

Byron (Buck) Buchanan QSM.



An Autobiography

“ POSMETUDE ”

Preface

Originally my autobiography was to be titled **"This too will pass "**

My story included many unfortunate incidents that had happened to me, over my lifetime, concerning friends and families. On reflection, and after my children had read the original script and discussed the contents, I could see no good would come from bringing up some of those incidents, as it may cause further ill will.

The title will now be **"Posmetude"** (positive mental attitude)

From 1953 onwards, my address in Taradale was headed, "Posmetude"

There are five simple rules to be happy.

Free your heart from hatred- forgive. Free your mind from worries – Most never happen. Live simply and appreciate what you have. Give more. Expect less.

There have been many periods in my life that I would like to have avoided, but you must look forward and not dwell on your mistakes, or those of others. Life is too short. I would like you to know that the words I use are totally my thoughts and will probably be interpreted in many ways. There is no intention to offend anybody and I have written my feelings honestly, trusting they will be taken in the best possible context.

As individuals, you the reader will judge the following pages as you see fit.

There have been some harsh words spoken over the times, made by our family, about each other's various activities. This was not unusual, as my parents encouraged us to be independent.

Brenda, my wife, and I in turn, developed those attitudes in our children.

However, when you need support in times of stress, your family are the ones that give you that support.

I had 30 wonderful years with Brenda with very few hiccups, all which were resolved because of my love and respect for her.

There have been a few turbulent periods with my lovely wife Alice. Times when we could have parted. Respect for her culture has taught me many things. I have come to appreciate the wonderful care and attention she has given me, that has sustained our relationship over the past 27 years, and I'm sure will continue into the future.

What drives your life?

Right now you may be driven by a problem, a pressure, or a deadline. You may be driven by a painful memory, a haunting fear, or an unconscious belief. There are hundreds of circumstances, values, and emotions that can drive your life.

Many people are driven by guilt. They spend their entire lives running from regrets and hiding their shame. Guilt-driven people are manipulated by memories. They allow their past to control their future.

We are products of our past, but we don't have to be prisoners of it.

Many people are driven by resentment and anger. They hold on to hurts and never get over them.

Instead of releasing their pain through forgiveness, they rehearse it over and over again in their minds.

Resentment always hurts you more than it does the person you resent. While your offender has probably forgotten the offense and gone on with life, you continue to stew in your pain, perpetuating the past.

Those who have hurt you in the past cannot continue to hurt you now unless you hold on to the pain through resentment. Your past is past. Nothing will change it. You are only hurting yourself with your bitterness.

For your own sake, learn from it, and then let it go.

Anger and resentment is like a cancer. William Ward identified the cure when he said, "Forgiveness is the key that unlocks the handcuffs of hate "

My philosophy is to have a positive mental attitude.

Byron Buchanan the Man



"This is the story of a proud member of the Buchanan Clan, who was born and lived his life as far from his Scottish heritage as it is possible to be. Nevertheless, the call of his ancestry has been a pervading influence throughout his more than 86 years and has helped to form the attitudes, standards and beliefs which have led to his success in so many bold ventures with which he has been associated. It may well be, that his sometimes uncompromising stand on matters where he holds strong feelings have 'ruffled feathers' or even caused some unhappiness, but this is the nature of the man and needs no apology."

PROFILE ON BYRON BUCHANAN

Born 11.06.1922 Christchurch

First School Riverton, Southland.

Final School. Technical College, Christchurch

Started work aged 16, Royds Bros & Kirk Ltd, Christchurch

1940 - 1943 Army in New Zealand

1943 - 1945 Army Egypt & Italy

1946 Commenced Wine & Spirit business, Wellesley Rd, Napier

1948 Married Brenda McCracken.

1948 Joined Napier Jaycees

1953 Elected to inaugural Taradale Borough Council

1953 Bought Stortford Lodge Hotel in Hastings

1962 Charter member Hastings Lions Club

1966 " president Taradale Lions Club

1969 Chairman Zone 202 B. attending Lions Clubs from Gisborne to Dannevirke

1978 Brenda passed away.

1981 Married Alice Lim

1986 Bought T & G Building, Napier (developed Great Wall restaurant)

1986 Sold Stortford Lodge Hotel to Magnum Ltd.

1990 Awarded QSM, Queens Service Medal, for services to New Zealand

1991 Chairman Tourism Hawke Bay Ltd.

1999 Sold Landmark Hotel (former T & G Building) to Mark Burt

Past president Hawke Bay Wine & Food Society

" " Napier Golf Club

" " Pania Toastmasters Club

" " Citizens and Ratepayers Association

Patron Hawke Bay Harness Racing Club

" Napier Golf Club

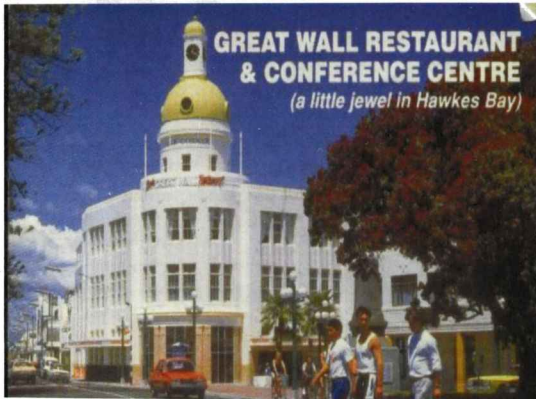
2001 President (recycled) Taradale Lions Club

2009 Enjoying life in Riversdale Lifestyle Village, Taradale

Two businesses that dictated the direction of my career



Our First Bottle Store, 1953. Stortford Lodge Hotel, Hastings



The T & G building, Napier, built in 1932.

I Purchased it, 1986. renamed it A & B Corner.

Established Great Wall Restaurant , Conference centre and accommodation

The Buchanan Coat of Arms

There is today a *Buchanan Society*, the oldest clan society in Scotland, whose Arms were registered in 1919. In 1939 a wealthy clansman bequeathed to the clan, the island of *Clairinch*, to be kept for all time as an animal and bird sanctuary. The island, so long associated with the origins of the Clan, is thus once more in Buchanan ownership in perpetuity.



The Buchanan Coat of Arms: In heraldic language it is described in the Lyon Register as Arms: Or, a lion rampant Sable, armed and languid Gules within a double tressure flory-counter-flory of the second;

Crest: A hand coupled, holding up a ducal cap proper, tassels with rose gules within two laurel branches, wreathed, disposed orleways Proper;

Supporters: Two falcons proper, perched on two blocks Proper.

Ancient Motto: Above the Crest "Audaces Juvo" (I help the brave)

Below the shield "Clarior hinc honos" (Brighter hence the honour)

Buchanan – the Clan

Several versions of the origins of the Clan Buchanan exist.

In one case, Buchanan of Auchwar traces it back to Anselan O'Kyan, son of a King of Ulster, who landed in Argyll about the year 1016. For his services against the Danes he was rewarded by King Malcolm II with the lands of Buchanan, lying to the east of Loch Lomond. According to this account the lands remained in the possession of the family for almost seven hundred years, until the death in 1682 of John, the twenty-second Laird of Buchanan.

A number of other scholars believe that the Clan originated in the middle of the thirteenth century, when the Earl of Lennox conferred upon his steward, Gilbert, a part of the lands of Buchanan, from which he took his name.

The land comprised the island of *Clairinch*, situated in Loch Lomond, and some 41,000 acres of land lying to the east of the loch. The gift of land was recorded in a charter dated 1225 and confirmed by Alexander II.

Members of the Clan have distinguished themselves in many historic battles, in particular when they supported Robert the Bruce in the struggle for Scottish Independence, and also when the Clan was represented in the force of 7,000 men sent from Scotland to assist the French King after the Battle of Agincourt in October 1415, where King Henry V soundly defeated the French.

In 1723 William Buchanan of Auchmar, a student of the genealogy of the name Buchanan, published *An Historical and Genealogical Essay Upon the Family and Surname of Buchanan*. He is said to have embarked upon his task in the hope of inheriting the lands, but seems not to have achieved his objective.

Among his comments William recorded that the Clan Buchanan was so numerous that *"The Laird of Buchanan could, in a summer's day, call fifty heritors of his own name to his house upon any occasion, and all of them might with convenience return to their homes by night, the most distant being not above 10 miles from Buchanan."*

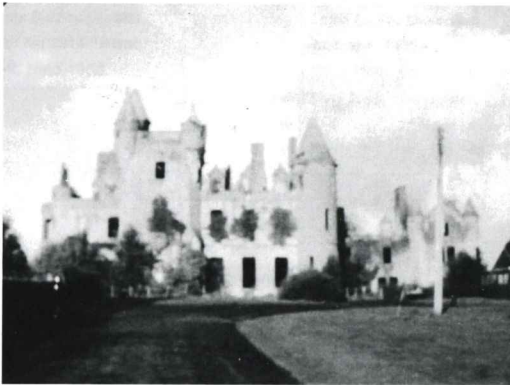


The Clan has also produced other notable men, the most illustrious being George Buchanan (1506-82) of the Drumskill line, regarded as the finest Latin scholar of the sixteenth century. He was tutor to James VI and Queen Mary, as well as Historian of Scotland.



Another, James Buchanan (1791-1868) of Ulster Scots ancestry, became the fifteenth President of the United States of America in 1857 and was succeeded by Abraham Lincoln in 1861.

In 1919 J.H. Buchanan of Leny died without issue. Since that time the Chieftainship has been dormant and the Buchanan family lands came into the possession of the Duke of Montrose, who also owns Buchanan Castle.



The ancient Buchanan castle at Drymen, near Stirling, Scotland.
To-day, much of it lies in ruins.

Ancestors



Grandpa, Duncan Buchanan and three daughters

Maud

Mabel

Max



Grandma Buchanan nee Jane McIntyre



My mother and her brothers
Harry and Karl Laurenson

Family growing up

Duncan Buchanan, born in 1855, a Scottish shoemaker, married 23 February 1877 Jane McIntyre, who was born in Tasmania, Australia.

One of their sons, Leslie Henry Buchanan, married Linda Louise Laurenson, who was daughter of Fleming Laurenson and Belinda Sophie Hellyer, They became my parents.



*Leslie Henry Buchanan. MM
Father after the 1914-18 war,
Born 1898, Died 1960.*



*Linda Louise Laurenson
Mother in 1930's
Born 1898, Died 1976*

Dad distinguished himself while in the Army as their 75 yards sprint champion.

When he returned at the end of the war, he used to run professionally for a guinea prize money to help make ends meet. He often ran against Arthur Harris who, funnily enough, like Dad became a Hastings publican, although 40 years later. Dad recalled a time when he and Arthur were in the starting blocks for a race when Arthur put him off by imitating a goat! Dad grew a beard to hide a wound he received during the war.

Dad also played rugby, representing Canterbury 1923, where he played on the wing. Dad was a great disciplinarian, but I never heard him utter a swear word. Among his many jobs he was at one time a journalist and I suppose this tempered his language, both oral and written.

I would like to record my gratitude to my Father and Mother for the training they gave me early in life, although I did not appreciate it at the time.



Dad as mine host, Stortford Lodge Hotel, Hastings



Award of the Military Medal to Bombardier Leslie Henry Buchanan, 1st New Zealand Expeditionary Forces 1917.

Copy of official citation

At Messines on 4th June 1917. This N.C.O. while taking part in a bombardment on Pettie Douve from the Front line showed conspicuous bravery in the gallant way in which he stuck to his mortar. During the second bombardment his position was destroyed by heavy shellfire. He immediately removed his mortar, complete, together with ammunition to a front line trench and reopened fire from this position. The enemy retaliation was severe, but through his coolness and tenacity he was able to fire the whole of his allotment with the best results. The Battery's expenditure for the day was 1,041 rounds. Bombardier Buchanan has always shown great gallantry and has been previously recommended for conspicuous work.

Prior to going to Messines Dad was at Gallipoli at the age of 16 years and 4 months. How he managed to hide his age, one will never know, however he was a well built lad and was accepted.

Three years later Dad was at Messines, France, at the age of nineteen and was awarded the Military Medal for bravery in the field. He was wounded on the chin by flying shrapnel, and his 'trademark' for a couple of years after the war was the 'goatee' beard he wore to cover the scars.

During World War 11, Dad enlisted in the Air Force and served time there until he was discharged because of his eyesight failure.

Note.

For those young ones reading this autobiography, I would ask you to start recording incidents and adventures you are experiencing in a diary. **Now.** Memories fade. Since writing mine I have had so many people tell me that they wish they had kept records of their lives



Buchanan family c 1935

From left top Ashton, Gloria, Byron,
Mother, Bruce, Patricia, Dad
Duncan (Mike), Pauline

I was born on 11 June 1922 in the city of Christchurch, in the South Island of New Zealand. It was said that I was such an ugly child that my mother concealed me under a blanket in my pram so as not to startle the neighbours, but this may have been just a fairy tale! I was in due course christened Byron Buchanan, a conjunction of names which may have indicated an interest by my father in one of the foremost English poets of the nineteenth century and my direct descent from one of the noble clans of Scotland

My older brother Ashton was born on April 11 1921. After attending Christchurch Boys'



Ashton & Jane

High School he went straight into the New Zealand Navy at the age of sixteen. He served on the HMS Achillies. He was discharged in 1941 suffering from tuberculosis. He spent a year in the Waipukurau Sanatorium where TB patients were kept in isolation as part of the healing process. In 1950 he married Jane Spotswood and settled in Wellington, where they had two children, Louella and Robert. Sadly, Ashton died 06.11.1962, from a combination of tuberculosis and heart failure.



Byron and Brenda



I came next, on 11 June 1922. I married Brenda McCracken 26th June 1948, and we had three children, John 06.05.1949, Linda 19.06 1951, Simon 14.08 1956. Brenda unfortunately passed away on 05.08.1978, from cancer of the Thymus gland.



Gloria, my eldest sister, was born in 1923. In 1948 she married John King, a Wine & Spirit Merchant in Wellington. They spent many years in the hotel trade, including periods in the Greenmeadows Hotel,

Napier and the Otane Hotel in Southern Hawke's Bay. Gloria died in 1975 of cerebral haemorrhage.

They adopted four children – Anthony John, Alister Karl, Anne Gloria (Penny), and Lindy Suzanne.



Bob and Pauline Smeath



Pauline

My second sister Pauline was born in 1925 and married Ian Creedon in 1948. They had two sons, Ian Leslie and Paul Bruce, who later changed his surname to Sand. In 1955 Pauline married Thorold Robert (Bob) Smeath, who had managed the Stortford Lodge Hotel for a time.

They also had two sons, John Bryan, and David Robert who died the day after birth. Pauline unfortunately died in 1976 after driving her car into a river



Molly & Mike

Duncan (Mike), the first of my younger brothers, was born in 1928.

He married Molly Tavendale and they had four children – Gary, Byron, Michelle and Louise. They lived in Hastings. Mike was a very enthusiastic amateur boxer. He leased the Te Pohue Hotel for some years. Mike passed away suddenly in 1974 as a result of a heart attack.

Byron, Mike's son, unfortunately died in an accident at sea.

My youngest brother Bruce was born in 1932. In 1961 he married Betty Young, daughter of the General Manager of the Royal Bank of Scotland. Bruce later divorced and moved to Perth, Western Australia.



Lyndsey and Bruce



Bruce, Lucy, Sam and Lyndsey

In 1978 Bruce married Lyndsey Fletcher, daughter of Sir Alan and Lady Fletcher of Mount Tyson, Queensland. They had two children, Sam, who achieved a Ph.D. in Environmental Science, and Lucy who had degrees in Art and Education and is now a teacher. Bruce and Lyndsey now live in Balmain, Sydney.



William and Patricia Stephenson



Patricia

Patricia, the last of my siblings, born in 1934, had a daughter, Giselle born 1957.

Giselle has three daughters, Joeline, Roseanne and Ruby.

Joeline & Roseanne married the brothers Turnewisch and have children.

Ruby is a late-comer, born 8.6.2003.

Later Patricia married Bill Stephenson in Auckland, with whom she had a son Byron.

Patricia sadly was killed in a motor accident on the Auckland motorway in 1974.



Roseanne,

Giselle,

Joline.



Giselle's mother, Patsy, partying.

Giselle and Ruby her daughter are now living in Alexandra, South Island.

Byron and Fiona have three lovely children. Alice & I spent a week with them in Feb 2008 during our six week tour of the South. They live in Bannockburn. Otago.

Now as I assemble the story of my life in 2009, most of my generation have passed away, Father, Mother and five siblings.

My brother Bruce in Sydney, Australia and self still enjoying life.



Brother Bruce and me. c 2006

EARLIER TIMES

I don't recall much of my early years except that we moved a lot – my mother once told me that the family moved 17 times as my father found employment in different places. I was born in Christchurch 1922, by 1927 we found ourselves in Riverton, near Invercargill. Here I attended my first school, at Riverton Rocks. Our house was right opposite the beach, and Dad used to take Ashton and me swimming every day unless the weather was too bad.

My other recollection of Riverton is of jumping onto the bumper of a car on my way home from school. The driver had just come out from the bowling club and I thought I would get a lift. I tried to jump off as the car gathered speed, but my coat caught on the car bumper and I finished up being dragged 100 yards on a gravel road until my coat tore apart. The car was travelling about 10 miles an hour.

I said nothing about this, but the story came out when my Father saw me in the bath two days later with a badly bruised back and skinned heels.

At the age of six I went to stay with Aunt Mabel Jones, my father's sister, on a cattle farm in Makarewa, Southland. Her son Cedric reminded me many years later of the day their ferocious bull escaped from the paddock. Although none of them could go near this animal, I was able to walk it back without any trouble.

I also recall that Aunt Mabel could squirt milk directly from a cow's teat into our mouths, without spilling a drop.

We moved at some stage to Anderson's Bay, Dunedin, before returning to Christchurch, where we lived at 139 River Road, Avonside.

It was here I remember that brother Bruce aged about two, managed to open a cupboard in the kitchen and pulled out a tin of caustic soda which was used for cleaning. He managed to open the tin and spilled some on the floor. It looks like sugar so Bruce put some in his mouth.

Dad had to rush him to the hospital in our big Willis Knight car to have his mouth washed and to check if any had got into his throat or stomach. He still has the scars from that accident.

We shifted from there to 183 River Road, a much larger section of one and a quarter acres, with a large two-storey house, divided into flats. It had no less than seven bedrooms, a billiards room, and a lounge. We needed a house that big to accommodate our family.

There was also a huge implement shed on the property, complete with its own toilet, left there when the original farm was sub-divided.

One of Father's bright ideas at that time, was to raise the shed, put it on steel pipes and roll it back a couple of yards to make enough room for an eight-rink bowling green. The bowling green had lights enabling it to be used at night and was probably one of the first floodlit bowling greens in New Zealand. It was hired out to banks and other organisations and there was usually a wooden keg of beer for the players to celebrate or commiserate with each other.

My job was to cut and roll the greens. We had a motor mower which was driven by electricity and you had to remember to swing the cord to the right side before you turned for each cut. A water-filled roller which was about five foot wide took a bit of moving and a bit of stopping once you got it mobile. Apart from the bowling green there was a back lawn, a front lawn, and a tennis court to mow and maintain, which took over two hours. For tending all those, I was paid sixpence.

Our house was two miles from Cathedral Square and it cost a penny for the tram fare to get there and another penny to get home. I saved this by running there and back. The Grand Theatre – or the 'flea house' as we called it – showed continuous pictures, so you could arrive at any time to see the films. Laurel and Hardy were popular, great fun, also Tom Mix, the cowboy film. I spent the twopence I had saved from the tram ride on aniseed balls, which I could share with my friends.

Transport got much better when Dad bought me my first bicycle, which cost 20 shillings.

Mother thought I had quite a good voice and arranged for me to attend the Avonside Church choir – can you imagine me as a choir-boy? I did not object because there were a couple of lovely cherry trees in the church grounds, and I was not averse to helping myself to a few, with extra to share with school-friends.

Each Monday was washing day when the copper had to be filled with water, carried bucket by bucket from an artesian well. The water was heated by a firebox which was under the copper. If we ran out of wood, we sometimes gathered from New Brighton beach for the fire to boil the water, we also dampened and rolled up newspaper, which burned slowly. Before the clothes were put in the copper, some of them had to be cleaned on a ribbed 'scrubbing board', using the bar of Velvet soap.

After rinsing in the tub, the clothes were passed through a 'wringer' or 'mangle' as it was known, a pair of wooden rollers turned by hand which squeezed out most of the water before they were hung out to dry. This whole operation took most of the morning.

The Aga stove in the kitchen needed a lot of wood to keep it hot enough for roasting or baking scones. That was another of my chores, cutting the kindling wood to start it. We stoked the stove before settling down at night, and when we got up in the morning the kitchen was always nice and warm. While it could be too hot in the summer, the warmth was a real boon on a winter morning, when we sat there eating our porridge. We had a friend who lived alongside the railway tracks. The firemen sometimes threw out lumps of coal to him as they were passing his place and we were lucky enough to have him share this with us.

Cleaning the stove was another weekly chore. Ashes and soot had to be emptied out and the stove cleaned. Zebra polish was applied in the same way as boot polish and finished with a stiff dry brush.

We had a maid Joan Borna, who came from Runanga, West Coast, and she was paid 10 shillings a week, for working five mornings, cleaning the house, scrubbing the front doorstep, polishing the floor etc.

If my memory is correct, she must have come at 7 o'clock because she made the porridge, which I hated, because it always had lumps in it.

I went to Richmond Primary School, near enough for me to run home for a sandwich and a glass of milk for lunch, and then run back past Mrs Pope's fish and chip shop for some tasty little throw-outs from the fried fish. Dad bought fish and chips sometimes for a treat.

Times were indeed tough! My favourite meal was lamb and roast potatoes and carrots, but not very fond of cabbage.

Our butcher had a Vauxhall car and sold his meat from an ice box attached at the back. He would call each Saturday morning as he was doing his rounds and I would occasionally help him with his deliveries.

Two spinsters next door had a small orchard which produced beautiful apples. I was caught one day helping myself to them and they told my Father, who gave me a hiding with his belt. This was not the only hiding I had. One other time, after two days in solitary confinement, shut in my bedroom without food, I owned up to taking some money from my Grandfather's overcoat pocket. Dad belted me with his razor strop. I also managed to get involved with a family of older boys who used to pinch cars for joy-riding. I was caught with them and got six months probation, which meant I had to report to the police once a week.

At school I remember getting strokes of the strap on my hand if I misbehaved, but I never felt any grudge because I knew I deserved it, and the remedy was in my own hands if I wished to avoid it. Today, the teacher would probably be charged with assault.

I was near top of the class at East Christchurch School but my Father decided to send me to Christchurch Technical College. My time spent there learning metalwork and woodwork taught me a lot about handling tools which has been helpful ever since. I can recall making my first tool-box of which I was very proud. Technical College had a tendency to suit those with an aptitude to practical work with their hands and it was a natural step to entering a trade.

Those academically minded attended Christchurch Boys High School and went on becoming office workers or professionals.

Like a lot of youngsters, I rebelled against the discipline imposed upon me at home and in the end I left home at the age of 16. I discovered later that this was no big deal, although it seemed be at the time.



Brenda, Byron, Father Gloria
Ashton, Jane, Mother, Patricia



Mother on left.



Byron ,Gloria ,Pauline, Ashton ,Duncan



Patricia, Gloria, Bruce



Louella, Jane, Mother,
Louella(Ashton's daughter)
Son Bob & Jock Anderson.



Gary Buchanan Molly B Bryan Smeath.

Starting Work

By 1938 I had become keen to get on with my life, and found my first job as office boy with Royds Brothers & Kirk, who were grocery wholesalers in Christchurch.

This provided my first contact with the world of food and catering, which has since dominated most of my life right up to the present time.

The best part of the job was taking orders through to the back store, where I used to grab a handful of cashew nuts as I passed by.

My pay was twenty one shillings a week, Fifteen shillings of this I paid for boarding with Mr and Mrs Cripps, relations of Sir Stafford Cripps, a leading British socialist politician and Chancellor of the Exchequer in the 1940s. Mr Cripps developed a doormat made from old car tyres and did good business with those.

I boarded with the Cripps family for about six months before moving to 139 Linwood Avenue to join the Bate household, where there were three boys of about my own age, George, Ra and Murray. Their Mum was a great lady who looked after me like one of her own. I was very fortunate to have joined their family .



George became my great mate.

George, Mum, Myself and Ra. Murray missing

We later served in Italy during World War II He was an obvious choice as Best Man at both my weddings.

George worked on the railways and I went with him on a trip to Greymouth on one occasion. We arrived around midnight and George suggested we should sample the West Coast ale. Bars were supposed to close at six o'clock, but we found a bar with quite a number of people in it. We were enjoying our beers when in walked a policeman. I was only 18 at the time, but George told me not to worry. How right he was. The policeman took off his helmet and joined the party. Things were different during those days!

Other samplings happened while Ra was learning the brewing business at Crown Brewery, Christchurch. One of his jobs was to go into the brewery and take the 'dips' to check the strength and quantity of the beer in the tanks for Customs. There was always a five gallon keg for the staff to sample, which we often enjoyed.

Murray Bate and I used to go rabbit shooting in Hurunui, near Christchurch. The farmer who owned the property had a model T Ford which he was prepared to sell to me. So there I was, aged 18 buying my first car for five pounds. I must have been pretty frugal in those days to save that amount of money.



Bill Yorston & Ra Bate

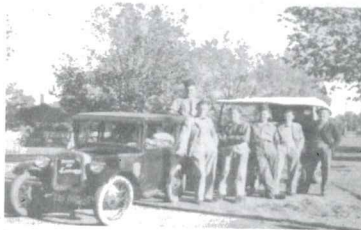


Me, Murray and the car.

A lot of fun was had in that car.

On the trip home we had so many punctures that we ran right out of repair kit.

The tyres were held onto the wheels by beaded rims, so we took them off and stuffed the tyres as full as we could with grass, and set off home. One tyre eventually came right off and we had to finish the journey driving minus tyre.



The trip to Hurunui, 1938.

Neil Arrow's Austin Seven is in front of my Model T Ford.

The group comprised Neil, Ian Bennett, Byron B, Ian Standish, Bill Yorston, Murray Bate

About six months later I bought another Model T Ford, for 7 pounds 10 shillings, but that wasn't the end of my association with these famous old cars – I bought a third one when I came back from war service, 1946, but this time I had to pay 25 pounds for it.

To-day they are worth thousands..

When the war started, petrol rationing was introduced. We supplemented our petrol supply with kerosene, a liquid fuel much used in those days to provide light or heating. I don't believe today's cars would run on this.

Cars were designed with running boards on either side to serve as a step when entering the car and also to prevent water and mud being splashed on the bodywork. Coal burners were introduced to supplement petrol, which was rationed, and were mounted on the running boards on cars

Roadside areas were set aside where motorists could stop and empty out the clinkers that were produced in the burners.

It is now 2008 and the demand for petrol is rising rapidly, that has driven the price up to two dollars a litre. I wonder if the coal burners will return?

PS. Jan 09 petrol has dropped to \$1.32 litre.!

One occasion I remember, while driving Mum Bate to the pictures, taking a shortcut through Latimer Square in Christchurch.

If you did that today I'm pretty sure you'd be disqualified for life!

We used to go to the Saturday night dances, park the car a couple of hundred yards from the hall, where we would go out during the break in the dances for a drink from a bottle of gin squash, which was hidden under the back seat.

One night a policeman caught us and asked what was in the bottle, we said squash. He smelt it and said he had a nose for gin and confiscated it.

No charges were laid. !!

In Christchurch bicycles are a popular and economical means of transport.

It was a pleasant day's ride from Cashmere, over the hills to Port Lyttleton, then on down to Sumner, and back home. Bikes had no gears in those days!

We often cycled five miles to Brighton Beach for a swim – I remember once, for a bet, peddling the whole way facing backward, sitting on the handlebars of my bike, from our house in Linwood,

Other times we would hang on to the rail on the trams and get towed along until the conductor caught us. Great fun!

Much of our spare time in those days was spent on the beach, surfing, swimming, playing volley-ball, fishing, or sometimes just lying in the long grass thinking about what life had in store for us later on.

Years later I became aware that friendships formed in adolescence, often developed bonds of trust and loyalty which, surpass those of friendships formed later in life.

The War Years

The advent of World War II in 1939, affected me as much as most other young New Zealanders.

In 1940 I joined the Territorial Army. I was attracted to the New Zealand Artillery and spent time in training camps at Wingatui, near Dunedin, Hororata, and Burnham, outside Christchurch.

At Wingatui, we went on manoeuvres with 3.7" howitzers, and not long afterwards with 18 pounders. We eventually finished up with 25 pounders and they were a great versatile gun.

In Hororata we camped for two winters under canvas at the racecourse which is about 30 miles from Christchurch where the cold winds from the Southern Alps made you wrap up well. I recall on one occasion, the wind blowing over the headquarters tent, with the office papers flying everywhere. Snow often covered the camp

One of my good mates here in camp was Ivan Wilson, whom I met again in Napier after the war.

I learned very quickly that the best job in the Artillery was that of the artificer. Their work was a specialist field, and as all the officers were not fully conversant with the mechanics of the guns, artificers became virtually their own bosses.

On one memorable occasion I poured oil down the buffer recuperator system of a 25 pounder gun and told our captain that I had to take the gun to Burnham to get it fixed. I enjoyed three glorious days of leave on the strength of this! I later attained the rank of Gun Sergeant and Acting Sergeant Major.

At Christmas time in 1942 I helped organise a 'walk-out' from the camp and was demoted for my efforts. We knew there was no possibility of our being shipped to the Middle East over this period, but the commander refused us Christmas leave, so we just formed up in columns of three and marched through the gate, straight past the guards.

There were far too many involved for us to be prosecuted, but some other leave we were due to have, was cancelled as punishment. If we had been in the British army, we would probably have been charged with desertion and shot!

During my Army service I had the experience of being 'man-powered' out to work on farms. I spent three months threshing wheat and barley, with an old coal fired traction engine, also stooking sheaves of wheat and haymaking. Often we had to go some distance to get water to fill the water cart for the traction engine. I had fun when the boss wasn't near, trying to get the horse to gallop, dragging the water cart behind it. I recall volunteering to do 'vehicle guard duty' in Hororata camp on Friday nights so that I could drain a little petrol out of army vehicles for my mate's car, to enable us to drive to Christchurch for week-end leave.

One week-end my mate had forgotten his daughter's birthday. On the way to Christchurch he spotted some new black lambs in a paddock, and decided that one of them would make a great present for her! They were very elusive and it took us 20 minutes before we collared one to give to her.

In 1943 I left New Zealand and sailed with the 10th Reinforcement, bound for Egypt on the *New Amsterdam*, a ship built to carry 2,000 passengers. We were 6,000 on board, sleeping on bunks, eight high in the theatre. It was called 'the queue ship' – as you can imagine, to cope with catering for that number, the queues were endless. I was in the beer queue one day when my superior officer spotted me. He said "*Aren't you supposed to be on gun duty?*" I replied "*Yes, but I've found a replacement*". It was a pleasure to up on deck in the clear air, so there was no shortage of volunteers for gun duty. He told me this wasn't good enough, so I was charged with 'neglect of duty' and ended up in the 'brig' for three days. Those were the best three days of the voyage! My meals were all brought to me, there was no queuing. I exercised on the Officers' Deck, and I slept in my own room, complete with fan. I never had it so good!

We had plenty of leave during our time in Cairo, but on seven shillings a day the only thing we could afford was the local beer, *Stella*. We called it 'onion juice' because that was what it tasted like!

A great trick we played after a session in Cairo was to take a '*gharry*' – the local type of horse and buggy – to the railway station. On arrival we would choose the right moment for the four of us to jump out and run for it, leaving the driver unable to chase us because he couldn't abandon his gharry. We thought this was great fun!

I was now with the 5th Field Regiment, 28th Battery. The Desert War was already over and the first real action I experienced was in Italy.

We landed at Taranto a town at the bottom of Italy. The first morning after our arrival I woke up and saw a soldier being sick – he appeared to be bringing up blood. I inquired whether he would like to see a doctor, but he declined, telling me "*It's only rooster's blood!*" – meaning '*Chianti*'. We were to see quite a lot of *Chianti* during the next two and a half years!

On one occasion we took the empty water cart to a winery in *Faenza* and filled it up with *Marsala* (a sweet wine). There were some English soldiers guarding the plant but one of us had borrowed some officers pips, so we pulled rank on them and helped ourselves.

Someone pulled out the bung and we were soon standing ankle- deep in wine, scooping it up with our helmets. On the way back to the camp the Germans sent over a barrage of shells, so we bailed out of the truck into a ditch beside the road.



This photo of me in " **the ditch**,"
taken by Tom McDonald during our trip,
40 years later.

On 3 September 1943 the Allies invaded the Italian mainland, the invasion coinciding with an armistice made with the Italians, who then re-entered the war on the Allied side.

Progress through Southern Italy was rapid despite stiff resistance by the Germans. By the end of October the Allies were facing a strongly fortified German winter defensive position, known as the Gustav Line, which stretched from the river Garigliano in the west, to the Sangro in the east. During the early months of 1944, Cassino saw some of the fiercest fighting of the Italian campaign in the town itself. The dominating Monastery Hill, providing the most stubborn obstacle encountered in the advance towards Rome. I was fortunate in having a very philosophical view of life – *if your number is up, you'll cop it* – and I still believe this. I am now over 86 and have survived two years being shot at, a plane crash, and a few near misses on the road etcetera, and have lived to tell the tale.

I lost one or two good mates, one in particular I used to go on leave with. He was a great companion, always looking for a bit of fun – he called himself '*Alan Honest Fearless Generosity Basil Brown*'. He was blown up by a German shell.

It brought home to me how tenuous life is.

The time I spent in *Cassino* was when I should have copped it. I recall the Germans shelling our position regularly. One day I was sheltering in our gun-pit during the shelling and a Pommie officer with his cane under his arm marched across in front of us. I couldn't believe it – "*Stiff upper lip, old boy!*" attitude!

It was a terrible sight to see the monastery at *Cassino* being bombed. President Roosevelt in July 1943 assured the Pope that, as far as it lay within the power of the Allies, churches and religious institutions would be spared the devastation of war during the fighting ahead.

D'arcy Osbourne, British Minister to the Holy See, informed the Cardinal Secretary of State in the Vatican, that if the Germans used the Monastery for military purposes, the Allies would be obliged to take whatever counter-measures, aerial or other, their own military necessity might require. But the phrase "*military necessity*" is sometimes used where it would be more truthful to speak of '*military convenience*'.



*Four of us on
leave in Rome.
Jim Bennett,
Colin Anderson,
Colin Mather,
Byron B on right.*

I spent four months of that winter living in a slit trench under canvas, trying to keep warm, in between servicing our 25 pounder artillery guns. The snow, hail, rain and mud as well as the constant shelling and bombing made conditions very unpleasant.

One consolation, I suppose was, that we were not as badly off as the Infantrymen, for whom I had the greatest admiration. Their job was hell. They were sitting targets for the Germans who were looking down upon them from Monte Cassino.

It certainly shook me when I heard my great friend Ra was wounded. He survived and was my best man twice.

In the end, the monastery was destroyed, because the Allies were certain there were German soldiers in there. More importantly, it had become a menace to the morale of our troops.

The battle for *Cassino* lasted four months, leaving the town a wasteland of tree stumps, bombed-out houses and mud.

Most of this could have been avoided if our commanding officer, General Sir Bernard Freyberg, had been listened to, when he arrived at *Cassino* in late January. His plan was to outflank the German positions by sending a column of armoured vehicles and tanks along route 6 and the subsidiary roads through the *Liri* valley, with air support, before the Germans could destroy its 45 bridges.

American General Mark Clark, overall commander of the 5th Army, ridiculed the plan and it was scrapped. The first battle for a diversion, to cover the *Anzio* landing nearer Rome, was a disaster. American troops attacking *Monte Cassino* from over the *Rapido* river in daylight were decimated.

The second battle involved bombing the Monastery, and many people have blamed Freyberg for that. Freyberg's plan, which he discussed with General Tucker of the 7th Indian Division, was to have fighter-bombers drop bombs on the gun emplacements outside the walls of the Monastery as a warning, but General Clark insisted on sending in '*Flying Fortresses*' to demolish the Monastery. This was a terrible mistake. The Allied forces were informed that the Germans had bunkered down in the Monastery, but this was proved incorrect. I think the bombing was a morale booster. Also due to an error of navigation, the Americans bombed a village 25 kilometres away, as well as the 7th Indian Division and the Royal Sussex Division causing a number of casualties.

The 28th Maori Battalion captured the railway station, but were unable to get tank support because the *Rapido* river was swollen and the ground a quagmire due to heavy rain. They had to retreat from the German counter-attack and lost more than 130 men. Before the third battle, the township of *Cassino* was carpet bombed by the Americans after all the civilians had left.

They also managed to drop some of their bombs on *Venadro* 10 miles away and caused 148 civilian casualties. There was a saying amongst us,

"When the Germans bomb, we duck; when the British bomb, the Germans duck; but when the Yanks bomb, everybody ducks".

The American pilots were great, but you couldn't say that of their navigators! Eventually the Poles captured the Monastery.

The remaining forces pushed ahead to cut off the German retreat and link up with the 5th Army, who were breaking out from *Anzio* beachhead.

This did not happen. Instead General Mark Clark decided to liberate Rome, which wasn't defended.

The German forces thus escaped. The ensuing battles went on over the length of Italy, thousands of soldiers killed on both sides because of his decision. He wanted the glory!

As we moved forward from *Cassino*, I came across a German soldier obviously just killed. I took his pay book out of his pocket to have a look. In it was a photograph of his wife and two children. I felt awful remorse, but it had to be him or me. There are still occasions when recalling this incident brings me to tears.

On a happier note I found a *Moto Guzzi* motorcycle in a haystack – a mate and I took it into *Firenze* (Florence) and sold it for enough money to enjoy a great week-end.

The New Zealand Division suffered 1600 casualties at *Cassino*, and a further 7000 in the advance through Italy to *Trieste*.

Although I was fortunate to come out of the war physically unharmed, the experience has created moments of torment, when I reflect on what I did during those dreadful years. Especially after re-visiting *Cassino* with some of my family in July 2004 and viewing the 22,000 German and 4,000 Commonwealth graves there, of men who had died, at an average age of no more than 23.

We consider that we suffered badly, but our casualties were light, compared with the Russians, who suffered 27 million killed and wounded during World War II. Credit must be given to the Russians, for without them we would have been over-run.

These facts which have come to light show the futility of war and the misery it causes on both sides.

I sincerely hope that with communications improving between people internationally today, it will help the European nations bond together and deter any interference with our way of life. Communications and travel are creating more opportunities for better understanding throughout the world. We are beginning to see that we all share the same desires, to marry and bring up our children in a happy environment.

History should have taught us, that war is **not** the answer, and the sooner we learn this, the better. Adolf Hitler, mega maniac, committed suicide, and Mussolini pompous show-off was hung by his own people. Too late !!

Greed for money, power or religion, are the major causes of the troubles in the world. A classic example is President Mugabe in Zimbabwe, now in 2008. It is unreal how we allow these things to happen.

How this situation can be controlled is the sixty four dollar question.

We were all happy as children so long as we had something to eat and a bed to sleep on.

What turned us into monsters?

I spent four years in the Army being taught to hate and kill – Germans, Italians, Japanese and others – they are now our friends.

War, over the years, have proved nothing but suffering on all sides.

The Bible says "*Love thy neighbour*". Let's practice it!



Cassino.
War graves for both sides.
Germans and Allies.
(war is futile)

In 1945 I returned to New Zealand on the *Otranto*, an uneventful voyage. Sometimes to relieve the boredom we played two up, a game where you toss up two coins and bet on whether they come up evens or odds, and a few card games, poker etc.

When I arrived in Christchurch I soon found a job at Blackwell Motors – greasing cars, in the days when they had nipples! Later I became a salesman for Hamish Keith, who at that time earned a living, painting miniature portraits of people. Today he is one of New Zealand's leading art critics and is held in high regard.

I drifted around doing various unimportant jobs and, in the end it was my father who came up with an opportunity to work with him, creating a wine and spirit business in Napier.

L. H. Buchanan & Sons Limited, which eventually formed the foundation of everything I achieved throughout my entire working life.

Sometimes what seems a small decision at the time, can release a tide which sweeps you along, and for me this was it!

L. H. Buchanan & Sons Ltd

Dad had been in the hospitality industry for some years. As a publican, in the Terminus Hotel Picton, and later in the Ponsonby Club Hotel in Auckland.

Whilst lifting a keg of beer onto a bar he suffered heart strain and in 1946 was offered, by Dominion Breweries in Auckland, the lease of a wholesale Wines and Spirits license in Napier which had not been operated for some years. Dad asked me to join him as a partner in this venture. I borrowed £600 from the Rehabilitation Department, with an equal investment by my Father, L. H. Buchanan & Sons Limited was formed.

We applied for and received import licenses, then began trading from the old Sunshine Brewery premises in Wellesley Road, Napier, where the Napier Health Centre stands today.

For the first year we sold only to hotels, on the basis that for every hundred dozen of beer they purchased, on which we were paid a commission of one shilling a dozen, we would also sell the hotel one case of spirits. In those days there was a great shortage of import licenses, but because of my Army service, I was granted extra licenses.

To obtain the maximum quantity of liquor we bought 90% of our spirits in barrels, over-proof strength, which we diluted it with distilled water we obtained from the hospital. We then filtered, bottled, corked, labelled and put lead capsules on before packing it into cartons. Gin in particular was a difficult product to prepare as it had to be passed through an activated carbon filter to remove the straw colour, which came from the wooden casks in which it was shipped. We used to get some friends together and had a great time doing the bottling – and a bit of sampling! We must have bottled literally thousands of gallons in this way. We imported barrels of wine from Italy and Australia, brandy from France, gin came from *Van Dulken Weiland* in *Schiedam*, Holland.

We had New Zealand agency for their range, which included 'square' gin in stone bottles, and liqueurs in traditional *Delft* ware.

I'm sure the whisky they made was 'straw gin', coloured to look like whisky! They still managed to issue a '*Five Years Old*' certificate which New Zealand customs accepted – whisky in those days was in such short supply that anything labelled whisky was accepted, even Australian, *Corio* or *Vanguard*.

My main job was to call on hotels and breweries from Wairoa to Woodville, down to Featherston, back over to Palmerston North and New Plymouth, returning home through the King Country in my 1938 Ford V8.

Some of the many breweries, whose names are now forgotten, included Kauri Brewery in Woodville, Newbigins Brewery in Hastings, (later renamed Leopard brewery), Cascade Brewery in Taihape, Champion Brewery in Wanganui, run by partners Tosswill & John King, my brother in law, and the Sunshine Brewery in Napier, where we had our first premises as Wine & Spirit merchants in their cellar in 1946.

The selling part of my job was easy, but drinking with each publican I called on, soon became a hazard. Even if I only drank a five-ounce beer with each of them, by the time I called on 10 or more pubs a day it totalled up to a situation where it was unwise to drive. Older travellers, working for the big liquor companies, didn't mind – it was part of the ritual. The publicans themselves could have a sleep any time they liked. The publicans I called on, as you can imagine, were of all types. Mostly good fellows, because to qualify for a licence in those days you had to have good character references. It doesn't appear to be so strict now – almost anyone can get a licence today, it seems.

One of the characters I called on was Bob Croft, at *Stortford Lodge Hotel*, Hastings. He used to sell huge quantities of beer and was one of my better clients. Eventually I bought the hotel with a partner Phillip McCullough who owned the Central hotel in Napier. I then discovered that a good proportion of his sales were 'after hours' – those were the days of 'six o'clock closing'.

Another well-known character was 'Skin' Butler who had a hotel in Sanson, near Palmerston North. I called on him on my way to New Plymouth. I would buy him a drink, talk about business and then he would say "*Call and see me on your way back and I'll check to see if we want any beer – in the meantime, send us a case of spirits*". I never did get an order from him. He had his favourite merchants.

In those days of rationing, we allocated one case of spirits for every one hundred dozen of beer ordered. The beer was sent direct from the breweries to the hotels. We had a consignment of beer refused by a hotel in Woodville, because he was overloaded with beer. It was forwarded to us in Napier and that started us in the retail business. He didn't send the case of spirits back.

We then bought premises opposite the old Gaiety Theatre in Dickens Street, Napier, from Kendall & Company, bottle merchants, and moved there.

I can recall loading wooden crates of two dozen quart beers onto Pettigrew's Transport trucks for delivery to Taupo hotels and three hotels on the way.

While I lifted the crates onto the truck, Russell (now Sir Russell Pettigrew) stacked them four-high on the deck. What it was to be young and fit in those days! Beer was eventually packed in wooden crates, containing one dozen quarts.

Today, in 2008, beer is in 330ml bottles or cans, packed in cartons.

At one time Dad took Mother on an overseas buying trip. Whilst in France he ordered 30 barrels of brandy, proof spirit. On the same trip he ordered 100 cases of Jamaica Rum in Ireland. I heard later that the Rum seller finished up in jail – it must have been smuggled into Ireland!

When our bank manager, Bob Stevenson, saw the bank draft for 20,000 pounds he called me in to discuss how we would pay for it.

I told him I would have no trouble in selling the brandy and rum, but if he didn't want our account he should say so. Those were the days when the local bank manager made the decisions – today it seems they are all made in Australia!

We had already bought some British currency, from memory paying a 5% premium to get it

Shortly after that, 'No Remittance' licences were allowed to be used for imported goods. If you had money overseas you could apply for and receive a No Remittance licence.

I immediately sold twenty barrels of brandy to Ballins Breweries in Christchurch, and 50 cases of rum to the Invercargill Licensing Trust. This relieved both me and the bank manager.

The 'No Remittance' licences soon eased the shortage of wines and spirits that had made trading difficult since the end of the war.

In those days we thought we were doing pretty well. In fact we were doing too well!

One of our main competitors was T & W Young of Wellington, who were one of Dominion Breweries largest accounts. With our plentiful supplies of wines and spirits, some of Young's clients had transferred to us. Young's put pressure on Dominion Breweries not to renew our lease of the licence in Napier, which is what happened.

That was my first experience of the ways of big business.

We then applied for a wine and spirits licence which had been granted for Te Aroha. We came up against internal pressures. Of the 6 applicants, we had the most experience and background in the trade, but the licence was granted to a local wood and coal merchant.

We sought another new licence which had been granted for Kaitaia, and on the way up to the hearing we learned that the licence would be given to a local publican named McDonald, as indeed it was.

The next new licence to come up was for Paeroa, and this time we were determined to leave no stone unturned. There were 20 applicants, including Dalgety & Company who has been in the wine and spirit trade for many years. We spent many hours with our young solicitor, Noel Smith from Hamilton, preparing a case that would certainly impress those concerned. Our cross-examination of each and every applicant further strengthened our case. Dad's war record –he was awarded the Military Medal in World War I – and my four years in the army in World War II, coupled with our experience in the hospitality industry, added weight to our application. This time we were successful, and were granted the licence. That was the turning point in my career. We built new distribution premises in Paeroa with a flat above, where Mother and Dad lived and ran the business, employing Bob Smeath to assist. At this stage I was married with two children, John and Linda, and still had premises in Napier where we continued to do the bottling, packing and despatching.

My trips to Paeroa were sometimes memorable.

Dick Ellingham, who was secretary for our company, once flew with me in a small aeroplane. When we landed at Thames the grass was so long that it tangled up in the wheels. The pilot, Peter Marshall, told us that he wouldn't be able to take off with three of us on board, so after our business was concluded, we had to take a bus as far as Hamilton, where he picked us up.

On the return journey the hills at Te Pohue were clouded over, so he decided to land us back at Taupo.

We went to the Spa Hotel, where we were offered a ride by car to Napier, by the manager of an insurance company. We thought we were lucky, but it turned out to be a hell ride, as our host wanted to play darts and consumed liquor in three pubs we passed on the way. At Taupo he had asked us to drive, which we agreed to do, but he insisted on driving from Te Pohue to Napier. At one stage he nearly drove off the road. I managed to turn the wheel to save the situation. When we suggested that he give up driving, he told us that he had raced on the Isle of Man.

When Dick asked him to slow down he turned around and told him to get out if he didn't like his driving. We finally made it to Napier at about five o'clock in the evening. A journey that took seven hours, instead of the usual three.

In 1946 the drive from Napier to Taupo took 3 hours. Now it takes 90 minutes.

On another occasion, I again flew in a small aeroplane to Paeroa, this time with Mark Knyvett, a fellow Jaycee. I recall Mark's mother not being very happy about flying in a small plane, but I assured her that it was perfectly safe and not to worry.

It was a pleasant flight going up, but as before, clouds were coming down over the Te Pohue hills when we were flying home. There is an area called 'the gap' in the hills, which the clouds had not covered, so I suggested to the pilot that we should climb until our wings were just below the clouds and then dive through the gap.

The pilot didn't want to do this, but I talked him into it. He should have done one more climbing circuit to gain sufficient height, but failed to do so. It was too late to turn away and I could see what might happen, so I took out my 8 mm camera and shot a movie of the event to provide a record if we weren't there to recount the story. The aeroplane didn't have enough power to get over the hill, and we could do nothing else but hit it.

Fortunately the ground was covered with bracken, so the landing, although sudden, was not as hard as I expected – we finished up with the tail of the aircraft hanging over a 100 ft drop. Fifteen stone Mark finished up on my back. Afterwards we walked out to the road and managed to hitch a ride back to Napier, this time with a sober driver. I don't know whether Mark ever told his mother about it.

Over the years I have bought many cars, mostly for business use, as the list shows. The Standard Vanguard van was bought for Alan Limbrick, who became our salesman.

Alan was a Napier man, and when he returned from war service in Europe he was posted to the Occupation Forces in Japan, 1945



Alan Limbrick in 2000

Alan joined our company in 1948, where he did a good job for us, until he left and moved to Australia where his first job was driving a concrete delivery truck for which he was paid £80 a week.

After that he developed a very successful business at Smiggins Hole, north of Melbourne, hiring out ski equipment.

Later Alan built himself a lovely home at Noosa Heads, Queensland, where I have spent many happy holidays with him over the years. He died in April 2007. He was a great host.

Cars I have owned

Year of make.

1924	Model T Ford cost five pound (my first car) bought 1938
1924	" " " seven pound ten shillings " "
1927	" " " twenty-five pound (bought 1945)
1938	Ford V8, purchased in Woodville – this car had the quietest engine
1939	Mercury, from Taihape
1939	Hudson Terraplane, .Napier from Doug Sinclair
1948	Standard Vanguard
1948	Mercury, bought new, paid £300 premium to get it!
1949	Austin A90 Convertible, new.
1967	Mercedes Benz 300SE Coupe, A red beautiful machine – sold for \$7000.
1970	Jaguar XJ6, new for \$9700.
1976	BMW 535, South Africa.
1978	Mercedes Benz 350SL. coupe
1999	Toyota van, from Japan, \$21,000



1988 Rolls-Royce
Silver Spirit

1994	Lexus LS400, ex Singapore, (sold there new \$160,000) half of that was duty.
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I bought it in 1999 for \$33,000 driving it still to-day, 2008 (done 250.000 K's)

Family and homes.

The first time I set eyes on my future wife Brenda was at a party in Seapoint Road, Napier. She was a good friend of Alan Limbrick. Brenda was then a



Sister at the Napier Public Hospital.

She caught my attention immediately and I pursued her from then on until one day I took her into McClurg's jewellery shop in Napier, and told the owner to lock the door until she chose an engagement ring.

I was not aware at that point that Alan also had designs on Brenda, as a wife, but I am

thankful that I was the lucky one

Brenda McCracken

Brenda at this time was a very popular Sister at the Napier Public Hospital.

She was also highly regarded by the senior medical staff at the hospital, as the references on the following show.

Dr. James Foley, Medical Superintendent,
Napier Hospital, 1948

"By reason of good clinical knowledge, her capacity for work and conscientious regard for the welfare of her patients, this nurse was early promoted to the position of Sister. She filled this position of Afternoon Superintendent for six months, and I must say that on not one single occasion during that time could I have faulted her. Sister McCracken has a quiet reserved manner, is thoroughly reliable, and in my opinion is an excellent nurse."

Matron, Letty Croft,
Lady Superintendent,
Napier Hospital, 1948

"Sister McCracken has clinical ability and has won the confidence of the doctors and those in authority in her care of the patients. Of quiet manner, she is attentive and kind to patients, as well as appreciating the need to understand them."

Brenda was a very athletic person and enjoyed outdoor activities. She had a good golf swing and was a very proficient swimmer.

Gordon Kelt, a friend, gave her a horse to ride. Unfortunately her nursing profession left no time for competitive riding.

In the late 1940's Brenda and another nurse, Molly Johnston, rode their bicycles to Taupo via Pohokura – can you imagine it? The road was metal, dusty and winding, from Te Pohue onwards. Brenda and Molly also climbed Mt. Tauhara, on the way, where they caught up with Alan Limbrick, who was a very experienced climber and pig hunter, without whose guidance they may have got lost.



Bob and Nanna McCracken
I couldn't ask for nicer in-laws.
Brenda's parents.



Colleen McCracken with her parents
Audrey and Ted.

My in-laws were good Church people and they put a great deal of time into helping to build and develop their church in Frederick St, Hastings.

As well as their daughter Brenda, they had two sons, Braden and Edward (Ted).

Brenda's father, Robert (Bob) McCracken was a foreman at the Tomoana Works, until the Unions had them closed down with their demands for more money, which the Company could not meet. They finally closed the Works and put 2000 men out of work. This of course affected the city of Hastings.

All businesses were affected, none more so, than my business at the Stortford Lodge hotel.

Brenda and I were married on 26 June 1948. Our first abode was rented and shared with two other nurses in Chaucer Rd. Mavis McCrae and Molly Johnston. Our honeymoon was spent in Australia, Sydney and Melbourne. We flew over in a flying boat, which took about four hours and was very comfortable.

In the 30 years Brenda and I were married I never crossed the line once. She was a devoted wife and mother, and, if I went to the end of the earth I could not have found a better partner with whom to share my life, nor better in-laws than her parents. I loved her dearly and she was a wonderful mother to our children, who are reaping now, the benefits of the time and care she devoted to them. Right through their school days she made sure that either she or I were at home when they arrived and were never left to wander the streets.



Brenda and Byron's big day 26.06.1948

The first home we purchased had three bedrooms, Lawrence Road, Napier. It cost us the princely sum of 3,500 pounds. At that time, the Government Price Tribunal determined the price of practically everything in New Zealand, including houses. They set the figure at 2,900 pounds. We got around this by buying the owner's pianola for 600 pounds, although it was probably worth no more than 60 pounds. Bureaucrats may set all sorts of regulations, but if you are determined to do so you can always find a way round them.



Our first home with John in pram and new car
Lawrence Road, Napier.

From there we moved to a two-storey home with seven bedrooms standing on one and a half acres of ground in Guppy Road, Taradale. I planted a crop of potatoes to help get the couch out of the ground before developing a delightful garden and lawns. We had only lived in the house for 3 years when the house caught fire. I had built a cover round the chimney in a room upstairs to get the warmth from the chip heater downstairs during the winter. The cover caught fire and was fanned by the hot wind in February 1953. The house was totally destroyed. At the time I was bottling some liquor in our premises in Clive Square, Napier, adjacent to the Fire Station. When the engine went past I thought, 'some poor soul is in trouble', little dreaming that it was my own place.

Meantime, the manager of our shop in Dickens Street was advised and ran down to tell me what had occurred. I immediately headed for home in the Vanguard van, racing down Kennedy Road, which at that time was unsealed, kicking up a cloud of dust (just as well there were few cops in those days!) to find that the fire engine had to turn and drive into a side street to access a fire hydrant. The time lost in that exercise was vital. Since that time fire hydrants have been clearly marked.

Jaycees helping to clear up the mess



Top.
John Stancombe
Peter Hurst
Below from left.
Keith Baker
Phil Giblin, me, ?,
Cyril Bromley,
Jim Germain a
neighbour

Unfortunately we were under-insured. I had bought things for the house, as and when we could afford them, that added up to more 2,000 pounds than we were insured for. The only thing that caused me real anguish was the loss of movie films and photographs of the children from the time they were born. Sadly, such treasured items cannot be replaced, no matter how much money is available.

Better times ahead

Our neighbours, Pat and Mary Ryan, kindly put us up in their home for a few days until we were able to rent Ed Stewart's brown house on the beach front at Westshore. We spent 18 glorious months there, and met our lifelong friends the Jones boys and families who owned the Bon Marche store in Hastings.

Tennis, golf and fishing took up all our spare time, and what a time we had! The tennis court was attached to the house and the golf course too saw a lot of us.

I recall playing Stuart Jones at Bridge Pa golf course, Hastings, and signing his card when he shot a course record of 62.

We also had a lot of fun fishing – I bought a 14 ft runabout with a 50 horse-power Mercury motor from Clyde Jeffrey, later to be the Mayor of Napier, which we used for water-skiing or going to Pania Reef to catch kingfish, snapper, gurnard and other fish.

One day when we were walking along the beach, four blokes were trying to haul in a net they had rowed out, and it was too heavy with fish. Stuart Jones and I helped by grabbing fish and throwing them on the beach until the net was light enough to drag ashore. We then rushed home and rowed out in our little 8 ft dinghy and, with our own net, brought in another 50 snapper.

We rang all our friends and invited them to come and collect some fish if they wanted them – the answer we got from several was "Are they cleaned?"

We also used set-lines to catch sharks, gurnard and snapper, but the most fun we had was catching kahawai on a rod – they are great fighting fish. At other times we took the net along the shore, walking up to our necks in the sea, to catch turbot, sole or flounder, which we cooked in champagne for breakfast.

Commercial fishing boats have denuded the sea in that area as they have been allowed to fish very close to the shoreline – all you can catch there now are crabs



Linda, John and
Margie Maaka.
Westshore, Beach
Napier.

Our children played with the Jones kids, Andrea and Sanny, and the Maaka's, Graham and Margie. Westshore in those days had a lovely sandy strip, where you could build sandcastles and was extremely safe for children. Extensions to the wharves at the port have changed this to a steep shingle beach. This could be rectified by building reefs similar to those at Surfers Paradise, Australia.



Brenda & Byron
at 21 Cambridge Tce
Taradale.

I bought a section and embarked on building our new home, at 21 Cambridge Terrace, Taradale, where we lived for 25 happy years. We had half an acre of land leading down to the Taipo stream. Our good friend Barry Sweet designed out three bedroom home. Building to the original plan for the house would have cost 6,000 pounds, which was stretching my budget to its limit, so it was revised to reduce it to 5,080 pounds.

I raised a mortgage from the AMP society of 3,000 pounds at 4 ½% reducable to 4% if paid on time.

Murphy and Hantz were our young builders. They did a good job and kept to the contract.

A bulldozer shaped the section and levelled the tennis court, and I had a digger to excavate the swimming pool. Alongside the pool we developed a shuffleboard area. All these recreation areas were built so that our children were encouraged to invite their friends home to play.

One thing I recall was laying the Pyrotenax copper heating cable set in the floors of the lounge, bedrooms and bathroom – the children used to sit on the bathroom floor in the winter, when the heating was on.

By now I had a manager looking after the Stortford Lodge Hotel, so that either Brenda or I were always at home by the time they arrived after school. As I have said, we spent many happy years in this house where our children were raised and I have so many joyful memories.

Brenda was a very keen gardener and spent a lot of time and energy establishing the trees and planting our very colourful garden.

My job was the vegetable patch, the lawns and the pool.

**Some details of the progress of our children,
John, Linda and Simon**



(b) 06.05.1949

John attended Colenso High School Napier and went on to Massey University, Palmerston North, where he received his Bachelor of Agriculture degree.

John had a quiet time in his last year, so he took up flying, hoping to become a pilot with the National Airways Corporation. John put in about 800 hours flying preparing for this, and I recall one occasion when he flew me down to Wellington in a Cessna 177. We struck such a violent wind over the Manawatu Gorge.

I had visions of the wings coming off! John's hope of flying with the NAC didn't eventuate, so he settled for a job with Air Traffic Control at Whenuapai.

He stayed with them until his tragic accident while paragliding in Napier, which left him a tetraplegic. On Boxing Day 1997 we were waiting to have lunch in the Great Wall restaurant, and instead of John arriving, a policewoman came in with the bad news of John's accident. John has been paralysed from the neck down and has only part use of his hands and arms, but takes a very philosophical view of life and gets on with it as best he can



Wedding Day



John, Peter Houalker, Brett Dockery

John is very fortunate to have Debbie as his wife, for she has had to endure a tremendous amount of inconvenience and worry – she truly deserves a medal for the way in which she has looked after him as John can be very demanding.

Their children, too, have been affected by their father's disability, but have accepted the situation.

Angus was a promising young rugby player, but a leg injury put a hold on that.

Presently he is in Europe using his skills as a quantity surveyor. Hannah shares John's interest in flying and is currently a commercial pilot, Captain, with Eagle Air. Bridget has not yet decided upon her career, but is enjoying her present office job.



John and Debbie with their children



John with book & cat.



John competing 07.11.2008



John being lowered into a yacht

Linda

Linda finished school, married Van Howard in 1972 who was at the time developing his first apple orchard property on Pakowhai Road, between Napier and Hastings.



Van & Linda moved to Mangaterere where they purchased a lovely home and orchard and raised their children.

Van, 11.05.1947

Linda, 19. 06. 1951

Sam, 08.11.1974

Kate, 10.08.1976

Barnaby, 08.10.1979

To-day Van and Linda have two very successful homestay units, plus their home on a 15-acre lifestyle block in Matangi Rd, Havelock North which keeps them busy. Van also spends time making rustic furniture and Linda is teaching at kindergarten. Sam is a share-broker in Wellington, Kate studied art at E .I. T. Barnaby enjoys travelling round the globe.



Van	Linda
Sam,	Kate
	Barnaby.



Sam's son, Jasper. 1st birthday
05. 01.07 My first great grandson.

SIMON

Simon left school and started work in the offices of Williams & Kettle Limited. Napier. He left that to go into the music business, with EMI, then into video, 'Lipstick' (a clothing shop)

In 1980, married Linda Ralph, and they had two sons,



Henry. Sept 22nd
1982

Daniel. Sept 2nd
1980

Simon, Linda and family



Daniel as a
teenager,
proudly showing
his catch.

Simon is a diabetic, and one thing stands out in my mind, the time they were in Bali. One day Simon went into a coma and Linda managed to get him to a doctor, only to be told to wait in a queue.

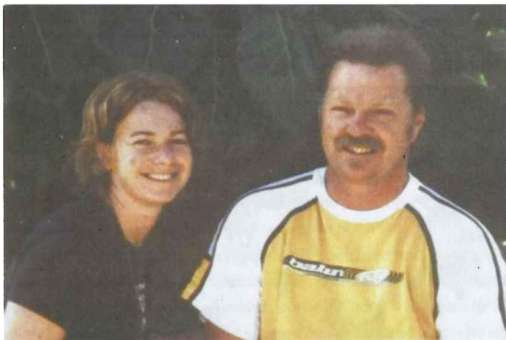
When Linda 'performed', they realised it was urgent and Simon received some attention. Although they are now divorced I am very pleased that they are still friends. Daniel, Simon's elder son, is now a winemaker, and Henry has become a chef. They are both enjoying their chosen professions

Simon & Sonya

Simon started manufacturing concrete planters in Cooks Beach on the Coromandel Peninsula.

He later moved this business to Hot Water Beach, Coromandel, where his partner Sonya Corlett, is making jewellery. They have developed a very good business and are doing well.

Simon gets in a lot of fishing and surfing. (lucky guy)



Sonya & Simon



My extended family 1990

Back row Linda Buchanan, Sam Howard, Kate Howard,
Simon Buchanan standing, Hannah Buchanan, Alice
Buchanan, Byron Buchanan, Van Howard, Debbie Buchanan
Front row

John Buchanan, my brother Bruce, Bridget Buchanan, Henry Buchanan,
Linda Howard, Angus Buchanan, Daniel Buchanan, Barnaby Howard

John King and family



Gloria Lindy Penny Tony Karl John.

The Stortford Lodge Hotel, Hastings, New Zealand

My experience as a travelling salesman, selling wines and spirits to over 200 hotels throughout the lower part of North Island, led me to believe that the hotel with the greatest potential for future development was the Stortford Lodge, at the junction of Maraekakaho Road and Heretaunga Street in Hastings.

When the opportunity to purchase the hotel arose in 1953 I jumped at the chance, in partnership with Phil McCulloch, who had previous experience as licensee of the Central Hotel, Napier. This was the beginning of the longest and most important business interest of my life. Phil and I purchased the hotel on 1st November 1953 for £21,000. We raised the money by way of a loan of £8,000 from the bank of New South Wales and another loan of £10,000 from the Public Trust. The remaining £3,000 was paid out of the takings of the hotel during the six weeks it took to agree on the valuations of the stock and chattles, so Phil and I put up virtually none of our own money.

The hotel was named after the town of Bishop's Stortford in Hertfordshire in the United Kingdom, birthplace of William Stock, who built the hotel in 1884, on the corner of Gordon and Maraekakaho Road



Stortford Lodge Hotel 1884
before it was moved.

The two-story section was cut off and hauled along the road by a steam engine to the corner of Heretaunga Street, in 1898. At one point it got stuck in a dip in the road and a second traction engine was needed to pull it out.

In those days the hotel was virtually out of town, and had stables for horses and paddocks for grazing. One famous horse, N Z bred, "Moifaa" was stabled there. Spencer Gollan a wealthy all round sportsman bought him from former owners, Alfred and Emily Ellingham and shipped him to England where he won the 1904 Grand National.

King Edward VII who watched the race, purchased the horse, and when the King died in 1910 Moifaa followed the gun carriage that carried the coffin through the streets of London, with the King's boots reversed in the stirrups.

This is what the hotel looked like when we took over 1953



*Side view of hotel with our manager,
Bob Smeath, crossing the yard*



*The rear of the hotel
Note the outside toilet, on right,
quite unacceptable today*



Clarrie Stratton

Joe Meehan

In private bar.



Vera Brown in house bar.

Bob Croft was the licensee when we took over the hotel and I recall the 'wet stock' included only six bottles of whisky, Australian Corio at that !
Bob was a very likeable rogue, up to all sorts of tricks. On one occasion he raffled a saddle in the public bar for ten shillings a ticket. When presented with the saddle, the winner, Jack Murphy a drover, took one look at the saddle and exclaimed
'You bastard! that's my saddle!'

When we took over the hotel the turnover in trade was £700 a week, and the wages bill for the entire staff, including Jack Alexander the Manager, Syd Britten the barman and Polly Britten the cook, a house-maid, plus two casual barmen, was £65.10s1d. Ten months after we bought the Stortford Lodge Phil McCulloch wanted to sell the hotel, because the Licensing Control Commission sent us a list of requirements which had to be met, to satisfy health, fire and other standards. This was going to involve a great deal of capital expenditure.

L.H. Buchanan & Sons Limited, the company in which my father and I were partners, solved the problem by purchasing his shares. I now effectively controlled three quarters of the share-holdings, my father having the other quarter.

At this time we were still operating our wines and spirits wholesale licence in Paeroa. This we sold to Waikato Wines & Spirits making way for my parents to move back to Hastings and for my Father to become manager of the hotel.

He and Mother had considerable experience in the hotel business, including the Ponsonby Club in Auckland and Terminus hotel in Picton behind them.

They really put "The Lodge" on the map.

They were truly wonderful hosts. Dad always dressed up in the evenings, and whether he was wearing his tuxedo and bow tie or his kilt and Scottish dress, he always had a great presence and treated our guests with true respect and dignity. Mother was a gracious lady who could hold a conversation with anyone.

The public bar was a great attraction for illegal bookmakers whom neither the police nor I were able to catch

I put up a building in Stortford Street for the Totalizator Agency Board to give our patrons a fair and legal chance to have a flutter on the horses which helped reduce the activities of the book-makers. When the hotel was finally demolished in 1998, that TAB building was converted into a club for Lodge drinkers.

Prior to our taking over the hotel it had been notorious for after-hours trading, when a dozen of beer cost the patrons 30 shillings, instead of the normal price of a 20 shillings.

Over the 35 years we were in the hotel we were only once charged with an offence. A barman served a man twenty-and-a-half years old on a hot Saturday afternoon after he had just visited his father in the nearby hospital.

Bob Smeath, the manager, (who is my brother-in-law, having married my sister Pauline), was fined £6 and had his licence endorsed.

The magistrate was the notorious Harlow.

On another occasion the police visited the hotel and found a couple of Bob's elderly customers sitting on seats in the public bar, which he had found for them.

That was, in those days illegal, the police wanted the seats removed, would you believe. They say the law is an ass. How right they are !!



Our first
hotel bottle
store.
1953

We converted the front part of the lounge area into a bottle store, Our first task was to clean the place up, and then set about developing the dining room and kitchen. When that was finished, the 13 rooms upstairs were completely refurbished with new wash basins, beds with electric blankets and new carpet in each room. We developed three bedrooms with their own en suites.

We received £41 from the auction of the original furnishings, then spent £6,000 on upgrading the accommodation, modernising and replacement of the old battered furniture, resulting in the Lodge being considered among the best hotels in Hawke's Bay.

As a gesture of hospitality, a miniature bottle of spirits was placed by the bedside of each guest, every night.

Up to this point boarders in the hotel had been charged 21 shillings a day, made up of 10 shillings for their room, three shillings for breakfast, three shillings and sixpence for lunch and four shillings and sixpence for dinner .

A total equivalent to \$2.50. in to-days money.

After paying all the costs of the improvements we felt justified in raising our charges to 35 shillings a day for full board, convinced we would be permitted to do so when the improvements had been inspected and the hotel re-graded.

Despite this absurdly low price, a business man of Wellington, complained to the Price Control Division of the Department of Industries & Commerce that we had overcharged him. They referred his complaint to us. We in turn sent a report back on the sort of people he and his friends were – we considered them, drunken boors !

We then received a severe rebuke from the Price Control Division for increasing our prices before the premises had been officially graded. In a letter dated 27 November 1956 Mr H.L. Wise, secretary of the Price Control Division, wrote a typical official letter to my Father:

" I understand that in due course you intend to apply to have your hotel graded, but at present the hotel is ungraded and you are entitled to exceed the tariff for an ungraded hotel only, if and when, following an application, specific authority is given to charge a higher tariff. It appears that you have committed offences against the Control of Prices Act, rendering you liable to prosecution, but before a decision is made in this respect you are given an opportunity, if you so wish, to make any submission to this Office within seven days of the date of this letter."

This illustrates the unbelievable level of government interference in commercial activities that businessmen had to contend with in those days - nothing has changed! We were eventually able to raise our charges for full board to 45 shillings a day when Eric Halstead, then Minister of Industries & Commerce, exempted us from price control.

Another instance of the extent to which bureaucrats had become involved in commercial affairs is provided by the correspondence between my Father and the Licensing Committee, following a report by Inspector Conway of Hastings Police to the Committee to the effect that work on the house portion of the hotel had ceased.

My father wrote to our solicitor, Max Pledger, saying,

"Had the Committee visited the hotel on the Tuesday afternoon following the date of Inspector Conway's report they would have found several men engaged in work in the old part of the building. Such inaccurate reports from the Police Department aggravate an already difficult position and should be brought to the attention of the Committee. Finally, I would commit to writing my indignation that a Magistrate should in open court cast insinuations of dishonesty against a citizen who is not appearing before him on a criminal charge Mr Harlow's remark that the expenditure analysis handed to the Licensing Committee should be investigated by the Police can have no other construction than that he doubted its accuracy - not only a reflection upon myself, but also upon the professional integrity of our accountants. If there is a repetition of such arrogant insinuations against my character I will ask you to institute remedial measures, which must be available to the public in such circumstances."

In 1973 we had experienced another remarkable instance of bureaucratic nonsense! We applied for a permit to allow dancing to take place in the Stortford Lodge hotel restaurant, to enhance the quality of the social functions we organised there.


LICENSING CONTROL COMMISSION OF NEW ZEALAND
CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION

PURSUANT to section 220 of the Sale of Liquor Act 1962 Stortford Lodge Hotel Limited, the holders of a hotel keeper's licence in respect of premises situated in Napier and known as the "Stortford Lodge" Hotel is hereby exempted from the provision of the said Act prohibiting the use of any part of the licensed premises for the purpose of dancing.

This certificate of exemption is issued subject to the following conditions:-

1. Dancing is to be restricted to the Dining Room and one Lounge Bar Room.
2. Dancing under the exemption is not permitted after 10.00 p.m.
3. The exemption may be revoked or varied by the Commission at any time.
4. The exemption is not applicable on Sundays and Good Fridays.
5. This certificate is not transferable.

DATED at Wellington this 26th day of October 1973.


E. M. Basil-Jones
E.M. Basil-Jones
Secretary

The permit was duly granted, but as the document shows, dancing had to

cease at 10 pm,

the time when most people would be thinking of starting to dance, not to finish!

(note) on certificate, premises situated in Napier .

How about this one! We thought it was a misprint.

Price Control Division recommended 9 pence for a 9 ounce beer. The Price Tribunal ordered us to sell **8 ½ ounces of beer for 8 pence**. How impractical can they get?

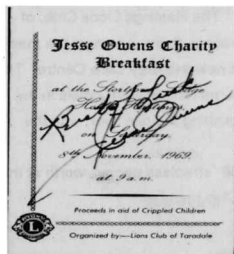
The old stables were demolished in 1955 and more than 30 loads of rubbish carted away. We initially planted the land in potatoes and as it hadn't been turned for many years, we had the biggest crop of potatoes the contractor, Lawrence Patrick Mahora Sweeney, known as the '*Mayor of Mahora*', had ever seen. The paddock was then dug out to a depth of two feet and filled with 16 tons of clinker and broken glass, mainly from the milk factory, to create a base for worm-free croquet and bowling greens. A further quarter acre was planted in grass, flower beds and shrubs, but this area was eventually converted into car parking to cope with the rapid expansion of business due to the improvement of the bars.

Some years later, building contractors excavating this same area in preparing the foundations for the new Bottle Store were somewhat surprised to come across this huge expanse of broken glass and clinker!

At the same time we also purchased and demolished four houses in Stortford Street to allow for future development.

During our days at the Stortford Lodge Hotel we enjoyed the patronage of many distinguished guests who visited Hawke's Bay. Jesse Owens the world renowned sprinter who created history at the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games stayed with us. He was then a feature attraction at the nearby Hawke's Bay Racing Centre

They arranged to have him as their guest speaker and he was brilliant in this role. We provided a banquet dinner and a champagne breakfast at the hotel, which raised hundreds of dollars for charity. Jesse Owens a wonderful speaker.



Jesse Owens was the most outstanding athlete of his day, starting with his establishing new national sprinting records while still at high school. Following that, many colleges and universities in the USA tried to recruit him, out of which he finally chose Ohio State University.

Here he found intense competition on the track and problems emerging as they battled with 'desegregation'. He was obliged to live off the campus and to eat and sleep in 'blacks-only' facilities.

His fame became world-wide after the Big Ten Conference Championships of 25 May 1935, where he broke three world records and tied in a fourth, all within 70 minutes. From this he went on to his astonishing performance in the 1936 Berlin Olympics, where he won four Gold Medals - for the 100 metre dash, the long jump, the 200 metre dash and the 400 metre relay. These were achieved in the presence of Adolf Hitler, who left the arena before the awards were presented, as he considered black people inferior to the supreme Aryan race.

The hotel sponsored a wide variety of organisations over the years. Golf and soccer clubs as well as the Napier and Hastings Highland Pipe Bands were on our gift list.

Prime Ministers, we had the pleasure of hosting at the Lodge



Keith Holyoake



Sid Holland



Sir Walter Nash

The extended dining room allowed us to seat 150 people, and many business organisations used our facilities for their functions. The Hastings Lions Club, of which I was a Charter Member, 1961, held their meetings there. Amongst the many charities the Club supported, they raised £750 for a new IHC Day Care Centre. This was in the form of a 'Pile of Pennies' donated by the patrons of eight hotels in the area. Mr L.D. Brown paid £ 21 for the privilege of pushing the pile over, with the assistance of a hydraulic jack.

During the subsequent sorting of the pennies a 1956 'strapless penny', worth at that time, £9 was found by Bob Fortune, a great Lions Club member.

From the outset it had always been our intention to make the Lodge an important element in the life of the business and farming communities of Hawke's Bay in providing not only top class accommodation and facilities, but also in being at the centre of its activities. Our very reasonable prices - shown in the accompanying *table d'hote* menu, combined with our pre-eminent position, enabled us to assist many organisations.

Stortford Lodge
Hotel Table d'
Hote menu
1974

Note. 6 courses
for \$4.25 !!!!!!!!!!!

<u>DINNER MENU</u>	
APPETISER:	Chilled Tomato Juice Chilled Fruit Juice Chef's Special Seafood Cocktail - 75c. extra
SOUP:	Creme of Tomato
ENTREE:	Terekihi & Tomato Pie
JOINT:	Roast Hogget with Mint Sauce
POULTRY:	Roast Chicken Roasts served with baked potatoes & hot fresh vegetables
GRILLS:	T - Bone Steak Fillet Steak Porterhouse Steak Ham Steak Victory Grills served with either French Fried Potatoes and Crisp Green Salad or Hot Vegetables
SWEETS:	Steam Pudding Apple Shortcake Fruit Salad & Ice Cream Ice Cream Sundae (Assorted flavours)
CHEESE:	SELECTED N.Z. CHEESES & BISCUITS
ONE PRICE	\$4.25
	28th. Nov. 1974
Coffee will be served in the lounge	

The hotel catered for all types of functions.

Mick Duncan's wedding we had 300 guests in the dining room, lounge and house bar. We catered for a number of Service club's, Rotarians, Lions, Round Table etc and also did outside catering for many organizations and private parties.

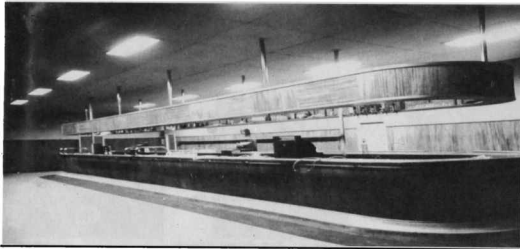
We also used to provide counter lunch each night for the public bar patrons about 5.15 pm. This was in the form of saveloys and sausages cut into finger size portions, liberally coated with Watties tomato sauce, plus chips. Those were the days of 6 o'clock closing.

The hotel was a very lively place.

Customers came from the Tomoana & Whakatu freezing works, Watties, Birdseys, Morrisons Industries, and others in our area.

On Wednesdays wives of the farmers attending the saleyards for the auctions would come in for lunch and exchange all the good news.

Monday Whakatu workers were paid and on Thursday Tomoana paid. Two big nights



This public bar area covered 2,000 square feet and the bar itself was 100 feet in circumference. It had six serving points. The bar was demolished not long after to make room for our customers. This was replaced by a serving bar 8 foot long where one person filled the jugs and glasses whilst one other took the money.

Hotel Workers Union

It is unfortunate that the Hotel Workers Union gets a bad name with employers, through experiences such as we have had, and I hope the Union would be more selective when engaging their staff.

I can remember Freddie Walton, a previous Hotel Workers Union Secretary. He was a good public relations person, who would come in and visit you to discuss any problems they or you may have. Times have changed.

In 1982 we ran into trouble when we wished to change the staff rosters. At the time we had 20 permanent and 20 casual workers. As trade fluctuated changes were made in staff rosters to improve the service we provided to our customers. The Union representative on our staff, Mrs Ray Smith, told me that we couldn't change rosters without giving one week's notice. We already had lengthy discussions with the permanent staff and had agreed upon changes, which would increase the number of permanent positions by three, while some of the casual workers would be laid off. As it happened, this change had the effect that Mrs Smith's hours would be reduced by three. She lost no time in contacting the union organiser, Simon Wallace, who called a meeting of all the staff, including a casual worker who had only worked for two days!

In the end, Wallace put the following motions before the staff and the majority meekly agreed.

1 That we don't accept the cut in hours

2 That all employed staff be retained

3 That the extra labour involved be carried by the company until they leave

4 That we take strike action from mid-day Saturday until mid-day Monday

I ordered Wallace to leave the hotel as he had no right to be there. He claimed that he had, so I informed him that I would call the Police and have him removed. This was at 10 am. I went into my office and left him standing in the foyer. I did not ring the Police, he left at mid-day.

It is unfortunate that these arrogant types rise to positions of power and influence within Trade Unions and then proceed to abuse it, to the detriment of employers who create jobs for their members.

I then prepared and issued a memorandum which was distributed to members of the staff of the hotel. It is reproduced completely on the following pages, so that anyone who has had no experience of the extent of the power of the Unions to interfere in the affairs of trade and businesses of all kinds in those days, may gain some impression of their obstinacy and destructive efforts, which impeded business, also the growth of the national economy.

To members of the staff of Stortford Lodge Hotel

The paid stop work meeting in Napier of the Hotel Workers Union attracted approximately 50 people. This is from a total membership from the district of nearly 2500 members. Surely this must have given a message to Union Officials that 97.5% of their members were not interested in striking, least of all on New Years Eve. Of the 50 attended 40% were against striking. This left a majority of 10 votes deciding to take strike action on behalf of 2500 members.

At meeting such as these, delegates from each unit, be it Hotel, Club or other affiliated organization should have had a secret ballot of their staff to get their feeling and should present this at the union meeting, then that decision should be given in writing to the secretary or official in charge. Staff members who were employed in 1982 will remember the illegal strike they were talked into at that time. The staff did not want to strike, but they were told they would be scabbing if they worked. The same statements are being made this time. Surely in a democratic country everybody has a right to work if they want to.

Striking on Christmas or New Years Eve or any other time, not only created disenchantment with employers, who after all have created jobs for them, by risking their capital, but also with the general public to whose patronage we rely on to pay wages.

One union approach to their demand for 14.9% wage increase, plus the other fringe benefits, was to put up the price of a jug of beer by 10 cents and it would solve the problem. There is a limit to what the long suffering public will accept by way of increase in prices. Unfortunately the hotels are the meat in the sandwich.

When the brewery puts up it's price, or there is a wage increase, particularly with the pay rises being demanded at present by the union, the consumption drops off and so do the staff requirements. More and more patrons are going to clubs, who are now selling vast amounts of liquor cheaper than hotel rates because they pay no tax on their profits.

There are now more than 6,000 premises licensed to sell liquor, of which just over 1,000 are hotel licenses. Hotels are finding the opposition, especially with clubs, hard to compete with. Trade is diminishing, profits with it. If we are to survive we will have to provide better services and standards and this costs money. Not a problem with clubs because they pay NO TAX.

Each and every one of you know, trade has shrunk and wages have gone up considerably in the last year and we are now having to look at every avenue to arrest this trend. It is over to us to secure the viability of the hotel and secure our jobs, by making sure the patrons we have are happy

Price rises will not do that.

The restaurant made a loss of \$70,000 in our last financial year. The union is asking for 14.9 % wage increase plus fringe benefits. Our wage bill for the restaurant averages \$2,000 per week or \$100,000 per year.

<i>The wage increase means a further</i>	<i>15,000</i>
<i>Transport allowance after 10pm</i>	<i>6,700</i>
<i>Double time Sunday</i>	<i>1,500</i>
<i>Triple time holidays (statutory)</i>	<i>2,000</i>

\$25,200 Plus meal allowance

Plus stocking allowance \$2 a day

This would bring our loss in the restaurant to over \$100,000 a year if we had continued the way it was managed last year.

The losses have not stopped. Losses over the month of November have averaged over \$900 per week. The suggested wage increase would bring this to \$1,400 per week. If you owned the restaurant what would you do?

The present management is trying to rectify the situation and have had confrontation with your Union officials when attempts have been made to change timetables. We are spending money on advertising, free meals for children, upgrading uniforms etc. to attract patronage, in an attempt to return the restaurant to viability. With your co-operation we may achieve that situation and the security of your jobs. We have commitments to meet and so do you.

This is a privately owned hotel and we reward those who have the company's interest at heart. The word SCAB has been used by your Union in their letter of the 3rd December, referring to those people who would remain loyal to company who employs them and pays their wages. To those who follow the dictates of the few people who voted to go out on strike, all that can be said, is that they have been woefully mislead as to the wishes of the majority of the union members. If you have taken the time to read this and you go out on strike, we hope that your conscience pricks you, when you consider the loss of wages and the disruption you have created for your fellow workers.

We trust common sense will prevail.

STAND UP AND BE COUNTED!

Byron Buchanan

Governing Director.

The Labour Government in 2001 rescinded the sensible *Employment Contracts Act* which allowed workers to negotiate directly with their employers, that in the main had worked extremely well. I sincerely hope that future governments of whatever colour will not allow Unions to call strikes willy-nilly and cause havoc, as they have often done in the past. It is always in good times that Trade Unions organise strikes, when employers are inclined to give in to their demands. When the economy is in recession wages don't correspondingly go down, so that our products or services then become too expensive.

I recall particularly a time when the Shearers Union contracted a deal which tied the charges for shearing, with the market price of wool. This was when the price of wool was rising, but when the prices of wool subsequently fell the shearers would not lower their shearing rates.

The farmers were naïve, if they had hoped for anything better!

The Wholesale Bottle Store

The Hawke's Bay Wine & Food Society held many functions at the hotel. We stored their wine stocks in our 1,000 square feet bottle store cellar where wine tastings were held.

My boldness or optimism was vindicated - far from becoming the 'white elephant' as predicted by others in the trade, the bottle store turned into a gold-mine. After two months in operation, the leap in business was so great, we had to increase the size of the Bottle Store by 50% to cope with the trade.

One of the big sellers at that time were flagons of beer. On Saturdays we filled 2,000 between 8.30 am and 10 pm. Tomoana Freezing Works had a staff of over 2,000 and Whakatu has approximately 1,500 during those days

Barry Sweet did a good job of designing the bottle store which Mackersey did likewise, building it.

In those days beer was bottled in quart sizes only, packed in 2 dozen wooden crates. These were moved by hand until we got a forklift. Tough times!

They eventually had one dozen crates, and now it is all in pints or cans in two dozen cartons. Much easier to handle

The quart bottles were returnable which we paid out one shilling a dozen and resold them to the Associated Bottling Company (ABC) for one shilling and sixpence a doz. The profit from this paid the wages for the staff. It was big business. There was a two lane drive in, to cope with the empties, that provided a good service.

At Christmas time I wore my kilt, and often had to direct traffic, as so many cars were waiting to park. There were three lanes to drive into the store and we had to use the footpath, which was wide enough, as a fourth lane during the rush periods.

We had a great selection of wines from many countries in our cellars. Our reputation soon spread far and wide among wine-lovers.

I made trips to the South Island searching for stocks of vintage wines I could buy to bring back to Hastings - one of my best sources of supply at the time was Fletcher Humphreys in Christchurch.

There are many stories told about the drovers and the Stortford Lodge Sale yards, that have been operating for over 100 years.

Murray Sparling, the stock manager for De Pelichet McLeod, who has been there for over 50 years, caught up with me in Feb 2008.

I was playing golf the Hastings Golf Club and having a cup of tea after with Ray Withers, when Murray, a member, came over to us and reminded me of the time, in the 1970's, during a heat wave, when they were auctioning sheep at the Stortford sale yards.

Kel Tremain was there working for Williams & Kettle. He yelled out to me that he was hot and dry. I responded, returned to the Stortford Cellars, collected a load of cans of cold beer, bought them back, and shouted for everyone at the saleyards.

Farmers and workers at the sale yards, were a constant source of business for us and I thought it was an opportunity to show our appreciation of that.

In those times, up to 60,000 sheep were sold in a day.

Both the large abattoirs, Tomoana and Whakatu, are now shut down.

In the 1960's there were seven stock and station agents in Hawke's Bay. Now there are 35 companies

There used to be 15 or so carriers, now there are only three main ones.

Mergers and takeovers have absorbed companies that have been operating for over one hundred years. Williams and Kettle here in Hawkes Bay is a classic example.

In the period between 1956 and 1996, 35 – 40 Companies have been swallowed up.

Stock was driven on the road from Ruatoria and Gisborne to the various buyers in Stortford Lodge

The drover was paid three pounds a day and was directed to delay bringing in the stock from holding paddocks, until there was enough grass had grown to feed them on their arrival. The drive could take up to a month or more.

Holding paddocks on the way were owned by the councils. There was usually one drover with a number of dogs to control the animals, on occasions up to 150 sheep.

If the animals were transported by rail to the Longlands rail siding, Harry Feldsen had a draft horse he hooked up to the carriages to shift them to where they were wanted.

They now use a steel rod which is used to lever the carriages into motion.

Derek Wedd told me of the story of the time a drover had his stock half way over the Fernhill bridge, when an irate man in his car tooted his horn. The irate drover smashed his stick on the roof of the car and this subdued the driver.

Another instance happened on the Pakowhai bridge. This driver was also impatient and was tooting his horn. The animals were half way over the bridge so the drover, Neil Evans, whistled his dogs, who then turned the cattle round and the car got a terrible buffeting. He was left in the middle of the mob for a short while.

Some of the drovers I knew were, Jack Murphy, Harry Roil, Alec Tait, Henry Woon and Louis Maulsted. They were all characters.

The drovers had a tent at the fairs, when they held them at the racecourse.

Little Louis Maulsted was chained to a post in the tent and advertised as the wild man from the Ruatoria bush. He was stripped to the waist and had a piece of raw meat beside him. People paid one shilling and sixpence to go in to see him.

Louis was kept happy with a glass or two or three.

Auctioneers Derek Wedd, Neil Evans and Stock Manager Murray Sparling have been kind enough to enlighten me on these incidents related to the stockyards.

Peter Hunter was killed in 2006, by a Friesian bull that lifted the gates off its hinges and gored Peter who was caught in the holding pen.

Baldy Christensen did the catering at the sale yards for some time. Half way through the morning when the sales were on, Baldy would chop up some onions and put them in the fire. The smell would waft rounds the yards and make people feel hungry.

Another job he did was collecting cream from the farm gates in his truck with his son Paul driving. When he finished his round, usually about 10 am he would come into the private bar at the Lodge and order a Bamboo, his favorite cocktail, which consisted of a nip out of each bottle of spirits or liqueurs he fancied. He was a great customer and many a time I drove him home for lunch and a snooze. His wife was very tolerant.

He was a very strong man and would challenge anybody to better him, pulling the lazy stick.

I had a manager in the wholesale department, John Ridgeway, who was with the company for 15 years. I would like to acknowledge, that a good part of the success of the bottle-store was due to John's management.

In addition to looking after the bottle store he built himself a concrete boat which took him eight years to finish. At one stage, when it was nearing completion, John was so exhausted that I sent him to the UK to attend a convention, on full pay, telling him to come back when he felt refreshed. He returned eight months later !



This is the yacht that John took 8 years to complete. He made a great job of it.

When Magnum bought the business I financed John into a wine and spirits business in Auckland. After repaying the loan, John sold the business, making a substantial profit. He could not complete the sale until I released the mortgage, and he wanted this done in 48 hours.

He instructed his Auckland solicitor to sue me if it was not done within this time frame. I couldn't believe it. How's that for gratitude? I wrote and told him that I was very disappointed at his attitude.

Now in June 2008 the bottle store has been closed and is in the hands of the receivers. Quite incredible !!! Supermarkets now selling beer and wine, have made big inroads into the wholesale wine and spirits merchants business.

Most merchants have adjusted and are coping, but this requires good management technique, which was lacking at Robbie Burns Hastings, and helped caused its demise.



The bottle store in 1966



As President of the Hawke's Bay Wine & Food Society, I am presenting an award to Tom McDonald, for his part in the growth of the wine industry of the Hawke's Bay. Many memorable functions of the H B. Wine & Food Society were held in the cellars

John Norris, who was a very devoted bottle store attendant worked for me for more than 24 years, giving me the day's good news.

John was still working there part time, till it closed in 2008.



The displays were a feature of the bottle store, and a great talking point.
 Paul Muller organized these displays and as you can see did a wonderful job.
 Following are samples of the many and varied advertising sets.



Win a trip for 2, Club Med



Win a trip for 2. see Cats in Melbourne.



Win \$1, 000 Xmas hamper.

J



This display of Johnnie Walker earned
 John Ridgeway, manager, a trip to Scotland



Sir Richard Hadlee, our famous cricketer
 Signing autographs for enthusatic kids.
 A Iwyn Corban back left Paul Muller back right.



Paul Muller, who was responsible
 many of the great displays in the
 Wholesale bottle store.



Win a trip to Australian Grand Prix.



Gloria

Bruce

Byron Pauline

A rare gathering of my siblings in the 1,000 square foot Stortford Lodge cellar, built under the bottle store

By the time my business in Hastings was sold to Magnum in 1986, the turnover had reached \$10 million a year, and the annual wage bill was \$1 million.

I was fortunate to have Len Webb, of Brown Webb & Co Hastings, negotiating the sale, as he was a very well respected accountant.

The sale was sealed with a handshake. Len's son Trevor, concluded the final negotiations.

No correspondence or litigation entered into.

It was in many respects a sad day for me when this great hotel and business, in which I had invested so much of my life was sold.

The hotel was demolished in August 1996 and replaced by a BP service station, but the Bottle Store remained until it was put in the hands of the receiver in 2008.



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June 2008

This is the sad ending of a hotel business I spent 35 years expanding 1953-1988.
and 22 years, 1966 – 1988, developing the finest hotel bottle store in New Zealand.

The night that changed my life

In the summer of 1981 I went to Taupo with Bob Dockery, Peter Hurst, Harry Taylor and Norm Harvey for our customary annual week of fishing and golf, which we had been doing for 20 years—the opportunity to enjoy a great time together. By now it was three years since Brenda had passed away. One night, after quite a few noggins, they suggested that I should go overseas and bring back a nice lady.

I jumped at the idea and promised that I would go ahead and do just what they had suggested. Great what a couple of noggins will do for you.

True to my word I contacted Miriam Heath, John's mother-in-law residing in Hong Kong, and asked her to advertise for a "social secretary". There were many replies, so I asked Miriam to interview the applicants and select the three she thought most suitable for me, then after my trip with the Melbourne Wine & Food Society through China, I would be in Hong Kong to meet them later.

The first one was a policewoman, the next one a clerk and Alice was the third one.

The first two were nice, but after learning a little of Alice's experience in various fields, I took her out to dinner and dancing. We agreed to meet again the following morning.

As we were walking down the street I asked her what star she was born under. She replied "Sagittarius", after which I said at once, "December 14 th".

She got quite a shock and wondered how I knew the date of her birthday.

Of course I didn't know about her birthday, but this date was already in my mind as it was Brenda's birthday – this sealed the deal. I had had 30 wonderful years, with my wife Brenda, so it appeared to be a good omen for me.



Miriam and Ian Heath in Hong Kong, discussing the applicants with me.

Alice Lim



Alice was a qualified nurse, received top marks in her class, in medical and surgical exams in the UK, and has a certificate of excellence in all subjects. I found out later that she had worked for the Town and Country Catering Company, Hammersmith, who catered for exhibitions, restaurants etc., plus the Queen's garden parties in Buckingham Palace. I also learned that she was a champion swimmer and had represented Singapore, in the

South East Asia championships, winning the 50 metre backstroke in record breaking time, 42 seconds.

Alice proved to be wonderful worker and superb cook. In the early days she often helped out in the Stortford Lodge kitchen. She expected staff to be equally diligent and was somewhat disappointed.

Asian people have to apply themselves if they want to get on. Kiwis have a very different attitude towards life, as they have many benefits provided by their own government via taxpayers .

I had decided to branch out into a new and exciting field. I purchased Sawyer's building that was alongside the Stortford Lodge Hotel, to develop into a high quality Chinese restaurant. I had engaged Alice Lim for this purpose in Hong Kong, and after her arrival in New Zealand she began working at the hotel where she was becoming familiar with the functions we arranged, getting to know the kitchen and restaurant staff on whom we depended for the quality of service we aimed to provide.

Alice also had to establish a relationship with the many organisations and businesses who regularly relied upon the Lodge as a venue for their meetings. Things between us were kept on a very formal basis for quite a while.

Although I wanted to marry Alice, she was not prepared to take this step until she received her New Zealand citizenship papers, because she thought people might say that her reason for marrying me was simply on account of money.



Alice celebrating with Jeremy Dwyer, Mayor of Hastings,
after receiving her citizen ship papers.



From left. Harry Lawson, Napier city council, Jeremy Dwyer, Mayor of Hastings,
Byron.B, Lyndsey Buchanan,(Bruce's wife) Alice B, Annie Lum, Bruce Buchanan,
Charlie Lum, Lucy Buchanan,(daughter of Bruce) Suzie Gorodi Alice's daughter

Alice demonstrating her culinary skills

My 60th birthday celebration party on June 11, 1982, was a great occasion, with Alice showing off her organizing and hostessing talents.

There were more than 50 guests, including Sir Richard Harrison, Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Mayor of Napier Clyde Jeffery, and Mayor of Hastings Mr. J.J.O'Connor, Members of the Diplomatic Corps included the High Commissioners Korea, Mr Younghun Hahm and his wife Sook, Canada Mr Roger Rousseau and his wife Francoise, from Fiji, Mr Joseph Gibson and his wife Emily, from Singapore, Mr Check Rahim Ischeck and his wife Wan.



Front table from right. Richard Jones Hastings District Council, Clyde Jeffery (Mayor of Napier), Sir Richard Harrison(Speaker of House of Parliament), Mah Wan, wife of Singapore Ambassador,

Top table, partially obscured, Ra Bate(my best man twice) Joyce Bate,Alice & Byron, Debbie & John Buchanan, Isobel & Bob Dockery, Joe Gibson, ambassador for Fiji.

Suzie Gorodi

I first met Alice's daughter Suzie Gorodi in Golders Green, London in 1982, where she was working at the time in a pizza palace. On our next visit to London in 1986, we managed to talk her into coming to New Zealand, but she only stayed for six months before returning to England. Life in Napier was very different from what she was used to in UK. Suzie was missing the high life and the drugs scene.

However, she returned to New Zealand in 1987 when she realised that, if she was to have a future, she would need a complete break from her lifestyle. It took quite a while before she decided to settle down.

On one occasion when I was driving her to work at the Great Wall Restaurant and thought her speech was a little incoherent. I drove her straight back home and told her she would have to give up drugs if she wanted to keep her job.

She eventually volunteered to enter Springhill Hostel in Napier, where people with various problems, such as alcohol and drugs are given treatment. She stayed there for three months and full credit to her, she got rid of her habit.

After that she took up a position in Auckland, in a similar institution, to advise and encourage the inmates there, to change their way of life – a very courageous decision.



Later, Suzie returned to Napier and attended the Eastern Institute of Technology for three years, taking an art course. The time was well spent there as she won 1st Prize in a Norsewear art competition with a design for a wall-hanging made in rubber-latex.

Her work was exhibited at the Hawke's Bay Museum and Art Gallery.

This led to her obtaining a position there which she held for four years. Suzie is now studying to become a Bachelor of Visual Art & Design for which she received a research award in 2007.

"Stop Press" Suzie received her results of her exams, 11 A's. Jan 2008

She is now sitting for her Masters degree.

Her partner, Martin Selman, is a well-know sculptor of marble. He has recently been invited by a school in Switzerland to demonstrate his work there - a great feather in his cap.

Kym Gorodi



This is Kym in her cap and gown
after being presented with her degree
BA in History. From Tynside University. UK
A proud moment for her mum and sister Suzie

Today I look back upon 26 years with Alice, which have sometimes been turbulent, but have been 99% good, and I feel sure I shall make it 30 years with her as I did with Brenda.

I had a stroke in 2001 and Alice's constant care and attention to my needs, played a major part in my recovery

In the years that followed Alice encouraged me to enjoy life and get around to see the world.

She has most of her relations in Singapore. Another daughter Kym in UK, a grand-daughter, now in 2008, a great grand-daughter and many friends in the United Kingdom, where she lived for 25 years, plus others in Hong Kong and Sweden.

Later I will describe our experiences in our overseas tours. Meanwhile, Alice and I are enjoying life to the full. She keeps me in the best of condition. I trust the situation will remain the same for some time to come.

Thank you, Alice!



I spent my early years in business making money, saving and being prudent about spending, but at the same time I was not devoting as much attention as I should have to my family, although I didn't realize this, at the time.

I hope I have made up for it up since.

The Great Wall Restaurant and Landmark Hotel



Although the building was not classified as Art Deco, it was a Historical Places Trust building, built in that 1930 era. It was a point of interest to the people on the Art Deco walk, to be taken into the building and shown the lift, which had a unique design. Instead of sliding sealed doors, it had caged doors, which you don't see today.



This is Joy Moore, suitably dressed for the Art Deco Ball. She was one of the early volunteer guides of the Art Deco walks during 1980's in the days when there were only a few tourists and few guides. It has now developed into big business, attracting tour ships to the port, plus visitors from all over the world.

Napier is regarded as the Art Deco capital of the world. In 2006, twenty three thousand people have been recorded, walking the city.



Joy has many talents, and this is Joy's sketch of me, done in pastels 2006.

The T & G building was a well known land mark - a familiar sight on the skyline for more than 50 years, when I bought it for \$455,000 in 1985.

My idea was to develop a Chinese restaurant to provide employment for David U, whom I had brought over from Singapore in 1982, to establish a Chinese restaurant in Sawyers building, which was next to the Stortford Lodge Hotel, Hastings.

That restaurant didn't go ahead because the Hastings District Council would not approve the development unless we provided money for two car parks outside our area. We had parks for 25 cars but they wanted 27 parks.

Despite my representations to the council, indicating we had a surplus of car parks attached to the hotel next door, except between 4 pm and 8pm on Thursday nights when the Tomoana Freezing Works staff were paid. The Council refused to approve the plans.

I had already purchased 4 houses in Stortford St and demolished them, which provided for more than adequate parking. Close on three acres.!!

As the proposed Chinese restaurant did not go ahead in Stortford Lodge, I still felt obligated to provide David U with employment, so I decided to establish the restaurant in the T & G building in Napier.

After all, I had gone to a lot of trouble to bring him with his wife and two boys to New Zealand to run a Chinese restaurant.

I had paid his overdue taxes, \$5,000, so that he could leave Singapore, also loaned him \$5,000 to purchase a car so he could take his children to school. These loans were never repaid. I put up a bond of \$75,000 for their son Terence, so that he would return to Singapore for military service.

I left him to purchase the majority of the cooking equipment needed, plus the crockery etc, which he said would be better purchased in Singapore because of replacements, although it would have been much cheaper in Hong Kong.

I hadn't thought of kickbacks he would be getting in Singapore !

Despite his wonderful CV, he completely misjudged his budget, way over in wages and way under in turnover. His own two chefs could not cope, despite his earlier assurances.

I found another cook from Wellington to help them at a more reasonable rate of pay. When Mr U found out, he told the new cook that he should ask for more money as it showed up the salaries his cooks were getting. So much for his loyalty to the Company. I had to sack Mr U eventually on February 7th, 1987 for insubordination.

A week later his two chefs left without notice, no doubt to cause the most embarrassment.

I rang them at 5pm to find out why they were not on duty preparing a banquet dinner for 52 Wine and Food Society members from around New Zealand.

There was no reply.

When I went to see the cooks, (they were living rent free upstairs in a flat next door to the restaurant), Richard Chua, in the shop below the flat, told me they had left.

Those miserable bastards no doubt left on the instructions from the U's.

My faith in human beings was shattered. I will never forget their shabby treatment.

I wanted to cancel the banquet dinner, but Alice, my wife, prevailed, took over the kitchen with her brother Jimmy, who is very competent chef, and a couple of her friends. They did a marvellous job. The only thing missing from the menu was the fish, which the chefs hadn't taken out of the fridge to thaw.

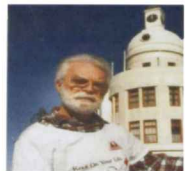
I was sitting down at my table in the dining room with the National President of the Wine & Food Society, Stanley Harris, wondering what was going to happen, keeping my fingers crossed. I needn't have worried, because the food arrived safely.

Little did the guests know of the drama behind the scene.

The Wine & Food Society sent us a letter, thanking us for a wonderful meal.

The T & G building in Napier, housed dentists, doctors, a school for the deaf, a milk bar, hairdresser etc. and one lady, Mrs Tonkin, who had leased a flat from day one, 1936. They were all given 6 months notice to find other accommodation..

My favourite builder, Ian Kepka and his men moved in to commence the demolishing of the interior, starting with the ground floor, where the restaurant was to be.



Discussing plans for the alterations with Ian Kepka who did a great job

Experts were employed to use explosives for this work as the building had been constructed in reinforced concrete following the 1931 earthquake.

We provided Hawke's Bay with a wonderful Chinese restaurant, first class conference centre, top class accommodation, and a bar area that boasted a magnificent polished copper dome which had great acoustic properties admired by all. The restaurant was officially opened February 1987 by the Chinese Ambassador, Mr Zhang Long Hai, who shared duties of cutting the ribbon with Napier Mayor, Dave Prebensen.



Opening with Lion dancers from Wellington.
Jenny Too in back, beside lamp.



Alan Styles and wife Chris
admiring the Lion dance.

It was the first non-smoking restaurant in Hawke's Bay. Only one problem, we never made any money. The restaurant was too upmarket for the majority of locals, whom I imagine, because of the apparent opulence of the restaurant, thought that it looked too expensive, but it was probably only \$1 or \$2 dearer than the average Chinese establishment. Perhaps, we were ahead of the times.

We provided air-conditioning, damask table cloths, napkins, chopstick holders etc. Visiting dignitaries and companies who wanted to impress clients and visitors patronised us, but there were not enough of them.

We hosted the rich and famous, including, Prime Minister Helen Clark, and High Commissioners from various Legations.

Kiri Te Kanawa, Ray Charles, Kenny Rogers and Shirley Bassey and others, who came over to perform at the Mission Concert, were also our guests.

Other guests included Jamie Packer, of media fame, who came over to play polo in Hastings. I recall his minders checking out the premises before his arrival.

Although he was supposed to be on vacation, his telephone account was as much as his accommodation.



Shirley Bassey



Kiri te Kanawa



Ray Charles



Jamie Packer



Prime Minister Helen Clark at the hotel poolside,
enjoying the breakfast I prepared for her.

I had the good fortune to employ as managers Bernhard Dalziell and E.J.Jaritz over the next 10 years, both of whom were very competent at their work.

Bernhard is now at Barrycourt motel, Auckland, and E.J. is at the Mission Restaurant, Taradale, doing an excellent job of catering.



The Great Wall
was the venue for
many fund-raising
and charitable
functions.

A full Chinese banquet, raised \$10,000 for Cranford Hospice.

By adding this, to the amount of money raised by the Mihiroa Marae committee, a Subaru station-wagon was purchased and specially adapted for transporting terminally ill patients

Another banquet held along similar lines, helped to raise funds required for rebuilding Napier's Veronica Sun Bay columns, to commemorate the work done by the Royal Navy after the 1931 earthquake.

Brass plates at the base of the columns, name and acknowledge, those who donated them. Two are from the Buchanan Trust.

Despite the fact I never made any money at the Landmark Hotel, the time I spent there was enjoyable and it was a pleasure meeting so many interesting people from places all over the world. We have become friends with many, and we have been invited to return to visit them whilst touring their countries.

The Landmark Hotel was sold in 1999 to Mark and Penny Burt, for 1.5 million dollars. They are leasing the Masonic Hotel opposite.

The Burt family took over the accommodation for their families at the Landmark, retained the conference centre, but changed the restaurant into a night club and developed the Café and bar on the ground floor. Subsequent to this, the night club has closed, and replaced by a Pizza restaurant and they have developed flats in the conference area. Then in 2006 they developed more accommodation upstairs and have made dramatic changes which I could never have conceived. I trust that they will continue to prosper.

An episode I recall during my time at the Great Wall Restaurant concerned the Mayor of Napier, Alan Dick.

In 1989, as a Napier City Councilor, he asked if I would nominate him for the mayoralty. I did, and he was successful in this election. He did a reasonably good job for the first three years, but it became all downhill from then on.

Numerous ratepayers, myself included, received threatening letters from the Mayor from time to time. He exercised his bullying tactics on all and sundry, culminating in his abruptly canceling, in a fit of pique, a booking by the Napier Council for an important dinner for a Chinese Delegation at the Great Wall Restaurant.

I was one of four Napier businessmen who gave their signatures to a document, covering a full page in the Hawke's Bay newspaper, recommending that the War Memorial project should not proceed until a major new hotel had been built in the city. This was followed by a petition signed by over 3,000 Napier rate-payers in the course of only five days, asking the mayor to re-consider his decision.

His response to the public protests was,

"We have had enough discussion - I have a closed mind on the matter."

The document advised the public that the council's own consultants, Ernst & Young, had reported that the proposed War Memorial Conference Centre, involving extensive reconstruction and refurbishment to meet the necessary standards, would lose around \$881,000 in the first year.

Despite these facts, the Mayor pushed the project ahead. The Council's estimated cost of the extensions was \$2.5 million, but the actual final cost was \$4 million, and is costing ratepayers at present \$2,000 a day.

In the meantime, the Mayor bullied a small majority of Councilors to support the proposal.

It seems, he presumed wrongly, that because I opposed the War Memorial project, I must also be involved in raising a matter of impropriety and dishonesty on his part, which was published in The Sun newspaper.

He stated,

"I am sick of it and will not hesitate to use legal or other remedies if and when appropriate. I advise you of that as a caution."

That prompted letters to the Editor from a number of readers, referring particularly to the Mayor's comment, that one of his Councilors was *"an egotistical wanker."*

In an Editorial in the Daily Telegraph on 20th June 1997, the Mayor put on notice some of his critics, whom he accused of mischief-making, that he might deal with them through the courts for their 'malicious attacks' on his reputation. This threat, and those assumptions, did him more harm, than the opinions of his detractors.

This was a feeble attempt of a weak mind to express himself forcefully.

When he was asked, as a director of the Local Authority Trading Enterprise, (L.A.T.E.S), about a clause regarding fees being payable to the widow in the event of the death of director, he stated *"I didn't realize this was so"*

In a statement he made to "Hawke's Bay Today", he admitted and acknowledged, that, under his guidance, the prayers used while he was in office, saying, *"We should behave in a Christian way both in and out of meetings, but it didn't work"*

In August 1998, during an application for a motel permit, The Honorable Justice Wild states, "I regret to say that I am in no doubt that, from the time he first became aware of East Pier's application, the Mayor, Alan Dick, was firmly predisposed against it.

It was a breach of natural justice, both in relation to predetermination/bias and failure to give East Pier a fair hearing of its application."

This was in relation to East Pier's application to develop a motel complex on its site. The Mayor was the political leader and the Chairman of the Council and what he said obviously influenced the views of others – though not all.

That case cost the ratepayers hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees.

In 2001 Alan Dick again stood for both Mayor and Council in Napier, but failed to make it in either position. The public may be apathetic most of the time, but the penny drops eventually.

Daily Telegraph report July 6, 1997

"After four years of talks, consultants have recommended a Heretaunga Plains Council, combining Napier and Hastings Councils.

It is what Napier businessman Byron Buchanan wanted when he first raised the issue of local government reform about four years ago."

It is an option Napier Mayor Alan Dick said he could never countenance, because it violated principles of serving "*communities of interest*"

Now that Alan Dick has been elected to the Hawke's Bay Regional Council, I hope he will see the bigger picture, of the benefits that can happen, if Hastings and Napier Councils amalgamate.

I wrote to the Chairperson, Eileen von Dadelzsen, expressing the hope that Mr. Dick would now work in a Christian way while representing ratepayers on the Regional Council.



The long lunch on the Marine parade. Art Deco week-end.

Left side. Suzy Gorodi, Linda Howard, Alice B, Lisa Cheong, Anne Liu

Right side. Martin Selman, Van Howard, Byron B, Eddy Ng, Jim Lim,
Leo Cheong, Tommy Liu

Community Service

The strength of any community depends upon the people in it, who have abilities, skills or influence, playing a part in the life of the community and in its development. Some of us do so in the field of politics, serving our local communities as elected representatives in government, or on a variety of boards or councils, while others become involved in one of the many Service Clubs which cater for people of all ages and interests. I am glad to look back upon my years of business life, knowing that I played my part in this process, and in doing so found most of the great friends I have made, during those years.

Napier Junior Chamber of Commerce 1949



Front left. Byron B, Peter Gifford, middle Brian Geddis, right Mark Knyvett, Others include. David Stephenson (bow tie) Joe Mulder, Joe Arbuckle, Lloyd Duckworth, Pat Sweetapple, Joe Haley, Buster Balfour, John Ash, John Stancombe.

My first experience of community service occurred soon after I returned from the 2nd World War in 1946, I joined the Napier Junior Chamber of Commerce.

These organizations which are still popular among young businessmen today in many countries, were then springing up all over New Zealand. We assisted in all kinds of local activities, one of my most memorable being the "Arts Ball"

We organized this in the Williams & Kettle cool store at Ahuriri. We polished the wood floors by dragging a wool bale towed by a tractor over the dancing area until we achieved a good shine on it. What an altogether a wonderful night it was!!

Hilarious in fact.

We formed a tunnel of scrim that they had to enter, to get to the dance floor. It was dark inside and the noises and squeals that emitted from there, made the effort worthwhile.



Members of the Napier Jaycees undertook to clean up my house in Guppy Road, Taradale, after it was destroyed by fire in Feb. 1953.

Filled with the energy and enthusiasm of youth, the Napier Jaycees accomplished many other major community projects in those early days.

Unfortunately most Jaycee chapters in New Zealand have folded, and there are very few chapters still operating in 2008.

Lions International

My introduction to the Lions Clubs, was in Hastings 1962, when I owned the Stortford Lodge Hotel. The initial meetings were held in the hotel with 31 charter members. I have to thank Ivor Curtis of Napier for twisting my arm and pointing me in the direction of Lions International.

Ivor was a Past District Governor of Lions, and after much persuasion I agreed, after having served three years in Hastings, to become Charter President of a new Lions Club to be formed in Taradale. Richard Ellingham agreed to be my secretary, after a bit of arm twisting.

Taradale Lions club was chartered with a membership of 26 in 1965. Our members included a doctor, a solicitor, an accountant, a plumber and a builder, because at that time our criteria for membership was restricted, one from each profession or trade.

Two years later I was elected to be Zone Chairman for our district 202B, which covered an area from Gisborne to Woodville. Fortunately, I had plenty of spare time to devote to the job and we had a very keen club, no problem getting willing members to visit our Zone clubs with me. Numbers grew over time, and 20 years later had risen to 56, but recently in 2008, have shrunk to only a few of the older members. We are finding it difficult to recruit new members.

Today, many people are working hard to make ends meet. One of the reasons being that everyone wants the latest gimmick. Kids especially, are very demanding when it comes to clothes and equipment, it has to be new and the latest!

My clothes as a boy, were hand-me-downs, my first bike was second-hand and cost \$2 in today's currency. This won't do for the kids today! Everything has to be new.

The first car I purchased in 1938, a Model T Ford, cost the equivalent of \$10.

The pressure to keep up with the "Jones" means less time available to participate in the commitments that are required, to be a member of a service club.



President Byron
Buchanan receiving the
Charter of the new
Taradale Lions Club
1967 from Noel Wilson,
Hastings President



International President Lloyd
Morgan,
Byron Buchanan,
President Bruce Johnson,
Taradale

President Bruce introduced the first Pakeke Lions Club in the world.
Those Clubs were formed, for people aged over 55 years.



Keith Mitchell,
National Secretary,
Byron Buchanan,
with Hor Hay Bird,
International President
visiting Taradale



Byron
Buchanan
presenting
Robin
Cardno with
banner for
Waipukurau
Club.

I appear to be more interested in the lovely lady seated in front right.

That is my late wife, Brenda.



Taradale past presidents 1965-1999. David Maunder on left, Byron B on right.

The only two remaining members still active in the Club 2008



Members of the new Taradale Lions Club taking part in their first public project.

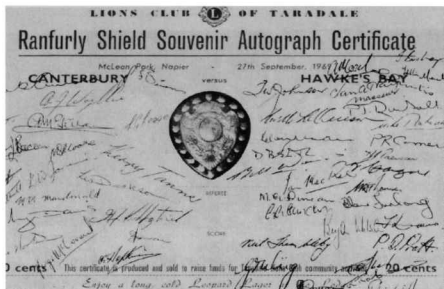
Laying the lawns for the newly-established Randall House in Pembroke St, Taradale.

Club members working from left, Ian Noble, Jim Perry, Ross Hutton, Mac Maaka, Monty Monteith, Bruce McLeod, Byron Buchanan, Bruce Evans, Wim Van der Linden, Tony King, Geo Blair, Trevor Campbell, and Tony Cox.

The Lions Club carried out many great projects.

Another major job we did was building a 'rumpus room' for a children's home in Taradale.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars were raised by the Club for worthy causes, such as the Blind, Riding for the Disabled, Optimist Dinghies and so on, which gave us a great deal of satisfaction. Fundraisers included Diners Guide tickets, kite festival and garden trail. Each of those activities raised \$15,000.



Another fund raiser, selling these certificates. 1967 A great era for Hawke Bay rugby

Kel Tremain was captain of our wonderful winning "Magpies"



Certificate of Appreciation from Lions International

Over the years I have derived great pleasure from my community efforts, which were acknowledged by the International President of Lions Clubs, with the award of a Certificate of Appreciation in Recognition of Distinguished Achievements in Leadership and Service, and of attaining the milestone of 43 active years in Lions.

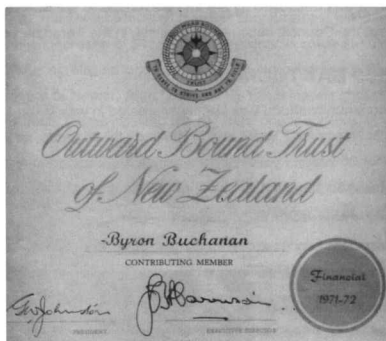
I am also proud to have been appointed in 2003 a Life Member of the Lloyd Morgan Lions Clubs Charitable Trust of New Zealand

The Napier YMCA

In 1950 a South African company called 'Silhouette' developed a wonderful gymnasium in the old Gaiety Theatre in Dickens Street, Napier.

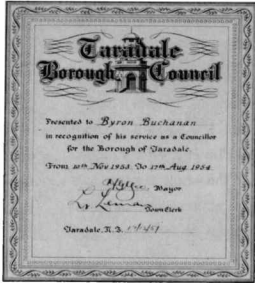
The Company eventually went broke, but the amenities it had created were magnificent and a group of 10 enthusiastic citizens decided to take it over. I was elected chairman and we formed the '325 Club'. The figure 325 was the estimated number of members needed to make the club pay. After struggling for a year without attaining this number we decided to gift the whole concern to the local YMCA branch. The equipment was installed in their Latham Street premises. Graham Gardiner took over as manager and did a great job for them.

Over the years the hotel has sponsored a wide variety of organizations and Clubs. Amongst them was the Outward Bound Trust. Barry Sweet was a director and he took me down to Anakiwa in the South Island and I saw what a great outfit it was.



Our Lions Club have sent selected people there and they have returned with glowing reports of the difference they made to their outlook on life.

Taradale Borough Council



I made my contribution in this area as a Councillor on the first Taradale Borough Council, after its status was changed from that of a Town Board in 1950.

Fred Yeo was Mayor of Taradale and those who were elected as Councillors were not thinking of the position as a source of income, as most of them seem to do today, but were keen to put something back into their community where they derived their living.

Later, Sir Peter Tait, Mayor of Napier at the time, offered the people of Taradale the opportunity to amalgamate into the city of Napier. They voted for this despite being somewhat parochial, because he promised not to increase their rates for 10 years.

At this point my period as councillor was abruptly terminated, because our home in Guppy Rd was destroyed by fire and we moved to Westshore, and I no longer qualified for the Council, because of not living in the Taradale voting area.

HAWKE'S BAY TOURISM

Another community effort I was keenly interested in was in tourism. I had been in business in Napier for 7 years and in Hastings for 35 years, as well as living in Taradale for 35 years. I believed there was a great opportunity during that time to promote Hawke's Bay as a single tourist destination, offering the diverse attractions of the region to our growing number of visitors.

Napier's Art Deco architecture, the Cape Kidnappers Gannet Colony, the industries in Hastings, the growing wine industry spread throughout the countryside, golf courses, fishing, beaches, etcetera, all made for a wonderful holiday.

When it was decided to create a Hawke's Bay Tourism Board, I was elected chairman. There being members representing each city, Napier and Hastings. Four others, representing the tourism industry in the region, all unpaid.

Our income from advertising was supplemented by a grant of \$35,000 per annum from each of the three Councils. Napier, Hastings and HB Regional.



I am trying to convince an assembly of mayors to work together.

Jeff Whittaker Havelock North, Jeremy Dwyer Hastings,

Alan Dick Napier, and David Marshall Hawkes Bay Regional Council.

When we later asked for an increase of \$15,000 in the grants to cover the expanding work-load, Hastings readily agreed so long as Napier would do the same. This was working well until the Mayor of Napier, Alan Dick, decided that Napier should go it alone and promote only itself, thereby pulling the rug from under our feet.



Dinah Williams, president of H B Tourism, accepting a cheque, for \$35,000 from the Great Wall restaurant, to further tourism in Hawke's Bay.

Sporting Activities of my family.



Bruce in his pipe-band regalia.

Without doubt, he is the leading sportsman in our family, showing talent in a variety of sports from a very early age.

His greatest achievements occurred during his school days, starting in 1944, when he represented Marlborough Primary schools in the inter-provincial rugby championships.

The following year he went to Scots College and was vice-captain of the Wellington rugby team. While he was at Scots College, from 1945 to 1950, Bruce excelled at every sport, winning the school championships in tennis, swimming and boxing.

But it was on the track that he really made his mark. In his six years at the College he was unbeaten, winning the primary, junior, intermediate and senior athletic championships and creating records in the sprints, hurdles and discus as he went along. To this day, his record of winning three consecutive senior athletic championships still stands. He also won the inter-school discus title for two years and finished fourth in the New Zealand championships.

In cricket he played for the First XI for two years while in the winter he was in the First XV rugby team for four years, again a record which still stands 55 years later, and he captained the team in 1950. A serious knee injury in his last game at school virtually put an end to his football career, though he later played a few games for Central Hawke's Bay.

Bruce's scholastic achievements fell far short of his sporting success.

"I hated boarding school with a passion" he says. "For the first three years I was always in the top four of the class, but after that my anger at being couped up in a boarding school boiled over into outright rebellion, and in my last three years I was always near the bottom of the class, although I did succeed in winning the school debating championships."

On leaving school Bruce went into journalism and after working on various New Zealand newspapers at the age of 25 he left for Europe. He hitch-hiked round Europe for three years before settling in London where he worked for Reuters for two years. He married Betty Young and in 1961 he went to Australia where he started his television career in Perth.

He later moved to Sydney and for the next 25 years, being successful as one of Australia's top current affairs and documentary producers.

Bruce and Betty divorced and in 1977, He then managed to catch Lyndsey Fletcher, who was a Queensland champion sprinter.

They have two children, Sam Moyston (1978) and Lucy Phair (1979).

The Croquet Connection

It started way back in 1920 when Mother, Linda Louise Laurenson as she was then, teamed up with Arthur Ross to win the North Island doubles championship.

Mother got married shortly after that and she busied herself with the first of her seven children.

Arthur went on to become New Zealand's greatest ever player

Dad and mother won the Irish croquet doubles on their tour.

When thirty-five years later Father and Mother came down from Paeroa to manage the Stortford Lodge Hotel, they became members of the Hastings Croquet Club,

It wasn't long before they were both winning major championships

1955 Dad won the North Island Championship and winner of the Golden Mallets in the same year. In the following year he again won the Golden Mallets.

Mother was not far behind being Hastings Senior Women's Champion in 1956.

She went on to become the North Island Intermediate champion and winner of the New Zealand Levels Singles in 1963.

Mother's crowning achievement on the croquet lawn came in 1966 when she was North Island Senior Women's Champion.

Although I never became involved in the world of croquet, my sister Gloria and brother Bruce both carried on the family tradition of success in this field.

Bruce took up the game in 1956 and in 1957 won several titles at the North Island championships. In the final of the men's singles he beat Dad. Some years later Bruce was runner up in the Australian doubles title.

Gloria excelled at whatever sport she played. Soon after arriving in the district she took up golf and her progress was extremely rapid. After two years she had to give it up on doctor's orders. Gloria gave up golf and turned to croquet and in one year had her handicap reduced from plus 12, to plus 5 and a half.

1966 she was North Island Levels Singles Champion, and reached her peak the following year, being New Zealand Junior Champion, plus Junior Doubles Champion in partnership with Mrs E.J. Hughes. She also won the New Zealand Junior Handicap Plate. What a great year!



Mother on left front, Gloria on right back

Golfing days

Throughout my life, the sporting activity which has had the greatest influence upon me, was golf. I met many of the people, whose friendship I have enjoyed greatly over the years.

I had played a little golf back in my Christchurch days, pre war, but it was not until I arrived in Napier and joined the Napier Golf Club in 1947 that I took it up seriously. In fact, I was so serious that, in 1948 I won the Junior Club Championship. I ended up with a handicap of three. I recall playing Stuart Jones, seven times New Zealand Champion, off the stick, until I woke up to the fact that the money was always going one way! Getting strokes at once became the order of the day after that. I have always enjoyed my golf, and still do so, and it has given me great pleasure to make a contribution to the Napier Golf Club via my election to the Committee, then as Captain, then President, and now Patron.

I was Club Captain in 1967 when we made the decision to build a new clubhouse. The older members said we would lose the atmosphere of the old club - we certainly did when the smell of pipes, cigars and the open fire disappeared!

Monty McGregor-Turnbull was Secretary at that time, and there were many stories about him. He was a stickler for the rules - jacket and tie always in the clubhouse, long socks with shorts on the course, and so on. He put up a notice in the women's locker room stating that ladies were not allowed to wear waterproof trousers unless the weather was inclement. On another occasion, he told a lady member who came to golf in an old van to park it outside the car park, as it lowered the prestige of the Club.

In those days you would never ask a player with a handicap lower than your own to play a round of golf with you, you waited until you were asked.

The clubhouse was completed in 1970 in time for the Freyberg Rosebowl, the premier tournament of New Zealand, in which all the provinces competed. The cost of the building, was £196,000 - in today's currency this was just \$12.50 per square foot. Can you believe that?

Ray Davis, a good golfer, was the financial expert who organised the money, selling debentures and fast-talking the bank manager with the help from President Arthur Spackman.

We had a very hard-working committee at that time, who devoted many hours to convincing the club members to subscribe for the debentures.



Napier Golf Club Committee 1972 Trevor Dunlop, Buster Balfour, Bob White ,Richard Ellingham, Ian Kepka, Chad Burmester, John Mullany, David Geor, In front Joe McKeesick, John Henderson, Arthur Spackman, Byron Buchanan, Ray Davis.



Cutting the cake on 100th anniversary of Napier Golf club. Gertrude (Beet) Chapman, Byron Buchanan, June Maaka.

My election to the Hawke's Bay Golf Association led to my being appointed manager of the Hawke's Bay Freyberg team when we played at Whangarei. 1973.



Freyberg tournament. Whangarei .

Host Mike Watson, Peter Maude ,Chad Burmester,
Brian Jamieson. ,Kim Southerden, Byron Buchanan manager,
Peter Crichton, Stuart Jones.

We would have won but for the fact that Peter Maude lost the last hole, a par four.
I suggested to Peter that he play it safe and use an iron, but he took out his driver
and hooked it behind some trees. He played a superb shot over the trees but the ball
landed in a bunker. All we needed was a four to win, but that was not to be, one out
of the bunker and two putts was the final score.

My winners' speech which I had prepared was ruined.
Funny how these little incidents stick in your memory.

Another incident I was reminded of, concerned the annual Presidents and Captains
dinner which was held at our club. This was the last one, and I know why!

Ernie Southerden, our professional, got up to make a speech and promptly fell over.
We picked him up and sat him in the corner.

When I spoke to Mac Maaka the next day I asked him how he got home.

He told me that I drove him and Dick Prebble home. I didn't recall this. Just as well I
only had to drive to Taradale!

Buster Balfour and Bob Rolls, both full of joy, had to drive to Napier!

Richard Ellingham spent two days in his pyjamas. There were fifty at the function and
we drank sixty bottles of wine, plus spirits, beer, port and liqueurs to finish off. Those
were the days!



Me receiving the King George 1V Cup, at Hanmer Springs at a Liquor industry tournament.

Our own Wairakei course at Taupo stacks up well against most clubs throughout the world, with the advantage that you can play it all year round.



Ian Kepka, Byron B Joe Gibson, the ambassador for Fiji. and his wife Emily.



Celebrating at Wairakei, Taupo c1976

Left to right.
Stuart Jones, Esther
& Paul Christensen,
June Maaka,
Shirley Jones,
Brenda B & Byron B

Golf has provided me with many opportunities to meet a lot of wonderful people right around the globe.

I have played on some of the world's finest courses, including Pebble Beach, USA, a wonderful experience. I recall an incident there, where this lady bought her husband a hot-dog sandwich from the hut at the 10th hole and a seagull, swooped and flew off with the sausage whilst we were looking for his ball that he hooked into the rough. She called out to the seagull to drop it, but it refused. We had a great laugh.

I also played at the Pinehurst Country Club, North Carolina.

The Dunes at Las Vegas, where I found a gold watch left in my hire bag, Bloomington Country Club, USA, where I played with my great friend Arnie Zimmer and his mates.

We enjoyed Princeville, Hawaii, and numerous other great courses during four visits to the United States, over the past twenty years.

Highlights in the United Kingdom were of course St Andrew's, where I 'birdied' the 1st hole, but it didn't take long for the course to tame me.

Also played golf at Carnoustie, and The Belfry courses.



Esau Sheik,
Alan,
Keith,
Byron

St. Neots, UK, where Moosa and his brother Esau Sheik took my money. I
Have also paid out to Alice's nephews Dan in the UK and Kim in Sweden - mind you,
I was using borrowed clubs!

I played at the Falsterbo links, Denmark. In Spain I played on the Figuera course. In Portugal at the Quinta da Marinha with two American friends, Carol and Clive Davies, who have a lovely home there.

Harness racing

I mentioned earlier that I had met Ivan Wilson in 1942 in the Army camp at Hororata racecourse, outside Christchurch. When I arrived in Napier after the war, I caught up with him again. Ivan was then President of the Hawke's Bay Trotting Club.



Ivan Wilson

Ivan was a great racing enthusiast and he talked me into buying shares in a horse he owned, 'Doc's Daughter'.



The trots in Hawke's Bay were held at the Tomoana Show Grounds. The committee and a few helpers had to erect the fence for the track, build in the betting booths, organise the catering and bar staff, etcetera. It was a major operation but we had a lot of fun.

Doc's daughter having a win

One of my duties was to stimulate interest in trotting and get people to come to the meetings. I had the job of hosting them.

My wife Alice sent invitations to various Legations in Wellington to attend and had a good response.

Meantime, 'Doc's Daughter' won a few races, particularly one I remember well at Cambridge. The trainer told us the horse wasn't quite ready to race and would be just having a run. It must have been the jockey's joke, because it won and paid \$57.

A lot of my friends believed I had inside information on the horses, but nothing was further from the truth. We used to bet in syndicates and when it was my turn to place the bets, we seemed to be lucky. That's all it was - pure luck!

On one occasion I went down to Hutt Park as Ivan's helper, where he told everyone, he was the only owner there with a 'millionaire stropper'.

I was eventually made Patron of the Hawke's Bay Trotting Club, which I still am, as well as a 'Life Member' of the Hawke's Bay Racing Club.

The Stortford Lodge Hotel contracted to provide food and liquor for the trotting meetings on 24 and 26 January 1983, and Alice was responsible for co-ordinating the exercise, for which she engaged casual staff at the rate of \$4 per hour, the current rate.

Simon Wallace, organiser in the Hotel Workers Union heard of the arrangement and rang to tell her that she couldn't treat his workers, as she would those in Singapore, Hong Kong or London. He added that she had better not be at the trotting meeting as he intended to go himself and discuss the contract with the staff we had employed there. When the information reached me I immediately rang Mrs Moir, the Union Secretary, and asked her what the problem was. She explained what the workers were entitled to and was kind enough to put it in writing, with a copy for each worker. We had already experienced problems at the Stortford Lodge Hotel due to Wallace's attitude, so I called into the Union offices later in the week to discuss with Mrs Moir these matters as well as the statements Wallace had made to Alice.

He was called in to the office, and admitted the statements he had made, whereupon I told Wallace that he would not be allowed on the premises of the Stortford Lodge Hotel again under any circumstances whatever. I said this in front of Mrs Moir, explaining that on three separate occasions we were unreasonably and irresponsibly subjected to his attitudes and I was not prepared to undergo this treatment again. I have not seen him since, thank goodness.

Gallops

I never bet a lot, which reminds me of one event in the days before the T.A.B. opened for business.

I used to bet with two Napier bookmakers, Brian Mahoney and 'Jumbo' Josephs, but only in a small way, such as £5 a win and £10 a place, until one of them reneged when I placed a wager on a horse which won at Carterton.

It paid £15 for a win, but one of them said they paid out a maximum of only £7 on small race meetings.

Two weeks later a trainer from the Wairarapa, Ashley Jenkins, called into our Wines & Spirits premises in Napier to buy some whisky. I sold him a case, and to show his gratitude (whisky was in short supply) he said he would ring me when he had a horse which was ready to win.

I duly got the message, and the horse was 'Sunshine Bay', which had run the week before and it was reported in the press that it had bled after the race. This must have put most of the punters off, but I went ahead and doubled my bets and was rewarded with a pay-out of \$800. I have never placed any money with a bookmaker from that day to this - I figure that if they diddled me once they'll do it again!

Sunshine Bay was the only certainty ever given to me which won, thanks to Ashley Jenkins. Ashley was introduced to me by 'Mad Mac' McDonald, who was the salesman for Citroen Motors, operating opposite our wines and spirits business in Dickens Street, Napier.

Mac invented the first bubble bath. It was activated by a Hoover vacuum cleaner system working in reverse, so that it blew air into two plastic tubes with holes in them, which were attached to the sides of the bath by suckers.

My wife Brenda produced our first son, John, in McHardy Home, Napier.

I went up to visit them shortly afterwards and on getting into my car to go home, 'Mad Mac' leaped up from the back of the car to congratulate me.

It gave me quite a shock - that was typical of him!

My Father at one time raced a galloper called 'Bollinger'.

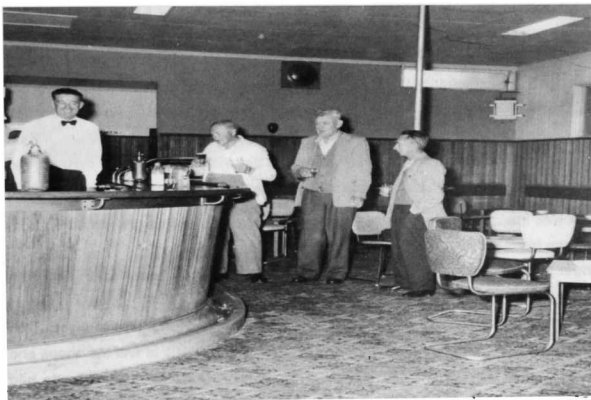
He had only moderate success, although Dad really enjoyed the social side.

It was also good for business as it gave us another opportunity to cater for a different section of society.

Cleve Mackie was a leading jockey in Hastings at that time, and Bill Broughton was No.1 in New Zealand.

The Stortford Lodge hotel in Hastings was popular among the local racing fraternity. One of the jockeys, Percy Atkins, was a regular customer and he always stood in the same spot in the corner of the bar, rubbing his foot against the wall, leaving an imprint. He usually arrived at around 4.30 pm and drove home in his big De Soto car at 6 pm.

Percy never worried about his ability to drive safely as the previous publican had always looked after him by watering down his whisky before handing it to him. Things changed when the new manager, Jack Alexander, took over - this practice ceased, and Percy had to slow up his intake. Great days!



This was Percy's favourite bar.

Joe Meehan, barman, with Baldy, Irish and Shortie

Cassino Revisited

The Battle of Cassino was commemorated in July 2004. Ceremonies were held in Cassino involving a large gathering of World War II veterans representative of the countries throughout the world which had been involved in the famous battle. As the number of veterans of this action declines each year it is expected that this will be the very last such reunion. I decided to return to the town which still haunts me with appalling memories of senseless death and devastation.



I took with me my daughter Linda from Havelock North and four grandchildren from our three families.

Bridget from Auckland, Barnaby from Havelock North, Daniel from Napier, and Sam from Wellington.

Prior to visiting Cassino we had a couple of days in Hong Kong, after a flight which took eleven hours from Auckland. It didn't take long for the girls to find the shops and go mad – that of course continued throughout the whole trip! I think Linda had seven pairs of trousers made in 24 hours. Bridget (19) eventually succumbed to a request from a very persistent (Wog) Egyptian man, to sit in a gharry, which is a two wheeled cart drawn by the man, to have her photo taken. After she did so, he took her photo then asked her for \$70 in payment. At this point I took over and gave him \$10 and told him to go on his way. I then explained to Bridget that this is what to expect while travelling in strange countries.



We had a great lunch with my wife Alice's friends, Suzy and John Uband in the Hong Kong Jockey Club. They serve fabulous food. It is a very elegant establishment, with marble and parquet floors, some magnificent paintings and artefacts – a real treat. It was a hot and humid day in Hong Kong, so it was an additional bonus to be enjoying an excellent lunch in the comfort of the air-conditioned club.

Our flight to Rome's Leonardo da Vinci Airport took another eleven hours. A forty-five minute bus ride to our hotel in a pleasant 20 degrees and clear skies completed the journey journey.

Daniel did the same trip later, in a Mercedes Benz taxi, in twenty-five minutes, doing 180 kilometres per hour! I don't know whether you have heard about Italian driving, but it's unreal! There doesn't appear to be any speed limit and vehicles dodge in and out of lanes, motorbikes galore, all crazy, but we never saw an accident, amazing! Parking, too, was chaotic. The Napier traffic cops would have had writer's cramp after one morning.



Bridget

My grand-daughter Bridget drove the whole time we were in Italy, nearly 1,000 kilometres, and never put a foot wrong, apart from not putting it down hard enough at times to keep up with the speeding traffic in front. She did a wonderful job in the circumstances – I can thoroughly recommend her as a chauffeur.

We saw the main tourist places. The Basilica in St. Peter's Square is a wonderful building. You eventually get inside after being in a queue a mile long, but it was worth the effort. It was very hard to imagine the beauty of the place. The paintings and sculptures done by famous artists hundreds of years ago on the ceilings and walls were a sight to behold.

Erecting the scaffolding would have been a major operation, but with the hydraulic equipment we have today it would be relatively simple. I climbed up the 300 spiral steps to the roof, where you have a 360 degree view over Rome, exhausting, but again, well worthwhile.

The next place we visited was the Colosseum. This was built over 2,000 years ago and held 50,000 people. It was where the blood-thirsty Roman populace was kept entertained and war-ready, with gory battles pitting gladiators against wild animals. It was here that lions were let loose to feed on the poor people and criminals, who were considered expendable.

To celebrate one victory, Trojan games were held here, which lasted 117 days, during which 9,000 gladiators and 10,000 beasts fought to the death. Gladiators were professional and their lives were sometimes spared for putting up a good fight, but there was no such luck for prisoners, slaves or animals.

The Presidential Palace in the Piazza del Quirinale, built in the 17th Century, is another magnificent building with more wonderful paintings, artefacts and sculptures. This was guarded by soldiers, with sentries posted outside, 'tommy guns' at the ready, all dressed up in colourful uniforms.

Whilst in the area I took the opportunity to visit the Hotel Quirinale where the headquarters of the New Zealand army were 60 years ago. It is very elegant today and costs \$700 a night. Unfortunately they were full.



Another splendid (I run out of superlatives!) piece of architecture is this Trevi Fountain.

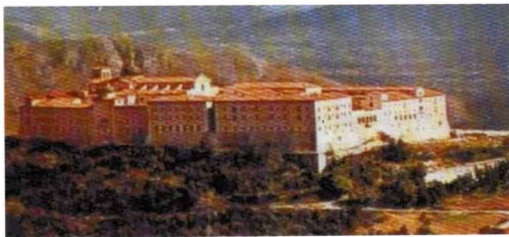
Rome is blessed with a myriad of buildings which are worth visiting, but time ran out and we had to move on, for the reason of our trip – Cassino.

The weather for the whole trip was perfect apart from a shower lasting two hours one night in Cassino. I have already described the four months I spent in Cassino during the winter of 1944, tramping around muddy gun pits, sheltering from snow and rain and living in a slit trench under a tent, dodging bullets and bombs.

It was a vastly different scene this time. Instead of stark trees, bombed houses and a desolate panorama, we arrived in spring to be welcomed by sunshine which remained with us until we left.

Now, the buildings stand amongst trees, manicured parks and gardens and one could not recognise the town at all. One good reason for this being so, is that it has not been rebuilt on exactly the same site. Only one thing stood out – the Abbey on the hilltop. I have vivid memories of the day when the B54 bombers, amongst others, came over in droves and obliterated the skyline where this great building had once stood. That was the fourth time over the centuries that the Abbey had been destroyed, but it is now in pristine condition and our tour through it showed that the restoration was complete. The foundation stone of the new Abbey was laid on March 15, 1945, exactly one year after its destruction. Its reconstruction followed closely the original plans, which had been taken to Rome by the Germans for safe-keeping.

The restored monastery



All the treasures and documents and archives removed by the Germans to the Vatican in the autumn of 1943, have been returned.



Commonwealth Graveyard, where 4,266 are buried.
Monte Cassino in the background, on top of hill.

This was the format for the commemoration services at Cassino.

Day 1: Remembrance Day for American Forces.

Day 2: Remembrance Day for British and Commonwealth Forces.

Day 3: Remembrance Day for the Polish Contingent.

Day 4: Remembrance Day for the German Contingent.

Day 5: Remembrance Day for the New Zealand Contingent.

Day 6: All those able to do so, marched through the town. A number in wheel-chairs joined them, to a welcome from the Mayor of Cassino and entertainment by a Maori Concert Party.

Day 7: Saw us visiting the Polish Cemetery with its 1,000 graves, and the cemetery where more than 20,000 German soldiers lie, who died in the Italian campaign. The New Zealand commemoration was held in the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery where the *Cassino Memorial* to a further 4,000 unknown soldiers can be found. The speeches were good and to the point – no political statements.

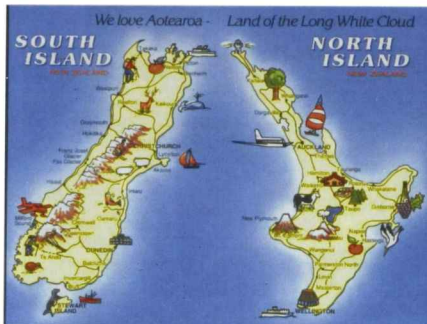
Prime Minister, Helen Clark spoke very well and she was well received.

The only flaw in the day was the Maori reception party which refused to be photographed and pushed or turned people away – reserved for Maori television. It's funny what dollars will do to people.



Staying together with some "old digs", lots of sad stories were told.
No doubt these two, one German and one Kiwi swapped a few tales.
These two were under instructions to kill one another **60 years ago!**

Living in Paradise



← Napier
Gannet diving

I have written this section to say that I appreciate the land and the lifestyle where I live, which has come about because I had to fight for it.

Most people would sooner do you a good turn than a bad one - always remember that.

If you ask any of our criminals, where would they go, if they were assaulted.

The answer would be to the Police. These criminals are all very brave when they are in gangs, and individually are probably nice people.

The Army teaches you that you have to rely on a lot of other people if you want to survive. If this message was instilled into these individuals, they would realise that the very people they are hurting, are the same ones they would ask for help when they are in trouble. I'm sure these criminals would not like being treated in the way they behave toward others.

In speaking to a number of people in my own age group I find they all agree that compulsory military training didn't harm anyone. They then understood the benefits of assisting one another in times of need.

In mainland China even doctors have to do manual work for two years in the fields. This makes you realise that you cannot live unless someone is producing the essentials of life, food. You then appreciate that farmers and their workers are just as important as professionals.

I spent five years in the Army, half of that time serving in Egypt and Italy. Many of my mates were wounded or killed while making our lifestyle safe. I was spared, and appreciate the sacrifices they made for all of us. Military training and discipline provides people with experiences that will be helpful to them throughout their lives. In civil emergencies, there would be a trained force able to cope with these situations. It teaches leadership.

We often hear how safe Singapore is. There, all men do two years military training and then do four hours each month accompanying a policeman on duty.

Think about it. We write our own destiny. We become what we do.

The good times

You have read about some of the unfortunate things I have experienced over the past years. It is from these experiences we learn, and one should view those bad experiences, as compost for growth, rather than something to be endlessly picked over, so I will now give you some of the highlights of the good things that have occurred, mainly to do with travel.

My good friend Tom McDonald lost his wife a month after my wife Brenda passed away. We decided that an overseas trip would help us to overcome our grief so we spent three months travelling in USA, UK, Europe, China and Singapore.



Tom McDonald ,wine- maker.

Chairman, of the Wine Institute of New Zealand.

My great travelling companion

Highlights of my world tour with Tom McDonald 1979.

Our first tour 1979 started in Honolulu. Where we spent a few days .

On to California where we hired a car and spent three weeks touring the wineries in the Napa valley. Tom was very well known by a number of the wineries we visited, which included Gallo's, the biggest winery in the world. They have their own glass works and produce 70 million cases of wine annually

I was taking a photo of the winery from a hill top, when a man in uniform approached and asked us what we were doing. He had a gun in a holster and told us that photos were not permitted and we were on private property. After explaining that we were from NZ, he said, "have a nice day."

Christian Bros Cellars have wonderful facilities and dining. We were greeted by their winemaker Gordon Pitone, who incidentally had been out to NZ visiting Tom. Gordon and his wife Anne invited us to stay and we had a very pleasant evening.

Calistoga was where we sampled a new grape variety, Zinfandel pink and white, bought in from Europe.

The chateau where the wine is produced was brought brick by brick from where it was originally established in France. They arranged a BBQ in honor of our visit so we could meet a number of their wine makers. They had rabbit on the menu. I recall driving to our hotel after the function and being pulled up by a traffic cop for speeding. When I told him we were from New Zealand, he said "Oh well drive carefully"

He was very kind!

We continued through Bakersfield and Anaheim, through Los Angeles, where we bought the Los Angeles Sunday Times, 420 pages.,



The Pyramid

Mexico was our next call.

We climbed this pyramid which was only discovered in 1906.

The day was very hot and I wore shorts much to the amusement of the locals. Even boys there do not wear them. Museum of Anthropology was superb.

From there we flew to Chicago, **USA**, to meet our friends Arnold and Betty Ann Zimmer who took us to the State Farm Insurance convention at Oconomowoc.



A highlight of that visit was the Bunny club we called into, where they had a Kiwi manager and a bevy of beauties.

Arnold, Tom, & Byron with girls

I met the Zimmers in Queenstown in 1979 when a neighbour in Taradale, Norman Shaw and I were doing a tour of the South Island. We arrived in Queenstown at 7 pm and managed to get some accommodation in a hotel. We went down to have dinner, but they were booked out. However the Zimmers saw our predicament and as they were sitting on their own, at a table for four, they invited us to sit with them. After thanking them I asked if we could buy them a wine. They accepted and when I asked red or white, Arnold said one of each please. That started a friendship that has continued since.

Toronto, our next stop, where we were hosted by Doug and Ailsa Banks. They are related to my son-in-law Van Howard. They took us to the Fort Eire races, where we were served lunch and drinks, with girls coming round to take our bets. Doug bought a filly, \$175,000.

New York we saw the Niagra Falls and got wet in the process.



France Aug 11th. We flew to Paris on the Concorde. On take off you could feel your back, pushing against the seat, but apart from that, there was no sensation of speed although we were flying at twice the speed of sound.

Champagne and caviar flowed freely.

Aug 14th. Went to **London**, to celebrate Simon my sons birthday, with his wife Linda. Returning to **France** we hired a car in Paris and for the next three months travelled through Europe.

After leaving Paris we traveled through Lyons to Avignon, a lovely walled city. From Marseille we followed the coast road to Cannes where we stopped for three nights so that I could go swimming and admire the gorgeous girls.



This one in particular, was a champion wind-surfer.

From there to **Italy**, to visit my old hunting grounds during the war. Florence (the city) and the Ponte Vecchio which was bombed and a mess, is now a thriving shopping mall and brought back great memories. Driving to **Salzburgh** the police pulled us up doing 67 mph. I explained we had no money so they let us off with a handshake. We drove on to **Vienna** and met friends of the Kazas, our neighbors in Taradale. Also called on a son of the Hallstroms, from Napier. Went to the opera, Tosca. Drove to Chur-**Switzerland**, 500 miles,

France 12th Sept we celebrated Tom's birthday with a visit to Chat. d' Yquem and Chat. Haut Brion where we had wine tastings. Next day, lunch at Chateau Palmer as guest of Peter Sichel. Started with 1967 Chat. Angulet, then 1961 Palmer, which Peter said was his favourite, (has every reason) followed by 1966 Chat. Coutet-barsac. Lunch finished at 3.30. After leaving Bordeaux we extended our tour of **Europe**, visiting Colmar Alsace, Riquewihl, Strausborg, Baden Baden, Mainz, Heidelberg, Geishiem, Koblenz, Bonn, Cologne.

France again 1st Oct. Epernay. Where Moet and Chandon store 48 million bottles of champagne in their 25 kilometres of cellars.

We were met by Ann Price, a friend of Gertrude (Beet) Chapman of Havelock North.



They provided us with a delightful lunch at the winery, together with other guests from the Bahamas, Chicago, Chile and France. We enjoyed being served by waiters with white gloves.

They have on show a huge barrel holding 200, 000 bottles that was drawn by white oxen to Paris in 1889.

The barrel.

Back in Paris we lunched with NZ Ambassador John Scott and his wife. He gave us a bottle of '61 Mouton.

Moving on to Calais we boarded the boat to Folkstone, where we met Ron and Mavis Steel, from Napier, who were also on board.

London. I saved up 11 rolls of film to take to Kodak headquarters to be processed and they lost them. They gave me 11 rolls replacement, but I was devastated.

I should have insisted they find them, but didn't unfortunately.

Hugo Dunn-Meynell, Chairman of International Wine & Food Society took us to dinner at the Cumberland Hotel and gave me a magnum of Chateaux.

Carbonnieux '72 grand cru classe, so that eased the pain, a little.

Visited Bruce & Lyn Johnson from Taradale, in Dorking, where we dined in a pub that was built in 1643. Bruce was teaching at a school there.

Took Virginia Heath, my son John's sister-in-law, to lunch at Trattoria da Otello in London. Oysters, huge, whole grilled fish, magnificent, washed down with some lovely white wine, Soave.

Tom and I then did a tour up east coast to Scotland and back down the west coast. Stayed at Buchanan Arms Hotel, at Drymen.

London. Arose at 5.30 in the morning, to visit Billingsgate fish market.

Barrow boys have right of way on streets. Oysters were £4 doz.

Greece 1st November, left London for Athens. Very impressed with bronze statue of Zeus (king of gods) made 500 BC. Not very impressed with being accosted by pimps (7 times) asking us if we would like a young boy. I don't think they were offered as guides!

Thailand. population is, 45 million. 1 million unemployed. Bangkok, capital.

All men attend monastery for 3 months. Boys start work at age 10 in sapphire factories. Minimum wage, \$2.50 per day. Remember this is 1979.

River filthy, but people washing and swimming in it.

Bought 3 silk pictures, bargained from 2,000 bahts to 500

Kowloon. Use bamboo scaffolding on high rise buildings. Apprenticeship 3 years, They get well paid. Electricity generated by diesel. There are tens of thousands of refugees. The Government is now sending them back.

Illegal immigrants are given six months hard labour.

Canton. City of bicycles and car horns blowing constantly. We stayed at an hotel built 1976, 25 storeys, very spartan, lino floor covering, thermos hot water, carafe of cold water, writing table and two chairs, manrobe, poor fittings, one mirror, one comb, 1 pair plastic jandals, clothes brush, bedside table, cupboard with no drawers. We had meal in restaurant with good friends from USA, Clive & Carol Davies. Food was beautifully presented, bird shaped from cabbage, flowers and rosettes from vegetables, lovely food.

CHINA



Transport in China. 1979, pulling concrete slabs.



Horse makes it a little easier



This girl took 3 years to carve this ivory elephant tusk

Back to **Singapore**, where there are lots of high rise flats built by government.

These sell for NZ\$35,000, for a 3 bedroom unit.

All men aged 18, serve 2 ½ years in forces compulsory, plus 4 hours twice monthly on police duty. Streets very clean.



Tom McDonald and myself dining with Carol & Clive Davies, Singapore

24/11/79 Return to Paradise.

In Auckland we were welcomed home with lunch with John, Debbie, Hannah, Linda, Barnaby, Peter and Robin Houlker and Andrea Jones.

Melbourne Wine & Food Society China tour 1980

1980 I went to China with 11 members of this society, whom I met at the International Wine and Food Society Convention, held in Sydney and Melbourne, Australia.

They were a great mix. Bill Knapp (our tour leader) a dentist, and wife Betty,

Dr. Geo Tippet, anesthetist and wife Naomi, Ian Home winemaker and wife Dorothy,

Ian Sutherland-Smith, wine & spirit merchant, Les & Joyce Rowe, Daniel Saleba, and Helen Reid, made up a great party.



This was an eye-opener as to what the Chinese cuisine could produce.

The presentation, variety, flavours and smells were out of this world.

Have not seen or tasted anything like it since.

Typical. first breakfast in **Canton**.

Spring rolls garnished with cucumber flowers

Minced pork rolled in light butter, shaped as a pear, and deep fried.

Prawn meat rolled in crushed olive kernels

Wucock, deep fried mixed pork and taro root

Steamed noodles with minced pork, served as a large roll.

Water chestnut gelatine cake

Hakow, steamed prawn and water chestnut rice noodle pastry

Small cakes with sesame seed, sweet bean cakes

That was a good start for the day.

Our trip took us right up to **Beijing**, where we climbed the Great Wall, then on to **Mongolia**.

The meals there were not as elaborate as the ones we had been used to, but just as enjoyable. Mongolian hotpot consisted of sauces made from sesame jam, leek flower jam, preserved bean curd jam, chopped spring onions, chopped fragrant vegetables, sesame oil and shrimp oil. These are placed into a rice bowl and mixed into a sauce. Sliced raw lamb is cooked for a moment in boiling water and dipped in sauce. Fine rice noodles and Chinese cabbage cooked in a similar way.



Getting stuck in



Mongolian hotpot

The final banquet in China at Pei Yuan restaurant, Canton.

A butterfly, shaped from cold sliced duck, egg and sausage roll sliced thinly

Sliced pickled cucumbers, sliced mushrooms

Fine puff pastry filled with pork, prawn meat patties rolled in peanuts

Shrimp balls

Straw mushrooms and Chinese green vegetables, only available in Canton

Wintermelon soup, served in a whole chilled winter melon decorated with pictures, carved on the chilled sides. Soup clear stock with sliced chicken, pork, zucchini

Barbequed chicken with prawn crisps, served with garlic, chilli plum sauce

Stir fried shredded pork and leeks.

Stir fried frogs legs with bamboo shoots

Deep fried, steamed, boned, sweet and sour fish. Fish had been serrated to look like scales – superb presentation. Highlight of meal.

Stir fried sliced pork, noodles and leeks

Water chestnut cake – water chestnut set in gelatine and cut in diamonds

Date sweetmeats rolled in fine pastry.

Bananas and longnans.



Melon soup presented in this beautifully carved melon



Meat dumplings shaped like rabbit



Dorothy and Ian Home, on left
Naomi and Geo Tippett, on right

Train back to **Hong Kong** was very comfortable 8 hour journey. Seats allocated, windows double glazed, blinds and lace curtains, lace antimacassar on head rests. Color TV both ends of carriage, swivel seats, air-conditioning. Girls came thru with food, duck, sponge rolls, tea bags and hot water, and liquor. Three Red guards came through and checked tickets.

The final dinner in Hong Kong was at a super restaurant and we were all dressed in our finest garb,

21 days with lovely people, lovely food, lovely memories.

Back home to paradise. Kiwiland

1981 South Africa with Tom McDonald

February 27. This was another three month tour. We had to drive to Auckland because of a strike by engineers. Qantas & Air NZ grounded.

Missed flight to Johannesburg so spent a week in Perth till next flight. Bought bottle Reisling \$1.99 at Coles. Visited Houghton Winery.

Perth. Visited Rottnest Island, named by a sea captain in 1696 after seeing rock wallabies that looked like rats. (Quokkas)

Nine hole golf course, sand greens.

Johannesburg Hillbrow, not far from our hotel is the most densely populated area in South Africa. They have lots of crime and murders. Dirty.

In Durban we said hello to a rotary student that Bill & Sheena Beaton had hosted here in Taradale. Very hot and humid, very clean. On the way south called in to **Plettenburg Bay**. A haven for the rich and famous, a really beautiful place. I could stay there forever. Visited Congo caves where there are 3 kilometres of them. The largest will seat 2,000.



Ostrich farm at **Oudtshoorn**, well worth visit.
Ostrich Meat sandwich for lunch.

Me, just about to take off, or fall off!!

Capetown. I rang Christian Barnard, who did the world's first heart transplant, and passed on regards from Ian Price, from Napier, who organized the fundraiser for the heart foundation when Christian was here in Napier.

Spent day with Dr Arnold Schickering, considered South Africa's best winemaker.

Drove 770 K's to **Kimberley** thru 700 kilometers wasteland. Kimberley has the largest man-made hole in the world. Diameter 1.5 K's and is 400 metres deep. On the way back to Johannesburg went thru huge crops of maize, sunflowers etc. Stretched for mile after mile.

Johannesberg Handed car back after driving 5, 564 k's. without a hitch.

One day to forget !!!!

We were due to depart for Victoria Falls, I lost my passport.

I Rang the hotel manager and reported it stolen. Security man tells me he has a suspect. Detective takes off to interview girl. They found 2 wallets, a string of pearls and pair of shoes in her room.

Police arrived with dusting equipment for fingerprinting. 12.15 pm Tom takes off to airport. I ring to cancel my flight, resigned to stay for two days while organizing a new passport.

Started unpacking 12.36pm find passport among documents.

Rang manager to apologies, rang airport for seat, got taxi and caught up with Tom being ferried to our air-craft. All is well.

Victoria Falls. Crocodile farm well presented. Crocs live for 100 years, teeth re-grow if pulled out. Oldest one 75, has harem, 5 females and still producing.

Nairobi, Kenya. Flew in 6 pm, booked into Stanley Hotel, went for a walk and was approached 6 times by black girls. Police were watching but didn't do anything. Told me after, that the girls were dangerous.

On another walk two young men approached me and asked what part of Europe I came from. I said N.Z., and they wanted to know more about N.Z.

When I said I was out walking not talking, they called me a racist.

Stayed at **Tree Tops**, saw 24 elephants, 200-300 water buffalo, lots of baboons.

Mt Kenya Safari Club magnificent surroundings, golf course, bowling green, tennis courts, fully tiled swim pool. The nicest place we have stayed in South Africa.

They lit fires at 4 pm, because we were at 7,000 feet altitude and there was snow on the mountain.

Hair-raising ride to **Meru Mulika** Lodge. Roads in awful condition. Car in front slid off track, about 50 blacks came from out of nowhere and pushed it out.

Flight to Seychelles. Barbarons Hotel was very expensive. 1/2 handle beer 15/-, Pot of tea 20/-. Tom left his wallet in taxi, driver returned it later, wanted £30. reward. I suppose he could have just kept it.

Went swimming, water clear and warm, snorkeling and went paragliding.

Sri Lanka. Sea water looks like a sewer. Fishermen paddle out in a skiff at 2am, back at 8am to sell catch. Town dirty, people cross road anywhere, cars need good brakes and horn.

Buffalo work in paddy fields and elephants work in timber mills. Timber, pit sawn.

Kandy University 4,000, power shut off between 8-9am. and 7-8 pm

Singapore. I was introduced to David U. by Lee Tung Fai. hotel manager.

Later proved to be an ill fortunated meeting

Jakarta. Had a drive round city 1 hour, \$5. Taxi to Bogor 40 miles, 6 hours, \$35.

Bali. Did usual things, swimming, last minute shopping etc.

Sydney – Auckland – Napier. Glad to be back in paradise.

1983 Start of 4 month trip, one of many world tours with my wife Alice

Honolulu was our first stop, spent a pleasant week swimming, sight-seeing as guests of Margie Maaka and Mike Abbott . Picture below.



Flew to **San Francisco**, hired a car and straight down to Clive & Carol Davies' place at **Los Altos** for another pleasant week. They took us to Cow Palace to see MacEnroe and Ivan Lendl playing tennis. Great!

Carol showed us her work-place where they are developing a shuttle vehicle to move between space ships and satellites.

On to **Los Angeles** where we stayed at the Beverley Wiltshire Hotel (in top 100 hotels in world) There, we met Graeme & Jennie Lowe from Hastings.

Kiwis are everywhere. Visited **Disneyland**, then five hour drive on to **Las Vegas**. Saw show at Caesars, Wayne Newton, \$100,

Went to bed 3 a.m. Got up to find hail on the verandah of hotel, and the streets below flooded. Very unusual in Las Vegas, as it is in the middle of the desert.

Left Las Vegas by air. Stopped at Phoenix and Minneapolis before arriving Seattle, 8 hours. From **Seattle** we took a bus to **Vancouver** 4 ½ hours, where we stayed with Mason and Elsie Sze, school-friends and neighbours of Alice in Singapore.

Caught up with Michael and Inge Morgan, whom I had met in Singapore and had a lovely meal at their place.

We joined up with the Wine & Food Society in Vancouver and enjoyed three days of festivities. Warren & Marilyn Wilson hosted 10 of us on the first night. The following days we toured the harbor in "Brittania", had a day tasting French white burgundies in between meals. A lunch was presented by some Olympic chefs. Fantastic!

After the weekend we visited **Victoria** Island and the Butchart gardens which are world renowned. There were a great variety of birds.

We had afternoon tea with the Mayor, Peter Pollen.