

**The First 100 Years
Are The Roughest**

The Autobiography of
George Douglas Powell, Sr.

As told to
George Douglas Powell, Jr.

2005 ©

Preface to 2005 Edition

We are updating this biography to commemorate dad's 85th birthday on May 19, 2005. In the last 9 years, Dad has continued to travel not only throughout the United States but also in England, and Australia. He has also remarried.

Much of the new material in this edition chronicles his two most recent trips to England, his trip to Australia in 1996 and his remarriage to Joyce Tickner, a Native New Zealander. We have also included a brief biography of Joyce at the end of this edition.

Only one new photo has been added to this edition, Dad and Joyce's wedding picture. However, the quality of the photos is greatly improved over the last edition due to improvements in scanning technology.

This edition is being published as a paperback with 200 copies. With luck, the next edition will commemorate Dad's 100th.

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A Brief Biography of Joyce Tickner Powell

I was born about 5pm September 21st 1925 in the old Alexander Hospital an extension of the Wellington Public Hospital, Hansen Street Wellington, New Zealand. My father was Stanley Thomas Tickner and mother was Sarah Tickner (nee Howard). Both parents were from England and so were their relatives. My mother was a very strict English disciplinarian but my father was kind, affectionate and gentle. During my childhood I had many conflicts with my mother, but had a much better relationship with my father. I did not have any brothers or sisters.

My parents landed in Wellington New Zealand July 1921 from England. My father's youngest sister had married a New Zealand soldier during World War 1 while he was being treated in a local hospital for his war wounds. He was shipped back to New Zealand and my aunt followed in 1919 on a troop ship with several other English war brides. That trip was very frightening for them as the crew mutinied mid-ocean. My father's two younger brothers then went to New Zealand in 1920 and lived with my aunt and husband in a large tent with a wooden floor for 5 years on a farm 40 miles from the closest town, Wanganui. In those days the only good transport was by river boat, and that service was available certain days in the week. We admired my aunt for adapting so well to that primitive kind of life after coming from near London. Then 1921 my mother and father decided to immigrate to New Zealand and landed in Wellington July 1921. In 1928 my father's parents, youngest brother and oldest sister immigrated there too.

Christmas 1926 was my earliest memory. I had been given a tiny chocolate doll in a little bed, and I remember taking the doll out of the bed and biting the head off. I was scolded for doing this so that was my first memory also of guilt feelings. Another vivid memory was being smacked for throwing a fire shovel of dirt over my mother's beaded dress hanging wet on the clothes line. Also I do remember how their small apartment was furnished. Another memory which comes to mind was sitting on my mother's bed when the Doctor visited and was examining her. I was real scared he was harming her and told him not to touch her.

My mother was put in hospital for 6 months with Rheumatic Fever so I was put in the care of 2 different people, one being my godmother's parents. The mother (Lena Morris) of my godmoth-

er (Henrietta Louisa Morris) was a very harsh person and used to force porridge (called oatmeal in US) into my mouth in spite of my protests. It is a wonder that I ever enjoyed oatmeal after that experience but I still enjoy that cereal.

A pleasant and exciting memory was that of Guy Fawkes Day, 5th of November, which I will explain the origin of further along. Children with the help of adults made up a "guy" like a body stuffed with straw and paper and dressed in old clothes and a hat. Then it was put into a pull along cart or small wheelbarrow which the children wearing funny masks took from door to door singing

"Guy Fawkes. Guy stick him up on high and there let him die, the geese are getting fat, please put a penny in the old man's hat".

Well, the children used to collect quite a lot of money which they spent on buying fireworks. That evening there would be bonfires built in backyards and on beaches and the "Guys" would be put high up on the fire and burned. There was always great fun letting off the fireworks together with friends. Then drinks of lemonade and cookies followed.

Picnics with my parent's and their friends with children on a Sunday at a beach about 30 miles out of Wellington City were lots of fun. I would ride with the other children and my father on the back of our friend's small pickup while the 2 mothers sat in the front with the driver. I was always so happy when we were with friends, as my mother who was very restricting concerning my physical activities would be persuaded by friends to give me more freedom.

Christmastide was also a very pleasant time as I always received many gifts. Being an only child, people could afford to give to one child but not a family especially in the early 30s depression time. Christmas 1930 my parents gave me a beautiful full size dolls pram and 2 celluloid dolls, one of which was colored. My mother had dressed them and made a pretty pram cover. This pram was the only replica of one which the New Zealand Government had sent over to Princess Elizabeth (now Queen Elizabeth of England). We did not decorate much for Christmas or have Christmas trees. Christmas dinners those days were mainly roast lamb or beef with mint sauce, green peas, roast potatoes, pumpkin, and kumera (the maori sweet potato), followed with fruit salad and trifle, hot plum pudding and boiled custard

and whipped cream. Nowadays people have salads and cold cuts with cold desserts as the old English traditional dinners are no longer popular with the younger generation.

Another early memory is a ride on the first elephant brought into the Wellington Zoo. Her name was Nelliecutta, and she was imported from India in the early 1930s. I was the first child in New Zealand to have a ride on her and feed her with some green apples, probably Granny Smiths.

My best friend when I was 5 years old was the next door neighbor Dorothy Mary Lee, who was 9 months younger than me. We had so many happy hours playing together mainly at her place as she was scared of my mother. We maintained our close friendship for years until we both married and moved to different areas. However, we still contact each other occasionally. Our lives have taken totally different paths throughout the years.

In 1928 my parents had a new house built in a suburb of Wellington called Hataitai (a Maori word meaning breath of the ocean). It was a split-level with a self contained flat below and we lived upstairs. I was not allowed to play boisterous games or make much noise in fear of disturbing the people living in our flat. We were in the first row of houses on a high hill overlooking the sea, and across the water from the high security prison. What a wonderful view we had over to the ocean on the right and outer harbor on the left. On a Saturday we used to watch the yacht races from our living room windows. Below us to the right was the Patent Slip where ship parts were manufactured and some ships were repaired. It was great fishing just off the rocks below us too. Most years the wild gorse on the hill below used to catch on fire and we would be awakened and sometimes had to evacuate temporarily. As a child I found this to be very frightening.

I started school at the Hataitai Public School at the age of 5 in Primer 1. New Zealand School system has Primer 1 - 4 then Standards 1-4. Standard 5 and 6 for many years have been called Intermediate School whereas in my time we went through to standard 6 in the same school. I cannot remember actually attending school on my first day but do remember getting dressed to go there and what I wore. School was about a mile from our house so I guess my mother walked to and from the school with me for a few days.

Birthday parties were always very happy times for me being an only child as I got to play with my friends and be dressed in a special party dress. Organized games with prizes for the winners were always fun and very popular at these parties. My 10th birthday was quite a memorable one for 2 reasons. It was the biggest party I had for some reason, with many school friends, lots of goodies and gifts. We were allowed to have a lot of games which were rather noisy because the people renting our flat were away on holiday.

My mother did not ever work in New Zealand but my father being a landscape gardener in England was in high demand as such on his arrival in Wellington. He worked for many years as a bowling green keeper at the Hataitai Bowling Green. Plus he helped lay several other bowling greens and tennis courts in the Wellington area. While there he built bird avaries and created beautiful rose gardens and hydrangea hedges surrounding the bowling green.. Saturday mornings I was allowed to help with small jobs in preparation for the bowlers playing bowls that afternoon and I earned 3 shillings and sixpence for that (equal to 42cents US). That seemed a lot of money in those days. I had the pleasure of buying my first watch then with my small savings.

Memories of my early teenage years are mainly of high school. In those days in New Zealand one year of high school was considered a reasonable education for a girl enabling her to obtain a good job. I wanted to do an art course at the Wellington Technical College but my mother insisted I do a commercial course, shorthand typing etc. My real ambition was to be a commercial artist or a nurse. However, I did not aspire to either of those because of parent restrictions. Mr Reggie Ridling the High School principal after seeing samples of my art work, tried to persuade my mother to allow me to take the art course but did not succeed. Not to be daunted I did attend Saturday morning art classes at the High School. I did not learn enough there to enable me to become a commercial artist.

First year at high school all students were required to do an IQ test to determined which class they would be in. Fortunately I passed with a high percent and was put in the top commercial class.

Several of us girls from Hataitai walked together to the high school which was 5 miles each way. We had to walk through a

mile long pedestrian and vehicle tunnel which was a much shorter route than over the hill. If it was raining we had to ride in the bus then 2 different trams. Not many parents owned cars in those days, nor did any of the students. Mathematics, called arithmetic in those days, English and writing were my top subjects and I was most times top of the class in them.

One of my girlfriends used to ask me to illustrate her history and geography projects and would pay me 1 shilling equal to 12 cents US. Sometimes I would oblige her and she would get top marks for her project but I would get 2nd or 3rd place for mine as I would cut myself short of time for doing mine. A shilling seemed a lot of money in those days and would buy several tasty foods at the school cafeteria. Most days we took a "cut" lunch which was a sandwich lunch made at home. I dreaded the gym classes especially vaulting over the hobby horse in the High School gym as I had never been allowed to participate in many sports or physical activities. So occasionally I wrote notes excusing myself from those classes. I guess the teacher never realized I had written them and not my mother. Otherwise I would have been sent to the principal.

My favorite pastime was art work, painting, pastel and pencil drawing. My father and several of his brothers were really good artists so I always had plenty of encouragement from them in creative projects. Most of the books I read pertained to my High School work. Some I read only because I had to such as Shakespeare, Dickens, and English history as I found them to be rather "dry" reading. Books I preferred and enjoyed were about family life, their adventures and experiences.

I finished High School near the end of my first year as unbeknown to me at the time my mother had found me my first job without first consulting me. Many mothers did this back in those days or went with the girl when applying for their first job. It was not really the kind of job I would have chosen, serving in a shoe shop and unpacking boxes did not have any appeal. We worked a 43 hour week for 16 shillings, equal to \$1.60. I paid my mother 6 shillings a week board and kept the remaining 10 shillings for tram fare 1 shilling weekly tram ticket, and the remainder for personal expenses. Six months in that job was more than enough so I left there and went to work in a patent and trademark office which was an interesting job but much further to

travel. To save tram fares then I did plenty of walking the extra distance.

Then one of our neighbors who had an accounting business asked me to work for him, so I did just that and enjoyed the work for 14 months. Being wartime and a shortage of people in essential industry some workers in non-essential industries were manpowered into factories. Well, I was ordered along with another office worker to go into a factory. I did not like working in this place which manufactured socks, as it was such a boring repetitious job, but I had to stay there for a few months until I joined the New Zealand Land Army. I will explain about this later.

World War II was quite an anxious time for those who had relatives overseas in the various war zones and there was always the fear that the Japanese would invade New Zealand. I remember reading in the newspaper every night the long lists of casualties, it was sad.

For us girls, though, who lived in and close to Wellington and Auckland it was also quite an exciting time when the 1st Marine Division arrived in Wellington in May 1942. When they left in December the 2nd Division arrived from Guadalcanal in January 1943. I will never forget that day. Even now that memory brings up lots of emotional feelings in many of us girls. What a sight it was from the 7th floor of the building I worked in. Early afternoon 3 large ships carrying the marines slowly made their way into Wellington Harbor and docked at wharves about a mile north of the railway station. In the early 1980s the New Zealand Government erected at the wharves gates 2 large plaques honoring the arrival of the 1st and 2nd Marine divisions May 1942 and January 1943.

Late afternoon several thousand 1st Marines came off those ships and made their way into Wellington city. All vehicles, trams and buses just stopped in their tracks as those American boys just took over the streets walking everywhere so pleased to be in a peaceful land away from the war zones. When us girls left the office and started to walk home some marines came up and walked beside us asking to take us to dinner or a milk bar. Probably the first females they had seen for awhile as they had been in action somewhere in the Pacific. New Zealand people were very hospitable to those boys and even after over 60 years they are still talking about that when I occasionally talk with some of my late husband's buddies.

Of course my parents being very protective did not allow me to date any of those guys, but I sometimes found a way around that. Shorthand/typing night classes were 7 to 9 p.m. twice a week so occasionally I missed those classes and went to a film with my girlfriend and 2 marines, but only till half time. One night we were standing outside the picture theatre saying goodbye to the 2 marines when I felt a tap on my shoulder. What a shock I got when I turned around and was facing my father. What could I say to him? He had been to his Lodge meeting and called in at my typing class so we could walk through the city together, only to be told by the teacher I had missed several classes. I begged him not to tell my mother about that. I know he did not say a word to her as there were no repercussions. After that episode, I could not miss anymore classes.

I was allowed to attend an occasional dance but had to be home on the last bus at 11pm. This I found quite restricting as my friends were allowed to stay until after midnight, and I always felt the odd one. One night I missed the last bus and arrived home by taxi at 11.15pm and was met at the front door by my father who told me to "get out" which meant leave home. Although I felt hurt by his anger those words were like music to my ears. So, next morning I found an advertisement in the morning paper offering free board to a girl for minding 3 children 3 nights every week. They owned a night club in the city. I phoned the given number and arranged to see the place in my lunch hour. It was a nice home right across from the beach, so I told the lady I would move in that night.

On arriving home I packed my 2 large suitcases and when my father arrived home from work asked him to help carrying my cases on the bus and tram. He was most unhappy about this and did not approve of my decision to go, but my mother did not speak to me at all. However, he went with me and approved of the people and house. At the time I was 17 and a half and felt I could manage out on my own which I later proved I could.

At this time the 1st US Marine Division had just left New Zealand and the 2nd Division had arrived from Guadalcanal. One evening after work, I was walking through the city and met with my girlfriend and her marine friend Durwood Rhoden. We walked together as far as the Evening Post building when we met another marine friend of Durwood's. Durwood suggested to his friend (Bill Schrambling) that he partner me. We all went to din-

ner and afterwards Bill and I spent the evening together. It seemed like "love at first sight" for both of us. He had 10 days leave so we spent every night together. The nights I had to mind the children Bill came to the house. After 15 days he asked me to become engaged to him, so we were engaged on the 3rd March 1943. That was the first time I really "fell in love".

When my parents saw the engagement in the newspaper they were not at all happy, especially that it was to an American. I might mention I had not been home for 6 weeks after leaving there but had talked to my father on the phone at his work place. He told me my mother was very angry with me for leaving home so I was afraid to face her.

Bill and I dated regularly for the next 9 months and I was very sad when he left New Zealand the 29th of October 1943 especially that he would be fighting somewhere in the Pacific areas. For the next 6 months we exchanged mail, then his letters suddenly stopped but I continued to write regularly.

In the meantime I had left my factory job and joined the New Zealand Land Army. My parents would not sign papers allowing me to join any of the armed forces so I decided to join the Land Army as that did not require parent's signatures. Soon I regretted my decision as my first experience of farm life was anything but interesting and pleasant. I only stayed there for 3 weeks as the farmer's wife and conditions were rather nasty. My next farm job was hard work helping milk 60 cows and dragging drains in the hot sun, but the farmer and his wife were real nice kind people. The living conditions were real nice too. During the 6 months I was there I had a fall from the first horse I had ever ridden and suffered a back injury so had to leave.

My parents had sold their house in Wellington and were moving up to Hastings Hawkes Bay. On leaving my Land Army job I decided to go back down to Wellington on the overnight train, a journey of 10 hours. After spending a few days with my parents in Wellington we traveled up to Hastings together on the train and stayed a couple of weeks in a hotel there while my parents found a house to buy. I soon made friends with a girl I met in a grocery shop and was invited to board for awhile with her and her parents.

I could not have another Land Army job immediately so had to work temporarily in Watties canning factory as that was regarded

by the government as an essential industry. That factory had the contract for supplying all the canned fruit and vegetables to the American troops in the Pacific. The Land Army Department phoned me after about 6 weeks to say they had a farm job for me 22 miles from Waipawa a small country town 28 miles south of Hastings. I had to go there by the paper car, which delivered the newspaper twice weekly. It was wintertime, cold and bleak, and I was not given a very warm welcome when I arrived at the farm.

I might mention here that most of the sheep and cattle stations (ranch) owners were rather snobby people in those day and some still are. My room was outside of the house in the backyard, bare boards, no sheets on the bed just grey wool blankets, and a bed and cabinet for my clothes, so austere and cold. Luckily I had a package of food with me as it was after their dinner time so I was not offered any food or drink then. That night was very cold and I consequently did not sleep very comfortable. Next morning after breakfast eaten in the kitchen with their maid I was shown what my duties would be. Hand milking 2 house cows, and various other farm chores.

After the first week there I just knew I was not going to be happy there. The living and working conditions were not good and the boss's wife was a very snobby unpleasant woman to the workers. It was an awful experience. After 3 weeks I phoned the Land Army Department in Hastings and told them I could no longer tolerate the conditions at that farm. They were not very pleased about that as they had previously sent other girls out there and they all left because of the unsatisfactory conditions.

I was soon assigned to another farm job, which was 13 miles out of Hastings. This was only a temporary job for 6 week, and entailed mainly working in the garden and in the house, not much actual farm work. The living conditions were good and I was treated well. Thirty miles from Hastings, the closest town, was my next and last farm job. I was taken out there by a delivery truck that went out there twice every week with groceries etc. for farmers living in these remote areas. 12,000 acres had been left by the father and divided between three brothers, each owning different amount of acreage according to the quality of the land. Nice living conditions, but again no socializing with the farmer and family. I had to eat alone in the kitchen or my small sitting room. I was taken to town about once a week, and was told to sit

in the back seat of the car as workers did not sit in the front with the boss.

During my first week there I met the man whom I married 6 months later. He worked for one of the other brothers as a shepherd. We dated quite often for awhile before he left there to buy a haypressing business in Hastings. A few weeks after meeting David a bundle of 11 letters arrived from Bill my U.S. Marine fiancée whom I had almost given up hearing from by then. Unbeknown to me and many other New Zealand girls at the time, I learned later the marines had been fighting in the Pacific Islands for months and could not get mail out to us. Reading his letters put me into a real emotional spin because I really loved him but I knew my mother and father would not allow me to marry him until I was 21. So I regrettably wrote and told him I had met someone else. Later I was wishing I had not done that.

I still had back problems so I was able to resign from the Land Army and work for a few months in an office before getting married to David Tibbles. David and I married in St. Matthews Anglican Church Hastings New Zealand 17th February 1945. Being wartime we just had a small wedding and reception at my parent's place. At that time I had no idea or indication that David would be a wife abuser, but soon found out 24 hours after the marriage. In those days a wife put up with the abuse and hated it, but was always foolishly optimistic that life would improve.

David's haypressing partner had also married and left the business owing David a lot of money. So David and I went back out to work for the farmer where he had previously been shepherding. No electricity or car for over 6 months was rather an inconvenience for us but we survived it alright. The electric company was in the process of putting the electricity across the valley to our community so we had it installed within the 6 months.

I was asked by David's boss to feed the 2 electricians an evening dinner for those few months. Cooking on a two burner kerosene stove and oven was no simple task but I managed. We were paid 2 shillings (24cents) per man for each meal. The farmer killed his own cattle and sheep and workers paid him 2 pennies (2cents) per pound for beef, and 3 pennies (3cents) per pound for mutton or hoggett (the 2 year old lamb). They did not have a large enough refrigerator or freezer to hold the meat so it just hung out in the meat house and was cut up as required. Electricity arrived and

everyone was so thrilled to at last have a nice new electric stove and a wireless (radio). Also no more problems having to light a coleman lamp every night which I found rather frightening if David was not home when it became dark. To use the phone we had to walk over to the boss's house. Their house had 9 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and huge dining and living rooms and kitchen. Beautiful gardens and lawns surrounded the huge homestead with tennis courts in the front. In the early days weekend hunts with the hares and hounds were held there, hence the need for the 9 bedrooms for the huntsmen and wives traveling the 30 miles out from Hastings.

Our first son Gavin Donald was born in Hastings 1st January 1946. Living 30 miles away from the hospital I went down to Hastings and stayed with my in laws for 2 weeks prior to entering the hospital a few days before he was born. My husband only got to visit me twice while I was the 2 weeks in hospital, but friends and my parents were able to visit. Taking a new baby home 30 miles away from the closest town with no family nearby, no phone and no car was quite an experience. Fortunately I was able to feed the baby myself so did not have to worry about buying and making up formulas. Rose hip syrup was the approved source of vitamin C for babies in those days. Being wartime this was a problem to purchase because of rationing. There were numerous rosehip bushes alongside the fences out where we lived so I used to gather the ripe rosehips, boil them then strain the juices through a butter muslin cloth and add Glucose D. I used to have a constant supply of my own then.

Later that year we managed to buy our first car, a 1932 Plymouth sedan. How exciting it was having our own car and independence. Towards the end of 1946 David had 2 weeks holiday so we decided to look for a farm to buy. Having our own car we drove the 300 plus miles up to Auckland to see several farms in that location. Either they were too expensive or the houses and farm buildings were old and run down. So we decided to put David's name into a ballot for drawing a rehabilitation farm. Rehabilitation farms as they were called were available by ballot to returned service men. There was an average of 47 men in the ballot for each farm so we were extremely lucky to draw one in a very productive area of the Waikato, 120 plus miles south of Auckland.

In May 1947 we left Whana Whana where we had lived for over 2 years and headed up north to our farm. Everything including our 3-bedroom house was new. Being winter and a heavy rainfall the new road into our farm was inaccessible when we arrived. That was quite a problem as we had to live in converted army huts up on the hill from our farm for 6 weeks. It was cold and windy there and we had to wear our jackets inside the huts. All our cooking was done on a wood range (stove) which was also the main heating source. July we settled into our new farmhouse and began life as farm owners. David proved to be an excellent farmer, and good provider. Working long hours he became very irritable and difficult to live with so I was not a happy farmers wife, but made the best of an unhappy situation.

Malcolm Melville was born in Matamata 29th of October 1947. Matamata is a small town of about 5,000 population, one of the centers for a large dairy farming district, and 15 miles from where our farm was. Nearly 3 and a half years later our youngest son Wayne Stanley was born in Morrinsville, another small town with a large dairy factory supplied by the surrounding dairy farmers. Financially we were doing quite well on the farm and were able to do many improvements, plus build another house for a farm worker as David needed help with the increasing farm work. He had increased his herd of milking cows too.

Shortly after Malcolm was born I learned to drive our car. I soon found out it was not a good idea to have my husband to teach me to drive, so I wrote down the instructions for driving and took our car up into a newly mown ensilage paddock (pasture) several times and taught myself. Six weeks later I had my driver's license, and that was sure a happy day. Petrol was only 2 shillings (24 cents) a gallon then. 1948 we bought a new British made car a Humber 10. That car was so economical on petrol, it did nearly 40 miles to the gallon.

From 1950 onwards I had suffered several of bouts of pleurisy and pneumonitis and had been treated with various antibiotics but no doctor could find the actual cause. They just advised me to go and live in a warmer and drier climate. We employed a 50/50 share milker who moved into our place and we moved over to the new place we had built for workers. A 50/50 share milker is a farmer who buys the farm owner's stock like cows sheep, pigs etc. and farm machinery and does all the farm work including milking the cows, and has half share of the profits. This was working

well for us and we were able to buy a house by the beach down in Haumoana, Hawkes Bay.

We moved down to our place in Haumoana December 1957. David made trips up to our farm every few months and would kill and butcher a sheep to bring home and put in our large freezer. Sometimes we would have a butcher slaughter a cow from the farm and package the meat for us. In 1960 we sold our farm.

In May 1960 I had to have an upper lobectomy done on my left lung as doctors found I had a carcinoid adenoma in the upper bronchial tube. This was the first recorded one found in the lung in New Zealand at the time. This had been the cause of the repeated bouts of pleurisy and pneumonia I had over the past few years. Fortunately I was young enough to make a complete recovery and have had no recurrence.

David was fortunate in securing a job selling and servicing chain saws in a large mercantile store in Hastings, 8 miles south of Haumoana. For a while the 3 boys really missed the freedom of farm life. Once we had settled in and they had started school, and made new friends they soon adapted to life by the beach. Life was for me busier as I became involved in several community activities. David became a Rover scoutmaster for a Hastings group of 17 - 23 year old young men and often went away on weekend camp-outs with them.

Malcolm the middle boy was quite a creative child always making things from wood. At 10 years old he made and sold his first doll's house for 10 shillings (\$1.00). Both the older boys enjoyed fishing at the mouth of the river nearby, while Wayne the youngest boy spent more time at home reading or playing games with his friends. All the boys played various sports at school and most Saturday mornings too.

I look back now and realize we were perhaps rather too strict as parents, which the boys reacted to in a rebellious way at times. No doubt the two older boys also reacted to their father's physical abuse to me. Wayne was no problem at all, a very intelligent, cooperative and lovable child. He was Dux (top marks of the class in grade 8) of the school in his last year at Primary School, (Elementary School). Right through Primary School he was top of his class. Both Malcolm and Gavin were good students and were above average in their classes. Gavin spent 3 years at a

boys-only High School and gained honors in Engineering and English.

Malcolm refused to go back to High School after his 2 years was finished so we told him he either went back to school or looked for a job as an apprentice in a trade. That night he phoned 16 builders and was fortunate in getting an apprenticeship with a local building firm. He did his apprenticeship in building then went with a roofing company.

At the age of 21, Malcolm built his own four-bedroom house, quite an achievement for a young man. Most mornings he would get up real early and go work on his house until it was time for him to go to his work. Some evenings after work he would go back and work on his house again. May 1969 he married a girl called Ann Nilsson. They had 2 daughters, Belinda Maree, and Melissa Ann

In May 1973 Malcolm and Ann separated and later divorced. He married again March 1976 to Phillipa Hill. They have one son Matthew born in August 21st 1978. Matthew gained his Bachelor's degree in sports administration at Massey University in Palmerston North, and is now doing an apprenticeship in building with his father. Belinda also went to Massey University and has a Bachelor of Arts. She came over to Bethesda Maryland in 1998 to work for a family as a nanny and married 3 years ago. They now live in Rockville Maryland. Melissa married and divorced and has a son Jake 9 years old and a daughter Rose 6. They live in Flemington a few miles out of Waipukurau Hawkes Bay.

The eye specialist advised Gavin to leave High School at the end of his 3rd year and go into agricultural work, because his eyes would deteriorate if he became an engineer. Of course that did not go over at all well with Gavin. He was determined to get into an apprenticeship with an engineering company. Fortunately he was able to get an apprenticeship in engine smithing. He also became a welder/fitter in other jobs he went into.

In January 1970 at the age of 24 he married Angela Hearn and lived with us a few months while their new house was being built. They had 2 daughters Kimberly born in November 12th 1967, Sonya Kristine, born July 8th 1972, and a son Michael Wayne born May 6th 1974. A few years later they sold their house and

bought a property in Waipukurau, 35 miles south of Hastings, where he started and owned an engineering business for 7 years. They sold the business and purchased a few acres of land a few miles south of the town, and Gavin worked as a foreman for an engineering firm in Waipukurau. 1994 they sold that property and bought a book shop in Napier and a house 2 miles north of Hastings. Gavin worked for 2 different engineering firms in Napier and Hastings but had to give up engineering because of health reasons so now he is helping Angela in their book shop.

Kimberly, their oldest daughter, has lived in Sydney Australia for several years. She married in 1996 and has two sons Joel 6 and Matthew 3. Sonya left New Zealand July 24th 1992 at the age of 20 and went to England where she stayed 4 months with friends and her sister Kimberly who was then working as a secretary in London. From there together with Kim they flew over to Texas and visited with Bill and I. Kim had to leave after 3 days for Australia and Sonya stayed on with us. After a few months she met a young man from Austin Texas and later married him so then applied for her immigration. She had spent a full year with us prior to her marriage. Four years later they divorced. There were no children from that marriage. She worked as a nanny for 9 years then acquired a job training as a technician in a veterinary clinic in Austin Texas.

Michael, their only son, lived in Auckland and worked for several years as Key Accounts Manager with Telecom Yellow Pages a telephone company in New Zealand and is now one of the managers for Biolab Great Lakes in New Zealand. January 2003 he married an Indonesian girl, Fenny, who studied Accountancy at the Auckland University, and now works there as an accountant. They live in Mount Roskill a suburb of Auckland.

Wayne our youngest son took a professional course at High School and did very well in his studies. He had his heart set on becoming a Food Technologist. Unfortunately his short life came to a tragic end at the age of 16 and a half when he was killed 25th August 1967 in a tragic and freak motorbike accident. The next morning after the accident several wonderful Maori friends of ours arrived at 7am with baskets of food and their aprons ready to work at anything to help us. What a great help and comfort they were to us. Maori people are wonderful organizers among their own people. For the day of the funeral they organized all the food and outside tables and chairs from the local community hall.

Wayne was laid to rest in the Hastings cemetery. His death was a great loss to our family and his friends. Hardly a day passes even now without I have a thought about him.

For several years I had been involved in the New Zealand Play Center Pre School Movement. I attended conferences as a delegate for our Association, and was elected to a position of, New Centers officer. This entailed a lot of traveling at times as I had to help with opening new Play Centers in several areas. I also worked with the Maori Education Foundation in regard to opening new centers in predominantly Maori populated areas. This I enjoyed very much and met many interesting people. I also trained as one of their supervisors and worked for a while in one of the centers I had helped establish in Hastings.

On January 4th 1974 I left David, my first husband, and decided to end our unhappy marriage. This was quite an emotional time for both of us. At the time I was working as an assistant supervisor in the Rothmans Cigarette Company's Child Care Centre in Napier so I rented an apartment nearby. I left my home with \$209 in the bank, a small car, and household necessities, had a great sense of freedom, and did not regret my decision at all. David was very bitter about my decision, which I could understand as we had been married 29 years. However, I was not going to stay and be physically abused anymore. He pleaded for me to consider going back and trying again telling me he would never abuse me again but I knew that was not to be. We had gone to encounter groups, and married couple therapy groups gaining a lot of valuable knowledge from them but they did not help improve our relationship.

After working for 6 months in Napier I moved down to Wellington, the city where I spent my childhood and teen years. Two days after arriving there and staying with friends I had found a nice apartment and a job in an Insurance Company. I was very happy in my new abode and job. A few months later I answered an advertisement for a Laboratory Assistant in the National Health Institute. This was something I had always been interested in. Fortunately I was the lucky applicant out of 15. I had no experience in that kind of work but was willing to be trained.

Four years later I applied for a job in the Biochemistry Lab in the Wellington Hospital just across the road from National Health and was chosen for the position. This involved being in charge

of the separating department which was a very responsible job. No mistakes could be made in the separating and labeling of patients' specimens to be tested in various sections of the lab. 1980 the lab moved from the old original hospital building into a new building. Now I was asked to work in 5 different sections of the lab, the protein section being my base. I enjoyed this change and gained a lot more knowledge and experience. Plus I made some long lasting friendships during those 8 years I worked in Biochemistry. I retired in July 1986 at the age of 60.

My father had died in 1977 at the age of 86 and had left me his small beach cottage so with the money from that and my half share of the marital property I bought my own house. The house was situated in Mornington on top of one of the highest hills in Wellington. What a glorious view I had. To the left was the Wellington harbor, to the right was the ocean called Cook Strait, between the North and South Islands. Looking out of the front room windows at night I could see myriad lights in the suburbs. Often I would walk to work as it was a pleasant 2 miles downhill walk, then I would ride the bus home after work.

By 1981 I had accumulated 12 weeks vacation time so I decided I would visit my pen friend in Pennsylvania. She had visited me in New Zealand March 1977 together with a girl friend. As I still had my marine ex fiancée's aunt's address I decided to write and ask if I could visit her while over there. Although I was longing to enquire about Bill I did not, just in case it would cause trouble with him and his wife. Within a month I received a reply from his aunt telling me Bill's wife had died the previous October. Then a few days later I had a pleasant surprise when I received a letter and photos from Bill asking if he could meet me in Los Angeles on my arrival there. What a wonderful thrill this was. Of course I wrote back right away saying I would meet him in LA. Many letters and over \$1200 worth of phone calls followed over the next 13 weeks.

After about 6 weeks he asked me if I would marry him and I agreed right then. He said he had lost me 38 years previously and did not want that to happen again then. What excitement followed.

Bill then retired from the position of foreman of road making in the Yavapai County in Arizona. Even though 38 years had passed since we had last seen each other, on my arrival in LA we imme-

diately recognized each other. Apart from looking much older he was still the tall handsome guy I had fallen in love with in 1943. He asked if I would like to get married in one of the wedding chapels in Las Vegas and I agreed, as this would be such an unusual experience for me.

En route to Las Vegas we visited his oldest son William and family who lived in Lafayette California. They readily accepted me into the family. However, I soon found out four out of five of Bill's daughters were not going to accept me as part of the family even before they had actually met me. This caused most of any conflicts we had throughout the 15 and a half years we were married.

Nine days after my arrival and traveling a few hundred miles we reached Las Vegas. We applied for our marriage license that morning and arranged to be married in the Gretna Green Wedding Chapel that night. Gretna Green Chapel is the oldest one in Las Vegas. It was a very hot 108 degrees at 7pm that night June 29th when we were married. This was quite an emotional experience for both of us. Two days later we drove down into Clarkdale Arizona where Bill lived. His daughter Joan was living with him at that time too. He sold the house to Joan before we left for New Zealand.

Bill had decided to immigrate to New Zealand so had to apply for his passport and immigration papers. While he packed up his belongings to send on to New Zealand I flew up to Buffalo New York State and was met by my pen friend Shirley Cimino whom I spent the next three weeks with. We stayed that night with her aunt who lived near Niagara Falls. The next morning we crossed over the border into Canada. The next two weeks were spent driving through Ontario and staying in Montreal and Ottawa on our way over to Nova Scotia. Ottawa really appealed to me as one of the nicest and cleanest cities I had been in. A canal runs right through the city and several houseboats are anchored there with people living in them permanently. We watched the 10 a.m. changing of the guards there in front of the Houses of Parliament, which reminded me of what they do in England also.

I really enjoyed Nova Scotia. The smell from the paper mills during our visit there was quite overpowering, something I had never encountered before. On our way home through Vermont, New Hampshire and other northeast states the colors of the fall

leaves were gorgeous, something we do not see in New Zealand. I spent the last week at Shirley's home in Roulette, just a very small country town in Pennsylvania. The plane to Phoenix Arizona left from Pittsburgh so Shirley drove me down there stopping on the way to spend the night in Shippinville with her daughter Christie and family. Christie was killed in an unusual traffic accident in the late 1980s in Winchester Kentucky where the family had moved to.

Next three weeks were quite hectic especially for Bill as he was saying goodbye to many friends and some relatives feeling he might never see them again. His passport and immigration papers had arrived while I was away and he only had to ship one very large packing case.

A few emotional family good-byes and we left for Los Angeles then onto New Zealand that night. What a great welcome we got from friends in Auckland New Zealand. They had a big "welcome home" party going at my friend's home near Auckland. We were so tired after traveling so many hours and did not really feel like partying then but appreciated the effort our friend had made to welcome us home.

Bill had difficulty in finding a job in Wellington so we rented a small shop and opened a second hand shop, which Bill ran for four years. Each Saturday we would go to garage sales and buy goods to stock the shop and during the week Bill would often buy goods people brought into the shop. We had two vehicles so we would go in different directions looking for our "goodies". During the week I would work in the lab and weekends clean the shop and put out our newly acquired stock.

During the 5 years Bill lived in New Zealand we made a trip to the USA for a his Marine Battalion Company B reunion held in Chicago. 1983. It was the first reunion Bill had been to so he had not seen some of his wartime buddies for nearly 40 years. It was quite an emotional get together for everyone there.

After I retired from the lab in 1986 we decided to go to California, buy a travel trailer and towing vehicle and tour round the States for a while. One of my work mates and her 21 year-old son lived in our house while we were away and just paid the utilities. While staying with Bill's oldest son and family in Martinez, near San Francisco we found an 18 foot- travel trailer and a sta-

tion wagon to tow it. So we were soon on our way. What an adventure for me visiting 33 states, meeting some of Bill's friends and older relations, and making a few new friends. Bill's Marine reunions were held each year meeting in different states each time renewing their wartime friendships, relating memories of their wartime experiences. I still keep in communication with a few of his buddies wives. Many of the marines have since passed on.

In July 1988 we left our trailer and pickup at his uncle Leonard's place in Scottsdale Phoenix and flew back to New Zealand. By then we had decided to sell our house and apply for my immigration to live permanently in the US. Fortunately for us our house sold in 3 days after returning to Wellington. I applied for my immigration into the US and was granted it after anxiously awaiting it for 3 months. The American Consul had recently moved from Wellington up to Auckland so we both had to fly up there (500 miles) to get the final approval for my immigration. Once we arrived at the Consul's office the whole process only took 10 minutes. All that added expense for 10 minutes.

We had three big garage sales to dispose of household goods plus Bill's workshop tools. All our furniture was sold to the lady buying our house. During the last 4 months in New Zealand we toured the East Coast of the North Island from Hawkes Bay upward. This is a very picturesque part of the North Island, which Bill had not yet seen. I did most of the driving, as I am familiar with driving on some of our rough, winding and narrow New Zealand back roads. We returned to Hawkes Bay and said goodbye to my family living there and returned to Wellington to finalize our shipping arrangements for our goods plus our flights back to the US. Farewell parties and sad good-byes to friends followed through the last few weeks in New Zealand. It was kind of sad leaving my family and country I had spent 61 years in, but exciting to think about the adventure of starting a new life at 63 in the USA.

When we arrived in the Los Angeles airport I had problems with the Asian immigration officer who kept putting other foreigners ahead of me, telling me to sit down and wait till he called me. I told him I was ahead of them but that made him more annoyed, so consequently we missed our connecting flight to Phoenix. Fortunately we were able to get on the next plane leaving for Phoenix within 2 hours.

After spending a few days with Bill's uncle in Scottsdale we hitched up our trailer and headed for Austin Texas. Bill had a close Marine buddy who owned 7 acres and a holiday cabin 30 miles west of Austin where we had spent much of our time while traveling. He invited us to park our trailer on his property while we searched for a house to buy in that locality. Within a few weeks we had found a nice home which was built up on poles, overlooking the Pedernales river. Just the kind of place we liked and Bill could work on closing in the downstairs area. March 1989 we moved in there and Bill immediately went to work building a downstairs living area and workshop. He did the building part and I did the painting. Everything was completed within a year.

During our 6 years in that area we were very active in some of the community organizations, and took positions on some committees. Several of our friends with whom I keep in contact with still reside in that area. We had many happy get-togethers in that community.

One evening in February 1995 Bill asked me what I thought about selling our house and going full-time traveling on the road. Well, of course me being adventurous jumped at the idea and next morning we were in Austin looking at trailers, and motor homes. We did not see anything that appealed to us so we phoned our friends in Austin whom we knew had a motor home for sale. It was exactly what we liked so we negotiated the price with them and it was ours. Our next move was to put the house for sale. It was sold within two months. There was no problem selling all our furniture privately, so we had three large garage sales to sell the remaining household goods and Bill's workshop machinery and tools, plus several of his gun collection. Bill and I constructed a kit set storage building on a friend's property to store our surplus goods we might have needed at a later date. All that accomplished we left our home in the motor home 11th May 1995 and began our life on the road.

While staying in Dalhart North Texas we had the opportunity of meeting people at the campground who owned a 5th wheel. We really liked the idea of owning a 5th wheel so when we arrived in Colorado Springs we traded in our motor home on a brand new 32ft Coachman 5th wheel, and our car on a Dodge 3/4 ton pickup.

We traveled into several states we had not previously been in and some we had. Gavin and Angela came to the states January 1996 and stayed mainly with Sonya and David. They spent 2 nights with us while we were back in Texas then together with Sonya and David they flew to Las Vegas where we met again with them and spent a few days before taking them to the airport and saying goodbye as they were returning to New Zealand

Bill had been feeling tired and at times not well on and off for several months but had passed it off as being tired from the driving. When on our way to a campground a few miles from Moses Lake he momentarily spaced out and hit the concrete median wall damaging the 5th wheel. I then insisted he see a doctor soon as we could get into Moses Lake. What a shock we both had when the cat scan revealed a brain tumor as large as a man's closed fist. That day was the last time he could drive so I phoned our friends in Ohio and they drove over to where we were camped and towed our 5th wheel with our pickup down to Phoenix Arizona. Mayo Clinic doctors ordered biopsies to be done which revealed malignancy in all the specimens. Weeks of radiation, steroids and other medications followed but he became progressively worse with personality and physical changes and was hospitalized in Phoenix 22nd November then transferred to a rehabilitation facility where he died the 4th December 1996. He was laid to rest in the Phoenix National Cemetery.

I stayed on for two more months in the campground in Phoenix before returning to Spicewood, Texas. A friend's husband flew to Phoenix and drove my pickup towing the 5th wheel back to Texas. After spending a few weeks with my friends I had my 5th wheel towed up to a local campground where I was living for a few months.

While living there I had the opportunity of joining an HMO health insurance scheme. The representative for the HMO came out to sign me up, and while talking with me he mentioned he had been at a house the previous day and had lunch with a man who had recently returned from a 3 months holiday in Australia. Knowing I was from New Zealand he asked if I would be interested in talking on the phone about the south Pacific area with George? When he got back to his office he phoned George and asked if he would like to speak with me then phoned and gave me George's number. I phoned him and talked awhile and we both

agreed we would like to meet when we both returned from our individual trips we were taking before Christmas.

This agreed, we both went on our separated trips and on returning phoned each other and arranged a lunch together. George arrived right on time with a bouquet of flowers and his book about Australia. After telling me about the places he had visited in Australia and showing me pictures and maps in his book we went to lunch at the Iguana restaurant in Lakeway overlooking Lake Travis. The scenery was great but the meal was cold and had to be sent back and reheated and that kind of spoiled our first meal together. George was very polite and attentive, and I found him quite interesting to talk with.

Another few days went by before he phoned and invited me to his home for a meal he would be cooking. That evening Sonya had planned to visit me at the campground so George invited her to join us at his place for dinner. It was a really nice meal with a dessert to follow. Both Sonya and I were quite impressed with his cooking ability. After that evening we began to date several times and some weekends he drove his motor home out to the campground where I lived and spent a few days. I still had the pickup so we used to drive to places in that. We shared a mutual interest of traveling so used to do a few trips in George's motor home down to visit Connie in Castroville. We ate over at Connie's 5th wheel and I spent the nights with her too.

George and I grew quite fond of each other over the ensuing weeks and he then asked if I would consider marrying him. Well, after having a lot of thoughts about marrying again I agreed. He took me over to a manufacturing jeweler in Austin and had an engagement ring made as he said he wanted to do the proper thing for me a ring, with 3 purple sapphires. Maybe we hurried things along somewhat, but, we felt as we were older than most couples when marrying it would be all right. We decided to be married by a judge in Austin then later have a church wedding in Interlachen Florida. Judge Davis married us on the 6th April 1998 in Austin, with Walter and Erlene Height as our witnesses. That evening Sonya joined us all and we had a celebration dinner at a restaurant in Austin.

Tim, Melissa and Josh came over on vacation to stay with us and while there helped pack up everything in my 5th wheel so we could trade it in on a new and bigger motor home than the one

George had. It was quite a job transferring most of my stuff over into the new motor home. I then moved the remainder of my belongings into George's mobile home in Paisano Park in Austin. Quite an experience for me living in a mobile home as I had never even stayed in one before.

We told Tim and Melissa about our plans to be married in Florida and right away Melissa offered to help organize everything including the bouquets, setups etc. We gave her money and agreed to let her go ahead and do the organizing.

George used to phone all the family on weekends so I had the opportunity of at least talking with them on the phone. After the rejection from Bill's daughters I was somewhat wary of being accepted into George's family and how they would feel about their father marrying again, but my fears were soon allayed.

After a formal wedding date was decided upon and the priest in Interlachen contacted we drove the motor home to Florida, parked it at Melissa's parent's place and went to stay with Tim and Melissa so we could make final wedding arrangements. I had asked my granddaughter Sonya in Austin if she would be my matron of honor and she agreed. So we made arrangements for her to fly over to Jacksonville and also stay with Tim and Melissa. It was necessary to meet with Father O'Neill the priest chosen to marry us so we made a trip down to Interlachen two weeks before the wedding then applied for the marriage license in Palatka. Even though I am not Catholic and had no intention of becoming one he was quite happy about marrying us. He impressed me as a real informal kind of guy.

Margaret arranged for me a "welcome into the family" lunch with Katy and Ruth Ann at a Greek restaurant. After our rehearsal at the Church we all gathered at Margaret's house for the rehearsal dinner she had made for 30 people. Meeting all George's children was a very happy experience for me as I found them to be warm and friendly people.

George's four sons and three daughters plus some of the grandchildren came to the wedding. George Junior was George's best man, Sonya my Matron of Honor, and my stepson William. Schrambling stood in for my oldest son Gavin who is in New Zealand and "gave me away". At the wedding Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus formed an archway into and out of the

church. That was really quite impressive. Our reception with about 50 guests was held at the local Interlachen Community Hall. As a wedding gift Margaret kindly supplied the wedding champagne, and Ruth Ann and Wally gave us \$100 towards the wedding cake which cost \$101. George's whole family were very generous with their wedding gifts to us.

Before returning to Texas after the wedding we spent some time with Tim and Melissa. We returned to Austin and settled down to married life together trying to adapt to each other. I had lived in Texas for nearly 12 years by then so was used to the American ways of living, but George seemed to have difficulty accepting some of my New Zealand differences, especially the way I cooked. I also prepared food the American way as I enjoyed making some of the different recipes. Quite often we used to have several of George's and my friends to the house for dinner.

George belonged to a couple of RV clubs so some weekends we would pack up the motor home and drive out to meet with members at different campgrounds. Potlucks, eating out sometimes, and playing various card games filled a very enjoyable weekend. George wanted me to learn to drive the motor home, but I was not about to learn to drive it at the age of 72, nor was I happy to have George teaching me. Most husbands rarely are not good patient driving teachers for their wives.

We made several long trip in our motor home including two over to Jacksonville. It was during one of our trips over there staying with Tim and Melissa that Tim asked about us moving over to Jacksonville. I was really enthusiastic about that so we discussed it and decided to do just that.

On arriving back in Austin we put out a For Sale sign in front of our house and fortunately it sold within a few weeks. We had a few weeks before moving out so flew over to Jacksonville and spent a week with Margaret. While there Margaret drove us round the city and outer areas searching for a place to buy. We saw just the right place for us in a well-kept mobile home park. Next morning we contacted the realtor, had a look at the place and decided that was the home we wanted to buy. All the necessary business completed for buying the mobile home we returned to Austin and had to face all the packing up to be done in our place there. George had so much to sort through and pack in his com-

puter room he only left it to eat and sleep for the next few weeks while I packed the remainder of the house.

Tim was at that time working for U-haul Company so he and Marty brought over a truck and trailer to move us to Florida. Those two guys worked like Trojans loading on all our gear. Luckily we had managed to sell some of our furniture to the lady buying our place. The next morning, Tim and Marty left Austin very early and we left in our motor home towing our car later that day. It took us about 3 days driving to Florida as we were rather tired after packing up the house and organizing everything in Texas. We were not looking forward to the big job of unpacking. Ruth Ann was very helpful on several occasions, mainly weekends as she worked during the week. In fact all the family living in Jacksonville gave us a lot of help. They all treated me as one of the family and still do.

We do miss socializing with our friends back in Texas, especially my granddaughter. However, we soon became involved in community activities, mainly connected with George's church. Even though I am not a Catholic I am welcome to participate in their various activities. I cannot really say what I feel is the best thing about moving to Florida apart from the fact George is in closer proximity to some of his family and we see more of them than we did while in Texas.

My health apart from my hip problem is still very good considering I will be 79 in September (2004). Until a few months ago I had not needed to take regular medications. Persistent hip pain since my fall in September 1999 and two unsuccessful replacements has resulted in elevated blood pressure so that is the only medication I now need to have. At this stage I am not greatly concerned about my health and will tackle any future health problem appropriately if they arise. During my two hip surgeries and convalescences, George proved to be an excellent caregiver. Visiting me daily in hospital and the rehabilitation nursing home. Plus taking good care of me when I returned home. His expertise in cooking and serving is also very good. I like the fact that he is very clean in himself and his clothes. This really impressed me as many elderly men neglect this.

George is an honorable and sincere person. What I do not like and find difficult at times to deal with his lack of anger management, in other words he tends to have a short fuse. This often

causes conflict together with his gruff way of speaking which I did not hear before we married. I have a low tolerance with being told what to do or how to do something I have been doing alright for many years.

Since coming to live in Florida we have made several good friends, some of them through the Knights of Columbus. One of our friends is a lady from New Zealand whom I found through one of George's Knights of Columbus friends. They live in our area about a mile away. Strangely enough we both have the same birthdays but 16 years different in our ages. We lived in the same cities in New Zealand at the same time but not knowing this at the time.

Another of my close friends here is in our organ music classes. We have a lot in common that we share apart from our music. Before I had my second hip surgery I read in the newspaper about organ lessons for senior pupils held in one of the well known music shops. So I phoned and enquired about the beginners' class.

Several weeks later George and I went along to my first Saturday morning class. I was so surprised at the end of the class to find George signing up for classes too as he had said he would not be interested. After our first lesson, we purchased our first electronic organ, then a few months later we bought a bigger and better organ which had belonged to one of our teachers. It was amazing how well George progressed especially that he had not ever before this played a note. One of our teachers who owns the music shop had the latest Lowrey organ demonstrated at a demonstration concert and we really enjoyed it, so once again we traded for another organ this time a brand new one. The Lowrey course is easy to follow and we have two excellent teachers. Visiting representatives from Lowrey and Roland Organ Companies give free concerts at the music shop several times every year. Throughout the year we also have get together dinners and entertainment at a hotel for a moderate cost. This is for all classes. In fact we have a very active social life here.

I really cannot offer much in the way of my view on religion, as I have never got involved in any one religion. Sometimes I go along to the Catholic Church with George as I like the priest and enjoy listening to some of his sermons. There is a greater power

than our selves existing in the world but I cannot really name it God and I cannot have a blind faith in anything that is intangible.

I feel many religions were formed to keep their followers under control and on the straight and narrow path of life. Maybe this does work for many people. While in New Zealand I have been to many churches of different denominations, and they all feel their religion is the "right" one. However, I do respect George's beliefs in the Catholic Faith. He has never tried to persuade me to join the Catholic Church.

My parents were not church-goers but they did have me christened when I was 6 weeks old in the Anglican Church in Newtown Wellington New Zealand. At the age of eight I was sent to the local Methodist Sunday School as it was within walking distance and some of my school friends also attended there. Often I would observe my mother reading her bible, but she never discussed with me anything she had read or what her thoughts and feelings were. Although I lived 17 years with my parents I never really got to know and understand my mother which I feel was really sad for both of us.

Communication between human beings has always been important to me so in conclusion I have a Senegalese proverb

"Misunderstandings don't exist, only the failure to communicate exists".

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