to London at the end of the war became anxious for me to have elocution lessons to rectify

the problem immediately if not sooner. So at Six years of age I was enrolled at St Brendon's Private School near Edgeware. It was a delightful experience which lasted perhaps a year. French lessons with Miss Rodgers "of severe bun and glasses", ballet lessons, patriotic songs such as "England fair England well hast thou earnt thy slumber." Elocution lessons with poems none of which I can recall.

One afternoon a week we could stay back at school and have a high tea of bread butter and jam sandwiches which always seemed beautiful to me. This was to enable our mums to shop without us I suppose. St Brendon's went to 6th class. I remember having one line to say in the annual play as a grasshopper. The school had beautifully kept lawns for the playground. We would take our little wooden chairs and sit in a circle in the sunshine for reading class.

I loved reading and even stole my reader "Fay, Tod and the feather." It had glossy pages, was small and illustrated and I just couldn't resist taking it. I can't remember the consequences if any, but I can still remember the book.

All too shortly we moved from Burnt Oak Edgeware to Aunty Root's place. This was a big old two storied house with the basement making it three stories really. Aunty and Uncle Root let it out to boarders – so boarded we did. We had a big room on the middle floor and shared a kitchen and bathroom.

Dad had been previously engaged to Mum root's daughter Mary, so she considered me like her own granddaughter. Mum Root taught me to play rummy sitting by the open fire and eating bread and sugar sandwiches – what a treat! I was not allowed to kiss Pop Root goodnight as he had TB and daughter Mary had died of TB.

Mum Root had a little Christmas tree in the living room and I was given a little basket from it. There was half a crown in it for me – What a fortune! Just before Christmas Mum Root took me to the Dutch children's Christmas party as she was Dutch. Black Peter was there with a stick for naughty children and St Nicholas was riding a white horse with gifts for good children. I received a present, so I must have been good, mustn't I?

Around this time, just before Christmas, I can remember the sheer joy and expectation of Christmas at school. In December it would get dark so early in the afternoon, so that the lights would be on in class, we would make decorations and it seemed so wonderfully enjoyable. I loved it. Because of the early dark my darling Mummy would meet me after school, which by the way was Hungerford Road Public School – which had a big bomb crater in the playground barricaded off. I can remember the joy of walking home and crunching through new fallen snow holding Mum's hand.

Chloe has just had her 8th birthday celebration and I think it will be memorable for her as it was held at Dumaresque Dam with a sizzle sausage tea around a big open fire, together with toasting and eating marshmallows afterwards.

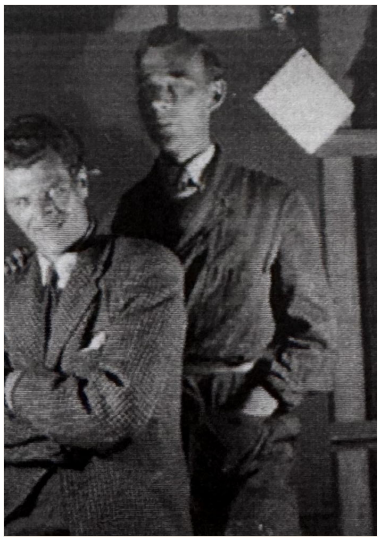
My eighth birthday was also memorable for me. We were still at Mum Roots, 51 Carleton Road Tuffnel Park as I recall. Dad had made me a beautiful sewing box with a door and two drawers inside, lined with red felt and with a picture of red roses on the front. It was beautiful and I loved it and what is more I still have it sixty one years later and it still is my sewing box. But, oh! so special was the party they put on for me. We children sat in Mum Roots best parlour and Dad did magic tricks for us. Things appeared and disappeared out of his hands so very quickly – it was fascinating, and we loved it. Then the lights were dimmed and we were entertained by Indians with black faces and bodies, eerie music accompanied these men as they played a pipe and before our very eyes they enticed a cobra snake out of a rope basket on the floor. Screams and yells beyond anything you could imagine as they piped away again and enticed the cobra back into its basket to our relief and wonder.

I can't recall how we eventually discovered the black thread attached to the ceiling with the other end tied to the snake – but soap and water revealed my Dad and Jack Thompson, his friend as the two Indians. I loved it and them for such extravagant love in doing it for an eight year old girl.

Shortly after my birthday in March it was time to leave Mum Roots and Michael who had just moved near to us. I had had the joy of his company for about two weeks when we said farewell to friends and family and boarded the "Empire Brent" for a new life and adventure in Australia.

Mum and Dad had made all the trips to London and Australia House to become ten pound immigrants. On one trip to London, Dad had taken me and bought me a beautiful striped green silk dress. It was smocked to the waist very beautifully and I loved it. On our return home I can remember the remonstrations of mother at the cost of four pounds ten shillings; an astronomical price for a child's dress, especially when compared to the cost of a six weeks journey to Australia costing ten pounds!!

Schools have played a large part in my life whilst both learning and working. I was awarded a medal for twenty five years service to children when I retired from teaching. Unfortunately it was stolen during a home robbery. So be it.



Barnard & Jack Thompson.



With Aunty Root.



Michael. April 1948.

04 • Books

BOOKS, I READ THEM AVIDLY – love to lie in bed and read before sleeping. I think that I have always loved books. A few in particular come to mind. Aged at about six when I was at St Brendan's School we were reading "Fay Tod and the Feather." The book was glossy paper, illustrated in colour, easy to read and I loved it. Surely I knew that stealing it was wrong – because I furtively purloined it and hid it somewhere that I don't remember. The consequences are also conveniently forgotten.

A choice was given me for my seventh birthday present. I was given the opportunity of selecting a book from a vast array in a book shop. How wonderful to look and look and choose one by myself. It was a great thrill when I eventually selected a colourfully illustrated children's Bible story book. It had a poem inside the front cover about Bible stories and ended with "But the best are the stories of Jesus, the most wonderful stories of all." I loved the book.

Three other books obtained about this time are still on my bookshelf. One a finely illustrated book of dogs featuring all sorts and breeds with beautifully drawn pencil sketches of dogs of many descriptions. I think the artist was a friend of my father's who kindly gave it to me.

Another of this trio on my bookshelf is a book given to encourage me at six years of age by my dancing teacher at St Brendons. It is titled "Ballet to Remember." and has photographs of ballet positions and steps.

And fairies. How I loved fairies at six and seven. “An elfin tale” was an often read imaginative story with pencil marks clearly seen where I had marked it to read and play act with my friends. The naughty elves and their mischievous deeds caught my imagination and I loved the happy endings which always followed. I still have it.

When we left England, Dad’s work friend Mr. Jack Thompson, gave me my first Bible inscribed in the front leaf “To Adrienne wishing her lots of fun – from her four little friends Patricia, Beryl, Peter, and Adrian. I used it regularly till I was about seventeen, when another friend, Noel gave me a new Bible. But my first Bible became my special treasure.

Reading came easily and as an only child it was a very happy pastime. Unfortunately I was often reprimanded in primary school for reading “under the desk”, instead of concentrating on the task at hand.

As I grew older books were my best birthday present. My dear mother’s writing is inscribed in some of my precious tombs. The Hudson Taylor volumes are an enduring treasure. What a joy it is to have uninterrupted time to read a good book.

05 • Pets

THERE WERE NOT TOO MANY pets as I recall when a child. Ginny lived with us at Burnt Oak Edgeware. The thing I associate with this ginger cat was the fact that she was allowed to lick my teaspoon after I had had my daily delicious dose of malt extract! I can't imagine how she was given this privilege, but I don't remember any fears of contracting cat diseases. I can see her in our tiny kitchen standing on her back legs stretching up for her daily treat.

We lived in a flat above Dad's factory. My Dad made wooden toys and beautifully hand painted glass dishes with posies of flowers on them. I loved to watch him paint them, turning each swiftly as he deftly completed it.

Downstairs and out the back next to the coal cellar I think, was a small area for Donald the duck. I think he was more Dad's pet than mine as I only remember him quacking and chasing me. Probably Dad saw him as a dinner.

The only other pet I remember having was a tiny little black kitten when I was aged nine and living at 9 Kerrs Road Lidcombe. We were renting a bedroom with shared use of kitchen and bathroom and a tiny living room. Mr and Mrs Corrick were kindly elderly folk, so I thought. However, Mr Corrick apparently did not like my kitten, for one day he picked it up and threw it as far as he could. The terrified kitten latched onto a fence in its flight and in the process one claw was torn loose. We took it to the vet, where its claw had to be removed. Needless to say, I don't think that we had it for long.

About a year later when we were living at Harris Park Mum would send me to the bakery to buy bread. What a surprise I had when Mr Corrick, of cat hate fame, served me and gave me a free bread roll, extra, each time I bought our loaf of bread.

06 • Sundries

MY DAD ALWAYS MADE MY TOYS especially birthday toys. I remember a three wheeled scooter when I was about three or four. My money box was a wooden cream and red doll house, with a door that opened to let you collect your savings. The chimney was made to drop the brown pennies down or half pennies, but rarely a threepence. Once there was a half crown from Mum Root at Christmas. Then there was the beautiful wooden sewing box at eight and a pink doll's cot when I was nine.

Dad was good at making things. He filled an empty shop window in Lidcombe with wooden toys he made for sale. There were chickens that pecked the seed when you turned the handle, parrots that swung up and down from a perch and a concertina toy that expanded and contracted when flipped, were the ones that I remember clearly.

I don't think Mum ever had a sewing machine until I was fifteen, and then I claimed it. However, I do remember Mum cutting up the bottom of a very pretty green nighty of hers to make my doll a dress. I was about six at the time and I loved my Mum very much. I can see her sitting in the chair by the fire at Burnt Oak and me on the floor beside her watching her hand sew this frock for my doll.

Mum also had her blue and white striped nursing uniforms cut up to make summer dresses for me with red bias binding to brighten them up. I remember them as rather stiff material.

Always nursing, never much spare time, Mum nevertheless knitted me a pink and blue twinset before Spencer arrived when I was ten. The blue stripes were fluffy angora and I thought it beautiful.

Another special love gift from my darling Mother was a coat of bright buttercup yellow paint on my little iron bed. I arrived home from school one afternoon and my bed was newly painted bright yellow with an also new blue Indian cotton coverlet on it.

07 • Friends

I CAN'T REMEMBER SPECIFIC friends before aged four and a half. When I was evacuated to Coleshill my cousin Michael became my best friend. He was three years my senior and so able to do many more things than I could. He could climb anything and often put nails in a friendly tree to help me climb. There was a wall with broken glass atop to keep people out and inmates in. My recall was that there were supposed to be Italians held there, incaserated during war time. I don't know whether this was true, but Michael being an intrepid child climbed the wall, helped me up, where upon I cut my leg badly. My apron was tied around my leg and tearfully we hurried home. I think the tears were as much anticipation for aunty's wrathful reaction as for my bleeding leg. But I think my dear Michael was the recipient of the hiding for taking me where he shouldn't.

However the climb over Mr Robinson's wall next to his pig sty was more rewarding. We could eat the pears which over hung the sty – a worthwhile climb.

After the war when we lived with Mum Root at 87 Carleton Road, Tuffnel Park, my friend Sylvia lived next door. We were about the same age and got on well together. At school we were always given a cup of milk at play time. During the school holidays we were expected to walk to school and receive our free Government-granted cup of milk. It used to seem a long way to go for a cup of milk to me, but our mothers appreciated it if we didn't.

In Australia Brefney Macintosh, who always said my name is Welsh was quite an organiser. In 6th class she ran a party at her place in the Christmas holidays. We walked there of course – we walked everywhere or caught a train if needed to. It was a scorching hot day in December. I remember drinking a very tall glass of water – saying I was English and needed it. But it was too big and I felt sick for the rest of the party – it served me right for showing off.

At Harris Park my friend Kay Hutley lived across the road. She was a little older than I and I was often the recipient of her outgrown clothes. We played hop scotch on the pavement regularly after school, or tied one end of the rope to the fence and skipped happily till it was teatime.



Peter, Patricia, Beryl & Adrienne





With Kay Hutley and Spencer. 1951



Mum Root & Marjorie, Adrienne & Sylvia. 1948



Jenny Hunt, Coral Alderton. 1957





Friends in 6th class at Lidcombe Primary School.

Another good friend while living at Harris Park was Josie Knowland, whose mother was French Polynesian and taught us how to make posies and garlands with frangipanni flowers. Josie's Dad was the manager of the Granville Picture Theatre and on Tuesday nights, a quiet night at the flicks, we were sometimes given free tickets to the pictures. My Dad painted the weekly advertising bill boards for the films.

Reaching High School age was wonderful – I rode my bicle along Parramatta Road and up the Western Highway making myself push up that hill a little further each day till I was able to ride right up to Parramatta High School on the top of that hill. My best friend was Wendy Sargent with Helen Plum and I making a threesome – which didn't always work. However my friends changed at High School when I discovered that boys were good fun too. However another house move came up and it was Cremorne High School for me – all girls there. I would ring up Wendy and cry heartbrokenly on the

phone. But time passes. I do not remember making friends at Cremorne School though Isobel Bennet was in my class and became a dear friend in later life at teachers' college.

Strathfield High was next, here I made some very strong friends who influenced me in many ways. Kathy Lambert can be seen sitting next to me in a school photo. We are the only girls without our ties on, I learnt how to wag school with Kathy using the train to escape afternoon school, have a free excursion and return home by train on time. Kathy left school at end of year 9 so I did too and unknown to my parents I went to town and obtained a job at the Commonwealth bank. Luckily for the Banks it did not happen, as my parents refused to let me do it. After a Christmas break, a holiday on a dairy farm and common sense righting itself I went back to school the next year and completed high school.

During the last two years I made friends with Coral Alderton who still communicates with me at Christmas time and Jenny Hunt who became a life long friend. Jenny's strong Christian witness at school became an encouragement to me to come to Christ afresh and in repentance walk with Jesus again. Years 10 and 11 at high school were very good for me, my friends being good influences and I hope I was a good friend to them.

08 • Church

A LOT OF MY MEMORIES START in Coleshill at Aunty Edie's place. Sunday saw us at Sunday School or church in the local village Anglican church. Two things have stuck in my mind from age four and a half or five. One was collecting the pennies in Sunday School and dropping the container so that I can still hear the rattling and rolling of the pennies on that hard, unforgiving wooden floor. The other is being the proud possessor of my very own birthday gifted prayer book and chewing the cover of it. Was it hunger during a long sermon or boredom that made me chew it? Oh taste and see that the Lord is good!

In 1946 I returned to my parents at 189 Burnt Oak, Edgeware, expecting to continue the Sunday experience. But dad didn't want to go to church. I remember protesting as an only child does, and I must have been fairly precocious as I proceeded to kneel down in the lounge-room and say the prayers I remembered.

I don't remember dad relenting and coming, but mother did. I loved it. Edgeware church had a winding stairway to a top balcony and I loved sitting up there with mum, singing the hymns because I could read easily from my very own prayer and hymn book, loving being with mum in church together. Funny the things you remember.

When I was 10 and we were living in Harris Park, mum and I would go to the morning service at the Anglican Church. One Sunday walking home with her I plucked up enough courage to ask

her if she was 'saved'. To my great relief she said she was and was baptised at 16 years in Cinderford Baptist Church. I was thrilled, as I had recently been to a Christian youth camp, heard the gospel and given my heart to Jesus Christ.

From Harris Park to St Johns, Parramatta for Confirmation classes, but another move to Strathfield and at St Andrew's Strathfield aged 15 I joined the choir, enjoying that and commenced being a Sunday School teacher. Each Sunday after Sunday School and before morning church, one of the senior Sunday School teachers would rehearse next week's lesson for us younger novices. I don't remember his name, but he was a fantastic teacher – making the bible stories come alive with his dramatisation and encouragement for us to do the same for our class. As he told the story I could almost feel the dirt and rubbish coming down on my head as the four friends broke through the thatch and lathe to let their friend through to Jesus.

Another move brought us to Ashfield where mother had her own nursing home. I was attending the Anglican church, but I wanted to go to the Baptist as they had an 'all-age' Sunday school. I interpreted that as an adult school and considering myself at 16 or 17 as an adult, I applied to the Minister Reverend Harry Orr and asked if I could come. He welcomed me warmly at the front door and being unable to persuade me to attend the teenager's class, graciously allowed me in an adults class. I had a lot to learn. But shortly after joining I requested to be baptised. My dear mother came, but disappointingly, not my dad.

However, not so long after this, the church was raising 30,000 pounds in 30 days. My dad said it couldn't be done, but it was. He was so impressed he came to church, heard the gospel, asked dear Harry to tell him more and dear Harry Orr came home to our place that night and led dad to the Lord. Praise God he was soundly converted and sometime later, as a very shy man, gave his testimony and was baptised one very memorable night.

I guess the next most wonderful thing that happened to me at Ashfield Baptist church was my marriage to darling Stephen, the one I had looked at longingly since starting at Ashfield and had waited three years for. Thankfully he finally asked me to marry him.

As a couple, Stephen and I participated in church wherever we were living. We taught Sunday school, helped with Vacation Bible Schools, were camp leaders, Stephen specialising as a Boy's Brigade Captain and sailing instructor. We taught children scripture at schools and more recently led the Seniors at church in the Eagle's group. Church has been a love of my life because Jesus is the love of my life and I thank Him for making me one of His family and allowing me to be part of His body, the church.



09 • A Sunday afternoon concert, and lessons in kindness

2009

TODAY I'VE HAD A FEW emotions which made me tearful. My body which is fearfully and wonderfully made, was showing signs of a "used by" date. Various parts of the body ached, were mean spirited and down-right nasty. To turn over in bed was almost too much to accomplish.

Having actually risen from bed and moved around, the day was on, slowly but on. Now some parts of dressing myself are really becoming difficult. I'm not sure if I was laughing at the contortions of getting shoes and stockings on – or was I crying? Anyway we finally arrived at church and I had shoes on. But what was this? I needed to be helped from the car seat on to my feet again – it really is getting ludicrous. These are things that happen to old ladies – Aren't they? My brain has lost its quick, quick, jump now mode that it had as a mother and school teacher, when I expected everyone else to move like that also. Instead my brain knows what I want it to do, but doesn't help me do it.

After a brief rest following lunch it was time to go with Margaret to Autumn Lodge Sunday afternoon Thanksgiving Concert. I had not been in a nursing home situation for a long time. Here were old folk

who were not in the "quick, quick, jump now" mode, but all needing helps to their various limitations of aging. I mentally took stock of the situation and discovered I was uncomfortable with – myself.

Robbie, a man with Down Syndrome promptly seated him self next to the visiting musician – out front next to the harpist. When she moved her music stand a little away from him for clearer vision he protested – he would need the music, obviously himself – to conduct! Judy the beautiful soul that she was, empathising with his needs allowed him to be there next to her and conduct as she played glorious Celtic melodies on her harp, accompanied by a flautist of great talent.

Robbie conducted on and on, clapping after each item. Only once did someone try to remove him – but he was not moving and Judy intimated that it was alright for him to stay. What a lesson that was to me! I noticed my hands trembling away, full speed at the uncertainty of the situation. I never was good at handling the unexpected.

But eventually the music washed over me, removing from me, for the time being, any fears about the future and my being in a nursing home. Funny but when I was 17 or 18 helping in my Mother's nursing home I felt no revulsion to nursing homes – all was love and light because my Mother was the beautiful Matron who cared for the patients as if they were her grandparents. She was my shining example of loving and caring.

We sang along to Amazing Grace, or should I say cried along to, for I had to stop singing and close my eyes to prevent them crying tears of thankfulness for the beauty of the music, ability to hear it, thankfulness for my life's situations and for the lessons in kindness I had been witness to.

The whole afternoon had been unexpected really. A last minute decision to come to Margaret's concert, had resulted in my emotions stirred strongly, of memories of dear Mother and her nursing home work.

Then came a further example of kindness and patience as I watched Stephen in a new light, show unlimited kindness to Robbie by repeatedly clearing up his afternoon messes, the spilling of Milo, sugar, and regurgitated food. Robbie demonstrated that he didn't like the mess, so Stephen cleaned it up for him, again and again.

I can go home, Robbie can not. That is a huge thing to contemplate. A joyful conclusion to my fragile emotions, was to see the joy on Robbie's face as he sat at Judy's harp, being allowed to stroke the chords – vigorously, still with his sun glasses and hat on his head. I'm not sure who appreciated the concert more, Robbie or I, Thank You Lord Jesus for it.



10 • Injections!

IS THERE ANYONE WHO ENJOYS having injections? I mean the sharp needle that is plunged into the body on the supposition that it will do you good? I for one resist, where possible the taking of such goodness. But someone was reminiscing about long blunt injection needles recently, which gave me a clear recall of my resistance to having one.

I was about 13 or 14 years old and was having a simply wonderful time at a horse riding camp in the school holidays. We were sleeping rough – if not exactly with the horses. We spent all our time with our horse, cleaning the stable, brushing the horse and generally getting in the dirt, getting dirty with no facilities for cleaning off the dirt.

We ate in an open annex to the stable area where the flies were our constant companions. Just as I was beginning to sit a horse, walk, trot and even canter, my seat grew a boil. Now you simply can't trot when the command is given, not even rise to the trot when you know you have to descend on your boil. I was however given the privilege of using the house bath. But to no avail – I had to return home.

I was heart broken – it was my first and only riding camp and now it was no longer possible.

My dear mother promptly obtained needle and Penicillin for my boil and proceeded to direct me to lie down on the bed and present my boil. I was not co-operative at all, in fact I carried on a treat till

Mum threatened to spank me and give me something to cry for. Then with one quick jab it was done – no more squeals from me or injections, but alas no more horse riding camp for me!

11 • Christmas 2009

FAMILY, SISTERS, LITTLE children, tree, food, hugs and laughing, but predominating was the presence of my three daughters reacting together. I could see them in my head as little girls, Merri and Ros together and Rachel a little older and capably looking after the little ones. Now in no time at all they were mothers looking after little ones themselves, where had all the years gone, how had it gone so quickly?

Their sunny natures were shining through each one of them and qualities of loving and giving and thoughtfulness for others were all evident as I watched them move amongst the family of aunts and cousins giving time to whoever needed it.

The boys, now men, a nurse and a doctor were both sober at times, but full of fun and teasing with the girls also. Their children playing together, the various ages all mingling. The different characteristics all evident, Joshua the quiet achiever, Jonathon the more noisy achiever, Olivia the quiet thoughtful princess, Amy buoyant and mischievousness, James lost in make-believe and arrows, Chloe confident as older sister, Charlotte the dramatist, Suzy a little older and more reserved now, Peter youthful and strong, Emma vivacious, Katy shining, Jesse the confident uni student – forthright. How I love them all, and am missing Sarah and Rebecca in England. Time is an amazing element in life, passing at the same relentless 24 hours per day, but having so many ways of seeming to behave. I look at our

older children, 48 to 41 at present and wonder how I missed the passing of the time from when they were little children, dependent on us, to now, as they have their own children dependent on them.

Oh how I thank God for enabling us to have these five beautiful children and for His grace to us enabling them to each receive His salvation and have Jesus as Lord of their life.





12 • The green silk dress

LAST NIGHT WAS NEW YEARS Eve 2009. Some of the family was gathered at Merri and Andrew's house for tea. During the course of the evening's conversation, the Second World War was discussed. Somehow I was brought in to the situation and various memories surfaced. The sound of the air raid siren is still impressed into my memory and the smell of the air raid shelters after 1946 when they were no more needed for bombing raids but now only used by vagrants. In 1947 mum and dad started making enquiries to migrate to Australia. Thoughts of sunshine and abundant food and opportunities, an attractive incentive after war time bombings and restrictions.

There were many trips to Australia House in London made. On one such trip I accompanied dad, for some reason mum did not. It was exciting to go to town with dad. There were the pigeons to feed at Piccadilly Circus, tea at the Lyons Corner House and best of all, a visit to a children's clothing store, I don't recall which, where my dad bought me a beautiful green and white smocked dress and a Panama hat to accompany it. I loved that dress with smocking from yoke to waist and swishy skirt. I don't think I was so keen on the hat – never have been one for hats – but dad was thinking of Australian sun. A truly lovely day for me, but on our return home mum was horrified at the cost of the dress at four Pound ten shillings, when the price of our ticket to Australia was only ten Pound! The sheer extravagance

was too much for my frugal, budget keeping, darling mother. However I kept the dress and wore it for a long time, as long as there was a hem to let down.

Years later when my little girl Rachel was seven years old, I made her a dress which was like my striped one. Hers was white with blue spots, Helen had given me the material and I smocked it from yoke to waist and it had a very swishy skirt.



13 • On leaving home

1960 WAS A BIG YEAR FOR me. I had been given my first school teaching appointment and was leaving home, mum and dad, Spencer, and the nursing home where we lived to go to the country and teach. I had nominated the Blue Mountains as an area to teach in, but my dad had warned me against that district, saying, "you'll get Lithgow if you choose there". And I did. So to Lithgow I went and having obtained help from the Baptist Church Secretary, Mr Jo Zimmerman, had been directed to Mr and Mrs Townsend, Salvation Army Officer's who took in boarders at times.

Rather nervously I knocked on their door, asked them about boarding and was confronted with a stern "do you smoke, do you drink", I promised I didn't, but was nearly in tears at this time as their Fox Terrier had already bitten my hand as I had rung their bell. Dear Mrs Townsend was eager to bathe the bitten hand but before she could do so Brigadier suggested I drive the car (dad's Renault), round the back and put it in the yard. I endeavoured to do this and promptly drove the car into the gate – taking it right off its hinges. More tears. However eventually the car was parked somewhere else, I don't remember ever driving in the backyard again, my bite was washed, we sat down to lunch and I was asked to give thanks. I was so emotionally wound up that it was very difficult to do so.

So began a very happy time of boarding with two of God's gems, servants of Jesus Christ, in their eighties who looked after me like grandparents.

14 • Kaleidoscope

TWENTY YEARS OLD, AWAY from home, teaching fourth class girls at Cooerwull School, meeting new people at Lithgow Baptist church and missing my friend, my sweetheart Stephen in Sydney very much. Nothing daunted, Stephen came to Lithgow on the weekend by train, stayed at the Imperial Hotel and visited with me. Pure joy! Later on the Townsends kindly let him stay at their place on fortnightly weekends and monthly in between I would go back to mum and dad's in Sydney.

One time when Stephen was visiting me I determined to drive him to some of the beauty spots I had found. What started out delightfully, became cool, then cold, till I twigged, or he told me, that he didn't like being driven. Lesson learnt quite quickly – change of drivers, all restored.

The fortnightly visits were eagerly anticipated (anticipated). One such very frosty night on May the 17th, the Townsends were down town at the hotels, witnessing and collecting funds and we were warm by the coal fire in the living room. Stephen proposed to me, and gave me a beautiful engagement ring. Euphoria! The Townsends were the first to share our good news. Seven months later on the day after school broke up for the Christmas holidays, we were married on the 16th December, at Ashfield Baptist Church.

If you've ever seen a kaleidoscope you will understand a little of what that first year in Lithgow was like for me. So many new experiences, boarding, children to teach, parents to placate, headmistress to please and new friends to make. One special new friend, Lois Jones, was to become a lifelong friend to me.



Stephen visited fortnightly.



Lois Jones.

15 • Love Gifts

YESTERDAY, FRESH INTO THE new year of 2010, darling Stephen was putting hooks up for me in the kitchen for six new mugs. But just a minute, this was not a mundane job, in case you are thinking it is. Let me explain. I discovered Stephen lying on the bench, on his back, looking up to the cupboard above him, measuring the position for the hooks. By the time he had measured, drilled, screwed hooks in the cupboard, his back was extremely uncomfortable, cramped but he wasn't cranky! I could only be amazed at what he would do for me because he loved me.

It reminded me of some very special love gifts Stephen made for me when he was courting me – let me tell you of some of them.

I was teaching my very first class of nine year old children and loving it. I really enjoyed sharing nature study with the children and fancied a terrarium for the classroom in which to observe small animals. Nothing daunted Stephen started right away to build one for me. He built from a fish tank a beautiful terrarium with safety lid and door that was quite ingenious. It was a real feature in the classroom with many occupants as the term progressed.

Next love gift was a beautifully made blackboard ruler for me to square up my lines on which to write neatly as an example at all times. I felt very privileged with my hand made, love carved ruler, the Department of Education ruler was no comparison at all.

Following the ruler and far surpassing it, was a beautiful case for an insect collection. Stephen constructed a large, lined box with soft board inside for pinning insects. It was fabulous and housed various beetles, moths and butterflies for years. A kindly pharmacist made me a killing jar or cyanide bottle which I used to plunge the creatures in for a quick death. Believe it or not I kept it at school on the top of the cupboard and no fatality occurred except to insects, how it was kept there is amazing when I think about it.

Then there were the forays into the bush at night to catch moths for the box. We would drape a sheet over a bush and expectantly and hopefully shine a torch on the sheet. Moths and creatures of the night would fly to the light and cling to the sheet whereupon we would use the net, capture and plunge them in the cyanide jar. A successful hunt over, we would come home and pin the creatures in the insect collection box.

How blessed was I to be so loved!

But the most wonderful example of a love gift has been given to us all by Jesus Christ. All that Jesus did at Calvary was because He loved us. He took my sin and rebellion and payed the punishment for it. He made me His child, forgave me my sin, and promised me the gift of living forever with Him.

Ps. The day after writing this was Friday which is Men's Shed day. Stephen came home with another love gift for me – a boxy-box stool especially for climbing on and reaching the top shelves in the kitchen. It is such a sturdy model with brass handles and no possibility of tipping... I love it. Stephen brought it home as a surprise and it was a gob-smacking surprise looking just great.

16 • On being a grandparent

07.01.2010

YESTERDAY WE AGAIN HAD THE delightful experience of two little grand-daughters bursting in with "hello Grandpa, Hello grandma – can we collect the eggs", in fact they are most interested in chooks and egg gathering. Checking out the cucumbers also rates an interest at the moment as the spiky little curcurbits gather momentum crawling ever further across the lawn.

But the girls made me realise how blessed we were in this season of our lives to have 'grandies'. When Stephen and I were growing up neither of us had the benefit of their love or wisdom. My mother Marjorie's mother died while she was about 18 or 20 and her father had died as the result of a coal mining accident when she was only 5. I did meet my father, Barnard's mother, Amy Maud just once. She must have been old and frail, for my mother was giving her a bath and because I was only about three years old, I was watching and no one shooed me away. Grandfather Ernest Alfred White was an artist, a fine etcher who worked for the London Fleet Street Newspaper. Mum's parents were Lillian May and William Beech. I think we found their graves in the Cinderford Baptist Church cemetery, but that's as close as we got to them.

When mum was growing up, she lived next door to her grandparents, Amy and Martin Hunt and had the joy and support of these two Godly people. Grandfather Martin Hunt was a Deacon at Cinderford

Baptist and would position himself in Sunday services upstairs, to sit with the boys in church and keep them in order. Grandma Amy's job was to sit downstairs, with the girls and keep an eye on them. The Hunt's had a Butchery and Sweet shop. One side of the shop was for meat and lollies were on the other side. Mum could remember being allowed to hold the beast after Granpa killed it in the backyard and she helped him hold the beast for butchering.

Mum's Aunty Mary, her mother Lillian's sister, was alive till I was about 15 years old and was like a grandma to me till we left England. It was dear cuddly Aunty Mary who lavished us with Australian, tinned, peaches in war time rationed England. Aunty would sit me on her lap and sing "My mother said I never should, play with the Gypsies in the wood, if I did, she would say, naughty girl to disobey". Then Aunty would open her lap and I would fall through... plop. Then she would sing "come along with me, come along with me, come along with me to the whisky shop, take a glass, take a glass it will do you good at last". Her interpretation of Gypsies made me fearful of meeting any. My very coloured but false knowledge of Gypsies from Aunty Mary was confirmed when I read the Hunch Back of Notre dame, in which Gypsies swapped a healthy baby for a child with a deformed back. I cried and cried when I heard that Aunty had died. We were in Australia – so no hope of going to the funeral. God is good to let us be grandparents to 15 most beautiful grand children now, there are ten girls and five boys.



17 • Crocheted Rugs

I HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR two photographs of Ronnie, which I have carefully put away somewhere. In fact I have searched every where for them except the place where they are hiding. But whilst I was searching I came across some old photos of Mum crocheting her round rugs. Oh how I would have loved to wrap my arms around her and hug her to me. I don't know how many rugs Mum made. Certainly all the grand children had one each and I would think that all the great grand children did also. They were beautifully made, each one individually patterned so no one wanted to be missed out on Grandma's rug list.

There were pastel ones for little babies, bright contrasting colours for toddlers, multi coloured ones as she used up all the odds and ends of wool skeins. Mum crocheted a double-bed-rug for Stephen and me, wool not acrylic, so it's quite heavy.

As mum got older – into her 90's, she would still sit and crochet her rugs. Occasionally she would ask, "What am I doing?" or "What am I making?" and we would remind her it was a knee rug and she would keep going round and round. But somehow the later rugs could not keep flat and they became like little pockets to put your knees or feet in, but not quite flat to wrap around as they were meant to do. However they were still very lovely and always appreciated by the recipirent.



Marjorie Emma

18 • Lidcombe Public School

AS A 4TH GRADER THE WALK to school seemed long but interesting. At the beginning I walked with my younger cousin Mavis, but she and her parents returned to England after having run a bicycle and toy shop in the main street for a couple of years. Bitter sweet memories of that place for me. We lived with Uncle Bert and Aunty Gwen temporarily, till we found some other accommodation. The landlord from whom we were renting in Hurstville previously, had taken Mum's address book and visited, unrequested, our relations in the U. K. She made herself very unwelcome by staying on and on and on. Unannounced, she arrived back one hot, summers' day saying we must vacate immediately.

I have no idea how poor Mum and Dad coped with the situation, like most of our contempories we did not have a car for transport, but rode the bus or train.

I can vividly remember Dad hanging many bags on my bicycle handle bars. But what happened to things that couldn't fit on the handle bars I don't know. We caught the train to Lidcombe and Gwen's for temporary shelter.

My cousin Mavis had a little lino-covered cubby house in the back yard. We look quite a sight in our wellingtons playing house in it. Uncle Bert sold fire works. One day I stole a jumping Jack – foolishly told Mavis, who told Aunty Gwen, who told me off!!!!!!!! Lesson learnt.

Well I started telling you about Lidcombe School. Fairly quickly my parents found somewhere else to rent just around the corner from Mavis at 9 Kerrs Road with Mr and Mrs Corrick. This meant I was able to stay in attendance at Lidcombe School.

I was seated next to Phylis King who had a ready smile, but smelt unpleasantly. I remember her ginger plaits, but I remember more not wanting to sit in the double desk with her. In the far off and long ago days, you were seated in class according to your class test results. There were usually about 40 in the class and I came 28th. I was not naturally industrious, but as I moved up into 5th and 6th class, I wanted to be good enough to go to Parramatta High School. So self motivation took over.

While in 5th class Mrs Kidd handed out Christian Youth Camp forms for the holidays and my parents let me go. It was here that I heard the Gospel clearly and asked Jesus to be my Saviour. So I thank Mrs Kidd in this regard, but not so thankful for her ministrations to me, smacking me with a ruler for incorrect maths.



Mavis visiting us at Hurstville.



In Mavis's "cubby" at Lidcombe



Washing our dolls' clothes on Mr & Mrs Corricks Verandah at 9 Kerr's Rd. Lidcombe.

My next term test result was 18th, so a change of seating followed into 6th class with 9th place and finally 6th position, which was just enough, by a hairbreadth, to Parramatta High. I think I was in 6th class when Mum and Dad had a party one evening and there was some Port for consumption. There was a lot of laughter over darts, aiming at a grape on the dart board. As an aside, I walked with Mum from Harris Park to Parramatta to buy this same Port for the party. We pushed the cane pram into Parramatta – a decidedly long way, Spencer also in the pram, to somewhere to purchase the drink. Then laden with the Port and some lemon aide to make it go further, I presume, we walked and pushed the pram and baby and alcohol home.

The next school day I did a very foolish thing. I must have been a very silly show off or I would have thought about the consequences. Blithely I filled my drink bottle with port and lemon, I'm not sure of the respective proportions but boasted about my drink to my friends. One was obviously not a friend, reported me to the Headmistress and obviously I was in trouble. I don't recall the consequences but I doubt it was a happy conclusion.

One good thing about Lidcombe school was the train I caught each day to school from Harris Park and home. But having arrived home it was my job to walk back to the station corner and collect the shopping from the little store there.

Mr and Mrs Pool owned the shop and their son Frank was in my class, 1E, which made it a little nicer to have to shop for Mummy after school, if I could see Frank briefly as well. 1E was the class I had scraped into, but my Dad wanted me to learn languages, so I gained permission to swap to 1B, where French and German were taught. This was not a good idea, as the maths were too hard for me.

Before I had time to make lasting friendships my family had another move.

19 • Swimming

BY THE TIME WE WERE LIVING in Harris Park, Attending Parramatta High School, I had joined the Granville Swimming Club. Again my bicycle was the trusty means of transport and independence. Entry cost was only a few pence, however we were on a very tight budget, which allowed for no extras. But Mum and Dad generously gave me the money to attend swimming coaching. I was about 12 or 13, was very keen, so rode my bicycle to Granville Pool, before school each morning and after school most days as well, plus competitions on Saturdays.

I was not the fastest, but loved to race and with the handicap I received for racing, managed to win enough club races to receive a trophy on prize giving night. I was thrilled to see my name on a trophy as I had never won any before.

That trophy was to be the one and only for swimming as I contracted an ear infection from constantly wet ears, causing the Dr to forbid me to swim again that season. The ear healed in time, but I had lost my momentum and lost my inclination for swimming – the ride by bicycle seemed now too long to push.

20 • Camping

YESTERDAY WAS CHARLOTTE'S 5th birthday and her wonderful; parents took her, with Chloe camping at Dumaresque Dam. As happy grandparents we tagged along to the sizzle sausage tea. The girls were very excited to be there and enjoy their new two bedroom tent which was set up opposite their cousins Bronte and Capri, Meredith and Paul. Their beds were carefully made up with colourful sleeping bags on top and the girls hopped on and off the mattresses anticipating the night spent in them.

The threatening sky stopped its threats and poured forth. Merrewyn praying it to stop, me running for my poncho. We moved our chairs according to the need to be dry – from outside to just inside the tent annex. Chloe had great fun emptying the pockets of rain water collecting in the tent annex. Unfortunately my chair was half under shelter and half just right to catch all the pocketed and deposited water down my poncho!

Stephen, Andrew, and Paul arrived as the bringers of cooked sausages so we struggled to fit the sausages into a piece of soggy bread and butter and find somewhere to sit out of the rain. I found I was half in and half out of the rain, the bread was wet so it was hard to relax over the meal. But it was a good camp the rain not dampening the children's spirits at all. Charlotte had a feisty disagreement over the title of the camp. I called it a sausage sizzle camp, meaning in no way to denigrate it. Charlotte took offence saying it was a normal camp and put me right.

Over our sausages we reminisced of other camps we had when our children were young and Meredith's parents would be camped next to us at Crookhaven Heads. The Epping Boys Brigade would camp along side also, as Stephen was the Boy's Captain and there was always lots of fun with boys and girls and surf mixed up together.

That night as I lay in my warm dry bed at home, I remembered the Christian Youth Camps I had attended whilst in primary school. At one such camp, housed under the Katoomber Show Ground, my bed was set up next to my friend Margaret Robinson. We both had plaits and agreed to plait each other's hair each morning. This was an agreeable arrangement to both of us, until I found a frog.

I was not a particularly naturalistic child, in fact it was nothing to do with a love of nature, that moved me to share my find with Margaret. A decidedly naughty thought occurred to me and before Margaret had jumped into bed I put the little green frog in her bed!

Covering my head to suppress my giggles of happy anticipation, I waited for something to happen. It wasn't long in coming. Poor Margret gave an hysterical scream as the little green frog stuck to her repeatedly in its efforts to escape the bed clothes.

My screams of delight gave me away as the obvious culprit. My best friend gave me up as her best friend on the spot. I had to tangle with my plaits by myself for the rest of that camp, but more importantly learnt not to tangle with friends and so lose them.

21 • Spencer My Brother

IT OCCURRED TO ME THAT I had not written about my brother Spencer and further, occurred that there is rather a fine, but tenuous cord of a story between him and I. I'm not sure why that is, but for ten and a half years I was an only child, then perhaps because of the age difference, I was not involved with my brother to an extent that I can remember.

As a ten year old I was excited that Mum was having a baby, but I can't remember Mum making any preparations for the coming event or involving me in them. Mum however bought a cane pram, scrubbed the inside and I think Dad gave the outside a coat of cream paint. So that was all – I can't see a nursery or nursery furniture in my mind – only the pram in which he must have slept.

I do remember the night on which he was born, Mum went to the Womens' Hospital in Newtown, Sydney by ambulance as we didn't own a car. I called out as she left, "I hope it's a boy." I'm sure this was Dad's sentiment entirely. The ambulance driver laughed at me as he drove my Mum away and for ten days I missed her badly.

At school one day I cried, I was missing Mum so much. My teacher asked me the matter and I told her Mum was in hospital. She gave me a sympathetic look, then asked me why she was there. I told her and she laughed! I was hurt and felt she did not understand my pain at all.

However, it came to pass. I don't remember visiting at all till it was time to bring Mum home. I wore my lovely green, silk, smocked dress to school because I was going with Dad after school to bring Mum home. I was in trouble for not wearing my tunic. All my troubles were soon over and forgotten on Mum's return home. Surely I was excited about a new baby brother, but the over-riding memory is of the joy of Mum's presence again. I can't remember the baby being carried from the hospital or station, but he must have been and all the way home from Harris Park Station to 14 Marion Street.

Spencer must have been a good baby, but I can't check that now, because very soon Mum was back at work doing night duty. How she managed to snatch a sleep in the day I don't know. I do remember one incident, however, very unhappily. It was Saturday afternoon and I was all set to meet my friends at the Roxy Theatre Parramatta. Mother asked me to stay home and mind Spencer so she could have a sleep. I hate to own up to it now, but I let her down badly, ran to the pictures and regretted it ever afterwards.

You see I really loved my mother more than anyone, but I was so selfish I couldn't do that thing for her. I hope I was severely punished, but I don't remember.

Spencer had his first ice cream, mine, when I came home with it on a Saturday morning after tennis from Dinny Pale's School. I can see him, a little toddler sitting on the floor with me, eating it lick for lick with me. Another memory of him when about two years old, was of him standing by the toilet bowl, looking at the kittens he had put in there.

We had another move to a Nursing Home in Cremorne where Spencer started pre-school. I walked him there in the morning and home in the afternoon. On one occasion I was given detention for not having done some drafting in sewing lessons – it was all foreign to me, having just come from Parramatta School where I hadn't done sewing. So I was to stay in after school and do the drafting. I pleaded

with the teacher to let me be detained at lunch time as I had to collect my brother after school. I felt she didn't believe me, but I was given lunch detention anyway.

On the way home from collecting Spencer, the teacher passed me in her car and saw me with him. I was so pleased and felt she understood me better after that. Spencer was not happy at that Pre-School and he recalls climbing to the top of the monkey bars and staying there as a protest.

Another move to Strathfield, where he and a little friend held races on the footpath with their dinkies – it was flatout and lookout! He was about 5 years here and I can remember a bit of rivalry now at times, me a teenage girl and he his father's pride and joy – hence a few sibling clashes.

Next move was to Ashfield, to mum's own Nursing Home in Victoria Square where there was a pleasant park in front of the house for him to play cowboys and Indians and use his bow and arrows. Spencer was old enough to know he didn't like dad smoking and told him so. Dad loved him dearly so he stopped smoking immediately, which was a huge achievement for him as he was a heavy smoker. About this time dad had a block of land somewhere near Windsor. He took Spencer and his little friend camping there for a few days. Dad made it very special for them with handmade bows and arrows, camping rough outdoors, eating large amounts of food cooked on an open fire and having a wonderful time. We lived closely together but we were not close. We shared the same bedroom all this time, he slept on the bottom bunk and I on the top. I did my homework in the kitchen so as not to keep him awake at night with the light, and I seemed to pass out of his life for a while, whilst at teachers college and sleeping at Balmain sometimes, then moving to Lithgow for school teaching.

But that tenuous chord, a strong bond was still there. When Spencer was 10 years and 2 months I left home permanently and was married to Stephen. The wedding photos show Spencer to be a shiny eyed boy with a very fresh hair cut for the occasion and a happy

smile. We saw each other only occasionally, the next 2 years either on our visits to mum and dad or their visits to us in Lithgow on weekends.

About 1962 Mum, Dad and Spencer moved to Lithgow. Dad to seek work there, mum to continue nursing in Sydney and returning by train in the weekends to Lithgow. Spencer was to find this arrangement very difficult. He missed mum terribly, although dad endeavoured to make up the loss to Spencer where he could.

Consequently they moved back to Sydney, but the next 2 years saw us with 3 little children, so that Mum, Dad and Spencer visited us many weekends, Spencer enjoying the company with Stephen and riding his billy cart down our steep grassy hill.

That thin strand of relationship between an only brother and sister continues to hold and imperceptibly strengthen as the years go by. Incident by incident we are knit to each other. Spencer was with us at Castle Hill when the announcement was given over the radio, for the selection of the next batch of boys to be conscripted into the Vietnam War. We held our breath as the names were read out and his was not chosen. What relief, what ecstatic rejoicing, as he felt he could contemplate life again without the dread of having to go to war.



Spencer with Mother – at Harris Park.



Barnard, proud father.



Spencer about 4 years.





Visiting his in-laws at 51 Atkinson St. Lithgow.



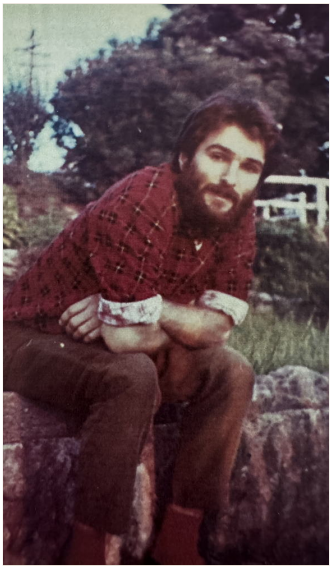
Lithgow High School Cadet.



1961. About 11 years.



A "Beetle's" fan.



About conscription time for Vietnam. He was not called.

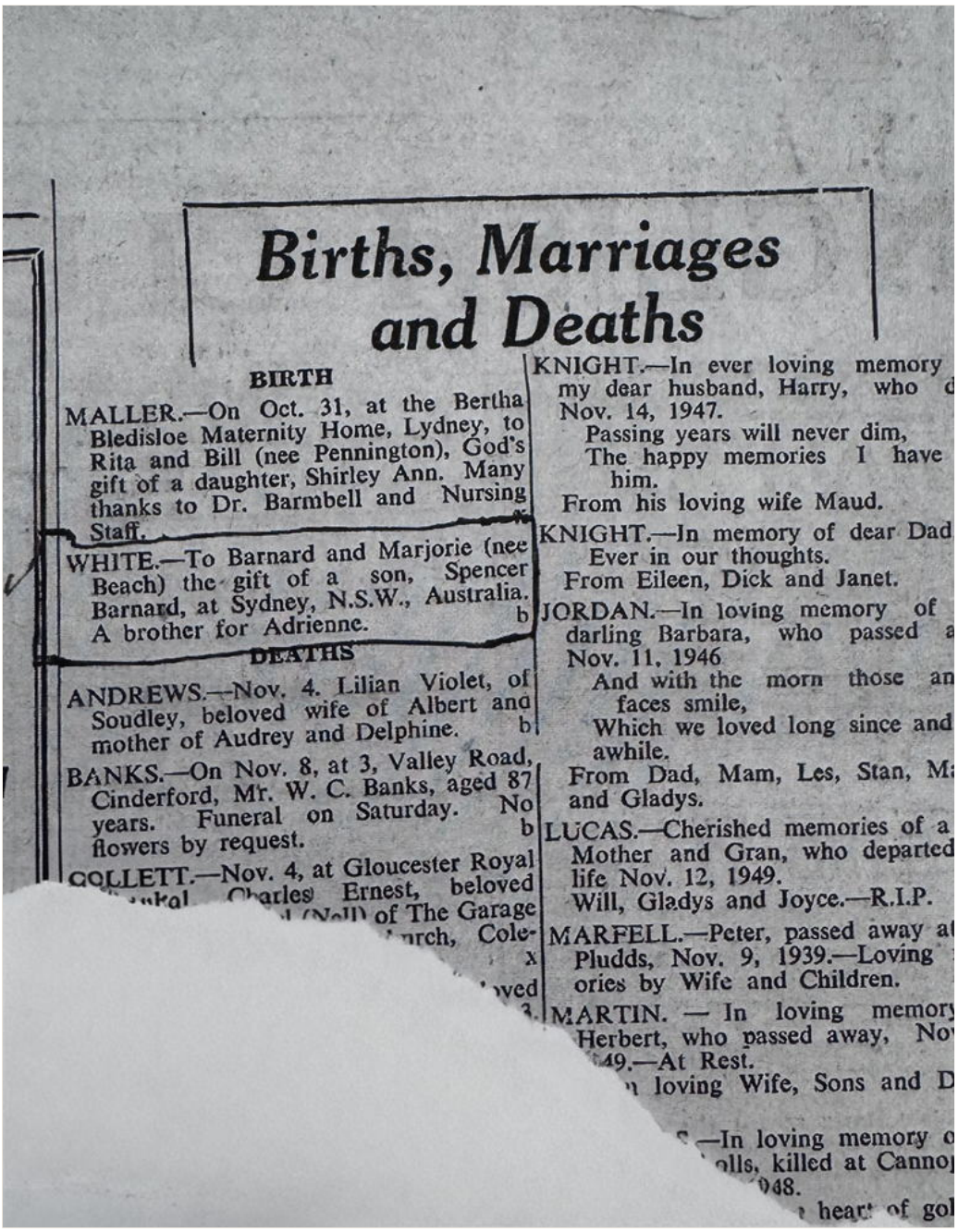
Around this time Spencer's relationship with Wendy broke up and he was heartbroken for a considerable time. But life moved on for him and eventually he married Lourds St George, a beautiful Sri Lankan girl who was taught classical guitar by Spencer at the music school.

In the course of time 3 lovely girls were born to them and life was never the same again.

Over ensuing years we have kept in touch by visiting each other and sharing in the many delightful celebrations of both our families. I for one am very thankful that I have one such special brother. Once when I was just a young girl, I asked my mother why she had had no more children after me. Her reply was quick, "you don't want to have babies in air raid shelters".

I guess not.

But thanks to God who brought us safely to Australia, where Spencer could be born in safety with no need for air raid shelters.



Births, Marriages and Deaths

BIRTH

MALLER.—On Oct. 31, at the Bertha Bledisloe Maternity Home, Lydney, to Rita and Bill (nee Pennington), God's gift of a daughter, Shirley Ann. Many thanks to Dr. Barmbell and Nursing Staff.

WHITE.—To Barnard and Marjorie (nee Beach) the gift of a son, Spencer Barnard, at Sydney, N.S.W., Australia. A brother for Adrienne. b

DEATHS

ANDREWS.—Nov. 4. Lilian Violet, of Soudley, beloved wife of Albert and mother of Audrey and Delphine. b

BANKS.—On Nov. 8, at 3, Valley Road, Cinderford, Mr. W. C. Banks, aged 87 years. Funeral on Saturday. No flowers by request. b

COLLETT.—Nov. 4, at Gloucester Royal ... Charles Ernest, beloved ... (Nell) of The Garage ... urch, Cole- x ... ved 3.

KNIGHT.—In ever loving memory my dear husband, Harry, who d Nov. 14, 1947.
Passing years will never dim,
The happy memories I have him.
From his loving wife Maud.

KNIGHT.—In memory of dear Dad Ever in our thoughts.
From Eileen, Dick and Janet.

JORDAN.—In loving memory of darling Barbara, who passed a Nov. 11, 1946
And with the morn those an faces smile,
Which we loved long since and awhile.
From Dad, Mam, Les, Stan, M and Gladys.

LUCAS.—Cherished memories of a Mother and Gran, who departed life Nov. 12, 1949.
Will, Gladys and Joyce.—R.I.P.

MARFELL.—Peter, passed away a Pludds, Nov. 9, 1939.—Loving ories by Wife and Children.

MARTIN. — In loving memory Herbert, who passed away, No 49.—At Rest.
loving Wife, Sons and D

—In loving memory o olls, killed at Canno 948.
heart of gol

A newspaper cutting Mum had kept all these years, from the Cinderford daily paper.

WHITE. To Barnard and Marjorie (nee Beach) the gift of a son, Spencer Barnard, at Sydney, N.S.W., Australia. A brother for Adrienne.

22 • The Pictures, the Cinemas

I HAVE ALREADY MENTIONED an incident concerning the Saturday pictures. 3 more occasions come clearly to mind. The first occasion was when I was six, just home from Aunty Edie's care and I accompanied my Mother to the evening pictures. It must have been summer time for when we walked home after the film, it still seemed light. The film was "The Dream of Alwyn", with a beautiful musical theme running through it, which must have been quite popular as I remember Mum & Dad playing it on the piano.

The storyline was of a girl who walked in her sleep and of the race to prevent her falling into the water, as I try and recall. She must have drowned because I remember sobbing loudly, to such an extent that a lady in the audience gave me some sweets to passify me. Poor Mum had to console me all the walk home.

Later whilst living with Mum Root, I would walk with my friend, whose name I have forgotten, but who was the same age as me, just eight, and we would go to the Saturday morning Matinees at the local picture show. One Saturday we almost made it to the cinema, when a neighbour of ours stopped us and asked us to mind her pile of laundry while she shopped for something nearby. Reluctantly we agreed, but agitated till she returned to set us free, where upon we raced to the theatre to be told that the pictures had started and we would not be allowed in, now that it had.

There was no more that we could do, our explanation of lateness was no excuse. We could not go in. Oh boy, we were disappointed and downright disgruntled as we tramped home.

The next picture incident I recall was a Saturday afternoon at the Roxy Parramatta that I have already recalled to my shame. Mother needing a sleep after working night duty and me selfishly disobeying her and running to meet my friends at the pictures. I am not proud of that story. I was probably 12 years at the time.

A little later when I was 15, and living with my family at Strathfield nursing Home, I would go with my friend Jill to the Saturday afternoon Matinee and watch the serials and films. One notable film of that time was Carmen Jones – Bizet's classic story of unrequited love put in a modern setting of a factory with an all negro cast. It was fascinating and I later persuaded Mum to buy a record of the music. But that was not the occasion which led to serious consequences.

On this particular Saturday a boyfriend sat next to me and behaved too friendly. As a young person you think the pictures are dark enough not to expose you. But unbeknown to me a neighbour whom I was never able to identify, saw me misbehaving and wrote a letter to my mother about it which caused quite a stir.

At tea time, when all around the table, my Mum gave me the letter, told me to read it then give it to Dad. I read it, jumped up and ran out of the house. In hindsight now I don't think kissing a boy in the pictures was too wicked, but at 15, unsure of my Dad's reaction, I was genuinely frightened. I ran to the Minister's house and knocked on the door. His wife said he was out, and she didn't invite me in. So I kept on running. I passed the Burwood Tennis courts where young people were playing an evening game and I saw my Dad's car parked outside. I deduced he was out looking for me and this made me go even faster. I remember reaching the main Liverpool Road and being quite distressed that I couldn't go back home. I walked for a long time. On several occasions a car would stop to offer me a lift. Thank goodness, in my foolishness, I had enough sense not to

accept. But finally when the road was quite in the country, an ambulance stopped, the officer very authoritatively said, “Get in” and I did.

He asked me where I was going? “To the next town” came the stupid reply. He promptly turned the ambulance around and headed homeward. When I told him my address, Montrose Nursing Home, he didn’t believe me – as only recently he had been there, delivering a patient to Mother. Eventually he sensed I was telling the truth and took me home. Mum and Dad were so relieved to see me unhurt, that dire punishment was with held. I was received gratefully from the kind officer who went beyond the call of duty, to take notice of a young girl, on the road late at night and take her home.

That year, year 9 was a rather torrid year for me and probably a worrying year for my Mother. Not only bringing up a hormonal 15 year old girl and vigorous 5 year old boy, but working full time as Matron of a small Convalescent Home where she was nurse, cook and Manager. I was inattentive at school, played truant often with my friend Kathy and was determined to leave school at the end of the year. As was the way then in 1955 – one could leave school at 15, having done the Intermediate certificate. So at the end of term, without asking Mum or Dad’s permission, I left school and caught the train to town, had an interview at the Commonwealth Bank and applied for a job. I sat a test then broke the news that night that I had been successful and would start work next week at the Bank. As our science teacher used to say, “A vigorous effervescence took place!”

No, I was not to be allowed to leave school. As a least compromise, I could go to Tech at night and study for the leaving certificate and could work in the day. But the next ensuing six weeks of holidays saw me persuaded of the sense of finishing school.

At the beginning of the next school year, I fronted up to the headmistress who had not been favourably impressed with me last term. Graciously she said that she would admit me this year, but gave me the impression that she would have preferred me not to have returned.

However God kindly intervened in that year at school by bringing Jenny Hunt to start school in year ten at Strathfield Girls' High. Jenny was living out and out, for Jesus Christ. God kindly drew me close to Himself one morning when I was reading my Bible. I read a tract about a judge who stepped down from the dock and took the punishment for his friend, who was convicted of a crime. So with my restoration to God and the good Christian friend I had, life improved for me greatly which must have been a great relief to Mum and Dad.

23 • Olivia

LAST NIGHT OUR GRAND daughter, Olivia, practised her speech for school, to be given the next day. It was entitled "All about Me". Olivia related various important events in her life dealing with her past, present, and future. She spoke confidently and clearly beginning with an incident as a two year old at Thredbo, inadequately dressed for a snowy day, when she became quite frozen, turning blue in colour. She remembered the cup of hot chocolate given to revive her. Olivia proceeded with various incidents in her life to the present time and even shared her dreams and determination into the future, when she intends to be an orthodontist. Gross mouths will not put her off, she declares, in fact she is looking forward to it.

Olivia spoke so clearly and orderly of her life and self, it was a delight to hear. Olivia is 10, nearly 11 years old. What an accomplished child so early in life. Such a very composed, calmly confident, little girl, beautiful to look at and beautiful in character.

She has worked out her routine of things to be done for school and quietly goes about completing her homework or preparing for the next activity. She reminds me of a very successful woman, her Mother, capable, loving, efficient, careful of the needs of others around her, quietly accomplishing what needs to be done. I thank God for them both.


BATES
CLASS
CAPTAIN

24 • The Ferris Wheel

ROSALIND IS HAVING A Garage Sale here in Canberra and Stephen and I have been helping prepare for it. There has been such cleaning out, sorting out and throwing out. Whilst looking for something in their shed, I spied the quaint, ferris wheel, squeezed in between various miscellaneous other odds and ends of by gone days. Tentatively took it from the shelf and wound the wheel. The wheel still worked and the music box still played the London Bridge is Falling Down, falling down, falling down, my fair lady. Amazingly that little, plastic toy still worked after 38 years.

I remember clearly the day it was bought. It was a few days before Christmas, Rosalind and I were doing a Franklins grocery shop, she curled up in the shopping trolly and I was pushing her up and down the isles.

Rosalind was a good girl to take shopping, never noisy or demanding sweets, but a happy, contented, little girl. However Franklins had included some Christmas toys among their groceries and Rosalind wanted one. She had spotted this tiny ferris wheel. I said "No" and continued shopping, but before we reached the checkout, I put one in the trolly and said it was for someone else.

Her pathetic response, which made me feel awful was, "I feel sick." – She was so disappointed that she literally felt sick. Thankfully Christmas was not too far off and disappointment turned to joyful surprise.

I felt really pleased to see that Ferris Wheel had survived all these years, reminding me of a very precious little daughter, when aged 3, sitting in a shopping trolly.



Rosalind hanging on to her kitten.



On her 3rd Birthday.

25 • Marjorie

MARJORY EMMA BEACH WAS born on the 14th February 1913, the younger of two children, born to Lillian May and William Beach. She and her sister Edie were born in Cinderford, a village of coal miners who worked the various mines surrounding the towns of Gloucestershire. I have only the word of mouth stories from mum and a few memories of my own from Cinderford, to recall but from what I gleaned from mum, it was a lovely time growing up but tempered by the death of her father and subsequent financial restrictions.

When mother was five and Edie eight years old her father William suffered an accident in the coal mine and as a result gangrene set in and caused his death. There was no penicillan available. Lillian had a hard time making ends meet. She took in washing and later let out the front room for boarders.

Marjorie recalled objecting to one male boarder and loudly commented on the large helping of dinner he had been given. Mother Lillian was not impressed by this rudeness.

Fortunately Grandpa Martin Hunt and Grandma Amy Hunt lived next door, only a lane being between them. The Hunt's door was always open to the girls. The grandparent's made it possible for the girls to learn the piano. One lesson Edie did not want to attend. Grandpa picked her up and put her over his shoulder and carried her through to her lesson. But Edie crying and protesting pulled the

cloth on the cupboard as she passed, all the crockery falling to the floor. A sound spanking then into the piano lesson, there was not much nonsense allowed I gather.

The Cinderford Baptist Church was at the bottom of the lane and mother said it was the centre of their life. On Sunday's Grandpa Hunt would sit upstairs and keep the boys in order and Grandma Hunt would sit downstairs and keep an eye on the girls. Mum was baptised by immersion when she was sixteen and the Pastor told her mother Lillian, "you should have seen her face when she came up, full of joy".

Mum told stories of Sunday School picnics and long walks after church to various favourite spots where everyone would take the air on a summer's evening. There were also long walks when she would have loved a carry as a little child from her father, now absent. There were fields to cross and find mushrooms and blackberries in season to pick. And great joy, there were the times when Grandpa Hunt would let her be present at the slaughter of a beast in the back yard. Grandpa Martin Hunt was a butcher as well as a church Deacon. Marjorie recalled helping hold the beast when Grandpa had hung it for butchering. Grandma Hunt had a sweet shop, the other half of Grandpa's butcher shop where she made and sold homemade sweets. She also cooked 'smalls' for the butcher shop. Smalls were meats made from the less favoured cuts of meat. Black sausage as well as ordinary ones, faggots made of intestines stuffed with savoury bits and pieces and cooked to tantalise passers-by. Nothing was wasted. Frugality was a way of life. Mother learnt it by necessity and handed it down to me also.

Dear mother won a scholarship to Monmouth High School and with help from the grandparents managed to find the extra money for uniforms and train fares to Monmourth station. Little snippets of her memories of school surfaced briefly, of books so neatly written that her French Teacher said she wanted to put gloves on whenever she opened Marjorie's books. Tales of sweethearts, friends and

summer evenings and the perfume of fruit trees in the garden and Edie's hats as she was an apprentice to a milliner, drift in from the past.

Mother chose nursing after school and enrolled at the local Dilk hospital. Work was hard and nursing not looking so attractive. One weekend mum came home crying. It was all too hard, days too long and no fun at all. An aunt who was present in the kitchen when mum complained of it all, declared loudly, "Marjorie will never see it through, she'll never be a nurse".

Mum was so angry at this remark that defeat was instantly turned into determination to complete her training and become a nurse. Mother completed her apprenticeship at the Dilk and went on to Hammersmith Hospital, London to finish her training. She won the Silver Medal for her results. Mother kindly gave it to me in later life, but when we had a robbery it was stolen from our place.

I do not know many tales from this time in London, but mother used to say that no matter how tired you were from nursing, you'd find time for a game of tennis after work.

Whilst nursing in London mum met Bill, Ena's husband whilst he was a patient. Ena was dad's sister and Bill her husband. So mum met the White family after nursing Bill to health. There are tales of Barnard courting and doubling mum on the back of his motorbike all the way up to Scotland. It must have been freezing, but apparently mum was not put off, because they were married on New Year's Eve 1938 at St Michael and all Angels, Bedford Park, County of Middlesex. The Wedding Certificate states that Barnard Henry White, condition bachelor, a process engraver of 96 Thornton Ave, married Marjorie Emma Beach – condition spinster, of 11 Thornton Ave, Dec 31, 1938. Dad was 28 and Mum was 25.

I have only one photo of them taken in Will Hancock's garden that has remained. I think Will and Lally had hoped Mum would marry their son Victor. Home was a new bungalow at 45 Croysdale Avenue Sunbury On Thames, Which Dad had built for them to move into after the wedding. It was to be their one and only home Which they

owned until 1961 when mum sold Currawong, her nursing home and they subsequently bought a house at Mona Vale, opposite a golf range and just a 100 yards from the beach. It was a short lived ownership.

I couldn't recall how many times in their lives Mum and Dad have moved since their marriage in 1938, but I always remember Mum making the best of it (I have no recall of her ever grumbling about the situation or the places they were in). Dear Mother was so pleased when Stephen put on a complete new floor level on our home at Epping And invited them to live With us. She loved it and we loved having them there. Unfortunately for them we took the opportunity to move to Beltana, a 1280 acre property out of Tamworth. It was not until 2002 when Dad died, that I had the joy of Mum living with us again. For four and a half years we had her loving presence with us. I can shut my eyes and still see her sitting in the garden over looking the Lake, or crocheting one of the many rugs she made for us all, or kneeling down beside her bed at night, saying her prayers.

One prayer oft repeated was remembered from days in London Hammersmith Hospital and prayed by the nurses as they went on night duty.

"Oh Lord support us all the day long of this troublous life,
Until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes,
The busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over
And our work is done.
Then Lord, in Your mercy, Grant us safe lodging,
A holy rest, and peace at the last;
Through Christ our Lord." Amen.



At Hammersmith Hospital 1936.



Matron of "Currawong" Convalesent Home. with Mrs Goodrich, Mrs Fenwick, Mrs Smith & Sister Kenna. 1957.



31st December, 1938. Barnard & Marjorie. Freeda is Br. Maid.

Marjorie Emma White
born in Cinderford England on the 14th February 1913
died in Newcastle NSW Australia on Friday 28th July 2006
aged 93 years



1984



1951





1971. Mum with Rosalind & Merrewyn



Celebrating 60 years of Marriage.

P.S 20-06-2010, Stephen and I remembered that when I was 15 Mum took me to White City to hear Louis Armstrong perform! What a thing that was and our children remember that Mum took them to Luna Park... even going on some of the rides with them Mum really was great. One whole weekend she came and minded all 5 of them so Stephen and I could have a weekend away – which we spent on a house boat journeying up the Hawkesbury River, Beautiful, SHE REALLY WAS Special.

Marjorie White died in Newcastle Hospital N.S.W Australia, on Friday 28th July, 2006 aged 93 years.

Dr Brian Draganic operated on Mum to remove a bowel cancer. She survived only 18 days more. I am so glad she has her own home to go to, a mansion with the Lord Jesus, prepared for her by the heavenly Father, one which will not fade away. Thank You Lord Jesus.

26 • The Word

MY FIRST REAL BIBLE WAS given to me by four little friends, Patrica, Peter, Beryl and Adrian Thompson when I left England. I recall a sunny day when aged about eight or nine lying on a rug under a grey blanket, which dad had made into a tent or garden, reading several stories from the front of the book and boasting to dad that I had read so many pages. He promptly enlightened me that it was quality not quantity that counts with everything. I think I was put off reading much more because I don't think I read it till I was ten, at a Christian Youth Camp. Here I was encouraged to read some everyday, now that Jesus was my saviour and friend. My teacher Miss Ruth Parry encouraged me to think on the verse from Hebrews 12:2 "looking unto Jesus" and to make that direct my life. That was the first verse of scripture that impacted me. The second verse was given to me the following year, by Miss Parry, with equally dramatic impact on me, so that I recall it today sixty years later, Galatians 3:1 "Oh foolish Galatians (oh foolish Adrienne) who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth", for I had forgotten to walk with Jesus.

For the next five or six years I endeavoured to read the bible on and off irregularly. When about sixteen and living at currawong nursing home I read the scriptures in the morning as was my habit by now, then a tract about a judge who paid the price and took the punishment for a friend whom he had just sentenced for a crime. It was such a clear picture of what Jesus had done for me that I took it

for myself. Colossians 2:14 “Having forgiven you of all trespassers, having wiped out the hand writing of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us, and he has taken it out of the way having nailed it to the cross.” This was salvation and liberation indeed.

Shortly after this I was baptised at Ashfield Baptised church and gave as my testimony Galatians 6:14, “God forbid that I should boast, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ”, I knew it was Jesus that had done everything for me.

The following year I was at teachers college and leading the TDF bible study. The passage was Psalm 139:1-6 which tells us God knows our thoughts, our ways and our words. Whilst preparing for the study I told my dad off, saying he shouldn’t be smoking now that he was a Christian. Then I went to my room to continue bible study and read in Psalm 139:23 “Search me oh God and know my heart, try me and know my anxieties and see if there is any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.” This was such a revelation to my heart. I was soundly convicted of my own sin, apologised to my Dad and confessed to the group the next day. The word convicted me soundly.

It was probably the next year or so, when boarding at Lithgow, that the Song of Solomon became a much read and loved book to me. One Sunday I was asked to give my testimony in church and Song of Solomon 5:16 was my testimony “His mouth is most sweet, yes He is altogether lovely. This is my beloved and this is my friend”.

By 1968 Steven and I were married and had just had our fifth child Rosalined. Soon after birth it was evident that Rosalined was not well. Investigation led to the discovery of holes in her heart and the need for surgery. The thought of such a tiny baby having such a procedure was frightening. However God knows our thoughts and fears and anxieties and gave me a word which strengthened my hope and faith and trust in him for Rosalined, Psalm 46:5 “God is in the midst of her and she shall not be shaken/moved, God shall help her just at the break of dawn”. Oh how this upheld me and how we

rejoiced to bring her home from Camperdown's Children's Hospital at seven months of age, just seven pounds and eleven Oz, exactly her birth weight.

From 1981-1994 I taught at Dungowan School. One year I was commissioned sports mistress. The title did not fit me. To my horror and consternation it was the year we were to host the district Sports Carnival. Yes, I was to be responsible for the smooth running and hosting of the seven schools' participation. I really had anxieties about it. But God is able to do exceedingly more then we ask or think or imagine and he gave me the verse in Daniel 11:32 as mine to hang onto, "but the people who know their god shall be strong and carry out great exploits". Oh what a beautiful word. And he did it, It was the best carnival according to other heads and the sun came out after a freezing night, the children had fun and I knew God had done it, and I was so thankful.

And outstanding word or Rhema to my heart, whilst still living in the Dungowan area was Colossians 2:14. Somehow my sinfulness was still condemning me, but God cleared this up also for me when I read "having forgiven you all trespasse having wiped out the hand writing of requirements that were against us which was contrary to us. And he has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross". Oh what a precious picture, my condemnation nailed and forgiven at the cross. Relief. "Cling to him for he is your life" Deut 30:20. Of later years I had done this, thankful to be able to cling to him and cling to Steven, whom He gave to me. There have been ups and downs, faith and doubts, some hard parts to walk, but God has been faithful to me and to Steve in every way. We/I, have been able to say "it came to pass" for "He has made all things work together for my and our good" Romans 8:28

For the last ten years I've had Parkinson's disease, I wish he'd kept it, It's not worth having. So I am making Isaiah 55:6 my meditation "seek the lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is

near. For He has said I'll never leave you nor forsake you" Hebrews 13:5. "And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matt 28:20.

27 • 51 Atkinson Street Lithgow

ON THE 16TH DECEMBER 1960, the day after school broke up for Summer holidays Stephen and I were married at Ashfield Baptist Church by the Rev Harry Orr.

I was blissfully happy as I hope Stephen was also. We had a delightful adventure filled week in a Halvorsen cruiser on the Hawkesbury River. We were new to a lot of things, driving the boat, coming into a wharf, anchoring safely, reading the tides, and being married. On the last day that we were to return our cruiser we discovered a creek that we hadn't investigated before. Unfortunately we didn't read the tide. It ran out so fast that before we could retreat, we had tipped over at an angle and beached the boat on the sand. It was about 2 AM before the tide came in again and we could move out in the dark to deeper waters which we accomplished without mishap.

Honeymoon over, we bought our first home in Lithgow. Sydney houses were much more expensive than we could afford so we decided to buy in Lithgow, where I was teaching. For twelve hundred pounds we bought an old timber cottage on the side of a mountain. In winter when the days were shorter, the sun rose very late on our patch and left very early in the afternoon. The coal mine railway was directly in front of our place so that one could collect lumps of coal from the trains as they dropped off occasionally and save them for the fire. Our front gate was only a few metres from the railway line.

One morning when Ralph was just a few weeks old, I was totally absorbed breast feeding him believing 12 month Rachel was playing inside. Unbeknown to me she had wandered outside, down the path and onto the railway line. I didn't know a miracle had taken place! Usually the train came back up the gully backwards, with the engine the last to arrive. This day the engine was in front so that the driver had seen Rachel sitting on the line... stopped the train... carried her up to me and asked if she were my child? What a shock... God had intervened and given the driver time to stop the train and bring her to safety!

On an other sunny day at home Rachel was 17 months, playing with a child whom we were minding. They were playing with the clothes line pulley, swinging on it. The friend came running in to me screaming "neck". I found Rachel suspended in mid air, blue in the face, frothing at the mouth... She uttered a gasp as I released her... praise God she was alive!

But God gave us another miracle. For that day I had the car! Usually Stephen had it at work. Into the car and up to the hospital we went... very fast... the three children on the back seat, with no seat belts in those days.

Rachel recovered, but she had been so close to not surviving that we were in shock for a considerable time.

I think I did a lot of growing up in those first few years with 3 little children under 4 years of age.

Our little cottage perched on the hill had 3 quarters of an acre, 2 cherry trees, a few other fruit trees, a chook yard, and a pig pen. I learnt to use Stephen's rifle, shooting at the chicken hawks. We became the proud owners of two pigs. The church was encouraging us to make some money and give it to God. It was just like the story of the talents in the Bible. We received our 2 pounds, our 2 talents and bought 2 piglets proceeding to raise them on deep litter. We threw in the sawdust litter and it got deeper and deeper as the months went by. Somehow the pigs knew they were church pigs,

because they would escape, run down the road, with us giving chase... but only do this on Sundays. We would be dressed and ready to go when somebody would spot them and alert us.

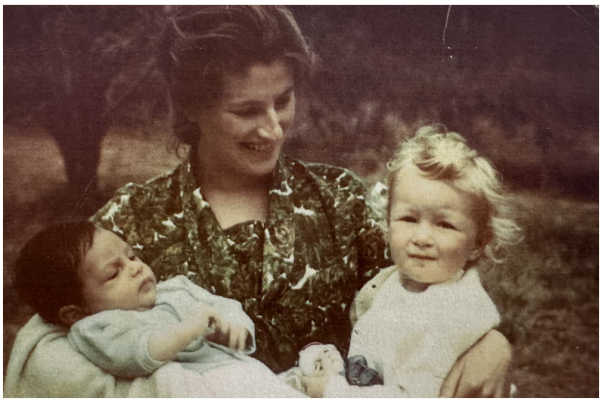


Very happily Married 16th December 1960



Ralph Groves, Lorna Smith, Margaret Charamiss, Gladys Lawson and George Gourlay.







We were ever so pleased when it was decided they were big enough for the butcher. We thought how splendidly fat they were and what profit they would return. However fat is not good on a pig. So the butcher did not pay us generously and we could not boast about a great result in the talent scheme, but I think it had been fun.

It was a quaint little house, quite drafty in certain places. For instance the bathroom had been tacked on to the back of the house had never been lined. We watched the snow beat in through the cracks one winter's bath time.

The pan toilet was situated a long way up the path outside. At night the kangaroos would bound up the hill frightening me.

Winter was cosy inside... freezing outside. We would sit round the fire on our 2 kerosene tin stools which I had covered and compete for the space between the nappies drying on the fire guard. The trick was to turn the nappies before they scorched brown.

Barry Jones our friend the plumber, put water pipes behind the fuel stove and open fire so that with either of them lit, we had hot water. It also meant that with the stove constantly alight I was more likely to cook a desert or cake or something nice to eat.

The first year of teaching school in Cooerwell, Lithgow, I ran an I.S.C.F. group at lunch time. During the holidays I organised a bus to bring the children who wished, to our place and I mustered 82 children on the front lawn! Dividing them into teams we ascended the mountain, cooking our sausages on little fire places that Stephen had made up ready on the previous weekend. I thank God He kept each child safe, for ordinarily speaking, 82 children was too many for one person to take on an excursion.

That mountain was quite thickly covered in undergrowth and at the base near our house, was covered in blackberry bushes. We were often seeing brown snakes coming out of those bushes.

So dear Stephen was determined to clear out those snakes.

About 2pm one Sunday afternoon, he lit the blackberry bushes which lit up with a great roar and a swoosh roaring up the mountain side. Again we thanked God... for His wind direction, for the fire swept up all before it... weeds, rubbish, old trees, dumpings, and every other imaginable thing in its path. In fact it swept away and up the mountain, away from our dry, timber home, thankfully not towards us!

It was time for Stephen to sell his milk run and try for greener pastures in Sydney. So for 13 hundred pounds we set our house on the market, acknowledging the increase in price as we had carpeted the house, painted it and generally improved things. The next adventure was set in place as we sold 51 Atkinson Street, and for 14

weeks Stephen and 3 year old Ralph stayed with Aunty Helen, while 4 year old Rachel, 2 year old Jonathan and I lived with Aunty Margaret in Croydon, while we searched for a house to live in. At the end of those long 14 weeks, separated, we had found our new home at 3 Carcoola Street, Castle Hill.



Long Ago – July 1964.



28 • Long ago and far away

ONCE UPON A TIME, LONG AGO and far away, there was a young woman aged 24 who was married to a fine young man who was aged 29. They had 3 children under 4 and they lived in a cottage on the side of a mountain near the State Coal Mine. The young woman was still a relative novice at most things required of her as a wife and mother of very young children. However she was fairly creative in the home and mostly endeavoured to keep above water. But as fast as she picked up things, the little ones scattered them inside and out, the meals had to be prepared 3 times a day with baby feeds in between, the washing had to be hung out, brought in, put away again and so on and so forth.

The young woman was convinced that her husband did not appreciate her effort at home making. She felt hardly done by and gradually became resentful of the constant demands of the house and children binding her as she thought, to a never ending round of muddles.

So one bright day she had a new thought. If her husband didn't know what a lot of work she did each day, she would help him understand and perhaps he would be more sympathetic towards her efforts in the future.

Next day, emboldened by her plans, the young woman [foolish and immature], took the car keys and drove out of the garage, leaving the young husband to care for the three little children. Unfortunately the young husband was responsible for opening the safe at

work and was unable to do this, nor even ring work as he did not have a phone at home [as it was in the long ago and far away before mobile phones.]

The foolish, immature, young woman blithely, though not without some feelings of guilt, drove around and out of town as far as Walarawang, Wang for short. Pulling over to the side of the road she rested. This was an unusual treat, to rest in the normally busy day, but sweet as it was she could not enjoy it, her conscience just would not let her.

After sometime (how long was it) she turned the key and rather sheepishly headed Homewood. Whilst the details are slightly blurred due to the years that have passed since this occasion, it would be clear to say that the reception was not cool as they say today, but decidedly frozen. Freezing, freezing! But what was this? The three little children all playing happily, so pleased that daddy was home. The washing dried and neatly put away. The dishes washed and in place, the house tidy and everything in order.

It really was just too much! It was all so long ago and far away, but I believe the foolish, immature, young women grew up quite quickly by the time there were five little children running around. She learnt a few handy hints to housekeeping and some other valuable information along the way that helped.

29 • All Houses, Great and Small

I HAD GROWN UP MOVING house many times. I used to be able to rattle them off, all the rented houses in sequence after landing in Australia. I think it went something like this 10th may 1948 disembarked the Empire Brent and headed for Maroubra, from there to Hurstville, thence aunty Gwen's, followed by 9 Kerrs Rd Lidcomb, onto Marrian St Harris park, next a convalescent Home at Westmead, to two weeks at Marickville, to a hospital at Cremorne, to a nursing home at Strathfield, to 9 Victoria Square Ashfield and sometimes I'd live at a terraced house in Balmain.

This was followed by boarding with the Townsends at Lithgow, marriage to Stephen and living at 51 Atkinsons St. Then the time had come to move back to Sydney, so between Helen and margeret we split and camped till we bought our house at three Carcoola St, Castle Hill. From here Stephen obtained a job with Channel Seven, as the Accountant, so we moved again to Epping near his work and rented 25 Wyralla Ave Epping.

We fancied a few acres for our family to enjoy so bought 7 acres at Kellyville and went about making it more hospitable. The problem arose when for a few yards, we had crossed the Neighbours boundary with a track we had bulldozed to the creek. The neighbour retaliated by dumping demolished houses, on our fence line, which would not have been pleasant to look at if we built there. As a

consequence we sold that bush block and bought a battle axe block at 47 A Wyralla Ave Epping, from Mrs Tollhurst, and built a lovely home there.

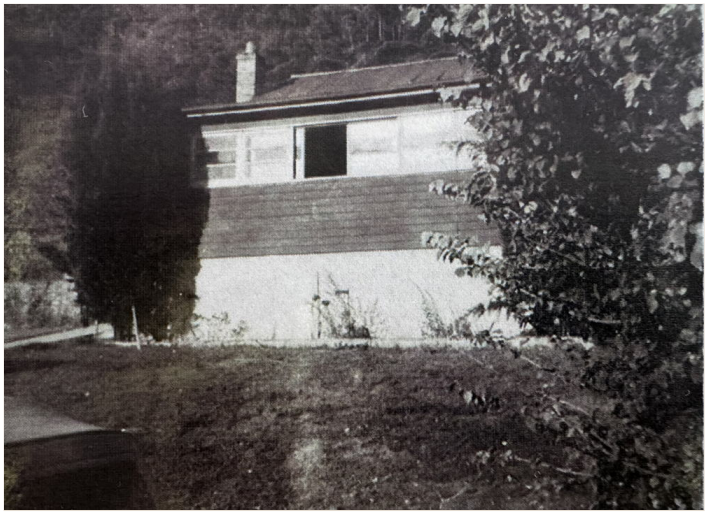
It was wonderful to watch the house grow. If I remember correctly Stephen carried me over the threshold the day we moved in. Two years later we had built another floor on top, to accommodate Mum and Dad, but this only lasted another two years, before we bought a farm, Beltana on the Mulla Creek. When we moved house this time we really moved lifestyle as well as house. No security of regular wages, a new season of learning agriculture, weather patterns and dependence on God, a new way of living for us all.

I'm sure the children would remember incidents at 47 A, I certainly do. Ralph climbing the tree in the back garden and jumping out of it to fly. He was impressed by the advertisement at the time which said "drink milk and fly through the day". He drank milk, but unfortunately he did not fly. As the children were all supposed to be on their beds for Sunday siesta, they did not come to tell us Ralph lay winded on the ground.

I had said "no pets", but one Saturday they went to the Sydney markets by train and bought a white kitten and some ducklings. I was not impressed. But later I used my energy and dug a pond in the corner of the block for the ducks. There were three of them Beatrix, Dracula and Rhubarb. Sometimes they would all three stand one on top of the other, most interesting to watch and see how long they could hold this circus act.

Jonathan had a fright one time when he and a friend threw plums at a passing car. The driver rushed out of the car and chased Jonathon down to the house, where he confronted Jon and us too, with the severity of the incident. All the houses so far had been in suburbia on a quarter acre or less blocks. Not so our next adventure. Beltana, the farm we moved to, provided endless stories of happenings to the Gourlays. The first day, the boys proceeded to start the antique, Massie Ferguson Tractor so push started it down hill, momentum at last, right down the road and straight into the creek!

Oh well, a perfect opportunity to meet the neighbours. Let's ring them round and see if anyone has a tractor that could pull ours out. And so the neighbours meet the city slickers and had a good laugh at our expense, I imagine.



51 Atkinson St, Lithgow.



25 Wyralla Ave, Epping.



3 Carcoola St. Castle Hill.



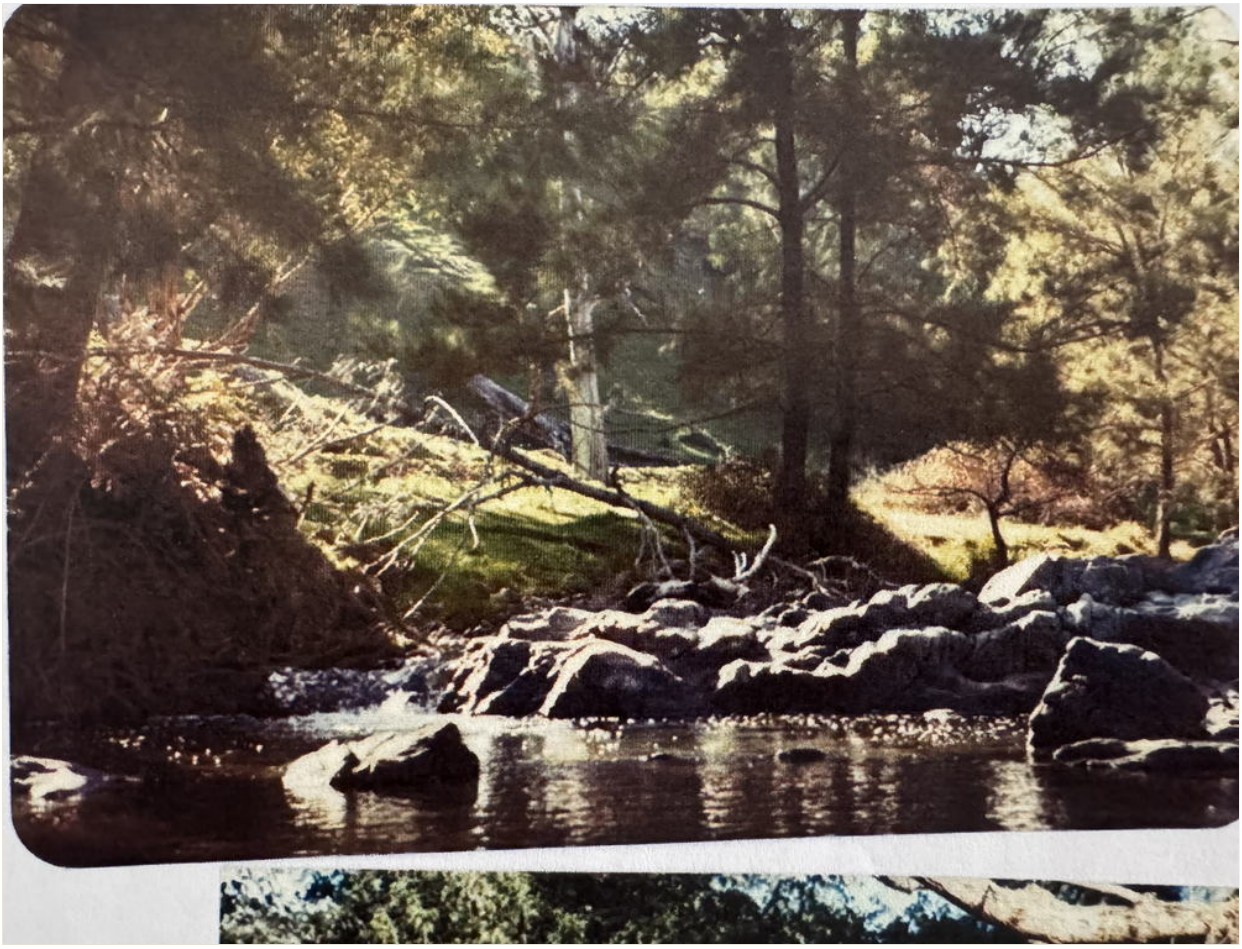
7 acres at Kellyville



47 Wyralla Ave, Epping.



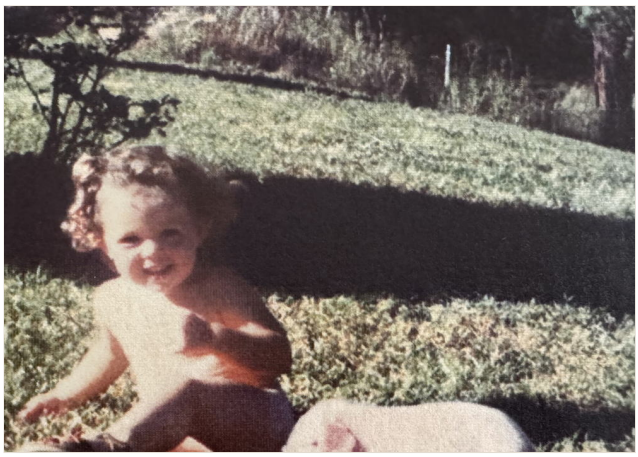
Beautiful "Beltana."







"Petty" and litter.



Jane Patterson and "Punky"



"Praise God I'm out of the office."



New kids on the block.





Frequent Visitors. Bill & Shirley Bruce.





Baptist youth camp.



Church camp on lawn, Merrewyn on guitar, Paul & Ralph leading.



Jonathan Shoeing Eddy.



Room for any more? Yes, Michael Shaw joined us.





A romantic ride into the sunset?

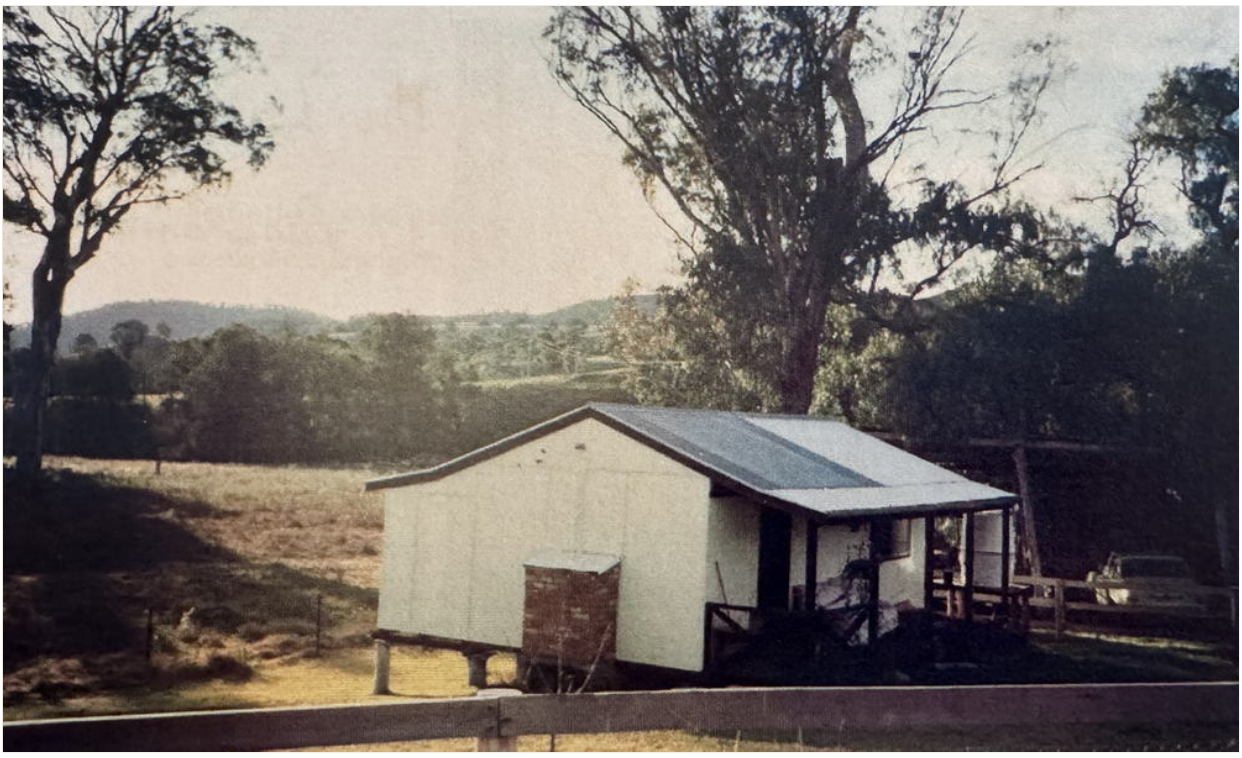


Looks efficient – but can she deliver the goods?





Dress up day at Dungowan school.



The "Little House" on "Beltana"



"Brindabella" Ogunbil Rd. Ogunbil.



Cooking dough-boys down by the creek at "Brindabella."



The "Lake House." 37 Panarama Ave, Charmhaven.



The reserve provided a place for picnicing, the lake was great to sail, the slope was the best slip & slide at Christmas.





Then there were the two pigs we bought, that come farrow time, reverted to instincts and made huge grass nests in the paddock and had their babies in great piles of hay, fabulous to see.

Horses provided more than transport over our hills. Nipper threw Rosalind off, second week there, and broke her arm. My romantic ride with Stephen came to an abrupt end as Sun dot raced for home with me on her back, and I flew off as he rounded the bend coming

through the gate, depositing me on my back. The swelling on my back started soon after this and by next morning I was only to pleased to go to hospital. I stayed there for nine days till the haematoma had gone down sufficiently.

Stephen came off the motorbikes umpteen times, also Merrewyn came off when racing Jonathan through the gate on the motorbike and she was hospitalised for two weeks, but we all survived and loved most of the experiences there.

The ducks multiplied and we sold sixty odd to the Cold Storage place in time for Christmas one year. Another year we had a paddock of golden sweet corn to pack in our freezer chest. A swimming pool was erected with surrounding deck, where we delighted to cool off after school and work. Spot lighting at night for rabbits proved fun for the boys and the girls enjoyed having girlfriends home for the weekends, when I could put them all to good use killing and cleaning chickens for the freezer.

There were church camps held on Beltana, archery for sport, family visits as big as camps in the holidays. There always seemed to be enough food to go round and God always blessed us with sufficient with all our needs. One winter the girls needed winter clothes, Stephen encouraged them to pray and ask God for two hundred dollars. God sent it via the wool check teaching us all of His perfect timing.

The spring green foliage present when we purchased the place soon gave way to drought. The creek dried up into ponds, the paddock grasses were megre for the sheep and cattle and Stephen was down in the creek bed on his knees pleading God, for rain. Father God is very gracious – the rain fell and we watched the creek begin to trickle down, then become a small stream, till finally the Mulla Creek would flood. It was fascinating to watch the hills seep water, then gush springs everywhere, till the roar of the creek in flood was awesome. When this happens we were stuck.

A few times, three I think, I was stuck at school in the afternoon. The waters had come down, the creeks cut so I stayed with the Shanohans, or Barry Gilbert's and Gwen in Nemingha.

Once we could get across Disher's creek, we still had ours to cross. So Stephen tied a dinghy to the now washed away swinging bridge supports and we ferried our goods and selves across the swollen creek. Romantic thought, but most inconvenient and wearisome late on Thursday nights after shopping to have to carry all the grocery bags down the hill, fill the boat, row across or pull the rope, carry bags up the hill and finally up to the house. Worse still Jonathan had his car washed away one year, a huge log dumped on top of it, where it remains today.

Eventually working very hard with cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs to make the farming enterprise pay its way, lost some of its charm! Fencing up and down mountains, cleaning pigs, receiving profits which did not leave room for rejoicing, made Stephen know the time was ripe to move on. By the grace of God our neighbours bought the property, joining it to their own and we purchased a 14 acre block and house down the road, which was tar sealed!

Our children had discovered Brindabella for us whilst we were away over seas and we all decided it was our next place. We purchased it, just before Jonathan and Elizabeth's wedding.

Stephen enjoyed raising his poddy calves down on the "flats", as he was able to walk in the paddocks with them, domesticate them, till they were quite tame, then move them on to the sale yards via Gai's, our neighbour's ancient, highly dangerous old yards and so on to the trucks. I was ever so pleased when the last mob of cattle were herded up and out Gai's ramp, out of sight to the sale yards.

Again the time had clearly come for change. Mum and Dad were in need of a little help, nearer by. So we thought of a complete geographic change and headed for Terrigal and surrounding lakes area from which to choose a place to live. We found our Lake House on a reserve, with access to the water for Stephen's catamaran. The

Lake House or 37 Panorama Avenue, Charmhaven, was both charming and heavenly. The sunsets on the lake were wonderful and the sunrises never failed to hear us sing God's praises for their beauty.

Christmas 2007 was lots of fun there, especially for the children, but adults too. Andrew and Stephen put a 6 foot wide plastic down the slope to the reserve. Buckets of soapy water were poured down the slope then the family lined up for the best slip and slide imaginable. There were some bruised bottoms out of it, but no one seemed to mind the pain.

On the 14th of November 2008 we drove away, on our way to our next house, a tree change this time, to 3 MaKeon Avenue, Armidale.

The family were wonderful in helping us settle in to our new home. Just before we came to Armidale, Stephen had a prostate operation at Wyong Hospital, preventing him from driving up. George kindly came to the rescue and drove our car, trailer, and us to Armidale. Thankfully we arrived safely, but the next day Stephen was hemhoraging and so went to Armidale Hospital. He was taken to Tamworth Hospital by ambulance and the lonliness was eased by Jonathan visiting him each day. After 4 days he returned home, but started bleeding again, this time the ambulance took him to Armidale Hospital.

Eventiuallyy he healed and we enjoyed our new home together. The challenge here was the garden. Full of lovely plants happily coexisting with a jungle of weeds growing on top of old carpet and sacking and news paper on the ground. Eleven trips to the tip with all that old carpet covering, plus endless piles of weeds pulled out and a lawn finally laid in the back and front... resulted in the garden looking loved and cared for. Even before we arrived here our dear family had placed a trailer full of bark covering to discourage the weeds.

One year later I am perfectly at home here in this house. It is convenient to all and the new kitchen Stephen had installed is delightful. He has had blinds placed on the back verandah for shelter and privacy also. Best of all is the nearness to Merrewyn and Rachel's families and Beth and Margaret near by.



3 Mackeon Ave Armidale.



There were lots of interesting plants in the garden.



Stephen tamed the jungle with lawns.

Well that's at least 19 houses, some great and some small I've lived in since arriving in Australia. I don't know if there will be any more houses before I take up residence in the Mansion God has promised. But I know it will be beautiful and I shall see my Saviour with my Mum and Dad there. Hallelujah!



Chloe and Stephen playing dominoes.

30 • Jobs

IN A VERY SMALL ROOM OFF the gymnasium, was the tuck shop at Parramatta High School. Access was from the school playground, outside, and the queues were long each recess. I can't remember the gentleman's name who owned it, but he was a pleasant, quiet older gentleman as I recall. One recess, quite by surprise, he asked me if I would like to help serve in the tuck shop?

Delighted, a quick response of "yes please!" and I was ready to serve in the tuck shop, from the sweet counter. I can't remember any money changing hands, but I could choose some sweets for wages. Unfortunately I was only at Parramatta High School a couple of years before we moved to Cremorne.

But before we did that, a similar thing happened in the school holidays. When I went to buy the Saturday paper for Dad at the Harris Park Newsagent, the Proprieter asked me if I would like to work there in the Christmas holidays? I was only 14 years and I can remember saying I'll have to ask my Mother. Mum must have said Yes, because I enjoyed that job. However one customer was very irate with me because I couldn't understand what he wanted. With much repetition and pointing I finally understood that he wanted some Robin Hood tobacco.

This was a paid job so with the first money I had earned I bought my Mother a cup, saucer and plate for Christmas and I think I felt a little proud of the achievement.

At 16 the Christmas holidays again gave me some time for a job and I secured one at Coles in Burwood. In those far off and long ago days the customers were served from behind the counter... there was no helping yourself or check out system. I have a photo of me at the counter wearing a blue dress I had made, with blue matching earings, the dingle-dangle type that I thought were just great. But it was about this time that my Mother, observing the earings and lipstick said that I looked like a cheap tart! ...ho hum! When a little later I rejected the lipstick, Mum said that I looked like bleached drift wood!... It's sometimes hard to please everyone, especially your Mother.

During the final school holidays I started a job at Grace Brothers Broadway in the stationery department. I caught the bus to town each day and joined the madding throng in Sydney town. I enjoyed working there and sitting in the park at lunch time where I would eat my lunch and read my pocket Bible. One day a man sat next to me and asked, "understandest Thou what Thou readest?", quoting Philip to the eunuch in Acts. We got into conversation, he was of the Brethren persuation and he gave me a little book called The Path of Life, by Stella Stafford.

Whilst I still had the holiday job my Dad bought a typewriter from me as I was able to get a staff discount. He had that typewriter and used it till he died at 93. Grace Brothers was my last job till I commenced teaching in 1960. Actually, I had forgotten, I worked for Mum when 15, living at Montrose Convalescent Home in Strathfield. It was my job to do the dishes in the evening. That sounds simple, but with 12 patients and 4 of us, it was a decent sized wash up! Later at Currawong Nursing Home I did the 7.00 am breakfast shift. My job was to make the breakfast of porridge and toast, set the trays and take them to the patients. Clearing away the trays was followed by washing up then empty the bed pans, tidy wards, dust a little here and there, generally making things look ready for the day. They were mostly folk who up and dressed for the day, so then it would be time to make their beds.

I think I managed that job for the best part of the year. It meant Mum had a break one morning a week, also I learnt a deal about responsibility and also earned a little money which always helped. I also had the benefit of working at home on the job, with no travelling to do. I liked working with and for Mum... Mum saw to it that I did it properly and would check my dusting to see if it really was clean. I guess she had inspectors who regularly came to check on her management and knew it all had to be up to scratch. Mother had some wonderful women on her staff, who loved Mum and really cared for the patients. Mrs Goodrich, a Christian from Fivedock Methodist Church, was a faithful friend to Mum. Mrs Fenwick or Fenny as we called her, became a Christian, loved into the Kingdom by Mum and Goody. She was going to be Baptized but died of cancer before doing so.

Sister Kenna would relieve Mum on her day off. I hated coming home from school when Mum wouldn't be there, even though I was 17 but Sister Kenna always saved me some scones that she made to compensate me! Not that a scone compensates... I just loved being with my Mum, perhaps a hang over from evacuation days. I remember once at school we had to say what we liked doing best of all. I wrote, "I like doing anything with my Mum." She was a very special person!



In Coles Burwood at 16.





With Mum at Currawong. about 17.

31 • His Word

THE PATH OF LIFE WINDS upward.

New every morning is Thy love, our waking and uprising prove.

Walk in the light as He is in the light.

Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify Your Father in Heaven.

Can a mother forget the son of her womb? Yes she may forget, but I will not forget you. I have engraved you on the palm of My hands.

I have called you by name, you are Mine.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.

The King is coming!

When the trumpet shall sound and the dead in Christ shall rise and we shall be changed... in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. Death shall be swallowed up in victory.

There shall be no more crying or tears, for He Himself shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.

Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.

Fight the good fight, lay hold on life.

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

I will praise You with my whole being.

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised.

When I am weak, then am I strong.

Seek My face. My heart said “Thy face Lord will I seek.”

Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near.

Come unto Me all you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me, For I am meek and lowly of heart and you shall find rest for your souls, for My yoke is easy and my burden is light.

I and My Father are one. Abide in Me and I in you.

32 • June 2010

AS BETH AND I LEFT THE Armidale School Gym and entered the playground, the Junior School boys were enjoying recess and were thoroughly engrossed in games of hand ball allover the concrete yard.

As the tennis balls flew here and there I remembered my Dad would carry a tennis ball in his pocket and play catching with me as a child. I think it must have been Saturdays that I remembered when about 6 or 7, walking with Mum and Dad and a lot of other people on Hampstead Heath. Dad would walk a little ahead to throw back the ball to Mum or me. With his oft repeated "If at first you don't succeed, try, try and try again", he would keep on throwing the ball to me, until I eventually learnt to catch it.

Michael had been my teacher in Coleshill. He would bowl the cricket ball to me as we played on the road outside the station master's house, with little fear of traffic, for few, if anyone in Coleshill owned a car in 1945.

Hampstead Heath was a lovely place, an oasis in the middle of town and traffic.

There were rolling downs, grassy commons, bordered with woods. Bracken under oak trees made a child's shelter and place to imagine all sorts of fairy things within the circle of leaves and precious hiding things. A toadstool on a log, a cowslip or primrose, a mossy stone all enchanting and providing the necessary make believe in contrast to school and the mundane.

I have a feeling Dick Wittingham had something to do with Hamstead Heath. Was it his cat went here in his big black boots? Or was he looking for the field mice in the undergrowth? I think there were mile stones along the paths of Hamstead Heath, marking the miles Dick Wittingham had to go to visit the Queen, where his cat frightened a little mouse under her chair.

On one sunny occasion at this lovely place with Mum and Dad, we spotted an ice cream vendor with his barrel of goods. Dad bought us each an ice cream as a special treat. As I can not remember any previous ice creams, this one took on special proportions of expected enjoyment. Alas and alack! Dad flew into a torrent of abuse at the ice cream vendor. "It wasn't ice cream! It was ice water!" How dare he call it ice cream... it was a disgrace, a fiction of the imagination to call it ice cream, etc. etc." I don't know what the consequence of all Dad's noise was, I only hope we were allowed to finish eating it... for to me it was a delicious ice cream!

33 • Barnard Henry White

MY DEAR DAD WAS BORN ON 19th July, 1909 in Wimbledon, England so his birth certificate says. His father was Earnest Alfred White and his mother, Amy Maude (nee Wastie) White. He was one of 10 children, I think he may have been number 7 or 8. Dad told me very little about his father or siblings, I never quite understood the silence about them all. He liked some of them, disliked his youngest brother Hubert and strongly discouraged me from writing to him when he contacted us. His three sisters, Ena, Gwen and Pauline looked after his interests as their younger brother. The story goes that when Barnard was about 19 he decided that he would go to Canada to join the Mounties. He bought his uniform, but before he was able to sail across the sea and join the Mounted Police, his sisters hid his clothes and he was unable to sail and thus escape.

Another story he told was when his father would bury the pocket money in the garden and he would have to dig his patch to find it.

His love was drawing from a young age and he won many art competitions while still at school. When about 12 years old he had his appendix out and tells a tale of woe of spending 6 weeks in hospital recovering from that surgery.

Before he met Mother he was engaged to a Dutch girl named Mary Root, who died of Tuberculosis before they could marry. I think he met Mum through his sister Ena when Ena's husband Bill was in Hammersmith hospital where Mum was nursing. During their

courtship he doubled Mum to Scotland on the back of his motor bike. He would have loved doing that and Mum was always ready for an adventure too.

They were married, so the certificate says, whilst Barnard Henry White, condition batchelor, a process engraver, of 96 Thornton Avenue, married Marjory Emma Beach, condition spinster, of 11 Thornton Avenue, at St Michaels and all Angels' Church, Bedford Park, County of Middlesex on 31st December, 1938. Dad was 28 and Mum was 25. They moved into their brand new bungalow at 45 Croysdale Avenue, Sunbury on Thames and were there a short time before the constraints of war, air raids and bombings apparently necessitated a move. I'm not sure where home was between this move and my evacuation to Coleshill. I feel we may have stayed with Aunty Pauline for while and also with Aunty Mary. But when I was four and a half the government decided that the children in London must be sent out of the city, to the comparative safety of the country as the nightly German bombing raids were blitzing London. It may be that his job with aircraft necessitated the move from Sunbury on Thames.

Dad's certificate for immigration states that from December 1940-43, he was employed in the experimental department on the jet meteor aircraft... then inspector at the Gloucester Aircraft factory which might have accounted for Mum and I being at Aunty Mary's. From 1943-1945 he was inspector in control of the section on NAPIER engines for Typhoon aircraft. When the war was over he went back to his own profession as a tone etcher at the HALF TONE engraving Co, Ltd Faringdon Street, London. There is a note written by Dad up the side of his immigration application stating that from leaving school until 1928 he was taught the trade by his Father, Earnest Alfred and worked under him in his Father's business.

From 1944-1946 there is an absence of my knowing of Dad for 18 months as I was sent to Aunty Edie's for safe keeping. This would have been a major trauma for my Mother, and Dad, I imagine, as I was their only child. I do not have any recollection of them visiting

me during this time. I have said elsewhere that I was very happy with my Aunty Edie, Uncle Archie and cousin Michael. But in 1946 when the war was over, Dad came to collect me and return me home.

I was playing in the stooks of the wheat fields by the road which comes from the railway station. Glancing up the road I saw away in the distance, the unmistakable shape of my Father! The 18 months was over... nothing else mattered as I ran to meet him and he swept me up in his arms to hug me to him.

In later years I found out from Michael how upset Edie was – there may have been no communication stating Pick up date and she certainly wasn't prepared for my departure, she apparently packed my case and put it outside! Poor Aunty... I wish I had memories of my reunion with Mum.

Dad was a very creative person, full of ideas for making things as I found when I returned to Mum and Dad living above Dad's factory, for making wooden toys and hand painted glassware.

Like most English men he was a keen soccer fan, so he devised a system for choosing the winning soccer matches. I seem to remember several upgrades of those systems he made and had printed and I think sold some of them.

In bursts of inspiration he would paint. Always beautiful, traditional oil paintings of which Spencer and I have benefitted, from the ones he did in later years. A few Christmases ago I gave one of these paintings to each of our five children. I am privileged to also have five of his paintings on our walls.

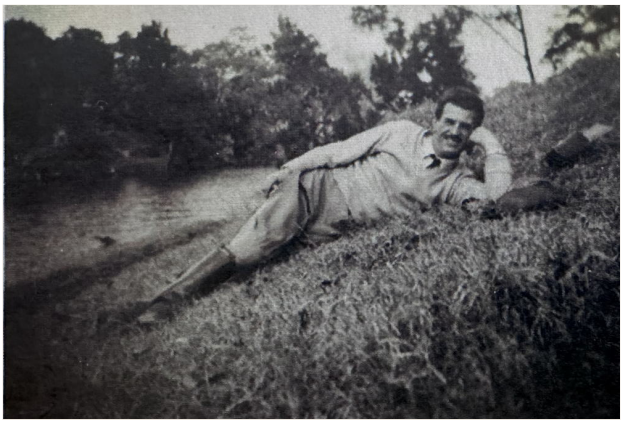
In 1948 we migrated to Australia, arriving in Sydney on 10th of May, 1948... a glorious sunny day, full of expectation and wonder at a new beginning in a new country. On the 24th of October, 1950 Spencer Barnard White was born and Dad was thrilled, he had a son born in a war free country, a son to dote on and fulfil his dreams. Spencer was a much loved baby and Dad was busy working at any job that would pay our rent and food. For some reason he had many odd jobs in succession. I think a lot to do with it was that process engraving

was being fazed out and colour reproduction was changing systems. He was not needed to process or etch. I remember he bought a cheap second hand car and sold door to door, Rawleigh's products for a while. He sold ice creams from his car on the weekends, painted bill boards for the pictures each week, painted signs and made billiard tables.

These tables were great, just half size for the average home, with a table tennis top which fitted over it, hence two games in one. We had a billiard table for years, when our children were growing up, with the tennis top always popular and when not needed for games it became our dining room table, seating a good crowd round it.

One very happy memory I have of Dad is shortly after he had been converted, he and I went to a nearby horse riding place for a weekend. He looked so much the part on horse back... always straight back, riding britches and crop and long brown riding boots on. He loved it, perhaps remembering his desire to be a Mounty in the long ago. Anyway I have a delightful memory of us lying on the grass and Dad requesting I go through the Bible, front to back, telling him what it was all about. It was a wonderful afternoon, a rare time of complete harmony.





"Tell me, what's in the Bible."



Beth & John's farm at Berry.



Dad's painting of Renoir's "The Boating Party."





Some of Dad's Work.



We were not always harmonious, Dad and I. At age 10 I was very verbally cheeky to Dad. I objected to Mum having to go out to work and objected loudly and long till Dad said "Don't let me touch her Marj, or I'll knock her head off!" I remember it to this day. In retrospect I hope I improved my attitude.

In later years I had a bad horse fall and was hospitalized for 9 days. Dad rang me in hospital and told me off soundly! I was not to get on a horse again etc. etc. I was so angry that I wrote a letter back to him... I wish I hadn't.

The first commandment with a promise is to honour your parents. I confess to not having done that on many occasions.

When Stephen asked Dad for me, to marry me, Dad said to my little brother, "What do you think Spencer?" But when the marriage actually arrived he was generosity itself to us. He printed verses of Scripture, placing them in the hired pot plants in the Ashfield Baptist Sunday school Hall. He hired carpet for the reception and when we left for our Honey moon he had a box of groceries for us to take on our Halvorson Cruiser. Barnard was a doting Grandfather and loved each one of his grand children dearly. When the great grand children arrived, he was delighted with each one, particularly when Ralph called his son, Peter Barnard.

Dad had a certain affection for cars. I remember one huge American model, I don't know the breed, perhaps a Plymouth, but he stood proudly next to it with one hand on the driver's window. Another car he loved was a little red sports job, a Triumph, in more ways than one.

When he had his Sports store, he drove Mrs Merry/ Mary Christmas around the C.B.D. of Avalon and Mona Vale in the red Triumph advertising Mrs Mary Christmas, as a good advert for his shop.

Cars were an affection for Dad, but with golf Dad had an addiction. He loved it and was so enthusiastic about it that I think he put people off it. Certainly he did with people he loved, Mum, Spencer and myself. He enjoyed very much the golf range near Terrigal when he was there in later years. But his constant swinging, whether on

the lounge carpet or on the range, played havoc with his back, making him think for a long time that it was incurable. But determined as he was, and is, in most things, the try, try, and try again was put into practise to fix the problem. Dad put a bar up between the door jams, pulling his back into shape again.

When I was going to Balmain Teacher's College, Dad would sometimes give me a lift in the car. One, two, three and off we go! He would boast he could get into top gear and go all the way in top gear... fast and furious... so look out! I'd arrive in top gear all right.

There was another side of Dad, other than being fast and furious and loving to race the other man in the car at the lights to be first away... he could play the piano! He bought a second hand piano when they moved to Terrigal and painted it white. He painted very carefully, as he always did and it seemed alright. But when the piano tuner came to do his job, he said it was the worst thing Dad could have done to the piano. Regardless of this opinion, Dad could play quite well. He was artistic in temperament and liked to play expressively. That means loud peddle, fortissimo! On the other hand Mum would play and you wanted to stand by her and sing along. Mother could play by ear as well as read music and it was all lovely.

When I was little Dad used to sing to me "Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer do, I'm half crazy all for the love of you. It won't be a stylish marriage, I can't afford a carriage, but you'll look sweet upon the seat of a bicycle built for two!"

He would carry me on his shoulders when I was too tired to walk. He would sit me on his knee and feed me boiled egg and grapes after I had my tonsils out. He loved me, I know it.

I was awake in bed last night remembering Dad, the night he was Baptised at Ashfield Church. He was a shy man, and being in church was a big thing for him. He read out his testimony and it was so wonderful to see and hear him praising his Saviour. Mum and I were so thankful to God. Dad was about 48 years old.

But then I remembered a time when his strong determination made me so angry. Dad used to make all his own frames for his paintings. One time, after he had sold his car, so was without one, he and Mum caught the bus to Erina, shopped in the BBC hardware store and bought lengths of timber for framing. But no car... so we'll walk won't we! How they managed to walk all that very, very long way along the main road from Erina to Ash Street, Terrigal, without either of them having a heart attack I'll never know. Only the kindness of God kept them that time. Yes he had a determined spirit, but it made me so mad!

Before the foundation of the world God knew Mum and Dad and chose them for my parents. He made me from them so I am blessed with their likenesses. I thank God for Dad and Mum and for making us all so fearfully and wonderfully.



34 • Stephen

THE BEST TILL LAST; THE cream on the cake; the joy of my life; my heart's desire; the one on earth whom I revolve around; my best half; the love of my life; my dearest friend; he is my one and only and apart from Jesus he is my life! When God gave me Stephen for my husband, He gave me all I could ever want as my desire for living here on earth. I couldn't imagine the emptiness now of not being with him. Since 16th December, 2010, we have been married 50 years. Selah!

You children, Rachel, Ralph, Jonathan, Merrewyn and Rosalind have heard many times the story of our beginnings together but some of your children may not have heard. It goes like this. I had commenced going to Ashfield Baptist Church after reading their notice that they were starting All Age Sunday School. I interpreted that to mean "adult" Sunday School, so I asked permission from my Mother and from Mr Orr, the minister, to attend. I was welcomed at the door when I rode up on my faithful steed, my bicycle. Mr Orr tried to interest me in a teenagers class as I was about 17 at the time. No way! I wanted the adult stuff and he graciously put me in an older group. You see I was serious about learning God's Word and I equated it to something akin to a Bible College, if it was for adults.

Anyway Stephen Gourlay was the leader of the Young People's Department and so Sunday by Sunday I observed this lovely young man and my heart said "yes", he's the one... Well the old Norton

House was being renovated for the All Age Sunday School and we young people were going to paint the rooms in the evenings. I was so excited if we were in the same room on occasions.

On the October long weekend the young people were going to camp at Blackheath, so Stephen dutifully invited all the group including me, to come along. But alack and alas, the Leaving Certificate loomed very large on the horizon and I dare not go as I needed every bit of time to study. However Stephen gave the same invitation next year. Oh no! That huge Teachers' College assignment was due and only the weekend to complete it. With no personal invitations or communications as such the whole of the following year, I woke up to myself and made sure all my assignments were completed and I was ready for the camp. I did not go for the weekend but only on the Monday. I joined in a walk that Stephen was part of and by the time it was time to go home I had been invited to journey in Ralph Groves car. Oh joy, oh bliss Stephen sat next to me in the car and can you believe it, he held my hand going home. I thought I was in Heaven! So with Ralph looking on from the front mirror, I felt it was on, at last. The next Sunday we sat next to each other. In the Ashfield Baptist Church that was considered a public announcement that you were going together.

I was over the moon!

Shortly after this Stephen asked me to come to Ruth Leiber's 21st birthday. I wore my new dress that I had just worn for the Teachers' College Graduation day so I felt special and we had our first photo taken together. It's the one in the lounge room where I appear to be leaning slightly into Stephen.

The next invitation was a very nervous affair for me. It was to the Gourlay Family Christmas get together. It was a large gathering, in my eyes, as there were 7 siblings in their family plus all their children whilst I was from a family of just two children, besides there was an aura about the Gourlays, that marked them out as special, high up the ranks of Christians, in my eyes.

We met at Noeline and Ross's home and they made me very welcome. I was quite overwhelmed when they included me in their Christmas giving, of one parcel per person and dear Noeline had bought me a sewing basket. Not only had the family included me in their family Christmas celebration, but I felt I was accepted by them as Stephen's special friend, if not anything more serious.

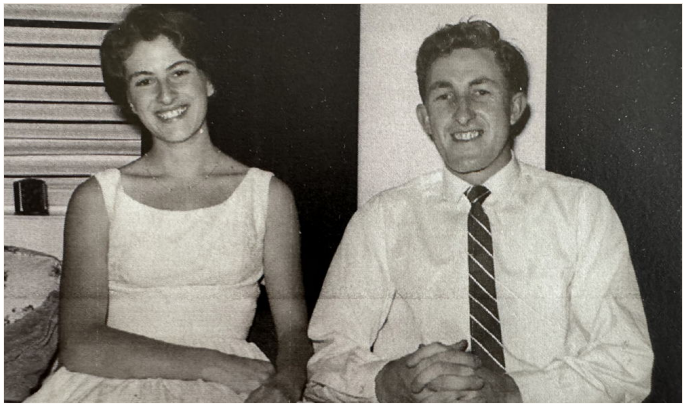
Well, dear Stephen seemed to love me a little bit, I knew it couldn't be as much as I loved him... because I felt my love was so great for him. But the inevitable parting happened because I was off to Lithgow at the end of January to start teaching. However dear Stephen, undeterred, came up to Lithgow on the weekend and visited with me, so beginning a regular pattern. Each fortnight he would travel up to Lithgow on Friday night and board in the hotel, or at Mrs Pym's and later with the Townsends, then the following fortnight I would journey home and we would catch up in Sydney.

Monday mornings I would cry because he'd gone home and I had to wait another fortnight till I'd see him again. But I grew up a little bit and our love grew and Stephen proposed to me on Friday night, 17th May, 1960, in front of a lovely fire at Mr and Mrs Townsend's place. May to December was a long 7 months in which Stephen saved up his resources and I sewed up a hession bag apron (essential for cleaning fire places according to Mrs Townsend,) some nighties, a going away outfit of dress and coat, started a glory box, had salesmen sell me blankets and bed linen, supposing this all prepared me for marriage!... I thought!

We had decided to buy a house in Lithgow as Sydney was far too expensive for us. After one attempt at buying a house in Ferro Street at which we were gazumped, we set our sights on an old wooden house set on a hill in Atkinson Street, State Mine Gully, with 3 quarters of an acre and a mountain of blackberries and bush behind us.

On the last day of term I travelled back to Sydney by train, quite unwell as I had caught Mrs Townsend's gastric bug. I spent a lot of the journey in the train toilet feeling most unwell.

However the next day I was to be married so my dar Mother did her utmost to doctor me and with all her loving I was well enough to go to D.J's and have my hair set. Home by train then dressed for the wedding with my bride's maids in attendance. Gladys Lawson and Lorna Smith were my dear friends and bride's maids and Margaret Charamiss was my little flower girl. I guess it's all a bit of a blur now but it was a lovely wedding. Mum and Dad had done everything they could to make it beautiful and there was my beautiful Stephen waiting in church for me.



Our first Date. Ruth Leiber's 21st.



Meeting the Family.



Will Dad give me away?



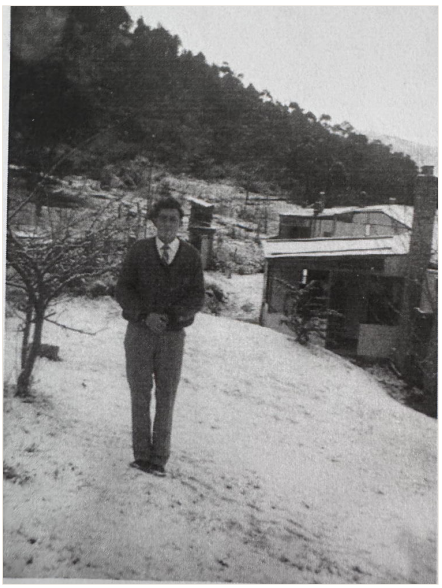
Visiting me in Pym's garden.



Sunday Mornings.



Weekend past-time.



Winter snow.



Dear Brigadier & Mrs Townsend.

We were married with all the blessings of family and friends then finally it had come to pass and we were off on our own as Mr and Mrs Gourlay. Dear Stephen's sisters had packed his case with loads of confetti so that when he changed he left a trail of confetti every where, giving away the obvious that we were just married.

This chapter is about Stephen, I really felt we were one now so it's about us both. We had a marvellous time on the Halvorson Cruiser and quite an adventure on the last day of our holiday. As we went up a creek, the water ran out like a pulled bath plug. We tipped over at an angle till the boat was on the bottom of the river bed and we had to wait till the tide rose again and we floated off to deeper waters in the middle of the night.

50 years have come and gone... that's hard for me to believe but I know it's true. I can't recall it in detail, but we've journeyed it together, in all the little details of each day as well as the big things that have happened.

At the end of our first year together, Rachel was born. It was the 2nd last day of school term. I was not expecting her for another month, in the school holidays... but I was never good at maths and had the date wrong. I cleaned out my school cupboards, packed the Ute and headed home after school. But Stephen was working at Katoomba, training to be a Food Fair Manager for Woolworths and he was't home yet. I cried as I prepared to take myself to hospital... The train was further delaid, but someone gave Stephen a lift so he arrived home just in time to take me.

Ralph, Jonathan, Merrewyn and Rosalind followed in fairly quick succession. Rachel being the eldest of 5 children when she was only 7 and 3 quarters old. Stephen had worked as an accountant and general help for Don Bennet's general store when we first married. He next was the accountant secretary of the Lithgow Co-OP, a big job. A managerial position at Woolworths Foodfair followed the Co-op then self employment as a milkman. Early mornings, cold winters, debts to collect, cooled the enthusiasm somewhat and Stephen decided it was time to move to Sydney.

His time at H. G. Palmers was made famous by his being taken to hospital with a suspected heart attack. Darling Rosalind was in hospital with her heart surgery, also it looked like we were expecting our 6th child. This was all it took to produce an altogether severe stress reaction in Stephen. We were just stressed, not pregnant, Stephen recovered and life improved when Rosalind came home from hospital. I can't omit one other thing that H. G. Palmers is remembered for. The orange vynal lounge suite which occupied our lounge room for long years and years will always be remembered and gladly replaced when the time came to afford a less conspicuous one.

Channel 7 required an accountant of the highest order and they found it in Stephen. He was the accountant par excellence and for 13 years was there, till the pull of the country drew him out of the office.

In 1981 life changed for us. Stephen bought a 1280 acre property out of Tamworth, on the Mulla Creek and so began 12 years of grazing cattle, sheep, goats, and growing out pigs. Now riding horses, motor bikes and tractors became the new transport, the children and extended family all enjoying the "farm".

Holidays were full of friends, family or church camps. Stephen learnt many new skills, had some spills and heaps of challenges. Thorns and thistles, fencing, floods, droughts, rabbits, missing sheep, finances and family all kept him quite occupied. A small cottage of 2 rooms was regularly occupied by a few boarders or holiday makers, nephews Campell and Joanne then Rachel and Brett followed by Merre and Andrew, for a time living in the cottage.

Eventually working as hard as he did for very small returns decided us that it was time for the next stage. We sold Beltana to our good neighbours the Disher family and moved down the road to Ogunbil.

Eight years of gentle creek flats and raising calves, with many happy times of family fun and picnics by the Dungowen Creek, were a wonderful interlude before moving south to the central coast. It seemed clearly the time to be nearer Mum and Dad so as to be of some support to them.

The Lake House was a delightful home on the foreshores of Lake Budgewoi. Stephen had many exciting/nerve wracking Saturdays on his catamaran with the sailing club.

In 2002 Dad died aged 93 and Mum came to live with us. We were blessed. Mum was a very special, choice soul, giving us 4 and a half years of her loving and living with us. In 2006 she finally was at home with the Lord, having lived life 93 years here.

It was time for another one adjustment.

Rachel's circumstances had changed and we felt it would be a good idea to move from Charmhaven to Armidale, to be closer to her. With God enabling, our house sold, during difficult economic times and we moved to Armidale on the 14th November, 2008.

Stephen had just undergone surgery, so was not in the best of health for a move. George kindly drove us up and helped us move in doing the heavy jobs for Stephen, who unfortunately was hospitalised twice more, until he healed, home and recovered.

2009 was a physical year of garden blitzing, lawn laying, settling in to a new life in Armidale. The family were wonderful to us, loving us and helping in so many ways. We enjoy so much living close by to them. It has been Stephen's role and joy to be a near at hand Father and Grand Father, brother to Marg and Beth, uncle to Meredith and their families. He is often called upon to do "just" jobs. He delights in his family and contributes to the Armidale Community Church, where he worships.

It's impossible to think a few pages could contain a life such as Stephen's. I am so grateful to have been sharing him and his living and loving for 50 years and I look forward to each tomorrow. Thank You Lord God for him. I love him dearly and always will. His children are blessed to have him as their Father. I honour him.



What an introduction to teaching. 4A – the pick. What a beautiful class of eagre children.



6B kept me crying every night for the first two weeks until we learnt to love each other.

35 • Old Recipes

TONIGHT, 30-6-2010, I HAVE been looking through old school recipe books and modern ones too, Trying to find a recipe for making honey comb. I eventually found it in the book dear Rachel made me when she was in year 10 or 11. All the recipes are hand written with coloured pictures to match. Not only had she written the honey-comb one, but marsh mallows, coconut ice and toffee followed on the next page. Chloe and Charlotte will have some fun making them with me in the holidays.

Whilst searching, I came across an old recipe in Rachel's school book, Common Sense Cook Book, for "bread and milk," page 160. It took me back to aunty Edie's, when I was 4 and a half years old sitting by the fire with Michael, in our pyjamas just before bed time. Aunty would give us this for supper sometimes. As I remember it, it was a bowl of sliced bread, cut into cubes and doused with hot milk and a sprinkling of sugar on top. Simple, warming and lovely when eaten by the fire, all cosy and ready for bed.

Another fire side scene came to mind, a little older, probably 7 years of age, sitting with Mum Root... eating sugar sandwiches, a real treat. White bread, butter and sugar sprinkled liberally on top. Again very simple fare, post war days were not extravagant.

Our semi detatched house in Harris Park had a little lane way between the next semi detatched house. Our living room window was opposite their living room window. In that next door house lived 2 elderly spinster sisters and their very elderly bachelor

brother. I do not remember their names but one of the ladies asked me what I would like her to cook me for my 11th birthday? I asked for a baked custard. I remember the delicious pudding she made me... a truly lovely gesture from a dear lady to me, passed out from her window to me in the lane.

36 • Tiddliwinks

THIS MORNING, 9-7-2010, I saw a button behind the chair when I was vacuuming the carpet. Aha! I know what that is, thought I, a tiddliwink button. Only last week Chloe and Stephen were down on hands and knees playing tiddlywinks... each determined to win. Chloe had selected carefully her buttons from the collection in the little tin from all sorts and shapes. She knows what sort to choose and she won the contest, 5 to 4.

As I considered this pearly button left behind the furniture, it was only a small thing about 1 centimetre across, but I remembered the words, "despise not the day of small things."

Life is made up of many things, both small and great, like buttons in the button tin... all sorts there are... each for a purpose, past, present, or future.

Today is a day of small stages for me, walking the walk of faith behind Father Abraham, who, "not being weak in faith, did not waver at the promise of God, through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith giving glory to God and being fully convinced that what He had promised, He was also able to perform." Romans 4:19-21. So my small "thing" is to lengthen my drug stage, through faith in Christ my Healer, and lasting without a small tablet called Stalevo, for a longer period, even till 12 o'clock mid day. That's my small stage, thing, for today.

And, yes, I made it to 12-15 am. A pearly button is a lovely little thing.

37 • The Bird Feeder

SO MUCH PLEASURE FROM THIS thing! Firstly the pleasure Stephen found in making this "thing". The idea came together by degrees. Anna, beautiful Anna is now in year 11 (2010). So 4 years ago when she was in year 7, she made a delightful bird house, painted it blue and generously gave it to us as a Christmas present. It is beautiful and has been a decoration on the wall all this time.

Well recently we visited Jonathan and saw his roomy bird feeder in amongst the trees, set to invite the little birds to come and feed. I think these two models led to Stephen's desire to build a bird feeder for our garden also. So using Anna's idea of a house he designed one for us.

Off to the Men's Shed to use some machines and turn some stout hardwood for the pole. Screwing here and varnishing there, it eventually came together in the garage till finally the big dig in the garden. Two feet deep at least was the hole to bury the beautifully turned wooden stand.

I wondered if our neighbour, Ted, observed our pleasure, as he would have seen us from his window, as the bird feeder construction finally stood, erect and stately in the garden.

Just the seed to put in and we are all set... waiting expectantly.

Sure enough they came, gradually at first, sitting in the cherry tree, discussing this new largess of seed. The galahs talked loudly, the lorikeets swept down boldly and the sulphur crested cockatoos viewed it from the walnut tree. However it was not long before we

had the pleasure of them scoffing the seed and delighting us with their presence in the garden. Parrot colours of the lorikeets, pinks of the galahs, crimson and green of the kings and the heady white and sulphur of the cockatoos.

Thank You God for colour and eyes to see and birds to give us so much pleasure.





38 • Violets

A COLD WESTERLY WIND HAS been blowing today, the first of August, 2010. The sunshine all glorious in contrast to the grey skies and intermittent rain we've had lately, has tried to hurry Spring along. A few of our flowers in the garden have tried to recover from minus 11 degree frosting. Three brave golden daffodils, one brilliant poppy, a few pansies and two blue hyacinths have convinced me that Spring is not too far away. Rather less conspicuous are the violets which are blooming here and there in between other odds and ends. As you pass by, their fragrance rises invitingly, saying "pick me and take me inside." Such little individuals, but by the time I had picked 20 or so, the perfume of the bunch was beautiful.

They compel me to paint them to endeavour to extend their time in the vase.

They are a deep purple, delicate flower with a pale lemon throat and minute orange tongue. A beautiful, five petalled flower of dainty proportions.

As I took a deep breath of the perfume I remembered my Father, Barnard, used to buy Mum a bunch of violets on a Friday night after work when he was employed in the city. There was a woman flower seller at Wynyard Station entrance, who in season, sold bunches of violets. Dad would buy a posy for Mum and a little jar of hard boiled sweets for me. My violets today took me back to Dad's violets of 1954... a beautiful memory of Dad's love for Mum.



Violets with broccoli flower & daisies.



Some of the Sisters & Brothers.

39 • Sisters

29-10-2010

THERE IS A MOST beautifully winsome photograph in one of our albums of Anna with her little arms around Emma's neck. She has the sweetest expression on her face of innocence and love for Emma. I just love it. It epitomises the nature of Sisterhood to me. Rachel and Brett had moved to America when Emma was 4 and Anna was 4 months. Brett was studying theology, Rachel had chronic fatigue much of the time and Jesse couldn't understand his father's absence every day. All was certainly not easy for them as students far away from home. I used to ring them up from Brindabella on Saturday morning to have a chat, just to hear Rachel speaking – I missed her very much.

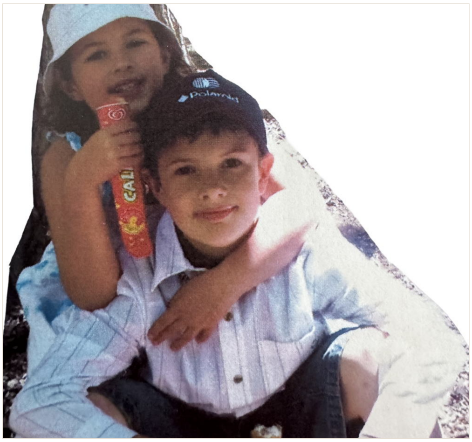
We visited once and stayed two weeks with them. It was a cold winter, the geese were skiing on the frozen lake. We were walking with Rachel to the hospital to obtain some Fenergin for Anna to help her sleep at night. The poor baby was waking up about 10 times each night, Rachel was needless to say very sleep deprived. The hospital wouldn't give any medication, but deduced that Anna wasn't getting enough breast milk, was hungry, so gave Rachel instructions to increase her feeds and weight. We left in December after a flurry of deep snow made tobogganing great fun, covered the world in white magic, and snowed our plane in, delaying it for an hour.

It had been such a special time with them, now we were heading for Wales and three other little sisters. Ralph and Roslyn welcomed us just before Christmas. Rebecca had just started school and was learning Welsh language. Katy about 4 was not far behind in anything Rebecca did whilst Sarah a toddler was doing her utmost to keep up with her sisters. I seem to remember these very active little girls walking up the hill to the castle, walking around the Isle of Skye with us and happily throwing stones in the Loch to find the Loch Ness Monster. A precious time.

One of the loveliest times for me is attending the Colour Conference with our three daughters, beautiful women now!

Of very recent years, Chloe and Charlotte have been the little sisters in our lives. What lovely times Stephen and I have been privileged to be part of, as they share times with us as grandparents. I can see them dancing to Stephen's flute, collecting eggs, climbing the cherry tree, Charlotte insisting on hot apple tea from her teapot, standing at the kitchen bench helping with cooking, sleepovers and other happy times I love to remember.

It's wonderful to have sisters or brothers. How blessed are you grand children who have a sister or brother. Susie and Peter, Olivia and Jonathan, Amy and James, Joshua and Jesse.







Emma & Anna in America. approx 1994. Aged about 6 & 2.



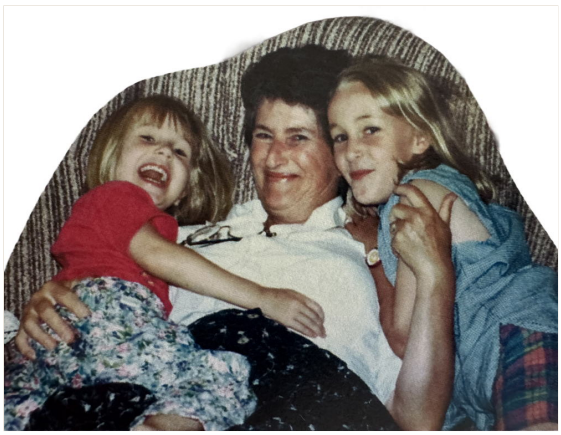
Katy, Sarah & Rebecca. approx 1998 aged 8, 6 & 10.



Rachel aged 7½ nursing Rosalind about 1 week old. 1968



Sisters at "Colour" Conference 2009.



Anna & Emma just returned from America.



Chloe & Charlotte, making sausage rolls! 2009.

40 • Sunday lunches...

29-8-2010



Sunday Lunches.

THERE'S SOMETHING SPECIAL about Sunday lunches with family – it just seems right that the family are together, as many as we can round up. Today it is Rachel, Anna, and Joshua – how I love to have them with us here.

In this season of our lives, meals are usually for the two of us, taken quietly, little discussion, but perfectly contented with the quiet.

However with family there's always something to discuss – the present happenings at school, work for the adults, or Church just visited. However we don't serve up roast Preacher. We are blessed with a devout Pastor who serves us up well-prepared sermon meals each week. He illustrates them with copious pictures to help us understand the truth plus many jokes as well.

My meals don't stray too far from the same each Sunday – a small leg of lamb or half leg, baked vegies and plenty of gravy to slip it down. Desert rarely deviates from peach or apple with an occasional crumble accompanied by custard or ice cream. Mind you the ice cream is good these days – as I follow Beth's recipe of two jars of cream, 6 eggs and a half cup of sugar all beaten up to produce most enjoyable ice cream.

But it is the family not the food that makes it so satisfying. We've all grown older but our children bring their children back to us when they're able, joy of joys. Today Stephen and Joshua are playing a game of competitive croquet on the back lawn. Their obvious fun and enjoyment squeezed out of them in giggles and wrestles warms my heart – as Rachel or Anna stir the gravy and prepare to help me serve the meal. Occasionally I have not slept well the previous night and am tired – the children rally round and clear up for me and being 70 I let them do it.

Today Rachel suggested beating Stephen at cards as he had won croquet against Joshua. Well Joshua explained the rules of the salubrious game of Scum Bag, and we were in. It took me a while to hold, sort and handle the cards – but I finally entered in, almost enthusiastically for one who hasn't the games gene within me.

It's three all so we can conclude the afternoon's pleasure of games, chocolates, ginger, lunch and interaction with a family who love and enjoy being together. The blessing of the Lord it makes us rich
And He adds no sorrow with it.

Thank You my Heavenly Father – The Creator of families.

41 • Trains and Dreams

1.9.2010

I READ RECENTLY FROM A book called "Wide Awake" by Erwin Raphael McMannus, that your dreams are the "products of your longings," the "portrait of your potential" and the "promise of your future." I found this an interesting statement considering so many of my night time dreams are in the setting involving trains. I often wake myself up calling out whilst dreaming and think that the dream was so vivid I will remember it, but I don't. The dream, the situation and the people within it are all so clear at the time, but after waking I just can't remember them, or very rarely anyway.

Very early in my childhood memories, trains are a feature. There were the trips from London by train to Aunty Mary's at Cinderford. Somehow the smell of coal dust and smuts linger in my olfactories rather nostalgically and pleasantly. Then there was the Hornby collection of shiny green enamel and even shinier brass engines, which sat serenely on the top of my cousin, Michael's cupboard in the bedroom. These were beautiful replica models of trains, all individually numbered, which had been collected over years by Uncle Archie. Uncle Archie was the Station Master at Coals-Hill, so I suppose his life was set pretty much around the trains, which was his lively hood. Hence was his interest in the models which he had collected and given to Michael or which Michael had inherited from his father. These were very solid models and I remember them

running smoothly on the curving tracks between stations, tunnels, sidings and signal boxes, up and down the hall where we played with them. I wish I could remember the conversations we must have had and the imaginations we would have been enjoying, but I can't.

Even more vivid were the real live games we two played in and out of the stationary goods trains. The station Master's House was only separated from the rail tracks by a wooden fence, no real barrier to two determined children. I seem to recall playing in and out of empty coal trucks and seeing if we could shunt them along the tracks. Sometimes we were successful in moving them, Michael having learnt the knack of shifting the heavy steel handle leavers. I can remember the clang and clash as one empty truck would run down the line and shunt into the next van or box car. Needless to say, this was forbidden territory and occupation to us. But I can't recall being punished for it or being caught doing it. Amazing what dangerous things young children can do and get away with.

Playing on railway lines, reminds me of the incident when we were young parents – Stephen and I, with our first two children. Rachel being about thirteen months and just toddling on uncertain steps and Ralph was about a month old, certainly no more than six weeks. I was feeding him in front of the fire while Rachel was playing in the house by herself. I was absorbed in my breast feeding and didn't hear her leave the house, walk down the path, cross the road and reach the railway line. There was no fence along the track which went in front of our house up to the state coal mine. Every day the coal train would come back up our way, backwards. The engine being at the end of the train and the driver having less than optimum vision, I imagine, as he reversed towards the mine. Certainly a little child sitting down on the tracks would be very hard to see whilst reversing.

However, praise God, this particular day when Rachel decided to be independent and adventuresome, the driver brought the train in frontwards, stopped the train in time, climbed down from the train and carried her up to our house. “Is this your child?” he asked when I answered the door.

I listened horrified as I heard from where she had been rescued, and feeling guilty of neglecting my precious little girl. I thank God with all my heart for His protection of Rachel and determined to lock her inside when I was absorbed with something that I could not give her my full attention.

Once I travelled from Lithgow by train to Sydney to visit mum and dad when Rachel was four, Ralph three and Jonathon about six months. It was the early morning train, Stephen had put us safely on it, having bought two tickets – one for me and one for Rachel and Ralph to share, and Jonathon was placed on the floor in his bouncinette. It was memorable for the endurance needed to entertain three little children, restraining them to the two seats allocated, and coping with crowds of early morning passengers wanting seats and objecting strongly to children sitting when they were standing. It was a nightmare not a dream, but eventually it came to pass. The train arrived at Central Station and mum and dad were there to carry the children. It seems funny to me, but I cannot remember returning with them to Lithgow by train.

However the recurring train dreams I have now are not with my own little children, but with school children, mostly from Dungowan School. There is invariably a trauma of sorts going on in the dreams. Either I am racing to catch a train, with children and baggage in tow, or trying to alight from the train with children and baggage in tow, whistles blowing and it’s too late to get on, or too late to get off...missed it! Or the other picture of full carriages, I’ve made it on, but there’s nowhere to sit.

And now I feel as though I have nearly come full circle with trains, as we journey to Canberra from Armidale with Country Link Rail – the Journey which takes from 8:20am to 11pm. A long sit – but worthwhile when family is reached at the end of it.

It seems to me to be a rather flimsy thread throughout my life, or narrow gauge line, but somehow it has meaning in my night visions, to such an extent that I wake myself up during the dreams, shouting to someone to "come here, you ragamuffins" or "get on quickly children".

For James' eighth birthday we gave him a set of model trains and tracks. Hopefully they will provide him a little fun, and perhaps nostalgia in the future.

As to Mr McMannus' statement that dreams are the products of your longings, I don't see dreams as part of my longings nor a portrait of my potential unless they are to impress upon me punctuality. I fail to see rightly or not, trains as a promise of my future. I shall look more carefully in my dreams next time, perhaps I'll see you there.

42 • Celebrating 50 years of living and loving together

THE PROPOSAL SEEMS AS GOOD a place to start as any. Rosalind has asked for a few details regarding Stephen's wedding proposal to me and subsequent happenings as she wasn't around at the time. Fifty years later blurs some memories, but on the whole it remains fairly clear to me.

It was the 17th. May, 1960, a frosty autumn night beside a cosy coal fire in the Townsend's living room. Brigadier and Mrs Townsend were in town collecting for the Salvation Army. Firelight shone on diamond light, as Stephen asked me to marry him. I am trying to think what to write next Rosalind... Words like ecstatic, jubilation, ecstasy – come to mind, I was not slow in saying "Yes".

Preparations got off to a good start. The Lithgow Furniture Store called Finley's had a second hand sale so I asked Brigadier if he would forgo my board money this fortnight this month – and I would pay next fortnight. He was very understanding and hopefully had enough to eat till my next pay. I bought a couple of tables for four pounds each, 6 chairs at 10 shillings each and a double bed for four pounds. Not bad I thought. Brigadier to the rescue – stored it all in his shed for 7 months. – He really was very long suffering.

Other pre wedding preparations consisted of sewing and stocking a Glory Box. I made 2 nighties, a spotted blue-green dress and blue silk coat for my going away outfit. I have no photos but still have the long cream gloves with rose buds on them.

The woollen blanket salesmen came round, having seen the engaged notice in the paper and I was convinced of the need to buy two pair of blankets from them. Lithgow has a cold climate but compensates by burning coal fires. Mrs Townsend assured me I would need a hessian apron and saved the next bag for me to sew. It served the purpose for cleaning many fire places.

There was a visit to Mrs Dixon's daughter for a wedding dress fitting, also a visit to the cake decorator who iced the 3 tier cake my darling mother had made us. A memorable phone call from Stephen to the florist to order lemon-yellow rose buds for my bouquet had me in tears. He told me she had said white was better and had made the posy white. Stephen realised I was rather fragile at this point and told me it was a joke!

The last day of school term finally came and I caught the Lithgow train to Sydney in the evening, – spending a lot of time in the train toilet, unwell. Home eventually to darling Mum who dosed me with everything to ensure I'd be well for the morrow. Mum and Dad had prepared lovingly for us.

16th December dawned beautifully sunny, I had my hair done at D.J.'s and felt oh so excited. Our home was also a Nursing Home to about 15 residents, who were all excited to see the bride and brides-maids and join in the happy occasion. We had our photos taken across the road, Victoria Square at Mr. And Mrs. Charamiss's home, where their daughter Margaret was my flower girl. Lorna Smith and Gladys Lawson were my dear friends at Balmain Teachers college and bride's maids.

Ralph Groves and George Gourlay were Stephen's best man and groomsman.

Then it rained, poured in fact, a real summer deluge! – but it didn't dampen our enthusiasm.

I have a lovely photo of holding Dad's arm coming into Church. His fist is clenched knuckle white. Nervous? – Then I was standing next to my beloved bridegroom, Stephen. I remember it all as a very happy occasion.

For the reception Dad painted Scripture verses and placed them in the pot plants they hired and Mum had placed taper candles in the flowers on the tables, all lit up for the arrival of Mr. And Mrs. Gourlay into the reception on a beautiful red carpet, also hired for the occasion.

At the reception Ralph Groves presented Stephen with a sailor's cap alerting everyone to what we were doing for our honeymoon – A Halvorsen cruiser. Dear Brigadier would not be excluded from the speeches and told the story of a little girl who embroidered her big sister, a couple of pillow slips, for a wedding present with a verse on it, "Lord forgive them for they know not what they do."

Photos then were taken but I have none with Dad in, as he kindly drove the Townsends to the station to catch the last train back to Lithgow.

At last we were sent on our way rejoicing! Mum and Dad presented us with a box of groceries, enough for a week to take for our honeymoon cruise of the Hawkesbury River. Oh what a week that was!!!!!!!! Learning to pilot the boat, tie up successfully at wharves and anchor safely at night. Stephen remembers me crying when he did not kiss me goodnight – His reason was that he had been kissing me all day!!

Steve's sisters had packed his bag with confetti through and around every garment so we left a trail.

I cannot leave out the last day of our cruise. We motored up an inviting tributary only to discover too lately that the tide was pouring out, as if someone had pulled the bath plug. Before we could turn about and escape the water was gone and we were stranded on the sand at a precarious angle. We had to wait until two o'clock in the

morning, when we could safely head out into deeper water and anchor down till morning. We were charged another days fees for late arrival at the Marina.

For about the next five or six years we lived in our house on the hill, gratefully enjoying the blessings of each other and our little family.

Celebrating 50 years of togetherness, loving and living by God's blessing on us & our family. Thank You LORD Jesus!



43 • Gardens

24-8-2010

IT IS WINTER AT PRESENT and the gardens are mostly keeping their secrets of things to come next month. I do love gardens, ours and other peoples. I think it's very special that God made a garden first for His children, Adam and Eve. A delightful place of food and provision and so beautiful to the eyes. Thank You Heavenly Father For all Your caring for us that You do, to make us enjoy the plans You have for us. Flowers and ferns, greens of every hue, trees for shade and fruit and flowers, great architectural monuments from the forest and miniature, dainty violets from my garden, all to delight us and make us joy in our Heavenly Father, Creator.

As a child I can remember delighting in making miniature gardens in a saucer. There was vivid green moss from a dark shady corner, and the longer moss which had the long hairs with a knob on it. A few stones in the saucer to be a path, a petal or two from the fox gloves and I had my very own garden.

Aunty Mary's garden in Cinderford was, in my eyes, a jungle of tall poles covered in beans and a wild cottage garden of flowers in summer and always the huge asparagus fern outside the laundry covered in red berries, which I picked as pretend food for my doll to eat.

Mum Root's garden was also fairly wild I thought, but it had the added attraction of a fish pond with orange gold fish of various sizes in it. I liked to sit on the edge of the pond and watch the multicoloured fish swimming round and round, hoping for a nibble of something to eat. There were beautiful tall hollyhocks in her front garden, pinks and whites, taller than I, that were Aunty's pride and joy.

Our garden at Hurstville I remember for the back lawn, where Dad would make me a tent to dream my holidays away in summer. I can feel the heat penetrating the grey army blanket as I read a book in my very own pretend camp site.

The garden at Harris Park was notable for its cuttings. Growing plants from cuttings was new to me. My friend Kay Huttly from across the road, lived with her parents and grand parents, who were keen gardeners. Grandfather Huttley grew prize tomatoes each year by staking them tall with pointsettia cuttings. these pointsettia sticks invariably shot with brilliant red flowers at the top of the stakes. I thought this was fascinating. Grandma Huttley gave us lots of Pelargonium cuttings to my Mother, explaining that they would grow simply by putting them in the dirt. This Mum did and we were pleasantly surprised to see them all grow, flourishing where ever she put them.

Our house at Castle Hill was built on virgin land, having previously being a dairy. Ralph Groves brought us some lemon scented gum tree saplings which soon grew tall at the front of the house. Round the back of the house I remember digging out Ki ku u grass to make a vege patch. In the back corner we dug a little pond for the children to play in.

I have a lovely scene in my memory of Merre and Rosalind as pre schoolers, playing in the nasturtion patch with nastution flowers poked in their hair, beautiful, just, when at 25 Wyralla Avenue. From there we moved up the road to number 47, to the back of Mrs Tolhurst's place. We planted more gardens and again dug a pond for our ducks and ducklings to enjoy.

But perhaps the most note worthy garden is the one we acquired at 3 Mackeon Avenue when we moved in 14-11-2008. It had been a very beautiful garden once I'm sure. It had been carefully laid down with old carpet and paper to inhibit the weeds. But this was not successful as the weeds loved the challenge and grew into a veritable jungle. Friends and family tried to suppress the jungle with loads of bark mulch for us.

I found it a joy to come into the garden early in the morning during that first summer and just pull weeds to make piles, which Stephen then took 11 trips to the Tip to unload. Finally it was tamed, rearranged, a chicken coop made round the walnut tree, and a beautiful Fescue lawn laid down.

It is impossible to count all the variety of plants God has made. The colours and hues are breath taking. What a Creator is our God. ... And He is our Father. Truly His idea of a garden for his children was wonderful and I for one enjoy them immensely.





1949. Dad would make a tent from an army blanket.



Written by Adrienne Gourlay (née White)
and given to her son Jonathan in February 2011.

Transcribed from the original spiral-bound book.
Her words are kept as she wrote them.