



Winter 2010

ST JOHN'S JOURNAL



By the time this issue of the Journal goes to press, Sureka, Jeyanth, Maya and I will have been in Wahroonga for five months... and what a five months it's been! A new home, a new school for Jeyanth, a new kindy for Maya, a new job for Sureka, and a new Church family for all of us. And we've been made so welcome that after just those five short months we feel right at home at St. John's – that it's the right place for us to be - that God has indeed called us to be here.

One of the great things about coming to St. John's is that so much happens because dedicated groups from the congregation take the lead, and plenty of people put their hand up to do what needs to be done. Whether it's the network of pastoral care, or providing resources to Oetapó, Exodus or Mission without Borders, or practical outreach through the Dish, or fund raising through the book sales and antiques fair, or the prayer group...

And yet with all this already happening, the congregation still seems to have the energy to throw into new activities and special events. Playjays has been a source of much excitement for me – check out Sureka and Davinia's article in this issue. And we've loved finding out more about the local area and it's inhabitants (both human and animal!) on the Cartophiles bushwalks. Easter week was a wonderful mixture of crazy busyness (remember Palm Sunday?) and moments of amazing peacefulness (lying on the beanbags for the final station of 'stations of creation' late on Friday night).

It won't surprise anyone that many of the highlights for me have involved kids – Playjays, our two family services, telling Jesus stories to groups of WPS kids who cornered me at recess, or just sitting and listening to their youthful excitement. Our connections with children and families in the area are just starting to grow in number and depth – through Church families, WPS, the Bush School, Playjays, and just spending time with the kids in the park. So many opportunities on our doorstep, that we are just starting to explore.

And that's been the greatest highlight for me - the growing sense of how positive we are as a Church about possibilities for the future. It's so often said – both in the media and within the Church – that Church life in Australia is declining, that congregations are ageing and shrinking, so it's a breath of fresh air to be in a place with ideas, energy, and, above all, faith for the future. If we just do half of the things we're dreaming about, the next five months promise to be even more exciting – and even busier – than the last.

And I pray that, in the love and power of God, we will live up to our incredible calling: to be the body of Christ here in Wahroonga.



Winter at St John's

Sunday evenings at St. John's

Each month we have four quite different gatherings on Sunday evenings at St. John's which share a common desire: to provide ways into the Gospel which are different from – and complement - the approach we take on Sunday morning.

Each gathering has a different flavour: Sacred Space is self-directed contemplative spirituality; Jazz Café is warm and mellow with a generous dash of spiritual insight; Bring and Share hunts out the most interesting speakers to appeal to heart, soul and mind; and Alternative Worship is... alternative.

Recently some of those involved in the four gatherings got together to explore how we could encourage more people, within and beyond our congregation, to have a taste of these different approaches to our faith. The result is that come the spring (probably on Sept. 26th) we'll be having a Sunday Evening special combining key elements of all four styles with a BBQ supper.

Listen out for more news in the coming weeks, and watch this space:

<http://stjohnswahroonga.org/celebration/evenings>

Hymn Books

St John's had been toying with 'Together in Song' for a couple of years with selected hymns printed in the order of service. Mary Smith changed all that in December 2009 by donating 100 copies of 'Together in Song' in memory of David. At Christmas time it became evident that more were needed and so in January an appeal went out for further donations. 60 more copies have been added to our supply and these all have inscriptions on the inside front page just as had the old Australian Hymn Book.

Another tranche is planned in order to get the total number of Hymn Books up to what we used to have. Should anyone wish to join the list of donors, please see Ted Metcalf to discuss details.

It is with grateful thanks that we would like to acknowledge a very generous donation to offset the cost of printing the St John's Journal. Past parishioners Col and Jessie Terry, who are now living in Canberra have been receiving copies of the Journal through Keith Campbell and see it as a means of keeping in touch with many old friends at St John's

Playjays



Perhaps it was a nudge from heaven at a chance meeting. Two mums, both new in Wahroonga, meet at a school function, and the conversation drifts into lamenting the lack of a good local playgroup for pre-schoolers. They talk some more, and find out that one of them used to lead their church playgroup in England, and the other is the wife of the new minister at the local Uniting church. It dawns on them that they could fix this problem together - and there begins the story of Playjays.

It took us a couple of months to sort out the details, but with a very supportive Church Council who backed the plan and gave us seed funding; a great congregational effort bringing in toys and filling the volunteers roster; invaluable advice from Judyth Roberts, the Synod Children and Families Ministry Consultant; and a fair bit of legwork scouring garage sales for toys and distributing publicity we launched Playjays on the 7th of May 2010.

We were thrilled when 15 children came to our very first Playjays, and the numbers have been growing steadily throughout term. Several families have been coming regularly and inviting their friends along. The most recent Playjays had 25 children attend, and the lower hall was definitely looking full. Its just possible that we've managed to hit on a real need in our community.

A typical Playjays session starts at 9.30am, with several play areas set up around the lower hall. The play-dough table and a large area of soft toys for babies are always there, but we try and vary other toys from week to week. One table is always set aside for a craft activity, normally something involving paint or glue or something equally messy that kids love and parents dislike doing at home. The kids enjoy unstructured play until 10.15, while the grown-ups chat over a cuppa. Davinia, Sureka & Chris focus their time on welcoming families, explaining how things work and getting to know people while two rostered helpers from St John's are always around to make hot drinks and ply people with cake. (Our helpers have been brilliant in bringing along treats). At 10.15 we sit all the kids round in a circle for a morning tea of fruit, plain biscuits & juice. After morning tea, the parents help pack up the toys into boxes, and we sit in a big circle for a sing-song and perhaps a story that takes us to home-time at 11am.

Playjays (continued)

At Playjays, we chose the 'casual' playgroup model, where families contribute \$2 and a piece of fruit when they attend, but do not have to enrol for a whole term or pay membership fees upfront. This model seems to suit people quite well. So far, feedback has been positive and it has been immensely gratifying to be organising something that has turned out to be so popular. We have met some lovely local families, and it's great to see familiar faces when we go across to the park during the week. We hope that the experience of our many rostered helpers has been as satisfying.

What next for Playjays? We've got some exciting ideas for later next term when we have the courtyard and warmer weather back, so we're saving up for some water-play tables and ride-on toys. We are also seeking feedback from the families who come as to what they would like, and wracking our brains as to how we can make the best use of our space as our numbers grow.

We are also thinking of how we can serve the young families of Wahroonga in other ways. Wahroonga seems full of families that are new to the area, many new to Australia, all of whom are juggling the challenges of parenting, work and life. We need to think deeply about how we can meet the spiritual as well as community needs of these neighbours of ours.

Sureka Goringe & Davina Inkson

Guessing Competition

These fungi were photographed in the garden of a member of the congregation in mid-June.

But whose garden were they in?

(All answers to Alison Stewart)



Reflections on WPS circa 1944/5

School took place in the Church hall. Miss Bartlett often read to us portions of post cards received from her brother who I think was away at the war. I particularly remember Miss Jones who read to us about Greek myths and legends. We learned about numbers, spelling and writing. Reading was encouraged but resources were few. My impression is that the educational philosophy exists as strongly today but how the resources have improved! Go and have a look at the new WPS.

There was a blue circle painted on the floor of the hall and a teacher played the piano while we all skipped round and round the circle. My sister thinks the skipping was interminable.

WPS was a happy place but I think play equipment was in short supply. The playground was just dust and gravel. We played marbles on the ground and got very dirty. Over in the corner of the yard there was a de-commissioned petrol pump and a mock up railway ticket office with a real destination board. My other sister thinks this was removed from Wahroonga Station as a security measure in case of invasion. The day peace was declared we all sat on the lawn in front of the Church waving flags.

After lunch a rest was mandatory and I used to lie on a stretcher bed staring up at the ceiling. Even today I see the remarkable similarity with the vaulted roof construction and how it matches the interior roof of the Church. Rev. Flockart was an imposing character. We were in awe of him and much moved by his lectures on the Christian way although I hold a better memory of the vertical stained glass window in the lower hall than I do of anything of import which he may have said to us as small children.

My special treat was to earn a ride to school atop the horse driven baker's cart which came by our house each day and proceeded down Coonanbarra Road. Other children walked hand in hand across the park after getting off the brown and yellow bus at the Station.

So many years on I am struck by the outstanding facility which WPS now is, compared with what we had back then. Nevertheless the idea that St John's provides a quality education to meet the intellectual, physical, social, cultural, moral and spiritual needs of students persists, as it has since 1926.

Ted Metcalf



Philippa Metcalf with daughter Sarah and grandchildren Philippa and Angus Rich at the Mothers' Day Celebration Breakfast. Sarah who has been a highly regarded teacher at WPS is now on leave.

Victoria Cook with Ben at the celebrations for Mothers' Day



The School Captains Benjamin Wickens and Rose Saunders at the Sunday Family Service at St John's



WAHROONGA PREPARATORY SCHOOL

The first two terms seemed to have passed very quickly with new staff joining the School and the excitement of moving into the new building. The new learning spaces are a joy for the staff and children to work in. The Library, Music room and Art room are well used by all classes and each of them has its own ambience.

Those who have had the opportunity to see the new school are aware of the atmosphere and attractive environment that the School now offers its students to learn in. This is reflected in the quality of work the students are producing and the results they are getting.

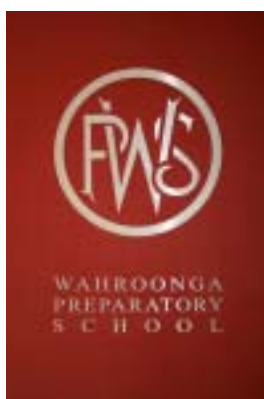
The new playgrounds with new equipment and the latest 'soft' surfaces will provide a safe environment to give a physical challenge for all the students.

Chapel Services have been well attended by the parents with Easter and Mother's Day Services being special ones. These services are prepared by: Dr Chris Goringe and myself with help from Mrs Amanda Ferreira (Music teacher) and Mrs Dawn Platt (Choir mistress). Other staff and students take part reading prayers and the Bible readings. Miss Christina Halkjaer (School secretary) prepares the Order of Service and liaises with all involved. Chapel is held three times each term and is looked forward to by staff, students and parents.

Mrs Margaret Mead (Principal) believes Religious education is vital for the student's spiritual growth and that the opportunity to worship as a school community is very important.

St John's members are always welcome to attend Chapel services. The dates and times for the third term are: Thursday 29th July at 8.45 am; Thursday 2nd September at 9.00 am (Father's Day Chapel service); and Thursday 23rd September at 8.45 am (Grandparents' Day Chapel Service).

Laurena Potter



Ruth Keir on one of her last visits to church with her daughter Virginia



Ruth Arnold Keir

4th November 1926 – 28 May 2010

Ruth Arnold was born on 4th November 1926, the second of three children who grew up on the shores of Clovelly Bay, swimming each morning, playing on the beach in the afternoons, living the quintessential Australian lifestyle growing up tall, strong and tanned. She attended Clovelly Public School where she met her lifelong friend Judy Cooper, before they both went off to SCEGGS in Darlinghurst. Here they learnt little French and less History to the great irritation of their teachers but they loved school. Here they both cemented friendships that lasted a lifetime and a lifestyle that saw them happily through the war years. They both had all the essential attributes required of Eastern suburbs debutantes of the day – good looks, a great sense of style, the ability to organise balls, cocktail parties and fundraisers and of course fabulous dresses and divine hats (which they often made themselves). Ruth didn't just party the war away. She was a VAD and worked in her father's firm, having done a business course at Miss Hales Business College in the city, where she came to know every inch of the family business – stone. This was another passion that lasted a lifetime.



She met John in the early 1950's, on a blind date at a masked ball that she and her committee of friends had organized to raise funds for a worthy cause. The rest, as they say, is history. They married in February 1954 on a day of torrential rain and gale force winds – she was drenched by the time she reached the wedding car to go to the church, needing to borrow a comb from the driver to redo her hair. The same driver who wrapped the car around a traffic light on the way back from the church in what some might think to be a not very propitious start to the rest of one's life. Ruth and John however went on to live 56 very happy, colourful but not always easy years together – two strong personalities in the one home makes for an eventful life. Naturally they had lots of parties and dinners with friends, neighbours and business acquaintances – they both loved entertaining and they both had an extraordinary knack for making friends. They both love people, genuinely finding them endlessly and deeply interesting. They love putting people in touch with other people and drinks, lunch or dinner at their house in Ada Avenue always saw a disparate but fascinating group brought together.

It needs to be said that while Ruth was a great hostess she was a tragic cook – unless of course you liked eating cake, and we children are all eternally grateful that Johnnie developed into such a fabulous cook. Together they really were the perfect couple – dinner and desert covered! Johnnie's favourite TV program in the early years of TV was probably Graham Kerr's 'The Galloping Gourmet'. Ruthie's favourite TV personality was Joe the Gadget Man. Over the 45 years they lived at Wahroonga she managed to modify almost every conceivable household appliance, and even the fabric of the house itself with her 'home handy-woman' modifications to otherwise perfectly well designed objects. Elastic bands, bobby pins, paperclips, safety pins, pieces of string and plastic bags were all pressed into service to correct or improve on the function of something that had 'been designed by a man' and could clearly have been better designed by a woman. None of her daughters or granddaughters to date has gone into engineering or industrial design, although she did encourage us all to get an education and a career. She was quite convinced that women could rule the world and usually didn't have any problem telling men that this was so.

Ruth worked in advertising for many years while also managing to be an at-home mother. This was achieved not only by her multi tasking but by teaching us to wash our own clothes, make our own lunches and walk to school. She would however, bake us gorgeous

Ruth Arnold Keir (Continued)

cakes, pick us up after school in her little blue convertible and take us swimming or on picnics, leaving no time for anything as mundane as homework.

She was creative, hardworking, organized, met her deadlines and her targets and collected yet more friends along the way. She didn't just value her clients, she cared about their businesses, their families, their health, and they knew it. This was more than business, this was the way she lived her life. She never compartmentalized things, she let it all roll together into one organic whole. It is instructive that on the day of her funeral there were colleagues from the newspaper industry for whom she was more than a co-worker, shopkeepers from the Hunter Valley for whom she was more than a customer, staff from the State Library for whom she was more than a researcher, volunteers from the hospital for whom she was more than a patient. For the family of St John's she was the person who insisted on matching tablecloths, fresh flowers and china cups. She was also the person who masterminded the piano restoration project – raising the funds and even making the cover. She was a member of the choir and she loved doing the flowers. Yet she also harassed the Parish Council until it saw the wisdom of using The Dish van to raise money for other projects. She seemed to cover both ends of everything – loving beauty and enjoyment while understanding the practical side of things, and all the time insisting on excellence in execution.

Ruth was perhaps the original exponent of 'tough love', not that she knew it as that. She was affectionate, funny, generous and kind. She could also be demanding of people and scathing in her criticisms. However she only bothered to demand things of people that she knew they could or should deliver – so you should be flattered if you were ever on the losing end. She applied the same stringent standards to herself.

While losing her sight to macular degeneration she began a research project that resulted in her cataloguing 100 years of Sydney's history in stone monuments through reading and transcribing the order books of F. Arnold & Sons, her family company. This two volume set took over 10 years of work and the final proofing was done using an enormous magnifying glass, reading one letter at a time. This took a huge effort and many would have understood her giving up, but this was a concept she just didn't understand.

She took the same approach to pancreatic cancer, becoming that one in a million person to survive more than a few weeks. She fought it for two and a half years, rarely complaining, always believing she could win yet knowing that the odds were really stacked against her. A great support to her throughout this time were her dear friends at St John's. Although she rarely came to church in this time, she was always on the phone to them, sharing a laugh, organizing a choir function, chasing up those red tablecloths and generally keeping her finger on the pulse.

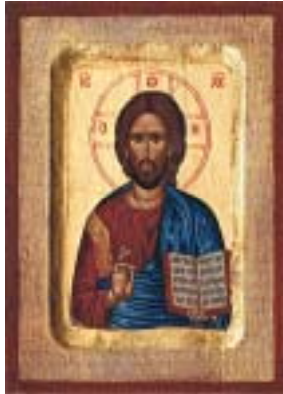
Thank you to everyone who made her final event at St John's one of such fun and beauty and laughter. For the beautiful cakes, the lovely flowers, the wonderful music - particularly for her special request 'A Stranger in Paradise' - and for all those pink scarves and shirts and jumpers – thank you. It was a wonderful way to send off one of our own.

Virginia Mitchell

“Reflection on a Greek Icon”

Rob Ferguson, Jazz Café Church 13 June 2010

During our recent trip to Turkey and Greece wherever we went in Orthodox churches we saw icons, icons of Jesus and Mary and all the disciples and of numerous saints, many that we'd never heard of. For a time they were frowned upon in the church because they were becoming idols, objects of veneration in themselves, rather than pointers to the divine. In the same way sometimes our sacred words can become misunderstood idols.



We brought home an icon, this one, which shows Jesus with the abbreviated inscription *Iesous Christos* and the words *Ὁ ὢΝ* [ho ōn]. I particularly like this one because these words *Ὁ ὢΝ* are the Greek translation of the words that God spoke at the burning bush.

When Moses asked God for his name, God replies “I am who I am”. In the Greek this is translated as “I am *Ὁ ὢΝ*”, which might be rendered in English as “I am He who is being”. Now to me today this use of ‘I’ and ‘he’ do not mean that God is a ‘he’ or even a person, however exalted, but it does point to the personal aspect of ‘Being’.

And here we have a huge difference between Greek philosophy and our faith - that of personal relationship.

And this continues to be a big difference between people of faith today and those without. As people of faith we acknowledge an awareness of divine mystery that the person without faith does not acknowledge.

Now I don't say that such a person does not have an awareness of the divine but that he does not acknowledge that awareness.

If we think of *Ὁ ὢΝ* as “He who is being” rather than ‘a being’ it does raise the question: how can we put this into words for the contemporary non-churchgoer?

I believe that one of the most pressing issues facing the church today is how to find language to reach out to the growing number of non-churchgoers for whom our faith is becoming more and more irrelevant to modern life. We ourselves know that our faith is not irrelevant, on the contrary to us it is central, but the terminology and concepts that we continue to employ are becoming increasingly outmoded to the modern ear.

We in the church have become accustomed to practising what has been termed “simultaneous affirmation and denial”.

So for example when we recite words like “born of the Virgin Mary”, on the one hand we affirm that the phrase is a 2000 year old way of saying that there was something especially inspiring about this man Jesus, while at the same time denying the literal interpretation of a miraculous birth from a virgin.

Reflections on a Greek Icon (Continued)

This is fine for us insiders but the non-churchgoer doesn't know about the semantic somersaults we are unconsciously performing when we say these words. All they hear is that we believe in a scientifically impossible virgin conception, and then they just switch off.

If we are going to use contemporary language and contemporary concepts without doing harm to our faith, then perhaps we should start right at the beginning with the use of the term God, for here again what we think we say and what others hear, may be worlds apart.

How do we explain our use of the word God to the outsider? How do we counter the simplistic popular press view that God is a capricious celestial puppet master?

If that is the only view that the great mass of the population ever hear, and I'm sure it is, it is little wonder that the concept of God is dismissed as irrational and illogical.

For as long as we use language that fails to address this misconception we will continue to provide ammunition for prominent atheists who delight in refuting the idea of such a being, and thereby rob their many listeners of faith's deep spiritual dimension.

A common definition of God is something like this one from a modern dictionary: "The supernatural being worshiped as the creator and ruler of the universe". So in the 21st Century we are still using definitions that limit our understanding of God to 'A being', admittedly a "supernatural" being, but 'A being' nevertheless. As JB Phillips would have said "that God is too small".

If we are going to be true to the enigmatic openness that we see in God's reply to Moses at the burning bush then we shall have to go beyond the limitations of the dictionary definition. Even the term "definition" is fraught with problems because it implies that we can define, or put a boundary around God.

If we go back to the burning bush, the original Hebrew "I am who I am" is not just a static, bounded, concept but actually contains the dynamic, unfinished, creative sense of "I will be what I will be". So we might say that our sacred word 'God' refers not so much to Being itself, as to Becoming, or even, the 'creative movement towards becoming'.

That of course could remain no more than a philosophical or scientific proposition unless we acknowledge the importance of our relationship with this ultimate depth of being. So to the non-churchgoer I would have to say that the religious word 'God' will remain utterly meaningless and misunderstood until you yourself sense a connection, however tenuous, with this life enhancing, welcoming and creative "Beyond in the midst of life", to use Bonhoeffer's phrase.

Reflections on a Greek Icon (Continued)

When you no longer perceive life and time and space as coldly neutral, indifferent or absurd, then you may realise that this perception may be the impetus for the affirmation “I believe in God”, which is a religious way of saying, as John Macquarrie put it, that you experience “the graciousness of Being”. Then we won’t feel a need to define God, any more than we feel a need to define Love, because this experience, this perception, this relationship, will help us sense what the term means. And this is the start of faith.

So as well as advocating sensitivity and care in our use of this sacred word ‘God’, I am suggesting that we all need to struggle to develop a vocabulary for conversing with people for whom our religious terminology has become a barrier to faith with understanding.





Ignorant superstition!
shrieks the skeptic
ablaze with irreligious fervour
hell bent on saving us
from the divine mystery of religion;
but the little wrinkled peasant lady
bowed bent from years of child bearing, family raising,
planting, weeding, tending fields more rock than soil
knows not one of his self-righteous angry words

Her furrowed face reflects the gold of the blessed icon
shadowed now as trembling lips bestow a sacred kiss
and age worn knees struggle to maintain her dignity
but she is lost in the ecstasy of the encounter
the holy mother and child
serene in succour of the humble soul
raise her up
and for one brief moment she is one with the angels
and she carries the love away
at work in her heart.

[The open pages of the Bible on the icon of Jesus have the words from Matt 11:28 "Come unto me all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest"]



Robin Mackenzie with Bob

SOME BITS OF MY LIFE

I was born at Parramatta in 1939 and spent the first few years of my life at Kenthurst, where my parents ran an orchard and poultry farm. Dad was an Englishman who had migrated to Australia to join a cousin who had a property in Kenthurst. My mother was a local girl from Annangrove, where she had lived all her life. When Dad later joined the RAAF and was stationed at Bankstown our family, which then had three children, moved to Punchbowl. I became the middle child of five when my parents had two more children to complete our family.

My education was first at the local primary school then at Bankstown Home Science School. At Bankstown I took the commercial studies course consisting of shorthand, typing, business principles and bookkeeping. After attaining my Intermediate certificate, I left school and attended a local evening college to re-learn the shorthand and typing skills I hadn't really enjoyed at school.

After leaving school I had various office jobs – as general dogsbody for an import/export company in the city and in a similar capacity for a paint company at Bankstown, as secretary to an ear nose and throat specialist in Macquarie Street and RPAH Medical Centre, then for ten years at a life office in Sydney and Melbourne. While employed at the life office in Sydney I married then separated, and in 1967 transferred to the head office in Melbourne.

Bob Mackenzie worked at the same life office in Melbourne and was one of the reasons for my transfer. We had met through the office after my marriage broke up and when I wanted to get away from Sydney, Melbourne was an obvious choice.

In the years I worked in head office, my boss was the Senior Actuary. He was a brilliant mathematician, and a most interesting man. Bob and I still visit him on our annual trips to Melbourne. One of the things I typed for him was an index of published actuarial tables which he prepared for the Institute of Actuaries of Australia and New Zealand. I was especially pleased with the result as it was typed on an ordinary electric typewriter (no computers then) and for the most part I hadn't a clue what it was all about!



In 1968 The Duke of Edinburgh's Third Commonwealth Study Conference was to be held in Australia and the Conference organisers were seeking study group secretaries from various companies here. I was asked if I would be interested in doing this job for a month. This was quite an honour as only 25 women were being recruited throughout Australia. I accepted of course, and spent part of May and June that year working in Sydney, Adelaide, Port Pirie, Port Augusta, Whyalla and finally back in Melbourne. It was a very busy time, the highlight of which was during the initial stage in Sydney when we were presented to Prince Philip – curtsy required please!

Later that year my divorce was finalised, and I finally caught Bob in December. We were married in March 1969, then in May Bob was transferred in the office to Sydney. Naturally I came too, and we have been here ever since living in the house we moved into in July that year.

In July 1970 our first child, Andrew, was born, followed by Bill in March 1972 and Scott in June 1974.

I did not work while the boys were small, but at that time, parents were encouraged to help out on occasion at the primary school, and I found myself teaching groups of Year One children how to knit, and running the infants' school library. The library was great fun, and I had the job of buying new books once a year. For a bookworm, this was a great honour and joy. I also took up swimming, teaching at the school on Saturdays, after obtaining the necessary qualification by, among other things, swimming the huge distance of one hundred metres. I do not enjoy swimming and after achieving the distance for the test I never managed to do it again. Nevertheless, I did teach some children and adults to swim.

When Scott started at infants' school, a friend who had a seriously disabled child suggested I act as a volunteer aide at her son's school, and I did this one day a week for some years. Once Scott was at high school, I started part time paid employment in Hornsby (for Peter Loxton) and continued this for about eight or nine years. Retirement came suddenly when we were arranging a trip to New Zealand and I realised I didn't really want to keep working after our return. So I gave Peter my notice and helped organise my replacement. A few years later Isabelle Limburg asked if I would like to fill in for a few weeks at Graham's office in Thornleigh. This I did on an occasional basis for a couple of years.

Our two older boys are married, and Andrew and his wife Lily have provided us with three grandchildren, Grace, Sam and Paddy. Bill and his wife Sally are yet to have any children. Scott is still footloose and fancy free!

Robin Mackenzie (continued)

My big interest now is in Merry Makers, and I spend every Saturday afternoon in the company of my friends from that group. We have some fun times together, and our concerts involve a great deal of time assisting the Administrator, Janet Macfarlane, with costumes and other necessary organising. Bob and I have travelled with the group to Toowoomba, Brisbane and Adelaide for concerts, and in September this year we are making our biggest trip ever when we go to America with the Merries for performances at Disneyland. Bob and I will also have a little time in Canada to travel on the Rocky Mountaineer from Calgary to Vancouver.

About sixteen years ago, when Bob was beginning to think about retiring, Allan Hedges asked at St John's if there were any people who would be interested in joining the State Emergency Service to work in the Operations room. We decided it would be an interesting thing to do, and would fill in some of the anticipated available time after retirement. We joined up, and James Loxton did the same at the same time. We have now all received a ten-year long service medal from SES and the National Medal from the Australian Government for fifteen years working for a volunteer organisation.

Bob and I joined St John's in 1970, and have enjoyed many ups and downs during our membership. A few of the downs have been devastating, but these have been balanced by the many ups that have presented themselves. We have many good friends at St John's and enjoy their company both on Sundays and on other social occasions. The names of some of the people mentioned in this article will be familiar to some of you, and have all been part of our happy experience as part of the extended St John's family, along with the many others who have not been named. A lot of close friendships have developed for Bob and me over the past forty years, and many of them started with meeting people at St John's. Thank you!!

Robin Mackenzie

Dr Jill Forrest AM



The congregation of St John's Wairoa would like to congratulate Dr Jill Forrest (McKerral) on the award of an AM in the Queen's Birthday awards. This was awarded to Jill for her service to medicine as an academic researcher and educator and for music as both a composer and carillon recitalist.

Do we know this pair?



Sue Craig, Brendan Puckeridge, Sue Shavikin (not from St Johns) and Aida Jenkins crossing Calna Creek.

The Cartophiles enjoying lunch at Bobbin Head in April.



The Cartophiles Bushwalking Club

St John's has grown its own bushwalking club.

In the last Journal Kit Craig asked for people who might be interested in starting a bushwalking group to contact him. There was enough interest to make a start. The club has now completed three walks and has a full schedule planned to the end of the year. Even more importantly each walk has had participation from people who are not regular members of St John's.

"I started the bushwalking group for three reasons," says Kit. "Firstly, because a number of people in the congregation had shown a real interest in hiking based on the treks Sue and I had been doing. Secondly, I saw it as an activity for the St John's community to join in beyond worship services. And finally, it's a way to reach out to people beyond the congregation and bring them into the broad family of the church. Maybe from there some of them will want to learn more about what we do and why we do it."

The club's program is to run monthly day walks that explore the lovely bush tracks in our immediate area, and from August to also introduce overnight walks leading up to a three day trek along the Six Foot Track in the Blue Mountains in November. Some of the walks are challenging but within the capability of most of the St John's congregation. All the day walks are scheduled to start mid-morning on Saturday.

On the first walk eleven Cartophiles completed the Birrawanna Loop Track in the Ku-ring-gai Chase national park. On the second eleven walkers took the Gibberagong Track along Cockle Creek to Bobbin Head. The third walk, in June, had seven Cartophiles go from Mt Ku-ring-gai station to Berowra station via Crosslands Reserve, which included the challenging steep climb from the bottom of the valley up to Berowra.

On that walk one of the participants was a lady Kit and Sue had met at their gym. She wasn't sure what to expect from a church-based hiking group.

"When she told her friends she was hiking with us, they warned her not to,' said Kit. "They told her we'd be preaching at her all the way. Of course we didn't; she really enjoyed the hike and will be coming next time.

"But the response of her friends typifies the challenges we face reaching out beyond our 'normal' congregation. I hope that the Cartophiles makes us more accessible, and then through our behaviour we can make Christianity more accessible."

Why the name 'Cartophiles'?

Kit smiles, "That's a secret revealed only to people on the walks."

You can find the schedule of walks on the St John's web site here

<http://stjohn'swahroonga.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/Cartophiles-2010-Walk-Program.pdf>

Kit can be contacted on 0411 507 422 to by email at ***cartophiles@stjohn'swahroonga.org***.



Framework for new building

New Building
(front view)



New Building
(rear view)

A Helping Hand for Oetapó School

In the last magazine article and the presentation at church on June 13th, I explained the background to our support of Oetapó and gave a little bit of an update. If you missed the presentation, you can have a look at the slides on the web, at <http://stjohnswahroonga.org/service/oetapo/>

In this article, I thought I'd talk a bit more about the background and the logistics of the coin collection & harvesting.

When the idea of supporting an East Timorese School was first discussed in November 2003, we were conscious of the need to find a way of offering long-term support that did not take money, or attention, away from our other outreach activities - support of the Exodus Foundation and the Ku-ring-gai Christian Education Association. (Since then we have also added The Dish to our outreach activities.) We came up with the thought of collecting 'little & often' - by targeting pocket change at home that wouldn't be missed day to day. Hopefully, when all put together and 'harvested' regularly, it would amount to a useful sum. Collection tins were prepared, with help from the Sunday School children, and everyone at church was invited to take a tin home and pop some coins in it from time to time. For those that prefer to donate at church, there is also a large collection tin at the back of the church, beside the flowers.

At the end of every school term, we usually have a family service. Everyone brings their collection tins to church, so that we can 'harvest' the coins, count them up and put the money into the St John's bank account. However, if you have missed a 'harvest', or your tin is full up - please just bring it along to church any Sunday morning and I'll take the contents to count & bank. I usually collect a number of tins for a week or two either side of the harvest services! (If I'm not there, the offering stewards will put it somewhere safe for me.)

Our St John's Treasurer sends the money to the Mary MacKillop Institute for East Timor (MMIET), so that they in turn can send the money off to Oetapó. Although MMIET collect money from a number of sources in Australia, it is all very carefully accounted for by Sr Josephine, so we can see that our money has gone to the Oetapó School teachers.

Money is sent regularly to Dili, where one of the nuns from MMIET arranges for the salaries to be paid to the teachers at Oetapó and the other supported schools. The teachers are paid monthly and a Oetapó teacher walks the 4 hours to Balibo to collect their salaries. When teacher training is organised, all the teachers have to walk to Balibo and back.

When we first discussed school support with Sr Josephine at MMIET, we specifically asked for some feedback to let us know how the school was progressing, so that we wouldn't just be sending money off to a faceless charity. We have over the years had many photos & reports and even some thank you letters from the children – hand-written in Tetun and translated by a MMIET staffer.

This year, has been one of big changes at Oetapó School – the school year dates were changed to align with the Southern Hemisphere school year and the new school building made 3 extra classrooms available. I am looking forward to news, after the rainy season has finished, finding out how many children were enrolled at the school and how many classes were run. With the recent building of the water pipe to the village and the construction of the new building, many children from other villages were keen to come to the school too. Please keep dropping coins in your collection tin at home – if you don't have a tin, you can collect an empty one from the Narthex, or ask me.

Thank you for your continued help – it is much appreciated by the children of Oetapó, and an investment in the future of East Timor.

Final note: a date to put in your diary - Oetapó Casserole Dinner, Saturday 11th September, more details nearer the time, or speak to Annie Loxton.

Patricia Daly



Children at Oetapo School



Class 1 in old building



Old extension building



Class 2 in old building

An update from Ian Howden

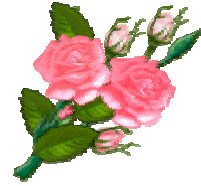
These photos show the boys at Gampong Anak (Children's Village) in Aceh repairing their bikes. Many of these bikes were donated by members of the St John's community and they have been well used by the boys. Acehnese are not used to bikes with gears and when repairs were required it did cause some confusion as seen on the face of Zakir. Zakir is one of the university students who are now running the orphanage. They are doing a wonderful job of catering for the needs of adolescent boys who would otherwise be out on the streets.



Zak helping the boys to mend the bikes at Gampong Anak



A Poem of Hope



Near shady wall a rose once grew,
Budded and blossomed
in God's free light.
Watered and fed by morning dew;
Shedding its sweetness day and night.

As it grew and blossomed fair and tall
Slowly rising to loftier height,
It came to a crevice in the wall,
Through which there shone
a beam of light.

Onward it crept with added strength,
With never a thought of fear or pride
It followed the light
Through the crevice-length,
And unfolded itself on the other side.

The light, the dew, the broadening view,
Were found the same
As they were before;
And it lost itself in beauties new,
Breathing its fragrance more and more.

Shall claim of death
cause us to grieve,
And make our courage faint or fall?
Nay, let us faith and hope receive –
The rose still grows beyond the wall....

Scattering fragrance far and wide,
Just as it did in days of yore,
Just as it did on the other side,
Just as it will for evermore.

Submitted by Gerry Cull for "The Journal"



BRING AND SHARE

We have had 5 successful evenings this year with wonderful speakers, great fellowship, fine food and universal uplift in spirits. Our new Minister Dr Chris Goringe has supported each activity and displayed his impressive computer skills in the set- up and operation of the presentation technology.

The year opened on 21 February with our own member Dr Robert McFarlane who told us of the 'small' but active Christian church in Bali. Robert also serves the UCA as Director of Continuing Education NSW Synod.

Our next speakers on 29 March were our Minister Chris and Sureka Goringe who outlined their faith journey, how they met, their courtship and how they came to grace us at St John's. A great opportunity to discover more about Chris and Sureka, and to appreciate factors which drew them together and to St John's.

On 18 April we heard from Geoff Morris about the trip he organised and hosted to Vietnam and Cambodia for members of the East Wairoona Probus Club. David and Rosemary Maclean had travelled with that group and kindly arranged for Geoff to address us as they were unable to be present on the night. Both Vietnam and Cambodia are worthy although different tourist destinations. Each in the last 40 years has undergone horrendous losses through conflict. Vietnam underwent what the locals describe as 'The American War' in which Australia played an active and costly role. But there was no apparent rancour to the Australian visitors. Cambodia saw unimaginable atrocities mostly committed on its own citizens. Both countries contain the remnants of earlier civilisations and magnificent buildings.

On 16 May Ross Duncan, St John's Member told us of his visit to Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic Islands in 1998. His photos of the ice itself, including his Russian Icebreaker vessel with its bow 'parked' on the ice, and the fascinating wildlife were stunning.

We were thrilled by Ian Gordon on 20 June with amazing insights into 'Sharks and Conservation'. Ian is Mrs Olive McCredie's nephew. She very kindly approached Ian to address our 'Bring and Share' group. Ian is a world authority, broadcaster and expedition member on these 'top-end' and essential marine predators. He showed compelling DVD clips of sharks and their behaviour in various circumstances.

In summary, 'Bring and Share' is off and running in 2010. We remain grateful to our loyal core of attendees, and the preparedness of busy speakers to give up their Sunday evenings. But we are always looking for more suitable speakers – either in-house or external. So if you know of a prospective speaker, please contact our Minister or me.

KenBroadhead



Olive McCredie listening to her nephew at "Bring and Share"



Ian Gordon showing the difference between a fossil tooth of a shark and a present day shark

The Enid Fisk Art Group

Many members of St. John's will already know about the Art Group, but some may not. It all began in 1984 when Mrs Enid Fisk, a former commercial artist who had recently retired, offered to teach painting and drawing. Anyone interested was invited to meet Enid in the Lower Hall on Thursday mornings. The first day three people came and the Art Group was formed. Over the years the number grew to about 20.

Enid Fisk proved to be a very able teacher but she did much more – she welded the people together into a very happy and caring group.

In 1995, about 2 years after I had suffered a serious stroke, I was invited by one of the members to join St. John's Art Group and immediately I felt as if I had been adopted by a loving family. I am sure this aided my recovery. When Enid died in June 1996 I felt privileged to have known her for about a year. The members of the Art Group decided they must stay together and continue to paint and Joy Giblin has been our Coordinator ever since.

Over the years a number of our members have died, some have moved away and others have been unable to continue due to failing eyesight. At the end of last year our number was reduced to three.

By changing our meeting time to Tuesday at 2pm we have gained two new members. One of these is Mrs Olive McCredie who has offered to give instruction to anyone who needs help and we are very grateful to Olive. We are hopeful that our numbers will grow again.

Today I think that I would describe St John's Art Group as a Painters' Fellowship where we enjoy painting with a caring group of friends. At present there are 6 of us and we would love to encourage new members.

Whether you have painted before or would just like to try – please feel welcome to come on Tuesdays at 2pm – 4:30pm in the Lower Hall.

Phone *Margaret Harvey* 9487 8874
Olive McCredie 9487 6778



A Tuesday evening Study Group thinking and recording activities within the St John's family

SLOW DANCE



Have you ever watched kids on a merry-go-round?
Or listened to the rain slapping on the ground?

Ever followed a butterfly's erratic flight?
Or gazed at the sun into the fading night?

*You better slow down. Don't dance so fast.
Time is short. The music won't last.*

Do you run through each day on the fly?
When you ask "How are you?" do you hear the reply?

When the day is done do you lie in your bed
With the next hundred chores running through your head?

*You'd better slow down. Don't dance so fast.
Time is short. The music won't last.*



Ever told your child, "We'll do it tomorrow"?
And in your haste, not see his sorrow?

Ever lost touch, let a good friendship die
Cause you never had time to call and say, "Hi"

*You'd better slow down. Don't dance so fast.
Time is short. The music won't last.*

When you run so fast to get somewhere
You miss half the fun of getting there.

When you worry and hurry through your day,
It is like an unopened gift - thrown away.

*Life is not a race. Do take it slower
Hear the music before the song is over.*



This poem was written by a terminally ill young teenage girl in a New York Hospital. This young girl had 6 months left to live, and as her dying wish, she wanted to send a letter telling everyone to live their life to the fullest, since she never will. She will never make it to prom, graduate from high school, or get married and have a family of her own.

She wanted to see how many people got her poem.

Please pass it on to people you know - maybe even to those you don't know!

Help the Homeless.

Thanks to all those who help us each Friday evening. The last time I was serving we fed fifteen – a record number –with fabulous food! Each week 3 people prepare a soup, a main or a dessert; it is served by 4 volunteers from at least 6 churches in the area.

What constitutes being homeless? It's easy to visualise those who are rough sleepers – but can you imagine how cold it is at night, now in mid-winter?

There are others who are “couch surfers” – they stay on the couch at a friend's house until they wear out their welcome; then they move on to another couch in another place. Many cases have occurred, since the economic downturn, of folk out of work who cannot finance accommodation costs due to job loss. NGO's in the area are faced daily with new clients who are in need of money, food. They aim to keep them in their accommodation as long as possible/practical.

Some folk are mentally, physically disabled but are unable to sustain a normal working life, nor care for themselves properly. These people come to share a wholesome meal, companionship and camaraderie.

Others are in and out of drug/alcohol rehabilitation units of our public hospitals. The aim is not to discharge these folk onto the streets and encourage them to have a clean lifestyle. For this to happen, support services need to be co-ordinated.

Currently the Hornsby Homeless Taskforce Committee is working towards helping the homeless in the area sustain a lifestyle that may permit them to apply for accommodation, perhaps pursue a course at TAFE that may help them work in a field that will give them some feeling of self-worth. For this to be effective counsellors, housing authorities, volunteers have to work together to encourage those in need.

Over 50 public housing units are to be built in Hornsby to house at least 30 displaced persons when they are completed within the next 2 years. The Federal Government is funding the building.

Help! If you wish to join the team of people preparing food, serving the homeless each Friday please talk to Alison or Janet, or make contact through “The Dish” on the website, or the Church office.

Many thanks go to the two new cooks who have joined us via Wool'n'Veft Craft Fair. We still need helpers.

Thanks for your help!

Alison Stewart

Peter and Diane Sadler's first grandchild

Tim and Pam Sadler are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Jessica Grace, on February 21, 2010. Diane and Peter Sadler are the very proud grandparents.

Long-standing members of St. John's will remember Tim from Sunday School, Scouts, and Fellowship. Tim was active in music with both Fellowship and Cow Club. Tim and Pam were married at St. John's in August 2001. They now live at Forestville, and are very involved in church life, especially music, at Naremburn/Cammeray Anglican Church.



Elvington (Yorkshire)

“Though I take the wings of darkness
And remain in the uttermost parts of the sky
Thy right hand shall hold me.”

From those of us
held safe by your right hand
who gratefully saw bright dawns replace
the seemingly endless dark of skies
we give our thanks.

For those of us
our friends, our foes also,
lost in those friendless seas of night
blest by your left hand, may they be
safely at rest.

I fly no more
on wings of the darkness,
still let your right hand holding mine
guide me on as evening comes
and day's light dims.

Memorial plaque at former R.A.F. Station Elvington (Yorkshire)
(c.f. Psalm 139)

Forwarded by Keith Campbell



Some Important Memories Concerning My Family

I was born on September the 29th 1927, in a small private hospital, ‘Rothsay’ at Dubbo, which at that time, was a minor town at the foot of the Western Plains, known, also, as “The Hub of the West”. My father, was a Pharmacist, and he and my mother were tenants of a cottage in Gipps Street. The medical practitioner for my birth, Dr. W. Flower, was a friend of my parents and was assisted by Nurse Toomy.

The original birth certificate was printed in the office of the District Registrar, Mr. Clive Pickup, and signed by William A. Hicks at the Dubbo Court House. My parents were able to arrange for a new brick and tile house to be constructed in Dubbo on a street quite close to the town, at 117 Cobra Street, (now renumbered 119), also known as Wellington Road. The house served well for many years and remains, I believe, in good condition, with a large front and back garden. The climate of this area was very hot in summer and cold in winter. At the very back of the property there was a small orchard planted with peach, apricot and citrus trees, as well as a flourishing vegetable garden and grape vines attached to large trellises. Flowers were grown in the back, side and front gardens, with hardy lawns of buffalo grass. A hen and rooster run produced a wonderful supply of eggs for consumption and for breeding. On very hot nights we slept on the back lawn, with mosquito nets to provide protection. Dust storms were prevalent and the water supply from time to time polluted with mud and other matter from the river. Initially, there was no hot shower but a chip heater mounted at the end of the bath provided warm or hot water for this only. The sewer had not been connected, until much later, and the laundry was in a part of a fibro building at the back of the garage. A fuel copper (and a wringer) was established in a small space with piles of wood and other material, used for the fireplaces in the house, the copper and chip heater in the bathroom. Some of this fuel was kept dry in the garage, as well as in the open orchard area. Spliced pieces of pine packing cases from my father’s pharmacy in town were used as kindling.

I was sent to Dubbo Primary School, when I was 5 or 6 years young. At first, this gave little joy, but later, I found that each day produced wonders as my education commenced. Towards the end of class 4, I was examined for an O.C. Class, and enrolled into a class known as 6C, but this meant missing year 5 - a huge mistake! This class was composed of children who had a high level of intelligence as well as others who required more education for their progress. So, it was necessary for me to repeat the usual 6A class in 1939.

In 1940, I was enrolled into Dubbo High School, for class 1A, not long after the commencement of World War Two. I was quite successful in the years that followed, joining the High School Cadet Corps, with promotion, in due course, to Lance Corporal, Corporal and Sergeant. However, when in year IV, with other cadets, I was sent to Warilla Army Camp (near Wollongong) for further training. During one of these operations I had been on patrol duty and stumbled over rocky terrain, damaging my left knee. This accident changed the course of my education, for I was absent from school for many days, including surgery for an operation that in these times, would be a one day procedure. For over 5 weeks I was a patient in St. Vincent’s Hospital, Sydney, and on returning to Dubbo, the long period of convalescence meant missing over three months of the year most important for success in the Leaving Certificate in the following year.

Continued overleaf

When the Cadet Corps activities became very difficult, due to my knee problems it proved desirable to relinquish my role in the Cadet Corps. Then I joined the Royal Australian Air Training Cadet Force, trained in Parkes and Narromine and learned Morse code at the school at night and in our home. I learned to fly a Tiger Moth Aircraft at Narromine and enjoyed visiting the Air Force Stores Depot, in Dubbo, not far from our home, engaging in driving cranes and examining electronic materials and devices for I was not at all interested in combat. During my school days, my special hobby was the construction of radio receivers and then listening to short wave broadcasts from all over the world and obtaining verification cards from transmitting stations. I had a large collection of these cards mounted over the bedroom walls. Many of my receivers had been constructed from discarded parts, given to me by a local Radio Amateur, the owner of a business, and for whom I had given significant assistance in his shop and home. (VK-2AMR). I worked, also, in the workshop of another Radio Shop, owned by Max Moore, also a 'Ham'. After school and during vacations, I worked in my father's shop, in order to assist my parents with my personal requirements and further education. Other retail stores were sources of part time employment. There is far more to tell concerning my childhood and youth including the fact that I also enjoyed constructing model aircraft and constructing kites from basic materials and flying them.

At the age of about 10 years, with my three siblings, I was given the opportunity to receive instruction in theory and practical piano studies, and these proved to be quite successful. Later, my parents decided that their sons should abandon their piano lessons, with our sister, Jocelyn continuing with hers. With a different teacher she was able to gain the highest AMEB certificate. My love of music was profound, and when very much younger, was given a small harmonica, which I learned to play by intuition. This has remained a part of my musical interest, even at the age of over 82 years. I have two harmonicas, one a pocket size, and also a chromatic model. I kept a written record of the music that had I heard and enjoyed when listening to the radio or by gramophone records at school. This significant interest remains.

Many early mornings were spent riding my bicycle with a large can to collect supplies of milk, from one of my father's customers, who had a small dairy on the outskirts of the town and it was very cold in winter! The Wolf Cubs and Boy Scouts also were part of my adolescent year's activities in Dubbo, with camping excursions etc. and friendships created. During the final two years at Dubbo High School, I had served as a prefect and in the final year as vice-captain. The best sporting results were in those of swimming and life saving but I also enjoyed tennis and cricket and occasionally athletics.

During my school days I had spent part of my time, after school and during vacations, teaching many people to swim, including members of the Army Camp and Air Force Depot. Children as well as adults of all ages had been my pupils, following my receipt of the bronze medallion, bronze cross, silver medallion and Award of Merit, and Life Saving Awards. I was a member of the local swimming club, training in the early mornings, at lunch time and in the evenings. Sunday mornings meant participating in Dubbo Swimming Club Competitions and was most successful. The High School Swimming Carnivals were highlights of my years as teenager. Unfortunately the damaged knee resulted in a less ability with some of my swimming strokes. Following the conclusion of my secondary education and the gaining of my driving licence in December 1944, I travelled to Sydney, residing with my grandparents at Manly, until the rest of the family came to live in Sydney, which was after my commencement of the first term at The University.

My L.C. results, with a quota system for University entrance, then in force, were insufficient for entry into the Faculty of Medicine. However, Dentistry permitted my joining this Faculty in March 1945. Electrical Engineering and Pharmacy had also been considered, but my parents felt that Dentistry could be a better profession. My parents found it difficult to move from Dubbo, but felt that the educational opportunities for their offspring would be best achieved by a move to Sydney. Another significant factor was that the climate proved to be very difficult for my mother, due to her recurrent respiratory problems (asthma etc). The search for a suitable home was eventually made and a very old house found in Eastwood, within walking distance from the shopping centre and railway station. Initially, my father was employed by a local pharmacist, Mr. Fred Westley, and many friendships were established in this suburb.

In March 1945, I commenced studies in the Dental Faculty, with excellent results in all years. Greater success would have been possible, except for my participation in extra-curricular activities. These included The University Undergraduate Choir, lunch time music lectures, plus concerts all providing new interests for this country bred lad. The final year also required distractions, for I had been appointed Business Editor for the students' journal, "The Articulator". Many hours were spent tramping the city in order to gain advertisers who provided financial support for its publication. Obtaining photos for each final year student included visits to the company that produced the metal dyes required for photographs and organising the students for their appointments with the photographer..

During the University course, I had worked part time, performing gardening jobs, also making crystal radios for sale. Honorary teaching of swimming for the N.S.W. Amateur Swimming Association provided opportunities to travel by rail and coach to a number of country towns. The Association provided the costs of travel and the accommodation in hotels. Some towns had a river or tributary, as the sole source of water, for this activity. On occasions, when much water was released from reservoirs and dams, this made it dangerous for novice pupils. However I enjoyed meeting many folk in several towns and always hoping that I may have reduced the number of drowning fatalities. For two years, during the summer vacations, I travelled to Orange, and resided with an Aunt and Uncle, and their two sons, the purpose being to 'pick' cherries, earning some cash to assist in the purchase of text books and instruments for the dental course.

In the Summer Vacation periods for the commencement of years Three and Four, with my fellow students, I was required to attend the Dental Hospital for more practical work, additional lectures and seminars, in order to become more proficient in our careers. Of course, this extended the course to more than the original four years. Despite the distractions, mentioned before, I was able to graduate with honours class II. A better result could have been possible, except for the other activities of my life as a student, as mentioned above.

My sporting activities included swimming, cycling, cricket and tennis. I found my way to the Eastwood Presbyterian Church, joining the Youth Fellowship, and became a leader in a number of areas, and a member of the Choir. After graduating I met Eleanor Margaret Hindmarsh (she was known as Margaret), who was a student of Kindergarten Teaching, at the College in Waverley her home being in West Ryde.

When I led a study group in the Fellowship at Eastwood, she was also a member. I was attracted to this auburn haired young woman. We enjoyed music and I invited her to accompany me to a Sydney Symphony Orchestra Concert. This was the beginning of a life long friendship and the love that became so real. I spent one year at my parent's home following my graduation but became attracted to the idea of practising in a country town or city. The original plan was to do so at Culcairn, one of the towns that I had visited during my swimming teaching excursions. However, this proved not to be ideal and with the advice of Mr. Vic Jennings, was able to locate a practice in Armidale, occupied by Robert L. Currie.

During my student days, for at least two years, Robert L. Currie was the Superintendent of the United Dental Hospital. He had been a pharmacist, prior to his dental graduation. He had attended Dubbo High School, with his father being a tailor in this town. He wished to leave Armidale to return to Sydney in order to prepare for an M.D.S. degree then specialise in the field of periodontics. With a little financial assistance from my father, I was able to purchase his small practice.

When I moved to Armidale, I brought my bicycle on the train, and it was my only form of transport, except for my legs. Not long following my arrival I was appointed an honorary at the local hospital and with my bag of instruments on the bicycle rack, for many operations journeyed in the early hours of the morning to the hospital. My mother was so upset that I should have been 'so unprofessional' in using this form of transport. In due course I hired a taxi, until I bought with a loan, my first car, a Renault 760, in 1951.



Margaret and I exchanged correspondence every day except one, from the day of my arrival, until the occasions when I visited Eastwood. We continued to write until we were married at Eastwood on 29.09.1951. Our honeymoon, for about two weeks, was spent at an hotel at Southport, Queensland, but the weather was wet for much of the time. However, we were able to walk and take some bus tours.

We negotiated the purchase of a small weatherboard house, a little out of the town boundary of Armidale, this having been built by the husband one of my patients and was almost new. It was the commencement of our family life. We purchased blue 'Feltex' floor covering and some linoleum as well and at that time it seemed to be luxury! A wood fired stove was located in the kitchen. Subsequently we added an electric model, purchased for summer use. In winter the fuel stove and oven were so comfortable.

Continued overleaf

We used wood for the fireplace in the lounge room and later for another small heater in the dining room. I installed an electric radiator on the wall of the bathroom and mounted a cabinet that I had made on the wall over the sink.

The adventure into my profession was most interesting and I was able to support Margaret and our children, as they arrived. I received good accountancy advice and services from a patient, who became a special friend. We were modest in our way of life and the income was not large, but in due course, the Building Society Loan was reduced significantly following the return of loaned money to my father and father-in-law.

Through patients whom I had served, with minimum fees, many friendships were established and remain, but with rare opportunities to meet. Some were from Armidale and others, who were part of my professional life as a practitioner in Macquarie Street, Sydney, as well as from the Eastwood and Pymble practices. For twenty three and one half years, I served as the honorary orthodontist for the Spastic Centre. For twenty years I was privileged to serve as a lecturer and demonstrator for the Sydney University Post Graduate Long Orthodontic Course, and this resulted in further contacts with former students and despite differences of age, has meant a few friendships with them.

Our first born was Susan Margaret (now Noble) who resides in Armidale, where she and three of her siblings were born. Susan and another daughter, Ruth, attended the infants school in Rockvale Road Armidale, within walking distance from our timber home. The other children, who were born in Armidale, were not old enough to attend school, prior to our departure from Armidale in the autumn of 1960 and a further two children were born after we settled in Sydney.

There remains many more details to be filled in but these will have to wait for a further edition of "The Journal"

Dr William Harvey OAM

Pennies from Heaven

I found a penny today

Just laying on the ground,
But it's not just a penny
This little coin I've found.

Angels put them there.

That's what my Grandpa told me,
He said Angels toss them down
Oh, how I loved that story.

He said when an Angel misses you.

They toss a penny down,
Sometimes just to cheer you up
To make a smile out of your frown.

So don't pass by that penny.

When you're feeling blue,
It may be a penny from heaven
That an Angel's tossed to you.

Author unknown

Forwarded by Gerry Cull

STILL IN TOUCH



Around Easter time we received a charming letter from Marion Wood. It seems that she reads the Journal and hears from Helen Amor with news of happenings at St John's. She and her late husband David had been members of the congregation for 50 years before Marion moved to Woonoona 2 years ago. Nevertheless she is up to date with the arrival of Chris, Sureka and their lovely children, as well as the work done to the Manse in order to make it ready for the young family.

It is a tribute to the love Marion has for St John's that she made a donation towards the cost of manse refurbishments.

In addition to a personal letter this is now a public 'thanks'.

Thank you for being a friend

Thank you for being a friend to me when needing someone there – my failing hopes to bolster and my secret fears to share.

Thankyou for being so good to me when it was hard to know the wisest course to follow, what to do and where to go.

Thankyou for giving me confidence when I had lost me way-speaking the word that led me through the tunnel of the day.

Thankyou for all you did and said to ease the weight for me – never intruding, but there in the background, helping quietly.

Thankyou not only for sympathy in times of grief and stress-but for all you have meant to me in terms of happiness.

Many a lovely day we've known and many a laugh we've had
Thank you for being the kind of friend that shares the good and bad.

From,
Give me a Quiet Corner
By Patience Strong.

Forwarded by Pat Barringer

Another milestone for Pat





The Baptism of Ella Jessie, daughter of Nicholas and Aires Hegarty, was a specially happy day for grandmother Sandra.



Happy scenes after the service on a Sunday!





The Baptism of Samantha Elizabeth Palozzi



A lovely Baptismal photograph of Olivia Alexandra and Allegra Alina the beautiful daughters of Nicholas and Vanessa Oddone

Baptisms

- 30.5.10 Samantha Elizabeth, daughter of John and Emma Palozzi
30.5.10 Olivia Alexandra daughter of Nicholas and Vanessa Oddone
30.5.10 Allegra Alina daughter of Nicholas and Vanessa Oddone
27.6.10 Ella Jessie daughter of Nicholas and Aires Hegarty



WEDDINGS

- | | | |
|---------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 20.2.10 | Matthew Mastro and Natalie Odlum | Rev Michael Thomas |
| 27.2.10 | Campbell Marshall and Melissa Hunter | Rev Michael Thomas |
| 20.3.10 | Jonathon Tait and Kacey Ridley | Rev Dr Robert McFarlane |
| 27.3.10 | Peter Reid and Fiona Moody | Rev Dr Stephen Reid |
| 10.4.10 | Nicholas Truong and Megan Lord | Rev Michael Thomas |
| 18.4.10 | Stephen Issanchon and Alison Lette | Dr Chris Goringe |

VALE

Ruth Arnold Keir 4.6.10