

**The Ups and Downs
of
Jeremy James**



The Ups and Downs of Jeremy James

Growing up in New Zealand
in the 1960s and 1970s

Dedicated to my Mother who is the real hero of this story

Published privately in 2020 by Jeremy James Heath-Caldwell with a print run of 85 copies.

Jeremy James Heath-Caldwell asserts the moral right to be identified as the author of this work.

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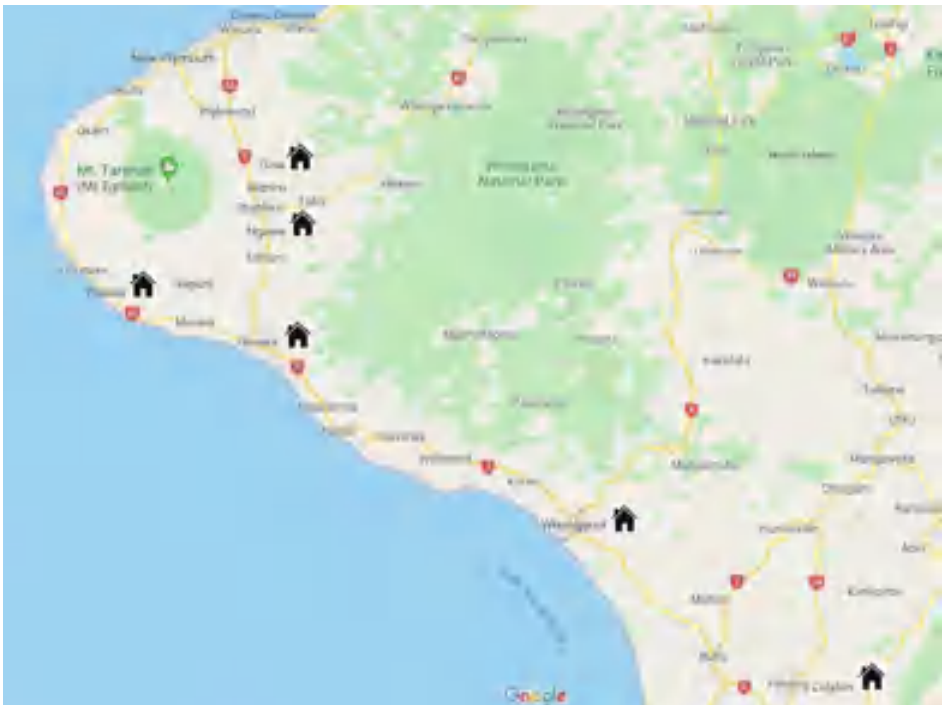
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Taranaki is located on the west coast of the North Island of New Zealand.

MAP OF THE WEST COAST OF THE NORTH ISLAND OF NEW ZEALAND



Map of the West Coast of the North Island of New Zealand.

The main part of my story takes place in Taranaki where I lived from the age of 1 through to the age of 13. My parents arrived in New Zealand in 1956 and initially lived on a farm in Pihama which is on the Taranaki Coast between Opunaki and Hawera. They then moved to Colyton near Feilding which was where I was born in 1959. We then moved back to Taranaki living for a brief time at Hawera and then 3 years at Tuna, near Midhirst. At the end of 1963 we moved to Ngaere and we went to school in Stratford. In 1973 we moved to Whanganui which is approx 120km further down the coast.



PROLOGUE

I was born at midnight between the 7th and the 8th of March 1959, in the Feilding Hospital, which is in the Manawatu in New Zealand. My mother Dora tells me that the birth was all straight forward, partly because I was a fairly small baby (8lb); well, smaller than my sister Hilary (8lb 7oz) who was born 21 months earlier and smaller than my brother Michael (8lb 13oz) who was to be born 21 months later. Just after my arrival, one of the maternity nurses asked my mother what date she would like recorded on the birth certificate, 7th or 8th. My mother chose the 8th. I know it does not really matter but I am very glad that she chose the number 8, rather than the number 7. The number 7 is a 'prime number' and so sounds quite important but the number 8 is a much nicer number. The character is drawn with two neat circles, one on top of the other, unless I am drawing it, in which case it is usually a bit lopsided but let's not worry too much about detail. You have to agree, when drawn correctly, the number 8 does have a very neat symmetrical look to it. Best of all, it can be divided by two to give you a pair of 4's and it can also be divided by 4 to give you a lot of 2's. The only thing I think is a little odd, is that if you take the character 8 and you chop it horizontally across the middle, you actually end up with two o's (instead of two 4's), which means that you get nothing, unless of course you don't see digits but instead you see letters, in which case, you get 2 of the letter o (o and o).

For me, I am definitely a numbers person. I like to see digits rather than letters. Numbers are easy but words I sometimes find are difficult.

I am now 61 years old and so, a fair way through my life (more than halfway) but hopefully still with quite a few years to go. My mother Dora is 85 and still going strong and my father James is 90 (still going strong but not as strong as my mother). Hopefully, I should have quite a few years before my life's journey reaches its conclusion.

When I look back at my life, I see what everyone else sees in their life; a long series of ups and downs, good times and bad times, fun times and sad times, things you got right and things you got wrong. Life is a struggle and each of us, on our separate journey, encounter lots of obstacles that we have to persevere with and overcome.

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Some are born into good circumstances and get a head start in life. Others are born into less favourable circumstances and have to start from behind. Good health is something that all the healthy people take for granted but if your health is not top form, then this is certainly a disadvantage. Those less fortunate, have no choice but to try and run faster and catch up. We all have to accept our lot, smile and keep moving forward.

A big part of the race is dependent on money, but you don't need lots of it. A serious lack of money reduces your ability to exploit opportunities and move forward. If you have too much money, you might not realise you are in a race and you could even end up wandering off in completely the wrong direction.

When I look back, I do still retain a lot of memories of my pre-school years, growing up on our family farm. I don't have memories of everything that happened to me, but I do remember some things, so I am writing this biography of my early life to get things down on paper before I forget completely. I have picked up further information by speaking to my mother Dora and my sister Hilary. I have also been very lucky, in that a large number of family letters and a few diaries have survived, together with some photographs of those far off days, back in the early 1960s.

Among the various things that I remember was an event that happened on or around the 7th of January 1963, when I would have been 3 years and 10 months old and we were living on our farm in Taranaki. It was midsummer and my memory was of a warm day, probably blue skies and sunshine, but I can't be certain. Two cars drove up our farm track that morning and came to a halt next to our house. One was a grey police car with two policemen and the other car, I was later to find out, was my father's doctor (Dr Rutherford). I remember my mother and father both being very distraught and both crying. For me I wouldn't say that it was traumatic but it was certainly very frightening. I remember my father saying again and again to my mother that he was very sorry. I don't remember what my mother was saying, probably not very much at all, as she was so distressed by the whole situation. Afterwards my mother told us that our daddy was not very well.

Looking back, this event really was a rather major turning point in the life of our family. After that day, my father pretty much passed out of our lives for the rest of our childhood. He was not to play any part in our upbringing, and except for a few brief occasions, we were not to be reunited with him until much further into our adult lives. My parents' dream of building up their farm and living a great family life as prosperous dairy farmers in Taranaki, had quickly come to a very sudden and absolutely earth-shattering end.

PROLOGUE

I had very little understanding of the events going on around me. The only thing I knew for sure, was that a short while later, we left the farm and my father no longer lived with us. Later, as I drifted through school, I could see that we didn't have much money and I got the impression that most of the other families had lives that were very different to ours. The question I had was why? But there was no way of getting any answers that I would have been able to comprehend. Slowly, step by step, my life played out and over time, I gradually pieced together what had happened and why. For quite a few years I thought someone was to blame but eventually I realised that everything was the result of a combination of events. No one had intentionally gone out to make life difficult for our family. It was more a case of, stuff just happened.



Richard Stanley Jones (known as Stanley) with his daughters Dora and Edna (known as Emma). Picture probably taken around 1939.

MY PARENTS: JAMES AND DORA: THEIR FAMILY BACKGROUNDS

My mother Dora was from a reasonably normal English background (working-class). Her mother (also named Dora) was the daughter of a coal miner. Dora senior had married twice. Her first husband had been Richard Stanley Jones (known as Stanley) and they had two daughters but Stanley had left when my mother was about 7 years old and her sister Edna (Emma) was about 5. Stanley then took up with a new wife and he made no further contact with his two daughters. My mother did meet up with him 40 years later and it was a very happy reunion. She found Stanley to be quite an interesting character. He had made a lot of money in the 1930s, as a house builder, but his business came swiftly to an end when war broke out in 1939 and perhaps that had been a big part of the troubles in his first marriage. During the war he became an electronics engineer, working for the government on radar projects. After the war, he continued in the civil service and worked at the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment (AWRE), Aldermaston, where he worked on the control systems for the various UK atomic bomb projects.

So, Stanley had left, and the person that Dora junior got to know was her mother's second husband Les Bailey. He was a very straight forward practical person, who built things out of metal. Dora and Emma got on with him very well and he became their new dad. They called him 'Pop'. He also had two daughters, Sonia and Hilary, so Dora and Emma gained two stepsisters.

Dora did quite well at school and would have liked to have progressed onto university, but her mother felt strongly that Dora would be much better off, leaving school and getting a job. This was how most working-class people saw it. University was for the toffs and it was expensive. Much better to leave school as soon as you could and get a paid job.

So, with no opportunity for university, Dora left school and took up a job working for Boots the Chemists. This she did for a few years, but she kept hankering for a better education and in the end her mother agreed that she could go to agricultural college and do a one year diploma course. In 1955 she went to

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Edna and Dora Jones (at rear) with their step sisters Sonia and Hilary Bailey (at front). Picture probably taken around 1947 under the plum tree at Trent View, St Helen's Grove, Burton Joyce.

Kingston Maurward College, near Dorchester, and it was there that she met her future husband James.

James' family were definitely from the other end of the social scale. They were 'landed gentry' type of people and they were all well spoken, charmingly polite, and reasonably well educated. Among his many ancestors there were a lot of interesting people who had done quite amazing things in their lives. I won't go into detail, as that would be another book, but the following list, mainly of his male forebears, gives a flavour:

King Alfred the Great 848/849–899 He who burnt the cakes. First English king to make full use of the new technology called reading and writing.

John Napier 1550–1617 The Inventor of Logarithms. He was very good at multiplication and division.

MY PARENTS: JAMES AND DORA: THEIR FAMILY BACKGROUNDS

Francis Marsh 1643–1714 Mariner and trader, who was shipwrecked off the Isle of Wight in 1694. Before his ship went down, he put his bible and his money into a pig skin for flotation. He was the only survivor and his bible still exists, with the story written on the inside cover.

William Long 16??–1723 An extravagant immoral and profuse man who was in and out of debtor's prison.

Robert Crowe 1710–1788 Lawyer in Norfolk. In his youth, James had looked up at a magnificent portrait of Robert, every time the family had tea in their dining room.

George Marsh 1722–1800 Commissioner of the Navy, who became very rich. He helped to make Great Britain great.

Phyllis Hopkins 17??–1794 Lived in India with her husband but he died. Phyllis and her daughter Sarah then moved in and lived with her son in law, Gen Richard Smith, who took special care of them.

Gen Richard Smith 1734–1803 Soldier and adventurer. Made lots of money in India working for Robert Clive. Richard married Amelia Hopkins but he then got her sister Sarah pregnant. His wife Amelia must have been very upset, but they named the daughter after her to make her feel a bit better. We can assume that his mother in law, Phyllis, was probably not very amused. He later returned to England and took up a very popular past time, called gambling. He wasn't very good at cards and he lost all his money.

Arthur Cuthbert 1734–1788 Financial wheeler-dealer, who made tons of money in India. The government needed to send money to India and the traders in India needed to send money home. Arthur organised the transactions both ways and he kept 10%. He stepped in and married his cousin Sarah Hopkins, took her daughter Amelia as his own, and everybody was happy.

John Hesketh 1750–1815 English wine merchant, based in Portugal. He had to leave in a hurry when Napoleon's army turned up in 1807.

William Marsh 1755–1846 Failed banker, who lived a remarkably long and charmed life. He married three times and outlived all his wives and he also outlived quite a few of his children.

Amelia Marsh nee Cuthbert 1765–1793 Her genetic father was Gen Richard Smith but she probably thought her father was Arthur Cuthbert. She was the first wife of William Marsh, who at the time was a rich banker.

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She died young but we remember her by her beautiful portrait painted by John Russell.

James Heath 1757–1834 Engraver who copied paintings and illustrations onto copper plates so that printers could make lots of copies to go inside books. The quality of his work was exceptionally fine.

James Caldwell 1759–1838 Lawyer, businessman and protégé of Josiah Wedgwood. He was an incredibly remarkable person and he was the ancestor who bought the Linley Wood estate. A lot of his possessions, including his diaries and some of the books from his library, were passed down in the family. His portrait hung in the sitting room.

Arthur Cuthbert Marsh 1786–1849 Born into a rich banking family but the collapse of the family business very much overwhelmed him. He married James Caldwell's daughter Anne.

James Stamford Caldwell 1787–1858 Lawyer, who inherited the Linley Wood estate from his father. Stamford did not marry and had no children, so he left the whole estate to the second son of his niece Mary Emma Lady Heath. Large portrait in the garden room.

Robert Hesketh 1789–1868 Businessman and diplomat who lived in Brazil. He married a beautiful girl who was 30 years younger. I think he had a very happy life. His impressive portrait was also in the dining room.

Anne Marsh Caldwell 1791–1874 Author who wrote lots of novels for Victorian ladies. She published anonymously as she and her husband did not want people to know that she earned money by writing books. Sadly, the family had not kept any of her novels.

Richard Jones 1814–1888 Doctor, who married an heiress, who was 13 years older than him. They had three children and indications are that they were a very happy family.

Adm Sir Leopold George Heath 1817–1907 One of the key men who finally brought slavery to an end in the late 1860s. He married Mary Emma Marsh and their children were all amazingly successful people. His naval sword had been passed down in the family to my father James.

Col Henry Helsham-Jones 1838–1920 Royal Engineers. Spent much of his army career in India and Egypt. His wife died very young.

Joseph Palmer 1850–1924 Surgeon based in Armagh in Ireland. A very good person.

MY PARENTS: JAMES AND DORA: THEIR FAMILY BACKGROUNDS

Maj Gen Frederick Crofton Heath-Caldwell 1858–1945 Royal Engineers. He saw fighting in Egypt and South Africa and his last posting was helping to set up the Royal Air Force. He inherited the Linley Wood estate from his grandmother's brother.

Capt Cuthbert Helsham Heath-Caldwell 1889–1979. War hero. Awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC). He sold the Linley Wood estate in 1949. He was James' father.

There were many family homes and estates owned by various ancestors but the home that my father had known very well was Linley Wood in Staffordshire.



Linley Wood. The home of the Caldwell family from 1789 to 1945. Staffordshire, England. Painting produced probably in the late 1800s while the Miss Marsh-Caldwells lived there.

His grandfather Maj Gen Frederick Heath-Caldwell had taken possession of the estate in 1913 and it was at that time that he had changed his name from Heath to Heath-Caldwell, the addition of Caldwell being a requirement in the will of his grandmother's brother James Stamford Caldwell.

The Linley Wood estate consisted of approx 1000 acres and up on the hill overlooking it all was the huge mansion, generally referred to as Linley Wood. The estate had been brought in 1789 by James Caldwell and had been passed down in the family. Over the generations the mansion had steadily been filled by

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a vast collection of furniture, paintings, portraits, china, silver, books, diaries and other family artefacts, passed down over 200 years, from various branches of the family. The mansion also housed a magnificent private library, with numerous volumes covering a diverse range of topics. Some of the books dated back to the 16th century.

At the end of World War I (1914–1918) the United Kingdom and the allies had beaten the Germans but Britain was very short of cash. On top of this the government had borrowed a lot of money from America and this needed to be paid back. At the same time, the British Empire was on the decline. The vast flow of wealth, that had been generated from the huge amounts of trade in the empire, was now on the decrease. Member countries were starting to become more independent and one by one, the strong ties of economic trade were reducing.



Portrait of James Caldwell of Linley Wood (1759–1838) painted around 1785 by Joseph Wright of Derby (1734–1797).

For over a hundred years, the English Landed Gentry had all lived a very privileged lifestyle in their various country houses, up and down the length of the United Kingdom. With the decrease in the flow of money, everything was now in a state of change. People living in ancestral homes no longer had the resources to keep them going. Keeping on a large team of servants was becoming impossible and the mounting costs of roof repairs and other essential maintenance, meant that one by one, these once privileged families, were having to consider selling up and moving on.

For most of these families, World War II (1939–1945) was to be the final nail in the coffin. Britain was now broke. Very few people could afford to live in a large country house. For most, the final clear out happened in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Country estates were being sold off left right and centre. In each case, the estate would be split into smaller farms, and then sold as separate lots.

MY PARENTS: JAMES AND DORA: THEIR FAMILY BACKGROUNDS

The contents of the big houses (antique furniture, paintings, books etc) were all emptied out and went under the auctioneer's hammer. For a number of years there were auctions almost every weekend and with such a large amount of stuff coming onto the market, lots of amazing relics were sold for next to nothing. The prices for old furniture were often so low, that sometimes it was more economic to just chop it up for firewood. If you had been wanting to collect antiques at the time, you would have picked up some excellent bargains.



MY FATHER JAMES' EARLIER LIFE

My father never actually lived at Linley Wood but he went there often and knew it very well. His grandfather Frederick died in 1945 and 4 years later, the estate was split up and sold. James' father Cuthbert wrote to one of his cousins at the time and said that the London auctioneer's Sotheby's had collected all the portraits of queens and duchesses and from the library they had taken a few boxes of mouldy old books. The rest of the contents was to be sold by the local auctioneers at the weekend.

Cuthbert did note that he had taken home a few trailer loads of portraits and other stuff that he felt had a particular family significance. In fact, given the difficult circumstances of the time, he did do quite a reasonable job of separating out a lot of the more important relics. He drove back down to Cattistock, in Dorset, where he was now living in a 200 year old thatched cottage (The Pound House). In the same village he had also bought a house for his mother (Cattistock Lodge) and between the two properties he was able to stash quite a lot of the old family stuff. Much of these old relics were still there when I cleared my late aunt's house in 2005 (no auctioneers this time).

So, James started his life with a reasonably privileged upbringing, but things were changing very quickly. They were Landed Gentry type people but the family land and the general trappings of family wealth that he had witnessed as a child were fast disappearing.

In 1930 James' family were living in Fareham near Portsmouth, where his father was based in the Royal Navy. At that time, Cuthbert and Violet had three children, all daughters (Pat, Danny and Rosamond) so when James arrived, they must have been very pleased to at last have a son who would be able to carry on the family name. By this time Violet was very much advanced in her years to be a mother. On 15 February, heavily pregnant, she was to celebrate her 45th birthday. She gave birth to James the following month, 28 March. He did not have any physical defects and gave every appearance of being a perfectly normal baby.

As I look back and consider the very privileged childhood that James had, one impression I get, is of an only son being brought up with everybody doing everything for him. His mother doted on him as probably did all the household servants.

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*Heath-Caldwell family. Diana, Violet, Patricia, James, Cuthbert, Rosamond.
Photo taken around 1935.*

In addition, he had three elder sisters continually keeping an eye on him. For James, life was probably all play but no responsibility and nothing really practical. For him there was very little opportunity to think for himself and develop what today would be called personal organisation skills.

A few years later James' father Cuthbert took up a job in Hong Kong and so James spent his early childhood growing up in the far East with a Chinese nursery maid (amah) to look after him. The family returned to England in the mid-1930s and when James was about 8 years old (1938), he was enrolled at a boarding school (Winton) in Winchester.

James said that he found school difficult, as he was quite small for his age, but he was fairly bright and so he managed to pass most of his tests. He then progressed on to The Royal Naval College, Eaton Hall, near Chester. His father had made the decision that James would follow in his footsteps and become an officer in the Navy. James was not consulted and that was really a pity, as with hindsight a career in the Navy was probably not the best choice for him, or as James would

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later put it “not really his kettle of fish”. However, back in those days, fathers, sent their sons to boarding schools and fathers, decided what vocation their sons would follow. That was just the way things were.



*James Heath-Caldwell in navy cadet uniform.
Picture taken around 1943.*

A few years after WWII had ended, James passed his officer selection board and entered the Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, Devon.

Looking back, James said he actually found it quite difficult to follow in his father's footsteps. Cuthbert was a war hero and he had been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) for bravery in the Mesopotamian campaign during WWI. Following in his footsteps would have been difficult for anyone.

James did however enjoy his time at Dartmouth (1946–1947) and he told a very funny story about being in a boat race during his time there. The fast team

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was very organised and got their sail up very quickly and launched. The team that James was in, was all the duffers. They were rather disorganised and as a result were a good 10 minutes behind, before they finally managed to get their boat underway. However, by a stroke of luck, it just happened that there was a very fast tide that was just on the turn. As the events unfolded, the fast team, which had launched first, had immediately been swept backwards but by the time James' team launched the tide had turned and they were swept forward and actually won the race!

Despite James enjoying himself, his navy records indicate that all was not well. He was assessed on four occasions and on three of these the officer in charge noted that James was very popular with everyone but he was struggling. In three of these reports the details were words to the effect that James is young and small in stature but will hopefully develop well, given a bit more time. However, the fourth report was written by someone who, with hindsight, was a bit more on the ball. This report is very short and just says "James is incompetent and should be removed from the navy as soon as possible".

James graduated from Dartmouth and then spent a few years stationed on aircraft carriers which he found to be quite exciting. After that he was being considered for pilot training. Flying is an ideal job for officers who are small, as the space inside an aircraft cockpit is very restricted and not suitable for big men. James was sent to Yeovilton and was flown in a Firefly as a familiarisation training exercise. It was around this time that everything just became too much for him. He had also had a short interlude with a lady called Hope but things with Hope had not worked out as well as he had hoped. Presumably this had also added to his anxieties.

He went home for the weekend to see his parents, and while there, he had a complete mental breakdown and became convinced that he was the devil incarnate. His father, who was very religious (as were lots of people at the time), tried to perform an exorcism to remove the devil from him but this probably made things worse, as James was then made to feel that he really did have the devil in him.

Exactly what happened in James' brain, we will never know, but his father called the navy and they arranged an ambulance to pick James up. He was drugged and was taken to the Royal Naval Hospital at Netley near Southampton. This was around 1953 when James was about 23 years old. The diagnosis was schizophrenia.

The word schizophrenia is a medical term, used to describe a wide range of mental conditions. It is often regarded as split personality but every case is different.

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The patient suffers from hallucinations, delusions, confused thoughts and changes in behaviour. The only common theme is that their brains don't work logically and, in most cases, they are not curable. The main treatment these days is drugs to slow their brains down but the patient then feels very lethargic and so does not like taking the drugs.

James said he felt quite relaxed in the hospital, as with the drugs he felt very restful and he had no responsibilities. The nurses fed him and told him what to do. He did not need to think about anything. Sadly his naval career was now over. He said that the most difficult thing about this, was that his social life disappeared over night. All his friends continued in the navy but he was now on the outside.

After a few months he went back home and lived for a while with his parents in Cattistock, while he started to get his thoughts together and think about what to do next.

As it was to turn out, James and his sisters Pat, Danny and Rosamond, were all to suffer from schizophrenia, at different times. Pat and Danny got it relatively mildly but Rosamond got it quite badly and for James it was to prove utterly devastating. It must have also been terrible for their parents Cuthbert and Violet, but they were very religious, and I suppose they just prayed regularly and hoped that it would somehow sort itself out and disappear. I would note here that I do not mean to criticize them, as in those days, not much was known about schizophrenia and even today, any plan to address a situation like this, would not be guaranteed to result in a good outcome.

After being at home for a period, James decided that farming might be a more suitable career for him. It would be a lot less stressful than a job in the navy and hopefully everything would work out much better. He decided to enrol at Kingston Maurward College, near Dorchester.



KINGSTON MAURWARD COLLEGE, DORSET (1955–1956)

James and Dora met at Kingston Maurward College in September 1955 when they both enrolled to do a one year agriculture diploma. James was 25 and Dora was 20. There were about 30 other men on the course and 6 girls. Most of these fellow students were younger, having progressed on directly from school. Kingston Maurward was originally an estate owned by the Pitt family (cousins of William Pitt the elder who was Prime Minister from 1766 to 1768). The estate was eventually taken over by Dorset County Council and in 1949 it opened as an agricultural college. The original manor house, a rather impressive building clad in Portland stone, was very much central to the activities of the college, and for James and Dora, and the other students, the whole place must have been quite magical. James got on well with everybody, just like he had in the navy. He developed a very good friendship with another student called Freddy Prideau and they all had an excellent time together. For the 6 girls it must have been great with all these men around, but James and Dora were in fact the only ones who ended up getting married.

Dora visited the Pound House in Cattistock and met James's parents, Cuthbert and Violet, and also his grandmother (Constance or GM) who was by now 87 years old and was living at nearby Cattistock Lodge.

James did not try to hide from Dora the fact that he had been medically discharged from the navy with a mental illness. He put it down to a bit of a 'break down' and this is probably what he genuinely believed. Other than that, he did not talk about it. He certainly did not use the word schizophrenia, as it did not seem to be anything to dwell on. His parents likewise were also silent on the matter and perhaps that was their way of hoping that the problem would not occur again.

Dora and James had decided that they both wanted to get away and start a new life. New Zealand was the country that held the most promise for them. At this time, the New Zealand government was encouraging emigrants from the United Kingdom and if you met the criteria, you could get a subsidized passage for just £10 but James decided that they would fund their own ticket. This may have been

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because he realised that, with a mental history, he probably would not be eligible for a subsidized ticket anyway.

James was very impressed with Dora's stepfather Les Bailey and in particular his ability to make things and fix things using tools. At the same time Les and Dora senior really liked James, as he was such a lovely person. Les encouraged James to go on a welding course before they set off and so James did this and very much enjoyed it.

Dora found James's parents to always be polite and friendly but looking back she felt that they probably looked down on her. In fact she was spot on, as years later they made their views quite plain, to some of their other relatives, that James had married beneath himself and that Dora's family were nothing more than just common working-class people.



1956: Wedding Photo: James and Dora Heath-Caldwell.

The wedding took place at St James' Church in Poole, 26 August 1956, and the whole event went well with no problems, except for Dora having trouble getting to the church on time. Just as she and her stepfather Les were driving to the church, the Poole harbour bridge had gone up and so she was delayed 20 minutes.



1956: Wedding Photo: Heath-Caldwell and Bailey/Jones families.
Sonia Bailey, Cuthbert Heath-Caldwell, Pat Heath-Caldwell, Violet Heath-Caldwell, Constance Heath-Caldwell,
James Heath-Caldwell, Dora Heath-Caldwell, Dora Bailey, Les Bailey, Edna Jones, Nigel Parker, Hilary Bailey.

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A few weeks later, in early September, Dora and James boarded the passenger ship RMS Rangitata and they set off for New Zealand sailing via Panama. The ship made a few stops along the way but James was not keen to disembark and see the tourist sights. He felt they would be better to stay on board and save every penny of what money they had. Dora thought this was a bit strange but did not really think about it much further. If James did not want to take this one-off opportunity to do any sightseeing, then that was fine by her.

They arrived in a very cold Wellington, 4th October, and disembarked. By now Dora was suffering from morning sickness, which rather dulled her appreciation for the great adventure that they were now on. They managed to get some initial lodgings with a Mrs Smith in a house up on the hill overlooking the harbour. The next step was to find a suitable job on a farm and begin their agricultural career. New Zealand was very much on the move and it did not take long to find a few farming jobs, advertised in the Wellington newspaper.

The first job they tried for, was working on a farm at Konini near Pahiatua, so they journeyed out by train (railcar), to take a look and meet their potential employer. They didn't get a comfortable feel about this job and when the young couple, who were just leaving, took them aside and told them the place was terrible and the employer was diabolical, Dora and James decided to pass on this one. On their journey back, Dora remembers waiting on the railway station platform but when the railcar appeared it drove through without stopping. This could have been a bit of a disaster, as there were no more trains and nowhere to stay. Luckily the train driver had seen them and so he stopped the railcar and reversed back to pick them up, much to their relief.

The next job they applied for was a dairy farm at Pihama, which was located on the coast between Opunake and Hawera. This was in Taranaki, the whole province of which is dominated by the beautifully formed volcanic cone of Mt Taranaki (Mt Egmont) rising up 8,261ft (2,518m) from the sea. This job felt right, so they accepted it and together they moved into their first home just before Christmas 1956.

PIHAMA, TARANAKI (1956–1958)

The farm at Pihama was owned by Mr & Mrs Gopperth who were quite elderly and so they had split the farm between their two sons, who now managed each half as a separate enterprise. James and Dora were employed by Ivan Gopperth and they found him to be a very reasonable person to work for.



1957: James and Dora's first home, on the Gopperth's farm at Pihama.

They were made to feel very welcome, initially staying with Mr & Mrs Gopperth senior and this gave them a few weeks to search around for some second-hand furniture to set up their first home together. Dora continued to suffer from morning sickness but it was a lovely feeling when they moved into their little farm worker's house, safe in the knowledge that they now had a home and a secure income.

The hours were very long but James and Dora coped. They got up very early in the morning and left the house at 5.00am. The cowshed was quite close being

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1957: The dairy cows in the milk shed, on the Gopperth's farm at Pihama.

only about 200m away, so that was a bonus. There were 115 cows, and these were milked in batches of 10, which altogether took a couple of hours. Once the milking was finished and the equipment was all cleaned up, Dora and James returned to their house for breakfast at about 7.30am, after which James then set out to do the day's work on the farm. He had a one-hour break for lunch at mid-day and then worked through the afternoon until the next milking session which was from 3.30pm to 5.30pm. On a dairy farm in those days, cows were generally milked twice a day, 7 days a week, so a day off each week for a farm worker was only possible if someone else did the milking. On Sunday, lots of people would go to church but only after the cows had been milked.

These rather long hours were what was normally expected of farm workers at the time. Wages were about £55 a month from which a quarter was deducted for house rent, free milk and free firewood. The rate of tax was probably about 17%. This wage was not a lot of money, but it was enough to live on.

The following May James and Dora went to Palmerston North to attend a dairy farmers' conference. Dora was by now 8 months pregnant but despite this she was keen to take the opportunity to get out for a few days and see a bit more of the country. They went by train but as they boarded, they suddenly realised

PIHAMA, TARANAKI (1956–1958)

that they had not pre-booked reserved seats and as the train was full, all the seats were taken. An exceedingly kind passenger recognised her predicament and immediately stood up so she could have his seat. What happened next was very unexpected. Before she had managed to move across and take up the man's kind offer of a seat, James had sat down, politely saying thank you as he did so. Dora was rather shocked but no more so than the man, who then immediately told James that he had vacated his seat for Dora who was obviously heavily pregnant and much in need of a seat. James quickly came to his senses, stood up and Dora sat down. This was just a momentary error on James' part but nevertheless, it seemed a very odd error to make.

Later at the conference Dora was feeling very ill and so she went and sat in the park. She remembers feeling very much overcome and just sat there crying thinking how much she would really like to just go home to England. She was very unhappy, and things just did not seem right but she could not really identify what it was that was actually wrong.

So what was the problem? Certainly being in the later stages of pregnancy, she would not have been feeling top form. She was by now finding the experience to be quite draining and rather painful but the anticipation of an imminent arrival and the new joy that it would bring kept her going. James was a lovely person and she was very pleased that she had married him but something was not quite right with their marriage. The farm at Pihama was relatively remote. She could walk down towards the sea and look out at the waves gently coming into the shore. Out there, a long way over the horizon was England. Emigrating to New Zealand had been a great adventure but it meant that she was now a long way from home and going back just wasn't an option. The Gopperths were a lovely family but other than going to church on Sundays Dora was meeting very few people and she did not have any real friendships.

Another thing that Dora had noticed more and more, was James' aversion to spending money, even very small amounts. One reason why they were not meeting many people, was that he just did not seem to like going out, usually saying they could not afford it.

Dora gave birth to their first child at Opunake Maternity Hospital, a daughter whom they named Hilary, 7 June 1957. The birth went reasonably well but afterwards Dora developed very bad boils on her bottom and the doctor was very concerned that these might be infectious. As a result she was moved off to New Plymouth and placed in an isolation ward for a week. Baby Hilary was kept at the

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hospital at Hawera. This must have been pretty tough for Dora, having just given birth but having then more or less immediately been separated from her new baby.

The good news of Hilary's arrival was very much welcomed back at Cattistock in England and was also given to James' grandmother Constance who was still alive but she died a few days later having reached the great age of 88. Although Dora was not aware of it at the time, James' grandmother had left him some money which later on he was able to use to buy a farm.

Constance was laid to rest in the churchyard near the ancestral home of Linley Wood and after all the formalities, Cuthbert cleared his mother's possessions from Cattistock Lodge and the building was sold. Again various things went off to the auctioneers but a lot of her possessions were kept in the family, some going to James's sisters and quite a few things were crammed into the Pound House. Some were put in the attic and were to remain there untouched for the next 48 years.

Sending things to New Zealand was not a very practical option and so James did not ask for any of the furniture, family portraits or any other bulky items. He did however tell his father that a few things would be nice to have and so Cuthbert arranged for a chest to be packed up with a selection of what he felt would be useful items and these were dispatched to James.

James did at the time mention to his father that Dora's wristwatch had recently broken and if grandmother's gold watch was available then they would be very grateful to receive it. A few months later the chest arrived at Opunake and when they unpacked it they were very pleased to also find the watch. This was in good working order and my mother then wore it every day for the next 10 years, it being the only watch that she owned. The other items in the chest included a tea service, a tray and some cutlery all made of silver. Also a china dinner service, a clock and few other items. All the things that Cuthbert thought might be useful for them in their new home.

I mention this note about the watch because I was to find out quite a few years later that unbeknown to James and Dora, the dispatch of the watch to Dora caused an all-out fight between Cuthbert and James' three sisters (Pat, Danny and Rosamond). They all saw their grandmother's gold watch as being a prized family heirloom that they felt should go to one of them. Cuthbert presumably felt that the gold watch should go to Dora as it was the only thing that James had actually asked for. I don't know for sure but when I heard about this years later from Aunt Danny, I got the impression that they all held Dora responsible for this and probably never forgave her.

PIHAMA, TARANAKI (1956–1958)

The following year Cuthbert and Violet decided to visit James and Dora in New Zealand and of course to meet Hilary, their new granddaughter. They flew out first class in January 1958 travelling via New York, San Francisco, Honolulu, Canton Island, Fiji, Auckland, New Plymouth. James and Dora drove up to New Plymouth to meet them and then took them back to Pihama. The Gopperths also made them feel very welcome and all indications are that they very much enjoyed their two months in New Zealand. They also did a trip across to the East Coast to attend a wedding of one of James' former naval colleagues who had also moved to New Zealand.



*1958: Family group on the drive at Pihama with the Ford Consul.
Violet, Hilary, James, Dora and Heidi the Collie.*

After he returned to England, Cuthbert wrote a note about his experiences in New Zealand and I have included it here in my story, as I feel it gives quite a good view of the country at this time. Cuthbert's note reads as follows:

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1958 – New Zealand

Two months in New Zealand. Some impressions.

We reached New Zealand on the 25th January and left on the 25th March having travelled via the U.S.A. QANTAS Airways returning via the Middle East.

The purpose of the trip was to visit our son who is working on a dairy farm in the Taranaki district.

Taranaki is situated on the bulge on the West coast of the North Island about 100 miles north of Wellington.

The countryside is dominated by Mount Egmont, 8000 feet extinct volcano. There is a range of hills on the east side of the mountain: on the south the land slopes gently down to the sea. There are several small streams running down from the mountain. This is one of the best dairy lands in New Zealand and is selling at about £100 an acre. Less than 100 years ago it was a scrub covered swamp.

The owner of the farm on which we stayed is nominally retired which does not mean that he has given up working, but his 250 acres is divided into two units which are managed by two of his sons who work their holdings with a high degree of co-operation. Each unit has a paid worker whose wives assist with the milking.

The owner lives in the homestead surrounded by a bright attractive garden, a feature of which is a tall hedge of blue hydrangeas which seem to thrive in the district.

The younger son and his family live about 50 yards from the homestead just off the main road. The workers residence is about 50 yards further on in the corner of a paddock. All the houses are on the telephone which is more widely used than in this country [than in the UK] at much cheaper rates. Most of the New Zealand houses are one storey timber buildings with galvanised roofs, usually painted white every two years and picked out in bright colours. They are generally built on concrete piles raised about 18 inches above the ground. The effect is pleasing to the eye and enhances the sense of freshness and cleanliness and light which was our first impression of the country. Even the towns look bright and clean. We saw nothing drab or dingy.

The workers residence where we stayed was naturally smaller than the other houses. It has a fair sized well proportioned living room with three

PIHAMA, TARANAKI (1956–1958)

bedrooms, a small combined kitchen and pantry and an up-to-date bathroom opening out of it. Everything is electric, cooker, water heater and automatic pump which brings water from a well in the paddock. At the east end there is a small sunporch with a wash-house and lavatory opening out of it.

There is a roomy garage with a concrete approach to the main road, the whole fenced in with a lawn five to ten yards wide round the house. A few yards away a quarter of an acre kitchen garden, also fenced in, the whole being shielded from the main road by a high boxthorn hedge.

*The farm is flat except that at the far end there is a belt of sand-dunes leading to the cliffs. The dunes are covered with yellow lupins and scrub. Apart from the flowering shrubs there are few trees in the district, a few plantations of *pinus signus* [pine trees]. Shelter is provided by boxthorn hedges up to 20 or 30 feet high. These help to shelter the vegetation and the animals from the cold salty winds which prevail during the short winter months.*

Everything on the farm is streamlined. Milking shed and implement sheds are close to the homestead, and adjoins a concrete road which runs down the middle of the farm. On either side of the race, as it is called, there are eight or ten rectangular paddocks divided by box thorn hedges. The gates are all made on the farm and kept in first class repair.

During our visit they were milking 113 Jersey cows, ten at a time from 5.30am to 7.30am in the morning and from 3.30pm to 5.30pm in the evening. The milk lorry is backed onto the concrete bay in the shed, and the milk driven off half a mile to the factory after the morning milking. It is poured into tanks on arrival and has been made into cheese by about 3pm. The cheeses are then placed in an air-conditioned store for a fortnight when they are ready for export, though they are at their best if kept for 12 months.

After the morning milking, the cows are turned into a different paddock each day, though during part of our visit they were turned into a turnip field for an hour. Apart from the one field of turnips nothing is grown except grass. Silage and hay is made for winter feeding.

I was told that a really good cow produces 500lbs of butterfat per season, but that the average yield is about 250lbs. Generally speaking, milk recording is less efficient than in this country [than in the UK].

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It is usual for farm workers to take their 14 days annual holiday in the winter months, but our farmer suggested a week's holiday for our worker and told him to take a few days extra if he wished so that we should be able to see more of the country. Accordingly we set off early one morning with our infant grand-daughter parked on the front seat of the car and a couple of tents on the roof rack. The weather was warm when we started with midday shade temperatures of 78 and 84, but nearly always a cool sea breeze.

We drove south through Wanganui to Palmerston North and then turned east through the Manawatu Gorge up the west coast through Dannevirke to Napier in the Hawkes Bay district. Except for the gorge, the roads were fairly level with long straight stretches, tar-sealed in the middle, the edges left rough and levelled from time to time with a grader. After leaving Manawatu Gorge it got hotter and we lost the vivid green of the west coast. After leaving Napier we found ourselves in the hilly country rising up to two or three thousand feet and following the contours of the hills with countless hairpin bends and often a sheer drop of several hundred feet.



1958: Camping at Lake Tutira, near Napier.

PIHAMA, TARANAKI (1956–1958)



1958: Camping at Lake Tutira: Dora, Violet, James, Hilary.

We camped for the night under the willows by the side of Lake Tutira, about 30 miles north of Napier. This is a bird sanctuary, all we saw were some black swans, geese, and ducks. It was very beautiful in the early morning, with the vivid blue sky and the surrounding hills and the willows reflected in the lake. After a bathe in the lake and breakfast we left for Gisborne, mostly up and down and round steep hills with the usual hairpin bends every fifty yards. We passed several road gangs with bulldozers, cutting through hills and filling up valleys.

At Gisborne we spent two nights in a motor camp close to the beach. The temperature during the day was high, and we were in and out of the sea most of the time. You find motor camps or motels in or near many of the towns and bathing beaches. They are pleasantly designed with trees or high hedges. Sites are provided for tents and caravans, and there are buildings with shower, baths and lavatories, and a cook house supplied with electric or gas cookers on the penny in the slot principle.

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The next day we made an 80 mile drive to Opotiki on the Bay of Plenty. We climbed to 4,000 feet and as we crossed the summit we passed from a brown dried up countryside to a vivid green one. We spent the night in another motor camp at Ohope beach. Rain started during the night and continued for most of the rest of the trip. This was a pity as we missed some of the most striking scenery. We stopped in Rotorua, and some of the party had a look at the Maori village at Whakarewarewa, but as there were no guides to be seen, we gave the geysers and boiling springs a miss and drove on to Wairaki which is a few miles north of Lake Taupo. Wairaki is also famous for its thermal wonders, and we joined a party next morning to walk round the valley and look at the geysers and boiling mud. There had been so much rain that one of them had turned from pink to white (or the other way about) during the night. Meanwhile we had been fortunate to engage the last four berth cabin in the Wairaki motor camp, as there was no ground dry enough to pitch a tent. Some of the party had a disturbed night, the camp being a few hundred yards from another thermal valley which has been tapped to provide steam for a power station. The steam escaping never stopped roaring, and the cabin was vibrating all night. The rain was still coming down in buckets the next morning so it was decided to cut short the trip and make for home. We drove south along the eastern shore of Lake Taupo, then turned west through Taumarunui with an alarming succession of bluffs and gorges [Taumarunui to Stratford]. The road was slippery in places and a skid would have sent us over the bluff and into the river five hundred feet below. As it happened next day some of the towns we passed through were flooded and the roads were closed. The rain continued for another day after our return. On an average we had about one day of rain a week during our two months visit, but usually there was bright sunshine.

During the latter part of the trip we passed close to two volcanoes, Ruapehu and Tongariro, but owing to the rain we did not see them. The visitor gets the impression that New Zealand is a happy country, although some of the legislation is considered socialist, the individual still counts. Given integrity, average intelligence, some initiative and above all a capacity for work, any young man has a reasonable prospect of making a good living and probably running his own show after a few years. No one could have been more thoughtful, hospitable, and kind than our farmer and his family.

PIHAMA, TARANAKI (1956–1958)

Indeed everywhere we found friendliness and nice manners. The standard of living seems to be much higher than in this country [than in the UK]. The food was good, margarine and artificial creams are unknown but I did not like the bacon.

The New Zealanders we were privileged to meet struck us as carefree though doubtless they have problems to face like the rest of mankind. The fall in the prices of butter and cheese is one of them, but the older hands have been through it before, and I was told that many of them can increase production if it is worthwhile.

I cannot write with certainty about the economic aspect. Many imported goods are dutiable, but there is no such thing as purchase tax. I think taxation is generally less drastic than in this country [than in the UK]. Tobacco is half the price and petrol is three and ten a gallon.

We shall always have happy memories of our two months in New Zealand. We boarded our plane at New Plymouth 4pm Tuesday 25th March and headed to Auckland.

From Auckland Cuthbert and Violet flew to Sydney and then onto Newcastle where they stayed with some of Violet's Palmer relations for 4 days. After that they flew back to Sydney and on to London going via Jakarta, Singapore, Bangkok, Calcutta, Karachi, Cairo and Athens.

Dora and James spent two years working on the Gopperth's farm at Pihama and learned all about dairy farming. They had found the Gopperths to be lovely people to work with but it was time for a change. Their next adventure was to be the experience of working on a sheep farm.



FEILDING, MANAWATU (1958–1959)

In late 1958 James and Dora moved to Les Gandar's farm, which was at Colyton, near Feilding, in the Manawatu. Dora was by now pregnant with her second child (Jeremy James, i.e. me) but the move went well, and they were very pleased with their new house which was much larger than their Pihama house.



1958: *The Valley House, on Les Gandar's farm at Colyton, near Feilding.*

Les Gandar was an incredible person. He had graduated in Science at Victoria University and during World War II he had been in the Royal NZ Air Force and had been part of the war effort in the Middle East. By 1958 he was well established on his sheep farm and in his spare time he was becoming very active in local politics. Much later he progressed on to become a Member of Parliament (1966–1978) and he finished his political career as the NZ High Commissioner in London (1979–1982).

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Les was a lovely person to work for and Dora remembers him, in the shearing shed, showing her how to throw a fleece. She still thinks about it whenever she throws her duvet onto her bed.

I arrived at midnight between 7 and 8 March 1959, being born at Feilding Maternity Hospital. Our family had now grown from 3 to 4 (Mum, Dad and 2 infants).

While James had been relatively settled working on the dairy farm at Pihama, he found working on a sheep farm to be difficult. One would have assumed that working for a person like Les Gandar would have been a dream job, a great opportunity to learn a lot very quickly but for James this was not to be the case. Dora noticed that whenever decisions needed to be made, James was very



1959: Jeremy James Heath-Caldwell, age 10 days.

hesitant to just make the decision and get on with it. Instead he was continually hesitating and waiting for further guidance from Les. This must have been quite frustrating for Les, as he would have noticed that progress was slow and not a lot of work was actually getting done.

Things eventually came to a head when James had an accident on the tractor. He had been using the front loader to pick up wet hay bales, which he was dropping into a gully where they were going to be left to compost. Somehow James and the tractor tottered down into the gully, joining all the hay bales. This could have been quite serious, but James survived, and they also managed to recover the tractor without too much of a problem.

FEILDING, MANAWATU (1958–1959)

Les Gander was an exceedingly switched on person and he did not see how James could have crashed accidentally. The whole situation made him extremely uncomfortable and a question at the back of his mind, was whether James was actually suicidal. Les decided that there was no long-term future on his farm for James. Apparently he was very gentle when he spoke to James and told him that he was terminating his employment. He told James that there was no hurry and he could continue to stay and work there until he had found a new job to go to.

By now James was aware that he would soon have some money from his late grandmother's estate but the cash had not yet arrived, so he decided it might be best to head back to Taranaki and find another job milking cows.



HAWERA, TARANAKI (1959–1960)

In about October of 1959 they took up a job near Hawera working for a farmer by the name of Les Bent but expectations of regaining the happy times that they had experienced with the Gopperths at Pihama were quickly dashed. They found their house was full of fleas and although Les Bent's wife was a lovely lady, they found Les Bent to be a fairly horrid person to work for. The house was extremely dirty and the tap water tasted a bit grimy. The bad tap water was explained a short while later when Dora found two dead birds floating in the water tank. Luckily for James and Dora, they knew they were not going to be staying too long so life was endurable (as long as they boiled the tap water).

While living at Hawera, they were joined by Dora's mother (Dora senior or Nana) who had saved up her sixpences in a glass jar until she had enough money for a trip to New Zealand. Nana was quite practical and very organised, but she was also quite a domineering woman and she and Dora did not have the best



1959: Jeremy James with his grandmother Dora Bailey and father James at Hawera.

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mother – daughter relationship. Nevertheless, they were incredibly pleased to be reunited. Years later, Nana told me that she absolutely loved her first visit to New Zealand as she had done very little travelling in her life and being able to see her first two grandchildren made everything wonderful. This was even though I had apparently bitten her quite badly on the end of her finger. But there you have it, most grandparents enjoy the company of their grandchildren.

During this time another odd situation arose with James over his frugal habit of seldom wanting to part with money. Nana momentarily ran out of cash and while waiting for more money to be sent out from England, she asked her son in law if he could possibly give her a loan to tide her over. Her request was met with a rather emphatic no and this was a bit of a shock to both mother and daughter. James did however pay for a ticket for Nana to travel to the South Island to visit her cousin Maggie Ikin in Dunedin.

The money from James' inheritance had now arrived and so it was full steam ahead looking for a suitable farm to buy. They did some more journeys by car to see a few farms up in the Waikato and an excellent sheep farm at Karapiro. They would have loved to have bought the Karapiro farm but sadly it was not within their budget. They had also looked in Taranaki and the farm they chose was at a place called Tuna which was about 5 km to the north east of the village of Midhirst (10km from the town of Stratford).

We don't have a record of how much they paid but I assume it was approx £10,000 (this being before New Zealand decimalised and changed to dollars in 1967).

TUNA, NEAR STRATFORD, TARANAKI (1960–1963)

The owner had built a very nice bungalow only two years previously and this was set approx 200m back from the road. It was approached by a long drive that meandered down over some sloping ground, past some large trees to a little bridge over a stream and then up an incline to the house which was located on the flat area above. Although the farm had recently been run as a sheep farm there was a cow shed and this was located not far from the bungalow. The farm was 108 acres which was a bit on the small side but large enough to take a herd of approx 100 cows.



1960: James and Dora's farm at Tuna near Midhirst.

James and Dora were very pleased to leave the Hawera farm and there were no fleas in their new house at Tuna and the tap water tasted fine. Nana was still with them and was able to share the excitement of the move which took place around February 1960. This was to be their first farm and the first home that they could

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1960: James and Dora's farm at Tuna near Midhirst.

truly call their own. It was a major step forward in their great adventure and their dream of a happy family life in New Zealand. For me it was going to be the place from where I would have my earliest memories.

There was a lot to be done to convert the farm from sheep to dairy. The old milk shed had to be cleaned out and recommissioned, but a much larger job was reorganising the layout of the paddocks. This required a substantial amount of new fencing which was going to cost a lot of money. For the short term, it was decided to use electric fencing which could be erected quickly, at reasonably low cost, and then later on, sections of the fence could be upgraded to a more sturdy post and wire fencing, as money became available.

This was a good plan, but James also decided that he would like to plant some rows of trees along the fence line. Dora pointed out that this would not be practical, as the cows would eat the young trees. James seemed to be focused on the fact that trees would take a long time to grow, so it would be best to plant them straight away but he just did not seem able to understand, that the cows would be likely to eat them. Although the cost was quite considerable, James bought the trees and planted them. A short while later, the cows ate the trees.

TUNA, NEAR STRATFORD, TARANAKI (1960–1963)

Again, Dora started thinking that maybe James was not very good at looking into a situation and making the right decision. Or put another way, James could not see the wood for the trees.

The 100 cows were moved onto the property and having eaten the trees, they settled down to eating the grass and producing their precious milk. Milking took place twice a day and the milk was then sent to the dairy factory at Midhirst where it was made into butter, much of which, back in the 1960s, was then exported to the United Kingdom.

There wasn't much social life on a remote dairy farm, but James and Dora started to meet some of the neighbours and make a few friendships. Church on Sunday was another opportunity to meet people and around this time Dora also joined the Stratford Archery Club. She had sensed that James was not too keen on her joining a club, as it was another thing that would cost money, even if the cost was relatively minor. But, having originally come from Nottingham, Dora felt an affinity with Robin Hood and so the joy of pulling back on a bow string and firing off a few arrows very much appealed to her.

I have lots of little snippets of memory of my early life, growing up on our farm at Tuna, but the earliest memory that I can put a date to, would have been the birth of my brother Michael on the 17th of November 1960. I remember that



1961: Tuna: Dora with Michael and Hilary.

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my father took me and my sister Hilary into Stratford to see Mum and baby. We turned up at the front door of the maternity hospital but initially did not get any further, as they had a strict rule - no visitors. I remember that the nurse at the door was very nice and she suggested that we walk around to the back of the building and we would be able to see Mum through the window. My dad lifted me up and sat me on the windowsill and I remember peering into what seemed to be a rather dark room and sure enough, I could see my mother waving from her bed. I am quite proud that I have such an early memory because at this time I would have only been aged 1 year and 8 months.



1961: Tuna: James with Michael, Jeremy James and Hilary.

In Taranaki there has always been a good community spirit and local farmers always help each other, so James and Dora quickly got to know their neighbours who were very welcoming. There was Jack and Enid Cookson, whose farm was on the opposite side of the road and there was Martin Langdon, whose farm bordered our own on the southern side. I remember going to Martin Langdon's house once and saw a wonderful new thing called a television set (TV). It was a black and white picture and I remember there was music and some girls dancing. Martin Langdon particularly liked the dancing girls.

TUNA, NEAR STRATFORD, TARANAKI (1960–1963)



1961: Tuna: Feeding the calves: James and Hilary.

The local family that we got to know the best was the Klenner family who lived just a bit further along the road, in a very old wooden house behind which I remember a shed and a large green laurel tree. The front door had a window made up of some old panes of stained glass. I also remember that the kitchen had a black iron coal range that Ann used for cooking and keeping the place warm. The house was later pulled down and there is now just a green field with nothing left to even indicate where it once was.

Don and Ann Klenner had a lot of children and I was to find out much later that the eldest two, David and Linda were from Don's first marriage but their mother had died when they were very young. Ann had been about to become an unmarried mother but she met Don and married him before her son Michael was born. Don and Ann then went on to have Silvia, Brenda, Colin, Phillipa and Robin. And then later they adopted a young Maori boy called Nathan. The numerous children did not stop there, as years later, long after Don and Ann had passed away, Colin told me that a lady called Karen made contact with them and informed them that she was their half-sister, having been an earlier illegitimate child mothered by Ann and put out to adoption. Life is complicated.

Ann and Don were what would have been described at the time as Catholic working-class people and Don was employed as a farm worker on one of the

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*1961: Tuna: Playing in the mud near the cowshed:
Hilary, Colin Klenner, Brenda Klenner, Jeremy James.*

other neighbouring farms. Don did not say much but Ann was very warm and friendly and she was the sort of person who always had a smile on her face. Silvia and Brenda were very close to my sister in age and Colin was my age, so we often played together. At the same time Ann and my mother became very good friends. Sometimes the Klenner children would come over to our house and sometimes we would go over to their house. I have lots of memories of fun times together but I do also have a terrible memory of an incident when Don beat Michael very badly. The whole episode scared the living daylights out of me, and I remember thinking that it was completely unfair on Michael and I was very surprised that his mother Ann did not intervene. I have never forgotten it, but I suppose back in those days fathers beating their children was probably quite common.

James and Dora met Warwick and Shirley Martin at church and Warwick, in addition to farming, also sold insurance policies. James bought an insurance policy taken out on Michael, but Dora could not really understand why. On the good side, Dora and Shirley became regular friends and we sometimes played with their children, Leif, Thomas and Linda. My mother and Shirley are still in touch.

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Some other people that my parents knew were Colin Trowbridge and his wife Claire. Colin had been at the Kingston Mauward Agricultural College with my parents in Dorchester. He had recently moved to New Zealand and he now had a job herd testing, so he visited lots of the farms in the Taranaki area. We did not see a lot of Colin and Claire. I got the impression that Colin was really good friends with my father James. Everybody liked James as he was such a nice person.

I only have a vague memory of John and Maureen Bowyer. He was also a herd tester and they were both English. My mother looked after their horse called Kelly who was a very large animal at 17 hands. Apparently my father James was not happy about giving them free grazing but my mother liked horses. John and Maureen bought a farm high up on Pembroke Road but a short while after that tragedy struck when John was diagnosed with cancer and he sadly died very quickly afterwards.

There was also a local farmer called Rex Morgan but I am not sure how well they got to know him.

One day Dora said to James that it would be good to get a domestic pig to fatten up for butchering. This started a sequence of events and before she knew it, James was dreaming up a scheme to move into pig farming.



1962: Cuthbert Heath-Caldwell in the sitting room at Tuna.

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James' parents Cuthbert and Violet came out for a second trip to see us in January 1962. Again they flew out first class and presumably they were very pleased to see James settled on his own farm together with daughter in law and three grandchildren.



1962: *In the kitchen at Tuna: Violet Heath-Caldwell, James, Dora.*
On the right hand side you can see the silver teapot standing on the fridge.

Cuthbert and James set to, building a pig sty with concrete walls and a tin roof. Looking back I get the impression that neither of them were very good at construction projects or for that matter even simple repairs. They had just never done anything like this before. Nevertheless, I suppose it was great that they gave it a go and I hope they got a lot of satisfaction from it. It wasn't many years later that their pig sty completely disintegrated but in 1962 the new pig sty was completed and we got pigs.

Violet kept a diary of her visit and she mentions going to New Plymouth with Dora and buying her a top quality Kenwood mixer and mincer. One day she also noted: "Dora had a good evening at her archery, and came back with a lovely cake, home made, the previous week she had three lovely chickens, the small kind, so she must be good, she practises here when she has a minute or two to spare".

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Violet also noted: “Hilary goes off to her kindergarten today till 3.30pm and enjoyed it very much and found Jeremy would like to go too, and cries bitterly because he can’t, but gets over it. He has been in the wars lately, just trying to sample some caustic soda!! Awful effect, and then falling in the bath, knocking his head. And finally falling last evening and bumping his nose badly and having a fine nose bleed. But today seems full of beans”.

Before they flew back to England, James and Dora bought them a large painting of Mt Taranaki (Mt Egmont) a picture which I now have the pleasure to own and it brings back some good memories whenever I look at it.

My grandmother Violet had mentioned me being in the wars and my mother said this was a fairly common occurrence for me. The caustic soda instance I do remember. My sister Hilary told me that it was ice-cream. My mother was often rushing us off to see Dr Gordon and this was another one of those occasions.

Another incident was with the electric fence. I had put my hands on it and was getting the full shock treatment, but I was unable to let go: zap! – zap! – zap! – zap! My mother had to knock me over to get me off the fence. I have no memory of this so perhaps the high voltage also momentarily frazzled my brain.

In the house one day I was running around without any pants and my mother told me to put my pants on. Apparently, I straight out refused and momentarily stepped backwards onto the electric heater. Unfortunately this was a very old heater and it did not have a guard to stop accidents. The two hot bars, at 240V, instantly scorched parallel lines across my bottom and there was the horrid smell of burning flesh. Again, it must have been quite a shock for me as I don’t remember this one either.

I do remember the radio. This was a wooden box that sat on a low cabinet. You could turn the big round knob on the front and hop between radio stations, but it was very difficult to get the station spot on. The other smaller knob made the sound louder or quieter (for me definitely louder) but the real joy was when I gazed in the back and there was what looked like a miniature forest of glowing orange lights. It was like looking into some sort of magical world, all in miniature. These were the old radio valves that predated transistors. In fact we don’t even have transistors these days, as all electronic circuits are now produced on microchips. In 1962 we had beautiful glass valves that glowed and were hot when you touched them. What was even more interesting was that if you put your hands around them and yanked them upwards, they unplugged. Absolutely fantastic. The only drawback was for my parents, because when they wanted to listen to

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the radio, they would often have to search around the house to see where I had put the valves.

Farms can be dangerous places for children because there is lots of farm equipment and one of the main items on our farm was the tractor. All of us children used to love sitting up on the seat and yanking at the various handles, knobs and controls but my parents were one step ahead of me here as they had installed a special child safety lock to ensure that none of us could start up the engine. Despite this, I managed to start it and it was wonderful hearing the engine whirr into life. Luckily for me, my father was only a short distance away and he managed to remove me from the tractor before I might have inadvertently engaged the gears and run over any of my siblings. In fact my feet would not have been able to reach the clutch pedal so I am sure there was no real danger anyway.



Jeremy James attempting to teach himself to drive the Massey Ferguson tractor.

Playing on the farm with the Klenners we often got up to mischief. My mother tells a story of one occasion when I fell down the drainage hatch but luckily Michael Klenner was there and he immediately grabbed me before I disappeared down the actual drain pipe. This was the drainage system that removed all the cow effluent from the milking shed. If I had gone down the drain pipe it really would have been bye bye JJ. What a way to end such an early life. As it was, I survived but presumably I must have been a bit on the smelly side.

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I did on one occasion take a paint brush to the car and painted it yellow, even managing to paint out the headlights but the most naughty thing that I ever did was when Colin Klenner and I were playing in the garage one day. There was a large trolley full of loose paper and on the bench there was a packet of matches. Colin and I can't remember which one of us actually set light to all the paper but the flames roaring up into the air produced an amazing spectacle. Luckily my father saw all the smoke and rushed in. The trolley happened to be on wheels so, with a very quick action on his part, he grabbed the handles and pulled it out into the open, thus preventing the flames spreading and burning down the garage. He then put out the incendiary by dowsing the flames with the garden hose. Both Colin and I got a real hiding and my mother has always said that this was the only occasion when she saw my father actually hit anyone.

I wasn't always in trouble. In the hot summer we had the water sprinkler going on the lawn and we all ran around having a great time jumping through the water jets. On another occasion Silvia, Brenda and my sister Hilary played on our rotary clothesline, swinging as it went around. I wasn't tall enough to reach but my sister lifted me up so I also got to have a little swing. My mother took an excellent colour picture with her camera. Years later my brother Michael put the image on



1963: Tuna: How we played online before the internet: On the line Brenda Klenner, Hilary and Sylvia Klenner. Standing Colin Klenner, Michael and Jeremy James.

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facebook with the caption “how we all used to play online before the internet”. It went viral getting thousands of views.

From time to time, we all have accidents and one I do have a vague memory of, was when the teapot got dropped in the cowshed. The main reason I know so much about this one, is because I now have the actual teapot and it still shows the scars. As I mentioned earlier, my grandfather had sent out to New Zealand a chest of old family items that he thought my parents might find useful. One of these items was a solid silver teapot which dated back to the marriage of my great great grandparents in 1853. On the farm this was the only teapot that my parents had, so they used it every day to make tea (tea bags had not been invented back then). In the

evenings my mother would make a pot of tea for my father and take it out to him while he was milking the cows in the cow shed. On this particular evening the silver teapot was accidentally dropped onto the hard concrete floor and it immediately split along one of the seams. My father did try to repair it a few days later with some



Silver teapot made by Edward & John Barnard and hallmarked London 1853.

solder but not very successfully and the teapot has remained unserviceable from that date. It is still a lovely little memento, not just of my great great grandparent’s wedding but also a memento of our time living in Taranaki back in the early 1960s.

I could ramble on here about a lot more of my memories but it might be best to just summarise some of the moments that still come to my mind:

Playing in the haybarn and jumping onto the loose hay.

Eating silage – very tasty.

Seeing my dad doing some welding using gas cylinders. Not sure what he was building.

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Lots of tools in the garage but what were they used for?

My father shooting a rabbit which we then had for dinner – also very tasty.

I broke a glass jar and cut my hand badly – another trip with my mother to see Dr Gordon.

A trip by car up the mountain where we were surrounded by native bush with huge trees.

Up on the Stratford Plateau, at 3608ft (1100m) altitude, we first experienced snow.

Seeing a special machine that dug beet out of the soil (feed for the pigs).

Seeing one of the pigs being butchered outside.

Very interesting to see the amazingly colourful variety of the dead pig's internal organs.

We all caught mumps and measles.

The honey extracting machine. Shiny stainless steel. Sadly it never worked.

One day my sister Hilary went missing on the farm. Everyone was looking for her. She was found in the barn eating silage together with our collie dog Heidi.

Another one to finish off with was the visit of Bishop Bains and this I do vaguely remember. Back in 1934 he had been a curate stationed in Hong Kong, where he had met my grandfather Cuthbert. They must have become very good friends, as my grandfather later went into the church and spent his final working years, as a church minister, in the quiet village of Brixton Deverill, in Wiltshire. The good Bishop came to Stratford and stayed the night at our home in Tuna. In the early morning I discovered his false teeth sitting in a glass jar in the bathroom and immediately found them fascinating. This was all fine but when the Bishop got up a short while later, it was all hands on deck to try and establish where his teeth had gone to. I understand they were eventually found so no great problem.

Being brought up on our family farm consisted of lots of good times, interspersed here and there with a bit of danger and excitement, but sadly all was not well. My father was finding everything to be somewhat overwhelming. Whenever he tried to build something, or fix something, he no doubt realised that the results of his efforts were often far short of his expectations. Looking after the cows was a constant toil, in particular the milking, which throughout most of the year, required full attention twice a day, seven days a week. On the money side of things he was mostly very frugal, being very concerned that there were monthly mortgage payments to be met but then he would sometimes go off on a wild tangent,

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spending appreciable amounts of money on things that were just not necessary (like the trees that the cows enjoyed eating). Then on top of this, he had his wife and three children to look after. Looking back, it was fairly plain that he just was not very good at it and maybe this was what slowly ground him down.

Dora had continued to see aspects of James behaviour that were erratic but nothing to be overly concerned about. She was young and had very little experience of life, certainly no experience of spotting a mental illness, let alone identifying a strategy to deal with it. She was lucky to have a very good relationship with her family doctor Ross Gordon and on some of the numerous visits (mainly taking us children in and out) she discussed her concerns with Ross. Although he was not James' doctor, he had met James and he did not feel that there was anything major wrong with him.

On one of her visits, Dora asked Dr Gordon if he knew of any young unmarried expectant mothers, who might be looking for somewhere to stay for the duration of their confinement. Dora's life was fairly busy, as in addition to cooking meals for the family and looking after three young infants, she was also helping to milk the cows and she was carrying out a myriad of odd jobs around the farm. She thought that a bit of unpaid home help would be very useful and she liked the thought of potentially helping out a young lady in a delicate time of need. This was back in the sad old days when pregnant unmarried girls disappeared for six months, gave birth, adopted their baby out and then returned to their social circle and pretended that nothing had happened.

A few weeks later, Dr Gordon contacted Dora to tell her that, through one of his contacts in Wellington, he had found a young lady who was in immediate need of a six month confinement and that accommodation on a remote dairy farm would be much appreciated. Within days we were joined by Jill Shapcott. Jill and Dora got on extremely well and, as events unfolded over the following six months, her help was to be invaluable to both of them.

By now James was becoming quite depressed and was not sleeping very well. He was having nightmares and was constantly waking up in the night in a hot sweat. During the day he was becoming more erratic and less able to carry out the simple but necessary tasks on the farm like milking the cows. Dora persuaded James to allow her to take him in to see his doctor (Dr Rutherford) and on this occasion Dora was able to speak to Dr Rutherford and tell him that James was not sleeping well. Dr Rutherford prescribed some pills, which did seem to have some effect in that they made James more settled but at the same time they also

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made him very lethargic. He took the pills for a few days but then decided not to take them any more.

James had always written letters regularly back to his parents in England and to his three sisters and a few other old friends. He was now writing a lot more letters and one day, while posting them, Dora noticed that some were addressed to the Duke of Edinburgh, Harold Macmillan (the British Prime Minister) and Nikita Khrushchev (Secretary of the Soviet Union). James was also writing to newspaper editors and all sorts of people who he had never met. Again, Dora accepted this at face value. She felt it was a bit unusual, but she assumed that it was not a major problem.

Of course, Dora did not know that James suffered from schizophrenia but the one person who did know, was James' doctor (Dr Rutherford). Sadly, due to patient confidentiality, Dr Rutherford made no mention of it to Dora.

James had been talking off and on about the possibility of buying a Landrover. Being a four-wheel drive vehicle, this would be very useful on a farm but Landrovers were relatively expensive. One afternoon he said to Dora that he was going to pop out to see Jack Cookson and ask him for his thoughts on it.

Jack Cookson was a very practical person. He was probably about 20 years older and he was well established on his farm which was located just over the road. This was early 1963, probably around the 7th January.

As early evening approached, Dora was a bit concerned that James had not returned, so she phoned Jack and enquired if he knew where James was. Jack confirmed that James was with him and had been for much of the afternoon, but he went on to say that James seemed very unsettled and was just talking non-stop. Jack had tried to calm him down, but he was still just rabbiting on talking continuously about almost anything. As it was now getting a bit late, Jack brought James back and as soon as they arrived Dora could tell that James was not at all well. He was very tired and just collapsed onto the sofa where he slept for the night.

Jack was very concerned and so he drove over the following morning to discuss the situation with Dora. Jack could see that James was depressed and rather erratic. He suggested to Dora that, as a precaution, it might be best if they removed James' guns from the house, just in case things deteriorated further. There was no indication that James was about to shoot us all but nevertheless Jack felt it was best not to take any chances. Without James knowing, Dora quietly got the guns out of the hot-water cupboard and passed them through the window to Jack who then put them in his car and drove home.

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Dora let James rest, while she and Jill milked the cows and sorted out the meals and all the other things that needed doing. There was not much improvement in James so in the evening Dora phoned Dr Rutherford and told him what had happened and that she was very concerned about James. Dr Rutherford said he would visit the following morning and see what he could do.

The following morning Dr Rutherford did arrive as he had promised but unexpected by Dora he was accompanied by two policeman. Looking back, it is hard to know exactly how the situation evolved from there, what was said and what was not said. My mother remembers that James started off by saying to them "if I had known you bastards were coming I would have been waiting for you". Dr Rutherford decided there and then, that James definitely needed to be certified. All I remember was feeling very afraid at what was going on with all these men that I had never seen before. Both my mother and my father were distraught and my father kept saying over and over that he was very sorry. James cooperated and got into the police car. I understand from my mother that Dr Rutherford then apologised to her, saying that he had not been aware that James' mental health had deteriorated so badly. He said that if he had known, he would have acted much sooner. By now my sister Hilary and I had both been taken back into house, presumably by Jill Shapcott. We did not get to see our father being driven off and for understandable reasons we did not get to say goodbye.

I understand that James was driven back to the Stratford Police Station where he could be held securely and safely. To be certified, a second opinion was required from another doctor and it was Dr Upham Steven who was called to the Police Station to see James. Dora had previously met Upham as he was in the archery club but she did not know him very well at that stage. It was to be quite a long day for everyone. It was decided that James would be taken that evening to Tokanui Mental Hospital near Te Awamutu. They asked Dora if she would like to accompany them and she decided she would, but looking back, if she had known how long it was going to take and how hopeless the situation really was, she would have been much better to have just gone home and left events to take their own course.

By now James had been drugged to make him more settled. They set off in the early evening in a taxi with James and Dora sitting in the back and the taxi driver and a policeman sitting in the front. Today it would take approx 3 hours to drive the 235km distance from Stratford to Tokanui near Te Awamutu but in 1963 it must have taken about 5 hours. They arrived around midnight and the male mental nurses took James away. Shortly afterwards there was a bit of scuffle and

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Dora found out that James had actually bitten one of the men, quite badly. There was nothing more to be done so they now left James and headed back to Taranaki. They drove all through the early hours with the policemen and the taxi driver sharing the driving. By the time Dora got home it was daylight and she must have been absolutely shattered.

For the moment the assumption in Dora's mind was that James was ill but soon he would recover. In the meantime, the cows needed to be milked twice each day, in addition to various other jobs needing to be done on the farm and there was also the children to look after.

Jill Shapcott was to prove to be an absolute star and was a great help mucking in and doing whatever needed to be done. Ann Klenner was also right on the button and arranged for her brother-in-law to help out with the milking, so for the next few days it literally was all able hands on deck.

Sadly, worse was to come. A few days later, Dora found out that James had recently given a donation of £1,000 to a charity called CORSO (The New Zealand Council of Organisations for Relief Service Overseas). CORSO was a charity that helped needy people in overseas countries. £1,000 in 1963 was a colossal amount. You could have bought a house for that much money. Up until this moment Dora had not even known that James had this much in his bank account. She did not really think about money as it was all in James' name and he was the person who dealt with it.

Another question I have, when I look back after all this time is: was this £1,000 a one-off donation, or were there other donations that James had also given away to charity? We will never know. One thing for sure, Dora needed that money to buy food and also to pay the monthly payments on the farm's mortgage. She contacted CORSO and explained the situation and asked if they could return the money. Sadly, CORSO did not return the money.

The day after James was certified, Dora sent a telegram to James' father Cuthbert in England to let him know that James was very ill. Although most people had a telephone in their house in those days, phoning long distance was not straight forward, especially if you wanted to call overseas. Dora had to book a call with the telephone operator and eventually, at the agreed time, she was able to speak to Cuthbert. He was very helpful and agreed to pay for Dora's stepfather Les Bailey (grandpop) and her stepsister (aunt Hilary) to fly out immediately to help. They dropped everything, packed their bags and a few days later Dora picked them up from New Plymouth airport.

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This must have been a great help and Dora certainly felt a lot better now that she had her family there to help her. It also gave her more time to try and get her thoughts together. Over the next few months she made weekly trips up to see James in the mental hospital in Tokanui. These were long journeys but some of her friends like Shirley and Warwick Martin helped out by driving with her. Ivan Gopperth came up from Hawera and also helped by accompanying her on one of these trips.

While all this was going on, Dora remembers a conversation with Ann Klenner's brother who had previously had experience of a relative with mental illness. He was possibly the first person to try and help Dora to understand that James' mental illness might not be curable.

Life on the farm carried on but as summer progressed they reached a point in time where the dry grass needed to be brought in to make hay. This is a task that usually requires quite a few people and what was really nice was that the neighbouring farmers all turned up and got everything sorted. Dora says that she was ever so grateful especially as some of those helping were people who she had never even met before.

Another person who came into our lives was Doris Rogers. She was an elderly lady and must have been in her mid 70s. She lived in a very old house in Stratford. She was a warm and genuine lady who could not provide us with much help but she kept in contact and I am sure her taking an interest in us was very much appreciated by my mother.

My mother's stepfather Les Bailey stayed for 3 weeks and then flew back to England. A short while afterwards, in late March, he and Dora's mother Dora senior (Nana) boarded the ship R.M.S. Ruahine, and 6 weeks after that, they both arrived in New Zealand. They helped out on the farm and they also used the opportunity to tour around seeing more of the country. Meantime Hilary Bailey (Aunt Hilary) also stayed for most of the year.

As time went on Jill Shapcott's pregnancy progressed until the time came and she gave birth to a healthy child at Stratford Maternity Hospital. After staying in hospital she went through her own very traumatic experience of signing her little baby over for adoption and they were then parted forever. This is the way it was for young unmarried mother's in those days. Jill came back and spent a few more weeks on the farm with us and then headed back to her home in Lower Hutt near Wellington. We never saw her again.

As James became more settled, it was decided to have him home to see if this would help him recover. These home stays were tried on about four occasions but

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each time things went wrong. The problem was often to do with his medication. When he took his pills he became settled but was also quite lethargic, which he did not like, so he would then decide to stop taking the pills but this would result in him deteriorating and his hallucinations and erratic behaviour would begin again.

On one of these home stay visits he deteriorated quite badly and tried to hang himself first in the barn and later in the garage. What was even worse was that he had Hilary watching, as in his mind he felt that she should experience what it was like to suffer. When Dora realised what he was doing it was all just too much. By now the other concern in her mind was the risk that James, in an unsettled state of madness, might even go so far as to kill all of us.

By mid 1963, Dora was starting to get a much better understanding of what the situation really was. Approximately 6 months had passed since James had been certified suffering from schizophrenia and she had now realised that he was possibly never going to recover. The farm needed to be looked after and the cows had to be milked. She had us three children who also needed to be looked after. She recognised that trying to do all this just was not going to be possible. She had to make some difficult choices. James was 33 years old and his life was never going to be easy. We three children were very young and had our whole lives ahead of us. Her children were her priority. We would need to leave the farm and find a new home. James would need to be separated from our lives.

She discussed this with the hospital and told them that she could not take James back. She was now going to focus on bringing up the children. No one at the hospital attempted to get her to change her mind. None of her friends tried to tell her she was wrong. This was a very difficult decision to make but now as I look back, over 50 years later, I am certain that she definitely made the right decision.

Because the farm and the money was all in James's name, a government department called the Public Trust took over the administration of his financial affairs. The farm was heavily mortgaged, so there was no spare cash and James' donation of £1,000 to CORSO had made matters a lot worse than they should have been. Dora had to keep her expenditure to a minimum. We had vegetables from the garden and meat from the freezer. We did of course also have a very handy and regular supply of milk. In addition, grandpop (Les Bailey) had been giving my mother a bit of extra cash to help keep things going.

The farm would have to go but it could not be sold while James was certified. The Public Trust decided that it would be best for the farm to be rented out. The rent could be used to pay the interest on the mortgage and hopefully there would

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also be a bit of cash left over for Dora to use to rent another house. With this being the plan, the Public Trust went ahead and organised for the herd of cows and for all the farm machinery to be sold. An auction was held on the farm in September.

James's parents were very unhappy with how events had unfolded and Cuthbert decided to fly out to see James and to see if there was anything he could do to help. He flew out on the 15th October and Dora picked him up from New Plymouth airport. He had a good rest and then Dora drove him up to Tokanui to see James at the mental hospital. They spent probably a good hour or so talking to James and then headed back to the farm at Tuna. Another long day and at the end of it, for Cuthbert, a long sleep.

The following morning Dora was in the kitchen with Ann Klenner. Dora was chopping up meat for dinner while Ann was sitting at the kitchen table. Cuthbert had arisen from his sleep and came into the kitchen. Being a navy captain he presumably felt that he should take charge of the situation. He told Dora that he had had a good think about things and he felt that there was nothing really wrong with James but he was just in need of a good rest. He suggested to Dora that rather than separating, Dora should take James off on a cruise around the world and they should both have a good holiday. This would give James a good rest and the opportunity to get better. Cuthbert said he would take the three infants (Hilary, Jeremy and Michael) back to England and Pat would be able to look after them at the Pound House. Dora reacted very quickly and very aggressively waving her hand (with the carving knife in it) at Cuthbert and told him in no uncertain terms that he was not going to take her children away from her. Her exact words were 'that would only be over my dead body'. Ann Klenner was a bit shocked, as for a moment she thought Dora was going to run Cuthbert through with the carving knife.

Cuthbert perhaps thought his life was threatened. He certainly felt that Dora was not showing any appreciation for his help. He immediately packed his bags and left without saying anything further. That evening he stayed with the neighbour Martin Langden and it would appear that he then set off back to England the following day. His daughter Pat recorded in her diary that she picked him up from the airport, 1st November, and she noted that he was very tired.

Cuthbert was by now 74 years old and he really should have been enjoying the pleasure of a happy retirement in his home where he could sit comfortably and look out into his garden. Even putting his age aside for one moment, he was a man from a world long past that no longer existed. His ability to comprehend what was really going on was rather limited. Flying around the world and trying to

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help his son get better was sadly very much beyond him. Dora had lived full time with James since 1956 and it had taken her 7 years to realise that he was mentally ill. Sadly Cuthbert could not even accept that his precious son was ill, let alone recognise that James was unlikely to ever live a normal life.

Dora did not know it at the time but some of the neighbours also did not understand that James was mentally ill. In fact they thought that James was just very tired and Dora should have done a better job looking after him. As it turned out Cuthbert thought even worse.



NGAERE, NEAR STRATFORD, TARANAKI (1963–1972)

Warwick Martin knew of an empty house at Ngaere owned by Denis Walker. Ngaere is a small village on the main road about 3 miles (5km) south of the town of Stratford. It is not really a village in the normal sense, as there isn't a built-up area of houses but there was in those days a small shop and a village hall. Over the fields about 300m to the west was the Ngaere cheese factory and about 500m to the south there was a small Primary School.

We all went to see the house, and for me and my sister Hilary, we found all this to be very exciting. Michael of course was still quite young at this time. The house itself was located on a quarter acre section, in the corner of the Walker's farm and was bounded by the main road running north-south and by Sole Road running east-west. It also had a large garage that opened out onto the road. On the far side of the main road, running parallel to it, was the railway line but we could not actually see this, as the section of railway near the house was down in a slight cutting. Up above, to the west, we could see the massive peak of Mt Taranaki (Mt Egmont). Wherever you are in Taranaki, the mountain always dominates the view. If you looked in the opposite direction, out to the east, far



Standing in front of our house at Ngaere: Jeremy James, Dora, Michael, Hilary. Photo taken around 1965.

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in the distance you could see the three mountains over on the Volcanic Plateau: Mt Ruapehu, Mt Ngauruhoe and Mt Tongariro.

I don't think my mother considered any other houses. She had a strong preference to continue living in the countryside, rather than take a house in town, so I suppose the number of empty houses available would not have been very many. Also, her budget was very limited and the rent for this house was not expensive. She agreed to take it and we moved in just before Christmas, 1963.

Dora realised that there would not be much money coming from the Public Trust (from the rent of the farm) and at the same time she was not eligible to claim any benefits from the Government. James by now was living up in the Waikato, where he was in and out of the mental hospital. He did get a few jobs and so was able to send Dora some money but this was a bit sporadic and Dora could see that she could not rely on this source of income. It was also around this time that all contact with his parents ceased (Cuthbert and Violet) and we did not get any money from them either. In fact, for the rest of our childhood we were never to get so much as a birthday card from them and certainly nothing at Christmas. As I grew up, I thought this absence of contact was a bit odd, as I could see that other families, including the Walkers, had very regular contact with their doting grandparents.

Another problem that my mother had at this time, was that the old Ford Consul car was desperately in need of replacement. Dora received a rambling letter from James saying he was going to buy her a Morris Mini but she did not take this very seriously. Later that week she received a call from the garage in Stratford to say they had a brand new Mini for her. She immediately said that was all well and good but she could not afford it, at which point the man on the phone told her it was all paid for. We never found out where James got the money from but presumably it was cash that he had received from his parents. It was a lovely little car with a small 848cc engine, white paintwork and red interior, no headrests and no seat belts, so not at all safe by modern standards but lucky for us we never had any accidents and we got about 6 years use out of it.

I didn't know it at the time but as part of his rehabilitation James worked as a labourer in one of the large pine forests. He then joined the army and elected to go into the Artillery. This was the more mischievous side of him at play. Because of his mental state, he was barred from holding a gun license but in the artillery they had some very large guns that he would be able to play with. Of course it did not take very long for the army to realise that he was mentally ill and so he was discharged quite quickly. He then got a job herd testing. He told me later that

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he kept getting all the test sample bottles mixed up, so that job did not last long either. After quite a few years he settled into working with a small metal working company that made air conditioning ducts and other things for various projects. He was not very good at it, but the owner liked him and so kept him on. This really was a life saver for him.

1964 started with us living by ourselves in our rented house at Ngaere. My mother realised that she would need a job but as a solo mother with three infants to look after this was going to be quite difficult. She came across a vacancy being advertised for a teaching assistant at St Mary's Stratford which was a private boarding school for girls aged 13 to 16. St Mary's had quite high academic standards but most of all they prided themselves on bringing up young girls to have good manners and I suppose the school helped them develop the necessary skills to find a good husband.

Except for her agriculture diploma, Dora had no qualifications but she discussed the situation with the vicar, who had some links with the school, and he encouraged her to apply for it. She had an interview with the head mistress, Miss Bruce, and she got the job. It might be that Miss Bruce liked her because she was English and she had a hyphenated surname but we will never know for sure. Miss Bruce was a spinster who was probably in her 50s. Looking back she was an incredibly sincere and genuine lady, who had a real presence about her and she was highly intelligent. She probably recognised my mother's difficult situation and was no doubt very pleased to be able to offer some help by giving her the job and then hoping that things would turn out well for everyone. She would have also recognised that Dora really needed the job, so given the opportunity, she would be likely to work very hard to make a success of it (which she certainly did).

During this time, while my mother was frantically doing everything possible to look after her three children, she was pretty much unaware of what was happening with James' parents, Cuthbert and Violet. All contact had pretty much stopped but in June 1964 she received, in the post, some letters from Violet but instead of being addressed to Mrs D Heath-Caldwell, they were addressed to Miss P Heath-Caldwell (James' sister Pat) c/o Jack and Enid Cookson, Salisbury Road, Tuna. The postman had obviously seen the name Heath-Caldwell and had mistakenly redirected the letters to our new address.

Dora was not aware that Pat was visiting New Zealand, so she phoned Enid Cookson to enquire if Pat was in fact in the country, and if she was, was she staying with them, and if she was staying with them, could she possibly speak to

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her as she had some mail for her. Enid replied that yes she was staying with them but no she could not speak to her.

Dora found this to be quite upsetting, so in a fit of rage she wrote “return to sender” and posted the letters back to England. Looking back, she does now admit that this was the wrong thing to do but nevertheless, on the spur of the moment, that is what she did.

Aunt Pat had been sent out by her father Cuthbert to try and help James. By now Cuthbert had convinced himself that Dora was a thoroughly bad woman, in fact so bad that he was now referring to her as just “D”! I suppose he must have been pretty worn out about the whole situation and he had convinced himself that Dora had engineered everything and that she had a great scheme to sell the farm and take all James’ money. James was merely a pawn in her master plan. In addition, Cuthbert was convinced that she had a boyfriend and that once they had the money, big bad “D” and the said boyfriend, were going to abandon the grandchildren and disappear into the sunset.

As I write this, the phrase that comes to my mind is “you couldn’t think this stuff up, even if you were in Hollywood”!

Dora was not aware of any of this and was not to find out until more than 50 years later when all the diaries and letters came to light.

So Dora had phoned the Cookson’s to let Pat know that she had some mail for her. Pat refused to talk to her, as Pat was by then convinced that, in addition to all the other bad things that she thought Dora to be capable of, she now had first hand proof that big bad “D” was also stealing her mail!

Aunt Pat then spent the rest of this year in New Zealand (and also an interlude in Australia and New Guinea) and, together with her father, plotted to do everything they could to stop Dora getting any money. Even looking back, it is frightening to see that they did not seem to be able to comprehend that Dora was in desperate need of money, just to to put food on the table.

Pat met up with James on quite a few occasions and each time she told him that he must not send any money to Dora. In the end James became very angry and told her that she just did not know what she was talking about. Pat also reported back to her father, after she had visited a solicitor to see if there was any way they could stop my mother getting any money from anywhere. Pat and Cuthbert even went as far as investigating if it would be possible to get the family silver back, as they were convinced that big bad “D” would just sell off these precious family relics, as soon as she got the opportunity.

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The solicitor must have realised that Pat and her father Cuthbert were possibly even more insane than James. Pat reported back to her father a few months later that she had been trying to arrange a second visit to the solicitor but that whenever she phoned she was told that he was “not available”.

Pat never did meet Dora. There was one brief contact (19 December 1964) when we were at the Klenners playing with their children. Two ladies walked up to the gate and spoke to us. We did not know who they were but looking back they were of course Pat and Enid Cookson. Pat said she was our auntie, our father’s sister. Then she and Enid turned away and walked back down the road. The conversation had probably lasted for no more than 60 seconds. I was only 4 years old but I thought it was all very strange. Had we done something wrong? Why didn’t we ever see our father and why was it that our aunt was happy to look at us over the gate but not come in and talk to us?

In among the pile of letters that have survived from this period in the 1960s were a number of letters from the neighbours. The content was unbelievably negative towards my mother and verging on being hysterical. They said that Dora was doing a very poor job of looking after us and they reported seeing us walking around town as filthy little urchins and they also reported seeing Dora in town “with a man”! From the letters I could see that they had all convinced themselves that there was nothing really wrong with James and that all the fault lay with his wife Dora.

We can look back to the rather turbulent events of 1963 and we can see that my father James was definitely mentally ill, even if the neighbours saw him as a lovely friendly young guy. He had suffered from chronic schizophrenia in the navy ten years previously; he was suffering in 1963 and he has suffered from it ever since. The other question is; what was my mother’s state of mental health and could she have done anything different? The neighbours certainly at the time felt it was all her fault and sadly, to her disadvantage, she probably did not come across as a warm friendly caring young wife and mother. If you consider the trauma of what she had by now gone through, it would be ridiculous to think that she could have done any better. It is amazing that she managed to keep sane and to keep going.

Most of the neighbours from Tuna did not keep in touch with us after we had moved to Ngaere. The ones that we did maintain contact with for many years were the Klenner family. Possibly my mother got on well with Ann and at the same time Hilary, Michael and I got on well with all her children. Most of all, the friendship was maintained by Ann, as I think she could see that Dora needed help. We also maintained contact with the Martin family and with Doris Rogers.

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Mrs Rogers was a lovely old lady. She had experienced tragedy in her own family, having lost two sons, one was killed in World War II and the other had been killed in an accident up on Mt Taranaki (Mt Egmont). Her other son Nick had been living in England, where he had met Nana and Grandpop (Dora & Les Bailey) and that was where the connection had been made. She lived in a very old house in Stratford, surrounded by a garden that was quite overgrown. At the back was a small vegetable garden and I remember her growing small artichokes (they were rather delicious). Mrs Rogers knew that I had started collecting stamps and one day she gave me a very precious little gift. It was an old stamp album which had belonged to one of her late sons. I already had some stamps but in this album there were different pages for each country and more stamps than I had ever seen. Many of the countries were British Commonwealth and lots of these stamps featured a profile portrait of a British Monarch; King George VI, King George V, King Edward VII and the really old ones had Queen Victoria. Others had small pictures of places, people and events. I was fascinated, as each stamp was a miniature window, depicting a story of some sort. I did not know all the stories and I did not know all the countries, but I found it absolutely captivating. I think that is when I became a collector and I have been afflicted with collecting things ever since.

Mrs Rogers did not leave her house very much, as she was very elderly, but she did come and visit us at Ngaere one day for Sunday lunch and afterwards she wrote a letter to Cuthbert and Violet to let them know how we were getting on. The letter has survived, and I am printing it here in full as it is a lovely letter and I think it does give a good window on our lives at this time.

21st Dec 1969

From Doris Rogers, 48 Fenton St, Stratford, Taranaki, New Zealand.

To: Violet Heath-Caldwell, Pound House, Cattistock, Dorset, England.

Dear Mrs Heath-Caldwell,

This afternoon I had a very pleasant visit with Dora and the children. Dora came to me after church and took me home for lunch. Last Wednesday I gave Jeremy some stamps for his collection. I get some unusual ones from Papua New Guinea, so today I had to see his collection, which is quite large and very neatly kept in a special album. Then I saw

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Hilary's and then Michael's. Not nearly as many as Jeremy's but I gave him my son Geoff's collection. Geoff was killed on Mt. Egmont. I think stamp collecting is a great hobby for children, even if they do not keep it up. My son Nick also had a collection when he was young - very higgledy-piggledy, but last time he was home he found it still around here - so he took it back with him. He has a little son now, so he wants to get it all straightened up for little Nicholas Peter when he is old enough! That will not take long either, as they grow up all too quickly.

Hilary, Jeremy and Michael are all growing well and doing well. Hilary made me a very nice cup of tea. They are all very well occupied - a very good thing. Hilary showed me the Siamese kittens, new pets! They were all going for a swim when I came home - a very good thing too.

Dora is well thought of at St Mary's. The pupils there have done well in the exams. Nick and family are coming for Christmas, Lucy and I are well

Regards from Doris Rogers

The job that Dora took working part time at St Mary's School worked out incredibly well. Hilary was attending Avon Primary School and on my 5th birthday, 8th March 1964, I was also allowed to go to Avon, which meant that we were off our mother's hands from 9.00am to 3.00pm every day. Michael was still at kindergarten, mornings only, after which he was picked up by Elva Thomas who also had a son at the same kindergarten. Mum would then pick Michael up from Elva's house after she had finished at school. Eventually he also turned 5 and so was then able to join us at Avon Primary School. Family life, with us at our school and our mother at her school, worked quite well.

At this stage in my story I am not sure about whether to refer to my mother as Dora or as Mum. We of course called her Mum so from here on in my story I will probably sometimes refer to her as Mum and sometimes as Dora. I hope this is not too confusing.

Mum told a very good story about the early days when Michael was attending kindergarten and she was teaching part time at St Mary's. Elva Thomas had gone to pick Michael up from the kindergarten as usual, but he was not there. Apparently, he had confidently told the kindergarten teacher that he was walking home today. Elva phoned St Mary's School and got a message through to the head mistress Miss Bruce who then told Dora. Miss Bruce took over the class and Dora

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*New Zealand stamps from the 1935 Pictorial set.
Each little stamp depicting a story about New Zealand.*

set off to find Michael. She frantically searched everywhere for an hour and must have been at her wits end. She eventually found him wandering along the main road close to home. He was only 4 years old but he had walked about 3 miles (5km). She always remembers the sense of relief but also his reaction when he just smiled at her and said “I thought you were lost”.

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Mum started off as a teaching assistant at St Mary's, just working part time. She made the effort to read lots of the textbooks concentrating on science, in particular biology, and after a while she was allowed to teach her own class. I remember going once and sitting in her biology class. I think I might have been recovering from an illness or something like that. The lesson was fascinating as she dissected a dead possum. Its guts went everywhere, especially the long intestine which she pulled out and the girls measured the full length of it. I don't remember how long this intestine was but it was very long. It was really fascinating to see how much stuff was inside that dead possum.

Mum's salary was not high, but it was enough to live on, so that was great. Possibly the best thing about St Mary's was that it gave her a new social life and one that was very different to what she had experienced previously. Almost all the teachers were women and they had all been through university. They were bright and generally very friendly and very sociable. She had a lot of respect for them and over time they developed a lot of respect for her.

There was the music teacher Miss (Susan) Hutton, a very lively lady and she taught Dora how to play the guitar. St Mary's had a very high standard for music and they even produced their own record (St Mary's Sings). There was the glamorous Mrs (Valerie) Chruchley who taught Russian. She had beautiful long dark hair and she struck me as being a very mysterious lady. I wondered whether she was actually a Russian spy. She was also a single mother but she and her son Matthew lived with her father and so did not have any financial worries. There was Mrs (Julia) Wintle who taught English but she left after a few years and went back to England. I remember Mrs (Frances) Gray was always called Fanny by my mother and the other teachers but of course we were always told to address her as Mrs Gray. She taught English and was quite reserved. Her husband was the deputy headmaster of Stratford Primary School and they had a very beautiful daughter called Andrea with long fair hair but I never really got to know her.

The Chemistry teacher, Mrs (Jan) Busch, was an Oxford graduate and my mother always said she was a real brainy box. One of her daughters, Suzzie, was also a real beauty. Mrs (Margaret) Habershon taught English and her husband Dick Habershon was the Deputy Principal at Stratford High School. A few years later the staff were joined by Mrs (Margaret) Van Gend, another English teacher, who had recently moved to New Zealand from Malawi. Her husband was another doctor and they were all a very bright family.

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The teacher that we got to know the best was Pat Steven. She was a graduate of Otago University where she had met her husband Upham who was a doctor. Mum already had a slight connection here as Upham had been in the archery club and it was he who was the second doctor who had certified James a few years earlier.

During all the problems with James in 1963, Mum had ceased being an active member of the archery club but after being encouraged by Warwick and Shirley Martin, she had joined the St John's Ambulance. This she quite enjoyed and I remember her putting on her smart uniform and we would go to the stock cars which were held at the local agricultural show grounds. Just as we drove up to the gate, Mum would quickly place her very official looking St John's hat onto her head and the ticket man would wave us through without us having to pay. This was great, as generally we had no money so anything free was much appreciated. We watched the stock cars drive round and round the track. There was lots of mud flying up in the air and the smell of petrol fumes made it all feel very exciting. Looking back it all seems a bit crazy but at the time we all loved it.

Stratford was a fairly self-contained town with a population of approx 5,000. It was very much a town that serviced the local farming community. When Stratford had been laid out by the early settlers (around 1879), someone with a sense of humour had decided to name a lot of the streets after characters from Shakespeare's plays. There was Romeo St, Juliet St, Hamlet St, Portia St, Lear St, Ariel St, Falstaff St, Celia St, Cordelia St... etc and the main street, which was very wide, was called the Broadway.

Back in the 1960s, shops were closed on Saturday and Sunday but Friday night was party time for lots of the locals. On Friday, the shops stayed open until 8.30pm instead of closing at 5.00pm. Lots of people would come into town and walk up and down the street doing a bit of shopping or just socialising with their friends. We did not go into town much on a Friday night, as my mother never went to the pub and we did not have any money to spend in the shops. But we did go occasionally and the whole place had a lovely atmosphere.

I should also mention here, that in the 1960s, I don't think there were any restaurants in Stratford except for two Fish & Chip takeaways and I think one café (The Hob Nob). There were certainly no Indian, Chinese or Italian eating establishments. Foreign cooking was almost unheard of. Meat with a selection of 3 vegetables was by far the norm. Sometimes if we went into Stratford we would be allowed to buy fish & Chips and for us this was a real treat. The serving was salted and then wrapped in a clean piece of white paper and this was then all wrapped

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in a few sheets of used newspaper to keep it warm. Years later they stopped using second-hand newspaper, as it was felt to be unhygienic, but I don't think it ever did us any harm. Looking back, I suppose you could say that this was an early example of recycling.

Stratford also had a cinema and this was a very large auditorium with tiered seating and a big screen. The bottom half was designated as 'downstairs' and the upper half was designated as 'upstairs'. Sitting upstairs was slightly more expensive and there were lots of people who did not want to be seen sitting in the cheap seats. Mum didn't take us to the cinema very often as it was quite expensive, but if we did go, she always insisted that we sat 'upstairs'. Before the film would start there was always a clip of a large brass band playing the national anthem 'God Save the Queen'. We would all immediately jump to our feet and stand during the anthem to show our respect for the monarchy. I always used to watch that clip and think how funny the band members looked. They were all dressed in red uniforms with lots of gold braid but the really amazing thing was that they were all wearing horse helmets, but there was not a horse in sight.

Another place in Stratford where we went sometimes was the library, and this was in the Municipal Building in the centre of town. To get to the library you walked through a long corridor, which was the Stratford Hall of Remembrance, in honour of all the local men who had died in the war. High up on the wall were rows of individual photographs of 129 local men who had been killed in World War I (1914–1918) and a further 55 who had been killed during World War II (1939–1945).

The support provided from New Zealand to the Allies in WWI had been immense. Out of a population of about 1,000,000 there were approx 100,000 men who went off to war. This was about 60% of all the men in the country who at the time were between the ages of 19 and 45. Of these about 18,000 died and about 42,000 were wounded or fell ill. In other words, something like 60% of the eligible males in the country, went off to the war and approximately 1 out of 5 did not come back.

As a young boy I always remember looking up at those men and feeling a bit overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude of the whole thing.

The war was still regularly talked about, as in the local area lots of the men in their 50s had fought in WWII and many of the old men in their 70s had been in WWI. ANZAC day (25 April) was a big event and all the ex-soldiers would turn out on parade proudly wearing their medals and standing to attention to remember all their mates who had not come back.

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Stratford Hall of Remembrance in the Municipal Building (photo taken in 2019).

Church back in those days was still a very significant part of life for lots of families. There were no shops open over the weekend. Lots of sport events took place on the Saturday but Sunday was very much off limits. The Church really did have a strong hold and they wanted everyone to go to Church service. Our family was of course Church of England and after moving to Ngaere my mother took us to the church in Eltham. In the early days we went to the morning service, which started with a gathering of everyone in the Church itself but then we would split, the adults would stay in the church for the rest of the service and we children would go into the hall next door to be given our Sunday School education. I don't remember much about the religious education that we received but I do remember Susie Busch who always seemed to have lovely eyes and a beautiful suntan. I certainly didn't learn that God was this great power up in the clouds looking over everyone. Instead the more I heard the less I believed any of it.

I don't think we went to church every Sunday but later on we all joined the choir and we had an evening practice once a week and then turned up for the Sunday service. I didn't really enjoy being in the choir but looking back I am sure

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Portrait photos of many of the local men who became soldiers and died in WWI (photo taken in 2019).

it was of some benefit to me. Today it is great when I hear a familiar hymn and I find I can sing along, still remembering quite a few of the words. We did also get to meet the good Bishop Bains again when he graced our church with his holy presence to confirm us all. By then he was a bit vague and possibly suffering from dementia. Certainly nothing was said about me taking his false teeth out of the glass jar five years earlier.

Another memory that I have of living at Ngaere was the trains. We would hear them chugging up the line in the night and our whole house would shake. In the day we could look over the road and we would just see the very top of the train but nothing else which was a bit frustrating. In those days the big black steam trains were still running but they were being phased out. We liked the steam trains the best, as you could see the steam and smoke shooting up in the air. I remember that Denis Walker took us all into Stratford one day so we could witness the last steam

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train as it made its final journey through the railway yard. That was probably in about 1966. After that it was just the big red diesel trains and the occasional railcar.

With James out of the picture, life in our reduced family of 4 was now much more settled in our house at Ngaere but it was not easy, especially later on when I progressed through school. Our mother for many years yearned to go back to her home in England but this was not possible as we could not afford it. Living at Ngaere met her desire to live in the country instead of living in the town but for us children it was very lonely. Once we got back from school there were rarely any other children to play with, so we became quite insular. For Hilary it was not so bad as she had a horse and could get out and about going to pony club or meeting up with her friend Karen Buckthought. For me and Michael most of the time we had no option but to stay at home.

As I grew up, a question on my mind was; why did Hilary have a horse when we as a family had so little money? The answer was a simple one. Owning a horse, while costing money, was not prohibitive if you had free grazing. The other thing was that Mum had always wanted a horse but this had never been possible in her younger days when she had lived in England. With her limited financial situation and also limited time, my mother rarely went out and she certainly did not spend any significant amounts of money on herself. The horse was her one luxury and to Hilary, and to my mother, horses were their great passion.

We also had a lot of dogs. This had come about in our early days at Ngaere when one day Mum had been informed that James had escaped from the mental hospital and might be heading in our direction. We did at that stage have a very friendly collie called Heidi but the police advised Mum to get a guard dog as a precaution. They recommended a doberman and this was to become the first of many. We also had two dachshunds, mine was called Penny and Michael's was called Fred.

One of the great things about having dogs was that my mother would often drive us off somewhere interesting to take the dogs for a walk, sometimes to the beach but often we went up into the native bush that surrounded the lower slopes of the mountain. On many of these occasions we were joined by Pat Steven, who also had dogs (Staffordshire bull terriers), and we would all look at the great variety of native trees. Pat and my mother would tell us what was special about the habitat and how the species had adapted to it. Later on we also got a large book (New Zealand Flowers and Plants in Colour by John Tension Salmon, 1970) full of pictures of the native plants. I used to collect samples of leaves and dry press them,

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*Michael, Hilary and Jeremy James at Hawera beach with our first doberman 'Pagan'.
Photo taken by Dora around 1967.*

putting them into a scrapbook and labelling each carefully with its name. One of my favourite plants was the mighty Totara tree, as this was one of the largest trees in the native forest. It was great walking in the bush and learning the names of all the plants. Every one of them was special.

Later on it was decided by the park authorities to ban dogs from the mountain as there was a concern about the kiwis. These days a bigger problem in the bush is the rats that eat the Kiwi's eggs. It is a pity that we can't get special dogs trained to catch the rats but leave the Kiwis.

I should note here that the word 'bush' is the New Zealand word for jungle but in the UK this would be called the 'wood' or 'woods'. In the UK the word bush is only used to describe a small tree or shrub. In New Zealand the word 'wood' is only used to describe a material for building. This is all nuts but everyone has got used to it so that is the way it is!



AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL: PRIMER 1 TO PRIMER 3 (1964–1965)

In New Zealand, back in the 1960s, you started attending school on your 5th birthday. I became 5 years old on the 8th of March 1964 and I think this must have been very close to the changeover date. I was not the youngest in my class, that was Elizabeth Capper, but I don't think there was anyone else between us. Leith Martin was born only two days after me and I remember that he started in the next class down, although I didn't see him at our school as he went to Stratford Primary School or as we used to call it 'Stratford Main'.

You could think of Stratford as a divided town. The Patea River brought its clear water off the slopes of the mountain and it flowed right through the middle of the town running from west to east. On the north side of the river, pretty much all the children attended Stratford Primary School and everyone to the south attended Avon Primary School (founded in 1959). The main exception was the Catholic families who had their own school which was run by some nuns. The Catholic pupils all wore dark navy-blue uniforms and the nuns had grey gowns with a grey and white headdress. They all looked a bit sinister to us. At Avon we did not have a uniform. We all believed that the Catholics were somehow bad people but of course, as we got older, we realised they were fairly normal, just like us. After all, the Klenners were Catholic and they seemed fine.

My first class was Primer 1 (1964) and the teacher was Mrs Therkleson (Connie Therkleson). She was a really lovely lady and was probably in her late 40s at that time. In my first year I certainly remember feeling welcome and feeling safe. It was also in Primer 1 that I first remember Rebecca Western. She was a lovely girl with blonde hair, smartly done in two beautiful plaits, each running down to a neat little coloured ribbon.

Primer 2 was a staging year for some of the older pupils but I spent 10 months in Primer 1 and then went straight to Primer 3 (1965). Our teacher here was Mrs Bulmer (Josie Bulmer) who I remember always looking very severe. It was only in the previous year she had experienced the worst kind of tragedy that could ever happen to anyone, the death of her only child. Her daughter Dallas had been

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kicked in the head by her pony and she died of her injury shortly afterwards. Mr and Mrs Bulmer must have been absolutely devastated.

1965 was the year that Winston Churchill died and I do vaguely remember this, partly because the New Zealand Post Office actually printed a special 7d stamp to mark the event. However, a much stronger memory in the same year was one day sitting next to Nigel Dey and writing our respective names into our new books. Nigel quickly wrote 'N F Dey' while I had to spend a lot more time struggling to write out in my best handwriting 'JJ Heath-Caldwell'. At the time I thought how lucky Nigel was to have such a short name but much later on, I came to realise that very few people had a hyphenated surname and so I felt quite proud of my rather long and distinctive family name.

This was also the first time that I remember playing with electricity. In the class we had some large telephone batteries and some light bulbs. When you connected the light bulb to a battery with a length of copper wire, the light bulb glowed. This was great. If you then put two batteries in series and connected the bulb, then it glowed even brighter. This was brilliant. If you connected three batteries to the bulb you saw a brief flash from the bulb and then it stopped working. Soon we didn't have any bulbs that worked. They were all blown.

It was then that Murray Wharton brought in an amazing experiment that he had built with his father. It consisted of a number of 4 inch nails with lots of copper wires wrapped around them. He told us that this was called an armature. This was suspended under a very large magnet and it was made so it could rotate. He then connected a battery and another light bulb and the armature whirred into action, spinning round and round. This was an electric motor and it was incredible. I was very impressed with Murray Wharton and his father. They were obviously amazing people to have thought this up.

We then realised that the light bulb was using up energy so we took that out of the circuit to make the motor go even faster. It did go a little faster but the battery started to get very hot and then the motor steadily slowed down and stopped. When we reconnected the light bulb, it no longer glowed. Eventually we realised



1965: 7d stamp issued by the New Zealand Post Office to mark the death of Winston Churchill (1874–1965).

AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL: PRIMER 1 TO PRIMER 3 (1964–1965)



1965: Avon School, Primer 3. Teacher: Mrs Bulmer (Josie Bulmer).
Pam Murphy, Graham Payton, Lauren Coombe, Barry Jordan, Pauline Staveley, Gayll Buckthought, Christopher Connell, Murray Reed,
Helen Clayton, Nigel Cadman, Murray Wharton, ????
Dianne Rogers, Karina Thayer, Adrienne Sweeney, Gerald Landreth, Dennis Wheeler, David Rogers, ????, Barry Jordan?,
Heidi Drescher, Raewyn Bates, Maurice Johnson.
Karen Andrew, Nigel Dey, Eric Hayward, Rebecca Western, Elizabeth Capper, Donna Read, Terril Benton?, Jeremy Heath-Caldwell,
Tony Bradley, Warren Hayden.

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF JEREMY JAMES

that we had short circuited the battery and it was now dead but at least we still had one working light bulb, even if we no longer had a serviceable battery to power it. Murray and I learnt a lot from this experiment.

Another memory from back in 1965 was going to the Stratford Cinema (we sat upstairs) and seeing the musical 'The Sound of Music'. A short while later we also saw 'Mary Poppins'. These films both starred Julie Andrews and were very popular at the time, especially as they were in colour (rather than black and white). Mum bought the music sheets from Maunder's (the music shop) and learnt how to play them on her guitar while we all sang along. We also sang these songs when we were going on a car journey somewhere. I recently (2019) watched 'The Sound of Music' on my TV and I still absolutely loved it.

I should note here that records had become very popular by the mid 1960s. The first ever recording and play back was achieved when the American Thomas Edison invented the phonograph in 1877. This was followed by a wide variety of different methods for record and playback but by the mid 1920s, 78rpm records were being produced and these quickly gained popularity. They were played on a mechanical wind up gramophone with a steel stylus (no electricity). In the 1960s some of our friends still had these old wind up gramophones sitting in a corner gathering dust. In 1948 the Columbia Record Company, in America, introduced "Long Play" or "LP" records which played at 33rpm on an electric record player incorporating a ceramic stylus. These were initially in mono but in 1957 stereo was introduced and by the late 1960s most new records were being produced in stereo. Mono had one music channel but stereo had two independent channels.

Mum had a mono record player but around 1965, or possibly a bit later, she brought a more up to date stereo record player. This was a fascinating piece of equipment and was quite expensive so initially we were not allowed to even touch



1965: *The Sound of Music*
by Rodgers and Hammerstein.
Starring Julie Andrews and
Christopher Plummer.

AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL: PRIMER 1 TO PRIMER 3 (1964–1965)

it. It had two speakers and if you played a stereo record you could hear that the music in each speaker was slightly different. This top quality sound became known as “high fidelity” or “hi-fi”.

In Stratford we had Maunder’s Music that sold music sheets, as mentioned above, and they also sold musical instruments and records. LPs were quite expensive but if you didn’t have enough money you could just buy a ‘45’ which was about half the size and cost less than half the money but for some reason rotated at 45rpm instead of 33rpm. Mum’s record player had a switch where you would select 33, 45 or 78rpm dependent on which record you were going to play. If you had the speed switch in the wrong position the record would sound really weird. Over time Mum built up a small collection of records and the Sound of Music was definitely one of them.

Back in those days, a special trip for us was driving up to New Plymouth and this would take about an hour (30 minutes today). Sometimes Mum would drive us, but we also used to go with Denis Walker, who often did the journey, if he was having his children for the weekend. He and his wife Marlene had separated a few years earlier and Denis had then moved back in with his parents. This was why we were now renting his house at Ngaere.

Cars did not go very fast in the 1960s and any journey was slow because of the windy roads. You could speed up on the straight sections, but the speed limit was 55mph (approx 90kph) and getting a speeding ticket was not uncommon. On a Friday evening there was usually a lot of cars on the road so sometimes you would be driving in a long queue. Just before you reached the southern outskirts of New Plymouth, there was a very slow and tortuous route taking you right down into a deep valley, across a single lane bridge, and then up the other side. I remember a very large road works project that went on here for about a year. Denis Walker explained to us that they were building a “flyover” and he told us how a new section of road was going to be built across the valley to make the road into a straight line. This was fantastic.

Each time we made that journey, we would see all the big road construction machines gradually moving more and more earth into the middle of the valley until they had nearly filled it up. It was amazing. They built a bridge over the old road (Junction Road) and eventually the “flyover” was finished. We really enjoyed it when we were able to drive in a straight line right across that valley and look down where the old road had been. All of sudden, it felt like we were flying over it in an aeroplane.

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To us, New Plymouth was a huge place and we always referred to it as a “city”. Today it has a population of about 55,000 but back then its population was probably half that (but it was still about 5 times bigger than Stratford). Another thing we always enjoyed seeing were the traffic lights but on our early trips these were not there. During busy times, policemen would stand in the middle of some of the intersections on Devon Street. They would wear special white gloves and direct the traffic. I used to think that was a really dangerous job as we were always being told by Mum that you should never stand in the middle of the road.

AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL: STANDARD 1 & 2 (1966–1967)

In New Zealand, the academic year runs from February to December, with a long summer holiday at Christmas and through January. So every time February came around, we would all move up to the next class.

In Standard 1 (1966) we had Miss Barrow (Mrs Barbara Sextus) and it was around this time that we were given books to take home and read. These were very basic children's books with just a picture and a few words on each page. Once you had read the book, you would take it back and get the next one. Unfortunately I lost my first book and so Miss Barrow told me I was not allowed to get my next book until I had returned the first book. Other children learned to read at home sitting on their mother's knee and reading together. My mother by now was working full time and in the evening she often had work to mark or her own study to do. She tried her best but really she had very little time available to sit down and read with us.

In spelling we had 9 levels of tests. Spelling seemed illogical to me. Why did we have 4 and 'four'. Why not just 4. There was also 'for' which sounded exactly the same but was a different word and a different spelling. But for me it wasn't just 4 that was a problem. If we went 2×4 we got 8. This was spelt 'eight' but there was also another word 'ate' that again sounded the same but was spelt completely differently. A half of 4 was 2 and this was even worse. 2 was spelt 'two' but there was also 'to' and 'too'. There was of course the dictionary that listed all the words but I did not find this very easy to read either.

Even at the young age of 7, and having only just discovered what a dictionary was, it was obvious to me that, whoever wrote the dictionary, they had not done a very good job of it. Years later I was to learn that Dr Samuel Johnson was the man credited by most as writing the first dictionary, which he published in 1755. But even this was not correct, as there were earlier dictionaries. In 1604 there was 'Table Alphabeticall' created by Robert Cawdrey. This only had 120 pages with 2,543 words but it was definitely a dictionary and it was definitely earlier than Dr Johnson, even if hardly anyone knows who Robert Cawdrey was. And another

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thing, Dr Samuel Johnson didn't actually finish going to university so he was not a real doctor but years later a university in Ireland decided he was a great guy and so they sent him a certificate confirming that they had honoured him by making him a Doctor. His dictionary sums it up quite neatly. If you look up the word Lexicographer, his definition is: A writer of dictionaries; a harmless drudge.

Years later I read a lot of history and finally figured it all out. The real facts of the case, was that no one was in charge of the English language and that was really the source of the problem. If you go way back in time, everyone had just been picking up words from here and there, usually from other people's languages, and they all just got added together into one big melting pot. There are lots of little rules, but the overall result is just chaos and this has now become widely accepted by everyone.

I mention this here because for me, this was all a bit of a disaster. I liked numbers but I found words to be difficult.

Hilary (and later also Michael) were both top performers at spelling, but I found it a real struggle and dropped behind. Mum did give me a bit of extra tuition and in only a short time I had got to level 3 but she then stopped giving me any further help as she just didn't have the time and if Hilary could learn to spell then surely I could also.

Looking back, one major barrier to my learning was probably the fact that we were given a half pint bottle of milk to drink in class every morning. I never liked the taste of milk but we were told we had to drink it, so I did what I was told and I drank it. Years later (in my early 50s) I discovered that I had a dairy allergy. Drinking milk, and in fact eating anything with dairy in it, just made me feel very tired. The other symptom was a headache and a snotty nose. I would blow it and blow it, but the snot just kept running. I must have looked fairly horrid when I was at school.

While I found spelling difficult, I found arithmetic to be very easy. It was logical and you didn't really need to remember much as you could just work it all out in your head as you went along.

Another thing I remember in Standard 1 was the large map of the world, which hung on the wall. Half the countries shown were pink and these were all the countries of the great British Empire. The map must have been printed before 1947 as India was still pink. The United States of America was not pink so the map was definitely printed after 1775. We were a bit young to really know much about the British Empire but we could certainly see that it was very large and very pink.

AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL: STANDARD 1 & 2 (1966–1967)

As we progressed through school we were also told great stories of English history. Of heroes like the explorers Livingstone and Stanley of Africa (“Dr Livingstone I presume”) and General Gordon of Khartoum. Also some New Zealand history, with the Treaty of Waitangi which confirmed that the Maori owned their land but that they could sell it if they wanted to in return for money or barter (some glass beads and a few tomahawks). These were probably called half axes in 1840 but we certainly knew what they were and we called them tomahawks.

In 1940 the Post Office had created a stamp to mark the 100th anniversary of the Treaty. The same scene was also depicted on the 10 shilling banknote. Over time, more and more people started to realise that there was quite a lot of Maori land that had been clandestinely purloined by the Government and the Maoris did not even get the tomahawks. From the 1980s onwards the Government had to pay a lot of money to the Maori tribes to correct this injustice.

I think 1966 may have been the year that our class went on our first ‘school trip’, which was down into town to visit the new Stratford Post Office which had only recently opened. This really was a special treat. We got told all about the savings bank, the mail system and the telephone system. In those days the Post Office had responsibility for all three of these.

The Post Office Savings Bank was straight forward. You went to the Post Office and took with you, your money and your Post Office savings book. Your savings book was written up and stamped and they then took your money away and kept it safe. Your savings book then told you how much money you had in your account. When you wanted to take your money out, it was just the reverse of the process.

The mail system was also fairly easy to follow. A customer addressed an envelope, stuck a stamp on it and posted it. The Post Office then took it on a long journey with bag deliveries and sorting stations until eventually it reached the postman and he drove out in his car and delivered it to the recipient’s letter box.

The telephone system was much more complicated. There were no delivery bags, instead the phone calls were passed, as a special type of electricity, along a



2 ½ d stamp issued by the Post Office in 1940 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Treaty of Waitangi, 1840.

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series of wires, to make a connection between the person making the call and the person receiving the call. If it was a local call, this could be done fairly easily, as there was special machinery that just linked up the connection and rang all the people who shared what was called a “party line”. If someone made a telephone call to my Mum at home, all the telephones inside the various houses on Sole Road would ring (I think our number was Stratford 3194). If the call was for my Mum, the ring bell would go ‘long ring, short ring, long ring.’ Everybody on Sole Road would listen carefully to the ring and they would know that it was not their ring sequence, so hopefully they would not answer it. My Mum, recognising her ring sequence, would answer it by picking up the handset. Of course it was not always easy to recognise the rings, so sometimes when Mum answered the phone, she would find that she would also be talking to one or more of the other people who shared the line. No great problem, as eventually they would all figure out who was who and then everything would be fine.

This was how the local calls worked but long distance (toll calls) were more complicated. To make a toll call, Mum would pick up the handset and dial 100. I had better explain here, what it meant to ‘dial’ a number in those days. The dial on the front of the phone, was a circular piece of metal with holes in it for each digit (0,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1). You would assume that it went 0 to 9 but it didn’t and no one ever questioned why, as those highly intelligent people at the Post Office must have had a good reason for it. Mum would put her forefinger in the hole for ‘1’ and then rotate the dial clockwise a short distance round to its furthest extent and then let it go. It would make this amazing whirring sound as the spring inside would quickly send the dial back to the starting position. Mum would then put her finger in the ‘0’ hole but this time she would have to rotate the dial right the way around before she reached the end stop. Again she would let it go and once the spring got it back into position, she would do it one more time. This was how you ‘dialled’ 100 to reach the operator.

The operator would be sitting in a chair at the switch board, wearing special headphones, just waiting for someone to call and request a toll connection. My Mum would tell the operator that she wanted to ring ‘so and so’ who lived in a certain town and had a certain telephone number for that town. The operator, who was highly trained in using the switch board, would pick up a cable with a plug on the end of it and she would stick this into one of the many sockets on her switchboard. This would connect her to a second operator who would be sitting at a switchboard in the town that my Mum had requested. That second operator

AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL: STANDARD 1 & 2 (1966–1967)

would then ring the person, and if they answered, my Mum would then be connected through and would be able to talk to the desired person.

This really was magical, and it was amazing that our whole class could actually see it all taking place in the Stratford Post Office. I think all the telephone operators were ladies because this was a lady's job. The other thing that the lady operator would do, was to write out on a little card my Mum's number and once the call was finished she would add the duration time of the call. This card was then passed to another lady who collected all these up and took them off to the accounts lady. At the end of the month my Mum would receive a bill from the Post Office, telling her how much all her telephone calls for the month added up to. Telephone calls were very expensive and so most people only used the telephone if it was important.

As I mentioned earlier, overseas calls were even more complicated, so much so, that you actually had to book the call, in advance, usually the day before. This gave the Post Office forward notice, so that all the required telephone operators, located at various places around the world, would each be able to get their cords and plugs ready on all those switch boards, just for your call. If it all worked ok, you could speak and be heard but sometimes the sound quality would be very poor and on these occasions the telephone operators would pass messages to each other, to convey your words to the recipient and back. These telephone operators were wonderful people.

Our visit to the Post Office really was an eye opener for me and from that point on I was always fascinated trying to figure out more detail about how the telephone system worked (electronic engineering).

For about 20 of us in our class at Avon, we started at Primer 1 (in 1963 or 1964) and from Primer 3 (1965) onwards we were together right through until Form 2 (1971). The class size varied each year from 30 to 40, as there were always a few new pupils arriving and a few leaving. In some cases I have no idea who they were because they were only with us for a short time. In Standard 1 we were joined by Prudence Walker who had done Primer 1 and 2 but she skipped Primer 3. We were also joined by Janet Sulzberger and Joe Sheehan who had moved from other schools. Joe was from a Catholic family and had been at the Catholic School (St Joseph's) but his mother had a difference of opinion with the nuns about her children's education and so she had moved the whole family to Avon, all 9 children. Initially we thought this was strange having a Catholic person in our class but of course very quickly we realised that he was completely normal.

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Another thing to mention here, is that the size of the average family has very much reduced in my lifetime. Today (2020) most people just have a family of 1,2 or 3 children. In Taranaki, back in the 1960s, we had quite a few pupils in my class who were from relatively large families. Joe of course had 8 siblings. Prudence Walker had 8. Murray Wharton had 4. David Rogers and his twin sister Dianne had 8 other brothers and sisters. Quite a few of the others were also from large families.

It should be noted here that the population of humans on our planet was approx 3 billion in 1958–59 when we were all born but now in 2020 it is nearly 8 billion. The population has more than doubled but the size of the planet has not increased. This is becoming a huge problem and will lead to disastrous consequences but for the moment politicians and journalists hardly ever talk about it. It is crazy, as this is a ticking time bomb and although it is not an easy subject, if people will not talk about the problem, it is going to be exceedingly difficult to solve.



1966: Set of stamps, on a first day cover, issued by the British Post Office to commemorate the 900th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings (1066).

Another memory of 1966 was that my Nana (Dora Bailey) sent me a very special set of English stamps that showed sections of the Bayeux Tapestry, depicting the story of the invasion of England by the Norman Duke, William the Conqueror, 900 years earlier in 1066. It was a very big set, as there were 8 stamps

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in all, so obviously this must have been a very big event. These stamps certainly got me interested in history and the more I found out about this particular war, the more questions I had. Why did they call William a “Norman” when he was definitely a Frenchman? The other odd thing was that the Bayeux Tapestry wasn’t in England, it is in a place called Bayeux, in France. Also, if the English lost to a Frenchman, why did they want to celebrate it? Very strange.

Murray Wharton has found another excellent photo taken of us at the end of this year on the occasion of our Christmas Nativity play.

Away from school, it was around this time that Michael and I joined the Klenners for a week in the summer holidays. We went and stayed at a bach (a beach house) at a place called ‘Onaero Domain’ which was located on the north coast of Taranaki. This was a fantastic adventure and I think we actually did it for three years running.

Onaero Domain is a very small holiday park at the mouth of the Onaero River and on the west side of the river there is a hill covered in bush which was once an old Maori settlement (Puketapu Pa). You could still make out the terraces and defence ditches. There were also some pits but everything was overgrown with native bush. In among the trees were some little gravestones, all that was left relating to some of the early people who had once lived there (one was dated 1876). We used to love walking up through the trees and exploring. I often wondered who those people were who had once lived there. We also went up one evening, just as it was getting dark. We could hear the moreporks (owls) high up in the trees making their creepy sound. The whole thing was very scary and we ended up running back to the campsite as fast as our legs would carry us.

David Rogers has now brought me up to date on this. Puketapu Pa is located within the Pukemiro Historic Reserve west of the Onaero River. The tribe (Iwi) this site is associated with is Ngati Mutunga. The site is one of many that was handed back by the Crown to Ngati Mutunga iwi through the Treaty of Waitangi negotiations as part of the Grievance Settlement process.

During the day we spent our time catching fish with a line and hook. In later years we got proper fishing rods which were even better. There was no bridge there in those days, so we had to wade across the river at low tide if we wanted to go to the beach for a swim in the ocean. It really was fantastic and we enjoyed every minute of it.

In Standard 2 (1967) our teacher was Mrs Brunning (Betty Johnson) and the big event that year was currency decimalisation. The way the old currency worked

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December 1966: Our class (Standard 1) dressed up for the Nativity play.
???, Elizabeth Capper, ???, Pauline Staveley, Prudence Walker, Rebecca Western, ???, Nigel Dey, Donkey1, ???, Gerald Landruth,
Donkey2, Murray Wharton, Murray Reed, Jeremy Heath-Caldwell, Graham Peyton, ???

AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL: STANDARD 1 & 2 (1966–1967)



1967: Avon School, Standard 2. Teacher: Mrs Brunning (Betty Johnson).

Top row: Karen Andrew, Karina Thayer, Pam Murphy, Pauline Staveley, Gayll Buckthought, Verna Shelford, Janet Sulzberger, Terril Benton, Dianne Rogers, Elizabeth Capper. **Middle row:** Graham Payton, Stephen Thomas, Murray Reed, Prudence Walker, Heidi Drescher, Rebecca Western, Murray Wharton, David Rogers, Bruce Vickers. **Bottom row:** Warren Hayden, Nigel Dey, Dennis Wheeler, Kerry Johansson, Tony Bradley, Eric Hayward, Jeremy Heath-Caldwell, William Roa, Joseph Sheehan.

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was that two halfpennies made a penny (1d), three pennies made a threepence (3d), six pennies made a sixpence (6d). Good so far, but this was where we started to get onto the difficult stuff. Twelve pennies made a shilling (or a bob), two shillings or twenty-four pennies made a florin. Two shillings and sixpence, or thirty pennies, made a half crown. One would suppose that we had a crown which was worth two half crowns but no such luck (there were special commemorative crowns but they were not used for general circulation). The next denomination was moving up to the high value stuff and this was a ten bob note (ten shilling note) and two of those added together to make twenty shillings or two hundred and forty pennies, which was one pound (£1).



Old New Zealand coins used until 10 July 1967.

Half penny, one penny, three pence, six pence, one shilling, one florin, half crown.



Old New Zealand ten shilling note used until 10 July 1967.

Shows a native kiwi and the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi.

AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL: STANDARD 1 & 2 (1966–1967)

If you were buying a horse then this was different again, as the price was usually given in guineas (instead of pounds). One guinea was equal to one pound and one shilling but there was no such thing as a one guinea note. Back in England there had been a one guinea gold coin but apparently these went out of circulation in 1816.

Just another short note here. Pounds, shillings and pence were sometimes abbreviated to 'Lsd' but this had nothing to do with drugs. It goes back to the Roman words for various coins: libra, solidus, and denarius. I had often wondered why 1 penny was shortened to 1d, when surely it should have been shortened to 1p. But again, this was the English language, so I suppose our parents had just got used to it.

This was all very complicated and hence the reason to decimalise. We all thought that moving to dollars and cents was much more sensible! We had lots of adverts on the TV all about the change and indelibly printed on my brain ever since, has been the date 10th of July 1967, which was when we started using decimal currency. When we awoke that morning, the whole of the country was in dollars and cents. They even changed all the postage stamps. One old pound was now replaced by two of the new dollars (£1 = \$2). One hundred cents made a dollar and that was all you needed to know (100c = \$1).



New decimal coins used from 10 July 1967.

The large one dollar coin in this commemoration set was not used for general circulation.

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF JEREMY JAMES



New one dollar note used from 10 July 1967. Shows a native fantail.

DECIMAL CURRENCY BOARD

This is to certify that

Janet Sulzberger

of Avon School

has attained a satisfactory knowledge
of Decimal Currency
and is fully prepared for the New Zealand change over
on the 10th Day of July 1967.

She is therefore entitled to be called a
DOLLAR SCHOLAR

Signed
Mr Dollar.

AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL: STANDARD 1 & 2 (1966–1967)

Janet King (Sulzberger) has reminded me that we all had to sit a special test about decimalisation and provided we passed we were given the prestigious ‘Dollar Scholar’ certificate!

I think most of us passed the test and were presented with our certificates. Within a few years we had probably all managed to lose this special memento but looking back, it is nice to know that we can still call ourselves “Dollar Scholars”. For Denis Wheeler the day was even more memorable as it was his birthday!

Sets of the new coins were issued in special commemorative packs to mark this momentous event. We all loved the new coins especially the 50c coin as this depicted James Cook’s ship HMS Endeavour sailing around the Taranaki coast with our mountain in the background. They also issued a special commemorative \$1 coin but this was not for general circulation as we had a \$1 note.

During the year, one job that each of us was given was to be the class ‘milk monitor’. In fact this highly responsible position was usually shared by two of us at a time and we would carry it out for a week. The crates of milk were delivered to the school each morning and the two milk monitors would pick up a crate and bring it into the class and everybody would be given their half pint glass bottle. What I do remember about this was that on the very cold days in the winter the bottles of milk would start to freeze, the milk would expand, the aluminium tops would all start popping off and the milk would drip down the sides of each bottle making quite a mess. On the hot days in the summer, the milk would sometimes be so warm that it would start to go off and taste fairly horrible.

Another memory from Standard 2 was that I got my first watch on my 8th birthday. It was made in Switzerland by a company called ASCO, incorporating “17 jewels incabloc”. This really was something, even if I had no idea what the 17 jewels were being used for, and no idea what incabloc meant. It was a clockwork watch so I had to wind it every few days and it lasted me 10 years before it finally conked out. I still have it as a little memento of my early years. I suppose you could say that it is no longer “working like clockwork” but that is also a phrase that you don’t hear so much these days.

At the back of the school there was a large bike shed, as most of the pupils cycled to school. It is quite incredible to think how ‘health and safety’ was so different back then. I suppose today most primary schools no longer have bike sheds as all the parents always take their small children to and from school, dropping them off, and picking them up, from the main gate. I was not to get a bike until I

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was about 11 years old. Living out at Ngaere, it would not have been safe for an 8 year old boy to cycle along the busy main road and even if there had been no cars, 3 miles (5km) was quite a long way.

Mrs Brunning showed us some interesting things with plants. One was to submerge a plant in water and then observe it two days later, when you could see all the little bubbles of oxygen, clinging to the leaves. We were told how plants take in carbon dioxide and produce oxygen (as noted by Joseph Priestley in 1774). Another experiment was putting a daffodil flower into a pot of ink. After a few days you could see the ink working its way up the stalk and into the flower petals. You could then see all the veins in the flower and get a feel for how the plant was moving nutrients around. I was really keen to see what happened after that but of course the flower wilted and died and that was the end of the flower.

Elizabeth Capper has reminded me that Mrs Brunning's temper could sometimes be a bit quick. She had a one yard long wooden ruler (that is 91cm into today's money) and every now and then she would slam it down onto one of the desktops. Wack! The sound was earth shattering and we would all "jump out of out of our seats". Of course, we didn't actually jump out of our seats, but that is the phrase in the English language, that we all use to describe the feeling. The other phrase that is a bit odd is "in today's money" which doesn't seem very logical when we are actually talking about a length and not a currency. In fact we don't hear this phrase much these days either.

By now lots of things were not going very well for me. My handwriting was terrible, my spelling was bottom of the class, I certainly didn't like reading books and I was hopeless at sport. The only thing I was mildly good at was arithmetic. As a total contrast there was the beautiful Rebecca Western (her with the long blonde hair in 2 neat plaits with 2 coloured ribbons) who had wonderfully neat handwriting, was excellent at spelling, quick with arithmetic and even quicker when it came to sport. She was just good at everything. I must point out that it wasn't just Rebecca that was good at things as Joe, Elizabeth, Janet and lots of the others were also reaching a high standard. In fact we had one pupil, Gerald Landreth, who was so exceptionally good that he was put up a class. He was a very nice kid but once he was a year above us, none of us played with him anymore. He made friends in his new class.

Meanwhile, I was often in trouble with the teachers, but I couldn't really understand it all. The deputy headmaster strapped me one day and I have no memory of why. I was very traumatised by the whole thing. I decided there and

AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL: STANDARD 1 & 2 (1966–1967)



*New decimal stamps issued by the Post Office from 10 July 1967.
Each stamp tells a story.*

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then that he was a very horrible person and that all the other teachers were probably in the same boat. It was best to try and have as little as possible to do with any of them.

My ability to mix socially with the other boys in my class was a bit variable and it was only occasionally that I got invited to other boys' houses to attend birthday parties and that sort of thing. I think part of the problem here was that our home at Ngaere was 3 miles away (5km) and this made us a bit isolated.

I remember going to Joe Sheehan's house once. As I mentioned, he had lots of brothers and sisters and they were a very big happy family and lived in one of the very few two-storey houses in Stratford. They seemed to me to be rich. One person who I did get to visit, on several occasions, was Murray Wharton. His mother and father were really lovely people. Mr Wharton was a carpenter and I remember him building a massive workshop behind his house. He was also into photography as a hobby and he had a "dark room" where he could develop his own photographs. These days we have digital cameras and the pictures mainly just stay in a memory somewhere, unless we actually print one off. In the 1960s, cameras required a plastic film which could only be used once. To develop the film, it was necessary to dip it in a chemical solution and then dry it out. This was then called a "negative". After that the film image was projected onto special paper and this produced the photograph or "positive". All this was done in the "dark room". I found all this technology to be incredible and I will revisit this a bit later in my story.

Most of the boys played sport on Saturday morning but for me this was not possible. I was no good at sport and living at Ngaere, it was just too far away. They all had bikes and their parents were happy for them to cycle around the streets in Stratford as much as they liked. It was fairly safe and I don't remember any of them ever getting run over. Again, they all had two parents and so in most cases received a lot of support and encouragement.

Some of the boys did come out to Ngaere to play at my house but this was only occasionally. Murray Wharton has reminded me about the flying fox and this was very popular. Mr Walker had obtained a large roll of number 8 wire from his brother Peter, who worked for the Electricity Board. I think this was disused power cable, taken from the overhead electricity distribution network. In New Zealand, electricity is distributed via wires high up on power poles (in the UK it is mainly underground cables). Mr Walker wrapped one end around the large tree on the top of our hill and then ran the wire down to a strainer post in the fence

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at the bottom of the hill, probably a distance of 100m. He had then put a wire strainer on the end, so with a handle we could tighten or loosen the wire. If it was too loose, the wire would be low and you would just drag along the ground. If the wire was too tight, it would be high, in which case you didn't touch the ground, which meant you just got faster and faster. On one occasion I had it too tight and too high, the result was that I had a nasty accident, as I crashed into the ground, just short of the end. I remember having the wind knocked out of me and for a brief moment, it was very difficult to breath. I was badly bruised but of course I did recover after a few days.

Another great past time was climbing trees. In Taranaki, children did not have climbing frames in their gardens, as with there being plenty of trees around, there was no need. We all started by climbing the small trees and then as we built up our confidence, we would scale higher and higher trees. The Walker's garden next door was full of trees so there were always lots of new challenges there. Years later my mother said she found it quite unsettling seeing us all at the top of some of these trees, to the extent that she found the best way to cope was to look in the opposite direction. None of my friends died falling out of a tree but I understand it did happen from time to time.

Denis Wheeler remembers visiting and we went down the road to the little pond that was just below Mr Cox's house. In the spring this was always full of frogs and tadpoles and a wide variety of insects. We used to spend countless hours catching tadpoles and then taking them home and putting them in a large tank at the bottom of the garden. It was amazing watching the tadpoles slowly growing, gradually getting bigger and then a pair of rear legs would start to form, followed by a pair of front legs. At the same time, the tail would get shorter and the tadpole would change from black to more of a brownie colour and eventually to bright green. Then all of a sudden, we would realise that we didn't have any tadpoles left. Instead we had a tank heaving with lots of small green frogs. It really was absolutely fantastic. Who wants an Xbox when you can get all this for free!

For posterity (somebody might be reading my story 100 years hence) I had better just record what an Xbox is. This is a computer (video game console) which arrived under the Christmas trees in 2001 for lots of children that had been well behaved and who also happened to have well off parents. For the next 10 years, and in some cases even longer, children have been glued to screens, clicking buttons and watching amazing combinations of colour (together with complementary sounds) presenting worlds that are completely imaginary. We did not have these

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toys in the 1960s and looking back I must say I would still have a preference for the tadpoles and frogs.

Opposite the pond was Mr Cox's haybarn. This was another fantastic place to play. We would move all the hay bales around and make little huts. Sometimes Mr Cox would come in and find us and he would be a bit grumpy and chuck us all out but other times he was happy to let us carry on playing.

In the summer we could not afford to go on long holidays much but Mum did her best. One year we went on a trip to Tauranga which was one of the few occasions where we met up with our father. James was very pleased to see us and he had arranged a very special trip out to Mayor island on a boat which was full of people who were going to spend the day fishing. This was fascinating as we had never been on a large boat before and as we were chugging along, we saw lots of flying fish jumping out of the waves. Unfortunately, James had not realised that there is nothing at Mayor Island and there was nowhere to buy lunch. If my mother had known beforehand, she could have sorted out a packed lunch. As it was, we were dropped on the island by the fishermen and we spent the day sitting there feeling rather bored and very hungry.

The fishermen picked us up late afternoon and by the time we got back to Tauranga we must have been starving and probably quite subdued. For James this must have been very disheartening, as he had obviously put a lot of thought into trying to plan a really good day out for the family but, as in the past, things had not worked out as well as he had hoped. For Mum this was just another one of those small events that again confirmed the significant limitations of James' capabilities.

Looking through some of our old family photos I have a picture of me, Hilary and Michael, taken at Christmas, where we are all wearing very neat looking blue patterned jerseys. The picture was taken in our garden at Ngaere. We always had lots of jerseys and we wore these through the winter months and also on any cold days in the summer. Some of these jerseys were sent to us from Nana & Grandpop in England (my mother's mother and stepfather) and others were knitted by my mother. Denis Wheeler has told me that he always remembers me wearing unusual jerseys.

The other thing noticeable in this photo, and also in some of the class photos, is bare feet. Most of the summer, and even occasionally in the winter, we went to school without shoes. In general, you could run faster if you were in bare feet, and also, you didn't have any shoes to polish and no laces to tie up. Many of the other pupils at Avon School also went bare foot. After a while, the

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soles of your feet hardened up, but you did have to watch where you walked. Stepping on a bumble bee and getting stung was quite painful and walking on the stones on the side of the road was not easy. The other thing I remember was walking across the paddocks on the farm, and every now and then, accidentally stepping in a cow pat. If it was a few weeks old, then this was not much of a problem, but if the cow pat was fresh, and a bit runny, it would all squeeze up between your toes. It was quite smelly and the only thing you could do, was get the hose pipe and give your feet a good drenching.



Boxing Day, 1967: Hilary, Jeremy James and Michael in new Christmas jerseys.



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In 1968 we had Miss Burrows (Mrs Rae Eager) as our teacher for Standard 3. I think it must have been around this time that we started doing our very first chemistry experiments, trying to make copper sulphate crystals. Using a “Bunsen burner”, we would boil up some water in a glass beaker and then dissolve some copper sulphate to make a saturated solution. We left it overnight and when we came back the following morning, we would find that there were all these wonderful blue crystals formed at the bottom of the beaker. Some were larger and some were smaller. We would all be gazing at each other’s crystals to see who had managed to grow the biggest.

My Nana (Dora Bailey) sent me a first day cover of a British stamp celebrating the bicentenary of Captain Cook leaving England in HMS Endeavour (1768).



1968: Postage stamp on a 'first day cover' issued by the British Post Office to mark the 200th Anniversary of Captain Cook setting out from England on his voyage of discovery.

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This was the start of his circumnavigation of the world and the following year his discovery of New Zealand. This was quite interesting and was an early start to all the celebrations that we were to have.

At playtime there was one game that we all enjoyed and this was called “Bullrush”. This was a version of a UK game known as “Bulldog”. All you needed was an empty space and a large group of kids, anything from 10 to 30. You would then elect someone to be “It”. The person who was “It” would stand in the middle of the field and call out the name of one of the kids waiting on the side-line. This person would then attempt to run across the field while “It” would attempt to catch them and drag them to the ground. If they were successfully grounded, they were considered caught and they would then join “It” but if they managed to keep moving and they made it to the other side, they had escaped. If they knocked “It” right over during the process, then no problem, as this was just part of the game. Once he or she reached the far side, everyone would yell “Bullrush!” in their loudest voices. This was a like a war cry. Instantly, all the other kids would run in a massive stampede across the field, hoping if they were quick, that they would make it to the other side without getting caught.

Sooner or later ‘It’ would catch someone to join him. They would then call another one of the kids but this time it would be more difficult to get across, as there were now two catchers in the field. The game would continue with individuals attempting to run the gauntlet and whenever someone got through, they would be followed by another shout of “Bullrush!” followed by another stampede.

In the early stages, it would be the smaller kids who would be caught and as a result the team of catcher’s would get larger. Eventually, there would only be a few of the larger faster runners left but they would now be trying to run through a very numerous and widely spread group of catchers. Finally, everyone would be caught. The last person to be caught would usually be “It” for the next game.

A slight disadvantage of this game, was that everyone would get fairly dirty, as they got dragged to the ground, especially if it was a bit muddy. Shirts getting ripped happened fairly often. There was also the occasional injury, but I don’t remember anyone actually breaking any bones. Certainly no one was ever killed at our school.

The best thing about this game, was that you could participate whether you were large or small. Size and speed did not matter. Even the girls joined in. If you were small, you ganged up with the other small kids until your group was numerous enough to bring the big kids down. I always loved this game.

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As I mentioned, in the UK it is called “Bulldog” but I understand it is not played any more, as it is considered to be too dangerous, or if it is played, it is more of a tag game, rather than a game of rugby tackles. I think it is sad that the young people of today miss out on so many experiences like Bullrush.

We also played sport during class, and for boys this was usually rugby in the winter and cricket in the summer. Girls were not allowed to play rugby. Instead they generally played hockey in the winter and netball in the summer. Maybe the fact that they were not allowed to play rugby was one reason why many of the girls liked playing Bullrush.

One sport that we all liked was swimming. We only did this in the warm summer month of February, and this consisted of taking the morning off school and walking down to the public swimming baths. Apparently, these are still in the same location, at the intersection of Page Street and Miranda Street, but the pool is now in a very large covered building. Back in the 1960s it was all open, there was no heating and the water was always very cold, even if all above was blue skies and sunshine. This was because Stratford was actually 1017ft (310m) above sea level and so was much colder than the coastal towns like New Plymouth.

Our individual abilities varied a lot, with people like Murray Reed and Janet Sulzberger being incredibly fast swimmers and of course also Rebecca Western and a lot of the others. You got a special certificate with coloured stickers that you would be awarded every time you completed a longer distance. Murray and Janet soon earned all their coloured stickers. I did get the certificate but gaining the accolade of those very special stickers was something I never achieved.

I remember one of the exercises was to be stationary in the water and just float, with little or preferably no movement of the hands. Murray and Janet could do this easily, they did not move their hands at all, but whenever I tried, I just sank. The teacher told me I had to practise more, but when I thought about what the teacher told me, I came to realise that the teacher had it all wrong. This exercise of floating in the water did not require any skill, you just kept your lungs as full as possible and you floated, except that in my case, I sank.

I got thinking more about this and I remember watching Janet swimming one day. She glided along and appeared to just float over the water. Then I realised what the situation really was. Both Janet and Murray were well built. They were not a flimsy light build like me. I could see that the ratio of their lung capacity to body weight, was going to be much more favourable than mine. Floating was not a skill. Swimming was a skill, but in both cases to be good, you need to have

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a favourable ratio of lung capacity to body weight. It was really very simple and I realised, for myself, there was very little I could do about it. I could see it, but why were the teachers unable to understand it?

While we enjoyed sports, one thing we did not enjoy was visits to the dental nurse. Within the school grounds was a small building and this was the Dental Surgery. Every now and then the dental nurse would appear at the door of our classroom. Suddenly there would be a hush as we all just stopped and looked. We all knew who she was, and we knew what was going to happen next. She would speak softly to our teacher and by now we were all looking around the classroom wondering who the next victim was going to be and of course hoping that we wouldn't be picked. The teacher then called out the person who was on the dental nurse's list. They were then led away.

Later, in the playground, we would all be keen to find out what terrible pain had been inflicted on the poor victim concerned. Sometimes they would be all smiles as they had managed to get off without needing any fillings. Other times they would be a bit subdued and would talk with a bit of a mumble. The after effects of the anaesthetic injection, causing them to have difficulty moving their mouth to articulate their words. It was a tough time. We all had to be brave. For most of us, we were putting too much sugar on our cereals each morning and as a result, tooth decay was quite common.

In addition to the occasional filling, I also had another problem in that my teeth were developing in a way where they were getting a bit jumbled up. A higher level of dental care would be required. The dental nurse kept telling me to tell my mother to take me to a dentist to get my teeth straightened. Each time I would go home and tell my mother but she would just say that we could not afford it, so no point visiting the dentist. In New Zealand at the time, basic dental care was free but more advanced work like teeth straightening had to be paid for. Every time I met the dental nurse she would talk to me like I was a naughty boy who had not passed the message onto my mother. In the meantime, I grew up with a full set of crooked teeth which from my teenage years onwards was a great sadness to me. Eventually in my 40s I realised that my crooked teeth were just part of me and on the good side at least all my teeth were real. After that I did not worry any further.

In Ngaere I often went across to the Walker's house and sometimes I would play with Denis Walker's sons, Trevor, Keith and Gary but a lot of the time they were not there, as I mentioned earlier, they lived with their mother in New Plymouth. In addition to Denis Walker there was also his twin brother Peter who worked

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for the Electricity Board. They were all a fairly happy family most of the time and around their house was a fantastic garden that old Mr & Mrs Walker had built up over the years. It was a great place to play and explore and they were very happy for us to just wander over there whenever we wished.

In addition to the main house there was a very old building that was used as a shed. This had actually been the original homestead, build by an early settler, probably back in the mid 1800s. We didn't know who this early settler was but he and his family, a hundred years previously, would have been the people who chopped down the native bush to make grazing land for cows. The little homestead was just a small building with two rooms and presumably they had lived there for quite a few years, while they developed their land and earned money from their dairy cattle. Eventually they had saved enough to build a much larger house for themselves and this was where the Walker family now lived.

Behind this shed was an area in the trees where these early settlers had dumped all their rubbish and over the years this had become very overgrown. In among the undergrowth you could see things sticking out here and there, mainly old glass bottles. Mr Walker was happy for me to take a shovel to this and explore further. I now became an "archaeologist" and it was like digging for treasure. Over a few weeks I dug up much of the area and recovered mainly old bottles but also a few old pairs of spectacles and even a pair of false teeth. Some of these bottles were



Blue castor oil bottle dug up behind the Walker's shed.

relics of early soft drink technology with a glass marble in the neck that had been used to seal the contents. There were medicine bottles, ink bottles and all sorts of glass jars. My favourite was a blue glass bottle that would originally have had castor oil in it. Apparently back in those days lots of parents dosed their children with a spoonful of castor oil each day, thinking that it was good for their health. It probably made very little difference to their health; the only certainty was that there was an entrepreneur somewhere who must have made a lot of money out of it. I suppose he put his castor oil in a special blue bottle to make it look even more magical.

I kept a lot of those bottles for quite a few years, but one by one they were lost or given away. As I write this story today, I am pleased to report that I do still have

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*The original homestead on the Walker's farm, now used as a shed.
Probably built in the mid 1800s (photo taken in 2005).*

the blue castor oil bottle tucked away safely in my library in amongst my other special family relics.

One pastime for us, throughout the year, was watching television (TV) and this was a window to the outside world. Public TV broadcasts in the UK had begun way back in 1932 but it was not until 1960 that television broadcasts began in New Zealand, initially with a transmitter to cover Auckland and then, one by one, further transmitters were built to cover the rest of the country. I think we probably got our TV in about 1966.

Everyone had to pay for an annual television receiver licence but in Taranaki each licence holder had to also chip in a bit extra to pay for the transmitter that had been built at the 'Hen & Chickens' on Mt Taranaki. I always thought 'Hen & Chickens' was a lovely name to describe a few large rocks on the side of the mountain. Having a TV transmitter there made it seem even more special.

Back then we had no need for a TV guide, as there was only one channel, and the daily list of programmes was printed in the newspaper. We turned the TV on as soon as we got back from school and we watched whatever was showing.

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On Sundays there was the ‘Afternoon Matinee’ which I think started at 2.00pm. It was generally a full-length film, lasting a few hours. These films were either American or English productions, often produced in the 1940s or 1950s, so they were actually quite old, but we didn’t realise that. It was great to just sit down after lunch and absorb one of these stories, especially if it was raining outside. In the early evening, probably at about 6.00pm, there would be ‘Disneyland’ and this was always introduced with a few words from Walt Disney. He was a real gentleman and was usually wearing a dark suit with the top of a white handkerchief just visible sticking out of this top pocket. Walt Disney actually died in 1966 but in New Zealand all our TV programmes were a few years behind, so we didn’t know he had passed away. He was on our screens every Sunday and looked very fit and healthy.

One of our favourite programmes, which showed later in the evening, was called ‘Coronation Street’ and was about some families living in a northern town in England. Our mother was always telling us about how great everything was in England – “much better than NZ”. But we were one step ahead here, as we were watching Coronation Street and we could see how bad it really was. The Ogdens did not even have a bath until Stan Ogden installed one himself. In our house at Ngaere we had the luxury of a bath and a shower. Watching Coronation Street made us feel quite well off.

We also liked watching the news, which told us about all sorts of things happening in New Zealand and around the world. In 1968 one of the major events was the sinking of the ‘Wahine’ which was an inter-island ferry that did the regular journey from Wellington to Lyttelton near Christchurch. There was a huge storm with winds gusting up to 171mph (275kph) and the Wahine ended up hitting Barrett Reef in Wellington Harbour. Of the 734 people on board, 53 people died from drowning or from the cold. It was all very sad.

The other thing that was often reported on the news, was the ongoing conflict in the Middle East between the Egyptians and the Israelis. This had also caused the Suez Canal to be blocked and ships had not been able to use it since the 1967 war. Running sort of in parallel with the Middle Eastern conflict, was aircraft being hijacked by terrorists. In fact, over a five-year period (1968–1972) the world was to experience over 300 hijack attempts which was about one every week.

A very special event for us back in 1968, was going to the ‘Bowl of Brooklands’ to see a live performance of the pop group ‘The Seekers’ (Judith Durham on vocals, Athol Guy on double bass, Keith Potger and Bruce Woodley on guitar). They

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were all the way from Australia! The Bowl of Brooklands was an outdoor theatre located on the southern end of Pukekura Park in New Plymouth. The whole place had a great ambiance as you sat on the side of a grass covered hill (no seats in those days) and you looked down on the stage which was on the other side of a lake. The lake added an extra dimension as the performers and the stage lights were all reflected on the surface of the lake giving a very magical appearance, especially at night time.



'The Best of The Seekers' by the Seekers (1968).

Again Mum had brought the sheet music from Maunder's and she had learnt to play it on her guitar. We all sang the songs; 'I'll Never Find Another You', 'A World of Our Own', 'Morningtown Ride', 'Georgy Girl' and 'The Carnival Is Over'. I can still remember some of the words.

We also went to the Opera House in New Plymouth, to see the 'Vienna Boys Choir'. I remember the conductor wore a black tails jacket and I thought this looked very funny, as I had never seen one before. The Opera House was an amazing old building and it still exists.

Trips to New Plymouth, as I mentioned, were a special event for us. We liked going to the Farmer's Cooperative Department Store, which was truly huge, so big in fact that it actually had an escalator that would carry you up to the upper floor. To us an escalator really was an amazing piece of machinery and we certainly didn't have one in Stratford. In fact, I don't think we had any shops in Stratford that were 2 stories, except possibly Mandy's.

In the summer we went to Ngamotu Beach which was in the middle of Port Taranaki. Swimming in the sea and sitting on the black iron sand was great but there were also lots of other things to do and see. Sometimes we went out on the wharf and fished which was great fun. Next door they were building the new power station and this required a very tall chimney. During the construction they poured concrete nonstop, day and night, 7 days a week, until they got the chimney up to its full height of 198m. Initially the power station was going to be fired by coal and then by oil but when the gas came online, from the well at Kapuni, the

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power station was made to take natural gas. We learnt all about it and to us it really was quite incredible.

There was (and still is) a small oil well on Ngamotu Beach and this pumps a few barrels of crude oil up every day and has been doing so since the 1860s. Apparently it is one of the oldest oil wells in the world. We used to marvel at the beam pump that was always nodding slowly up and down.

Next to the power station construction site is Paritutu Rock and the Sugar Loaf Islands which are the remnants of a volcano that was active 2 million years ago but has since very much eroded away, just leaving these extremely solid rocks. We used to enjoy climbing to the top of Paritutu (156m high) from where we could get a fantastic view of the new power station and all the other places that we knew in and around the city. We could also look right out to sea and spot a few boats making their way around the Taranaki coast.

The other very interesting place for us was the New Plymouth Museum, which was full of artifacts in glass cases, mainly relics of the early Maori and the early settlers. I used to love looking at all those things and reading the little notes that described what the relic was and its little part in our country's history.

Back in Stratford, it was around this time, when I was about 9 years old, that I did a very bad thing. I stole my mother's diamond engagement ring. It sounds terrible and it was. She had a little box of jewellery in her bedroom. It was full of lovely looking trinkets but she never wore any of these as she never went out. She also never wore the diamond engagement ring but she did continue to wear her wedding ring and she certainly always referred to herself as Mrs Heath-Caldwell.

The really unfortunate thing is that I lost her diamond engagement ring. Around this time there had been a programme on TV about some people who had buried a time capsule full of things that some lucky people would be able to dig up in 100 years time. I thought this was a great concept and so I made up my own little time capsule full of treasure and I buried it under the house. It might be that this was where I put the ring but I just don't really know what happened to it. I did spend the next few weeks frantically digging around under the house trying to find my time capsule but no matter how much I looked I never found it.

The consequences of this situation were truly terrible. Mum was understandably very upset that I had lost her diamond engagement ring and she told me that it had cost my father £50 which to me was a colossal sum. At this point I was absolutely stunned but it did not stop there. Mum continued to be very upset and continued to grind away at me hoping that the ring would appear. She spent every

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day telling me that I was a thief and a very horrible person. By this time I think I was probably close to having my own mental breakdown and her mental state was probably also rather strained. I went into total shock and I couldn't even talk. Again, no matter what I did, I always seem to get things wrong. The world for me was a truly horrible place to be.

It was at this time that Pat Steven realised how bad things really were. It was the summer holidays and so she offered to have me to come and stay with her for a few weeks. It was lovely going to live in her house and looking back this in itself was a great experience for me. She did ask where the ring was but when I told her I didn't know she just accepted it and did not ask me again. Her husband Upham was a very quiet man. He was a doctor at the hospital and when he arrived home late afternoon we would all have dinner together and then most evenings he would sit in his chair and read.

Pat was not working, as it was the school holidays, so her time was pretty much what she wanted to make of it. We spent lots of time going out walking the dogs and talking about all sorts of things, her younger days as a student at the University of Otago and later, her marriage and her family. She had four children. Her eldest, David and Diana, had also been to university. Since then they had moved away taking up jobs, getting married and setting up their own homes. Dion was currently at Massey University but as it was the holidays, he was away working somewhere. Debbie was more of a free spirit and it was difficult to know what she was up to.

I did also have a few moments when I spoke to Upham. I remember picking raspberries with him. He also had a German Army helmet that had been brought back from World War I so we talked a bit about both wars and his time in the army reserve while he was at university.

They were a very happy family but like all families they had problems from time to time. Debbie had got pregnant while she had been at secondary school. She had gone away, had the baby and then signed it out for adoption which, as I have mentioned previously, was what young unmarried mothers did in those days. Debbie was now trying to get her life back together. I learned a lot about life staying with Pat and I certainly decided that I would like to go to university if I could. After a few weeks it was time to go back home. I would have liked to stay with Pat but of course that was not possible.

For Standard 4 (1969) we had Mr Clarkson (Bruce Clarkson). Mr Clarkson was very young, being only 19. He was a local boy (or man), who had just completed

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his teaching diploma at Palmerston North and we were his first class (36 pupils). He was an excellent teacher, and this was the year that I started to make some progress with my education. Another change that year was that they stopped giving us a half pint bottle of milk each morning and looking back I am sure this did me a very great favour. As I mentioned earlier, I was not aware that I had a dairy allergy. Consuming milk made me very tired.

Mr Clarkson was very interested in plant life and he got us to do transections out on the playing field. We used pieces of string to mark off an area of ground, probably about a metre square, and then we carefully examined the area in great detail, noting every plant and any insects that we found. Then the following week he marched us all down to King Edward Park where there was a large area of native bush. We all did transections again, but this time we had a wide range of native plants to identify and record. It was magical and we really enjoyed it.

We didn't know it at the time, but years later Bruce told me that he got in big trouble over this, with the deputy headmaster (Mr Neve). Apparently, Geoff Neve felt teaching should be confined to the classroom. Later, Geoff must have got thinking about all this, as when we were in Form 2, he took us out for a full day trip up on the mountain.

Mr Clarkson also told us, his own little stories, of his tramping expeditions over Mt Ruapehu and the Tongariro Crossing. He was very engaging and really did get us all to take a much greater interest in what was around us. To top it off, he played the guitar and so we had some good singsongs.

Mr Clarkson got me doing gymnastics and this gave me a real sense of achievement. Looking back, the reason I was so bad at sport was not only because I was always one of the youngest but I was also a bit of a light weight for my age. Not eating the right food meant that I was not growing like the other boys in the class. With hindsight, I should have been on a non-dairy diet, but allergies were not really recognised by many people back in those days (certainly not recognised by me).

Another thing that we need to keep in mind, is that people don't all age exactly at the same rate. I aged slowly, which meant that I was small back then but I am now reaping a bonus, in that I am over 60 but still fit and healthy and looking relatively young for my great age. Another way to say this, is that in 1969 I was a late developer but sadly it was sometimes just put across that I was rather immature (as though there was something wrong with me).

Most of the sports like rugby, cricket, tennis, running, ... etc, always favoured the older pupils in our class like Murray Reed. He was bigger than most of us

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1969: Avon School, Standard 4. Teacher Mr Clarkson (Bruce Clarkson).
Back row: Graham Payton, Barry Jordan, David Rogers, Murray Reed, Peter Couchman, Ross Murray, Murray Wharton, Stephen Thomas, Bruce Vickers. **Second row:** Pam Murphy, Virginia Haimona, Lynette Little, Janet Sulzberger, Verna Shelford, Gayll Buckthought, Pauline Staveley, Sheryl Terry, Raewyn Bates. **Third row:** Terril Benton, ???, Heidi Drescher, Prudence Walker, Elizabeth Capper, Dianne Rogers, Rebecca Western, Karen Andrew, Karina Thayer. **Front row:** Joseph Sheehan, William Roa, Jeremy Heath-Caldwell, Nigel Cadman, Eric Hayward, Denis Wheeler, Tony Bradley, Nigel Dey, Steven Crow.

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but he was also quite a solid build. He pretty much always won any of the sports competitions and he got a lot of enjoyment from it which then spurred him on to practise and do even better. He eventually ended up playing rugby for Taranaki. We all wanted to be like Murray Reed.

Gymnastics was a sport where size did not give you much of an extra advantage. It was a case of learning how to do all the various moves and I loved it. I remember that David Rogers was exceptionally good at this and he could even walk on his hands! One particular event that I remember very well was when Mr Clarkson arranged for a group of us to give a gymnastics display at the Midhirst Village Hall. Lots of people were watching, many of them mums and dads. We started our routine by bending down to touch the floor but unfortunately, just as I bent over, I let out an incredibly loud fart. All the people in the audience thought this was hilarious and immediately the whole hall erupted into laughter. I was of course exceedingly embarrassed, but we kept going and we got through all our gymnastic routines without any further surprises.

Mr Clarkson left at the end of the year and we did not have any more gymnastics after that, which was a pity. He went on to teach at Ohura District High School for a few years and then went back to university and completed an PhD in Biology. He had various jobs and ended up at Waikato University, in Hamilton, where he became a professor and in 2020 is still working at the age of 71.

1969 was also the 200th anniversary of Captain James Cook discovering New Zealand, so we learnt all about his expedition and how he had plotted a map of the new country and in 1770 he named our mountain Mt Egmont after John Perceval, 2nd Earl of Egmont. In fact the good earl (who knew my great x5 grandfather George Marsh) died before Captain Cook got back and so never got to know that a mountain on the coast of a new country on the far side of the globe was named after him. David Rogers said that his Maori ancestors had named the mountain Taranaki a long time before Captain Cook's visit. However, as our county was called Taranaki, we all thought it was a bit silly to give the same name to the mountain that all of us called Mt Egmont (in 1986 the name of the mountain was officially changed to 'Mt Egmont or Taranaki', on Google it is now marked as 'Mt Taranaki').

David Rogers was to retain a lot of interest in Maoridom and later on he became very active helping the various land claims through the legal process and also other activities relating to welfare. He is now a Justice of the Peace and still lives in Taranaki.

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*Hilary, Jeremy James and Michael at the picnic area by the bridge at Ngaere.
Photo taken by Dora around 1969.*

The Post Office issued a special set of 4 stamps to commemorate the 1768–1771 voyage of Captain Cook and his “discovery of New Zealand” (4c, 6c, 18c, 28c). My Mum went to the Post Office and brought me a full set for my stamp album. These were unused stamps and so we stamp collectors referred to them as “mint”. This got me thinking, the Post Office was onto a good thing here because they were selling us stamps for my stamp album but they were not having to deliver any mail. Mum also ordered me a ‘first day cover’ so the Post Office made even more out of it. For them, this really was a “licence to print money”!

The Maoris in our class, like David Rogers, were all very proud, that their ancestors were cannibals. ‘Puha and Pakeha’ was a humorous song going around in the 1960s. David Rogers used to love saying Puha and Pakeha and he always had a big grin on his face (white men cooked with a bit of lettuce for dinner). Sadly the more recent history books of New Zealand seem to have been cleansed and very little reference is made to cannibalism among the Maori before NZ was colonised by the British. I was quite surprised when talking to my niece one day and she was not aware that there were very strong indications that the Maori had been cannibals. She was quite upset that I should even make such a suggestion.

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1969: Set of postage stamps on a 'first day cover' issued by the Post Office to mark the 200th anniversary of James Cook discovering New Zealand in 1769. Capt Cook only got 1 stamp in the UK but he got 4 here in New Zealand!

We had the option for some extra studies. I can't remember what was on the list to choose from but Rebecca Western (her with the long blonde hair in 2 neat plaits with 2 coloured ribbons) opted to do Maori studies so I also put my name down for it. It was actually very interesting and very enjoyable. Mrs Rogers (David's mother, Miria) came to school and taught us about the Maori way of life and we all learnt Maori songs and the haka. She was a lovely lady and in addition to helping out with things like this at school, she also did similar stuff for the scouts and guides. I could see that Maori culture was just as much a part of the culture of New Zealand as was the culture of the Pakeha (the white man).

I suppose we also developed an awareness of who we were, in relation to where we lived, and a clear distinction here was between those who lived in the town and those who lived in the country (townies and country folk). We lived in the country and so we definitely saw ourselves as country folk. Looking back, I would think that really there was very little difference. Joe Sheehan pointed out that his house was on the edge of the town, so it had the town on one side

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and the country on the other side. He could have been either, but I still thought he was a townie.

Avon School was not well known for academic achievement. There was probably more emphasis on sport rather than trying to swim against the tide and get all the pupils scoring high marks in tests. I was to find out much later that some of the teachers in the staff room had a theory that once in every 7 years, completely by chance, there would be a bright class. Not a class where everyone was above average academic ability but a class that would have a reasonably large group of pupils who were above average ability.

It was many years later that Bruce Clarkson told me that our class was considered to be, a “one in seven”. In our special group there was of course Rebecca Western but in addition there was Elizabeth Capper, Lynette Little, Terril Benton, Janet Sulzberger, Joe Sheehan and a few of the others. During lessons, Bruce would often put us in a group so we could all work together and really make progress. I suppose it was a bit like academic streaming. It was probably this stroke of luck, being in an above average class, which helped me to progress on and of course eventually I did make it to university.

In the UK, all primary schools provided lunch for their pupils but in New Zealand there were no kitchens and no lunches provided. You had to bring your own. Most of the other pupils came to school with a little lunch box carefully packed by their dutiful mothers. This was in an age when most mothers did not work and they were often referred to as “house wives”. I think at this time, I was possibly the only person in my class who had a “solo parent”. The others in my class all had a father who worked and earned money and a mother who took care of everything else. Hilary, Michael and I did have lunch boxes, but it was up to us to sort out the contents. We had sliced white bread, butter and as a filling we generally had a choice of vegemite, cheese or jam. I didn’t like the bread or the butter, so generally I didn’t have anything to eat for lunch. With hindsight, all this food had a high dairy content and with my allergy it would not have been very good for me. That is probably why I didn’t like eating it.

We did have bacon and eggs for breakfast for a little while and this was absolutely delicious but this did not last long. My mother told us that we did not have enough money to have bacon and egg every morning. So, we continued with cereals and milk.

There were a few occasions when we ran out of bread. Our mother gave us some money to buy lunch at the shop. On these occasions I usually bought a meat

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pie and absolutely loved it. Sadly these occasions were not very frequent.

My mother realised that she needed to earn more money, as the salary for an unqualified teacher was not great. She embarked on a correspondence course with Massey University to do a degree in the Russian language. Being a science teacher, learning Russian was an unusual choice but her friend at St Marys, Mrs Chrchley, had got her very interested. Trying to do a correspondence course at home in the evenings made Mum even more tired. However, she always told us that getting a good education was very important.

Another activity which occurred over a number of years, in parallel to my life at school, was the scouts. We were very lucky in Stratford in that our scout group had an extensive scout hut which was in the King Edward Park just next to a bend in the river (known as the Old Ford). It really was an ideal place for a scout hut and the hut itself was quite an extensive building. Initially it had just been a hall with an attached kitchen and toilets but while we were there, they built a second hall, which made the hut into a very large building indeed. The scout group was also well supported with quite a few scout leaders, all of whom were of course volunteers.



Scout badge for Central Taranaki (Stratford) showing the native Fantail.

My progress through cubs and scouts was very slow and I was very much a misfit. I only earned a few badges in cubs but I did stick with it and I achieved a bit more in scouts. Murray Reed was exceptional and had so many badges that he ran out of space on his sleeve. His mother must have been kept very busy sewing all those badges on.

We went to a jamboree in New Plymouth and a few years later one in the Waikato. In both cases lots of things went wrong for me. I found it very difficult getting on with everyone and a lot of time I just didn't understand what was going on around me. I was a fairly weak member of the team and that did not help things either. If the leaders could have had the choice, I think they would have preferred that I had not been a member of the scout movement. I also remember being incredibly sick on the Waikato trip, probably because I had eaten too much food with dairy in it.

It was around this time that Mum brought two hiking tents and in the summer holiday we drove all the way over to the East Coast and camped at Lake Tutira,

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which was the lake that my mother had visited with my father and his parents about 10 years previously. It was a great trip.

Another holiday was spent at Urenui which was along the coast from Onaero Domain. Again we did some fishing and we all very much enjoyed it. Other holidays I can remember included a trip to Wellington and a trip to Auckland but my memory is a bit confused here and I am not sure which places we went to in which years. The only thing I can say was that they were excellent holidays.

In 1969 the TV people started doing live outside broadcasts and the first one of these that I remember was when we watched, in real time, the lunar

landing of Apollo 11. We saw Neil Armstrong step down onto the surface of the moon and we heard him say “That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind”. We all wanted to be astronauts when we grew up.

Another thing covered on the news in this year, was the inaugural flight of the Concorde supersonic airliner which took off and did a circuit at Bristol. This was such a big thing that the UK Post Office produced a set of 3 postage stamps to celebrate what they saw as one of Britain’s greatest engineering achievements (I must point out that it was a joint development with the French, hence it is Concorde



Jeremy James in scout uniform together with Michael and Hilary. Picture taken in Ngaere probably around 1971.

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rather than Concord). There was still a lot of costly development needed but everything came together and commercial flights began in 1976. It did also fly all the way to New Zealand as a one off in 1986.



1969: Set of stamps issued by the British Post Office to mark the inaugural test flight of the Concorde.



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We really felt like we had achieved something when we moved up from Standard 4 to Form 1. By now we had completed 4 years in the Standards and we had finally made it to the Forms! At the same time, we had reached the 1970s and we were leaving the 1960s behind. We were starting to feel very grown up, even if we were only 11 years old, going on 12.

Our teacher in Form 1 was Miss Ryrie (Janice Ryrie). By now our class, and the one below us, had got too big, so the headmaster Mr Fitzpatrick (Bob) decided that some of the overspill would be put into Form 2. Consequently, for this year, we lost; Janet Sulzberger, Lynette Little, Rebecca Western, Terril Benton, David Rogers, Murray Reed. They spent the year with their own table in the corner of the Form 2 classroom next door with Mr Neve. The rest of us remained in Form 1 where we in turn were joined by a small group from Standard 4 which made our class size for that year 40.

In our classroom all our desks were put into little groups and I remember sitting next to Virginia Haimona. She was a lovely girl and I remember that she was exceedingly good at sport. I can't remember who else was in our small group.

This was also the year that I started wearing glasses. Initially this felt a bit odd but it was certainly great being able to see things a lot more clearly. Some of my friends told me I looked like a professor.

It was in 1970 that the Apollo 13 space mission had a breakdown, while on their journey to the moon. James Lovell said the immortal words "Houston, we've had a problem". Everything was touch and go for a few days, while the astronauts had to continue all the way to the moon and back and then attempt to make a safe return through the earth's atmosphere. Eventually they splashed down in the Pacific while the whole world was watching the event on TV. We all breathed a sigh of relief when they made it back in one piece.

Another event, was that the Kapuni Gas Field started producing gas. Kapuni was only about 16 miles (25km) away from our house and sometimes we would drive over in the evening to see the massive flare burning away. There wasn't a visitor's area or anything like that, but you could walk along the fence line and stand quite close. The noise was deafening, and the heat was incredible. I used

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to stand there trying to figure out why they were burning all that gas. Surely they would be much better selling it or using it to heat some water. I couldn't figure out the answer to this question.

By 1970 I absolutely hated school and all I wanted to do was to run away but of course there was nowhere to run to. Geoff Neve decided that I needed to have something that would be mine, something I could take a pride in. He made me 'Science Monitor'. My job was to look after the science trolley which had an array of items for carrying out science experiments. Looking back, this was a brilliant move. Here at last I felt special and I felt appreciated. The job actually required me to do very little, but it felt good all the same.

This was when I developed an interest in Chemistry. Together with Nigel Aldridge we learnt how to mix up potassium nitrate, sulphur and charcoal to make gun powder. When we set a match to it, we were able to watch a very vigorous chemical reaction. Not quite a bang, but certainly a spectacular fizzle. The bangs came at Guy Fawkes each year (5 November) and we were all given firecrackers to let off and create mayhem with. There were lots of accidents. My sister got very badly burnt in her face when her skyrocket took off sideways and glanced off her cheek. These days parents don't seem to give fireworks to their small children.

Nigel Aldridge was an interesting person. He had been brought up in New Plymouth but had also lived in the South Island. We were very impressed by this, as most of us had never been to the South Island. To us we thought of it as a foreign country. Nigel's parents had split up and he was possibly the only other pupil who was being brought up by a solo mother. I remember going to play at his house and his mother was a very nice lady.

One thing that did go well at this time, was singing. We had quite a few kids in the class who had very good voices and for a few years we became quite accomplished. In the core of the group were Rebecca Western and Steve Crowe who were both excellent at singing and at strumming their ukuleles. We all had a great time singing 'Knock Three Times' by Tony Orlando (Dawn) and 'Try A Little Kindness' by Glen Campbell. The other thing that had helped bring this along was our time with Mr Clarkson and moving forward Mr Neve was an amazing musician who was very accomplished both on the guitar and the piano. He also taught some of us to play the recorder.

It was this year that we did a production of 'The Wizard of Oz'. Carolyn Maaka (Barbarich) reminded me about this, as she says she has a great memory of us all singing the song 'Follow The Yellow Brick Road'. I played the Tin Man,

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'Candida' by Tony Orland of Dawn (1970).



'Try A Little Kindness' by Glen Campbell (1970).

Steve Crow played the Scarecrow and Joseph Sheehan's elder sister Carmel played Dorothy. The character I remember best was Karina Thayer who played an excellent portrayal of the wicked witch. I can still picture the way she lurked across the full width of the stage, with her arms extended forward, as she wiggled her fingers and cast her wicked spells. Some of the younger pupils in the front row were so frightened that they jumped right out of their seats and ran out of the hall, absolutely terrified. Towards the end I was blown up in an explosion off stage and then had to run on stage looking blackened and dishevelled. To achieve this look, one of the girls rubbed black shoe polish onto my face. Apparently this looked great but I do remember afterwards finding it very difficult to wash it off.



'Wizard of Oz' with Judy Garland (1939, 1968).

For Christmas that year I finally got a bicycle. Initially Mum would only let me ride it up and down Sole Road but this was no great problem with me. Sole Road was a 'no exit' road and went west to east following the slope of the mountain continuously downhill for a distance of about 1.3 miles (2km). Cycling down was

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exhilarating, as it was high speed all the way, but once I reached the end there was nothing to do but cycle back. It was tough having to cycle uphill for 2km, but I suppose it helped me keep fit. Most of all, riding my bike gave me a sense of freedom and a feeling of accomplishment. Eventually Mum relented and I was allowed to cycle on the main road and go all the way into town and that was even better. I must point out there were no bicycle safety helmets in those days as I don't think they had even been invented (in 1994 the wearing of cycle helmets became compulsory in NZ).



1971: Jeremy James and bicycle at Ngaere.

I should mention here, another family that Mum had become good friends with over the years, was the Walker family (no relation to Denis Walker our landlord). Peter and Jill Walker had a large family of nine children, and they all went to Avon School. Caroline was in Hilary's class and Prudence was in my class. We often played together, and they also had dogs, so trips to places where we could walk the dogs happened quite a lot. Over that Christmas 1970–1971 the Walker family left Stratford and moved to Wanganui, which was about 75 miles (120km) further down the coast.

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School started again at the end of January and we were all back together with a class of 33 pupils. Our teacher was now Mr Neve (Geoff) and I must say I probably wasn't his favourite pupil but looking back he was a very professional teacher and I am sure we all benefited. He was another person who had been badly affected by the War. His father had been a pilot but was killed when he crashed in a Bristol Blenheim bomber in northern Nigeria in 1942. I understand that Geoff was just 5 years old at the time. It must have been absolutely devastating for his family.

I haven't mentioned this previously but back in those days we had a large blackboard at the front of the class and the teacher would write things up using sticks of chalk (no white boards in those days). There was also a phrase "chalk it up" which meant to record something in writing for other people to see. Once the blackboard was covered in text and diagrams, the teacher (or some of the pupils) would pick up a 'duster' and rub all the chalk off ready for more things to be written. This also had an associated phrase "done and dusted" which meant that all was done and understood, let's move on. These phrases were often heard in daily life outside the classroom but of course are seldom heard today.

Carolyn Maaka says she always remembers that you had to stay alert in Mr Neve's class because if he saw anyone daydreaming, he would sometimes pick up the duster and throw it across the room at the offending pupil. He was a very engaging teacher and the dispatch of the duster every now and then certainly woke us all up. I suppose teachers are not allowed to throw dusters any more, health and safety etc.

A new person who joined us this year was Sarah Stewart whose parents had emigrated from the UK. This was quite a novelty for us, as up until then I don't think we had any foreigners in our class (we had all been born in New Zealand). We used to tease her a lot about being a 'pom' but she was a lovely person and I think we all liked her. I remember her mother came in one day and gave us a talk about the United Kingdom and how her family used to like eating Wattie's canned pears (made in New Zealand since 1934). She also told us that she was actually Welsh and in addition to speaking English she could also speak the Welsh language. We were very impressed. Sarah was one of those people who passed through my life only for a very brief period and I have often wondered what happened to her.

In this, our last year at Avon School, we all did what was called domestic studies (or manual studies). This involved a bus trip down to Eltham, once a week, to attend the 'technical school'. The girls were taught cooking and we boys were

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taught woodwork. I really enjoyed the woodwork and I found I could achieve a reasonably high standard. We did various little projects including building a tie rack and also a box for shoe cleaning materials.

I think the reason I was good at woodwork, was because of all the little projects that I built at home. In our garage we had lots of tools that had been kept from the farm. Large items like the welder had been sold off in the auction in 1963 but most of the other tools had been kept. So really, I had my own workshop with quite an impressive array of tools. Our neighbour, and landlord, Denis Walker was a lovely person who took the time to give me help and encouragement whenever he could. I learnt a lot from him and he was always bringing me wood from packing crates that he had got from the Ngaere cheese factory where he worked. For Christmas and birthdays, he took great delight in buying me a brown paper bag full of nails and I had great satisfaction using every one of them in a wide range of homebuilt projects.

In those days most of us young boys used to build things and one of the projects that Murray Wharton and Joe Sheehan had done was building a canoe out of a sheet of corrugated iron. Murray's father had built one previously but Murray and Joe then built a second one, so they could both canoe down the river.

Most of the houses in New Zealand had roofs covered in corrugated iron, often referred to as a tin roof. These roofs were made of overlapping sheets, each approximately 7ft by 3ft (2m x 1m). It was always incredibly noisy when it rained, particularly if you were lying in bed at night but at the same time you sort of felt a feeling of comfort, being safe and warm inside, while nature was creating mayhem outside.

These roofs had to be painted every few years, but this was not too much of a problem, as most of them were not very steep and you could climb up on a ladder and then walk over the whole roof. After about 50 years the sheets of iron would start to rust and consequently the roof would begin to leak. It was then time for a new roof, which would require all the old sheets to be removed and new ones nailed down in their place. Because of this, there were often lots of old sheets of corrugated iron lying around. People would re-use them for smaller projects like wood sheds and bike sheds, even fences. In Taranaki you never threw anything away, you always found a use for it. These days this is called recycling but that word didn't really exist in the 1960s.

Anyway, Murray and Joe had got one of these sheets of corrugated iron. They were careful to select one with the least number of holes in it. They then beat all

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the corrugations out of it to make it as flat as possible, then they folded it right down the middle of the whole length, to create what then started to look like the beginnings of a canoe. The next step was to get a 12 inch length of 4b2 wood (4 inches by 2 inches) for the bow, and nail one end of the sheet around this. Then a larger piece of wood was fixed at the other end to make a stern.

By now their sheet of tin really was looking like a canoe but of course it still had lots of places where the water would be able to leak in. What they then needed was a tube of mastic, but I don't think that had been invented then either, however, the road outside was made of stones held together by tar. In those days "tar-seal", as it was called, was great stuff but in the hot summer months you would get patches of black tar that would turn to a sticky mess. Murray and Joe spent some time out on the road scraping off some of the tar patches and they then used this to fill all the holes in their canoe until it was reasonably watertight.

They could have made some proper paddles, but the canoes were quite small, so they didn't bother, instead they just used some pieces of wood that they held in their hands. No thought was given to life jackets, as back in those days people didn't think about things like that very much. Murray and Joe carried their canoes across their paddock and launched them on the river. They climbed in and then sailed off going with the current on quite a long journey, all the way down stream to the Old Ford (near the scout hut). This was a distance of about 1.3 miles (2km) and apparently it took them quite some time, but they made it and Murray's father met them at journey's end and then took them home. Wow! What an adventure! No sane parent would allow two 12 year olds to do this today. I would have loved to have been involved in their canoe project, but I didn't get to hear about it until much later. I was extremely impressed.

On TV this year, and in previous years, I remember a regular item of news was about the Vietnam War. This was a bit of a fiasco that the United States had got involved in, and Australia and New Zealand subsequently got dragged into it. Lots of people look back at the politicians and feel it was all their fault, but it is not as simple as that. It was more just a combination of events that played out over quite a long period. New Zealand was actively involved from 1964 to 1971 and over this time 37 New Zealand soldiers lost their lives. On the news there were reports of operations and casualties but as we got towards the end of 1971 it slowly fizzled out and I remember seeing the coverage on TV showing people leaving the United States Embassy on the last helicopter out of the place. It all seemed a bit far away to us.

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Another item in the news was the civil war in East Pakistan. Independence was declared and a new country called Bangladesh emerged but lots of people were starving as famine ravaged the country.



1971: Set of stamps to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of the famous New Zealand Physicist, Lord Rutherford.

The Post Office issued some stamps to celebrate the centenary of the birth of the famous Physicist Lord Rutherford (1c and 7c). Ernest Rutherford had been born and educated in New Zealand and then moved to England, where he became a very active scientist involved in all sorts of experiments involving radio waves and subatomic particles. At school we were told that Lord Rutherford was the first person to split the atom and this conjured up visions in my mind of him sitting at his dining table with a very fine knife but of course it was a lot more complicated than that. Ernest Rutherford really was one of my heroes and if he could do all this then surely we could too.

Another New Zealander who went off and did great things was the racing driver Bruce McLaren but in 1971 we got the sad news that he had been killed in a crash.

Back in our class at Avon School, Mr Neve organised a really great field trip up on the mountain. We travelled up in the school bus and we were also accompanied by another man, I don't know his name, but he was an expert on all the native trees and plant life. He told us about how the plants were adapted for their individual environments (I already knew this because my Mum had taught me).

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He also told us about a vegetable caterpillar (my Mum had not told me about this one). He actually managed to dig around in the 'bush' and find a mummified example to show us.

The vegetable caterpillar is really a caterpillar that gets eaten by a fungus. The caterpillar is the larval form of a moth (*Aoraia dinodes* or *Dumbletonius*) and this would be happily eating leaves on the floor of the bush but, without it knowing, it accidentally consumes a tiny spore of the fungus (*Ophiocordyceps Robertsii*). The caterpillar then goes underground to have a rest and start thinking about metamorphosizing into a moth, but no such luck. The little spore starts to multiply and quickly eats the unsuspecting caterpillar, from the inside out, and then grows a small stem through the head of the caterpillar up above to the surface. From there all the newly grown spores are scattered around the floor of the bush ready to wait for another unsuspecting caterpillar. I felt a bit sorry for the poor caterpillar, what a way to die, but this of course is all part of the circle of life.

Another thing we were told about was the peripatus, or velvet worm. This is a small worm or insect which is really a bit of both. They are often referred to as 'living fossils' as they are remarkably unchanged from 500 million years ago. They are about 5cm long and live for about 5 years, feeding on insects. Very unusual and we did not find any on our trip but my mother had once shown me one that she found in the garden.

As we were driven up the mountain road in our bus, we were told how the plants changed as you get to higher altitudes (the plants get smaller). The road took us up to the Plateau, which is located at an altitude of 3,845 ft (1,172m) and here the plants are just shrubs, not much higher than 6ft (1.8m). Mr Neve gave me a very special job, which was to boil some water on a small gas stove and record the temperature at boiling point. We noted that water boiled at a lower temperature and this was due to the air pressure being lower (as identified by John Dalton in 1803 when he produced his Law of Partial Pressures). It was very handy having a mountain for us to carry out this experiment.

Denis Wheeler has reminded me that he and Murray Reed were not allowed on this particular trip as they had been naughty. None of us can remember what their particular misdemeanour was but apparently while we were up on the mountain, they had to stay at school and sit in Mrs Bulmer's class (poor guys).

Another trip that Mr Neve organised for us, was a visit for a few days to Palmerston North and from there a day trip down to Wellington (our capital city). I am fairly certain that the whole class got to go on this trip including Murray and

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1971: Avon School, Form 2, Trip to Egmont National Park (Mt Taranaki).

Female: Left to Right Carolyn Maaka, Raewyn Bates, Pam Murphy, Terril Benton, Karina Thayer, Gayll Buckthought, Elizabeth Capper, Heidi Drescher, Sarah Stewart, Virginia Haimona, Lynette Little, L'raine Hill, Rebecca Western, Pauline Staveley, Janet Sulzberger, Verna Shelford. **Male:** Left to Right David Rogers, Graham Payton, Philip Mills, William Roa, ????, Murray Wharton, Nigel Dey, ????, Steven Crow, Peter Couchman, Jeremy Heath-Caldwell, ????, Stephen Thomas, ????, Geoff Neve.

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Denis. We went by train from Stratford and there was an excellent photograph taken of the whole class on the platform at the Stratford Railway Station. Some of the parents also came with us including Murray Wharton's dad (John Wharton), Murray Reed's mother (Essie Reed) and Stephen Thomas' mother (Elva Thomas).

Mr Neve had previously taught in Palmerston North and so, through his old school, he arranged for us to all be billeted in other pupils' homes. I had never been billeted before, so this was another word added to my vocabulary and it was also a great experience. I stayed with a boy called Bernard Fowley whose parents were very well off and lived in a really great house. Bernard had some fantastic models of the space rockets and the Apollo 11 landing craft. It was wonderful to meet such intelligent people and I remember having quite a detailed conversation with his father about the future need for recycling glass bottles. These people were of course townies but very different from Stratford townies and they certainly were not country folk.

While we were in Palmerston North we visited the school and had a dance in the evening but I don't remember much about that. We made an interesting visit to a Flax Mill near Foxton and we also visited the Royal New Zealand Air Force base at Ohakea. We drove through the main gate and as we passed a grey Vampire jet mounted up on a post, we really felt we were arriving at a very special place. Inside the base there was a massive hanger and we were shown some of the old aeroplanes including a DC3 that the Queen had flown in when she had been on a royal visit quite a few years earlier. We also saw an Orion maritime surveillance aircraft which had 4 engines and sticking out from the back of the tail was a funny looking pole. The planes that I enjoyed seeing the most were the Skyhawk jets that could fly at 673mph (1,083km/h). The RNZAF had taken delivery of 14 of these aircraft only one year previously (1970) so they were very new. They were to use these aircraft up until 2001 when they were finally taken out of service. I particularly remember being shown some of the electronic units inside that made them work. The nose was just a piece of fiberglass but underneath was a miniature radar. Incredible stuff.

The trip to Wellington was very memorable. Mr Neve hired a bus and he also shared some of the driving with the bus driver. We were very impressed to see that Mr Neve, as well as being able to play a piano and the guitar, he could also drive a big bus. Years later I found out that he could also fly an aeroplane. Amazing guy!

In Wellington we had a ride on the Cable Car up the hill and from there we were able to view all of the city including seeing the ships in the harbour. We then

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF JEREMY JAMES



1971: Avon School, Form 2, Trip by Train to Palmerston North.

Standing: Murray Reed, Gayll Buckthought, Murray Wharton, Elizabeth Capper, Rebecca Western, Janet Sulzberger, Lynette Little, Terril Benton, Steven Crow, Raewyn Bates, Barry Jordan, Geoff Neve, Stephen Thomas, Christine Tolland, Peter Couchman, Sarah Stewart, Pauline Staveley, Nigel Aldridge, Karina Thayer, Pamela Murphy, Philip Mills, Eric Hayward.

Crouching: William Roa, Graham Payton, Heidi Drescher, Jeremy Heath-Caldwell, David Rogers, Nigel Dey, Bruce Vickers, Joseph Sheehan, Denis Wheeler, L'raine Hill, Virginia Haimona.

AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL: FORM 1 & 2 (1970–1971)



1971: Avon School, Form 2, Trip by Bus from Palmerston North to Wellington.

Female: Left to Right

Karina Thayer, Pam Murphy, Lynette Little, L'raine Hill, Sarah Stewart, Pauline Staveley?, Rebecca Western, Gayll Buckkthought, Heidi Drescher, Raewyn Bates, Terril Benton, Christine Tolland, Janet Sulzberger, Virginia Haimona, Elizabeth Capper?, Mrs Thomas (Elva), Mrs Reed (Essie),

Male: Left to Right

William Roa, Mr Wharton (John), David Rogers, Steven Crow, Nigel Aldridge, Joseph Sheehan, Stephen Thomas, Jeremy Heath-Caldwell, Philip Mills, Peter Couchman, Bruce Vickers, Geoff Neve.

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF JEREMY JAMES

visited Avalon which was the TV station and we saw Philip Sherry reading the news. After that we went to Parliament where we were met by our local MP David Thompson and also the MP Les Gander (my dad's boss 12 years previously). I did take the trouble to introduce myself to him but I am not sure if he really knew who I was, after all I was only a 12 year old little squirt! Or maybe I got David Thompson mixed up with Les Gander, in which case David Thompson would not have had a clue as to who I was! Eventually we all made it back to Palmerston and the next day back to Stratford. A great time had by all. Thank you Mr Neve.

Janet King (Sulzberger) and Denis Wheeler have reminded me that a few weeks later we had a presentation in the school hall for our parents to hear all about our adventure. Apparently, Denis gave an overview of our visit to the Ohakea Airbase and he said how much we had enjoyed seeing all the Skyhawks on the "tampax" (should have been tarmac). Apparently all the parents roared with laughter.

One other thing to note about this trip, is that Mr Neve lent me his camera and this was the first time I ever used one of these little boxes of magic and it gave me the opportunity to figure out how cameras worked. This particular camera was probably about 5 years old and was now a spare, as he had recently bought himself a more modern one. As I mentioned earlier, cameras in those days were not digital and they did not have a memory. Instead they used film and there were a number of variables that had to be considered before you took a photograph.

First you had to note the speed of the film and this was designated by a number written on the side of the film cartridge. Standard film was 100ASA, as this was the best compromise between speed and detail. 200ASA film did not need as much light (exposure), so it could work at higher shutter speeds giving less blur, but the image would be more grainy in appearance. 50ASA would be slower and so would require a longer exposure time. Any movement would produce an unwanted blur, but the image would be less grainy (finer detail). As a general rule, if you were taking photos of a sport event, it would be good to use a fast film like 200ASA or 400ASA but if you were taking a picture of a flower, you would get the best results by using slower film like 50ASA. Of course, this was all a bit complicated, so most amateur photographers just used 100ASA all the time and made the most of it.

The film was very expensive, especially if you bought colour (black & white was cheaper) and later on you would need to pay extra to get it developed (printed). The film came in a small box, inside which was a special sealed tube and inside that was the film cartridge. You opened up the back of the camera and placed the

AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL: FORM 1 & 2 (1970–1971)

film cartridge inside and threaded the end through. Then you closed the back and wound the film along 2 stops (frames). The camera would then be ready to go, once you had set the shutter speed, exposure and focus.

To help determine these settings, you had a separate item, which was a light exposure meter and this had a very complicated looking dial on it. So, for a moment you would put the camera down and you would concentrate on the light meter, setting the dial to the correct position for the film speed and your desired shutter speed. For general use you would go for a speed of $1/125$ second but for a moving subject you might select a faster shutter speed of $1/250$ second or even faster. For a stationary subject you might use a slower speed of $1/60$ second. Having chosen the speed, you then read off the reading and this gave you an aperture setting for the camera lens. You then put the light meter down and you once more picked up the camera. You set your shutter speed to the desired number, then you set the aperture setting to the calculated value.

As you have guessed, this all took quite some time and if you were unlucky your subject might have completely disappeared during this interval. Assuming your subject was still there, you were now almost in business. You would take a quick guess as to how far away the subject was and you then set the focus dial to the required distance. Then you pointed the camera and clicked the button “click!”. Big smiles all around. Immediately afterward you pulled the lever across to move the film along and set a new frame ready for your next shot.

As I mentioned, film was very expensive, so you only took a photo when you really wanted a particular shot and you certainly did your best to keep wasted shots to a minimum. A film would have either 24 or 36 frames, so eventually you would have shot the lot, and the film would reach its end and would go no further. At that stage you would pull up another lever and wind all the film back into its cartridge, then open the back of the camera, remove the cartridge and place it inside its special sealed tube. Next time you were in town, you would take the film to the chemist (Sturmer’s Pharmacy in Stratford), as they were the people who developed films in those days. A week later your photos would be ready for collection.

There were lots of things that could go wrong, but I would need another 5 pages to cover that, so it might be best if I stop here. A few years after this, a new type of camera called an “instant camera” or “instamatic” came out and these cameras were point and shoot with no dials to be set. This was great but the quality of the image was always very poor.

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF JEREMY JAMES

Around this time Mum decided that we needed to learn more about money, so she set up bank accounts for us and we got an allowance of \$2 per week, paid by direct debit into our bank accounts. At home we all mucked in and did our various jobs around the house, washing dishes etc and this money was a sort of recognition of our contribution. While it was not a lot of money, to us it was fantastic. We could now go out and spend, but we knew the value of money, so in general we concentrated on saving and we kept the spending to a minimum. I think we all learned a lot from this exercise.

Another big difference when comparing the 1960s to the present day (2020) is that people back then rarely lived on credit. Most things were paid for with cash or by writing a cheque. I remember that when my mother sold her Morris Mini car and bought a Morris 1100, she paid part of it with monthly instalments spread over the year but other than that, I don't think she ever bought anything else on credit. Most people just lived within their means, as there was no easy way to borrow money and we certainly didn't have any financial adverts on TV telling us anything different. Credit cards did not exist and they weren't to appear until the late 1970s.

Eventually my eight years at Avon School were coming to an end. It was time to move up to Stratford High School which was located right over on the east side of town, on the north side of the Patea River. It was the only high school in Stratford, so it was geared up to take everyone, of all abilities.

We had been there a few years earlier when the Governor-General, Sir Arthur Porritt had made an official visit to Stratford. That had been a great experience, so we had very positive feelings about the High School. The Governor-General had stood up and made a short speech and told us he was very pleased to see us and that we could all have an extra day's holiday. In our eyes, anybody who could award us a day off school was obviously a great guy.

We now had to visit the High School once more, this time to sit in the big assembly hall and complete our entrance exam. The reason for this test was to grade us, so that we could then be streamed into the right class. Of course, we did not really understand any of this but the exam itself was multichoice and for me, this was fantastic. No requirement to write anything. I just had to tick lots of boxes. It was a doddle.

In addition to the stamps celebrating the anniversary of Ernest Rutherford's birth, there was also a stamp to mark the 50th anniversary of the 'Rotary International' in New Zealand. I had no idea what the Rotary Club was but I

AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL: FORM 1 & 2 (1970–1971)



1971: Avon School, Form 2 Photo. Teacher Mr Neve (Geoff Neve).
Nigel Dey, David Rogers, Barry Jordan, Philip Mills, Peter Couchman, Murray Reed, Murray Wharton, Stephen Thomas, Eric Hayward,
Nigel Aldridge, Geoff Neve.
Denis Wheeler, Dianne Rogers, Terril Benton, Elizabeth Capper, Janet Sulzberger, Verna Shelford, Pauline Staveley, Gayll Buckthought,
Sarah Stewart, Shirley Ngarau, Pam Murphy, Bruce Vickers.
Jeremy Heath-Caldwell, William Roa, Heidi Drescher, Lynette Little, Karina Thayer, Christine Tolland, Virginia Haimona, L'raine Hill,
Rebecca Western, Graham Payton, Joseph Sheehan.

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF JEREMY JAMES

do remember a gold Rotary symbol up on one of the power poles, visible as you drove into Stratford. As it was in gold, I assumed it must be something very special. Years later, around 2008 I joined Rotary and have been an active member ever since.



1971: Stamps commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Country Women's Institutes and the 50th anniversary of Rotary International in New Zealand.



1971: New 23c stamp showing Mt Egmont (Mt Taranaki).

AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL: FORM 1 & 2 (1970–1971)

A very special stamp that we all loved in Stratford was new 23c stamp which depicted a picture of our mountain with the view taken from near Stratford. How better could you get than that!

Another thing that happened in 1971 was that my grandmother Violet Heath-Caldwell died but we were not in contact and so did not find out until a few years later.



STRATFORD HIGH SCHOOL: FORM 3 (1972)

In February we all turned up at our new school, dressed in our uniforms and ready to start our secondary education. One by one, our names were called out and we filed off to join our new classes. My class was to be 3C2 which at that precise moment did not really mean very much to me. The other thing that became apparent to us, was that whilst at primary school we had been referred to as pupils, now that we had progressed to secondary school, we would be referred to as students. We had definitely gone up in the world!

Rebecca Western (her with the long blonde hair in 2 neat plaits with 2 coloured ribbons) was not with us anymore, as she had gone to St Mary's. Denis Wheeler's family had moved to Inglewood and so he was now attending Inglewood High School. Joe Sheehan had become a boarder at Silverstream College which was a prestigious private school near Wellington.

We were all herded into a classroom by Miss Cook (Cheryl Cook), who taught typing but in addition she was also going to be our form teacher for the year. Having quickly told us that if we touched any of the typewriters we would be in big trouble, Miss Cook then went on to explain everything to us. The 3rd form at Stratford High School consisted of 10 classes and these were all streamed academically from top to bottom. She congratulated us all on the fact that, due to getting good marks in our entrance exam, we were now in the second to top class.

This was amazing. Here was me, with terrible spelling and sloppy handwriting but despite these deficiencies, I had made it into the second to top class. Elizabeth Capper, Janet Sulzberger, Lynette Little and Terril Benton had done even better as they made the top class. All of a sudden, life had changed, school was looking up and I felt I had achieved something.

In 3C2, from Avon, there was me, Eric Hayward, Graham Payton, Heidi Drescher, Pauline Staveley and Karina Thayer. Besides the 6 of us, I didn't know any of the other students except for Colin Klenner who had been living at Midhirst



Small badge with the Stratford High School coat of arms showing Mt Egmont (Mt Taranaki) in the background.

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF JEREMY JAMES



1972: 3rd Form Class, 3C2, at Stratford High School

Back Row: Kevin Hopkins, Colin Klenner, Robert Oliver, Greg Whyte, Keith Stockman, Neil Belcher, Eric Hayward, Kevin Stark, Robert Stanners, Graham Payton

Middle Row: Lynette McCord, Ann Moore, Karina Thayer, Peter Butler, Simon Hancock, David Hancock, Brent Stanners, Jeremy Heath-Caldwell, Stephen Grey, Lesley Northcott, Lenora Russell, Heidi Drescher

Front Row: Fiona Logie, ???, Deborah van Dam, Faye Beatty, Joy Hughes, Miss Cheryl Cook, Pauline Staveley, Maree Wilson, Robyn Kitchingman, Maree Douglas, ???

STRATFORD HIGH SCHOOL: FORM 3 (1972)

but his parents had recently moved into Stratford. Having been family friends for quite a few years, it was great to have at least one other person that I knew. The rest of the students in our class came from all the other Primary Schools that were scattered around the Central Taranaki area.

The year went reasonably well but being the smallest boy in the class, and actually one of the smallest boys in the school, life was not easy. I was pushed around by a lot of the other boys and of course trying to participate in sport continued to be hopeless. I found it a scary place and I never felt secure.

The subjects that we were taught were: Science, English, Maths, Social Studies, French, Music, Art and Religious Education, but I can't remember much about that except that we were all given a little red Bible by the Gideon Association (sadly a lot of these Bibles ended up in the bin). We did all these subjects together as a class but for technical studies the boys and girls were separated. The girls did cooking and sewing while we did Woodwork, Metalwork and Technical Drawing.

Technical Drawing and Woodwork were very enjoyable but the best subject was Metalwork where the classroom was full of lots of amazing machinery including some metal lathes. I think these days health and safety would not allow you to use these in a classroom as they can be dangerous. I thought they were fantastic. I can't remember what we built but I know we had a good time doing it.

I found some of the teachers to be really nice people, very engaging and I got interested in all sorts of things. I didn't get on with our Social Studies teacher (History and Geography) and one day she got very unhappy with me and sent me to the men's workroom to be caned by one of the other teachers. I found this to be a very unsettling experience and I had two very large bruises going right across my bum which took a few weeks to heal. It was unfair. Some of these teachers were big bullies and I was only a little guy. Again I started to think that these teachers were vindictive bastards and I did not really want to have anything to do with them. After that I did not bother to engage in Social Studies. As far as I was concerned this teacher was a heap of shit (but of course I was smart enough not to tell her that).

The metal work teacher was Mr Gray and his wife Mrs Gray taught music. They were both really nice people. The English teacher was Mr Custer who was from America. I did think it a bit funny that we had an American teaching us English or was he teaching us American? Miss Quill, the French teacher, was a nice lady but most of us found French to be impossible. The science teacher was Mrs Roberts and she was also very good.

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF JEREMY JAMES

The Maths teacher was a Mr Caldwell which I thought was quite interesting. Maybe a distant cousin but of course I was a Heath-Caldwell, so I felt much more important. Mr Caldwell showed us how to use a slide rule, which was an amazing piece of calculating equipment (I still have mine). You lined two numbers up and you then just read off the product. Very quick and very easy. Division was even more handy. You could also use it to calculate square roots and trigonometric values to work out angles. Of course, these days you would use an electronic calculator or a computer, but they did not exist back in 1972.

I joined the stamp club and really enjoyed it. As I have mentioned, collecting stamps back in those days was a very popular hobby and most young people had a stamp collection of some sort (and yes, I still have mine). We were always trying to collect the full set of all the various issues, especially the early ones. This often entailed doing swaps with other collectors. It was all about negotiation and looking back this was a very useful skill to learn. By now I was starting to collect some of the early ones that had Queen Victoria's head on them and I learnt about the very first postage stamp which was issued in 1840 in England. It was called the 'Penny Black' and apparently it was engraved by a man called 'Charles Heath' and the printing was done by a firm called 'Perkins & Bacon'. I wondered if there was a family connection with my Heath-Caldwell ancestors.

I also got more involved in music. At Avon I had learnt to play the recorder and at High School I joined the brass band and learnt how to play a tenor horn. Music lessons were one to one, with the bandmaster, and this was great as it allowed me to get off normal classes for one period each week (provided I remembered of course). I also joined the cast of the opera for that year, which was HMS Pinafore by Gilbert & Sullivan. I played the part of the cabin boy 'Tommy Tucker' which wasn't a speaking part but we all sang the songs and I strutted around the ship's deck with my father's naval telescope tucked under my arm. Being tiny was the unique attribute that meant I was ideal for this part. My Maths teacher, Mr Caldwell, was also in our production of HMS Pinafore where he played Captain



The world's first postage stamp 'Penny Black' 1d, issued in the UK in 1840 and depicting a profile portrait of Queen Victoria.

STRATFORD HIGH SCHOOL: FORM 3 (1972)



1972: Stratford High School Brass Band

Back row: Sharron Trengrove, Kevin Bradley, Anna Megchelse, Trevor Coombe, Richard Wright, Patsy Smith.

Middle row: C Parker, Heidi Drescher, Trevor Thomas, Lynette Wood, Robert Watson.

Front row: Noel Taylor, Jeremy Heath-Caldwell, Barry Kretchmer, Lynette McCord

Corcoran who was the commander of our good ship. He was an excellent singer and had a very strong tenor voice.

Looking back, Taranaki could on occasions be a violent place. At school there were often fights among the boys and most of the time these were just minor scuffles but sometimes they could be quite aggressive. I remember seeing a fight when one boy was smashing the other boy's head into the concrete floor. Fighting wasn't just among the boys; if you were small like me, you could even get pushed around by some of the older girls if you were in the wrong place at the wrong time. The teachers took things quite seriously. It was only a few years previous that the principal of nearby Inglewood School was murdered by one of the pupils so this must have made all the teachers rather wary.

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF JEREMY JAMES

I found that the library was a relatively safe place, so I would often go there at play-time but I couldn't seek shelter there all the time. On one particularly bad day I was having a pee in the urinal when one of the bigger boys in my class came along and just shoved me right in. It was horrible and I was soaked. He thought it was hilarious. I was so distraught that on that occasion I went and saw the Deputy Principal Mr Habershon. He was very patient with me and asked what happened. He did later talk to the boy concerned



*1972: Jeremy James as Tommy Tucker
in the Stratford High School production of HMS Pinafore.*

and explained to him that it wasn't very fair to push small boys into the urinals just for a laugh. This could have ended up being even worse for me but I think the boy concerned took Mr Habershon's comments constructively.

This was one of the very few occasions that I spoke to Mr Habershon but my mother met up with him years later and she was very impressed that he remembered my name and asked how I was getting on. Apparently he was exceedingly good at remembering names. He was another incredibly professional teacher.

At home, it was probably around this time, that I had started to realise that there was something unusual about our cutlery. All our friends had good quality stainless steel cutlery but our spoons and forks were pretty old. Over time they went black and so every now and then, we had to get some rags out and give them

STRATFORD HIGH SCHOOL: FORM 3 (1972)

a polish. We also had to make sure that the dogs did not get hold of them as one of the teaspoons had once been chewed by the dog and had become completely dented. There was also some strange looking marks with lettering on the back and on the tip of the handle there was the remains of what I started to realise were family crests.

These were all solid silver and they were very old. I managed to get a book from the library which listed hall marks for English silver and I was able to work out that most of this silver cutlery dated to the early 1800s and there was one particular spoon, with a very nice crest of a horse head, where the hall marks dated it to 1725. In addition to the silver cutlery, we also had a few other items in our house. There was the silver teapot that my mother had dropped in the cow shed and there was a very large silver tray with the name 'James Caldwell' on it. Our china plates were also very old and were made by a company called Spode and they also dated to the early 1800s.

As a young teenager, I could see that this stuff was old and it was very valuable. Someone, one of my early ancestors, back in the early 1800s, must have had a lot of money. Who were these ancestors and how had they made all their money? And if we had these rich ancestors, how come there was now no money left? What had happened to it?

We also had a book 'Records of the Heath Family 1913' with lots of short biographies of people with the name Heath. But our name was Heath-Caldwell, so I naturally started thinking; where did the Caldwell come from? The silver tray with the name James Caldwell was obviously a clue but who was James Caldwell? And on a separate item, who was that guy Charles Heath who had engraved Queen Victoria's head onto the first postage stamp back in 1840? All this was the start of my interest in family history.

As a family we all carried on attending choir practice and singing at the Eltham Church. The other activity for me continued to be the scouts. A lot of



*Silver dessert spoon made by Paul Hanet and hall marked London 1725.
Horse head crest of George Marsh (1683-1753) my great x6 grandfather.*

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the older boys, including Murray Reed, had moved on, so I gradually took on a bit more responsibility. I organised a scout camp for my section and we held this successfully at Warwick Martin's farm. We camped by a stream and had a great time trying to catch small fish. We didn't manage to catch any of the fish as they were just too fast for us but we did manage to catch some "crawlers". These are a species of freshwater crayfish and are native to New Zealand. The Maori name was "koura" but we mainly called them "crawlers" (some people called them crawlies). We boiled these up in a billy of water and then ate them, very delicious. It was really neat being out by ourselves without any grownups.

Organising this camp was one of the key milestones as I steadily worked my way through all the requirements for the Chief Scout's Award. Eventually I had it all completed and I felt very proud at my achievement as there were not many scouts who managed to gain this award. Unfortunately the scout leader did not have this particular badge in stock but he promised that he would order one for me and that I wouldn't have to wait too long. Sadly it never came.

I was also carrying on with my building projects at home and I helped Mr Walker convert our woodshed into an outside bedroom for me. We laid a concrete floor and we lined the walls with the tops of the wooden packing crates that he had obtained from the cheese factory. He also managed to get a window and a door but I don't know where he got those from. Mr Walker was a very resourceful sort of a person. It was fantastic having my own bedroom and we painted it all a light shade of yellow.

The other project that I did in 1972 was building a go-cart. It was mostly built out of wood and it used an old petrol motor mower engine. The design was very basic but it was enough for me to drive it up and down the road outside our house. The only problem was that the chain would often fall off when I turned a corner. Looking back, I think this project was quite an accomplishment for a little boy who was only 13 years old.

By now colour televisions had started appearing in the shops but they were very expensive, so we continued with our black and white set or "goggle-box" as Mum used to call it. There was still only one channel, so we watched whatever was on. On the news there was coverage of the general elections when the Labour Party won a landslide victory, making Norman Kirk "Big Norm" prime minister. We also heard about all the goings on in Uganda, as the tyrannical dictator Idi Amin expelled 50,000 Ugandan Asians with British Passports.

1972 was the year of the Olympic games, which were held in Munich in Germany. A team of 8 New Zealand rowers (and a cox) won the gold medal. I was

STRATFORD HIGH SCHOOL: FORM 3 (1972)

amazed to see how big their canoe was and I wondered how they had managed to get it all the way to Germany but then again maybe they had borrowed it from a good mate who just happened to be in Germany and who just happened to have it spare. I also thought it must be fantastic to be a cox and be allowed to go along for the ride. We saw the whole race on TV and everyone was elated, especially later on, when we saw the medals award ceremony and the band played the New Zealand anthem. We were all very proud.



Stamp issued in 1973 to celebrate the Rowing team winning gold at the 1972 Olympics.

Various aeroplane hijackings and kidnappings continued to make regular appearances on the news and sadly all the great things at the Olympics got overshadowed when a Palestinian terrorist group called 'Black September' took 11 Israeli Olympic team members hostage and later on killed them all at Munich airport. Watching the news really helped us to understand that there were lots of people in the world who did not have anything like the great life that we had in New Zealand.

There were also various programmes which occurred once a week as a serial. Very popular were 'Hogan's Heroes' (1965), 'Dad's Army' (1968) and 'MASH' (1972). All with a war theme but using comedy to entertain and so none of the characters got killed. These programmes were all in black and white, so even if we had had a colour TV, it would not have made any difference.

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American cowboy movies were very popular. Each would have some fast moving scenes of people galloping along on horses and there would always be a few good shootouts. In the background there was the sound of a really catchy theme tune or in the sad bits we would hear violins. It was the good guys fighting the bad guys. Sadly, the native American Indians were often presented as the bad guys, but of course, the real historical facts were that the white men were more often the bad guys and the Indians were regularly disadvantaged.

Today, movies about Cowboys and Indians have pretty much disappeared, as they are now judged as not being politically correct (non-PC). This is probably quite right but I would still like to see some of them again. The ones that I remember were: 'The Lone Ranger' (1949–1957), 'Gunsmoke' (1955–1975), 'Maverick' (1957–1962), 'Bonanza' (1959–1973), 'Rawhide' (1959–1966), 'The Virginian' (1962–1971), 'The High Chaparral' (1967–1971), 'Lancer' (1968–1970), 'Alias Smith & Jones' (1971–1973). There was also 'Daniel Boone' (1964–1970) but he wasn't a cowboy, he was more of an early American settler. Another great programme, also without any cowboys, was 'The Waltons' (1972–1981). It is hard for me to pick a favourite as all these programmes were excellent but if I was making a judgement based purely on theme tune then Bonanza would be my number 1.

'Star Trek' had started in America in 1966 but as all our programmes were behind, we did not get it until a few years later. Everyone enjoyed 'Star Trek' which was a science fiction story based in the future, all about James T Kirk and his team on the starship USS Enterprise on its five-year mission "to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no man has gone before". What was interesting about this production was that it was probably the first programme I remember seeing with an ethnically mixed group of characters. In most other programmes the cast would all be white Anglo Saxon looking people. In 'Star Trek' there was a black African American lady called Uhura, there was Sulu who was a Japanese American, Scotty who was Scottish and of course James Kirk who was a white American. I am not sure where Spock was from. There were no New Zealanders (Maori or Pakeha) but that was no problem. Looking back I suppose this science fiction series really did show us how ethnic diversity would become the established norm in the future.

I need to put in a little note here to say that in the 1970s the students at Stratford High School were predominantly fair skinned people with European ancestors. There were also a lot of Maori or part Maori people. I do not remember any black people with African origins and I do not remember any Indians,

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Chinese, Japanese or Asian looking people. You could say that we all lived in an ethnic bubble.

My mother continued working as a science teacher at St Mary's, which she really enjoyed, but the school was running into financial difficulties and job security was starting to look a bit uncertain. After a chance conversation, Mum's friend Jill Walker rang up to say there was a science teaching job in Whanganui for her. We had visited Whanganui a few times and Mum liked the place so she took the job and we made arrangements to move. This was going to be a big change in our lives. We had been brought up in a small close-knit agricultural community and now we were going to live in a city. While Stratford had a population of approx 5,000 people, Whanganui had a population of approx 30,000 and instead of living out in the country we were going to live within the city boundary. I was very sad to be leaving Stratford but on reflection this big change did in fact do me a lot of good.



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In 1973 this was spelt Wanganui but a lot of the local Maori had been saying for years that this was not correct and that it really should be spelt Whanganui, which phonetically, was closer to the correct pronunciation. Quite a few years later, the spelling was officially changed with the inclusion of the h, so I am now using the modern spelling.

With the requirement to find a new house, my mother decided to buy rather than rent. At this time, she had also had some discussion with my father James, and they had decided to sell the farm at Tuna. This had not been possible in the past, while he had been certified, but he was now relatively settled, living in Hamilton and working in a sheet metal workshop. He was deemed to be competent and so this meant that he could legally take the decision to sell the farm which was in his name. They also talked about the possibility of James moving to Whanganui and reuniting our family but they both quickly came to the conclusion that this would be unlikely to work. Living in Hamilton had brought relative stability for James, so they both felt it was probably best not to risk making a major change.

Money from the farm would not be forthcoming for at least a year, so Mum borrowed \$1,000 from her mother and together with a mortgage, she had \$5,000 to spend. This was not a lot, but it was enough to buy a very old house up on Bastia Hill overlooking Whanganui. The house itself was in very poor condition and the previous owners had left filthy pet cages and a lot of rubbish all over the place. The one really good thing about this property, was that it sat on a 4 acre plot. Most of this was steep sloping land but it was enough for Hilary's horses.

The move took place in the summer holidays but Michael and I were not there, as we had been attending the scout jamboree up in the Waikato. When we got back to Stratford, we stayed with Pat Steven, and after a couple of days rest, she took



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us down to our new home in Whanganui. Jill and Peter Walker had helped with the move, and a lot of the clean-up work had already been started. There was still lots to do, so we all mucked in, pulling down the filthy pet cages and collecting up lots of rubbish and burning it or taking it to the tip. We all got bitten by fleas and other horrid insects, but we survived.

The house itself was built from native New Zealand hardwoods and was probably getting on to being 100 years old. The wood was in good condition, as it was just too hard for wood eating insects to make a meal out of it. However, the house had subsided somewhat, and it had quite a significant slope across the floors. Various alterations had been made over the years and so it looked very much a wreck, hence the fact that it had been relatively cheap to buy. Nevertheless, it was ours and we all felt great living in our own home.

Whanganui, like Stratford, also has a river flowing right through the middle and this is the great Whanganui River which starts up near Taumarunui, in the centre of the North Island, and then meanders down collecting water as it goes and eventually spews its load out into the sea, just below the city at Castlecliff. As it passes through Whanganui, it is a massive expanse of moving brown muddy water and is probably a good 100m in width. In the early 1900s, there had been an active harbour at Castlecliff. This was now a large meat works but the actual wharfs still existed and when you looked out, you could see the rusty iron work remains of a very old ship that had been used to make a breakwater.

Whereas in the town of Stratford there had only been one secondary school, here in the city of Whanganui there were actually six. Mum's new job was teaching at Sacred Heart College, which was a girls' school. There was also St Augustine's College which was a Catholic boys' school. There was a state secondary school that just catered for boys (Boys' College) and one that just catered for girls (Girls' College). Whanganui Collegiate, which was a very posh private boys' school, was the oldest (founded in 1852). The school that we all went to was Whanganui High School (founded 1958) which, unlike all the others, was co-educational and so was the only school which took both boys and girls. It was quite a large school having well over 1,000 pupils and as a result it had very good resources.

Mum bought us new school uniforms and in February we turned up to start the new academic year. I still had very little confidence, and except for Prudence Walker, I did not know anyone, so it really was a big step into the unknown. In some ways, it was like starting a blank sheet of paper. No one knew anything about

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1973: Whanganui High School, Form Class 4F.

Top Row: Richard Scott, Paul Bakker, Leonard Gould, Brent Payne, Paul Kitson, Timothy Moore, Tyrone Mulligan, Richard Terrey, Inia Ashford. **Middle Row:** Paul Amer, Andrew Basset, Dianne Prop, Angela Biggs, Heather Young, Shereen Snowdon, Dale Cameron, Murray Frank, JJ Heath-Caldwell, Mr Walker. **Bottom Row:** Pauline Garrett, Elizabeth Lamont, Angela Bott, Carolyn Goodman, Julie Clark, Sharon Nolan, Karyn Parkin, Jean Kirkby.

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me, and I didn't know anything about them. One definite change was that from this point onward people started to call me JJ instead of Jeremy.

My form class was 4F with Mr Walker, who was also to be our French teacher (no relation to the other two Mr Walkers). I had continued to be very small for my age and if anything, I felt even smaller. The two tallest boys in my class, Paul Kitson and Timothy Moore, were a good 12 inches taller and absolutely towered above me. I really was tiny.

Whereas the classes at Stratford had all been academically streamed from top to bottom, here the classes weren't streamed, except for one class which had all the top students. The rest were mixed, so our class had a diverse range of ability with some being good at schoolwork and some being completely detached from what was going on around them.

Our form teacher Mr Walker was a very strange person. He had a cane on his desk and cotton wool in his ears. On our first day he started by laying down the law, telling us that he did not like noise and that if any of the boys caused any trouble, he would take them outside and use his cane to give them "two of the best". In other words, he would beat the shit out of us.

Like my previous schools, some of the teachers were very good and some of them were hopeless. French I found to be impossible, as did most of the other students. We just could not even understand why we had to learn French. At this point in time, the French government was letting off atomic bomb tests at Mururoa Atoll, which was a French island territory just to the north of New Zealand. This was reported quite a lot in the news, as the New Zealand and Australian governments were very opposed to the French tests, because they were releasing harmful radioactive material into the atmosphere. If the French government thought it was safe, then why didn't they do their testing in Paris? This animosity was to carry on for years and peaked with the sinking of the ship 'Rainbow Warrior' in Auckland Harbour in 1985, a very underhand operation carried out by French government agents.

Even in 1973, we knew the French were a load of irresponsible idiots, so why learn their language? None of us had any intention of ever visiting France. If we had to learn another language, why not learn Maori. Although it was by then, an almost dead language, at least it had a part in the history of New Zealand (I am happy to report that the Maori language has since undertaken quite a revival, and is popularly taught as an option in most schools).

Being tiny, I got pushed around quite a lot. I wouldn't say that I was bullied, because there wasn't anyone with really nasty intentions towards me. It was just

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that all the other boys were a lot bigger than me and if it came to any sort of push and shove, I was generally the person who got shoved.

On one particular occasion, I was sitting on a handrail (as was often done by everyone else). However, not being tall enough, my feet did not quite reach to the ground, so rather than sitting on the bar, I suppose it would be more accurate to say that I was perched on the bar. I had my hands tucked in close holding onto the bar, being careful not to lose my balance. Some of my friends thought this was quite funny and Murray Frank, as a bit of joke, came up behind me and grabbed me by the ankles. He pulled my legs backwards slightly, laughing as he did so. Unfortunately I immediately lost balance and tipped forward. So fast in fact that I did not even get time to put my hands out to break my fall. I landed headfirst with a loud crunching sound as my skull impacted with the concrete.

I wasn't knocked out totally unconscious. I was sort of aware of things going on around me. The pain in my head was excruciating and I felt very strange. I could not speak and I could not move. I was carried off to the sick bay. My mother was called, and I was admitted to the hospital with concussion and stayed overnight for observation. By the next day I was recovered, and I was back at school shortly afterwards. Although what Murray Frank had done was pretty stupid, I actually felt quite sorry for him. He was probably more shook up than I was. He was exceedingly apologetic and even phoned my mother in the evening to say sorry.

It was a short while after this that we had a real tragedy in our class. Karyn Parkin, who was a lovely girl, did not turn up for school one morning. A terrible rumour started to spread that she had had an accident. Mr Fountain, the Principal, came into our class and gave us the very sad news, that Karen had been run over by a bus, while she was cycling to school. She had been rushed to hospital but sadly had been declared dead on arrival. We were all stunned. Even today, when anyone talks of the unlikely event of being "run over by a bus" I always think of Karyn Parkin and I see her smiling face. It was very sad.

In those days everyone cycled to school and it was an excellent way to get fit. Most of the time it was fairly safe, but I do remember one day having an accident that gave me a bit of a shock. I was cycling along Wilson Street on the way to school when I noticed a massive new crane vehicle parked in the Bullocks yard. Bullocks was a large contracting firm that specialised in earthmoving and road building projects, so there was always a lot of interesting looking vehicles and machinery parked in there. On this particular morning, my eyes were drawn to this massive crane that I had not seen before. It was truly ginormous, and it had

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an incredibly large number of huge wheels all along the side of it. I couldn't tell you how many wheels, because as I was cycling along looking at this monstrous crane my bike came to a very sudden halt as I crashed into the back of a parked car. Instantly I flew over my handlebars and landed face first on the top of the car. I was quite dazed, but I soon figured out my error. When riding a bike, it is very important to look to your front rather than cycling along looking sideways.

Unfortunately the force of the collision had bent my front forks back and I couldn't turn the wheel. A very kind man from Bullocks walked over and gave me a hand. We quickly realised that if we took the front mud guard off, there would be just enough clearance to be able to turn the wheel again. He managed to get a couple of spanners, so a few minutes later I continued my journey to school with my front mudguard dangling around my neck. Later that afternoon when I got home from school, I was able to bend the forks back into their correct position and then refit the mudguard. No great damage and definitely another lesson learnt.

Whanganui High School had an active drama group and part way through the year they put on an excellent performance of Shakespeare's 'The Taming of the Shrew'. This was held in the school hall and although I found the old language difficult to follow, I got the gist of the story and I very much enjoyed it. The main plot is about the courtship and marriage of Petruchio and Katherina. Katherina is a very headstrong lady who gives all the men a hard time but Petruchio gradually tames her until he is able to completely manipulate her and make her into an obedient and devoted wife. There is lots of comedy and the play finishes with everyone living happily ever after.

It is interesting to note that this play is not performed very much these days as some people feel that it is no longer politically correct (non-PC). It is not acceptable in our modern world for females to be treated the way that Petruchio treats Katherina, even if they do live happily ever after. 'The Taming of the Shrew' is of course a good example of the comedy that was popular in the late 1500s (I wonder what Queen Elizabeth I thought of it?). It is a good thing that we now have more gender equality in our modern society but I hope some people will still put this play on as it really was great entertainment.

We had a school dance this year which was my first experience of going to a 'disco'. The people from the local radio station (2ZW) were up on the stage playing records all evening. I have two memories. One was dancing with a beautiful girl called Susan Watson and the other memory was of the music blaring out

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all evening, especially the song ‘Listen to the Music’, by the ‘Doobie Brothers’. Whenever I hear that tune, I always remember back to that evening.

In 1973 there was lots happening in the news. We had fairly constant coverage about the French and their dreadful atomic bomb tests at Mururoa Atoll. Over in Rome a 16 year old boy called John Paul Getty III got kidnapped by Italian gangsters but his grandfather the American oil tycoon J. Paul Getty, who was known as the world’s richest man, refused to pay the



‘Toulouse Street’ by the Doobie Brothers (1972)

ransom. This was a regular item on the news for about 5 months, during which time the gangster’s cut John’s ear off (ouch!) and posted it to his grandfather. Eventually he handed over the money and John was released (minus his ear).

In the Middle East, Egypt and Israel went to war again and this was called many names including the Yom Kippur War, the Ramadan War, or the October War. I wasn’t aware of it at the time but the Egyptian navy did have a bit of success with one of their small fast patrol boats and a few years later they placed orders for some really sophisticated navy boats to be built by the British company Vosper Thornycroft.

The other two things that year, were the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) putting the oil prices up and the United Kingdom joining the European Economic Community (EEC). This was a double whammy for New Zealand, and it was to tip the country into a recession for quite some time.

We had the Kapuni gas field in Taranaki and the offshore Maui gas field but no oil production, except for that tiny beam pump in New Plymouth that I used to enjoy watching. When OPEC cut back oil production to force the price up, there was immediately a world shortage of oil and all sorts of measures had to be put in place to reduce our consumption. One measure taken around the world was to reduce the top speed of vehicles on roads, as cars being driven fast were using up more petrol. In New Zealand, the speed limit was reduced from 55mph to 50mph (80km/h). I suppose the traffic police dished out a lot more speeding fines that year.

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1973: British first day cover to mark the occasion of the United Kingdom joining the European Economic Community (EEC).

At the same time, New Zealand had to start earning more money to pay for the increased cost of imported oil, but the main market for our produce was the United Kingdom and with them now joining the EEC, this market was about to be reduced. New Zealand was not geared up to sell stuff to other countries, and as a result, much of the next decade was to be spent ramping up marketing activities to find new customers. Many New Zealanders felt strong links to the UK, after all, a lot of NZ soldiers had lost their lives fighting with the UK against the Germans. Now the UK was leaving us and taking up with the Germans and the French, what a terrible combination! It was tough, but everyone did understand the logic behind the UK's decision to join the EEC, so that was pretty much that.

During the latter part of this year, I took up a job as a paper round delivery boy. I can't remember if it was the 'Dominion Post' or the 'Herald'. Whichever newspaper it was, it was brought up from Wellington by car in the afternoon and arrived around 5pm at the paper office on the corner of Watt St and Cameron Terrace. There were about a dozen paperboys and we would all be waiting, ready to effect a fast onward delivery. My round consisted of about 20 addresses on Bastia Hill so I would collect my papers and then immediately set off back across the river and then up Mount View Road and then all around Bastia Hill delivering the papers

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to all the subscribers. I can't remember how much I got paid, probably not a lot, but it was great and I really enjoyed it.

It was also around this time that I started to buy a few records (LPs) from the Record Shop on Victoria Avenue. My first two records were actually free, as I won a competition on the local Radio Station (2ZW) and the prize was a \$10 gift voucher. With this I bought 'I Don't Know How To Love Him' by Helen Reddy (1971) and 'Ringo' by Ringo Starr (1973). I then saved up my pocket money and I bought the double album 'Yellow Brick Road' by Elton John (1973). Not sure how



'I Don't Know How To Love Him'
by Helen Reddy (1971).



'Ringo' by Ringo Starr (1973).



'Yellow Brick Road' by Elton John (1973)



'The Dark Side of the Moon' by Pink Floyd
(1973).

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much it cost, probably something like \$10 which to me was a lot of money. It was wonderful playing these LPs on my Mum's hi-fi and it made me feel almost grown up. I would have also liked to have bought 'The Dark Side of the Moon' by Pink Floyd (1973) but I had to wait another year until I could afford it.

Another thing I remember around this time was walking up Victoria Avenue one afternoon and seeing a black man (a man of presumably African origin). You may think this is an odd thing for me to write about but during the first 14 years of my life, growing up in New Zealand, I had never seen anyone who had originated from the African continent. These days (2020) everywhere you go you see a wide variety of people from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds, and you don't give it a second thought. We had of course seen American Africans on our black & white television but these people all lived in America which was a long way away from Whanganui.

For Christmas this year my mother bought me a '1 transistor radio kit'. This was really neat. In the plastic bag there was a diode, capacitor, transistor, earpiece, battery, length of copper wire and a few other bits and pieces. I had to wrap the wire around a cylinder to make a coil (inductor) and once this component was completed, I connected everything up to make a tuned radio circuit. Then it was a case of making an aerial (antenna) to catch some radio waves. My aerial was made by getting a very long length of wire and taking it from my bedroom window out to the top of the pear tree.

Back in those days, radio station signals were transmitted as AM (amplitude modulation) on carriers in the frequency band 535 to 1605 kHz. FM (frequency modulation), which gave better audio quality, was just in the process of being rolled out on carriers higher up in the frequency band at 88 to 108 MHz. FM was a bit complicated, but AM was very simple, and a radio could be made fairly easily using some basic components.

It was a fantastic feeling, when I had all the components connected up, and I inserted the earpiece into my ear. I had to do a bit of tuning and then in amongst a few crackles I could hear a radio station. I have no memory of what I heard being broadcast from the actual radio station, but it was definitely a radio station. What a great feeling!

These days children do not learn much about building things like this. Everything is bought readymade. It is rather sad that young kids today are not able to have the thrills that I experienced but I suppose they just do other stuff.

In my second year at Whanganui, we all had to take English and Maths, but we could choose our other 4 subjects. I chose Chemistry, Biology, Physics and

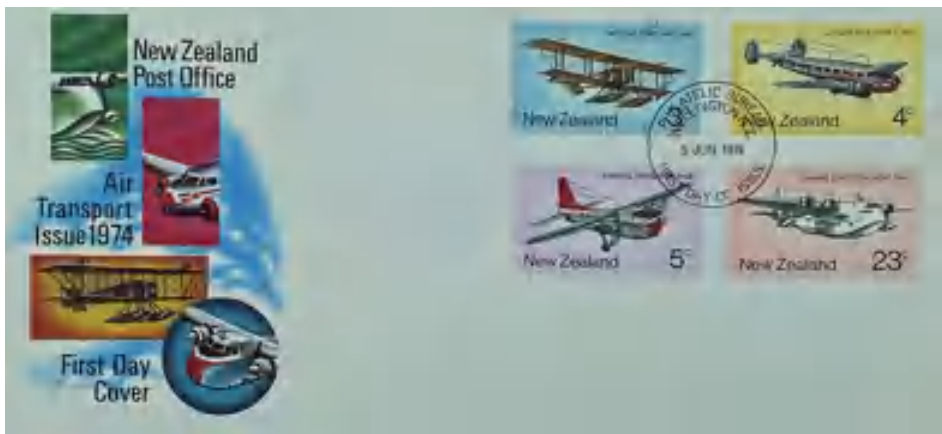
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History. Life was still tough but there were no more French lessons, and this was a great year. All the teachers were excellent, and I was now in the top classes for the science subjects and this gave me a warm feeling of pride.

I was very keen to get to university, but I was surprised that most of the other students did not share my enthusiasm. I remember talking to one of my friends who told me this was just not going to happen. His words were something along the lines of: “Look JJ, this is the way it is. Dumb people like us don’t go to university. The toffs from the other school over the road are the ones who go to university. It’s a waste of time and they are all wankers anyway. Much better to complete School Certificate and then leave school and get a proper job”.

By now some of the boys were leaving and weren’t even bothering with the School Certificate exams. One left to be a plumber and another left to work for a second-hand car dealer. One boy, not in our class, left at age 14 to work on his father’s farm. In those days, most people started to leave at age 15 but you could leave at age 14 if you had agreement from the school and from your parents.

We did have a teacher who gave career advice (one to one) and so I booked an appointment and went to see him (Don Kilpatrick). I assumed he would tell me all about how to take up plumbing or carpentry or selling cars etc. Mr Kilpatrick was a very nice person and he started by asking me what I would really like to be when I grew up. I thought for a brief moment and replied that I would like to be a rich businessman and that I would like to fly around in planes and have lots of secretaries, with good spelling, to do all the writing. He immediately laughed and then we talked about the subjects I was doing. His advice was to stick with



1974: New Zealand first day cover with stamps to celebrate the advance of air transport.

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academic subjects, work hard, progress onto university and then just do whatever subjects I found easiest. He told me not to worry about what job I would end up with, as he was sure I would find that everything would just fall into place. Looking back, that really was excellent advice.

Our Chemistry teacher was Mr Lupton (Roy Lupton) and he really was an incredibly good teacher and a brilliant person. Every time we did an experiment, he would tell us a story about how someone had discovered it and had then gone on to make lots of money out of it. He always had a captivating yarn and we were often spell bound. One story I remember, was of his early days when he was working in a very old school in England and he had seen a ghost! He had not really seen a ghost, but it was an excellent story.

Our Biology teacher Miss Parker (Eva Parker) was a Canadian lady who was very young and ever so sweet. The Physics teacher was an English guy Mr Lang (David Lang) who had only recently arrived in New Zealand. He drove a green MGB sports car and I think the girls found him to be very handsome and rather dashing. I also remember he once told us that he liked repairing old clocks. Maths was very easy, so there is not much I can say about that, except that I had two teachers Mrs Gavin (Sandra Gavin) and Mr Rankin (Nigel Rankin) both excellent. English continued to be impossible, so the less I say about that the better except that my teacher was Mr Milne (Colin Milne) and he was a great guy. History was difficult because in order to do all the homework and tests, I needed to write, and of course I was not good at that. But history as a subject, I found fascinating. The teacher was a Mr Smellie (Doug Smellie), which was an unfortunate name to have but he was very good at getting us interested in early New Zealand history and of course British History (which was an integral part of New Zealand's history). He also told us stories about his time in WWII when he had been a pilot in the Royal Air Force and he had flown bombers over Germany. I later found out that he had been awarded the DFC. Wow! Another really amazing person.

While at Whanganui High School I joined the school tramping club which was run by Mr Lupton, my Chemistry teacher. He took us on some amazing weekend trips. The club had its own hut up on the south side of Mt Ruapehu, so we did a number of trips up there.

Staying the night in the hut was a great experience. As it was up on the mountain, it was very cold and the only heating was from a fire that we would light as soon as we arrived. The hut itself was quite small and inside there was a sort of small mezzanine floor which in effect was a giant bunkbed. I suppose the top

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half would take about 10 people and the bottom would take another 10 people, all sleeping in their sleeping bags. Everyone just piled in with the girls and boys being all mixed up. I remember on one trip sleeping next to Heather Young who was from my form class. She was a lovely girl and I wish I had got to know her a lot better.

We got up the next morning, had breakfast and then climbed to the summit of Mt Ruapeahu (9,176ft or 2,797m) but it was a cloudy day, so we didn't actually see anything. On the way back Mr Lupton showed us how you could run down the mountain side, dodging all the rocks. This was absolutely exhilarating, as long as you didn't fall over and mush your head into a rock (in these days of health and safety you would not be allowed to do this). None of us damaged ourselves and in fact I have carried on doing it whenever I have had the chance and I am still in one piece.

The other thing I remember about Mr Lupton was that he would stop every now and then to point out some of the plants. He would tell us their Latin names and their common names, and he would explain the special attributes of each plant that allowed it to flourish in its natural environment. On another trip, when we climbed Phantoms Peak (6,450ft or 1,966m), on the side of Mt Taranaki (Mt Egmont), I think he was quite impressed, as I was able to tell him the names of some of the plants that he was not familiar with. On that trip he also took a select group of us fit ones right down to Lake Dive. We then climbed back up to Dawson Falls, where we re-joined the rest of the group, ready to set off back to Whanganui.

Other trips included a trek down a river which was in a steep gorge but I cannot remember the name of it (Otaki Gorge?). In places the river was very deep and had sheer rock walls both sides and so the only way through was to swim. We all got soaked, but of course we had prepared for this, with dry clothes packed away in sealed plastic bags. We camped for the night and then in the morning put our wet clothes back on, so we could continue the journey. This really was great character-building stuff. We also did a canoe trip on the Whanganui River, starting at Pipiriki and paddling down to Atene, with an overnight camp in between.

I really enjoyed Chemistry and I became a lab technician, which meant I could spend some of my lunchtime in the laboratory. My great interest was any chemical reaction that would lead to an explosion. I got very good at this and was able to work out the formulas and make sure I got the relative quantities just right for the optimum result. One day I worked on a new one, with red phosphorus and potassium nitrate, which was quite an unstable mixture. As it was, I got the quantities

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absolutely perfect, but the resulting explosion was a lot larger than I had anticipated. The bang was absolutely deafening, so much so that I was rather stunned. The room was instantly filled with smoke and a short while later some teachers burst in to find me sitting on the floor looking a bit shell shocked. Mr Lupton was very apologetic when he told me that he was very sorry but my career as a lab technician would now have to come to an end. He said he just could not take the risk that I might have another accident, as he would then be in really big trouble.

On a separate occasion, one of the girls in our class got into a very bad situation and it was to have a very sad outcome. She had missed a few days of school and when she got back she had bandages on both her wrists. She seemed very washed out and just did not appear to be her normal self. One of the teachers, with the whole class present, asked her why she had both wrists bandaged. She replied that she had accidentally walked through a glass door and had held both of her hands up as she did so and hence had sustained quite bad cuts to both her wrists but she had been very lucky in that all the broken glass had not cut her anywhere else. I can't remember what the teacher said next, but his body language certainly said that he did not believe her.

It was very unfortunate that the teacher had questioned her in this way, but he was obviously completely unaware of the full situation and so he was having to think on his feet. The result of his questioning was truly horrible, but I would note here that I don't think he was in any way at fault. He was a good teacher and generally had a caring approach to life.

Over the next few days, the story slowly came out. She had fallen in love with another boy and she had got pregnant. She was 16 years old. We will never know the full story of what she wanted and what her parents wanted and what her doctor wanted. We do know that the law at this time was that an unborn baby could not be aborted unless a doctor felt the mother's life or mental health was in danger. In her very distressed state, she had cut both her wrists in an attempted suicide and shortly afterwards she had received medical attention that had saved her life. The doctor then deemed her to be in danger and so got all the necessary paperwork signed and she had an abortion. I understand that she never fully recovered mentally and in later life she took to drugs and alcohol. Such a waste of life. She was a beautiful girl, very popular with everyone in class and she had everything going for her.

During the 1970s there was a big debate about abortion, driven by two very active political lobby groups. One group wanted abortion completely banned,

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saying it was murder, and this was the view which was also taken by the church. The other group were pro-abortion and they said that the physical and mental wellbeing of the mother was a higher priority and that women should have the right to manage their own bodies. There was regular TV coverage of protest marches to parliament by both groups and there were various petitions being signed by lots of people. Everyone seemed to have an opinion. Views within the medical profession were split but some doctors took it upon themselves to help young women have an abortion but there were risks. I heard a story about a doctor who had a patient who died and when the full circumstances became known he was struck off the medical register and was banned for life.

The politicians were bombarded from both sides and as a result were fairly ineffective at introducing new legislation but over quite a few years, various changes were slowly made and eventually the rights of the mother became more respected. Looking back, it was truly terrible for young women who found themselves in this very delicate predicament.

On the news we had also been hearing for a number of years about the bombings and murders happening in Northern Ireland and 1974 was a particularly bad year, as a New Zealand family got blown up by an IRA (Irish Republican Army) bomb that had been planted in the Tower of London. Their holiday of a lifetime had been instantly turned into a terrible nightmare.

In America a 19 year old girl, called Patty Hearst, who also had a very rich grandfather, got kidnapped by the left-wing terrorist Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA). We never understood what the SLA was, but they seemed to spend their time robbing banks and murdering people. Poor Patty got brainwashed and, in the end, joined them. We saw pictures of her on TV waving her machine gun around during one of the bank robberies. I think her grandfather must have been very unhappy when he saw the CCTV video. After 19 months she was eventually rescued but then the police immediately arrested her and put her in jail. We all felt sorry for Patty. She had been really unlucky.

Also in America, President Richard Nixon had to resign because of the 'Watergate Scandal'. We heard that 'Tricky Dicky' had been very naughty recording people's telephone conversations onto a tape recorder but most of us had very little understanding of what it was all about.

Another shock was the unexpected death of our prime minister Norman Kirk. On the TV it was announced that he was unwell and had been taken into hospital and then the next day it was announced that he had died. All the politicians who

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had spent the preceding 2 years criticising him, changed their tune and said he had been great guy. I found it difficult to understand why all these people had just suddenly changed their minds but I suppose that is what happens in politics. Bill Rowling became New Zealand's new prime minister.

On the TV around this time was the series 'War & Peace' (1972) which consisted of 20 episodes which ran for quite some time. The other good one was 'The Onedin Line' (1971-1980). If you watch these movies now the sets look very cheaply built and the acting is poor but when we saw them back then, both these programmes were brilliant.



1974: Hilary, JJ (Jeremy James) and Michael at Frank's parent's house at Totara Street.

DORA MET FRANK

It was during our time in Whanganui that Mum met Frank Wright. He had two children, Joy and Paul. Frank's wife had died a few years earlier and Frank was at this time living with his elderly parents Frank senior and Norma. Joy was the same age as Hilary and was attending Whanganui Girls College. Paul was much older and lived with his wife and two young children at Taupo.



1974: Frank Wright at his parent's house at Totara Street.

During the latter part of World War II, Frank had joined the Royal New Zealand Air Force and he had been lucky enough to be selected for pilot training. He experienced the great adventure of travelling around the world and living in England for a few years, but he never actually went into action. When his pilot training was completed, and he had earned his wings, his first assignment was helping to train more pilots and he really enjoyed this. Then on the 8th of May 1945, the Nazi Germans surrendered and it was all over. Frank was able to come back to New Zealand in one piece. He had been incredibly lucky.

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Frank loved flying and so he took it up as a permanent career, becoming a pilot instructor. He had worked in various aero clubs around the country and he had also spent some time on a project in Thailand. Now he was working for the New Zealand government, on an aid project for Bangladesh. The first batch of 4 Bengali students were being trained at the Whanganui airport and later, Frank would be going to Bangladesh to set up a flying school there.

By now the farm at Tuna had been sold and my mother had enough money to rebuild our house. Peter Walker did this for us and it was fantastic seeing this amazing project happen around us. I had always liked woodwork and living in the middle of these major alterations, got me even more interested in carpentry. I was also able to do odd jobs and one I remember was dismantling the old chimney. To do this, I climbed up onto the roof and then chipped away at the chimney, brick by brick, and then dropped them down the inside. Each brick made an almighty bang as it hit the bottom, crashing into the hearth and then bouncing out into what had been the lounge. I chipped away at the bricks at the top and Michael



1974: JJ (Jeremy James) on the roof of the house at Shakespeare Road, Bastia Hill, Whanganui. Taking the chimney down brick by brick. No need for safety hats or scaffolding or ropes.

DORA MET FRANK

handled the other end of the operation, picking up the disintegrating bricks and being fairly careful not to be hit by any disintegrating pieces bouncing around the room.

Looking back, I have often wondered what would have happened if I had left school and become a carpenter. I might have progressed on to having my own building company and after that I might have become a land developer. I possibly would not have flown around in aeroplanes very much, but I might have ended up being very very rich!

Frank and Mum got married around this time and Frank and Joy moved in to live with us. I should note here that my parents, although separated for 10 years, had never actually been divorced. Prior to Frank, my mother had never had, or even sought, a relationship with anyone and I think my father during this time had probably been the same, but after 10 years they both decided that it was probably best to make new starts. Their divorce was sorted, and Mum and Frank then got married. A short while later James followed suit and married a lady called Mae who had been a fellow patient at the Tokanui Mental Hospital.

Suddenly having Frank and Joy living with us was very different but we all got on, so no great problems. We also got to know Frank's parents Frank Senior and Norma but I never felt confident speaking to them, as it was never decided what we should call them. Calling them Mr and Mrs Wright would have been a bit formal, calling them by their first names would have possibly been disrespectful and calling them Grandma and Grandpa would just not have sounded right.

Frank senior was very good to me and taught me how to use wood stains and paint. He also told me about his time in WWI when he had fought at the Battle of the Somme in 1916, which was one of the largest battles to have ever taken place. From all the countries involved it is estimated that there were over 1,000,000 casualties and of these approx 300,000 were killed. Altogether, it is estimated that about 20,000,000 people died in WWI. Frank senior was wounded in the leg and underwent an operation, the makeshift operating table being a couple of haybales. He was then transported to the UK where he spent some time recovering in a hospital near Brockenhurst, after which he was evacuated back to New Zealand. He said his main memory of the battlefield was "everywhere you looked was mud, bits of bodies and rats". He was also very proud to tell me that the very ship that he travelled in, was now the wreck of rusty iron down in the breakwater at Castlecliff (Te Anau 1879-1924. The interior of the main cabin from this ship is now on display at the Wellington museum).

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Our new stepfather Frank (junior) set off for Bangladesh towards the end of 1974 for the second part of the government aid project (to set up a pilot training school in Dacca). Meantime we started making our own preparations to join him. I remember getting vaccinations for Cholera, Typhoid, Yellow Fever and Smallpox. A week afterwards we all felt a bit sick but apparently this was normal. Once our school year had finished, we packed up the house and set off on our big journey. Moving from Stratford to Whanganui two years previously had been a big change in our lives and now we were about to experience an even bigger change.



1974: JJ in front of the house at Shakespeare Road, Bastia Hill, Whanganui.

DACCA, BANGLADESH (1975–1976)

We departed Whanganui in a 28 seat, Fokker F27 Friendship, turbo-prop aeroplane and headed for Wellington. This was an NAC flight, as this was the name of the domestic airline company before it merged with Air New Zealand a few years later. I had never been in one of these aircraft before, but I had seen them flying over our house. It was great sitting in the seat and thinking of our journey ahead.

In Wellington we stayed the night in a hotel, and this was another new experience for me, having never stayed in a hotel previously. From Wellington, we boarded a Douglas DC-8 and I think this was an Air New Zealand plane with 4 jet engines (2 on each wing). I had never even seen one of these planes before, let alone been inside one. This had something like 260 seats, so was much larger than the F27. We flew to Sydney and stayed a night in another hotel and then the following day we set off to Bangkok on a Qantas Boeing 747. Wow! This was incredible. The aircraft took more than 400 passengers and it cruised along at about 560mph (900km/hr). Looking down from way up in the sky was absolutely awesome.

From Bangkok we flew in a Thai International Boeing 707 to Dacca in Bangladesh and arrived around midday. Up until then everything had been slick and organised. In Dacca things were very different. The airport building was not much more than a large shed and it was hot and muggy and very chaotic. We were incredibly pleased to be met by Frank, who had a special airport pass. After collecting our bags and completing all the immigration formalities, Frank drove us into Dacca, carefully dodging the countless rickshaws that were all over the road. Progress was very slow and whenever we stopped at an intersection our car was besieged by beggars wanting money to feed their numerous children. Everywhere you looked you saw people. There were thousands of them, in every direction, and they all looked skinny and unwashed. We eventually made it to the Intercontinental Hotel, which was a cordoned off island of tranquillity. Welcome to Bangladesh!

In 1947 India had been partitioned into two new countries. The larger country had retained the name India and this had a majority Hindu population. The other was called Pakistan and it was predominantly a Muslim population. But this is

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1975: Dacca, Bangladesh. The rickshaws rule the road. People everywhere.



1975: Dacca, Bangladesh. Locals catching a ride on a truck.

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where it got a bit tricky. They found it very difficult, deciding where the new borders should be drawn and so, as it turned out, Pakistan ended up having two separated areas, one called East Pakistan and one called West Pakistan, but both ruled by one parliament.

Trying to run a country which existed as two sperate areas of land, was never going to be easy, and in 1971, led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, independence was declared. A civil war ensued and about 3,000,000 people were killed until eventually, everybody decided to call it a day. East Pakistan was renamed Bangladesh and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman became the leader of a country with 75,000,000 people but no money and no bridges (all the bridges had been blown up in the war).

It was now 4 years later and independence had not brought much improvement. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was still the Prime Minister, working exceedingly hard to do his best but the economy had remained shot to pieces and the country was politically unstable. Worse was to come, as later that year Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was assassinated in a coup and a military government took over.



15 August 1975: Assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Prime Minister of Bangladesh. Bullet case picked up from the grounds of one of the neighbouring houses.

We lived in the hotel for the next 6 weeks while Mum and Frank made all the necessary arrangements to find a property and set up a new home for what was to end up being a two year stay. There were four other New Zealand families also working on the flying school project, so we had a very select little social circle and over time Mum and Frank also met a few other people. The Intercontinental Hotel was luxury and it also had a swimming pool with a diving board. I swam every day and spent endless amounts of time diving off the diving board. By the time we left my ability to swim had improved considerably.

Hilary and Joy lived in Bangladesh for a year and studied towards their Bursary exams, after which they both went to Massey University. Michael and I spent the

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two years boarding at Whanganui Collegiate School, but we made four trips to Bangladesh in the holidays.

For me, seeing Bangladesh was an incredible experience and opened my eyes to all sorts of things that I had not considered before. Living in Dacca, gave me an idea of what Victorian England had probably been like. There was an incredibly large number of uneducated people, with very little work and little opportunity to earn money and feed their families. What was making it even worse for all of them, was that in amongst all the general chaos, they were having more and more children. This was when I realised that over population was going to eventually become the number one problem in the world.

Because they were all short of money (and hence food) they would take any opportunity that came their way. Most of them were completely dishonest and would steal anything that they could get their hands on. To start with I found this very off putting but after a while I could see that this was not a case of a lack of high principles, it was a basic necessity. They all desperately needed food.

We also noticed that men treated their wives as second-class citizens. When you saw them walking along the street, the wife would most of the time be walking behind the husband. This is how it was.



1975: Dacca, Bangladesh. People everywhere.

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1975: *Dacca, Bangladesh:*

Squatters living in the grounds of the 'Ahsan Manzil' or the 'Nawab's Palace'.

By the time of my second trip, Mum and Frank were living in a lovely little bungalow in the Dacca suburb of Dhanmondi. There were three servants. Khan the cook was a very honest man who did an excellent job looking after us. He had two daughters that he was paying to put through school, as he realised the importance of a good education. Around the house was a garden of probably a bit less than a quarter acre and this was kept in pristine condition by Malee the gardener whose other responsibility was to be day guard. The night guard, or chowkidar, was Nurull and his responsibility was to stay up all night and make sure that we were kept safe. Early morning, just before finishing his shift, he would give the car a good wash, before Sahib (Frank) would be driving off to work.

In those days most of the Bangladeshis addressed white foreign men as Sahib and ladies as Memsahib. It was an old custom, still hanging on from the days of the British Raj.

We met a very interesting old man called Colonel Parni near a place called Tangail which was approx 60km north west from Dacca. He had been in the

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1975: Our Bungalow in Dhanmondi, Dacca, Bangladesh.



1975: Family group in front of the bungalow: Joy, Hilary, Dora, JJ, Michael.

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Army of the British Raj before partition in 1947 (28 years earlier) and he was now in retirement, living out in the country, in an incredibly old house, overlooking a big square lake with a small mosque at the opposite end. His house, and everything around it, was in a rather sad dilapidated state but you could imagine how magnificent it had once been. He told us stories of his experiences in the the old days, when the British ran the empire. He said that with all the chaos now in the country, many of the people harked back to the good times that they heard about from their grandparents. If it had been possible to use their democratic vote to bring back the British, then he was certain that they would have voted for it. However, he went on to point out that they would have been wrong to do so. Although he experienced some great times, he told us that things were just as disorganised back in the days of the British and, in his opinion, that was the very reason why they had left.

One little memento that I still have, from my time in Bangladesh, is some old coins. There were lots of these for sale in the market and they fascinated me. Each has the head of King William IV or the young Queen Victoria and on the other side is written ‘East India Company’. I could not help but wonder, why did it say East India Company? With the monarch’s head on the coin, it was obvious that it



1974: Col Parni at Tangail, Bangladesh.

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1974: Col Parni's old family home with a large square pond, Tangail.



1974: Col Parni's family Mosque at the other end of his pond, Tangail.

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was from the time of the British, but why did it not just say India? What was the East India Company?

Over time I heard about Robert Clive of India and lots of the other men who had gone out to India in the very early days and made their fortune. Eventually I found out that it was not the British Government that took over India. Instead, from small beginnings, English adventures and traders, working for the East India Company, slowly gained political control of the whole subcontinent. In fact, a lot of them were Scottish but they have always been referred to as “the English”. There was never any master plan. It was just the collective result of all these individuals



Old Coins from the East India Company, King William IV and Queen Victoria.

wanting to make money. Lots of them died very young but I get the impression that they found the beautiful Indian ladies to be incredibly alluring and the experience for most of them was sheer paradise. They must have thought they were in heaven, even if they had not yet got there.

By 1784 the East India Company got into serious financial difficulties, as the owners and many of the top employees, had been paying themselves far too much money. However, the company was too big to fail (just like 2008 when the banks lost everyone’s money) so the British government had to take the company over.

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They continued to run it as a company, until the Indian rebellion of 1857 (The Mutiny) after which they needed a new brand name, so they changed it to just India or the Indian Empire. Charles Canning, who was the Governor-General at the time, got a pay rise and was promoted to a new job called 'Viceroy of India' (same role but different job title). Queen Victoria was made 'Empress of India' but she did not need a pay rise because she already had tons of money. As I touched on earlier, this was the state of affairs up until 1947 when Louis Mountbatten was sent to India to sort things out, once and for all. He got his map out, drew a few lines and partitioned the subcontinent into India and Pakistan. Independence was declared and after a final cup of tea at the Viceroy's residence, Louis and his wife Edwina, packed their bags and went back to England.

During our school holidays in Bangladesh we did a few trips around the country and we also did a trip to Calcutta (Kolkata) and a trip to Delhi and Agra. I found the history of the place to be quite incredible and I have enjoyed reading history books on the subject ever since.

Another big thing happening at this time was the programme for the eradication of Smallpox (variola virus). Smallpox had been wide spread in Bangladesh and on the street we regularly saw people whose faces were completely covered with spots as a result. Although badly scarred for life, these were the lucky ones, as



1974: New Zealand made plane 'Air Tourer' at Dacca Airport. People everywhere.

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I understand the disease had generally killed 3 out of every 10 people infected. An English doctor, Dr Edward Jenner, was the first person to identify a vaccine and he published his work in 1801. By the early 1950s, due to widespread vaccination, the disease had been eradicated from Europe and North America and in 1959, the World Health Organization (WHO) started a plan to clear the disease from the rest of the world. By 1971 it had been eradicated from South America and this just left Bangladesh and Africa.

There had been an active programme of vaccination in Bangladesh for quite some time but it had not been possible to vaccinate everyone, as there were quite a few local people who were worried and hence did everything they could to avoid being vaccinated. In the final few years, it had been found that using teams of expatriates seemed to get more cooperation from the local people. Again, this may have been a hangover from the days of the British Raj and many people still had a lot of respect for the English (or anyone who looked like they were English). My mother and my sisters did a lot of voluntary work in this campaign. If anyone was found to be suffering from Smallpox, the team of expatriate vaccinators swooped on the area and went house to house vaccinating everyone that they came in contact with. They also had police backup, in case there was any trouble, but this was rarely needed. On one of our holidays my brother Michael and I also joined one of these vaccination teams.

The last Smallpox case in Bangladesh occurred in late 1975 and in Africa in 1977. Since then, the world has been free of Smallpox. I do look back and feel a sense of pride that I was one of the people who took part in the programme, even if it was only on one occasion. Special recognition should go to my mother Dora, sisters Hilary and Joy, and all the other people around the world who did their bit to eradicate this terrible disease.

Another memory of my trips to Bangladesh, is of the tourist shops that sold a wide variety of interesting souvenirs for visitors. Lots of these items were made from parts of dead animals and in many cases endangered species. There were all sorts of things made of ivory. Delicately carved elephants were popular and in some cases you would get a complete tusk that had been carved with a continuous line of small elephants arranged in a curve. You could also get fantastic chess sets with the white pieces made of ivory and the black pieces made of ebony. In every case, the quality of the carving was exceptionally good. There were also stuffed snakes, lizards, mongooses and various other animals. Lots of leather goods, wallets, handbags, belts, etc, all made out of lizard skin or snakeskin.

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Of course, everyone eventually realised that killing all these animals was not a very good idea.

A natural occurring item that was more sustainable was pink pearls. These came from freshwater mussels that were grown in the bottom of some of the numerous ponds that exist in the country. It takes about 3 years for a mussel to grow and pearls are only found in a small number of these. The mussels were collected mainly for the shell and the flesh. Finding a pearl was a bonus. The flesh



Pink pearl necklace made from pearls found naturally in Bangladesh freshwater mussels.

was of course eaten as shell food. The shells were crushed down and converted into lime. This was then used by the locals as an ingredient when chewing betel nuts. I never tasted betel nut but I understand that it contains an addictive substance which is in some ways similar to caffeine or nicotine. I remember seeing lots of local people who had very bad looking teeth, caked in an orange-brown substance. Apparently chewing betel nut is not very good for your health and lots of the people who consumed it ended up dying of cancer.

I have not been back to Bangladesh but I did make a trip to Kolkata (Calcutta) as part of a Rotary Club event in 2012. It was incredible to see how much things had changed. There were no shops selling ivory or stuffed animals. Traffic was still chaotic but there were very few rickshaws and when you watched people walking along the street, it was quite noticeable that wives no longer walked behind their husbands. There was a real buzz about the place, and everybody looked busy and there were very few beggars. It was brilliant to see how much progress had been made in the intervening period (36 years).

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An ivory elephant.

Items made of ivory were a common sight in shops in 1974.



WHANGANUI COLLEGIATE SCHOOL: FORM 6 & 7 (1975–1976)

As I mentioned above, my brother Michael and I needed to go to a boarding school and as Whanganui High School did not take boarders, we went over the road to Whanganui Collegiate. This was another big change in our lives. Attending this school really was a great privilege, as Collegiate had a very established reputation of being one of the best schools in New Zealand (even if my friends at Whanganui High School thought they were all a load of tossers). One of its ex-students had been Sir Arthur Porritt, the previous Governor-General, who I had briefly seen at Stratford High School about 4 years previously.



Collegiate had about 560 students and at that time these were split between 6 boarding houses and 2 day houses. Our boarding house was ‘Gilligan’, which was a bit unusual, in that it was separate from the School, being located a 5 minute walk away. All the other houses were within the main school grounds, including a day house that had been named ‘Porritt’, named after guess who. Altogether we had about 64 boys in Gilligan from 3rd form to 7th form (ages 14 to 18).

One thing that often came up in conversation with other students was the fact that my parents were living in Bangladesh. People sort of thought that I was from Bangladesh, but of course I saw myself as being from Whanganui and before that Taranaki. There were also a few other students in a similar situation, in that they were New Zealanders, but their parents were living overseas and so these students were now at boarding school.

The cost to send a student to Collegiate was incredibly expensive, so lots of the students had parents who were quite well off and some were super rich. The result was a diverse range of people who were in some ways similar to my previous schools but in other ways were very different. Whereas, at High School a lot of the students felt you were pretty stupid if you wanted to go to university, at Collegiate

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this was very much the other way around, the general attitude being that you would be pretty stupid if you didn't try and make it to university.

One thing I did find odd, was all the petty little privileges that were gained as the students progressed up through the age groups. At Gilligan only 6th and 7th formers were allowed to walk through the front door. All the younger students had to use the side door. The juniors had to do their evening homework all together in the common room, but the seniors had much more spacious study rooms that they shared in small groups. I could understand the reasons for the study rooms, as there was probably a shortage of space, but I did think that the front door rule was ridiculous.

As this was a boarding school, we were supplied with three meals a day. Everybody complained that the food was not very good but to me it seemed fine. Looking back, I was still consuming a lot of food which contained dairy, and this continued to make me tired, but of course I was so used to this, that I just assumed I felt normal. The fact that I was useless at sport and my school work was rather variable, certainly frustrated me, but that was the way it was.

I had been very pleased to have passed my School Certificate exams but my marks had been rather erratic. My highest mark was in Biology, despite me not expecting to get good marks in this subject. I had also passed Chemistry, Maths, English and History but I had failed Physics, despite the fact, that I had always found this subject to be fairly easy. Luckily for me, because I had passed everything else, a fail in Physics was not really a problem.

In the 6th form at Collegiate, there was generally just 2 classes for most of the subjects and these were streamed. One was the high class and the other was the lower class. Sadly for me, I was put into the lower class for all my subjects but I just made the best of it. To start with, I found some of the work difficult but over time I made reasonable progress, except of course in English.

In addition to the core subjects (English, Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Biology), I also took a new subject called 'Computer Studies' and we all had to take 'Religious Studies'.

Computers were a very new thing (no one had one at home) and the teachers were very proud of the fact that the school had recently purchased one, at great expense. I can't remember what the model of the machine was, but I do remember that it did not have a screen. You put information in using switches and punched tape and you got information out via a series of lights or via a printer. I would assume that this computer was based on an Intel 8080 processor, which was state

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of the art at that time (1975) and had a clock speed of 2MHz. A typical memory card would have been 16kb (my pc today has a clock speed of 2GHz and a memory of 238Gb).

I don't remember much about the detail of our computer course but a memory that I do have was that some of the students used to play a game called 'lunar landing'. You would punch some numbers in and the program would then send some numbers out. Unless you got your input right, the output usually said that you had crashed on the lunar surface. I found the game frustrating but the course was great and most of us passed the exam at the end of the year, so we were happy.

It was also in 1975 that small electronic calculators started to appear, and these really were fantastic. It was brilliant being able to quickly do multiplication and division without being slowed down by having to use logarithm tables (invented by John Napier, 1614). By the following year these calculators also started appearing with trigonometric functions which made them even more useful.

Religious Education (RE) really was a subject on its own. It was only one period a week (1 hour), there were no tests and no final year exam. We had this subject occasionally at primary school and we then had it consistently all the way through secondary school. In those days religion still was a big thing for our parent's generation, most of whom believed in God or at least thought there might be one, even if they didn't really know what he looked like.

In my generation, the number of believers was diminishing, and I certainly wasn't a believer. Religious Education seemed to be in the curriculum, simply because it had always been in the curriculum, and it would have been a very big decision in any school, for a headmaster to decide to discontinue it. However, there was a major problem. The majority of students were not interested in being taught religious studies and in my experience none of the teachers ever managed to engage with the class and get anything useful out of the time spent. We had one teacher who told us we were all stupid because we believed in evolution, solely because we were taught it as part of the Biology curriculum. He told us in unequivocal terms that any idiot would know that we did not develop from monkeys. After this rather robust lecture, he said a short prayer, and our one hour lesson was once more brought to a close.

Looking back, possibly it could have been a lot better if Religious Education had been taught as a subject of history. They could have covered the origins of the Bible and the other early religious texts that existed in the ancient civilizations, most of whom believed in multiple gods. Then we could have progressed

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through the Greeks and the Romans to the time of 391AD when Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire and the Bible, translated into Latin, became the number 1 book. Then the time of Muhammed (570–632) and the Muslim religion and a few hundred years later the Crusades, when everyone took sides and every now and then met up to fight it out (and achieve nothing). We could have also touched on some of the religions in India and China. The next big event was John Wycliffe's early translation of the Bible into the English language in 1384 and the incredible resistance to this that went on for a further 150 years. Reformation of the church was begun by Martin Luther in 1517 and King Henry VIII's break with the Catholic Church in 1534 continued the change, ... etc etc. The other thing that would have been good to have learnt more about, was the way that kings and politicians manipulated religion to help them meet their goals (or their society's goals). I have probably rambled on a bit here, but I hope you get the picture. Really, in my opinion, Religious Education at school was a lost opportunity.

I understand that this year in New Zealand (2020) the government has finally taken the decision to drop Religious Education from the curriculum and replace it with studies on Climate Change. An excellent decision and I understand that very few people have objected to it.

While I was at school, I was never keen on reading books but I do remember reading 'Tom Jones' by Henry Fielding, which was a very old novel, first published in 1749. The story is about a highly active young man by the name of Tom Jones, who travels around the place getting into all sorts of hilarious scrapes and escapades, often involving young ladies. He keeps going and at the end he marries his sweetheart, the beautiful Sophia Western, and we assume that they both lived happily ever after. My kind of story. Sadly, I did not read many books until later in my twenties but this was certainly the first real novel that I ever read and I enjoyed the story immensely.

Living in such close proximity with your fellow students meant that you got to know them very well. Over time you learnt to your cost that, while most were quite reasonable, there were some that you could not trust and there were some that were straight out violent. I was beaten up a number of times and there was nothing I could do about it. They were bigger and stronger than me.

I also had a situation when I sold an electronic calculator to one of the other boys. He paid me half the money with a promise that the rest would be forthcoming, but he never paid it. This led to a lot of anger and he also beat me up. These

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experiences were truly terrible, but I certainly learnt a lot about judging a person's character and this has always been a great help to me in business.

Something that I really did hate, and I had not experienced this at previous schools, was all the name calling and total lack of respect often apparent between many of the students. We had one particular student in our house who was always being called "poofter" (homosexual) when it was obvious that he was not. I felt this was very unfair.

At Whanganui High School I had been called JJ but here I was called Jerry which I never liked. But it was even worse. Being small, I had a high pitched voice, so the other boys nick named me "Chirp" and it stuck for the whole time I was at Collegiate. I was infuriated by this but again there was nothing I could do about it. The big strong boys could do whatever they liked but us little guys had to always take a back seat.

School is a great place for boys who are older in their age group and bigger in stature (fast developers). They have a fantastic time. They are that little bit more mature and when it comes to push and shove, being bigger, they do the shoving and they don't get pushed. They have the advantage in any competition. To win you don't need a lot more, you just need that edge. Winning builds confidence. They get given more responsibility. They learn to be leaders.

At the time it just seemed really unfair. People like me were just there to continually lose and to help make the winners feel important. If you won some and lost some, then that was a great balance and that is how it should have been. For me life was often just shit.

I joined the school brass band during my first year at Collegiate and once more took up learning to play the cornet. I found this to be very different to my experience at Stratford High School (3 years previously), where the bandmaster, most of the time, gave us lots of encouragement, but at Collegiate the bandmaster, who was the school music teacher at the time, just gave us lots of abuse. The problem was of course lack of practice. I suppose the bandmaster at Stratford just accepted that when you are dealing with students, this was just the way it was, but at Collegiate the band master seemed to think that if he was incredibly abusive towards us, then we would all start doing more practice. Nuts!

In fact, due to circumstances, practice was rather difficult. We did have a practice room across at the school, but I was down the road at Gilligan House. Here we had a small study room where you could play instruments but it made a lot of noise and some of the other boys complained. I remember Derek Cotton was exceedingly

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good on the clarinet, but this was a much quieter instrument than my brass cornet and when he practised, he could produce quite a good tune. My attempts were not quite so musical, they were very noisy and consequently, it did not go down well.

Once a year we had a few days where the whole school stopped and we all did army cadet training. I was quite looking forward to this, as I had assumed we would be running around shooting guns and all that sort of stuff. In the end it was a bit of a let-down, as none of us got to shoot any guns and all the members of the band were put into a separate group (the cadet band). We all went to camp and the bandmaster told us we should use the opportunity to practise and so in the evening we all did. It was very noisy with everyone doing their own thing but overall it was good to get a bit of practice in. This was going quite well, until all of a sudden a very angry teacher burst into the room and told us off for making such a terrible racket. We were a bit stunned, as we thought we were all doing very well, conscientiously practising on our separate instruments.

The following morning we were told that we were naughty boys and that all the band members were going to be punished (except of course the bandmaster). I can't remember what the punishment was; perhaps we all had to wash the dishes or something similar.

At the end of the year I looked back at my time in the band. It had been fairly bonkers. Gilligan had won the House music competition, so we felt quite good about that, but as a school band we had not done any performances at all. Surely as a band, you need to do performances, as these are what you enjoy the most. You practise, practise and practise with a focus on the date for that big day, but in our case that performance never happened.

In life lots of things go wrong and it is often a set of circumstances, not necessarily one person's fault. However, on this occasion I look back and I do feel that the bandmaster could have done a better job. I never liked him as a person. He always seemed a bit odd and instead of spending his time hurling abuse at us I think he would have achieved much more if he had focused on his own self organisation skills. I decided not to continue with the band in my second year, as I felt there was no point in doing something that I was not enjoying. I thought no more about the bandmaster after that but years later I heard that he got in trouble with the law and was convicted for interfering with little children. Horrible man. A very odious character indeed.

On the TV news towards the end of 1975, we watched coverage of the New Zealand general election and we were all very pleased, when Robert Muldoon

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won, as most of the students at Collegiate were from families who were keen National Party supporters. I am not sure if Robert Muldoon turned out to be a very good prime minister but that is another story. The country had been suffering from lots of strikes and most people were by now fed up with the unions who did not seem to be acting in the best interests of their members.

Another big change in New Zealand this year was that the wearing of seatbelts in cars became compulsory. Old cars did not have seat belts fitted but all cars sold in the country from 1965 onwards had safety belts on the front seats and later this rule was extended to the back seats as well. Where fitted, they now had to be worn. Road deaths in 1973 had peaked at 843 but in the following year (1976) they were to drop to 609. This drop in the death rate had also been helped by the decrease in the speed limit at the end of 1973 and in 1974 it had also become compulsory for motorcyclists to wear helmets.

Over in the Middle East, Egypt and Israel had stopped fighting each other and the Suez Canal was opened again, having been closed for the preceding 8 years (1967–1975). In the United Kingdom a lady called Margaret Thatcher had become the leader of the opposition (the Conservative Party). This was very unusual, as most of the important jobs were always done by men. Looking back, there has been a lot of very good progress on gender equality during my lifetime.

Despite my difficulties at school during the year, I did the study and I got relatively good marks at the end of my 6th form (except for English but that was not unexpected). Sadly, my good marks were not enough to get me moved up to the bright class, so the following year I just had to stay put and make the most of it. Again I took Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Maths but I was finally allowed to drop English, so I took Economics in its place.

I found Economics to be fascinating and I could not understand why a lot of the other students found it to be difficult. It was probably easy for me because it was really more numbers based, rather than words based. The teacher (Mr Hooper) told us all sorts of things, about how companies made money and lost money. In some cases, companies would make a product or a service that consumers needed but in other cases they would make something and then just convince customers that they needed it, when in fact they didn't. As an example, he told us about a company that had come up with a very novel idea, 'bottled water'. Selling bottles full of water, was unheard of at that time and most of the students in the class thought that the whole idea was crazy. We all knew that water came out of a tap and it was free. Only a dumb person would pay money to get it in a bottle. Looking back, I can see how

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wrong we all were, as over time, consumers started to buy water in bottles!

One thing that students did spend money on was records and in Gilligan we were able to keep up with all the latest music releases as there was usually someone who would buy a new record as soon as it came out. Around this time I remember the albums 'Crime of the Century' by Supertramp (1975), 'Horizon' by the Carpenters (1975), 'A Trick of the Tail' by Genesis (1976) and 'Hotel California' by 'The Eagles' (1976). One thing I always remember about these albums was the cardboard covers which were always brilliant pieces of visual artwork. To people of my generation, these record covers are always instantly recognisable.



'Crime of the Century' by Supertramp (1975).



'Horizon' by the Carpenters (1975).



'A Trick of the Tail' by Genesis (1976).



'Hotel California' by 'The Eagles' (1976).

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One music group that had been very popular at this time was ABBA who had burst into the spotlight when they won the Eurovision Song Contest in 1974 with their song ‘Waterloo’. What was even more amazing was that they were Swedish but they sang their songs in English and gained worldwide popularity. In 1975 they produced their 3rd album which was called ‘ABBA’ and in 1976 they produced ‘Arrival’. Initially everyone loved their music but after a few years their popularity began to wane. I remember Derek Cotton referring to their style as “popcorn music” and he was no longer a fan. It just wasn’t cool. All of a sudden, lots of the other students were saying similar things and the ABBA records quickly became music from a past era. Initially I just followed the crowd but after a while I got thinking about this. I still quite liked to hear the ABBA music, even if nobody else did. This then got me thinking about a wider question, why do we sometimes think and act as a herd? Why don’t we think for ourselves and act as we wish? This is not an easy question to answer but I do know that I still like the music of ABBA. I have also seen ABBA the movie, ABBA the musical and I have also experienced ABBA the dinner. I just like their music.



'ABBA' by ABBA (1975).



'ABBA Arrival' by ABBA (1976).

During all this time, I had continued growing slowly and in the 7th form I had finally started catching up with everyone else. I was certainly not tall but I was probably reaching an average for my age group. However, despite gaining an increase in my height, my body never filled out, probably because I wasn’t eating a suitable diet (I needed a non-dairy diet). In sport I started to make some progress, but I was not big enough to play any effective part in games like rugby. I did

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1976: Gilligan House, Whanganui Collegiate School.

James Brow, Michael Peacocke, Greg Porter, Colin Hickey, Grahame Hopcraft, David Patterson, Peter Richards, Nigel Thorne, Max Willacy-Kuhn, Duncan Caird, Jeffrey Pugh, Alan Mountfort, Matthew Taylor, Ross Coulthart, Andrew McPhail, Nigel Sibbald, Duncan Fraser, Neil Gray, Michael Renai, Craig Jenkins
Russell Hoffer, J Kutt
Michael Heath-Caldwell, Ross Freebairn, Charles Collins (Rod), Hamish Curtis, Warwick Oakden, Quintin Dodd, Brendon Darby, Michael Godfrey, Nigel Smith, Ian Averill, Robert Gardner, Rick Manning, Noel Bamber, Danny Blankenbyl, David lee-Jones, Peter Broomhead, Christopher Fogg, Michael Blackburne, John Maikuku, Stephen Abernethy
Stephen Le Poidevin, JJ Heath-Caldwell, Peter Abernethy, Derek Cotton, Chris Black, Mark Croker, Jean Martel, Geoff Martel, Jean Morris, Alec McNab, John Freebairn, Paul Desborough, Tim Hardwicke-Smith, Richard Pugh, David Peacocke
Nittish Niranjani, John Gray, John Tannahill, Richard Lay, R Hewitt?, DE Moss, Jack Renouf, Andrew Butchart, Tony Signal, Brett Wilton, Hugh Duncan

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however manage to get the average time in the 400m running race and likewise in some of the swimming races. The one bit of joy that I did have, was winning the diving competition. However, I was so unused to winning and so lacking in confidence, that I actually convinced myself that they had made a mistake with the scoring but looking back I am sure they didn't. I won it and I deserved it.

Towards the end of the year we were all swotting for our Bursary exams and also making choices about which University we would like to go to and what subjects we would like to study. I decided that I would like to try and do Medicine at the University of Otago but I knew this was very competitive. They only took the students with the highest marks but for the first year you actually did science subjects and of course you could continue these if you did not win a place in Medical School.

Back in those days not many students went on to university but if you did, you could decide to do pretty much whatever you wanted (except for certain subjects like Medicine). I filled in the form and posted it off to the University of Otago, to tell them that I had decided to go to their university and that I would be arriving on the 20th of February. I would be doing the science year and if I got high enough marks at the end of that, I would be very grateful for a place at their Medical School. There was no requirement for me to visit the university before hand and there was no requirement for any interviews.

I also chose the University of Otago because it was located down in Dunedin, in the South Island, and I had never been to the South Island before. Years earlier in Stratford, I remembered Pat Steven telling me how much she and her husband Upham had enjoyed their days as students at Otago. It seemed to me that it could be a great adventure. Founded in 1869 it had also had its own stamps on the occasion of its 100th anniversary in 1969.

My time at Collegiate had taught me a lot. Academically I had progressed, but I had also learnt a lot about people and a lot about myself. I was still very immature for my age group and I had very little self-confidence (that was to come much later). The other thing that I had realised was that one of the most important things in life is not to be poor. Making more money than I needed was going to be the overall number one priority in my life. Every morning when I cleaned my teeth, I looked in the mirror at my mouthful of jumbled teeth and my desire to make money became stronger and stronger. If I ever had any children, I was going to make sure that they ended up with straight teeth. For the moment, my only problem was, I had no idea as to how to make money.

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First day cover with stamps commemorating the 100th anniversary of University of Otago (1869–1969)

Many of my experiences at Whanganui Collegiate School were very disagreeable but, looking back, I am very glad that I went there. I gained a very wide range of experiences in my secondary school education. I spent the 3rd form at Stratford High School which was very much a country school and I spent 4th and 5th form at Whanganui High School which was a city school, both state funded institutions. Then for my final two years, 6th and 7th form, I experienced life in a private boarding school and one that had an exceedingly good reputation. In these schools I met a very diverse range of people and I learnt the ability to look at situations from a wide variety of viewpoints and perspectives.

By now the flying school project in Bangladesh had come to an end and Mum and Frank were once more living in our house in Whanganui and Frank was looking for his next job. He had a good break from work for a few months and later in the year he took up a job in Christchurch working for NAC (Air New Zealand) teaching a group of Indonesian students to fly.

I spent my last day at Collegiate but I have absolutely no idea of what I did on that day except that I definitely walked out of the gate for the last time, feeling like a free man (a young man aged 17).

I think I must have spent the summer holiday dossing around home and doing a bit of gardening. I also passed my driver's licence. In the 1970s you could sit your licence as soon as you turned 15. The test consisted of a written exam paper with

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multiple choice answers, then an oral test with 5 questions and then a practical test. I failed the written test by one mark and so had to do it a second time. I also failed the oral test and had to do it again but I managed to pass the practical first time so I was reasonably pleased (after 2011 the requirement changed in New Zealand and the licence is now done in stages from the age of 16).

Another major event at the end of the year, was that on the 14 December, New Zealand officially changed from imperial to metric measurements. Unlike decimalisation, 9 years earlier, when we woke up to a new country that was in dollars and cents instead of pounds and pennies, the change from imperial to metric was not really all that noticeable. We had all been using both imperial and metric measurements, side by side, for quite a few years, and most of us preferred metric because it was easier. Instead of miles we now had kilometres for road distances. For general measurement, chains, yards, feet and inches were replaced by metres, centimetres and millimetres. For area, acres were replaced by hectares (1 hectare = 10,000 square metres) Temperature was now in degrees Celsius rather than degrees Fahrenheit. Weight was in grams and kilograms rather than pounds and ounces. Volume was in litres rather than gallons, quarts and pints.

It was great to see logical legislation to bring in metrication and make numbers much easier. Some people were against it but the majority were very pleased with the change. It is a pity that something similar can't be done to legislate for improvements in the English language but as I mentioned much earlier in my story, the English language and how we use words, is the way it is.

I don't remember much about that summer holiday period except for sheer elation when my exam results came through. Against all the odds, I had passed, and I had got an 'A Bursary'. The way Bursary worked was that the government took the initial test results and then scaled all the marks up or down, so that half of those who sat the exam passed and half failed. This was very horrible for all the students who failed but what it did mean, was that the standard of achievement would be comparable every year. Out of the five subjects, if your score added up to be over 250 you would be awarded with a B Bursary. If your score added up to be over 300 you would be awarded an A Bursary. My score was 323, so not only



1976: *My driving licence.*

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had I won an A Bursary but I had got an exceedingly good mark. I was incredibly pleased and my confidence gained a good boost. My overall level of confidence was still fairly low but at least it was now on the way up.

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In February I packed my bag and caught a plane down to Dunedin. On the flight, by chance, there happened to be another student who I had known at Whanganui High School and who was now also on his way to Otago University. He was not someone who I had known well but it was great meeting him again. As it turned out, he was accompanied by his father who was going down on business and he had arranged for a hire car, so they gave me a lift from the airport into Dunedin and dropped me at the Arana Hall of Residence.



I have mentioned previously those times of transition that had brought change into my life. Progressing up from Avon Primary School to Stratford High School had been a change. Moving from Stratford to Whanganui had been a big change. My experiences of boarding at Whanganui Collegiate School and spending my holidays in Bangladesh had certainly opened my mind. Now moving to Dunedin and matriculating at the University of Otago was to bring even more change into my life. I like that word 'matriculation'. It means starting at university and joining the team. Looking back, change was always a bit daunting, but it brought with it the opportunity to learn a lot more about life.

Arana probably had about 100 students, all of whom were male. Most of us resided in the main block but there were also some outlying buildings, mostly old houses that had been converted into student accommodation. There was also a gymnasium and a squash court. Board was fully catered, and we had a large communal dining room where we would all sit down together at mealtimes, 3 times a day, 7 days a week. Showers and toilets were communal but there were no complaints about this. I suppose most of us had never heard of ensuite accommodation. There was a laundry room and a hot drying room. All students were expected to wash their own clothes. There were also a number of small kitchen

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facilities where you could make a cup of tea or cook some toast etc.

Most students tended to spend their first year in one of the Halls of Residence. After this, for the second and following years, the popular choice was to get into a small group of 4 or 5 students and share a flat (self-catered). This was referred to as “flating”.

In the 1970s attending university was free. There were no student loans. All the tuition fees were paid for by the government, provided you had passed your exams at secondary school. The government paid you an allowance of \$25 per week and this covered the cost of your board and meals. If you had a B bursary then you got an extra \$100 per year and if you had an A bursary, you got an extra \$50 a year on top of that. What this meant, was that we were all financially cared for by the state. Some students took on part-time jobs during term time, but most just got a job in the summer holidays. Either way, the extra money was very useful.

Looking back, there must have been students with rich parents and students with poor parents but this was not all that noticeable. Very few students had cars,



University of Otago. Beautiful old stone buildings in delightful landscaping (picture taken in 2005).

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and if they did, it was often because they had taken a few years off previously and earned some good money. I think rich parents probably did not give their children much extra, as they realised it was better to let them stand on their own two feet.

One thing that was very noticeable was the total lack of Maori students. This did seem strange and was talked about from time to time. We did have a diverse range of students, a lot from Malaysia and Singapore, also quite a few New Zealanders with Indian and Chinese backgrounds but no Maori. I understand that this has now all changed and there are lots of students with Maori backgrounds and presumably the mix of students going to university is now very much aligned with the mix of people across the country.

For me, arriving at the University of Otago really was like arriving at paradise. Dunedin was a lovely city and the university was very much at the centre of it. Around the university campus there were lots of amazing old stone buildings, all set in beautifully landscaped grounds and through the middle ran the Leith River. A short 15 minute walk away, was the middle of town, an area called “The Octagon” and in the centre a statue of the poet Robert Burns. The city had been founded in 1848 by Scottish settlers and although I didn’t realise it at the time, all the streets had been named after the various streets back in Edinburgh. In fact, Dunedin was the old Gaelic name for Edinburgh. I suppose you could say that the city had a very Scottish feel to it, but for me, having not been to Scotland, I was not to know this either.

On the first day we were all gathered together in the Arana gymnasium, where we were welcomed to the university and we were told that we were in the top 5% of the country’s students. It was lovely that we were all made to feel so special and so welcome. Everyone was a lot older than me. I had always been the youngest at school but here at university, there were quite a few students who had taken one or more years off and so many of them were a good few years more mature than I was. I really did feel young but who cares, I had made it and I was going to get the best out of it.

I was still very shy but I think this was probably a feeling that quite a few of my fellow first year students shared. For me, my previous 2 years boarding at Whanganui Collegiate School, had probably been a good steppingstone. For many of the others, starting at Otago was their first time away from home and I suppose some of them found it to be quite daunting. Over time, I got to know a lot of people and the one thing I do remember was just how nice everyone was. Not necessarily warm and friendly but always pleasant and welcoming. The other

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really nice thing, was that people were calling me 'JJ' again and the silly name of 'Jerry' or 'Chirp' from my Collegiate days was now nothing more than a memory.

I am not sure what the ratio of girls to boys was, but there were definitely more boys than girls. 20 years earlier the boys would have vastly outnumbered the girls but today I understand the girls now outnumber the boys. It is amazing how things do change over time.

Our first week was full of frenzied activity, selecting subjects and buying textbooks. In addition, a lot of events were organised to help us get to know each other, including various parties and a big dance (or hop) held at the Students' Union. One memorable event was a beach party where everyone played volleyball. But this game of volleyball was a bit different. Rather than everyone being totally focused on winning, there was much more of a 'let's have a good time' attitude. The game was very enjoyable. Missing the ball or hitting it completely in the wrong direction was just all part of the fun.

Another thing I remember was the 'chunder mile', organised for all the new Arana Hall students. This was held over at the University Oval at Logan Park, which was a grassed area with a 400m running track marked out. We were all told that it was compulsory, so we duly appeared at the requested time. The event was supposed to be a race, that consisted of drinking some beer (served up in a potty), eating a cold meat pie, and then running around the 400m circuit as fast as you could go. I am not sure why it was called the 'chunder mile' as it was only one circuit of the track and therefore the total distance was no more than 400m.

There wasn't enough space for us to all start at once, so it was arranged that we would go in batches of about 10 students. The first batch of 10, got the starter's orders and it was go. It really was hilarious seeing these guys trying to consume the pie and the beer as fast as they could; chump, chump, chump and slurp, slurp, slurp followed by a few more chumps and a few more slurps. It really did seem to take ages. Eventually they took off around the track and sure enough, for one of the guys it was all too much. He suddenly stopped, right next to a large bin that had been specially put there for what was about to come. He leant over the bin, dropped his jaw and had a really good 'chunder' (he vomited). What was then quite incredible, was that he continued to run, and did in fact finish the race. He hadn't won, but if there was any gold stars for this, he should have been awarded 5.

The next batch of 10 participants stepped forward ready to start their race, but just as they were collecting their pies from the pie trolley, one of them threw his pie at one of the other guys. All of a sudden, absolute pandemonium broke out. There

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was a massive surge of people from all directions converging on the pie trolley and grabbing as many pies as they could. Then for a brief moment, the sky was alive with flying pies. It was an incredibly sight, total mayhem. People running in all directions, some throwing pies, some being hit by pies. There were also a few trying to catch the pies and then throw them again. Within a few minutes all those pies had been very well used and they were all disintegrated into lots of pieces, a crust here and a few bits of meat there. Perhaps even the odd bit of kidney but I am not certain about that.

All of a sudden, there being no pies left, the whole event was over. There was a bit of cleaning up to do which I was happy to help with. It was a great feeling having managed to participate in such a prestigious event without having to eat any pies or drink any beer.

Before long we started our classes. I chose to do Physics, Biology, Chemistry and Mathematics. Each week consisted of various lectures in the large lecture theatres and in between were laboratory sessions for the science subjects and a tutorial for maths. The maths tutorial was held in a classroom with a small group of about 15 of us. Initially I found maths quite difficult, as having been in the lower class at Whanganui Collegiate there were a lot of things that we just had not covered. I was very lucky to meet a lovely girl called Barbara King, who was from Auckland. She could see I was struggling, so she did her best to help me and we spent most of the year sitting together. As it was, I picked the subject up very quickly, so much so, that by the end I was fairly good at solving all the problems. I do remember Barbara saying to me one day; how was it that we had started off the year with her helping me with the questions, but finished the year with me helping her with the questions?

There were lots of lovely girls like Barbara and I would have loved to have had a girlfriend but this didn't happen. When it came to talking to girls, I didn't know what to say and really I just wasn't on their radar screen and most of them were older than me anyway. I have always remembered a lovely girl called Jenny Cook, who was in quite a few of my first-year classes. I think looking back, I liked her and she liked me, but again, I just never knew what to say. I suppose these moments are all part of growing up as we drift through each day, learning as we go along.

A month or so after arriving at Otago, I found out that Rebecca Western (her with the long blonde hair in 2 neat plaits with 2 coloured ribbons, from Avon Primary School) was also at Dunedin, where she had enrolled to do a sports degree. She was staying in a very old house annexed to Carrington Hall and she

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had the most amazing room that was high up in a tower with fantastic views out over the University. It was lovely to meet up with her, but she no longer had her hair in plaits, and like my own hair, it was now much darker. We had both changed a lot in the intervening 5 years, but she was still very beautiful, and she still had her lovely smile. Over the year I often popped in to see her when I was out for a run and she was always polite and always took the time to stop and chat for a while. I remember her favourite LP at the time was 'Silk Degrees' by Boz Scaggs. She wasn't there the next year and I understand that she married her boyfriend Mark Instone (also from Avon Primary School).

My studies continued on through the year, and so did all the various dances and parties. I didn't go to all the dances, but one I do remember was the Arana Hall Ball which was held at Larnach Castle, located out on the Otago Peninsula (possibly New Zealand's only castle). We all travelled out by bus, with everyone dressed up for the occasion. There was a live band in the ball room and the drink was all included in the price. It was magical and we all felt very special. I didn't

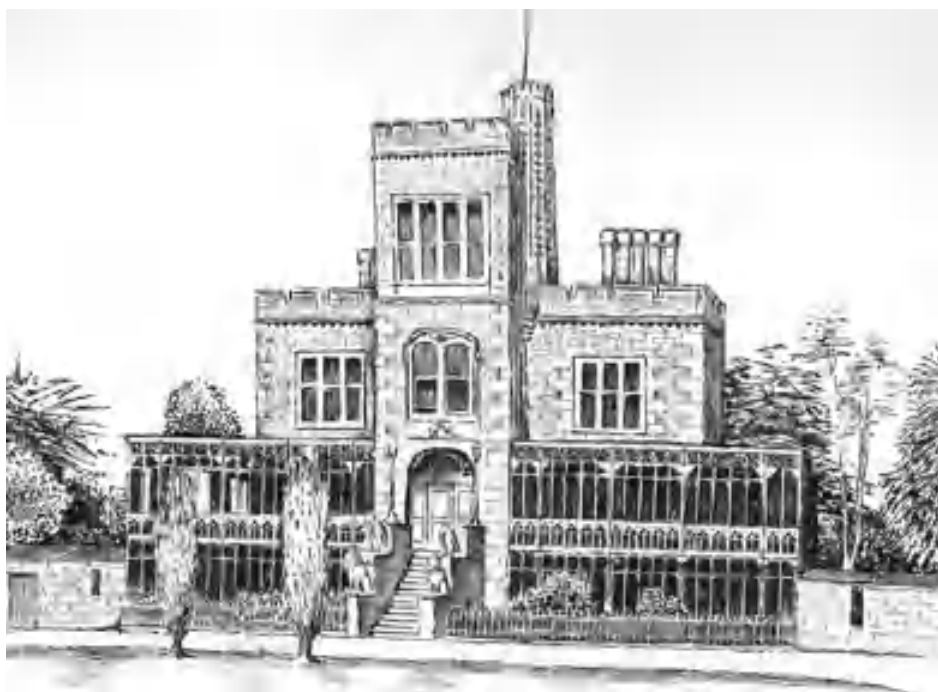


'Silk Degrees' by Boz Scaggs (1976).

drink much as I was not all that keen on alcohol but everyone else certainly made the most of it. It was a very warm night and I remember lots of people out on the lawn late in the evening, some of them being very sick, having a quick 'chunder' in among the flower beds. It really was a lovely evening and we all enjoyed it.

Quite a few of the guys at Arana were into drinking beer in a big way. They would get together in groups and buy a keg of beer and then have a really serious party. Eventually one or more of them, would have drunk far too much and would then be very sick, preferably making it to the toilet for a chunder or going outside for a chuck in the garden. If they disgraced themselves on the premises and made a really big mess, then the rule was that they had to buy another keg for everyone else. This was called paying for a 'shout' or 'my shout' and of course this helped to perpetuate Arana's rather notorious booze sessions.

It was a great atmosphere living at Arana Hall and we all really enjoyed these carefree days but for one of the boys it was to lead to tragic consequences. Jock



Larnach Castle drawn by Michael Heath-Caldwell in 1979.

Hedley was a real party animal and a great guy who got on well with everybody. One afternoon, having had a few drinks, he got on a motorbike without a helmet, went off at high speed and had a fatal crash. Everyone was devastated. We just couldn't believe it. One day he was there and the next day he was gone. We had a memorial service for him in the gymnasium attended by all the students. It was a very sad day.

I went home in the May holidays and my mother had found a job for me joining a small gang of scrub cutters, working up in the hills on a remote sheep station. I only did it for 3 weeks but I thoroughly enjoyed it. I suppose it was my first real job. We spent the 3 weeks camped in the shearing quarters and each day we would walk up and down the steep hills chopping down all the young trees that had sprouted up in the grass. This was nature trying to claim back the land and change it into bush again but of course the farmer needed grass for his sheep to graze, hence the need for us to get out and push the balance of nature more towards the farmer's liking.

The other thing I remember about this job was the food. The farmer supplied us with lamb carcasses or more accurately "a side of lamb". We would then take the

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side of lamb out into the woodshed and chop it into three sections. The boss had a very big roasting dish and before we left in the morning, we would put a large section of lamb into the roasting dish, surround it by vegetables and then put it in the oven on slow heat. When we got back at the end of the long day, the smell of cooked food was just wonderful. We stacked as much as we could fit on our plates and we ate it all. Whenever I have roast lamb for dinner, it always conjures up memories of my time scrub cutting.

As I mentioned, life at Arana Hall was great. It really was a case of good food and good company but I do remember one occasion when we had a massive food fight in the dining room. All of a sudden, the air was full of boiled potatoes flying in all directions and at the same time everyone was hitting the floor looking for shelter under their tables. I must of course say that looking back I was not at all proud of this moment, but it was extremely enjoyable. In fact, some of the potato was not cleaned up very satisfactorily and a week later the kitchen failed on a food hygiene inspection and had to be closed down for a few days while they sorted it out.

At university I didn't watch TV very often, so I can't remember much about political events going on around the world. One significant event for the country this year was the government declaring that our economic zone (fishing area) would be increased from 12 nautical miles to 200 nautical miles. This meant that all the fish in an area a bit over 4,000,000 sq.km were now owned by New Zealand.



First day cover with stamps marking the declaration of New Zealand's 200 mile limit (issued 1978).

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The magnitude of this was so large that the following year the Post Office issued a set of 5 stamps including one with a map to show us how big New Zealand had suddenly become.

1977 was also the year that the first 'Star Wars' movie was released. I remember everyone talking about it but I don't think I saw it until a few years later.

Exams were held over October and November and during this period, completely unconnected, Guy Fawkes fireworks were available in the shops. Exams and fireworks were probably not going to be a good combination. Some of the students had been buying skyrockets and the other thing that happened at this time was that someone pinched all the vacuum cleaner tubes from matron's store-room. The cleaning ladies were not very happy about this. The combination of students, skyrockets and now vacuum cleaner tubes (rocket launchers) became rather explosive. Over the weekend there was a massive skyrocket war between the main building and some of the adjacent accommodation houses. Lots of the glass windows were smashed.

I was away at the time, but I remember seeing this spectacular event being reported on TV. Mr Dennison the Hall Warden was interviewed in the middle of the mayhem. He was asked if he had the situation under control, and just as he was answering the question, one of the students threw a bucket of water from one of the upper floors. You didn't actually see the bucket on the TV screen but what you did see was Mr Dennison, mid-sentence, being absolutely drenched. I felt very sorry for him. He got a lot of abuse from the residents that he did not deserve, as he was a nice guy really.

Another thing that happened around this time was that some of the residents started throwing the china dinner plates as though they were frisbees, which they obviously weren't. This progressed on to a lot of the hall china being thrown around and broken. This was horrible really as it was nothing more than completely unwarranted vandalism.

Sadly, after the year had come to a close, we did not get our deposits back, as the damage to all the windows was quite extensive and all the broken china had to be replaced. Someone had to pay for it, and it was a case of collective responsibility. We all had to foot the bill.

If you ever get the chance, do watch the film 'National Lampoon's Animal House' (1978). It is an American comedy film that was produced around this time on a tight budget. Most of the actors were unknown and the story is all about a misfit group of male students who challenge the authority of the dean of Faber

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1977: *The young gentlemen of Arana Hall of Residence, students of University of Otago.*

College in the great USA (all pure fiction). It is one of the few films that I have seen more than once, and it reminded me a lot of the humorous side of my time at the Arana Hall of Residence.

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At the end of the year I joined the Territorial Army (4th Otago Southland Battalion, of the Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment) and reported to the Burnham Military Camp for 12 weeks of training over the holidays. Some people ask me; why did I decide to join the Territorials? I suppose the answer was that there were quite a few students who had enlisted and they all spoke very favourably of it. It was a good job for the summer holiday, as it fitted in perfectly with the dates. The money was reasonable but most of all, the experience of running around in the bush and firing guns just sounded great.

Although looking back I was totally unsuited for the army, I absolutely loved it. For the first two weeks at Burnham we were kept going nonstop from 5.00am in the morning until 12.00pm midnight. Every night when I put my head on my pillow,



New Zealand Army, 4 cent stamp (issued 1968)

I instantly went to sleep. For some people it was just too much and each morning on parade, a small group would double off to the side, sign their exit papers, hand back their kit and we never saw them again.

At Burnham we were given excellent food, the best I had ever had. Three meals a day with bacon and eggs in the morning, meat and veg for lunch and more meat and veg for dinner. There was a wide range and I could choose what I wanted. I probably consumed a lot less dairy and as a result most of the time I felt as fit as a fiddle.

We had to clean our rifles and polish our shoes. We also learnt to iron our shirts and then hang them in our wardrobe with each one facing to the left (I still do this). Everything had to be perfect. There were regular inspections and the corporals, the sergeant and the entire chain of management above them, spent all their time screaming their heads off at us. Initially this was very unsettling but of course after a while we all got used to it.

The other thing we all had to have was short hair. I had always had long hair, so this was quite a change for me. Anyway, we were in the army now, so most of

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us opted to have a very short 'crew cut'. One of the corporals had a set of electric clippers and with the attachment in place it was very quick to do a once over leaving a perfect crop with a uniform hair length of 1cm. With hair this short, it was a funny feeling to realise that one's hair was all literally standing on end. The really great thing about it, was that it was incredibly quick to wash in the shower and fast to dry. Much more practical than long hair and I have had relatively short hair ever since.

All the training staff were soldiers who had seen active service in the Vietnam War (1964–1972) and our platoon sergeant, who must have been in his late 40s, had also been involved the Korean War (1950–1953) and the Brunei Conflict (1962–1963). These guys were all serious people. Initially, to me, it all seemed a bit unreal, as I thought the chances of New Zealand being involved in another war were pretty unlikely, but one of the other guys on the course said to me that we all needed to pretend that it was serious stuff, otherwise we would not really get much out of it. He was right. By taking it all seriously, I think I learnt far more than I otherwise would have.

We all lived in the barracks and next to my bed space was Doug Wilson who I got to know quite well. While I was only 18, Doug was about 10 years older and was one of the people that you look back and remember. He was a lawyer who had spent a couple of years in Wellington, working for the government at Parliament. He had got to know many of the politicians of the time and while everybody assumes that these public leaders are all fairly bright people, he told me that he found it to be far from the case. The MPs certainly all had very good presentation skills and some of them were very smart but some were not. In fact he told me that when it came to making important decisions, it was fairly obvious that some of the MPs were hopeless and should never have been put in a position of responsibility.

For me this was very enlightening and over my working life I have sometimes found this to be the case. Just because someone presents themselves well, never assume that they really do know what they are talking about. Sometimes they will get things very wrong.

Most of our training took place at Burnham but we also spent a few days at Tekapo which was 230km away to the southwest. This was open country and we had an exercise where we had to dig holes and then sleep overnight in them. Spending the whole afternoon digging a very large hole was hard work but I really enjoyed it. I did however feel very sorry for the soldier who was next to me because when he had dug halfway down, he hit a gigantic rock. He tried to

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dig around it but it was really huge. In the end he had no choice but to just fill the hole in and start a completely new one in a different place. He was pretty despondent but we all lent him a hand later, so by the early evening all our holes were completed.

We had a night attack around midnight which was great fun. The whole scene was lit up with flares floating down from the night sky and everywhere you looked you could see the flash of grenades and rifle fire. We were all issued with 7.62mm SLR rifles and shooting lots of blanks was great fun. The noise was tremendous. We then slept, but only for a few hours, as we had to get up at about 4.00am and 'stand to' ready for dawn. We were then attacked again by the enemy, just as the daylight was starting to come up.

I also remember going out on a night exercise. As everything was very dark (no torches) the platoon commander at one stage was rather uncertain about where we were. I heard his boss on the radio say "are you lost? – over". He paused momentarily and then clicked the talk button and confidently replied: "negative – we are experiencing navigational difficulties – over and out".

The other trip we did, was to Lake Hochstetter, which was about 230km away, over on the West Coast, near Greymouth. This area was all dense native forest and at night everything really was pitch black. We camped in the bush and swam in the lake which was really quite idyllic. Just imagine, other people would pay money to be able to camp at a place like this and here we were, actually being paid to be there.

This was also where we were going to be practising helicopter embarkation and disembarkation but only if the weather was suitable. None of us had ever been in a helicopter before, so we were all looking forward to it and of course hoping for good weather. On the day we awoke in the morning to see sun and clear blue skies. Perfect weather. We couldn't believe it when later that morning we were told that the helicopter was cancelled due to fog at Christchurch airport. Bother! Better luck next time.

In the army we were given lots of kit and some of this stuff was really useful for camping. You could buy all this ex-army gear from the Army Surplus Store but a better way was just to officially 'lose' it on exercise and then pay the nominal fine. This was very widely accepted and everyone did it.

One of our fellow recruits was a very comical guy who had the surname of Ching. I can't remember what his first name was, as we all just called him Ching. If he had been Chinese, I suppose there would have been nothing unusual about

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his name, but his parents were clearly Anglo-Saxon and he told us that they had originated from England. He was short and stumpy, wore highly magnifying spectacles and he wore a size 14 boot. This was such a large boot size that the army had to order a special pair for him.

Ching was not a highly intelligent person but he was very genuine and got on with everyone really well. I am not sure why, but he decided that he would like to buy a mosquito net. He spoke to the corporal who advised him the best thing to do was to declare it 'lost' at the end of the exercise. Ching felt very uncomfortable about this, as he was not the sort of person who would tell white lies but in the end he managed to understand how the system worked, so all should have been fine.

At the end of the exercise we were lined up in our platoons and the sergeant major went along the lines asking everyone to report any losses. In each case he wrote down the soldier's name and the item concerned. There were quite a few losses being reported and the sergeant major started to get a bit grumpy. I suppose he thought he had better things to do with his time, rather than writing out a long list of lost items. When he got to Ching he asked in his rather gruff voice, "what have you lost Private Ching?" Ching replied, "My mosquito net, sergeant major." The sergeant major's eyebrows rose in disbelief and he bellowed, "how the fuck did you manage to lose a mosquito net?" Ching was not a fast thinker and had not anticipated the question, so he immediately stuttered and then managed to mumble, "It was very difficult, sergeant major." At this point, everyone burst out in laughter. This was the army and laughing in the presence of the sergeant major was not done but we just couldn't hold ourselves. Anyway, Ching's loss was duly noted by the sergeant major and later that week he had to pay \$5 for his mosquito net. I hope he got good use from it over the following years.

One other memory I have was participating in a 2 mile running race. We all ran up the road as fast as we could and then at the 1 mile mark we turned around and ran back. As I made the turn, I was actually second and as I started back, I saw all the faces of everyone who was behind. All my mates cheered me on and I felt myself speed up even more. I overtook the guy in front and I won (10 minutes and 35 seconds). There were over 100 people in that race and I had beaten every single one of them. I felt tired out, but the joy of winning was just fantastic. This was the sheer exhilaration that I had never been able to experience during all my time at school. It made me realise even more, how much fun all the bigger boys at school had been able to enjoy, while I had had to just sit on the side-line.

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The 12 week military training finished with the Battle Efficiency test (BE). Fully laden with a pack and webbing, wearing our boots and carrying our rifles we had to march and jog 10 miles in 2 hours and 10 minutes (13 minutes per mile). We then had to pick up and carry another soldier, complete with all our kit, a distance of 100m. Then jump a 6 ft ditch and climb over a 6 ft wall. To finish off, we were taken down to the firing range where we had to shoot live rounds at a target. This really was serious stuff and it was a great feeling to have completed it.

I should say something here about 'teamwork'. In the army you hear the phrase teamwork again and again. We were all taught that to succeed you need to work as a team and as a team you need to look after each other. In any team there are strong people and less strong people, but the key thing is to recognise that everyone is different, and each individual will contribute something. Competition is strong but when you are in a challenging situation, the key thing is to move forward together and cross the line together.

I learnt a lot during my 12 weeks army training and at the end of the period my level of fitness was exceptionally good. Someone had once said to me that having a fit body gives you a fit brain. I am sure that being fit does help your brain to be a bit sharper but most of all being fit just makes you feel great. From that time on, I have always run regularly and have kept myself in good shape.



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My first year exam results came through and I had passed everything but not with high enough marks to get into Medical School. Again my results had been erratic. In Chemistry, which was my best subject, I had not got a high mark but in Physics I had done very well. I enrolled to do a 4 year degree leading to a BSc(hons) in Physics but later in the year I changed my mind and opted to just do a 3 year degree and get a BSc without the (hons). I also thought about studying Economics but I quickly dropped the idea as I realised I needed to concentrate on Physics and Maths.

In this, my second year at University, I went “flattening” with 4 other students: Jane Reddish, Judith O’Malley, Allan McRae and Murray Simpson. I had not known them very well before hand, in fact I had not even met Jane and Judith, but as it turned out, we all got on really well. Murray and Allan were a year older than me, but Judith and Jane were in my year group. They were all doing accountancy and Allan, who was a very smart cookie, was doing a double degree of law and accountancy.

Our “flat” was at 110 Clyde Street and it was one of two houses built at the same time, probably back in the 1920s, with the layout of each property being a mirror image of the other. At the back was a communal area which was in effect shared by both houses. In the house next door were Barbara May, Colleen McElrea, Barry Wells, Ewan Soper and Stuart McNamara. Really we had a group of 10 and mostly we all got on very well, so much so, the following year Jane married Stuart and shortly afterwards Judith married Ewan.

In our flat, we each had one night a week, when we would take it in turn to cook a meal. Allan always cooked meatballs and I always cooked roast lamb. Murray liked cooking casseroles but the girls were a bit more adventurous and over the year cooked us quite a range of delicious meals. Over dinner we would sit and chat about all sorts of stuff. It was excellent with everyone having different opinions. Murray, Allan and Judith were great but it was Jane who I liked the most. Like me, she was also quite young, and so we had a sort of affinity but she already had a

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Our flat at 110 Clyde St, located very central to the University (picture taken in 2005).

boyfriend, so nothing happened between us.

Allan has reminded me that the meals were pretty variable especially in the early days. On one occasion I burnt the frying pan so badly that I had to take it outside for a good scrub. Allan had gone to a lot of trouble to have special training from his mother and he feels that his masterpiece of meatballs (flavoured with



1978: Inside our flat at 110 Clyde St. JJ and Jane.

tomato sauce), potatoes and cabbage, was the first meal that wasn't burned and was reasonably edible. I remember he was always very keen on tomato sauce, so we used to buy it in big bottles.

When I cooked my roast lamb speciality, I used to add all the vegetables into the roasting dish, the wider the variety the better. For me, vegetables roasted in the lamb fat were absolutely delicious but there was one

exception and that was one day when I roasted some brussel sprouts. When I served it up I remember that Allan did not eat his.

I should mention here that electronics had been a casual hobby of mine for quite a few years and it was also part of the Physics curriculum. In my younger days my interest had mainly consisted of dismantling radios but while I had been boarding at Collegiate I had actually built a stereo hi-fi amplifier, which together with a turntable and homebuilt speakers, I was able to use to play records.

Hi-fi systems and records were a big thing in the 1970s and they were very expensive. Some of the students who had taken a working break for a year and earned some money, often had fantastic hi-fi systems, consisting of a whole rack of separate items and 2 massive speakers. The whole system would look really impressive stacked up in the corner of the room. My hi-fi was not in this league but it was good enough and I also had a tape deck on which we could play compact cassettes (CDs weren't invented until 1982).

Records cost about \$6 each and this was a lot of money. I probably only had half a dozen record albums. In Whanganui I had started with 'I Don't Know



1978: The back of our flat at 110 Clyde St. Trevor (lying down), JJ, Jane, Judith, Allan, Colleen (picture taken by Murray).

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How To Love Him' by Helen Ready (1971), 'Ringo' by Ringo Starr (1973) and 'Yellow Brick Road' by Elton John (1973). I had since added 'The Dark Side of the Moon' by Pink Floyd (1973), 'Endless Flight' by Leo Sayer (1976) and 'Rumours' by Fleetwood Mac (1977).



'Endless Flight' by Leo Sayer (1976).



'Rumours' by Fleetwood Mac (1977).

The rest of my music was on compact cassette tapes, many of which were pirate copies that I had recorded myself after borrowing records from friends. Compact cassettes were great, in that they were cheap, but the sound quality was pretty horrible, as there was this constant hissing sound in the background. The other inconvenient thing about them, was that if you wanted to skip one of the songs, you had to click fast forward and then guess as to the best place to click stop, to try and find the beginning of the next track. If you were really unlucky, the fast forward or fast rewind would all of a sudden come to a crunching halt and upon investigation you would find that the tape had got all screwed up inside the mechanics of your cassette player and everything was now a total wreck. You then had to spend the next half hour carefully trying to unravel it all.

During 1978 we started to see clips of popular songs being performed by the various artists on the TV. Our TV set was still black and white but nevertheless, having the experience of hearing and seeing an artist's performance was fantastic. Kate Bush released her song 'Wuthering Heights' and I remember seeing her doing these amazing cartwheels in a long white dress (I assume it was white as that was the colour of it on our black and white television set). How she could do a cartwheel and still sing while she was momentarily upside down was completely

beyond me, but it was fantastic. I had to have the record, so I went down into town and splashed out another \$6 buying her album 'The Kick Inside' (1978). We were then all able to hear Kate Bush in our living room for the rest of the year.



'The Kick Inside' by Kate Bush (1978).

Jane and Judith liked the album 'Bat Out Of Hell' by Meatloaf (1977) which had an incredibly fast moving rhythm. Allan liked: The Beatles, Roy Orbison, Neil Diamond, Neil Young, Split Enz and ABBA. There were lots of fantastic albums and we would have loved to have owned all of them. Other popular artists included: Simon & Garfunkel, Diana Ross, Joni Mitchell, Eric Clapton, Barclay James Harvest, Bachman-Turner Overdrive, The Eagles, Supertramp, Pink Floyd, Steely Dan, 10cc, Genesis, Manfred Mann's Earth Band, Boz Scaggs, Steve Winwood, Boston, Blondie, Dire Straits, Gerry Rafferty, Joan Armatrading, The Alan Parsons Project, ... etc.

Of course, at university, we could not spend all our time listening to music. We continued to attend lectures in the day and in the evening most of us walked across to the library to do our study. The library was heated so that was certainly an attraction but although you were not allowed to talk or make any noise, it always had a sociable atmosphere and it was a great place to meet up with friends.

The pub was also a popular place for socialising but the drinking age in New Zealand was 20 and I had not yet reached that age of ultimate responsibility. I did go in a few times but I never felt comfortable as the police used to make regular visits and arrest any students who looked underage and I definitely looked underage. When it came to a social life, I always felt a bit like I was on the outside.

Having completed the army basic training course, at Burnham over the holidays, I was now attached to the 4th Otago Southland Infantry Battalion. We shared a large drill hall with the various other army units that were based in the area. I was in the signals platoon, which was a small group of people who looked after all the radio communications equipment. Our standard radio (AN/PRC-77) was the size of small brief case and was quite heavy (6.2 kg). This technology has of course now been completely superseded but back in 1978 this really was something special as



'After the Gold Rush' by Neil Young (1970).



'Bridge Over Troubled Water' by Simon & Garfunkel (1970).



'Trespass' by Genesis (1970)



'Everyone Is Everybody Else' by Barclay James Harvest (1974).



'Not Fragile' by Bachman-Turner Overdrive (1974).



'Serenade' by Neil Diamond (1974).



'The Hissing Of Summer Lawns'
by Joni Mitchell (1975).



'The Roaring Silence'
by Manfred Mann's Earth Band (1976).



'How Dare You' by 10cc (1976).



'Boston' by Boston (1976).



'The Royal Scam' by Steely Dan (1976).



'An Evening With Diana Ross'
by Diana Ross (1977).



'Bat Out Of Hell' by Meatloaf (1977).



'Animals' by Pink Floyd (1977).



'Chicago XI' by Chicago (1977).



'Steve Winwood' by Steve Winwood (1977).



'Deceptive Bends' by 10cc (1977).



'Even In The Quietest Moments' by Supertramp (1977).



'City to City' by Gerry Rafferty (1978).



'Parallel Lines' by Blondie (1978).



'Dire Straits' by Dire Straits (1978).



'And Then There Were Three' by Genesis (1978).



'To The Limit' by Joan Armatrading (1978).



'Pyramid' by The Alan Parsons Project (1978).

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it used transistor technology rather than valves. The unit covered the frequency range from 30 to 75 MHz, with an output power of 2W and had a range of about 8 km. Playing with these was great fun and I learnt a lot about radio communications which, as it turned out later, was to prove very useful to me.

From here on, being in the Territorial Army, consisted of attending drill night for a few hours on Tuesday evenings and then once a month or so, we would have a weekend exercise. These were all very enjoyable and at the same time we got paid money, which made it even better.

I had a bad experience with alcohol after one of these weekend exercises. In general, I drank very little but on this particular occasion, after we had completed cleaning up all the gear and getting it packed away, a small group of us met up in the army mess for a few drinks. I drank more than I should have, after which one of the other guys gave me a glass of straight vodka and told me it was water. Of course, I did realise that it was vodka but I drank it anyway. Very silly. A few moments later I crashed onto the floor and vomited. It was a pretty horrible thing to do to me but I suppose at least they cleared up the mess and took me home. Jane and Judith thought it was hilarious and talked about it for quite a few days afterwards. I suppose it was all part of growing up, learning from my mistakes, being more wary of other people and being more careful in the future.

Mid-year I was very lucky to get the opportunity to go on a jungle warfare training exercise in Fiji. Unfortunately this was during term time, so it rather mucked up my lectures but I did a lot of work in the holidays to make sure I did not fall too much behind. We flew to Fiji in a Royal NZ Airforce Hercules C130. This was very different from flying with a normal airline. There were none of the comfortable airline seats. Instead we sat in simple webbing seats along the side of the aircraft and in the middle we had all our stores stacked up to last the three weeks. We were all dressed in our army gear complete with rifle between our knees. It felt quite surreal.

Living in a tropical jungle was fantastic personality building stuff and I enjoyed every minute of it. One particular memory was doing a night exercise with an attack the following



One dollar note from Fiji.

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morning, the enemy being in hiding up on top of a hill. At daybreak the attack started and for about 10 minutes there was hell and mayhem with bullets and grenades going off left right and centre (all blanks of course, so very safe). At the end of this tremendous fire fight everything suddenly came to a halt when the enemy called up on our radio and told us that we had been attacking the wrong hill. As it turned out, we had spent the 10 minutes shooting at the other half of our own rifle company. Afterwards I realised that in real wars most people probably have very little idea of what is really going on around them.

Before returning home, we had a few days off to visit the duty-free shops in Suva. In those days there were heavy import taxes on goods being imported into New Zealand but travellers returning were given a duty-free allowance. This meant that within the allowance you could bring some stuff back and you did not have to pay duty on it. I bought a portable cassette player and a watch, both of which, I in effect got for half price (half what it would have cost me in NZ).



ASCO Clockwork, 17 Jewels, 1967. Seiko Digital, Quartz LC, 1978.

As I mentioned previously, I got my first watch back in 1967 when I was 8 years old and this was a clockwork watch which required winding up every few days. Once a month I had to check my watch against the time given on the radio or the TV. This was not a great problem as we all just accepted that synchronizing

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our watches once a month was part of the routine. Digital watches had started appearing in 1976 and initially they had LED displays (light emitting diode) which showed red illuminated digits. These watches were an amazing advance in technology as they contained a quartz crystal oscillator which was incredibly accurate and would keep good time over a whole year without needing to be corrected. The only downside with these LED watches was that they were very expensive and the battery had to be replaced every 3 months.

By 1978 digital watch technology had advanced quite quickly and the latest products had LCD displays (liquid crystal display) which used very little energy and so the battery would last for a few years. I bought a Seiko (made in Japan) with all sorts of amazing functions. In addition to telling me the time, it also told me the day of the week, the date and month. It also had a stopwatch, a countdown alarm and a 24 hour wake up alarm. This was absolutely incredible. On top of this, the watch was very well built and I think only cost a bit over \$100. By today's standards this may sound very expensive but back then this really was a bargain even if it was expensive.

Shortly after we returned from Fiji, it was found that some of the soldiers had picked up a fairly nasty tropical bug and they were rushed off to hospital. We all then had to be tested but I didn't get ill, so luckily no problem for me.

1978 was the year that the movie 'Saturday Night Fever' came out starring John Travolta and his two ladies Karen Lynn Gorney and Donna Pescow. I didn't go to the cinema very often but I did see this film and absolutely loved the music



1978: The dance drama film
'Saturday Night Fever'.



1978: The musical romantic comedy film
'Grease'.

and dancing sequences. Shortly afterwards we also had the musical 'Grease', again starring John Travolta but this time playing opposite Olivia Newton-John or as we used to call her 'Olivia Neutron Bomb'.

I can't remember much about what was on the news but this was the year that the Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin made a peace agreement at Camp David, witnessed by the American President Jimmy Carter.

I was by now less active at collecting stamps but I do remember that 1978 was the anniversary of the founding of Stratford and the New Zealand Post Office produced a 10c stamp to mark the occasion. The stamp itself, showed a stylized picture of the Stratford war memorial and up above it Mt Taranaki. You are probably thinking why am I bothering to write here about a stamp? Well back in the 1960s and 1970s I really did like postage stamps.

Again at the end of the year, I passed my exams, so all was well and good. In the summer holidays, I managed to get a job working in the Physics Department on a Wind Energy Resource Survey. It had been assumed that eventually the country would start using wind power to generate electricity but one question was; how much energy was there in the wind? To measure the wind, we had wind anemometers on masts at various locations. My role was very much as an odd job person and I got to drive the Land Rover around to some very remote spots.

I should note here that in those days wind anemometers were mechanical devices with 3 small cups that rotated in the wind. These aren't so common now as sensing wind speed is mainly done by solid state devices incorporating laser technology.

One particular mast, was located on the remote Rocklands Station in Central Otago. This mast was probably about 30m tall and had been built for us by the Electricity Power Board but of course it did not have any electricity wires attached to it. There were 6 anemometers in pairs at three different levels and then a wind direction monitor on the top. Climbing this tower was a great challenge.



*10 cent stamp.
Centenary of Stratford
(1878-1978).*

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A bit worrying the first time you did it, but after that you got used to the height. There was no safety harness, so obviously you had to be careful that you didn't fall off. I remember the little platform right at the top, rocked a good few inches, back and forth, even in a light wind. I had a great time being involved with this project and again I learnt a bit more about electronics.



*1978: Tower at Rockland Estate, Central Otago.
Great fun to climb.*

The other thing that happened in the summer holidays was our annual army camp. I went a few days earlier and helped to set the camp up. One job we were given by the sergeant major was to erect two rows of tents, about 10 tents in all. These were the old-style canvas tents with an A frame and a ridge pole. We got stuck in and made great progress banging in about 20 pegs for each tent. When the sergeant major returned later in the afternoon we were very proud to show him the results of all our efforts. He stood at the end of the row and looked down the line and turned to us and said, they aren't lined up in a perfect line. You will need to move them all.

Bother! We then spent the next hour removing all those pegs just so we could move each tent and position them in a perfectly straight line. Then we bashed all those pegs back in again. Ever since then, whenever I do anything where there might be some sort of a line, I always make sure it is a straight line.

The camp lasted about 2 weeks during which time we had various exercises. One was live firing of a grenade launcher. This was great. It was like an oversize shot gun with a really wide barrel. The grenade was fired out of the barrel with a bang! From there it would make an upwards trajectory and then drop down

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on its target. Boom!!! In this case the target was a 44 gallon drum on the side of the hill opposite. We all got one shot each. The reason this was a memorable moment for me, was that my grenade actually landed smack inside the 44 gallon drum and the boom was immensely spectacular as it blew the drum to pieces. Everybody was very impressed.

It was also around this time that two girls joined our signals platoon. They were twins, Jools and Lynda Topp and were about a year older than me. They were a very happy pair and on a couple of occasions they played their guitars and we had a few good sing songs. They had also been playing in some of the pubs around Dunedin and I remember Jools telling me that they had decided to move to Auckland because if you wanted to make a name for yourself in the music business then Auckland was where all the action was. I understand that their musical careers really did take off after that and they have done very well.



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Eventually the summer was over and it was time to head back to university for my third and final year, and we changed flats, moving to 83 Queen Street. Murray, Allan and myself stayed together but Jane and Judith were replaced with Jane Wilson and Sue Dewes. This last year was easy for me as I had by now completed most of my degree and I just needed to pass another two subjects (Physics and Maths).

Study at university went well throughout the year with no major problems. I went to my lectures in the day, lab sessions in the afternoon and most evenings I continued going to the library and doing all my assignments. There were the



Our flat at 83 Queen St. About 5 minutes walk to the centre of the University (picture taken in 2005).

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various balls organised by the Halls of Residence and a few of us got together and attended the Arana Ball once more. My memory is that this one was not held at Larnoch Castle but instead was held in a local hotel. I can't remember much about it but we have a photo.



1979: Arana Hall Union Ball. Left to right: ????, JJ Heath-Caldwell, Diane Grieves, Murray Simpson, Jackie Harrison, Allan McRae, Martin Rudduck, ????

Another job that I had towards the end of a year was washing dishes in a restaurant. This might not be the sort of job that most people would want to take on, but it was a job and it paid money. This might sound a bit weird but as it turned out, I really loved it. It was great to work with such a nice group of people and I often think of it when I'm washing my own dishes in the kitchen. The restaurant was up on the hill and it was run by a Hungarian lady who must have been in her late 50s if not her early 60s. I think her name was Marina. She was a real character and loved to do things like getting dressed up as Father Christmas. In addition to supplying food to the guests she did an exceptionally good job keeping them entertained.

There were a lot of dishes to sort out each evening. As soon as the first course was completed, the dirty dishes started to come in and I had to work like the blazes to get them all cleaned and dried, as some of these items were needed later

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for dessert. Then the main dishes came and eventually they were followed by the dessert items. In between there was all the cooking pots to do as well.

One of Marina's specialities was 'Scallops Mornay' but there were no scallops, as they were very expensive. This wonderful dish was made by dropping some cooked fish into an old scallop shell and covering it with some grated cheese. This was then toasted under a grill and before it was served up, a small piece of parsley was added to top it off. Most of the guests in the restaurant had already started drinking and with slightly muddled minds and dark lighting, none of them ever knew any different.

Washing up all the scallop shells was usually left until last as these were very tricky to get clean. The shape of the shell meant that getting the encrusted cheese out of every little indentation took a lot of scrubbing especially around the edges where the cheese had usually burnt in. I remember late one evening, a few of the guests suddenly appeared in the kitchen. They were very drunk and had come in to thank us all for such an excellent meal. One of the lady guests spent some time telling Marina how much they had all enjoyed the scallops and asked her if she would let her know where in Dunedin she could source such delicious shellfish. I always remember Marina's face. She hesitated very slightly but then quickly smiled, lightly touched the side of her nose with her forefinger and said it was a very secret supply and she could not possibly divulge it. We all smiled.

Sometimes at the end of the evening there was a bit of roast chicken or cake left over, in which case I could take some of it back to the flat. This was great but I never took any Scallop Mornay home with me. In my mind I thought it probably wasn't very hygienic reusing those old shells as you could never really get them completely clean.

After my final evening working there, Marina gave me a little envelope with a thank you card and a five dollar note and wished me well for the future. One of the other ladies told me afterwards that I had made a very good impression and that it was very rare for Marina to give anyone a going away present. One of the others then chipped in and said, let's face it, before JJ came along Marina had needed three girls to get all those dishes washed up. Apparently, I had saved her a fair bit of cash.

By now I was thinking about what I was going to do for a career, and I decided that I would like to join the army full time. I attended an officer selection course at Burnham Camp, but I failed to be selected and so I felt quite devastated. The course consisted of a series of team exercises, doing all sorts of complicated

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tasks. These activities were all very challenging and lots of the candidates ran around like headless chickens trying to find a solution. I tended to just sit there thinking and trying to figure out how to solve the problem but these were problems that could not be solved all that easily. In fact everyone running around trying things was the right approach, as in most cases, a solution eventually emerged.

The candidates that were chosen were the people who ran around and made things happen. I was not one of them. I left feeling sad and dejected. However, there is that saying that “every cloud has a silver lining”.

The following week I managed to find a psychology book in the library which was all about officer selection and personality traits. Reading this book was to be a real game changer for me. The selection process was very involved. The first part of the selection process was to look at the candidate’s background and upbringing. Top of the list; was there any family history of schizophrenia? If your father had schizophrenia, then there was a 10% chance that you would also get it. Second on the list was a stable family background with a mother and a father. By now I could see that I was not looking good. Next after that was participation at school in team sports and other team activities. It was becoming very apparent to me that I would never have been seen as a strong candidate. Most of all, they wanted young people who could speak confidently and get on with people well. Not me either. Top of the list they wanted people who made things happen. Well I thought I made things happen but obviously I didn’t.

As I looked back on my childhood, I realised that living out in the country (rather than in town) had meant that I had missed out on a lot of socialising and playing with other children my own age. Being young and small for my age group, I had found myself to be hopeless at sport, so I had played very little of it. Even worse, when I did play sport, I always lost and this had diminished any confidence that I might have ever had. I could see that this was not my fault and it was not anyone else’s fault, it was just the result of a combination of circumstances at the time.

The book went on to say that a person’s personality is pretty much set by the time they reached the age of 20. After that, a person would certainly mature with age but their basic personality would not change very much. Reading this made me feel pretty much done for but I carried on turning the pages. The book did go on to say, that in very rare circumstances, if the young person could break away from his surroundings, experience overseas travel and get engaged in all sorts of social activities with other people, then it would in some cases be possible to develop their personality further.

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It was at that stage that I realised I needed to get away and gain new experiences but most of all I needed experiences where I would meet lots of people. I had to put my past circumstances behind me and I had to start making my own circumstances in the future.

Shortly after that I saw an advert on the Physics notice board about a British company called Marconi Radar, that was interviewing students with a view to employment in the United Kingdom. Two men from the company were going to be in town the following week and would be conducting interviews with prospective candidates. This looked interesting, not because I was super keen to join a radar company on the other side of the world, but I thought going for an interview would be an opportunity to practise my own interview skills. I put my name down and the following week I turned up for my 1 hour interview.

The meeting was warm and friendly and the two guys from Marconi (Alan Horsnell and Ian Donaldson) told me that they were really enjoying their two weeks in New Zealand, during which time they had travelled around and had also visited a few of the other universities. I do remember them telling me that they particularly enjoyed drinking the New Zealand wine. As I was not expecting to be offered a job, I was actually feeling quite relaxed and relatively confident.

We talked about my degree in Physics, which with the exams happening over the following two weeks, was now very near completion. They asked me about my schooling and they were very interested to hear about my time in Bangladesh. I told them a bit about my soldiering activities, my experience using radios in the army and my jungle warfare training in Fiji. They seemed very pleased to hear that I had built my own stereo hifi amplifier but I didn't tell them about my earlier interest in my parent's old valve radio. Before the interview had finished they offered me a job. This was to be in their Field Services Department and my role would be to travel around the world building and maintaining radar systems. I was a bit stunned. My immediate thought was, perhaps these guys had been drinking a bit too much of the New Zealand wine.

I went back to the flat and told Allan that two crazy poms had just offered me a job where I was going to be paid to travel around the world as an electronics engineer working on radar. His reply was "Wow! That is fantastic. Are you going to take it?"

At this initial point, I was rather uncertain. I had not expected a job offer and I had not previously thought of becoming an electronic engineer. After all,

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I had been studying Physics, not Electronic Engineering. I had however been thinking of going to the UK for a one year working holiday as there were various relatives there that I had never met. My sister Hilary was away in the UK at that moment and because my stepfather Frank



British stamp issued in 1967 to celebrate the invention of radar in 1935.

was working for Air New Zealand, I was eligible for a subsidised ticket but only until I turned 21. After thinking it through, I realised I might as well take them up on their offer, as I had absolutely nothing to lose. If the job turned out well then great but if it didn't, I could always resign and look for something else.

The offer in writing came in the post a few weeks later and I immediately wrote back confirming that I would be very pleased to accept the job. I didn't head home straight away though, as Jane had got engaged to another friend of ours, Stewart, and we were all invited to the wedding. I had never been to a wedding before, so it was quite exciting, and I was very much looking forward to it. Murray, Allan and I all got dressed up in our suits with highly polished shoes, ironed shirts and neatly done ties. Everything at the wedding was lovely and of course we knew a lot of the guests, as many of them were our fellow students from Otago.

I remember looking around, Jane was exceedingly beautiful in her wedding dress and everyone looked happy, but for myself, I felt rather sad. I sort of felt that I would really have liked to have married Jane. We had always got on well but nothing more than that. At the reception I was surrounded by lots of fellow students, some of whom I had known for the full three years. Now it was all about to change. Soon we would all be going off in separate directions, to start new challenges and experience new adventures. Very shortly most of the students would be living far away and I would be off to the other side of the world, which was about as far away as anybody could possibly get.

More good music came out this year. Supertramp continued to be super and released their album 'Breakfast in America'. ABBA released 'Voulez-Vous'. Right

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at the end of the year Christopher Cross released 'Christopher Cross' and Pink Floyd released 'The Wall'.

On the TV news this year, Margaret Thatcher became the UK's first woman Prime Minister. This was a tremendous step forward in the women's equality movement but what made it even better was that she had achieved it, not by being a woman, but by being a lot smarter than all the male contenders. A very sad event at the end of this year was the Mount Erebus disaster when an Air New Zealand DC10 aeroplane crashed in Antarctica instantly killing all 257 people on board. New Zealand is a small country and so everyone either knew someone on that flight or had a friend who knew one of those who had sadly lost their lives.



'Breakfast in America' by Supertramp (1979).



'Christopher Cross' by Christopher Cross (1979).

The other thing that happened towards the end of 1979 was that both my grandfathers died in the UK. Cuthbert Heath-Caldwell and Richard Jones. I had hoped to meet them but this was not to be.

I went home and spent Christmas with my family. In January I attended my last annual camp with the Territorial Army and after that I packed my things and set off for the UK.

I was still 20 years old and probably rather young to be leaving university, let alone leaving the country. I was about to start the next great adventure in my life, so I certainly felt excited, but I also felt a degree of trepidation. This was going to be another period of rapid change in my life. A few days later, I boarded a flight, which was to take me from Auckland all the way to London. As I took my seat and

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did my buckle up, there was a slight flutter in my stomach and I felt a little bit like I was an astronaut, about to be blasted off on a space flight to the moon! However, despite my momentary hesitation, I was certain I would survive, and my strong intention was that I would be back home in New Zealand the following year.



NZ Army cap badge (RNZIR) and identification tags.

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The job with Marconi Radar, working as an electronics engineer, was fantastic. I spent two years living in Portsmouth, where I was working on a project to build fast patrol boats for the Egyptian Navy. There were 6 October Class boats (25m) and 6 Ramadan Class boats (45m), all incorporating surveillance and tracking radars made by Marconi. During this time, I also did a 3 month stint working in the Naval Dockyard in Alexandria in Egypt. Eventually that project was scaling down and for my next assignment I was sent to the Sultanate of Oman. I lived for a short time on the desert island of Masirah, out in the Arabian sea, and then for a year I was based in the desert, at an air force base called Thumrait which was very remote. My second year was spent up on the north coast, near Muscat. There were a lot more people up at Muscat and the social life was really great.

During this time, I earned very good money and so I was able to go on lots of holidays and I also bought a small one-bedroom flat in Bournemouth in the UK. The other thing I had started doing was reading books. By now I had realised that knowledge is important and your education does not stop when you leave school.

Although I had strong intentions to return to my homeland of New Zealand, I kept extending my working holiday for an extra year and of course eventually I realised that I was probably never going to move back. No matter how much you plan things, life sometimes just doesn't quite work out in the way you anticipate.

After five years I left Marconi and took a job as an 'applications engineer', based in the UK, working for a German company called Rohde and Schwarz. They made very high specification electronic test equipment, which was used in a wide number of applications involving radio frequency engineering. Training consisted of three months at Chessington in Surrey and we also had 2 weeks in Munich, Germany. As time went on, I began to realise that although the job was advertised as an 'application engineer', it was really a sales job. I finished my training by going on a one day sales course, after which, I was let out on the road. I had a company car and I drove all over the south of England visiting all sorts of interesting people, working on a wide variety of projects, many of which were top secret. I absolutely loved it and everything went very well.

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In 1989 I married Sue and in the following year we bought our present house in Sutton Scotney, near Winchester. The other event that year was when I was flying back from the Channel Islands in a small single engine Piper Cherokee and the engine packed up. This was a very difficult moment, but I am happy to report that myself and my friend the pilot both survived. Sue and I were blessed in 1992 when our son Daniel arrived. He is now grown up and has a very good job as a mechanical design engineer building flood relief gates.

My next job was working for a small company, called Radio Frequency Investigation (RFI), which specialised in electromagnetic compatibility testing (EMC) and radio type approval testing. In addition to all the general sales and marketing work, this job also got me very involved in training courses, trade associations and standards committees. By now I was a chartered engineer and I started doing a lot of international travel, meeting customers, attending exhibitions and speaking at conferences. This was also when the cellular radio industry really took off and we found ourselves as key players, right in the middle of it all. I stayed with this job for 7 years.

It was during this time that I realised, I really needed to do more to improve my writing skills, so I went back to school and did an evening course for an A level in English Language. I also completed a diploma in accountancy and finance.

I then had a short interlude working for a New Zealand company, that wanted to set up a European Headquarters, as their aim was to expand into Europe. Unfortunately this company (MAS) was immediately taken over by an American company (DMC) and within about 12 months, we were all sacked. It sounds terrible but I did a lot of travelling and really enjoyed the whole experience.

After that, I spent 3 years with a small company on the Isle of Wight, which made very specialised high-power microwave amplifiers. These were used for passive intermodulation testing (PIM) in the communications industry, but they also had other applications, including nuclear accelerators, medical equipment and some special government applications (James Bond stuff). It was great working on the Isle of Wight and I would often travel over by hovercraft.

After that I decided to work on my own, initially as a consultant providing my services to a number of companies and this is where the idea came to me to start an internet company. The internet had begun in the early 1990s and very quickly I realised that this was going to change everything. The best way to learn more about it was to create my own website, so as I had an interest in my family history, I created a website about some of my ancestors (www.jjhc.info). This was a hobby

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website, so it did not make money, but you could say that the internet company that followed, was a very useful spin off.

The internet company is Local Surveyors Direct

(www.localsurveyorsdirect.co.uk) which is a price comparison website for building surveys and a wide range of professional services relating to the property industry. This I started in 2005 and as I write the company is still going (in 2020).

With my family history hobby, I have over the years collected quite a lot of stuff relating to my ancestors and when my aunt Pat died in 2005 (Pat was my father's sister) I negotiated with all the beneficiaries and I bought the bulk of the family relics, including various portraits of my illustrious forebears and numerous other relics, including the remains of my greatx4 grandfather's library (James Caldwell 1759–1838).

The family library contains a large number of old diaries and letters and over the years I have had the pleasure to meet quite a few historians, who have been interested in various topics that overlap. I do read a lot of history books and biographies, and I find it fascinating learning about people's lives. They all had ups and downs. Most of them learnt to swim with the tide, with varying levels of success.

The other thing that happened during this time, was that distant relatives started finding my website and getting in touch. I started meeting lots of 3rd cousins, 4th cousins and I have even met a 7th cousin. These have all been great people and quite a few have become very good friends.

Over the years I have had lots of hobbies. I had a number of MGB sports cars in the 1980s and I learnt a lot about how cars worked and I also made quite a few good friends through the MG Owners Club. In Oman I did a lot of skin diving, water skiing and various other sports associated with the sea. I had a close encounter with a big shark which was quite terrifying. I also became quite well known for organising trips out into the desert and with various friends we climbed some of the mountains. A great pastime in Oman was the Hash House Harriers and I became a regular runner and kept myself fit. Much later, I joined the Winchester Rotary Club and I got involved in organising the annual Clarendon Marathon which starts in Salisbury and ends in Winchester, first Sunday in October

(www.clarendon-marathon.co.uk).

Another experience was parachuting which I loved. I did three jumps but it was very weather dependant and after spending all day waiting on one occasion for the right weather, I gave up and didn't do it again.

Sue and I also had a yacht for about 10 years which we shared with her parents.

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It had accommodation to sleep 6 people but it was an expensive hobby and we found it very difficult trying to get the time to use it, so I was quite pleased when we finally sold it.

I still like woodwork and I build pieces of furniture in my garage every now and then. I also have an allotment where I grow vegetables.

One thing I will note here is smoking and drinking. Smoking in the 1960s was a very common practice and the cigarette industry ran incredibly sophisticated marketing campaigns to convince people to carry on smoking. Even the films on TV at the time, often presented the hero with a cigarette in the corner of his or her mouth. Lots of people smoked, just because lots of other people smoked. Even though everybody realised that smoking was a waste of money, and was bad news for your health, lots of people still carried on lighting up.

In the 1970s a strong anti-smoking lobby emerged, and eventually forced the politicians to introduce legislation to stop the cigarette companies brain washing everyone. The anti-smoking lobby also managed to convince lots of people that smoking was becoming socially unacceptable. Consequently, smoking has steadily decreased during my lifetime which is good to see. I never actually took up smoking, so for me it was never a problem.

I am sure the drinks industry is going to gradually go in the same direction but it might take a bit longer. Most people drink alcohol and they see it as one of their little luxuries (as did the smokers back in the 1960s). I drank very little while I was at university. In my 20s I drank pretty much like most other people and we had some good parties. In my 30s, after the occasional party with a good drinking session, I started to find myself feeling a bit washed out. This steadily got worse and over time I found that I did not feel at all well, even if I only drank a few glasses, so I scaled my drinking down to just the odd glass and then eventually I stopped completely. I do miss some of those great parties but even if I still drank today, I am no longer in my 20s so those days are long gone.

I never drank coffee but I was a regular tea drinker but again I started to notice that I did not feel good so I scaled this down as well. Likewise with processed food, so I also stopped consuming anything out of a packet.

Around the age of 40 my health began to deteriorate further and I often felt tired. When I discussed this with my doctor he told me that it was probably the fact that I was getting older and so I would have to get used to it. He also said that maybe I had an allergy of some sort but as I did not believe in allergies, I dismissed this quite quickly.

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By my early 50s my health was significantly deteriorating and eventually I realised that I had a dairy allergy. I cut dairy out of my diet and since then I have felt great. So great in fact, initially it was like living on a permanent high. I now eat natural food, I avoid dairy, I drink water and I exercise regularly. I have realised that just as we all have different faces and different voices, we also have different digestive systems and we all need to figure out how to tune our diet to get the best results from our bodies. I have found what works for me. If you have any problems with your health, I hope you can find what works best for you.

I continue to work full time. As long as I am lucky enough to have good health, I have no intention of ever retiring.

My life after 1980 could probably be another book but I hope the above post-script helps to fill in a few blanks.



The Heath-Caldwell family, Napier, March 2019. James, JJ, Michael, Hilary, Dora.



SOME OF THE BOOKS THAT HAVE BEEN OF INTEREST TO ME

I have over the years read quite a few books and in this section I am just recording some of those that were memorable or were of particular interest to me. The first section is the books that I read before 1980 and the second section is a selection from the books that I read after 1980. I have also included a few notable volumes from the Linley Wood library.

At this point I could say that if you don't read books, then don't bother reading any further, but of course I then realised, if you don't read books then you won't have read this far anyway!

BOOKS I READ BEFORE 1980

I read very little in the first 20 years of my life. So few books in fact, that I think I can confidently list them all as follows:

Winnie-the-Pooh by A.A. Milne, 1926

This was a nice story despite the title conjuring up a rather smelly theme. I remember the honey jar.

Buller's Birds of New Zealand edited by EG Turbott, 1967

An updated edition of 'A History of the Birds of New Zealand' by Sir Walter Lawry Buller, 1888. This was a very expensive book but my mother had a copy at St Mary's School and she brought it home so we could see it. I did not read it cover to cover but I looked at all the pictures and I read some of the sections. It was great being able to learn the names of the birds and then try and spot them whenever we walked in the native bush. I always remember reading about the Huia which is now extinct, the last sighting noted as being in 1907. Reading this book, was the point in my life when I started to think about what we humans were doing to the planet. When I was born in 1959 there were about 3 billion humans on the planet. Now in 2020 there are 7.8 billion and the population is growing by 1 million every 4 days. This is a major problem but sadly very few people talk about it.

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New Zealand Flowers and Plants in Colour by John Tension Salmon, 1970

Wonderful book, containing lots of photographs, all about the native plants of New Zealand, quite a few of which were in the Egmont National Park (Mt Taranaki). We spent ages flicking through this book and learning the names of the plants. I used to like looking out for the Totara as I think it was the tallest species of tree in Taranaki.

Macbeth by William Shakespeare, 1606?

We did this play in the 3rd form with our English teacher Mr Custer. I remember that it started off with three witches and a little while later Macbeth murdered King Duncan and found it difficult to wash his hands (should have used more soap). After that there was a lot of people who certainly didn't like each other and consequently they were bumping each other off left right and centre. In the end Macduff killed Macbeth and of course that was the end of the story. It is certainly an historical part of our culture, but I didn't enjoy reading it.

For Whom the Bell Tolls by Ernest Hemingway, 1940

I think we did this one in the 3rd form. A very sad story, set in the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s. The main character didn't get to live happily ever after. There was also a film version made in 1943 starring Gary Cooper and Ingrid Bergman. I think it was one of those Sunday afternoon matinee films that we watched on our black and white TV back in Stratford in the 1960s.

The Winslow Boy by Terence Rattigan, 1946

We did this one in the 4th form with our English Teacher Mr Milne. Ronnie Winslow is expelled from school for stealing a 5 shilling postal order. It turns out that he was falsely accused so his father contests the case and wins. Lots of things happen in between. I enjoyed this play.

All Quiet on the Western Front by Erich Maria Remarque, 1929

A novel that we read in the 5th form. My memory is of the soldier Paul Bäumer who is rather lost when he gets sucked into being a German soldier in WW1. Sad story which depicts the cold reality of war and the disconnections in society.

The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde, 1895

5th form play. I always remember the line said by Lady Bracknell "To lose one parent may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose both looks like carelessness". It's a great play.

SOME OF THE BOOKS THAT HAVE BEEN OF INTEREST TO ME

The Old Man and the Sea by Earnest Hemingway, 1951

We read this in the 5th form. I enjoyed this because I liked fishing and Santiago, who is the main character, really does catch a whopper.

Pygmalion by George Bernard Shaw, 1913

6th form play. Professor Higgins teaches Eliza Doolittle how to speak and thus pretend to be a member of the upper classes. Interesting to look back, as over my lifetime the class structure has largely disappeared, and now most people just speak the way they want to. This play was also adapted to make the musical 'My Fair Lady'.

Tom Jones by Henry Fielding, 1749

An excellent action-packed story and at the end Tom Jones marries Sophia Western. This was the first real novel that I read of my own volition. If I was handing out gold stars, I would give it 5.

The Betrothed by Sir Walter Scott, 1825

A lovely book with a girl called Eveline and a boy called Damian. The story takes place about a thousand years ago during the crusades. All sorts of people do all sorts of horrible things but by the end Damian and Eveline have fallen in love and get married. My kind of book. Top marks.

The Guns of Navarone, 1957. Ice Station Zebra, 1963. Where Eagles Dare, 1967. All by Alistair Maclean.

These are action packed novels and in each case the hero is a great guy who continually dices with death but somehow survives. I enjoyed them at the time, but I probably wouldn't read them again.

Some Novels by Agatha Christie

I can't remember the titles, but each of them had a murder which took an incredibly long time to solve. After reading these I have generally avoided 'who done it' novels.

Run for the Trees by James S Rand, 1968

This book is very politically incorrect (non-pc). It is a story set in Africa about two characters who are great white hunters who have lots of sex with both white and black women some of whom are really slaves. Lots of lions and big cats get shot. In fact this book is so non-pc that it is no longer in print and if you search on google to find out about the author, strangely he does not seem to exist. Very spooky. Treating women and animals this way is very wrong. I would not recommend reading this book.

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Gone With The Wind by Margaret Mitchell, 1936

I found this book to be a fascinating portrayal of the privileged lifestyle (for the few) in the southern states of America which, at the time, was propped up by slavery. After the American Civil War (1861–1865) everything really had gone with the wind. The heroine Scarlett O’Hara sees it all come and go and she then has to start from scratch to build her new life. I also enjoyed seeing the film with Scarlett and Rhett played by Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable (1939). A very long film and it was in colour (not black and white).

PSSC Physics Third Edition by Uri Haber-Schaim, 1971

I would not recommend reading this book, but I thought it would be nice to list it, as it was my text book during my last year of Physics at Whanganui Collegiate School in 1976. I bought another copy recently and I am hoping to read some of it, just to see if my brain can still understand it.

The above titles are the sum total of all the books I read before the age of 21. There might be a few that I have missed but not very many.

BOOKS I READ AFTER 1980

By the time I reached the age of 21 years, I realised I had a problem, in that my ability to read, write and communicate was rather limited. To address this deficiency, I decided to do the following:

Travel and meet new people and gain lots of experiences.

Get more involved in situations which involved people (clubs and activities).

Keep a diary and write in it every night (still doing it).

Write more letters (unfortunately I was very poor at keeping this up).

Read some books.

To start the ball rolling, I needed to find some books that would be suitable for me. Some books looked interesting but of course, “you can’t judge a book by its cover”. I had to try and identify which books would be likely to be useful to me. Some books might not be captivating but could still be well worth reading. I needed to think of it as more of a challenge, rather than a recreation. So, my starting point was, which books should I read?

I thought about this and realised that I needed to apply a bit of logic. As a general guide, I decided to read books that were old, but were still in print. If a book had been written more than 100 years ago, and people were still buying copies, and

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presumably still reading it, then surely there must be something in it worth reading.

I bought a selection that met my criteria and I made a start. In general, I read them cover to cover but I didn't find this to be easy. I would read a page and then not have any memory of what I had just read. At the same time, I found that the title and the name of the author would quickly be forgotten, unless I flicked back and looked at the title page. Some words I didn't recognise, so I was continually looking them up in a dictionary (this was before Google). Some books I just could not make heads or tails of any of it. Nevertheless, I just kept at it.

Living for a while in Egypt and later in the Sultanate of Oman, gave me a lot of spare time and reading was a good way to take full advantage of the situation. I persevered and every time I completed a book I felt a sense of achievement, so much so, that I have kept most of the books that I have ever read. It's a bit strange, but when I have had a book in my hands for a few days or weeks, and I have carefully worked my way through all the pages, I sort of feel an attachment to it and I don't really want to part with it. I suppose it is that collecting affliction that I suffer from.

As time went on, I am pleased to say, I developed much better abilities at reading and writing. I know I will never be top form, as I am really a numbers person, more than a words person. Over the years I have come to particularly enjoy history books and biographies. Fiction can often be a good read, but non-fiction is more real, and I find people's lives to be very absorbing and often very entertaining. At the same time, the more I read, the more my knowledge builds up and so whenever I start reading a new book, I often know something of the background and this makes it much easier to understand a book that other people might otherwise find a bit heavy going.

Another thing that has happened in parallel during this time, is my collection of books relating to my forebears. Some of these books were written by my ancestors and some were written about events that they were involved in. I have a large archive of old letters and family diaries. I also have quite a few books from the ancestral home of Linley Wood.

The library at Linley Wood was initially formed by James Caldwell (1759–1838) and then over the years it steadily grew, as later generations added more books to the shelves. Most of these books were sold off in 1949 but some stayed in the family and I managed to get the remains from my late aunt's estate in 2005 (303 volumes). This collection was further enlarged when I met a book dealer whose grandfather had bought a lot of these family volumes at the auction in 1949 and

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there were quite a few, still in his stock, 60 years later (160 volumes). Other copies have turned up from time to time in bookshops and via auctions and also a few from other distant relatives. Building the Linley Wood library back up again, has been a great hobby and has given me a lot of fun. It now contains about 500 books from the original library and a further 500 with various associations. These are all pre-1900 and the oldest volume is dated 1560. What makes them even more fascinating, is that lots of them have bookplates and inscriptions, just inside the front cover, documenting the name of the original owner and sometimes the names of the people who the volume was later passed on to.

Over the recent years I have had the pleasure to meet a number of historians who have been writing books on various subjects, often overlapping with my own interests. In some cases, these historians have used information referenced from my archive and the really great thing is that they have then printed my name in their acknowledgement section. I have had great joy reading these books, as it has been a lovely feeling to know that I have had a very small part in their conception.

The following list is not all the books I have read, but I have listed a reasonable selection to give you a flavour of what I found interesting and why. I have also listed a few interesting volumes from my family library. For simplicity, I have put them in order of publication, with the oldest ones first and the more modern ones towards the end.

The Bible

This is the book that everyone knows the title but no one knows who wrote it, and I find very few people have ever read it. Although I am not at all religious, I have read the whole of the Old Testament from start to finish. It took me about three months and it was a real slog. If the Bible was being published today for the first time, I don't think it would be a best seller. The other problem is that it is definitely non-pc. There is lots of killing going on, lots of people are slaves and most of the women are treated like second class citizens. However, in amongst it all, are the little stories that we have often heard of. Many are fully covered, only within a few pages (Adam & Eve, The Baby Moses, David & Goliath, Jonah and the Whale, Daniel and the Lion's Den, ...). There are also lots of phrases that are quite common in today's language but few people realise they are from the Bible (by the skin of my teeth, a drop in the bucket, a scapegoat, the ends of the earth, bite the dust, the blind leading the blind, a broken heart, can a leopard change his

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spots, go the extra mile, see eye to eye, writing's on the wall, ...).

I have also read the New Testament but this was the children's version and I read this with my son Daniel when he was about 10 years old. It was an excellent read and I enjoyed all the individual stories within it. The thing that really is special about the Bible is that it is one of the fundamental building blocks of our modern civilization. If you are interested in the English Language or History then the Bible is well worth reading.

A very good modern book, all about the history of The Bible, is 'The Book of Books' by Melvyn Bragg, 2001.

The Iliad and The Odyssey, by Homer

Written around 700BC this story is so old that no one knows who Homer was or even if he actually wrote these stories. Either way, they are great books, all about Achilles, Helen of Troy, Hector and the Trojan Wars. A big wooden horse turns up in the middle somewhere. Later on, after the war is done and dusted, Odysseus journeys home having all sorts of scrapes on the way. Full of adventure, the modern edition has of course been modified and is actually quite readable.

Ecclesiastical History of the English People, by Bede

Assumed to have been written around 731AD. This is the earliest history book about England. It covers the Romans and then a bit of darkness and then the arrival of the light of Christianity. By then Bede is up to date, so he is not able to write about what happened after that. If he had lived for another 200 years he could have written about King Alfred the Great and all those horrid Vikings.

Beowulf

This is an Old English poem consisting of alliterative lines (not rhyme). The oldest known copy is written in old English and dates to around 1000AD but the story itself is much earlier. Beowulf is a Scandinavian King who has all sorts of adventures with lots of people killing each other. I found it very difficult to read but at least I now know what it is. I think really Beowulf was a Viking.

Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam

The various items of poetry in this book were probably written around 1100AD. The poems became very popular in England in 1859 when Edward FitzGerald produced a translation loosely based on the original but modified to give it a good feel for English readers. The copy that I read was a

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translation by Peter Avery and John Heath-Stubbs published in 1979 and presented as being closer to the original version. It was an excellent read. Edward FitzGerald is an interesting character and he knew one of my ancestors (Dr Richard Jones). In my library I have one of Edward FitzGerald's books (Gallery of Portraits with Memoirs 1833), with his bookplate pasted inside the front cover. One day I must read his version of the Rubaiyat.

The Canterbury Tales, by Geoffrey Chaucer

Written somewhere between 1387 and 1400. Lots of short stories. This is written in old English but well worth reading.

Utopia, by Thomas More, 1516

Thomas More's perfect world that he had in his head in 1516 (in Latin). Sadly, he fell out with King Henry VIII a few years later, as life at that time was far from perfect and in 1535 Thomas More lost his head anyway. Definitely worth reading, if only to understand where the word utopia came from.

The Prince, by Niccolò Machiavelli, 1532

My copy was a modern Penguin edition. Very interesting book where Machiavelli writes what could be a sort of handbook for 'great men' to learn the best ways to totally crush any political opponents with the objective being to stop any unrest. I think the best thing I got from reading this book was I found out the background to the word 'Machiavellian'.

Julius Caesar Sive Historiae, by Hubert Goltzius, 1563

Julius Caesar Sive Historiae Imperatorvm Caesarvmqve Romanorvm. I have listed this book here because it is the oldest book to survive from the family library at Linley Wood. It is all in Latin and I am never going to read it. I think even if you were a Latin scholar you probably still would not read it. It is not really a book, it is a relic of my family history.

Chronicles of England Scotland & Ireland,

by Raphael Holinshed and William Harrison, 1587

Another book from the Linley Wood library. This one was in my grandfather's study when I cleared my late Aunt's house in 2005. This book itself is a very old history book and it is said that William Shakespeare used a copy of this book as his main source of information when he was writing some of his historical plays.

Francis Marsh's family Bible, 1641

This Bible is another family relic and in the front is a handwritten note confirming that my great x7 grandfather Francis Marsh was shipwrecked

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off the coast of the Isle of Wight in 1694. He was the only survivor and was washed up “half dead” on the coast clinging onto a pig skin for flotation. The pig skin also contained his money and this bible. Quite incredible. There are another approx 500 volumes still existing in what remains in my family library. They are all very precious to me.

Christopher Crowe’s family Bible, 1660

This is a beautiful Bible with the covers being done with top quality green leather made from a lizard skin. The edges of the covers are solid silver and it has a silver hinged spine. In the middle of the front cover is the family coat of arms of Christopher Crowe who lived in the mid 1600s and is assumed to be an ancestor but he is so far back in time that it is not possible to know exactly what the connection is.

The Diary of Samuel Pepys, 1669

Samuel Pepys diary covers the period 1660 to 1669. This is the period of the restoration of King Charles II and the first 9 years of his reign. Lots of things happen and are duly recorded, in particular to do with the navy and with Pepy’s own private life. My copy was printed in 1936 and I had assumed it covered the full text. There is certainly a lot of text, about 1300 pages, and it took a long time to read. There were a few odd bits where the words did not seem to flow. One moment he would be admiring the beauty of his serving girl and the next moment he would be putting money in the collection box. I found out a few years later that my 1936 version had been censored and his record of his numerous sexual liaisons had all been removed. This is an excellent diary but if you decide to read it, I recommend that you read a modern edition – just to ensure you get the full picture.

The Pilgrim’s Progress, by John Bunyan, 1677

All about a guy called Christian who leaves his hometown (the City of Destruction) and tries to get to the Celestial City. Along the way he goes through all sort of places including the Valley of the Shadow of Death. All sorts of hopeless people cross his path including Discretion, Prudence, Piety, Charity, Hopeful, Faithful and many more, all with names well and truly loaded with double meaning. Its worth reading because of its historical context but I did find it a bit heavy going.

Abridgment of the History of the Reformation, by Gilbert Burnet, 1683

This book is from the Linley Wood library and was owned by Thomas Bentley who was the partner of Josiah Wedgwood. Thomas’s niece

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Elizabeth Stamford married James Caldwell and this book then ended up in the Linley Wood library. I would imagine that their daughter Anne Marsh Caldwell probably used it as source book when she wrote 'Protestant Reformation in France', which she published in 1847.

A New Voyage Round The World, by William Dampier, 1697

This book was of great interest to me as I have an original copy from the Linley Wood library. The book itself is not easy to read but it is worth persevering with, as it is a first-hand account of history being made.

Robinson Crusoe, by Daniel Defoe, 1719

First published in 1719 and there was a copy in the Linley Wood library of which I still have the first 349 pages but the other half of this volume is long gone. It's a great story but initially as you start to read through, you find the language a bit odd. If you persevere, it is interesting, in that you will find that your brain starts to adapt and after a while the language all flows quite nicely. Of course, the story is about a guy who gets marooned on an island for 26 years and he is finally rescued in 1686. Obviously, there is no sex in this story. Other stories by Defoe that do have a bit of sex in them include the novels 'Roxana' and 'Moll Flanders' both of which are a good romp. 'A Journal of the Plague Year' is an excellent fictional account of what happened when the Plague hit England in 1665. I also have the Linley Wood copy of 'The Political History of the Devil', 1726, but I have never read it.

James Caldwell's family Bible, 1736

Yes, its another Bible passed down in the family. This one was owned by my great x5 grandfather who was another James Caldwell (1721-1791). They all liked their Bibles.

History of Czar Peter the Great, by John Banks, 1740

A copy from the Linley Wood library and inside the cover is the signature of my great x6 grandfather John Stamford. This copy was sold in the Linley Wood auction in 1949 and then bought back by me in 2016. I have not yet read it but I would assume that it is probably a very interesting book.

The Other Side of the Question, by the Duchess of Marlborough, 1744

With the bookplate of James Stamford Caldwell of Linley Wood. This volume came up for sale on the internet in 2004 and was the first of many books that I brought from the bookdealer Robert Gibb. It subsequently transpired that his grandfather had been to the Linley Wood auction in 1949

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when my grandfather sold the family estate. All together Robert managed to find me a further 160 volumes that had come from the family library.

Voyage Round the World, by George Anson, 1748

All about George Anson's voyage around the world from 1740–1744 during which time his squadron of boats fought the Spanish and were exceedingly lucky to capture a gold ship which made them all very rich men. I have a 1776 copy from the Linley Wood library with the signature of James Stamford Caldwell. I have read a modern version and this is an excellent story of bravery and determination. It should be noted that of the original 1,854 sailors only 188 survived.

The Rambler, by Samuel Johnson, 1751

An 8 volume set of books from Joseph Heath's Circulating Library. My great x6 grandfather Joseph Heath and his son Joseph Heath ran a 'Circulating Library' in Nottingham in the mid 1700s. These were the earliest version of commercial libraries, available to the public. There is a bookplate inside confirming that the library contained "above 2000 volumes" and membership of the library cost 8 shillings per year. I had known about this Circulating Library for quite a few years and I had always been on the lookout for a copy. Finally, in 2018 this set turned up from a book dealer in Edinburgh and of course I was very pleased to be able to purchase it.

Candide, by Voltaire, 1759

A young man called Candide coming of age in mid 18th century France. Lots of bits of funny humour make this an enjoyable read.

The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia, by Dr Samuel Johnson, 1759

I came across this book purely by chance and really enjoyed reading it. I also have a 1775 edition which came from the Linley Wood library and was owned by my great x5 grandfather George Marsh. The author, Dr Johnson, was of course he who wrote the Dictionary in 1755. Rasselas is a story about a prince who lives a pampered life and decides to go out into the real world to find out what life is like for normal people. What he finds is that everybody has good times and bad times and people make good choices and bad choices. Very unusual philosophical story and it is a pity that it is not more well known. I would give it 5 stars out of 5!

Boswell's London Journal, by James Boswell 1762–1763

Not actually published until 1950, this gives a very detailed account of

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London during this period and Boswell's time with the famous Dr Samuel Johnson (he who wrote the dictionary). Boswell also details some of his liaisons with the ladies, but he ends up getting the clap and had to go home to Scotland to recuperate. Boswell also wrote 'The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D', 1785 and 'Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D', 1791. All of these are excellent and well worth reading.

The Vicar of Wakefield, by Oliver Goldsmith, 1766

A very nice fictional story all about the trials and tribulations of the family of Dr Charles Primrose, who is the Vicar of Wakefield. Lots of money gets lost and then in the end, money turns up and lots of people get married. An excellent story.

Diaries of James Caldwell, 1770

The manuscript diaries of my great x4 grandfather James Caldwell (1759–1838). These are all hand written diaries starting with his records of pottery experiments when as a teenager he was working for Josiah Wedgwood in the 1770s. The diaries then continue through most of his life and record meetings, formal and informal, with all the people that he came in contact with. There are approximately 50 family diaries from the Linley Wood library written by various ancestors and relatives and a further 2,000 letters and associated documents. I will not record them all here but I just list James Caldwell's to give an indication of what these are.

Humphry Clinker, by Tobias Smollett, 1771

A wonderful book about the travels of the family of Matthew Bramble around the UK, in the mid 1700s, with stopovers in Bath, London, Scarborough and Edinburgh. Written as a series of letters by different authors. This story contains lots of humour because it presents the perceptions of the different members of the group. They are all going to the same places and interacting with the same people but in each case, seeing everything completely differently.

Gay's Poems, by John Gay, 1775

I came across this book by chance in a second-hand bookshop in Dorset in 2004. The reason it was of interest to me was because it has an inscription inside the cover from my great x5 grandfather, George Marsh. It was a very cheap purchase, as it was only 3 volumes of 4. By an extra bit of good luck, the 4th volume came up for sale in another bookshop 13 years later. I have always been very pleased with this purchase.

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Evelina, or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World, by Fanny Burney, 1778

This is a lovely book but it is written as a series of letters which makes it a bit strange to start off with but after a while you get used to it. Probably more popular with the girls than with the boys, however I still enjoyed it.

The Naval History of Great Britain, by Frederic Hervey, 1779

This is the earliest published book to feature an engraved illustration by my great x4 Grandfather James Heath. Most of the illustrations are of famous English admirals. By this time Great Britain was becoming the greatest naval power in the world. A strong navy enabled the country to protect its trade network and this is one of the main reasons why Great Britain was to become a very rich country. Books about the history of the navy became very popular and the consumers were happy to pay good money for a very expensive production like this 5 volume set.

The Pleasures of Memory, by Samuel Rogers, 1793

I have never been all that keen on reading poetry but I have read a few pages from this book and I hope to read all of it one day. In the late 1700s reading poetry books became very popular. This particular example was first published in 1792 with the illustrated version coming out the following year (1793). Illustrations in those days were made from a copperplate engraving and so were very time consuming and expensive to produce. Some books would just have an engraved picture on the title page, while more expensive versions would have a further 4 engravings spread through the text. In this example 2 of the 4 illustrations were engraved by James Heath and hence have his name in small letters in the bottom right hand corner (plate size 87mm × 64cmm). As these small poetry books were expensive productions they would often be bound in very elaborate leather bindings with gold tooling on the spines and covers. Sometimes the pages would also be tipped with gold on the edges making the book an absolutely delightful item to look at.

Camilla, by Frances Burney, 1796

A first edition copy from the Linley Wood library. What is interesting about this book is that there is a list of 'subscribers' in the front. In those days the production of a book was a big investment and so some publishers sold the copies in advance. These early buyers were referred to as 'subscribers' and their names were printed in the front to make them feel good. My great x4

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grandmother Elizabeth Caldwell (1754–1831) is listed as a subscriber and this is of course her copy. Another person listed on the subscriber list is ‘Miss J Austen.’ This is a long story and takes up 5 volumes but I must admit that I have not yet read it. I will keep it on my to do list.

Dictionary, by Dr Samuel Johnson, 1799

First published in 1755 as ‘A Dictionary of the English Language’, this book is a must for any library. My copy was published in 1799 and just inside the cover, opposite the title page, is a portrait of Dr Johnson, engraved by James Heath.

D. J. Juvenalis Satiræ XVI. ad opitimorum exemplarium fidem recensitæ, 1801

A book in Latin but I have no idea what it is about but it was from the Linley Wood library. Inside the front cover is an inscription ‘J Stamford Caldwell, St John’s College, Cambridge, College Prize Book for 1806’. One volume was found at my late Aunt’s house and the second volume was found in the stock of the bookdealer Robert Gibb. They had been separated for 67 years and it was a wonderful feeling when I was able to reunite them (even though I have no intention of ever reading them).

Shakespeare, 1802

This is a very large production, consisting of 6 huge volumes containing 10 engravings with a large plate size of 31cm x 20cm. In addition to being the engraver, James Heath was also the main backer for this project and he launched his prospectus 8 years earlier in 1796 to attract advance subscribers to help fund the project. First published in 1802, there were various editions on until 1818.

Sense and Sensibility, by Miss Jane Austen 1811

We all love all the novels of Jane Austen. ‘Pride and Prejudice’, ‘Mansfield Park’, ‘Emma’, etc. They are full of funny characters and everything has a sense of real life but the really good thing is that most of the characters all live happily ever after. We know it is all fiction. Sadly Jane’s life did not end like one of her novels, she never married and she died in 1817 at the age of 42 and is buried in Winchester Cathedral. I often see references to her whenever I venture into town (into Winchester).

Waverley by Sir Walter Scott, 1825

All about Edward Waverley who gets caught up in the Scottish rebellion of 1745. At the same time there is a love story going on with Edward and Rose (I do think that Rose is a lovely name for a young 18th century maiden).

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This novel became the first volume of a series known as ‘Waverley Novels’ which included some other well known titles; ‘Rob Roy’, ‘Ivanhoe’, ‘The Betrothed’ (as mentioned above), ‘The Talisman’, ‘Redgauntlet’, ‘The Antiquary’. Very popular in Victorian times but not so well known now. I enjoyed reading them.

Cyclopaedia, by Abraham Rees, 1819

This is a truly mammoth set of encyclopaedia consisting of 46 huge volumes and it has been passed down from the Linley Wood library. It was without a doubt the most expensive set of books that James Caldwell ever purchased and it is so large that it was never thrown out and was still in my grandfather’s bookcase, when I cleared his house, after the death of my late aunt in 2005. Of course, we no longer need encyclopaedias, as we now use Google, but this set of books, even if never read, is very special.

Pleasures of Hope, by Thomas Campbell, 1821

This is another lovely little poetry book with 4 engraved illustrations (engraved by Charles Heath) but the very special thing about this particular example, is that it was the first book in the world to feature engravings from a steel plate, rather than a copper plate. This was a major technological advance in its time. Copper was easier to engrave but after a few thousand prints had been taken, the copper plate would no longer be useable. Engraving on steel allowed the possibility to then harden the steel and make further impressions of the plate onto softer steel which could then in turn be hardened. This process was very important for the production of banknotes and later on for postage stamps which needed the illustrations to be printed in much higher numbers. James Heath’s son, Charles Heath was also one of the leading businessmen behind this new technology.

Shipwreck, by Falconer, 1822 RNC

The special thing about this little volume is that it was a prize book given to my great x2 grandfather Adm Sir Leopold George Heath when he passed out of the Royal Naval College (RNC). The inscription records a prize for maths in 1831. He would have been 14 years old and this was the year that he went away to sea as a cabin boy. Beautifully bound in blue leather with gold tooling and in the middle of the front cover in large letters RNC. Inside there is a small illustration of a shipwreck and this is engraved by Leopold’s uncle ‘Charles Heath’. I have always thought it a bit strange for a young naval cadet to have a poetry book about being shipwrecked but perhaps it

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appealed to his sense of humour. The other thing to note is that the author William Falconer first published this work in 1762 but he himself subsequently had the misfortune to be drowned in a shipwreck in 1769.

Trial of Mr Fauntleroy relating to the Marsh bank crash,
by Pierce Egan, 1824

Fascinating account of the aftermath of the collapse of the Marsh bank, where all the blame was put on the junior partner Mr Fauntleroy. The senior partner William Marsh (my great x4 grandfather) got away scot free but Fauntleroy was found guilty and was hung only three months afterwards. Justice was swift in those days. Today if you are a banker you can steal everyone's money and get away with it, as long as you do it within the rules so it can be referred to as adverse market circumstances. Of course we are not allowed to accuse the bankers of stealing all our money. Instead of being hung, they have all been given 'golden handshakes'.

Two Old Men's Tales, by Anne Marsh Caldwell, 1834

Two stories ('The Deformed' and 'The Admiral's Daughter') written by my great x3 grandmother, this being the first that she ever published. She wrote about 30 books, most of them novels, but she also wrote a history book about France and she wrote a few children's books. I have read most of them and really enjoyed them, as they gave me an insight into her mind. She was reasonably popular in her time but is now almost unknown. In addition to her books, I also have in the family archive most of her diaries and a large collection of associated family letters.

Robert Hesketh's family Bible, 1838

Another family Bible. This one owned by my Hesketh ancestors and full of inscriptions recording marriages, births and deaths over a 100 year period. In particular it covers the marriage of 48 year old Robert Hesketh (1789–1868) to 18 year old Georgiana Raynsford (1819–1910), my great x3 grandparents. Although there was a 30 year gap in their ages, they appear to have had a happy life and they had 13 children, the last one arriving in 1857 when Robert was 68 years old. Fantastic piece of family history memorabilia.

Arabian Nights Entertainments, 1840

An old book from the Linley Wood library. This is based on the 'One Thousand and One Nights' or the 'Arabian Nights' which is a set of very old stories that probably originated in India or Persia in the 8th century. Over time they were translated into Arabic and adopted in some of the Middle

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Eastern countries. More stories like 'Aladdin's Lamp', 'Sinbad the Sailor' and 'Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves' were added and in the early 1700s they were translated into French and then English. I have read a modern version of the Arabian Nights and I enjoyed the stories.

Results of Reading, by James Stamford Caldwell, 1843

This is a wonderfully eccentric book written by my great x3 grandmother's brother. He inherited the Linley Wood estate and the family library from his father in 1838. He practised as a barrister in his young days but then it seems he retired early and spent much of the later part of his life reading all his wonderful books. In 'Results of Reading' he strings together lots of quotations from the books that he agreed with, intending thus, to give us (the reader) the benefit of his time spent. He never married and after he died in 1858 the estate was passed on down to my great grandfather FC Heath who then became FC Heath-Caldwell. This book is completely unreadable and worth reading only for that very reason.

Adventure in New Zealand, by E Jerningham Wakefield, 1845

Interesting account of a settler in the early days of New Zealand when the English were arriving and doing everything they could to buy land off the Maori for a little as possible.

Jane Eyre, by Charlotte Bronte, 1847

A excellent story about a girl called Jane who has an unusual set of ups and downs in her life. She falls in love with Mr Rochester, the master of Thornfield Hall, but she then runs into a few unforeseen difficulties. It's a lovely story.

Wuthering Heights, by Emily Bronte, 1847

Another wonderful story, this time about Heathcliff who always wants to marry Cathy but things just never work out for them. I also enjoyed the Kate Bush song in 1977 and I still have the record.

Vanity Fair, by William Makepeace Thackeray, 1848

Story about two girls coming of age in the early 1800s against the backdrop of the Napoleonic wars. Becky Sharp lives on her wits and is often happy to do anything underhand, if she thinks she will get away with it. Amelia Sedley is a very genuine person who becomes a widow and runs into lots of problems because her father-in-law fails to support her. Well worth reading.

Leaves from my Journal, by Robert Grosvenor, 1852

I bought this volume from the bookdealer Adrian Greenwood in 2004

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as this particular copy was given by the author Robert Grosvenor to my great x3 grandmother Anne Marsh Caldwell in the year of publication. It was the first family book that I sourced via the internet (the first of many). Adrian Greenwood, as well as being a bookdealer, was also an author and I met him in 2016 but sadly he was murdered in a robbery a few months later.

Little Dorrit, by Charles Dickens, 1857

I found this story very difficult to follow. There were lots of eccentric characters and everyone seemed to be forever losing money or coming into it quite by accident. I have not read any other novels by Dickens but I did see David Copperfield on TV and I was very pleased that he came through all his difficulties ok.

Life of Josiah Wedgwood, by Eliza Meteyard, 1865

There have been lots of books written about the great pottery entrepreneur Josiah Wedgwood (1730–1795). James Caldwell started working for him around 1770 and they got on exceptionally well. Josiah provided James with excellent mentoring and helped him to progress on and gain his own success. It should be noted that Josiah Wedgwood was a businessman who realised it was best to be nice to people and get everyone working together as an effective team, as in the long run, you will always achieve a lot more. Most books about Josiah Wedgwood are well worth reading.

War And Peace, by Leo Tolstoy, 1869

This is another book that is a little bit like The Bible, in that everyone had heard of it but very few people have read it. It is a brilliant piece of historical fiction about a number of families living in Russia during the Napoleonic wars in the early 1800s. The story is very long but it is an excellent read and it contains lots of bits of philosophy about life (as lots of books often do).

Lorna Doone, by RD Blackmore, 1869

An historical romance set in Exmoor, Devon in the later half of the 1600s. It is all about John Ridd and Lorna Doone. Both lovely young people and I am sure you can guess what happens. I enjoyed reading it.

Photograph Album of Anne Marsh Caldwell, 1870

This is a massive volume in which Anne Marsh Caldwell has collected together lots of small portrait photographs of her friends and relatives. For any historian it is fascinating to read her diaries and letters and then see all the faces in her Photograph Album. The family library contains approx

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10 other albums and some loose photographs from various other relatives. Again I am not listing them all here but I hope this one gives a flavour.

Energy, by DD Heath, 1874

'An Elementary Exposition of the Doctrine of Energy' is a physics book written by my great great grandfather's brother Douglas Denon Heath (1811–1897). I have a copy but have never read it as it is now very much out of date but it certainly confirms that Douglas Denon Heath must have been quite a bright guy in his time.

The Bible in Latin 1879

Interesting small volume which has in inscription in the front saying that my great grandfather Maj Gen FC Heath-Caldwell, picked it up on the battlefield of Tel-el-Kebir in Egypt in 1882. Apparently, he found it lying on the ground just after the battle. Presumably dropped there accidentally by one of the other soldiers.

Old New Zealand, by Frederick Edward Maning, 1887

A tale of the good old times by a Pakeha Maori. This is an excellent account of one Irishman's early experiences living with the Maori people in the 1830s. FC Manning was apparently one of those guys who was very much a larger than life character, but on top of that, he was also very tall in real life, being 6ft 3inches in height. Well worth reading.

Arabia Deserta, by CM Doughty, 1888

I read the slimmed down version which is 'Passages from Arabia Deserta selected by Edward Garnet', 1931. Fascinating account of Doughty's travels in Arabia in the 1870s. I read it while I was living in Thumrait, on the southern edge of the Rub al Khali desert in Oman.

Plain Tales from the Hills, by Rudyard Kipling, 1888

This book is a collection of sketches covering many aspects of the lives of the British Raj in India during Victorian times. Back in those days it was a fascinating time to be participating in Empire.

Tess of the d'Urbervilles, by Thomas Hardy 1891

A sad novel about a young lady called Tess who really deserved a better life. Most of the novel takes place in Dorset and the final end is in Winchester. I have found all the novels that I have read by Thomas Hardy to be well worth reading.

John Russell RA, by George Williamson, 1893

Biography of the Georgian portrait painter John Russell (1745–1806) who

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painted an excellent portrait of my great x4 grandmother Amelia Marsh (1765–1793).

Letters from the Black Sea, by Adm Sir Leopold George Heath, 1897

A collection of family letters during the Crimean War, written by my great great grandfather and published as a book in 1897. I found this to be an excellent read but of course my main interest was because it was written by my illustrious ancestor.

The Way Of All Flesh, by Samuel Butler, 1903

When I picked this book up by chance one day, I saw the title and thought it might have some good sex in it, but I found nothing of the sort. However, it is a brilliant novel which is a semi-autobiographical account of the author growing up in Victorian England with a tyrant of a father. Separately Samuel lived a few years in early New Zealand and wrote a novel called 'Erewhon' which I have also read but I could not make heads or tails of that one.

Stories by DH Lawrence 1910 to 1930

I have read 'Sons and Lovers' and some of this other novels but I found them difficult to follow. I must read them again one day and see if I can get more out of them.

Records of the Heath Family, by George Heath, 1913

We had a copy of this book at home when I was growing up in New Zealand. It was fascinating to read about all these people who shared the name Heath, especially Adm Sir LG Heath who was my great great grandfather and whose sword hung on our living room wall. This book, and a later book, also included notes on my grandfather Capt CH Heath-Caldwell and his father Maj Gen FC Heath-Caldwell.

Stories by F Scott Fitzgerald 1920s

'The Great Gatsby' is a brilliant novel and the line I always remember is "Rich girls don't marry poor boys" said by Jay Gatsby the mysterious millionaire who gives great parties at this Long Island mansion. He always hoped somehow to win the heart of Daisy but life just doesn't work out that way. Fitzgerald's first novel 'This Side of Paradise', 1920, is also a brilliant book all about Amory Blaine, a university student who is setting out in life and trying to figure it all out. I found all the novels by F Scott Fitzgerald to be fantastic. Life in all his stories is very jumbled up. In real life, his wife Zelda suffered from schizophrenia and she wrote a book 'Save Me The Waltz', 1932.

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Both Zelda and F Scott were trying to get somewhere but sadly in their real lives, wherever it was, they never made it and both died relatively young.

A Passage to India, by EM Forster, 1924

This is EM Forster's book that I enjoyed the most. It is a book of fiction written about India, much of it as seen through the eyes of an Indian, Dr Aziz. In particular, it presents an Indian view of the British Raj in the early 1920s. All EM Forster's books are great but this one is exceptional.

The Castle, by Franz Kafka, 1926

All about a guy called 'K' who wants to take up residency in a village which is controlled by some bureaucrats who live in the castle. It does not matter what 'K' does, he just can't seem to get the necessary permissions. This novel really did do my head in. I did not enjoy it and I have always steered clear of any books written by Kafka.

Seven Pillars of Wisdom, by TE Lawrence, 1926

The autobiography of Thomas Edward Lawrence about his time in Arabia in WW1 supporting the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Turks from 1916 to 1918. We might never have known about TE Lawrence except that an American writer by the name of Lowell Thomas published his own account 'With Lawrence in Arabia', 1924. This sold incredibly well and generated a lot of public interest, so much so, that when TE Lawrence published his autobiography lots of people bought it. Today we would say that his story went "viral".

Lots of stories written by Evelyn Waugh 1930s to 1950s

I have read lots of books by Evelyn Waugh and I enjoyed all of them. They were all generally very witty and entertaining. Some of the ones that I read include; 'Decline and Fall', 1928, 'Vile Bodies', 1930, 'Black Mischief', 1932, 'A Hand Full of Dust', 1934, 'Put out More Flags', 1942, 'Brideshead Revisited' 1945. He also wrote a short biography of 'Edmund Campion', 1935, who was a Jesuit Priest in Elizabethan England. And he wrote 'Remote People', 1931, which was a travel book about Haile Selassie's Abyssinia. I remember meeting an elderly relative who had met Evelyn Waugh in Africa in the 1930s and she is mentioned in 'Remote People' (Genesta Long). Genesta said Evelyn was an amazingly witty person.

Burmese Days, by George Orwell, 1934

Orwell's first novel based on his early life in Burma. As I have said before, life often does not work out as you want it and of course in 1948 Burma

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became independent and all the British left. I have also read his novels 'Coming Up for Air', 1939, 'Nineteen Eighty-Four', 1949 and 'Animal Farm', 1945. Not my top author but well worth reading as Orwell and his books are a key part of English literary history.

The World Crisis 1911–1918, by Winston Churchill, 1931

Winston Churchill was a fantastic writer and it is not surprising that he went on to become Prime Minister during WWII. This book is very long but it is an excellent read. 'Marlborough: His Life and Times', 1938, was also magnificent and also very long.

Alarms and Excursions in Arabia, by Bertram Thomas, 1931

Bertram Thomas spent 7 years living in Oman (1925–1932) and this is a book that he wrote at the time, recording his travels in the country and his perceptions of the native people.

Tigris Gunboats, by Vice Admiral Wilfrid Nunn, 1932

Covers the Mesopotamian campaign in WWI from 1914 to 1917. My copy is a signed copy from Wilfred Nunn to my grandfather Cuthbert Heath-Caldwell, both of whom took part in the campaign. Looking back, they were probably very lucky, in that they both survived in one piece.

Claudius the God, by Robert Graves, 1935

An historical novel about the life of Claudius. Emperor of Rome AD41–54. I can't remember much about the story except that I very much enjoyed this book. There was also a television series.

The Southern Gates of Arabia, by Freya Stark, 1936

All about Freya Stark's travels in Southern Arabia in 1935. She lived to be 100 years old must have been quite a lady.

Early Days in Central Otago, by Robert Gilkison, 1936

In my days in the Territorial Army we went on numerous exercises out in the hills of Central Otago. One very noticeable part of the landscape were the remains of all the aqueducts that had snaked around the sides of the hills, carrying water, in the gold rush days of the mid 1800s. This book covers much of this period when a small number of people made a lot of money but lots of gold prospectors made very little money at all.

Daily Life in Ancient Rome, by Jerome Carcopino, 1939

Reading this book is a window into an age lived 2,000 years ago. Tourists get to see all sorts of places and often they have very little understanding of what they are seeing. If they are going to travel all around the world

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they really should take the time to read a few books first. If you are ever intending to visit Rome, please read this book before you go.

Strangers and Brothers series, by CP Snow, 1940s to 1970s

This is a fascinating set of books about men working together, some with a science education and some with a humanities education. CP Snow felt that the country is often lead by the humanities type people with good presentation skills but a lack of understanding of how things work. He felt we need to get a better balance among our leaders. I am sure he was right. He probably would have liked Margaret Thatcher but I don't think he would have had much time for David Cameron. CP Snow is not very well known today which is a pity. I think all his novels are excellent.

Pelican History Of England, 1950–1965

This is a series of 9 books, written by different authors but then linked together to give an excellent overview of British history. The individual volumes were as follows:

'Roman Britain', 1955, by Ian Richmond

'The Beginnings of English Society', 1952, by Dorothy Whitelock

'English Society in the Early Middle Ages', 1951, by Doris Mary Stenton

'England in the Late Middle Ages', 1952, by A.R. Myers

'Tudor England', 1950, by Stanley Bindoff

'Stuart England', 1978, by J.P. Kenyon

'England in the Eighteenth Century', 1950, by J.H. Plumb

'England in the Nineteenth Century', 1950, by David Thomson

'England in the Twentieth Century', 1965, by David Thomson

I can't remember which volume I read first but it was excellent and so I then bought the rest of the set and read all of them. This gave me an exceedingly good overview of history and so whenever I have read anything since, I have been aware of how different events fitted into the overall timeline.

In the Wake of da Gama, by Genesta Hamilton, 1951

An excellent history book about the early Portuguese explorers and their activities on the east coast of Africa in the 1600s. Genesta was my grandfather's cousin and I met her in 1981. She was by then 82 years old and was mildly eccentric. She wrote a record of her amazing life 'Stone's Throw', 1986, much of which was spent in Africa. She also wrote 'Fragments from Africa', 1937 and 'Princes of Zinj', 1957. I enjoyed them all, but they might not be everyone's cup of tea.

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The Reason Why, by Cecil Woodham Smith, 1953

A very detailed history book about the disastrous 'Charge of the Light Brigade', during the Crimean War, 1854. It follows the chain of command and all the conflicting perceptions of the various key people who were involved. An excellent book.

Sir John Moore, by Carola Oman, 1953

A biography of Lt Gen Sir John Moore who was hit by a cannon ball and killed, during the retreat to Corunna in 1809. This was part of the Napoleonic wars in Spain. Sir John Moore was my great x4 grandmother's cousin. Particularly good account of this part of the Napoleonic wars, which of course in the end Napoleon lost (Waterloo 1815).

Russell's Best, by Bertrand Russell, 1958

Bertrand Russell was a guy who really did have an amazing brain. He published stuff from 1896 to 1975, covering a diverse range of topics from the principles of mathematics to the abc of atoms to marriage and morals. Also lots of books on politics and various philosophical topics. I have read a number of his books but Russell's Best gives a selection of all his works and in many cases the bits with a bit of humour.

Desert Sands by Wilfred Thesiger, 1959

Wilfred Thesiger was a very interesting person. He was Oxford educated and fought in WW2 in the SAS in North Africa. In the late 1940s he spent some time in the Rub al Khali desert in Oman (the Empty Quarter) and he subsequently wrote 'Desert Sands' about his experiences exploring this area. In 1982 I spent a year at Thumrait which is on the southern edge of the Rub al Khali. With some friends we did a 3 day journey up into Rub al Khali and saw the huge sand dunes. Excellent trip and excellent book.

Catch-22, by Joseph Heller, 1961

This novel is probably partly autobiographical in that Joseph Heller's main character Yossarian is a bombardier flying missions over Italy in World War II, which was what Heller had done 20 years earlier. The book is full of characters most of whom are nuts. What do you do if you think everyone is nuts and you think you are the only person who is sane? I remember reading an article that Heller wrote much later in life, in which he said, if you are the Managing Director of a company, you are not fully in charge. If you are the President of America you are not fully in charge. Even your

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mother is not fully in charge. No one is really in charge. That is why moving through life is never straight forward. Excellent book.

The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole, Aged 13¾, by Sue Townsend, 1982

Excellent book with its own unique style. Adrian Mole is wonderful at observing his impressions of what is going on around him. It is a great diary even if it is all pure fiction. This was a best seller in the 1980s.

In The Sticks, by RL Bacon, 1963

This fictional story is absolutely brilliant but hardly anyone knows of it. The narrator is sent to a rather backward part of rural New Zealand to run a small school. The story is all about the way-out people who live there. No doubt RL Bacon, whoever he was, had all these experiences in real life.

The Fatal Impact, by Alan Moorehead, 1966

A history book about the fatal impact of the western invasion of the South Pacific, and in particular New Zealand, in the period 1769–1840. The western civilization with greater resources and better technology gradually took control of this area of the world with devastating consequences for the existing inhabitants (The Maori and the Islanders). A very good overview of the sequence of events and the final result. Sadly, this is history.

Joseph Wright of Derby, by Benedict Nicolson, 1968

Biography of the the famous painter Joseph Wright (1734–1797) including a list of all his known works. This book was of interest to me as he painted portraits of James and Elizabeth Caldwell and Elizabeth's sister Hannah Stamford.

Bruce McLaren – the Man and His Racing Team,

by Eoin S Young, 1971

Bruce McLaren was brought up in Auckland and from an early age took up an interest in go-carts and racing cars. He travelled to the UK and became a world famous racing car driver and founded McLaren Racing which became one of the world's top racing car companies. Sadly he was killed in a crash in 1970. He was only 32. I am surprised that the New Zealand Post Office did not make a postage stamp for him (they did in Austria).

The Siege Of Krishnapur, by JG Farrell, 1973

Excellent piece of historical fiction covering the trials and trepidations of the British who were swept up in the Indian Mutiny of 1857. As this was written in 1973 it is very easy to read.

Muscat & Oman, by Ian Skeet, 1974

This is one of many books that I have read about Oman. This particular

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book records life in the country before Sultan Qaboos bin Said took over in 1970. I lived there from 1983 to 1985.

Old Taranaki And Its Mountain, by Campbell McAllister, 1976

As I was brought up in Taranaki from 1961 to 1971. My library would not be complete without a few books on Taranaki. Excellent book and it has lots of pictures.

The Civilization of Ancient Egypt, by Paul Johnson, 1978

This is one of a large number of books that I have read about the history of Egypt and this particular book I read while I was working in Alexandria in 1981. I found all these books fascinating as the history of Egypt is so old.

Cuthbert Heath, by Antony Brown, 1980

Cuthbert Heath, maker of the modern Lloyd's of London, was my great grandfather's brother. He was not able to join the army or the navy as he was deaf. Instead he went into business in the insurance industry and made a very large fortune. This is an excellent biography but it is also a very good book about business and innovation.

BSAC Divers Manual, 1980?

I can't remember the exact title of this book and sadly I no longer have my copy. Whatever it was called it was an excellent book and I learned all about skin diving when I lived in Oman 1982–1984.

El Alamein Desert Victory, by John Strawson, 1981

I visited El Alamein in 1981 while I was working in Alexandria. By 1942 the Germans had overstretched their resources and the battle of El Alamein was the turning point. Among the 7,240 graves in the cemetery at El Alamein, there are lots of New Zealanders. All together 2,989 New Zealanders did not come back from the North African campaign. I remember the old soldiers who I had met in my younger days and they had all told me that the war was very tough but they were very pleased that they went. As I came across some of the graves of the fallen New Zealand soldiers at El Alamein, I suddenly realised, these were all young men who did not come back to say they had been pleased to have gone.

Introduction to Radar Systems, by Merrill Skolnik, 1981

Everything you have ever wanted to know about radar if you ever wanted to. I spent 5 years working as a radar engineer and this technical book was very useful to me but I would not recommend reading it (unless you are working on radar).

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The Oxford History of New Zealand, edited by WH Oliver and BR Williams, 1981

Great to have the whole history of NZ summarised and put into one volume. A very good read.

Electronic Equipment, by Tony Rudkin, 1981

This book gives a good overview of a wide range of electronic test instruments. I remember meeting Tony Rudkin at an exhibition. He said he often feared that people bought his book but did not get around to reading it. He was very pleased when I told him I had read it cover to cover and found it to be excellent. However, I would not recommend reading this book now, as sadly it is very much out of date.

Guide to Purchase & DIY Restoration of the MGB, by Lindsay Porter, 1981

This book was my very own personal Bible when I had my MGB sports cars from 1980 to 1994. It was very enjoyable working out how these fantastic cars worked.

Oman & Its Renaissance, by Sir Donald Hawley, 1984 revised edition

This very large book is one of my prized possessions, as it was given to me by my friends and work colleagues when I left Oman towards the end of 1984. We had a great party and everyone signed their names in the front. It is a lovely memento of my 2 years spent in the Sultanate.

With Friends Possessed: Edward FitzGerald, by Robert Martin, 1985

A biography all about the unusual life of Edward FitzGerald, the author who translated and rewrote the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.

Competent Crew, by Pat Langley-Price and Philip Ouvry, 1984

An introduction to the practice and theory of sailing. I read this book when I was learning all about how to sail a boat.

The Sailor's War 1914–1918 by Peter Liddle, 1985

Peter Liddle spent much of the 1970s and early 1980s travelling around and interviewing the small number of remaining ex-servicemen who had fought in WWI. This book contains 19 chapters, one of which covers the experience of my grandfather Cuthbert Heath-Caldwell and his experiences in the Mesopotamian Campaign.

On Fiji Islands, by Ronald Wright, 1986

I read this book because I spent 3 weeks in Fiji with the NZ army in 1978. The country has two main cultures; the native Fijians and the Indians. Understandably this has caused tensions over the years as the native Fijians feel it is their country and the Indians, most of whom are 4th or more

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generation, understandably feel that it is also their country. Luckily they all seem to still get on relatively well.

Himalaya: Trekking from Sikkim to Pakistan, by Ann Mitcalfe & Doug Wilson, 1988

I met Doug when I was doing my Army basic training at Burnham Military Camp and the following year we met up at Mt Ruapeau where I also met his girlfriend Ann. Both lovely people who a few years later did this incredible trip along the Himalaya mountain range. Sadly Doug died relatively young from cancer.

The Stratford Inheritance, by Ian Church, 1990

If you have a connection with Stratford in Taranaki and you would like to know more about the history of the town, this is the book for you.

The Honourable East India Company, by John Keay, 1991

All about the fantastic history of the traders who slowly took over the Indian subcontinent just because they wanted to make lots of money.

The Radar Army, by Reg Batt, 1991

All about the very successful project to develop radar during WWII. My grandfather Richard Jones worked on radar during the war and this gave a good background to the whole radar project.

The Heath Engravers, by John Heath, 1993

Biography of James Heath the engraver and a list of his works. James Heath was my great x4 grandfather. The author, John Heath, was a fantastic guy. He was a graduate of Oxford University and on D-Day 1944, in WWII, he had landed on the Normandy beaches with the army. He later had a very successful career as a diplomat being Her Majesty's Ambassador in Chile. He was a distant cousin and I got to know him very well as we were both interested in old books.

Endure No Makeshifts, by Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach, 1993

A biography of Henry's life in the navy. I list it here because Henry lived in our village and he signed my copy for me. He was a real gentleman and gave much support to events in the in the local area. His story is an excellent read, much of which is about the Falklands War. I was working in Portsmouth in 1982 and I have memories of all the navy boats setting sail one by one, bound for the Falklands. Sadly some of them did not return.

The Insatiable Earl, by NAM Rodger

Biography of John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich who was first Lord of the Admiralty. My interest was because my great x5 grandfather George Marsh

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worked for him. This is an excellent book that covers a lot of the Earl's official responsibilities but also talks about the great craze of the time; gambling. NAM Rodger also published 'The Command of the Ocean : a Naval History of Britain' which is also very well worth reading.

Finding Home, by Dominic Sheehan, 1996

A fictional story very much based on Dominic's childhood growing up in Stratford and going to Avon School. I enjoyed reading it. I went to Avon School and a very good friend of mine was Joe Sheehan who is Dominic's elder brother.

Notes from a Small Island, by Bill Bryson, 1996

If I was going to recommend one book to read for anyone thinking of visiting England, this would be it. The story is all about Bill Bryson's experiences coming to this island in the late 1970s. It is fantastic and I found there were lots of parallels with my own experiences coming to the country a few years later. I did have the pleasure of hearing Bill Bryson give a talk at Winchester Cathedral in 2016 and the place was completely full. The other books I have read by him include: 'The Mother Tongue', 1990, 'A Short History of Nearly Everything', 2003, 'The Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid', 2006, 'At Home: A Short History of Private Life' 2010, 'The Road to Little Dribbling', 2015. All excellent. Top marks!

Telecommunications Networks: 2nd Edition, Edited by J Flood, 1997

For all electronics engineers involved in the telecommunications industry this is a good book with a lot of detail explaining how everything works (telephones, mobile phones, base stations and networks).

Elizabeth Gaskell The Early Years, by John Chapple, 1997

John Chapple was interested in Victorian women writers including Anne Marsh Caldwell. He gave me a signed copy of this book and I greatly enjoyed reading it.

Getaway, by Gordon Thomson Woodroffe, 1998

The only NZ airman to escape from a Nazi prison camp and make his way back to England in WWII. Only a paperback copy but this is an excellent story of one man's incredible battle against the odds. This book, containing an inscription from Woodroffe, was given to me by a very good friend whose father was also a POW escapee.

The Cash Nexus, by Niall Ferguson, 2001

A very detailed economics book, some of which I found hard to follow but

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I was very glad I read it. One of the things covered is how governments (run by politicians) keep printing more money every year. This is really a tax on the people who own the money which is not usually the rich people but is actually all the normal people. Shocking. We are all being ripped off.

White Mughals, by William Dalrymple, 2002

I have read numerous books on the history of India and William Dalrymple is certainly one of the best writers. I have also read 'The Last Mughal', 2006 and 'Return of a King: The Battle for Afghanistan', 2012.

The Adventure of English, by Melvyn Bragg, 2003

I wish I had come across this excellent book much earlier in my life, as it really does explain why the English language is as chaotic as it is. Melvyn also wrote 'The Book of Books', 2011, which I have also read. He gave an excellent talk at the Winchester Guildhall in about 2011, all about the Bible and the English Language.

Never A Footstep Back, by Bruce & Don Hamilton, 2003

A history of my old school Whanganui Collegiate 1854–2003. This is a massive book and initially I only intended to read the first chapter about the very early days of the school, but I found it all so fascinating that I read the whole thing. It also covered the period that I was there 1975–1976 and it was interesting to see that the teachers had lots of disagreements between each other. At the time, my perception was that they were very much a united force. Also quite a revelation to see that two of the teachers must have been very odd as they later got into big trouble with the law for interfering with young children. In the same year of publication there was a second book which was a register of all the students and a brief overview of that happened to them and this was also fascinating.

The Smartest Guys in the Room, by Bethany McLean and Peter Elkind, 2003

Excellent book about the amazing rise and scandalous fall of the American company Enron. We all assume that highly paid business leaders are amazingly intelligent people who know what they are doing. This book documents a case study where you realise that the only thing smart about these guys was that they managed to take everyone for a ride while they paid themselves astronomically high salaries. Most of them pretty well got a way with it but everyone else lost everything.

HIH The Inside Story, by Mark Westfield, 2003

Another case study of a business run by a group of people who were not as

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smart as they made out. Again a huge number of people lost a lot of their life savings. This story is a reminder that some business leaders might have good presentation skills but be very lacking in integrity.

The Hive, by Bee Wilson, 2004

This is just a fairly straight forward book about the history of our civilization, but it is all told from the aspect of honey. Starting from Biblical times and then step by step being brought right up to date. I really enjoyed reading it, so I am noting it here in my list.

White Gold, by Giles Milton, 2004

The Story of the Sultan of Morocco, Mulay Ismail (1645–1727), and his slaves including the Englishman Thomas Pellow. Fascinating account of life as a slave in Morocco. When you read a book like this one, you start to realise how lucky we are to live in the modern world.

The Barefoot Emperor, An Ethiopian Tragedy, by Philip Marsden, 2007

A history book all about the British Expedition to Abyssinia in Ethiopia in 1868 to rescue the British agent Mr Rassam from the Emperor Tewodros II. My interest was that one of my ancestors was involved in the navy side of the operation.

Tars: The Men Who Made Britain Rule The Waves, by Tim Clayton, 2007

I had the pleasure to meet Tim Clayton as he had referenced some of my archives in this book. He is a really nice guy. I have also read his 'Waterloo: Four Days that Changed Europe's Destiny', 2014 and 'Sea Wolves The Extraordinary Story of Britain's WWII Submarines', 2015. He also gave an excellent presentation at the Gosport Submarine Museum shortly after Sea Wolves was published. All his books are extremely well written and very entertaining.

The Ordeal of Elizabeth Marsh, by Linda Colley, 2007

Linda Colley spend two days with us while she went through the Marsh papers doing research for her biography of Elizabeth Marsh. She was a lovely lady and we travelled up to Greenwich when she held her initial presentation for her book launch. The book is excellent and I have also read 'Captives: Britain, Empire and the World', 2002 and 'Britons: Forging the Nation' 1992.

No Ordinary Man: Arthur Porritt, by Graeme Woodfield & Joseph Romanos, 2008

A biography of the remarkable life of Sir Arthur Porritt who was born in Whanganui, went to Whanganui Collegiate School and the University of

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Otago and then travelled to the UK. He had an amazing life and ended up being Governor-General of New Zealand (1967–1972). I would not say I was following in his footsteps but our paths certainly crossed on more than one occasion.

The Artist's Daughter: Ellen Churchyard, by Sally Kibble, 2009

The Churchyard family were friends of my ancestor Dr Richard Jones in Woodbridge, in the mid 1800s. Sally and her husband came and visited to take photographs of some of Ellen's drawings in my family archive. Later she sent me a signed copy which I greatly enjoyed reading.

Our Men in Brazil, by Ian Sargen, 2009

All about the Hesketh brothers in Portugal and Brazil in the first half of the 1800s. Ian and his wife Hilary came and visited to explore some of my relics relating to our Hesketh Ancestors. The book is excellent and he intended to write another but sadly his health failed.

Dragon Rampant, by Donald E Graves, 2010

The Welsh Fusiliers at War, 1793–1815. An excellent book about the British Army in the Napoleonic Wars. Donald Graves has used some references from Charles Crowe's journal. See below.

An Eloquent Soldier, edited by Gareth Glover, 2011

This is the Peninsular War Journals of Lieutenant Charles Crowe, 1812–14. He was a cousin of my great x3 grandmother but he had no children, and as a result, his diary was passed down in the Heath-Caldwell family but had never been published. The diary itself is well written because he rewrote the whole thing, sometime after he had returned from Spain. My brother Michael typed out the text and Gareth Glover then edited and added more information about the people and places that Charles had mentioned. An excellent read. Do go out and buy this book.

Steve Jobs, by Walter Isaacson, 2011

Biography of Steve Jobs the entrepreneur who created the company Apple (computers and phones). Seems a very candid biography of his life noting what he got right and what he got wrong. Well worth reading. I have also seen the film which was also very good.

Batavia, by Peter Fitzsimons, 2011

Betrayal, shipwreck, murder, sexual slavery, courage but most of all an excellent fictional account of what really did happen when the Dutch ship Batavia hit a reef on the Houtman's Abrolhos islands off the west coast of

SOME OF THE BOOKS THAT HAVE BEEN OF INTEREST TO ME

Australia in 1629. Lots of stories have been written about this particularly harrowing event, when a small group of opportunists took over and terrorised the remaining survivors. Although lots of people get murdered, this book should be read by everyone, just to remind us all of what some bad people can be capable of.

London and the Georgian Navy, by Philip MacDougall, 2013

All about the administrators back in London who played their part making the Royal Navy supreme and making Britain great. This history book references some of the information from the diary of my ancestor George Marsh, Commissioner of the Navy.

A History of Britain in Thirty-Six Postage Stamps,

by Chris West, 2013

A wonderful book featuring 36 British postage stamps against which Chris has written a general history of the UK between the years 1840 and 2012. This gave me the idea to put a few postage stamps into my book.

John Napier, by Julian Havil, 2014

Life, Logarithms and Legacy a biography of John Napier. My interest was that John Napier was one of my ancestors. Interesting book about how he invented logarithms partly to help him with his religious studies.

How To Run The Country, by Ian Rock & others, 2015

I have known Ian for quite a few years and we often talk on the phone about politics and economics. This book is brilliant and although the title is a bit tongue and cheek, the contents of the book is serious economics. I think it should be compulsory reading for all politicians and journalists.

Thomas Telford: Master Builder of Roads & Canals, by Anthony Burton, 2015

Thomas Telford pops up in James Caldwell's diaries when they are building the Harecastle Tunnel. This is a great biography about one of our great engineers.

Conquerors, by Roger Crowley, 2015

How Portugal Seized the Indian Ocean and Forged the First Global Empire. We all think that the British colonised the world from the 1700s onwards but about 100 years earlier, in the early 1600s, it was the Spanish and the Portuguese who were very active in this activity. Their method was very much kill and steal which was horrific but that was how things were back then. Very informative book.

Crystal Clear, edited by AM Galzier & Patience Thomson, 2015

Recommended to me by Margaret Lady Heath who was the daughter of

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William Laurence Bragg. Excellent book if you are interested in Physics but the book also gives a good overview of life in the early to mid 1900s. Also references to the New Zealand born Physicist, Lord Rutherford.

Man of Iron by Jock Vennell, 2015

The extraordinary New Zealand story of WW1 hero William Malone who had lived in Taranaki. William's portrait is in the Stratford Hall of Remembrance and the gates are dedicated to him. A statue of him was unveiled near the bridge on Broadway, 2011. I have just bought this book and I am looking forward to reading it. Many thanks to Janet King for bringing this to my attention.

Ancient Worlds: An Epic History of East & West, by Michael Scott, 2016

We all know a bit about the Greeks, the Romans and the Egyptians but what about the other civilisations. This book gives a good overview of all the ancient civilizations extending into Asia. Michael Scott came to Winchester in 2017 and gave an excellent talk in the Great Hall. This book is also excellent.

Through Spain With Wellington, by Adrian Greenwood, 2016

I had the pleasure to listen to one of Adrian's talks at the Greenjackets Museum here in Winchester in early 2016. As I mentioned, I had also come across him a few years earlier when I bought a book from him (*Leaves from My Journal*, 1852). He was a good author but sadly about a month after meeting him he was murdered during a burglary of his home.

Squadron: Ending The African Slave Trade, by John Broich, 2017

I have not met John Broich but he referenced some of my family archive and sent me a signed copy. Mentioned in the book is my great great grandfather Adm Sir Leopold George Heath who was one of the key men who finally brought slavery to an end. The book is excellent, especially as it covers a lot of history that people just are not aware of.

The Country House Library, by Mark Purcell, 2017

My interest in this book is because I have the remains of my ancestor's country house library. I have found old libraries to be fascinating and this is the only book written about the subject, that I know of. I did meet Mark Purcell at a conference here in Winchester and he was kind enough to sign my copy for me.

Charles II: Art & Power, by The Royal Collection Trust, 2017

I have listed this book, not just because it is an excellent book, but also

SOME OF THE BOOKS THAT HAVE BEEN OF INTEREST TO ME

because it was a special Christmas gift to me from my son Daniel and his lovely girlfriend Verity.

We Were A Band Of Brothers:

The Memoir of Captain Philip George Heath MC, 2017

The diary of my grandfather's cousin Philip Heath and his experience in the army in WWI. Excellent first hand account of experiences fighting in WWI.

Harecastle's Canal & Railway Tunnels, by Allan Baker & Mike Fell, 2019

The Harecastle Tunnel is located on the Trent and Mersey Canal in Staffordshire. It is an exceptionally long tunnel at 2.4km and was built by Thomas Telford in the 1820s. At the time, James Caldwell was chairman of the company and this project is mentioned extensively in his diaries. Very interesting book especially if you are interested in canals and tunnels.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have lots of people to thank, all those who helped me in New Zealand during the period 1959 to 1979 and those who have helped me over the last few months while I have been putting my story together.

Top of the list is my mother who endured all sorts of difficulties but just kept moving forward, when a lot of people in her situation might have just given up. Life for our family was very difficult but the good thing is that we all get on well and we keep in regular contact. Many thanks also to my sister Hilary and my brother Michael.

I would also like to thank all our family friends who gave us lots of help. Sadly, some have now passed away but I will record their names anyway. Ann & Don Klenner, Shirley & Warwick Martin, Denis Walker, Pat & Upham Steven and Jill & Peter Walker.

Much of my early days were of course spent at school so I would like to thank all my teachers. I was not an easy student but they all kept pushing me in the right direction. At Avon Primary School these were:

1964 Primer 1. Mrs Therkleson (Connie Therkleson).

1965 Primer 3. Mrs Bulmer (Josie Bulmer).

1966 Standard 1. Miss Barrow (Mrs Barbara Sextus).

1967 Standard 2. Mrs Brunning (Miss Johnson).

1968 Standard 3. Miss Burrows (Rae Eager).

1969 Standard 4. Mr Clarkson (Bruce Clarkson).

1970 Form 1. Miss Ryrie (Janice Ryrie).

1971 Form 2. Mr Neve (Geoff Neve).

Also a thank you to David & Dianne Roger's mother (Miria Rogers) who came to school and taught us Maori studies. The headmasters during my time at Avon were Cyril Cook up to and including 1969 and then Bob Fitzpatrick. If I could go back in time, I would like to give all these teachers 5 gold stars for their good work.

Many thanks to Lee Coles who helped put me in contact with a few of the other teachers from Avon. She also taught my brother Michael.

I would also like to thank everyone in my class at Avon. Of those who started in Primer 1 (1965), about half of us stayed right through to Form 2 (1971). We had

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pupils who joined part way through, or left part way through, and we had some who were there one moment and then gone the next. We all had good times together and bad times but we were together and it is wonderful now to look back at some of the old black and white class photographs that record a moment in time for each of those years.

Over the last few months, I have remade contact with quite a few of my fellow pupils and have had some excellent conversations and exchanges of emails. This has helped me a lot remembering all those things we did together. Many thanks to Janet King (Sulzberger), Murray Wharton and Nigel Dey who managed to send me copies of our old school photos. Also thanks to Bruce Clarkson who was able to tell me some of the funny things as viewed from the perspective of a teacher. Thanks to David Rogers, Denis Wheeler, Elizabeth Shelton-Agar (Capper), Gayll Rasmussen (Buckthought), Joe Sheehan, Prudence Walker, L'raine Eason (Hill), Carolyn Barbarich (Maaka) and Rebecca Instone (Western). Special thanks to Janet King (Sulzberger) who has also given me some excellent help with the editing.

At Stratford High School (1972) we had separate teachers for each subject and the teachers who I do remember were Mr & Mrs Gray (Music and Metalwork), Mr Rowland (Woodwork), Mr Rawlinson (Technical Drawing), Wally Caldwell (Maths), Keith Caldwell (Sports), Mrs Roberts (Science), Miss Quill (French), Mr Custer (English), Mr Wylie (Art and Stamp Club) and our form teacher Miss Cheryl Cook.

Many thanks to Colin Klenner who I had known since the age of 3 and we met up again when we started in the 3rd form at Stratford High School. Recently back in touch, Colin has given me a lot of help figuring out the names of our various teachers. Also many thanks to Deborah Van Dam who gave me a photo of 3C2 and also helped me with the names.

While at Stratford, I was a member of Cubs and Scouts. We were very lucky to have an excellent troop and this was due to all the voluntary work that the various leaders put in. I can't remember their names but I look back and I really do appreciate all that they did.

At Whanganui High School (1973–1974) my teachers were: Roy Lupton (Chemistry and the tramping club), David Lang (Physics), Colin Milne (English), Mr Walker (French), Sandra Gavin (Maths), Nigel Rankin (Maths), Doug Smellie (History), Eva Parker (Biology), Graham Wakely (Woodwork), Stan Davis (Metalwork), Don Kilpatrick (Careers Advice), Leith Power (Deputy Principal).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

And again I would like to thank all my fellow students, particularly those in my form class (4F) photo. Thanks to Tyrone Mulligan who has helped me to figure out most of the names of our fellow students appearing in the photo. Thanks also to Leith Power for his memories. Special thanks to Colin Milne who has helped me with the names and has also done a lot of excellent work helping with the final editing.

For Whanganui Collegiate (1975–1976) my teachers were: Christopher Harper (Physics), Bruce Storey (Physics), Peter Mackay (Biology), David Walker (Chemistry), Keith Hooper (Economics), Peter Irvine (Computer Studies), Alan Trist (Maths), Geoff Martel (Gilligan House Master). Many thanks also to all the students that I spent my time with particularly those in Gilligan House.

Special thanks to Geoff Martel, John Freebairn and Alan Mountfort, who I recently met up with at a School reunion. And also Michael Godfrey who I met in Napier a few years ago and we have kept in contact on facebook. Many thanks also to Richard Bourne and the staff at the excellent Collegiate School Museum.

At the University of Otago, special thanks to Professor Jack Dodd and Keith Dawber from the Physics Dept and Gloria Olive (Maths). My first year (1977) was spent living at Arana Hall and I would say thanks to everyone that I shared my first year with. I would also like to thank: Allan McRae, Jane Reddish, Judith O'Malley and Murray Simpson, for such a good year in 1978 when we shared a flat together and also to Jane Wilson and Sue Dewes who joined us the following year. While at Otago I met lots of students and some names I remember and some I don't but many thanks all. Otago was a very happy 3 years.

Extra thanks to Allan McRae who I have met up with quite a few times on various outdoor adventures in New Zealand; Tongariro Crossing, Mt Taranaki Summit, Lake Waikaremoana. Much of this book I started formulating in my mind, earlier this year, when we spent 5 excellent days canoeing down the Whanganui River. Allan told me that if I wrote a book he would definitely read it so I certainly hope I will achieve an audience of at least one.

From late 1977 to early 1980 I was a Territorial Soldier and this was a fantastic interlude. I don't remember any of the names but I do remember a lot of the excellent experiences. Thank you to everyone in the New Zealand Army and the Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment.

Lastly I would just like to thank a number of my friends who have read various versions of the story and given me a lot of very useful thoughts and comments. Thanks to Alison Simmonds, Mark Burley, Jell Ellis, Steve Feeney, Fiona Arnott

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and Pamela Hannam-Saunders. Also thanks to my cousins Tinka Walters and Claudine Brown for all their encouragement.

In this story I have done my best to present everything as it was from my perspective. I have expressed my views as I see them even if my views on occasions are not politically correct. Some people will agree with them and some people will disagree. The only other thing that I can add, is that I was there at the time and this story is all about my perceptions of what was going on around me. I hope you have found it to be of interest.

Well done for reading this far. You have now reached the end.

COVER ILLUSTRATIONS

FRONT COVER:

Upper picture is our farm house at Tuna, 1961.

Lower photo is Hilary, Michael and Jeremy inside our house at Tuna, 1961.

New Zealand postage stamp showing a map of New Zealand, 1923.

Silver teapot made by Edward & John Barnard and hallmarked London 1853. This teapot celebrated the wedding of Adm Sir Leopold George Heath and Mary Emma Marsh in 1853.

BACK COVER: PORTRAIT IMAGES.

Elizabeth Caldwell nee Stamford 1754–1831 by Joseph Wright of Derby.

Robert Crowe 1710–1786 by John Theodore Heins.

Georgiana Hesketh nee Raynsford 1819–1910 by an unknown artist.

Anne Raymond Heath nee Dunbar 1787–1842 by an unknown artist.

Anne Marsh Caldwell 1791–1874 by an unknown artist.

Henry Helsham 1767–1806 by Jacques-Gabriel Huquier.

John Hesketh 1750–1815 possibly by James Reilly.

Mrs Cuthbert lived late 1600s to early 1700s,
possibly by Johann Kerseboom.

Anne Marsh Caldwell 1791–1874 by Evelyn Mason after Osgood.

James Stamford Caldwell 1787–1858 by Thomas Phillips RA.

Amelia Marsh nee Cuthbert 1765–1793 by John Russell RA.

Robert Hesketh 1789–1868 by Thomas Hargreaves.

Richard Jones 1814–1888 by an unknown artist.

Assumed to be *Alice Crowe* nee Alpe, died 1777, by Gervase Spencer.

James Heath 1757–1834 by Richard James Lane
after the drawing by Thomas George.

Adm Sir Leopold George Heath 1817–1907 by W A Hastines.
Phyllis Hopkins, died 1795, by Abraham Daniel.
Harriet Moore nee Henderson 1779–1866 by John James Halls.
Arthur Cuthbert 1734–1788 photograph after Lemuel Francis Abbott.
James Caldwell 1759–1838 by Joseph Wright of Derby.

George Marsh 1722–1800 by Lemuel Francis Abbott.
Constance Mary Helsham Heath-Caldwell 1869–1957 by Cosway.
Mary Emma Lady Heath 1826–1902 by Julian C Brewer.
Hannah Stamford 1753–1832 by Joseph Wright of Derby.
Arthur Cuthbert Marsh 1786–1849 by an unknown artist.

Mary Graham nee Shewen 1737?–1798 possibly by Francis Cotes.
James Stamford Caldwell 1787–1858 possibly by N. Freese.
John Cuthbert 1675–1824 possibly by Johann Kerseboom.
William Marsh 1755–1846 by John Wright.
Henry Crowe 1769–1851 by Edward Kilvert.

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*One last stamp. This one showing Mt Taranaki (Mt Egmont)
from the 1935 pictorial set, 3 shillings.
This view was taken from a location near Hawera.*

