

After I had been a student minister in the Newmarket and Ascot Vale for three years, the church invited me to stay on as a young married man. I was married in the Christmas vacation and after returning from a rather unusual honeymoon on which I ended up violently ill and had to be hospitalised, we settled into the first of six houses which would be our homes for the future.

Our first house was at 15 Vine Street, Moonee Ponds, just down the road from the famous Dame Edna Everidge. It was grandmother's home and she had lived there all of her life. Like the houses of Newmarket nearby, it was a workman's cottage built in the very poor days at the turn of the century. The house was eighteen feet wide and ran the width of the block except for a narrow sideway two feet six wide down on one side, which then was joined by the wall of the next house. It was a weatherboard house with a corrugated iron roof and one long passage running the entire length of the house opening from the front door right on the street down to the end. Opening immediately inside the front door was the front room which was always reserved for best and immediately behind it the main bedroom out of which my grandmother shifted for my new bride and I to have as our own. The middle room of the house was the lounge room and off it a very small single bedroom into which Grandma shifted. The passage then opened into a bathroom/laundry with a big brick surrounded copper in the corner, two stone wash troughs and a bath with a wooden chip heater. It served its dual capacity as bath and laundry, and then the kitchen - rectangle in which people ate and dominated at the far end by a large wooden stove, a sideboard for crockery and an ice chest. The ice man came every two days. The only other building on the property was an outdoor toilet down the end of the narrow block of land with its back to the alley. Up this lane for several generations the night cart had come. This toilet had fond memories. One day when I was two years of age my Nana was minding me for the day, and while she was in that toilet, I slid across a door bolt, which locked her in. All morning and afternoon she was locked in as my small fingers could not loosen the bolt. Neither could her shouting until my mother returned. At least she had a place to sit! But in Moonee Ponds in our day we had sewerage connected and a cast iron water closet sat at the top of the toilet with a chain dangling within reach. There was a small vegetable garden and a woodshed attached to the back fence. I was reminded that in this tiny little cottage my grandmother and grandfather had brought up nine children.

Nanna had lived alone for a number of years and it was a concern of my mother and my aunt that she was becoming very forgetful and it would be good if the young married couple could move in with her. I was still a student at university and the low cost accommodation was a great boon to us, particularly as both the church and the university were not far away. We lived there for the next two

and a half years with the lounge in the centre doubling as our common room, my study and our family room together. Very soon I had some bookcases moved in, a desk, typewriter and it was here that I used to counsel many of the young boys that I had in our Youth Club and the first of the boys that came on probation.

My grandmother felt she owned the piece of street immediately outside her front fence and as our house was adjacent to the Moonee Valley Racecourse there were always race goers parking their cars outside. On every race day she would stand outside the front gate with her arms folded across a very ample chest, glaring at any car who dared to park in front of her house. She would place empty wooden boxes on the road with pieces of timber across them so that no race goer could park there. The fact that she did not have a car, and we did not need it for parking was quite irrelevant. That was her piece of road. She paid rates on it and if the Council allowed people to park their cars in front of her house on her road, then they would soon hear about it!

Living with my Nanna was very difficult for my young bride. Unfortunately Nanna's memory was failing and although her daughters had not seen it and I was too young and inexperienced to realize it she was well advanced in a stage of dementia suffering from Alzheimers Disease. Very soon we began to notice a lot more symptoms than the loss of memory. She would occasionally bring home from the greengrocer's large boxes of berries and a huge bag of sugar and start mixing pounds of jam on her stove, or bottling dozens of bottles of preserved apricots. Whenever I would ask her why she needed so many she would always reply, "If you have a large family you must do the bottling! It is jam time now, and I've got to get the preserves in." She had so much happiness making jams and preserving fruit even though she no longer had children round about to eat them, that I took to a rather tricky subterfuge to help her. As soon as her preserving cupboard became full and she started to complain she had nowhere else to put the bottles of preserves I would sneak out bottles of preserves and jams and give them to deserving people in the community whenever I visited or else to some of the ladies from the church who would run a street stall. Nanna was never the wiser about where they went but when she noticed the cupboards were down by a few bottles would make comments about how she would soon need to get some more sugar in because "those kids have nearly finished all of the jam". When the time came to leave, she suffered a stroke and we rushed her to hospital and after a short time she passed away.

The second house we lived in was really the first manse we ever occupied. The little church at Newmarket and Ascot Vale had not had a house for a minister since the early 1930's and had relied

upon student ministers to supply over all the years. After three years of student ministry and now another two and half years of part time student ministry, the churches were showing signs of vitality and great growth. The Sunday School was booming, boys and girls clubs were at good strength, we had a teeming teenage group and church attendances had reached the highest they had been for forty years. It was obvious that we needed to move into full time ministry and that would require the purchase of a manse. To those poor people living in the inner areas of Melbourne, the purchase of a manse was a huge undertaking.

But I broke down the cost into units and encouraged people to buy one unit representing part of the total cost of the property. We encouraged other people to give some interest free loans, and very shortly we had sufficient money to purchase our first manse at 85 Athol Street. It was a moment of enormous pride in the life of the church. They had achieved what people had talked about for forty years. It was a lovely house, one of the best in the street. Unlike almost every other house it was solid brick and painted white. It had a little patch of lawn in the front, but like all the other houses still had only a very narrow frontage although this time we had gone from 18 feet to 25 feet in width. It also had a door opening at the front leading into a passage that ran the length of the house with one front bedroom, then a lounge room, then a kitchen and dining area and finally a second bedroom and, opposite a laundry. This time we had a toilet attached to the house even though we had to go outside the house to enter the toilet.

On one side of the house we shared the common wall with the family next door, an Italian family who covered their backyard with trellis growing grapes and who squashed the grapes for wine in the family bath.

On the other side we had a narrow sideway and our one lounge room window opened directly opposite the lounge room window of the house next door. They had a large family and the mother and father were always shouting at each other and engaging in physical fights. In our young married life we would often be astounded to hear the shouts, the swearing and the physical assaults that were taking place. There were times when we would just sit on our single lounge chair looking out the window at life size shouting and fighting and carrying on next door. We referred to it as our "life size television". It was really quite a soap opera. On one occasion Mr. Lake fled out the front door of the house closely followed by Mrs. Lake who was brandishing a broom taking swipes at him. He managed to get out the front gate and started running down the street with Mrs. Lake in hot pursuit. As they reached the front of our place she caught him on the back of the head with the end

of her broom and he fell to the ground like a stunned mullet, completely unconscious. Mrs. Lake looked at him lying there, rolled him over with her foot and taking her broom under her arm, calmly walked back inside knowing that he would one day recover and come home for his meal.

Our first baby was born while we lived in this house. We did a lot of work in establishing gardens front and rear and in building a carport at the back, a brick barbecue, and a tool shed. We had not been there long, however, before many of the community's derelicts came to know our address, and our house was the most popular one in the street for people who came for meals and handouts from the young wife who would meet them at the door.

The third manse in which we lived was in the country town of Ararat, Victoria. 90 High Street, Ararat, was right opposite the busy Ararat railway station. Here during harvest time all night the trains would be shunting the huge open carriages of wheat backwards and front and rear talking to each other with systems of whistles signals. Beside us was a plumber who manufactured large round rainwater tanks and the hammering of the tanks night and day made sure there was always plenty for us to hear. We had not been called to this church and they were not expecting a minister. It was a church that had been riven by strife and factions. A series of young ministers had left broken-hearted. While preparing to go overseas for some graduate study the Conference of Churches of Christ of Victoria and Tasmania asked me to go up to this little country church, to sort out the differences and settle it down so that a minister might be sent and have a fair chance of having a happy ministry.

All of our furniture and belongings had been sold or else sent to America in preparation for our arrival. We had nothing at all except what we stood up in when we arrived at the door of the church manse. The church people knew we were coming and knew that we had no furniture of our own but they had guaranteed that they would furnish it. The house itself was an absolute disgrace. The iron roof was totally rusted, having not seen a coat of paint since the First World War. The timber walls were all cracked and the paint had long since disappeared leaving the boards exposed to the weather. There was a rusty iron fence outside and an unmade dirt track up the side of the house.

The church had promised to furnish it but we were surprised with what greeted us. There was a nondescript old wooden bed in the front room with a wire that sagged almost to the floor. A kapok mattress full of lumps on this weighed down the wire. It was more comfortable to put the old kapok mattress on the floor than on the wire. The rest of the house had an odd assortment of mismatched

chairs and tables and an old lounge suite that had been in somebody's garage. We had been furnished with people's second hand furniture that was not good enough to give to St. Vincent de Paul.

The toilet, as with country toilets, was outside and down the back. There was a slow combustion stove which was slow and without any fire wall which meant that the oven was completely useless. The hot water service was supposed to run off the stove and so it had to burn night and day, but as the tank was out in the open and not insulated we had luke warm water even at the best of times. The old wooden house had huge rooms with high ceilings. In the heat of the summer the house was an oven by day and in the cold of the evenings, freezing by night. There were no carpets but odd pieces of congolium were tacked to the floor. It was an absolute hovel. But here we turned some back sheds into some fowl houses and started keeping some chooks, brought home sleepers from along the railway sidings and split them in the backyard to keep the slow combustion fire burning, laid out gardens in the front and along the side and at the rear, and made for the first time a level lawn. It was here that our second child was born in the local country hospital. We ended up staying two years because the church experienced the nearest I have ever seen to a revival, with large numbers of new members joining it. The church property itself was demolished in part and new buildings were erected and the whole life of the church became vital and expanded. By the time a new minister was called and willing to come, arrangements were made to purchase a new manse.

Our fourth manse was 101 Chesterville Road, Cheltenham. We had struck another winner. It also was an old wooden house but better painted with asbestos sheet walls. The church had once possessed a very nice manse for its minister but had sold it in order to buy the block of land next door to the church upon which this old house had stood. They explained to me when I came that they were thinking of building a new manse. We stayed in that manse for the next ten years and it was always the same. Every time the wind blew the carpets would all rise up. The lounge room carpet would rise nearly three feet in the centre on a windy day. The lathe and plaster walls and ceilings were in very bad shape because of movement in the foundations from the rumbling traffic that screeched to a halt at the major intersection right outside our door. There were 36 traffic lights outside our front door on a major 13-lane highway, and the rolling of the heavy trucks and sudden braking at a red traffic light always caused the house to vibrate. The stumps had gone and the walls were sagging and as the walls moved huge cracks appeared across every wall. Lumps of plaster would regularly fall off the ceiling roof. But this house had an inside toilet and here two of our

children were born in the next ten years. It was here Beverley's mother came to live in a tiny room at the back of the house during her last illness as we nursed her towards her death.

Once more we built gardens, both flower and vegetable gardens, and a chook shed for ducks and chooks and, in the large backyard a sheep, a tortoise, a dog, a cat, 56 white mice, a gander, several drakes, a flock of ducks, a rooster or two, some hens and, at various times, other additional members of the family.

The problems of the dropping floor, the sagging walls and the pieces of ceiling which kept falling in the various rooms of the house, was overcome by the Officers after a great deal of opposition. The time for building of a new manse was not now, but as it was impossible to live with the plaster falling down about our ears, a practical solution was reached. A false ceiling was put in throughout the rooms and sheets of masonite were nailed up over all the walls to stop the plaster from falling.

After ten years that church had grown to be a very large church with huge properties with the first of three retirement villages being built and by now a large staff. When I had come I was the only person on the payroll but now we employed an office secretary, a minister of education, a minister of visitation, a minister of evangelism, a minister of administration, a social worker, a part time nurse, a retirement centre receptionist and so on. The time had come to replace the old manse. The church quickly gathered the money to build the new house. Plans were drawn up and the old house was demolished while we lived a little distance away. I took our children to see the last day in the life of the house as a bulldozer pushed it all into a heap and set fire to it. Our children were absolutely devastated. I did not realize the traumatic effect because for four of them it was the only house they knew as home.

Six months later we moved into the new manse, large, light airy, beautifully presented. It was the first time we had ever had such comfort and convenience in our life and just after we were shifted into it the call came to leave to come to Sydney.

And so we came to 16 Corona Avenue, Roseville, our fifth manse. A grand old home which had been the home of Superintendents since 1930 with large rooms and high ceilings. But after the new modern house it felt dark and depressing. The laundry was outside the house up behind the garage and had no hot water connected to it. The hot water had to be carried from the kitchen in buckets. The carpet was original 1930 and had holes in many places and had split at the joins. The Officers

were apologetic and immediately set about building a new laundry and enlarging the kitchen and installing hot water to the laundry. As for the carpets I looked inside hall cupboards and, sure enough, found that the carpet layers had even carpeted inside the cupboards in those extravagant days of the 1930's. So those pieces were cut out, the holes were patched and the split seams were re-sewn and they lasted us another ten years until they were replaced when we added a fine study in the lofty roof space.

The unusual thing in all of this is that from the early days of our marriage my wife and I struggled to get enough money to put a deposit upon a house of our own. Eventually in 1971 we bought our own house and it has followed us wherever we have been, but we have been unable to live in our own house because the church where we served insisted that it was proper that we should live in the church residence. So our own house has been for us a refuge, one day a fortnight when we would mow the lawns, do the painting, clean out the gutters, do the gardens and pay the rates like any other couple.

Our experiences of church manses, in spite of the fact that we have ministered in two of the largest and most significant churches in the nation, has been as I have described. And yet we hear people say, "But aren't you lucky, having the church provide a house for you." They never realize that ministers rent their manses from the churches and the rent is taken out of the salary before it is even paid to them.

But over all the years we have never complained and we have never asked the church to do anything major about our manse believing that it is the church's responsibility to provide a convenient and comfortable residence at the level of its own concern for its minister. God has blessed us with great happiness in the houses in which we lived. But on the whole the church members who were given the responsibility of seeing the Church manse was kept in good condition failed to carry out their responsibilities.

But I must admit that where we were going to live never consciously figured in our minds whenever we heard a call to minister anywhere and never once have we actually visited a manse prior to accepting a call.

The heart of each home in which we lived was Beverley. Since a deep friendship began when she and I were both thirteen, she has been much more than wife and mother. She has been in full time ministry too.

No other woman has raised so much money anywhere in Australia using only traditional methods and volunteers to aid the poor than Beverley. Today thousands of Sydney's poor, needy, homeless, derelict and ill have been helped by Beverley and her remarkable band of volunteers.

When we shifted to Sydney in 1979, Beverley was appalled at the plight of the homeless in inner Sydney, especially the more than 100 derelict men who slept in deplorable conditions in squalid dormitories in Francis Street's "Night Refuge for Men".

While I worked to complete a new high-rise for them in Bourke Street, she realised that second-hand clothes, food and companionship were not enough, but that large sums of money were required to provide decent accommodation and basic care.

A quiet and reserved person, she did not find it easy to mix with the men nor to start raising money. Her four teenage children needed all of her attention. It would have been easy to forget the needs of the inner city. She started immediately to care for them and to raise funds to improve their conditions.

Then in November 1980, several boats with Vietnamese refugees landed on the north coast of Western Australia including 30 children whose parents had been shot and raped by pirates in the China Sea.

Wesley Mission was asked by the Commonwealth Government to care for them. However the Government provided only \$5000 as a one-off grant for their care. Beverley decided to help provide care for the 30 boys. A huge residence with 30 bedrooms was found and in five days it was cleaned, painted and renovated. Beverley purchased hundreds of plastic bags which she labelled "VIET-KITS". Each included a list of requirements either for hygiene, educational, medical, or clothing needs. Over one weekend they were distributed to hundreds of church members who each filled one bag with specific requirement for one boy. From appeals on television and radio I was offered 120 truck loads of bedding for 30 children, furniture, books, sporting equipment and school requisites. Health-care, cooking, language interpreters, staff, and volunteers all had to be recruited and organised and with the help of others from Wesley the children were all adequately provided for.

Over the next six years each boy completed the Higher School Certificate, and every one went to university, or institutes of technology, except three, one of which commenced a motor engine repair business and the other two opened their own restaurant. She became a foster mother to the boys in the grief of their own loss and the difficulties of establishing themselves in a strange land with different language and culture.

Beverley saw how much could be done by organising volunteers and in 1980 accepted the task of raising money to help provide for Sydney's homeless, the Vietnam orphans, aged people, and children in care. Working with a group of mainly elderly ladies, she organised craft stalls, cake stalls, dinner parties, and the like and raised in her first year \$72,000.

When she saw what that money did in providing personal comforts, buses, furniture, holidays for the under privileged, relief for inner city families and the like, she commenced working full-time in an unpaid task of raising money. She has organised concerts, garage sales, book fairs, garden parties, dinners, dances, hundreds of stalls to sell cakes, food, and hand-crafts, organised radio and TV ads., distributed handbills, gained the presence of personalities from the media, political and ceremonial life including Hazel Hawke, Lady Stephen, Lady Rowland, Lady Cutler and a host of others. The leading celebrities in Australia accepted her invitation to open special events.

The personal pressure was enormous. It has been a united family effort with each of her children helping their mum. Apart from this, she has supported me in all of my work as head of Australia's largest Christian welfare organisation, and as minister's wife in Australia's largest church where she works as an Elder.

Beverley used her own home to type letters, sew bedspreads, cushions, and aprons, bake cakes, and made floral arrangements. She constantly soaked tens of thousands of used postage stamps and packaged them. She organised letters to hundreds of companies requesting donations of outdated stock, off-cuts and factory seconds, which she distributed to others who made goods for sale.

At the same time over 400 volunteers were recruited and organised through monthly meetings, which she chaired. Soon help was being provided to fourteen childrens homes, a sheltered workshop, nine aged care centres, two hospitals and sixteen homes for the intellectually handicapped, mostly in the inner suburbs of Sydney - a total of 122 centres of care.

A retired lady jeweller offered to repair fashion jewellery so Beverley set up in George Street on the footpath, a stall where she personally sold the jewellery each week. While organising hundreds of other volunteers, she led by example becoming involved in all areas of fundraising. Others joined in to help selling the stock, especially Ivan and Alice Reichelt and Maria Burns.

In all of this practical Christianity, Beverley maintained an enthusiasm even when fulfilling tasks that were taxing and against her natural inclinations. She would not accept methods of fundraising that would violate the Christian conscience of some, and so no form of gambling, raffles, bingo or alcohol was used.

Yet without these she had raised as clear profit after expenses a total of over three and a quarter million dollars. Beverley worked voluntarily and never claimed any expenses.

Beverley Moyes (nee Vernon) was born in Mont Albert, Victoria. She was educated at Mont Albert Central School and Camberwell High School. After secretarial studies she worked for seven years with an English textile-importing firm. Beverley attended the Box Hill Church of Christ and was a member there for eight years until her marriage. During her time with the Box Hill Church of Christ she taught Sunday School, led a junior girl's Club, and held leadership positions in the Box Hill Church and in various youth organisations.

Beverley and I met at the Box Hill Church of Christ at the age of 13, and we have been together ever since. We married in 1959, and now have four married children and their spouses and ten grandchildren.

In 1966 we commenced ministry at the Cheltenham Victoria, Church of Christ, where we ministered for thirteen years. During our first three ministries, Beverley taught Sunday School, led youth groups, taught Scripture in school, led women's groups, was a member of two choirs as the accompanist, played organ or piano for weddings, funerals, and church services and performed all the other tasks necessary in a minister's home.

During our Wesley Mission ministry, Beverley was more than a voluntary fundraiser. Beverley's activities have been many and varied. Whilst still seeing herself as a minister's wife and all that entailed, she has led prayer groups, a home Bible Study group, spent much time counselling and giving pastoral care to Wesley Mission church members and the now paid staff at Wesley Mission.

She counselled troubled people, provided food for transients and took into our home an elderly lady who needed nursing and a young drug addict.

In recognition of Beverley's voluntary work, both in fund raising and in other areas of work at Wesley Mission, in 1988 Beverley was honoured by the Bi-Centennial Women 88 Awards, as one of the twenty outstanding women achievers in Australia, and was listed as one of the ten major award recipients. Thousands of women were nominated through Australia's premier women's magazine, "The Australian Women's Weekly" and to be judged one of the Nation's ten most outstanding women was a great achievement.

Majorie Jackson became a friend when Beverley was elected as one of Australia's ten outstanding women, and Marjorie was also in the final selection.

In 1989 Beverley was the recipient of an Australia Day Citizenship Award given by the Sydney City Council for voluntary service to people of the city of Sydney.

In the 1989 Queen's Birthday Honours List, Beverley was appointed a Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia (AM). At this time there we were the only couple in Australia to be separately honoured.

In recognition of Beverley's work as a volunteer amongst the people of Sydney, the Rotary Club of Sydney awarded her a Paul Harris Fellowship, one of Rotary's highest honours.

Family life has always been of greatest importance to Beverley, and has always been and remains her top priority, along with her strong commitment to God and service to Him. She is an elder in the Church at Wesley Mission, and she actively works in a caring and counselling role to the hundreds of people involved with Wesley Mission. She leads in public prayer and for years has led a good home Bible study group in her home.

The program of the Australian Bicentennial Authority was really a wonderful one. They called for nominations for Australia's most outstanding women in every part of the nation, and 1200 women were nominated for their outstanding permanent achievement to Australian society including Sallyanne Atkinson then the Lord Mayor of Brisbane; General Eva Burrows, then the world leader of the Salvation Army; Joan Carden, Opera Singer; Nancy Kato, author; June Dally Watkins, famous model; Caroline Jones, media presenter; Eileen Joyce, the great international pianist; Dame Leonie Kramer, the university professor just elected Chancellor of Sydney University; Senator Jean Melzer

of Victoria; the athletes Shirley Strickland and Marjorie Jackson; Margaret Noff of the Wayside Chapel, Nancy Bird-Walton the famous aviatrix, Professor Di Yerbury - Vice Chancellor of Macquarie University and so many others. Every famous woman in Australia was on the nomination list.

The aim of the Bicentennial year was to recognise the achievements of Australian women and to give public recognition of women who have a high personal quality that has been translated to significant achievement in their personal and community lives.

Beverley had been nominated by some men on our Church Board. The requirements were that the Australian Bicentennial Authority were looking for "Australian women who have consistently shown such qualities as courage, tenacity, leadership, compassion, humanity, determination, and creativity in the work in which they were involved."

Beverley was told she had been chosen among 20 such women to be the final representatives from across Australia.

She and I were invited to fly to Melbourne to a special dinner of honour to be attended by hundreds of people in the Melbourne Hilton.

At the Melbourne Hilton, there were more than 500 of Australia's outstanding women. There were ten chosen as the outstanding achievers in Australia. There was Dr Patricia Brennen, doctor, missionary, reformer, leader of the movement to ordain women priests in the Anglican Church; Dr Helen Caldicot medical doctor and leader of the U.S.A. powerful group Doctors for Social Responsibility and well known anti-nuclear campaigner; there was Kay Cottee the solo yachtswoman who was the first woman to solo circumnavigate the world in a sailing vessel; there was Dr Jocelyn Scutt Australia's most academically qualified lawyer including 4 masters degrees in two different fields and her doctorate was done in the work of rape and prostitution and non-sexist law. There was Christine Milne a remarkable member of the Tasmanian Parliament. There was Marjorie Silver Weiss, the founder of Australia's Flying Nurses Service which pre-dated even the Royal Flying Doctor Service and who has given a long life time of serving the Far West Children's Hospital Scheme and outback nursing, Joan Winch, outback health worker of Western Australia, who was named the Aboriginal of the year, 1987. Among these top ten was Beverley Moyes, for "a life time of support to people in need, using her own home and organizing church women in raising millions of

dollars for charity, the most successful in Australian history, using traditional women's methods of crafts, cooking, concerts and the like.”

The judges said of Beverley “She rarely receives recognition for her extraordinary community service. This modest self effacing woman is truly typical of Australia’s quiet achievers.” For us as a family, it was not new that wife and mother should be elected as one of the ten most significant women in Australia. We all knew she deserved this honour.

Beverley stood before those 500 outstanding Australian women being chosen in the top ten. It was such an honour but more was to come. Beverley was asked to speak on behalf of all of the women of Australia. Hers was the only speech given by the ten award winners.

Beverley acknowledged her faith in God and what a privilege it was to help those people who can’t help themselves. She thanked church members and others who motivated and inspired her and indicated that she wanted to go on helping others in the community as long as she was able. It was a beautiful speech and strongly applauded by the ten fellow awardees and the 500 guests.

The ten top awardees each received a gold, ebony and silver broach and \$2000 worth of crafts of her own choosing made by outstanding Australian craftswomen. Beverley chose a magnificent quilted wall hanging, which hangs in our house to this day and a hand-crafted leather handbag and some jewellery. At our table was Marjorie Jackson. Marjorie received a special commendation for her work, as not only an all Australian great athlete but for her work in raising more than \$1 million for the Leukaemia foundation.

Because of a number of press conferences and media events in which they were both involved they spent some quality time together. We never lost contact with this remarkable lady. Now in her late 60’s, Marjorie still lives in Adelaide where she is the greatly loved and respected Governor of South Australia.

In all of this Beverley was a busy wife and mother. Each of the children got married and grandchildren began arriving and she saw her role increasingly as being mother, not only to her family, but also to the many hundreds of people within the life of Wesley Mission. As an active Elder of the church she is busy caring and counselling people in the life of the worshipping congregations, and was elected for this work “Mother Of The Year”.

That part of her life has evolved and changed leaving her a very experienced public speaker and mature leader. One aspect of Beverley's life and ministry in Sydney has been the exercise of a gift of hospitality. Hundreds of people have appreciated the meals that she has prepared and served in our Roseville home. The dining room table seats 12 so consequently dinner parties always have 12 present. She has cooked and prepared for hundreds of people over the years in these dinner parties. New staff, donors to Wesley Mission, members, visitors to this country have all been welcomed as guests to our table. She has also presided at meals or functions in which more than a dozen Governors General, Prime Ministers, Premiers and their wives have been present, as well as visiting dignitaries from overseas such as Sarah Ferguson, The Duchess of York. In turn Beverley has been a guest at many functions for distinguished and royal visitors. She has had conversations with the Queen and Prince Philip and other members of the Royal family.

In all of this Beverley remains a very humble person, loving her garden, always growing flowers and giving them every Sunday to other people or a carton of eggs from our hens or a parcel of vegetables from her extensive vegetable garden. But Beverley is never happier than when fulfilling her role as an Elder within Wesley Mission congregations; visiting the sick, leading the home Bible study group and home prayer group, welcoming visitors and caring for those who sit in the pews. Her gifts and talents in ministry did not come naturally; they have been acquired by hard work, careful preparation and a willingness to be uncomfortable as she tackles something new.

Beverley and I have frequently been interviewed by journalists. City journalists were not like Chris Fisher in Ararat. We discovered a new breed. I also discovered that ethics was not a word to be associated with some journalists. There is a senior woman journalist writing for the major press who is known for her viciousness in attacking people. She never seeks to build up, only tear down. Her name is a by-word amongst public figures. I remember on one occasion when she wanted to come and interview. Many of my friends advised me to ignore and cancel the appointment. I hadn't found a vicious reporter previously and rather foolishly granted an interview in which I openly and frankly answered her questions.

Most of what I had to say was not news worthy and consequently didn't see the light of day. Instead she attacked my footwear, my ties, and my appearance. She actually made mistakes on all of them. She declared that I was wearing extremely expensive silk ties from overseas. The fact was I had purchased three ties from the corner store of Market and Pitt Street, which had been closing down owing to a fire sale for the last three years and had been running a special on ties - 3 for \$5! The

image that she gave was that I was expensively dressed and possibly using money given to a charity on my own appearance. I discovered this woman over a period of time was incredibly vicious and seemed to want to destroy any person with a high profile within the community.

A senior male journalist I discovered had a deep-seated hatred of clergymen. I don't know where this hate began but I certainly know he turned the blowtorch on me with some of the most untrue and vicious lies I have ever encountered in my life. One of his often repeated insinuations made public was his quote "He drives a gleaming gold Fairlaine" as much as to say, I had the most expensive car possible and that again I was wasting charitable money. He also used to link me with American television evangelists in a way that was totally untrue and unfair. The bit about the gleaming gold Fairlaine, for those who knew me was a bit of a laugh. My car is a Fairlaine, a 1983 model. I guess there are not many people still driving 22-year-old cars on the road these days. And it is gleaming because both my wife and I are careful to wash it and wax it with the result that it has remained rust free over the whole period of its life. She's a delightful looking grand old bus and we enjoy driving it. But its insured value is less than \$1000. But not according to the way this journalist wrote it. Apparently he has problems with cleanliness as well as godliness

I discovered also in the mid eighties, another kind of senior journalist who works for a respectable newspaper but whose articles I never now read. I discovered that he deliberately generated gossip in order to get headlines and news stories that were blatantly false but just dropped into obscurity with the next new story that came along. I remember him ringing me one morning as he was getting close to a deadline and asking me "Is it true that Premier Neville Wran is putting together a group of people to take control of the Channel Ten television network and that you are one of his key players?" I replied to him. "I don't know what Neville Wran might be considering. All I know is that I have no comment to make. I have not spoken to Mr Wran in the last few weeks and I certainly have no intention of becoming involved in the ownership or running of a major television network." That statement was translated into a major story much to the surprise of Mr Wran as well as myself "Wran and Moyes to take over Ten TV" read the headline. I gathered he had asked Mr Wran did he know that I was considering him to be chairman of the board to take over Ten TV. I have never read his articles since discovering his techniques. Recently a leading politician told me of several similar incidences with the same journalist. You would think the newspaper Editor in Chief would call him to heel.

But Fathers Day 1986 was to introduce our whole family into the gutter ethics of journalism. I had always noted with some pleasure the very distinguished people who were chosen each year to be Father of the Year by the National and NSW Fathers Day Council. Usually I felt their choices were very well considered and appropriate. Never for a moment did I think that during 1985 I would be approached to consider being the NSW Father of The Year for 1986. I was approached by the Father's Day Council in the person of the President Denis Cudworth. Mr Cudworth was a remarkably fine upright businessman with a good reputation within the retail industry. He organised a small luncheon with his personal assistant Mrs Margaret Wangman who handled most of the arrangements for the Father of the Year function and with Sir Ian Turbott, the previous Father of the Year, a diplomat of very distinguished international experience and the newly appointed chancellor of the University of Western Sydney.

At this luncheon I was surprised that the NSW Father of the Year Council had researched a number of suitable candidates very thoroughly. I was even more surprised when I discovered that the Father's Day Council had a very serious purpose in the promotion of the Father of the Year. That purpose was expressed in the "Decalogue". '10 Rules for being a good Father', which was promoted very widely at their luncheons and other functions. They also raised money for most worthy charitable purposes. At that first meeting with the president and former Father of the Year, I must say I was most impressed with their research, thoroughness and gentlemanly approach to the whole issue. Mr Cudworth noted I was wearing cufflinks. He then informed me that he was the leading importer of cuff links into Australia.

Consequently the NSW Father's Day Council had a luncheon of several hundred business and community leaders on Friday August 22nd at the Sheraton - Wentworth Hotel when I became the 30th Father of the Year. There was a very distinguished gathering of community leaders supporting this programme, including the Governor Air Marshal Sir James Rowland and Lady Rowland, the former Governor Sir Roden Cutler and Lady Cutler, the heads of all the churches and the Chief Rabbi, there were former Fathers of the Year including some whom I was pleased to call friends, such as the entertainer Bobby Limb the Australian Test Cricketer Alan Davidson, the medical researcher Dr Brad Norrington, the former Chief Commissioner of Police Jim Lees, the former Governor General Sir Zelman Cohen, Broadcaster Gary O'Callaghan, Major General Alan Stretton the hero of the re-building of Darwin and many others.

The presentation as Father of the Year was extremely well received by all of those present. In my speech I reflected on what my father had given to me. I explained my father's premature death from alcoholism and how that influenced my attitudes today. I said "I am different from my father in every way because I don't drink and he was never involved with the church. And I don't swear either and the only words I can ever remember my Father saying to me was "God Damn you Mick" Mick being his nickname for me. "My mother and I discovered him dead one night not far from my home where he had fallen down drunk and hit his head on the gutter. I was only eight at the time and I remember the doctor saying to me "You are the man of the house now, you are responsible for the family."

His death gave me a very strong sense of responsibility but knowing what insecurity felt like at an early age made me very responsible. It also made me ensure that my four children had a strong sense of security. I believe that children gain this primarily by having parents who are happy and loving towards each other. So my wife Beverley and I have always demonstrated our affection for each other openly."

As part of my duties it was expected that I would travel around the state and accept speaking invitations to support the role and significance of the family within the community. This I was pleased to do and it gave me a most enjoyable yearlong experience.

On the morning on which the announcement was to be made, Denis Cudworth had warned me that we would have all of the television stations coming to our home for interviews, radio personalities and press reporters there by the dozen.

I thought that some of them would want to see me at work in my study, so I cleared up my desk and threw out a whole lot of papers with which I had finished. I then emptied my waste paper basket into our bin. Meanwhile Beverley was busy cutting sandwiches and preparing morning tea for the press. We did television interviews for all the major television stations and also for the radio stations. The press asked me some questions about my relationships with my children and my wife and I remember saying to one; "The best thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother."

Beverley and I did not realise it but some of the press were taking our children away by themselves. We didn't realise it because Beverley and I were being questioned by other members of the press

about a conflict between being a clergyman and being a father. I regarded it as a privilege without any areas of conflict and Beverley supported me on this.

It was only afterwards that I discovered that other reporters had taken our children off one by one on the pretext of asking to be shown to their rooms and quizzed very strongly. It became quite apparent that they had been charged by their Senior Editor with the task of finding dirt on my relationships with my children which would allow them to have a headline such as “Child Abuser Father of the Year” or suchlike. I remembered Jenny saying with a horrified voice. “They kept asking me: ‘Does your father belt you? Does he abuse you?’” Peter said that he felt like hitting one of the questioners who said to him in a very sneaky fashion “How do you feel when your Mother and Father quarrel?” He replied with a great deal of strength that his mother and father didn’t quarrel. David and Andrew were asked: “Does your father show any interest in you or is it mainly in his work?” David said he didn’t know how to reply to that question because we were all interested in my work not just me but my wife and children as well but at the same time I showed great interest in each of my children. David said “Then I remembered something you said Dad, that we should give first commitment to God, then to our family and then to our work. The family always before work” Afterwards someone said, ‘There are papers all over the nature strip!’ Apparently a couple of guys were going through all the copies of letters I had put in the rubbish bin. Someone had thought that if they investigated our rubbish bin they might find something that would incriminate me!

It was all to no avail. The chooks had scratched around every possible avenue and couldn’t find anything except a well balanced, well relating family.

The public however responded in a magnificent way with hundreds of letters, telegrams and faxes of congratulations from people that I never thought would take the trouble. I received congratulations and invitations from Municipal Councils, parliamentarians, the Lord Mayor, the Premier, from Rotarians here and overseas from other church leaders and from book publishers. My children responded with a great deal of affection and pride. They each sent me special Father’s Day messages that year. I have kept them and only just now have looked back through them. There was one of my children, our only daughter Jenny writing, “I cannot remember a time when you haven’t been to us, the Father of the year.”

'Father of the Year' was a great honour but there were those who were determined that that honour should have been turned into a story of abuse and conflict. Denis Cudworth was right. There would be a great interest by the media and the press but what I didn't realise was that there would be a few in their number who were determined to discover the Father of the Year had feet of clay, that their role was to pull down rather than build up and to get for themselves headlines over stories regardless of the ethics used or the truth involved.

I always regarded myself as a fit person. I never realised how that changed over the years. At 18, I was one of the top junior athletes in the state. At 35, I was still playing in a football team, training twice a week and competing in matches every Saturday. At 45 I still ran everywhere and lept up the stairs two at a time. But the next twenty years would give me two major health scares because I was not fit and lived such a busy life.

In May 1996, I was invited, with the Governor of NSW, to join in the opening of a new Emergency Ward at the magnificent Sydney Adventist Hospital. I was asked to speak on "Recollections Of A Former Patient." What I said at the opening explains what for my wife, family and myself the biggest crisis of my life to that date.

The best thing that has happened in my life, in medical terms, occurred in this hospital when I had heart surgery, in December 1993.

I was carrying a heavy load. I was managing Wesley Mission which was on a strong growth curve. We had then grown to 1,750 full-time paid staff, 3,500 volunteers, 250 caring centres, hospitals, nursing homes, retirement villages, and children's homes; I was senior minister of the largest church of any denomination in the nation with an annual budget of \$70 million, host of a national weekly TV program, daily radio programs, had been writing, lecturing and counselling non-stop, preaching overseas, and for 15 years had spent 35 weekends every year conducting small evangelistic campaigns in 400 small towns all over the nation, flying back to Sydney every Sunday afternoon to conduct afternoon meetings and evening church services before doing three hours of broadcasting until mid-night. December had us booked into 67 Christmas parties, more than 100 speeches and sermons, and 50,000 people at our biggest service "A Darling Harbour Christmas" which I would host on national television. It was the end of really great year!

The cardiologist was blunt. "You are over weight. If you had been a drinker or a smoker like your father you would have been dead as he was at thirty-eight. At present half your heart is dead meat. It may never recover. You have already had two major heart attacks and you continued working. I want you in the Sydney Adventist Hospital immediately. If you have the slightest pain now, you will go by ambulance to the Royal North Shore Casualty. At present you are ten minutes from death."

Safely transported to Sydney Adventist Hospital, I was given an Angiogram. The cardiologist and two surgeons explained: "You have arteries blocked in five places. I am trying to book a theatre and a surgeon for first thing tomorrow. You are in urgent need of surgery."

The surgeon smiled and said to my wife: "I have been looking at your husband's heart on the screen. He certainly presents a challenge."

The operation took four hours, required five bypasses, and for 47 minutes my heart was stopped. "The Sydney Morning Herald" and the "Telegraph" announced it to the world. I was unconscious. My wife took a long and concerned call from the Governor. Then came assurances of prayer from prayer groups all over the nation. More than 1000 letters, faxes and cards came to the hospital from the Premier, politicians, church leaders, international Christian leaders, the Trade Union Movement, media personalities, church members and myriads of people who sent flowers and fruit.

My family gathered round the bed in the Intensive Care Unit while a nursing sister stayed at the foot of the bed monitoring the equipment over 48 hours. I remember nothing of that, except my family told me that when one sister left to get something, my son remarked she was a very pretty young nurse, to which I apparently replied: "Yes, but she's a bit of a tart!"

When I arrived up in the ward, the bed had been stripped and a manufacturer of a new kind of mattress on hearing of my hospitalisation had visited the hospital, and had received permission to install a new kind of mattress so I could test drive it. The recovery days in the private ward were a wonderful experience of gratitude to God for growing recovery and wonderful appreciation for my wife whom I had courted continuously since we were both aged thirteen.

On the fourth day I rang my wife at 6am and asked her to bring my best cardigan which would fit around the tubes. She came in at 7am, and I had been up and was fully dressed. The Nurse Unit

Manager arrived and scolded: "Look at him. he's up and dressed like he's ready for church. He must think it's Sunday." I replied, "Not here Sister. It's the Sabbath!"

On the fifth day, I experienced the worst pain in my life for six hours while blood and fluid in the rib cage was drained off. Referred pain, at the point of shoulder ended completely as the catheter was withdrawn. I was walking one kilometre up and down the passage, each morning and afternoon.

At home I worked hard at breathing and developing my lung capacity, at walking every day, then swimming every day. I lost 17 lbs, was leaner, fitter, healthier than I had been for years. At the end of eight weeks I was back at work completely. I gradually resigned from the Presidency of five national organisations, stepped down as Chairman of more than a dozen committees including the Boards of Management of two hospitals. I continued as President of the Rotary Club of Sydney. I was going to have a narrow focus on my core work.

I thank God for five features of the hospital:

1. For the superb surgical teams and facilities;
2. For the excellence in caring by the staff, including escorting of my family through the Intensive Care Unit explaining to them what would happen to husband and father;
3. For the promptness and generosity of my Hospital Benefits fund into which I had contributed for thirty years before I made a significant withdrawal;
4. For the Adventist friends I had known for years who made sure I received VIP treatment, including the CEO who arrived to welcome me with a bottle of non-alcoholic wine to toast my recovery; the Chaplains who made the Christian presence among the staff so real, the dieticians who reorganised my life-style, and even the physio who pummelled my chest and made me cough had an ounce of compassion.
5. For the classes in diet, exercise, stress and life-style led by a young woman I had lectured in Wesley Institute.

It was the best thing of my life in medical terms, and it occurred in this hospital.

There is that delightful chapter in Mark Twain's, "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" (Chapter 17) when the three boys, Tom Sawyer, Huck Finn and Joe Harper are believed by the town to have drowned in the river. The following Sunday a funeral service is held for the three missing boys. Only they are alive and hiding in the church's gallery. They listen to the eulogies over their own lives and hear what people thought of them. So moved were they that they decided to come down from the gallery and present themselves to the public.

For two months I have been in the gallery listening in at my own funeral service! It has been a humbling experience. My dear friend, Vice President of the Boys Brigade Australia and fellow Rotarian Carl Harman, a year previous had felt a pain in his heart and had died immediately. For some reason, that did not happen to me. I felt no pain, suffered two heart attacks, had one portion of my heart turn to what my surgeon described as "dead meat", had my heart and lungs stopped for forty-seven minutes, received five bypasses to the heart, and within two months was back at work. Our whole family were grateful to God for such a positive outcome.

From the time we were teenagers Beverley and I knew we would marry. We knew we wanted to have four children – we even picked some of their names. We had four children, they have introduced to our family four greatly loved spouses and ten grandchildren. We are a tightly knit family that see each other frequently. Our children enjoy their own company without us and every year go on holidays together with all the cousins joining in.

As our children came along, some principles have guided us as a family. Seeing Beverley has been awarded "Mother of the Year" and I was "Father of the Year" these principles may be of interest to others. In an era when family life is often denigrated, and others claim it is an impossible dream, we have kept these principles to the fore.

Beverley and I pray aloud with each other every night for each family member. Of course we pray for others, for friends and world situations, but we pray for each family member without fail. Prayers are answered, concerns we have are remembered and decisions to do something about such concerns are made. Nothing has aided our marriage togetherness so much as that daily prayer.

Then we have been fairly strict with our children as they were growing. My experience in the juvenile justice system, my days as a probation and parole officer underscored this point. Once I

examined the files of 104 serious offenders and every one of them mentioned “little or no home discipline”. One day in a court room listening to another list of offences I realised the danger was greater with too little discipline in the family than with too much.

Beverley and I had an occasional need to smack a child but no child was ever beaten or spanked. We encouraged good behaviour continuously with praise and if needs be, disciplined bad behaviour by depriving the child of some luxury or freedom. Our grandchildren have also been brought up the same way. None of our children have ever been convicted, smoked or used alcohol or drugs even though they have been available.

We worked on the principle that our family did things together. We would spend time together, always holiday together, and if one child brought home from school a swear word or concept that was not right, we explained that while their friends might speak like that or behave like that, that was not said or done in our family.

We held our breath when Andrew our youngest became a good musician and founded a rock band. We encouraged them to rehearse in our home, but were concerned when their only venue for “gigs” was in large hotels and nightclubs. But the band played on, and Andrew never did drugs or drank alcohol like those listening to them. To this day, none of the family are into alcohol or drugs.

We keep family celebrations. Everyone has a birthday party when their turn comes with every family member contributing. With grandchildren, that is twenty family celebrations per year, plus Christmas, Mothers Day and Fathers Day. Roughly every second week of the year we get together to celebrate. Other occasions like breakfast together after the Easter Sunrise service make for many happy family traditions.

Because Beverley and I lead a very busy life with hundreds of appointments and nights out each year, this would seem to be a scheduling nightmare. It is never an issue of scheduling. It is a matter of priorities. At the beginning of each new year I write into my diary, 23 family celebrations, and around them over 400 other appointments. The family has priority.

Another principle we have followed is not to expect too much but to realise God is faithful. We have always had a very restricted income. We learned to budget, never to have debts (except for house mortgage) and not to live extravagantly. Our children understood we could not have all that

others had. But God was faithful and we always had enough. I have had staff who also were on limited budgets but people gave to them very generously. I have known pastors to be given air fares, holidays, motor vehicles and even a house! We have never received such gifts. Nor have we expressed our needs to others. Our needs were between ourselves and God and He supplied them.

For example clothes. We have never been ashamed to wear second hand clothes or gifts of clothes. Beverley knitted for every member of the family every year. Her mother was a professional tailoress, who taught Beverley how to read patterns, cut material, and make clothes. Our children were always well dressed. Then a lady whom I helped asked if we would receive gifts of clothing. She was head of the returns department in a large store that sold exclusive children's clothing. Many wealthy mothers returned clothing because a button was off, or a zip was broken or some stitching was unravelled. Every month to our home came a large bale of hardly ever worn, slightly imperfect goods. Beverley mended or repaired each one and gave them to families in our church or to our children. Result? The best-dressed kids in the street! Likewise I was given shirts and jackets that had been on store models in shop windows and therefore could not be sold. I purchased shoes that had been on store models for quarter price. Then, when I started appearing on television every week, a Christian tailor John M. Cutter offered to make me a suit every second year, which he did for twenty years. In turn all our own clothes were handed on to other families or to the homeless. I have sometimes seen my former suits walking the streets!

Or take bread. For years Beverley would take the children in the family car at 5:30pm to a couple of bakeries where they would have large garbage bags full of unsold bread and cakes. Beverley would then drive on a "bread-run" and deliver the bread and cakes to each of our retirement villages where everyone would take their pick, then onto some poor families and finally to a convent where a group of nuns would get their bread and cakes. And there would always be some for our table. God provided the bread and cakes but it took some friendly people in the bakeries, a family car, an hour just before the meal time and some petrol, but the miracle of the loaves and cakes continued over the years. That was a partnership that meant more than the bread.

Partnerships were the key to the provision of other necessities in our family life. We all helped, and when it was Spring Fair everyone supported Beverley, and when it was Easter Mission everyone helped Dad because the children knew these things were important to us.

Another principle our family accepted was that just because I was on a platform speaking everyday of my life and speaking on radio and TV programs, the family could not expect to be promoted. I abhor preachers who include comments or smart things their children have said. Our family would not be praised or humiliated publicly even though what they said and did might make us very proud. In some ways this was unfair. Everybody else's children we praised for their every contribution and sometimes our children added more to the common good, but until now we limited the public exposure and praise. What needed to be said was said to them in private. We would not be a family of self-promoters.

A final thing, we would help our children develop their interests and talent in directions in which they wanted to go. We guided their choices and encouraged them, but did not try to work out our interests, beliefs and desires through them. Consequently they all developed different interests yet abided by our family values of clean living, practising Christian beliefs, keeping clear of drugs, smoking and alcohol, speaking respectfully without swearing, and devoting time to their children and the needy of the community.

Our first child was Jenny, born while we ministered to the people in the slums of Melbourne. She trained as a School teacher, teaching in a Jewish school which broadened her knowledge, and then as a Personal Assistant to the General Manager of Corporate Services at Wesley Mission, Richard Menteith. She also trained as a LifeLine Counsellor. In recent years she has been Personal Assistant to Wesley Mission's Group Manager of Pastoral Services Graham Want, who has the oversight of all of our worship services, chaplaincies, ministries and pastors, youth leaders and pastoral carers. Her experience of ministry in local churches as a minister's wife certainly equipped her for this task.

She married Ron Schepis, a member of Wesley's staff. Ron worked in administration and in the welfare of homeless people. During their courtship they both served the homeless. After graduating with his Social Welfare certificate, Ron started studying and graduated as a Registered Nurse with extensive experience in nursing people with mental ill health. That led to further study. Then Ron responded to my call for people to consider studying for Pastoral Ministry. He entered Carlingford Theological College and graduated with his Diploma of Ministry and Bachelor of Theology from the Sydney College of Divinity. Later he completed his Master of Arts. Ron and Jenny served in full-time Parish Ministry at Keilor (Victoria) and Pendle Hill (NSW) before accepting a call to be a specialised Chaplain to the Mentally Ill in two of Wesley's Hospitals, and a

trainer of LifeLine Counsellors for the telephone counselling service. Jenny and Ron both have loveable personalities. Ron lived in our home for quite some time before their marriage so we all became one family.

Ron and Jenny have three children, Michael, Rachael and Emma. Both of these girls are strongly into team sports, and Michael is the leader of all the ten cousins at every family celebration. He also had a beautiful treble voice and travelled the world singing in concerts with an international choir.

Peter our second child, was born during our Ararat ministry and something of the love of countryside and animals has always stayed with him. Because of Peter's love for animals, our backyard at Cheltenham resembled Noah's Ark. He was always caring for sick and injured animals and birds. Once a Major Mitchell cockatoo, came walking up the drive of our Roseville house dragging a badly broken wing, as much as to say, "Is this where the man who cares for injured birds lives?" That cocky still lives with Peter over twenty-five years later.

As a teenager, Peter operated the sound and lights in our old Lyceum Theatre during church services. This was a demanding job with early set ups. He was so good at that he was included in the Wesley Film Production Ltd crew that filmed throughout the Mediterranean and Middle East. His interest in animals, land care and horticulture led him into courses at Ryde Horticultural College and work as groundsman at a local Golf Club where he continued studies in pesticides, and the operation of heavy machinery. This was soon to benefit his parents.

Peter married Trina, a highly talented Occupational Therapist who had learnt the arts of restorative massage. From the first visit to our home, we knew she would make the most wonderful wife and daughter-in-law. She related well with each of the other children as Ron had done. When they had built their home, on an acreage of course with horse, cow, goat, hens, ducks, sheep, dogs etc, etc. Peter had dreams of living off the land but his acreage was too small. Because Trina was able with her professional practise to earn more than Peter with his horticulture, after the birth of their third child Peter became the primary carer of the children.

When I added being a Parliamentarian to my otherwise overfull life, we faced a quandary. The house at Tumbi Umbi into which we would shift when I retired from Wesley Mission needed

extensive alterations and additions, and the acreage needed a great deal of upkeep. So while the children were in school, Peter came to our rescue as builder and estate manager.

I would never have been able to cope with all the demands if it wasn't for Peter who has overseen the renovation and extension of our house and who has built and maintained our property. Every one of his skills and background training has been used. I owe Peter a debt I can never repay.

Their three children are each accomplished swimmers: Cassie is a qualified surf life-saver who is regularly on patrol, Jack is an outstanding surf swimmer, second in the State in his age group in the gruelling 'Iron Man' events, and Indy is a "water baby" competing in events covering all styles of swimming. Between them they have scores of trophies and medals.

David, our third child was born in Cheltenham. As a young teenager, interested in radio broadcasting, making movie films and in all things electrical, David was the centre of the biggest crisis in our young family's life.

Through no fault of his own, but due to some very old, faulty electric wiring in our Roseville Manse, David was one night electrocuted in his bedroom. Hearing his scream I rushed to his room to see him convulsing on the floor with the full 240 volts still going through his body. I grabbed a wooden broom and forced the wires from his body and the electric light that had become alive. A large hole was burnt in the flesh of his arm. He was conscious but incoherent. We turned off the power and rushed him to the Royal North Shore Hospital Emergency department. The doctors were amazed he was still alive. A long recovery with skin grafts was to follow. In the hospital bed, and almost unconscious, the fourteen-year-old said, "Thank you God for saving me. You must want me to be a minister."

David never remembered this and Beverley and I never mentioned it, until four years later, in discussing his post school career David re-affirmed his commitment to becoming a minister. He trained with his brother-in-law Ron at the Carlingford Theological College and graduated with his Diploma of Ministry and his Bachelor of Theology from the Sydney College of Divinity. David has been minister of three very large churches: Epping Church of Christ (NSW) Monash City Church (Victoria) and senior pastor at Belconnen Baptist Church (ACT) one of the largest Baptist Churches in the nation.

He married Leisl, the beautiful daughter of one of the pioneer Church families in Churches of Christ. They have two daughters, Brianna who has represented two states in both soccer and basketball, and Chelsea who is outstanding in her sports of physical culture and basketball. When all ten cousins get together you can imagine the sporting competitions.

David is a mature minister, a good preacher with a caring heart. At Wesley he and our other children grew up with children living in out of home care, with people from great social disadvantage, with the homeless, the mentally ill and the disabled. While David was at School a teacher said, "We are introducing disabled children into main stream schooling but we are having difficulties with most of our students. Only David has the capacity to relate naturally with disabled." Those years at Wesley had prepared him, and his members comment on that compassion and wisdom to this day.

Our youngest child Andrew was born at Cheltenham. He quickly developed an interest in music and was active in our youth groups becoming a good leader in youth camps and club leadership. He also trained as a LifeLine Counsellor. He formed his own band and played at local churches and at gigs. He entered banking after completing his schooling, started to move up the ranks very quickly, then left the bank to undertake University studies, only to return to the bank to continue his career in commercial banking. Today he holds a very high position in commercial banking being the bank's representative with major customers.

Andrew married Rebecca, a trained teacher who specialises in teaching children with developmental problems. She is a keen horsewoman and you see that in the youngest of their children, Scarlett who with her horse at the Royal Easter Show in 2005 won over a large field of competitors as the best in the State in her age bracket. Her older brother Tom is School House Captain and enjoys boating and fishing with Andrew. The family have built their own home on mountain acreage from a self-build home-kit.

That's our family. The joy of our life.